

INT. ORIENTAL RESTRAUNT-DAY

Ivan sits at a table by himself, a bowl and a pair of chopsticks up to his lips. He is eating his stir fry intently. There are several empty bowls on the table around him. A waitress approaches him with a concerned look on her face.

HARUHI

Would you like your check now, Sir?

Ivan swallows to speak, but doesn't look up at her.

IVAN

Just keep the food coming, Haruhi.
I've got a fast metabolism.

Ivan continues to eat. Suddenly, a crashing sound occurs outside, followed by loud, stomping footsteps. Ivan looks up. He glances at Haruhi.

IVAN

On second thought, I'll take that
check now. Can I get a bowl of this
to go?

Haruhi hands Ivan his check folder, and Ivan tucks some bills in it, not even looking at his total. He hands it back to her and stands up.

IVAN

I'll come back for my to go box
later. Keep the change, Haruhi.

Ivan runs out the door. Haruhi opens the check folder and gasps. There are four 100 dollar bills in it. She looks back up to see Ivan through the window. He is pulling on his super hero gear as he runs down the street.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-DAY

Ivan follows the path of destruction. As he goes, he runs into the rest of the team.

JAYDE

Street Ninja! There you are! Where
have you been all day?

IVAN

I sure wasn't cooped up in The Tower, that's for sure! I found this really great oriental restraurant! I'll show you guys some time!

THE BRAWN

Ooh! Sounds delicious!

NIGHTLURKER

Can we focus on the task at hand, please? Hodolph is running rampant on a giant, mechanical spider!

HERO

Any sign of Jaqui?

JAYDE

None, but keep your eyes peeled. We need to stop Hodolph in his tracks!

The team catches up to Hodolph. He cackles menacingly, then catches sight of The Unstoppables.

HODOLPH

Ah, Unstoppables! I thought you might show up eventually! Street Ninja! Good to see my new nemesis! Did you get a new living room lamp to replace your old one?

Ivan glares at Hodolph.

IVAN

I'll never forgive you for that!

HODOLPH

I should hope not! I went through a lot of trouble to get you to hate me enough to be my nemesis! I wouldn't want it all to have been for naught!

IVAN

Stop mocking me!

Ivan pulls out his swords and lashes out at one of the robotic spider's legs. A green flash of energy blows Ivan back. He groans, smoldering.

HODOLPH

Mocking you? YOU? What about the months and months you spent mocking me?! It's payback time, Street Ninja!

The team starts forward. Hero shoots at the spider with a rifle. The bullets bounce off. Jayde uses her psychic powers, but they turn and attack her instead. Nightlurker uses his magic, but it redirects back at him. The Brawn observes this, and takes a step back.

THE BRAWN

All our attacks are coming back at us!

Hodolph laughs.

HODOLPH

I call it, the mirror defense mechanism! It's wise of you not to attack my spider! You deal short bursts of colossal damage! You might've killed yourself!

HERO

Jayde! How do we beat this thing?

JAYDE

I... don't know. If only we could ask Willis!

IVAN

I don't know about you guys, but I'm going for the source!

Ivan jumps up on top of one of the spider's legs. Then he leaps towards Hodolph. He gets about a foot away before being blown back. He crashes into the side of a building.

HERO

Ivan!

NIGHTLURKER

He'll be fine in a moment.

HODOLPH

Idiot! Of course I would have the defense mechanism generate the force field around myself as well! Now that you are my nemesis, our rivalry will only make me stronger!

Ivan emerges from the hole in the brick wall. His cuts and bruises heal quickly. He glowers at Hodolph.

IVAN

You've got the weirdest logic. And that's coming from a mentally unstable mutant!

EXT. ALLEYWAY-DAY

A short creature watches the heroes and Hodolph from around the corner.

GENE

Zampano! The Street Ninja just called himself mentally unstable! Are you sure you can still use him?

The creature turns to look at his slender, reptilian companion. This one has a mohawk and red stripes down his sides. He smiles.

ZAMPANO

That makes my job easier. Let's go, Gene.

Gene turns and follows Zampano, who stalks away.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-DAY

Ivan shouts as he raises an enejatō to slice one of the robot's legs. He brings it down, but the energy instead bounces off and slices off Ivan's arm. He roars in frustration. Hodolph laughs.

HODOLPH

If you keep hurting yourself, Ivan,
you're going to put yourself out of
commission! Step aside!

The spider begins to move forward. Ivan continues to attack
the spider, hurting himself. Jayde holds out a hand.

JAYDE

Street Ninja! Stop! There's gotta
be another way!

IVAN

Hodolph! You injected me with a
serum that nearly killed me! You've
been playing with my life to
convince me to be your nemesis!

Ivan continues to inflict damage on himself. Hodolph and
the team both simply watch in surprise. Badly beaten, Ivan
falls to his knees. His injuries immediately heal. He
shouts at the ground with his head bowed.

IVAN

You...! You killed Lucia!!

Hodolph blinks, then grins.

HODOLPH

I really got to you, didn't I? This
is perfect!

HERO

Ivan...

Hodolph pushes a few buttons. The spider starts forward
again. It walks right over Ivan. The rest of the team
starts after it. Nightlurker nods to Ivan as he passes.

NIGHTLURKER

You want to stop him, or not?

Ivan's eyes light up. He stands and follows the team. As
the team nears the spider, Hodolph nods to someone standing
on a rooftop. It is Jaqui. She holds up a small bomb and
throws it at the spider. The bomb explodes on impact,
inflicting damage on the whole team. They are blown back.
Hodolph cackles.

HODOLPH

Ha ha! I just stopped The
Unstoppables from stopping me! Oh,
this is a great day! So long,
suckers!

The giant spider stomps away. The Unstoppables are strewn
on the pavement. Ivan groans and lifts his head.

BLACK (V.O.)

We got beat up by Hodolph? That's
embarrassing.

Ivan grimaces. He picks himself up and helps the others
onto their feet. Jayde steps forward.

JAYDE

Gotta... stop Hodolph...

Nightlurker puts a hand on her shoulder.

NIGHTLURKER

Not in our condition. We gave
ourselves better lashings than any
villain ever has.

JAYDE

I've never let a villain just walk
away!

NIGHTLURKER

Do not worry. We will get him. We
just need a plan.

Nightlurker says this soothingly. They lock eyes for a
moment. Then Jayde turns her head away abruptly. She walks
away. Nightlurker heaves a sigh. Ivan observes this. The
Brawn approaches Ivan.

THE BRAWN

Sorry we didn't get him, little
buddy. I know it means a lot to
you.

Ivan snorts.

IVAN

What do I care? Just some stupid,
fat dude with too much time on his
hands.

The team looks at him pityingly. Ivan simply stretches.

IVAN

Well! I've got a bowl of teriyaki
goodness waiting for me, so see you
guys later!

HERO

You mean you're leaving again?

JAYDE

You're almost never at The Tower
anymore!

IVAN

Yeah, well, there's a good reason
for that that we don't need to talk
about. Catch you later.

Ivan leaves. Hero sighs.

HERO

He's pulling away from us.

THE BRAWN

Is he still sad about his lamp? I
thought the spell was broken!

NIGHTLURKER

The spell broke the deception, but
it cannot take away the sence of
loss. In Ivan's mind, his love has
still died.

THE BRAWN

Oh.

Hero looks saddened.

HERO

It's my fault. If we hadn't broken
up-

NIGHTLURKER

We cannot change what has passed.
It is like what the voice in his
head said. If we let him alone, he
will be alright eventually. In the
mean time, I am going to research
the technology of the mirror
defense mechanisim.

JAYDE

Me too.

THE BRAWN

Let's all go.

The team leaves.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-DAY

Ivan jumps from rooftop to rooftop towards the oriental
restraunt.

BLACK (V.O.)

You know, we can't avoid home
forever.

IVAN

Says who? It's not like I can't
live on my own. I'm a freaking
ninja!

BLACK (V.O.)

The team is worried about us. And
for good reason. We've kinda been
through a lot lately.

IVAN

If I can't handle this on my own,
then I don't even deserve to be on
the team. All of them have had
rough times, and they've all delt
with it. I need to deal with mine.

Ivan jumps down to the street, pulling off his gear. He
turns to walk towards the restraunt.

INT. ORIENTAL RESTRAUNT-DAY

Ivan walks in. Haruhi sees him. She runs up and bows to him.

HARUHI

Good day to you, Sir!

IVAN

Hi, Haruhi. Did you save that bowl for me?

HARUHI

I did! Your friend came and picked it up for you!

IVAN

My... friend?

HARUHI

Yes! He said he needed to talk with you urgently, so he picked up your to go breakfast for you! He gave me his address to give to you.

Haruhi hands Ivan a napkin. Ivan looks at it, then back up at Haruhi. He bows to her.

IVAN

Thank you, Haruhi.

Ivan turns to leave.

HARUHI

S-sir!

Ivan turns back.

HARUHI

The tip you gave me earlier! I... I can't possibly accept it!

Ivan smiles.

IVAN

Please, after what I put you through today? It was what, fifteen bowls of noodles?

HARUHI

Seventeen, Sir.

IVAN

I rest my case. Thank you for the meal.

Ivan leaves. Haruhi stares after him.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-DAY

Ivan, back in full gear, hops on the rooftops. He looks at the address.

IVAN

That's odd. I'm not headed towards the residential areas of town.

BLACK (V.O.)

What are we doing? We don't have friends! We're headed into a trap!

IVAN

I think I can handle myself. I want to know who this guy is, and what's so urgent that he needs to take my breakfast hostage to get me to come.

Ivan finds himself in front of a club.

BLACK (V.O.)

Should we call the team, just to be safe?

IVAN

I'll be fine.

Ivan takes off his gear and walks into the club.

INT. ZAMPANO'S CLUB-DAY

Ivan walks into the large room. There are lots of people dancing to a song with a loud bass beat. There are others drinking and socializing at a bar. Ivan looks around.

BLACK (V.O.)

How do we find our "friend"?

STELLA (O.S.)

Hey, there!

Ivan turns to see a beautiful woman smiling at him. This takes Ivan by surprise.

IVAN

Uh, hello!

STELLA

You look a little lost. What's your name?

IVAN

Ivan. Ivan Daynes.

STELLA

Ivan! Nice to meet you! I'm Stella!
Why don't you come over and sit
with me and my friends?

IVAN

I'm actually looking for some-

STELLA

I insist!

She links arms with Ivan and leads him to a table with three women sitting around it. She sits him down.

STELLA

Girls, this is Ivan!

The girls scoot closer to him.

GIRL 1

Say! You're not that super hero
Street Ninja, are you?

IVAN

I am.

The girls all gasp and chatter.

GIRL 2

I've seen you on TV!

GIRL 3

You're even more handsome in person!

IVAN

S-sorry?

BLACK (V.O.)

Woo-ee! We sure do like it here!

ZAMPANO (O.S.)

Now, girls. He's new here! Take it easy on him.

STELLA

Zampano!

Ivan turns to see Zampano smiling at him. He offers his hand to him.

ZAMPANO

Hello, Ivan. Would you care for some stir fry?

A look of understanding crosses Ivan's face. He stands.

IVAN

It was nice meeting all of you.

Zampano turns and walks away. Ivan follows him. They walk to the bar and sit down. Zampano holds up a take out box and hands it to Ivan. Ivan immediately begins to eat.

ZAMPANO

Would you care for a drink?

IVAN

No thanks.

Zampano nods at a bartender, and the man hands him a glass of green liquid. Zampano drinks.

ZAMPANO

So! Ivan! The Street Ninja! The Healing Hero! The Unstable Unstoppable! There's quite the buzz out there about you.

IVAN

So I've heard. Most of it not so pleasant. Turns out I scare people with my healing ability. Why am I here again?

ZAMPANO

Those ungrateful slobs. You do nothing but help protect this city, and what do you get? Bad publicity.

IVAN

To be honest, publicity doesn't really concern me.

ZAMPANO

Seems like you've been spending a lot more time on the city lately. Maybe you should care.

IVAN

Are you some kind of social worker?

Zampano throws back his head and laughs.

ZAMPANO

I own this club! I'm the owner, the manager, the boss, whatever you call it. This place? All mine.

IVAN

So what do you want with me?

Zampano looks around. He beckons for Ivan to follow. They walk to the edge of the room and enter a smaller room. The word "office" is on the door.

INT. ZAMPANO'S OFFICE-DAY

Zampano closes the door behind him. He sits at his desk and props his feet up on it. He gestures at Ivan.

ZAMPANO

Take a seat, Ivan.

Ivan sits in a chair.

ZAMPANO

I'm a greedy man, Ivan. I'll admit it. I always want more. More money, more women, more power, everything. I thought I would be satisfied with this club, and I was for a while. But then I saw you on TV. I saw your healing ability. How spectacular would it be to be able to heal yourself from any wound or sickness?

IVAN

It's not as great as it sounds. I can't sleep, and I can't heal other people.

ZAMPANO

See, that sounds pretty great to me! I want it.

IVAN

My healing ability?!

ZAMPANO

Yep! And I'm willing to pay you just about anything to get it. What's your secret?

BLACK (V.O.)

He's offering us money for our healing ability?!

IVAN

I can't tell you how I got to be this way. You see, I kind of have amnesia. That's why I'm mentally unsound.

ZAMPANO

Is that so? Well, that's disappointing. I suppose I could try dissecting you, but The Tower would have my head for that.

IVAN

Heck yes, they would! Are we done here?!

ZAMPANO

Not quite. There's still more power to be gained here. What do you want in exchange for all the backstories of your super hero friends?

IVAN

Why would you want to know their pasts?

Suddenly, a memory flashes through Ivan's mind.

INT. LEGEND'S OFFICE-NIGHT

The team sits around the long table. Ivan stands before them.

JAYDE

A hero's backstory is their most prized possession! It is the essence of who they really are! It's the reason they became a hero at all!

NIGHTLURKER

To tell someone your backstory is to entrust them with the secrets of your very soul!

INT. ZAMPANO'S OFFICE-DAY

ZAMPANO

A heroes' backstory is what makes a hero what they are. Imagine duplicating a backstory! Or altering parts of it for a different result! I could become as powerful as I wanted!

Ivan snorts.

IVAN

That's ridiculous. You can't simply replicate life events. Backstories are more complicated than that.

ZAMPANO

When you're as rich as I am, you
can do basically whatever you want.

Ivan looks scrutinizingly at Zampano.

IVAN

How'd you get so rich anyways?

Zampano smiles knowingly.

ZAMPANO

I sell power. Everybody wants
power, I don't care who you are.
More power for control, more power
to protect those they love, it goes
on and on. It's a market that never
runs dry.

IVAN

How do you do that? What kind of
power are you selling?

ZAMPANO

Power comes in all shapes and
forms. One of my most frequent
customers displayed his newfound
power on the news today. I think
you saw him.

Zampano flicks on a TV. A news channel shows the team
fighting Hodolph's robot spider. Ivan looks surprised.

IVAN

That was you? You gave him that?!

ZAMPANO

Sold it to him. I don't give things
out for free. I don't work like
that.

IVAN

Then...! You're just as guilty as
him for destroying parts of the
city!

Zampano lets out a hearty laugh.

ZAMPANO

Right! And while you're at it, go
 arrest everyone who sells guns and
 knives and everything else
 criminals use to get their way!
 It's out of my hands that Hodolph
 decided to use his purchase that
 way!

Ivan grimaces. Zampano leans forward in his chair.

ZAMPANO

Now, about your teammates'
 backstories...

IVAN

Forget it. My friends backstories
 are important to them. Besides, I
 don't even know them all.

Zampano looks surprised. He glares at Ivan.

ZAMPANO

I said, tell me their backstories!

IVAN

And I said you can forget about it!

Zampano pushes a button on his desk, and Gene runs into the
 room.

GENE

Sir?

ZAMPANO

I told you to drug Ivan through his
 stir fry!

GENE

I did, Sir! His healing ability
 must have overturned the effect!

IVAN

Drug me?!

Zampano turns a sly smile towards Ivan.

ZAMPANO

I apologise in advance for this,
Street Ninja.

Suddenly, the chair Ivan is sitting in sparks with electricity. Ivan groans and goes limp.

ZAMPANO

So the truth serum has no effect on him, I guess. Quickly, we don't have much time before he wakes up.

INT. LEGEND'S OFFICE-DAY

The team sits around the long table with Legend.

JAYDE

I mean, he does still come in for missions, but we almost never see him otherwise!

NIGHTLURKER

We think it might be because of the grief he feels, but refuses to show.

LEGEND

I see. So he wanders the city in search of distractions.

THE BRAWN

Distractions? I thought he was learning new languages and stuff like that for distractions.

NIGHTLURKER

Speech and music would not keep him occupied for ever.

Hero folds her arms.

HERO

Well, if he doesn't want to be around us, why should we make him?

Nightlurker shoots a look at Hero.

NIGHTLURKER

What is the matter with you? Ever since you came back from your training with The Black Tulip, you have grown careless!

Hero stands up abruptly.

HERO

It keeps me from caring too much!

She storms out of the room. The team looks surprised. Nightlurker looks guilty. He glances at Jayde, and then bows his head.

LEGEND

If only we could find a way to ease Ivan's suffering.

The Brawn looks up.

THE BRAWN

What about Ivan's room? We could look in there for clues to help him feel better, maybe?

JAYDE

Good idea, Theo. We should all go.

The three heroes and Legend stand and leave the room.

INT. IVAN'S ROOM-DAY

Legend opens the door, and all of them enter. They look around.

THE BRAWN

Kid keeps a tight ship, huh?

Jayde turns and gasps. Everyone spins around to see what she is looking at. She stares at the wall with Ivan's blood smeared on it. The bloody words say, "SHE IS STILL ALIVE!!" Jayde turns to Legend.

JAYDE

He knows?? How has he not gone insane??

LEGEND

I don't think he knows... I think he's more confused. That's why he can't sit still.

NIGHTLURKER

Should we go after him?

THE BRAWN

Where would we start looking?

EXT. THE BAY-DAY

The screen is black. The sound of sloshing water can be heard. The screen changes to Ivan, lying in a small, fancy, motor boat. He is tied up, and his eyes are closed. He slowly opens his eyes and lifts his head. He looks up to see Stella, prepping the boat.

IVAN

Stella? You're in on this too?

Stella doesn't look up at him.

STELLA

Zampano knows everyone's weak spot. If he doesn't, he'll find it.

IVAN

Stella, help me out of here. I can help you.

Stella lifts her head.

STELLA

You can't help me.

Zampano walks up and lightly kisses Stella's cheek. She looks slightly sad, but accepts the gesture with softness. She looks after him longingly as he enters the boat. A look of understanding crosses Ivan's face.

IVAN

Do you often take people hostage to get what you want?

ZAMPANO

I do as I please. Untie the boat, honey.

Stella unties the boat and stands on the dock. She watches sadly as Zampano drives the boat away.

EXT. THE BAY-AFTERNOON

Zampano drives the boat, with Ivan sulking in the back.

IVAN

Are you taking me for ransom to get my friends' backstories?

ZAMPANO

Novel idea, Ninja. But no. There's other ways to get what I want. I can't risk having you warn them before I can get to them. That's why I have to kill you.

Ivan chuckles.

IVAN

Trust me. I've been dead several times. Can never get past that freakin' gate. I keep coming back.

ZAMPANO

Oh, I know how to kill you, Ivan. In fact, it was you who gave me the idea.

IVAN

Me?

ZAMPANO

Sure! You and your friends rid the city of a certain monster a few months ago. A monster with a similar talent to yours.

Zampano stops the boat. He turns to Ivan.

ZAMPANO

If you get killed enough times without being able to rest, you'll eventually die permanently. I wonder how many times you'll have to drown for that to happen?

IVAN

You'll never get away with this!

Zampano laughs.

ZAMPANO

I already have! I've paid people off to say that you left town of your own accord, never to return. Now, I must be going!

Zampano pushes Ivan. Ivan almost falls over the edge, but stables himself and headbutts Zampano. Like a brick wall, Zampano doesn't move. Ivan shakes his head and looks up at Zampano in surprise.

IVAN

What... What are you?!

ZAMPANO

A freak, like you.

Zampano pushes Ivan again, this time, harder. Ivan falls backward, and into the water.

EXT. UNDER WATER-AFTERNOON

Ivan begins to sink. A chain can be seen, wrapped around his ankles. The chain leads upward, into the boat. As Ivan lowers, Zampano can be seen above the surface. He pushes something else out of the boat. It is a heavy, metal ball connected to the chain. It sinks quickly, going over Ivan's head. Ivan makes a face as the ball and chain drag him upside down, and then downwards to the floor.

BLACK (V.O.)

We're an idiot! We should've called for backup! We trust a complete stranger because he took our stir fry hostage?! This never would've happened if we had just listened to us!

As Black yells in Ivan's head, Ivan struggles to free himself. He grows more and more desperate.

BLACK (V.O.)

We... We can get out of this,
right?

Ivan looks around. He suddenly sees the decaying skeleton of the monster he and the team drowned earlier that year. He lets out a little of his breath in surprise.

BLACK (V.O.)
The creature! It really did die!
That's gonna happen to us!

As the voice panicks, Ivan looks around. He makes a pained face. He sees a sharp object jutting out of the ground nearby. He lunges for it.

BLACK (V.O.)
The team has no clue where we are!
We're gonna die! For real! We've
never really thought about real
death before!

Ivan is able to move the metal ball towards the sharp object. He leans against it, letting it slice into his arm. He winces painfully, but looks drowsy. He cuts off his arm just below the elbow. His arm suddenly gains vigor and swims forward to re-attach itself. Ivan shakes his head sharply and nods towards the surface. His hand pauses, then swims away. Ivan watches it, letting a little more breath escape. Suddenly, he looks pained and lets all of his air go. The screen fades to black.

EXT. SMOKY EXPANSE-DAY

Ivan is back in the land of the dead. The collared padlock hangs around his neck. He looks around and sees Bradley, leaning up against the gate. He approaches him.

IVAN
Bradley?

Bradley looks up and smiles.

BRADLEY
Ivan! It's been a while!

IVAN

Bradley! I need your help! I'm drowning!

BRADLEY

Is that some kind of figure of speech? As far as I can see, you've already drowned.

IVAN

I'm not permanently dead yet, Bradley! But I will be if I don't get my body out of the bottom of the bay!

BLACK (V.O.)

I thought we sent our left hand for help?

IVAN

It's not going to find me anyone in time!

BRADLEY

I wish I could help, buddy. But you're outta luck. Spirits can't really influence the living like that.

IVAN

There must be something we can do!

Bradley lifts a hand and forces Ivan to sit on the ground beside him. He pats him on the shoulder.

BRADLEY

Ivan, calm down. I really do wish there was something I could do. I don't want you to permanently die. I would lose my only long-term friend. But I'm just the gatekeeper. If you are going to die, can't we just spend your last moments together as friends?

Ivan looks up at Bradley. Bradley looks saddened. Ivan finally nods.

IVAN

Sure, Brad... Sure.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-AFTERNOON

The team stands together on a street corner, out of gear. They converse with pedestrians on the street.

JAYDE

You mean you haven't seen him anywhere?

GUY

No, ma'am. Sorry. I wish I could help.

NIGHTLURKER

Can you inform us of our comrade's whereabouts?

TEENAGE GIRL

Say what?

HERO

He means, have you seen our friend, Street Ninja? Also known as Ivan Daynes?

TEENAGE GIRL

Oh. Not today. He's a total hottie, though. Weird, but hot.

Nightlurker puts a calming hand on the fuming Hero's shoulder as the teenage girl walks away.

THE BRAWN

You seen our man Street Ninja lately?

GENE

Yeah, I saw him. Boy, was he acting crazy.

The team turns to Gene, who looks up at all of them.

NIGHTLURKER

How was he acting?

GENE

He seemed pretty upset. I saw him at the metro station. He was trying to buy a ticket from the ticket lady, but when she asked where he wanted to go, he just kept saying, "Anywhere but here! Anywhere but here!" After a while, I didn't see him any more. I assumed he got fed up and left.

The team looks disheartened.

HERO

He was trying to leave?

THE BRAWN

Do you think he actually did it?

Jayde thanks Gene, and he walks away. Nightlurker nods.

NIGHTLURKER

No, it makes sense. What better way to distract your mind than to travel? We should let him be. He'll come back.

THE BRAWN

But why would he leave without saying anything? That's not like him.

HERO

Maybe because he's mentally unstable? Guys, come on. Let's go home.

A commotion on the streets can be heard. The team turns to look. A woman runs past them screaming.

WOMAN

The hand! It's moving on its own!
It's alive!

RANDOM DUDE

It must belong to Street Ninja!
That guy can heal himself, right?

The team runs to the commotion to investigate. There is a crowd of people surrounding Ivan's hand. It seems to be listening, or looking around.

JAYDE

It's Ivan! He must be close by!

NIGHTLURKER

It is just his hand. Is he in some kind of trouble?

The hand seems to notice them. It crawls towards them. The Brawn picks it up.

THE BRAWN

Ivan! Is that you?

The hand gives the thumbs up sign. It starts spelling words in sign language frantically.

NIGHTLURKER

He is trying to tell us something! What are these hand symbols?

JAYDE

Do any of us know sign language?

THE BRAWN

Never took the time to learn. Ivan sure uses his free time well.

Suddenly, Gene jumps from the crowd and snatches the hand out of The Brawn's grasp, then breaks out into a run. The team looks surprised.

HERO

Hey! Bring that back!

The team chases him. He skids into an alleyway and disappears. The team screeches to a halt.

THE BRAWN

Where did he go?!

NIGHTLURKER

Something is definitely wrong! Ivan's hand wasn't trying to

(MORE)

NIGHTLURKER (CONT'D)

reconnect itself, it was trying to tell us something! Wherever Ivan is, he must need our help!

HERO

But where could he be that he can't come to us himself? Why send us his hand?

EXT. UNDER WATER-EVENING

The water is growing darker as the sun sets. Ivan dangles limply above the ball and chain anchoring him to the bottom of the bay. His eyes are closed, and he doesn't move. A slow stream of blood emits from his arm where his hand used to be.

EXT. SMOKY EXPANSE-DAY

Bradley and Ivan sit across from each other on the ground. There is a chess board between them. Ivan looks anxious. Bradley moves a piece.

BRADLEY

Check.

Ivan appears not to have heard. He stares past Bradley to look beyond the gate. He hugs his knees and rocks back and forth slightly.

BRADLEY

Ivan?

Ivan blinks and looks up at him.

IVAN

Hm?

BRADLEY

You okay?

Ivan looks away.

IVAN

I'm dying for real! No, I'm not okay!

He sighs, looking back at the gate.

IVAN

Have you ever been over there?
What's it like?

BRADLEY

Heaven is beautiful, Ivan. I think
you'll like it a lot.

IVAN

But... What about my friends? Theo,
Vlad, Hero, and Jayde? What will
happen to them?

BRADLEY

They'll have to re-learn how to get
along without you, I suppose.

Ivan looks troubled.

BRADLEY

I'll miss you when you're gone.

IVAN

How are you sure I won't survive?

BRADLEY

You're chances aren't good, Ivan.
Besides, wouldn't you want to die
for real, if you had the chance?

IVAN

What do you mean?

BRADLEY

Think about it! If you were dead,
you wouldn't have to worry about
being mentally unstable, or trying
to find your past, or saving the
city. You wouldn't have to worry
about anyone close to you dying, or
having to fight Hodolph. You'd be
free.

Ivan blinks in realization. He suddenly looks hurt.

IVAN

You're right. Nobody would even miss me. The city thinks I'm a freak, and the team got along without me before I got there.

BLACK (V.O.)

We're... obsolete?

Bradley reaches into a pouch on his waist and pulls out a key. He shows it to Ivan.

BRADLEY

That lock around your neck, it attaches your soul to your body. When it is unlocked, you are able to pass through this gate. You are dead. When your body becomes unable to sustain life any more, your lock will unlock itself. Until then, you have the ability to unlock it yourself, if you want.

Ivan stares at the key.

EXT. ARBEIVILLE-EVENING

The team searches in the alleyway. The Brawn looks desperate.

THE BRAWN

We have to find his hand! Hang in there, Little Brother! We'll find you!

JAYDE

I can't believe that man escaped right in front of us! We're better than this!

HERO

Why did Ivan have to go and get himself in trouble in the first place? If he just stayed at The Tower-

NIGHTLURKER

The Tower gives him no comfort! If
you do not care for his well being,
then go home!

Hero falls silent, but continues to help the team search.
Jayde uses her psychic powers to detect a hidden doorway.

JAYDE

Over here! There's an inconsistency
in this wall!

Jayde presses on a few of the bricks, and one of them makes
a clicking sound. A small doorway opens up, and the team
files inside.

INT. ZAMPANO'S OFFICE-EVENING

The team walks into Zampano's office. They look surprised.
Gene gives Ivan's hand to Zampano. He holds it and
chuckles.

ZAMPANO

My my! The Unstoppables! What an
honor to have you in my club!

JAYDE

Who are you?

ZAMPANO

My name is Zampano. But isn't it
rude to storm into someone's office
and ask questions?

HERO

It's more rude to steal someone's
hand!

ZAMPANO

Fair enough. But I live by a simple
philosophy. Finders keepers, losers
weepers! Ivan lost his hand, I
found it!

THE BRAWN

We found it! You took it from us!

ZAMPANO

And what are you going to do about it? Attack me, and I'll make sure you won't find Ivan's hand, or the rest of him for that matter, before he loses his life forever. I can assure you, he is in very real danger as we speak.

NIGHTLURKER

What have you done to him?!

ZAMPANO

Tut tut! There you go again! So demanding! I'll tell you what, I propose a trade. Ivan's hand, for all of your backstories!

Ivan's hand gives the team a thumbs down, but then goes limp.

JAYDE

No deal! We want the whole Ivan!

ZAMPANO

That's not how I work, dearie. Look at his hand, growing weaker by the second! You're running out of time! Shall we start with you, then?

The team exchanges worried glances. Jayde finally steps forward.

EXT. SMOKY EXPANSE-DAY

Ivan reaches out a hand to touch the key. He runs a finger over it.

IVAN

It's that easy?

BRADLEY

Please don't think I'm trying to talk you into this, Ivan. Frankly, I want you to survive this, so that this won't be the last time we meet. But I also hate seeing you

(MORE)

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

suffer in life. I would rather stop
your suffering, than ease my
loneliness.

Ivan looks up at Bradley. Bradley just smiles gently. Ivan
stares at the key. Then he puts on a brave face. He grabs
up the key, and shoves it into his padlock.

INT. LEGEND'S OFFICE-NIGHT

Ivan sits up and gasps a huge breath of air. He is sitting
on the long table, the team standing around him.

THE BRAWN

He's okay!

HERO

Thank goodness!

Jayde leans over the table and hugs Ivan.

JAYDE

We were so worried about you!

IVAN

Guys?!

NIGHTLURKER

You gave us all such a scare! Had
we found you a moment later, you
might never have woken up!

Hero leans in and wraps her arms around them as well. Then
The Brawn scoops everyone together and squeezes them all.
He releases them a moment later. Ivan allows a small smile.

IVAN

You mean, you wanted to find me?

JAYDE

Of course! Once an Unstoppable,
always an Unstoppable! We had to
find you, no matter the cost!

IVAN

Cost? What happened?

The team suddenly all look away. Ivan looks at all of them.

IVAN

What happened while I was gone??

HERO

We... We had to tell Zampano all of our backstories in order to get you back.

Ivan sighs.

IVAN

So that was his plan, all along. Guys, I'm sorry.

NIGHTLURKER

It's quite alright. Concerning my backstory, I'm assured his knowlege is quite useless.

HERO

Mine is resolved, so me too!

THE BRAWN

Zampano is kinda stupid to think he can re-create a fluke like me!

Ivan smiles again.

IVAN

Thanks for saving me, guys. You're the best.

The team smiles at him in response.

EXT. SMOKY EXPANSE-DAY

Bradley sits by himself by the gate, the chessboard still sits in front of him. Ivan's voice sounds in his mind.

IVAN (V.O.)

On second thought, Brad, life may be tough, but I'm not the kind of guy who will let it get the best of me if I can help it. I want to be able to walk through that gate,

(MORE)

IVAN (v.o.) (CONT'D)

knowing I've done everything else I
can. So here's my key back, Brad.
I'm not going to need it. Oh, and
checkmate.

Brad chuckles as he looks down at the chessboard. Ivan won
the game. He opens his hand, which has Ivan's key in it. He
puts the key back in his pouch, and bows his head.

END.