

Welcome back from break, speedsters. The Flash returns after its cliffhanger reveal that the man under the Zoom mask bore a familiar face to have Barry face off with yet another villainous speedster, but this one of an accidental making.

Barry has continued to work tirelessly on upping just how fast he can run, but it's been putting strain on the entire Flash team. So, with some not-so-subtle suggestions, the group (including Harry's daughter, Jesse, though she has a protective wristband on) heads out to the club for a night on the town.

Everything goes smoothly at first in a club that allows for surprisingly normal vocal levels of conversation (either the DJ is asleep at the wheel, the writers have never been to an actual club, or the team behind the camera decided it might be worth hearing what everyone had to say). Iris and Wally join the team, and everyone seems to be having a good time. This being The Flash, of course, means that "good time" is finite, and despite Cisco's embarrassing dance moves and Barry and Iris' loaded jokes about their married Earth-2 counterparts, the night eventually runs into trouble.

Another speedster rolls into the club, stealing every purse, wallet, and loose bill in sight, and despite Barry's best attempts, he can't catch this mysterious speed demon. He assumes the new person behind the mask (who knocks him off course in their next encounter, which is also when he discovers it's not the presumed guy they think it is but in fact a woman) is a henchman of Zoom's, but Caitlin reveals there's another possible source for a person popping up with this power.

(ASIDE: Trajectory's appearance and thefts are understandably assumed by some to be the work of the Flash, as he's the only non-helmeted speedster the town knows. Among those wishing to smear his name is Iris' editor at the paper, who demands she writes a story discrediting the scarlet speedster. She is obviously reticent, and so she attempts to talk her boss down from this crusade. The two hash this out over coffee, a meeting which he misconstrues for a date. This misunderstanding leads to an awkward end to the business meeting/faux date, but it's most certainly not the end of Iris and Scott's relationship, professional or otherwise. She eventually hands in her story, which proves the Flash is not the one at fault, and reveals to Scott that while she was surprised by his suggestion, she's not opposed to the idea of a real date. But whatever romance lies ahead is for another week. END ASIDE)

Caitlin finally fills Barry in on Velocity 9 and its effects. Barry, of course, had no knowledge any of this experimentation was going on, but in order to manufacture more, Caitlin reveals she had help from a former co-worker at Mercury Labs. So

she and Joe head out to visit Eliza Harmon, who greets the two with open arms.

Eliza offers no hidden agenda, no secret dark past, and so for now they take her at her word. (The meeting also offers perhaps the best meta moment of the episode when Eliza mentions how “law and order” Caitlin is being, right in front of Joe, a.k.a. former Law & Order actor Jesse L. Martin.)

But left to her own devices, Eliza reveals she is in fact the new runner, having reverse engineered some V-9. And she’s not alone. The drug has affected her to such a degree that Trajectory, her costumed persona, has a voice of its own, speaking to her and egging her on to consume more of the V-9.

Trajectory has essentially taken hold of Eliza, using the last vial of V-9 to recharge her powers (in a sequence cut like the fever dream of a junkie itching for a fix while trying to resist the urge). And Trajectory has a plan in mind to find more of the juice.

Trajectory breaks into S.T.A.R. Labs, throwing Barry into a metahuman tank (just as he’s grappled with the idea of using V-9 to get an edge on Zoom, only to smash the vial and decide he’s better off on his own) and holding the rest of the team at gunpoint.

She wants them to make more V-9 for her, and though they at first refuse, Harry is the one to break. When Trajectory threatens Jesse, her father cracks and immediately agrees to develop some more V-9 for her, which he and Caitlin do, and yet the menace in their midst remains suspicious the serum has been tampered with somehow.

Trajectory infects Jesse with some before escaping, the V-9 too pure for her system and causing her to convulse. Luckily Harry is a blood-type match, and so the two can transfuse enough blood to save her life. Yet even though Jesse is thankful to be alive, she’s not thankful for her father’s behavior. While tampering with that wristband during her night out, Jesse discovered her father’s recording, in which he pledged he was willing to kill if it meant saving her.

Harry’s only concern in life is keeping Jesse safe, but she thinks maybe it shouldn’t be. He endangers an untold number of lives by being willing to just give the villains whatever they want, even if it means potentially saving her.

And though Trajectory got what she wanted, Caitlin did manipulate the serum just a tad with a microchip tracker. The group uses it to find her running back and forth across a bridge leading out of town, creating friction and, inevitably, destroying the bridge.

Barry, freed from his temporary prison, rushes to the bridge to save the 200 people still on it, which he does so in a way reminiscent of the series' first truly memorable set piece, when Barry saved passengers from a train running off the rails in season 1's fourth episode.

But saving everyone ruins the "fun" Trajectory has planned, and so she roughs Barry up before speeding off across the bridge and sending it crashing into the sea. The two speedsters stand on opposite sides of the bridge, and Barry will need to run at Mach 3.3 to make the jump across the water (a similar jump to the one Barry failed to make in the episode's open).

This time, Barry succeeds, taking Trajectory by surprise and hoping to put an end to it. She has other results in mind, and threatens Barry by taking out the V-9 from the lab. Barry attempts to do his best to talk her out of using it. He gives her the big superhero speech, telling Eliza, not Trajectory, that this isn't her, that the speed force is killing her (just as he finds out in the episode that it was killing Jay), and that they want to help.

For a moment, it seems as if Eliza has broken through the force of Trajectory, but her alter ego eventually fully takes charge and injects herself with the V-9. She sparks up with more energy than ever before, boasting about being faster than the Flash. She speeds away, but as she does so, her lightning starts to turn blue until her entire speed force turns that shade.

In perhaps one of the series' most gruesome ends, Trajectory dies by her own hand, running so fast that she disintegrates into specks of flesh, tissue, and the remains of her suit and her mask. It's a gross, disturbing end, but one that leads Barry along to the path to answers.

The team regroups in the lab, though Harry enters the discussion in the midst of a sudden, unexpected shift in his life. Jesse has now left him a message on the wristband, explaining that she needs to go out on her own, make something of this world for herself, and perhaps he's taught her all he can. She heads off to Opal City (which has been referenced on both Arrow and Supergirl, for those keeping track) while Harry is left to help the team analyze where they stand after Eliza's mysterious death.

Her lightning was blue because of the V-9. Zoom's lightning is blue. Eliza was sick. So Zoom must be sick. He must be coming after Barry because he needs his speed force as a cure to the V-9...just as Jay was looking for a cure.

The group comes to these conclusions by taking a few leaps, but they're now

nonetheless suspicious, despite believing they saw Jay die in front of them. (They have seen speedsters in two places at once before, after all.)

Luckily, they believe they have a way to find out. Cisco admits he's been vibing and seeing Zoom (in a room lit like a music video was being shot in it), and each vibe has happened while he's been around Jay's helmet. Barry smashes open the case, his anger rising, and hands the helmet to Cisco, who vibes after touching it and sees Zoom unmask himself to reveal Jay's face. Of course, there's the Hunter Zolomon of it all to consider, but the team can only draw one conclusion from this revelation.