



## Road Trip

or

*Life is a highway*

<b>Mission title:</b>	<i>Road Trip or Life is a highway</i>
<b>Mission log:</b>	1-07
<b>Mission Johnson:</b>	
<b>Mission reward:</b>	
<b>Participants:</b>	Cogwhistle, Dr. Farsight, Ricardo

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## 1-07: Life is a Highway

“Damn traffic. I’m getting out of comms range now.” Ricardo’s curt and bald-faced lie cut through the tension in the car. With an exaggerated movement, Ricardo turned off his comms, and motioned for the other two in the Toyota Elite to do the same. Puzzled, dr. Farsight and Cogwhistle did the same, the dwarf fumbling slightly with the comms before he managed to get it turned off.

Cogwhistle’s strong suit was magic, not technology, and to some extent the Irish dwarf really followed the stereotype. Though he was likely to respond rather ... nastily if someone asked him about his “lucky charms”.

With deft movements, Ricardo instructed the GridLink in the sports car to return to dr. Farsight’s apartment, and engaged the autopilot. Smoothly, the steering wheel partially retracted, and a HUD map was displayed showing exactly where they were, and the estimated time to arrival at their destination.

Turning slightly in his seat, Ricardo addressed his passengers. “You’re both aware of my recent trip to Germany. On that trip, I was made aware of a ... situation that explained a great many things about some of our crew’s recent behavior. I have reason to believe that Jinx and Schneider are infected by some sort of parasite that has at least in part changed their behavior, and I think that they’re not to be trusted much anymore.”

Cogwhistle’s reply was immediate, and vehement. “Then, they should be taken out of the equation. *Permanently.*” “Now now, no reason to go off half-cocked, no pun intended,” Ricardo said, making a placating gesture with his hands. Dr. Farsight was still quiet, just observing this. “I think we should do some more research before we go to such a ... *drastic* measure.” Ricardo turned to dr. Farsight. “I think you’ve gathered some blood samples of Jinx after the run-in with that thing in Redmond?”

A curt nod affirmed this. “Then I have some ... *backers* in Germany that will be very happy with getting those blood samples. There’ll also likely be some financial compensation in this. We’ve all met representatives of those backers before. Currently, I think it would be *premature* to try and permanently remove our erstwhile team members from the equation – they haven’t been overtly hostile so far. Also, even though they’re both wounded, we’re not up to maximum strength either.” At this, dr. Farsight grudgingly nodded, absent mindedly scratching his peeling nose. Burn wounds were notoriously slow to heal.

“We’re in accord, then. We send the blood samples to our *friends* in Germany, and we then take it from there. No nuking of anyone right now, but we must be ready to act at a moment’s notice.” The Toyota Elite smoothly pulled up in front of dr. Farsight’s apartment and announced with a muted message that they had arrived. At Ricardo’s expectant gaze, dr. Farsight scowled – but ultimately nodded. Cogwhistle seemed almost childish in his eagerness to agree, an attitude somewhat at odds to the otherwise quite dour and pragmatic dwarf.



“I’ve had some suspicions so far,” dr. Farsight pointed out, “but I must say for the record that I protest sending off blood samples to others on what is a very likely suspicion – but a suspicion nevertheless. I haven’t seen *irrefutable* evidence yet. Blood samples are very powerful tools and can seriously jeopardize our work later on.” At this, Cogwhistle looked slightly more pensive. “I will, however, send off the samples I have gathered. Under some protest, I might add.” Dr. Farsight’s voice was firm.

Quietly, an electric delivery truck pulled up with a well-known delivery firm’s logo on it. Dr. Farsight, Cogwhistle and Ricardo all got out of the Toyota Elite. Going to the apartment, dr. Farsight quickly retrieved the Styrofoam container with the blood samples. Properly marking it with biohazard symbols and filling out the paperwork with the courier was the work of minutes. Ricardo paid the driver, and sent him off.

Dr. Farsight immediately entered the back seat of the car again, and looked quite cross. If he had his doubts with this course of action, he *really* didn’t like that Ricardo clearly had preempted the entire situation by ordering the courier to come here way before he had presented his case to Cogwhistle and himself.

As Ricardo pocketed the courier’s receipt for the package, Schneider’s car pulled up on the sidewalk in front of the Toyota Elite. The huge troll, placed in the rear of Skidz on his equally oversize bench seat, rolled down his side’s passenger window. With a growl in his voice, he asked, “Are you quite done with this silly business now?” Ricardo flippantly answered, “Yes, we’re quite done now. By all means, let’s go to Tacoma.”

Cogwhistle and Ricardo got into the car, Ricardo at the steering wheel. This time, no one talked on the half an hour drive over to Tacoma.