



©

Games People Play

Story by Jim Caswell

Audioplay by Jim Caswell, Kat Rybarski and Eric Grzywa

Episode Summary

Neil's Comics and Video Emporium is opening its doors to the gaming community to build business, but nothing is ever as easy as it should be.

Starring

Gene
Gerr
Stew

Ryan Gilbert
Mick Mize
Roger Kelley

and Featuring

UPS Girl
Norm
Customer #1
Seth

Louise Francis
Steve Cain
Andy Greeva
Erick Greeva

PROLOGUE

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: Neil’s Comics and Video Emporium

SOUND: Shop background noise with no customers. Door chime rings while being opened.

GENE

Hey Stew.

GERR

Morning, Stew.

STEW

Hey guys.

GENE

Running a little late this morning, huh.

STEW

It was “that time of the week.” Real wall-to-wall witch-lock this morning.

GENE

Was it the “you’re a failure as a provider” one, or my all time favorite: “I ran out of toilet-paper this morning, so I used your college diploma so it would be of some use to us.”

STEW

No, it was the warm-up act. The “you know my father would give you a much better job if you just asked.” Has the UPS guy arrived yet?

GERR

Not yet, but I hope he gets here soon. I want to have enough time to put together a display before the tournament tonight.

STEW

Where did you find old Villains and Vigilante merchandise?

GENE

Better question. Why did you find old V and V merchandise?

GERR

Awe, come on. We used to love playing V and V back in college.

GENE

Yeah, twenty years ago, when we had connect the dot acne and no-gray facial hair. And look where we are today. Can't wait for that reunion.

STEW

Unfortunately, it's the best we can afford.

GERR

I'll go see what Clyde has stored in the back. If I'm not back in ten microts, send an archeology professor in to find me.

SOUND: Footfalls cross room.

STEW

It was nice knowing you.

SOUND: Door opens and closes.

GENE

He does know we can only afford Professor Plum, right?

STEW

Get a clue. That's only in Master Detective. The rest of the time he's a scientist.

GENE

Anal retentive much?

STEW

Any word yet from the distributor on when we'll get the new DVDs we ordered?

GENE

He says we'll get the videos when we pay for them.

STEW

Where's the sport in that?

GENE

I don't know... keeping the business running?

STEW

See, I don't need my degree when I've got you.

SOUND: Door chime rings while being opened.

GENE

Good morning, can we hel....

SOUND: Silence – 1 beat as footsteps move forward.

STEW

Please excuse my friend. He's not used to seeing attractive women in our store... or anywhere really.

UPS GIRL

I can tell. If the warm welcomes don't drive them off, I'm sure the smell does. Is that ketchup and onions? Ewww... He should pick up his tongue, by the way, before it gets dirty.

STEW

Trust me, if he was able to pick anything up, he wouldn't be sitting here. What can we do for you?

UPS GIRL

I have a delivery here for a "Grrrrr." I assume that's a misprint.

STEW

He pronounces it "Jer," but he spells it with a G and two Rs.

UPS GIRL

Why?

STEW

Because he's weird?

UPS GIRL

I should have guessed. Huh, weird people working at a comic book store...that's a first.

STEW

My name is Stew, and my dumbstruck friend here is Gene.

UPS GIRL

Like Billy Jean?

STEW

Like gene pool.

UPS GIRL

Right. Clearly that's worked out for him.

SOUND: GENE mumbles incoherently.

UPS GIRL

Well said.

STEW

Where's the normal UPS Guy?

UPS GIRL

He's been assigned to a different route. I'll be making deliveries here from now on.

SOUND: GENE makes another incoherent sound, this one resembling pleasure.

STEW

Well said.

UPS GIRL

Can one of you get Grrrr for me so I can have him sign off on these boxes. I have several more stops to make.

STEW

Certainly. I'll be right back after the opening theme.

SOUND: Cue Intro music.

ACT I

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: Neil's Comics and Video Emporium

SOUND: Shop background noise with no customers. Storeroom door opens.

STEW

See, that didn't take too long.

UPS GIRL

Just long enough for your buddy to regain some semblance of intelligence.

GENE (dreamily)

Hi there.

UPS GIRL

I spoke too soon.

GERR

Are you holding my package?

UPS GIRL

And that is officially the worst pickup line of the day.

GERR (flustered)

I mean... I wasn't... I didn't...

UPS GIRL

Easy, <grrrrr – a soft, sexy growl>, I was just pulling your chain.

STEW (under his breath)

He could only be so lucky. Now, if that's a new add-on feature to your company's services...

UPS GIRL

I'll get the cases from the truck and be right back.

STEW

Let me help you with that.

UPS GIRL (sarcastic)

That's OK. I don't need some big, strong man doing my job for me.

SOUND: Door opens and chime rings.

STEW

Did you hear that? She called me big and strong.

GENE (dreamily)

She's gorgeous.

GERR

And so far out of any of our leagues, we'd have to climb five flights of stairs to get to her basement.

STEW

I'd like to climb into her basement. Oh what a climb that would be...

GERR

Hey Stew.

STEW

Yeah.

GERR

Remember your wife?

STEW (disappointed)

Oh yeah. Well, you can't blame a guy for looking. After all, I'm married, not dead.

GENE

Not yet anyway. You're such a stereotype for midlife crisis.

SOUND: Door opens and chime rings. Footsteps walk across store.

STEW

Morning Clyde.

SOUND: CLYDE grunts.

STEW

That's the new UPS delivery person.

SOUND: CLYDE grunts.

STEW

Yeah, she is.

GERR

Looking forward to the gaming tournament tonight?

SOUND: CLYDE grunts.

GERR

Oh.

SOUND: Back storeroom door opens, then closes. Front door opens with chime ringing. A two-wheeler is pushed in.

UPS GIRL

What did you order, bricks?

STEW (defensive)

I offered to help.

GERR

Its role-playing rulebooks and supplementals.

UPS GIRL

Oh. What games? D and D, Hero System, White Wolf or Gurps?

STEW

You know Gurps?

GERR

V and V. Villains and Vigilantes.

UPS GIRL

Never heard of it.

GENE

Few people have.

SOUND: Boxes thump to ground and two-wheeler is pulled out from underneath them. Lighter wheeler and footfalls start back across shop.

UPS GIRL

You must have bought in bulk.

GERR

The distributor said I needed to take it all or nothing.

GENE (under breath)

Should have gone with nothing.

UPS GIRL

I'm surprised you aren't hosting one of the card games. They're a bit more popular now, aren't they?

GENE

Like Jer knows anything about popularity...

STEW

Right, and you can talk, gene pool... They are a little more common, yes. You know about this stuff?

UPS GIRL

A little. I've got a little brother that's into that type of stuff.

STEW

Well, you should bring him by tonight for the tournament.

UPS GIRL

We'll see. Sign this and I'll let you fellas get on with your day.

STEW

Don't rush off on our account.

UPS GIRL

Don't worry, I'm not.

SOUND: Door opens and chime rings. Transition music.

SCENE 2 – CUT TO INT.: *Neil's Comics and Video Emporium*

SOUND: Shop background noise with no customers. Front door opens with chime ringing.

NORM

Hey guys.

GENE

Norm!

GERR

Norm!

STEW

Norm!

NORM

What's new?

STEW

Comics, film or life?

NORM

Start with life, and we'll work our way up to the important stuff.

GERR

Are you going to be at the tournament tonight?

NORM

Oh yeah. I wouldn't miss it for the world.

GERR

That's great. See guys, I told you that people would be excited.

NORM

Sure. What's not to be excited about? Video game and DVD giveaways, free food... I even heard there's going to be a Wii raffled off.

SOUND: Silence – two beats.

STEW

We don't have any of that stuff going on. Where did you hear that?

NORM

Its all over their website and handouts.

STEW

Who's website and handouts.

NORM

The Lyon's Den. That's what you guys were talking about, right?

GERR

What! When?

GENE

Wait, they have a website?

NORM

Tonight, starts at seven. I'm surprised you guys haven't heard about this.

STEW

When did they announce this?

NORM

About three days ago. I thought it was pretty short notice, but according to their message boards, they're looking at a huge turnout.

GENE

Wait, they have a message board?

STEW

Three days? We've been planning this for weeks. Jer, did you forget to put up the flyers?

GERR

No. I plastered them all over town.

NORM

Oh yeah. Now that you mention it, I do remember seeing something a couple of weeks ago, but they disappeared about a week ago, so I assumed you guys had canceled it. What are you guys hosting again?

GERR

Villains and Vigilantes tournament.

NORM

Villains and what?

GENE

Argh!

STEW

Thanks, Charlie Brown. That helps a lot.

GERR

What are they hosting? D and D? Hero Systems? White Wolf? Gurps?

NORM

Yu-Gi-Oh! card game. Thus the DVD and game tie-ins. They even got the U. S. distributor to visit their podcast to promote the event.

GENE

Wait. They have a podcast?

GERR

We're doomed.

NORM

Listen guys, I had my heart set on going to the Den tonight, but you also know I'm loyal to Neil's. I've been coming here every week to get my comics and DVDs for years, even after the Lyon's Den opened and they started offering thirty percent membership discounts. So if you want me to come support your event tonight instead, I'll do it, *< sigh >* even though they're doing free giveaways.

STEW

That's great to hear. We appreciate it.

NORM

You mean you still want me to come?

STEW

Well, yeah.

NORM (sighing)

Fine, but there had better be free pizza at least.

SOUND: Footfalls walk toward door, which opens and closes with chime.

GERR

He left without his comics.

STEW

He probably figured he can get them tonight.

GENE

Let's hope so. And let's make sure we order some pizzas. That sounded good.

GERR

He really is a nice guy, though, and a loyal customer.

GENE

Yeah. Some day we really should learn what his real name is, rather than just calling him Norm all the time.

STEW

That would be easier to do if he paid by check or credit card once and a while, but he always uses cash.

GERR

We could always ask him what his name is.

GENE

Nah.

GERR

Nah.

STEW

Nah.

STEW

Norm works. He's always in here...

GERR

And, like us, he kinda looks like a Norm.

GENE

Or a Morn.

STEW

Morn? That's your second option? Deep Space Nine? Everyone knows the Babylon Five had much better names.

GENE

But no characters that were modeled after Norm. And you call yourself a sci-fi geek. And why don't we have a website, or a message board, or a podcast.

STEW

Same reason we don't have lots of things. Money.

GENE

Jer, wasn't one of your degrees in computer programming? Why can't you design us a website?

GERR

That was back in the eighties, and I was trained in assembler. It's not used much anymore, let alone in web design.

STEW

I'm gonna go see what happened to our flyers. If Seth did what I think he did, I'm gonna...

GERR

Just remember, nothing they can press charges with.

GENE

Again.

SOUND: Footfalls walk toward door, which opens and closes with chime. Transition music.

ACT II

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: Lyon's Den Comics

SOUND: Shop background noise with lots of customers. Front door opens.

CUSTOMER #1

Do you have any more copies of X-Men 240?

SETH (snooty)

Do you mean Uncanny X-Men, regular X-Men, X-Men Legacy, X-Men original run... ?

CUSTOMER #1

The new release.

SETH

Were there any on the shelf?

CUSTOMER #1

I didn't see any.

SETH (bothered)

Then we're probably sold out. You should have been here sooner.

CUSTOMER #1

It's two o'clock on Wednesday!

SETH

Our club members have their books pulled Tuesday night and aren't bothered with having to pull their own titles. For an annual subscription fee of only thirty dollars...

CUSTOMER #1

I know all about your club. I don't get enough comics to make it worth the fee.

SETH

Well then, we'd be happy to backorder it for you.

CUSTOMER #1

That'd be great, I'd...

SETH

... for a small fee.

CUSTOMER #1 (huffing)

Never mind!

SOUND: Customer moves away while STEW moves to the counter.

SETH

Well, if it isn't Stewie. How much longer are you going to toil away in that hellhole you call a store before you call it quits and get a real job?

STEW

Well, if it isn't Darth Competent, Dark Lord of the Seth. You know, with insults like that, I'm going to start mistaking you for my wife, except you're far more feminine than she is.

SETH

Darth Competent? That's a new one, and far more complementary than I'm used to from you guys... though it doesn't say much about your wife.

STEW

Not when you consider that the films always removed the in from the names: In-vader, In-sidious, In-competent.

SETH

Well, what about Darth Maul?

STEW

That's Phantom Menace. It barely counts as Star Wars.

SETH

And how is Neil's Comic and Video Emporium, which isn't owned by a man named Neil and barely counts as an emporium.

STEW

It's more of an emporium than this place is a den, and you know how it's going, thanks to your latest act of sabotage.

SETH

Oooh, sabotage, such a nasty term.

STEW

What would you call tearing down all of our flyers and scheduling a gaming tournament on the exact same night as ours?

SETH

Good business sense and strong marketing?

STEW

You're right; "tearing down" the flyers implies a much more masculine act than you're capable of.

SETH

You can't prove we tore down your flyers. And who uses flyers in this day and age anyway?

STEW

Well, not all of us can manage to undercut our competitors and gouge our customers at the same time. I'll give you and the Emperor credit; that takes some talent.

SETH

That's Mr. Lyons to you; Graham to myself and a few other close friends.

STEW

Hate to break it to you, Seth, but you aren't his close friend. You're his brother-in-law, and without that fact, I have serious doubts you'd be running a lemonade stand, let alone one of the branches of his chain of stores.

SETH

The head branch, thank you very much.

STEW

Either way, this is a new low, even for you guys. I thought sewer-lines ran low. You couldn't just leave us alone. You had to mess with our event.

SETH

Don't think of it as messing with your event. Think of it as saving the gaming community from a night of boredom. I mean, who wastes their time with R.P.G.s anymore? Doesn't R.P.G. stand for Retired Players Game? All that time wasted crafting a character from scratch, when you could buy a deck of cards or pop in a video game instead.

STEW

You like card games because you can buy a winning deck that destroys your competitors without having to work for it.

SETH

Much as it is in real life.

STEW

Well, no matter what you and the emperor try, you're not going to get a monopoly in this town. We're here to stay.

SETH

That's adorable. You're like the little engine that couldn't.

SOUND: Cellphone ringtone starts to play the Emperor's theme from *Star Wars*.

STEW

Your master calls, Darth. You'd better answer or the Emperor may find a new Dark Lord to take your place.

SETH

You know, Stewie, you are what the scientific community would call a Maximus Failus Ignoramus.

STEW

That's funny. You're what the general population calls a dick.

SETH

Good luck with your tournament tonight. You'll need it.

SOUND: Cellphone opens, cutting off the ringtone.

SETH

Yes, mas... Graham. What can I do for you?

SOUND: Footfalls start to move away.

SETH (fading into background)

I'm sorry, Mr. Lyons. You're right, I do know better.

STEW (in a mocking Comic Book Guy voice)

Worst. Insult. Ever. <normal> Excuse me.

CUSTOMER #1

Yes.

STEW

I couldn't help but overhear your conversation with the manager over there. I know that Neil's Comic and Video Emporium, over on fifth, has plenty of X-Men 240's in stock.

CUSTOMER #1

That place is still open. I was told it closed down months ago.

STEW

From the Dark Lord of the Snakes-in-the-Grass over there, I'll bet.

CUSTOMER #1

We'll see. I've been looking for an excuse to stop buying the dumb things. I'm getting to old for comics anyway, and I think he just gave me the right reason.

STEW

Well, it never hurts to stay young... if you change your mind, keep us in mind. Have a good day.

CUSTOMER #1

A little late for that.

SOUND: Transition music.

SCENE 2 – CUT TO INT.: Neil's Comics and Video Emporium

SOUND: Shop background noise with no customers. Door chime rings while being opened.

GENE

Hey, hey. Don Quixote returns from tilting at windmills.

GERR

Did you learn anything?

STEW

Nothing new. The Lying Den continues to live up to its name.

GERR

They took down our flyers?

STEW

Took the flyers, booked an event with the direct intent to steal business from us, and bragged about peeing on the embers of our business.

GERR

You know what we should do? We should go over there and sabotage them somehow. Fight fire with fire.

GENE

And how do you propose we do that. I mean, they already treat their customers like second-class citizens, charging fees and penalties for practically walking in the store, and they keep going back.

GERR

Kinda reminds me of the banking system and the government.

GENE

Oh come on, the government's much more honest.

STEW

We aren't going to do anything to them because that's not our style. As dirty as they play, we don't sink to their level.

GENE

Yeah, you're right.

STEW

Besides, I already tried to steal one of their customers, but I got to him too late. He was already too demoralized to save.

GENE (disbelieving)

You didn't.

STEW

It was a moment of weakness.

GERR

So what are we going to do? I've got character sheets for thirty players and an adventure all planned out.

GENE

I hate to admit it, but we might want to just consider cancelling.

GERR

Well, the store stays open until nine anyway, so it's not like it'll cost us any extra to see if anyone shows up. And it's not like the three of us get paid extra either way.

SOUND: Cellphone rings and is answered.

STEW

Yes dear?

SOUND: THE WIFE can be heard wa-waing through the receiver.

GENE

Did it just get colder in here, or is it just her?

GERR (stage whisper)

Shhhh. You know she can hear an insult and hold it against him from fifty yards away.

STEW

Yes dear.

SOUND: More wa-was.

GENE

Whether there was an actual insult made or not.

STEW

Shhhh. <beat> No dear, I wasn't telling you to shush. I was talking to the guys.

SOUND: More wa-was.

STEW

The number of customers we currently have in the store doesn't make a difference. I'm the manager and need to be here.

SOUND: More wa-was.

STEW

No, dear. I'm not getting uppity. I'm just stating a fact.

SOUND: More wa-was.

GENE (stage whisper)

Oh, oh, he's in trouble now. That was two no dears in a row.

GERR (stage whisper)

Don't worry, he'll follow it up with a yes dear next.

STEW

Yes dear...

GERR (stage whisper)

Told ya. Anytime you hear anyone say "deer" that much, somebody's about to get shot...

STEW

I know that I'm a failure as a provider and a worthless excuse for a man. You remind me often enough that I'm not able to forget.

SOUND: More wa-was.

STEW

Yes dear, that time I was getting uppity.

SOUND: More wa-was.

STEW

Yes dear, I realize that we'll be continuing this when I get home, but remember that we have our event tonight and I won't be home until late.

SOUND: More wa-was.

STEW

Yes dear. You'll wait up for me. I'd expect nothing less. Goodbye.

SOUND: Cellphone closes.

STEW

God. It's a good thing I love her, 'cause at times I really can't stand her.

GENE

We bought you the one-way ticket to Canada. You're the one that didn't use it.

GERR

And it's not like she's changed over the past ten years. She's the same woman you dated.

STEW

Yes she is.

GENE

Have you thought about going to see a shrink over these masochistic tendencies?

STEW

About four times a day, but then my thoughts are interrupted with her yappin. But look at the bright side, she convinced me to go ahead with the tournament tonight. I don't care if it's just the three of us, we're gaming tonight.

SOUND: Transition music.

EPILOGUE

SCENE 1 – ENTER INT.: Neil's Comics and Video Emporium

SOUND: Shop background noise with no customers.

STEW

This is just depressing.

GENE

You said you didn't care if it was just the three of us.

STEW

That's one of those things you say when you're trying to prove a point. It's not like I actually wanted it to be just the three of us.

SOUND: CLYDE grunts.

STEW

Sorry Clyde.

SOUND: Front door opens with chime ringing. Footsteps approach.

NORM

Hey guys.

GENE

Norm!

GERR

Norm!

STEW

Norm!

NORM

Am I early?

GENE

Technically speaking, you're fifteen minutes late, but who's counting.

STEW

Apparently you are.

GERR

Your timing is fine either way. Which would you rather be: a female brick, a male energy projector or a female mentalist that pretends she's a male?

NORM

Those are my only choices?

GENE

I thought you said you had thirty characters put together?

GERR

Yeah, but these are the ones that were supposed to be working together. The others were in different branches of the adventure.

STEW

Jer, show the man all of the choices. We'll improvise.

GERR

OK, but don't blame me if you need a key component and it's not there.

GENE

Don't worry. We will.

NORM

Do you have any gadgeteer martial artists?

GERR

No, you can't be Batman.

NORM

How about Blue Beetle? Ted, not Dan or Jaime.

GERR

Just look through the sheets and see if anything interests you.

SOUND: Front door opens with chime ringing. Footsteps approach. GENE makes a choking sound.

STEW (excited)

Hey!

GERR

Did you bring your little brother?

UPS GIRL

That sounded a lot creepier than you intended, didn't it?

GERR (embarrassed)

Yeah.

STEW

I think what Jer meant to say was, "it's great to see you. Did you tell your little brother about our event and he wanted to co... attend?"

GERR

Yeah, something like *that*.

UPS GIRL

Yes, I told him about the gaming.

STEW

Great. Where is he? I'd love to...

UPS GIRL

He wanted to go to the Lyon's Den instead. I guess they had something going on tonight also.

STEW (upset and sarcastic)

Really? I hadn't heard.

GERR

So what brings you by?

UPS GIRL

That other place was way too crowded, so I thought I'd stop by and see how things were going here. *<beat>* So where is everybody?

STEW

You're looking at them. We were about to get started.

UPS GIRL

Oh. *<beat>* Ok, what kind of characters do you have available? You wouldn't happen to have any female bricks, would you?

STEW
You're going to play? With us?

UPS GIRL
Is that a problem?

STEW
No, no.

GERR
No problem at all.

SOUND: GENE girgles. CLYDE grunts.

GERR
One brickette, coming up.

UPS GIRL
Oooh. Pizza.

GERR
Ok, it's official. I think I'm in love.

STEW
Join the club.

GERR
Hey Stew?...

STEW
Yeah?

GERR
Remember your wife?

STEW
Oh yeah... Canada, anyone?

CUT: Ending music and credits.

**© Copyright 2009, 2011 – TimeWell Productions
A TimeWell Electronic Recording Production (TWERP) Online presentation.**

Ending Credits

You have been listening to Roll Playa'z – Episode 1: Games People Play, starring (in order of appearance) Ryan Gilbert as Gene, Mick Mize as Jerr and Roger Kelley as Stew.

This presentation also featured Louise Francis as the UPS Girl, Steve Cain as Norm, Andy Greeva as the Comic Book Store Customer and Erick Greeva as Seth.

Roll Playa'z is a production and property of TimeWell Electronic Recording Productions; copyright 2011. Games People Play was written by Jim Caswell, Kat Rybarski and Eric Grzywa. Music was composed and produced by Paul Mitchell. This has been a TWERPs Online Presentation.