

# Episode 1: Fuse Ignites

## Teaser

"I'm telling you, Bo," the old man says as he walks out of the door of the bar into the evening chill, "it doesn't make any sense that this town's turned into a 'haven for foreign dignitaries' in the last ten years. The Illuminati is getting them all together for some reason!"

A younger man smiles, obviously used to the old coot, "Wasn't that when Mr. Shaw got on the city council and started the new tourism push and zoning ordinances? There's a reason the man gets reelected every four years."

"Of course he does... he's part of the Illuminati!" the stocky old codger gestures, as if his point was made for him.

His companion just laughs, "Well I guess that would explain it. You need any help getting home?"

"No, thanks, Bo. I'm not drunk enough that I can't make it two blocks."

"Alright, Jack, I'll see you later."

The two men walk off in different directions down the sidewalk. The old man strolls unhurriedly down the city street, an old New England downtown visible in the streetlights. At the end of the block, he turns right and heads down an alley and out of view.

From down the alley, his steps suddenly stop and his voice echoes from the walls, "What the hell, punk? I don't have any money or valuables. Get out of my face before I kick your ass! What the..."

This last is punctuated by a sudden flare of flickering light and the sound of an inferno. The alley lights up brightly as the screaming begins. Both quickly fade into a whiteout and the opening bars of a rock song...

## Introduction

The whiteout fades back into a sun high in a clear blue sky, turning to look down to a bird's eye of a well-appointed high school. The riot of colors on the trees show that it's well into Autumn, but the kids on the lawn indicate that it's a nice enough day nonetheless. Despite the obviously falling leaves, someone has clearly kept the grounds raked, and students on the clean grass toss footballs while rushing about or lounge on various outdoor picnic tables scattered throughout the area.

Two middle aged men stroll along a central walkway, seemingly in companionable silence. They're dressed like professors, and there's an obvious break in horseplay as they pass various groups of students. Though they don't appear to be having a conversation, occasionally one of them gives the other a pointed look, as if he's just said something objectionable.

They pass by a fountain that has clearly been colonized by the school's luminaries. Many of the boys here wear letter jackets, and the girls are dressed warmly but fashionably against the fall chill. This is the nexus of the various football players, and at the very center, lounging against the fountain, are the unquestioned lords and ladies of all they survey.

[Roleplay]

Across the lawn, a very different batch of kids sit amongst the roots of a large oak. Much smaller in number than the previous group, the only letter jacket in evidence is worn by a smug looking and lanky young man, who has decorated it with a wash of patches and buttons that almost obscure the letter itself. The rest of the kids are awash in off-brand and thrift-store jackets in a variety of colors.

[Roleplay] [Beat? Branch?]

## Social Studies Class (Strange Email) (Kat, Madrox; Mort; Max)

- The whiteboard is covered with clear and heavy handwriting. At the top is a heading, "20<sup>th</sup> Century" and beneath it are a cavalcade of names like Armenia, Katyn, Zanzibar, Burundi, and, in red letters, Holocaust. "I know you all think I'm telling you about all of these things just to depress you about how screwed up the world was for your grandparents. It's all over now, right? Wrong. 1995 was before most of you were born, but not by much. For homework, I want you all to look up Srebrenica ([srêbrenit̪a]). You might find that the world is still a very dangerous place for people who are different. Class dismissed."
- Both Kat and Madrox's smartphones show a new email when they check them after class. "powerslide745@hotmail.com; About the burned body; I have proof Allerdyce killed that man. Meet me downtown at 9. I'll email you the location right before. I see more than a handful of people, his running crew, or cops and I bolt."

## Gym Class (Peter, Wanda, Henry; Pietro; Cain)

- Cain has Peter and Henry grapple to show off for the rest of the class.
- "Wrestling's fine. If you're big and quick, you can use it pretty effectively to take care of someone weaker than you. And it's about the most effective martial art I'm allowed to teach on school time. But there are way more effective techniques out there. My favorite right now is Krav Maga. It's an Israel martial art. You never stop moving, never let up. I'm going to be starting a club to teach it later in the semester. If you're really interested in how to defend yourself, you should sign up. I'll have permission slips next week."
- Pietro shows the same email to Wanda. They're interrupted by Cain, "I've already talked to your father about the class. He really appreciated that it's an Israeli combat style. I expect to see both of you there. Oh, Wanda, your father wants to talk to you before you leave today."

## Principal's Office (John, Madrox; Moira; Xavier)

- Madrox being disciplined for spying (or something he did earlier)
- John called in to try to get him to fess up ("I don't like to use my telepathy to spy on students"): contest with Xavier, possibly with Moira backing up John

Short scene when Wanda talks to Max about what he wants at his room. ("I need you to do something for me..." cut to commercial)

End of School, Rest of game branches

## Reveals

- Reports of burned victim reach various characters.
- Kat, Madrox, and Pietro get emails suggesting a secret about the victim if they come meet alone.
- At the alley, the PCs are confronted by Cassidy and Bishop, keeping them from pursuing a strange albino watching the crime scene.
- Pyro may be confronted by Callista if he's not with the group.
- When going to the location, if Kat and Madrox aren't alone a nearby building suddenly catches fire explosively and starts collapsing. Skids attempts to separate and capture Kat and Madrox while everyone is distracted.
- Callista and Caleb confront the PCs and explain what's going on, attempting to team up to find their missing kids.
- Villains and kidnap victims holed up under nightclub (lots of noise, both auditory and mental, to confuse searching) in basement storage room.
- When fight goes south, villains evacuated by strange male silhouette in a brightly lit doorway from nowhere.
- B Plot: Magneto wants Wanda to steal Mrs. Rasputin's diplomatic ID card from her house. She's there just as Peter and Illyana get home...
- B Plot: William Stryker is taking a keen interest in Jack's death.

## Plot

Jack K. Stanley was a notorious crank and retired mechanic in Westchester, fond of writing editorials to the local paper about his conspiracy theories. Most of them were sheer rubbish, but a few hit closer to the mark than even he knew.

- This city is a secret Illuminati Training Site
- The Foreigners from the UN in Westchester are secret spies for their home countries
- Why isn't anyone talking about the alien children in our midst?

While nobody really took him seriously, his notes had come to the attention of the mutants in town and they were watching him carefully. He also came to the attention of the MLF who found him an ideal candidate to sow some chaos.

Their plan was to eliminate him in an obviously strange fashion to try to get the local powers in conflict, create an opportunity to recruit students, and begin a national outrage about the mutants hiding in their midst. Even if the first two points were impossible, the man was the mentor of Bolivar Trask, a gifted and vengeful local mechanic, and a deacon at the church of William Stryker, a young and passionate minister just back from service in the Middle East and fiercely protective of his flock.

So, last night, Rusty burned the man to death on his way home from his local bar and Sally began their master's plan to start recruiting. What they weren't aware of was that Rusty and Sally's old protector had tracked them down to this place...

## Wedges

- Madrox and Kat recruited by MLF
- Pyro blamed for the burning to Kat, Madrox, and Pietro/Wanda
- Wanda happens to be at right place to see something suspicious (anyone)
- Peter, John, and Henry might have to work together to stop the burning building
- Wanda sent to steal from Peter's house
- Characters have to work together to recover kidnapped friends

## Episode 2: Dominos Fall

### Teaser

A half dozen older men in nice suits walk out into afternoon light falling on the front of a classic New England city hall. One man, wearing a black bespoke suit, is clearly the alpha of the group. Trailing behind, a woman with the mien of a secretary but the looks of a supermodel takes notes on a tablet computer on top of a stack of printed documents and folders.

"Good afternoon, gentlemen," the man says, dismissing his cohort as he strolls toward a new black Jaguar sedan parked in the closest space on the street. "Tessa, please let Mr. Tanaka know that I'm on the way. I'll drive straight to meet him in the city." "As you say, Mr. Shaw."

He slides into the seat of the Jag as the rest of the group spreads out toward other, slightly less nice cars further down the streetside parking. Shaw closes his door and the thunk is immediately coupled with an enormous boom, a pillar of fire erupting from beneath the car, flipping it into the air, and smashing it back onto the pavement.

"Oh my god!" screams one of the other city council members, as they race forward and then halt at the obvious wave of heat washing out from the ruins of the car. They barely have time to reach for cell phones before the inverted driver's side door smashes onto the sidewalk and Shaw pulls himself from the wreckage of his car. His suit is burned and ruined, which only highlights that his skin shows absolutely no sign of burning and his hair is mussed but unharmed.

"Sebastian, how could you possibly..." one of the men begins... and then stops, as all of the men freeze in place, one by one stagger away from the accident, sit on a nearby bench, and slide into apparent sleep. A look of annoyance on his face as he stares at the car, Shaw glances into the road, where a blonde woman in a sharp white suit is standing by her idling white BMW, eyes locked in concentration on the councilmen. "Emma. Excellent timing." She nods to Shaw, "Fortunately, we were in the area." A pale-skinned, dark-haired young woman is getting out of the passenger seat staring in awe at the wreckage of the car.

"Sir, I'll need to investigate this further," the secretary begins as sirens start to wail very nearby, "but I'm willing to advance a high probability theory that this was a deliberate attempt to demonstrate your gifts. If Ms. Frost hadn't been here there would have been several high credibility witnesses..."

He nods, grimly. "Emma, please be so kind as to make them remember that the car exploded prematurely as I was still in the building. I'll be inside changing. Someone will pay for this..."

"Oh, and Tessa, please send Mr. Tanaka my regrets and reschedule the meeting."

### Reveals

- Stryker questions Peter about his grill explosion (ruins of the car fade into the ruins of the grill?)
- Alexandra Rasputin is detained on suspicion of espionage, and Pietro hears about it
- Frost runs into Madrox and Pride, and corrals them to talk about admittance to her school... and the kidnapping she heard about from her friend Callista
- Creed is looking for Logan, and runs into McCoy near Wanda and Kat
- Stryker intercedes between Creed and McCoy
- Creed quizzes Wanda and Kat on their relationship to Logan
- Creed turns out to be possibly even worse than Logan
- Tessa Fox (2d12), Shaw's aide, assesses John to see if he's Hellfire material (in direct contention with Frost's dislike of the boy)
- Stryker witnesses John burning leaves with his flamethrower
- Stryker runs into McCoy and John together
- Sabretooth enacts a brutal plan to capture Logan, and the PCs get trapped in the middle of it
- Sabretooth reveals that he's got friends in high places, and then is baffled when Detective Day has never heard of him before except as a troublemaker

## Plot

The Mutant Liberation Front is stepping up its attempt to cause dissent among the mutant ranks to get them to out themselves in the worst possible way. It still hasn't given up on co-opting highly useful espionage capabilities like those possessed by Pride, Madrox, and Pietro.

In addition to beginning feints at the Hellfire Club, Stryfe has contacted Sabretooth while pretending to be Detective Day. The young man has been convinced, with subtle mind control in addition to opportunities for graft, that he could have a lucrative career in Vice. All Creed has to do is find some dirt on a former schoolmate that he already hates: Logan. And it just so happens that several of the kids at the high school have a relationship with Mr. Howlett...

Meanwhile, Stryker and Trask continue their investigation into their friend's death. Stryker's former military service had him in the same local unit as Creed, and he can provide some interesting insight on the angry young man... insight that will get him into closer contact with the students who could shed light on what happened to his friend.

The attempt by Magneto to get information on decommissioned Russian nuclear subs using Mrs. Rasputin's clearance did not go quite as smoothly as hoped: a week later, security logs revealed Mystique's entry into the Russian embassy disguised as Alexandra Rasputin, and Peter and Illyana's mother is now being held for questioning in this unauthorized use of her credentials.

All of this is complicated by the new substitute teacher: a recent college graduate named Nina Thurman who is returning to her old high school while she decides whether to go to grad school. It also happens that her own luck powers tend to have a very unexpected and subtle interaction with Wanda's, causing unexpected meetings between individuals that would rather be left apart.

## Wedges

- Creed brings up McCoy's friendship with Logan (who has been creepin' on Wanda and Kat)
- Creed taxes Wanda and Kat's relationship
- Stryker brings Peter's attention to the fact the grill explosion (that John used as a distraction to let Wanda escape the Rasputin house in episode 1) may be related to his mother's detainment
- Stryker runs into McCoy and John together, potentially forcing them into solidarity against the snooping outsider
- Frost reminds Madrox and Kat that they're both still on her list for her school
- Peter may eventually find out that Wanda stole his mother's ID card and got her into this mess