



Game of Zones

Written by

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EXT. THE LOUD HOUSE - DAY

It's raining hard but CLASSICAL MUSIC sets a peaceful mood.

KIDS (O.S.)
Love the rain... So cozy...

INT. LIVING ROOM

The SISTERS lounge on the couch or sit on the floor. They read, draw, play board games. The fireplace crackles softly.

LENI enters carrying steaming mugs on a tray.

LENI
I've made hot chocolate
smooooothies...!

The kids look up with big smiles -- and the scene FREEZES.

LINCOLN steps in and addresses the CAMERA.

LINCOLN
Yeah.... This isn't how rainy days
go at my house. It's been raining
all weekend. Let's break that down.

The green, bottom slab of a DEFCON-STYLE CHART drops onscreen with a THUD. It blinks "IRRITATION LEVEL: COOL." Behind it, we see the girls in the living room, watching TV together.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
Friday afternoon. DEFCON 5, light
rain. Irritation Level: Cool.

New slabs SLAM on top of each other, shaking the screen. In the background, the sisters begin to fight over the remote.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
(blue slab)
Friday afternoon. DEFCON 4, rain
continues. Irritation Level: Warm.
(yellow slab)
Saturday morning. DEFCON 3. Still
raining. Irritation Level: Simmer.
(orange slab)
Saturday evening. DEFCON 2. Rain
increases. Irritation Level: *Boil*.

The sisters shout at each other, wrestling for the remote. The screen freezes as Lincoln steps in front again.

LINCOLN

If you think *this* is as bad as it gets, you obviously don't live with 10 sisters. It's Sunday afternoon and we are now at...

A RED SLAB smashes into the screen like a brick, cracking the glass. The slab flashes: "DEFCON 1! IRRITATION LEVEL: ARRGH!"

LINCOLN (O.S.)

DEFCON 1! Irritation Level: Arrgh!

RETURN TO SCENE

The remote sits atop the TV. The sisters have staked out the living room. LORI on her phone, LOLA checking a hand mirror, etc. But they're all keeping one eye on that remote.

LISA lifts a hand -- the others jerk forward, ready to pounce. But Lisa just turns the page on a science journal.

The sisters settle back. The air fizzles with tension.

Lincoln peaks out of the kitchen. He clutches a big bag of chips to his chest, holds a trembling can of soda.

LINCOLN

(to camera)

On rainy days, she who controls the remote, controls all.

INSERT - LINCOLN'S POV:

A dotted line moves through the living room, mapping out the least dangerous route.

LINCOLN (O.S.)

It's like crossing a mine field.

RETURN TO SCENE

Lincoln enters the living room. He tiptoes around Lori on the corner of the sofa. Her eyes follow him. He swallows.

He slides by the lamp, casting a shadow on Lola's mirror.

LOLA

You're blocking my light!

LINCOLN

Sorry!

He steps back and barely nudges Luna's guitar.

LUNA
(British accent)
Watch yourself, you bloody muppet!

LINCOLN
Sorry!

Stepping back, he sets off a chain reaction, bouncing around like an apologetic pinball as he:

QUICK SERIES OF INCIDENTS:

- slips on Lisa's stack of science journals.
- taps over Leni's shiny bottle of nail polish.
- knocks Lucy's Edgar Allen Poe bust off the table.
- topples Lola and Lynn's JENGA GAME.
- steps on Lily's pacifier.

RETURN TO SCENE

With each collision, the SHOUTS escalate until the sisters have clustered before him and --

SISTERS
Lincoln!!!

The shout EXPLODES, blasting Lincoln out of the living room. His bag of chips bursts, scattering salty bits of debris.

LINCOLN
Arrghhhhhh!

The sisters smile, united -- then remember the remote. They rush for it, surrounding the TV. Stalemate! Slowly, they back up to their original spots, growling like wild animals.

HALLWAY

Lincoln lies on his back under a fallout of chips. Through a window behind him, we see heavy rain.

He sits up, groaning, then notices the can of soda still in his hand. He brightens and pops the tab -- but the soda, well shaken, sprays all over him.

LINCOLN
So, here are my choices. I can hide
in my room and starve...

LANA slams against the window outside. She's covered in mud.

LANA

Rain, rain, come my way! Bring me
mud everyday! Ha ha ha!

And she's gone.

LINCOLN

Join Lana outside. Or...

ATTIC STAIRWAY

Lincoln stands at the foot of the narrow staircase.

LINCOLN

Disturb mom when she's writing.

ATTIC

Lincoln opens the door and peeks in.

LINCOLN

Mom...?

RITA sits at a desk, bent over a laptop.

RITA

How many times have I told you not
to bother me when I'm not writing.

LINCOLN

But mom, this is an -- wait. Not
writing?

RITA

(slumps over keyboard)
I've been up here three hours and I
got nothing! Who am I kidding? I'm
not a writer!

LINCOLN

Maybe you just need a little break.

Rita sits up, deadpan. She sighs.

RITA

OK. What's the problem?

LIVING ROOM

Lincoln and Rita peer between the bars on the staircase. Below, the sisters quiver with irritation. The whole living room is vibrating like the tremor before a major quake.

RITA

I haven't seen it this bad since
that blizzard two years ago...

INSERT - TIME LAPSE:

The sisters, faces pressed against an icy window. Their appearance deteriorates until they look like shaggy she-wolves. They eye each other, growl, and lunge --

RETURN TO SCENE

Lincoln grabs his throat and shivers.

LINCOLN

B-r-r-r-r...

RITA

It's like a battlefield down there.

Her expression changes. An epiphany is trying to get through.

LINCOLN

Mom?

RITA

Battlefield...

RITA'S POV:

The living room turns into a GAME OF THRONES STYLE MAP. Each sister "POPS" (changes) into a CASTLE with BANNER flying. The sigils reflect their characters: SMARTPHONE for Lori, SUNGLASSES for Leni, GUITAR for Luna, CLOWN HORN for Luan, CROSSED HOCKEY STICKS for Lynn, SKULL for Lucy, MIRROR for Lola, TEST TUBES for Lisa, and a PACIFIER for Lily.

RITA (O.S.)

Nine kingdoms fighting for
control...

RETURN TO SCENE

Lincoln shakes Rita out of her revelry.

LINCOLN

Mom. What's the plan?

RITA

The plan...? You mean, the *plot!*

Rita grabs Lincoln by the arm and zips out of frame.

LINCOLN

Arrghhh!

ATTIC

Rita has sketched a fantasy map on a whiteboard: towers and banners and sigils, mountains and lakes and forests. She writes across the heart of the map: "The Loud Lands."

RITA

Don't you see? I can turn our real life crisis into an epic fantasy! Nine kingdoms fighting for control of... The Loud Lands!

LINCOLN

The Loud Lands?

RITA

Nine kingdoms -- and the spy who sneaks from realm to realm...

Lincoln takes a step back, hands at his throat again.

LINCOLN

Sp-sp-spy?

RITA

... uncovering their schemes, their alliances, their secrets.

LINCOLN

You want *me* to go down *there*?

RITA

Did you know Tolkien based the Lord of the Rings on his own family?

LINCOLN

Really?

RITA

No! But J. K. Rowling did base Hogwarts on *her* family.

LINCOLN

Really?

RITA

No! They had talent! Please,
Lincoln? This is the first real
story idea I've had all year!

He looks into her hopeful eyes and gives a hesitant smile.

LINCOLN

Sure, mom. I'll be your spy.

She hugs him tight. He looks at us over his shoulder.

LINCOLN

(to camera)

What comes after DEFCON 1?

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM - LATER

Lincoln peeks in the doorway. Lisa works at a lab table.
Bubbling tubes and vials cast her in stark light.

LINCOLN

Hey, Lisa, what's cooking?

Lisa turns, eyes narrowed.

LISA

I'm mixing a potion that blocks the
frontal lobe's logic centers
rendering the victim susceptible to
suggestion. Street name: truth
serum. Our sisters are older and
stronger, but they'll learn that
knowledge is the real power! Soda?

She offers him an open can of soda.

LINCOLN

Thanks.

(drinks)

But how are you going to get them
to drink your --

Lisa checks her watch. Lincoln looks at the can.

LINCOLN

On no...

LISA

10 seconds! Lincoln, do you wish
Ronnie Anne was your girlfriend?

LINCOLN

What? No! I -- I -- I *do* wish she was my girlfriend. She's tough and funny and -- arrghhh! You put the truth serum in the soda!

ATTIC - LATER

Lincoln paces back and forth, frantic.

LINCOLN

She'll learn everyone's most embarrassing secrets! Then she'll blackmail us, get control of the remote, and watch The Physics Channel until the rain stops!

RITA

That's diabolical! I love it!

LINCOLN

You what?

Rita erases Lisa's test tube sigil and draws a scroll.

RITA

It's like a spell! Lisa is the wizard in my story! And -- wait, did she ask you a question?

LINCOLN

Me? No! I mean, yes. She asked if I wished Ronnie was my girlfriend!

RITA

And...?

LINCOLN

(struggling)

I said n-n-nnnn... Yes! I say yes!

RITA

The dark wizard tricks our heroic spy into drinking the potion. But the only secret he reveals is his love for the fair Ronnie Ann.

Lincoln rolls his eyes.

RITA

This is so good! Now, I have a special mission for you...

EXT. FRONT YARD - LATER

Lincoln, in yellow rain coat, runs through puddles toward the van in the driveway. The windows are fogged on the inside.

He's almost there when he's blasted by a jet of water. It rolls him across the lawn into a huge mud puddle.

He sits up and sees Lana holding the garden hose.

LINCOLN

You're using a hose in the rain?!

LANA

There's not enough mud. Cannonball!

LINCOLN

Arrghhh!

He tries to duck but Lana explodes into the puddle, knocking him out onto the soggy grass. He lands with a SPLAT.

LANA

You made the right choice coming out here. It's cold, wet, and muddy. But it's ours. We're free!

Lincoln crawls away as Lana laughs.

INSIDE THE VAN

LYNN sits watching a football game on his phone, buds in his ears. Chips, cookies, and soda on the dash. He's in heaven.

Lincoln pulls the door open, hops in, slams the door.

Lynn jumps and fumbles the phone.

LINCOLN

I've been looking everywhere for you! Things are going crazy in --

He points but the window is fogged. He wipes a clear hole and points through it at the house.

LINCOLN

-- in there!

LYNN

Why do you think I'm out here? After seventeen years as the man in charge, this is my reward.

LINCOLN

Hiding is your reward?

LYNN

I prefer to think of it as, "Me time."

(panic)

Does your mom know where I am?

LINCOLN

No. She sent me to find you.

LYNN

Or you could... join me.

He nods to the backseat. Lincoln sees an ICE CHEST filled with delicious snacks. Stars twirl in his eyes.

LINCOLN

Must... resist...

ATTIC

As Lincoln reports, Rita draws a swampy area on the map, then adds a hut. The banner's sigil is a poop-like pile of mud.

LINCOLN

Lana is as happy as a pig in, well, mud.

RITA

The wild-folk, living in filthy happiness far from the court.

LINCOLN

And dad's hiding in the van. He's got enough food to last a week! He even has a Port-A-Potty!

Rita adds a castle to the forest. It looks like a van without wheels. The sigil is a tilted crown.

RITA

Your dad is like the old king who once had total power. But now the younger kingdoms are rising up. So he gathers his treasures and hides in the wilds, hoping to survive!

She turns to Lincoln with an excited smile.

RITA

Who's next?

Lincoln tries to smile but it's more of a grimace.

MONTAGE - EACH SISTER'S PLAN

A recap of each sister, facing CAMERA as they reveal their plans to Lincoln. A FLASH OF COLOR separates each cameo.

FLASH! (TURQUOISE)

LENI

(in sparkling dress)

First, I'll dazzle them with my new dress, then I'll melt their hearts with eggnog smoothies --

FLASH! (RED)

LYNN

(in ninja outfit)

I'll switch the power off at the fuse box, then go full ninja. They're never know what hit 'em --

FLASH! (BLACK)

LUCY

(swinging a watch)

I'll hypnotize Luan into thinking it's April Fool's Day. In the grim chaos, I'll take the TV and remote to my room and lock myself in --

FLASH! (PURPLE)

LUNA

(strumming guitar)

I'll connect all my amps together and C! D! G! Power-chord 'em into submission --

FLASH! (YELLOW)

LUAN

(blank stare)

April Fool's Day... April Fool's Day...

FLASH! (PINK)

LOLA

Plan? Who needs a plan when you have RAGE?

(MORE)

LOLA (CONT'D)
(flames burst around her)
They will pay for defying me --

FLASH! (BLUE)

LORI
I should be in charge. It's my
birthright! I'm older. Smarter.
Stronger. And... I have a credit
card --

FLASH! (LAVENDER)

LILY
Poo poo!

RETURN TO SCENE

Lincoln and Rita stand before the updated map. She puts a
loving hand on his shoulder.

RITA
I can write a fantasy *series* based
on this map! And my first novel
will be dedicated to... my brave
spy!

LINCOLN
Wow, a fantasy novel dedicated to
Lincoln Loud!

They share a big, contented SIGH.

RITA
You know what I love best about
fantasy? It helps you escape --

There's a loud CRASH and the attic trembles, knocking Rita
and Lincoln off their feet. They look at each other in panic.

LINCOLN AND RITA
Reality!

LIVING ROOM

Lincoln and Rita cringe at the top of the stairs. Down below,
the sisters are a tumbling, yelling, ball of limbs.

SISTERS
Give me that remote! It's my
birthright! Hi-ya! Hands off! C-G-
D! It's mine! April Fool's!

LINCOLN
DEFCON Zero! What'll we do?!

RITA
I don't know!

LINCOLN
But you're the author!

RITA
Not of reality!

A LANDSLIDE OF MUD crashes through the living room window.
Lana rides it like a surfer.

LANA
Cowabunga!

The sisters SCREAM and scramble for higher ground, perching atop the sofa, armchair, table, bookshelves.

The mud half-buries the TV. The remote tatters on the edge.

The sisters SCREAM and dive -- too late! The remote PLOPS into the mud, followed by the sisters.

They surface, covered in mud, and glare at each other.
They're about to explore --

But they look so ridiculous, they start laughing.

RITA
The nine kingdoms, faced by a
common disaster, unite...

LINCOLN
What?

RITA
I have my ending!

Rita rushes out of frame.

The sisters break into a happy mud fight, laughing wildly.

Lincoln watches with a big smile.

LINCOLN
Fantasy is great. But there's one
thing reality has that fantasy
doesn't -- it's *real*.

A mud ball SPLATS in his face. He wipes the mud off and we see he's grinning.

LINCOLN
And messy sometimes.

With a gleeful SHOUT, Lincoln leaps from the staircase.

LINCOLN
Arrghhhh-ha-ha-ha!

He belly-flops in the mud.

The kids battle happily as the front door opens.

Lynn peeks inside. His eyes snap wide, then he backs away,
closing the door as we:

FADE OUT

THE END