

STARMAN

"Pilot"

Based on the DC Comics Characters
Created by James Robinson and Tony Harris

Written by
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ACT ONE

EXT. FIVEPOINT MEDIA BUILDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Forty stories above Opal City. DAVID KNIGHT (36) stands on the wide ledge beside an art deco statue of Atlas holding up a satellite dish instead of the world.

DAVID (V.O.)
My name is David Knight.

He wears a RED BODY-ARMORED SUPERHERO SUIT with a bright YELLOW STAR ON THE CHEST and a GREEN CAPE AND COWL. In his hand, the COSMIC ROD - a five-foot long golden staff, electronics running its length and under ornate handgrips.

DAVID (V.O.)
But to the people of Opal City, for these last two years, I've been Starman. My brother hates that name, but you just want to trust a guy called Starman. It's a good guy name.

POLICE CHOPPER flies past. They dip to him. He waves back.

DAVID (V.O.)
I'm the protector of this city. Self-appointed, but it seems to be working out.

David holds aloft his Cosmic Rod -- it GLOWS -- ENERGY SURGING through the circuit patterns.

DAVID (V.O.)
But not much longer.

The Cosmic Rod LIFTS HIM INTO THE AIR when --

--RRRRIP! Something - a bullet? - TEARS through the center of David's chest -- PUNCHES A HOLE through his armor. David SEIZES in pain -- FALLS TOWARD THE STREET BELOW. Tries to regain control of the Rod, ENERGY SPARKING OFF it.

DAVID (V.O.)
I should've listened to Jack.

FALLING. SLOWING. SWERVING. FALLING MORE, like a single-engine plane sputtering out.

JACK (V.O.)
Could you please not do that?

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE/STORE - DAY

David in his BOXER SHORTS trying to put on his Starman suit, HOPPING, one leg in the costume, trying not to bump the stock shelves surrounding him....or the hanging BIRD CAGE containing a COCKATOO named FRED.

SUPER: 81 MINUTES EARLIER

DAVID

I had a meeting out this way.
Seemed like a waste of time driving
back to the penthouse.

Looks up at his unimpressed brother, JACK KNIGHT (27, in a classic 50s bowling shirt, cargo shorts and Doc Martins), standing in the doorway.

His dark hair flops as he keeps an eye on both David and on the storefront filled with rarities like Bakelite radios, Bugs Bunny telephones, and painted collector plates.

DAVID

Ludlow's interested in my solar
battery. Similar design to the one
in the Rod. It can store stellar
energy.

(gets no reaction)

C'mon Jack, solar panels that work
at night--

--Falls on his ass.

DAVID

What? Where am I supposed to do it?
Out in the alley?

JACK

No. Whatever you do, don't open the
back door.

DAVID

Why not?

JACK

Rats. Looks like they're doing a
remake of Ben back there.

DAVID

Rats? Since when? And who's Ben?

Jack shakes his head at his philistine brother. RADIO SQUAWK.
Their attention turns to a police scanner sitting on a shelf.

DISPATCHER (POLICE SCANNER)
Unit 2-Bravo-9, see the man in the
ragdoll mask at Ellsworth and
Second.

FRED THE COCKATOO
BRAWK! - 2-Bravo-9 - *BRAWK!*

JACK
Zip it, Fred.
(to David)
And oh-for-one on subject-changing.
You know I meant you could just not
put that get-up on at all.

DAVID
Geez, Jack. Not this again.

FRED THE COCKATOO
BRAWK! - This again. This again.

JANGLE of bells over the door. Jack turns to see NNE WHITMORE
(15, bright tights under the skirt of a school uniform, moves
like a cat sneaking into the cupboard). She avoids looking at
Jack and diverts behind rack of Hawaiian shirts.

DAVID
I don't have time for this.

JACK
Neither do I.

2-BRAVO-9 (POLICE SCANNER)
Dispatch, this is 2-Bravo-9. We're
10-100, any other units available?

Jack clocks a gentleman (appears 40) dressed for Oscar
Wilde's funeral - a pair of Victorian sunglasses perched on
his nose. He moves with precision and purpose as he examines
a selection of snowglobes. Jack calls him "THE SHADE."

JACK
So let me get this out before "The
Shade" out there starts in on how
my hand-drawn maps of Old Turk
County are lighting up the tilt
sign.

THE SHADE (O.S.)
If by that you mean fraudulent,
they are indeed.

FRED THE COCKATOO
BRAWK! - Never buys anything!

Jack shuts the door and throws a cover over Fred's cage.

JACK

Every time you put on that suit and fly off, I'm scared-a-pantload that it's going to be the last time.

DAVID

I understand that.

JACK

Then stop. You didn't invent that damn rod to play pulp hero.

DAVID

No, I invented it to be a solar-powered energy weapon.

JACK

Granted, that's not any better.

DAVID

And I agree. It's too powerful to be in the wrong hands, but it's a travesty not to put its power to good use in the right hands.

JACK

Why do the right hands have to be yours?

DAVID

Who else is there? I chose me because I trust me. And only me. That's why I put the biometric lock on the Rod. It will only ever work for me. And in the last two years, I've saved 1,417 lives, including Copperhead hijacking that 737.

JACK

You counted?

DAVID

You're damn right. So I can pull it out on you for this exact purpose.

JACK

Dad's gone. You're the only family I have.

DISPATCH (POLICE SCANNER)
Any available unit to Ellsworth and
Second. See the man in the doll
mask.

DAVID
Maybe it's not fair to ask this of
you - to be willing to accept this
risk.

HOPE O'DARE (POLICE SCANNER)
This is 5-Fox-3, I've got that 51-
50 at Ellsworth and Second.

DAVID
I don't see you pulling this on
your girlfriend. Hope's out there
every damn day and all she's got is
a gun, a badge and a Crown Vic.

DISPATCHER (POLICE SCANNER)
Acknowledged. See you at the Blue
Light after shift, Hope?

HOPE O'DARE (POLICE SCANNER)
Gotta miss it tonight, dispatch.
Got a hot date.

Jack smacks the police scanner off.

JACK
Yeah, but you're not going to be
around for the we-need-to-talk
moment we're gonna be having
tonight. It's gonna get heavy.

DAVID
Jack, no. I told you not to listen
to that thing. It just makes you
worry more. And stupid more.

THE SHADE (O.S.)
Mister Knight?

Jack opens the door and leans out to find...The Shade at a
box of eight-by-ten photographs. One pulled out.

JACK
That's a black-and-white eight-by-
ten of Hitler defaced by Charlie
Chaplin. Five hundred bones.

THE SHADE
Mmm. No. Chuck was left-handed.

JACK

Chuck?

THE SHADE

Nevertheless, it was my intention
to draw your eye toward something
rather more alarming.

JACK

What? You're gonna say my Tom &
Jerry cartoon cels are phony?

THE SHADE

No, but they may not be in your
possession much longer.

Shade nods toward Nne as she sneaks to the front door --
sheets of painted celluloid cartoon cels slip out from under
her sweater.

JACK

Hey, stop!

Nne MAKES A BREAK for it -- DASHING out the door.

--Jack SCRAMBLES to chase, knocking a ceramic coffee mug
marked "1939 WORLD'S FAIR" off a nearby table.

Shade catches it by the handle on the end of his cane and
sets it back without ever actually touching it.

EXT. GARDNER STREET - DAY

The Olde Town part of Opal, gas lamps and pretty bus benches.

Jack BOOKS IT down the sidewalk after Nne as she struggles to
stuff the remaining cels into the waistband of her skirt.

Nne dodges between oncoming pedestrians. Jack's not so
smooth.

JACK

Stop! Shoplifter!

Nne looks back and smiles, then turns forward to find a BEAT
COP. He puts a hand up to halt her.

--She RUNS UP a bench -- LEAPS, grabbing on a light post --
SWINGS into a sharp turn.

--She FLIES past the FRONT OF A BUS -- INCHES from FLATTENING
her.

Jack catches up to the Cop, and when the bus passes, there's no sign of her.

Jack looks down at the bus moving away and sees Nne hanging off one of the back windows with one hand and waving at Jack with the other. Then, the BUS STOPS...because *bus stop*.

JACK
Hey, Adam-12! Look!

BEAT COP
I'm 3-Charlie-3, who's Adam--?

Beat Cop spots Nne running across the street.

JACK
It was a TV-- Never mind, c'mon.

Jack and Beat Cop chase her into...

INT. ALLEY OFF GARDNER - DAY

...where there's no sign of her, just a dead end and several basement entrances to buildings on either side.

BEAT COP
Sorry about that. Hope she didn't get away with too much. You want to file a report?

Jack looks down at a storm drain and sees Nne smiling back at him. He can't help but crack a chuckle.

JACK
S'alright. With moves like that, I'd say whatever she got, she earned.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Jack trudges through the store. Shade still there, browsing like nothing happened.

THE SHADE
I see you have an 1886 Waterman fountain pen.

JACK
It's an '84.

THE SHADE
It's not, but I'll take it. I've never found an instrument that fit
(MORE)

THE SHADE (CONT'D)
my hand so comfortably. I should
have stocked up, back in the day.

JACK
What day would that be? The
Garfield Administration?

THE SHADE
Grover Cleveland, actually.

Jack, not even listening, opens the door to the office and
finds...

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

No David. And the skylight was left open.

THE SHADE (O.S.)
Mister Knight?

Jack turns back as The Shade puts on - yes - a TOP HAT and
displays the fountain pen between his fingers.

THE SHADE
How many "bones?"

He leaks a grin that makes skin crawl.

EXT. OPAL CITY BANK - TWILIGHT

Two CROOKS wearing cloth hoods with stitched doll's mouths
and triangle patch noses under cut-out eyes BUST out of the
bank and jump into a BEATER CONVERTIBLE and JAM ON THE GAS.

CROOK #1
Boss was right callin' this child's
play.

CROOK #2
Could do without these stupid
masks, though.

They pull off the masks and look ahead to see David as
STARMAN DESCENDING to the STREET IN FRONT OF THEM.

He aims the COSMIC ROD and two ENERGY BLASTS BLOW OUT THE
FRONT TIRES -- The front end drops and the RIMS SPARK ON
PAVEMENT.

Crooks PULL OUT GUNS -- take AIM AT STARMAN and UNLOAD,
literally, every shot in both their pistols. BYSTANDERS take
cover.

Starman uses the Rod to put up an "INVISIBLE" ENERGY SHIELD. Bullets BOUNCE OFF, revealing GLOWING RIPPLES in the shield with each strike.

With nothing left but SMOKING BARRELS...

DAVID

You want to try running?

David HOVERS off the ground.

They drop their guns and put their hands on their heads in utter dejection. David smiles. Bystanders APPLAUD.

EXT. FIVEPOINT MEDIA BUILDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

David lands on the ledge where we first saw him, by the Atlas statue. Takes a deep breath and looks out over *his* Opal.

Hears a FOOTSTEP. Looks over to the other side of the Atlas.

DAVID

What are you doing here?

EXT. RIVER WALK - NIGHT

Jack stands at the railing overlooking the Opal River running through Olde Town and sees a SHOOTING STAR. Probably David.

HOPE O'DARE (O.S.)

Sorry, I'm late.

Jack turns to find DETECTIVE HOPE O'DARE (31, fiery hair, porcelain skin, gold badge and a Glock 17). She's getting out of what is clearly an unmarked cop car.

HOPE O'DARE

I got a little tied up with a--

JACK

--A 51-50, I know.

HOPE O'DARE

It's sweet that you listen to the police band.

She plants a kiss on him, but he's unreceptive.

JACK

It's really not.

HOPE O'DARE

It's not because you want to hear my voice, is it?

JACK

I love hearing your voice. I love it more than I love hearing Roky Erickson's 1980 recording of "I Walked With a Zombie" live at Cabaret Zero.

HOPE O'DARE

That's-- uh. Thank you.

JACK

I listen to it because I need to know you're okay.

HOPE O'DARE

Of course, I'm okay. You need to not worry so much.

JACK

I can't help it.

HOPE O'DARE

Oh, Jack.

JACK

And it's a problem.

HOPE O'DARE

What are you trying to say?

JACK

I don't think I can keep doing this.

HOPE O'DARE

I'm police, Jack. This is my job.

JACK

I understand that.

HOPE O'DARE

It's in my blood. I'm seventh-generation cop, all my brothers are cops...

DISPATCH (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)

Urgent call, all units.

JACK

Can you turn that off?

DISPATCH (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
All units, respond to the Fivepoint
Media Building on Burnley. Man,
down. Repeat, man down.

HOPE O'DARE
Jack, I have to--

JACK
--I know. I know. It's just that's
exactly what I'm--

HOPE O'DARE
--I can't do this now.
(into radio)
Dispatch, do you have an ID on the
man down? Is that an officer down?

JACK
You should go. We can do this on
the flip-- later. Do it later.

Hope nods and turns to her car.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
(voice breaking)
It's Starman. Somebody shot
Starman.

She stops while that registers. Silence until...

2-BRAVO-9 (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
2-Bravo-9 on our way.

MATT O'DARE (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
5-Fox-2, here. Matt O'Dare is
movin'!

2-BRAVO-7 (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
2-Bravo-7 en route.

3-CHARLIE-10 (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
3-Charlie-10, bookin' as fast as I
can.

Finally, an opening...

HOPE O'DARE
(into radio)
This is 5-Fox-3, coming off 10-7.

Jack jumps in the car, waiting for her drive.

HOPE O'DARE
Jack, you can't--

JACK
--It's David.

HOPE O'DARE
What are you--
(realizes, into radio)
Be there in half a shake.

Drop the radio, yanks the gear shift and peels out.

EXT. FIVEPOINT MEDIA BUILDING - NIGHT

Ground level. Squad cars form a barricade. CRIME SCENE tape strung up. DAVID'S BODY lies in a pool of green cape and dark red blood. Illuminated by a HELICOPTER SPOTLIGHT above.

UNIFORMS scurry under the command of DETECTIVE MATT O'DARE (39, Hope's disheveled brother, mustache too shaggy to be regulation, wears his badge like a license to be an ass).

MATT O'DARE
(re: helicopter)
Somebody get on the horn - get an
airship to nudge them vultures out
of here. No damn press.

Matt turns to find Hope, flashing her badge to uniforms as she goes under the tape. A dazed Jack trailing behind. PARAMEDICS come up behind them and BLAZE PAST straight to David's body.

HOPE O'DARE
There's no avoiding that. He fell
off the Five Point Media building.

Hope gestures to the windows above, SMARTPHONE and professional VIDEO CAMERAS pointed out nearly every window.

MATT O'DARE
Got'dang it.

Looks down and sees Jack.

MATT O'DARE
You did not bring your damn boy toy
to a crime scene.

HOPE O'DARE
(soft)
He says Starman's his brother.

MATT O'DARE

Bullsh--

JACK

--Davey!

He charges toward the body, but Matt and Hope block him.

HOPE O'DARE

You don't want to see this, Jack.

MATT O'DARE

Maybe it ain't even your bro-ham.

Hope sees the paramedics remove the cowl, revealing that it is, in fact David.

HOPE O'DARE

No. It is.

David coughs up blood.

PARAMEDIC

Holy crap, he's alive! Starman's alive.

Jack's eyes bulge in equal measures of relief and horror. Hope back him up toward a bench.

HOPE O'DARE

Just sit down Jack, and let us and the paramedics do our jobs.

Sits him on the bench. Clocks a GLIMMER under the bench - the Cosmic Rod. Lifeless, NO ENERGY PULSING. She picks it up.

MATT O'DARE

Holy hell. Is that it?

Matt grabs the Rod out of Hope's hands. Shakes it around.

MATT O'DARE

The famous Cosmic Rod. How d'ya work it?

JACK

You can't. It only works for him. Biometric-mumbo-jumbo-something.

PARAMEDIC

He's trying to say something.

David can only GRUNT. Reaching toward Matt.

JACK

The Rod. He wants the Rod.

MATT O'DARE

This is evidence.

JACK

GIVE IT TO HIM!

HOPE O'DARE

We don't know what that thing can do. Maybe we should just...

Matt reluctantly lets Hope take it. She puts it in David's hand and he grips it tight. ENERGY PULSES, but it's WEAK.

JACK

C'mon, Davey. C'mon.

Jack looks up at all the cameras pointing out of the building.

INT. DARKNESS - NIGHT

Somewhere. Pitch black except for the light coming from an iPad which is playing streaming video of from the Crime Scene showing Starman being loaded into an ambulance. The face illuminated by the iPad is that of THE RAGDOLL.

Thick, dyed RED DREADLOCKS like yarn sticking out of a cloth mask with the same PATCH NOSE and STITCHED MOUTH seen on the crooks. Except when he speaks, the mouth moves, like it's stitched to his lips. And instead of eyeholes, BUTTONS. That move.

THE RAGDOLL

This is for real.

DOLL #1 (O.S.)

It's all over the news and the net.
It's for real.

THE RAGDOLL

It's time to take it back. It's time to take it all back! Now!

The iPad illuminates people marching past him on either side. We'll call them Dolls, all wearing the doll mask. And they just keep coming...and coming...and coming...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. MAGPIE ELECTRONICS STORE - NIGHT

LCD TVs on display in the storefront window.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA
This is Maria Mendoza with our top
story tonight. According to
eyewitness reports, Starman,
protector of Opal City, is dead.

Dolls run past the window. Then some more, waving guns, bats
and crowbars.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA
And now we're receiving word, here
in the WFP-TV studios, that gangs
of hooligans and criminals have
taken to the streets, apparently
emboldened by tonight's events.
Violence and looting--

--Window SMASHED by a Doll with a baseball bat. More Dolls
run past, filling the street. PULL BACK to find a THRONG of
DOLLS MARCHING down the street like a WALL - they POUR OVER
THE TOP of abandoned cars, threatening to flatten anyone in
their path.

THE SHADE (O.S.)
I think you lads have gone far
enough.

Ahead of them, standing right on the double yellow, The Shade
smiles, leaning on his cane, looking over the top of his dark
spectacles. A casts a SHADOW under a streetlight.

DOLL #1
Who's gonna stop us, weirdo?

THE SHADE
I shall do so, however reluctantly,
if forced to.

SIRENS approach in the distance.

DOLL #1
Like to see you try.

THE SHADE
I'm afraid you won't see anything
at all.

The Shade's SHADOW EXPANDS toward the Dolls, until--

--Behind him, the FLASHING LIGHTS of a dozen POLICE CARS pour in from cross streets to oppose the Dolls.

The Shade looks over his shoulder, smiles and turns back to the Dolls.

THE SHADE

It seems my services aren't needed here after all. How fortunate for you.

The Shade SNAPS his fingers and every light on the street - street lights, neon signs, video screens - GOES OUT.

Only the HEADLIGHTS and FLASHERS of the police cars STAY ON. As the police reach the point where The Shade stood, they stop and form a blockade. The LIGHTS FLICKER BACK ON.

The Shade VANISHES - nowhere to be seen.

Doll #1 looks to another Doll. They shrug. Then EVERY DOLL PULLS A GUN -- taking cover behind abandoned cars -- and OPENS FIRE on the police.

EXT. ST. ARCHIE'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Ambulance SCREECHES up to the door. Doors SMACK open and the Paramedics run David (still clutching the Rod) on a gurney into...

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jack jumps out of the ambulance and follows David. Outside we see Hope and Matt running in to catch up.

PARAMEDIC

G-S-W and blunt trauma. Fell forty floors. Shallow breaths but respo--

E.R. DOCTOR (O.S.)

--How can someone fall forty--?

E.R. DOCTOR and MEDICAL STAFF meet the Paramedics -- see that it's Starman and take over.

E.R. DOCTOR

We need to get this body armor off and see what's going on under there.

Medical staff wheel David through a set of double doors. E.R. Doctor stops Jack, Hope and Matt from continuing through before backing through the doors himself.

MATT O'DARE

That body armor and the Rod are all evidence--

HEAD NURSE

I understand, but the priority is saving Starman's life.

JACK

I'm his brother, I know his medical history.

Nurse looks to Hope and Matt for confirmation. They nod.

HEAD NURSE

(to Jack)

Come with me.

She takes Jack aside. Hope follows. Matt walks up to the double doors - eyeing that rod.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

NURSES scurrying around - busy night. Head Nurse gives Jack a clipboard.

HEAD NURSE

Fill this out.

JACK

He...he just went in that room. He's almost dead.

HEAD NURSE

Quickly then.

ANNOUNCER (LOUDSPEAKER)

Incoming. Three G-S-W's, two stab wounds.

HEAD NURSE

I'll be right back.

Jack starts filling out the forms as Hope drifts closer.

HOPE O'DARE

They'll do everything they can, but things are getting crazy out there.

JACK

I used to nightmare about this day. Can I do that, verbify nightmare?

HOPE O'DARE

You already did, so, yeah, Jack.
Sure.

JACK

I imagined that one day I'd get
that call, but I never thought
about after - Now I'm in the after
and I don't know what to do.

HOPE O'DARE

I don't think anyone would. If it
were my one of my brothers--

JACK

One day it's gonna be. --I'm sorry.
I shouldn't have said that.

HOPE O'DARE

It's okay, Jack. One day, it might
be.

JACK

You know that poem by Auden?

HOPE O'DARE

I'm sorry, Jack, you know I--

JACK

--It's about how when someone you
love dies, you feel like the world
should come to a complete stop, but
it doesn't. There's forms to fill
out and--

HOPE O'DARE

--He's not dead yet, Jack. He can
pull through.

DISPATCH (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)

All units. All units. OCP is on
emergency alert status. All units
are now on duty. No 10-7s. All
units are now on duty.

HOPE O'DARE

The world certainly hasn't stopped.
If anything, it's gotten worse.

JACK

It has, hasn't it?

DISPATCH (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
Unit 5-Fox-3, please report to
Fourth and Saarinen Way - take
command of barricade operation.

HOPE O'DARE
(into radio)
This is 5-Fox-3, acknowledged.
(to Jack)
Jack, I'm sorry, I have to--

JACK
No. Not now.

HOPE O'DARE
I'm needed--

JACK
--Yeah, by me. I need you.

HOPE O'DARE
I've told you before, Jack. I'm--

JACK
--I know, you're a police. Fuzz for
life.

HOPE O'DARE
I'll get back here as soon as--

JACK
--Just go.

Hope knows she can't fix this, better to just WALK.

JACK
Don't come back here dead, Hope.

HOPE O'DARE
How do I come back if I'm--
(realizes where she is)
No. I won't.

Hope disappears through the double doors, leaving Jack alone
with a clipboard and buzzing florescent lights.

INT. NNE'S TENEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Small, cluttered. An old tube TV in the corner tuned to the
news.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA
...Reports of rioting coming in
from all corners of the city. The
(MORE)

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA (CONT'D)

Mayor has declared a curfew effective immediately along with a shelter-in-place order. Anyone on the street will be subject to arrest.

Nne pushes a heavy hutch to block the door. DEDE (37, haggard, sickly, bathrobe) hangs in the door to the bedroom. Needs the doorway for support.

DEDE

Nne, baby, what are you doing?

NNE

Nothing. Get back in bed, mama. You shouldn't be up and around.

DEDE

(through coughs)

You don't tell me what to do.

NNE

I do when you're not following Doctor's orders.

Nne grabs a roll of duct tape and starts affixing couch cushions over the windows.

DEDE

It's bad out there?

NNE

TV says someone shot Starman. All hell broke loose.

DEDE

Nne?

NNE

Sorry, mama. All heck.

DEDE

I'll help y--

--Breaks into a coughing fit. Nne drops the tape and cushions and helps her back to bed.

NNE

I've got this, mama. We'll be safe in here. You need to take it easy.

DEDE

You're such a good, girl. Nne. I'm sorry. I'm supposed to be taking care of you.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA

A little good news on this, what's turning out to be the worst night Opal City has seen since the Great Blackout of 1987.

NNE

We do what we have to do, mama. Now, you lie down.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA

We're now getting word that reports of Starman's death may be premature. We go live to Lucas Carr at St. Archibald Hospital.

INT. DARKNESS - NIGHT

Again, The Ragdoll's face illuminated only by an iPad.

WFP REPORTER LUCAS CARR

I'm here at St. Archie's where hospital staff is telling me that Starman, now known to be Opal citizen David Knight, is alive and in critical condition. In fact he's going into surgery as we speak.

THE RAGDOLL

(to o.s. Dolls)

Whoever did this - I don't know, but see to it that it's finished.

HIT-DOLL #1

You got it, Ragdoll.

Many o.s. FOOTSTEPS rush out of wherever this is.

THE RAGDOLL

By the end of this night, we won't be the disposable playthings of Opal City. We'll be the top of the heap!

The Ragdoll laughs and pulls away from the light of the iPad into the nothing.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - TRAUMA ROOM ONE - NIGHT

Jack pushes through the double doors and finds the room empty and in disarray. On a gurney, David's Starman suit has been cut and ripped apart but rests in a vaguely humanoid shape on the bloody sheets.

Jack runs his fingers over the kevlar and cloth.

JACK

I want so much to say "I tolja so,"
but...I don't know...

A RUCKUS outside the double doors. Looks through the windows to see paramedics wheeling in more RIOT VICTIMS. Some forced to walk in under their own power.

JACK

Instead, I guess I should say I'm
sorry. Maybe I was wrong to give
you so much crap for being Starman.
Not for naming yourself that, it's
still so Mickey Mouse. I wanted you
to be safe, you were just making
sure everyone was safe.

Pushes open a door. Down the corridor, he sees more bloody, but less injured Riot Victims lining the wall, waiting for medical attention.

JACK

If this is what Opal turns into the
moment Starman's not here, then who
am I to read you the riot act abou--
Okay, poor choice of words tonight.

Goes back to the armor-strewn gurney.

JACK

You gotta pull though, David. If
not because I need my brother, then
because Opal City needs Starman.
And this time, I'll be there for
you. Whatever you need.

EXT. SAARINEN WAY - NIGHT

Hope slams her Crown Vic into place behind a barricade of cruisers shielding a team of Uniforms holding off a swarm of Dolls. Jumps out of her car and...

HOPE O'DARE

(to no one in particular)
Sit rep.

MASON O'DARE (O.S.)
The Doll-heads have fourth to ninth
locked down. We can't make any
headway. They keep coming.

Hope looks to find her brother MASON (25, clean-cut, beat
cop, not a hair out of place).

HOPE O'DARE
Mason, what are you doing here?

MASON O'DARE
Protecting and serving. With two
O'Dares on the scene, these
freakazoids don't stand a chance.

Hope looks past Mason at the onslaught.

HOPE O'DARE
What would Dad do in this
situation?

MASON O'DARE
He'd run their asses down.

HOPE O'DARE
Rank, Mason.

MASON O'DARE
He'd run their asses down, sis.

HOPE O'DARE
Break the barricade formation.

Hope stands up on the roof of the first car to face the
oncoming Dolls. Mason's car. Mason hands her the car mic.

HOPE O'DARE (ON P.A.)
Attention. Curfew is in effect. You
are ordered to return to your
homes. Anyone who approaches risks
being turned into a speed bump.

Mason REVS THE ENGINE. Hope drops the mic and PULLS HER GUN.
Mason grins as the mini-armada of police cars STARTS MOVING
toward the Dolls. They're not slowing down.

Hope's not so sure this was a good plan now.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - TRAUMA ROOM ONE - NIGHT

Jack still pondering David's Starman gear. Medical staff
BURSTS THROUGH THE DOOR with a bad-off Riot Victim, E.R.
Doctor barreling in behind them.

ER DOCTOR

Sir, we need the room. It's turning
into a war-zone out there.

Jack scrambles to gather up David's costume and spots the
COSMIC ROD, lying on the floor. SCOOPS that up too and RUSHES
out to...

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jack comes to an ABRUPT HALT as a GANG OF FOUR HIT-DOLLS bust
through the entrance.

HIT-DOLL #1

Where is he!?

(clocking Jack)

You! Where is he? Where is Starman?

Jack drops David's costume, leaving only the Cosmic Rod in
his hand.

--ROD POWERS UP, PULSING ENERGY in JACK'S HANDS.

His eyes pop, his jaw drops, and the ROD BUZZES with power.

JACK

I'll be a monkey's...brother.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

As before, a team of Hit-Dolls face down Jack.

HIT-DOLL #1
I asked you a question. Where is
Starman?

JACK
Me? How would I know?

The Hit-Doll team menaces toward Jack.

HIT-DOLL #1
You're holding his magic stick.

HIT-DOLL #2
Not for much longer. Hand it over.

Jack turns his attention to the Cosmic Rod.

JACK
Over my dead body.

The Hit-Dolls aim their guns at Jack.

HIT-DOLL #1
Yours, Starman's, whoever's...

Jack aims the Rod at the approaching Hit-Dolls. It throws
SPARKS and FIZZLES.

HIT-DOLL #2
You done playin' hero, kid?

The Rod HUMS, growing in intensity.

JACK
I'm not playing.

Jack UNLEASHES a MASSIVE BLAST of ENERGY.

EXT. ST. ARCHIE'S - E.R. ENTRANCE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The Hit Dolls are THROWN CLEAR of the Emergency Room --
SMACKING into the SIDE of an AMBULANCE -- Their weapons go
FLYING.

Jack CHASES out to find the Hit-Dolls trying to get back to
their feet.

Jack runs up and KICKS HIT DOLL #4 over as he reaches for his gun. Even knocked down, Hit Doll #4 is inches from reaching the gun.

JACK
No such luck, Stretch.

Jack BLASTS it with the Cosmic Rod -- it SLIDES into some SHRUBS.

He WHACKS HIT-DOLL #4 UPSIDE THE HEAD -- KNOCKS HIM OUT.

Jack turns to find HIT DOLL #3 right behind him.

Hit-Doll #3 STRIKES JACK with a NERVE CHOP to the NECK, then KUNG-FU KICKS HIM in the ABDOMEN, sending him stumbling back, but never losing grip of the Cosmic Rod.

JACK
(in pain)
Nice moves. Think I saw that combo on Richard Dragon, Kung-Fu Fighter last Saturday morning.

Jack falls on his butt and LOOSES ANOTHER BLAST, sending Hit-Doll #3 head first into a vending machine -- KNOCKS HIM OUT -- dumps CANS OF SODA all over him.

JACK
Yeah, I meant to do that.

Jack turns his attention to Hit-Doll #2, SHOOTING at him. The ROD PULLS JACK UP into the air.

JACK
Whoa! Down, boy! Down, boy!

All the BULLETS MISS.

HIT-DOLL #2
Where'd he...?

Hit-Doll #2 looks up to find JACK'S BOOTS IN HIS FACE as he FALLS BACK to Earth.

As Jack gets to his feet, he hears the SOUND OF A GUN COCKING. He spins around to find Hit-Doll #1.

HIT-DOLL #1
Drop the stick and maybe I'll only shoot you in the knee.

Jack aims the Rod, but only gets a few SPARKS. Hit-Doll #1 AIMS DIRECTLY AT JACK'S HEAD.

GUNSHOT.

Hit-Doll #1 DROPS to the ground as MATT O'DARE comes sauntering out of the E.R., reholstering his weapon.

MATT O'DARE

Not a bad show, Jackie-boy. Like brother, like brother, eh?

JACK

I'm just as surprised as you. I guess my biometrics are close enough to Davey's-- What are you doing here? I thought all units--

MATT O'DARE

--Somebody's got to cover the hospital, yeah? We're a target right now. Why don't we head back inside? Get you looked at?

JACK

I just need a little time right now.

MATT O'DARE

T'ain't smart stayin' out here, son. Need to keep you safe. And the Rod. Don't want that fallin' in the wrong hands now.

JACK

It's not going to.

Jack grips it tight to his chest.

MATT O'DARE

Very nearly did. How 'bout you give me the Rod. I'll get it locked up safe, down in the slabs and we'll get you a ham n' cheese and I'll bet I can scrounge a beer.

JACK

I just don't even want to be here.

MATT O'DARE

Pardon?

As the Rod RE-ENERGIZES.

JACK

I said, I don't even want to be here.

MATT O'DARE

Who--

The Rod PULLS JACK UP, not just a few feet, but HIGH INTO THE SKY.

MATT O'DARE

...does? Dagnabbit.

EXT. SKIES OVER OPAL CITY - NIGHT

Jack hangs on the Rod for his life.

JACK

I could've used that beer first!

Below, RIOT CROWDS and FIRES and FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS all over the city.

INT. NNE'S TENEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nne peeks out under the cushion taped over the window. Dede sounds like she's COUGHING OUT A LUNG.

NNE

Mom, use your inhaler.

DEDE

I'm trying.

Nne rushes to Dede and examines the inhaler.

NNE

It's empty. You need a new one.
Now.

DEDE

I'll be fine.

NNE

No, you won't. Remember last time?

Nne puts on a jacket and get her boots on.

DEDE

You can't go out there. The pharmacy's gonna be closed. We don't have the money.

NNE

We have some money.

Nne checks her smartphone. Cracked screen, but we see EBAY and the words "TOM & JERRY CEL - SOLD."

NNE

I have to go. You need your
medicine. There's no two ways...

Nne peels back the cushion and squeezes out the window.

DEDE

The street is filled with those
doll-masked gangs.

NNE

I won't be on the street.

And she's gone. Off Dede; worried.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - NIGHT

Jack lies CRASHED on the floor, looking up at the open
skylight and covered in collectible tourism spoons, baseball
cards and some shattered porcelain Looney Tunes figurines.

Cosmic Rod lies on the floor beside him.

JACK

That was...kinda cool.

Sifting the broken stuff off him.

JACK

Only kinda...damn it.

Turns on a vintage RCA TV he keeps on his desk and keeps an
eye on the live coverage as he cleans up.

WFP ANCHOR MARIA MENDOZA

--Curfew remains in effect.
Meanwhile, in pursuit of what
happened to Starman this evening,
Fivepoint Media has obtained these
images taken by an Opal City Police
Helicopter moments before Starman
fell to Earth.

Jack looks to see a FUZZY SHOT of David in Starman gear atop
the Fivepoint Building talking to a shadowy figure, ALL IN
BLACK wearing a TOP HAT.

JACK

The Shade? What the fu--

--FOOTSTEPS out in the store. Jack grabs the Rod. It's an
instinct now.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Dark. Jack edges out into the store, Cosmic Rod at the ready.

JACK
Who's there?

Nothing.

JACK
This is not the night to scramble
my eggs, so I advise you put one in
your shoe and beat it.

Turns a corner and finds a shadowy figure removing a TOP HAT.

THE SHADE
I sometimes think you're as much a
man out of time as I am, Jack. I
may call you Jack, mayn't I?

The Rod ENERGIZES in Jack's hand, illuminating The Shade.

THE SHADE
Your style and facility with the
heterodox English of the forties,
fifties and sixties - nineteen-
forties, fifties and sixties that
is - I find it musical.

JACK
What did you do to my brother?

THE SHADE
I've done nothing to David, nor
would I...except perhaps in extreme
circumstance.

The ROD HUMS and SPARKS with Jack's rage.

JACK
I saw you. You were on the roof
before he went earthbound.

THE SHADE
I was there. To talk to him. As I
have done many times.

JACK
What about?

THE SHADE
A subject of which I suspect you
would approve.

JACK
What subject?

THE SHADE
Putting down the Rod.

JACK
I'll put it down when I'm goo--

THE SHADE
--I meant him. I asked him many
times not engage in this high
profile super-heroism.

JACK
I know why I wanted him to quit.
What is it to you?

The Shade walks down the aisle, running his black-gloved
finger along a table, past antique BOTTLES OF an old-timey
snake-oil called GINGOLD,...

THE SHADE
I've seen what's become of places
like Starling and Central City when
these masked heroes arrive.

...past an amulet depicting a BLACK CONDOR,...

JACK
--What? What happens?

...and past a promotional HOURGLASS stamped with the name
TYLER PHARMACEUTICALS. All these speak to future adventures.

THE SHADE
The criminal element raises their
game. It upsets the balance, Jack.

JACK
David did a lot of good putting on
that derpy cape--

THE SHADE
--He kept up. He held against
rising evil. Until he didn't. And
with the fall of Starman, the
scales tipped. And in a place with
a history like Opal's--

JACK
--What do you mean "a history like--

--EXPLOSION in the distance. Jack can see a light burst out in the city through the shop windows. The Shade ambles up to Jack.

THE SHADE

I implored David to lay down his Cosmic Rod, now I must ask you to take it up. Opal City needs a Starman. To restore and maintain the balance.

JACK

I'm no super-hero.

The Shade puts a finger on the Cosmic Rod and points it away from himself before striding past him.

THE SHADE

Then become one. And sharpish. It's going to be harder now than it was for David, and the clock is ticking.

Jack follows The Shade into...

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

JACK

What clock?

The Shade stops next to Fred's birdcage and turns back to Jack. Holds up his wrist, displaying his...

JACK

That's a 1926 pre-crown-logo Rolex.

FRED THE COCKATOO

BRAWK! - Fancy!

THE SHADE

And it's ticking away the hours and minutes until I must act. You have until sunrise, you and Opal's Finest, to restore balance to my city.

JACK

Or what?

The Shade opens the back door.

JACK

Wait, don't--

NATTERING RATS scurry in. They're everywhere. A virtual carpet of vermin. FRED SQUAWKS his head off.

THE SHADE

Or I do it.

JACK

What are you going to do?

A pitch black shadow falls over everything, extinguishing all light. The nattering STOPS. And Fred's squawks.

THE SHADE (O.S.)

Do you recall the Great Blackout of 1987, Jack?

Jack FIRES Up the Rod to a dull GLOW to find himself ALONE.

JACK

I was just an ankle-biter in-- Huh?

Jack looks out into...

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND KNIGHT'S PAST - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

No Shade. No rats.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Bumps into his birdcage. Closed, but FRED IS GONE too.

JACK

Fred?

Jack's grieving is interrupted by the sound of SHATTERING GLASS. Jack rushes with the ENERGIZED COSMIC ROD into...

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - CONTINUOUS

...where he finds a glass panel knocked out of the front door to unlock it.

Hope is helping Mason walk/drag himself. He's BLEEDING from a BULLET WOUND in his leg.

Off Jack; weight of the world.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - NIGHT

Mason's laid out on a vintage fainting couch, practically passed out. Hope blots the sweat from his forehead. Jack finishes packing ice on his wound.

JACK

Bleeding stopped. Looks like it missed the arteries and stuff. I'm pretty sure it hit bone, though.

(to Mason)

I'll bet a complete set of Gumby ViewMaster slides that your femur's fractured.

HOPE O'DARE

You'll hunker down here, Mason, until we can get you to St. Archie's.

Mason nods and then passes out. Hope stands up and paces. Clocks Fred's empty cage through the office door.

HOPE O'DARE

Where's Fred?

JACK

Long story. Speaking of which, you ever heard of the Blackout of '87?

HOPE O'DARE

Sure. My brother Clarence was already on the force back then.

JACK

What happened?

HOPE O'DARE

Nobody knows what caused it, but after the lights came back on, there were almost two hundred missing person reports filed. To this day, not a one of them has turned up.

JACK

(Twilight Zone theme)

Doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo.

HOPE O'DARE

No, the weird part is that included in the 200 was the entire Benetti

(MORE)

HOPE O'DARE (CONT'D)
Crime Family, except for the one
who was behind bars out in the Turk
County Federal Pen.

JACK
(to himself)
That must be what he had in mind
when he said he'd restore the
balance. Disappearing hundreds of
people...

HOPE O'DARE
Who?

Off Jack; deep breath. Gonna have to do the long story.

INT. ST ARCHIE'S - SURGICAL THEATRE - NIGHT

Matt stands up in the empty gallery watching David undergoing
spinal surgery. CELL RINGS. Answers.

MATT O'DARE
Yeah.
(pause)
He's still alive. He's in surgery
now.
(pause)
Nah, I didn't get it. It's gone
now.
(pause)
Yeah, I know where it is.
(pause)
I don't think--
(pause)
Yeah. I comprendé all right.

Snaps the phone off and SMASHES IT INTO THE FLOOR. The
SURGICAL STAFF all look up to see Matt storming out.

EXT. SUTTON DRUG STORE - NIGHT

Nne emerges from the neighboring alley and finds the doors
and windows all smashed in. LOOTING DOLLS within. She ducks
inside...

INT. SUTTON DRUG STORE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

She dodges Dolls in the aisle as they fill sacks with
whatever. She climbs up on top of an aisle and jumps from top
to top until she gets to the PHARMACY at the back.

She leaps behind the counter and finds a MED-THIEVING DOLL
scooping up boxes of medicine into a sack. He pulls a gun on
her.

NNE

Please, don't shoot. I just need an
inhaler. One. For my mama.

MED-THIEVING DOLL

Get out of here, kid.

She turns away, but as the Med-Theiving Doll lowers his guard
-- she KICKS him in the head, knocking him out.

Rummages through the wreckage and finds THE INHALER. Stuffs
it in her jacket and runs away.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND KNIGHT'S PAST - NIGHT

As before.

HOPE O'DARE

And the rats were just gone?

JACK

In a flash. Well, the opposite of a
flash. In a...dark. That a thing?

HOPE O'DARE

And Fred?

JACK

And poor Fred.

HOPE O'DARE

Why were the rats there in the
first place? You keep that alley
clean.

JACK

I don't know, they just started
showing up a few weeks ago.

HOPE O'DARE

Something must have driven them
here. But where from?

JACK

(epiphany)
The Shanghai tunnels.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - MOMENTS LATER

Jack spreads out an antique hand-drawn map.

JACK

These maps were drawn by Brian
Savage, he was the sheriff of Turk
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

County in the 1800s, before Opal was incorporated. It was a lot like Mos Eisley back then. Y'know, from Star Wars?

HOPE O'DARE

A wretched hive of scum and villainy?

JACK

Without the sweet-ass landspeeders. Back then there were these tunnels that honeycombed all under the town. Sheriff Savage included them on this map.

HOPE O'DARE

Shanghai tunnels?

JACK

Because old freighter crews would use them to gank young men and press 'em into service - Shanghai them - as deck hands. Now, the tunnels are all but forgotten.

HOPE O'DARE

Somebody didn't forget them and they forced the rats topside. Maybe this Ragdoll Gang is using it as a base.

JACK

I think I know where to find an entrance.

Hope pulls her gun, checks the chamber - ready to roll.

HOPE O'DARE

Where is it?

JACK

Nah. I'm not telling you. Not yet.

HOPE O'DARE

We need to get this checked out.

JACK

I'll check it out. Your place is with your brother.

HOPE O'DARE

Jack, you're not trained for this sort of thing.

JACK

Yeah, but apparently my biometrics work on the Cosmic Rod. All you've got is that admittedly very impressive peashooter. I'm doing this.

Jack takes a classic leather biker JACKET off his vintage rack and throws it on.

HOPE O'DARE

Jack, please don't.

JACK

Worried something will happen to me?

Notices a pair of WWII TANK GOGGLES on a Styrofoam wig head. Grabs those too, puts them on - pushed up into his hair.

HOPE O'DARE

Yes. I am.

Jack takes up the Rod and ENERGIZES IT.

JACK

I know how that feels, but now, I think I know how you feel. And Mason. And Matt.

HOPE O'DARE

And David.

Jack strides into the office, under the stars shining through the skylight. Nods his head, causing the goggles to fall in place on his face.

JACK

Mostly "and David."

Smiles and FLIES OUT THE SKYLIGHT.

EXT. SKY OVER KNIGHT'S PAST - NIGHT

Jack FLIES STRAIGHT UP, white-knuckling the Cosmic Rod.

JACK

Wah-hoooooooooooo!!!!!!!

And almost STRAIGHT BACK DOWN to land in...

EXT. ALLEY OFF GARDNER - NIGHT

Where Nne escaped him and the Beat Cop earlier.

JACK
(to himself)
A thousand feet up to go a half-a-
block west. Jack, you might be
liking this too much. That won't
last.

Jack tries a basement door. Locked.

JACK
She couldn't have gotten through
this one.

Tries another one. OPENS RIGHT UP into...

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

Like a sewer, standing water on the floor, ancient brick walls and the only light is the GLOW OF THE COSMIC ROD as Jack explores.

JACK
(to himself)
It's okay, Jack. You've been in
worse places than this, right?
Remember that storage unit in
Keystone where you found that
collection of Harry Ajax Hawaiian
shirts? Now that, that was scary.

Jack steps cautiously, trying not to SPLASH too much with each step. It's not working. He hears something. ROAR OF A CROWD. Stops dead to listen...

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.)
We are born with one purpose. To
rise.

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - RAGDOLL'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

A carved out intersection of several tunnels. THE RAGDOLL stands atop BIG WOODEN CRATES (some marked "9mm CARTRIDGES," others marked "COMPOUND 4") -- as his stage/soapbox. He addresses a THRONG OF MASKED DOLLS. Exceptionally animated.

THE RAGDOLL
We are never lower than at the
moment of our birth. We can't even
hold our own heads up, we have
nowhere to go but up.

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

Jack hears SPLASHING coming toward him. Many FOOTSTEPS.

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.)
So we climb, working for the
highest amongst us, when they deign
to lower a hand to us.

Jack turns a corner and finds a team of TUNNEL DOLLS coming
right at him.

TUNNEL DOLL #1
Get him!

Jack tries to blast them, but he only gets SPARKS.

SHAKES IT - like that'll fix it.

Nothing. Turns and runs.

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - RAGDOLL'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

The Ragdoll builds the throngs into a frenzy. His BUTTON EYES
MOVING AROUND but looking at - who can tell?

THE RAGDOLL
Now, they push us back down. They
don't want us anymore. And they
will take whatever we've been able
to cobble for ourselves, whether
they need it or not. But we have
built for ourselves. Right beneath
their feet, we've built the arsenal
we need to take back Opal. Our time
is now. We have Olde Town!

CHEERS.

THE RAGDOLL
We have Snejberg Square!

CHEERS.

THE RAGDOLL
Next, we take City Center and their
precious financial district.

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

Jack trudges through the water, spots a LIGHT up ahead. RUNS
TOWARD IT.

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.)
Once we have the police department,
city hall and the central nodes of
Opal's communication and power
(MORE)

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
infrastructures, Opal will be ours.
We do not occupy. We own!

Coming up on the light, Jack slows down. Looks back at the
TUNNEL DOLLS CLOSING IN -- tries the Rod again. SPARKS,
again. PANEL POPS OFF the Rod.

Under it Jack finds an LED CHARGE INDICATOR - 02%.

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.)
They made us into their Ragdolls,
and threw us away, but now - now we
will rise again. From the trash to
the top. And nothing can stop us.
Not even Starman!

CHEERS, which get louder as Jack, in defeat, arrives at the
opening and it's...

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - RAGDOLL'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

The Ragdoll points past the throng at Jack,...

THE RAGDOLL
And certainly not that guy.

...stuck between the throng and the Tunnel Dolls.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

Throng from Ragdoll's chamber CLOSING IN on one side. TUNNEL DOLLS that were chasing him CLOSING IN on the other. Looks at the Rod. CHARGE CHANGES from 02% to 01%.

JACK

Funny thing is, I've dreamt about this moment, except you were all the two-sided Raggedy Anns made by the Georgine Novelty Company in 1931. Sleepy-faced on one side, awake on the...yeah, this ain't getting me anywhere is it?

NNE (O.S.)

Mister Knight?

Jack looks back, forth, then up where he finds A LADDER HOLE to street level and NNE AT THE TOP, shouting down.

NNE

Up here, Mister Knight, hurry.

Jack looks at the Rod. Still 01%.

JACK

This will only be ironic if it works.

Grips the Rod tight and closes his eyes.

JACK

Save me, the one percent!

FLIES UP THE LADDER HOLE. Tunnel Dolls follow under and OPEN FIRE after him.

EXT. STREET LEVEL - NIGHT

Jack FLIES OUT and CRASHES into a mailbox. Nne, with all her might, shoves the manhole cover in place. RANDOM DOLLS running AROUND in the b.g., breaking things, looting, etc.

Jack recovers and realizes who Nne is.

JACK

You.

NNE

Sorry, gotta run.

Nne DASHES OFF. Jack tries to chase but TRIPS.

Notices a TUNNEL DOLL'S FINGERS prying from under the manhole cover. JACK STOMPS ON 'EM. He smirks at the FALLING CRY OF PAIN and SPLASH at the bottom.

A RANDOM DOLL notices Jack. Jack notices him back -- glances at CHARGE 00% -- BOOKS IT OUT OF THERE. On foot.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Matt lounges across several chairs with one hand on his gun and the other playing with a Zippo lighter. SURGEON emerges.

SURGEON

You were waiting for word on David Knight?

Matt stands when--

THE SHADE (O.S.)

Opal City...

Matt looks to find the Shade standing next to him. Awhere-the-hell-did-he-come-from look on Matt's face.

THE SHADE

...is awaiting word.

MATT O'DARE

How's it looking, Doc?

SURGEON

The bullet ripped him up good. He's going to make it, though.

MATT O'DARE

But...?

SURGEON

The fall -- He'll likely never walk again.

The Shade nods in a way that the Surgeon takes as "dismissed."

MATT O'DARE

Opal City without a Starman. I don't feature that being okay.

THE SHADE

I don't believe that Opal is yet without a Starman.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - NIGHT

Jack BURSTS through the door and SLAMS it behind himself.
Dumps off his tank goggles.

Hope pulls her gun before she registers that it's Jack.

HOPE O'DARE
Jesus, Jack. You scared me.

Jack BLOCKS THE DOOR with a display table.

JACK
That's saying something.

Hope rushes up and HUGS HIM TIGHT.

JACK
Is that your gun in my pocket?

Hope pushes off in a "don't-be-gross" way.

JACK
It was. See?

Hope still has her gun in her hand. Holsters the gun.

JACK
How's Mason doing?

HOPE O'DARE
He's out cold. Probably best thing
for him right now. What did you
find?

JACK
I totally found the Ragdoll's
headquarters. It's like a weird
cult vibe going on down there.
Jamestown meets Toy Story meets
Occupy Wall Street. And he said
something about an arsenal...

HOPE O'DARE
That's how they seem to just keep
on coming, they just keep going
below and reloading.

JACK
I also found out that the Cosmic
Rod's got a limited amount of talk
time.

Holds up the lifeless rod.

HOPE O'DARE
It's dead?

JACK
For now. Davey said it uses the
same design as his stellar
batteries.

Jack ambles to the office.

HOPE O'DARE
What does that mean?

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jack props up the Cosmic Rod under the skylight.

JACK
It means it can charge by
starlight.

The CHARGE CHANGES from 00% to 01%.

HOPE O'DARE (O.S.)
Hence the name, Starman. Sure.

Jack heads back to...

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - CONTINUOUS

Jack takes off the jacket.

JACK
No, that's just Davey being a dork.

HOPE O'DARE
Can you show me on the maps?

Jack nods and heads over to where they laid out the maps and
starts showing her where Ragdoll's chamber is.

INT. NNE'S TENEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Nne climbs back in under the cushion taped over the window.

DEDE (O.S.)
Nne?

NNE
It's me, mama. Put down the
funwrecker.

Dede, LABORED BREATHING, stumbles out of her room with a golf club - a driver. Sets it against the wall. Nne pulls the inhaler out.

NNE

I got it.

Dede fumbles for it, Nne helps her use it.

NNE

Deep breath, mama.

Dede breathes deep. Relief falls over her, and then over Nne.

DEDE

You're a good girl, Nne.

NNE

Good enough, I guess.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - NIGHT

Hope hovers over the map table with her radio, moving Monopoly pieces to plan her strategy.

HOPE O'DARE

We have to pull the SWAT units off the front line.

CLARENCE O'DARE (RADIO)

If we do that, we're going to lose ground. They're closing in on City Center.

HOPE O'DARE

We might lose ground, but we're going to take their legs out from under them. We'll cut off their supply chain. Please, Clarence. You know I'd never pull the family card, but you also know I wouldn't tell you to do this if I didn't think it would work.

CLARENCE O'DARE (RADIO)

All this based on tunnels I didn't even know existed?

On the chaise, Mason stirs to consciousness. Jack's right there for him with a glass of water. Mason drinks it down.

JACK

Still a lot of pain?

MASON O'DARE
More than anything.

JACK
I know how you feel. Stepped on a
Lego once.

Mason LAUGHS, but tries to STIFLE IT so he doesn't shake too much. Notices Hope hovering over the maps and (out of earshot) talking into her police radio.

MASON O'DARE
What's she getting up to?

JACK
Saving the city. You know, the
usual.

Hope steps back from the map and turns to Jack and Mason.

HOPE O'DARE
We got it. We got entrances to the
Shanghai Tunnels - the one here in
Olde Town and ones in Snejberg
Square and Robinson's Department
Store. They want Downtown? We're
gonna lay out the red carpet for
them.

JACK
They're going to force them into
the downtown tunnel?

HOPE O'DARE
We're going to bottleneck 'em.

JACK
We?

FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS arrive outside the store.

HOPE O'DARE
Clarence put me in command of the
Olde Town team.

Jack looks to Mason in disbelief.

HOPE O'DARE
Jack, I need you stay here with
Mason.

Jack nods. He gets it. Hope heads out.

MASON O'DARE

Don't worry, Jack. Nothing can
take her down.

JACK

She beat you up a lot when you were
little, huh?

MASON O'DARE

Still does.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - DAVID'S RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Dark. Lit only by the fires out in the city. David's on
oxygen and a HEART MONITOR BEEPS slow and steady. Sitting in
the corner...

THE SHADE

Many lives are being lost tonight.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

THE SHADE

No, I'm not blaming you. Much.

Is he actually communicating with David somehow? BEEP. BEEP.
Shade stands up to look at his city burning.

THE SHADE

Yes, I have the power to end this,
but it's not a power to use
lightly. It's an extreme measure
and there's the possibility that,
if I do it, I'll throw the balance
even further to the darker side.
I'm no hero, but I may prove the
villain if it keeps Opal City from
burning to the ground.

BEEP. BEEP. BEEP.

THE SHADE

Thank you for listening. For once.

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

Hope, in bulletproof vest and carrying an AUTOMATIC RIFLE,
leads a SWAT TEAM - armed and carrying RIOT SHIELDS.

TAKING FIRE -- GIVING IT BACK down the tunnel.

CLARENCE O'DARE (RADIO)

5-Fox-1, Tangos report.

TEAM 1 COMMANDER (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
1-Tango-1 in Robinson tunnel, we're
fighting to a standstill. No
attrition.

TEAM 2 COMMANDER (HOPE'S POLICE RADIO)
2-Tango-1, we're getting a lot of
pushback here at Snejberg.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - NIGHT

Jack stands over the map. He moves Monopoly pieces around the center chamber to correspond with the last two reports. His police scanner stood up at the map's edge.

HOPE O'DARE (POLICE SCANNER)
Olde Town 5-Fox-3 here, we're
taking heavy fire. We can't budge
'em.

TEAM 4 COMMANDER (POLICE SCANNER)
Downtown, 4-Tango-1 we're not
seeing anything on our end. They're
not flushing out.

Mason hops over, using an umbrella as a cane.

JACK
Hey, that's a--

Mason glares. Jack lets it go, turns his attention back to the map.

MASON O'DARE
They're not regrouping into the
Downtown tunnel. Ragdoll must sense
a trap. He's redoubling the other
tunnels before he pushes downtown.

JACK
From this central chamber. When I
saw Ragdoll he was standing on
something. Wooden crates.

MASON
That must be their ammo cache.

JACK
There was enough down there to
fight World War II all over again.
And have some left for skeet. She
needs help. She needs back-up.

MASON O'DARE

There is no back up. Every last badge is holding the streets.

Marches to...

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - OFFICE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Grabs the Rod and checks the charge.

JACK

Nine percent charge.

MASON O'DARE

How long will that last?

JACK

About nine percent of the time I'd like it to...?

Puts on his jacket and goggles.

MASON O'DARE

You'll get yourself killed.

JACK

Better than letting Hope get killed. Don't touch the Bakelite radios. Fingerprints.

Looks up to the skylight and FLIES.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - NIGHT

As before, Hope's team taking HEAVY FIRE.

HOPE
(into radio)
5-Fox-3, we're not gaining any
headway. Taking heavy fire. Their
cache must be close by, they keep
reloading.

JACK (O.S.)
Everybody kiss the floor!

All turn to find Jack behind them, Cosmic Rod at the ready.

JACK
What I mean is get down as low as
you can. Please.

Hope and the team get low as Jack BLASTS an ENERGY BALL down
the corridor -- WEAPONS FIRE STOPS. The silence breaks with a
LOW RUMBLE -- Bricks FALL and walls CRACK. Tunnel Dolls OPEN
FIRE again.

HOPE
Sounds like you knocked a few guys
down.

Hope and the team return fire.

JACK
These old tunnels can't take
another blast without caving in.

HOPE
It was worth a shot.

JACK
I've got another idea.

HOPE
(re: gunfire)
Tell me while I can still hear.

JACK
You all need to stop shooting.

Hope gives a signal and the TEAM MUZZLES UP.

HOPE

What've you got in mind, Starman?

JACK

What - who? No, I'm not--

HOPE

--Just do what you're going to do.

JACK checks the Rod charge. 05% -- Deep breath and POWERS UP -
- forms a FORCE FIELD in front of Hope and the SWAT team.
BULLETS RICOCHET off it.

HOPE

Okay, they can't shoot us, but we
can't shoot them. What now?

Jack MARCHES forward, SWAT folding in behind -- the BULLETS
KEEP BOUNCING OFF the FORCE FIELD -- he gets closer and
closer to the TUNNEL DOLLS until he's right on top of them.

Tunnel Dolls CLICKING their guns -- OUT OF AMMO.

THE RAGDOLL (O.S.)

Pull back! Pull back!

Jack, Hope and the team PRESS ON until they reach...

INT. SHANGHAI TUNNELS - RAGDOLL'S CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Tunnel Dolls SPILL into the chamber. Ragdoll up on his stage -
which we now see to be CRATES OF AMMO and EXPLOSIVES. A
feeding frenzy as Dolls GRAB FRESH MAGS FROM THE CACHE.

THE RAGDOLL

Reload. Quickly, reload and push
them back.

Jack and the SWAT team push out of the tunnel -- Jack FLIES
UP on top of the CACHE -- Aims the rod at the Dolls.

JACK

Back up, or you're gonna know how
my army men felt when I was ten.
They would describe it as melty. If
they'd survived...and weren't
plastic.

FLARES THE ROD -- Charge drops to 03% -- Dolls back off.

THE RAGDOLL

You're not Starman.

JACK

Call me Jumpin' Jack Flash. No!
Wait! Don't. I take that back.

THE RAGDOLL

You may not be Starman but I know
his energy weapon. Hand it over.

JACK

You and what army? What other army?

The Ragdoll pulls out what is clearly a big-red-button
DETONATOR. All the Dolls SCRAMBLE OUT the other tunnels.

THE RAGDOLL

I'm not the one standing on enough
combustibles to collapse ten square
blocks.

Jack notices the wiring and charges on the crates underneath.

JACK

You blow me up, you blow you up.
You'll die.

THE RAGDOLL

Maybe. Maybe not.

Jack looks around. No Dolls. Hope pushing the muzzles of her
team down, eyes on Jack. Jack considers the Rod and holds it
out to Ragdoll.

HOPE

Jack, no.

RAGDOLL

Jack, yes.

Ragdoll reaches for the Rod -- Jack WHACKS THE DETONATOR --
it FLIES. Jack WHACKS Ragdoll in the leg, but his LEG BENDS -
THE WRONG WAY -- then SNAPS BACK in place.

Ragdoll throws HIS ARM AROUND JACK'S NECK - IT WRAPS AROUND
LIKE A SCARF - not like something with bones in it and
TIGHTENS - STRANGLING JACK.

Jack PRIES at the arm -- trying to get breathing room.

Ragdoll spots his DETONATOR, releases Jack and dives for it.
He lands at the detonator to find the SWAT team all pointing
guns at him.

Ragdoll SMACKS the BIG RED BUTTON -- BOOM -- FLASH OF LIGHT --
but everyone's still standing.

All turn to see Jack struggling to maintain a force field containing the EXPLOSION. He SHRINKS THE FORCE FIELD down to a ball of shrapnel.

The charge on the Rod reaches 00%. The FORCE FIELD DROPS -- the surviving metal THUDS on the ground and the chamber fills with an ASH CLOUD. Hope strides up to Ragdoll.

HOPE

Now who the hell is this clown?

Hope tries to peel the mask off Ragdoll, but..

HOPE

It won't come off. It's fused to his skin.

Ragdoll LAUGHS as she gestures to the SWAT team to take him away. Finds Jack against the wall - totally spent.

JACK

Should've been David.

Hope puts an arm around Jack, comforting.

EXT. GARDNER STREET - SUNRISE

Hope and Jack emerge from the alleyway to find Dolls surrendering to police - left and right.

HOPE

Their boss is captured and their cache is destroyed. Opal makes it to another sunrise.

Jack looks up to see the sun emerging from behind the buildings. Smiles a tired smile.

EXT. OPAL CITY SKYLINE - DAY (A FEW DAYS LATER)

Some SMOULDERING still. Sun shining.

JACK (V.O.)

Only been a few days, but things are looking a lot less Escape From New York down there.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - DAVID'S RECOVERY ROOM - DAY

Jack (in his leather) looking out the window. Turns to find David sitting up in bed, with a set of fine tools, working on the Rod.

JACK

Hope says the last of the Dolls surrendered this morning. And still no idea who this Ragdoll is or how he got all bendy and floppy.

(noticing David's tools)

What are you doing with that thing? Sad to say, I think your Starman days are done.

DAVID

Sad to say?

JACK

I didn't like when you made the choice to be a big Christmas-colored hero. I was pissed off because you made me live with the possibility of losing my older brother. I've seen first-hand now that it was probably worth it. You've done a lot for Opal and this city owes you.

DAVID

Opal owes me nothing. It made me what I am. I could have taken Knight Energies to Metropolis, but I stayed here because this is where I learned that people come first. It's why I became Starman. Opal made me what I am: a successful manufacturer of alternative energy solutions. Catch.

Tosses Jack the Rod. Jack Catches it and it POWERS UP.

DAVID

I tightened up the biometrics. It won't give you any sparks or misfires now. It's yours.

JACK

I can't.

DAVID

You already have. The Rod is too powerful not to be used for good, and there are no other hands I trust more. Except mine, but...

JACK

I don't know, Davey.

DAVID

And I'm going to need your help on one more case. The O'Dares stopped by earlier with this...

Gestures to a file folder on the bedside stand. Jack picks it up, pages through it.

DAVID

It's a forensics report. They pulled the bullet that ripped through me out of the façade of the Fivepoint Media Building. Except it wasn't a bullet.

Jack picks up a photo of what looks like...

JACK

Some kind of metal spider?

DAVID

Police lab's never seen anything like it. Those legs expand on impact and rip up tissue. This is beyond Ragdoll. This was something else. Help me find who did this to me.

David offers a hand. Jack grabs it -- grips hard. He's in.

INT. ST. ARCHIE'S - ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Jack gets in and as the doors close, THE LIGHTS GO OUT. An emergency LIGHT COMES ON revealing The Shade, leaning in the corner swinging his cane.

THE SHADE

I wanted to convey my thanks, Jack.

JACK

For helping you to not lift a finger. Sure, no problem.

THE SHADE

Woe betide the day I do lift a finger. Opal City is important. I will always safeguard it. The people, however, have you.

JACK

What is a city if it's not its people?

THE SHADE

You may one day find out. In the meantime, consider me - not a friend - more a colleague.

JACK

What's your name? What do I call you?

THE SHADE

Two different questions. You can keep calling me what you already call me. I like it. Elegant and mysterious.

JACK

You got it,...*The Shade*.

THE SHADE

And do be a bit less tedious. An elevator? Really? Next you'll be hailing a taxi cab.

Shade SNAPS. LIGHTS OUT. Doors open. Shade's GONE. Jack rolls the Rod in his hand and grins.

EXT. SKIES OVER OPAL - DAY

Jack flies with abandon, finally getting the hang of the Rod.

INT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - STOREFRONT - LATER THAT DAY

JANGLE of bells over the door. Jack sticks his head out from behind a cabinet to find Mason (on crutches), Matt and Hope.

JACK

Hey Mase! How's the leg doin'?

MASON

It'll be a few weeks, but it'll be as good as new...better even.

HOPE

Jack, we had a talk with Clarence. We think your jacket is missing something and he agreed.

MASON

You can't be Starman without a star.

Hope pins an old-timey five-point Sheriff's badge on the lapel of his leather. Jack's dumbstruck by the gesture.

MATT

That there was hammered out of tin
by Sheriff Brian Savage hi'self.

HOPE

Makes it a collectible.

JACK

I don't know what to say.

Jack cranes his neck and spots Nne. Matt CLOCKS THE COSMIC
ROD in the office.

MASON

Say Opal City still has a Starman.

JACK

(at Nne)

Hey, you!

Nne books it out the door. Matt moves, but--

JACK

No, I got this.

--DASHES to the office, grabs the Rod and UP THROUGH THE
SKYLIGHT.

INT. ALLEY OFF GARDNER - DAY

Nne makes for the tunnels, but JACK LANDS in front her.

JACK

Hey, I just want--

--Nne runs back out of the alley, but Jack THROWS UP A FORCE
FIELD, closing it off.

JACK

Just wanna talk. Got a name?

NNE

Nne. Nne Whitmore. I'm really
sorry, I needed the money. My
mama's sick and can't work and
we've got no-- Don't turn me in.

JACK

I'm not going to turn you in. I'm
going to offer you a job.

NNE

You're doing what-now?

JACK

I want you to work in my store. You know what to steal, so you've got a good eye for collectibles. And I want you to train me to parkour and stuff - like you used to get away from me when you were ripping me off. I'm a little stiff and I don't want to be a hundred percent dependent on this hunk o'junk.

(nods to the Rod)

We got a deal?

Nne smiles. They've got a deal.

EXT. KNIGHT'S PAST COLLECTIBLES - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jack lands a few feet away and continues back to the store with a spring in his step. Hope's waiting for him. No smile.

HOPE

I thought maybe we should finish that talk you said we needed to have. I think it's going to go another way than it was before.

JACK

I know I've been a jerk about you being a police, and I'm not going to say it's gotten easier to accept the risk, but I understand it better now.

HOPE

So do I. I'm afraid. My life is a wild ride. I get shot at a lot, and I'm facing down increasingly stranger situations everyday; Ragdoll cults, strange men who cast weird shadows, flying science heroes...I need some stability. I need a safe place and it used to be with you. I'm glad you chose to take your brother's place and I won't be the reason you *don't* do it. I'm sorry, Jack.

Hope kisses his cheek and walks away. Jack just stares dumbstruck, until -- SIRENS APPROACHING -- FIRE TRUCKS CAREEN past Jack. He turns to see them RACING towards BLACK SMOKE a few blocks away.

He pulls his GOGGLES from his jacket, POWERS UP the rod and BOLTS INTO THE SKY -- This is who he is now. He's...

TITLE CARD

STARMAN

EXT. TURK COUNTY FEDERAL PENITENTIARY - DAY

Establishing. Out in the farmland.

INT. TURK CO. PEN - PERSONAL EFFECTS STORAGE - DAY

CLERK enumerates the contents of a cardboard box to a PRISONER, his big, wide back to us.

CLERK

One suit, cheap. One tie, blood-spattered. One driver's license, expired. One money clip, gold. Twenty-nine bucks, cash. Sign here.

Clerk shoves a clipboard. Prisoner signs.

CLERK

You got anyone picking you up?

PRISONER

The 5:15 bus.

CLERK

No family?

PRISONER

Haven't seen them in a long time.

Prisoner puts his stuff back in the box.

PRISONER

Not since the Great Blackout of '87. But I'm going to find 'em, and when I do there's gonna be--

CLERK

--Hell to pay?

Picks up the box and turns to us, where we see stenciled on his shirt. "#87B00029 BENETTI ." BOBO BENETTI (60, slicked-back hair and built like a Sherman tank.)

PRISONER/BOBO

No. There's gonna be Bobo Benetti to pay.

END OF EPISODE