

Neon Inkwell: Rez High
Episode 3 – Thick as Thieves

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1. EXT. PLAYGROUND

Jo-C, Dogwood and Reflex are making use of the playground.

REFLEX

Okay, Dogwood, I want you to run at Jo-C. Head first, fast as you can.

DOGWOOD

(sceptical)

No?

REFLEX

And, Jo-C, I want to you step out of his way. At the very last moment.

DOGWOOD

Why?

JO-C

Come on, Dogwood, run at me. See if you can knock me on my ass.

REFLEX

Get a good run up.

DOGWOOD

Oh, go on then.

Dogwood steps back, braces himself, then runs noisily across the virtual space RIGHT at Jo-C -

FAST. When he's almost there -

REFLEX

(projecting)

Bank!

Jo-C casually steps aside. Dogwood slows down, turns round.

JO-C

Ha! Missed me!

DOGWOOD
(getting breath
back)

I was supposed to miss you. Wasn't I?

REFLEX
Yes.

DOGWOOD
I don't understand.

JO-C
What did you shout, Reflex?

REFLEX
I've built something new into Rez High.

JO-C
Again?

REFLEX
It stores our progress and saves us from having to do the same missions over and over.

DOGWOOD
(flashbacks to
horror)
Oh thank luck. About time too.

JO-C
So how does it work?

Reflex half-mouths, half-speaks the key words.

REFLEX
Like H-a-l-t mode, you just have to say the word. Only this time the word is B-a-n-k .

JO-C

Oh, that's what you said.

REFLEX

Yes, and when I did, I banked our progress. Now it's stored for us so we can go straight back to that moment.

DOGWOOD

I've had enough of this going backwards, time-wasting stuff.

REFLEX

No, I think you'll like this. Let me show you.

(projecting)

Restore!

A tiny flash of digital noise from beyond the simulation, then we're back in time, Dogwood hurtling at Jo-C again.

This time, however, Jo-C isn't expecting it - and Dogwood slams RIGHT into her. They tumble noisily to the ground.

Jo-C finds it a lot funnier than Dogwood does. She can't help but laugh as Dogwood gets up, he lets out a chuckle as well.

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

Rusty Quill Presents: Rez High.

Episode 3 – Thick as Thieves

[Music]

2. EXT. REZ HIGH

HEAD

**Welcome to Mission Three. Heist School.
The history exam is fast approaching
and you're doomed to fail. Your only
hope is the exam answers locked in
the head's safe. Can you get the
combination and steal them away?
Good luck!**

NPC LUCY

Hey, you.

JO-C

Yeah?

REFLEX

Hello.

NPC LUCY

**Pixie Brown heard a rumour you're
looking to break into the head's
safe.**

JO-C

Word gets around fast.

NPC LUCY

She says she can help you.

JO-C

Great, we'd like that, thanks.

NPC LUCY

Meet her in the usual place. Now.

JO-C

Where's the usual place?

NPC LUCY

The little girls' room.

JO-C

Which little girl?

NPC LUCY

All of them.

Goodbye.

DOGWOOD

If Livia was here she'd help us find it.

REFLEX

She might not even be in this mission.

DOGWOOD

Why not? What do you mean?

REFLEX

We're limited in where we can go depending on the mission we're in. We probably get different Rez High characters too.

DOGWOOD

Then do we have to do this mission?

Jo-C can't believe he's even asking. This is *the* mission.

JO-C

Yes. Yes, we do.

REFLEX

I think we're supposed to go to the toilets.

DOGWOOD

'The loo.'

REFLEX

Didn't you see, they've divided them into ones for boys and ones for

**girls. They're the only places
around here that are so obviously
gendered.**

JO-C

**And they're little rooms! Good
thinking, Reflex.**

3. INT. LOOS - SHORTLY AFTERWARDS

The door swings open as Jo-C and company enter.

NPC PIXIE

You took your time. I was about to leave.

REFLEX

Are you Pixie?

NPC PIXIE

Who else? And you're the gang who wants to break into the head's safe.

DOGWOOD

We're a gang?

JO-C

Apparently you're going to help us.

NPC PIXIE

You'll need the safe combination.

JO-C

What's that?

NPC PIXIE

The code to get into the safe. You know -

(imagines typing
it)

beep beep beep beep.

JO-C

Yeah, we'd like that, thanks.

NPC PIXIE

I need you to do some things for me first. A quid pro quo deal.

JO-C

I don't know what you mean.

The Rez High-ness of Jo-C's comment jumps out.

DOGWOOD

**'I don't know what you mean'
Ugh. You too?**

REFLEX

This place is getting to you.

JO-C

No its not.

NPC PIXIE

**Some of the kids at this school are
overdue for payback. It's up to you
to carry it out. Every time you
serve one of these kids their just
desserts, I'll give you a clue to
part of the combination.**

REFLEX

A clue?

NPC PIXIE

A clue to part of the combination.

JO-C

To part of the combination?

NPC PIXIE

**First up, Home Economics, your next
lesson. Tricia Katona has been
spreading stories about me and it's
payback time.**

JO-C

Nope. I'm not beating her up.

NPC PIXIE

**Take this salt. Swap it for Tricia's
sugar. Give her crumble a little
special something. But don't get**

caught.

REFLEX

You drive a hard bargain.

DOGWOOD

**And this is for one part of
whatever?**

NPC PIXIE

**A clue to one part of the
combination.**

JO-C

**Alright. How do we get to the 'home
economic' lesson?**

Music swells, the scene fades.

REFLEX

**I don't think we have to go there at
all. I think it's coming to us.**

4. INT. HOME ECONOMICS CLASS

As if by magic, Jo-C, Dogwood and Reflex are standing at a table in the home economics class.

NPC MRS COOK

Today, children, we're all going to make apple crumbles you can take home to your parents.

There are numerous reasons that doesn't make sense:

DOGWOOD

Er...

NPC MRS COOK

Each group of three has a copy of the recipe and all the ingredients you need. You have until the end of class... So, on your marks! Get set! Bake!

DOGWOOD

(overlapping)

What's this blobby stuff?

NPC RONNIE

Margarine?

Dogwood tastes a little - altogether too much - then can't believe how oily his mouth is.

JO-C

Is it nice?

DOGWOOD

(oily mouthed)

You try it.

She does, and the experience is truly baffling.

JO-C
(oily mouthed)
Why?

DOGWOOD
(mouth full of
sugar)
Try this.

JO-C
Oh, that's much better.

NPC RONNIE
That's sugar.

DOGWOOD
It's amazing.

JO-C
Give me a bit more of that.

Dogwood's not keen to share.

DOGWOOD
Don't take too much.

Reflex leans over to the next group.

REFLEX
Which one of you is Tricia?

NPC SAMMY
Tricia has a red bow in her hair.

JO-C
So what's the plan?

REFLEX
Dogwood, you chat to Tricia. Then,
Jo-C, while Tricia's distracted,
swap her sugar for this conveniently
similar-looking bag.

JO-C
(oh no you don't)
I'll do the talking, Dogwood. You do
the swap.

Jo-C approaches Tricia.

JO-C (cont'd)
Hello Tricia.

NPC TRICIA
Hello.

JO-C
(schmooze mode)
I was hoping you could tell me
something about history.

NPC TRICIA
What about it?

JO-C
Well, that's a very big question.
What do you know?

NPC TRICIA
History is second period on Tuesday
and last period on Thursday. It's in
class 3B.

JO-C
(full schmooze)
Let's try a different approach,
shall we? Tell me all about this
year. It's the year 1979, isn't it?

NPC TRICIA
It's 1979.

JO-C
What's happening this year?

NPC TRICIA

School, mostly.

JO-C

Interesting. So most people are in 'school' like this?

NPC TRICIA

I am.

JO-C

And why are you in school?

NPC TRICIA

To learn stuff.

JO-C

But why you? What did you do?

NPC TRICIA

I don't know what you mean.

JO-C

(mission done)

Never mind... Enjoy your food.

NPC TRICIA

You're weird.

Jo-C and Dogwood head back to Reflex.

JO-C

Well done, Dogwood.

The segue music comes in.

DOGWOOD

Here's the music again.

JO-C

Good. No hanging around. Let's get that clue and get into the safe.

5. INT. LOOS

As the music resolves, they're back with Pixie.

NPC PIXIE

Splendid work. I hear Tricia's crumble was absolutely disgusting. Before I give you the clue, here's your next mission.

JO-C

Okay.

NPC PIXIE

Take this note and slip it onto Winnie's tray. But don't let her see who did it. I want her to think it comes from Mad Monk.

REFLEX

Why?

NPC PIXIE

Because Monk needs to be bought down a peg or two. I want to see the whole school laughing at him.

DOGWOOD

That sounds good to me.

Reflex reads the note.

REFLEX

'Hey Winnie, want to meet behind the bike sheds? Monk.'

JO-C

It's all action at the bike shed.

NPC PIXIE

Now here's your first clue.

Reflex takes the clue card from Pixie.

JO-C

What does it say?

REFLEX

(reads)

**Carry the weight but don't touch
the widget. Weight and widget are
written big and bold.**

JO-C

(reflecting)

Weight and widget.

DOGWOOD

What does that mean?

REFLEX

I don't know.

(thoughtful)

**Carry the weight but don't touch
the widget...**

JO-C

You'll work it out.

NPC PIXIE

**I'll give you clue two once Winnie
has made a laughing stock of Monk.**

REFLEX

Are you okay with this, Jo-C?

JO-C

Yeah, let's get into the safe.

REFLEX

(just checking)

**After what you said about the kiss
and the fight?**

JO-C

(shrug, justifying)

Winnie's not real and neither is
Monk. Nobody gets hurt this time.

DOGWOOD

Unless Monk catches us.

The music carries them across to the lunch room.

6. INT. LUNCH ROOM

Lunch is being served and eaten.

REFLEX

Dogwood, here's the note Pixie gave
us. Slip it onto Winnie's tray.

JO-C

Excuse me, where is Winnie?

NPC BENNY

I don't know. But she'll be all
alone.

JO-C

Why?

NPC BENNY

Because she doesn't have any
friends.

JO-C

I hate this place.

REFLEX

(remember)

Winnie isn't real.

DOGWOOD

There's one girl sitting by herself.
I'll go and slip the note on her
tray.

JO-C

Why am I not doing this?

REFLEX

Dogwood attracts less attention.

Dogwood walks discreetly across the room.

DOGWOOD

I hope you don't mind me sitting here.

No reply. He sits. Clears his throat, and then -

DOGWOOD (cont'd)

**I think Izzy was looking for you.
And there she is now. Look. Hello
Izzy!**

Winnie glances away, there's a scramble, then she looks back to catch Dogwood with his hand reaching towards her tray.

NPC WINNIE

What are you doing?

DOGWOOD

(red handed)

What?

NPC WINNIE

What are you doing?

DOGWOOD

Nothing. I'm very curious about your food. What is that?

NPC WINNIE

Boiled cabbage.

DOGWOOD

And that?

NPC WINNIE

Spotted dick.

DOGWOOD

Excuse me?!

NPC WINNIE

What's this?

DOGWOOD

Oh... a note? I don't know about that. Don't look at me.

NPC WINNIE

Did you just-

Jo-C sits down next to Winnie and interjects. The cavalry.

JO-C

Hello Winnie. So what was Monk just doing here?

NPC WINNIE

I didn't see Monk.

JO-C

Yeah, he just walked by behind you. I could swear I saw him put something on your tray while you were talking to Dogwood.

NPC WINNIE

You saw him?

JO-C

Definitely. Come on, Dogwood. We've got somewhere important to be.

DOGWOOD

See you later, Winnie.

As they walk off:

JO-C

**Will the music please start playing?
I want the next clue. Hello? Music?**

It starts.

JO-C (cont'd)

There we go.

. INT. LOOS

They're carried back to the loos.

NPC PIXIE

**Great work. Winnie went straight
over to Monk with the note.**

DOGWOOD

Already?

NPC PIXIE

(titters)

It was hugely embarrassing.

JO-C

Embarrassing for her?

PIXIE

For him.

JO-C

What about her?

NPC PIXIE

**She went back to her table and ate
her spotted dick.**

REFLEX

**(echo of Dogwood's WTF reaction)
Excuse me?**

JO-C

Can we have the second clue now?

NPC PIXIE

Certainly. You've earned it.

Reflex reads the card.

REFLEX

Dog meat is canine but not canned.

DOGWOOD

Gross.

REFLEX

Canine... Canned...

JO-C

Any ideas, Reflex?

REFLEX

**Yeah... maybe. They're almost
anagrams, just one letter out.
Weight and widget. And canine and
canned.**

JO-C

And...?

REFLEX

Give me time to think.

NPC PIXIE

**To earn your third and final clue, I
need you to swipe Webster's PE kit
from the dressing rooms.**

**(pleased with
herself)**

**Then he'll have to do PE in just his
vest and pants.**

JO-C

**Somehow, I don't think we're the
good guys in this story.**

DOGWOOD

Why Webster?

NPC PIXIE

Webster's a little pig.

DOGWOOD

Maybe we are the good guys.

REFLEX

Remember, it's all just make believe.

JO-C

Make believe bullying.

The music transitions them to the next scene.

8. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR

REFLEX

What if making us feel bad is the whole point? That would be something, wouldn't it? If this is all a living story about how terrible bullying is?

JO-C

Right, third clue here we come.

REFLEX

Okay, Dogwood, they're boys' changing rooms.

JO-C

The big boys' room.

REFLEX

Go get Webster's bag.

DOGWOOD

How will I know which one is Webster's?

JO-C

Maybe it's the only one in there?

DOGWOOD

What if it isn't?

REFLEX

It might be labelled?

DOGWOOD

I'll do my best.

He goes in.

JO-C

We could go in and help. Who cares if it's boys' only?

REFLEX

No, an older could appear and cause all sorts of trouble. We should try harder to think like the Rez High.

NPC MONK

Hey losers.

JO-C

Hey, I heard you put a note on Winnie's lunch tray.

NPC MONK

Who's Winnie? I don't know anything about any note.

REFLEX

Why do they call you Monk, anyway?

Dogwood returns.

NPC MONK

Here's your twerp friend.

DOGWOOD

Oh. Monk.

NPC MONK

What's that?

DOGWOOD

A bag.

REFLEX

That's Dogwood's bag. With a kit inside.

JO-C

He's lucky he's got it, because if he didn't, he'd have to go to the next lesson wearing just his underpants. For some reason.

NPC MONK

Thanks for the idea.

DOGWOOD

(weakly)

Please, Monk, no. Not my bag.

Monk snatches the bag and hurries off.

NPC MONK

(hustling away)

My bag now. See you later, losers.

JO-C

There we go. Two birds on one arrow.

DOGWOOD

Turns out there was only one bag in there and it had a label on it.

REFLEX

I hope the Rez High understands what just happened.

The music stirs.

JO-C

This happy music sounds like it did.

9. INT. LOOS

And we're back.

NPC PIXIE

**You've done well, for beginners.
Here's your third clue. Good luck
getting into the safe.**

JO-C

**But first we've got to get into the
Head's office.**

NPC PIXIE

**I can help you with that too. I was
in there earlier and left the window
slightly open. But the Head will be
back before long. You need to get in
there before he does.**

REFLEX

But where's the Head's office?

NPC PIXIE

I'll add it to your map.

JO-C

What map?

An affirmative sound cue, outside of reality somehow.

JO-C (cont'd)

**Oh... strange... I remember the map.
Why didn't I remember it until now?**

They leave the loos for the corridor.

10. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

REFLEX

Do you remember the map too?

DOGWOOD

Yeah. Cool.

JO-C

I don't like it. And if you're going to put a map in my head, why not do it earlier?

REFLEX

Bank!

(explains)

We've got all the clues. This seems like a good place to Restore from.

JO-C

Why didn't we do that after getting each clu-

Dogwood grabs Jo-C's arm, stops her dead.

DOGWOOD

Jo-C, wait. Let him pass.

Groan is crossing at the end of their corridor, just a few feet away. He doesn't notice them, yet -

GROAN

Out of my way, you rats.

NPC JOHNNY

Won't do it again, sir.

GROAN

No. You won't.

- and then he does see them.

GROAN (cont'd)

It's you.

(suspicious)

What are you doing?

JO-C

We're on our way to class.

GROAN

Good. Don't disturb the other students.

JO-C

That's the plan.

Groan heads one way, Jo-C and friends the other.

DOGWOOD

That guy's an arseblot.

REFLEX

You've met him before?

DOGWOOD

Yeah, he's called Groan. He's got a terrible attitude problem.

JO-C

What's the final clue?

REFLEX

It says

(reads the card)

'Turn on, tune in and listen, but not to aliens.'

JO-C

What does that mean?

They push through a door, out onto the playground.

11. EXT. PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

The walk steadily, going on their way.

REFLEX

**Well, they're nearly anagrams again.
Listen and aliens. Only one letter
has been changed.**

JO-C

But what does it mean?

REFLEX

**Well, the first clue. Weight and
widget. Swap the 'H' in weight for a 'D'
and it's an anagram for widget. So,
I think the first part of the
combination might be 'H'.**

DOGWOOD

**'H' is the one letter in weight that's
not in widget?**

REFLEX

**Exactly. And 'I' is the one letter in
canine that's not in canned. Our
second letter would be 'I'. And then
letter in listen that's not in
aliens, that's the letter 'T'.**

They come to a stop at their destination.

DOGWOOD

So we get H.I.T.

REFLEX

**It spells HIT. So I think that's
the combination we need. Hit. H.I.T.**

JO-C

**Brilliant. This is the window. Here
goes.**

She slides it up, and climbs in.

12. INT. THE HEAD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dogwood and Reflex climb in behind Jo-C.

DOGWOOD

There's the safe.

JO-C

Go on, open it.

DOGWOOD

What did we say the combination is?

REFLEX

Hit. H. I. T.

DOGWOOD

No. It can't be.

JO-C

What?

DOGWOOD

These buttons all have numbers on them, not letters.

REFLEX

Let me see.

(yep)

Oh, spit.

JO-C

You've got the answers wrong, Reflex.

REFLEX

I don't think so. Weight but not widget is 'H'. Canine but not canned is 'I'. Listen but not alien is 'T'.

JO-C

Dogwood, just try 1-1-1.

DOGWOOD

Why would I do that?

JO-C

Reflex got it wrong. If we aren't going to work it out we should at least try all of the numbers. Probably in order. 1-1-1 first.

REFLEX

We're not going to do that.

JO-C

Okay. So what were the clues again?

DOGWOOD

You won't work them out.

JO-C

Maybe you're overthinking it. Perhaps hit means we're supposed to hit it.

Jo-C picks up a pot plant.

REFLEX

No, don't be so-

JO-C

Out of the way. I'm going to hit it with this bush in a little bowl.

The pot plant smashes over the safe. Half a beat of anticlimax, then:

DOGWOOD

That was never going to work.

REFLEX

Just give me a second to think

through the clues again.

DOGWOOD

There must be numbers in-

JO-C

(hushes them)

Quiet.

DOGWOOD

(quietly)

Spit. Somebody's coming.

REFLEX

What?

Footsteps approach.

Whoever it is, they're almost at the door.

Then they are. A hand grabs the handle. At the last instant:

JO-C

(panics)

Restore!

13. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR

A flash of system noise and then they're back in the corridor, at the exact moment Reflex banked.

DOGWOOD

I do not like that.

They make a beeline for the office window again.

JO-C

We need more time for Reflex to think about the clues.

REFLEX

We do, do we?

DOGWOOD

But now we've got to do the same things all over again.

JO-C

Somebody was coming. If we get caught we'll be sent right back to the beginning of the mission.

REFLEX

(ta da!)

Jo-C, I've got it.

JO-C

You do?

They push open the door and go outside.

14. EXT. PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS

REFLEX

**Weight ends in the letters
E.I.G.H.T. Eight. But widget...
widget does not.**

DOGWOOD

Oh, and canine ends in nine.

REFLEX

And listen ends in ten. T.E.N.

JO-C

The combination is 8-9-10?

REFLEX

I think it is.

(delighted)

I really think it is.

15. INT. OFFICE

The window opens, and in clammers Jo-C, followed by Dogwood and Reflex.

REFLEX (cont'd)

Okay, so, 8, 9, 10.

DOGWOOD

I remember.

Dogwood types in the combination. Beep. Beep. Beep beep.

The safe clunks open: the greatest sound in the world.

JO-C

What's in there?

DOGWOOD

Brown envelopes.

JO-C

I want them all.

Dogwood passes the envelopes to Jo-C.

DOGWOOD

Here.

**The success music plays as Jo-C tears an envelope open.
Their time is up.**

JO-C

No... not now, music. Not now.

She rips into another envelope.

JO-C (cont'd)

We're not done here.

The office is a thing of the past, exam answers too.

HEAD

**Congratulations. All of the answers
to next week's history exam are
yours. All you have to do now is
understand them, remember them and
be able to regurgitate them under
pressure. Maybe that A grade won't
be quite as easy as you first
thought. Mission Three complete.**

JO-C

**I earned those envelopes of history.
Give them back.**

REFLEX

**They were probably meaningless, Jo-
C.**

JO-C

No. How will we ever know?

The music shifts, playing them into a new mission.

But very quickly there's trouble with the audio.

HEAD

(Max Headroom)

**Mission Four. Hack Attack-ak-ak
Attack. Even a C-see-see-see grade
in history, there's the small matter**

of y-y-y-your misbehaviour record-

DOGWOOD

What's going on?

REFLEX

Restore!

16. INT. REZ HIGH CORRIDOR

They're back at their save point again.

JO-C

This slagging machine.

REFLEX

**I did not like the sound of that. I
should investigate.**

JO-C

**I'm done. Are you two coming?
Are you?**

17. INT. BUG ROOM - LATER

They all resurface from Rez High with a gasp.

REFLEX

Jo-C?

JO-C

(not okay)

I'm okay.

DOGWOOD

You're obviously not.

JO-C

What part of 'I'm okay' means 'I'm not okay?'

DOGWOOD

The volume?

JO-C

(reacting to a hunch)

Quiet. Listen.

(half beat)

What is that?

DOGWOOD

What's what?

JO-C

I don't know.

They all listen a moment.

Jo-C doesn't realise what's up, but an extractor fan is running, whirring gently amid the noise of bugs.

REFLEX

What is it?

JO-C

(slightly hushed)

**There's something we're not seeing.
It's like... it's like there's
someone standing behind me.
Breathing on the back of my neck.
But when I turn around, they move so
they're always behind me.**

REFLEX

**I hope the Rez High isn't getting to
you.**

JO-C

(frustrated)

I'm done with this.

Jo-C's up and on her way out. She yanks the trapdoor open.

REFLEX

Can I do anything, Jo-C?

No answer. She's gone.

DOGWOOD

Guilty conscience.

REFLEX

**What? No. She's upset about Rez
High. I think she had some
unrealistic expectations.**

DOGWOOD

**Can't she just try to have fun? She
just made us do that stupid mission.**

REFLEX

**She'll feel better when she's kicked
the border fence a few times.**

DOGWOOD

**Well, whatever. As long as she
doesn't try to burn it down.**

[Music]

ANNOUNCER

Rez High is a Neon Inkwell podcast distributed by Rusty Quill and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Share-alike 4.0 International License.

The series is written and created by Brendon Connelly and directed by Lucy Wray.

This episode was edited with original music by Katharine Seaton and mastered by Catherine Rinella.

It featured Olivia Hirst as Jo-C, George Bunting as Dogwood, Lozza Gilbert as Reflex, Kazeem Tosin Amore as Head, Beth Alsbury as Livia, Ryan Hopevere-Anderson as Groan, Christine Walsh as Mrs. Seven, Shahan Hamza as Kamet, and William Killgore as Quartz. A full list of cast and credits is available in the shownotes.

Neon Inkwell is produced by April Sumner with Executive Producer Alexander J Newall and Showrunner Elizabeth Moffatt.

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