

0 11/13/2024

The Line

by

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Gargoyles: City of the Phoenix
Season 2, Episode 5

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INT. SCENE - LABORATORY

A dark and decrepit biological laboratory. The equipment sits out but idle, storm-damaged, the tables strewn with detritus.

There is a scratching and a couple of clicks from the door. It finally relents and opens, admitting two burglars in work clothes: CHRISTINA VAN BUREN and BART NOTARO, carrying flashlights and tool bags. They take a quick survey around with the lights, revealing the wreckage of the lab, and then they separate to set to work stripping scrap metal. CHRISTINA goes for the wiring, zipping open an outlet and yanking the receptacle out with its wires trailing behind it. BART goes for the plumbing: he ducks under a bench, and uses a reciprocating saw to cut at the pipes, wrenching them out and stuffing them in his bag.

BART

You were right. This is great.

CHRISTINA

I told you. Labs are the best for this sort of thing. It's all short pipes and wires and lots of them.

BART

And you're sure we're safe in here?

CHRISTINA

Sure I'm sure. It doesn't look like this place has been touched since the storm, does it?

BART

No, but, what I want to know is why.

CHRISTINA

Oh, nobody ever checks the labs. They always assume either they're guarded or they're worthless.

BART

Oh. I thought there might be a curse or something.

CHRISTINA

Curse of the abandoned lab, huh?

BART

Yeah. Place is spooky enough for it.

CHRISTINA

Yeah, well, if it were cursed, you think it'd smell better.

BART

How you figure that, Chris?

CHRISTINA

Dunno. I can hope.

BART eyes a fat, juicy drainpipe near him, and with an avaricious gleam in his eyes, puts saw to pipe and begins working. He does not get far: it suddenly ruptures, spewing a nasty goop onto his face.

BART

Aaagh!

CHRISTINA

What?

BART

It slimed me.

CHRISTINA

(laughing)

Actual physical contact! Goes with the territory. You okay?

BART

Yeah. Ugh. It tastes like copper.

CHRISTINA

I bet they had a washroom around the corner.

BART scoots out from under the table, wiping his face with his hands.

BART

Lot of good that does if the water's off.

CHRISTINA

Well, maybe they got some towels in there or something.

BART

Yeah, all right.

He goes off in search of a bathroom.

CHRISTINA
Don't go too far, huh?

BART (OFF)
I won't.

CHRISTINA keeps working. She pops off another outlet cover, pries loose the receptacle, and goes to work with a wire cutter. She eventually cuts the receptacle loose, but it is eerily quiet around her, the only sound being the clicking of her wire cutters. There is suddenly a low growl from within the building, like a low belch. She jumps, and then looks annoyed.

CHRISTINA
Very funny, Bart. Come out of there.

No response. She looks out at where he'd gone.

CHRISTINA
Bart? Knock it off.

No response. She slides off the table, reaches into her bag, and extracts a long set of bolt cutters. She begins to approach the doorway that BART had gone through.

CHRISTINA
You're gonna get a belt across the jaw
if you don't quit it.

She shines the light down the hall after where BART had gone. There is nothing to be seen. There is another low growl, though, and CHRISTINA recoils and brandishes the bolt cutters.

CHRISTINA
Bart? You okay?

And from around the corner the monster appears. Human in general form, but gray and scaly around the head, its eyes glow as it fixes its glare on CHRISTINA. It rushes around the corner and at her. But as it is upon her, clang! CHRISTINA belts it across the head with the bolt cutters. It howls in pain and raises one clawed hand to its jaw.

CHRISTINA
Serves you right. Jeezus, you scared
me. Who do you think you are running
around jumping out on people like that?

You nearly gave me a heart attack
screwing around.

The monster glowers at her and growls again.

CHRISTINA

You can knock that off, too. It ain't
gonna work on me. Bart! Come on, show's
over. Bart?

The monster looks at her, even more angry than before. CHRISTINA
starts to back away. She raises the bolt cutters again.

CHRISTINA

Now, I've had enough of that out of
you. Go on. Beat it.

The monster begins to approach her again. CHRISTINA swings the
bolt cutters at it again, trying to ward it off.

CHRISTINA

Go on! Get lost, I'm not interested!
Bart! Bart!

The monster catches the bolt cutter and wrenches it away from
her. She is disarmed, and puts up her hands as her only defense.
The monster swings at her, there is a crack, and cut to black.

INT. SCENE - CAVERN.

Deep in the earth, apparently, and totally dark. There is a
scratching and a scraping. By and by, a light appears down in
the corner, as something displaces the stones making up the cav-
ern. After a few stones have been moved, the light moves into
the cavern, pushed ahead of a creature much like a large wood
louse (BENNY) who creeps into the chamber. As BENNY enters, the
sound of a commotion seeps into the chamber behind him. He
stands up and shines the light around, revealing the gargoyle
eggs that are at the center of the chamber. He leans down to the
opening.

BENNY

They're here!

DELILAH (OFF)

Are they all right?

BENNY

Hang on.

BENNY quickly shines the light around on the eggs, examining them thoroughly.

BENNY
Yeah, they look fine, no damage.

DELILAH (OFF)
Okay. Can you roll them back here?

BENNY
No problem.

BENNY takes up one of the eggs and very gingerly sets it in the tunnel he came from, and rolls it in.

DELILAH (OFF)
Gently, now.

BENNY
I know.

INT. SCENE - LABYRINTH. COMMON AREA.

In the wreckage of the old Labyrinth, DELILAH, TALON, and MATT BLUESTONE circle the little tunnel dug through the rubble leading into the chamber. Behind them are angry voices yelling at them indistinctly. The first egg rolls out in front of BENNY. DELILAH picks it up and looks it over.

DELILAH
It's a miracle. No damage.

BLUESTONE
Thank goodness for that.

TALON
Yeah.

BENNY
You want all three?

DELILAH
Yes.

BENNY
Coming up.

BENNY retreats into the tunnel.

BLUESTONE

That's a relief. I don't know what Goliath would do if we lost these.

DELILAH

Don't jinx it. We still got to get the others and then we gotta get them past all that out there.

BLUESTONE

Yeah.

INT. SCENE - TUNNEL.

In the tunnel, a group of tunnel workers are loudly protesting against the move. They are being held back by a police line that includes Sgt. MORGAN MORGAN and several others. There is a scuffle as one of the workers tries to rush through the line but is restrained.

INT. SCENE - LABYRINTH. COMMON AREA.

The second egg is rolling to the mouth of the rescue tunnel. BLUESTONE picks up this one and turns it carefully.

BLUESTONE

This one looks all right, too.

DELILAH

One to go, then.

BLUESTONE

This one's Broadway and Angela's?

DELILAH

That one...I don't remember now. It's been, what, four years?

BLUESTONE

Yeah. Back during the election. That's how I remember it.

TALON

Works for you, I guess.

BLUESTONE

It does. Sorry. But we got to mark the time somehow. It gets by so fast.

TALON

Not fast enough, sometimes.

DELILAH

They're all the clan's children, really.

BLUESTONE

Right. I still remember Goliath going to the Rookery that first night, with all the eggs there. Proud papa he was, too. He was just beaming.

DELILAH

I bet.

TALON

Excuse me.

TALON steps away toward the tunnel. BLUESTONE looks after him.

BLUESTONE

Is he all right?

DELILAH

He's still mad about moving, I think. Keeps complaining about having to be Goliath's babysitter, too.

BLUESTONE

Oh.

The third egg rolls out of the rescue tunnel. DELILAH gets a hand out to keep it from rolling away as BENNIE exits the tunnel and stands.

BENNIE

That's it. They all look fine to me.

DELILAH

Good. You can carry this one?

BENNIE

Sure. Where are we going?

DELILAH

There's a closet up in the old Terminal
that should work.

BENNIE

Lead the way.

He picks up the egg gently and the three of them head for the
tunnel.

BLUESTONE

Let me go first. Watch yourselves.

He takes up the lead, with BENNIE and DELILAH following.

INT. SCENE - TUNNEL.

As BLUESTONE enters the tunnel, the shouting from the crowd in-
tensifies. MORGAN looks over to BLUESTONE, who nods at him as
BENNIE and DELILAH enter the tunnel. There is suddenly a blaze
of light: the news is there, filming the move.

MORGAN

All right! Keep 'em back!

The officers stiffen the line and work to keep the protestors
back. BLUESTONE, BENNIE, and DELILAH, guarding the eggs, proceed
down the tunnel. TALON enters the tunnel and follows them as the
shouting intensifies:

WORKER 1

Go on! Get 'em outta here!

WORKER 2

Send 'em after the rest of those
freaks!

WORKER 3

C'mon, officer, do your job! They're
the problem go take care of 'em!

WORKER 4

Go on, get outta my city!

This last speaker hurls a brickbat at the group. It strikes BEN-
NY on the back. He is unaffected.

DELILAH

Bennie, you all right?

BENNIE
Physically?

DELILAH
Yeah.

BENNIE
Yeah, fine.

MORGAN
Hold the line!

There is a shower of other trash that gets flung at the retreating group. BENNIE cradles his egg a little lower, as does BLUESTONE, both trying to shield it from the assault, as DELILAH spreads her wings slightly to shield hers. She takes much of the assault. A bottle smashes against the back of TALON's head, and he turns and growls at the crowd, which only spurs them on.

BLUESTONE
Talon! Come on. Not going to win that fight tonight.

TALON
Doesn't mean I don't want to have it.

DELILAH
Not now.

TALON turns and follows the group, intensifying the jeers from behind him. The group finally gets clear of them.

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. PLATFORM LEVEL.

BLUESTONE, BENNIE, DELILAH, and TALON enter the Terminal, the shouts of the crowd dying off behind them. As the others make their way to the stairs leading up, TALON remains at the doorway, looking out. MAGGIE comes over to him.

MAGGIE
Derek?

TALON leans his head up against the door frame, and thumps his fist against the wall, listening to the shouts from up the tunnel. MAGGIE takes his shoulder. Behind them, BLUESTONE hands off the egg to MALIBU and directs him to follow the others up the stairs to the upper level, and then returns to TALON. As he does, MORGAN appears at the doorway.

MORGAN

Hey, we got that hothead who chucked the bottle at you. You want to press charges on him?

TALON

No. Let him go.

BLUESTONE

Well, you may not, but I do. Book him in for assault, maybe give him something to think about next time.

MORGAN

Sure thing, boss.

MORGAN exits.

TALON

And what's the point of that?

BLUESTONE

Like I said, give him something to think about next time he decides to bother you guys.

TALON

You think that works? You think that makes any difference at all?

BLUESTONE

Maybe. Maybe we just fight back the best we can.

TALON

Yeah.

He has nothing more to say to BLUESTONE. MAGGIE looks back at him, and expresses her thanks with a look. BLUESTONE nods and moves off as the shouts echo through the tunnel.

INT SCENE - BLUESTONE'S OFFICE.

BLUESTONE sits at his desk. He is fiddling with the golden stake he collected back in Episode 3, just turning it over and over in his fingers and on the desk, thinking. As he does, there is a knock at the door, and ELISA enters.

BLUESTONE

Hey, partner.

ELISA

Hey. Everything go alright?

BLUESTONE

Relatively. All the eggs made it through safely, anyway. We wound up booking one guy for chucking a bottle at Talon.

ELISA

Assault?

BLUESTONE

That's as much as we could get, yeah.

ELISA

It isn't much.

BLUESTONE

Huh. You sound like him. He said the same thing.

ELISA

He's not wrong.

BLUESTONE

He's not, but what else do I do?

There is another knock at the door: it is MORGAN, with a file in his hand.

MORGAN

Hi, Cap. Excuse me.

ELISA

Hi, Morgan.

MORGAN

Got the report for that hothead ready for you.

BLUESTONE

Thanks.

MORGAN

Sorry to interrupt.

ELISA

Not at all. In fact, I may have something for both of you.

BLUESTONE

Yeah? What's that?

INT. SCENE - ELISA'S OFFICE.

This office is much like BLUESTONE's, although the walls are hung with a number of news clippings relating to the gargoyles and their victories, as well as a group picture with Goliath and Brooklyn posing with the members of the GTF (as it then was) and ELISA. ELISA is sitting at her desk, with BLUESTONE and MORGAN flanking her.

ELISA

Detectives got this one this morning.
We had a bodega turned over last night.
You will want to see this.

On her computer, she plays the video. It is surveillance video, and shows the back of a small bodega. Initially it is quiet.

BLUESTONE

I'm gonna get ahead of things and guess
this isn't an ordinary robbery.

ELISA

No, just watch.

On the video, there is a crash as the front of the store caves in. Through the debris wades the monster, which scrapes the shelves clean and begins to root through the pile of debris. It finally finds what it wants, which is a small can. It rips its teeth into the can, and then sits up, putting its face in view of the camera. ELISA freezes the frame. BLUESTONE and MORGAN contemplate what is shown.

ELISA

There.

MORGAN

Oooh.

BLUESTONE

Right.

ELISA

We know it isn't a gargoyle, but it's near enough--

BLUESTONE

Right. Just inside the line.

MORGAN

A Mutate?

ELISA

Maybe.

BLUESTONE

Doesn't look much like any of Talon's group, though. What's the damage?

ELISA

Other than wrecking the front door, not much.

MORGAN

The door and the mystery meat?

BLUESTONE

What?

MORGAN

Yeah.

ELISA

He's right. Third one this week, and the only thing taken was from the variety meats shelf. Potted meat food product, Vienna sausages, stuff like that.

MORGAN

Silkworm pupae.

BLUESTONE

What? What do you know about those?

MORGAN

Academy prank. Some horrors a cop doesn't shake, you know?

BLUESTONE

Good to have you on the case, then.

ELISA

Upstairs wants to intercept this, but it's not really a robbery case. Gargoyle Relations is the closest we got.

BLUESTONE

Is that it, or are you worried that the regulars are going to plug this thing if they find it?

ELISA

It had crossed my mind, yes.

BLUESTONE

I think we ought to talk to Talon, soon as we can.

MORGAN

You think it's one of his?

BLUESTONE

No, but I think it could become one of his. I want to warn him as much as check in with him.

ELISA

We've tracked them, and we don't have much, but it's kind of working down the east side. We're already planning to watch a couple of stores over there the next couple of nights, but wanted to get you tied in too.

BLUESTONE

Yeah, good thought.

MORGAN

I got a couple of guys who can come in. They've been itching to do something on nights besides paperwork anyway.

BLUESTONE

Yeah, do that. I want to lay eyes on this too.

The video loops around as the monster rips into the can of pot-
ted meat and devours its contents.

EXT. SCENE - STREET. (NIGHT)

An unmarked patrol car sits across the street from a typical bodega. Traffic is relatively light as it is late into the evening. Out of the door comes Sgt. MORGAN, carrying four cans of soft drinks. He comes around to the passenger side of the car, sets two cans on top, and opens the door. He passes the other two cans to BLUESTONE, who is in the driver's seat.

MORGAN

Here. Good for what ails you.

BLUESTONE

Thanks.

BLUESTONE eyes the ingredients list on the can as MORGAN takes the other two cans, gets in, and shuts the door.

BLUESTONE

Zow. You drink this rocket fuel?

MORGAN

Eh, not my usual brand, but it's what they got.

BLUESTONE

Shocking.

MORGAN

You work nights, you do what you gotta do.

BLUESTONE

Yeah, but, making it to fifty's on my list of things I gotta do, too.

MORGAN

(opening his can)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Here's to ya.

BLUESTONE opens his, and clinks cans with MORGAN.

BLUESTONE

To the monster patrol.

They drink. BLUESTONE gags slightly.

MORGAN

Bit potent, boss?

BLUESTONE

There must be a pound of sugar in that.

MORGAN

Selling point.

The lights go off in the store, and the owner exits, locking the door and rolling down the security gate behind him.

BLUESTONE

That'll be closing time for him, at least.

MORGAN

Yeah. Now it's really nighttime.

BLUESTONE picks up the radio.

BLUESTONE

G.R.U. One to units, you guys ready?

HARRIS (ON RADIO)

G.R.U. Two, on the spot.

TRAVANTI (ON RADIO)

G.R.U. Three, ready. Nothing much here.

CHUNG (ON RADIO)

G.R.U. Four, ready.

BLUESTONE puts down the radio. He and MORGAN contemplate for a moment between sips of energy drink.

MORGAN

Hey, boss?

BLUESTONE

Yeah?

MORGAN

You think this really could be one of Talon's guys?

BLUESTONE

I doubt it. He's got a lot better control of them than this.

MORGAN

Thailog, then?

BLUESTONE

Yeah. Maybe. Except he aims a bit higher. I mean, why would he be rolling little stores? That's not his style.

MORGAN

No, I guess not.

BLUESTONE

His, or Demona's.

MORGAN

No. Well...

BLUESTONE

What?

MORGAN

You don't think Demona would come up with something that eats bodega meats?

BLUESTONE

Well...

MORGAN

I mean, it seems like the kind of random--

BLUESTONE

She'd be more likely to make it eat human meat, you know? I can't see her sparing the people in the stores if she could help it. Anyway, she tends to be a bit more flamboyant.

MORGAN

I guess.

He sips his drink.

BLUESTONE

You know what I'm worried about?

MORGAN

No, what's that?

BLUESTONE

Sevarius.

MORGAN

Yeah, well...yeah.

BLUESTONE

He's been quiet a long while. It just sort of feels like he ought to be popping up again.

MORGAN

Bite your tongue.

BLUESTONE

I know. But if this is anyone's work, it just feels like his M.O. Make up a creature, turn it loose--

TRAVANTI (ON RADIO)

G.R.U. Three to One, got something.

BLUESTONE takes up the radio.

BLUESTONE

G.R.U. One, coming. Two and Four, hold your positions for now.

He starts the car and pulls out into the street, lights flashing.

EXT. SCENE - A DIFFERENT STREET. (NIGHT)

BLUESTONE pulls up on a different bodega, outside of which are PHIL TRAVANTI and another detective, JESSE LOZANO. There are a couple of crashing noises inside the shop. BLUESTONE and MORGAN get out of the car and approach the others.

BLUESTONE

You saw it?

TRAVANTI

No, but we sure heard it. It must have come up the back.

BLUESTONE

Any idea what it is, or who it is?

The front window shatters as a shelving unit is pitched into the street. The police duck out of the way.

TRAVANTI

I'm guessing it's about that big, for one thing.

BLUESTONE

We gotta get eyes on this. Morgan?

MORGAN

Lead on.

MORGAN draws his gun and holds it at his side.

BLUESTONE

You guys hold the line outside and you hold your fire, understand? I don't want to have to clean up an incident here.

TRAVANTI

Yes, sir.

BLUESTONE and MORGAN step through the shattered window of the bodega and disappear inside as the two detectives wait outside.

INT. SCENE - BODEGA.

Inside, it is very dark. Already the front of the shop is disintegrating under the influence of whatever is there, which continues to roil the back of the store, in pitch darkness. BLUESTONE draws his gun and holds it up at his side as he picks his way through the wreckage, followed by MORGAN.

BLUESTONE

All right back there. Police. Come out of there and keep your hands in sight.

MORGAN

(quietly)

Or whatever you got for hands.

The thing in back keeps rummaging, and then stops. There is a sudden grating sound. From the back of the store a small object whips toward BLUESTONE and MORGAN. It hits the front wall of the store and bounces back toward them, skittering across the floor. The label lands facing up. What is left of it reads, "--INS IN MILK GRAVY". A white goop drips from the remnant of the can.

BLUESTONE

Dinner time again, I guess?

MORGAN

Don't say that.

BLUESTONE

Listen, back there. We're with Gargoyle Relations. We're not here to shoot you or anything like that. We just want you to stop tearing up stores. If you need some kind of help, we can get it for you.

There is suddenly a growl from the back of the store as the monster strides quickly forward. It backhands MORGAN in the process, sending him sprawling, and leaps for the shattered front window.

BLUESTONE

No, don't!

EXT. SCENE - SECOND BODEGA. STREET. (NIGHT)

Out on the street, the monster leaps, rolls forward, and lands on its feet. It runs. LOZANO pulls his gun and begins firing after it. BLUESTONE jumps out of the window, in pursuit, but is halted by the gunfire.

BLUESTONE

Hold it! Hold your fire!

LOZANO puts up his gun. The monster has gone, anyway. BLUESTONE holsters his gun and goes to LOZANO.

BLUESTONE

I told you to hold your fire!

LOZANO

It was getting away. It did get away.

BLUESTONE

And did it come after you?

TRAVANTI

No, sir, it did not.

LOZANO scowls at TRAVANTI briefly before facing BLUESTONE again. Meanwhile, MORGAN comes out of the store.

BLUESTONE

Then what business did you have firing on it?

LOZANO

It could be a menace. Look at what it did here.

BLUESTONE

All we got is malicious mischief right now. Is that a capital offense all of a sudden?

LOZANO

No, sir.

BLUESTONE

Or maybe shoplifting?

LOZANO

No, sir.

BLUESTONE

Was it heading for anyone else?

LOZANO

Not that I could see.

BLUESTONE

Then what do you expect to put down on the use of force paperwork, huh?

LOZANO squirms a bit but has no answer.

BLUESTONE

You go see Captain Maza at the end of your shift, you hear me?

LOZANO

Yes, Inspector.

BLUESTONE

Travanti, call Internal Affairs, get the typewriters going.

TRAVANTI

Yes, sir.

BLUESTONE, agitated, straightens his shoulder holster and turns to go assist MORGAN. LOZANO turns to TRAVANTI.

LOZANO

Thanks a lot, pal. Good job covering my back.

TRAVANTI

Now, come on, he has a point. You shoot him down and the Gargoyle Guild guys are gonna be all over the department.

LOZANO

Like it's the first time, or something. The Giggles have been riding us for years. Easy enough for them, anyway. They're sitting at home grasping their pearls over this kind of thing. We're the ones having to deal with it face-to-face.

TRAVANTI

Yeah, we are. Let me tell you something about that, though. You get them mad, it's gonna come back down on me and Morgan and Chung and all the rest of us. So who's covering whose back, here?

LOZANO

Yeah. Well.

TRAVANTI turns to go.

TRAVANTI

See you at bowling.

LOZANO

Yeh. Sure.

LOZANO exits. At the front of the store, a wolf appears, sniffing around. It looks up to camera, its eyes glowing, and then jumps inside.

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. PLATFORM LEVEL.

BLUESTONE and MORGAN are walking the platform alongside TALON and MAGGIE. MORGAN keeps looking around in wonder at the Terminal. Around them are several of the Labyrinth people going about their business.

TALON

What'd he look like?

BLUESTONE

Tall, but not crazy tall, maybe six feet. Gray. Gray and kind of scaly.

MORGAN

Big teeth, too.

TALON

Big teeth. Uh-huh. And, uh, looking around here, you see anyone matching that description?

BLUESTONE

No.

TALON

Then why bother me about this? I got enough to deal with on my own.

BLUESTONE

I know.

TALON

Those tunnel guys are--you see what they painted on the wall outside of here?

BLUESTONE

Yeah, I did.

TALON

You know I had one of them shooting in here with a pellet gun last night? Yelling something about he hoped he got our eggs so there'd be less of us? That's just the printable parts.

BLUESTONE

I know.

TALON

And now you want me to answer for some mutate that I have never seen?

BLUESTONE

No, that's not it.

TALON

Then what, Inspector? What do you want from me?

BLUESTONE

I want you to keep an eye out. I don't know who or what this is, but I do have a feeling it may show up here eventually and I want you to look out if it does.

TALON

And?

BLUESTONE

And let us know. Let me know if it turns up here.

TALON

And then what do you plan to do?

BLUESTONE

Maybe nothing. If it's fine, if you got him, let him stay here. But it didn't seem reasonable earlier tonight. I don't want it tearing you guys up.

TALON

No chance of that. We got no calf's brains in stock down here.

BLUESTONE

Just be careful, all right?

TALON

For once, huh?

MAGGIE

Talon!

He stops and looks at her. She is giving him a fierce look. TALON sighs and relaxes slightly.

TALON

Yeah, all right. Thanks for the heads-up.

MORGAN

And if you start having serious trouble with the tunnel guys again, let me know that.

TALON

Why? What are you going to do about it?

MORGAN

Keep the peace. Same as always.

TALON

Don't know why you bother.

He walks away. BLUESTONE follows, trying to reason with him.

MORGAN

He's in a rough spot.

MAGGIE

Yes, he is. Are you surprised?

MORGAN

I'd hoped it would have gone better for him. For all of you.

MAGGIE

So had I.

MORGAN

And, I mean, this place isn't so bad, is it? It's not home, I guess, but still...

MAGGIE

No. On the face of it it's not bad.

MORGAN

On the face of it, huh?

MAGGIE

Well, I mean...we had eighteen years in the Labyrinth.

MORGAN

Lot of history to get past.

MAGGIE

Yes. On the other hand, we can't get past some of it quick enough.

MORGAN takes her hand in his hands and smiles gently at her. She scoffs, and smiles back at him.

INT. SCENE - HOSPITAL ROOM.

BART lies in bed in a semi-private room, asleep. His shoulder is bandaged. Gradually, groggily, he awakens. DOCTOR LARCH enters and comes to his bed.

LARCH

Hello there. Finally awake?

BART

Partly. What's happening?

LARCH

How much do you remember?

BART

Oh, um...not much.

LARCH

You came into the emergency room this morning with your shoulder all cut up. Do you have any idea how?

BART

No.

LARCH

I see.

A police detective enters and comes to the bed.

DETECTIVE

Good morning. All right if I ask a couple of questions?

BART

You can ask.

LARCH

Should be all right.

DETECTIVE

What's your name?

BART

Chris Kimball.

DETECTIVE

And your license says your name is Bartholomew Notaro. What's that, a typo?

BART

No, it's not. That's my name.

DETECTIVE

Mr. Notaro, where were you last night?

BART

I don't know. I don't remember.

DETECTIVE 2

You sure? You might not be in trouble here, you know. It looks like you might have been shot last night, and if that's true--

BART

If that were true, you think I'd remember it, right?

DETECTIVE

Yeah, I hope so.

BART

Keep hoping, but I don't remember it.

DETECTIVE

Any idea where you were?

BART

No.

DETECTIVE

What you were doing?

BART

No.

DETECTIVE
Out partying a bit hard, or...

BART
No.

DETECTIVE
I see.

He scribbles a couple of notes on his notebook and then closes it.

DETECTIVE
Well, I got nothing to go on, then. Get well soon.

BART
Sure.

DETECTIVE 2 and LARCH exit. As they do, BART's face softens and the fear comes into his eyes. He puts his head back and shuts his eyes.

BART
No, no, not again, not happening...

INT. SCENE - BLUESTONE'S OFFICE.

BLUESTONE sits at his desk a few days later. He has a map of Manhattan open, with dots drawn and circled on it showing where the latest assaults have taken place. He is studying it, running his finger over the map, tracing routes, and thinking. As he does, ELISA comes to the door. She taps on the door, and BLUESTONE looks up.

ELISA
Are you busy?

BLUESTONE
Yeah. Come in.

He folds up the map. ELISA shuts the door behind her, which BLUESTONE notices.

BLUESTONE
This is a closed-door kind of visit, then.

ELISA

Yeah, about the other night.

BLUESTONE

I should have known. What's on your mind, Cap?

ELISA

You do know he was acting to protect the city against a clear and present danger, right?

BLUESTONE

What?

ELISA

A slobbering beast was roaming the streets and ravaging small businesses. What other choice did he have?

BLUESTONE

Is that what he told you?

ELISA

That's what his attorney told me.

BLUESTONE

And you believe him?

ELISA

I don't want to. But it has happened. You know that as well as I do.

BLUESTONE

It didn't happen this time, though. I was there.

ELISA

And what did you see?

BLUESTONE

I saw something that wasn't human. I saw it eating and then I saw it run. It never attacked us.

ELISA

Except Morgan.

BLUESTONE

It just knocked him out of the way,
that's all.

ELISA

And you're going to defend it doing
that?

BLUESTONE

No! Of course not. But I'm not going to
see it killed just because it knocks
over a bodega and then knocks over one
of my guys.

ELISA

I see.

BLUESTONE

You have some doubts about that?

ELISA

I don't know what to think about it.

BLUESTONE

Are you sure?

ELISA

Matt.

BLUESTONE

What?

ELISA

No, I'm not sure.

BLUESTONE

How come?

ELISA

There is a reason why I couldn't take
the G.R.U. You know as well as I do.

BLUESTONE

Yeah.

ELISA

I have to look at these things impar-
tially. I'm talking about wounding
someone's career over this.

BLUESTONE

Versus him wounding some thing out there that might have done nothing worse than some property damage.

ELISA

I know.

BLUESTONE

Or worse. I told him, flatly, "hold your fire." He didn't.

ELISA

He still has a right to defend himself. He still has a duty to defend the city.

BLUESTONE

So he should defend it! Not shoot at it!

ELISA

You're going to take this creature's side against an experienced detective?

BLUESTONE

Yes. Right up until it does something to deserve being shot. Which it did not.

ELISA looks at him, and smiles. BLUESTONE shakes his head.

BLUESTONE

It went something like that?

ELISA

Just about. But I also worked in a point about stray bullets endangering the community.

BLUESTONE

And?

ELISA

Fourteen days off, no pay. The most I could get for him. But his lawyer was fighting it all the way.

BLUESTONE

And how many times did he bring up your history?

ELISA

Every chance he could.

BLUESTONE

Figures. It really figures.

ELISA

How are you getting along?

BLUESTONE

I'm not. I thought it was moving downtown, but it's doubled back now. I don't know where it's going.

ELISA

And still all bodegas?

BLUESTONE

Yeah, pretty much. You talk to Goliath recently?

ELISA

He's fine. Sends his regards, says thanks for protecting the eggs.

BLUESTONE

Just like that?

ELISA

He's not the effusive type. You know he means it.

BLUESTONE

I know. I kind of wish he were here to help with this, though.

ELISA

Just this?

BLUESTONE

All of it. Everything. Arrgh.

He rubs his face.

BLUESTONE

This thing is getting to me. I got to go get some air.

He stands.

BLUESTONE

You in?

ELISA

Not tonight, sorry.

BLUESTONE

All right. Hey, if you get time, go talk to Talon. He needs it.

ELISA

Yeah.

BLUESTONE puts on his coat and heads for the door.

ELISA

Hey, Matt?

BLUESTONE

Yeah?

ELISA

That detective's lawyer's with the Quarrymen.

He stops and looks at her.

ELISA

I'm working to transfer him out, but it'll be a while. I thought you should know that.

BLUESTONE

I wish I could say I was surprised.

ELISA

Just watch out for yourself.

BLUESTONE

Yeah. And you.

He opens the door and exits.

EXT. SCENE - SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' MONUMENT. (NIGHT)

BLUESTONE walks up on the monument and looks out to the west. It is a clear night. The stars are shining and the lights of New Jersey are shining across the Hudson. He leans up on the rail, pondering.

BLUESTONE

So what do we got? We got a thing that's just taking down bodegas, eating all sort of weird canned meat, and not doing much else. No rhyme or reason to it, no pattern beyond that, and no way to tell where it'll go next.

He sighs, and leans forward. Along side him, a canine face appears: a wolf (HAL) puts its paws up on the rail alongside him and looks out, too.

BLUESTONE

And that's besides all the rest of what is going on down in the Labyrinth. Man, when it rains, it pours. And now here I am, talking to a dog.

He reaches out and scratches HAL behind the ears. HAL reacts with pleasure.

BLUESTONE

What do you think, pup? Hm? Think I can solve this one?

HAL

(Minnesotan accent)

Yeah, I do, but I hope you don't right away, because that really feels good.

BLUESTONE recoils at the voice. HAL looks up at him.

HAL

I don't normally let people do that, either, but you seem like a nice type.

BLUESTONE

What?

HAL

I'm sorry, I don't mean to startle you. Are you all right?

BLUESTONE

Yes, um, I just didn't expect...

HAL

Oh, yah, we get that a lot, y'know.

From behind them, another wolf approaches.

RUTH

Whatcha got there, Hal?

HAL

It's that policeman from the other night, Ruth. He's a nice fella, too.

RUTH

Let me see him.

RUTH, the other wolf, comes around and looks at BLUESTONE, who is beginning to get over his shock.

RUTH

Oh, yah, he seems nice. A little dis-combobulated, maybe.

HAL

Well, you know, we only just met.

RUTH

Oh, yah.

BLUESTONE

Hello, there.

HAL

You got a name there, officer?

BLUESTONE

Yeah, it's Inspector Matt Bluestone, NYPD.

HAL

Hello, Inspector. I'm Hal. This is Ruth.

RUTH

Hi there.

HAL

You were at that convenience store the other night, right? The one that thing came out of?

BLUESTONE

Yeah.

HAL

There, you see, Ruth, I told you we could find him.

RUTH

Well, of course we did. Still, I bet it's that other guy that he'd be interested in finding, am I right?

BLUESTONE

The guy who broke out of the store, you mean?

RUTH

That's the one.

BLUESTONE

Yes, I would.

HAL

Well, we got some good news for you, then.

RUTH

Oh, yeah.

BLUESTONE

What's that?

HAL

We traced him back. We know where he came from.

BLUESTONE

You do?

HAL

Yeah. You want to see?

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY.

BLUESTONE enters, flanked by HAL and RUTH, who promptly begin to explore. BLUESTONE shines a light around in the space, the light landing on the abandoned tool bags of the two scrap metal thieves. HAL and RUTH snuffle around a bit; HAL approaches BART's tool bag, sniffs at it, and then looks up.

HAL

Oh, yah, this is it right here. He held on to this.

RUTH

I think you're right about that, Hal. Seems like he went back this way, too.

HAL

You think so?

RUTH

Yah, well, I'm not too, too sure about that, but I think it could be.

HAL

I think you're probably right, there. Oh, look at this mess here.

He points out the puddle of goop under the pipe that BART had been trying to cut. BLUESTONE shines his light on it. Meanwhile, RUTH goes back into the depths of the laboratory.

HAL

Oop, don't get too close to that one, Inspector. I don't think it'd be too healthy for you.

BLUESTONE

You can smell that?

HAL

Yah, well, it smells really different, it does. Kind of not too good.

BLUESTONE

I'll take your word for that.

RUTH (OFF)

Hal, honey?

HAL

Yah, Ruth?

RUTH (OFF)

Would you say that smells a lot like the ore dock over in Twin Harbors?

HAL

Yah, well, kind of like that.

RUTH (OFF)

'Cause I think he went back here to clean himself off.

HAL

Oh, yah?

RUTH (OFF)

Yah, pretty sure of it. Smells about right.

HAL

D'you want to come in here and check it?

RUTH (OFF)

Yah, I better. Be right there.

HAL

Okay.

BLUESTONE

Do you mind a personal question?

HAL

Well, if it's not too personal, sure.

BLUESTONE

What brought you to Manhattan? Not this, right?

HAL

No, no. I mean, we're glad to help you out and all, but we didn't know all this was going on.

BLUESTONE

So what was it?

HAL

It's hard to put it. I don't know how best to describe it, but it just sorta feels like something is going on. Ruth's got it worse than me, haven't you, Ruth?

RUTH enters from the hallway.

RUTH

Yah, it's kind of like, you know when you have someone using a vacuum cleaner a couple of rooms away, and you can hear it? It's like that.

BLUESTONE

I'm sorry, I don't get it.

RUTH

Well, it's hard to get, anyway. I'm trying to think of a good way to explain it. But all the other where--um.

HAL

Oh, go ahead, Ruth. He got us right away, I think he can take it.

BLUESTONE

All the what?

RUTH

All the other werewolves say they feel the same thing.

BLUESTONE looks at both of them. They return the look, somewhat sheepishly.

BLUESTONE

All? All the other?

HAL

Werewolves, yah. Ruth and me, and a few others.

BLUESTONE

But, um...

HAL

Oh, no, no, no. Don't be worried about that.

RUTH

No. We're very happy like this. We don't mean any harm to you or anything.

HAL

That's right.

BLUESTONE

But you were human once?

HAL

Well, I was. Ruth here, she was born wild.

RUTH

Oh, he says the nicest things, you know that?

HAL

But I couldn't get away from her. You never get away from your soulmate, y'-know? So here we are.

RUTH

Yah, that's right. How long is it, five years now?

HAL

Yah. Five years, one of them happy.

RUTH

Oh, stop it. You kidder.

BLUESTONE

And you're all in Manhattan now?

HAL

No, no. Most of us stayed up at the farm, out near Chicago.

BLUESTONE

That's a long way.

HAL

You're telling me. But we had to--

RUTH

Hold up. Sorry, Hal, but hold on a sec.

HAL

What is it?

RUTH

Listen a sec.

They listen. The hair begins to go up on HAL and RUTH's necks.

HAL

You think it's coming?

RUTH

Yah, I think that's the case.

HAL

All right then. Inspector, would you mind taking the center?

BLUESTONE

Center of what?

RUTH

If you could just be right about here. That creature's about to come right through that door there. And, Hal, you take the left side?

HAL

You got it.

They take their positions. From the hallway comes a growl. BLUESTONE draws his gun and holds it up. Slowly, the monster comes into the light. It stares down BLUESTONE, and begins to come toward him more quickly. But before it gets too far, HAL and RUTH leap onto it. Sinking their teeth in, they begin to yank the monster around. It shakes RUTH off, and then tries to shake HAL off, but he holds on. He digs his paws into the ground and pulls the monster to its knees. BLUESTONE aims at the monster's head.

BLUESTONE

Stop! Police!

The monster is supremely unimpressed, though, and backhands BLUESTONE's gun out of his hands, and then grabs onto him, pulling him in close. He is thwarted in his efforts, though, as RUTH lands a vicious bite to the back of his neck, yanking on

it. The monster flings BLUESTONE over the lab benches, and he hits the wall and falls to the floor. The monster begins clawing at its back, trying to get hold of RUTH, but she stays out of his reach. The monster begins to flail around, shaking HAL loose. He goes back in again, diving at the monster's shoulder. It squeals, and whirls around trying to get free, but only succeeds in knocking a bench over. A broken gas line ignites, and fire begins to spread. HAL releases the monster and looks back over toward BLUESTONE, who is staggering to his feet. HAL calls out to RUTH:

HAL

Ruth! I think it's about time you left that thing be, it's getting kinda hot in here.

RUTH

Okay, Hal, be right there. Go help that Inspector fella for me, would you?

HAL

Okay.

HAL goes over to BLUESTONE, takes his wrist in his mouth, and begins to lead him outside. Meanwhile, RUTH gives one more sharp twist with her jaws, and then springs free of the monster and bolts for the exit. She and HAL lead BLUESTONE out. The monster flails briefly, but then gets to its feet and pursues them. RUTH turns and growls sharply at him, and he suddenly changes course and leaps out of a window, and is gone. The fire in the lab continues to grow.

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. PLATFORM LEVEL.

From the stairway, BLUESTONE descends to platform level, followed by HAL and RUTH. TALON is there, sees them coming, and gives BLUESTONE a peeved look. BENNIE and ERIN (his sister, a human-turtle mutata) come over to greet them, along with a few of the others in the Labyrinth.

TALON

For crying out loud, Bluestone. I'm not taking in more strays. We're full enough already.

RUTH

We're not strays.

HAL

Yah, don't'cha know that's right.

TALON

Bluestone, what is this?

BLUESTONE

Talon, I'd like to introduce Hal and Ruth, two werewolves visiting New York. Hal, Ruth, this is Talon. He leads the Labyrinth Clan.

HAL

Nice to meet ya.

RUTH

Hi.

TALON

I'm not running a hostel here. First Goliath leaves his eggs here, now you're bringing in two mutts here--

HAL

Hey.

TALON

Who else is coming? You got any family members, maybe a stray cousin or two we can put up while we're at it?

BLUESTONE

Talon, listen.

TALON

No, forget it. I am not here to house anyone who just happens to stop by. You're out of luck.

HAL

Yeah, well, leave it to an overgrown black cat to know a thing or two about out of luck, huh?

TALON

What did you say?

RUTH
(growling)
Halvor!

HAL
What?

RUTH
That was uncalled for. There's no reason for you to be uncivil. Now apologize.

HAL puts his ears back and ducks his head down at the rebuke.

HAL
I'm sorry, Mr. Talon. That was out of line.

RUTH
That's better. Now, Mr. Talon--

TALON
It's just Talon, it's fine.

RUTH
Talon, we don't mean to impose on you. We've been talking it over. Hal and I know the scent of this creature now. Inspector Bluestone thinks it'd be a good idea for at least one of us to be here in case it comes a'calling, so you'd get a good early warning.

BLUESTONE
Right.

TALON
Two werewolves.

RUTH
Right.

TALON
Very polite werewolves.

RUTH
We strive to be. Most of the time.

HAL ducks his head again slightly at this rebuke, as TALON looks at both of them.

RUTH

I know it may be a bit constitutionally difficult, but we're not meaning to make trouble at all. At least not for most of you.

BLUESTONE

They did tackle that creature capably enough.

TALON finally shrugs.

TALON

All right. Have it your way.

RUTH

Thank you.

TALON walks away, shaking his head in disbelief. HAL goes over to RUTH, head down.

HAL

I'm sorry, love.

RUTH

I know you are, darling. It's been a hard night already for both of us.

BLUESTONE

I'll leave you here. Thanks for your help tonight, but I need to go follow up on a couple of things.

RUTH

Oh, sure. Don't you worry about us, we'll be fine.

BLUESTONE goes back up the stairs and exits.

ERIN

Real werewolves?

HAL

Yes, miss.

BENNIE

Why do you talk like that?

RUTH

Well, it's how we grew up, out on the
Iron Range, y'know.

HAL

Yah.

EXT. SCENE - POLICE STATION. STREET. (MORNING)

There is a crowd protesting outside of the police station. The protestors are divided into three camps: one protesting the lack of action to contain the beast smashing up small stores, one protesting the failure of the G.R.U. to bring back the gargoyles to help, one arguing that all the freaks should be banished. It is a general melee between the groups, and the police have a hard time keeping things contained. Through the crowd wades BLUESTONE, and he draws the ire of all the groups, who yell at him and throw their signs in his face. With difficulty, he fights his way into the building.

INT. SCENE - POLICE STATION. G.R.U. OFFICES.

BLUESTONE enters the bullpen. Several of his officers are at their desks, working excitedly. ELISA and MORGAN are together at one desk, and both look up as BLUESTONE comes in. They go to him.

MORGAN

Morning, Inspector. Got some news for
you. Traced that lab you called about.

BLUESTONE

Morning. Great to hear. My office.

They go to his office.

INT. SCENE - BLUESTONE'S OFFICE.

BLUESTONE puts up his coat and begins firing up the coffeepot in his office as they begin to explain the situation.

ELISA

You get any sleep at all last night?

BLUESTONE

No. I had to drop off a couple of werewolves with Talon, and, you know, when I took this job I never thought I'd be saying that sort of thing seriously.

MORGAN

The ownership records are a bit tangled, but not too bad. Shell company inside a shell company.

BLUESTONE

And the inner shell?

ELISA

An old friend. Gen-U-Tech.

BLUESTONE

No. Seriously?

MORGAN

That's what all the records point to.

ELISA

It gets better, though. I had a word with Alexander this morning. He looked it up, and Xanatos has been out of that building for years. They had it leased out.

BLUESTONE

Yeah? Who's got it now?

ELISA

Nobody now. It's a wreck. More so after last night, but they evicted the last tenant after the storm.

BLUESTONE

But who had it last?

ELISA

He says they'd rented it to something called Central Control. And the signatory on the lease is Doctor Victoria Cotter.

INT. SCENE - COTTER'S OFFICE.

This is Victoria Cotter's New York office, a rather posh one, but not entirely as personalized as her Chicago office. She sits behind her desk, glaring at BLUESTONE, who stands before her.

COTTER

No, I don't think I could tell you much about what happened there, Inspector.

BLUESTONE

But it was your laboratory up until two months ago.

COTTER

If you have the paperwork saying so, I guess it is so.

BLUESTONE

So why can't you tell me about it?

COTTER

Because we have certain agreements not to disclose our clients' information.

BLUESTONE

Is that right?

COTTER

That's not for me to decide. It seems to me you would be better off seeking the proper legal processes if you want that kind of information.

BLUESTONE

Dr. Cotter, I have some sort of a creature raising havoc right now across upper Manhattan. That includes burning your lab last night. I can respect the fact that you respect your clients' confidence, but right now, I need to protect the city from whatever this is.

COTTER

That's lovely, Inspector. Get a warrant. Until you do, I have nothing more to say. And don't think you can have your dog sniff around here looking for evidence, either. I won't have it.

BLUESTONE

I don't have a dog.

COTTER

What?

From behind BLUESTONE, RUTH leaps up onto COTTER's desk and sticks her muzzle right into COTTER's face.

RUTH

I'm not a dog, ma'am. But I am a little peeved at you putting these nice people in danger, and a little more peeved at you putting my mate into danger with them. So I wonder if you'd like to answer the man's questions for me?

COTTER

You are gorgeous. What are you?

RUTH

Oh, y'know, that's real kind of you to say, but I don't think that's a question I'll be answering for you today.

COTTER

Riiiiight.

BLUESTONE

From the top, please?

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. UPPER LEVEL.

TALON and CLAW are in the upper level as HAL sits on the stairs down from the street, watching them from a distance. TALON gestures toward one side of the upper level, and CLAW nods and goes into a side room. TALON sits on the stairs and contemplates for a moment. HAL looks over at him, quizzically. TALON, noticing this, looks back.

TALON

Eggs.

HAL

Yours?

TALON

No. My...brother-in-law left his kids with me. Claw's been egg-sitting.

HAL

Oh. He's another mutate, then, your brother-in-law?

TALON

No. Something totally different. Not even my brother-in-law, technically. Something the law doesn't even recognize. Worlds apart.

HAL

I see.

TALON faces forward, staring into space. HAL continues to look at him for a moment.

HAL

Go on. If you like.

TALON

What?

HAL

I won't mind.

TALON

Oh, I guess.

TALON gives HAL a gentle scratch behind the ears. HAL tips his head into it, very pleased.

HAL

Aaah. That feels nice.

TALON

I'm giving scritchies to a werewolf. This just keeps getting weirder and weirder.

HAL

Well, if you don't mind me saying so, I can get that. I'm getting scritchies from a sort of human-cat-bat, um...

TALON

Electric eel.

HAL

Really?

TALON

Really.

HAL

Huh. And you built all of this?

TALON

We built the community. We found the Terminal, with a little help from Inspector Bluestone.

HAL

Yeah?

TALON

Yeah.

HAL

You don't seem to get along with him so great, though.

TALON

I do, sometimes. It's been a rough couple of months, though. It's been kind of hard to have his back when the city hasn't had ours.

HAL

Yeah, that makes sense. Still, he seems like a nice enough person.

TALON

He means well enough. I give him that. But don't you tell him.

HAL

No, not a word.

BLUESTONE and RUTH descend the stairs into the upper level of the Terminal. As they enter, TALON quickly stops scratching HAL's head.

RUTH

Hi, guys. You getting along all right?

HAL

Oh, yah, just fine, y'know?

RUTH

Oh, that's nice.

BLUESTONE

We had a good chat with the tenant at the lab.

TALON

You don't say. What'd they have to tell you?

BLUESTONE

She said they had been doing genetic engineering there. They got shut down by the storm.

TALON

Too bad for them, I guess. I'm not sorry to hear it.

HAL

Did she give you any more details about this?

BLUESTONE

No. So I was hoping I might be able to get some help checking the lab out. The fire damage isn't supposed to have been so bad.

TALON

I hope you can, too. Excuse me.

He stands and begins to go downstairs.

BLUESTONE

It's Sevarius's work.

TALON stops abruptly and turns back.

TALON

Sevarius is gone.

BLUESTONE

Doctor Cotter, the tenant, was trying to extend some of Sevarius's experiments.

HAL

What's that mean? Who's Sevarius?

TALON

Anton Sevarius. He was responsible for...this.

He gestures to himself.

TALON

For most of the Mutates downstairs, too.

HAL

You're sure of this?

RUTH

That's what she said. She wasn't lying, from what I could tell.

BLUESTONE

She did say the work had gone nowhere. She was surprised to hear something had come of it.

TALON

Did she say anything about stopping it?

BLUESTONE

She said they never got that far. But she did say they built in a fail-safe.

TALON

What's that?

BLUESTONE

They were aiming for something that would work at night. "Flair," she called it. They made the mutation sensitive to melatonin. She said they built it so that anyone with it would need lots of, what was it?

RUTH

Tryptophan.

BLUESTONE

Right. Drop that and the mutation shuts down.

TALON

And who was this supposed to be for?

BLUESTONE

She wouldn't say.

TALON

You didn't press her?

RUTH

He did. I was very persuasive, too.

BLUESTONE

You want to help with this now?

TALON

Yes. If it's Sevarius, yes. What do you need?

BLUESTONE

Two or three people, at least.

TALON

Come on.

He goes down to platform level, followed by the others.

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. PLATFORM LEVEL.

TALON descends the stairs, followed by HAL, BLUESTONE, and RUTH.

TALON

I don't care if Sevarius himself is out of the picture. You mention it's his work, you're going to have half the Mutates down here ready to help. And the other half will only stay here because I need them here.

BLUESTONE

Good to hear it.

TALON

Delilah! Need you for something!

Across the floor, DELILAH looks up at him, and then starts coming over.

TALON

We can get Delilah for sure, probably
Burbank and Bennie too. It could be
better if we...

But as he speaks, HAL's nose twitches, and he looks over toward one of the distant platforms where a small cooking fire is going. TALON's voice grows distant as HAL goes toward it. At the fire are two or three human Labyrinthers. One of them is BART, his neck and shoulder bandaged. He is digging food out of part of a can. HAL's hackles begin to go up as he gets closer. As he does, BART notices him. He stops eating and watches HAL intently, as HAL gets closer and closer. HAL begins to growl quietly.

BART

Hello, dog. You want some?

He holds out the can. It is half of a tin can that has been ripped apart. The label on the side says, "Potted Meat." HAL begins to growl more earnestly.

BART

No, huh? You want to--guck...

BART drops the can and begins to twitch severely. HAL backs up. The others around the fire stand up and watch, shocked. As they watch, BART's skin becomes gray and scaly, and he begins to growl. HAL turns back.

HAL

(howling)

Ruuuuuuuuth!

Back by the stairs, RUTH's head pops up, ears erect. TALON and BLUESTONE also both look over to see what is happening. They see BART shaking and transforming as HAL crouches, ready to defend himself.

RUTH

Hal! Hold on!

RUTH charges toward them, with TALON and BLUESTONE chasing behind.

The monster looks around. The others around the cooking fire come into its sight first, and it reaches out for them. They scream. HAL leaps upon the monster and locks his jaws around its wrist. It howls and begins flailing to shake him free. RUTH arrives next and grabs it on the nape of its neck. It shakes them

both off, and then takes off running. TALON winds up and fires a bolt at it, but misses, knocking some of the stonework down instead. People scatter. HAL and RUTH give chase, growling viciously. DELILAH, ERIN, and HOLLYWOOD come out to help corral the monster and keep it away from the others in the Terminal. The monster stops, sniffs the air, and then makes a beeline for the stairs up. The others pursue it.

DELILAH

Where's it going?

TALON

Upstairs. Don't let it get to the street!

BLUESTONE

I don't think it's headed for the street. It's been chasing food.

TALON

Then why go upstairs? There's nothing there but...oh no.

DELILAH

The eggs. Come on!

HAL and RUTH put on speed and dash up the stairs, hot on the monster's heels, with the others following.

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. UPPER LEVEL.

The monster comes up the stairs and snuffles around, and then starts for a side room. HAL is right behind him and grabs onto his ankle, and RUTH follows fast and leaps onto the monster's back, knocking him on to his face. He rolls over and begins kicking, catching HAL in the belly and knocking him back across the floor. Next up is DELILAH, who leaps onto the monster and claws at it. It parries and punches at her. She dodges, and counterpunches, knocking it down. She dives at it, but it throws her off and makes for the side room again. It enters, briefly, but there is a loud zap from the side room and it comes flying backward out and lands on the floor. From the side room steps CLAW, hands up. The monster scrambles to get to its feet, but too late. TALON is upon it, and punches it right in the face. It growls viciously, its eyes flaring, and it claws back at him. TALON blocks the attack, only to be slugged by its other fist, and flies off to one side. He rolls and lands on his feet and, with a howl, pounces on the monster, preventing it from stand-

ing. HAL gets it by the ankle, and it kicks, carrying him up in the air, but he hangs on fiercely.

TALON

Hal! Off!

HAL

(muffled)

Yes, boss.

HAL releases the monster's ankle, flying off through the air; he lands on his feet and skids to a stop. As he does, TALON dives in, and then grabs the monster's ears and jolts it with a mighty flash. It spasms, moans, and then goes limp. The others gather around it. The monster lies on the floor, breathing heavily. TALON stands, and looks down at it. As they do, CLAW lets off a heavy sigh, and puts one hand across his face; TALON looks up at him, and touches his shoulder.

TALON

The eggs?

CLAW nods, indicating they are safe. TALON nods in response and pats his shoulder.

EXT. SCENE - CENTRAL PARK SOUTH. (NIGHT)

The police and an ambulance surround a nondescript kiosk in the park, waiting. From the kiosk, BLUESTONE and TALON emerge, followed by CLAW, carrying the monster. News reporters photograph the scene. CLAW helps to load the monster into the back of the ambulance. It struggles weakly; BART's face is beginning to appear from out of the scales. They close up the back of the ambulance, and it leaves. The reporters converge on BLUESTONE and TALON.

REPORTER 1

What's the connection of the G.R.U. to this?

BLUESTONE

We're obligated to investigate anything that could be connected to gargoyles affairs.

REPORTER 1

And was it?

BLUESTONE

No, as far as we can tell, it was not.

REPORTER 2

The Mutates are reported to be blocking construction of the subway extension. Any connection there?

BLUESTONE

No, nothing we can discern.

TALON waves off the reporters and goes back downstairs. He looks toward BLUESTONE, and then slams the door of the kiosk, cutting off access to the reporters. BLUESTONE scowls, and then turns back to the reporters.

BLUESTONE

We do believe this puts the bodega ransacking to an end, though...

INT. SCENE - TERMINAL. UPPER LEVEL.

TALON, MAGGIE, and CLAW are watching television, with BLUESTONE, HAL, and RUTH sitting nearby.

BLUESTONE (ON TV)

...Careful tracking of the incidents led us to this creature. The NYPD is indebted to the Mutates for their help in capturing the creature, and we're confident it will now get the treatment it needs.

REPORTER (ON TV)

But opinion on the street is hardly uniform on that.

BYSTANDER 1 (ON TV)

No, I mean, I think they deserve our thanks for this. I don't know the police can do it by themselves, not with the gargoyles gone.

BYSTANDER 2 (ON TV)

They oughta drag the whole gang of them in. It means something they had to get the thing out of there. They had to be covering for it somehow, right?

BYSTANDER 3 (ON TV)

I'm just concerned about what this city is becoming. I have a grandson here. I can't wait for it to get back under control.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Staff at Bellevue Hospital report they will be keeping the creature on a restricted diet in hopes of controlling it. It is said to be under continuous guard at this hour. In Central Park for Nightwatch, Dale Chevere.

The program continues as the others talk.

TALON

No good deed goes unpunished, as always.

MAGGIE

It's not that bad. You got some people at least backing us.

RUTH

Yeah, you can't please all the people all the time, after all.

TALON

Well. Maybe.

BLUESTONE

I'm doing what I can, anyway. But if it's not clear, we owe you a lot of thanks for tying this up. We couldn't hold the line in this city without your help.

HAL

That's right.

TALON

Don't mention it.

HAL

How about you, hon? Any better?

RUTH

No. I can still feel something going on. Stronger, if anything.

TALON

Can I get you anything?

RUTH

Oh, no, but thanks anyway. We just need to find this thing.

TALON

Well, if you come up with any way we can help, I'd be glad to. And, by the way, I should have said it, but you're welcome here.

BLUESTONE

Yeah, same here.

RUTH

Thanks. You're nice people, I'm glad to be here.

BLUESTONE

One thing, though. You gave that monster a pretty thorough mauling. You're not worried about it becoming, you know...

RUTH

Another werewolf?

BLUESTONE

Yeah.

HAL

Oh, no. It takes a lot more than that.

MAGGIE

Really? Like what?

HAL

Well...

RUTH

Now, that's not for polite company.

HAL

Yah, you're right, Ruth. Story for another time.

MAGGIE snuggles with TALON, who embraces her, and RUTH and HAL cuddle together alongside them.

=END=