

Codex Goes Solo
by
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FADE IN:

INT. CODEX'S BEDROOM - DAY

CYD SHERMAN aka CODEX is rushing about, getting ready to go out. Dressed in professional attire, she's putting the final touches on her make-up with the phone cradled on her shoulder. We only hear her half of the conversation.

CODEX

... Seriously, you don't know what this means to me. (pause) Especially after ... (pause) Yeah, the fire (beat) I said sorry about that right? (pause) Well, I am -- Sorry, that is. (pause) Yeah, thanks again for the opportunity. You don't know what this means to me. (pause) Oh, yeah, I did say that already. (pause) OK, I'm on my way out the door right now. Bye.

Codex hangs up the phone as she finishes her make-up. She rushes out the door, but after a few moments returns and grabs her shoes off the floor and her keys off the computer desk. She exits again, only to return a second time to grab the violin case from off her bed before finally exiting for good.

EXT. CODEX'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Codex exits her apartment, locking it behind her and heads down the stairs to the courtyard before proceeding to the parking lot. As she's reaching the bottom of the stairs, a man exits his first floor apartment. He's walking a large dog of indecipherable breed, and also heads towards the parking lot.

EXT. CODEX'S PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Codex proceeds to her car, going first to the passenger side door, she unlocks and opens it and places her violin case upright in the seat. She then leans in to pull the seatbelt across the case and lock it in place. After closing the passenger side door, she then goes around to the driver's side and enters. Angle through the windshield on Codex in the driver's seat as she

puts on her seatbelt and starts up the car. The sound of the passenger side door opening is heard.

BLACKLOCK (O. S.)
(pained)
Roscoe -- In!

Angle from behind the passenger side of the car as JOHN BLACKLOCK is pushing the lever to move the passenger seat forward to access the back seat. His right arm is immobile against his abdomen and his left hand, which he's using to operate the lever, is also holding the leash for his dog ROSCOE. He quickly directs the dog into the back seat, which can barely contain the animal, before pushing the passenger seat back into place. Angle on the full windshield as Blacklock starts getting awkwardly into the car, his right arm is still holding his abdomen.

CODEX
(shocked)
What!?!? Hey, what are you?
Wait -- Get out! Who are you?
Get your dog out of my car!
Careful! Watch my violin,
it's expensive. What's going
on?

Blacklock, who was half inside the car before noticing the violin case, begins trying to unclick the seatbelt but Codex instinctively swats at his hand.

BLACKLOCK
Ow! Uh, sorry, Miss, but it's
kinda urgent. I really need
your help.

At this point Codex had become aware that the reason Blacklock is holding his abdomen so firmly is that he's bleeding from there.

CODEX
(taken aback)
What happened?

BLACKLOCK
(indicating the
dog)
Oh, it's this thing. I was
making lunch. I had a knife

in my hand and I didn't realize he was getting underfoot until I turned and tripped over him. I'm not sure what happened, but when I tried to brace myself for the fall, the knife ended up in my stomach.

Blacklock moves his right arm enough that Codex can see the knife is still in him to prevent him from bleeding out. Codex blanches at the sight.

CODEX

OMG!

BLACKLOCK

Sorry?

CODEX

Oh, my god!

BLACKLOCK

So, if you could just get me to the emergency room.

CODEX

Oh, uh, well I'm -- OK, yeah. I guess I'd, uh ...

Codex quickly unclicks the seatbelt and grabs the violin case so that Blacklock can get in. She unclicks her own seatbelt, gingerly reaches across him, pulling the door closed. She starts trying to help him with his seatbelt, but then thinks better of it considering his wound. She pushes the violin case down onto the floor by his feet and reconnects her own seatbelt and starts the car. Angle from behind the car as it pulls away.

BLACKLOCK (O. S.)

I'm John Blacklock, by the way.

CODEX (O. S.)

Cyd Sherman.

INT. CODEX'S CAR - LATER

Codex is somewhat distracted as she drives, worrying about her passenger.

CODEX
(nervously)
So, uh, can I ask? Why did
you bring the dog?

BLACKLOCK
Roscoe.

CODEX
OK, Roscoe.

BLACKLOCK
You can't really leave him on
his own. It's bad enough he
caused me to stab myself, I
dread to think what I'd end up
coming home to if I just left
him there. It could very well
end up being worse than
getting stabbed.

CODEX
Oh.

BLACKLOCK
So, you seemed to be in a bit
of a hurry back there. Where
were you headed? Emergency
string quartet?

Blacklock points to the violin for emphasis.

CODEX
Naw -- Well, sorta. My, uh --
Well -- "Ex" called me out of
the blue. He's moonlighting
by working on scoring some TV
show and one of the violinists
didn't show.

BLACKLOCK
Well, that's nice that you
have the kind of relationship

with your ex that you can do him a favour.

CODEX

Uh, yeah, except it's really him doing me a favour. Well, I guess it's mutual since he's in a pinch, but the breakup wasn't exactly amicable -- Let's just say there was fire involved -- I haven't exactly been in huge demand since then.

BLACKLOCK

(smiling)

Wow, Cyd -- Hidden depths.

CODEX

Anyway, the quicker I can get there, the better impression I'll make, so I'll get more work thrown my way.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL - LATER

Codex drives up in front of the door to the emergency room. She rushes around to open Blacklock's door and then runs inside to get help. While she's gone, Blacklock slowly edges himself out the door and once outside he steadies himself before leaning down to move the passenger seat forward again. He has to lean into the car to grab Roscoe's leash and guide him out of the back seat. Just as the dog exits the car, Codex and an ORDERLY arrive with a wheelchair. Blacklock hands the dog's leash to Codex as the orderly helps him into the chair and they proceed toward the door.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The sliding doors part and they all enter the emergency room.

ORDERLY

You can't bring your dog in here, Miss. It's a hospital.

CODEX

Oh, right, well -- Uh -- It's just it's not my dog, it's his. And I've got to go.

ORDERLY

So, then you can take it with you.

BLACKLOCK

That would really help, actually, Cyd.

CODEX

Yeah, but -- Uh. OK. I guess I'll just have to meet you back here after the session.

BLACKLOCK

Thanks. You've been really great.

CODEX

Uh huh. C'mon Roscoe, let's go.

Codex leads the dog back out through the sliding doors.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Codex and Roscoe head towards her car. The sliding doors begin to close.

BLACKLOCK (O. S.)

Don't forget you can't leave Roscoe on his own.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE STUDIO - LATER

CODEX'S EX is waiting rather impatiently outside the door of the studio. As he's pacing back and forth he finally spies Codex approaching at a run with her violin case in one hand and Roscoe's leash in the other. Upon seeing her, the Ex brings up his arms as if to do the "pointing at the watch" gesture to tell her she's late, but drops them again once he notices the dog. Not realizing the dog wouldn't stop immediately, Codex is almost pulled over by the dog when she halts at the door and has to take another less than graceful step to keep her balance.

EX

Whoa, Cyd, careful. What took you so long? And what's with the barkfest? I didn't know you got a dog.

CODEX

It's not my dog, it belongs to a neighbour. Somehow I got roped into driving him to the emergency room and babysitting his dog.

EX

OK, well, c'mon. We're already under a time crunch, so we need to get this done.

They enter the building.

INT. STUDIO LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Codex, with Roscoe, and her Ex walk toward the studio proper, passing by the reception desk. The RECEPTIONIST is on the phone, using a headset. They stop at the desk and wait for her to be available.

EX

(to Codex)

I hope you've been keeping up with your practice, and not spending all your time on that silly game of yours. This is a complicated piece and you've got a fairly substantive solo passage.

CODEX

I can handle it. Don't worry.

The receptionist puts the call on hold.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you?

CODEX

Yeah, oh, uh, see I'm filling in on violin, but, uh, I had to bring my neighbour's dog with me -- Don't ask ...

Codex steps back a couple of paces and points to the dog. The receptionist grudgingly gets up and leans over the reception desk to see what Codex is talking about. Her eyes get wide when she sees the beast.

CODEX

(continued)

... So, I was wondering if you could maybe take care of him for a bit -- Or something ...

Although obviously not thrilled with the prospect, the receptionist holds out her hand to take the dog's leash, which Codex is happy to hand over.

CODEX

(continued)

... Thank you. Make sure you keep a good watch on him, and don't let him be on his own.

The receptionist guides the dog around to the back of the desk using the leash. Codex and her Ex proceed into the recording studio.

CODEX

(to her Ex)

Sorry again about your cello.

EX

Don't worry about it.

INT. SOUND STUDIO - LATER

Inside the sound proof booth of the sound studio, Codex is playing the solo portion of the score. The booth is separated from the console room by a wall with a large window. In the console room are a RECORDING ENGINEER, a PRODUCER and her Ex. From her vantage point and through the window, Codex can see the studio door as it opens and the receptionist enters with Roscoe. She does not look happy. Codex has to use all her concentration to continue playing. But she can't help noticing when the

receptionist, talking to the producer, points to the dog, then points through the window at Codex. The producer shakes his head in disbelief as the receptionist passes the leash to him before she departs the studio. The producer looks at her Ex who just shrugs.

INT. SOUND STUDIO - LATER

Codex had been joined in the studio by her Ex, on cello, another VIOLINIST and a VIOLA PLAYER to form a string quartet. The recording is proceeding quite well when Codex suddenly notices that the engineer suddenly disappears from view. The producer stands up quickly, looking first at where the engineer had been and then turning to look angrily through the glass at Codex. He walks over to the console and hits the intercom switch.

PRODUCER
(via intercom)
OK, hold it.

The producer clicks the intercom back off as the musicians stop playing. The producer helps the engineer up to his feet and clicks the intercom back on. Before speaking he puts his hand over the mic and has a quick word with the engineer before removing his hand and speaking.

PRODUCER
(continued, via
intercom)
Miss Sherman, may we see you
in here for a moment.

Codex looks sheepish as she walks to the interconnecting door between the sound studio and the console room.

INT. CONSOLE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Upon entering the console room, Codex is able to see the smashed chair where the engineer had, until recently, been seated. Codex can not imagine how Roscoe had managed that level of carnage. Whatever had happened it must have been quick for them to be unable to stop the dog from doing it.

CODEX
(flabbergasted)
What the?

PRODUCER

Look, Ms. Sherman, I appreciate that this was short notice. But your dog --

CODEX

He's not my dog, he's my neighbour's dog.

PRODUCER

OK, you're neighbour's dog -- Whatever. He's just too destructive. And I don't like the way he growls at me. You'll have to do something else with him. I had to send my receptionist home -- You don't even want to know what happened to her. I don't care what you do with it, but this dog needs to not be in my studio. He needs to be gone right now and to never return. I'd rather shut down the session and eat the cost of a lost day than let this beast have free reign. Understood?

CODEX

Yeah, understood.

INT. STUDIO LOBBY - A SHORT TIME LATER

While keeping a firm grip on Roscoe's leash, Codex dons the receptionist's headset and makes a call. As she does so, she surveys the damage to the lobby, which is extensive.

INT. CLARA'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Seated at her computer desk, CLARA is engaging in some online gaming. Her phone starts ringing and continues to do so as she ignores it.

CLARA

(to the mic)

Someone take down those orc archers. With Codex AFK for

the day, we can't take any
withering fire.

TINKERBALLA (O. S.)
I'm on it.

ZABOO (O. S.)
Where is my lady love? It's
not like her to miss a guild
run.

CLARA
It's something musical. She
said she had to play something
for her Ex.

BLADEZZ (O. S.)
His skin flute?

VORK (O. S.)
Bladezz!

TINKERBALLA (O. S.)
Whose phone is that?

An instant message pops up on Clara's display.

"Codex: Clara, pick up your phone!"

CLARA
Oh -- Right.

INT. STUDIO LOBBY/VARIOUS BEDROOMS/OFFICES - INTERCUT

Codex is seated at the receptionist's desk, having commandeered her computer to send an instant message to Clara. She has to type with one hand while keeping a firm reign on Roscoe with the other. Also at their customary gaming positions are ZABOO, TINKERBALLA, VORK, ZABOO and BLADEZZ.

CODEX
C'mon, Clara, pick up.

Clara finally picks up the phone.

CLARA
Hi, Codex.

ZABOO
(surprised)
Codex?

CODEX
Hey, Clara. Uh -- Is there
any chance you could do me a
favour?

CLARA
What kind of favour?

ZABOO
Codex needs a favour?

TINKERBALLA
Are you just gonna repeat
everything Clara says, Zaboo?

BLADEZZ
I can think of a favour I'd do
Codex.

VORK
Bladezz!

TINKERBALLA
And, Vork, are you gonna just
keep chastizing Bladezz?

VORK
Are you all going to let the
guild run go by the wayside
because of Codex's latest
drama? Even AFK it's all
about her.

ZABOO
Hey! That's my woman you're
talking about. I don't want
to resort to fisticuffs, but I
will in the name of her
honour.

BLADEZZ
Ooh -- Meow!

VORK

Very funny, Bladezz. We are not ladies and we are not going to catfight, or fight in any way. I just don't like getting sidetracked.

CODEX

I'm at the recording studio. I had to take a neighbour to the hospital and so I got stuck with his dog and I need you to pick him up -- The dog, that is.

CLARA

I don't know. What kinda dog?

ZABOO

Dog? Whose dog?

TINKERBALLA

Dude -- Seriously?

CODEX

You know, the dog kind of dog. I don't know what breed he is. Does that matter? I think he's a mutt.

CLARA

Well, yeah. I mean, if I've gotta pack three kids into the car to drive there, I need to know if there'll be room. OK, so he's a mutt. That could be anything. How big is he?

CODEX

Well, actually he's kinda big. He pretty much took up my whole back seat. Then again my car's pretty small. Even so, he's a really big dog. I wonder if anyone else in the guild can pick him up.

CLARA

Codex wants to know if anyone can pick up her neighbour's dog.

ZABOO

I'll do it. I'll totally do it. Volunteer'd.

CLARA

Zaboo says he'll do it.

TINKERBALLA

How are you gonna pick up anything without a car?

CODEX

He can't do it. He doesn't have a car.

CLARA

Zaboo, Codex says you can't do it without a car.

TINKERBALLA

Told ya.

ZABOO

Tell her, "I can do anything for you, my love."

CLARA

Yeah, uh, I'm not telling her that.

CODEX

Telling her what?

CLARA

Nothing. It's just Zaboo being Zaboo.

TINKERBALLA

More like Zaboo being creepy.

ZABOO

More like Tink being hurtful -- Hurt'd. Clara, just get

the address and tell her you changed your mind and you'll do it. Then trust me, everything will be fine. I'll handle it -- Handle'd.

CLARA

Fine, whatever. OK, Codex, what's the address. I got it covered.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE STUDIO - LATER

Codex is seated on the steps of the studio next to Roscoe, impatiently awaiting Clara. A bus stops across the street and then departs to reveal Zaboo, seeming unnecessarily satisfied with himself. He starts to cross the street but has to wait for some traffic to clear. Codex is surprised, at first, but soon realizes she half expected it as he does have a habit doing this.

CODEX

I should have known.

ZABOO

How are you, my sweet? And this must be Roscoe.

Zaboo reaches out to pet the dog, but is greeted with a low growl, so he quickly retracts his hand.

ZABOO

Reject'd.

CODEX

That's the first time I've seen him to that. Wait, how did you? Did I?

ZABOO

Rental agreements, cancelled checks ...

CODEX AND ZABOO

(in unison)

Veterinary records.

CODEX

Yeah, got it.

Codex stands up. Roscoe follows suit and comes to heel. She tries handing the leash to Zaboo, but the dog growls again, louder this time.

CODEX
(to Roscoe)
Where were you when he showed
up on my doorstep?

ZABOO
(a little hurt)
Harsh.

The door to the studio opens and Codex's Ex emerges part way.

EX
Have you done something with
the dog, yet?

(to Zaboo)
Oh, hi.

CODEX
Almost. This is Zaboo. I'd
introduce you, but I'm sure he
recognizes you from your DMV
photo and probably has copies
of you tax returns.

EX
Uh -- I don't know how to
respond to that, Cyd. Is he
taking the dog, or what?
We're burning studio time
here.

CODEX
We've run into a bit of a
snag.

ZABOO
It hates me -- Hate'd.

CODEX
He doesn't hate you.

Zaboo tries to put his hand out as you do to show a dog you are friendly, but is immediately rebuffed with a sharp bark.

ZABOO

Hates me.

CODEX

He probably just thinks he's protecting me.

ZABOO

That's my job, Codex.

EX

(momentarily
confused)

Codex? Oh, I get it. You're one of them. It figures. It's not enough the game took over your life while you were playing it, but now it's invading the rest of your life.

ZABOO

(angry)

Hey, you don't get to comment on what she does with her time anymore!

CODEX

(to Zaboo)

I can handle this myself, Zaboo.

(to her Ex)

But he's right. So back off.

Her Ex is taken aback by being confronted by both of them, but even so is more concerned that Roscoe is now growling and bristling at him. He retreats behind the door a bit.

EX

You know what, Cyd, this was a bad idea. I thought we could be civil, but I'm not going to put up with you trying to

intimidate me with your attack
dog ...

CODEX
He's not my dog.

EX
(continued)
... And your new boyfriend.

Zaboo instinctively tries to put his arm, supportively, around Codex, but then remembers the dog and thinks better of it, even before Codex has to stare him off.

CODEX
He's not my boyfriend.

EX
Whatever. We're obviously
done here.

Codex shrugs and begins to move towards the door. Her Ex jumps fully into the building and pulls the door closed. Codex rolls her eyes and then makes a "violin" gesture. Her Ex opens the door slightly.

EX
You stay out here with that
thing. I'll get your violin.

CODEX
Fine.

Her Ex closes the door again and leaves to get the violin. After a few moments Zaboo goes towards the door, giving the dog a wide berth.

CODEX
What are you doing?

Zaboo opens the door and then turns back to Codex.

ZABOO
Violins are made of wood,
right?

CODEX

Yeah.

ZABOO
Like cellos?

CODEX
Obviously. Why? Oh! He
wouldn't!

ZABOO
He looks pretty mad.
Immolate'd. Better safe than
sorry.

Zaboo enters the building and follows after Codex's Ex.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL - LATER

Codex, Zaboo and Roscoe all pile out of the car. Zaboo is still carrying the violin.

CODEX
You can leave that in the car.

ZABOO
Right.

Zaboo quickly returns the violin to the car and then catches back up to Codex as they get to the sliding doors which open at their approach.

CODEX
I'll have to wait here with
Roscoe, so you'll have to go
in and ask for ...

ZABOO
John Blacklock.

CODEX
(continued)
Right. I don't know if
they'll tell you anything
about him since you're not
family, but at least let them
know I'm waiting out here with
his dog.

ZABOO

I accept your quest and will
carry it out posthaste.

CODEX

Just go.

Zaboo enters the hospital. Codex notices a bench near the entrance and sits down. Roscoe jumps up next to her and lies down, his head on her lap, taking up the rest of the bench.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOSPITAL - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Zaboo emerges from the hospital, looks around for a moment trying to locate Codex and, upon seeing her seated on the bench, approaches her.

CODEX

So how is he.

ZABOO

He's gone, Codex.

CODEX

(flabbergasted)

Gone? How can he be gone? I
mean, yeah, he had a knife in
his stomach, but it was
stopping the bleeding.

Zaboo looks like he wants to try to comfort Codex, but is still aware of Roscoe and is wary of how the dog reacts to him.

ZABOO

Codex, no, not gone like that.
Gone like he left the
hospital and went home.
According to the hospital
computer, he got a few
stitches, a prescription for
pain medication and then
discharged. He's fine.

CODEX

Then where is he?

ZABOO

One of the orderlies -- He remembers you and Roscoe, BTW -- Said he called himself a cab and took off. He probably went home.

EXT. OUTSIDE BLACKLOCK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Zaboo is peering into Blacklock's apartment, his hand shielding his eyes to avoid glare from the windows. Codex is standing nearby with Roscoe.

ZABOO

I hate to repeat myself, but -- He's gone, Codex.

CODEX

What, gone out? How can you tell?

ZABOO

No, not gone out -- Moved out. His apartment is completely bare.

CODEX

Are you sure this is the right apartment? You might have gotten the wrong information online.

ZABOO

Unlikely. Besides, I called the apartment manager to confirm. Double-check'd.

CODEX

WTF? So, he accidentally stabs himself, cajoles a ride with me to the hospital, convinces me to babysit his dog and then sneaks back home to moves everything out of his apartment, forgetting that he left his dog with me? That makes no sense.

ZABOO

I'm beginning to think his injury wasn't lunch related.

CODEX

I think we need to get into his apartment. Maybe he left a clue, or a note or something.

ZABOO

OK, but how. If it was a computer system, I'd already be in there by now. I think we need someone with an entirely different skill set. Someone a little more stealthy.

INT. CODEX'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

BLADEZZ

What makes you think I can pick a lock?

Bladezz is standing, back to the others, looking out the window. Zaboo is seated on the couch and is eyeing Roscoe as he trails behind Codex who is in the kitchen area looking through cupboards. She eventually finds a suitable dish, removes it from the cupboard and places it on the counter next to the can opener. She removes a tin of dog food from a bag of freshly bought groceries and opens it to feed Roscoe.

ZABOO

You play a rogue in the game. Plus, you know all that slight of hand, card trick stuff, so you've got nimble fingers.

CODEX

So? You play a warlock, but the only magic I've seen you do is appear at my home out of thin air.

ZABOO

Ow, my love! Wound'd.

CODEX

Although you're mom did make
my home disappear, so maybe
you inherited her abilities.

BLADEZZ

If you two could stop flirting
for a moment, I didn't say I
couldn't. I just wanted to
know why you thought I could.

ZABOO

Oh, yeah, and it's in your
sealed juvi record.

BLADEZZ

Oh, c'mon! Am I the only one
getting tired of this?

CODEX

Juvi? No, wait -- Flirting?
Ah, we'll come back to that.
Juvi?

BLADEZZ

Yeah, well, I wasn't always
the straight as an arrow
Bladezz you see before you. I
had a bit of a past.

CODEX

Which included juvi,
apparently.

ZABOO

And lock picking.

BLADEZZ

Yeah, OK, it includes juvi and
lock picking. I guess we
can't all be squeaky clean
like Ms. Arson and Mr.
Computer Intrusion.

CODEX

Point taken.

ZABOO

Touche'd.

BLADEZZ

Good. So what are we waiting for?

EXT. OUTSIDE BLACKLOCK'S APARTMENT - LATER

Zaboo, Codex and Roscoe keep watch, facing away from the door with Bladezz behind them, obscured from casual view. It only takes him a few moments before the lock clicks open.

BLADEZZ

Got it.

CODEX

Quick, let's get inside.

INT. BLACKLOCK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Everybody files inside and they shut the door. Codex turns on a flashlight moments before Zaboo just flicks on the lights.

CODEX

Turn those off!

ZABOO

Oh, OK.

Zaboo turns the lights back off.

ZABOO

(continued)

Wait -- Why?

BLADEZZ

Yeah, why?

CODEX

We don't want people to know we're in here.

BLADEZZ

How would anyone know it's us instead of the guy who used to

live here? Which is more suspicious, to see an apartment with it's lights on, or an apartment with a flashlight shining around when there isn't a power failure.

ZABOO

He's right.

Zaboo flicks the lights back on. Codex decides not to argue the point and turns her flashlight off. They start looking around for clues. Bladezz approaches the kitchen area where he can see the edge of a pool of blood mostly obscured by the counter.

BLADEZZ

I guess this is where he stabbed himself. He mustn't have had time to clean it up.

As he gets closer, Bladezz realizes it's not blood from Blacklock's stab wound as there's too much of it and it leads to a body: The REAL JOHN BLACKLOCK.

BLADEZZ

(continued)

... Or not. Uh, guys -- Maybe you should see this.

Codex and Zaboo go to where Bladezz is standing and see the body for themselves. Almost immediately, Codex vomits on the floor.

BLADEZZ

(continued)

... Or, again, maybe not.

Zaboo tries to comfort Codex which brings another growl from Roscoe.

ZABOO

(angry)

Oh, shut up, Roscoe! I'm tired of you trying to bully me into keeping away from my lady love.

BLADEZZ

I'd swear that dog is trying
to cock block you.

ZABOO

Cock block'd? By a dog? Dog
cock block'd?

CODEX

(nauseated)

It's not the dog that ...

Codex vomits again.

CODEX

(continued)

... Is blocking you. Hey,
wait a minute. I know that
guy -- Er -- That is a knew
him. Well, I remember seeing
him once, at least. I thought
that dog looked familiar.

EXT. CODEX'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - FLASHBACK TO HER MOVING IN - DAY

Codex is walking down the stairs from the second floor as Zaboo
is on his way up with a cardboard box. They pass each other
about midway.

ZABOO

Where should I put this one,
my love?

CODEX

Like I keep saying, just put
them in the middle of the
living room. I'll sort it all
out myself.

Codex is distracted by looking back to make sure Zaboo doesn't do
anything odd. As she gets to the bottom of the stairs and turns
to head towards the parking lot, she's taken aback to be
confronted by the face of a huge dog, up on his hind legs,
putting his forepaws on her shoulders, almost like they are
dancing. Codex can't help letting out a little scream of
surprise.

ZABOO (O. S.)

(yelling)
Codex? Are you OK, my
darling?

CODEX
(yelling up to
Zaboo)
I'm fine.

(to Roscoe)
Now, who do you belong to.

REAL BLACKLOCK
Down!

Roscoe shoves Codex back a step or two while pushing his forepaws off her to get down on all fours.

CODEX
Oh!

The real Blacklock approaches and picks up the dogs leash from the ground. The dog seems contented as he lets Codex pet him.

REAL BLACKLOCK
I'm sorry about that. He just
got away from me. Wow, he
really likes you. Actually,
that's kinda weird.

CODEX
What is?

REAL BLACKLOCK
He doesn't normally like
people, especially ones he
doesn't know. I'm just
keeping him for a friend, but
I had to spend like a week
with him before he'd even stop
growling at me.

CODEX
Well, he seems like a big
sweetie to me. Anyway, nice
to meet you both. I'm just
moving in, so I have to get

back to it. I'll probably see you around.

REAL BLACKLOCK

Yep, see you around.

Real Blacklock leads Roscoe towards his apartment while Codex heads back towards the parking lot.

INT. BLACKLOCK'S APARTMENT - RESUMED

CODEX

I met him when I first moved in here, but I never did end up seeing him again, until today, so I forgot all about both he and Roscoe.

BLACKLOCK

I guess he never forgot about you.

Zaboo, Codex and Bladezz all look towards the door at Blacklock who had entered silently while they were distracted by discovering the body. He has his knife in his hand.

BLACKLOCK

(continued)

In fact he lead me right to you this morning, and I really was just looking for a ride to the hospital. I wasn't planning on looking for you until I was patched up.

CODEX

Looking for me? Why?

BLACKLOCK

You have something he stole from me. I was nice enough to lend him my dog, and still he stole from me.

ZABOO

No honour among thieves.

BLACKLOCK

Whatever. Anyway, he admitted, before his unfortunate demise, that he'd given the package to the girl that Roscoe likes -- And that's you. Once he knew I was looking for him, he must have decided to move out, but came back to retrieve the package from you, only I caught up to him first.

CODEX

So you stabbed him and in the ensuing fray you got stabbed by your own blade?

BLACKLOCK

No, I stabbed him and then tripped over my dog, just like I said.

ZABOO

(to Codex)

I told you his injury wasn't lunch related.

CODEX

Yeah, uh, good call, but not helpful right now.

BLACKLOCK

Once we were at the hospital and he let you take his leash without growling, I knew you had to be the one I was looking for. Then it was just a matter of waiting for you to show up here.

CODEX

But the thing is, like I was saying, I hadn't seen him or the dog since I moved in. He

never gave me any package, or anything of any kind.

BLACKLOCK

You'll forgive me if I don't simply take your word for it. I've searched here, so how about we march our way up to your apartment.

Blacklock moves away from the door, pointing his blade rather purposefully at Codex. Then he gestures with it to indicate that they should exit, which they do. Blacklock follows and gets right up behind Zaboo.

BLACKLOCK

(continued)

And don't do anything stupid or you boyfriend will be sorry.

ZABOO

I would happily sacrifice myself for you, my love.

CODEX

He's not my boyfriend.

BLADEZZ

Kinda undercuts the romantic gesture, doesn't it.

VORK (O. S.)

Ah, there you are, Codex.

EXT. OUTSIDE BLACKLOCK'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

As they emerge from Blacklock's apartment Vork, who is about halfway up the stairs, notices them and turns around to come back down.

VORK

(continued)

I've been meaning to discuss with you some of the recent

disruptions in the guild by
your relationship with Zaboo.

CODEX

How many times do I have to
tell you people that we aren't
in a relationship?

EX (O. S.)

Hey, Cyd, can I talk to you?

Her Ex approaches the group from the direction of the parking
lot, carrying his cello case.

EX

(continued)

Oh, wow, so what, the gang's
all here, I'm guessing?

ZABOO

Except Clara.

BLADEZZ

And Tink.

EX

OK, whatever that means. You
people and your crazy fantasy
world. Sorry. This isn't
about that. Look, they are
really pissed off about the
damage your dog caused.

CODEX

Not my dog, my neighbour's
dog.

BLACKLOCK

No, he's actually my dog.

CODEX

I meant you.

BLACKLOCK

Speaking of -- If I may have
my dog.

Blacklock puts his hand out and Codex passes him the leash while he continues to keep the blade at Zaboo's back.

EX

(to Blacklock)

So maybe you're the one I should talk to. That dog is a menace. He tore up the lobby of a recording studio and ruined an expensive custom chair. Somebody has to pay for that.

ZABOO

Maybe this isn't the time or place to discuss this.

VORK

Exactly. We have important guild matters to discuss.

ZABOO

That's not what I meant.

EX

(to Codex)

Look, I'm really trying to put all this acrimony behind us and help you get your career back on track, but your friends here aren't making it any easier. If we could just speak privately.

Codex's Ex tries to take her by the hand to lead her away from the group, but forgets about Roscoe. The dog freaks out, starts barking and lunges at her Ex with enough force to pull Blacklock out of stabbing distance of Zaboo.

VORK

(shouting)

He's got a knife!

Zaboo, Codex and Bladezz have the presence of mind to get away from Blacklock. Codex's Ex is so startled that he falls backward, letting go of the cello case which lands, vertically, right between Roscoe and Blacklock and remains so just long

enough for Blacklock to be pulled abdomen first onto the top edge of the case. As Roscoe pins Codex's Ex to the ground, snarling all the while, Blacklock lets go of the leash as he crumples to the ground in pain, blood gushing from the re-opened wound. He passes out from the blood loss.

CODEX

Someone call 9-1-1!

(to Roscoe)

Roscoe! No!

Codex picks up the dog's leash and leads him away from her Ex.

VORK

I guess we can table guild business for now.

BLADEZZ

You think?

INT. CODEX'S LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

The guild members are all present, seated in various chairs, with Roscoe sitting patiently at Codex's feet.

CODEX

(to Clara and
Tink)

... So after he'd passed out, we tied his hands, just in case, and did our best to stop his bleeding until the paramedics arrived. Then we had to explain the whole thing to the police.

BLADEZZ

Artfully glossing over the whole breaking and entering part of the evening.

CLARA

How about your Ex?

CODEX

He was a little shaken up, but no harm done. I don't think he'll be offering me any work, though. Just a hunch.

TINKERBALLA

So what about this package he kept talking about?

ZABOO

I doubt we'll ever know what it was or where it went.

CODEX

The police had a hard time believing that I knew nothing about it.

VORK

And the dog?

CODEX

They asked me to keep him until they can find a permanent home.

ZABOO

I can't wait.

BLADEZZ

I bet you can't.

TINKERBALLA

It'll probably take them awhile since, besides you, the only people Roscoe likes are dead or in hospital on the way to jail.

CODEX

They're not the only ones.

CLARA

Who else?

BLADEZZ

I thought you're the only one
he took to.

CODEX

I'm not as unique in Roscoe's
affections as his masters
would have you believe.
Zaboo, remember the damage to
the recording studio lobby?

ZABOO

I don't think that was all
Roscoe's doing.

INT. TAXYING AIRPLANE - SIMULTANEOUS

The receptionist sits in her coach seat, awaiting takeoff. She looks around to make sure no one is looking at her and then discretely removes an object wrapped in a handkerchief from her purse. She opens a corner of the handkerchief just enough that only she can see its contents. Satisfied with the object, she smiles to herself and puts the object, handkerchief and all, back in her purse.

FADE OUT: