

Remember, Your Level Number is 6

by Rachel Rosenblum and Dave Reed

Ever had one of those mornings where you wake up with a girl straddling you and pointing a gun at your forehead?

Ever had one of those mornings where you were the girl straddling someone and pointing a gun at his forehead?

Be thankful I have self-control.

This...is Rachel¹. She carries the gun. This...is Dave². He carries...everything else.

And so began our quest for the perfect dictionary. By way of Boston. And possibly New Orleans, we're not sure yet.

We had to begin in the warehouse. And we had to end in the warehouse, because that was where we stored our getaway vehicle.

Welcome to Boston. Level 6.

Upon releasing our free spirits on the unsuspecting city, we went directly to Church, which was sitting nice and squat, surrounded by his grandchildren, the skyscrapers. Including the ever-impressive tallest one, John Hancock³.

Let's not dwell on the church, but rather skip right to Newbury Street. "'Tis a Bright and Sunny day," said Harlan Ellison⁴ as he walked by. "Don't panic," said Neil Gaiman⁵, "you'll see Harlan again." Then, Neil introduced us to his good friend, Terry Pratchett⁶. They told us they were going to meet Douglas Adams⁷ for tea, but we politely declined stating that we would be meeting him later.

Then, the synchronicity kicked into high gear.

Who are you? asked No One Special⁸.

...And you will know us by the Trail of Dead.

Rachel ran off to have a conversation with the Bront_s⁹. Meanwhile, Dave started asking Bob Bloch¹⁰ how he could get into the Club. Around the next corner, we spy Neil and Terry again, talking with Harlan, and they wave us over. Harlan turned to us and said, "I apologize for Anne

McCaffrey¹¹ not being with us today, but she and Mercedes Lackey¹² had a date to visit Lowood and check on the children."

Victor Hugo, with the Club, cordially invites all you gentle readers to visit him.

"What do you want?" asked the man behind the counter of the pizza place we stopped at for lunch.

Mom¹³ said, "Eat your broccoli," and Dad¹⁴ said, "Finish that slice. You need to get some flesh on those bones."

We wrapped up the leftover pizza. Someone along the way might need it.

Regrettably, the parking meter didn't want the pizza. Pity.

So, onward, we met Mike¹⁵ for a canoli. They smelled delightful.

You and me and the couch make three. How would we go about making one? Discussion ensues. It is decided that Dave is on top because Dave is older and bigger. (I think there are too many Daves¹⁶ in this.)

And then, we met a Jen¹⁷. Rachel said hi. Dave said nothing. Jen's boyfriend goes to Clark.

"Why are you here?" whispered the voice in the back of Rachel's head.

Samuel Johnson¹⁸ was beckoning to me.

Here, we were almost tempted off the path to go to Grandmother's house¹⁹ to go to New Orleans, but, typically, we didn't have sufficient funds. Our relatives later expressed approval at our lack of funds.

After we noticed that Rosencrantz²⁰ and Guildenstern²¹ were dead (er... or is that Guildenstern and Rosencrantz?), we split a little Temptation and then on with the quest.

March 6, 17:59– Perfect Dictionary found. All set.

On our way back to the warehouse, a fine, upstanding young lad asked us for change. We offered him the pizza.

We are now returning to Ground Level.

Please fasten your seatbelts and return



trays and seatbacks to upright and locked positions. Keep your hands and feet inside ride at all times. The animals bite.

"What do you have worth living for?" said the sign as we were leaving Boston.

When we're rich and famous, we're going to do whatever we want! •

Authors' note: We now know *all* the words to "Puff, the Magic Dragon."

¹ Rachael Rosen is a character in Philip K. Dick's "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep", the basis of the Harrison Ford movie *Blade Runner*.

² David Reid, I believe, still plays for the Boston Bruins.

³ Historical figure. Possibly a forefather.

⁴ School bus driver for the children at Lowood.

⁵ Wrote an episode of *Babylon 5*.

⁶ Always a *Good Omen*.

⁷ Date to be announced. Be patient.

⁸ Renowned playwright, novelist, and all-around good humanitarian.

⁹ Curren, Acton, and Ellis Bell

¹⁰ Short guy.

¹¹ Is that with or without an "e"?

¹² This is obviously a fake name.

¹³ Mythical creature.

¹⁴ Bad acid trip.

¹⁵ Wanna go to the Blarney?

¹⁶ Use of the silent "h" is being explored.

¹⁷ Use of the silent "z" is being explored.

¹⁸ Some minor repairs to the covers have been performed.

¹⁹ See Dictionary of Imaginary Places.

²⁰ Guildenstern.

²¹ Rosencrantz.