

THE TERRIFICS

STRANGE ADVENTURES

Episode 102: "Fair Play"

Written by

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Based on Characters from DC Comics

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INT. STAGE - DAY

A Reenacted Bat-Mite is wearing a FELT Batman costume circa, the 1943 serial, the same style and same blue-gray colors like the real Bat-Mite.

BAT-MITE REENACTOR

I... am... Bat-Mite!

Hero of not one! Not two! Not three! Nor four... but five dimensions!

And I am only a humble servant of Batman! And by the order of Batman I am here to arrest you -- Harley Quinn! -- and take you straight to the nearest Gotham precinct!

The HARLEY QUINN REENACTOR stands proud in her own, cheap, felt costume.

HARLEY QUINN REENACTOR

Well, I am Harley Quinn!

The Crown Princess of Crime!

And I must commit crime because because a bad person is cool, and being good is super boring and super lame-balls!

A very bad and CHEESY FIGHT happens between the two, both giving out EXAGGERATED GRUNTS. It's the Harley Reenactor's SQUEAKING HAMMER versus the Bat-Mite Reenactor's felt gauntlets. It's like a Star Wars lightsaber sword-on-sword combat that never happened historically, only slower and not as cool looking.

The Harley Quinn Reenactor GRABS a Batarang from Bat-Mite Reenactor's utility belt. The Bat-Mite Reenactor makes an "oh no" face to the screen, equal parts karate movie and French pantomime combined.

The Harley Quinn Reenactor OVERHAND THROWS the Batarang off to the side, AWAY from the Bat-Mite Reenactor.

We see the VICTIM (played by James Gunn) with half of a Batarang sticking out of his forehead. The faux-blood is ketchup THICK on his forehead, and a single stream of THIN red-black blood comes out of his forehead like one of those peeing cherubim statues in Italy.

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VICTIM

Hey! That hurt!

The Victim DRAMATICALLY FALLS to the ground like a fainting southern belle and somehow the Bat-Mite Reenactor is there to CATCH HIM. It's the world's lamest Pietà.

Although the Victim is about to die, the STEADY STREAM OF BLOOD continues to come out strong from his forehead, covering him and the Bat-Mite Reenactor in blood.

VICTIM (CONT'D)

Thank you, Bat-Mite! Thank you for being the coolest, bestest, and definitely not being the person who put this Batarang in my head.

HARLEY QUINN REENACTOR

Ha ha! Once again evil wins and being good is for loser virgins who don't use deodorant! Ha ha ha!

As the Victim's head's lols to one side and his tongue sticks out proving that he's dead, the BLOOD DOESN'T STOP spurting out.

BAT-MITE REENACTOR

It should have been me!

Noooooo!

(sobs)

Noooooo!

He sobs some more, takes a long pause to take in a deep inhale then continues.

BAT-MITE REENACTOR

Noooooo!

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

VICKI VALE

What you just witnessed was the recreation that the defensive team representing Bat-Mite showed the court today. According to Bat-Mite and his lawyers, these recreations are what happened exactly, that tragic day. Verbatim.

Already there are some doubts, however.

(MORE)

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VICKI VALE (CONT'D)

Bat-Mite claiming he's from five different dimensions is not true. We know that he is from just the one single, fifth dimension.

Vicki Vale does everything in her power not roll her eyes as she grits her teeth.

VICKI VALE (CONT'D)

That, along with some other... discrepancies, cast doubt on the validity of the recreation we just shared.

This is just the first of more recreations set to be submitted as evidence in the coming days.

Reporting from Bill Finger County Municipal Court, I'm Vicki Vale.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

For a long, two beats, Adam and Alanna Strange are SITTING on their couch, frozen, looking at their working screen, SLACK JAWED.

ALANNA STRANGE

Wow. I can't believe that this country is so obsessed with this stupid trial.

ADAM STRANGE

This country always gets obsessed with the stupidest things.

Remember two years ago when those two people got caught cheating on the Kiss Cam at the Coldplay concert?

ALANNA STRANGE

That was two years ago?!

Adam nods.

ADAM STRANGE

Yuuup. It was all anyone could talk about, but not even a week later, everyone forgot. Time flies and yet it's slow at the same time, ya know?

(MORE)

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ADAM STRANGE (CONT'D)

People want a movie or a TV show tomorrow, not realizing that these things take years to make.

Then, next thing you know -- WHAM!
-- the movie is out.

Time is wild like that, babe.

It's fast as hell and slower than hell at the same time. Weird. So fucking weird.

ALANNA STRANGE

Speaking of slow. How's Mr. Wonderful's investigation of you going? Has he closed the case yet?

ADAM STRANGE

His name is Mr. Terrific, but you already knew that. And I'm sure he's finishing up the forensic report on my ray gun that I gave him.

Alanna grabs the remote, turns off the (working) monitor and turns her full attention to her husband.

ALANNA STRANGE

You gave him your ray gun?!

ADAM STRANGE

Yeah. Sure. Why not? Babe. I swear, I didn't kill that kid!

ALANNA STRANGE

It's not that, Adam! Who knows what type of evidence he can create and frame you with now that he has your gun!

ADAM STRANGE

Alanna. Honey. Please. You know he's not like that.

ALANNA STRANGE

"I know he's not like that"? I literally just met him. And you too! Have you ever known him before he knocked on our door?

Adam shakes his head no.

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ALANNA STRANGE (CONT'D)

See! And you're just gonna trust the guy?

ADAM STRANGE

What choice do I have! He's an active member of the Justice League!

ALANNA STRANGE

And so were you. Once. Back when it was called the Justice Society International Gang or whatever the heck it was.

Adam rubs the bridge of his nose.

ADAM STRANGE

Babe. It wasn't called that back in the day.

ALANNA STRANGE

Whatever. That's not the point. What is the point, is, what the fuck is that Terrific son of a bitch doing right now?

Adam sighs and gives a 1,000 yard stare.

ADAM STRANGE

Who knows. My understanding is, he has an intellect that's equal to or higher than Batman's. That's why Bruce put him on the case.

He's probably looking into a microscope or interviewing God knows who.

The talk box voice of "MR. GROOVE" by ONE WAY starts to play. As soon as the BEAT DROPS, we switch scenes to...

INT. STUDIO 86 ROLLER-DISCO - DAY

Half of the roller-disco is as dark as a cave, while the other half is sprinkled with neon colors and the purple glow of black light.

In the middle of the roller-disco dance floor, DANCING and SPINNING, is PHANTOM GIRL and PLASTIC MAN.

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Plastic Man is using his superpower, the ability to STRETCH AND CHANGE INTO ANY SHAPE by spinning Phantom Girl, his arm like a snake SPUN AROUND HER LIKE A SPOOL, sending her SPINNING and FLYING into the air.

Time BRIEFLY SLOWS down to show Phantom Girl SMILING AND LAUGHING as she reaches the heights of the roller-disco. As TIME RETURNS TO NORMAL SPEED, we see her FALLING TOWARDS a skating couple holding hands, TERRIFIED at what's about to land on them. But Phantom Girl uses one of her three powers and PHASES through the couple.

The couple still FALLS in a panic, thinking they were about to be struck.

PHANTOM GIRL

It's okay. I was never really falling anyway.

The stunned couple on the floor simply nod wide-mouthed as Phantom Girl displays her second power, FLIGHT.

PHANTOM GIRL (CONT'D)

(still rising)

You were never in any danger, sillies! Well, maybe just a little...

Phantom Girl then does a LOOP IN THE AIR and floats in front of the sun glass wearing, smiling, always flirtatious, PLASTIC MAN. She then displays her third and final power, the DARK ENERGY TOUCH, by giving Plastic Man a tiny BLOOP of a touch on his nose from her GLOWING WHITE HAND.

Instantly, Plastic Man's head EXPLODES, from the chest up his head spreads like strands of branches, a flesh colored tree. Phantom Girl GIGGLES IN HER HAND as the crowd SCREAMS AND SCATTERS but Plastic Man just as quickly RECOMBINES together.

PLASTIC MAN

Hey! What did I tell you? Not the face. That's the money maker, honey cakes.

PHANTOM GIRL

Dude. Gross. I'm 19! Don't call me honey cakes.

PLASTIC MAN

What should I call you, then? Sugar...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Phantom Girl crosses her arms. An impatient, unimpressed Olympian meme come to life.

PLASTIC MAN (CONT'D)

...lips?

PHANTOM GIRL

Ew! No! Dude, that's worse. Like, way worse.

PLASTIC MAN

Sorry. I'm a newly divorced man. What you can and can't say to women changes every month and I've been a frozen egg for over five years so I'm not sure what is and what isn't acceptable.

PHANTOM GIRL

Well, we're teammates. There's no need to practice on me, old man.

PLASTIC MAN

I'm not flirting with you, Phantom Girl! I have a son one year older than you, for Pete's sake. I see you like a daughter, if anything.

I'm just saying, I'm bad at talking with women. Like, all women.

Even my own mother, who won't touch a fly, smacks me at least once a year!

Phantom Girl thinks about it.

PHANTOM GIRL

Yeah. That tracks.

On the other side of the roller-disco rink MR. TERRIFIC and METAMORPHO, THE ELEMENT MAN, are also skating. Mr. Terrific is STRUGGLING to skate and stay standing.

MR. TERRIFIC

Hot damn, I hate this shit.

METAMORPHO

Relax, Michael! How can you hate this when it was your idea? We haven't seen Phantom Girl smile in days and look at her now!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

METAMORPHO (CONT'D)

You couldn't knock that smile off her face with a sledgehammer!

MR. TERRIFIC

No. I said that one of you two knuckleheads should take her out to do something fun. My idea of roller skating was just the one she liked the most. Obviously.

As Mr. Terrific nearly falls, again, Metamorpho saves him from falling... again. Mr. Terrific brushes off Metamorpho's arm away. Again.

MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Don't help me, fool! I told you, I got this!

METAMORPHO

Doesn't look like you got it...

Mr. Terrific, once again nearly falls and Metamorpho has to STOP HIMSELF from saving Mr. Terrific. But just as Mr. Terrific is about to fall back, he steadies himself and, like magic, straightens himself up.

MR. TERRIFIC

See? Told you I got it!

Metamorpho pouts in impressment. What Metamorpho doesn't see is the T-Shperes holding up Mr. Terrific from behind, just under the TERRIFIC name on the jacket.

Mr. Terrific and Metamorpho see that Phantom Girl and Plastic Man are causing a ruckus as the pair spin and twirl around, Plastic Man's arms and legs looking like firehoses come to life.

MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Why don't we go take a seat. I can use a break.

METAMORPHO

(mutters)

I think your ego needs a break...

MR. TERRIFIC

What d'ya say?

METAMORPHO

I said, "Sounds like a great idea!"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MR. TERRIFIC

Yeah... what I thought.

They exchange a pleased look, although Metamorpho is the one TRYING NOT TO GIGGLE.

INT. STUDIO 86 ROLLER-DISCO - CAFETERIA - DAY

The foursome is now seated at a cafeteria bench inside the Studio 86 Roller-Disco. It's nearly septicly bright compared to the roller rink in the background. There's a SMALL CROWD looking on, trying their best not to look like they're not looking on.

Mr. Terrific, frustrated, takes the straw out of his mouth and puts his soda down.

MR. TERRIFIC

Aye, yo, Plastic Man. How 'bout a little privacy for us, yeah?

PLASTIC MAN

No problemoooo... Señor Terrificooo...

Like an umbrella, Plastic Man POPS INTO A LARGE TENT that covers them in near darkness. The only light being the SOFT GLOW that Phantom Girl gives off and the white of the team's eyes.

MR. TERRIFIC

Metamorpho. Some light, if you would.

Metamorpho lifts up a fist that begins to GLOW in a soft white/orange warm color. The glow from Metamorpho's hand makes the small, dark, intimate place feel cozy and beautiful. Little flickers of warm light, like small embers or tiny fireflies dance inside the makeshift tent. Small, sparkling, dots of light slowly move along the canopy that is Plastic Man's body, like a slow planetarium. It feels like they are in a campfire. There's a warm, intimate vibe. If you could give it one word, it would be pretty.

Plastic Man's long, serpentine neck slowly lowers his head next to Mr. Perfect's face, shit eating grin and all.

Not taking the bait of the sunglasses wearing man's smile behind his shoulder, Mr. Terrific says, without making eye contact:

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MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Would you mind not doing that?

PLASTIC MAN

Doing what?

MR. TERRIFIC

Being all clingy and shit!

PLASTIC MAN

Um, I'm not being clingy! I'm being your security sound dome.

Adding that one to the C.V., by the way.

MR. TERRIFIC

Can you just move that noggin a little bit more away from me, yeah?

Mr. Plastic's sunglasses become clear for a moment so everyone inside the tent can see his eyes roll. He snakes his head back from Mr. Terrific's shoulder. Just.

PLASTIC MAN

Geez. Sure thing, Mr. Terrifically Serious!

MR. TERRIFIC

Thank you. Now. You're all probably wondering why I asked you to come here.

Plastic Man's head disappears from hovering over Mr. Terrific's shoulder to POPPING UP next to Phantom Girl, who does NOT like it.

PHANTOM GIRL

Dude! Are you always trying to be gross?

PLASTIC MAN

Geez! Is today National Pick On Plastic Man Day?! You know what? How about I just take away my security sound dome? Patent pending.

Mr. Terrific RAISES A HAND for everyone to pause.

MR. TERRIFIC

Plastic Man. Please. Try and calm down.

(MORE)

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MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

We all appreciate what you're doing. I just need everyone to get serious for one moment. Okay? I need everyone's undivided attention, just for one second. Please.

Everyone here appreciates what you're doing for us, Plastic Man. Ain't that right, everyone?

No one utters a word.

MR. TERRIFIC

I said, we all appreciate Plastic Man and his contribution, right?

PHANTOM GIRL

Yeah. Sure. Best thing ever.

Plastic Man's serpentine head now POPS UP next to Metamorpho, leaning his head on Metamorpho's shoulder, like someone who's love sick.

Metamorpho, arms crossed, raises his nose and doesn't say a word.

MR. TERRIFIC

Rex...

Metamorpho lets out a heavy sigh.

METAMORPHO

Fine. Yeah. Sure. Okay. Yaaay, Plastic Man. Woo hoo.

PLASTIC MAN

That didn't sound too sincere if I'm being honest.

(turns to Mr. Terrific)

And you. Your little, "I'm sure you're wondering why I brought you here" was a little too villain-y for my liking. Should I create a cat for you to stroke while you tell us how we're gonna steal nuclear weapons or something?

Mr. Terrific GRITS HIS TEETH while Phantom Girl and Metamorpho look on, pleased with themselves. Mr. Terrific has tried to tell the group that Plastic Man isn't an annoying clown, yet Plastic Man is just proving Phantom Girl and Metamorpho right.

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MR. TERRIFIC

Plastic Man. Dude. Can we talk about your feelings at a later time? This ain't the time for joking.

PLASTIC MAN

Who says I'm joking!

PHANTOM GIRL

Can you just... stop?! I wanna hear what Mr. T has to say!

MR. TERRIFIC

Thank you, P.G. The reason I asked for you to come here today is... I need help with an investigation.

Everyone looks on at each other in confusion.

METAMORPHO

Are we even ready to start... superhero-ing? Don't get me wrong. You're a great teacher and all, but I'm not sure if the three of us are ready yet.

PLASTIC MAN

Well I know I'm ready for some crime fightin' and sleuthing!

Just like Phantom Girl and Mr. Terrific, Metamorpho acts like he didn't hear Plastic Man.

METAMORPHO

And why us? Why now? We could not be more different. And some of us are more ready than others. And none of us, to my knowledge at least, have ever played junior detective, before.

MR. TERRIFIC

That's where you're wrong, Rex. While you each see each other and see people who are unlike one another, I see people who are the same. Exactly the same.

Phantom Girl. When my now-ex-business partner, Simon Stagg, created that rip into the Dark Multiverse, you came to us, scared and alone.

(MORE)

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MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Literally, an abandoned child.

Plastic Man. When Stagg created that rip, he also unfroze you from your five plus year stasis only to find that your wife and son had left you. And you also learned that it was your superhero "friends" who had put you there.

And Metamorpho. When I first laid eyes on you, you were nothing but a squid monster with a head. But, thanks to you, I had the chance to meet Simon Stagg.

METAMORPHO

Hey! I tried to warn you about doing business with my father-in-law!

MR. TERRIFIC

I know, I know. I ain't mad at cha'! But Stagg and that Neanderthal oaf of his both hate you. Even though he used you as an unknowing guinea pig in one of his experiments, turning Rex Mason into Metamorpho.

What I'm trying to say is this: Everyone at this table, under Eel's silence dome--

PLASTIC MAN

Security sound dome!

MR. TERRIFIC

--security sound dome. Is that all of you have the same thing in common. You all have been done wrong -- hella wrong -- by someone or someones in the past. And the other thing you have in common is, you could all take revenge but have chosen not to.

Everyone looks at one another, taking in what Mr. Terrific has to say.

MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Phantom Girl. Your family left you to rot in the Dark Multiverse.

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CONTINUED: (5)

PHANTOM GIRL

Yeah. But I've asked you to let me go back.

MR. TERRIFIC

You know I can't reopen that rip! Plus, everyone knows that you don't ever want to go back.

Phantom Girl puts her head down and nods yes like a good little girl is supposed to.

MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

Plastic Man. Batman put you in a deep freeze to protect you from yourself when shit hit the fan.

Yet, even though that decision cost you your family, you and Batman are getting along swimmingly.

And you, Rex? Don't even get me started on who has fucked you over time and again. That Simon Stagg muthafucker turned you into something you didn't want. He hated you when you were Rex Mason then and he hates you once he made you into Metamorpho now.

I, mean, shit. I knew he wasn't the business partner I thought he'd be when I discovered that he gave you and his own grandson to Lex Luthor for crying out loud! That dude is the definition of toxic. But you always knew that, didn't you? Letting him, once again, use you like a piece of carpet. Still by his side. I don't know how you don't turn a hand into a steel guillotine blade and go French Revolution on his ass.

Metamorpho scoffs and smiles at the light illuminating the plastic tent.

METAMORPHO

Let's just say that killing your father-in-law is not the best way to please your wife, okay?

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CONTINUED: (6)

PHANTOM GIRL

That's all true. Very true. But aren't you the smartest man alive?

MR. TERRIFIC

Third smartest. Batman and Lex Luthor are smarter than me. And what does that have to do with what we're talking about?

PHANTOM GIRL

(exasperated)

See?! That's what I'm trying to get at! You're always six moves ahead. You tell everyone that you're the third smartest man alive so that everyone can focus on Batman and Baldman, meanwhile, everyone just happens to forget about you and your big brains, Michael. How convenient.

Mr. Terrific is impressed.

MR. TERRIFIC

Okay, young lady. Seems like there's something on your mind. Out with what you gotta say.

PHANTOM GIRL

Everything you said is true. Yes, we do have all those things in common.

We are all living in a past that hurt us. None of us are living in the present. We're all just walking wounds of bad things that were done to us.

I'm sure Plastic Man isn't happy that he was a frozen egg for over half a decade by his so-called friends, losing his wife and son because of those aforementioned friends.

But then you bring up Rex, Metamorpho. Why he won't go after Simon Stagg. But there's the rub. We all got beef with Stagg.

Simon Stagg ripped me from the Dark Multiverse.

(MORE)

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CONTINUED: (7)

PHANTOM GIRL (CONT'D)

It wasn't paradise, but it was the only home I knew and I was living in relative peace.

And the only reason Batman and Superman and everyone else whose last name ends in -man turned Eel into an egg for five fuckin' years was because Simon Fuckin' Stagg was playing God once again, and the team felt they had to protect Eel the way they did.

And don't get me started on you! After you and Superman saved the world from being ripped in half by a black hole created by Lex Luthor, you met Rex and his son Joey, became fast friends, met Joey's Mom and Metamorpho's better half, Sapphire Stagg, and she introduced you to Simon Stagg. Her father!

And what did Simon Stagg do after meeting you? He then used your Terrifictech as his play toy, nearly destroying the world! With your tech, dude!

MR. TERRIFIC

What cha gettin' at, P.G.?

PHANTOM GIRL

What I'm "getting at" is that maybe you brought us all together not because of some heartfelt kumbaya shit. You're using... wait. No. You may be using our past pain that we're still dealing with as a cover.

MR. TERRIFIC

A cover for what?

PHANTOM GIRL

For us to help you kill Simon Stagg.

The feeling in the tent is in tense (sorry!). No one is breathing, and eyes are darting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

MR. TERRIFIC

Very good, P.G. Very good. But unfortunately, your theory is wrong. If I wanted Simon Stagg off the chessboard, I'd do it myself. Checkmate.

PHANTOM GIRL

Yeah, right.

METAMORPHO

I mean... she has a point, T.

Plastic Man grows a deerstalker hat, a comically large magnifying glass, and a pipe.

PLASTIC MAN

I do say, Watson. The young misses is on to a scent.

Mr. Terrific SLAMS THE TABLE.

MR. TERRIFIC

Enough! I got you all together for the reason I said! I'm done training your asses! Y'all are ready to help the world whether you think so or not. The mission I need help with doesn't even involve Stagg. Look. I get it. Y'all are skeptical. But trust me. I don't just see heroes around me. I see superheroes. And... I didn't want to say it, but have any of you given any thought to my background? I too still live in my past, mourning my wife. And my child.

Every. Damned. Day.

No, the reason I picked you to help me is not because I have some malicious plan to use you or something.

METAMORPHO

No. You picked us because you're tired of babysitting us and want us off your hands...

Mr. Terrific acts as if he didn't hear the muttering.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (9)

MR. TERRIFIC

I picked you because you are the best of the rest and... you're all like me. We're all the same. Wounded men and women, trying their best to get by. Every, single, day.

Do y'all believe me or nah?

Everyone in the makeshift tent says or nods in agreement.

MR. TERRIFIC

Good. Now, if there are no more doubts, are y'all ready to hear what investigation I need your help with?

The mood is sad, Michael Holt having shared his pain. The mood is also resolute, knowing full well that they have an important mission. One that none of them will deny.

METAMORPHO

Okay, Michael. I think I can speak for everyone when I say that we're all on board. We're ready to start!

The group gives solemn but resolute nods.

MR. TERRIFIC

Okay. Good.

A T-Sphere pops up in front of Mr. Terrific's face. He leans into it like a microphone.

MR. TERRIFIC (CONT'D)

My man. Ya ready?

Through the tinny speaker a male voice says:

VOICE (O.S.)

Ready when you are.

MR. TERRIFIC

Plastic Man. Give us a door to my right, yeah? Our guest has arrived.

Plastic Man CREATES A FLAP and a silhouette of a man enters. He has the same head covering of Adam Strange yet only his head covering is dark whereas Adam's is white. And unlike Adam, his entire face is covered.

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CONTINUED: (10)

The man's mask DISAPPEARS revealing JAIME REYES.

BLUE BEETLE

Name's Blue Beetle. And I need your help finding the man who kidnapped my fiancé.

WE ZOOM INTO BLUE BEETLE'S EYES AND THE SCREEN SHAKES AGAIN AND TRANSITIONS TO SEPIA; THE SCREEN'S RATIO CHANGES TO 4:3.

INT. RANN PALACE - DAY

ADAM STRANGE and a very pregnant ALANNA STRANGE are walking through the opulent, futuristic fortress of a castle, talking to SARDATH.

Guards in royal garb accompany the trio.

SARDATH

It's been nearly two years since you saved Rann from the Pykkts, Adam. But this incoming armada is so large, so huge, that I doubt having one-thousand Adam Stranges would save us this time.

ADAM STRANGE

Sardath. No. I stopped them once and I'll stop 'em again. We'll... stop 'em again.

Sardath shakes his head.

ALANNA STRANGE

Father! It's true! My husband is not called The Hero of Two Planets for no reason! He has saved Earth and he has saved Rann. He's done both before and he can do both again.

SARDATH

My dear. I love your optimism. I really do. But even I, the smartest man alive, knows the truth when he sees it.

No.

Our time here is done. We need to find another planet.

(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

SARDATH (CONT'D)

Or else no one will be safe. Not you, your husband, or your son.

ADAM STRANGE

We're actually hoping for a daughter...

SARDATH

It doesn't matter what you want! How can you raise a son or a daughter or whatever when we're all in shackles as slaves on our planet!

ALANNA STRANGE

Father. You truly can't be that serious, can you?

SARDATH

'Fraid so. We need to find another planet. Somewhere else to call home.

Maybe we can go to your Earth, Adam?

ADAM STRANGE

What? You'd want to bring the billions from Rann to an overcrowded Earth that has billions of people as it is?

SARDATH

No! Of course not! We could easily take Earth from the humans. You, more than anyone, has to understand that we -- the Rannians! -- are more important to the universe than some... petty humans!

ADAM STRANGE

You would want me to help you kill all of humankind just so that you can hide from the Pykchts?

Are you that crazy to think that I'm that crazy?!

SARDATH

Adam! Please! You must understand! We cannot possibly beat the Pykkt armada that is coming our way!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SARDATH (CONT'D)

We have to escape. And Earth is a few trillions of lightyears away!

ADAM STRANGE

No! I will not give up Earth to save the Rannians!

Sardath tries to object, but Adam stops him.

ADAM STRANGE (CONT'D)

And I won't give up on Rann either!

SARDATH

So what, exactly, would you have us do?

ADAM STRANGE

Fight.

We stay looking at Adam Strange, standing resolute after his powerful, one word declaration. Even though his lips are no longer moving, we hear his voice begin to monologue.

ADAM STRANGE (V.O.)

It was that moment that I knew I had to save Earth and Rann once again.

THE SCREEN RETURNS TO NORMAL ASPECT RATIO AND WE GO TO...

INT. MICHAEL HOLT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

...we are zoomed into a page of a book that has the exact words that are being V.O.ed by Adam Strange.

ADAM STRANGE (V.O.)

Only this time, I'd have to be The Hero of Two Planets... at the same time!

Michael shuts the book closed and looks out into the dimly lit bedroom. He's reading on a recliner that is next to the window, the only a T-Sphere as a reading light and the nighttime glow of the city outside his apartment.

MR. TERRIFIC

T-4. Call Batman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BATMAN (O.S.)

Yes.

MR. TERRIFIC

Okay. I'm on the case. I now know that Strange did kill that kid from the bookstore.

BATMAN (O.S.)

And you know this, how?

MR. TERRIFIC

Trust me, Bruce. I have the answer. Everything equals up. I just have to find the integers to make it all add up.

There is a small chance that I'm wrong, though.

BATMAN (O.S.)

You're never wrong.

MR. TERRIFIC

I know. Let's just hope for the sake of everyone involved that this time I am. Not to worry though. There's still more than a 1% chance that he didn't kill the kid. So I won't be going crooked prosecutor on his ass and finding evidence to fit my narrative. All I care about is the truth, pride be damned. If that means I find evidence that contradicts what I'm trying to conclude, I'll follow that and include that in my report as well.

But I gotta tell ya, Bruce. I wouldn't be booking the Stranges to D.J. any bar or bat mitzvahs anytime soon.

BATMAN (O.S.)

Well, keep me posted and let me know when you've made your final report.

We hear the CLICK of Batman ending the call.

EXT. MICHAEL HOLT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The screen becomes A NIGHT VISION SITE that is focused on Mr. Terrific. The screen has AUDIO WAVES, showing that the entire conversation that Mr. Terrific and Batman have been having is being recording by a laser mic from atop a building across Michael's building.

MR. TERRIFIC (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 (talking to a dead
 line)
 Will do, Batman.

Will do.

From the telescope's vision we can see that Mr. Terrific's T-Sphere flies off and disappears, leaving the apartment dark.

From behind the viewfinder we see Alanna Strange who has heard everything. She is furious.

INT. KORD ESTATE - NIGHT

Inside a STONE STEPPED STAIRCASE that TUNNELS DOWN into the UNDERGROUND FACILITY of the KORD ESTATE in PALMERA CITY, we see Blue Beetle leading the group, followed by Phantom Girl, Metamorpho, and Plastic Man. At first, it almost feels as if the team haven't left ROXANNE ROLLER's home ground of Studio 86 Roller-Disco, the group still covered in shadow and dim light emanating from the bodies of Blue Beetle, Phantom Girl, and Metamorpho.

PHANTOM GIRL
 Where are you taking us?

BLUE BEETLE
 Trust me. We're almost there.

PLASTIC MAN
 Screw this.

Plastic Man lets his head snake ahead of the group and out the end of the tunnel. He sees a LARGE POWER SWITCH and HIS CHIN grows two, tiny T-Rex like arms, one of which SLAMS the power switch UP to ON.

The team react to the small glow ahead of them, slightly COVERING THEIR EYES.

PLASTIC MAN (O.S.)
 Guys. You're not gonna believe
 this!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The team walk out to see the Underground Facility of the Kord Estate. It's harder to see than it was in "Blue Beetle" (2023) but it's still all there, everything lit, but a lot dimmer.

The only interruption to the darkness is the soft spot lighting highlighting the three things of note.

The two old Blue Beetle suits.

The giant Bug flying machine, still damaged and still spray painted by MILAGRO, Blue Beetle's sister, with the one-word phrase "ÁNIMO!"

The final dimly lit part of the Facility is the control panel.

As the team walks in awe of their surroundings, Jaime Reyes, Blue Beetle, catches them up.

BLUE BEETLE

My fiancé, Jenny, was obsessed with finding her father, Ted Kord. The second Blue Beetle.

METAMORPHO

The second Blue Beetle? So there was one before you?

BLUE BEETLE

Yeah. I'm actually the third. The first Blue Beetle, Dan Garrett, was crushed to death in a cave-in. Who caused that cave-in and killed Dan Garrett? Someone in Familia Kord. It wasn't Ted Kord, though. It was an uncle or cousin or something. But Ted Kord was a great guy. There's a reason that Dan gave Ted the scarab. The first Blue Beetle's most trusted friend was also killed by his biggest enemy; a Kord. Can't trust anyone.

METAMORPHO

Gee. Sounds like it.

BLUE BEETLE

Yeah. There's a reason that I went to Mr. Terrific regarding Jennifer. The only reason I exist as the Blue Beetle was because the original one was murdered. Just like the first Mr. Terrific.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PLASTIC MAN

Wait. There was another Mr.
Terrific before... Mr. Terrific?

Blue Beetle nods. The group fans out, everyone curiously looking at different things covered in shadow.

BLUE BEETLE

Yeah. The first Mr. Terrific?
Terry Sloane? Dude was also
murdered. That's what all the
capes know, at least.

What no one else knows is that,
Ted Kord, the Blue Beetle before
me, Jenny's dad? He always
suspected Terry Sloane was
murdered before it was cool.

In fact, Ted Kord was looking into
Terry Sloane's death when he
disappeared.

The team gives each other a long, confused, and slightly scared look.

METAMORPHO

So Michael is the second Mr.
Terrific and you're the third Blue
Beetle?

Metmorpho looks at the pair of old, Blue Beetle suits, still inside their containers. There's a third light over a space for one more tube to hold a suit.

METAMORPHO

And the second Blue Beetle? The
one before you? The guy whose
house we're in?

BLUE BEETLE

Ted Kord.

METAMORPHO

(nods)

Yeah. So your girlfriend, Ted
Kord's daughter, Jenny, spent most
of her time here trying to find
him? She didn't think he died?
Where did she think he went?

Even though Blue Beetle has been inside that facility a thousand times, he's looking around nervously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Blue Beetle scoffs.

BLUE BEETLE

One. She's not my girlfriend,
she's my fiancé. And, two, where
Jenny thinks he is, is irrelevant.

PHANTOM GIRL

And why's that?

BLUE BEETLE

Because everyone thinks he's dead
as well. Only Jenny held on to any
hope that he was still alive.

Wanna guess the rumor of how he
was killed?

Phantom Girl shakes her head no, chewing on a fingernail,
scared of the rhetorical question.

BLUE BEETLE (CONT'D)

They say that the second Blue
Beetle, Ted Kord, was also
murdered. Just like the first Mr.
Terrific, Terry Sloane.

I found a file, two actually, that
claimed that people close to the
disappearance of Ted Kord
confirmed that not only was he
dead and murdered, but they also
claimed to know how he was
murdered. Shot in the head.

Of course, Jenny refused to
believe that. All the other files?
Oh, sure. Those were true. But the
ones saying her pops was shot in
the head were the only files that
were problematic. Of course they
were. They didn't fit into her
narrative.

PLASTIC MAN

Holy macaroni and cheese.

Plastic Man grows fangs and his hair grows a widow's
peak. His ears grow long points, reminiscent of Batman.
He covers his mouth in a faux cloak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PLASTIC MAN
(terrible vampire
accent)

Bleh! You must hate guns the same way as Batman! Maybe two times as much, ah, ah, ah! Maybe three times as much, ah, ah, ah!

Metamorpho rolls his eyes. The muscles in Metamorpho's cheeks tighten as he forms fists, itching to clock Plastic Man.

METAMORPHO
Damn it, Plastic Man! You're literally the one person here who is a friend of Batman's. You -- more than anyone else! -- knows that he doesn't talk like some Transylvanian duke or something. Did Transylvania even have dukes? Was that what Dracula even was?

Metamorpho was not asking anyone, just thinking out loud. Something a nervous person would do.

Blue Beetle grins.

BLUE BEETLE
Yeah. You can say that. I'm more of a blade, mace, and energy blast kinda guy.

Blue Beetle stops walking.

BLUE BEETLE (CONT'D)
Got it. Thanks.

The team is confused by the last comment that Blue Beetle said out loud.

PHANTOM GIRL
Um... you're welcome? Which of us were you talking to?

BLUE BEETLE
Oh. Sorry about that. I was talking to Khaji Da, the scarab that I've mended with. She says that a guest is on their way here.

PHANTOM GIRL
A guest?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

BLUE BEETLE

Yeah. Not to worry. I invited him to help us. He's an old friend of Ted Kord.

PLASTIC MAN

Who?

BLUE BEETLE

You'll see. I couldn't tell you guys until I felt I could trust you. Until I felt you guys were ready.

METAMORPHO

So you trust us?!

Metamorpho and Phantom Girl hold hands in giddy hope like two kids about to meet Santa.

BLUE BEETLE

Well, Terrific trusts you. And if Terrific says you're good, then you're good. But I still have my own tests. One test, actually. And you guys passed with flying colors.

PLASTIC MAN

And what test was that?

BLUE BEETLE

Making sure that you guys ain't annoying. There's nothing worse than dealing with difficult people. I only work with cool people.

Congrats. This group isn't annoying.

(grin)

Completely, at least.

PLASTIC MAN

Thank goodness you didn't find us annoying!

Blue Beetle looks at Plastic Man straight in the sunglasses.

BLUE BEETLE

Well, two out of three is a passing score.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

As Blue Beetle walks towards the control panel, Phantom Girl and Metamorpho share a silent giggle. Still oblivious, Plastic Man tells Phantom Girl and Metamorpho:

PLASTIC MAN

Geez. I wonder which one of you
two he doesn't like?

The echoing sound of footsteps can be heard from the same descending tunnel they entered through.

BLUE BEETLE

Looks like he's here.

PHANTOM GIRL

Who?

BLUE BEETLE

(smiling)

Ted Kord's best friend before he
died. Or disappeared, if you asked
Jenny.

The smile drops from Blue Beetle's face and becomes a face of shock and doubt.

BLUE BEETLE (CONT'D)

Max?

MAXWELL LORD

Maxwell Lord IV. In the flesh!

BLUE BEETLE

But... I didn't...

METAMORPHO

Hey, Max.

Jaime! You didn't tell us you knew
the first guy to reject me,
Maxwell Lord.

Blue Beetle is trying to hide his surprise that's more anger than anything.

BLUE BEETLE

Heh. Ya, I didn't know I knew him
either.

What are you doing here, Max?

MAXWELL LORD

(feigning surprise)

Me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

MAXWELL LORD (CONT'D)

Why, I heard you needed help
finding your sweetheart, Jenny
from the block.

METAMORPHO

(still smiling)

Yeah! You said that you invited
him, right?

I didn't know that you and the
previous Blue Beetle were friends?

MAXWELL LORD

Oh, yeah! Thick as thieves. Man...
the stories I can tell.

BLUE BEETLE

Yeah. That's what you're good at,
isn't it, Max? Telling stories.

PHANTOM GIRL

Umm... what's going on, guys?

MAXWELL LORD

Ah, nothing, my dear. And you must
be Phantom Girl! I'd kiss your
hand if you weren't incorporeal.

BLUE BEETLE

Pretty big word for a...

MAXWELL LORD

For a "what," Jaime?

Blue Beetle's mood changes from being unpleasantly
surprised to one of pleased smugness. He crosses his arms
and smirks.

BLUE BEETLE

I was gonna say, that's a pretty
big word for a guy who's about to
get his face smashed in and not
gonna be able to talk for at least
one week.

Maxwell Lord scoffs.

MAXWELL LORD

You wouldn't dare touch me. Would
you, Jamie? Not someone who knew
Ted Kord so, so well?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

BLUE BEETLE

No. You're right. I wouldn't.

But he would.

BOOSTER GOLD crashes through the ceiling. When he sees Maxwell Lord through the cloud of destroyed rock, Booster Gold FLIES INTO Max, SLAMMING him INTO the control panel on the wall next to Blue Beetle. Sparks fly and start to zap Maxwell Lord.

BOOSTER GOLD

You killed my best friend, you sonuva bitch! You killed Ted! You killed Ted Kord!

SKEETS, the flying, 25th-century security robot bladeless drone companion of Booster Gold focuses a red laser on Maxwell Lord's forehead.

BOOSTER GOLD (CONT'D)

And for that... for Ted... now you're gonna die!

The light that is pointing at Maxwell Lord's forehead starts to brighten and Maxwell Lord starts to SCREAM IN TERROR.

INT. MICHAEL HOLT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Michael Holt enters his apartment, carrying a paper bag of groceries. He turns on the lights, locks the door and walks into his apartment when he suddenly FREEZES and STOPS WALKING.

ALANNA STRANGE

You know, paper bags are bad for the environment. You'd think the smartest guy alive would know that.

MICHAEL HOLT

Actually, reforestation has brought back more trees than are cut. This is also a recycled bag which, in-turn, can be recycled again.

And studies have shown that plastic can take thousands of years to disintegrate.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHAEL HOLT (CONT'D)

And where do you think plastic comes from? The plastic tree? No. Ten-percent, or one out of every ten barrels of oil, is used to make plastic.

I think I'm fine with my choice, thankyouverymuch.

What I'm not fine with, however, is someone breaking into my house. That's a felony you know?

ALANNA STRANGE

So is lying and saying that an innocent man murdered someone he didn't.

Michael Holt puts his groceries down on the counter and enters the living room. Alanna Strange is sitting on the same recliner that is near the window. She is drinking a glass of red wine.

MICHAEL HOLT

Mind if I join you? I was saving this wine for a special occasion.

Michael begins to pour himself a glass of his opened wine.

ALANNA STRANGE

Awww. I'm sawwy.

MICHAEL HOLT

No. Don't be. This is a special night. Not everyday that someone breaks into my house. You outsmarted my Terrifictech. We'll drink to your success.

Michael Holt makes his way over to a chair and small side table that is near the lounge that Alanna Strange is sitting on.

She has taken off her pumps and is wearing a near nighty L.B.D.; little black dress. Her eyes are glazed and her body is relaxed and sultry. A femme fatale if there ever was one.

ALANNA STRANGE

You know. You should really read in bed. Or make calls on those T-Spheres of yours in bed as well. Not next to a window at least.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALANNA STRANGE (CONT'D)

You never know. People might be listening.

Michael Holt smirks. He chugs the wine in two gulps and sets it on the little table. He wipes his lips with the back of a hand.

MICHAEL HOLT

Well, there are two reasons why I don't read -- or make calls -- in bed.

One. Sleep hygiene. If you look at your phone, computer, or even a book while in bed, it makes it harder to fall asleep. Doing any activity other than sex or sleep tells your body that your bed is not solely a place for rest. If your bed is only used for sex and sleep, and nothing else, you'll find that you'll go from an insomniac to falling asleep before your head even hits the pillow. That's the power of sleep hygiene.

ALANNA STRANGE

And the second reason? And please don't let it be another boring fact.

MICHAEL HOLT

And the second reason is to make sure that the people that I suspect are following me fall for my trap. Like making fake phone calls in front of wide open places.

Alanna Strange squints her eyes for a long beat.

ALANNA STRANGE

Bullshit. You weren't on some fake phone call with Batman last night just to fool me. You don't think I'm that stupid, do you?

MICHAEL HOLT

No. I don't think you're stupid at all. I can tell when someone is following me and I don't like it when said people follow me. So I... what do the losers on the internet call it? Trolled you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Alanna Strange is twirling one finger in her hair.

ALANNA STRANGE

You really want me to believe that last night's call was just you fucking with me? Is that right?

MICHAEL HOLT

Yup. Don't believe me? Me pretending to make a fake phone call to Batman would be as outlandish as me pretending that I didn't know that you broke into my house just now.

ALANNA STRANGE

(exasperated)

Again. I call bullshit. I caught you red handed last night and now your sad little ego can't take the fact that I outsmarted you yesterday and tonight as well. Just admit it, Mr. Terrific. You were beat. Two times. In as many nights.

Michael Holt takes a deep breath in and lets out a slow exhale. He slaps both his knees.

MICHAEL HOLT

Welp. You got me. But, before you leave... a-yo, Four! Can you play the security footage of my balcony exactly 32 minutes, no, wait, make that 33 minutes from now, please?

The T-Sphere projects an image of the patio for both to see. It shows Alanna Strange using a glowing device in her hands as she gets inside Michael Holt's apartment.

Michael Holt is fighting the urge not to give her a see-I-told-you-so smirk.

Alanna Strange puts the glass on the floor and stands up. She quickly puts her heels on.

She points a finger at Michael Holt.

ALANNA STRANGE

Don't you ever pull that shit on me again, Terrific!

Michael Holt raises his hands in faux defeat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MICHAEL HOLT

Hey. Maybe next time, don't break into a muthafucker's house that's owned by a muthafucker named Mr. Terrific.

You want to follow me?!

Spy on me?!

Shit.

If that's the game you wanna play then get ready to get misinformed, misguided, and pranked on.

You're not the only one who can play games, Mrs. Adam Strange.

ALANNA STRANGE

These charges against my husband are not some joke! Not something for you to toy with!

MICHAEL HOLT

Well then, if this isn't a joke, stop treating it like one. Stop interfering with the investigation.

Alanna Strange marches towards the door.

MICHAEL HOLT

Hey! Wait! Speaking of the investigation. I'd like to have a chat with you. Maybe when there's less emotion and booze involved.

She opens the door and turns to him.

ALANNA STRANGE

(dripping in sarcasm)
Sure. You can interview me. For the sake of the investigation, of course.

MICHAEL HOLT

Of course.

Alanna Strange SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT behind her.

Michael Holt sits in silence for a moment. A long moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MICHAEL HOLT (CONT'D)

Four. Come here for a second,
please.

The T-Sphere floats next to Michael Holt's face.

MICHAEL HOLT (CONT'D)

Do you think she bought it? That
part about me knowing that she
overheard my call with Batman
yesterday?

T-SPHERE

(electric voice)

Her heartbeat and vitals were all
over the place, Mr. Terrific. She
was scared, but also relaxed. The
alcohol in her system made her
vitals go all over the place. It's
hard for me to tell if she
believed your lie. I'm sorry,
Michael.

MICHAEL HOLT

It's okay. You tried. Let's just
hope she buys my double bluff.

Shit.

INT. KORD ESTATE - NIGHT

Booster Gold has his forearms against Maxwell Lord's
neck, squeezing him against the control panel wall,
choking him. Booster Gold is about to blow off Maxwell
Lord's head off with an energy blast from SKEETS, Booster
Gold's floating drone assistant, when Maxwell Lord says:

MAXWELL LORD

Wait! Wait! Wait! You want to see
Ted Kord again, right?

Booster Gold presses on Maxwell Lord's throat even
harder. Maxwell Lord lets out a SMALL YELP.

BOOSTER GOLD

You think giving me the location
of Ted's corpse is going to save
your life? It won't, Max. You've
saved your own ass time and again
but this time, you've run outta
lives, kitty cat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Even though Booster Gold is full of energy and anger, he still has a moment to think even as he breaths heavily as he is in the middle of killing a man.

BOOSTER GOLD (CONT'D)

You're dying today, Max. Right now. But at least you'll die knowing you did something good for once in your shitty life! Where are Ted's remains?!

MAXWELL LORD

Remains? No! No! No! He's not dead, Boost! He's still alive, man! Ted Kord is still alive! Trust me! I can show you!

Maxwell Lord tries to catch some air and turns his head to look at Blue Beetle.

MAXWELL LORD (CONT'D)

And you. I can help you find... tu amor.

Booster Gold squeezes Maxwell Lord's neck even harder, maybe for the bad Español, maybe not. It does cause Maxwell Lord to let out another quick YELP IN PAIN again.

MAXWELL LORD (CONT'D)

It's true! I can help Beetle find his Brazilian fiancé and I can help Booster find Ted. They're both together! Father and daughter. Alive!

After a beat, Blue Beetle nods towards Booster Gold. Booster Gold lets Maxwell Lord go. Maxwell Lord nearly falls to the ground, GASPING FOR AIR.

Blue Beetle lifts Maxwell Lord by the hair. All the while the team is looking on in shock.

MAXWELL LORD

I'll prove it to you, okay?! I'll show you!

Maxwell Lord is motioning to the computer screens and all the keyboards.

Again, without a word, Blue Beetle simply nods towards the station.

Maxwell Lord starts typing. After a few beats we hear over the loud speaker:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TED KORD (O.C.)

"Hello? Whoever opened my computer, can you tell my daughter, Jenny, that her father is still alive. Ted Kord is still alive!"

A relieved Maxwell Lord smiles and Booster Gold takes a step back, mouth agape.

BOOSTER GOLD

I... I can't believe it. I know that voice better than my own. That was... was that Blue?!

Was that -- is that? -- Blue?

Blue... is still alive?!

Blue is still alive!

Maxwell Lord, is pleased with himself. And also trying to catch his breath as his face is dotted with sweat and blood.

MAXWELL LORD

What d'I tell ya? I told you he was still alive. And his daughter found him. We find her, we find Teddy boy. What else can either of you want?

An exhausted and spent Maxwell Lord is still pleased with himself, once again escaping death by the skin of his teeth.

MAXWELL LORD

Fine. Since no one'll say it, I will.

Thank you, Maxwell Lord.

Blue Beetle takes a step near Maxwell Lord's self-pleased face. Blue Beetle cocks his fist back as if he's about to punch the shocked Maxwell Lord. Instead, it's something worse. The right arm becomes a LONG, PRAYING MANTIS RAPTORIAL FORELEG that grows the length to Maxwell Lord's face. He puts the blue bug blade next to Maxwell Lord's throat.

MAXWELL LORD

Wha- What?! I've given both of you everything I know! Everything!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BLUE BEETLE

No. Not everything.

Blue Beetle types a few keys with his other, non-foreleg, hand on the keyboard next to Maxwell Lord and SWOOSHING sound can be heard O.C. near the two, older, Blue Beetle uniforms.

Upon seeing what has been revealed O.C., Maxwell suddenly doesn't care that there's a blade next to his throat, ready to kill him. Maxwell Lord's eyes and mouth go wide, stunned. He calmly pushes the blade arm away from his throat and takes two slow steps forward.

MAXWELL LORD

No way. That can't be.

Is that--? No...

That's impossible! Impossible!

The last thing we see is the original yellow and red uniform of the first Mr. Terrific, Terry Sloane. There is a bullet hole in the uniform's chest, right near the words FAIR PLAY.

"MY MIND PLAYIN TRICKS ON ME (RADIO VERSION)" by the GETO BOYS plays.

CUT TO BLACK.