

ESCAPE TALES

LOW PRIORITY

File: 02

Name: John Barns

**Don't open this file until
you have fully completed File: 01**



File: 02

Name: John Barns

Your name is John Barns and you're 36. You live in the suburbs of a metropolis, but you've been dreaming of moving out for a long time. You spent a few years working as a personal bodyguard for the CEO of one of the corporations on the coast. Now you run a small bar downtown.

During a test drive of an autonomous car you are planning to buy, you hear your phone ringing. You look at the screen. It's Elizabeth, an old flame who you haven't talked to for a while. You wonder what she could want at a time like this?

You silence the music and pick up the phone. Despite the static, you manage to isolate the familiar voice:

"Johnny, please come to me now. I need you" Elizabeth says, her voice shaking. Then there's a crack and loud blaring of alarm.

"Elizabeth?" you ask, somewhat concerned.

"Come as fast as you can. Do not call anyone. You've got to trust me."

You want to reply but the phone goes silent, and you feel your own fear.

With a move imprinted in your brain from years of training you go for your firearm. You haven't been a bodyguard for some time, but you never got rid of your gun. You've been around, and you know that it often happens in life that the only thing you can rely on is your finger on the trigger.

Rows of trees speed by before your eyes.

"Change of route" you tell the car's AI system.

You input the new destination and wait for the data upload.

Read **P244**

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P200

You managed to cut the power. The control light of the hatch is blinking green.

Discard cards C090 C145.

Take card C045 if you do not have it.

P201

You hear a loud clank of the mechanism coming from the basement. One of the bars has just unlocked.

Discard cards C089 C116.

Place 1 Progress Token on card C087.

P202

This old type of gun comes from the time when firearms weren't fingerprint protected. It used to belong to your father. Since the pacification of the Legion cyber-activist riots you never part with the weapon. You have been receiving anonymous death threats. One time a man even tried to stab you on the street. He managed to get away, and you never found out if he was one of the Legion.

P203

You must get to Elizabeth as fast as you can. You raise the flap. Inside you find an integrated circuit. In order to switch to manual route selection, you must connect elements in such a way that the red fuse is overloaded, but without overloading other fuses.

Take card C114.

P204

You open the hatch. A dark tunnel leads into the house. You can hear a faint echo of footsteps from inside.

Discard cards C002 C045 C099 if you have them.

Take card C110.

Read P233.

P205

You walk up to the antenna on the roof. Ben's system uses it to communicate with the central server. It's complex tech. To reprogram the system you have to know which satellite is now in range of the antenna, and you need to input the proper command signature. The panel holds a history of some server commands. This will surely be helpful. You should switch everything to test mode. Then any anomalies in the system will be ignored by the center.

Take card C146.

P206

Incorrect sample. The system locks you out for 5 minutes. Return with correct sample to open the door.

Discard 1 Action Token. If you do not have any Action Tokens, draw a Stress Card and then discard an Action Token.

P207

You look at Joan's bed. Looks like the daughter has the father's eccentric tastes.

P208

You seem to know this teddy bear... Of course! It comes from Ben's favorite video game. For a fast food restaurant menu bonus, it is of surprisingly high quality.

Take card C024.

P209

The car pulls up to the mansion. There are red alarm lights pulsing in some of the windows. You notice someone's shadow in one of them. You take your firearm and exit the vehicle. You have to get in as fast as possible. Elizabeth might be in dire peril!

Discard Location Card L15.

Discard Map Card C140 and all tokens on it.

Take Map Card C008.

Take Location Card L14 and set it up on the board according to the Map Card.

Take 2 Action Tokens.

Take card C034.

P210

You manage to block the door to Joan's room, but you lose access to Ben's office. Suddenly, you hear the sound of footsteps from the floor below. Someone is there! You run downstairs weapon in hand and call for Elizabeth. She doesn't answer. What's worse, the basement door is sealed shut. To open it you must quickly find a way to release two steel bars.

Discard card C071.

Discard Location Cards L10 L14 and Map Card C129.

Flip the Game Board to the other side.

Take Location Card L17 - it will now be your Map Card.

Take cards C043 C069 C087 C092 C122.

Place the card according to its role at home in the correct areas of the board.

Take 4 Action Tokens.

P211

You always wondered why Elizabeth chose Ben. How a woman so in love with order could also fall in love with a man who leaves his socks by the bed?

P212

You never understood Ben's art taste. It's weird that Elizabeth allowed to fill her house with those ugly pictures.

P213

You found the right order of the levers. From the basement you hear the noise of a steel bar sliding open.

Discard cards C004 C091 C123.

Place a Progress Token on card C087.

P214

Your car is not parked on the driveway straight. Once all of this is over, you'll have to talk to the car salesman about parking sensors.

P215

Your attention is drawn by Ben's note on the desk. The pages are covered in chaotic notes. Ben never had a good memory.

Take card C120.

P216

You open the door thinking about Elizabeth's actions. If she left you some clues, perhaps she still has feelings for you? You chose such thoughts away. The most important thing now is to find her quickly!

Discard cards C035 C040.

Take Map Card C131.

Move Action Tokens from the old Map Card to the new one.

Discard Map Card C008.

Take Location Card L10 and set it up on the board according to the Map Card.

Take 4 Action Tokens.

P217

You walk up to Ben's nightstand. You're about to reach for his console, when you hear the sound of a message received via your phone. "I wouldn't do it if I were you, John. You better leave while you still can." You notice the slow bleeping of the console. The screen is displaying some sort of a countdown. Whatever Ben has hidden here, you prefer it remains a secret to you. Feeling his eyes still on you, you leave the bedroom. The door closes behind you.

Discard the bedroom card C092.

Take card C013.

You cannot go back to or explore the bedroom.

P218

Something probably spilled all over the floor. As you enter, you almost slip and fall. You should be more careful; you can't make mistakes like that anymore.

P219

A calendar displayed on an interactive wall. Nothing worth wasting time on.

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P220

The new message comes from the automated security system of Elizabeth's house. Back in the day she had me as an ICE, and it was probably never changed. Looks like somebody is trying to break in. The car has set up the safest route, but I have to change it to get there as fast as I can. My safety is less important now.

Take card C079.

P221

Modern solar panels reflect the light at a strange angle. They're probably worth a closer look.

P222

You manage to block the door leading to Ben's office, but you lose access to Elizabeth's daughter's room. Suddenly you hear the sound of footsteps from the floor below. Someone is there! You run downstairs weapon in hand and call for Elizabeth. She doesn't answer. What's worse, the basement door is sealed shut. To open it you must quickly find a way to release two steel bars.

Discard card C071.

Discard Location Cards L10 L14 and Map Card C129.

Flip the Game Board to the other side.

Take Location Card L12 - it will now be your Map Card.

Take cards C069 C087 C092 C122 C138.

Place the card according to its role at home in the correct areas of the board.

Take 3 Action Tokens.

P223

In the night stand you find a letter from Elizabeth: "John, I need your help. I cannot deal with this on my own. You're the only person I can trust."

Take card C130.

Take an unused Action Token and place it on area H1. You are not allowed to explore this area.

P224

You walk around Elizabeth's car. By the front wheel you find a hairbrush belonging to her daughter Joan. You turn around to face the mansion and notice the drapes moving in Elizabeth's bedroom. Was somebody watching you?

Take card C002.

P225

You seem to know this teddy bear... Of course! It comes from Ben's favorite video game. For a fast food restaurant menu bonus, it is of surprisingly high quality.

P226

As you approach it, the interactive calendar on the wall changes to a weather display...

Take card C004.

P227

Activating the alarm system transformed the mansion into a fortress. Without the special card you will never enter to find Elizabeth.

P228

This tree witnessed many of your romantic meetings with Elizabeth. You step in closer and move a moss-covered stone aside. You smile – some things never change. You find an instruction on how to get into the garden.

Take card C040.

P229

You managed to reprogram the autopilot. The car accelerates rapidly on its way to the destination.

Discard cards C005 C038 C054 C080.

Read P209.

P230

You switch the satellite to test mode. Now you can open the hatch.

Discard card C146.

Take card C045 if you do not have it.

P231

You look incredulously at the DNA scanner hooked up to the tool shed door. You'll need to obtain the correct sample to get in.

Take card C113.

P232

You open the basement door and run downstairs. Elizabeth is standing in the light coming from old game arcade machines, all shaken. Seeing you she smiles sadly.

"You're here at last. I knew you'd be able to beat Ben's security measures. He can't see us here. You have to help me, John" she says quietly and takes a step towards you. You've never seen her so horrified and so determined. You take her into your arms and hold her close. You can feel she's about to cry.

"You must help me. Will you help me?"

You swallow loudly. You know you'll do anything for her.

"Yes" you answer, as you look into her eyes. You'd never guess how much sadness you'd see in them.

"Then" Elizabeth points to your weapon, "you must help me die".

Take card C106.

P233

You crawl through the dark tunnel towards a red blinking light at its end. You get out of the hatch into the corridor. You notice a movement sensor right under the ceiling... It has detected you! The doors to different rooms start closing and you have mere seconds to react!

Take card C071.

P234

Ben never moved past his love for old things. He even has an old oven and a TV set from the smartphone era, and one with the legendary USB 2.0 socket. Still, none of this is useful to you now.

P235

You walk up to the tablet. As you touch it, the tablet starts displaying the home assistant.

Take card C031.

P236

Elizabeth's wedding photo. Ben is standing tall and confident. Elizabeth is beautiful in her wedding dress. And their child... is 3 years old. You move your glance to the panel on the wall. Knowing Elizabeth's sentimentalism this code should not be difficult to crack.

Take card C062.

P237

Ben went back to smoking and he's not even trying to hide it from Elizabeth. The ashtray you see before you fills up often.

P238

The closet opens. Elizabeth loves shoes but it's another thing to have a whole wardrobe hidden in the wall. You look at the shoe collection and at the levers on the wall. You knock over some doors by accident. You look at the numbers in the closet. The colors, the levers... You must place back the doors properly to set up the levers. You can rotate them, but not mirror them.

Discard cards C052 C062 C076 C120 if you have them.

Take cards C089 C116.

P239

Your attention is drawn to a red purse on the chair. Inside, you find a shred of a page from Elizabeth's diary.

Take card C052.

P240

You notice a cigarette butt in the grass. Although Ben has repeatedly promised Elizabeth he would move to e-cigarettes, he's never really done so.

Take card C128.

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P241

You walk up to Ben's computer and try to boot it up. Your face is immediately recognized by the system. The comm displays a message: "Did you really think I didn't know about your affair with Elizabeth, John?" The screen shuts down, and you take a moment to calm down.

P242

People tend to collect different things, but to collect birthday cards?

Take card C076.

P243

The system is done loading the route to Elizabeth's house. You have a long road ahead.

Take card C038.

P244

Your phone rings. You see a new message notification, and you decide to listen to it.

Take Map Card C140.

Take Location Card L15 and set it up on the board according to the Map Card.

Take 4 Action Tokens and place one on Area B2 and read P220.

P245

"You are not doing this!" you shout.

You take a step back, but Elizabeth is faster. She reaches for the gun herself. You strike it out of her hand with a single hit. The weapon lands on the floor between the two of you. Elizabeth moves her glance from the gun to you.

"I have a high life insurance. It can help my family, and without that money, it's going to be really bad. This is why we need to stage all of this. The truth may never see the light of day, John. People must believe I was a victim of a robbery. Only then will Ben and Joan get the money. You can probably guess what sort of money my husband insured this house for. This is why I need your gun."

You shake your head, determined not to listen anymore. You lean for the gun and pick it up, but then you feel slim fingers clenching down on your wrists.

"No!" you try to scream – but it is too late. Elizabeth pulls the trigger. The loud bang deafens you for a moment. With shaking hands you touch something wet on the floor.

"Elizabeth?" you ask, but there is no answer, and you're too scared to even look at your lover, the woman you held mere seconds ago.

Take card C009.

This is the end of John's story. Pause the game here or proceed to the next story.

P246

An interactive calendar displayed on the wall. Could those colorful numbers have a meaning?

Take card C010.

P247

The hatch leading into the house is protected against intruders. To pass through, you must first cut the power or break the communication between the unit and the main server. Only then will you be able to mechanically open the lock. You raise your eyes to notice a bird flying out from behind a tree. Elizabeth's garden is even more beautiful than when you used to meet.

Take card C099.

P248

Ben's obsession with security will never cease to amaze you. You enter the shed and see a ladder. Perhaps it will allow you to get on the roof.

Discard cards C002 C112 C113 C128.

Take Map Card C129.

Place the tokens from the current Map card on it.

Discard Map Card C131.

P249

You open the power panel control box, and rip the wires out, but the system is still working. You will have to put it into sleep mode. To do this, you'll need to connect the right sockets into pairs with wires.

Discard cards C023 C079.

Take cards C090 C145.

P250

Changing a once programmed route is quite a challenge with this car. You will have to override some protection to provide a new route. You probably watched a video about this exact model...

P251

You reset the car's navigation system. Now you can set your own route to Elizabeth's house in a way that it is continuous and completely visible.

Discard card C114.

Take cards C054 C080.

P252

You manage to put the teddy bears in the proper order. You can hear one of the bars in the basement sliding open.

Discard cards: C010 C011 C024.

Place a Progress Token on card C087.

P253

"Do you really want to kill yourself?" you ask incredulously.

"I want to help my family. I need your gun. It's unlicensed."

"Why do you want to do this? Is it Ben?"

"I have a high life insurance. It can help my family, and without that money, it's going to be really bad. This is why we need to stage all of this. The truth may never see the light of day, John. People must believe I was a victim of a robbery. Only then will Ben and Joan get the money. You can probably guess what sort of money my husband insured this house for" she says quietly.

Your resistance erodes slowly. Although you don't want to do this, you begin to understand Elizabeth's situation.

"Is there really no other way?" you ask, and her sad eyes are all the answer you need. You've seen glances like these. Sometimes there is simply no choice. Hands shaking you give her the gun. Her eyes become wider for a moment. While she looks at you with gratitude, you can also see that she's scared of what's to come.

"I knew you'd be the one to understand me." She hugs you one last time.

"Goodbye" you say, looking at her for the last time. You know you did what you had to do, but you still have your doubts. Was there really no other way? You take a few heavy steps on the stairs. You stop at the sound of the gunshot. You do not have the courage to turn around.

Take card C051.

This is the end of John's story. Pause the game here or proceed to the next story.

P254

The garden door is closed, and the fence is too tall to climb. You look around nervously. Elizabeth used to leave you clues helpful in circumventing Ben's security. Perhaps it is the case this time as well?

Take card C035.

P255

There are levers on the wall. Above them a row of symbols.

Take card C123.

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P256

Nothing under the bed...

P257

You notice a mysterious writing on the wall. It says: "Cake is a lie".

P258

You look at the map displayed close to the windshield. Elizabeth and Ben always valued their peace, and that's why they live so far from the city. It will take you two hours to get there, unless you take a shortcut.

Take card C005.

P259

A row of toys looks at you from the shelf. You're curious how an eight-year-old could reach as high. Under the shelf a display shows some values. You look at the device and notice that it has some traces left by the teddy bears. The question is which ones exactly?

Take card C011.

P260

The broken window is too high for you to reach it. The shards of glass on the lawn are covered in blood. Your heart starts to race. Is this Elizabeth's blood? You clench your fists and notice they're sweaty. You need to hurry!

Take card C112.

P261

The battery's control panel is cyphered. To cut the power you must know the code.

Take card C023.



