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SCENE: THE MONARCH HOTEL – FIRST MEETING WITH JOHNNY

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[The player steps inside The Monarch Hotel, its once-grand hotel floor now dimly lit by flickering wall sconces and dusty chandeliers. The smell of old alcohol and cigarette smoke lingers in the air. The tables have been cleared, replaced with makeshift strategy boards, crates of stolen supplies, and a few scattered weapons.]

[Johnny Velvet stands near a broken roulette table, idly smoking his cigarette. His tailored pre-war jacket, decorated with faded gold trim, gives him the appearance of an old-world mobster rather than a gang leader. His men, stationed near the room's exits, keep their hands near their holsters, but none of them make a move.]

[As the player approaches, Johnny smirks, finally lowering the cigarette from his mouth.]

JOHNNY VELVET: FIRST GREETING

JOHNNY:

[Smooth, confident]

"Well, well. Look what we got here. Word travels fast in Freeside, and I hear you're the curious type.

You ain't one of my boys, and you sure as hell ain't here to play blackjack.

That only means one thing—The King sent you.

So tell me, did he send you to warn me off? Or are you just here to sniff around and see what's what?"

[Johnny flicks the ash from his cigarette, exhaling slow as he leans against the table. His smirk lingers, but his eyes study you carefully.]

"Well, friend, you got my attention. So let's have ourselves a little talk."

PLAYER RESPONSE OPTIONS

1. [Neutral/Friendly] "No need for hostility. I just want to hear your side of things."
2. [Undecided/Neutral] "The King's got concerns. Should he be worried?"
3. [Rude/Aggressive] "Cut the act. You're stirring up trouble in Freeside, and I want to know why."

4. [Speech ??/60] "If you really want to be in charge, maybe start by not acting so guilty."

- [Speech 60+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "The Kings are all about freedom, right? So speak freely."

JOHNNY: [Laughs] "Fair enough. No sense in playin' coy, huh? The truth is, The King's had his time, and Freeside needs more than a smooth talker.

I've got the numbers, I've got the backing, and I got the plan to make this place strong."

- [Speech < 60] FAILURE:

JOHNNY: [Smirks] "I don't need to 'own' a damn thing, friend. You'll see soon enough. Freeside's got two futures: mine, or a slow, painful death."

- [Perception 7+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "Your people aren't as loyal as you think. They're watching you, waiting to see if you're just talk."

JOHNNY: [Pauses, then grins] "Damn, you got a sharp eye. Yeah, not everyone's convinced yet. Some of 'em are still caught up in that 'Kings forever' nonsense.

But trust me, when the time comes, they'll fall in line."

- [Perception < 7] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "Your boys are nervous. You sure everyone here is on your side?"

JOHNNY: [Chuckles] "Nervous? Nah. They're just waitin' to see if you're friend or foe."

- [Barter 50+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "You talk about power like it's free. But you and I both know big plans don't come cheap. Who's paying for yours?"

JOHNNY: [Pauses, before chuckling] "Sharp one, ain't ya? Let's just say I got friends in high places.

Freeside ain't the only place NCR's got their eyes on. Some folks in the Mojave got more interest in me than The King."

- [Barter < 50] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "You talk a big game, but every gang runs on caps. Who's bankrolling you?"

JOHNNY: [Smirks] "Caps ain't the problem. Vision is. But I get it, some folks need a paycheck before they see the future."

OUTCOME OF SECTION

- If the player plays friendly or neutral, Johnny remains open and discusses his plans.
- If the player is aggressive or rude, Johnny remains wary but still engages.
- If the player passes skill checks, they gain deeper insight into Johnny's operations and funding.
- If the player fails skill checks, Johnny deflects, remaining cryptic about his plans.

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SCENE: THE MONARCH HOTEL – JOHNNY REVEALS HIS PLAN

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[Johnny moves away from the table, rolling his shoulders like he's shaking off an old weight. The smirk is still there, but his voice is lower now, more measured, more real.]

----- JOHNNY VELVET: FREESIDE NEEDS A FUTURE -----

JOHNNY:

"You ever stop and really *look* at Freeside?
Not just the Kings' clubhouse, not just the lucky few who scrape by,
but the folks diggin' through garbage, the ones getting trampled outside the gate?

The King talks about 'freedom.' But what's freedom worth when you can't even afford a meal?"

[Johnny turns back to the player, his smirk fading into something colder.]

"The NCR's got their boots in the dirt.
The families? They don't give a damn 'bout this place unless it starts hurtin' their bottom line.
So tell me something,
You really think The King's got this under control? Or is he just keepin' the throne warm until
someone stronger comes along?"

----- PLAYER RESPONSE OPTIONS -----

1. [Supportive] "I see what you're saying. Freeside does need change."
2. [Skeptical] "You talk big, but what exactly are you offering?"
3. [Defensive] "The King keeps Freeside free. You just want power."
4. [Hostile] "This is just an ego trip. You don't care about Freeside."

- [Charisma 6+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "If you want me on board, you gotta be straight with me."

JOHNNY: [Pauses, then nods] "Alright. No bullshit. I got NCR officers willing to *look the other way* if I take power.

They get order, I get Freeside. Simple as that."

- [Charisma < 6] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "You keep dodging. If you want power, own it."

JOHNNY: [Shrugs] "Trust has to be earned, friend. And right now, you ain't earned it."

- [Survival 50+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "You overthrow The King, then what? You got food, water, infrastructure?"

JOHNNY: [Smirks] "Damn, you *do* think ahead. Yeah, I got a plan. Caravans. My NCR contacts make sure the supplies *keep coming in*."

- [Survival < 50] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "You say you want change, but what about food? Resources?"

JOHNNY: "You think I forget what makes a King a king? Please."

- [Perception 7+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "Some of your boys look uneasy. You sure you got 'em all on your side?"

JOHNNY: [Smirk fades slightly] "You're sharp. Yeah, not everyone's sold, yet. But when they see what I'm buildin'? They'll come around."

- [Perception < 7] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "You talk like a leader, but your men don't all look convinced."

JOHNNY: [Chuckles] "They're just waitin' to see if you're friend or foe. Is that our own fault?"

- If the player agrees with Johnny, he begins considering them an ally.

- If the player presses him, he admits NCR backing if prompted correctly.

- If the player calls him out, Johnny gets defensive but doesn't turn hostile, yet.

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SCENE: THE MONARCH HOTEL – JOHNNY'S HISTORY REVEALED
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[Johnny's smirk fades slightly, replaced with something harder to read.
He exhales through his nose, rolling his shoulders before pacing a little.]

JOHNNY:

"You keep askin' questions like you already know the answers.

But alright, let's entertain the idea for a second.

Maybe I got history with The King. Maybe that history ended with a gun at my back and a boot out the door."

[He stops, turning to the player with a raised eyebrow.]

"But before we go down that road, let me ask you something."

PLAYER RESPONSE OPTIONS

1. [Neutral] "I'm listening."

2. [Skeptical] "You mean to tell me you two were friends?"
3. [Accusatory] "This isn't about Freeside at all. It's about proving something to The King."
- [Perception 7+] SUCCESS:
PLAYER: "Your boys are watching you real close. That's not trust, it's doubt."
JOHNNY: [Pauses, then nods slowly] "Yeah. Some of 'em still ain't sure I can pull this off. They don't say it, but I see it in their eyes."
 - [Perception < 7] FAILURE:
PLAYER: "Your men seem tense though, don't they?"
JOHNNY: [Smirks] "They're just waiting to see if *you* are friend or foe."

JOHNNY FINALLY OPENS UP

[Johnny exhales sharply, then leans against a table, finally looking the player in the eyes.]

JOHNNY:

"The King wasn't always The King.
And I wasn't always Johnny Velvet."

[Johnny takes a slow drag of his cigarette, then exhaling as if weighing his next words carefully.]

"We started this whole thing together.
But when things got tough, he folded. I told him we needed to stand up,
to take Freeside before the NCR or House swallowed it whole.
And you know what he did? He *exiled* me."

PLAYER RESPONSE OPTIONS

- [Speech 75+] SUCCESS:
PLAYER: "The Kings don't rule on tyranny. Tell me what really happened."
JOHNNY: "Fine. You wanna know? *I wanted more.*
The Kings were sittin' pretty, but I saw what was comin'.
I told The King we needed to act.
He called me *power-hungry* and threw me out like trash."
- [Speech < 75] FAILURE:
PLAYER: "People don't get exiled for nothing. What did you really do?"
JOHNNY: "That's a story for a proper King. Not some courier like you."
- [Medicine 50+] SUCCESS:
PLAYER: "That scar on your ribs? You weren't just thrown out, you were beaten first."

JOHNNY: [Silent for a long moment, then grins darkly] "You got a good eye. Yeah, they wanted to make a show of it.

Told the whole gang I was 'too dangerous' to lead. Then this is what came of it."

- [Medicine < 50] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "Looks like you've seen your share of fights."

JOHNNY: "Every King's gotta fight for their throne. At this point, you 'outta know that."

- If the player sympathizes with Johnny, he begins trusting them more.
- If the player calls him out, Johnny grows colder and more defensive.
- If the player passes checks, they learn:
 - Johnny was physically beaten before exile.
 - Some of his men still doubt him.
 - He hasn't fully moved past his time as a King.
- If the player fails checks, Johnny remains guarded.

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SCENE: THE MONARCH HOTEL – JOHNNY DEMANDS AN ANSWER

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[Johnny has heard enough. He folds his arms, studying the player carefully. His smirk is gone, what remains is the expression of a man making calculations, weighing risks.]

[His men shift slightly in the background, fingers near holsters, eyes darting between their leader and the player. The tension in the air is thick.]

JOHNNY:

"Alright. We've had our little talk. You've heard my side of things.
Now I need to hear yours.

'Cause one thing's for sure: This city ain't staying the same.
And when the dust settles, you're either with me, or against me."

[His tone darkens, a quiet warning beneath his words.]

"So tell me, are you gonna be part of history, or just another footnote?"

PLAYER RESPONSE OPTIONS

1. [Support Johnny] "I see your vision. Freeside needs a real leader."
2. [Oppose Johnny] "I stand with The King. I won't let you take Freeside."
3. [Hesitate] "This is a big move, Johnny. You sure you're ready?"

- (If the player picks Option 3 more than once, Johnny grows impatient and forces a choice.)

- [Speech 80+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "If you want to lead, do it right. Rule with respect, not threats."

JOHNNY: [Pauses, jaw tightening] "You think I want this? You think I got a choice?"

...Maybe you got a point. But it's too late to back down now." (Johnny lets the player leave without hostility but remains watchful.)

- [Speech < 80] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "This isn't the way, Johnny."

JOHNNY: [Laughs dryly] "You think a pep talk is gonna change Freeside?"

- [Guns 60+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "Weapons don't win wars, Johnny. Soldiers do. And I see some of yours lookin' like they'd rather be anywhere but here."

JOHNNY: [Jaw tightens, eyes flicker with something unreadable] "...They'll fall in line. They always do."

- [Guns < 60] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "Your boys are loyal, but are they ready to die for this?"

JOHNNY: [Grins darkly] "You don't know a thing about the Kings."

- [Sneak 50+] SUCCESS:

PLAYER: "Your boys talk when you're not around. Some of them are looking for a way out."

JOHNNY: [Narrows his eyes] "...You got names?"

(Johnny becomes more paranoid, making him harder to convince later.)

- [Sneak < 50] FAILURE:

PLAYER: "You sure your men are as loyal as you think?"

JOHNNY: "You think I don't know who's in my corner? I watch everything."

OUTCOME BASED ON PLAYER CHOICE

OPTION 1: Support Johnny

- Johnny fully trusts the player and begins planning The King's overthrow.
- The player is sent to sabotage The King's support or rally local Freeside residents.

OPTION 2: Oppose Johnny

- Johnny immediately considers the player an enemy.
- If the player angered him too much, his men attack on the spot.
- If the player gained his respect, he warns them to stay out of his way.

OPTION 3: Stall / Delay

- If the player hesitates too much, Johnny grows impatient and assumes they're against him.

- Johnny forces a final choice, either support him or leave as an enemy.

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SCENE: THE MONARCH HOTEL – FINAL MOMENTS

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For players who SUPPORT Johnny:

[Johnny nods, a satisfied smirk creeping onto his face.]

JOHNNY:

"Glad to hear it. You made the right call, friend. But talk's cheap. Time to prove where you stand."

[He gestures to one of his men, who steps forward, handing the player a map of key targets in Freeside.]

JOHNNY:

"We're gonna shake things up. First step? Undermining The King's grip. Do this for me, and Freeside will be one step closer to something real."

[Johnny flicks his cigarette onto the floor, crushing it beneath his boot before turning away.]

(Player receives next objective: Sabotage The King's support.)

For players who OPPOSE Johnny:

[Johnny exhales sharply, shaking his head as he crushes his cigarette under his boot.]

JOHNNY:

"That's a damn shame. But I figured as much."

[He straightens, his tone colder, more distant.]

"You got one chance to walk outta here.

Be a wise man for me."

[Johnny turns away, but his men remain tense, hands hovering over their weapons, watching as the player leaves.]

(If the player provoked Johnny earlier, his men will attack on the spot.)

For players who STALL too long:

[Johnny's patience finally snaps. He gestures to his men, who shift uneasily.]

JOHNNY:

"You ain't playing both sides, friend. Make your call, or I'll make it for you."

(If the player still refuses to commit, Johnny assumes they're against him, and hostility may follow.)
