

**Chapter 4: Downtime**  
**April 2, 2013****[The Lurk Below Epilogue]***[Time Check: 10:00]*

Marina was sent to her room after a stern talking to. She understood the consequences and still chose to sneak out. Dad said he'd think of a harsher punishment in the morning. Seeing as grounding was ineffective. She sighed and curled up in bed. She was so irresponsible with her powers, her life. And now she was facing prison. She'd call the Phillips tomorrow, not that it'd really stop her from going to jail. Apologize to everyone in her life. Maybe even get back on track. All that after....sleep. She went to bed.

Dealing with Marina's folks was messy and Trevor was glad to wash his hands of that little problem for now. All that was left was a massive headache and a need to collapse on something soft and surrender to the peaceful oblivion of sleep. Between the amount of damage and likely loss of life that this swarm attack caused, and what happened to Erin... It hadn't processed yet. That and he didn't want to think too hard about it either. Home. Sleep. Maybe some food.

But first... Jezelle was still in her other mood... and he needed to call Henry. And actually drive home... maybe Jez could just teleport the whole car for him...

Call first. He had Henry on speed dial now. So he was literally one touch away. The phone did its regular ringing as it waited for the other party to pick up.

As Henry made it out of the building he was about a second from jumping into the sky to head for home when his phone started to vibrate in his pocket. At first he thought that something from the hive had stowed away in his pocket when he finally realized that it was his phone. He fished it out of his pocket and checked it. --Trevor-- He must have dropped off the two already. He answered the phone.

"Man oh man I do not envy you. How did things go with Marina's parents?" Henry asked in a joking manner.

Trevor just groaned and put the call on speaker phone. "That was one of the most awkward things I've ever had to do. The most. In fact, I'd rather not talk about it. How were things at your end?"

"They are as good as they can be. Erin is in a secured room and sedated. On my way back home now. Need to write a few things down and get cleaned up. I smell like mold and standing water." Henry said giving himself a sniff. He was in a right state of smell at the moment.

"Don't forget bugs," Trevor said blandly. "We smell like bugs too. Aha!" Trevor's sudden swing from emotionless to extreme excitement would give some people whiplash and he gave a slight whoop. "I've got some bug Albie and I knocked out earlier! I can make some more roasts!" The last bit he declared triumphantly. "Not a total waste!"

"Are you entirely certain that consuming a mutated bug is wise?" Jezelle queried.

"You kept one alive? You know that those things eat people right? You are going to be eating something that ate a person." Henry said with disgust.

"But... but... Fine... and no, they aren't alive. We just collected some of the ones we knocked out in the forest," Trevor sighed with disappointment. What was it with his bug roast that everyone wanted him to toss them out? It would be like... karma. "I need a breather anyway... you up for a game tomorrow?"

"I think I can fit one in. What time were you thinking about?" Henry turned the corner at this point heading back in the general direction of his apartment. Flying would be faster but it played hell with the phones. Like having a conversation in a convertible.

"Actually... I didn't think that far ahead," Trevor admitted as he popped the trunk and pulled out the bugs, tossed them haphazardly on the side of the road. "I just think we seriously need some semblance of normality. Also; I need to do some grocery shopping... my fridge is pretty empty." He paused and looked over at Jez so the question would involve her as well. "What time would you be available?"

"Hmm... we haven't gathered in some time so my cheat day is still available, and I haven't fully reconnected with the sports teams so I think I'm available whenever is necessary at this current point in time," Jezelle said contemplatively, partially thinking out loud.

"I was going to go to the library and look a few things up. Found out some interesting information and want to see if it pans out or it is more junk information. God I hate library. Too many books." Henry complained but he knew it had to be done. Memories of him trying to use the library system to do reports in high school flooded back. Card catalogs and computer systems and some old dead jerk's filing system that made no sense to him.

"Would you like some assistance, Henry?" Jezelle offered formally, "At least Three, myself and Eleven have no qualm with books."

"That would be more helpful then you know. You could drum up the information in minutes I bet. We can meet at the Unwin Library at, say, noon?" Henry asked with a little relief in his voice.

"Still miss fourth. Would settle for first. Even second," Trevor muttered, low enough not to be picked up by the phone or Jez. "Then around six, I guess? For the game? Give you two enough time to have fun at the library. And I can get the shopping done. And some cooking too, I guess."

"I believe we have a plan then," Jezelle affirmed with a nod, looking at Trevor expectantly.

"Six o'clock sounds good to me. I will see you all then." Henry replied.

"Awesome. I can email Albie. I don't think Marina will be able to make it for a while. A long while. And... So yeah, the four of us. Unless you know anyone else to invite," Trevor said.

"If we are going to a normal evening then I think we should stick to our own little group. We have had enough things going on lately. Would be nice to have a normal, or as normal as we can be, evening for once," Henry said thinking about the last game night. They all got to play while he was off cleaning up the chem plant. It all started with a game night.

"We can start a new campaign. I might even make a human this time..." Trevor said.

Jezelle's rather impressive look of concern unfortunately went unnoticed behind her mask.

"Well then. I will see you all tomorrow. Jez I will meet you at the front doors tomorrow at the library, Trevor I will be at your house at six." Henry said bidding his friends farewell. Looks like he had a normal day tomorrow.

"See you then Henry. You bringing food or money?" Trevor asked innocently. "Can't have a good game without food."

"I can bring something to eat. Chips always go over well. Salty crispy chips." At the mention of food his stomach growled. The last thing he had eaten was a sandwich before they went into the sewers. He would need to make himself something when he got back.

"Awesome. I'll make something fun to go with that. And none mutated for you sensitive people... Maybe chicken. Chicken is always good."

"Sounds like a plan. And with that I am off. See you all tomorrow." Henry ended the call and put the phone back away. Once it was in his pocket He jumped into the air and took off in the apartment's direction.

It wasn't a long flight but it was one that allowed him a nice view of the city. This place that he has lived in for his whole life was sure changing a lot. Sure, some of the places were bound to do that like any other city. Old stores would close down to be replaced with up and coming shops or restaurants only to close down a year later. Streets were getting repaved and areas were getting revitalized. There were a few new parks put in the city now where some of the older department stores once stood. One was devoted completely to dogs which he thought was hilarious. In the distance he saw the flashing lights on the police and had to wonder- was this a meta problem? Another person lost control of their powers or perhaps one that was using it for their gain over the normals. Or it might just be someone running a light or going the wrong way down the one way streets. He had done that before. He had also done enough for one evening. It was time to head home.

He landed by the bridge like he always did. He took off the mask and put it in his back pocket then walked the rest of the way back to his apartment. At the door he got his keys out and unlocked the place. It was dark inside from not having left any lights on when he left. It really

didn't matter since he really didn't have anything to steal. He closed the door behind him and locked it back up.

He stripped out of his clothes and dumped them in the trash can. He saved his phone, keys, envelope and the little mask. The rest were so covered in bug goo and whatever else that they were beyond saving. Even his shoes had to go. He would need to visit the thrift shop tomorrow to restock on some clothes. This was like his fourth outfit that had to be tossed.

A shower later and putting on the last of his clean clothes Henry went about the mundane task of laundry and dish cleaning. While all the things were getting cleaned he let his mind replay the day's events. The tasks he did were simple enough to let his mind go while he did them. Dishes in a drying rack, laundry in the dryer. He made his way to his bedroom and sat down on the floor. A notebook in front of him with a pen stuck in it. The envelope from Davis was tossed next to it. It told him when and where he was going to meet about the job offer he had. Monica mentioned that people were ready for the new meta team to get started. He hoped that the rest of the groups that Allied worked with had such an outlook.

Henry spent the next few hours doing the part of the whole meta super human thing that he didn't like. He did the paper work. He wrote down what happened and what new things he learned. Once that was done out came the note cards thumb tacks and string. He added a few new spots on the map and wrote a few new things under the little headings. Like *Bugs* and *Hospital*. Henry was not literary giant so this was as good as it was going to get. Once all that was done he mulled over all the information in front of him. And tried to figure out what was going on.

Trevor yawned as he put his phone away. He sniffed the last bug cautiously. "Maybe it's a good thing I'm tossing these... they don't smell all that fresh anymore..."

"I don't believe it was wise to eat a foreign creature in the first place," Jezelle pointed out with a sigh in resignation, going to get back into the car.

"Just because you were too chicken to try it last time," Trevor muttered, following and remote starting Cobie with the fob. "I kept telling you, they taste good."

"And you're disregarding the possible mutagenic effects of bugs that grew to such size and shape within a few weeks?" Jezelle said mostly rhetorically as though she wasn't paying much attention, part of her attention glued to her left hand that she was keeping very still to avoid pain.

"I turned into a cat overnight. Grew a tail and full coat of fur on just two dozen peices of chicken," Trevor said, pulling away from the curb. "Bugs are good protein. Except for the people eating part..."

"And if you transform into a bug-cat hybrid overnight from eating a few bugs?" Jezelle offered airily.

"Um... fine... I got catch some deer or something," Trevor conceded. "Still not changing back?"

"...Hmm?" Jezelle was a little lost between distracted by her hand and the lack of any obvious cues in the conversation.

"No scary egg sags to freak out over. You can relax now, you know," Trevor insisted, probably driving a tad faster than he needed to.

"Oh..." Jezelle finally cottoned on, though went back to examining her hand, "I suppose... but I probably have a higher tolerance for pain than the others."

"Okay, so what are the rest thinking about this whole thing then?" Trevor asked, trying a different angle.

"First, Eight and Eleven are rather shaken, Second looks about to cry, Three to Seven are either nonchalant or keeping it together, as is Nine and Ten," Jezelle explained a little vacantly, as though going distant to check on them more properly.

"About what we found, or what happened?" Trevor said after a moment.

"Both," Jezelle replied a little unhelpfully at first, "Seeing horrifying things in a movie is easier to dismiss; the smells and such make a firmer imprint on the memory. And the concept of Erin getting transformed into a bug... well, imagination can be a bad thing some times."

A stop light gave Trevor the time to just sit and brood in silence. "You think she's still... in there somewhere?"

"Given what we've encountered since the Big Bang I've taken to believe anything is possible, but if I were to attempt to use some obtuse version of logic, I would say something still remains. The human mind is a lot bigger than we give it credit for, and survival instinct can push people to unbelievable limits," Jezelle said a little philosophically, staring up into the air.

"Jezelle... I'm scared," Trevor admitted with a nervous chuckle. Because driving and emotional instability didn't really mix, he stopped. No need to add a car accident to the ever increasing list of 'things that went bad' for that day. "No, actually. I'm terrified. It happened again yesterday. After my... powers slipped at the hospital. I lost it again. Attacked Albie. Didn't... my head didn't clear up till this morning. It's like the fourth time in two weeks. This was just Erin's second time trying her new ability. What if that happens to me?" He curled as best he could, bending over so his forehead was against the wheel and covered his head with his hands. "What if the next time a wild meta threatening the city turns out to be me?"

Even with such a cool and collected mind right now, Jezelle couldn't see a perfect answer for this current situation, though other parts of her were attempting to rise to the surface at the sight of Trevor.

She kept silent for a moment, taking in a small breath and unclipping her seatbelt so she could shift closer and side-hug Trevor.

"It will be alright, Trevor," Jezelle assured, some measure of sincerity in her vacantness, "Having faith in yourself is difficult but can be a powerful thing. If you truly don't want to lose control,

you'll find a way. That's just how things work. I don't know how to explain it, but... even if your mind has to fracture itself into eleven pieces, it will always find a way to make you feel safe again."

"I attacked Albie yesterday. And I might have forzen all of you in the morning too. I snapped and went after Erin and ran partway around town doing what I can't remember. I even went after you on that first slip," Trevor gave a short mocking laugh. "And I'm being hard on Marina. I'm worse than she is."

"Don't let it get to you," Jezelle advised, ruffling his hair slightly in a light attempt to break the mood, "Accidents happen and we're not always at fault. You should be comforted by the fact you haven't managed to do anything truly regrettable; because maybe it'll never happen." She paused for a little bit and looked off to the side for a moment.

"And... if you can't put faith in yourself, then... put faith in your friends. I can say with certainty if your jaws find themselves at my throat someday, I won't be afraid. I know you won't do it," Jezelle said, swallowing hard and attempting to control the heat in her cheeks.

"Um...." Trevor didn't know excatly how to respond to that one, and there were all sorts of mental images. Some disturbing and non-kosher and down the lines he really didn't want to think about. Others disturbing and non-kosher, in a totally different way. He very quickly swept those aside. Clean mind, clean mind. "But what if... what if I do?"

"Well that's easy: you won't," Jezelle replied simply.

"Aren't you the confident one..." Trevor said blandly.

"You mean you'd eat me so easily?" Jezelle said in mock aghast, sitting back, "I'm hurt."

"If it's you I wou-" Trevor started softly, then panicked, clenching at the wheel with his fur bristling. "I mean... No! Yes? Gah! I'm just going to shut up now..."

Just when Jezelle was thinking about actually taking off the stuffy mask, she was suddenly thankful she still had it on as her cheeks lit up like beacons, shuffling off to the side and hasting to get her seatbelt back on.

"Just drive," Jezelle said rigidly, trying her best to shut her imagination up.

Fortunately, the awkward silence didn't have to last much longer since they weren't too far out from Jezelle's home. Still, it was a very awkward silence. Trevor broke it when pulled up to the curb. "Well..."

"...Thanks for the lift," Jezelle responded with much formality, waiting an appropriate pause, a sniff and then she quite plainly poofed into thin air and arrived in her room much a-fluster.

As was customary, Trevor jumped when she did. "If I didn't know she wasn't doing that on purpose..." Normally he would have waited for her to walk up to the door and such, but since she decided to not do thinks like a normal person lately. He sighed before driving off. "Night Jez..."

**Trevor's Rough Night**

Jez's advice was a bit of motivation. Enough to keep him relatively upbeat on his drive home. Relatively. Faith in self. He tried to take confidence in the fact that he hadn't seriously done anything in any of his mess up. Even Albie came out of it relatively fine. Even when he fell, he still didn't lose sight of everything. Just got very... blurry. And property damaged wasn't important in those times either. It was something of a thought trap, and he ran them over and over and didn't really make much progress past that point by the time he made it home.

Locking up, he turned in for the night, not even bothering with spending anytime reading or surfing the net. Odd how often he had neglected those lately. He just cranked up the AC, set the alarm and stripped for bed. Sleep wasn't easy in coming, and when it did, it brought friends. It was far from restful.

ὄρετή rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 2 11:14 AM

"Oi!" he called out, the place empty around him. Empty streets. Dark. Shrouded in shadow and darkness. He searched, concern at the emptiness, the void around him developing into unease. He tripped over the first body in the dark, swearing as he regained his balance. He scrambled back away from it, yelping as a sharp stone cut into the sole of his foot. A human foot. The actual hell?

He was human again. Well, regular furless, catless human. Not that was considering. Or would have been if another body hadn't dropped at his feet. A low growl accompanied it. Unease blossomed. Into fear, into terror. He turned, scrambling to his feet and fled.

"Henry! Jez! Alex! Marina! Erin!" He yelled out names, stumbling, aimlessly running into shrouded darkness that likely held as much risk as what he was trying to leave behind. But he kept running. Till it changed. Drawing to a stop, he looked around uncertain. He was... he felt smothered without the senses he had gotten used to. The shroud pulled back, revealing the friends he had been searching for. Erin. Alex, Marina. Still and lifeless on the ground, ravished by the marks of large claws. His vision was blurry from the tears. He stumbled back and tripped over another Henry. Even Henry.

"No... No. Nononono..." There was a quiet footfall behind him. Jez's body dropped from above. Jez. He turned slowly. To that point, he'd never seen himself in that form, how he looked when he lost control. He could vaguely remember it, but never seen. Still didn't. He turned and the roar it unleashed jolted him awake.

ὄρετή rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 16

Hours later, around 2 in the morning to be precise, a ghost's shadow moved across the street, closing in on Trevor's house. There wasn't even a shimmer to betray the presence of the figure putting it up. Completely invisible, like the myths of ninjas of old. The figure, a tall, lithe, Italian redhead crept closer. Taking cover in the familiar darkness, she looked the house over.

First checking for an open window or one she could easily make open. Without shattering it, of course. That didn't seem to work. All the windows were covered and while there wasn't a 'beware of dog' sign, that didn't mean there wasn't one ready to yap at her and wake up everyone. Getting up and still invisible, she made her way around the full perimeter of the house. This would be tricky... but not impossible. She was on short notice as well... She really should have taken the time to case the place... *Oh well*, She thought. *Inside there's a nifty little prize.*

Stealth: **femYellow 13** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed:  $8 + 11 = 19$

Walking a complete circle around the place, she stopped and shrugged. No other way for it, it seemed. Creeping up to the backdoor, she dropped her invisibility. She had learned in the past few days that trying to pick a lock when one couldn't see their hands was hard. At least doors were easy enough when invisible since one could feel for the knob. It was the same problem as doing common tasks with one's eyes closed. Fishing out her lockpick from a pocket, she went to work opening the locked door.

Disable Device:  $11 + 10 = 21$  to open the lock on Trev's house  
[alarm set off here.]

Felicia's eyes widened when she heard the alarm. Restoring her cloak, she took off into the night. Her sensitive ears hurt from the alarm, but there was no time to cover them. Least not until she was clear.

Trevor had been up. The damn dream kept him from getting back to sleep and he found himself in the bathroom splashing his face with cold water. Which was far more effective and a far less wise method than it was a month ago. When he didn't have a faceful of fur that would get shocked and take half an eternity to dry. He was muttering into the towel when the alarm went off.

"Should have went in through a curtained window..." Felicia cursed to herself as she ran. "Should have chanced the dog... Dammit! Next time, kitty cat. Next time." Felicia knew that probing security measures was never a good idea, but sometimes it was the only way to find a weakness in it. Now that she knew what she was looking for, she could test this later.

Fur still damp, he rushed out, through his living room and to the side door that was the entrance to his part of the house. The door was open, but he didn't just rush out. He slowed and called up a box around it before he edged out. No one. Well, not anymore. He could smell the traces of someone, but no one around at the moment.

Still, he was cautious after events. His ear twitched as he heard his parents heading down. Not too long later they had the shared door open and were at the base of the basement entrance. "What's going on Trevor?" his father asked.

"I don't know, but I think someone tried to break in," Trevor said, relaxing somewhat, though not letting the box fall. "The alarm scared them."

"Get back inside, I'm calling the police," his father said firmly. Well. it didn't seem as if he would be getting much more sleep that night.



Felicia decided that Plan B was in order. At least she still had her art supplies for Trevor's sketch... She made her way back to her house where she would write Trevor a little storybook, with this scene in it.

### **Library Goers Rough Time Slot**

Morning broke, like morning always does. The dawn of a new day for most. Henry, of course, was still up. He was always up. What time the others go out of bed depended on their personal plans for the day.

Henry snapped back to being when the light coming in through his windows met his eyes. Blinking and shaking his head he put the notebook and pen back down. He had a list of things that needed to be done before the day was over and the first thing on the list was breakfast.

Cereal milk and some toast was all that he had left. He ate his breakfast in pretty much silence. When he was done he took the plastic bag that the bread came in and stuffed it into the cereal box then smashed the thing into a very small ball. Popping that into the milk jug he put the whole thing into the trash and then pulled the bag out, tied it off and put in next to the stairs.

He washed his face, brushed his teeth and shaved. A process that took longer now since the big bang. He had to really push on the razor which cause a few cuts here and there along with a lot of stinging. But as he watched the cuts healed over and were gone by the time he rinsed his face. There were some perks at least. Grabbing his phone, keys, and wallet Henry picked up the trash and went outside. Locking the door behind him he headed on over to the dumpster and tossed the trash out.

//he needs lazer vision! <http://i.imgur.com/KFT9a0Q.gif>

A few more moments and he was back in the truck and turning her on. The rumble of the engine was a welcomed thing and he shifted the truck into drive. He was going to try and not use his powers to much today. He had been using them a little to much in the past few weeks and there were going to be people on the look out for metas now that all the crap has been going on. Now he would just play the part of the big vanilla human.

Henry's stop was to the grocery store. He needed food for his apartment and to pick up a bag or two of chips for the game night. He grabbed a cart and proceeded to hunt down the items that he needed: milk, cereal, bread, turkey (from the deli), cheese, mustard, a bag of frozen chicken, four potatoes, some other various veggies and odds and ends.

Money was exchanged and it was back to the truck with his bags going on the passenger seat. He wheeled the truck around and headed toward his next destination that was a little further from his apartment then the grocery store was. A few lights and a score of stop signs later he pulled into the medium sized parking lot to the thrift store.

Henry entered the store and waved at the young man working behind the counter. There were always teens working at this place and he never knew why. Must be easy work for them to get into and there really wasn't anything worth taking. He didn't think too long on it as he went to the men's section. It was a lot smaller than the women and children sections but it held a number of things that he would need. He skipped past the coats and suits and went to the back rack that held the shoes.

There were sneakers and loafers and kinds of foot wear that he didn't know the name of. There were even a pair of black crocs that he didn't know why any man would wear them. Then again they didn't seem that worn at all and they were here after all. Finding normal shoes was not that hard of a task seeing as there was a wide selection to pick from. A new pair of boots though were not going to be found in this store. He grabbed two of the least worn shoes and headed over to the clothing section.

Pants from every decade, color and material hung from the metal poles like some kind of museum to bad taste. There were some gems hidden in the mess and those were what he took. Couple of pairs of jeans and only one was thread bare. The shirts were easier to go through. There were hundreds to pick from. He picked out a variety and colors. As he was getting ready to pay he figured that he would walk through the random junk area. It was where you could find all the crazy items that are on sale through TV ads. Amongst the mess he saw something that he could actually use. A used duffle bag. It reminded him of the old gym bag that was now lost to the convention center.

With all his wares gathered Henry paid the teen and stuffed everything into the bag. All in all he managed to replace the clothing that he had lost and then some. He should be set for clothing now. The only item he was not able to replace was his armored suit but that wasn't going to happen anytime soon. Perhaps after he found out how much he would be getting paid for the Allied job if they hired him.

Henry was once again in the old truck and heading back to his apartment. His day so far had been very productive. Got his shopping done and his clothing picked out. All this done and had plenty of time to spare. Getting back to the apartment took a little extra time as there were people who were getting lost on this end of town because of the hospital traffic rerouting that was being done. Knowing the area better aided him in getting back to his place in a quick fashion. He carried the goods to the house and managed to get it all put away. He had to hustle back out if he was going to make it to the library on time.

He pulled into the library lot and park his truck. He would once again have to enter the dreaded library once more. Facing a terrorist threat, giant cat, fireball throwing meta, and a den of monsters were no problem but the library brought back the old fear. Memories of countless hours of studying in order to stay on the sports team and the headaches he would get after. The tutoring hours he spent here learning how to solve sides of triangles and what part of a frog he was looking at. How to give a speech in front of a class or write a paper on who in history he thought caused the most change. Which for the record writing about your parent was not the correct answer. Either way he entered the building and took a seat in the lobby waiting for Jez.

As was habit for Jezelle, she woke up at 6 like clockwork and immediately went about her morning ritual, something of a habit of necessity for someone used to squeezing the most time out of their day.

Though of course, nowadays 'more time' was hardly an issue any more, where she previously had to arrange her schedule with surgical precision to fit in all the studying and sports and play time - now she could do everything at once several times the speed.

But perhaps she just wanted a little normality today, considering the recent craziness and the prospect of nostalgic fun with a simple game at Trevor's like old times.

She kind of sighed halfway through her breakfast when she did a quick recap and comparison, from their last game, measuring the increase in craziness and how drastically calm and normal it had all seemed in the beginning. It truly sounded wonderful to think she might be able to revisit such a moment.

Especially after the convention shenanigans... an event she'd been using as a bit of a lifeline in terms of unwinding and forgetting all the anxieties and stresses this new meta situation brought on.

At any rate she breezed through her morning rituals even faster than she was used to after the Big Bang, and found herself staring at the clock wondering what to do with her time until noon when she was supposed to turn up to the library.

She figured it'd only take about an hour to get the legion ready for transit, and another half to get to the library in the event the bus was late, so she still had quite a bit of time. And of course, for her, quite a bit of time meant a colossal amount of time.

So she resorted to going to investigate the sports oval and the indoor courts, fairly certain at least one of them should be occupied even at this hour for those hardcore practicing teams.

She hadn't really gotten to play a good game of any kind of sport for weeks so she was a little afraid of being rusty, which made randomly joining the practice teams a convenience so she could see where she stood. So that was where she sunk her spare hours before going to the library in force, though her time at the practice sessions left her wanting.

Later at the library, there was sure enough a small flood of women off the bus, Jezelle with ten others in tow, the only similarities between them was the choice in shoes, the odd clothing accessory and that they all wore chokers with a small, silver, number pendant dangling from them.

Jezelle filed into the library with her legion in tow, looking rather down in her spirits as she located Henry and moved over to him.

"Sup Hen," Jezelle said lazily with a lifeless wave.

Henry stood up and wiped his hands on the legs of his pants. taking a deep breath he made his way over to Jez and crew.

"Good afternoon Jez. . . s" Henry said looking at all of copies. . . clones . . . sister? He didn't know what they were to be called but he saw that they all wore numbers. "I didn't know you were bringing all of them with you."

Notice **necar** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed: 18

"Eh, I figured it'd be quicker and... well, ever since the convention the whole legion thing has been a bit off, so I didn't want to be too far," Jezelle said with a shrug, "So what's the plan?"

Henry reached into his back pocket and pulled out a note card. If he would have known that the who Jez army was coming he would have made copies. Any way he held the card out to the first Jez.

"I want to find information out on somethings that have been bugging me. There are some organizations on that list and our doctor. He seems to be the heading up an organization and gathered a lot of information on metas even before the big bang. I know that researchers are always trying to get published since that is all the science guys at the chem plant would talk about. I figure that if he has anything it would be in one of those science journals that the Library has. There are just so many journals that this would take me a life." Henry explained.

**\*\* card has: Dr. Omar Caine, MBRIO, Allied Securities, Red Dawn written on it\*\***

"Ya really think this sorta thing is available to the public?" Jezelle queried idly as she examined the card, and in turn the rest of the legion got a good look.

"Isn't the whole point of science research to have that information be known?" Henry replied. He didn't how much of this would be here but he ahd hoped some of it would be.

"Honestly I have no idea," Jezelle chortled a bit, "I was never that interested in science, but I suppose there might be something interesting to discover about this whole meta gene thing. To the science journals then?"

"Sure. . ." Henry said a little hesitantly. "I have no clue where they are."

"University forces me into the library every now and then so I have a vague idea, but I'll probably just resort to abusing the legion," Jezelle said with a shrug, going off to head deeper into the library and look for a receptionist, the legion in the meantime split off in every direction of the compass like a crowd dispersing.

Henry followed the talking Jez since he figured that was the main one at this point. This whole splitting off into a bunch of different sleeves was very confusing to him. He had a hard enough time figuring out what he was doing half the time. Let alone thing doing that about ten times.

//Talking Jez...

//the one he was talking to

Behold, over yonder, at the clearly labelled and well located near the main entrance was the point were all librarians gathered and roosted between their exhibitions to hunt between and across the shelves and tables the composed there domain. Even now, two of the vicious defenders and keepers of knowledge were hunched over their counters, threatening children with their haggish countenance.

Okay... tad bit of embellishment. They were old ladies, but they wore it well and were filled with smiles and sappy nice voices like grandmothers that sneak you chocolate when you aren't supposed to be getting any. One of them aimed a Nice Granny Smile [r4 emotion control calm!] at the Jez that stopped by.

"Hello, I was wondering if you could direct me to the science journals?" Jezelle asked respectfully, deciding to keep things straight-forward.

"The science journals would be on the lower level," she said helpfully, giving her the reference numbers as well. "We have both digital and some printed versions available. Any topic in particular you are looking for?"

alternated reality: I will eat your soul with bread and wine.

Henry shuffled his feet around a little and look around the building while Jez got the directions. It seemed so far that the journals were located downstairs. Most likely inside some kind of dungeon area.

//for some reasons the three libraries I've been into to look at journals had them in the basement. Actually, four...

"I... don't think so?" Jezelle said a little uncertainly, treading on almost entirely unfamiliar territory here, "Finding scientists and organizations should be easy enough right?"

"You could use the internet for that as well, depending on the organization. Which one are you looking for?"

"Um, MBRIO?" Jezelle said a little offhandedly, trying to figure out why the internet wouldn't have what was in the science journals in a library.

//because it might be too soon for the journals to be a good reference. They tend to come out once every three months for the hard cores ones, monthly for the light science ones.

"Or anything by the doctor Omar Caine." Henry added in.

"In that case, you can go to the section 3 on the second floor. The local libraries have all been working towards organizing collated and up to date reference material on current events related to the metaevent the city suffered. News, local and international, some published research material, statements and flyers and so on."

"Woah, okay," Jezelle said, a little impressed but then again it wasn't like she knew what was truly impressive or not in this field, so she just shrugged, "We'll get right onto it then, thank you very much."

She gave a respectful nod to the librarian and immediately went to hunt down the section in question, though her legion was already en route.

Henry followed Jez as she sped off in the direction they were just told. "Well this sounds like a one stop shop for us. This hopefully will have everything I need and then some."

"One can only hope," Jezelle commented a little pessimistically, but vaulting subjects, "Why are we diggin' into a library when you know someone who's connected to all of this anyway?"

"Because I can only get so far with the information that way. This opens a new way and new information. Plus we might find something that they don't know. A person can't know everything and we are very behind in our information. We have some first hand knowledge but this whole meta thing has been going on for years. We might find a connection that we didn't see before. Or at least get some background info." Henry explained.

"Fair enough," Jezelle said with a shrug, sort of intrigued enough to investigate the journals anyway, and as they closed in on the section in question she idly interlaced her fingers and inverted the gesture and stretch a little.

"Time to get to work then," Jezelle said with a new onset of determination, and her legion swarmed the shelves.

The collection was very modest at the moment. A few racks with printed information sheets and handouts collected from various places, several stacks of papers, an index posted on the shelves beside them about which page to look at. The shelves held a mix of what would have been obscure fringe journals with the occasional more popular title as well.

[Let's see; flyers... stuff from the Abnormal Creature Response, about the A[will fill in] Research Center, MBRIO, Allied [in the image of a private security firm and such], City Councilor Isaac Benkin (I think) [DC15 search nets you the tidbit that he was the driving force behind these sections] and a few other stuff]

[will add more later when I got access to my notes]

Henry started looking at the oddest things he could find. He would start in the past and work his way forward. Looking at titles and authors to see if he recognized anything.

[Assuming TT20, he finds some stuff that has Caine's name in it, only a few, primarily on the Diaspora of Aberrant and non-standard biology across populations and landmasses. Some commentary on the same. Filled with lots of complex terms and words, back in the day when people still wrote their articles like they were paid a premium for being obtuse and *Sesquipedalian turn of phrase*. There were other things too. There was a small pamphlet report from Allied about encounters with metas in the past, mostly pointing to and citing journals (some were actually on the shelves if you were interested in that sort of thing) and so on. Never mentioning names or being any more specific than 'North West Canada', or 'In the mountains in central South America'. Not everything was recent. There was a folder with compiled photocopies of older manuscripts and works (followed by a simple summary and conclusion from a researcher about how it might be relevant).]

[he has to. ]

//Does he know the name of Caine's missing partner? The one who left shortly before the place was broken into?

//he was never given the name but that is part of the reason he is here. See if there is another researcher that pops up in the same papers over and over again. he knows that someone was working with him and it was the other guys files that went missing.

[It would take time... lots of time before he could pull out that sort of pattern, but should he be persistent, he would have seen a few names, some of which are mentioned on the list of member researchers for MBRIO, though a few not. {might make up names for Henry's files later}]  
 [Antony Richards, Naheem Sarajah, Leonard Price, Yale Barker, Opa Finley, Jon Wallen, Koon Denver, Walter Benns, Mark Van Heiser, Grace Queen, Lucas Minder, Tomas Jones, Rolan Daniel, Annetta Carr, Philip Gaines, Robert Pullman, Robert Samson, Ron Freeman, Ucan Penn and more. {Considering most articules have like two to four names...}]  
 //he has 6 hours and Jez with the small army :D She is going to be invaluable in this whole ordeal

The table that Henry was at was getting a small pile of papers building. He had a stack of research papers with a number of names which some of them were researchers with MBRIO. Out came the note cards and he started to write down the names. he was having a really hard time makeing heads or tails of the research but he was at least able to get the people involved. They never narrowed down people with powers but gave a gernal area. He figured one might have been in the area since there were metas here before the big bang. He knew this because he met one of them, she taught him how to fly. With a few cards already filled he turned to Jez. . . he turned to the Jezs.

"You find anything out over there? It seems that this research has been going on for sometime." Henry asked his head hurting a little from all the ready of big words and science babble.

"My brain hurts," Two whimpered defeated on the floor with a book over her head.

"I am so friggin bored!" said a Ten that was pacing mindlessly pretending to read another.

"Already?" a slightly surprised Eleven sitting next to her.

"...I think First is hoggin' all the Legionjuice..." a suspicious Fourth eyeing the Prime in question whom was growing increasingly irritated.

Fortunately Three was in the vicinity and went over to sit next to Henry.

"Our dear councillor has been rather busy with meta-related organizations and problems, it appears he was most sincere," Three remarked a little offhandedly as she browsed yet another book.

**MBRIO: MetaBiological Research Institution of Ontario**[Meta-Biology Reseach Institution of Ontario]

[or maybe Meta-Biological Research and Investigation Organization (Ontario Union) They might rename it as the scope broadens to include more than just the province...

MBRIO is a new group. Roughly only three weeks old, it has gathered several of the top minds and those who had more than a toe into what was previously fringe scientific research and formed a network were they can all contribute their skill, experience and expertise towards learning more about this explosion of previously though impossible events.

The lead of Ontario's contribution, and the foremost researcher is Dr Omar Caine, MD, also possessing Doctorates in Human and Animal Genetics and Biochemisty. Once thought to be radical and fanciful with his study of Abnormal genetics throughout various populations, his theories, methodologies and contacts have proved to be vital in establishing MBRIO's research. Currently based in the Francis Memories Hospital.

**Allied Trust: Security, Guidance and Protection**

A privately own firm with connections to, though independent from, the government. They have existed in various forms for some time, though Allied Trust is a relatively recent face, a conglomeration of several smaller groups that came together. So far, they have been proving an aid to all the major groups, some of their own researchers already representing among the contacts that are forming the MBRIO network. Due to their nature, they are treated as an independent (of the government) organization, though they have been allowed certain powers comparable to standard law enforcement.

#### **ACR :: Abnormal Creature Response**

The former is something between animal control and a swat team. Most the former. They gathered talented workers from various departments (Like they did for more of these organizations) and prepared them as much as possible to deal with the wilder things that might happen. For the most part, they have been dealing with the issue of the mutant insects, but there have been lesser issues that weren't so news worthy such as the plague of odd coloured grass that sprang up on one street two weeks after the the first MetaEvent.

The operate mostly out of the ARC and under MBRIO, with dealing with Allied Trust and most other local enforcement.

#### **ARC :: Abnormal Research Center**

A place, rather than a true group. The city, in response to the MetaEvent, leased a warehouse to serve as a temporary central point to house and conduct the more sensitive research related to MetaBiology until a more permanent solution can be made.

//Copy paste fail ^^'

#### **BARR :: Bureau of Relations and Reactions**

Currently small, but it's the organization currently managing the media relations as it relates meta-linked topics. Local chair: Councillor Isaac Berkins

Assorted: The books are informative, but not really all that helpful. Lots of sciencey stuff talking about population distribution and statistical models. Others were speculative and not really helpful either.

There was also the two press releases from MBRIO about the metagene factor they found and the classification tentatively being discussed.

On the con, there was a good amount, snips from every major news, printouts of progress reports on recovery efforts in the debris and so on.

Interestingly enough, there was a handout about the MetaFanClub from Jez's school, an also a link and print from a gossip/rumour page for the mysterious vigilante calling himself Force.

Re the hospital attack; it is just the newspaper articles so far, summarizing the fact that the largest swarm to date descended on the Francis Memorial Hospital. Reports put the injured in the tens and 7 confirmed killed.

//seven sounds like a decent number... What do you think?



//I can see that. Henry found like 4 of them and I bet there were more else where.

"He was not alone as well. There are like eight researchers that have been working on the topic and they all seem to be work with MBRIO now. I wrote all their names down and put tally marks next to them. There are a few that show up a lot more than others. They don't really say what the powers of the people they found are or where they are located. Very vague direction like East Canada. I also can't understand half of what is written here. I think it is written in Latin or something." Henry said as he tried his best to explain what he had learned.

"We certainly stumbled upon a lot of important people," Jezelle remarked airily as she blazed through pages at a prodigal speed -which unfortunately meant she was getting bored at a prodigal rate, "Meeting Caine as our doctor that day almost seems staged now."

"Latin looks different," Three commented idly, half glancing at what Henry was working on. Off in the background the rest of the legion's attention was fraying a bit and sporadic at best.

"We should totes go join that fanclub!" Ten remarked eagerly, tossing the book into the air and charging over to the others; Eleven fortunately already knowing Ten's mind and was able to catch the flying book with barely a thought and a glance.

Two obviously jumped on the bandwagon pretty quickly too, if only to be rid of the books.

"We have our copied wallets! We could totally do that right now!" Two insisted, cheering Ten on -though Prime seemed to be mostly ignoring them, Eight eventually came along to lecture the two.

"Yeah that was a lucky find with our Doctor but the rest is from us poking our nose in where we most likely shouldn't have. Found Allied that way when we thought they were the ones that nabbed Trevor. Boy, was I wrong on that one. . ." Henry stopped and cocked an eyebrow. "Fan club?" He asked.

"Meta Fan Club, my school," Three said informatively, pointing absently at the article.

"My god that Allied... I just... grrr..." Jezelle grumbled, clutching her head in vain desperation, "Anyway, not that this isn't fascinating, I am getting a little lost as to what I'm looking for in particular, there's so much stuff in here I'm getting scatterbrained."

"I wanted to find out information on our doctor which we already did. MBRIO, which I have that here." Henry said pointing to the notecard. "And then Allied and Red Dawn. All the other stuff is just more stuff to know. Though the response time is amazing. All these organizations and the big bang on happened like a month ago."

"Eh, who knows what the government has prepped up their sleeves; maybe they even got something in the event aliens attack or something," Jezelle said with an idle smirk.

"Red Dawn..." Three echoed quietly in contemplation, "That would be something Allied might have on records for discerning patterns and behaviour, or was it ACR that would? So much at once is terribly confusing..."

("Why're we even needed here? You've seen that crazy fast stream of info through First's mind, she don't need us here!" said an indignant Tenth to Eighth.)

"ACR are the bug guys. Allied would have that information but I kind of wanted to find out without asking them. Seeing as they are kind of pissed at us and since I might be working with Allied it will most likely slop over on to them as well." Henry said quietly looking around the area at any people that might be near by.

"I'm surprised they're angry that someone's making their job easier," Three said thoughtfully. "Yeah you'd think a flying brick would be way cheaper than throwing out the manpower and resources to achieve the same result," Jezelle commented.

"Yeah, I meant that Red Dawn is angry with us. You know for the Con thing. We kind og ruined their plan and took out one of the higher ups. Then they dropped a building on her." Henry tried to explain quickly.

"Ah," Jezelle stood corrected, "Well, still, that 'mother' character didn't seem all that broken up and they still blew crap up and made their statement, not sure why'd they'd be overly angry at us."

"Did you forget the whole 'we took out their fighting force' part. I don't know how hard it is to get people to sign up for team evil but we had to put a good sized dent in their numbers. You alone took out like fifteen people. Those were all in the main room that got crushed. The onlt people that seemed to survive in that room where the ones that Trevor saved. The rest were crushed. Plus that bomb did not go off as planned. It went off a lot less." henry kind of mumbled the last part a bit and waved a hand.

"Henry, I don't suppose you noticed how hundreds of those idiots were using the same superpowers, that's like, statistically..." Jezelle trailed off mid-rant, as even though most of her might not have heard Henry, there was enough in earshot with varying levels of attention to catch most of it, "...as planned..."

Most of the legion paused and turned to look at Henry with slight concern.

"That bomb was meant to flatten the building and it only did to part of. I figure that they wanted to destory the whole thing so that all the people who showed up to help would get hit with the chemicals. But that didn't happen. We got people out, or at least gave them the chance to get out." Henry tried to hastily explain.

"Henry... how would you know what the bomb was supposed to do?" Jezelle asked in concern, abandoning her book altogether as the rest of the legion both paid attention yet attempted to look inconspicuous to try and lessen the creepy factor of eleven pairs of eyes watching.

"W-we never found the bomb, and there's a bundle more metas now like they promised."

"Well everyone knows what a bomb is supposed to do." Henry said drawing the sentence out. "I don't think they wanted to get normal people. I think their aim was for the peopel responding. How are people going to enforce meta rules when the police and fire rescue and EMTs are all metas? We kind of stuck our thumb in their eye."

"No, no, no, don't try and distract me," Jezelle said accusingly with a digit pointed at Henry, "That's just like Trevor. I was asking how you knew how powerful the bomb was supposed to be, we already know the basic tactics they had."

"Oh, that. Guess work. I figure that they had enough planning and what not that it should level the building. I mean they had a shield outside and helicopters outside. They seemed pretty well funding and organized." Henry explain.

Jezelle started fidgeting irritatedly, puffing out her cheeks with a grumpy expression, pouting furiously before standing up and walking off into the aisles, looking like she was trying to restrain herself from something.

The rest of the legion seemed to go back to what they were doing, though it wasn't as natural for some of them, sort of forced but distracted.

"Not sure if the library has anything on topics like Red Dawn," Three said absently as she skimmed her book.

"Hmm then we might be done here unless you found out anything else?" Henry said through a dry mouth making his voice a little raspy. That was a tough thing to do. But, he really didn't know how he was to explain a deal that he made with another being on a whole different scale of magnitude. He wasn't sure if he still wanted to believe it.

"Though... Berkins did say metas weren't entirely new; historical even. That would stand to reason there would be lesser connections that might be found underlying society. For such a well-organized group with outlandish resources to appear within weeks of an event causing meta-population growth, it would only seem reasonable they started organizing a long time ago," Three theorized.

The majority of the legion dispersed afterward to look at other things, only Three, Six and Eleven remaining behind with their noses diligently in books without another care.

"He mentioned it and we met her. Jenny, the one who flew us there had been a meta well before the whole bang happened. I think her mother might be as well I am pretty sure Isaac was a meta before the whole thing started as well. Also the fact that Allied has a number of ways to stop metas means that they have been around long enough for trial and error and research to be done. I don't know if we will ever find the first meta mentioned here. For all we know they might have always been around." Henry added.

"It seems likely they would have been around in some form or another throughout history, which stands to reason groups like Red Dawn likely appeared all throughout history too -if not the same organization in different iterations," Three logically deduced, "Anything that isn't exceedingly new always has some kind of trace in history, it's practically impossible for any serious groups not to cause some kind of effect. How they get their weapons, how they get their recruits; are such things that usually get rebellions and such caught and ended before they get a chance to act."

"Either way, Red Dawn is on the To Do list now. Need to find a way to take out the ghost leader lady. If that is even possible." Henry said with no clue how one fought a ghost.

"In this kind of scenario, it would be typical for the protagonist to attempt to infiltrate the organization under the guise of a potential recruit, since they'll obviously need their numbers from somewhere," Three speculated, staring into space as she thought of various movies and the odd book.

"Yeah but then they put that yellow stuff in you. The stuff that was giving them the blasting stuff. Who knows what that does to you. It might even control you and that would not be good then. I think it is better to take out the leaders." Henry thought on that for a moment. The footmen all used the yellow bolts but the ones leading them seemed to have other powers. The head Red lady and the giant. Though the giant had some kind of device in him. Wonder if they ever dug him out or if he is still buried. Would be nice to get the device and have the tech people look at it.

"Yellow stuff. Hm..." Three mused, trailing off and slumping a little on the table partially from tiredness, "There sure is a lot to this meta business we don't know about."

"There sure is but at least now we have more of a clue than when we started. We have a clue to who is involved and how far spread it is. So that's a good thing." Henry said pointing out the bright side.

"...Do you intend to hunt them down, Henry?" Three asked a little wistfully, unmoving from her slumped position on the table.

"I plan on helping Allied in taking them down. They are way too hard to take on my own. Unless I can pull off a epic sucker punch then I will lose. They are organized and know what they are doing. Seemed that when we got them off track of their mission were we able to take them down." Henry replied.

"So what happens next? I think the only place we could get any more information would be from the people themselves, since they've been doing this for awhile and would be connected," Three queried, slowly sitting back up again.

"I have a meeting with Allied in a few days so I assume that some information will be handed out then. I hear there is even an employee handbook of sorts filled with stuff so that will be helpful. As for what to do next. I have no clue. I figured that this would take all day but with all of you helping you cut that time down to two hours. I was going to go from here to the game night but now I have extra time"

"Time is something I have in excess of now, just so little to do with it," Three sighed, sort of slumping again, "I suppose I could go join that Meta Fan Club, maybe prepare something for the game? But that won't take much time."

"I find my self with more time on my hands as well. No job yet and the whole long nights give you time to get things done. I need to find a less dangerous hobby." Henry said more to himself then anyone really.

Three peered at Henry pensively for a moment, though saying nothing with an unreadable expression as she got back to it.

"Well, I suppose I'll see you at game night then?" Three said half in query as she stood up.

"Sounds good to me. Hey. . . thank you for your help today. I don't think I could haven't gone through all of this with out you. You have been a massive help. If you ever need me I owe you one." Henry said with a thankful voice. He was truly happy for the help. This would have taken him weeks and with Jez's help they werea ble to get it all done in a few hours.

"Don't worry about it Henry," Three said shaking her head gently, "I needed the distraction and... well the debt is..."

She trailed off and just shook her head again, going off to put the books away.

Henry watched as Jez walked away to put her stuff away. Henry planned on just leaving his stuff on the table so that the librarians could put it away. There were signs all over the place saying just that. He would leave it to the professionals. He stood up and started to head back toward entrance. He head felt a little stuffy from all the stuff he found out. All of the bits of information all written down in semi-sloppy handwriting now riding in his back pocket. It might be time for just a short little drive around to clear his head. He hadn't had one of those in ages.

### **Trevor's Spectacular Day**

Everything was so not awesome for Trevor. As he predicted, the police took their time when they came. You would think that an attempted home invasion wouldn't take all that long, but it did. It dragged on and on. He had a cynical suspicion it had to do with the fact that he was, well, himself. Flamboyantly meta and such. And that suspected domestic abuse thing came up again (which lead to some very off questions from his parents since he had neglected to mention that to them.)

This wasn't hard to clear up, since he could explain the metaawakening situation. It only took another half hour or so to explain things to a satisfactory level for the officers. In the end, when everything was finally sorted out and the officers bid them goodnight, dawn was getting a bit feisty and trying to sneak up on them.

Still, what was a little sunlight in the wake of modern technology and a basement apartment? His curtains were pretty heavy. And he had extra cushions. A few well placed ones blocked the windows so little to no light trickled in. That done, he found a nice spot on the bed and made himself comfortable.

**Greykit** rolled a die with 20 sides for Nightmare check. The die showed: 8 Nightmare

**Greykit** rolled a die with 20 sides for will save. The die showed: 3 Fail. Terror

**Greykit** rolled a die with 20 sides for control. The die showed: *18 Yay! No Rampage!*

[Insert nightmare I can't bother writing at the moment her]

**Greykit** rolled a die with 20 sides for post nightmare save. The die showed: *4+3*

**Greykit** rolled a die with 20 sides for post nightmare save. The die showed: *11+3 14*

He woke, not with a jolt, but was a pang of deep seated terror, curled in his covered. It took him a long while before he could silence his whimpering and force himself to crawl out of bed. This was just getting worse...

Still, he wasn't getting anymore sleep. He still felt weary and fatigued, but he wasn't getting anymore sleep for that day. He drearily got some clothes on and put some stuff together. He needed to shop... he scrawled out a rough shopping list too. He swallowed the spit that had built up. No shopping around. He's just hit walmart. Get everything. Walmart and the hardware too. Get some extra stuff for the door.

He took a moment to close his eyes and focus his thoughts, clear them a bit, then headed out. Moping about wasn't going to help. Car keys... bags. Wallet. Actually, he needed to stop by one of those offices to get his ID's renewed... another thing for the day's To-Do list. And he said he would cook too...

He hit the hardware first. From there, he would work out the rest of the day. He had a fun time shopping, since people had their meta risk up again (not that he could blame them. He had a lot of people skirting away and picking up their pace as he looked for the parts he wanted. A heavy latch... a chain and a guard... They were all in the same section, so it didn't take long to grab them all. After that, he headed to walmart to get his groceries done.

Actually, he made a detour. He forgot about the ID issue again. The nearest Service Ontario was only eight or so minutes out of his way, in any case. There weren't a lot of people in the office, he found after he parked and headed in. So it didn't take him too long to get to the head of the line. He had expected ill-ease from the lady behind the counter, but she didn't look any different than any other customer service agent he had had before this month.

"Hello, what can I help you with today?" She asked.

"Um..." he fumbled a little before he settled. "My Ids... are all from..."

"You want to update your cards with the new face?" She said, filling in the gaps. He nodded.

"No problem. Have you heard about the new process?"

"Uh... in passing?" Trevor admitted.

"Basically, we take the new pictures now and send the request in from our end electronically, and send you with a printed copy of the paperwork and picture to have signed by three adult citizens people who knew you before and after and are willing to certify that it is the same person. You drop the form off at the post office, and you should have your new IDs within six

weeks. Until then, we stick little tags with your new image on the back of your current IDs so you can still use them."

"That's... easier than I thought it would be..." Trevor admitted. "No fees or anything? Signatures from the mayor or something?"

She laughed. "It would have been, but there was a motion to make a simpler version for those affected rather than punish them for it. It's only 20 dollars though."

"Really? Huh..." Trevor said, mentally compiling a list. He had his parents, and he could ask Henry and Jez too. He could mail it off by tomorrow. "So that's it?"

"Aside from the picture, yes. Would you like to do it now?"

"Sure... wait, what about passports?" He asked.

"That one you have to do the full renewal, through the federal government," she said apologetic.

"Ah, okay..." it didn't take much longer for him to pay and get the photo taken. It took a bit longer to add the extraneous details of his description to the paperwork. Still, he was back on his way in about half an hour all together. He found, at least, that being busy got his mind off the bad mood from the night before, though he was still tired and could feel it in his bones. He was pretty sure he didn't have anything else to do... new locks for the door... ID... now to groceries... He might as well get some other stuff while he was there... new clothes... he lost about half his wardrobe... at least a pair of jeans and another shirt... actually, that could wait. He had a bunch of stuff he never wore anyway.

So just shopping... that didn't take long either. Grab a cart and focus on the goals. Crossiants, a blueberry pie and that was it for the frivolous. Some chicken, rice, noodles, milk, couple drink mixes, bit of fruit, potatoes and some ground turkey... cheese... some tinned stuff. He didn't get as much as he thought (he did grab some party food; baby carrots, chips, dip) but it was enough.

Once home, he got to preparing stuff. Popped some wings in the oven to cook, pulled out the stuff they would need to supplies, set the table up, added his new security features to the door. Actually... this would be the first time Henry was at a game in a while. He'd missed one or two. And they hadn't had one since the world got turned upside down. And... what was the night's run supposed to be about anyway? While the wings and such got themselves all dolled up for consumption, he booted the PDFs and pulled out the books he did have and tossed together a campaign about hunting demons in a city state. [Henry calls this Thursdays][ "Too much like your day job? I could whip up something else... maybe hunting for ingredients for a legendary chef? How cooks using epic level weapons. A +5 Long sword of greater sundering... a cloak of fire immunity and resistance to acid and water... A rod of at will great mage hand and a ring of stirring... In fact... that kinda sounds awesome... maybe I should just do that..."]

Crap... he grabbed his phone and rang up Albie.

"The subscriber's cell phone is switched off or out of the coverage," was the likely reply should he call a mobile phone. Alex didn't get to recover it yet.

The home phone, though, did end up with an answer. Sleepy, yawny, tired. "Myaawn... Allo?" Alex's voice said in some sort of greeting.

"Was that a yawn? It's... 3 in the afternoon..." Trevor said.

"I am sorry for sleeping for a whole day and still not getting enough sleep," Alex replied. He kinda lied about sleeping part - the headache from the recent hit didn't let him fall asleep for quite a while.

"Yeah, well," it was probably a case of misery loves company, but Trevor was oddly pleased with the news that someone else was having a bad day for sleep. "Impromptu+Emergency game night."

"Emergency? Someone's running on fumes and is going to die if we won't stuff them with funballs?" Alex asked, in a 2srs tone.

"Um... no?" Trevor said, a bit confused. He hissed and hit speaker before rushing off to stir the pot and lower the heat. "Seriously... funballs?"

"...forget it," Alex replied, facepawing, "Why impromptu and emergency?"

"Because too much stuff has happened in the last few weeks. I'm running a game night. Arr though turning up. If yes, turn up with dice, food and permission. If not, then meh."

"Alright..." Alex replied.

"Good. Make sure you turn up. Later," Trevor said.

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Felica looked over the script she had written in the early hours of the morning after she had gotten to sleep from her failed attempt at a break-in. overall, she thought it was good. Short and to the point, not to mention looking like it could belong in a classic fairy tale. She went to work on drawing the pictures she had in mind to match the action. the pages were regular office printer paper, the words typed making it as generic as could be.

first things first... page 1. A map of Kent along with big happy smily faces all over it. *Once upon a time in the town of Kent, the people lived happy, if boring, lives. they worked, played, and life was good.*



The next was a sideways shot of the town, this time with a mushroom cloud where the chemical plant used to be. *On one day, that came to an end when a massive explosion ripped through the town changing the people and their lives. Ahhh the joys of unstable chemicals!*

next picture, a human version of Trevor walked into the shower. Right beside, he came out as a catman and with a shocked expression on his face. *Trevor Greyson was one of the people that changed. One day, he found himself magically transformed into a catman!*

//how does she know what he looked like before 0.o Right... broke in...

next picture was of Trevor weilding a box smashing a cartoon depection of a bug. the bug had crosses for eyes and a tonge hanging out. *As a catman, Trevor was stronger, then his old self and had a big assortment of magical powers of his own.*

//Okay... seriously... how does she know about that one o.o

Next picture was that of another anthropomorphic cat, a female backlit by the moon to obscure the features. *Trevor wasn't the only one to undergo such an extreme transformation though. His friend Alex was transformed, but another woman was too.*

the next picture showed the catwoman in question with an evening dress surrounded by other high society people. *This woman had two sides to her. The first being that of a ditzy socilite, casually going high-class functions and supporting a mask of refinement.*

the next showed an overturned treasure chest, an open window, and two middle-aged people with speech bubbles with 'oh no!' *The other side of that was of a daring cat burglar (no pun intended) who would strike randomly and without warning. All for the thrills.*

next picture, this time a stylazied version of her crouching at an open door. The sound effect of BREEE-BREEEE-BREEE can be seen. The catwoman herself has a shocked expression while holding a lockpick. *When the woman heard about Trevor, she tried to get in touch with and meet him, but something came up and she had to leave in a hurry.*

next picture was an infinite loop of the catwoman drawing the story again and again. *So instead, the woman wrote a book for Trevor and slipped it in his mail.*

The last picture was of a map from his place to an Italian resturant, along with directions to the place, and some money, \$150 to be exact taped to the last page. The woman also booked a table for two at her favrioute resturant in the hopes he's be intreagued enough to meet her. She'd be there at 5:30 PM

craft (art) **Yellow 13** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed:  $9+3=12$

Nodding , Felicia stapled the 'book' together and put it into a package, or at least something that would pass for a package. Now... all that was left was to slip it into the mail. Looking among her wigs, she adjusted her posture so that it would appear that she had a limp. Change of perfume, and finally a black wig. ensomble together, she headed to Trevor's place, package in hand.

Disguise: **Yellow 13** rolled a die with 20 sides. The die showed:  $12+9=21$