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**Town and Gown**

by

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Gargoyles: City of the Phoenix  
Season 2, Episode 6

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EXT. SCENE - HULL GATE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

It is a dark and stormy day. The grotesques atop Hull Gate are not bothered, and leer out over 57th Street as they have for decades. Below them, students hurry in both directions, either toward the Quad and shelter, or out to 57th Street and their classes or other collegiate distractions.

One student (ARCHIE) stops a moment, his eye attracted by a pamphlet taped to the stonework, advertising co-op opportunities. He snaps a quick photo of the pamphlet with his phone, and studies it closely.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. RECEPTION.

Bright, clinical, barren, all the things a university office can be but typically is not. A man (JIMMY LOCKS) sits at the reception desk, watching "Metropolis" on his computer. The door opens, and ARCHIE enters, looking around. He approaches the desk.

ARCHIE

Um, hello?

JIMMIE

Hi there. Can I help you?

ARCHIE

Do you still have co-ops open?

JIMMIE

We sure do. You're interested?

ARCHIE

Yes, please.

JIMMIE

Great. You're in luck. They're seeing people today. Could you just sign this for me?

He pulls a clipboard out from under the desk and pushes it across to ARCHIE. ARCHIE picks it up and looks it over. There is a form clipped to it that is very dense and very finely printed, with a large "X" marking the signature line.

ARCHIE

What's this?

JIMMIE

Release and confidentiality agreement.  
You know, so we can get at your student  
records, and so on.

ARCHIE

Oh. All right.

JIMMIE

And, uh, if you could leave your stu-  
dent ID, I can get the paperwork start-  
ed for you.

ARCHIE signs the form, and then, clipping his ID card to it,  
passes the clipboard back to JIMMIE, who takes it.

JIMMIE

Go ahead on in. They're waiting for  
you.

ARCHIE

Sure. Thanks.

ARCHIE opens the double doors at the back of the office. It is  
dark beyond. He looks over at JIMMIE, who has turned back to his  
movie. Lacking anything else to do about it, he shoulders his  
book bag and steps through.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. HALLWAY. (DARK)

ARCHIE carefully makes his way through the hallway. At the far  
end, a door is open and the room beyond is well-lit. To either  
side are a number of offices, all closed and dark. With great  
trepidation, ARCHIE slowly moves toward the lit room.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY.

The brightly-lit room turns out to be a laboratory with two exam  
tables in it and several other doctor's office paraphernalia.  
Standing at the center of the room is a golden android, face-  
less, humanoid. ARCHIE enters, looking around and squinting in  
the light. He approaches the android, looking it over carefully.  
He looks toward its face, if it had one. It speaks suddenly,  
cheerfully, startling him backward.

ANDROID

Hello, candidate!

ARCHIE

Hello.

ANDROID

We are pleased to have you join research project ARC7994168637, comma, Cybernetics Interface in Mobile Devices. Welcome.

ARCHIE

Happy to be here.

ANDROID

You are responding to our poster slash solicitation, is that true?

ARCHIE

Yeah. It said something about brain-machine interf--

ANDROID

We are researching advanced applications for brain-machine interfaces. We are in need of well-qualified research assistants. The position will pay up to \$2,500 in cooperative funding.

ARCHIE

Sounds great.

ANDROID

What is your major?

ARCHIE

I am, um, in English literature.

ANDROID

In what year of study are you?

ARCHIE

Second. Um, look, is there a live person--

ANDROID

Have you arranged for employment after your studies are complete?

ARCHIE

No, I mean, I'm a sophomore, it's a bit early for that--

ANDROID

Where is your home?

ARCHIE

Raton, New Mexico.

ANDROID

Thank you! Processing.

ARCHIE

Right.

ANDROID

We are pleased to offer you the position of research assistant with an immediate start date. Congratulations.

ARCHIE

Um, but, no, I have a study group--

ANDROID

Will you please remove your coat?

ARCHIE

What?

ANDROID

Will you please remove your coat?

ARCHIE

No, but, see, I have something--

ANDROID

Will you please remove your coat?

ARCHIE

Well...all right.

ARCHIE removes his coat and looks around for somewhere to put it.

ANDROID

Thank you. Will you please lie back on the table on my...right?

ARCHIE

Lie on the table? What for?

ANDROID

We would like to put your mind to work  
at once.

The ANDROID extends a saw from its arm and approaches ARCHIE. He panics and turns to run.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. HALLWAY. (DARK)

ARCHIE runs toward the front door. He stops short: from the side offices, two floating drones with articulated tentacles hover out, closing his path. The ANDROID begins to follow him.

ANDROID

We would like to put your mind to work  
at once. We would like to put your mind  
to work at once.

ARCHIE rushes forward, below the drones. He brushes through their tentacles. This is a grave error: they entangle him, and restrain him from reaching the door.

ARCHIE

Help me! Help!

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. RECEPTION.

In reception, ARCHIE's struggles are plainly visible, but JIMMIE continues to watch his movie, unbothered. A drone floats in front of the doors and closes them gently. There is the sound of a saw starting up and cutting, and ARCHIE screaming.

JIMMIE looks up casually at the doors, and then unclips the form and ID from the clipboard, drops the form into a file cabinet, clips a new form in its place, and puts the board away, and then puts the ID into a shredder, which consumes it as horrible noises continue to come from behind the doors.

EXT. SCENE - TRIBUNE TOWER. (NIGHT)

GOLIATH and BROOKLYN are standing on the east side of the tower, looking out at the lake, watching. The rain is coming down lightly.

Caption: Tribune Tower, Chicago. Monday, February 18, 2013. 7:43 PM.

BROOKLYN

*Hidoi.*

GOLIATH

*Hidoi?*

BROOKLYN

Katana would say things like that on nights like this. *Tenki wa hidoidesu.* "The weather is terrible." I was trying to remember it.

GOLIATH

Hmm.

BROOKLYN

She never wanted me to hear her complain about the weather. Even the kind you couldn't see through. She knew what I would have to tell her about that. "There could be worse things out there than the weather." I don't know that she ever knew I could understand what she was saying.

GOLIATH

You speak as though she were gone.

BROOKLYN

It feels like it. Every night I find one more thing about her I can't remember. Do you think we are ever going to get them back?

GOLIATH

Yes.

BROOKLYN

Just "yes"? Just like that?

GOLIATH

There is nothing more to say than that. Nothing is lost until it is gone.

BROOKLYN

No. I suppose it's not. But you would think that, after all this time...

GOLIATH

Yes. I know.

BROOKLYN continues to look out over the city and the lake. Something catches his eye, however, and he looks down.

BROOKLYN

What's that?

He points down, and GOLIATH looks. Below them is a small constellation of lights proceeding north up Michigan Avenue.

EXT. SCENE - NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE. (NIGHT)

The lights continue up Michigan Avenue. They stop outside of a high-end jewelry store and form up. They hover there a moment, and then one group flies around and crashes directly into the front of the store, smashing it. Glass flies everywhere and the alarm begins blaring. A second group dives in and begins to smash open the display cases. The third group descends, and begins to loot the cases. Inside, the customers dive for cover or scatter. The owner, behind the counter, pulls out a shotgun and begins firing at the drones. Three of them dive at him and tie him up, pulling him down behind the counter, as the others continue their work.

Behind them, GOLIATH and BROOKLYN land outside the store. Their arrival drives many of the remaining onlookers to take to their heels. BROOKLYN draws his katana, and the two of them wade into combat. GOLIATH swipes at several of the drones, forcing them to drop their loot. Unfortunately, one entangles his arms and is quickly assisted by a second. Despite his rage, his flailing is constrained by the drones, which begin to lift him into the air. BROOKLYN swings his katana, however, and in two or three slashes, severs the tentacles and frees GOLIATH, who goes back into the fight. Enraged, he grabs one of the drones and slams it into the window frame, smashing it utterly. BROOKLYN makes good headway, too, slashing down several. Suddenly, the remaining drones circle up and depart rapidly. In the distance, police sirens approach. BROOKLYN looks around him, and then sheaths his sword.

BROOKLYN

We better get out or we're going to take the blame for this one, I suppose.

GOLIATH

Up and out, then.



They leap out and get up onto the building facade, and begin climbing up rapidly as the first patrol cars arrive. The patrolmen, including KYLE MILLER, jump out to survey the situation. One of them looks up and points.

PATROLMAN

Up there, look!

They do. Miller draws his gun and aims at them, but by then they are out of comfortable range. He lowers his gun, and scowls.

EXT. SCENE - LOWER WACKER DRIVE. (NIGHT)

There is a dark stretch of Lower Wacker Drive, tucked back well away from traffic where even the rats won't go. The trash piles up there, the trash from the road and the city above just as much as the people who have been discarded from city life. A dozen people in shabby clothing are hanging around here with nobody else to lean on and nowhere else to go.

A newcomer shyly picks her way into this group. This is CATHY, a young woman, clearly not familiar with the social structure of this group. After some work, she finds an open, dry spot on a part of the structure. She hoists herself up and wraps herself in herself, trying to hide, and trying to hold off the chill, giving the world a look like a kicked dog, hostile yet terrified. From some distance, a man (WILLIAM) approaches, weather-worn and limping. CATHY turns her glare on him.

WILLIAM

Hey. You all right? You know, you might not want to stay there too long.

CATHY

Why's that?

WILLIAM

Well, it's just that Arthur's claimed that spot already.

CATHY

I don't see his name on it.

WILLIAM

He doesn't need to put his name on it. He's a mean drunk. Everyone down here knows that.

CATHY

Yeah?

WILLIAM

Yeah.

CATHY

He out getting mean, then?

WILLIAM

You could say that, I guess.

CATHY

How mean does he get?

WILLIAM

Mean enough he sent Paul to the hospital last week. Not mean enough to get lost coming back, though.

CATHY

That's pretty mean, then.

WILLIAM

Come on. I got space over by me if it'll work for you.

CATHY

All right.

She slides off the structure, and they walk together.

WILLIAM

You're new here.

CATHY

What do you think?

WILLIAM

It wasn't a question. I'm kind of new here myself. Call me William.

CATHY

Cathy. Tell me, you don't look like a William.

WILLIAM

Heh, no. Street name.

CATHY

Street name? What, you wanted by the cops or something?

WILLIAM

No, nothing like that. Just don't want to connect this up with my old work.

CATHY

What was that?

WILLIAM

Construction. I was a top *drywallero* for a couple of years. Then I twisted my knee, and then the market shut down, and, well, it never quite got any better.

CATHY

Too bad.

WILLIAM

Yeah, too bad. What's your story, Cathy?

CATHY

Not much to tell. Less of it I want to tell.

WILLIAM

Suit yourself. Your life. Here.

They arrive at a bedroll on an adjacent part of the structure.

WILLIAM

I can shift down a little, make some room for you.

CATHY

And in return?

WILLIAM

My intentions are honorable, milady. Don't worry about it.

CATHY

I do worry about it, thanks.

WILLIAM

Well, like I said, it's your life.

He hoists himself up on the bedroll and begins shifting it over a little to make room.

WILLIAM

But, the way I see it, if you got nothing else down here, may as well have someone to talk to.

CATHY looks at him, curiously, as he works. Finally, she boosts herself up onto the structure. WILLIAM gives her a small smile.

WILLIAM

Nice to meet you, Cathy.

CATHY

Well, I guess it's nice to meet you too.

WILLIAM

How long you been on the street?

CATHY

What's it to you?

WILLIAM

Well, it's just been that I've been out here five years already, and I've picked up a few things. Happy to share 'em, but I didn't want to tell you anything you already know, and get boring.

CATHY

About a month.

WILLIAM

That short, huh?

CATHY

Longest month of my life, I swear.

WILLIAM

Yeah. I guess it could be.

Around the corner comes a multi-passenger van, driving slow on the service road, passing the encampment. It pulls up to a stop. JIMMY LOCKS and his assistant get out.

JIMMY

Folks! Hello, everyone! We got jobs for those who want them!

MAN

How much?

JIMMY

Twenty an hour, cash.

This definitely draws attention, and several people make their way over.

WILLIAM

Cathy, I think you must be my good-luck charm. C'mon, let's go see what they got.

CATHY

I guess.

WILLIAM

You guess? C'mon, twenty bucks an hour's good money around here.

CATHY

What do you think they're paying for? What sort of work?

WILLIAM

Let's find out. C'mon.

He hops down, and CATHY reluctantly follows. He limps over to the van where four others are rapidly signing forms on clipboards. As they sign, they get into the van.

JIMMY

*Trabajo?* You want work?

WILLIAM

Depends on the work. What you got?

JIMMY

Simple enough. Lab work, light stuff.

CATHY

What kind of lab work?

JIMMY

Well, come along and you'll see.

WILLIAM

I got a bum knee. That going to be a problem?

JIMMY

No. Actually, we may be able to help you with that.

WILLIAM

Oh yeah? Let's see it.

JIMMY hands clipboards to WILLIAM and CATHY. They read. CATHY takes hers away to get into better light.

JIMMY

Miss? We need that back.

CATHY

I want to read what I'm signing.

WILLIAM

What is it?

CATHY

I'm not gonna get burned on something like this twice.

JIMMY

It's just routine.

CATHY

It's routine for me to read this stuff, too.

WILLIAM

She has a point.

JIMMY

Well, that's all right and all, but we only got eight seats and we got five people so far. When we fill up, we go.

CATHY and WILLIAM look at each other.

WILLIAM

It's good money.

CATHY

I know, but...

WILLIAM signs the paper, resignedly, and hands the board back to JIMMY, who looks at CATHY expectantly. She finally signs and hands it back to him.

JIMMY

Welcome aboard.

WILLIAM and CATHY get into the van and get seated.

CATHY

I hope you're right about this.

WILLIAM

That makes two of us.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

GOLIATH and BROOKLYN are talking to the others.

BROOKLYN

So that's when we left.

BROADWAY

They didn't get any of the jewelry, though?

BROOKLYN

Not much, anyway. They were more focused on making a scene, I think.

HUDSON

Which might suggest this was not simply a burglary. If it would come after you, that could have been their goal.

BROADWAY

Right.

GOLIATH

This is true. But I think it is just as likely they were inferior machines.

HUDSON

Aye. Still, it may be better to be alert. Even an inferior machine could be dangerous.

BROOKLYN

Any of this ringing a bell for you?

LEXINGTON

Not really. That kind of drone's common enough, but to have a whole fleet of them working like that isn't. Someone has resources.

GOLIATH

And someone is able to deploy them against the city and against us.

BROADWAY

I don't like the sound of that.

The roof door opens, and ERIC SANCHEZ (in uniform) and MATT enter.

LEXINGTON

Neither do I.

MATT

Evening, guys.

SANCHEZ

Hello.

GOLIATH

Officer Sanchez.

MATT

Did something happen downtown?

GOLIATH

Quite a lot.

SANCHEZ

So I heard. Want to talk about it?

GOLIATH

Perhaps. Why?

SANCHEZ

Word is that you robbed a jewelry store.

GOLIATH

That is untrue.



BROOKLYN

We were downtown, we saw someone smash up the store, we intervened.

SANCHEZ

And who smashed up the store?

GOLIATH

A fleet of drones.

SANCHEZ

Oh, really?

LEXINGTON

Not mine. Don't look at me.

SANCHEZ

'Cause I got people saying they saw you flee the scene.

GOLIATH turns to face him down, and crosses his arms.

GOLIATH

And which people would that be?

SANCHEZ

Couple of patrol guys downtown.

GOLIATH

And you believe them?

SANCHEZ

I believe they saw you leaving.

GOLIATH

Officer, if you feel the need, I will go to the police station and answer any other questions that you may have.

SANCHEZ

It isn't necessary, Goliath.

GOLIATH

I would hope not. We have done nothing wrong.

SANCHEZ

What is necessary is for you to know that the main one saying you were there

is one of the Quarrymen's main cheerleaders on the force.

GOLIATH  
Cheer leaders?

MATT  
Advocates.

SANCHEZ  
So I'd suggest that you need to be more careful.

BROOKLYN  
Officer, we have been dealing with the Quarrymen for years, some of us for decades, really. We know all about them. We also know that it'd play right into their hands for us to stand by while the city gets wrecked by the kind of people who'd run the drones we ran into tonight.

GOLIATH  
We will not be prevented from protecting this place by their suspicions.

SANCHEZ  
I never suggested that you should. Just that you should be careful about them.

HUDSON  
There is no point to that. Whatever distance we keep, they will take up.

GOLIATH  
Every time.

SANCHEZ  
So if that is the case, then how do we show them you're innocent?

GOLIATH  
You do not. It would be a waste of effort.

SANCHEZ  
All right, fine. How do we show everyone else you're innocent?

BROADWAY

Has there been anything else like this recently?

SANCHEZ

Not in my district, I don't think. I can ask around. Seems like we have had a few smash-and-grabs like that with no suspects.

BROADWAY

But no pattern, I guess.

SANCHEZ

Someone smashes out the front of a store and makes off with the goods. Not much more of a pattern that I know of.

BROADWAY

No, it's not.

SANCHEZ

I got a guy in Major Crimes, though. I can ask him if he's got anything.

HUDSON

You got a guy?

SANCHEZ

I have a friend there. An acquaintance.

MATT

A guy. You know?

HUDSON

Is your guy any good?

SANCHEZ

He's all right.

HUDSON

Hardly glowing praise, officer.

SANCHEZ

We're tight on staff and we're over-worked. We take who we can, he's actually good at his job, and I'm pretty sure he has no interest in the Quarrymen.

GOLIATH

Regardless of your guy, it may be best if we broaden our patrols and see what we can locate on our own.

SANCHEZ

And then what?

GOLIATH

Then we will handle it, with or without your guy.

SANCHEZ

Make it "with," please. I don't want to give the Quarrymen any more on you than you have to.

GOLIATH

We will do what we can.

SANCHEZ

Fine. I have to go, I'm supposed to be on patrol.

MATT

You need me to let you out?

SANCHEZ

I know the way.

He leaves.

MATT

Getting touchy?

GOLIATH

He does not seem to take us seriously somehow.

MATT

Why's that?

BROOKLYN

A couple of those drones tried to pick up Goliath tonight.

MATT

How'd that work out?

BROOKLYN

Nearly got him.

MATT

What? Really?

GOLIATH

Yes.

BROOKLYN

(tapping his katana)

I had to disarm them.

MATT

You're all right, though?

GOLIATH

For now, yes.

BROOKLYN

Disarm them. By cutting off their...

MATT

Got it, thanks. All right. Anything I can do to help?

GOLIATH

Broadway?

BROADWAY

Not right now. Until we know more about what we're dealing with, better for you to stay, well...

MATT

Out of the way?

BROADWAY

I was hoping to put it some other way.

MATT

That's fine, I get it. You need me to keep Officer Sanchez out of your way too?

GOLIATH

No. He does mean well. I have little doubt of that.

MATT

I'm sure, but he did come over tonight asking me to let him up here to talk to you. If you would rather I didn't do that, I won't.

GOLIATH

It does not trouble me.

HUDSON

Use your judgment, Matt. If he is badly dispositioned, it may be better to keep him away.

MATT

I'll do what I can.

GOLIATH

And, thank you.

MATT

For letting him in?

GOLIATH

For your concern.

MATT

Always.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. WAITING ROOM.

A bare room with two doors on opposite sides, a number of chairs, a couple of tables, and some boring magazines (maybe a couple of "Highlights for Children" too). JIMMY opens one door and enters, followed by the people from Lower Wacker Drive, including WILLIAM and CATHY.

JIMMY

Come in. We have a little exam we need you to go through before we can get you started.

(indicating one of the  
extras)

You're first. The rest of you just make yourselves comfortable and we'll get to you as quick as we can.

WILLIAM  
How long you think?

JIMMY  
Not long.

WILLIAM  
Long enough I can get a chance to read  
that paper I signed now?

JIMMY  
Let me see if our copier's working.

CATHY  
Can I get a coffee or something?

JIMMY  
If you have fifty cents for the ma-  
chine.

CATHY  
You can't advance me?

JIMMY  
I'll see what I can do.

He leaves through the other door, taking one of the people with  
and closing the door behind him. WILLIAM walks around the room,  
examining it. The others take their seats.

CATHY  
You heard the man.

WILLIAM  
Yeah, I did.

He tries the door that they entered through. It is locked.

CATHY  
Why don't you take a seat, then?

WILLIAM  
Because something is weird here.

He tries the other door. It, too, is locked. Defeated, he takes  
a seat next to CATHY and stretches out his bad knee. She looks  
at him.

CATHY

It wouldn't hurt so bad if you'd just settle down, y'know.

WILLIAM

Yeah. I know. I just get restless when I'm locked in a strange room with strangers. Personal quirk.

CATHY leans back, bundling herself, and sighs deeply. WILLIAM looks at her, concerned.

WILLIAM

You okay there?

CATHY

I'm fine.

WILLIAM

You don't look fine. You hurting?

CATHY

What's it to you?

WILLIAM

Been there before. This knee's even more of a bum when I can't afford to take care of it. You know what I mean?

CATHY

Yeah, I guess so.

WILLIAM reaches down and unrolls something from his sock. (How much of this we see and how much needs to be obscured isn't something I want to settle now, but he's taking a couple of hydrocodone tablets out of hiding.) He passes it to CATHY.

WILLIAM

There. That might help you. Have that when your coffee gets here.

CATHY

Yeah. Thanks.

WILLIAM sits back in the chair and shuts his eyes.

CATHY

You doing all right there?



WILLIAM

I'm fine. Just kind of tired.

CATHY

You want to split the coffee when it comes?

WILLIAM

Yeah, I would. Thanks.

INT. SCENE - POLICE STATION. BATHROOM.

SANCHEZ, fresh out of uniform, is washing his hands. KYLE MILLER comes up alongside of him and begins to do the same.

MILLER

Sanchez.

SANCHEZ

Miller.

MILLER

You've been busy lately.

SANCHEZ

Maybe so.

MILLER

Definitely so. There's a friend of ours over in Property Crimes says you've been asking about smash-and-grabs. Something going on?

SANCHEZ

Police work, bud. That's all.

MILLER

Is it?

SANCHEZ

Yeah.

SANCHEZ shakes his hands out into the sink and goes to dry them. MILLER remains at the sink, looking at him.

MILLER

You working a lead, or you working on something else?

SANCHEZ

I don't know why it would matter to you. Just working.

MILLER

Well, I mean, I could tell you where you ought to be looking. Then again, I hear maybe you've already been looking there, without seeing.

SANCHEZ

Miller, I'm going off duty. I got a pretty good idea what you're trying to tell me, and I don't have time for it.

MILLER

You really ought to be making time.

SANCHEZ

And you really ought to be minding your own business. If you're not going to do that, at least get to the point.

MILLER

What do the gargoyles have to do with these robberies?

SANCHEZ

They're trying to stop them.

MILLER

And you're sure of that?

SANCHEZ

Yes.

MILLER

So why'd the store lose about three grand worth of merchandise?

SANCHEZ

You tell me.

MILLER

Why do you think that happened?

SANCHEZ

You tell me. Maybe they shoulda washed their hands before working the case in-

stead of after so their fingers weren't so sticky.

MILLER

What'd you say to me?

SANCHEZ

I said nice weather we're having. I'm gonna go home and enjoy it.

MILLER

Tell Ellen hi for me.

SANCHEZ exits. MILLER dries off his hands, and then takes his phone from his pocket and places a call.

MILLER

Yeah. It's me. Yeah, sounds like they're getting involved in them, all right. You bet.

He hangs up.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. WAITING ROOM.

Three people remain: WILLIAM, CATHY, and one extra (reading a magazine). CATHY has no coffee, but she is sitting somewhat more relaxed than before. All of them are bored and nervous. The back door to the room opens. JIMMY enters.

JIMMY

Cathy?

CATHY

Yeah?

JIMMY

Your turn. Come on.

She stands nervously, and then looks at WILLIAM.

WILLIAM

Did you find a working copier yet?

JIMMY

We're still looking. Don't worry, you'll get it.

WILLIAM

Because she kind of wanted to have a look at the paperwork too.

CATHY

Yeah.

JIMMY

Don't fret. We'll get it to you. We just need to get this out of the way first. Come on.

CATHY

All right.

WILLIAM

Are you sure?

CATHY

Just a stupid medical thing. It'll be fine. It's fine.

WILLIAM

All right. I'll see you later, right?

CATHY

You bet.

She suddenly takes his hand and squeezes it, and then follows JIMMY out of the room.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. EXAM ROOM.

CATHY follows JIMMY into an examination room. This is white, very white, with a white exam table in the middle of the room and little else. The table itself is of an unusual design.

JIMMY

Just lie down on the table, would you please?

CATHY

You need me to get undressed or what?

JIMMY

Whatever you like.

CATHY

What kind of exam is it?

JIMMY

A quick one. Get settled.

He leaves and closes the door. She takes off her coat and puts it aside, sits on the table, and then leans back. She has just enough time to relax, then, snap! The headrest of the table gets hold of her neck, holding it down, and the sides fold up, clamping her arms down. She struggles against this. Beyond the head of the bed, a panel opens in the wall. She looks back over the top of her head (so upside down into the camera). Toward her float two androids. One carries a gold-colored pan between its hands, about the size of a drone. The other bears a nasty circular saw, which starts up. CATHY screams.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. HALLWAY.

Outside of the exam room, JIMMY stands, filing his nails and humming tunelessly to himself. One of the ball drones hovers nearby. A red light shines over the door. No sound escapes from the exam room. After a moment, there is a chime, and the light turns green. He puts away the file, opens the door, looks in, and recoils.

JIMMY

Ugh, I hate a bleeder. (To the drone)  
Get a mop, will you?

EXT. SCENE - GOLD COAST. (AERIAL, NIGHT)

Caption: Tuesday, February 19, 2013. 8:43 PM. Gold Coast, Chicago.

LEXINGTON and BROADWAY are gliding through the night on patrol, looking around below themselves.

BROADWAY

This looks about right. If they're going to make off with any kind of loot, this would be the kind of place for it.

LEXINGTON

Not just this, though, right?

BROADWAY

They could hit closer to the lake, I guess, but they just did that. Seems kind of risky to hit the same spot twice.

LEXINGTON

If they're aiming to hit any spots at all.

BROADWAY

What else would they be doing?

LEXINGTON

I don't know. But trying to make off with Goliath that first time isn't a good sign of this just being a burglary ring.

BROADWAY

No, I guess not.

There is a boom below, and a bit of screaming.

LEXINGTON

I guess we're about to find out. There they are.

BROADWAY

Come on.

They bank and descend toward the explosion.

EXT. SCENE - OAK STREET. (NIGHT)

The front of a very upscale jewelry store has been blown completely off. The scene in front is a war zone. A number of ball droids are busy rummaging through the showcases, but outside there are three or four of the faceless androids as well. They direct swarms of the ball droids around. One of the androids gestures across the street. In response, a flotilla of ball droids attacks a watch store there, blowing out the front window and swarming inside. From above, BROADWAY dives into one of the androids, sending it sprawling into the street, as LEXINGTON lands in the middle of the action, fangs bared, eyes lit, ready to rumble.

LEXINGTON

You want it? Come and get it.

One of the androids rushes him. He slips away from its grasp, but pulls its arm down, toppling it into the street. It kicks, somersaults backward, and regains its footing, but before it can resume attacking LEXINGTON, BROADWAY comes along side and slugs it hard in the head, spinning it around and throwing it to the

ground. Several of the ball droids dive in to join the fight. BROADWAY grabs at one of them. It begins to try to get him with its tentacles. He winds up a throw.

BROADWAY

Four in the corner!

He flings it away from himself and into the flock of droids, knocking them out. LEXINGTON joins in.

LEXINGTON

No, try this one. For two points!

He leaps, grabs one out of the air, dribbles it against the street (the droid thudding terribly), and then throws it up against the building. It smacks the building and then falls down through the jewelry store's sign, an oversized engagement ring.

BROADWAY

Like it, like it. Watch this one!

He nabs another ball droid from overhead. He rapidly passes it between hands, preventing it from getting a grip on him, and dribbles it to the same effect. One of the androids approaches to block him. He passes to LEXINGTON, who dribbles around the droid. He chucks the ball droid at the android, who is discom-bobulated. BROADWAY takes the rebound from there, dribbles twice, and then jumps up onto the adjacent building to avoid another android. From there, he pitches the ball droid through the sign, making his shot.

BROADWAY

From downtown...yes!

He jumps down off the building. Another ball droid is diving for LEXINGTON, but BROADWAY swoops in and captures it. He dribbles a bit; two of the androids work to block him in. He jumps. Both androids leap in the air and keep up their block. BROADWAY passes to LEXINGTON, who dribbles, and then skitters along the street to keep clear as the androids approach. He jumps up on the rubble, and goes for a jump shot to sink the ball through the sign.

This goes badly.

As he makes the shot, it's clear that the ball droid has sunk its tentacles in firmly, and it holds him tight.

LEXINGTON

Hey. Hey!

Two more of the ball droids rapidly dive in, wrapping their tentacles around LEXINGTON and firmly cocooning him on the street. LEXINGTON struggles fiercely against this, but he is rapidly overcome by them. He cries out, but they are holding him tight; his cry for help comes out as more of a squeak.

LEXINGTON

Broadway. Help me.

BROADWAY

Lex!

He bounds toward LEXINGTON. One of the androids tries to stop him and is immediately tossed aside. Another ball droid dives at his legs and snares him, tripping him up. He kicks, but his legs are firmly tied up. He finally flipper-kicks the ball droid into the street; it explodes, and he is able to get loose.

But by then it is too late. One of the androids has gotten hold of LEXINGTON and flies away into the night with him.

BROADWAY

No! Lexington!

BROADWAY leaps to the building and begins climbing rapidly, then takes off into the night.

EXT. SCENE - GOLD COAST (AERIAL, NIGHT)

The android, with a cocooned LEXINGTON in its arms, flies along. Not too far behind is an enraged BROADWAY, making the best time he can. The android looks back at BROADWAY, and then goes to full throttle, pulling away from him. BROADWAY roars angrily in response, but falls back. The android flies off into the night.

LEXINGTON growls and struggles as they fly along south toward downtown.

LEXINGTON

You get me out of this or you are going to be in big trouble, pal!

ANDROID

On the contrary. We will be very happy.



LEXINGTON

And who's we?

ANDROID

You and us.

LEXINGTON

I'm not into this sort of thing. Get me out!

ANDROID

Now, would you really pass up the opportunity to become what you have always admired?

LEXINGTON

What's that?

ANDROID

Me.

LEXINGTON looks at it, shocked. He cannot come up with anything more to say, though: the ANDROID explodes, leaving LEXINGTON hurtling through the sky like an errant soccer ball, tumbling toward earth. His struggles increase, but the ball droids are unrelenting. Then, suddenly, he is caught up again in two gold metallic arms, and flown back into the sky.

LEXINGTON

I don't want to become you! Let me go!

COLDFIRE

Whatever do you mean by that?

LEXINGTON is stunned by the sound of the cool, metallic, feminine voice, and then grins widely.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

GOLIATH, HUDSON, BROOKLYN, and BRONX are on the roof of the station. BROADWAY lands first. He is excited, not panicked.

GOLIATH

What has happened?

BROADWAY

We ran into trouble, but that's not the important thing. Look!

COLDFIRE lands, carrying LEXINGTON like a sack of laundry. She sets him down on the roof, and then looks at the others.

COLDFIRE

Well. It is about time you turned up.

GOLIATH

Coldfire?

COLDFIRE

Hello, Goliath. It has been far too long.

The others (except LEXINGTON) are jubilant, and they surround her.

HUDSON

Daughter, can it really be you?

BROOKLYN

How's Katana? How's Nashville?

COLDFIRE

They're fine, we're all safe.

GOLIATH

But where?

COLDFIRE

Pittsburgh. It is a long way from here.

HUDSON

How did you come to be there?

COLDFIRE

We got cut off there during the day. One of us would have gone with you, but I was waterlogged and Coldstone had to take charge of the others.

MATT enters from the building and comes up on the scene, wide-eyed. BROADWAY looks over at him, grinning. MATT looks at LEXINGTON, and then back at the group.

MATT

Um...did I interrupt something?

BROADWAY

No, you're just in time. Coldfire, this is Matt Pegram, one of the locals. Matt, this is Coldfire, one of the clan members we'd thought we lost.

COLDFIRE

How do you do?

MATT

How do you do? Um, sorry, are you a robot, or...

COLDFIRE

My body is machine. My spirit is that of a gargoyle.

MATT

Okay. And, um, is Lexington about to pupate, or is this sort of a recreational thing?

LEXINGTON

Neither. Could someone get these things off me? One of them is starting to get...FRISKY!

He yelps this last word as a tentacle goes wandering where it should not.

COLDFIRE

Oh, of course. Just a moment.

She deploys a plasma cannon from her arm. She concentrates on LEXINGTON.

COLDFIRE

Let me just keep the power down.

LEXINGTON

Please do.

She fires a weak blast from the plasma cannon into the head of one of the ball droids, which squeaks and releases LEXINGTON. She repeats for the second and third, and LEXINGTON wriggles free of them. The three droids writhe helplessly on the roof. LEXINGTON goes over to COLDFIRE.

LEXINGTON

Thank you!

COLDFIRE

Don't mention it.

GOLIATH

Welcome to Chicago, sister.

COLDFIRE

I am glad to have found you here. I would have been happier were it not for the trouble I found afflicting the clan.

GOLIATH

What trouble is that?

BROADWAY

Another burglary. Another attempt to capture one of us.

LEXINGTON

That nearly worked.

He goes to examine one of the ball droids.

LEXINGTON

But now, maybe we have a chance to figure out who's behind all this.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

LEXINGTON has the droid laid out on the workbench, and is going over it with tools. MATT stands behind him, looking on. The others are gathered around COLDFIRE, talking; BRONX is napping happily at her feet.

GOLIATH

You say that you were cut off.

COLDFIRE

We were, in multiple senses.

EXT. SCENE - STEEL YARD.

The hopper car is rolling along toward a loading line, where a grinder is dumping shredded steel into other hopper cars. Inside, COLDFIRE is trying to rouse COLDFIRE; around her, the

others of "Clan East" (Katana, Nashville, Tachi, Angela, and Fu-Dog) are stone.

COLDFIRE (VO)

We came into the city during the day.  
Coldstone says I was drenched by the  
storm, somehow, but I do not remember.

COLDSTONE sits up and looks over the edge of the hopper, alarmed by the approach of the loader. He looks ahead of him: the car ahead is empty, and not the one he is seeking. He takes up COLD-FIRE and lifts her out of the train, placing her on the ground in a nearby wooded grove adjacent to the river. He returns and lifts Katana out of the car.

COLDFIRE (VO)

He says it took all he had to get us  
into the clear in time. But by the time  
he did, you had departed.

BROADWAY (VO)

Not by choice.

COLDFIRE (VO)

No, indeed not.

EXT. SCENE - RIVERBANK.

A wooded riverbank along the Monongahela southeast of Pittsburgh. COLDSTONE tends to COLDFIRE and has set a small campfire, by which she is slowly drying and reviving. Around them are the others, still in their sleeping positions.

COLDFIRE (VO)

We did the best that we could that  
first day. The priority was to survive.  
But the second priority was to deter-  
mine where we were and what we had  
available.

COLDSTONE goes to the river bank and looks up river, at central Pittsburgh in the distance.

HUDSON (VO)

A familiar story.

COLDFIRE (VO)

The first night, we went up the river to the city. We thought that perhaps you would have ended up there.

EXT. SCENE - MT. WASHINGTON, PITTSBURGH. (NIGHT)

The seven gargoyles line up on the bluff, overlooking downtown Pittsburgh.

COLDFIRE (VO)

Of course, we were disappointed. For a time, we feared you had been lost.

BROOKLYN (VO)

The feeling was mutual.

COLDFIRE (VO)

So we set out to establish ourselves in Pittsburgh for the duration. We worked to get food and water, and a place to roost during the day.

MATT (VO)

And friends?

COLDFIRE (VO)

Alas, no. Coldstone felt it was inadvisable to contact the humans more than necessary.

HUDSON (VO)

Understandable.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

MATT

How come?

HUDSON

Human friends are hard for us to come by, for one thing. For another, Coldstone has a bad history.

COLDFIRE

So he does.

MATT

Sorry to hear that.

COLDFIRE

Which does lead me to ask: how did you gain your companion?

BROOKLYN

I got shot our first night here.

COLDFIRE

And you are keeping him prisoner?

BROOKLYN

No! No, nothing like that. Someone else shot me. Matt saved my life.

COLDFIRE

Oh, that is refreshing.

MATT

Well, I was in the right place at the right time, that's all.

LEXINGTON

Hey.

MATT

What?

LEXINGTON

Don't minimize it.

MATT

No, no, of course not. It was my gain.

GOLIATH

You have kept yourselves occupied in Pittsburgh?

COLDFIRE

Somewhat, yes. It has had its own problems. It has been a difficult few months.

LEXINGTON

How?

COLDFIRE

We have wanted resources. We have been isolated. The clan has been...brittle.

GOLIATH

That is unfortunate.

LEXINGTON

But at least we know where you are,  
now.

COLDFIRE

Indeed. And we would not have found you  
except from some very interesting pho-  
tographs that appeared online.

INT. SCENE - LIBRARY.

A darkened library. Nashville and Tachi are working on one of  
the computers, searching.

COLDFIRE (VO)

It was the children who discovered  
them. They had become restless, and  
hoped for news.

On the computer, several social media posts scroll by. They stop  
on a photo of a grinning BROADWAY posing with some people in  
costumes, showing off his trophy and giving a thumbs-up. Nash-  
ville and Tachi exchange astonished looks.

BROADWAY

Halloween?

COLDFIRE

Indeed.

MATT (VO)

Oh? How interesting were these photos?

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

BROADWAY

Here, check it out.

He rummages in a stack of things along one wall and pulls out  
his trophy, still scarred from the bullet hit. He tosses it to  
LEXINGTON, who hands it to MATT, who examines it.

MATT

You entered a costume contest?



BROADWAY

Yes. And won.

MATT

(indicating the bullet  
scar)

And this?

BROADWAY

I got shot at not long after.

MATT

Seriously?

BROADWAY

Yeah, it was an eventful night.

EXT. SCENE - MT. WASHINGTON, PITTSBURGH. (NIGHT)

Nashville and Tachi are explaining to the others, who are discussing.

COLDFIRE (VO)

We talked it over. It seemed almost too good to be true, but we realized this might be a message. And if it were, it was worth investigating.

COLDFIRE and COLDSTONE hold hands at the edge of the bluff as the others look on. They look deeply at one another.

COLDFIRE (VO)

We spent many spirited nights debating the best method for that. But it eventually became clear that I would need to go. Only Coldstone or I could possibly cover the distance safely, and only one of us could go without leaving the clan unprotected during the day. So I went.

COLDFIRE leaps off the bluff, turns on her jets, and flies off into the night.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

LEXINGTON is prying more vigorously on the drone. MATT lends his hands to steady it as he does.

GOLIATH

You were right.

COLDFIRE

As were you. It was a clever ploy.

GOLIATH

I am pleased that it has worked.

BROOKLYN

And everyone else is okay?

COLDFIRE

The clan in Pittsburgh is dispirited. Being separated has been hard. I look forward to returning with the news. More so to reuniting the clan.

GOLIATH

So do we. Your arrival is most encouraging.

BROADWAY

Can we talk to them? We know where they are.

GOLIATH

Lexington?

LEXINGTON

Yes? Should not be a problem. Now that I know...rrgh, come on!...where you are, I should be able to patch into Coldstone's comms.

COLDFIRE

He will be most pleased.

LEXINGTON

But before I do, I want to get into this thing.

COLDFIRE

As you should. It is very disturbing that we should face this sort of danger here.

GOLIATH

Better here than in Manhattan. They are wounded enough.

There is a snap, and the dome of the droid loosens up. LEXINGTON begins to work around the edge, prying the dome loose.

LEXINGTON

That's got it! Now, let's see what we have here.

He pops the dome completely free and puts it aside. When he sees what is inside, MATT gags, and turns away, suddenly. LEXINGTON scowls and looks horrified.

BROOKLYN

What is it?

LEXINGTON

A brain.

The others are shocked, and come over to see. In the middle of the drone there is a human brain, wired in. Some of the wires are broken or fused from the plasma cannon hit.

MATT

A real brain?

LEXINGTON

Yes. I think so, anyway.

MATT

Oh, my God.

BROADWAY

So what does that make this?

LEXINGTON

A sort of cyborg.

GOLIATH

Whose work is this? Who would do this?

LEXINGTON

Your guess is as good as mine.

GOLIATH

I will not guess. Find out.

LEXINGTON traces some of the burnt wiring with his screwdriver.

LEXINGTON

Well, this goes to an audio circuit,  
here. Maybe that'll help?

MATT

Maybe you'd better not.

BROOKLYN

We've got to. Sorry.

GOLIATH

Do it.

LEXINGTON reaches in, and swiftly reconnects the wiring. There is a pop from the drone as the audio circuit comes to life, and the drone begins to speak; it is CATHY.

CATHY

--hear me? Hello?

LEXINGTON

Hello?

CATHY

Hello? Who's that? Is someone there?

LEXINGTON

Yes, I'm here.

CATHY

Help me, please. I can't see. I can't  
move. I don't know what's happening.  
Help me.

BROADWAY

We'll try to help you. Just hang on.

BROOKLYN

Can you do anything?

LEXINGTON

I think the rest of it's wired through  
the dome. Let me put it back together.

CATHY

Please help me, I don't understand! I  
can't feel my hands!

MATT

(retching)

I have to get outside, I'm sorry.

He rushes toward the door, and exits onto the roof.

GOLIATH

Go help him.

COLDFIRE

I'll do it, if that's all right.

GOLIATH

Yes.

COLDFIRE follows MATT outside.

BROADWAY

We're going to help you. Do you have a name?

CATHY

Cathy. I'm Cathy. Where's William? Is he there? Is William all right?

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

MATT is at the parapet, breathing heavily. COLDFIRE comes up alongside him.

COLDFIRE

Are you all right?

MATT

No. That was horrible. That poor woman, locked inside that shell...

He looks over at COLDFIRE.

MATT

...I mean. I'm sorry.

COLDFIRE

No, you are correct. It is horrible for her.

MATT

Is that...I mean, you...

COLDFIRE

No. My body is a machine, as I said. My spirit has been bonded to it. My flesh is elsewhere.

MATT

Where?

COLDFIRE

Sewn to other flesh to make up my mate.

MATT turns slightly green at this.

MATT

Oh, please don't tell me that.

COLDFIRE

Here. Take my hand.

She offers her hand. MATT, hesitantly, takes it. She clutches his hand warmly, and MATT relaxes.

COLDFIRE

I am in no pain. I do not suffer. My life has changed, but what of that? Our lives are change, are they not?

MATT

Yes, I suppose so.

COLDFIRE

I have lost some part of myself. I have gained elsewhere: without this body, I could not have come here and we would not have begun to reunite our clan. So I am not sorry for the change.

MATT

I see your point. I'm sorry to get so weird about it.

COLDFIRE

You are not the first.

MATT

I wouldn't be, I guess. It is a lot to understand.

COLDFIRE

It will most likely be a lot for her to understand as well. She will need guidance. She will need caring for.

MATT

Who doesn't?

COLDFIRE

Indeed so.

MATT looks down at their hands.

MATT

Thank you for this.

COLDFIRE

I am a gargoyle, and you are a friend of my clan. Of course I will protect you.

MATT

I appreciate that.

She releases his hand.

COLDFIRE

Are you better now?

MATT

Yes. I still need to get some air, but I'm much better.

COLDFIRE

When you are ready, come back inside.

MATT

I will.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

LEXINGTON has put the top back on CATHY. She buzzes a bit, and then begins to hover.

LEXINGTON

That should put your video circuits and your motor circuits back online. Can you see?

CATHY turns around, sees the gargoyles, and begins to whimper. She backs away.

CATHY

No, stay away. What are you?

GOLIATH

We are not a danger to you.

LEXINGTON

Yeah. It's all right.

CATHY

You? You were speaking to me?

LEXINGTON

Yes.

CATHY

What has happened to me?

LEXINGTON

You have been put into a drone, a small flying robot.

CATHY

What?

GOLIATH

Do you remember what happened?

CATHY

I was...we were...we were on Wacker Drive. Downtown. William and I were going to get work. They came by looking for workers. I went for a medical exam, and then...

She sobs.

CATHY

I don't want to be here anymore.

GOLIATH

They took you off the street to do this.

CATHY

Yes.



GOLIATH

A depravity. Who has done this?

CATHY

I don't know, I don't know.

BROADWAY

How did you go in for the exam?

CATHY

They took us. It was a white van.

BROADWAY

And it was on Wacker Drive?

CATHY

Yes.

GOLIATH

It will not happen again. We will go there and we will stop this. Tonight!

EXT. SCENE - LOWER WACKER DRIVE. (NIGHT)

There are more people on Lower Wacker than there were before. They are keeping a lookout, and as the van pulls around toward them, the crowd follows it to a stop. JIMMY and his assistant get out.

JIMMY

Okay, everyone, back, just give us some room. We know you're eager, but we can't take everyone at once, so would you please--just, back up, all right?

The crowd presses forward, however: nobody wants to lose the chance at twenty dollars an hour.

There is a howling in the distance, eerie enough that both JIMMY and his assistant look up, alarmed. From out of the darkness, BRONX bounds forward, roaring. The crowd scatters. JIMMY and his assistant draw guns from under their coats and fire at BRONX, who swerves left and right and continues to charge at them. JIMMY and his assistant, realizing the danger, jump into the van, and JIMMY floors it, nearly hitting a couple of the people in the crowd. BRONX tears after the van. He leaps upon it.

JIMMY swerves back and forth, trying to shake off BRONX, but nothing doing. BRONX tears into the top of the van and leers in-

side. The assistant aims at BRONX point-blank, but BRONX chomps down on the gun and rips it away, then dives inside. JIMMY fails to slow down for the turn at Lake Street, and the van flips and rolls out toward the riverside. From outside, an enraged GOLIATH descends, gets JIMMY by the neck, and pulls him out to the outside of Wacker Drive.

GOLIATH

You will tell me where you have been taking them.

JIMMY

Taking who?

GOLIATH

Do not mock me! You have been stealing human lives.

JIMMY

What, those people?

GOLIATH slams him into the structure.

GOLIATH

Those people are protected. You will answer my question.

JIMMY

I don't think I will.

GOLIATH

Then I have little reason not to prevent your pillaging more directly.

He turns JIMMY upside down and holds him over the riverwalk.

JIMMY

Oh, no, don't do that, don't do that!

GOLIATH

You may perhaps ask your assistant to bring you there, and they may harvest your brain as you have harvested others.

JIMMY

No, please, I don't want that.

GOLIATH

Where have you taken them?

JIMMY

All right, all right! It's a lab, 59th and Kenwood.

GOLIATH

This is the truth?

JIMMY

Yes, it is, I swear!

GOLIATH

Very well. You will not do this again.

JIMMY

No, I won't.

GOLIATH

And to be sure...

He winds up and flings JIMMY out into the river, where he lands with a terrific splash. Sirens begin to approach, and GOLIATH leaps off and glides into the wind as the police begin to arrive. He swoops down over the riverwalk: BRONX leaps up and into his arms, and they glide away into the night. Among the first officers on the scene is MILLER, who jumps out of his car and examines the van, the claw marks in the roof especially. He leans into the van to talk to the assistant.

MILLER

Hey, you see who did this? Hey?

He gets no response, so he goes back down toward the crowd.

MILLER

Hey, who saw this? Anybody?

The crowd wants nothing to do with the cops, however, and begins to disperse. As the other officers begin to help the assistant out of the van, MILLER goes to the riverside and looks out.

MILLER

I know you're behind this. Got to be.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY. RECEPTION

All is quiet: the reception area is vacant, though the lights are on. That doesn't last: the door crashes open. GOLIATH enters, followed by HUDSON and BRONX. They are ready for a fight, but one is not coming. They spread out to investigate. As they do, a voice speaks from the desk:

COTTER

Hello, and welcome to the project office for the Cybernetics Interface in Mobile Devices program!

GOLIATH

A recording, nothing more.

They continue to search the office as the recording drones on.

COTTER

We appreciate your interest in the program, however, we are sorry to say that nobody is available to assist you at the moment. If you would please just put your name and phone number on a convenient piece of paper and leave it on the desk, we will be very happy to get in touch with you as soon as someone is available. Thanks for calling!

GOLIATH

Nothing.

HUDSON

Then we proceed. This way.

They go through the door and into the hallway.

INT. SCENE - LABORATORY.

BRONX is first through the door. The ANDROID is there. It turns and addresses them, and as it does, BRONX's hackles go up and he growls.

ANDROID

Hello, candidates! We are pleased to have you join research project AR-C7994168637, comma, Cybernetics Interface in Mobile Devices. Welcome.

HUDSON  
Another recording?

ANDROID  
Unfortunately, we regret to report that a preliminary scan has found you to be unsuitable for the project. Your application will be rejected.

The ANDROID deploys a plasma rifle from its arm and aims at the gargoyles.

ANDROID  
Thank you for your consideration.

It fires at them, and they scatter three ways. It begins tracking GOLIATH, who is able to roll out of the way of its second shot. The ANDROID does not get a third shot, as BRONX clamps down on its gun arm and rips it away.

ANDROID  
(flatly)  
Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow.

The ANDROID deploys the saw from its other arm and swings at BRONX, who leaps aside, still carrying the arm in his jaws. It swings back at HUDSON, who has his sword out, parries, and then cuts around, beheading the ANDROID, cutting off its string of "Ow"s abruptly. The head rattles and rolls into a corner, and the body slumps down to the floor. There is a sudden hum. A video screen deploys from the ceiling, and livens up, and COTTER appears. She scowls at them.

COTTER  
First you ignore my very clear instructions to leave a message, and then you wreck a perfectly good grad student. You know, Goliath, you are really beginning to get on my nerves.

GOLIATH  
Cotter, this--

COTTER  
Doctor Cotter, please. We have been over this.

HUDSON  
You disgrace that title, Cotter.

COTTER

Aww.

GOLIATH

How many humans have you consumed in this pursuit?

COTTER

What, this week, or all together?

GOLIATH

In all.

COTTER

Oh, I would think...probably forty or fifty. You know, it is so hard to keep track. I really should run an inventory.

GOLIATH

This will not continue.

COTTER

No, you're quite right. I'm stopping this project as of tonight. I've seen the light, Goliath. Thank you ever so much for that. Why keep pilfering bums and broke humanities majors out of this town when I could find better ones somewhere else?

HUDSON

What is your meaning?

COTTER

Like, say, Pittsburgh?

GOLIATH and HUDSON's eyes flash at this.

GOLIATH

Don't you dare!

COTTER

You really think that I would not have been listening to you? You think I would have given up one of those drones that easily for nothing? Come on.

From the door, several ball drones enter and hover toward them.

COTTER

Of course, now, your minds--

HUDSON

Will not be yours.

GOLIATH crouches for battle, HUDSON brandishes his sword, and the ball drones descend. One is suddenly blasted into rubbish, much to their surprise. BRONX, still carrying the android arm in his jaws, has fired its gun. He bites down firmly and fires again, taking a chunk from the wall. He looks delighted by this. GOLIATH and HUDSON attack, HUDSON cleaving the drones, GOLIATH crushing and flinging them into each other, and BRONX firing wildly around the room and sometimes hitting the drones.

One of BRONX's hits blows a hole into the wall, through which some computer equipment (blinkenlights) is visible. GOLIATH, seeing this, rips the wall down, revealing a control console. He points to it.

GOLIATH

Bronx!

BRONX looks at it, turns his head, and fires off two shots into the computer equipment. It sparks and flames, the blinkenlights go out, and the remaining droids drop to the floor, lifeless. COTTER is not happy.

COTTER

Yet again you have vandalized my laboratory, Goliath. Have you no pity? Do you know what my insurance rates are going to do?

GOLIATH

You should hope the insurance gets a hold of you before we do, Cotter. The last time was a battle. This is a war.

COTTER

Well, then, time to open up a new front. Buh-bye.

She hangs up the console. There is a shrill whistle from behind the walls, and GOLIATH, BRONX, and HUDSON run from the room as it self-destructs, caving in the walls behind them.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

On the roof, BROOKLYN, BROADWAY, and LEXINGTON are standing together, talking quietly. Apart from them stands COLDFIRE, who is talking to CATHY. The door opens, and MATT enters, followed by SANCHEZ.

SANCHEZ

Where's Goliath? Is he here?

BROOKLYN

He went down to take care of business.

SANCHEZ

Did that business happen to be on Lower Wacker Drive?

BROOKLYN

Could have been. Why?

SANCHEZ

We just had a big wreck down there. Miller's talking about a gargoyle attack and he's getting some attention for it. I thought I asked him to work with us.

BROADWAY

That would have taken too long. They were picking people off. Look.

He points toward CATHY, who's turned toward them. MATT joins COLDFIRE and CATHY.

MATT

How are you doing?

CATHY

I'm all alone now. I was able to communicate with the others a bit, but that just went dead.

COLDFIRE

They must have succeeded.

MATT

Maybe so. I hope so.



SANCHEZ

What is that?

LEXINGTON

Cybernetic drone. Someone was grafting human brains into those and using them to smash into jewelry stores.

SANCHEZ

Really?

MATT

Yes, really.

GOLIATH and HUDSON land, carrying BRONX.

SANCHEZ

There you are! Do you know how much trouble you're in?

GOLIATH

More than you think. Cotter is back.

LEXINGTON

Oh, that figures somehow.

HUDSON

It is worse than that. She knows about Pittsburgh.

COLDFIRE

The clan?

GOLIATH

Yes, and she is threatening to harvest them, as she put it.

MATT

No.

HUDSON

Aye, she said something along that line.

BROOKLYN

We've got to warn them.

BROADWAY

Right.

As they talk, everyone except SANCHEZ and CATHY gather together. SANCHEZ looks at CATHY, puzzled.

COLDFIRE

Can you get into Coldstone's communications circuit from here?

LEXINGTON

Maybe, but we may not have time.

MATT

How long will it take?

LEXINGTON

Two, maybe three days.

GOLIATH

Cotter is at some other location. She is using a television to speak to us. It will not take her nearly that long to reach them, I fear.

MATT

I've got a better way. I can drive.

CATHY looks toward them, gathered away from her, and at SANCHEZ, still eyeing her with some revulsion. She hovers over to him.

SANCHEZ

Hello?

CATHY

Hello. Could you help me go inside? It's getting cold out here.

SANCHEZ

Oh, sure. Come on.

They go to the door.

SANCHEZ

Hey, we'll be inside.

BROADWAY

Okay. (to MATT) How long would that take?

MATT

Eight hours, straight through.

SANCHEZ and CATHY go inside.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

Inside, SANCHEZ walks over to the desk and leans against it. CATHY hovers around, looking over the place.

SANCHEZ

They are so stubborn, sometimes. I swear. I just wish that I could get through to them.

CATHY

Yeah.

SANCHEZ

I'm trying to help them. I really am. But they're making it so hard by ignoring me.

CATHY

I bet.

CATHY has hovered over by one of the high-voltage cubicles, screened by an expanded wire mesh on which hangs a large, simple sign: "DANGER - ALIVE". She stares at the sign silently. SANCHEZ's monologue slowly fades out as she does.

SANCHEZ

I mean, we're friends. We should be, anyway, after all this time. Ellen's even been asking if they wanted to come over for a barbecue some time once the weather improves...

CATHY

(internally)

Please. Make it quick.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

MATT

No, no problem at all. Brooklyn'll tell you.

BROOKLYN

That wasn't the most comfortable ride of my life, you know.

MATT

Well, we could set up the tow rope too,  
if that works better, and--

He is cut off by a tremendous explosion from the station. All of them duck in response, and then look toward the building. SANCHEZ rushes out of the door, falls to the roof, and looks back. The blast has subsided as suddenly as it came. BROADWAY rushes to his side; he is unhurt, but stunned. MATT comes up to him next.

MATT

What happened? What did you do?

SANCHEZ

Nothing! I didn't...she...she went...

MATT comprehends immediately, and rushes inside, followed by COLDFIRE.

INT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION.

A plume of black smoke curls up from the cubicle as an alarm rings somewhere inside the station controls. MATT cautiously goes over. The metal mesh is partly burned, and below it on the floor lies what is left of one metal tentacle. He looks at it in stunned horror, and picks it up.

COLDFIRE

Did she...?

MATT

Yeah. Yeah.

The telephone rings as BROADWAY, SANCHEZ, and LEXINGTON come in. MATT goes to the desk and answers the phone.

MATT

Humboldt. Yeah. Yes, we did. Uh, I don't know, I think something must have got across the Bus Four side of the breaker. No. No, I wasn't there, something from the ceiling.

He looks over at the others and gulps softly.

MATT

Yeah, I'm fine. No, you'll need a mechanic out here to clean it up, I think. All right. Thanks. Bye.

He very quietly hangs up the phone and goes out to the roof, handing the remains of the tentacle to SANCHEZ as he goes. SANCHEZ looks down at it in his hand, clutching it.

EXT. SCENE - HUMBOLDT STATION. ROOF. (NIGHT)

MATT is standing on the edge of the roof, looking out over the city, alone. Behind him, GOLIATH approaches, and silently puts one hand on his shoulder. MATT sighs and looks down.

MATT

She was just so...lost.

GOLIATH

Not lost. Stolen.

MATT

Stolen, then. Whatever it was. I can't begin to imagine what she went through. Don't want to imagine it.

GOLIATH

Neither do I.

MATT

And I don't want to see it again. You think this is what they plan to do with the rest of your people?

GOLIATH

Yes.

MATT

I don't want to see that again.

GOLIATH

You are needed. Coldfire will need to return to Pittsburgh to warn the others. She will not travel alone this time. We do not.

MATT

Then, I think, we'd better get started.  
Station mechanics will be here soon  
anyway.

GOLIATH

Give it half an hour, at least. For  
Cathy.

MATT

Yeah. For Cathy.

And they look out over the night, contemplating.

=END=