

SAMPLE FROM STRAYS

INT. CREATURES' CAVE - DAY

*ZING! ZING!* The creatures fire at the group. Immediately the three disperse and duck behind piles of garbage.

LIANA  
We gotta get out of here!

ZELIA  
This is why I came alone!

Liana and Jaren trade shots with the creatures.

*CHING! CRASH! ZING!* The blasts ricochet off piles of metal, knocking the scrap all over the place.

Slowly, but surely, more armed creatures rush into the room, adding their laser exchange to the fray.

Jaren grits his teeth, eyeing the room, the environment, the enemy. Ears swivel, his mind reeling. The piles of trash --

JAREN  
That trash pile over there!

LIANA  
What!?

JAREN  
We knock it over, we cut 'em off!

LIANA  
But how?

ZELIA  
I'm on it!

The snow leopard leaps up into the piles.

JAREN  
Wait!

Too late -- she's on the move. He GROWLS. To Liana:

JAREN (CONT'D)  
Does your blaster have an auto-spread!?

LIANA  
Yeah?

JAREN

Cover me!

LIANA

But I'll be a sitting duck!

JAREN

Just do it!

He rushes over, blasting at those aiming for Zelia.

Liana sighs as she clicks a setting on her gun. Charges up. She jumps from cover and unloads a barrage of laser blasts!

The creatures duck into cover, giving Jaren a direct line right towards the closest ones -- those behind the hovercar.

Zelia leaps over to the netting around the pile. Begins to voraciously tear at it with her claws. The pile teeters.

Jaren rolls right underneath the hovercar.

Liana's gun goes quiet, smoke sizzling from the nozzle. She ducks back behind cover, nervous with a dead weapon.

The nearby creatures recover first, aiming for Zelia --

Jaren jumps up from under the hovercar, gun-butts the first creature. Uses Liana's trick to knock out the second!

Right as the other creatures begin to resume their attack --

*RUMBLE!* The loosen pile of scrap collapses right behind Jaren, shattering, spilling, cutting off the creature's line of attack! Jaren leaps into the car as debris fly everywhere!

Zelia rides the falling debris, leaping from piece to piece in control at first, but an errant blast from a creature - before being blocked - hits a piece Zelia climbss on --

ZELIA

YIKES!

-- stumbling, losing her grip, she makes a desperate leap --

Liana see her jumping, and makes a beeline dash for her --

She leaps, catches Zelia's falling form, which knocks the fox off her trajectory, towards the hovercar as Jaren gets up --

JAREN

WHOA!

-- WOOMF! Both Liana and Zelia land right on top of him right back in the hovercar's backseat!

The screams of creatures, clattering of spilled objects, and errant laser blasts go quiet in the billowing dust.

Jaren's head pops in in the mass of bodies. He fumbles on what to say. *So frustrated!* Zelia, unfazed, leaps out the hovercar. Liana pushes herself off Jaren next.

He finally finds the words:

JAREN (CONT'D)  
Are you all crazy?!

Zelia laughs, in success and shocked relief!

ZELIA  
*Whew!* It worked, didn't it?

JAREN  
Yeah, but --

LIANA  
Ha! Bold, but she has a point.

The wolf looks between the two. He's not winning this one. Sighing, exasperatingly rubs his hands through his headfur.

LIANA (CONT'D)  
By the way, did you just do my knockout move?

JAREN  
Yeah. Saw you do it.

LIANA  
You picked it up that fast?

JAREN  
I *observed* it.

He says mockingly, but then smirks at Liana. She smiles back, but... wheels are turning in her head...

Zelia listens as the creatures' chatter continues on the other side. Objects clattering, scraping of claws --

ZELIA  
They're coming over!

JAREN  
Get in!

Jaren, Liana, and Zelia jump into the hovercar. They push the unconscious creatures out. Jaren grabs the wheel, turns the car towards the trash pile, spilled at a convenient incline.

He shifts the gear.

JAREN (CONT'D)

Buckle up!

LIANA

... there's no seat belts.

JAREN

Um... hold on to something!

The fox and leopard grip the seat. Jaren hits the pedal --

They speed BACKWARDS and crash into another pile.

Everyone jerks and grunts in sudden pain. Zelia and Liana GLARE at Jaren, who fumbles at the control.

JAREN (CONT'D)

Uh, okay. Hold on. NOW buckle up.

LIANA

There's no -- EEE!

The hovercar ZOOMS forward as the three grip what they can. The vehicle darts up the incline as the creatures peek over --

VROOM! The hovercar VAULTS over the pile, creatures knocked right on their butts as the three land on the other side and speed off. The gun fire doesn't come close to hitting them.

Several creatures leap into other hovercars and give chase.

Jaren darts and dodges every pile as they head towards the light -- zooming outside into the open desert air.

EXT. ROCKY DESERT LANDSCAPE - DAY

As Jaren, Liana, and Zelia dart across the feisty sand, the eastern distance showcases the growing danger of the sandstorm -- huge, billowing, violent.

Sand spreads like waves as they speed across the landscape.

Three hovercars are on their tail. Four. Five. NINE.

Jaren jerks the car back and forth to avoid the creatures' blasts. The three of them stay as low as they can.

LIANA  
 Can't you make this thing go any  
 faster!?

JAREN  
 Do you want to drive!?

Liana's gun is back to full charge. She starts firing back.

Jaren looks over to the snow leopard.

JAREN (CONT'D)  
 Hey, kid! Time to grow up!

He tosses her his gun, she catches it.

JAREN (CONT'D)  
 Safety's at the top, hold it in two  
 hands, and make sure to --

Zelia clicks the safety off, cocks it, grips the handle  
*perfectly*, fires, nails the engines of two hovercars, causing  
 them to CRASH into each other, ejecting the riders.

ZELIA  
 (SARCASTICALLY) What was that, *kid*?

Jaren, Liana, blinks in amazement at Zelia's skill. An errant  
 laser blast knocks them out of the trance.

LIANA  
 We're not out of the heat yet!

She and the snow leopard continue to blast back. But there  
 are SO MANY CREATURES. About twelve-plus cars give chase!

ZELIA  
 Why are there so many!?

LIANA  
 It's gotta be like a hive-mind! You  
 screw one, you screw 'em all!

ZELIA  
 Don't steal someone else's stolen  
 goods! Honor even among thieves!

JAREN  
 Priorities! First, we live! Then we  
 can discuss motives!

Jaren zigs, zags, twists, turns, dodging the lasers blasts.

ZELIA  
If anyone has a miracle up their  
tail, now is the time to use it!

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
(STATIC) Jaren - Jar - you...  
there...?

JAREN  
Doc? Is that you?

LIANA  
Doctor Moriarty?

ZELIA  
It's really him?

Dr. Tedrick's voice starts to come in clearer.

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
It is nice to hear your voice  
again! How are you? How is  
Professor Liana and Zelia? I hope  
things are going smashingly.

*RRRP!* A errant blast slams the side of their hovercar.

JAREN  
You could say that!

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
What in the world is going on?

JAREN  
We're being chased by about a  
thousand of these creatures! We  
can't shake 'em!

LIANA  
... the sandstorm.

The three of them look over to the east -- the brewing  
sandstorm beckons danger. And, at the moment, survival.

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
What did she say?

JAREN  
... we're gonna have to drive into  
that sandstorm to lose them.

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
What? No! That's ridiculous! How  
far from you from me?

JAREN

I don't know -- a minute? I --

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)

No, no, eighty-eight seconds. I can see you. Drive straight and true. I will handle the rest.

JAREN

Handle what? Doc, what are you doing? I can't --

The line goes dead.

JAREN (CONT'D)

UGH! Why doesn't anyone tell me anything!?

He turns to the two next to him.

JAREN (CONT'D)

Stay low and watch out.

ZELIA

What's going on?

JAREN

I have no idea.

The wolf steadies the hovercar. A perfect target.

Suddenly... there's a FLASH from the sky.

A huge beam of light SHOOTS across the atmosphere and zings right towards Jaren, Zelia, and Liana.

They scream and DUCK as the light passes right over them, nailing the exact center between them and the creatures.

In seconds, a HUGE wave of sand erupts and crests completely over the entire pack of creatures.

Screams, screeches, howls; hovercars turn and crash into each other as they desperately try to escape the wave of sand.

But it's too late. Every single creature gets wiped out.

Jaren, Liana, and Zelia watch in astonishment as the creatures disappear in the wall of sand. They cheer --

LIANA

YEAH!

ZELIA  
YEEEEEESSSS!

JAREN  
WHOOO! Doc, you're a genius!

-- with fist pumps, high-fives, and gestures of excitement.  
But Zelia stops and stares behind them.

ZELIA  
Uh, guys...?

Jaren and Liana still celebrate and don't hear her.

ZELIA (CONT'D)  
Guys...!?

Still ignored by shouts of excitement.

ZELIA (CONT'D)  
GUYS!

JAREN  
What -- !?

He and Liana turn to her -- and gawk.

The wave of sand gets caught in the distant sandstorm, and, for whatever reason, takes on the property of the sandstorm.

The wave EXPLODES in sand and dust, becoming a giant, uncontrollable and unstable hurricane. Expanding hugely, faster, more violent -- and directly behind them.

Liana turns to Jaren and screams.

LIANA  
DRIVE!

Jaren slams on the gas and books it -- the out-of-control sandstorm *literally* right on their heels.

JAREN  
DOC! DOC! Can you read me!?  
Whatever that was, it's mad!

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)  
Oookay, that was unforeseen. Get  
back here at once!

JAREN  
Where do you think we're going!?



Liana places a hand on Jaren's shoulder. Worried look.

LIANA

If we stop for him, we're dead.

ZELIA

What? What did you say? No! We can't just leave him! We have to do something! Please!

Jaren looks between the two. The hard decision kills him.

JAREN

(DISTRAUGHT) Doc... we can't stop for you. Can't even slow down. We --

DR. TEDRICK (O.S.)

Of course you can't! Keep driving! Just be ready to catch me, eh?

Jaren's eyes go wide. His jaw drops open.

LIANA

What?

ZELIA

What did he say?

Jaren is too stunned for words.

They come up on their cave, the rocky ridge appearing in the distance. The three look at their temporary camp. And soon, they all realize what's going to happen as they see him.

Dr. Tedrick stands on top of the cave, like the Rocketeer in kangaroo form. On his back is a large, cylindrical, mechanical contraption. Around his shoulder is a satchel.

He gazes at the coming hovercar and the deadly storm behind them. His eyes squint - calculations are at work.

DR. TEDRICK

Temperature ninety degrees. Wind at fifteen miles per hours. Hovercar velocity at thirty - no, thirty-two miles per hour southeast...

The three in the hovercar can't believe it.

ZELIA

He's not going to --

LIANA

He can't possibly --

JAREN

He is.

Jaren turns to them.

JAREN (CONT'D)

Just... just grab what you can.

Dr. Tedrick whips out his goggles. He flops them on his face.

DR. TEDRICK

Carpe diem.

He backs up a number of set steps. Jaren, Liana, Zelia watch him back up out of sight, mere seconds from him.

The kangaroo RUNS to the edge -- and LEAPS.