

Episode Nine: Caught in the Middle

Kelly was confused, to say the least. It'd been another long day of serving, the countertop was more utensil than anything else and just as she began cleaning up...**BOOM!** Lucy and Nancey came crashing into town. They looked hurt but, Nancey got up and strolled off like nothing happened...And then a few hours later...**RING-A-LING!** Lucy pulled up lookin' angry as all Hell. The normally cheery girl even scared off some passing Mallow-Men on her way in. The diner was empty so at least she could eat and grumble to herself in peace, she did ramble about whatever happened to some guys on the phone, but Kelly had no intentions to eavesdrop. She just washed dish, after dish, after dish, after dish, after

RING-A-LING!

"Be with ya in a second!" Her eyes went to the reflective coffee maker as she pulled her hands from the sink. "...No...way..."

The diner's new patron stared daggers at Kelly. "He, he isn't here?"

WHOOSHI!

Kelly threw herself over the counter, she scrambled to beat "RAPHAEL!" to the door. **THUD!** She threw her body in front of the entrance, and pulled a key outta her apron **KACHAKI** "Raphael, listen to me baby, PLEASE!" She wrenched her phone outta her pocket. "Talk to your Mother for me baby, please! I swear she won't care that you'r-!" **SLAPI KAKACHHI!**

"Do NOT, contact her! Open this door NOW!" He tightly clutched a piece of paper as he shouted.

"Raphael baby please just listen to me!"

PUARI!

A red streak appeared between the two.

"Look, I don't know what chall got goin' on, but I just want to eat, and y'all are bein' loud as shit. Ms.Kelly can we just let him go? He don't wanna stay."

"L-Lucy, you're the sheriff, no matter what happens do not let him leave! We need him here! He hasn't seen his mother in years!"

"I'm sure there's two sides to this."

"I refuse to return here! This place is a cage!"

"I can agree with ya there. Alright, let's let him go."

"I can't damnit! This could be our only chance to bring the kids back!"

"This guy took 'em?"

"We are not cogs, the machine of this town shall hold grasp of our freedom for no longer!"

“What is happening?”

“Lucy look, more kids your age used to live here, I can’t speak for the others, but I’m pretty sure Raphael left because he’s g-!”

“SHUT UP!”
CRUNCH!

Cracks after cracks spiderwebbed through the diner’s tiles.

“What was that? What just happened?”

“He’s got a Phoenix-Factor.”

The young man, uh Raphael, was it(?) **THUDI!** fell to his knees. It took a bit to register but...he was dressed, uh, weird as Hell like...Shakespeare or something, dark cape, regal as Hell lookin’ thick ruffled collar, and his hair...Well his hair was beautiful. His lush locks hung over his face and. . . He started to shake.

“Look what you made me do.” He ran his hand across the floor. “Dragging me to such a state...To which I would damage something so precious...to him”

“Kelly. Open. The. Door. This guy’s about to fucking snap.”

“Lucy, I can’t! I can’t and I refuse!”

“This is why the jawbreakers left this land...And unfortunately, I’m left with no other choice...” **DRIPI DROPI DRIPI DROPI!** The young man cut his fingers on one of the jagged tiles. Flipping over that paper he brought with him, he started to write *something* in his blood.

WHOOSHI
GRIPPPPI

Two **absolutely jacked** blue arms cut through the air. Balling her shirt up, they slowly lifted Kelly off the ground. “I do not have another request within me!”

“This don’t scare me nothing hun!”

“Look uh, Raphael, nice to meet you, I’m Lucy. I’m sure that this building has a back exit. We don’t have to do this.”

“IT’S BIGGER THAN THAT! MY ENTIRE LIFE I’VE HAD TO HIDE WHO I AM!”

“Raphael I understand what you’re going through. But times have changed. It’s much more acceptable to be-.”

“NO MORE!”

CRASH!

The counter was bent outta shape.

Raphael was seein’ nothing but red.

And Kelly...

“I refuse to budge!”

Was colorblind.

So. Stuck between a rock and a hard place.

Lucy did what anyone else would do.

JUMPI

PAPER NOISE!

“Hey!”

JINGLE!

“No!”

TMPI

PUAR!

SLIIIIIIIIIIIIIDE!

The warring parties were blown to opposite sides of the diner. “Alright look. I’m going to take care of-.”

BEEP-BOOP-BEEP! “Good idea hun, hold him off for me aight!”

“No, shit, stop!” Forming a mine, Lucy was halfway through her pitch animation when.

GRAB! WHOOSH! The blue arms, now attached to a giant blue man in Spartan armor, snatched her wrists off the ground. **CRACK! WHUMP! THUMP!** His hollow eyes didn’t even blink under

the weight of Lucy's kicks. **TMP! TMP! TMP!** Rushing by **PAPER NOISE! + JINGLE!** Raphael snatched Lucy's items.

RING-RING-ING-RING-A-DINGLE! "END THAT CALL NOWWWW!" With all he had Raphael **CRASHED!** into Kelly.... **THUD! RING-RING-ING-RING-A-DINGLE!** Bit late to say but, Raphael was kind of a little guy, probably not even *two* of everything he had would've moved Kelly. He tried to wrestle the phone from her, but she pushed and mangled him around with just one hand.

RING-RING-ING-RING-A-DINGLE!

"Shit! C'mon man!" **CRACK! WHUMPI THUMPI!** "Rrrgh! C'mon man get off me!" Lucy's kicks still had no effect.

Okay shit, I gotta think! Henry said something about this!

TICK-TOCK!

TICK-TOCK!

"Lucy. Every Phoenix Factor, no matter how intimidating or how powerful it may be, has some catch or weakness. And how quickly you do or do not figure those out, can turn the tide of battle." - Henry

TICK-TOCK!

TICK-TOCK! DRIP - DROPI

DRIP - DROPI

The Spartan's finger was bleeding...

"Hrrng!" **THUDI THUDI THUDI!** Lucy slammed her foot onto the counter...while Raphael.

THUDI! "Umph!" Got slammed into a booth. "Stop! Don't do this!"

RING-RING-ING-RING-A-DINGLE!

"Hello?...Kelly?"

PUARI

WHOOSHI

Lucy's shoe blasted across the diner, **THUDI THUDI!** crashing into Raphael's head.

"Sofia! Sofia! Can you hear me? This is this is important!"

TMPI TMPI TMPI TMPI TMPI

JUMPI WHOOSHI KAKACHHI Lucy sprinted across the diner to kick the phone outta Kelly's hand. Raphael almost shouted, but... "...Kelly, what is it?" The phone landed right onto his table. . . And so did....

BANG!

Kelly.

"Did you butt dial me?"

THUMPI Raph pushed Kelly into the seat across from him. Just before he grabbed the phone. ***GRABI*** "Last time, promise, big guy's still after me."

CRACK!

THUDI

The sprinting giant tumbled.

SHINKI SHINKI SHINKI SHINKI

Using several series of silverware, she pinned him to the ground.

CLINKI CLINKI CLINKI

By the time they both got their bearings, Raph and Kelly had three plates placed before them. From where Raphael was sitting, from right to left, there was

His Piece of Paper

The Diner Keys

And Kelly's Phone

"Sophia, your son is here!" Now unfortunately for Kelly the call was muted.

But.

Looking up...

Her eyes met Raphael's...

CHK-CHK!

BOOM!

They both shot for the phone!

SLIDE!

They both grabbed a whole lotta nothin'.

Now the order was...
Kelly's Phone
The Diner Keys
And Raph's piece of paper

CHK-CHK!
BOOM!
SLIDE!

Keys, Phone, Paper.

“I’m sorry Ms.Kelly! I-I-I-I think his power is con-con-con-trolling me!
IgigigigiguhGah! Uhhibleible! This shit sucks! You’re, you’re on your own.”

Kelly and Raphael's eyes reconvened.

3...2...1...
GO!

SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!

Keys, phone, paper, keys, phone, phone, paper, keys, paper, phone, phone, paper, keys,
keys, phone, paper, paper, phone phone phone keyskeyskeyskeys!!!!

SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!SLIDE!

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“There!” “There!”

CHK-CHK!
BOOM!

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. .
. . .

GRAB!
BOOP!

“SOPHIA! YOU’RE SON’S HERE! COME TO THE DINER QUICK!!”

“Uh Ms.Kelly. I don’t wanna burst your bubble, but...I don’t have his mom’s number.”

“What hun?” Kelly looked down at the phone in her hand. The screen lit up to show Lucy and three guys she’d never seen before. Across the table Raphael held **HER** phone with a smirk on his face. “Give that back!” **WHOMPI SHINK!** A sheet of pink fogged her vision. “What the hell’s goin’ on here! Lucy!?”

“C’mon dude get the fuck outta here!”

TMPI TMPI TMPI

Lucy grabbed Raphael’s hand and dragged him across the diner. “Ahhh oh my God, your power is overriding the sanctuary that is my mind!...And bodily control!”

“Lucy! Stop him, you have to fight it! Gahlee! These crazy powers you kids have are so mysterious!” Capitalizing on the cellular distraction, Lucy had pulled Kelly’s shirt over her head and stabbed it to the table.

CHICK-KERCHAK! RING-A-LING!

WHOOOOOOOOOSHNNHH!

The cool night air blew into the diner, but Raph ain’t move.

“I’m not...I’m not entirely sure who you, are or why you even chose to help me, but...”

He clutched Lucy’s hands. “Thank you. Really.”

“Ah it’s no biggie.”

“I apologize but I must burden you with a request.” **PAPER!** “Please give this to Ico.”

“Ah alright, I don’t really know who that guy is, but I’ll figure something out. But c’mon now, bugger off.”

“I must thank you once more.” **CHFI CHFI CHFI** The young man dashed off, slowly being embraced by the dark of the night. “...And please!...Show my mother too!”

“Wait. Huh?”

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SHRRRIIPPP! With much less shirt than before Kelly exploded outta the booth.
“L-Lucy!” The young sheriff was laid out on the floor. **TMP! TMP! TMP!** Kelly rushed to her side and cradled her body. “C’mon baby stay with me now!”

“Uhhhrgh...” Lucy slowly pried her eyes open. “Wh-what happened? Ahrrgh! My heaadddd.”

“Baby it’s gonna be alright, I’m here with ya. Just catch your breath, I’ll give you some water, take your time...I’m so sorry you got caught up in this...”

“In what?”

“I’ll explain everything in due time girlie, it’ll only get louder from here... We’ve got to tell Walter...about the return...of the Jawbreakers.