

"We haven't really seen anything since," he says. "It's been really quiet around here. Did you and Phoenix Jones patrol Belltown in Seattle?"

"I believe we're going to," I say.

"Google 'Gunshots in Belltown' and you'll come up with a hundred stories of gunshots being fired in, like, the last year," he says wistfully.

Some boys pass us. "Want some reefer? Ganja? Weed?" they quietly murmur.

"No, that's all right," says Urban Avenger, walking quickly on. The boys shrug and continue on their way.

"Good thing I got all that on video," Urban Avenger eventually calls after them, indicating a small camera attached to his shoulder.

"Crack? Heroin? PCP?" the boys call back.

"Did you really film it?" I ask.

"No," says Urban Avenger. We continue our patrol.

"I noticed that you didn't make citizen's arrests on the drug dealers," I say.

"We didn't have probable cause," explains Mr. Xtreme. "All they did is say something. If they'd shown us crack rocks or marijuana it might have been a different story."

"You could have said you wanted to buy some and then they'd have got the drugs out of their pockets and you could have arrested them," I say.

There's a short silence. "That's true," says Urban Avenger.

As we reach the end of the patrol we get talking about burnout.

"I can relate to burnout," says Mr. Xtreme. "All the times I thought about hanging it up. But what would I move on to?"

"The person under the mask really hasn't accomplished much," says Urban Avenger. "But as a superhero I can go out and do something. I can feel like a better person, kind of."

"If I wasn't trying to make a difference in the community, I'd just be sitting around drinking beer," says Mr. Xtreme. "Watching movies, going broke, just being negative."