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**Gunrunner**

by

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Gargoyles: City of the Phoenix  
Season 1, Episode 3

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INT. SCENE - J-MO'S HOUSE. J-MO'S BEDROOM.

Morning. A dingy teenager's bedroom, with all the messiness and detritus that implies. A narrow finger of light, shaped by the house close by next door, wriggles its way through the dirty window and across J-MO, who is sleeping in his bed with the covers off. His aunt CORINNE is outside talking to police officer KYLE MILLER, and their voices carry through the door, breaking the peace.

CAPTION: Wednesday, October 31, 2012. 8:45 AM.

CORINNE (OFF)

I don't know what it is. I just woke up this morning and the car was like that.

MILLER (OFF)

Just like that?

CORINNE (OFF)

Yeah!

J-MO opens his eyes, listening to the discussion.

MILLER

Well, I don't know what to tell you, ma'am. It is Halloween.

CORINNE

But that's not until tonight.

MILLER

Well, some kids get an early start on the pranks.

J-MO quietly slides out of bed. He went to bed dressed and is still in his clothes from the previous night. He gets up and goes to the door. He reaches for his back pocket: the envelope from last night is still there. He cracks the door open to look out.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM.

Officer MILLER, in uniform, and CORINNE, in her work clothes, are in the living room. MILLER is filling out a report form.

CORINNE

You tellin' me that two busted tires  
and a busted trunk is a prank?

MILLER

Was the car here all night?

CORINNE

My nephew took it out last night--

She looks over and sees the bedroom door cracked open. J-MO  
tries to close it quietly.

CORINNE

Jerome! Where were you at last night?

J-MO doesn't answer. Inside his bedroom, he winces, wishing he  
were on another planet suddenly.

CORINNE

Jerome Morgan Tyler! Don't you make me  
come in there and get you up!

J-MO, defeated, steels himself, opens the door, and steps out.

J-MO

Yes, Auntie Corinne.

CORINNE

Where were you at last night?

J-MO

Nowhere.

CORINNE

Don't you tell me that you drove that  
car nowhere. Cars don't get busted up  
goin' nowhere.

J-MO

We just went down the park.

CORINNE

Who's "we"?

J-MO

Me and Ty.

CORINNE

You was out with Tyrone last night?

J-MO

Yeah, but we din't do nothin'.

CORINNE

You didn't do what?

J-MO

We didn't do anything, Auntie. We just went to the park.

CORINNE

How'd that car get busted up, then?

J-MO

I don't know, Auntie. We just got back and it was like that.

MILLER

Who is Tyrone?

CORINNE

Tyrone Henderson, his knucklehead friend. How'd the car get back here, then?

J-MO

We called the roadside. They towed it back.

MILLER

And it was just like that when they hooked it up?

J-MO

Yes, sir.

MILLER closes up his report and puts his pen away.

MILLER

I can put in the report for you, for the insurance, but I don't know it'll do much good catching who did this.

CORINNE

Well, all right, thank you anyway.

MILLER

Hope your day gets better. Happy Halloween.

CORINNE

Yeah, you too.

MILLER leaves. CORINNE turns to J-MO, scowling.

CORINNE

Lean forward.

J-MO knows what is coming. He leans his head down and winces. CORINNE slaps him across the back of the head.

CORINNE

What you doin' hangin' around with Tyrone? That boy's crazy!

J-MO

He's not crazy, Auntie.

CORINNE

Naw, he crazy, and you're crazy for callin' the roadside to tow a car five blocks. Why didn't you wait until the morning and call your cousin?

J-MO

They won't let you park there overnight. The City would have got it. It's been five hundred or more to get it out of the pound.

CORINNE relents slightly.

CORINNE

Oh, you're right, I guess. For once. Still, how am I gonna come up with \$200 for the tow?

J-MO

Auntie, I'm sorry about the car.

CORINNE

You crazy boy with your crazy friends. Come here.

She hugs him close.

CORINNE  
What did happen?

J-MO  
I don't know, Auntie Corinne.

CORINNE  
Don't you tell me you don't know.

J-MO  
A monster must of got it.

CORINNE  
What?

J-MO  
A monster got it, Aunt Corinne. Honest.

CORINNE  
Oh, a monster got it. Devil's Night, so of course a monster got it. You want to see a monster, I gotta take a CTA bus to work. You make me late, you're gonna see a monster come home tonight.

She goes to put her coat on to leave.

CORINNE  
What kind of monster chews up a car like that, anyway?

EXT. SCENE - WILLIS TOWER. ROOF. (NIGHT)

The gargoyles glide in to land on the roof, GOLIATH carrying BRONX, and BROADWAY closely shadowing BROOKLYN, who lands a little unsteadily.

BROADWAY  
Doing all right?

BROOKLYN  
Yeah, it's still a little sore, but it's not too bad.

He reaches down and pulls the bandage off. There is a noticeable scar, marked out by the butterfly bandages that had been holding it together, but his side is otherwise apparently quite healed. He begins to pick off the butterfly bandages.

BROOKLYN

Still, if it's all right, I think I may stay in tonight. Give it a little rest while it's healing.

GOLIATH

You will not come down and explore?

BROOKLYN

If you need me, I can, but I think I've gone through all my luck for the week already.

BROADWAY

Come on. It's Halloween!

LEXINGTON

Yeah, it only comes once a year.

BROOKLYN

I know that, but I don't know I can climb back up here if I go down there.

GOLIATH

It is your choice. Hudson, there seems to be much activity to the north. Take the others there. I will follow.

HUDSON

Come along.

HUDSON, BROADWAY, and LEXINGTON leap off into the wind and glide away to the north.

BROOKLYN

Something the matter?

GOLIATH

Your wounds are healing?

BROOKLYN

Yes.

GOLIATH

All of them?

BROOKLYN

(sighing)

Oh. No, not all of them. Not as quickly, anyway.

GOLIATH

Why did you go after those boys?

BROOKLYN

I told you: Because they were shooting at us.

GOLIATH

You did tell me that. And you told Hudson something different.

BROOKLYN

(quietly)

Yeah.

GOLIATH

I could not reach Elisa. The telephones are damaged. And if I cannot speak to her, then I do not know whether the damage...

He trails off, and looks out to the east, over the dark expanse of the lake.

BROOKLYN

Yeah, I know.

The two of them look out over the lake for a moment in silence.

BROOKLYN

I guess I went after them because it was the easier fight. Easier than fighting off doom.

GOLIATH

Aye.

BROOKLYN

At least I could pull a sword on them and get them to stop threatening us for a minute. If I could do the same thing against seeing everything fall apart, I would. In a heartbeat.



GOLIATH

As would I. But we cannot. All that we can do is not be beaten by the fears.

BROOKLYN

Yeah, I know. It sounds so easy.

GOLIATH

And it is so difficult. It is the hardest fight we have. Too hard to have alone.

GOLIATH gathers himself.

GOLIATH

This is a desolate place. This roof. Are you sure you will be all right here?

BROOKLYN

I'll be all right. Just make it back in one piece. I don't want to have to come down and save you.

GOLIATH

You don't?

BROOKLYN

Well. Not much. I'm itching to get at it, but my flank's still objecting.

GOLIATH

As you like.

BROOKLYN

Goliath, will you be all right?

GOLIATH

I...will manage.

GOLIATH turns and jumps off into the wind.

BROOKLYN

That isn't much of an answer.

He settles up on the west side of the roof, with BRONX, watching the city below.

INT. SCENE - EL TORITO BAR.

A crowded, hip bar in Wicker Park. A Halloween party is fully underway, but the bar is not especially crowded as it is early yet. The bar is fully decorated for it, though, with tacky and probably Fire-Code-violating ghosts and cobwebs all around. The bartender is in a ghoulish costume, and his general attitude makes it pretty clear this is not by his choice. The door's not guarded, and so there is no trouble for J-MO to enter, but it's clear from the looks of the staff that he is neither expected nor especially welcome here. He looks around, fully aware that he is being eyed, and unable to tell who he's here to meet. He finally goes up to the bar.

BARTENDER

Can I help you?

J-MO

Yeah, man, I'm looking for someone.

BARTENDER

I don't think he's in here. Are you sure you're in the right place?

J-MO

Yeah, I'm sure! He told me to meet him at El Torito. Think I don't know where I'm at?

BARTENDER

There's no need for the attitude.

From a nearby table, a relatively well-dressed man puts a hand up. This is CRAIG LARSEN.

LARSEN

It's okay, Phil, he's with me. Just, uh, send over another beer, would you?

BARTENDER

Oh. Oh, all right, Mr. Larsen. Coming right up.

J-MO sits at LARSEN's table.

LARSEN

Good evening. You got my note, then.

J-MO

Yeah.

LARSEN

And you had some trouble the other night.

J-MO

You bet I did.

LARSEN

So, why don't you tell me about it and let me see what I can do to help.

J-MO

Well, my auntie's car got busted up real bad while it was in the park.

LARSEN

Mm-hmm.

J-MO

And then it cost us \$200 to get it towed home, and she don't got the money to pay for that or to get it fixed.

LARSEN

I see. And how'd it get busted up?

J-MO looks away.

J-MO

I dunno, man.

LARSEN

Yes, you do.

J-MO does not answer.

LARSEN

Phil, is the back room open?

BARTENDER

Sure is, for you.

LARSEN

Why don't we continue this chat in private, hm?

J-MO  
Yeah, all right.

BARTENDER  
Beer's up, sir.

LARSEN  
Thanks. (to J-MO) How old are you?

J-MO  
Uh, twenty-one.

LARSEN  
I bet. (to BARTENDER) Cola for the young man.

BARTENDER  
Yes, sir.

They get up and go to the back room, LARSEN collecting his beer along the way.

INT. SCENE - EL TORITO. BACK ROOM.

LARSEN and J-MO enter from the main bar. The back bar is deserted, and it's clearly been hijacked for storing tables and extra chairs but it's still set up with about half a dozen tables. To one side are a couple of large travel cases, like Pelican cases. LARSEN pulls out a chair and sits down. J-MO follows his lead.

LARSEN  
Now, I can't help you with anything unless you're square with me. How did your auntie's car get damaged?

J-MO  
You're gonna think I'm crazy.

LARSEN  
I bet I won't.

J-MO  
It was--

The back bar door opens and J-MO checks himself. The waitress comes in with a cola, and sets it on the table.

LARSEN

Thanks, Diane. We'll want a little privacy. Tell Phil I'll come up later if we need anything.

The waitress nods, and exits, closing the door behind her.

J-MO

(whispering)

It was monsters.

LARSEN

(after a pause)

Go on.

J-MO

One of them was like, this big dog, you know? And it chewed up the tires. And there was a second guy, man, he was huge. He ripped off the trunk. And then there was a third one. He didn't break the car but he was there and he, kind of...

LARSEN

Yes?

J-MO

Well, he busted up my pistol, and about four or five more my man Lucas got me.

LARSEN

All right. Anything else?

J-MO

They was one more the other night--no, two more. I nailed the one in the back. I don't know about the other one.

LARSEN

Okay, so you had, let's see, five monsters, two of which busted up your car. That sounds right?

J-MO

Yeah, I guess.

LARSEN

And the one you drilled in the back,  
did he survive?

J-MO

Man, I don't know. I didn't stick  
around to find out. His friend come af-  
ter me for that.

LARSEN

Assume he did survive. Very good. Then  
I can solve your problems right here.  
Drink your Coke.

LARSEN stands and goes to the travel cases. He opens one, and pulls out a most unusual handgun: a long-barreled automatic, with three yellow stripes across the grip and an elaborate sight along the right side of the slide. He reaches into the case and dips his fingers into a box of ammunition, drawing out a short handful. He brings the gun back to the table, and lays out the bullets on the table.

LARSEN

May I introduce the Dellinger Model  
102. A modern firearm for solving mod-  
ern problems. You shoot with your right  
hand?

J-MO

Yeah.

LARSEN takes the sight and flips it over the gun to lie on the left side.

LARSEN

How's your eyesight?

J-MO

Fine.

LARSEN

Any previous training in firearms?

J-MO

Lucas got me set up shootin' cans out  
in the forest preserve. Nothin' else.

LARSEN

Fine. Then you should be set.

LARSEN ejects the clip and hands the gun to J-MO, who takes it with reverence.

J-MO

I ain't seen nothing like this before.

LARSEN

There has been nothing like this before. In fact, we are still developing it. We need help testing it out in the real world, on real-world targets.

J-MO

Then why don't you go to the cops?

LARSEN

What, and have all that paperwork? They won't take an experiment anyway. They don't think they can afford it. I say, they can't afford to go without protection like this, but, hey, to them, what do I know?

J-MO

Yeah.

LARSEN

Five creatures, yes?

J-MO nods. LARSEN slips five bullets into the clip, counting as he does.

LARSEN

One, two, three, four, five bullets.  
And:

(inserting one more)

One to grow on. Here.

He hands the clip to J-MO.

LARSEN

It goes in just like any other gun you may have used. Go ahead.

J-MO inserts the clip and racks the slide. A light within the sight flickers green, then red, then green, then goes out.

LARSEN

And now we are ready. Let's step outside and get acquainted.

LARSEN stands and goes to the back door. J-MO follows him.

EXT. SCENE - ALLEY (NIGHT).

LARSEN and J-MO step out into the alley behind El Torito. It is dimly lit, a typical commercial alley in Chicago. LARSEN points to the Coyote Building, which is visible a couple of blocks away.

LARSEN

There is a light on top of the building, on the coyote towards us. Do you see it?

J-MO

Yeah, I guess.

LARSEN

I want you to put it out.

J-MO

What, with this?

LARSEN

Yes.

J-MO

But that's gotta be half a mile away, all the way up there, and you only gave me six bullets, and five of those are for those monsters. How'm I gonna do that?

LARSEN

With one bullet.

J-MO

Naw, man. For real.

LARSEN

You will do it. Give it a try. Release the safety.

J-MO finds it and clicks it off. The sight lights up red.



LARSEN

Use the sight to aim at the light. Go on.

J-MO points up at the tower. Through the sight, we see him line up shakily on the light illuminating the coyote at the top of the building. The sight is lit red. He is not holding his aim well, and it wanders continuously. The sight suddenly clicks green.

LARSEN

Fire.

J-MO

I ain't holding on it, it's too far.

LARSEN

Shoot.

J-MO does, a single shot. Through the sight there is a pause, and then a shower of sparks as the light goes out. He drops the pistol to his side; the light is well and truly extinguished, and the coyote is no longer lit. J-MO is astonished.

LARSEN

Well done.

J-MO

You playin' me.

LARSEN

Not at all. The gun makes its own aiming corrections. Let it lock in, and it'll do the rest to get the bullet to its target flawlessly. Half a mile? Kid's play. One tester made a target a mile out, dead on, second night he had it.

J-MO

This thing's gotta be a million bucks.

LARSEN

Oh, we haven't set the price yet, it's a bit early for that. We're still testing, like I said. Now, one bullet down, five to go. You want to go and test on those enemies of yours, or shall I get in touch with Tyrone instead?

J-MO looks at him, resolutely, his spine steeled by the weapon in his grasp.

EXT. SCENE - SKY ABOVE RUSH STREET, CHICAGO. (NIGHT)

GOLIATH, HUDSON, BROADWAY, and LEXINGTON are gliding down over the city, looking around. Below them, Halloween festivities are in full swing, with groups of revelers, costumed or not, careening around the streets.

BROADWAY

You don't plan to drop right into the action, do you?

GOLIATH

As impressive as that might be, no. We can find a quiet corner to land.

HUDSON

What about behind that little garrison over there? It seems the troops are not on watch at the moment.

He points to the old Pumping Station (Chicago and Michigan). The front of the building is lit orange for the holiday, but the back is relatively dark and quiet.

GOLIATH

That will do nicely.

The gargoyles turn and descend to the back of the Pumping Station.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH, CHICAGO. (NIGHT)

Behind the Pumping Station, the gargoyles land, one by one, and gather.

LEXINGTON

I wish we really did have costumes. It's weird to be going as myself for Halloween.

GOLIATH

Remember that, to these people, you are in costume, so act human.

BROADWAY

Right.

The four of them stand straight, slacken their wings, and drop their tails to the ground, limp.

BROADWAY  
Come on, everyone.

(affecting a Chicago  
accent)  
Let's go see Chicahguh.

They step out onto the street as a group, tall and graceless in their own skins.

There now follows a montage of short scenes in which they are greeted by amazement at the quality of their "costumes". A couple of examples follow:

Cut 1: LEXINGTON is greeted by several women in flapper costume, oohing and ahing over him. They line him up for a selfie with them.

Cut 2: GOLIATH is walking along with BROADWAY. A couple, dressed as a Frankenstein and his bride, are impressed by him.

MAN  
Hey, can we get a picture?

GOLIATH  
It would give me great pleasure.

The couple, slightly amused by this phrasing, line him up and take the picture, departing with thanks.

BROADWAY  
"Yes, thanks." Have to loosen up a bit,  
Goliath.

GOLIATH  
(stiffly)  
Yeah, thanks.

BROADWAY  
It's better.

Cut 3: HUDSON is posing with an older couple (two pirates). He hoists his sword over their heads and grins evilly for the photo. They laugh and get the shot.

The montage continues briefly in the same vein, the gargoyles posing for photos and taking compliments on their looks.

The montage closes with the four of them walking down the street, GOLIATH in the lead.

HUDSON

This does get a little tiring.

BROADWAY

Well, at least we're sort of fitting in.

GOLIATH

Hudson is right. Being a spectacle is not much better than being an object of terror.

He smiles and nods as a small group passes, giving compliments on his looks.

LEXINGTON

Do you think this is working?

GOLIATH

Yes. They are making the pictures. They will share the pictures. If we are fortunate, very fortunate, the pictures will find the others, and the others will find us.

A tipsy man dressed as a penguin approaches them, cooing about the great costume. He reaches out and fondles HUDSON's ears. HUDSON shakes his head, and forces a laugh. The man reaches out and then fondles his wing. HUDSON pulls away and keeps walking.

HUDSON

I do hope so. There is only so much of this one can take before wanting to act out a slasher film.

GOLIATH

Steady on. We can always tell them the costumes are fragile.

HUDSON

Humph.

They pass a tavern with a sandwich board outside that says, "COSTUME CONTEST TONIGHT - Grand Prize \$500." BROADWAY's attention is drawn. He stops.

BROADWAY

Hey! You guys hungry?

They turn and look at him.

INT. SCENE - ERIE TAVERN.

The gargoyles, less BROADWAY, have packed into a booth and are drinking water. Up front, on what passes for a stage, BROADWAY is facing down another contestant, a man (ROGER) in a reasonably good (but of course inferior) gargoyle costume. An EMCEE stands between them, microphone in hand.

EMCEE

All right, everyone! The Erie Tavern is very pleased to present...THE FINALS!

There is a round of applause, including from LEXINGTON. The others look at him.

EMCEE

We have here two excellent, excellent costumes, both I believe representing the gargoyles from New York. On my left I have?

ROGER

Roger.

EMCEE

And where are you from, Roger?

ROGER

I'm from Pilsen.

EMCEE

Welcome, Roger from Pilsen. An excellent costume; did you make it yourself?

ROGER

I had a little help from my wife.

EMCEE

Your wife, huh? She out in the audience?

ROGER's wife waves from the audience, gaining a smattering of applause.

EMCEE

Well, well done, Roger and Roger's wife. And on my right I have?

BROADWAY

Broadway.

EMCEE

And where are you from?

BROADWAY

Manhattan.

EMCEE

And with that name I'm guessing that's not Manhattan, Illinois, right?

BROADWAY

Wait, there's a Manhattan around here?

The audience laughs. BROADWAY looks genuinely perplexed.

EMCEE

We have one, but it's not nearly as popular as the big one. And did you make your costume yourself?

BROADWAY

Been working on it all my life.

EMCEE

Well, it shows, it sure does. All right, Roger and Broadway. You're going to face off in a few challenges the staff here have devised. Winner will be determined by audience applause, so let's hear it for them: Roger and Broadway!

The audience cheers, and both ROGER and BROADWAY try to whip them up. ROGER extends his hand, BROADWAY shakes it, the DJ spins up some music, and the contest is on.

EMCEE

All right, first challenge, show us your gargoyle walk!

ROGER begins walking across the stage in time to the beat of the music. It is kind of a chicken walk. He gets to the other side of the stage, snaps both fingers, and points to BROADWAY. There is a smattering of laughter and a little clapping. BROADWAY grooves directly across the stage, also in time to the music, almost dancing. The audience gives him a little more applause.

EMCEE

That's one down! Second challenge: give us a little tail action!

BROADWAY snaps his fingers and points to ROGER, who takes the pass by pointing back, then bringing both thumbs up to himself. He begins to shake his rump, wagging his tail loosely around the stage. The audience chuckles at this. ROGER snaps and passes to BROADWAY, who takes it with two thumbs to himself, raises his tail, waggles it, and then slams it down onto the stage with a loud thud. The audience goes wild for this display. BROADWAY raises one fist in the air in response.

HUDSON

What is he doing?

LEXINGTON

Winning, I think. Come on, we should cheer for him. It's our dinner.

He begins clapping and shouting, and HUDSON and GOLIATH join in with a little less enthusiasm. BROADWAY acknowledges them.

EMCEE

Wow, let's save the stage there, Broadway. All right, third challenge. Give us a little wing action, how about it?

BROADWAY snaps and passes to ROGER, who looks worried. He begins huffing and puffing, trying to shake some action out of his wings. They don't move very much, actually, but they draw a few laughs from the audience. ROGER finally shrugs, drawing a smattering of applause. He snaps and passes to BROADWAY, who accepts. He draws his left wing up across his body and spreads it, then folds it back and, similarly, draws the right one out and spreads it, keeping the beat of the music the whole time. (This is done like John Travolta's dance in Pulp Fiction.) He folds both, and then spreads them full. The audience loves all of this and he gets loud applause and cheering. ROGER scoffs and waves off from his end of the stage.

EMCEE

Wow! Full articulation for the win, folks. Now, the final challenge, the one the great grand prize is riding on: show us your gargoyle rage!

Again, BROADWAY snaps and throws to ROGER, who accepts. He puffs his chest out beats on it, and:

ROGER

Rawr!

BROADWAY nods gracefully in approval. ROGER accepts this, and the small round of applause he gets, and then snaps and passes to BROADWAY, who accepts. He stretches his right arm, then his left, puts his fingers together and cracks his knuckles, and then clears his throat, drawing a bit of laughter from the audience. He then spreads his wings and his arms, lifts his tail, lights his eyes, and gives the best display of rage he ever has, roaring enormously. ROGER, caught right in the line of this, stumbles backward and scuttles back off the stage, losing his tail in the process. The audience goes wild for this, standing up, cheering. BROADWAY turns to them, capes his wings, and bows modestly. He then goes over to ROGER and puts out a hand.

BROADWAY

You all right?

ROGER

Whoa!

ROGER takes his hand and gets up. The EMCEE comes over and raises BROADWAY's other hand.

EMCEE

Winner, by knockout! Broadway!

The audience cheers and stomps the floor.

EMCEE

How'd you do it? What's your secret?

BROADWAY

Well, what can I say. It takes years of practice to get to...Broadway.

The audience laughs and groans at this.



EMCEE

Well, I know what we can say is, you got yourself a \$500 gift certificate from the Erie Tavern and you've set a high bar for next year's costume contest. Congratulations!

BROADWAY

Thank you.

He shakes hands with the EMCEE, bows again, and comes off the stage and back to the booth, taking his seat.

LEXINGTON

You need a pair of sunglasses to put on when you say a line like that?

HUDSON

This is not avoiding a spectacle, lad.

BROADWAY

No, but it's getting us dinner tonight.

GOLIATH

Regardless, this is the last time we do this.

BROADWAY

In Chicago, you mean?

GOLIATH

In...

BROADWAY looks at him hopefully. GOLIATH sighs.

GOLIATH

In Chicago.

BROADWAY

Great! What's on the menu?

He opens the menu to look at it. He notices the prices and his face droops.

BROADWAY

Woof. Maybe \$500 isn't going to go as far as I'd hoped.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT PARK. STREET. (NIGHT)

J-MO and TYRONE are in the car, parked on the curb. TYRONE is in the driver's seat. Both look worried. The car has two new used tires on the back: one is a grungy whitewall and the other is a snow tire.

TYRONE

Dog, you sure you wanna do this? The whole thing is sketch.

J-MO

I know it's sketch, but I ain't finna get jumped by those things again, and I'm tellin' you, we might be able to get them this way.

TYRONE

Man, why don't you just leave them alone.

J-MO

Listen, they run around my hood, I'ma take them down before they can do anything to us.

TYRONE

I know, but it's like, you miss them, you ain't got much room to deal with it. Five bullets?

J-MO

I ain't gonna miss, I told you that. I straight hit that light from all the way down there.

TYRONE

You sure about that, bro? This guy Larsen, he coulda set that all up. Maybe he's finna make you take a fall.

J-MO

No. Naw, he's, like...dog, I know what a gun feels like when you shoot it. I shot that light. I know it.

J-MO nervously pulls a phone out of his pocket and begins scrolling through it.

TYRONE

If you say so. Still haven't found them yet.

J-MO

We'll find them. They out there somewhere.

TYRONE

I still don't get why you want to start it with them like this.

J-MO stops scrolling and looks at TYRONE.

J-MO

Bro, we got to take care of this place. Auntie Corinne, she been here twenty years. She already got the house shot up, remember? Last summer?

TYRONE

Yeah, but, dog, these things, they ain't shootin' nobody.

J-MO

Yeah, but they still chasin' me down, sayin' I shot at them, you feel me?

TYRONE

J, I feel you, but you gonna take them by yourself?

J-MO

Someone got to. 'Less you want to help.

TYRONE

Dog, you know I got your back. We, like, Batman and Robin.

J-MO

Batman and Robin? You trippin.

TYRONE

I ain't trippin. We go out and fight crime, bro.

J-MO

This ain't no Batmobile, dog. Whoever heard of the Batmobile with two used

tires and a piece of plywood for a trunk?

TYRONE

Well, what's it like, then?

J-MO

It's like...like...well, it ain't no Batman and Robin, anyhow.

TYRONE

Pinky and the Brain?

J-MO

Dude, shut up. Auntie right. You crazy.

J-MO resumes scrolling through his phone.

TYRONE

You think you gonna find them tonight, or what? I'm hungry. I wanna get some burgers or something.

J-MO stops scrolling, startled by what he sees on the phone.

J-MO

Nah.

He holds up his phone to TYRONE. On the screen, in a social media app, is a photo of BROADWAY posing with a young lady in costume. The caption reads: "Shania is at River North, Chicago / Costumes are awesome this year! Happy Halloween yall!"

J-MO

They found me, bro.

TYRONE

Dog. He with your girl.

J-MO

Get downtown, Ty.

TYRONE starts the car and they begin driving downtown.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. STREET. (NIGHT)

BROADWAY, GOLIATH, LEXINGTON, and HUDSON are walking down the street as a group. BROADWAY carries a pair of doggie bags in one hand; in the other, a plaque, a trophy of his win. It is getting

somewhat late in the evening, and the crowds have thinned out. BROADWAY is on top of the world.

BROADWAY

Now, that. That was a dinner.

LEXINGTON

You said it. Worth waiting three days, almost.

HUDSON

Ahh, indeed. A fine meal, given it cost us our dignity.

BROADWAY

Oh, come on, Hudson. It's Halloween! There's no dignity on Halloween.

A small group walks by, and one of them frames up a quick snapshot. BROADWAY holds up his plaque and smiles greatly for the photo; the group thanks him and passes along.

BROADWAY

Anyway, it was me up there. If anyone's lost their dignity, it's me.

LEXINGTON

Can't lose what you never had.

BROADWAY

Got that r-- hey.

GOLIATH is silent, looking thoughtful. BROADWAY looks at him.

BROADWAY

Are you all right, Goliath?

GOLIATH

There was a time when we could not have done this, not down here. They would run.

HUDSON

Even back in the old castle, they would keep their distance.

GOLIATH

And even now in Manhattan we could not do this. Those we terrified would run

or attack. Those we did not would see us only as objects of curiosity. But now, here, tonight...

He stops, and the others stop with him. He looks around the street.

GOLIATH  
...there is respect.

LEXINGTON  
When they're not rubbing your ears or anything.

GOLIATH  
Yes, but even then, they know they do wrong. They apologize. They move on. We would not have even that consideration in Manhattan. One of many mysteries.

HUDSON  
You sound charmed by the place.

They continue on in silence a moment.

GOLIATH  
I cannot understand why they call them "buffalo wings" when they are so small.

BROADWAY laughs. GOLIATH looks irritated.

GOLIATH  
Well?

BROADWAY  
I'm sure there's a reason. Maybe Brooklyn will know; he'll have a few of them to enjoy when we get back, anyway.

LEXINGTON  
Angela would know.

BROADWAY  
Maybe Angela would know. It's the kind of thing she'd look into. I'll ask her, second or third thing when we find her.

LEXINGTON  
You miss her right now?

## BROADWAY

Miss her all the time. She'd love this.

Up the street, J-MO's car comes cruising by, unseen by the gargoyles and unnoticed by anyone else in particular.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S CAR.

TYRONE is driving down the street as J-MO looks out. He looks over and sees the gargoyles from the back.

J-MO

Yo, Ty, slow down, right here, slow down!

TYRONE

Yeah, I see 'em. You got 'em?

J-MO

I got 'em.

TYRONE

You gonna take 'em right here?

J-MO

Four shots, four kills. Four dead monsters.

J-MO rolls down the passenger side window and begins lining up for the shot.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. STREET. (NIGHT)

As J-MO's car rolls up the street behind them, BROADWAY and LEXINGTON continue talking. HUDSON, however, gets a feeling. He pricks up his ears and listens.

LEXINGTON

You think she'd put up with that performance?

BROADWAY

C'mon, she'da been right up there with me, made it a duet.

HUDSON looks back sharply and sees the car rolling up on them, with J-MO leaning out the window, ready to fire. The gunsight is reflected off his face; it is green.

HUDSON

Down! All of you, down!

All four gargoyles hit the ground as the gun fires. A shop window ahead of them shatters and crashes to the sidewalk. There is a general panic from the crowd as people scatter. HUDSON shouts and puts his hand to the side of his head: his ear has been nicked, and some of the hair on the side of his head has been cut by the bullet. The cut hairs drift down the side of his face.

GOLIATH

Spread out and get up! Lexington, with me!

LEXINGTON and GOLIATH leap up and sprint across the street. BROADWAY and HUDSON jump up and head for the nearest alley.

Inside the car, J-MO sees HUDSON running out of sight.

TYRONE

You get him?

J-MO

No, man, he ducked. Get after him!

TYRONE floors it after HUDSON.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. ALLEY. (NIGHT)

HUDSON and BROADWAY dash into the alley. HUDSON leaps up onto the side of a building on the left side. BROADWAY tucks the plaque under his belt in back, clamps the doggie bags in his jaws, and begins climbing up the opposite building. TYRONE tears into the alley and screeches to a stop. J-MO leans out the window with the gun in his hand. He starts to set a bead on HUDSON, but seeing BROADWAY climbing up right above him, turns his aim on him.

Down the sight, J-MO sets his aim into BROADWAY's back. The sight remains red as he lines up the shot.

In the alley, HUDSON looks down and sees J-MO lining the shot.

HUDSON

Below you!

BROADWAY looks down, bags still clamped in his jaws, and his brows pop wide in surprise. Below him, the sight goes from red



to green against J-MO's face. BROADWAY leaps off as J-MO fires. There is a loud crack, a splintering against his back, and BROADWAY screams. He takes to his wings and glides out the mouth of the alley, HUDSON following him. J-MO follows through the gun sight, which stands red, flashes green for an instant against HUDSON, red, green, and then he loses them around the corner as they turn up the street.

J-MO

Back, back, back it up!

J-MO ducks back into the car as TYRONE throws it in reverse and floors the gas. The tires squeal as the car shoots backward in the alley.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. AERIAL. (NIGHT)

Above the street, BROADWAY is rapidly gliding west, only a couple of stories up and working to gain altitude. HUDSON comes haring after, such as he can with the winds against him.

HUDSON

Are you hurt?

BROADWAY looks back and shakes his head, his voice muffled by the bags still in his mouth.

BROADWAY

Mm-mmm.

He reaches behind his back and pulls out the trophy, which now has a large gash across it where the bullet has torn into it. BROADWAY groans with disappointment. He takes the bags from his mouth.

BROADWAY

Aww, I worked hard for that.

Below and behind, the car screeches out of the alley, banging into a parked car (a BMW or something nice) to stop. TYRONE throws the car into drive and floors it after them.

HUDSON

Come about. We can catch the others.

They make a sharp left turn, south down the cross street. Below, TYRONE continues to pursue.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S CAR.

J-MO  
Get after them!

TYRONE  
Naw, J, it's--

J-MO  
Get after them!

TYRONE  
All right.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. STREET. (NIGHT)

TYRONE turns sharply left to follow, turning the wrong way down a one-way street. Traffic veers left and right as TYRONE plows ahead right down the center. J-MO leans out the window again. It's no good: BROADWAY and HUDSON have turned left again and are now headed east.

J-MO  
Left, they went left, go left!

TYRONE yanks the wheel and they go left into the next street, nearly throwing J-MO out of the car. He regains his position and they career onward down the street.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. AERIAL. (NIGHT)

Above, GOLIATH and LEXINGTON join HUDSON and BROADWAY going east.

HUDSON  
Should we know these people?

GOLIATH  
They were the ones who shot Brooklyn.

BROADWAY  
Their aim is getting better.

GOLIATH  
Get them away from here before they hit anyone else.

LEXINGTON looks down at their pursuers. J-MO is leaning out of the car window again, this time sighting up into the group.

LEXINGTON

Incoming!

GOLIATH

Break!

The four of them roll out and break formation as J-MO fires. There is a yell; GOLIATH has been hit in his right shoulder. He fumbles but regains his glide, gripping his shoulder. The wound is not serious.

BROADWAY

Goliath!

GOLIATH

Keep them moving!

They regroup loosely, weaving in and out and proceeding east.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S CAR.

Inside the car, TYRONE is driving east down Chicago Avenue with J-MO hanging out the window, trying to decide which of the gargoyles to aim for.

J-MO

This thing ain't working!

TYRONE

You ain't hit them yet?

J-MO

I hit them! I ain't killed them yet!

TYRONE

I told you he was playing you!

Traffic crosses in front of TYRONE. He pegs the brakes and tries to weave through. J-MO's aim is thrown by this.

J-MO

Doq, watch it!

TYRONE

I am watchin' it! I ain't finna wreck this car!

J-MO

Get it! After them!

TYRONE floors it and they continue down the street.

EXT. SCENE - RIVER NORTH. AERIAL. (NIGHT)

They have now reached Chicago and Michigan: the Water Tower and Pumping Station. The gargoyles continue eastward, weaving along the buildings. Meanwhile, atop the Water Tower another gargoyle looms, adding an unusual Gothic touch to the old tower: BROOKLYN has perched himself on the top level, with BRONX, and watches the group come up and pass by, and J-MO and TYRONE tearing along below.

BROOKLYN

Well, looks like we made it in time for the party, huh?

BRONX growls in response. BROOKLYN picks him up and jumps off into the wind, following the car.

Above, the four gargoyles are still headed east, weaving around, but they've now come out into the open above the parks and the MCA and there is no more cover. GOLIATH looks down and sees them following along on Chicago Avenue. He looks up at the open expanse of lake in front of them.

GOLIATH

To the shoreline! Lexington, with Hudson, go right! Broadway, with me, go left! Follow them when they turn!

BROOKLYN glides up into the formation.

BROOKLYN

And we'll take the center.

The others look at him.

BROOKLYN

(to GOLIATH)

You were right. It was desolate.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S CAR.

Below, J-MO sees BROOKLYN joining the formation. He moves his aim to center on him.

J-MO

Oh, now I got you.

Through the sight, he takes aim at BROOKLYN. The sight remains red for quite some time as he tries to line it up. BROOKLYN looks down, eye alight, and waggles one finger at him.

Inside the gun sight, the light goes green.

Suddenly there is a crashing thud on the back of the car. J-MO and TYRONE look back. BRONX has got hold of the back of the car, and he is angry. He climbs up on the back, digging into the plywood that's serving as a trunk lid and hauling himself up. It promptly caves in, dumping him into the trunk. J-MO and TYRONE scream. TYRONE punches the gas and the car leaps forward. There is a scratching sound in the back as BRONX begins to dig through the back seat, trying to get out. J-MO turns his aim inward, aiming at the back seat. TYRONE looks forward.

TYRONE

J? J-Mo!

J-MO looks forward. They have run out of street; they have reached Lake Shore Drive and traffic ahead is heavy.

J-MO

Go left!

EXT. SCENE - LAKE SHORE DRIVE. (NIGHT)

The car squeals and squelches through the intersection, carving through southbound traffic, and veers into northbound traffic, skidding wide before regaining traction and heading along.

EXT. SCENE - LAKE SHORE DRIVE. AERIAL. (NIGHT)

From above, the group splits as planned. LEXINGTON and HUDSON go south out of sight. BROADWAY and GOLIATH are gliding above the Drive. Below, J-MO and TYRONE have nearly forgotten them, and BRONX wriggles in the trunk, trying to get through to the car. BROOKLYN trails above the car. He lands on the roof, gripping it tight.

INT. SCENE - J-MO'S CAR.

Inside, J-MO and TYRONE look up at the roof, having heard the noise. J-MO sticks the gun out of the window. His arm is promptly seized by a ferocious BROOKLYN, who pulls him out of the window and looks him dead in the eye. J-MO cannot do much to react.

BROOKLYN

Got you.

EXT. SCENE - LAKE SHORE DRIVE. (NIGHT)

TYRONE comes up on the Ohio Street curve and veers left around it. BROOKLYN takes J-MO and flies off outside the curve.

TYRONE

J-Mo! No, J-Mo!

With one final lunge, BRONX breaks through the back seat and into the car. He shakes his head, and sneezes, and then lunges toward TYRONE. From outside, the car veers left into the center wall, right around a right curve, oversteers, crashes through the fence, flies onto the concrete beach, and skids to a stop. BROOKLYN lands alongside the car, still holding J-MO by his gun arm. GOLIATH and BROADWAY land. BROADWAY looks into the car. BRONX has landed on the back of the driver's seat, pinning TYRONE against the steering wheel.

BROOKLYN

You want to let that go.

J-MO holds on to the gun and grunts threateningly.

BROOKLYN

Look, either you drop that gun, or I can break your wrist--

BROADWAY

I told him that.

BROOKLYN

What?

BROADWAY

I already told him that last night. Sheesh.

BROOKLYN

Hmph. Some people just never learn, I guess.

HUDSON and LEXINGTON land.

BROOKLYN

Well, can't disarm him, guess I'll just need to take the hand, then.

He draws out his katana.

J-MO  
Naw, no, don't do that.

BROOKLYN  
No? Why not?

J-MO drops the gun. LEXINGTON steps in and picks it up.

J-MO  
There, you happy? That what you want?

BROOKLYN  
No. I want blood.

He takes the katana around and lines it up on J-MO's wrist.

J-MO  
Oh, no, no, please.

BROOKLYN  
All I've had to put up with these last few days. Losing all I've got, and then you shoot me, and then you lay me up in some dude's apartment, and I'm supposed to be merciful? No. Blood will have blood.

J-MO  
Oh, man, no, I swear to God, I'm not--

BROOKLYN  
Blood. Now.

He raises the katana to slice J-MO's hand off.

BROOKLYN  
Unless you have something worth more.

J-MO starts fumbling in his pocket with his left hand. He pulls out his wallet and drops it on the concrete.

J-MO  
There. There's twenty-eight dollars in there.

BROOKLYN scoffs.

BROOKLYN  
And what am I gonna do with that?

J-MO

Well, what you gonna do with my hand?

BROOKLYN

Doorstop? I don't know. That's a tomorrow problem.

He begins to swing the sword menacingly.

BROOKLYN

Or maybe you want to give me some reason to believe I won't be dealing with you a third time?

J-MO

You won't, you won't, I swear you won't.

GOLIATH

Where did you get this gun?

J-MO looks at him and whimpers. BROOKLYN shrugs.

BROOKLYN

Well, it was worth a try.

He raises the sword to swing.

J-MO

Larsen. Craig Larsen.

BROOKLYN

Who's that?

J-MO

I don't know. Some dude at El Torito. Left me a note after you all busted up my auntie's car.

GOLIATH

And he just gave this to you?

J-MO

He said they were testing them.

GOLIATH

Testing them?



J-MO

Something about people testing these guns. That's what he said. He said I could protect myself from...from the monsters.

BROOKLYN

What monsters?

J-MO looks at him.

LEXINGTON

That's not a very nice thing to say.

BROOKLYN

No.

BROADWAY

I told him about that too. Wow.

HUDSON

(to TYRONE)

Are you getting all of this?

TYRONE turns his head as much as he can, and nods. BRONX growls softly.

HUDSON

Good.

BROOKLYN

I tell you what. That's probably worth a hand.

He lowers his sword and sheaths it. GOLIATH comes over to them and grabs J-MO's head, turning it to face him.

GOLIATH

We will not have this conversation again. For the last time, leave us in peace.

BROOKLYN and GOLIATH release J-MO, who rubs at his wrist and looks at them. He stands up.

BROOKLYN

And don't forget your wallet.

J-MO looks at him, reaches down, and snatches up his wallet. In the distance, sirens approach. He runs past the car.

J-MO

'Rone. Tyrone! Come on!

HUDSON

Bronx, off.

BRONX releases TYRONE, who opens the door of the car. The door simply falls to the ground. TYRONE jumps out of the car, and he and J-MO run away. BROOKLYN looks at the fallen door and shakes his head.

BROOKLYN

That's a shame. That old car was probably worth money.

GOLIATH

The police are coming. Back to the tower.

BROOKLYN sniffs.

BROOKLYN

Hey, do I smell buffalo wings?

BROADWAY

Yeah, here.

He hands BROOKLYN one of the bags.

BROOKLYN

Oh, thanks! How'd you get those?

BROADWAY

I'll tell you at the tower. Come on.

BROOKLYN

Hey, can you help me climb up?

They all run south, toward downtown, keeping to the shadows as much as they can, as the police begin to arrive.

EXT. SCENE - WILLIS TOWER. ROOF. (NIGHT)

BROOKLYN, LEXINGTON, and BROADWAY are sitting together at the west side of the roof. BROOKLYN is munching on buffalo wings and looking at BROADWAY's trophy, now scarred by the bullet blowing

into it. LEXINGTON is looking over the gun, which he has in his hand.

BROOKLYN  
(reading)  
"Erie...Tavern..." Carving?

BROADWAY  
"Costume."

BROOKLYN  
You won a costume contest?

BROADWAY  
Yep.

BROOKLYN  
That's cheating.

BROADWAY  
Well, maybe a little.

LEXINGTON  
It was awesome.

BROADWAY  
Thanks.

BROOKLYN  
Wings aren't bad, either.

BROADWAY  
So what happened? You just got bored?

BROOKLYN  
Yeah.

LEXINGTON  
Really?

BROOKLYN  
Well. Sitting up here wasn't doing anything for me. Nothing good, anyway. Figured I ought to get in on the fun. And, wow, did I ever.

BROADWAY  
You feel that too?

BROOKLYN

Yeah, I do. Feels good to be protecting something again, even if it's not home.

He reaches for another wing.

BROOKLYN

One thing I don't get. You go charging off, strutting down the street and doing costume contests, like it's nothing. How?

BROADWAY

It's Halloween.

BROOKLYN

No, I mean, aren't you worried about Angela and all?

BROADWAY

Why? Sure, I miss them, but I know she can take care of herself. Why would I make it harder on myself by worrying?

BROOKLYN looks at him, and then smiles.

BROADWAY

Right?

BROOKLYN

Right.

Across the roof, HUDSON and GOLIATH are standing together. BRONX is by them, munching on the contents of the other bag (which are dog-safe, I'm sure, and not chicken wings).

HUDSON

Other than the excitement, was it a pleasant evening for you?

GOLIATH

It was better than I had expected.

HUDSON

You said you saw respect down there.

GOLIATH

Not much. Not enough to live on, perhaps. But enough. There is a spark there that I have not seen for a while.

HUDSON

A spark of what?

GOLIATH

Hope, I think.

HUDSON

We've had a short supply of that lately.

GOLIATH

This is true. I do not think we can live among these people any more than we could in Manhattan, but if we were to remain longer, perhaps we could be accepted.

HUDSON puts one hand to his wounded ear.

HUDSON

It is long odds. Especially when they are shooting at us.

GOLIATH

Yes. But perhaps the odds are a little better than I had thought. It is not home, but it is tolerable.

Back on the west side, BROOKLYN pulls another wing out of the bag and munches on it.

BROOKLYN

(to LEXINGTON)

So why'd you keep the gun? Not like two bullets are going to go very far.

LEXINGTON

I've never seen one like this before.

BROADWAY

Not with a sight?

LEXINGTON

Not with anything like this. The sight, the clip. You know, this clip collects the empty shells. Leaves nothing behind.

BROOKLYN

Well, that's considerate. Says no to littering.

BROADWAY

No, but, that's one of the things the police look for when there's been a shooting. Elisa told me about that once.

LEXINGTON

So there's less evidence.

BROOKLYN

Oh, that sounds bad.

BROADWAY

It is bad. Means they're less likely to get caught.

BROOKLYN

And if they're handing these things out for testing...

LEXINGTON looks down the sight, which shines green on his face.

LEXINGTON

This city might need our protection more than we thought.

=END=