

TENANTS TALK

NEWSPAPER OF THE ALL-CHICAGO TENANT ALLIANCE

★ WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON? JOIN THE CITY-WIDE TENANT STRUGGLE! ★

TEXT (773) 770-5650!

ALIANZA DE INQUILINOS DE TODO CHICAGO



ALL-CHICAGO TENANT ALLIANCE

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I want to fight for a better world

Will you join me in making it?

I want to be brave in the face of difficulty

I know the fight will certainly be difficult

Will you join me?

Will you stand by my side?

I know I will need to make sacrifices

In order to make sure that we do not lose

against those that fight against changing the world

Will you join me?

Will you be by my side?

I will need to fight through frustrations

Frustrations with my enemies will inspire me to fight

And frustrations with my brothers and sisters

will inspire me to teach

Will you join me?

Will you teach with me?

I will need to learn more,

and more,

and more

I will need to dig,

and dig,

and dig

to reveal the roots

of this wretched tree

I will need to understand the problems from every angle

so that every angle can be corrected

Will you join me?

Will you learn with me?

There is no better feeling than being understood by another—

Than having someone by your side through the struggle.

I will join you.

Will you join me?

**FREE TENANT
NEWSPAPER!**

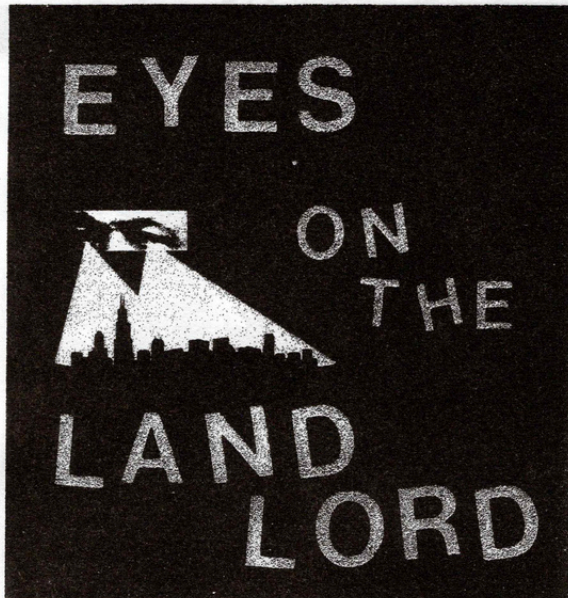


**Better housing means
Standing up to slumlords.**

**Join with your neighbors
to form a tenant union.**

ACTA can help you do this.

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



the tenants were originally ordered to be out by June 25 with no compensation whatsoever, Fuerzas Inquilinos' militant organizing has clearly pushed the company to soften their aggression. Regretfully, it is still not satisfactory to los lobos. They've sent a counter offer: One-year contracts at \$1,000 per month with the option to renew, all back rent forgiven and, of course, that 33/Evernest negotiate with BSTA, as well. In a profound sign of good faith, FIBC has offered to surrender the entire southern building to the company on the condition that they meet their demands. It should also be noted that \$1,000 a month is considerably more than what the tenants are currently paying... or, we should say, more than they would be paying—if they weren't on strike! Your ball, Millard.

FIBC COURTDATE

On Tuesday July 22 at 9am one of the FIBC tenants had their first court case. The fear of the eviction court has been inflated to astronomical levels, much to the benefit of landlords who use this fear to push tenants out. Many tenants often miss their first court dates causing the case to go into default judgement, making it an easy win for landlords. On July 22, after several weeks of preparing, Gregorio's comrades showed up in support. "You won't be alone" they said, and that morning not only were they there next to him, they made it a feast, with enough chilaquiles to feed a small army. The court cases may be individual but FIBC shows that they don't have to do it alone.

¡ACTIVAS ARRIBA!

Earlier this year, infamous Chicago slumlord George Triff started offloading his portfolio. Four of the buildings concentrated in a small quarter of Rogers Park were swept up in a blockbuster deal by the real estate attorney Imran Khan under the flag of his "company," ARK Management. Immediately, Khan sent notices to each of the tenants, numbering somewhere between 150-200 units, that their rent was going up by \$600, \$700, \$800 dollars and more. This is mass eviction by another name.

ACTA caught word of this, and after a series of meetings, on the 27th of July, dozens of tenants from the four buildings voted on the name of their union: Fuerzas Activas de la Damen (FAD).

The situation here is nearly identical to the situation at Broadway and Cuyler, except four times the scale. The tenants have lived in Triff's slums for 40, 30, 20, 10 years paying low rents. They are almost without exception Mexican. A new high tech investment titan saw an opportunity to buy low, and flip for high. This necessarily entails that he empty the buildings of all traces of the working class, renovate the units and rent them at double the price to yuppies.

After Fuerzas Inquilinos supercharged the tenant union movement in Chicago earlier this year, the "Fadistas" are following in their footsteps, even modeling their name on that of their comrades to the south. Now, they are putting their demands together and in August will begin their offensive against their own version of Drew Millard. Fuerzas Arriba!★

Keep your eyes open!
Don't let your landlord isolate you from the tenant movement blossoming in Chicago!

Be ready!
Decades of landlord control over our neighborhoods won't end without a fight!

Stay smart!
Landlords pump their perspectives into every news outlet in Chicago; it's time tenants had a voice of their own!

Tenants Talk has eyes on the landlord. Do you?

STRIKERS RALLY AT 33 MANAGEMENT'S OFFICE

Members of the All-Chicago Tenant Alliance joined striking unions Belden Sawyer Tenant Association (BSTA) and Fuerzas Inquilinos de Broadway y Cuyler (FIBC) at a rally outside their evictors 33 Management's office on Tuesday, July 15th. Chants of resistance and calls directed at money-hungry Drew Millard to negotiate with the unions rang across River North while 33's cronies hid inside their lair. While tenants rallied outside the front doors, the ashamed Drew Millard attempted to sneak out the back unseen where he was met by the men and women he's looking to boot to the streets. A rain of "Shame's!" pelted the fiend as he drove his Mercedes back to his Park Ridge McMansion. Hey Drew, you can run, but he can't hide! We'll be back until you negotiate with BSTA and FIBC! See you soon!

MOND PROTEST

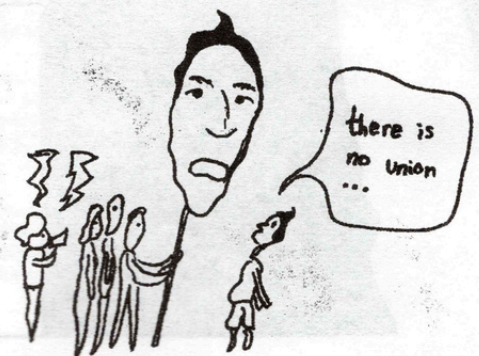
It should be remembered that whenever there is a malevolent landlord who wishes to empty homes to fulfill his desire for more money, not too far behind from him is a selection of goons who proudly do the landlord's dirty work. Brian Mond is just the guy for that, who will happily go terrorize the families of the Fuerzas Inquilinos de Broadway and Cuyler. Both BSTA and FIBC with ACTA therefore aligned their resources to show him and his neighbors that the tenants he's going to evict are not afraid to go to his house. So on Sunday July 13, we woke up early and headed to his house. We marched, talked to his neighbors, distributed flyers, and plastered posters so that his neighbors would see just the kind of person who lives next door. Despite the heat of the day, the music and live trombone playing kept the spirits high.

PARKSIDE TERRACE ALLIANCE FIGHTING ON

PTA has continued its development into a formidable fighting force against the vampires of Infinity Capital. Their instagram debuted, attendance at weekly meetings has grown and tenants in their sister building across the street have started joining the pride. August is looking to be the lion's most eventful month yet, so keep your eyes peeled as the month heats up.

FIBC AND 33 REALTY/EVERNEST ARE NEGOTIATING

Early in July, 33 Realty left new offers on the doors of the tenants in the two Broadway & Cuyler buildings. They offered to let the tenants stay until the end of July, to forgive all their back rent, \$2,000 cash and the clearing of any evictions filed. Considering



★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★

WHO ARE THE REAL TENANTS?

Confusion stalks the so-called housing justice movement. This includes those tenant unions whose definition of a tenant is "anyone who doesn't control their housing." This definition can be forgiven for its intention to include the homeless population in its scope because homeless individuals are without a doubt victims of the dictatorship of landlords.

But what can not be forgiven is the ideological clumsiness that such an abstract definition guarantees in the other direction: by virtue of the fact that homeowners are indebted to banks, their home is under the bankers' control and not their own. This definition of tenant includes homeowners.

Proof that this confusion is operative in the movement can be found in the concept of the bank tenant, a concept used by Kansas City Tenants, the Homes Guarantee coalition, the Louisville Tenants Union, among other housing justice organizations and coalitions. According to KC Tenants' definition, a bank tenant is a "poor and working class mortgage holder."

There is no doubt that money lending is part and parcel of the capitalist economic system. Bankers are indeed enemies of the people, owing to their dictatorship over huge sums of money and other types of private property. The close connection this branch of the economy has with landlords is obvious. However, in the analysis of housing and of what defines *control* over it, the only identity between tenants and homeowners in this aspect is that a third party is able to extort a profit from them; the landlord extorts the tenant via contractual rent payments, the banker extorts the homeowner via contractual mortgage payments.

If this is what control is reduced to—i.e. the power to leverage the legal title to the house for a profit—it makes perfect sense why we would end up with a definition of tenant that is identified with homeowners.

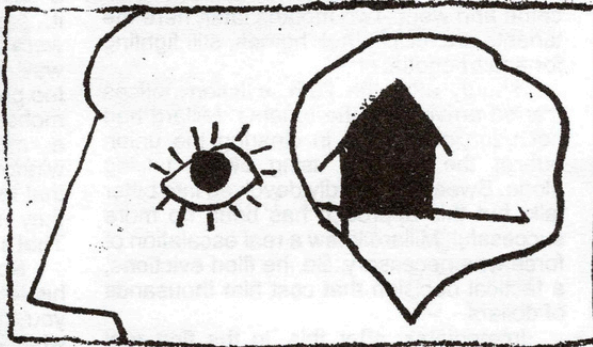
But this definition deforms the most important things that make tenants what they are. The fact of the matter is that the oppression of tenants is nothing like the oppression of homeowners—no matter how poor or working class. Drawing an identity between them is not only theoretically gauche, it is practically absurd from the perspective of political organization and this is the more important point.

ACTA does not have a definition of a tenant, it has never occurred to us that we should. What ACTA does have is a militant

organization of tenants, for tenants. We know what a tenant is in practice.

This is because every day, every week, ACTA is in apartment buildings side by side with people who are struck on the head by collapsing ceilings and leaking sewage. We are with people whose babies are bitten by bedbugs and rats. We are with people struggling together to figure out how to keep their children away from drug deals and violent strangers who break into and live in their halls. We are with people who not only lack the money to improve these conditions—they don't have the right to because they don't own them as their private property! They do not even know the identity of the one who does!

We are with people who do not have the assurance of a stable, predictable mortgage payment, but have a rent payment that goes up without notice and without reason—20%, 50%, 100% rent increases are not irregular. We are with people who are forced to hold down three jobs and send their teenagers to work just to pay for these



increases. We are with these people who, despite finding a way to pay for this shit are given eviction orders anyway, for no reason at all and with no way to recoup any of the money they've invested in the roof over their heads. We are with people who can not "leverage their equity" to put their children through college.

We are with people who are coerced to pay for this kind of life with no prospect of treating their dwelling as a piece of property that can one day be flipped to launch them out of the ghetto and into a middle class life of respectability. We are with people who, in fact, get displaced at the same time that the homeowners around their apartment buildings cash in on the "improvement of the neighborhood". There is no "asset" at the end of the rainbow for tenants, there is only more rain while landlords and homeowners can always choose to make off with the pot of gold.

ACTA is a tenant organization that is trying to change this. The very reason we believe it is possible is due to the specific economic and physical organization of tenants. For the most part, homeowners do not share common dwellings and therefore do not have common problems. Contrary to this, a rat infestation in one tenant's apartment is an infestation in their

neighbors' apartment because they live in the same structure. When one tenant's apartment burns down, their neighbor's does too. Not just one neighbor, 20, 40, 100 neighbors. If homeowners share problems, on the other hand, it is almost always external and incidental.

When homeowners do have a connection to other homeowners, the connection is precisely via their mortgages, which tether them to specific money lenders. But to organize homeowners on this basis, against their common lenders, would be virtually impossible due to their geographic distribution, and this assumes that learning which bankers are attached to every individual home in the city is a realistic endeavor for an organization that does not have a large, paid staff. In apartment buildings, on the other hand, fifty rent payers might be concentrated with all their rent flowing through one landlord, to one lender in one huge mass of money.

When we remember that landlords are also mortgage holders, the so-called "bank tenant" starts to look suspiciously like a landlord! If we concede that a homeowner doesn't control their housing because they are at the mercy of a money lender, it is obvious—by this definition—that a landlord does not control their house(s). In fact, the premise of a rent strike as a tactical weapon is based on this state of affairs. In other words, if tenants stop the flow of rent, the lender to whom the landlord owes that cash will be left dry. The tenants want the bank to punish him for it, thus compelling him to bow to the tenants' demands. The landlord's lack of "control" is the tenant's leverage.

Now look: if a tenant is anyone that does not control their house, the landlord, who just a minute ago looked like a bank tenant, has now all the sudden transformed into a real tenant! What good is this definition of tenant if it obscures the fact that tenants and landlords are opposites, not the same.

We do not deny that bankers are fucking over some of the lower class homeowners all around the country. But ACTA has a specific focus and that is to organize tenants on the principle of ending the horror system of private property and replacing it with *collective* ownership—replacing capitalism with socialism. The practical activity necessary to organize homeowners would look nothing like ours, we are not built for it. For us, this line of demarcation is not a weakness, it is a strength.

Besides, if we are successful in our objective to weaken the capitalist system and take control of our destinies, "bank tenants" will reap the rewards—as homeowners always do—from the sowing of real tenants.

Tenants! If you are ready to fight, we are ready to fight. Join ACTA! ★

★ NEWS FROM THE TENANT POINT OF VIEW ★



EVICCTIONS: THE LANDLORDS' RACKET

Fuerzas Inquilinos de Broadway y Cuyler are 5 months into their struggle against landlord dictator Drew Millard and his circle of harrassers, liars and manipulators at 33 Realty/Evernest. We can now add "racketeering" to the growing list of shady activities associated with this ring of criminals.

Those who have followed the struggle know that in January 2025, the tenants at Broadway and Cuyler were told that on June 25, they were going to be put out of their homes, no questions asked, because the Millard gang had plans to flip the building for a huge profit. But June 25th came and went. Two months later, here the tenants are, still in their homes, still fighting for a fair negotiation.

Shortly after the 25th, eviction notices started arriving for the tenants. Millard had not been successful in clearing the union out of the building using sweet talking alone. Sweet talk rapidly devolved into bitter talk, but this approach has been no more successful. Millard knew a real escalation of force was necessary. So, he filed evictions, a tactical decision that cost him thousands of dollars.

Immediately after this, in the first real signal that the company has had to capitulate to the union's force, they sent an offer to the union that attempted to leverage their new escalation. The offer was this: in exchange for walking away from the building, the company would give every tenant \$2,000, forgive their back rent and

rescind the evictions that they had just filed against them.

See for yourself, here is a direct quote taken from the offers given to the tenants:

"We want to emphasize that our team remains available to support you and answer any questions you may have. However, if no agreement is reached by August 15, we will continue with the formal eviction process, and no further financial or relocation assistance will be provided."

What is it called when you offer to protect someone from your own violence? It's called a racket. Specifically, it's a protection racket.

Protection racketeering was made famous by the mob. Al Capone's outfit, for example, sold protection to the famous Uptown club The Green Mill, as well as dozens of other businesses like laundromats, cafes, theaters, and music venues. A wiseguy would approach one of the owners of these businesses and tell them, "Hey, nice shop you got here. It'd be a shame if something were to happen to it..." But the things that might happen to it were always things that the wiseguy himself was responsible for. If the shopkeeper was too proud or too ignorant to accept what the mobster was selling, then... "say one night a molotov cocktail comes t'rough da window." The mob was supplying a product that forced its own demand. In other words, they made offers that couldn't be refused. That's what running a racket is.

So, when the evictor Drew Millard evicts his tenants, and then tells them "I'll protect you from this, if you give me what I want," what he's doing is racketeering. The difference between Drew Millard and Al Capone, of course, is that the state gives Drew the legal right to extort the tenants like this.

Stay in Park Ridge, you fucking slouch!
Get out of our city! Shame on you, Drew! ★

I'm so Jealous
They go anywhere
Cause their parents
don't care

They be up so late
I'm saying way pass 8
Once Tuesday night
How they gonna graduate?

They be writing on the walls
And sleeping in the halls
I don't know nothing about
that though
My mom keep in the house

They died last night in that
hallway
Ain't nobody read
No one cried
People just kept moving
Saying "life goes on"

- Bells, P.T.A.

ACTA MONTHLY REPORT: JULY 2025

LEARNIN' MARX GOES TO NYC

ACTA was invited to the big apple to teach and learn with the New York City/New Jersey chapter of the Diaspora Pa'lante Collective. DPC is a socialist organization within the Boricua diaspora in the US fighting for revolution and national liberation of Puerto Rico. Education is at the center of the DPC's activity, as it is for ACTA. DPC is in the process of trying to deepen the familiarity among their members of socialist theory, and they discovered us while searching for introductory education about Marxist-Leninism. We were able to spend a weekend with them sharing some of our ideas about pedagogy and going through our course Learnin' Marx. It was a very helpful experience for us, because we are also in the (never-

ending) process of redesigning the process of political development and education within ACTA, too. We learned a lot from them, and are very grateful for their patience, open-mindedness, hospitality, dedication, and above all their comradeliness.

We left with many ideas of how to continue our relationship and we look forward to knowing them in the struggle for a long time to come. DESPIERTA BORICUA, DEFIENDE LO TUYO!

HANDBOOK EDITION 2

The second edition of ACTA's Membership Handbook is out one year after its predecessor. If you are interested in understanding our organization from the outside, our handbook details our membership structure, major organizational functions, expectations we have of one another's attitude and behavior, and much more! And if you're interested in understanding our organization from the inside, please fill out our "Organize with ACTA" form in our bio! ★

The Collector of Homes

CHAPTER 4 – SOMETHING STINKS

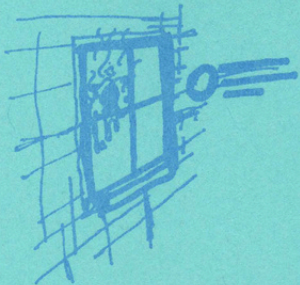
After their sudden and rough removal from the Collector of Homes' house, Freddy and Angie slowly picked themselves up off of the sidewalk. Their hands and knees were slightly scraped but not enough to make either of them cry. Still they were on the brink of tears. They had failed to convince The Collector to give them their home back, and now an iron fence and Mondo the bodyguard stood between them and the life they once knew. On top of it all, the sun was beginning to set and the shadows of the tree lined avenue were stretching out to cover the neighborhood in darkness.

The siblings barely had time to take stock of their difficult situation when they heard the sound of a war cry.

"Alright collector! I'm back! I'll be back again every night until you give me back my family and my home!" the scream seemed unusually loud given its source, a young girl about Angie's age, dressed all in black. Freddy watched with amazement as the girl ran up to the iron gate and with a heroic leap, pulled herself up to the top and perched between the spikes. From a bag strapped to her side, the girl pulled two white chicken eggs that seemed to glow in the dim evening light. In seconds they were sailing through the air as the girl lobbed them towards the castle-like house. Four, five, and then six eggs exploded against the stone wall and the windows. The gooey contents marked the location of each hit with a smear of golden yolk.

"Ahh! It stinks!" Freddy said, pinching his nose.

"That's right," the girl said, "I've been cooking these babies in my garage for weeks!"



A moment later she was startled from her position by a screeching alarm.

"**THE POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY! PLEASE VACATE THE PREMISES!**" came the metallic voice from the speaker. The girl hopped down off of the gate smoothly, landing

on the pavement in a crouch. All three of the children noticed the policeman from earlier charging down the sidewalk at the same time.

"Let's go, he's working with The Collector," the girl said and took off in the opposite direction. Freddy and Angie looked each other in the eyes and then started after the girl, afraid to get caught up in all of the chaos.

The sprint led them over chain link fences, across lawns, and through loose slats in the picket fences which crisscrossed the suburban neighborhood. Finally the girl led them through a patch of thick, overgrown grass and up to the door of an abandoned garage. She pulled up short.

"I'm Kira. I watched you two get thrown out by Mondo, so you seem alright. I'm going to trust you, but just know if you tell anyone about this place, I'm not going to be happy." Kira opened the door and the three started to go inside, but she stopped them again. "Wait! No cell phones. Those stay right here," Kira pointed at a rusty looking mailbox which had been haphazardly nailed to the side of the garage. Angie hesitated for a moment but then dropped her phone inside. Kira looked at Freddy, who shrugged.

"My mom said I'd get one when I'm older," he told her. Kira closed the mailbox and the three children stepped out of the darkness of the night and into the garage.

Kira's lair was a mess of things collected from around the neighborhood. All of it was illuminated by a single buzzing lamp suspended by its wire from the wooden beams of the ceiling. There was furniture with the stuffing busting out, chairs missing legs, a collection of sticks and rods of different shapes and lengths, a stained carpet, and a troupe of stuffed animals who looked like they had seen better days—and worse ones before being painstakingly repaired. In the corner water bottles and canned food was stacked to waist height.

Kira didn't waste any time, plopping down on a beanbag chair that looked like it was losing a critical number of beans.

"So, what are your names?" Kira said

"I'm Angie, and this is my little brother, Freddy," Angie said breathlessly. Neither her or her brother were used to that kind of sprint. On the other hand, Kira seemed completely fine.

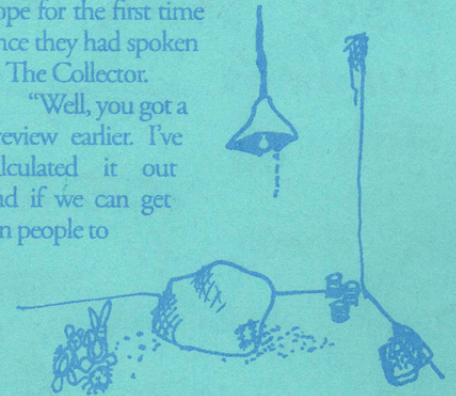
"What's your strategy to get your home back?" Kira asked.

"Strategy? We thought maybe The Collector would be nice enough to give it to us if we asked," Angie said. She was starting to realize how little they had thought through their plan.

"You call that a strategy? There's not a drop of kindness in that monster's heart. You're lucky though. I have a strategy, and I'll share it with you if you want," Kira said excitedly. She leapt out of her seat and walked over to a tarp in the far corner of the garage.

"What is it?" Freddy asked, feeling a little hope for the first time since they had spoken to The Collector.

"Well, you got a preview earlier. I've calculated it out and if we can get ten people to



show up every night at The Collector's house, and we each throw a half-dozen of my homemade egg stink bombs, that's sixty eggs a night. Multiply that by a month and that's 1800 eggs!" Kira was speaking quickly now, thinking of her brilliant scheme.

"So ten people throwing eggs will get our homes back? Do you think that's possible?" Angie asked uncertainly.

"I'm already one step ahead of you," Kira answered with a grin, and then ripped the tarp away revealing cartons and cartons of eggs, "1800 rotten eggs, right here and ready to make a stink."

"No, I mean, do you really think throwing eggs is going to get our homes back? Won't The Collector just have someone clean it all up?"

Kira looked hurt.

"Look, if you don't like my strategy, I'll do it alone. It will take longer going six at a time, but I won't give up. You can stay here for the night if you want, just let me know if you're up for it in the morning." Kira produced a few blankets and cushions and the three children settled down for a night's sleep, exhausted from the emotions and difficulties of the day.

TO BE CONTINUED...

To read the first chapters of the story, scan this QR code!



TENANTS TALK * ACTIVITY PAGE

Mad Libs: Find a friend and ask them for words to fill in the blanks. Ask them for the types of words described under each line and create a funny story!

When you're done, share your story with us by taking a photo and posting it on Instagram, tagging @all_chicago_tenant_alliance

I love my home. It is number stories tall and each story has number units. Every morning, the building's animal wakes all of the neighbors up with its adjective scream. It's the signal that it is time to verb. After that, people typically go out into the courtyard to verb the noun. The owner of the building is very adjective. Whenever the tenants see him, they throw plural noun at him. He gets so emotion that he verbs everybody! We all hope he ends up in Location.

Draw your scene here: