

PETE WISDOM and UNION JACK
HER MAJESTY'S SECRET PARCEL SERVICE

Issue 1: McGuffin it up

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A spec script for sample/practice purposes only
Not intended for production

PAGE 1:

PANEL 1:

Splash. Foreground: the panel focuses on a sporty little red convertible, which has bounced dramatically off the road, hanging mid-air. Driving the car is British spy and mutant PETE WISDOM, wearing a pair of sunglasses, currently with only one lens, his signature plain white dress shirt askew, black tie flapping in the wind. In the passenger seat is UNION JACK, Joey Chapman, holding on for dear life with one hand and cocking his Webley revolver with the other. Despite his full face mask, it's clear he's in that uncomfortable space between panicked and furious.

HANGING from the back of the convertible, mid-air, is the mutant TOAD, dressed in skuzzy street clothes. He is only attached to the car by his tongue, which looks like it's one bump away from coming loose.

Behind them, the rest of the panel is filled with a massive DRAGON, inhaling to spit out a huge gout of flames.

UNION JACK: I swear to god Pete Wisdom if we live through this I'll kill you myself.

PAGE 2:

PANEL 1:

CLOSE UP of Union Jack's revolver and dagger. Joey's BLUE-CLAD hand is placing the gun on a table.

UNION JACK: Sod this for a game of soldiers.

KICKER: ONE WEEK AGO.

PANEL 2:

Joey is STRETCHING his back, his uniform in tatters. He's standing in the middle of his worn out, underwhelming flat, which looks more like it should belong to a semi-employed builder—Joey's actual day job—than to a superhero. His mask is tucked into his belt, and we can see bruises and cuts on his face.

UNION JACK: How does Captain America do this stuff?

PETE WISDOM (OFF PANEL): The Yanks bung money at him, Jack. He's on the government dime.

PANEL 3:

Wider shot of Joey's apartment. Now we can see Pete SITTING in the dark, about to light up a cigarette, striking a dramatic pose with the collar of his long black coat turned up. Joey has GRABBED his gun and is aiming at Pete.

UNION JACK: I don't even want to know why you're in my apartment. Leave.

PETE WISDOM: What if I've come to offer you wealth and power?

UNION: Don't speak. Shut your gob.

PANEL 4:

Close up on Pete, face now lit by his cigarette, standing up to leave. Union Jack WATCHES him over his shoulder.

UNION JACK: And don't smoke in my flat.

PETE WISDOM: Fine, mate. I was just hoping to offer you a finder's fee, legal and tax from her Majesty's own coffers, to help me out with a little endeavor I need an extra pair of hands on.

PANEL 5:

Reverse angle again. Joey's leaning against his desk, but he's clearly no longer as aggressive as he was a moment before. Pete is standing across from him, grinning.

UNION JACK: Why am I even considering this. Why am I considering this?

PETE WISDOM: Because the bill for replacement tights is going to be more than a couple quid?

UNION JACK: There's that, yeah.

PAGE 3:

PANEL 1:

Pete and Union Jack are sitting side by side in a cab. In the foreground, the cab driver is eyeballing them like he thinks they're both nuts.

UNION JACK: Why me?

PETE WISDOM: You think quick on your feet, you've dealt with the supernatural, and you're technically off the books.

UNION JACK: Supernatural? Tell me it's not more vampires. I can't do vampires anymore.

PETE WISDOM: You may regret saying that. Here, put this on.

PANEL 2:

Both men exit the cab. Union Jack is pulling a long overcoat, not unlike Pete's over his uniform.

UNION JACK: Why?

PETE: One, you're walking around in bloody Spanx and I won't be seen with you in public. Two, you're a spy now, you get to wear the cool coat.

UNION JACK: And why are we at a pub?

PANEL 3:

Wider shot. Pete is looking back at Joey, the banner of the bar, AMPHIBIANS, emblazoned above his head.

PETE WISDOM: Picking up our last two teammates.

PANEL 4:

Interior bar shot. A fight has broken out. Central to it is THERESA CASSIDY, aka SIRYN or BANSHEE. She's in the sort of noirish street clothes we're used to seeing her in when she works with X-FACTOR. She has another familiar face, TOAD, by the throat. He has tried to attack her with his prehensile mutant tongue, which Theresa has a death-grip on in her other hand. She has Toad backed up against the bar, with patrons surrounding them cheering the fight on.

THERESA: Ye wee creepy frog!

TOAD: I on'y asched y'f y'wnted a drnk!

PANEL 5:

Pete and Union Jack have entered. Theresa and Toad are still in the foreground fighting, but the focus is now on Pete, who has called for ceasefire.

PETE WISDOM: Theresa, pet, I asked Toad to lure you here for me. We need to talk.

PANEL 6:

Theresa uses Toad's TONGUE as a pointing device to point at Pete.

THERESA: You! I'm goin' ta strangle you wit' this right now!

PAGE 4:

PANEL 1:

Our four heroes are gathered around a booth at the pub, apparently somehow able to prevent being thrown out. Union Jack, Pete, and Toad all have pints in front of them. Theresa is drinking tea. Joey has his mask pulled up to reveal his mouth.

TOAD: You look bleedin' ridiculous.

UNION JACK: Yeah, well, I'm the only one apparently needs to keep his identity a secret.

THERESA: Speak, Wisdom.

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PETE WISDOM: Here's the deal. I've been tasked to put together a team to appropriate a certain item. The Gem of Danaan.

PANEL 2:

Close up of Theresa rubbing her temple.

THERESA: Jaysis, tell me y'didn't recruit me because I'm the only Irish superhero you know.

PANEL 3:

Close up of Pete, grinning.

PETE WISDOM: No, I recruited you because your uncle has connections all across the UK and Ireland with the mystical black market, and I want you to call in a favor.

PANEL 4:

A wide view of the full table. Union Jack is sipping his beer. Toad had apparently stolen a full shot glass from another table and is lifting it back to their booth.

THERESA: And these two?

PETE WISDOM: Toad has certain underworld connections as well, and where we're headed, someone with his... distasteful mutations might come in handy.

PANEL 5:

Close up of Toad gesturing obscenely at his tongue.

TOAD: I taste plenty. Look at all these taste buds. Look at them.

THERESA: And Jack?

PANEL 6:

Close in on Union Jack, who looks suddenly confused. We can see Pete to the side as well.

UNION JACK: Yeah, I'm wondering about that myself.

PANEL 7:

Pete smiles, exhaling cigarette smoke from his nose.

PETE WISDOM: In good time, old boy. All shall be revealed.

PAGE 5:

PANEL 1:

Jack, Pete, and Toad are sitting at an airport bar. Toad is looking around lasciviously at women as they walk by. Joey has given up on the mask, but wears a pair of oversized sunglasses and a cap. He looks miserable. Pete looks bemused.

UNION JACK (Nodding at Toad): What if he rats me out?

TOAD: Believe it or not, mate, I don't actually care what your secret identity is. You're not that big a deal.

PETE: We'll have someone from psy-ops erase his memory when it's all done.

PANEL 2:

Close up of Toad looking offended, Pete is to the side of the panel looking at something off screen.

PETE: Here's our girl.

PANEL 3:

Theresa walks up to them, cell phone in hand. Jack and Pete have stood up. Toad is busy ogling a civilian.

THERESA: An old pal of my uncle's will meet with us when we get there. Explain how it all works.

PANEL 4:

Group shot, Jack central.

UNION JACK: How what all works?

THERESA: The gem.

PETE: It's magic. Magic always has rules.

PANEL 5:

They start moving away from the bar. Wisdom has Toad by the collar, pulling him away from interacting with the public. Jack is talking to Theresa.

THERESA: I figured you'd be scarred or somethin' under that mask.

UNION JACK: Well I'm not.

THERESA: You actually might be the most ordinary langer I've ever seen in my life.

UNION JACK: This is why I don't take my mask off.

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PANEL 1:

Wide shot of an airplane. Let's use a fake version of RyanAir.

PANEL 2:

Jack and Toad are side by side. Pete and Theresa as well. Jack and Theresa both look fairly upset about the arrangement.

UNION JACK: How'd I pull Toad duty?

THERESA: You smell like a smoke stack.

PETE: You realize you're flying all over Europe on her Majesty's coin, yeah?

TOAD: We're on the econo-flight. You're pocketing whatever expenses you don't spend, aren't you.

PANEL 3:

Smirking close-up of Pete.

PETE: Now why would I do something dishonest like that?

PANEL 4:

Our team leaving the baggage area. Everyone but Pete looks frazzled.

THERESA: You're dis big spy and you can't get us through customs without getting pulled aside?

UNION JACK: We would've been fine if someone hadn't LICKED the security guard—

TOAD: IT WAS AN INVOLUNTARY SPASM.

THERESA: That happens around me again I'll involuntarily spasm you into the next flippin' time zone.

PAGE 7:

PANEL 1:

The team walks up to a gorgeous car waiting for them outside the airport.

THERESA: You're a cheap aul' bastard about the flight but you get us this yoke to drive around the countryside in?

PETE: I like cars.

PANEL 2:

Pete jangles the keys in one hand, looking back and forth between Jack and Theresa.

PETE: Children. Who wants.

UNION JACK: I can't drive standard.

THERESA: Oh gimme that.

PANEL 3:

The team is piled into the car with the top down, Theresa driving, Pete shotgun.

PETE: So this bloke we're meeting, he's an old mate of Black Tom's?

THERESA: He's a black market magic dealer. I'm sure you know a t'ing or two about those, Peter Wisdom.

PETE: I've met my share.

PANEL 4:

They pull into a small downtown area. Probably looks like Gort.

UNION JACK: Could this place be more in the middle of nowhere?

THERESA: Shut your gob, flag boy.

PANEL 5:

The team clambers out of the car in front of a curry joint.

TOAD: The magic curry joint. You bring us to the nicest places, Wisdom.

PETE: And if you ask nicely, I might even buy you all dinner inside.

Page 8:

PANEL 1:

It's a typical Indian restaurant, mostly empty, dimly lit. In one corner, an older man, bald with a white beard, sits nursing a beer.

PANEL 2:

Pete points at Toad.

PETE: Behave, you little toerag.

PANEL 3:

Theresa and Pete slide into the booth with the older man, PADRAIG. Jack HANGS back, standing guard. He's still got his "spy" jacket on, buttoned up as if to hide his uniform.

PADRAIG: Tess, auld Tom told me you were followin' in yer dad's footsteps, but I figgered you'd go Interpol, not workin' with these English gobshites.

THERESA: One off, Padraig. Just doin' a favor.

PADRAIG: Tch.

PANEL 4:

Padraig pulls an old leather bound book out from under the table. He places it between them.

PADRAIG: I have no idea what ye'd be needin' the Gem of Danaan for, but y'should know it's not just layin' about somewhere.

THERESA: Never easy, is it.

PADRAIG: Tis not. I can get ye to the cave, but—

PANEL 5:

Reaction shot of Jack.

UNION JACK: Cave?

PANEL 6:

Back to Padraig and Theresa.

PADRAIG: City fella I'm guessin'.

THERESA: Guessin' right.

PADRAIG: Anyway. I can get ye to the cave, but it's up to you to get past the guardian.

PETE: Got any details on what exactly the guardian is, mate?

PADRAIG: Dragon of course.

PAGE 9:

PANEL 1:

Wide shot of the table. Union Jack has officially joined in on the conversation, pointing at Pete.

UNION JACK: Dragon? You knew there was going to be a dragon involved, didn't you!

PETE: Well I knew there was a guardian. Could've been a troll. Maybe a golem.

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UNION JACK: I didn't sign up for anything involving dragons.

THERESA: Where are YOU going?

PANEL 2:

Cut to Toad trying to SNEAK OUT.

TOAD: Do I look like a Targaryen?

PADRAIG: He kind of looks like how I pictured Tyrion, actually.

PANEL 3:

Reaction shot of the entire team staring at Padraig.

PADRAIG: What? I read the books. Didn't you? Anyway, there's one last thing you need to get the Gem. I'm assuming that's what Tess here is for.

THERESA: Which is?

PADRAIG: A hero pure of heart.

THERESA: You're joking.

PANEL 4:

Back to Pete as the central figure in the conversation. He's lighting up.

PETE: I've read your files, Theresa. Sorry, you aren't our paragon of clean livin'.

THERESA: Well it sure as hell ain't you, is it.

PETE: Of course not. My heart is blacker than pitch. This is what we brought Jack for.

PANEL 5:

Jack is throwing up his hands. Pete looks amused, Theresa incredulous.

UNION JACK: You brought me along because I'm NICE?

PETE: Pretty much. You'd be shocked how few actual nice people there are taking part in heroics these days.

TOAD: Well we all knew it wasn't me.

PANEL 6:

Jack is walking away, leaving everyone else sitting around the table.

UNION JACK: Let's get on with it. Go slay a dragon or whatever. I'm the sacrificial virgin I guess. Why does this nonsense always land on me...

THERESA: He's not really a virgin, is he?

PETE: Ask him. I only brought him on account of he's not Captain Britain.

PAGE 10:

PANEL 1:

The team climbs a hillside in the Irish countryside. Everyone's in full battle gear now, which means Jack is in his uniform, and everyone else is in their street clothes. They're all miserable and tired.

TOAD: Spent all those quid on a fancy sports car, never thought about getting a range rover, huh?

PETE: I will beat you to death with your own tongue if you don't stop talking.

PANEL 2:

Theresa, however, is flying. She drifts in the air next to Pete and Jack.

THERESA: I can see a ledge up above. Looks like a cave.

UNION JACK: Nothing bad ever comes out of caves, right? Ever. Hey, Theresa?

PANEL 3: The group reaches the top of an incline. There is, in fact, a cave. Theresa is landing lightly on her feet. Toad doesn't appear winded, but he does look annoyed.

THERESA: What.

UNION JACK: Are you, um... Seeing anyone?

THERESA This isn't really happening. Tell me this isn't happening.

PANEL 4:

Pete leads the way into the cave. It appears to be a dead end, though there is a gap in the stone surface not unlike a mouse hole.

PETE: Children. Stop flirting. Toad, come over here.

UNION JACK: We're not flirting.

THERESA: Not even a little.

UNION JACK: No need to be cruel about it.

TOAD: No.

PANEL 5:

Pete is pointing at the hole in the cave wall. Toad is looking up at him, defiantly.

PETE: There's a level inside that gap. I need you to pull it.

TOAD: I don't know what YOU do in your private time, but I, for one, don't go sticking my tongue willy nilly into random holes in—

PETE: Do it and I won't make you go into the cave first.

PANEL 6:

Toad's tongue has disappeared into the spot in the wall. Both Theresa and Union Jack look horrified.

TOAD: I 'ot it.

SFX: CLUNK

PAGE 11:

PANEL 1:

The wall of the cave opens up like a doorway. Everyone stands around staring at each other.

PANEL 2:

Now everyone is looking at Jack at the same time.

UNION JACK: Oh, you want ME to go first? You can all go bugger off.

PANEL 3:

Union Jack is headed down the tunnel, the rest of the team following him.

UNION JACK: I swear if rent weren't so high in London...

PANEL 4:

Pete's holding up one hand, using his mutant HOT KNIVES to cast light. The cave is dark otherwise, extending off into the distance. Nobody looks particularly happy with what's happening.

THERESA: You have any flippin' idea what my powers would do in a cave this tight, Pete Wisdom?

PETE: So don't yell at anyone.

TOAD: I stepped in something.

PANEL 5:

Everyone has come to a stop. They look at Toad.

PANEL 6:

They all look down.

UNION JACK: If that's dragon poop, I'm done. I'm leaving.

THERESA: You might as well just burn those shoes right here. You'll never wear them again.

PETE: Is that BREATHING?

PAGE 12:

PANEL 1:

Splash. They are standing in the entrance of a straight-outta-the-Hobbit dragon cave, filled with treasure, and, of course, a gigantic sleeping dragon.

TOAD: I thought there were no lizards in Ireland.

THERESA: Snakes, and that's a myth, and also be quiet.

PETE: Everyone keep schtum and take a peep for the Gem.

PAGE 13:

PANEL 1:

Wide panel as the group spreads out.

TOAD: Can I keep a few things?

PETE: No.

THERESA: Did you even consider bringing flashlights?

PETE: No.

UNION JACK: Found it.

PANEL 2:

Close in on Jack pointing at something off panel. The group gathers behind him.

UNION JACK: That it? Up there?

PANEL 3:

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The Gem. It's a goose-egg of an emerald, about the size of a rugby ball. It's also sitting very close to the dragon's face.

PANEL 4:

Pete's got his hands in his pockets and nods a chin up at the gem. Jack looks incredulous.

PETE: Off with you. Go get it, love.

UNION JACK: Are you having a laugh?

PETE: Not even a chortle.

UNION JACK: I'm not going up there.

PETE: Toad will provide a distraction if we need it.

PANEL 5:

Pete and Union Jack are closer together, almost arguing in each other's faces. Toad is framed behind them.

TOAD: I'd rather not.

UNION JACK: Why can't you get it?

PETE: It can't be removed from the cave by anyone not pure of heart.

UNION JACK: I'm not pure of heart!

PETE: Well you're close enough.

PANEL 6:

Theresa starts walking toward the dragon. Jack runs to pass her instead.

THERESA: I'll go.

UNION JACK: No. I got it.

THERESA: I'll go if you're going to whinge about it.

UNION JACK: I've got it. Hang on.

PAGE 14:

PANEL 1:

Jack is climbing the piles of gold in the background as Theresa and Pete talk.

PETE: That was effective.

THERESA: I've run superteams before. Clearly one of us has done it.

PANEL 2:

Jack is climbing up the mounds of gold, the dragon's body always in the backdrop, alarmingly close by.

UNION JACK: Just once I want to get into something that doesn't feel like a near death experience. Just once.

PANEL 3:

Jack reaches the top of the mound of gold, right next to the dragon's face. The GEM is prominent. He reaches for it.

PANEL 4:

Close up as Jack LIFTS the Gem.

PANEL 5:

Jack tucks the Gem under his arm and looks down at his companions, clearly smiling under his mask. He points at the Gem as if to say: "SEE?"

PANEL 6:

Toad, Pete, and Theresa look absolutely horrified as they look up at Jack.

PANEL 7:

Close up of Jack.

UNION JACK: What?

PAGE 15:

PANEL 1:

The dragon is awake and standing over Jack, staring at him like he's a snack.

UNION JACK: He's awake, isn't he.

PANEL 2:

Pete is FIRING hot knives from his fingertips at the dragon and preparing to run.

PETE: Move it people! Let's move!

PANEL 3:

Theresa takes flight, attempting to distract the dragon. The monster's focus is entirely on UNION JACK below, though, who has started running, firing his Webley pistol behind him for cover.

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PANEL 4:

Jack runs past Pete, both of them terrified.

UNION JACK: Was this part of your plan?

PETE: You were supposed to be able to just pick it up! What happened to your pure heart?

UNION JACK: I may have had a thought!

PETE: What kind of—

PANEL 5:

Theresa is circling the dragon above them, looking particularly brave and fetching.

PANEL 6:

Pete looks so incredibly disappointed. Jack is taking aim with his gun again.

PETE: Tell me you didn't picture her naked when you were up there getting the Gem.

UNION JACK: I may have wondered if she has freckles on her back.

PETE: That's not impure, that is stupidly quaint. Now RUN!

PANEL 7:

Toad is FRAMED in the doorway of the tunnel they came in from. Pete is POURING ON the hot knives, hitting the dragon with all he has. WINGS dominate the frame as the dragon prepares to chase them.

TOAD: YOU GUYS ARE SO BAD AT ESCAPING.

PAGE 16:

PANEL 1:

The men are all running down the tunnel, Jack still hugging the Gem to his chest.

PANEL 2:

Same as above, except the DRAGON has jammed its head into the tunnel and is clawing its way after them.

UNION JACK: Theresa's back there!

PANEL 3:

The dragon digs closer, gaining ground.

PETE: Pretty sure she's NOT the one he's after, mate!

PANEL 4:

Same as above, but now the dragon looks close enough we could smell its breath.

PAGE 17:

PANEL 1:

Pete, Toad, and Union Jack all come flying out of the tunnel.

PANEL 2:

All three men hang in mid-air...

PANEL 3:

And start rolling down the hillside.

PANEL 4:

Above them, the dragon CRASHES out of the tunnel, the cave, crumbling and shattering around him.

PANEL 5:

The three heroes, or, um, thieves, run toward us as the dragon TAKE FLIGHT above them.

PAGE 18:

PANEL 1:

The car is PARKED on the side of the road. Toad is already leaping into it. Jack is in the foreground, firing at the dragon. Pete RUNS for the driver's side door.

PANEL 2:

The boys pile into the car. The dragon rises up above them as the car revs to life.

SFX: VRRRRRRRRROOOM

UNION JACK: Drive drive drive drive drive!

PANEL 3:

The car PEELS OUT onto the country road. Cows are in a pasture on the right, staring at the car calmly. They don't seem bothered by the dragon that is crashing along the road after the car.

UNION JACK: I can't believe we left her!

PANEL 4:

Close up of Pete driving, his head low over the wheel.

PETE: It's chasing US! Theresa will be home for tea by the time we're finger food!

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PANEL 5:

The dragon spits FIRE at the car, narrowly missing it. The car hits a bump and we see Toad go FLYING out of the back seat. Jack barely holds on himself.

PANEL 6:

Toad's TONGUE lashes out and latches onto the back of the car, for all the good it'll do him.

PAGE 19:

Panel 1: The car is actually smoking from the heat of the dragon breath. Toad is drifting in mid-air, anchored by his tongue. Jack is pulling the trigger of his gun but we only have the CLICK CLICK CLICK of an empty weapon.

UNION JACK: I swear to god Pete Wisdom if we live through this I'll kill you myself.

PANEL 2:

Reverse angle. There's a lone figure standing in silhouette in front of the car.

PANEL 3:

Close up of Pete.

PETE: Get out of the bloody way you toerag!

PANEL 4:

Tight on the feet of the woman in silhouette. The car is framed between her ankles.

PANEL 5:

Close up of her eyes.

THERESA: Of course it's up to me to fix this.

PAGE 20:

PANEL 1:

Big panel. Theresa unleashes her BANSHEE SCREAM. Her whole body is into it, power surging forth from her.

PANEL 2:

Pete swerves the car. It doesn't handle well. Maybe one wheel is still in touch with the pavement. The dragon is coming up behind it fast.

PANEL 3:

Back to Theresa. Play up the sonic BOOM of her mutant powers.

PANEL 4:

The car flips, spilling its three passengers into the air.

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PANEL 5:

Theresa's sonic boom hits the dragon full force.

PAGE 21:

PANEL 1:

The dragon, knocked the hell out, comes to a crashing halt on the ground, looking like a drunk on a bender. The car is off to the side, totaled. There is standing slightly off center in the panel. The men are scattered around like dropped puppets.

PANEL 2:

Theresa helps Jack to his feet. He still, miraculously, has the Gem in his hand.

THERESA: How's that road rash treating you?

UNION JACK: Ow.

PANEL 3:

Pete staggers over, a bent cigarette in his mouth, his black suit tattered. Toad is DRAGGING himself to his feet behind Pete.

PETE: Good work, Sunbeam.

PANEL 4:

Group shot of the four team members looking like hell. The dragon is still unconscious behind them. Pete is making a phone call.

THERESA: You get what you were lookin' for, Wisdom?

PAGE 22:

PANEL 1:

Close up on Pete Wisdom.

PETE: We should get out of here before the beastie wakes up.

PETE: Much the pity, too. I know a dragon who might've been able to talk some sense into this one.

PANEL 2:

Toad looks back at the sleeping dragon, looking remorseful.

TOAD: Sorry, big guy.

PANEL 3:

Pete takes the stone from Jack, who is staggering and still has his Webley in-hand. Pete holds the Gem UP TO THE LIGHT.

PETE (into the phone): Need an extraction immediately. Send in a metazoological team in to make sure the critter is put back into the mountain unharmed. Well you could leave it on the side of the road, but I don't think animal control is going to be able to handle it.

PETE: Ponce.

PANEL 4:

Theresa helps Jack stay on his feet. Toad looks vaguely offended nobody's helping him.

UNION JACK: So what happens next, Wisdom?

PANEL 5:

Close up on Pete Wisdom, holding the Gem so he can look inside.

PETE: Now? Now comes the FUN part....

TO BE CONTINUED...