

EPISODE EIGHT - "CATCH AND RELEASE"

WRITERS:

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EPISODE EIGHT - NEWS ONE

INT. NEWS STUDIO

In the studio.

FIONA VAUGHAN

The body of beloved forties super hero Uncle Sam was found frozen in ice this week. Researchers have said that Uncle Sam's physical augmentations may be responsible for his miraculous survival in freezing conditions for almost eighteen hours before eventually succumbing to the effects of hypothermia.

UNDERWRITER

That was Fiona Vaughan reporting from SPR Alaska.

WENLING CHEN

Live from SPR News in Washington, I'm Wenling Chen.

SFX: School Board Walla.

WENLING CHEN (CONT'D)

School Board meetings across the county have been flooded by NormCore members posing as concerned parents.

(then)

The following is from a meeting in Mendocino County, California.

SFX: Phone recording.

MALORIE BAINBALL

...how can my child be safe going to school with a ticking time bomb?

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, NEWS 1, EP 8

Miss this is a meeting about rehabbing the soccer field. Do you have any questions about that?

MALORIE BAINBALL

I don't think they should be playing sports either. They have an unfair advantage.

(MORE)

MALORIE BAINBALL (CONT'D)
(struggling to think)
Speeders, strength-sters, lazer-eye-
sters...

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, NEWS 1, EP 8
Sigh does your child even go to
our school Miss?

MALORIE BAINBALL
...You cannot silence us! We are
the fragile majority and we will be
catered to!
(then)
Don't touch me! I'm filming this! I
have several followers on twitter!
Several!

SFX: Pushes over the mic. She runs around screaming.

WENLING CHEN
This woman, Malorie Bainball has
been leading protests advocating
for Supers to be banned from public
schools throughout the region. She
has announced a campaign for US
Congress and has been endorsed by
several NormCore friendly
politicians.

UNDERWRITER
That was Wenling Chen reporting
from Washington, it's 75 degrees
here in Paradise City. Now it's
These American Supers.

EPISODE EIGHT - END NEWS ONE

EPISODE EIGHT - ACT ONE - TAS REHAB

INT. TAS STUDIO - DAY

In the studio.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

From QSPZ Baltimore, it's These
American Supers. I'm Ethan
Schwartz.

(then)

Last year we sent one of our
producers into a supervillain rehab
facility to speak to supers about
their exploits on the wrong side of
the law. Today we're going back
inside to bring you a very special
investigation into what happens to
villains after they're caught. Act
one: "Rogue's Roulette."

(then)

I'm going to play an ad you may
have heard on the radio lately...

SFX: Tape being inserted.

ADS

Are you tired of the endless cycle
of villainy?

DR FUNGO'S AD VILLAIN

It's a snake eating its own tail
and I will unleash it on Miami as
soon as I'm free! *cackling
laughter*

ADS

At Dr. Fungo's Rehab Center for the
Criminally Insane, we aim to treat
the underlying causes of
supervillainy, so you and your
loved ones can enjoy a happier,
less evil life.

(then)

Dr. Fungo's. Healing iniquity with
dignity.

(then)

Use offer code: "cray-cray" for a
five percent discount on your stay.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Dr. Fungo's is only one of many for-profit facilities that have marketed themselves as "the cure for villainy." You may recognize names like Shady Acres, Flip-flops, or Mahkra.

(then)

In fact, Supervillain Rehabilitation is one of the fastest growing fields of therapy within the United States.

(then)

It's a multi-billion dollar industry. But with Super-crime numbers keeping steady, we at the program began to wonder: Does it really work?

INT. DOCTOR FUNGO'S - DAY

SFX: Door chimes. Slams. Muzak plays.

DR FUNGOS EMPLOYEE, EP 8, REHAB

Welcome to Dr. Fungos Rehab Center for the Criminally Insane. I'm Jenny, and I'm insanely interested in helping you today.

DOTTIE

Hi Jenny I'm looking for my daughter Leela. Leela Warnhouse. She's seven feet tall, red skin, blue hair, sparks shoot from her fingertips sometimes. Can't miss her.

DR FUNGOS EMPLOYEE, EP 8, REHAB

Oh, I'm sorry, we can't divulge that information as that's a HIPPA violation. But if you have a request you can call our corporate help line.

DOTTIE

I've already called corporate and they confirmed I'm on her permission list. Can you check?

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (ASIDE)
 This is Dottie Warnhouse. Her daughter, Leela, has been in and out of villain rehab facilities since 2018.

(then)
 In that time, Dottie has become intimate with the way these facilities operate.

DR FUNGOS EMPLOYEE, EP 8, REHAB
 Ma'am I'm sorry I'm not authorized.

DOTTIE
 Yes you are. If you have her file open just scroll down to special authorizations and you'll see my name. I have an email right here from the courts.

DR FUNGOS EMPLOYEE, EP 8, REHAB
 Ma'am if you keep raising your voice I'm going to have to call security.

DOTTIE
 (voice getting louder)
 Call whoever you want. I'm seeing my daughter.
 (yelling)
 Leela! You here?

SFX: Kicking open door.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)
 Leela?

SFX: Boots.

DR FUNGOS SECURITY, EP 8, REHAB
 Miss you need to calm down. Don't make me use the tranquilizers.

DOTTIE
 You aren't authorized to use them on me. I'm allowed to be here and

SFX: Tranq gun

DOTTIE (CONT'D)
 (suddenly sleepy)
 I will go to the DSS over---

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Dottie was held for five hours.
During that time, the director of
the facility was able to confirm
Dottie's right to information.
Leela wasn't there.

(then)

We caught up with Dottie at a local
diner once the tranqs wore off.

INT. DINER - DAY

SFX: Plates clatter. Chairs squeak. Diner hum.

DOTTIE

They promise more miracles than a
tent revival preacher. Same tricks
too.

(then)

Build you up, say you're healed and
send you out into the world a few
dollars poorer. Not to mention a
few screws looser.

(then)

Every time she gets out, Leela
tells me "this time it will be
different Ma I'm on the straight
and narrow."

SFX: She hits the table.

DOTTIE (CONT'D)

A month later she'll be "back in
the lair." You think it'd be easy
for me to keep track of a giant red
woman, but every time she's caught
by one of these spandex freaks, she
winds up at a different facility.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Don't these places keep records?

DOTTIE

Snorts Sure.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

And how many rehab facilities do
you think Leela's been in over the
years?

DOTTIE

Eleven. No twelve. Twelve. Wow.
Twelve.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

In three years? Is that normal?

DOTTIE

Between you, me, and your listeners, I think if any of these places wanted her to get better, they wouldn't trade her around like a gosh darn baseball card.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Leela is one of many villains caught in what's known in the industry as the "Rogue's Roulette."

(then)

Most rehab centers are for-profits. And every villain they treat unlocks large grants of federal funding.

(then)

This has turned these wayward souls into potential payouts. For the right person.

INT. UPSCALE BAR - NIGHT

SFX: A classy crowd. Soft jazz. Glasses clink.

PHOBOS

As you can imagine I have quite the Rolodex of evil-doers from my days with the good doctor. And a number of ingenious ways to trap them in goo. **OR alt: For the unwilling I can always use the goo gun.**

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (ASIDE)

That's Phobos Marina, former accomplice to a number of villains.

PHOBOS

Insano is my favorite. I still see him.

(then)

He's quite the reliable repeat offender.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Phobos is what's known as a "Rogue Broker."

(then)

(MORE)

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

She uses her connections to the underworld to bring villains to rehab centers for treatment.

(then)

Think bounty hunter, rather than social worker.

PHOBOS

And business is booming.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Do any of your old contacts make it out of the system?

PHOBOS

Not for long.

SFX: Goo gun.

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

SFX: Buzz of lights. Checkers. Faint TV.

DR. INSANO

I always seem to end up back here don't I?

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

We caught up with Dr. Insano himself at Dr. Fungo's Rehab Center for the Criminally Insane in Sunrise, FL.

DR. INSANO

It's hard to find satisfying work. I have three masters, two PhDs and a most wanted poster from the FBI. Any job I'm qualified for is a "security risk." [**alt: I'm a security risk**] HA! Little did they know I had been purged of my desire for world domination. Set out to live the simple life and show them all how content I could be!
laughter

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

But then you've ended up back here? What, seven times?

DR. INSANO

Still need to pay the bills eventually.

(MORE)

DR. INSANO (CONT'D)
 (takes his time)
 Do you know the definition of
 insanity?

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 To try the same thing over and over
 and expect different results?

DR. INSANO
 Every time I come back it's the
 same program. The same doctors. The
 same motivational posters. So do we
 think Dr. Fungo is mad himself?

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

SFX: Clock TICKS. A water cooler DRIPS.

DR. MCGRATH
 They're not designed to work.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 Dr. Madison McGrath is an expert in
 Supervillain Rehabilitation.
 (then)
 She runs a non-profit
 rehabilitation center in
 Summerville, West Virginia.

DR. MCGRATH
 Most facilities aren't interested
 in best practices. They get paid
 per occupant and that's as far as
 their interests go.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 And this leads to the high
 recidivism rates we've seen?

DR. MCGRATH
 Unless villains are in a facility
 that teaches them to use their
 powers, their incredible intellects
 for good, how are they ever
 supposed to truly reform?
 (then)
 Villains who genuinely want to
 change get burnt out. They already
 distrust the system, these for-
 profit facilities make it worse.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Isn't there government oversight?
DSS regulations?

DR. MCGRATH

No. The government only wants "bad
guys" off the streets. They don't
care about their sense of self-
worth.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

But then what about the Heroic
Legion? Don't they have --

Dr. McGrath laughs.

DR. MCGRATH

The Legion runs almost all the
villain rehab centers in the
country.

(then)

You wouldn't know because they
don't put their name on them.

(then)

Fungo's, Flip-flops, Anglepork, all
of these places, Government funded,
Legion owned.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

But doesn't the Legion have the
greatest interest in seeing these
places work?

DR. MCGRATH

If you're asking me whether the
Legion wants a world without
villains, I'd still say follow the
money.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

This made us revisit our earlier
interviews with a new perspective.

DOTTIE

Inside they talk about how
important it is to have support,
then they cast kids out alone. What
do they think is going to happen?

DR. INSANO

Fungo's has skills trainings:
Robotics, espionage, safe cracking.
I've learned a lot.

PHOBOS

Marks always have their gadgets when I pick them up. In good condition. I think the facilities refurbish them.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

At this point we reached out the Legion Office of Villain Engagement. They have not yet replied, however we did hear back from someone unexpected.

INT. DINER - DAY

SFX: as before.

LEELA

This time I actually think it's going to be better.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

This is Leela, the once missing daughter of Dottie Warnhouse who we met in our intro.

LEELA

I didn't even know there were places like this.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

By luck, she had ended up in Dr. Mcgrath's program in West Virginia.

DOTTIE

Oh I'm just happy you're alright.

LEELA

I'm ok ma. I really am.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

So this is your 13th run at rehab, correct?

LEELA

Lucky number thirteen!

DOTTIE

We can call it fourteen like the hotels do.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

And you feel like Dr. McGrath is helping?

LEELA

It's way different. We focus on behavior, patterns, and what I can do to avoid triggers. It's not all that positive affirmation junk.

(then)

Some of the centers I've been in, hell, they basically send you off with a get-away driver.

DOTTIE

But not this time.

LEELA

Not this time. This time it'll be different, this time it'll stick.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

How?

LEELA

I don't know.

(then)

But it will.

Music Cue.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

While researching this story, one thought kept coming to mind:

(then)

Some of these villains chose to do evil, some had it thrust upon them, but they have one thing in common: They are all trying to break the cycle in a world that won't let them.

(then)

I can't help but think, Who's the real villain here?

Music.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

Since this recording Dr. McGrath and Leela have been meeting weekly.

(MORE)

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

Leela has begun to train as a councilor for at-risk supers, once she's released the facility will provide job placement support and remote counseling sessions.

(then)

Dr. Insano is eligible for release again later this month.

(then)

Phobos Marina is right behind him.

(then)

We'll be back with part two of our program: "The Human Cost." After the news break.

EPISODE EIGHT - END ACT ONE

EPISODE EIGHT - NEWS TWO

INT. AD BREAK

In the studio.

ADS

Support for SPR comes from...

(then)

Rangs.Com, Lets face it, your boomerangs don't always come back, and after awhile it starts to eat into your budget.

(then)

That's why we founded Rangs.Com, your one stop shop for bulk boomerangs.

(then)

Whether it's a custom piece or one from our catalog, we promise to deliver the highest quality boomerang directly to your door,

(then)

and then back to our warehouse and then back to your door,

(then)

and then back to our warehouse and then back to your door,

(then)

and then back to our warehouse and then back to your door,

(then)

and then back to our warehouse and then back to your door.

(then)

Rangs.Com. You'll be back.

INT. NEWS STUDIO

In the studio.

WENLING CHEN

Live from SPR News in Washington, I'm Wenling Chen.

(then)

(MORE)

WENLING CHEN (CONT'D)

Spandexo CEO Jake Bindle held an impromptu press conference at the Ritz Carlton Plumbing Supply [Ritz Crackers manufacturing plant] in Prince Georges, Maryland urging customers not to use Steel Trap's Protective Ring.

EXT. HIGHWAY

SFX: Press Conference.

JIKE BINDLE

I'm a business man and I know alien attacks are bad for business, but now we're under attack by big government.

(then)

You know what they're saying? What everyone's saying: "they're trying to steal your DNA." Well, they are stealing your DNA! It's the government making the doppelgängers! Raising the corporate tax rates! Criminalizing private zoos. Taking your freedom.

(then)

This ring? That's how they're gonna get you. They want to put this ring on, to control you. It's about *control* people. Open your minds! I have thousands of terabytes of evidence of this international scheme to steal your freedom and liberty. All the evidence you need. Yes, Jennie?

REPORTER #1, NEWS 2, EP 8

Can we see it?

JIKE BINDLE

No.

WENLING CHEN

The conference continued for another hour with claims that Agents of ACRONYM were threatening him and his family. Jake Bindle has since gone into hiding.

(then)

Stock in Spandexo plunged 9% following the conference, but has since rebounded.

UNDERWRITER

That was Wenling Chen reporting
from Washington. It's 74 degrees
here in Paradise City. And now back
to These American Supers

EPISODE EIGHT - END NEWS TWO

EPISODE EIGHT - ACT TWO - REHAB PT2

INT. TAS STUDIO

In the studio.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Welcome back to These American
Supers, I'm Ethan Schwartz.

(then)

Part two of our program: "The Human
Cost."

(then)

Young villains like Leela Warnhouse
who fall into the Rogue's Roulette,
are victims. There's no other way
to put it. They are caught in a
cycle designed to make money off of
their suffering. For lack of a
better word, it feels...Real bad.

(then)

But for every ten that fall onto
the wrong side of the law, there is
one who jumps into it with both
feet.

NOTE: Edit in sound clips of villains we've heard over the
past two seasons. Sicko. Babylon. Croc Commander.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

These villains are deemed too
dangerous to rehabilitate. Instead
they are housed behind the walls of
our country's Maximum security
lockups. However in recent years it
seems that even these fortresses
have broken gates.

(then)

The most recent high profile
escapee, is the arch-villain Sicko,
who was the subject of this
season's Sequential.

NOTE: This dialogue is from Ep5 - SQ Ep4.

SICKO

Now that's a story to follow!
laughs, coughs, laughs

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

These facilities supposedly have the highest walls, the strongest bars and the latest technology. They charge the government over \$20 billion a year to keep us safe. So if they aren't escape proof, what's the solution?

SFX: Jail walla.

HANK PALACE

Look, it's like I always say, the only way to stop a villain is to make them... No wait. What do I say? Something about killing them.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

This is Hank Palace, one of the most notorious vigilantes of all time. He was banned from the Heroic Legion in the early aughts for his trademark technique for fighting crime.

HANK PALACE

Basically I shoot bullets at bad guys until there's no more bullets, or no more bad guys. Or I until get tired.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Most Heroic Organizations have banned the use of fire-arms after Hank killed six Villainous League members, 400 henchmen and twelve former villains who had been released from Rehab.

HANK PALACE

It put a stop to recidivism, that's for sure.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

But what about retaliation?

HANK PALACE

Oh yeah, there was a bit of that.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

In fact, the Villainous league's response led to the largest loss of life the Heroic legion has ever experienced.

HANK PALACE

I don't regret it. Those guys were killers and they'd be back on the street today if not for me.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Hank talks to us today from inside Santa Diablo Prison, where he has been since his "Justice Spree."

HANK PALACE

I know rehab's basically a cheesecloth, but you look at places like these. These private prisons promise to keep the real villains out of circulation. How long does that last? A year, two? Just as long as it takes for some hero to get bored.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

You don't feel like these facilities are secure.

HANK PALACE

Oh I don't know, why don't you ask Babylon, he's right down the hall. Oh wait.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

It's not just Hank whose noticed the steady volume of jailbreaks in what should be the most secure facilities on Earth.

(then)

The following is an interview with Superhero Gila Monster who has been dealing with an outbreak of supervillainy following the opening of the Saguaro Prison.

SFX: Outdoor walla.

GILA MONSTER

I always wonder why they always have their gear? Every time they're released from rehab or prison, they have their cold guns, their mobile chemistry sets, their cursed voodoo dolls.

(then)

Seems to me that the first thing I'd do would be throw their gadgets into an incinerator.

(MORE)

GILA MONSTER (CONT'D)
 FWOOSH problem solved. I mean,
 leaping lizards, they kept Gold
 Croc's metal teeth in the guard
 room. Might as well have let him
 keep them on.

NOTE: The Rehab Witness dialogue should be garbled.

REHAB WITNESS
 We were told to leave their
 implements where they could find
 them.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 This is a former Shady Acres
 employee who spoke to us under the
 condition of anonymity.

REHAB WITNESS
 We had explosives. Firearms. Super-
 science all just laying around like
 candy.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 To ask the obvious, weren't you
 worried about your own safety in
 such conditions?

REHAB WITNESS
 I mean, sure, but the pay is
 outstanding and as long as we kept
 the crazies alive, the bosses
 didn't care.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 So it's intentional?

REHAB WITNESS
 Absolutely. You know Candy Striper
 and Sicko?

ETHAN SCHWARTZ
 I am familiar.

REHAB WITNESS
 Official policy is to ban former
 associates from meeting with
 villains, it's just common sense.
 (then)
 But unofficially, it happens all
 the time. Sicko asked to mail Candy
 a letter and the higher-ups posted
 the thing themselves.
 (then)

(MORE)

REHAB WITNESS (CONT'D)

You think they didn't see what Sicko was doing to that girl? We have cameras. Sicko wanted out and we basically held the door open for him.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

That's pretty damning.

REHAB WITNESS

It wasn't the first time this has happened. My buddy works in Santa Diablo. You should hear what they got up to last year.

SFX: Office Walla.

JULIE BLIND

Before Babylon escaped, things were not looking good. For the Legion.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

This is Julie Blind, who works for Momo Analytics, a public opinion research group.

JULIE BLIND

With Cosmos locked up, Legion numbers were in the toilet, after Quantum's death, there was a pretty big bounce.

(then)

There were questions about whether the Legion could handle big threats without the big guy.

(then)

I think what happened in New Orleans helped convince some policy makers that the Legion still had what it takes.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

Are you saying the Legion may have released Babylon intentionally?

JULIE BLIND

Of course not. Although, it does tend to happen a lot. Escapes, that is.

REHAB WITNESS

I'll say it: The Heroic Legion. Let. Babylon. Out.

Music cue.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ

When Babylon attacked New Orleans, only one man died. But during Babylon's initial escape, hundreds lost their lives. Entire towns were flattened in his wake. The pain he caused is unimaginable.

(then)

We at the program have been trying to do the math, to count the number of lives that have been lost from every escapee from their prisons and every "graduate" of their lackluster attempts at rehabilitation. But the ripple effect is too great.

(then)

Consider the death of Stephen Singh. How many more will die because Quantum is not there? How do we measure the pain of losing him? For the thousands or millions that still mourn the ultimate speedster? How do we measure the cost?

(then)

The Heroic Legion has refused to participate in this story, calling these allegations "totally false."

Music cue.

ETHAN SCHWARTZ (CONT'D)

For those looking for alternatives to Heroic Legion Rehab Facilities, we encourage you to visit our website, www.SPRpod.Com where we have worked with Dr. McGrath to list Programs that are accredited and proven to work.

(then)

We will be back soon. With more of These American Supers.

EPISODE EIGHT - END ACT TWO

EPISODE EIGHT - NEWS THREE

INT. NEWS STUDIO

In the studio.

WENLING CHEN

Live from SPR News in Washington,
I'm Wenling Chen.

(then)

Heroic Legion President Iron
Barracuda had been inducting
members of the New Capes Program
into the organization, but the
ceremony has taken a sudden and
dramatic turn. We go live now to
Legion Tower One in Philadelphia.

SFX: Press walla. Murmurs. Angry people.

HERO CHORUS, NEWS 3, EP 8

You released Babylon?/How Long has
this been going on/Step down!/This
is supervillainy!

IRON BARRACUDA

My fellow heroes. Today is about
our new members. They have worked
hard to get to this point and let's
not--

HERO CHORUS, NEWS 3, EP 8

Do you deny the practices?/Are all
of these places Legion run?/How are
we supposed to trust you?

IRON BARRACUDA

We have always had people best
interest at heart. I'm not prepared
to comment on any accusations until
I've heard them in full. We are
proud of the work we do to
rehabilitate wayward rogues and
villains--

HERO CHORUS, NEWS 3, EP 8

So you admit it./Step down/You're
an eel!

IRON BARRACUDA

Okay, okay. I'm sorry kids. This
ceremony is over.

HERO CHORUS, NEWS 3, EP 8
 Come back!/where are you
 going?/Down with the cuda.

Shouts continue.

WENLING CHEN
 We will update you as this story
 develops...

UNDERWRITER
 That was Wenling Chen reporting
 from Washington.
 (then)
 Today's show was written and
 produced by John Dorsey and
 Maximilian Clark. Additional
 producing by Carla Lerner. This
 episode's cast include (see
 website). With special thanks to
 Brenna Killeen and Brendan Sokler.

(then)
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Outro:

UNDERWRITER (CONT'D)
 Coming up next...
 (then)
 He took over his rival's body for
 two years and came out a better
 person. Kelly Close interviews
 former Supervillain Doctor
 Croctapants about his new book: A
 mile in Spider Dan's eight shoes.

SFX: End Music.

UNDERWRITER (CONT'D)
 This is SPR

EPISODE EIGHT - END NEWS THREE

END EPISODE 8