

TA 1-3 / 3-1

G.A.S - Godspeed Automotive Services By Alex Rockey



The team has been hired to help a trucking company that has been experiencing a rash of thefts. They gather and plan what to do.

Zach: "Let me get this straight. The thieves are taking the cargo *while* the trucks are moving?"

Holt: "Correct."

Tilda: "That's pretty brazen of them."

Zach: "The question now is, how do we find the thieves?"

Dag: "May I make a suggestion?"

Aisha: "Sure. What do you have in mind?"

Dag: "Well, maybe we could transport something valuable for them?"

Aisha: "Actually, that sounds like a good idea."

Tilda: "To help make it look legit, I'll transport it with my truck."

Zach: "Incase they have someone on the inside, we should have the company do up all the proper paperwork so it looks like she is just another trucker."

Terri: "We will follow from behind and watch. When they attempt the theft, we will keep them busy until the police show up."

Dag: "And I will record as much info of it as I can for the police."

Holt: "I will relay this plan to the employer."

Terri: "Well, with that said, I guess this is what we will be doing."

The team heads out to get their vehicles ready.

The next day...

Zach: "You're going to use you daily driver for work?"

Dag: "Yeah. I don't have anything else ready yet."

Zach: "Well, you should get something for work, as it can be a bit rough on vehicles. Plus, you may need to add a few things to it so it would be more practical for work."

Dag: "I understand, but not to worry, I've made a few practical modifications to my daily driver."

Zach: "That's good. We've done that with our work vehicles. Speaking of them, it's time to go."

Dag: "Oh, before we do, I almost forgot; I made up these ear pieces for hands free operation while we work and drive. They connect with both your phone and our radios."

Zach thinks to himself, 'Huh, safe thinking. I like that.'

The team drives off to the transport company and loads up the cargo onto Tilda's truck. They leave, with most of the team trailing behind to watch from a short distance. Dag leads up a short way, to keep an eye on the way ahead. Some of the team talks among themselves to pass the time, particularly Dag and Zach.

Zach: "Hey, you mentioned that you modified your truck. What have you done?"

Dag: "Well, I modified the turbo for the engine, improved the electronic controls, added connection to my computer, sensors to monitor road conditions, and, of course, various lights and cameras."

Zach: "Those last three sound like good ideas."

Dag: "Thanks. It's an ongoing project of mine, though I have other projects going on. You said that your vehicle is also modified?"

Zach: "Yeah. We all have them built to be practical for work. With mine, I've got a modified all-wheel-drive system and suspension with adjustable ride height, all for multi-surface use."

Dag: "Cool. It's good to be prepared." (*Dag takes notice to a few vehicles passing by that he could have sworn had gone by before.*)

Zach: "I agree. I also have a gun safe installed, escape hatches, roll bar, water-tight sealed body, and race-grade restraint systems. Safety is the best thing to be prepared for."

Dag: "That's good. Oh, hey, we're almost there!"

The team arrive at the destination. After the cargo is unloaded, they leave, with a bit of relief and disappointment at the same time.

Terri: "Well, that was a bust. They didn't take the bait."

Tilda: "So, what do we do now? Try it again with a different load?"

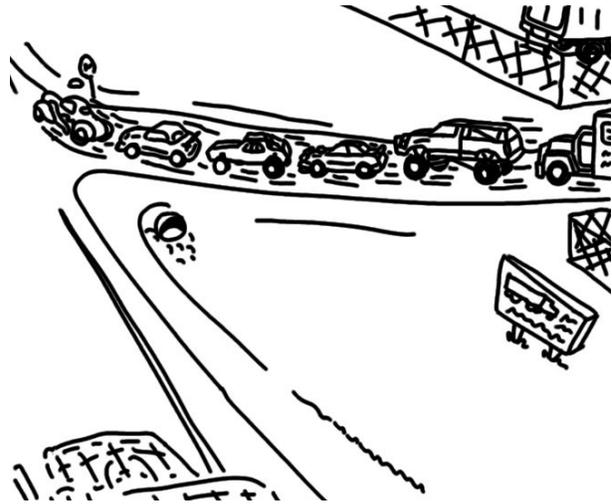
Zach: "Depends on what the—"

"Cargo company just called! The thieves are stealing the load we just dropped off!" Dag worryingly tells the other team members.

"All team members are to immediately begin returning to the cargo unloading location!" reacts Holt.

“Guess our suspicions about an insider must of been right, seeing as they waited until after it was unloaded and we had gone. Too bad the paperwork didn’t fool them.” Zach mentions.

The team quickly returns, with Dag being first to arrive. He sees six vehicles rushing away, but manages captures photos and uses them to search for information on the internet. This reveals the vehicles to match those of a bunch of wanted criminals, known to be dangerous. Plus, he notices that they are the same vehicles that kept passing by earlier. He relays the info and photos to the rest of the team, then informs the police of what is happening. The team continues to follow, then they see most of the thieves split up in different directions. Only two continue down the main highway.



Holt quickly tells the team “All the members are to choose a thief to follow. You are to follow that thief and keep the police updated on the thief’s location. Do not engage the thief, unless deemed necessary to protect the public.”

The directions the thieves choose to go appear to be based on their vehicles. The two thieves that stayed on the highway are driving a large moving van and a hot rod. A thief in a sports car takes an off ramp into the city. Another goes off-road on a large 4x4 and one on back roads in a rally car. Finally, one in a dune buggy is jumping between on and off road. The choices the team made proves to be equally matching.

Each team member is driving their own vehicle, made to match their style and skill. Tilda flows after the large van in the ‘Overhaul’, her heavy duty flatbed truck. Dag is the opposite in his modified ‘Rapid’ sport truck that is fast enough to follow the hot rod. Aisha follows into the city with her ‘Temple BT23’, a car based ambulance. She believes the sirens and lights would be good idea for the city, just in case, but, for some reason, also believes her ambulance can keep up with a sports car? As for Hold, he goes off-road. He uses his six-wheel-drive, Jeep-like ‘FC6’ to follow the large 4x4 along a

very rough path. Though technically still on roads, the back roads Zach has followed a rally car on is also loose and varied, but he is confident his 'Osprey' S.U.V. can safely handle it. As for Terri in her 'Thrasher' buggy, she is following the buggy along a much more varied path, literally jumping from the ditch to road and back again. It is easily seen that the choices are well thought out.

The team members stay near the thieves, but keep their distance. Thanks to Dag's earpieces, they can easily keep the police informed of their location while driving. Although the police have not yet arrived, the thieves are driving recklessly. When they do, the thieves get worse. It is contemplated this may be a ploy to get the police to call off the chase, due to danger to the public. With this, the team decided to get closer and help stop the thieves before they hurt anyone.

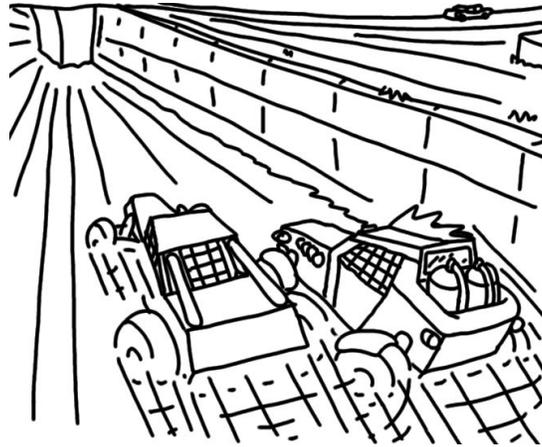
Dag and Tilda stay on the highway, matching speed and size. Obviously, the hot rod rushes ahead. Dag also does, but carefully, due to the traffic. He keeps the police updated on their location. In spite of the cops not yet being there, the thieves shows no sign of slowing down, even with the crowded road. This worries Dag. Suddenly, the hot rod falls behind the big van - the police have set up a road block! Yet, the van doesn't slow down. The reason is soon revealed, as the driver just simply barrels right on through the blockade, smashing several cop cars! The hot rod rushes through the newly formed gap, then speeds ahead of the van. The hot rod is faster than the cops, who don't even try to go for the van. Dag puts action ahead of his worries and goes in to help, with Tilda choosing the same action.

Terri.

She is following the buggy alongside the highway, on and off a service road. She radios in the police, but a problem quickly arises. Like on the highway, the police set up a roadblock, but the buggy driver has a few tricks. The vehicle's design allows it to just simply go around the blockade, without loss of speed or control! Setting spike strips prove equally pointless, avoiding them just like the blockade. The cop vehicles are not as capable as the buggy, so they are unable to follow. To the driver's misfortune though, Terri's 'Thrasher' is as capable.

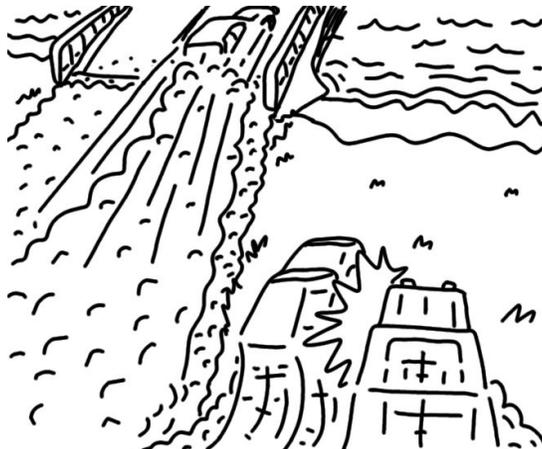
Terri goes in and chases the buggy. They jump up and down, using the ditch as a ramp up to the road. The thief does so to avoid the cops and in an attempt to lose Terri. She, however, seems to be having fun doing this. Up and down, over and under, they continue on. That is, until Terri finally tries to stop the thief. Upon realizing that Terri isn't easy to outrun, the thief tries to stop Terri instead. So, when Terri gets close, the thief tries to push her into a wall. When this happens, Terri realizes her buggy is lighter than

the thief's. It keeps getting worse; her wheel is between the thief's wheels, so slowing down or speeding up isn't an option. The wall is not the type you want to try driving through. Then, she notices the upcoming support for a bridge...



Zach.

He is following the thief in a rally car down a back road. Even though it is not a main road, it still has plenty of traffic, likely due to it leading to recreational sites. This is suggested by the few motor homes, campers and boats on trailers that pass by. Combine the traffic with the changing road surfaces and the thief's erratic driving becomes even more dangerous. Acting over confident on loose and bumpy roads, weaving through traffic, and even ignoring intersections. When the cops show up to stop this, the thief forces other vehicles into the cop's way. Zach has had enough of this dangerous driving and begins to think of a plan. With the traffic, blowing out the tires may prove too risky. While thinking, he notices the thief has just forced a motorist off the road, losing control just a short distance from a bridge over water! Zach makes some quick adjustments to his vehicle and rushes in to help. He gets beside the motorist's vehicle and gives a gentle nudge that directs them into a safer direction, but now Zach is the one headed straight for the water!



Holt.

On a path of much rougher surface, Holt follows a thief. Though it is clearly a used path, it is unlikely intended for vehicles, but for foot traffic. Thus, the thief has taken it to lose the cops, hoping the large 4x4 would be much more capable than theirs. Yet, the thief did not expect to be followed by Hold. He stays with the thief and continues to report the location with unwavering seriousness, at least until a cop in an SUV and a few on ATVs show up. They pass Holt and attempt to stop the thief. Yet, the thief proves to be right, as the cop's SUV proves to be less capable. When the capable ATV's get close, they are forced to back away. The open design of the ATV's gives them little protection from the stones the thief is deliberately kicking up with the truck's large, knobby tires. Even if they did get close, it would be too dangerous, due to the size difference and the thief's aggressive actions. Thus, they back away. Hold, however, continues to follow. That is, until he turns off the path and out of sight.

Seemingly unfollowed, the thief continues on. Upon reaching a long, wooden bridge, just barely wide enough for the thief's 4x4, the path's true nature is revealed: there are on-foot hikers walking across the bridge, but the thief does not slow down. That is, until he notices something on the other side: *Holt in his FC6*. It seems he has managed to find a shortcut around. With him blocking the other side, the thief comes to a stop. This gives time for the hikers to evacuate the bridge. In an attempt to get Holt to also leave, the thief tries to make a few threats by revving the truck's engine and lurching ahead. It seems the thief suggest to ram Holt out of the way...



Aisha.

Meanwhile, back on paved roads, Aisha is following a sports car through the city. This thief's tactic is to use the sports car's size and handling to weave through traffic and outmaneuver cops. As with the others, this is dangerous, but with the added risk of crowded city streets and more intersections. The traffic adds the additional problem of making it difficult to set traps. Plus, the thief is using the car's handling to frequently change streets, making the thief's direction unpredictable. Yet, Aisha manages to not lose the thief.

The police decide to back off, due to the chase being overly dangerous to be worth performing. Aisha continues to follow from distance. Yet, even without being chased by police, the thief continues to be fast and careless. This makes Aisha wonder if there is some possible way the thief has confused her ambulance for a cop car, in spite of the differences. To test it, she goes down an adjacent street, with buildings partly obscuring the view between them. From what can be seen between the buildings, the thief continues on speeding. The thief really wants to get away fast, whether or not being followed. Then, up ahead, Aisha is reminded of another risk the thief has taken a few times before - speeding directly towards an intersection. This one, however, is *much busier...*

Tilda and Dag

Back at the highway scene, they are still following the fast little hot rod and the huge cargo van. In repeat of some of the other thieves, they continue to speed ahead, in spite of the lack of cops, who stopped chasing them due to the increasing traffic. The rod is picking up speed, so Dag speeds up to follow. While passing the van, he notices something through the scraped paint. After slowing down to take a better look, he realizes what it is. The damaged paint reveals another layer of different paint, showing much differing words and logos than on the outside layer: it is a stolen armoured bank van! SUDDENLY the van veers towards Dag, nearly hitting him! He thinks it was a mistake to slow down next to the van, but manages to collect himself and go back to following the hot rod. Tilda, noticing what happened to Dag, goes after the van.

Tilda

"Why don't you pick on someone your own size?!" reacts Tilda, as she gets closer to the bank van. Just as she gets behind, the van gets close enough to another vehicle to break the mirror off it! Having seen enough, Tilda decides it is time to stop this thief. "I'll teach ya for picking on the smaller ones!". She drives up next to the thief and tries to force the van off the road. The thief reacts by returning the gesture.

They battle for a little bit. Each tries shoving the other over, slamming their armoured vehicles together - even Tilda's! It is, in fact, an ex-military truck that Tilda left the armour on for it's 'dent resistance'! Alas, this armour, along with the weight of the vehicles, makes them evenly matched. Sure, she may have more power, but this is a sideways push battle, not a race or tractor pull. It also doesn't help that she needs to avoid the traffic. Realizing that even push coming to shove isn't enough, Tilda needs a different way to stop this menace - just as it speeds directly towards a slow moving car!



Dag

Oppositely, the hot rod is speeding farther ahead, as Dag tries to keep up among the increasing traffic. These two factors are why the police are no longer in pursuit. Dag worries again, but needs to stay focused and think. He needs to figure out a way to safely stop the rod without causing an accident. This brings him to contemplate the various devices he has created, but is unsure whether they would work in a safe manner. Nonetheless, he is going to need to act quickly, if he wants to reduce the risk that this thief poses. He does so, getting an idea just then. He sprints up to the thief, but a problem arises. Dag needs to get in front of the thief, but the increased traffic is making it difficult. While waiting on the traffic, Dag makes some quick adjustments on his computer. Just then, a gap formed in the traffic! Dag overcomes and surprises the thief with lightning speed - but accompanied by an actual flash of light!?

Terri

The bridge's end support is coming up quickly, with no where for Terri to go, but up. Alas, she is in a buggy, not an aircraft. The thief is determined to crash her, so Terri frantically slaps a button in her vehicle. This is followed by a...large cloud of smoke? Has Terri crashed? Nope, she chose to go *up!* Her Thrasher jumps right over the bridge, catching a few people on it off guard. "I'm on top of it!" she remarks, as she literally lands on top of the thief's buggy! Previously thinking that Terri was gone, the thief is now completely caught off guard. To surprise the thief again, Terri gives the button another slap and flies upwards. This is her vehicle version of her compressed gas 'Jump Jet'. The cloud it forms engulfs the buggy and blocks the thief's view. Terri lands safely off to the side.

The cops take notice and jump at the opportunity. They throw out a spike strip just before the cloud blows away. Unable to see it soon enough to avoid it, the thief's buggy gets all it's tires deflated. However, the suspension design allows it to still continue on at a high enough of a speed. That is, until the thief swerves into the ditch to avoid a cop car. The flattened tires dig into the soft ground, slowing it down much more. The tires get stuck in the dirt, with the rims spinning inside the tires, since there isn't any air pressure to keep them mounted to the rims. The police waste no time, jumping in to arrest the thief.

Zach

The thief in the rally car speeds across the bridge. A fork in the road follows after, and the thief chooses the route with much less traffic. A police officer spots the thief from the other road and quickly changes route to give chase. Alas, the thief is still faster on these roads.

Immediately, a loud crack rings out into the air. Just then, one of the thief's tires goes flat! This slows down the thief to a matching speed to the cop's. Then another loud bag and the next tire flattened. The cop is finally able to catch up and perform the pit maneuver. The thief spins out into the ditch. The cop stops in front of the thief's car to prevent attempts to drive back onto the road, since backwards is into the lake. From across that lake is Zach, standing in the sunroof of his Ospray, of which is floating in the water. He is holding a recently fire handgun, the source of the sounds and tire punctures.

Holt

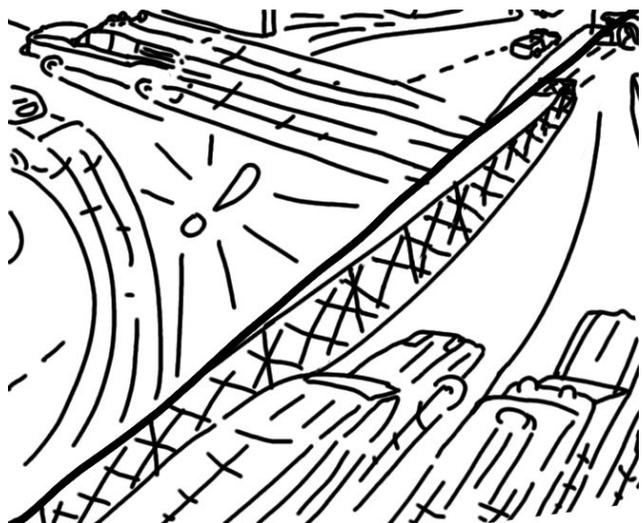
None of the thief's threats get to Holt, as he stays steadfast and still. More of it still doesn't faze Holt. The thief grows tired of this and proves the threats were empty. Rather than damaging the 4x4, the thief chooses to try going along the side of the dry,

rocky ravine instead. Holt finally moves, but to follow. Continually growing tired of Holt, the thief tries drives faster, but this actually causes the 4x4 to drive slower. The increased throttle spins the tires on the loose rocks, causing a loss of traction. When the truck slips on the side of the rocky ravine, the thief reacts by applying more throttle, but this just causes even more loss of traction. However, Holt continues to follow without problem.

The thief is getting desperate, as Holt won't let off. Just then, the thief begins to go sideways. The attempts to go faster are not helping in this situation. The thief tries to get back up, but does so by applying even more throttle. This becomes dangerous, as the thief continues to go sideways down the ravine. Then, the wheel spinning comes to it's final conclusion, as the 4x4 tips. Down goes the thief, sideways on the truck's side. It flips some more, until finally resting on it's top at the ravin's bottom. The thief was prepared, having a roll bar on the truck and wearing a helmet. This allows the thief to continue on, racing on foot to the other side of the ravine. Holt slowly and surely drives down. Alas, the thief did not learn from what just happened. Even on foot, the thief is slipping and throwing rocks, while crawling frantically up the ravine side. Holt, though, is skilled in climbing and traversing rough terrain, both in vehicle and, as he is now, on foot. Before the thief can climb to the top, Holt's slower approach is actually faster, as he appears in front of the thief. Now with nowhere to run, as Holt is in front with his hand on his sheathed knife, police ATV's closing in around and a cop helicopter flying in above. The thief smartens up and gives up.

Aisha

Like a precision surgeon racing against the clock, Aisha threads her way between the buildings. Quickly, she gets in the way of the thief, who abruptly changing direction to avoid a collision. This sends both of them down a different street. It appears to be vacant and has two different fences on each side, a brick sound barrier and metal house fencing. This gives them only one way to go. This leads them to a small parking lot and an entrance to a park. Rather than trying to turn around, the thief decides to enter the park. The narrow entrance forces Aisha to go behind the thief, as they can't thread through together.



The park is lined with long, narrow and very curvy paths. Many obstacles of various sorts are planted along the park, from trees, ponds, benches, markers and more. This forces them to stick to the paths. Thankfully, the park appears to be empty of pedestrians.

The thief navigates the path at high speed, determined to get away. Aisha is just as determined to stop the thief, knowing that the thief is determined to take dangerous risks. This empty park ought to be the best place to do so. Shen informed the police as to the thief's location and actions, while keeping her distance from the thief. Though, she must navigate the park just as well as the thief to keep in view. That is, until the thief gets too reckless. While navigating a turn, the thief over does it. The sports car's back corner clips a path marker, sending it into a spin. The thief attempts to correct, but it is too late, as the car careens sideways into a tree. Aisha, however, makes the turn and rushes on over. She finds the driver hurt, but conscious enough to hear her say "Mate, consider yourself blessed that you were being followed by an ambulance."

Tilda

A small car drives lazily along the busy highway, with the occupants oblivious to the huge vehicle barreling straight at them. That is, until something unusual happens. Rather than rear-ending the car, the van goes...over them?! It seemingly flies above them, catching them both off guard. Then, they notice Tilda's truck next to them; apparently, she used the truck's crane to lift the van! She slows down to get the van away from the car. Just in time, as the van breaks loose and falls off to the side of the road. It's weight works against it, breaking the front axle upon landing. This essentially stops the van. The police are quick to arrive, being particularly determined to arrest this thief. They are very happy to get this driver off the roads.

Dag

The thief in the hot rod races ahead, but something doesn't look right? Can see the road ahead, but nothing is moving? Plus, why can't the motor be heard and does it feel like the rod is slowing down? Just then, the view fades, revealing that the hot rod is, in fact, coming to a stop at the side of the road! The engine won't restart and the cops close in fast! Not a view the thief wanted to see.

With all the thieves arrested and the cargo returned to the proper owners, the team gathers back up and share their experience with each other.

“So, how did you stop the thief, Dag?” one of the team members asks.

“Well,” Dag begins to reply, “the ever increasing density of the traffic meant I needed to quickly and safely stop the thief. Normally, using a blinding flash would be a bad idea in this situation, but I had been working on a device that would cause Illusory palinopsia. Essentially, there would be an ‘afterimage’ of what they just saw prior to the flash. For a short time, the driver would think they see the road ahead, allowing me to safely drive in front of them without fear of attack. The next thing I did was flood the engine compartment with a highly conductive, but non flammable liquid. This shorted the ignition system and stalled the engine. Quickly, I then gave the hot rod a gentle nudge to push it off the road, out of the traffic.”

Even though Dag worried that his actions were risky, the team actually congratulates him, much to his relief. They are also relieved, being thankful everyone is safe. After, they all go to maintain their vehicles and get ready for the next job.

THE END