

**THE MASKED RIDER**  
**EPISODE 3 - "A FOOL AND HIS MONEY, PART 1"**

Written by  
Scott D. Harris

**THE MASKED RIDER - "A FOOL AND HIS MONEY, PART 1"**

PRE-TITLES 1. EXT. MUSEUM OF CULTURE & MYSTICISM- DUSK

FADE IN

The twilight splays out behind the magnificent three-storey building. The front of the museum rests at the top of a flight of marble stairs and the courtyard is surrounded by a curving, elegantly designed wall. In the middle of the yard is a fountain designed to resemble a woman dancing with a large python. We can hear the faint banging of ceremonial drums.

PRE-TITLES 2. INT. INITIATION ROOM- SECONDS LATER

The drums are much louder here. The room is dark, lit only by the fire in the middle of the floor. BERNARD LOCKE - an athletic, tanned man - is kneeling in the middle of a veve circle wearing only his trousers, fastened by a belt that resembles an iron padlock. A mask of some kind of strange bird is pulled over his head. The TABOO and CLAY DOLL TROJANITES are performing a dance around him, their bodies only glimpsed in the light of the flames. The SMILODON TROJANITE watches on curiously as the TERROR TROJANITE - little more than a silhouette - oversees the ritual. The TERROR TROJANITE raises his hands and begins to chant in a strange language as the rhythm of the drums grows faster and more powerful. Black ritualistic tattoos appear over BERNARD'S body and the keyhole on his belt glows with a golden light. BERNARD'S body tenses and he releases a pained scream.

**(ROLL OPENING TITLES)**

1. EXT. SISKO & SISKO OFFICE- DAWN

EST. SHOT of the office door.

**TITLE CARD:** "A FOOL AND HIS MONEY, PART 1"

FADE TO

2. INT. SISKO & SISKO OFFICE- MORNING

CLOSE-UP of a portable radio. We hear the voice of ANIKA playing over it.

**ANIKA**

**(Over radio)**

Good morning, Ville Venteuse, it's 9 o'clock and you're listening to Legends F.M. with your Princess of the Airwaves, Anika Torrance. We've been receiving dozens of calls from you listeners out there about the apparent monster sightings around the city..

Her voice fades into the background. RENÉ, PHILIP and CAPTAIN CHARBONNEAU are sitting around the desk playing Old Maid. RENÉ watches CHARBONNEAU carefully but it is PHILIP'S turn.

**CHARBONNEAU**

Okay, Phil. Take the...King of Hearts.

**PHILIP**

Yes. It is this one.

He reaches across and slips the middle card from CHARBONNEAU'S hand. He flips it to show the others that it is indeed the King of Hearts. CHARBONNEAU looks at his hand, which consists of only the Joker now, and frowns.

**CHARBONNEAU**

I don't know how you do it, kid. Sometimes you're so on the ball it's like you're not even human.

**RENÉ**

I gave up trying to figure out Philip a long time ago, *mon ami*. It ain't worth the headache. You ready to fold?

**CHARBONNEAU**

Like I've got a choice?

**RENÉ**

Looks like you're buying me and my brother here dinner at *Belinda's* then. Hope your wallet can stand it.

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CHARBONNEAU is about to protest but is interrupted by a knock at the door. RENÉ hops to his feet and walks over.

3. EXT. 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR CORRIDOR- SECONDS LATER

NATASHA is standing outside, arms crossed with a worried expression on her face. The door opens and RENÉ sticks his head out.

**RENÉ**  
**(Cont'd)**

Ms Fontaine?

He comes all the way out and closes the door behind him.

**RENÉ**  
**(Cont'd)**

I thought the rent wasn't due for another-

**NATASHA**  
**(Interrupts)**

This isn't about the rent, Sisko. I...I want to hire you.

**RENÉ**  
You do? Well, ah, why don't we step into *your* office?  
Mine's a little cramped right now.

**NATASHA**  
Fine with me.

4. EXT. STAIRCASE- SHORTLY AFTER

NATASHA is leading RENÉ down the stairs towards the 1<sup>ST</sup> floor.

**NATASHA**  
**(Cont'd)**

Honestly, it's not me who needs you, but I *am* the one hiring you.

**RENÉ**  
You're paying for someone else?

5. EXT. 1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR CORRIDOR- CONTINUOUS

NATASHA stops just past the last stair and turns to face RENÉ.

**NATASHA**

It's my sister and her husband who need your help, but they're between jobs right now and can't afford a detective on their own. Now hush up and come on.

RENÉ pauses and then nods. They continue walking.

6. INT. NATASHA'S OFFICE- MOMENTS LATER

The door opens. Unlike RENÉ'S office, NATASHA'S is very neat, with certificates awarded to herself and the dance school on the wall behind the desk, a family portrait on the opposing one and a trophy cabinet by the window. Her older sister DAKOTA is seated on the customer side of the desk, her husband LEON is comforting her with an arm around her shoulder. NATASHA and RENÉ enter the room and the COUPLE look up at them.

**NATASHA**

**(Cont' d)**

Dakota, Leon, this is René Sisko, the private detective I told you about.

LEON stands up and shakes RENÉ'S hand.

**LEON**

It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr Sisko. My name's Leon Walker.

**RENÉ**

Pleasure's all mine, *monsieur*. So, Ms Fontaine tells me you require my unique abilities.

NATASHA rolls her eyes. DAKOTA clasps her hands together in her lap.

**DAKOTA**

Yes, sir. It's our daughter, Grace...

7. EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS- DAY (FLASHBACK)

EST. SHOT of the building.

8. INT. WALKER FAMILY FLAT- DAY (FLASHBACK)

The flat is small, barely bigger than a bed-sit. DAKOTA and LEON are kneeling at a small table and sorting through job advertisements.

**DAKOTA**  
(Cont'd)

She was always a good girl.

GRACE - their lovely 20-something daughter - walks into the room with two cups of tea. She sets them down on the table and ALL of them start talking inaudibly.

**DAKOTA**  
(Cont'd)

Always supportive of us in times of trouble. She paid herself through college but put her studies on hold to help around the home.

9. INT. NATASHA'S OFFICE- PRESENT

RENÉ has his notebook and pen out and is listening intently to DAKOTA.

**RENÉ**

Mind if I ask what she was studying?

**LEON**

She was at business school. When I lost my job - I was a cleaner, you see, the company had huge lay-offs and... sorry, I'm digressing.

**RENÉ**

It's okay. So you two haven't been able to hold down anything steady since?

**LEON**

Right. Mainly odd-jobs and part-time stuff. The only way we paid for Grace's course was by dipping into our nest-egg, Natasha helped us with that too. Even when I was employed the pay wasn't none too great.

**RENÉ**

What about you, Mam'selle Walker? Did you work?

**DAKOTA**

Yes. I was a typist, but the boss, he...we'll say 'asked me to stay late,' one night. I haven't been back there since.

**RENÉ**

*Mais, at least he had some good taste, right?*

DAKOTA smiles slightly. NATASHA, who is leaning against the door, glares at RENÉ. LEON pays no mind to the remark and gives his wife's shoulder a comforting squeeze.

**RENÉ**

**(Cont'd)**

So, did Grace work as well?

DAKOTA nods.

**DAKOTA**

She did part-time at a café, the one on the corner of Randall and Hopkirk.

**RENÉ**

I know the one. So what exactly happened to your daughter?

10. INT. WALKER FAMILY FLAT- EARLY MORNING (FLASHBACK)

GRACE - now wearing a fine white suit and pearl jewellery - enters the flat. LEON and DAKOTA are sitting at the table, having been waiting for her. They both look deprived of sleep.

**DAKOTA**

Grace, you didn't come home all night. Where were you?

**GRACE**

Why does it matter? I'm home now, aren't I?

**LEON**

Don't be coy with us. You were at that casino again, weren't you?

**GRACE**

What if I was?

DAKOTA approaches GRACE.

**DAKOTA**

Sweetie, we're just worried about you.

GRACE brushes her off.

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**GRACE**

Just forget it, all right? Yes, I was at Mr Cash's place again, but if I make enough winnings we can get out of this slump!

**LEON**

Who are you trying to fool?

**DAKOTA**

Leon...

**LEON**

**(Interrupts)**

No, it has to be said. Grace, I can tell you've almost never won a game there. The first night you went, you blew all your prize money on that hussy outfit! Now all you do is come back with less than you left with, I'm surprised you have anything left!

**GRACE**

What do you know?! My big break will come and I *will* get us out of this...this cesspit we've all been living in!

**LEON**

That's enough out of you.

**GRACE**

No! It's enough out of you! I was doing this for your benefit but if you don't want it then fine! See you in the obituaries!

She storms out of the door. LEON goes after her.

**LEON**

Grace! Grace!

DAKOTA covers her face with one hand and rests her free one against the wall.

**DAKOTA**

**(V.O.)**

Leon never caught up to her, we haven't seen her since.

11. INT. NATASHA'S OFFICE- PRESENT

RENÉ jots something in his notebook.

**RENÉ**

How long ago was that?

**DAKOTA**

Exactly a week ago. We tried all her friends but nobody's seen her. We're at our wits end, Mr Sisko.

RENÉ tucks away his notebook and lifts DAKOTA'S hand, planting a gentlemanly kiss on it.

**RENÉ**

You have nothing to fear, *mon cher*. I am the greatest detective in all of Ville Venteuse, and I will find your girl.

DAKOTA blushes. LEON frowns and grips his wife's shoulder a little. RENÉ notices this, stands up and tips his hat politely.

**RENÉ**

**(Cont'd)**

I'll contact you when I find something solid. *Adieu*.

12. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE NATASHA'S SCHOOL- SOON AFTER

RENÉ is climbing onto his motorcycle. NATASHA is standing at the kerb with her hands on her hips. PHILIP is in the doorway with a book tucked under his arm. CHARBONNEAU is leaning against the wall, using a snapped tree branch to scratch his back.

**NATASHA**

**(Sarcastic)**

Well you didn't lay it on too thick, did you, Casanova?

**RENÉ**

I've no idea what you mean, Ms Fontaine. Anyway, Dakota mentioned a café on Randall and Hopkirk. Only one there is *Belinda's*, so I'll start my search there. Philip, see if you can find a list of casinos where Grace may have been a regular.

PHILIP nods.

**PHILIP**

Understood.

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**CHARBONNEAU**

Good luck, Sisko.

**RENÉ**

Not going to lend a hand, Captain?

**CHARBONNEAU**

Nah, I'll see if the boys at the station can dig up anything...maybe.

**RENÉ**

Don't strain yourself, you lazy old Basset Hound.

CHARBONNEAU points his branch at RENÉ.

**CHARBONNEAU**

Hey! Less of the old, kid.

RENÉ smirks and puts his crash helmet on. He revs his motorcycle and drives away down the street. NATASHA sighs.

FADE TO

13. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BELINDA'S- SOON AFTER

FOCUS ON the street sign at the corner of two roads. The one going straight up is 'RANDALL RD.,' while the one heading right is 'HOPKIRK ST.'

TILT DOWN to show the café. We can see through the windows that there are a few CUSTOMERS and WAITRESSES moving around inside.

14. INT. BELINDA'S- CONTINUOUS

The place is as busy as we have been led to believe. A pop-rock song plays on the jukebox in the corner. RENÉ walks amongst the crowd towards the counter. He reaches the CASHIER and leans towards him, handing him a playing card of a joker with a snake painted on top.

**RENÉ**

**(Quietly)**

I need to see Belinda. Give her this. She'll see me.

The CASHIER hesitates and then nods.

15. INT. BELINDA'S OFFICE- SHORTLY AFTER

The large room is filled with all manner of arcane items. Amulets, dolls, decorative skulls and other such oddities line the shelves. On one wall is a glass case with some kind of habitat inside it. Two armchairs stand on either side of a varnished table. The purplish fumes of incense fill the air. Separating the room from the hallway itself is a curtain of beads. The beads slip aside as RENÉ enters.

**RENÉ**  
(Cont'd)

Belinda?

No answer. RENÉ slowly walks across the room and takes a seat in one of the armchairs. He leaps up again with a gasp and turns around. A boa constrictor - which was most certainly absent before - is coiled on the chair and glaring up at him. RENÉ takes a couple of steps back as the boa hisses at him.

**VOICE**  
(O.O.S.)

Griselda doesn't appreciate being sat on.

RENÉ turns to face the voice and sees BELINDA - a woman with blonde hair in ringlets and dressed in a tie-dye shirt, jeans, cowboy boots and numerous bangles and necklaces.

**BELINDA**  
(Cont'd)

Hello, Sisko. Here on business?

**RENÉ**

Afraid so, *cher*.

BELINDA moves past him and gently lifts up the boa, draping it over her shoulders. The boa's eyes watch RENÉ.

**BELINDA**

You never come just to see me anymore.

**RENÉ**

Seriously, Belinda, I'm on a case right now, but I promise I'll take you out to dinner right afterwards.

**BELINDA**

I'll hold you to that. Now, what's this case?

**RENÉ**

I'm looking for Grace Walker. She used to work for you.

**BELINDA**

Yeah, I remember her. Nice kid, kept to herself, then she met this guy and quit the very same day.

**RENÉ**

A guy? Like, a boyfriend?

**BELINDA**

No. Not a boyfriend. Unless she's into older men.

16. INT. BELINDA'S- DAY (FLASHBACK)

The café is less busy than when we last saw it. GRACE, looking much more humble and dressed in a waitress' uniform, is taking an order from a TEXAN in an expensive suit, bolo tie and Stetson hat. He is in his 60s, with a bushy moustache and a rotund stomach, but carries himself with an air of dignity. They are speaking inaudibly.

**BELINDA**

(V.O., Cont'd)

He wasn't a local. He sounded Texan, Dallas maybe, but I ain't too certain.

The TEXAN gives GRACE a business card, which she inspects with interest.

**BELINDA**

(V.O., Cont'd)

Guess he made her a business proposition since he gave her his card. Seemed to clinch it since she left with him. Never came back.

17. INT. BELINDA'S OFFICE- PRESENT

RENÉ is absorbing the information thoughtfully. BELINDA pets her boa's head.

**RENÉ**

Could it be possible that this Texan ran a casino?

**BELINDA**

Wouldn't surprise me. He looked like a winner, a real biz-wiz. I can tell these things. You know that.

**RENÉ**

You're right. I do. Thanks for the info. Keep me posted.

He starts to leave but BELINDA grabs his wrist.

**BELINDA**

Not so fast. If you knew me, you'd remember my info  
always comes at a price.

SLOW ZOOM IN on the space between their faces.

FADE TO

18. INT. CORRIDOR, BLOCK OF FLATS- SHORTLY AFTER

RENÉ is standing outside the door of a flat, carrying a plastic bag. He knocks on the door and rocks a bit on his heels before checking his watch and knocking again. The door opens and the TENANT pokes his head out.

**TENANT**

Yeah?

**RENÉ**

Delivery for you. That'll be twelve dollars.

**TENANT**

Twelve bucks for some beignets? You've gotta be yanking my chain, pal.

**RENÉ**

I could say the same about a guy who orders *three* of these deep-fried heart attacks.

The TENANT stares at him thoughtfully for a moment, then shrugs nonchalantly (though his face tells us the remark has agitated him greatly).

**TENANT**

Touché.

The TENANT fishes his wallet out the pocket of his jeans and flicks through the notes inside. He hands over the money and RENÉ gives him the bag. The TENANT closes the door without saying 'thank you.' RENÉ shakes his head and starts walking away when his mobile phone starts buzzing. He pulls it out of his pocket, flips it open and puts it to his ear.

**RENÉ**

*Bonjour?*

19. INT. PHILIP'S WORKSHOP- CONTINUOUS

PHILIP is sitting at his desk with the computer on. He has his own mobile phone pressed to his ear.

**PHILIP**

Hello, Dear-heart, I have some news for you.

**RENÉ**

**(Over phone)**

Lay it on me.

**PHILIP**

As it turns out, there was a casino established just last month, owned by a Mr Carson Cash of Dallas, Texas. It is based on his privately-owned riverboat that passes the city riverfront every Friday at midday exactly. Membership is by written invitation from Mr Cash himself, very exclusive club.

20. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE BLOCK OF FLATS- CONTINUOUS

RENÉ has just emerged from the building and is walking towards the car/bike-park.

**RENÉ**

But how could a woman like Grace, from a family with barely a penny to their name, wind up being invited onboard?

21. INT. PHILIP'S WORKSHOP- CONTINUOUS

PHILIP has now stood up and is walking along the metal catwalk.

**PHILIP**

I am afraid there is only one way to find out. We must somehow gain membership ourselves.

22. EXT. CAR/BIKE-PARK OUTSIDE THE BLOCK OF FLATS- CONTINUOUS

RENÉ walks across the tarmac to where his motorcycle is parked. He looks up at an overhanging lamppost with a C.C.T.V. camera attached to it.

**RENÉ**

Hmm...I think I've just hit upon an idea.

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EXTREME-CLOSE of the camera's lens; RENÉ is reflected in its surface.

FADE TO

23. INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM- LATER THAT DAY

The room is dimly lit. A SHADOWED FIGURE sits at a bank of C.C.T.V. monitors, each one showing a different place in the city. The FIGURE reaches over to the console and fiddles with a bronze Trojanite Key.

FADE OUT

24. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BELINDA'S- EVENING

Across the street from the café is a pawn shop. A car pulls up at the kerb. NATASHA is in the driver's seat with RENÉ next to her and PHILIP in the back seat.

25. INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS

NATASHA looks across to RENÉ. Behind them, PHILIP fiddles with a large cardboard box.

**NATASHA**

This had better work, Sisko.

**RENÉ**

Trust me, Ms Fontaine. The owner of the pawn shop's a friend of mine. Your stuff will be kept safe until we're done.

**NATASHA**

All right, you're a lot of things, but not an idiot, Sisko, but what makes you think this Texan will take the bait?

**RENÉ**

I got this theory. Access to Cash's casino is by written invitation only, but he's obviously not limited to socialites and rich folk. He has to pick people out who are in financial trouble. Now...

RENÉ points to something out of the windshield and NATASHA turns to look in the direction he is gesturing in.

26. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BELINDA'S- CONTINUOUS

SLOW ZOOM IN on a C.C.T.V. camera mounted on a lamppost.

**RENÉ**  
(Cont'd, O.O.S.)

What if our guy's got a C.C.T.V. uplink all over the city?

27. INT. CAR- CONTINUOUS

NATASHA casts her gaze back to RENÉ.

**NATASHA**

I see.

**RENÉ**

If I'm right, Cash will see you as a potential new member of his little gambling club. So act it up in there.

**NATASHA**

And what will you two be doing?

**RENÉ**

What else? We'll be watching from *Belinda's*. Now, you ready?

NATASHA hesitates, then exhales to centre herself.

**NATASHA**

All right. Let's do this.

She unbuckles her seatbelt, opens the door and climbs out. She opens the back door.

**NATASHA**  
(Cont'd)

Hand me the box, Phil.

PHILIP nods and obliges.

28. EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BELINDA'S- CONTINUOUS

NATASHA walks towards the shop while RENÉ and PHILIP head across the street towards the café. The C.C.T.V. camera follows NATASHA.

29. INT. PAWN SHOP- CONTINUOUS

The door opens and a bell above rings as NATASHA enters with her box. The SHOP OWNER emerges from the back room.

**SHOP OWNER**

Ah, good evening, Miss.

**NATASHA**

Hi.

30. INT. BELINDA'S- MEANWHILE

The place is as busy as always. RENÉ and PHILIP are in a booth close to the front door, hiding their faces behind menus and peeking over the tops to watch the shop across the street.

**PHILIP**

The camera outside is focussed on the shop.

**RENÉ**

Then he's taken the bait. Hook, line and sinker.

**PHILIP**

I think you may be getting presumptuous.

**RENÉ**

What do you mean?

**PHILIP**

Since when has it ever been this easy? We should remain prepared for any eventuality.

**RENÉ**

What? You think there's a Trojanite involved?

**PHILIP**

It's entirely possible.

**RENÉ**

Come off it, Phil, this isn't their style. Anyways, I'm getting hungry, so how about we order something while we're here? If all we do is sit, we'll look conspicuous.

PHILIP frowns and goes back to looking at his menu.

**PHILIP**

Shrimp...po' boy?

31. INT. ALLEYWAY- MEANWHILE

A BESPECTACLED MAN enters the alleyway from the street, panting and staggering as he is chased by an UNSEEN ASSAILANT. The MAN reaches a rusted fire escape ladder and starts scrambling up it. He grips a particularly rotten rung and it snaps. The MAN cries out and lands with a heavy 'thud!' on his posterior. The shadow of the UNSEEN ASSAILANT approaches rapidly.

**BESPECTACLED MAN**

No! No, leave me alone! I...I told you, I'd get the money!  
I just need more time.

The UNSEEN ASSAILANT raises a gloved hand. Clamped in the fingers is a large, silver coin, the surface of which is shimmering unnaturally. The UNSEEN ASSAILANT thrusts the coin against the MAN'S forehead, silencing his screams. The MAN collapses, alive but mindless, and the name 'GREG LUDLOW,' appears on the coin. The UNSEEN ASSAILANT slips the coin into the pocket of a white jacket before turning and heading towards the entrance of the alleyway.

FADE OUT

32. EXT. BUS STOP- THE NEXT DAY

FADE IN

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of a business card reading;

*GOLDEN GATES CASINO*

*"The best the Muddy Miss has to offer!"*

*Members meet at High Street bus station  
every Friday at 12 p.m. precisely.*

*You are invited courtesy of*

*Cold Cash*

ZOOM OUT to reveal the card is being held by NATASHA. She is standing, along with three or four OTHER PEOPLE, looking anxious. She glances up the street and sees the front end of RENÉ'S motorcycle poking out from a side street.

33. EXT. SIDE STREET- CONTINUOUS

RENÉ is perched on his motorcycle with his crash helmet on. He checks his wristwatch as the designated time is only seconds away. Perfectly on cue, a bus with a peculiar white, red and green design drives past, reflecting off his visor. RENÉ revs the throttle on his motorcycle and prepares himself.

34. EXT. BUS STOP- CONTINUOUS

The bus pulls in to the stop and the door opens. The OTHER PEOPLE climb on, showing their invitations to the DRIVER before taking their seats. NATASHA reluctantly follows suit. The doors shut and the bus drives away. RENÉ pulls out of the side street and follows closely.

35. INT. BUS- CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER sees RENÉ in the wing mirror and floors the accelerator.

36. EXT. STREETS OF VILLE VENTEUSE- CONTINUOUS

The bus speeds up. It swerves dangerously past some cars and knocks a third one out of the way when it tries to swing away. The third car spins towards RENÉ.

**RENÉ**

Whoa!

He sequentially pops a wheelie and jumps over the car just in time, then lands perfectly and continues the pursuit.

**RENÉ**  
**(Cont'd)**

Tricky son of a gun, ain't you?

He comes neck-and-neck with the bus, which suddenly jolts in his direction and forces the motorcycle up against a guard-rail. RENÉ cries out as he is thrown off his motorcycle and barely manages to grab the edge of the roof, while his motorcycle skitters back up the street on its side.

**RENÉ**  
**(Cont'd, struggling)**

Well...this could've gone better!

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He pulls himself up, using his arms to get a better grip on the roof. A VOICE laughs OUT-OF-SHOT. RENÉ looks up in time to see a WHITE SUITED MAN finish changing into the MONEY TROJANITE.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

Well, well, well...

**RENÉ**

Get him, Webster!

His wristwatch emits an electronic beeping sound and transforms into a mechanical spider. Webster launches off the watch's wristband on a string of webbing and hits the MONEY TROJANITE twice across the face. The TROJANITE stumbles back as RENÉ retracts Webster and pulls himself all the way onto the roof. He throws away his crash helmet and replaces it with his hat.

**RENÉ**

**(Cont'd)**

Let's dance.

He pulls out his mobile phone and puts it to his ear.

**RENÉ**

**(Cont'd)**

Philip, I need the belt.

37. INT. PHILIP'S WORKSHOP- SECONDS LATER

PHILIP quickly walks across the metal catwalk towards the brass pipes on the wall while carrying the belt buckle. His laptop displays hacked helicopter footage of the bus speeding dangerously down the road. He has his own phone held between his ear and shoulder. PHILIP opens one of the brass pipes and slips the belt buckle inside. It disappears with a loud 'WHOOSH!'

**PHILIP**

Incoming. I hope you have good timing.

38. EXT. RIVERFRONT WAREHOUSE DISTRICT- MOMENTS LATER

The MONEY TROJANITE runs towards RENÉ, who puts out his hands defensively.

CUT TO

A hole opens in a building and the belt buckle fires out like a bullet.

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CUT TO

RENÉ leap-frogs over the MONEY TROJANITE, catches the belt buckle in mid-air and slaps it to the front of his waist before landing nimbly at the other end of the bus. He reaches into his waistcoat and whips out his green and black Rider Keys. He jams them both into the slots on the belt buckle.

**RENÉ**

Ride up!

**BELT'S A.I.**

Cyclone-Joker!

CRASH ZOOM IN on the buckle as the Rider Keys crackle with power. CRASH ZOOM OUT to show RENÉ clad in his black-and-green suit of armour. RENÉ does a sweeping arm movement as his eye-pieces flicker.

**RENÉ**

I...am the Masked Rider!

**MONEY TROJANITE**

Dead's what you are, partner!

The MONEY TROJANITE goes to strike RENÉ but he is quick enough to block it and punches the TROJANITE in the gut, knocking him over. He grabs the TROJANITE and wrenches him to his feet, following up with two kicks, a jump-kick, a punch to the gut and a karate chop to the back. The TROJANITE rolls along to the opposite end of the bus and charges. RENÉ drops down and flips the TROJANITE onto his back. They continue brawling until they throw each other from the roof with a united cry. They hit the ground just as the bus turns the corner and disappears. RENÉ stands up.

**RENÉ**

Sorry, *mon ami*, playtime's over.

He kicks the squirming MONEY TROJANITE back down and runs after the bus. The TROJANITE quickly gets back up.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

We're not finished, Bug-boy!

A volley of coins fire from his silver navel and explode against RENÉ'S back, grounding him. RENÉ gets up on one knee and pulls out his silver Rider Key.

**RENÉ**

You ain't listening...whoa!

He barely dodges another attack. He stands up and crosses his arms, defending from a third. He growls and inserts the Rider Key into the belt's left slot.

**BELT'S A.I.**

Cyclone-Metal!

RENÉ'S left side changes from black to silver and his quarterstaff appears on his back. His eye-pieces flash. The MONEY TROJANITE launches two more explosive coin-bursts, which RENÉ deflects with his quarterstaff.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

Just how many dad-gum Keys you got, boy?!

**RENÉ**

*Mais*, let's see...one, two...hey, wait!

RENÉ lifts his quarterstaff and both he and the TROJANITE run towards each other. RENÉ deflects a punch and starts striking the TROJANITE with his quarterstaff, forcing him towards the edge of the river. The MONEY TROJANITE collapses onto his back and finds the end of the staff pointed at his throat.

**RENÉ**

(Cont'd)

You're done.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

Don't count your coins before they're cashed.

He knocks the staff away and gets up.

**RENÉ**

Huh?

**MONEY TROJANITE**

This gut of mine ain't just puppy fat, partner.

The silver circles patterning his stomach open to show numerous coins inside.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

(Cont'd)

Each of these coins is the soul of some poor sucker.

He holds out one with 'GREG LUDLOW,' engraved on it.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

(Cont'd)

I die. They die. Get it?

RENÉ lowers his quarterstaff.

**RENÉ**

Souls? No, it can't be.

The screaming face of the BESPECTACLED MAN appears on the coin's surface and then vanishes. The MONEY TROJANITE walks away from RENÉ while spreading his arms for emphasis.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

It can and it is. You see, we at *Golden Gates* have a... unique policy..

39. EXT. RIVERFRONT PIER- MEANWHILE

The bus pulls up. The elaborately decorated riverboat is already waiting with the STAFF standing on the deck and offering greetings to the disembarking CUSTOMERS, including NATASHA.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

**(V.O., Cont'd)**

When you lose all your money, you can stake one more prize...your life.

**(Evil laugh)**

NATASHA stops at the edge of the pier and looks up at the imposing boat. She gulps, takes a deep breath and enters.

40. EXT. RIVERFRONT WAREHOUSE DISTRICT- SECONDS LATER

The MONEY TROJANITE turns back to face RENÉ.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

**(Cont'd)**

They all know the risks, but they play anyway. It's all for the sake of the game.

41. INT. PHILIP'S WORKSHOP- MEANWHILE

PHILIP, who has been listening over his laptop, watches the screen with a surprised expression.

**PHILIP**

No, that's...that's just impossible. How horrible.

42. EXT. RIVERSIDE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT- SECONDS LATER

RENÉ clenches his fist.

**RENÉ**

You...release them! Now!

CUT TO

The NAZCA TROJANITE appears on the roof of a warehouse. He puts one hand on his glowing iron belt buckle and stretches his free hand out towards RENÉ as yellow sparks dance on the surface of his hand.

CUT TO

Yellow light creeps towards RENÉ'S right side. He cries out in pain and puts his hand to his face as his right eye-piece blinks rapidly. The MONEY TROJANITE grunts curiously.

43. INT. PHILIP'S WORKSHOP- CONTINUOUS

PHILIP stands up and slams his hands down on the desk.

**PHILIP**

René!

44. EXT. RIVERSIDE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT- CONTINUOUS

The NAZCA TROJANITE clenches his outstretched fist as the sparks become faster and his eyes glow.

CUT TO

RENÉ screams and struggles, but he is barely able to move.

**RENÉ**

This pain! I...can't...move!

The MONEY TROJANITE runs forward and punches him several times, knocking him over. RENÉ gets up on his knees, still clutching his face.

**RENÉ**

**(Cont'd)**

What's happening to me?!

The MONEY TROJANITE spreads his feet and holds out his hands, launching two streams of coins. They explode against the ground and engulf RENÉ in flames.

**MONEY TROJANITE**

That's what I owe you for that beating before...paid in full.

He walks away.

**MONEY TROJANITE**  
**(O.O.S.)**

Happy trails, Bug-boy.

CUT TO  
The NAZCA TROJANITE lowers his hand, dismissing the sparks,  
and also leaves.

CUT TO  
The flames begin to die down, revealing RENÉ lying on the  
ground, barely moving and covered in ash. His eyes are barely  
open. He reaches out with a shaking hand towards the  
retreating form of the MONEY TROJANITE, who has turned back  
into the WHITE SUITED MAN.

**RENÉ**

No...I was...so close...

The WHITE SUITED MAN stops and turns back towards RENÉ, but a  
car passes by before we can see him, disappearing as it moves.  
The car comes to a stop and a WAREHOUSE WORKER runs out  
towards RENÉ.

**WAREHOUSE WORKER**

Holy crows, boy! What happened to you?! Guys! Get an  
ambulance!

**RENÉ**

Ms...Fontaine...

**WAREHOUSE WORKER**

Easy there, buddy. Save your strength. Dang it, where's  
that ambulance?!

**RENÉ**

I'm...sorry...

He loses consciousness.

CUT TO BLACK

45. EXT. MISSISSIPI RIVER- DAY

EST. SHOT of the river. The Golden Gates riverboat is chugging  
along quite merrily.

46. INT. GOLDEN GATES CASINO, FIRST FLOOR- DAY

The room is brimming with numerous video poker and slot machines and table games and is filled with excited CUSTOMERS, DEALERS and other STAFF, many of whom are wearing glittering theatrical masks to disguise their identities.

CUT TO

Two MEN are arguing over a game of cards. ONE pulls out a pistol and the OTHER concedes and sheepishly pushes his coloured poker chips towards him.

CUT TO

A WOMAN playing at a video poker game cheers happily as coins flood out of the depository at the bottom of the machine.

CUT TO

Amongst the crowd is NATASHA, muttering to herself.

**NATASHA**

I don't know where the heck Sisko got to, but it looks like I'm on my own...

She is not looking where she is doing and bumps into CARSON 'COLD' CASH (the moustachioed fat Texan from BELINDA'S story), dressed in a white Stetson hat, powder blue shirt, black bolo tie and tan trousers.

**NATASHA**

**(Cont'd)**

Oh! I'm sorry, I guess I-

**CASH**

**(Interrupts)**

Aw, don't worry your pretty little head, ma'am. Here...

He hands her a token.

**CASH**

**(Cont'd)**

First game's on me. You have yourself a rootin' good time now, you hear?

He tips his hat to her and strolls off. NATASHA looks down at the token and smiles slightly.

**NATASHA**

Well, I guess...one little game couldn't hurt.

47. EXT. MUSEUM OF CULTURE & MYSTICISM- DAY

EST. SHOT of the building.

48. INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

The room is beautiful to behold, with many elaborate trappings including intricately crafted furniture and a traditional fireplace (unlit), above which hangs a family portrait of the TORRANCE FAMILY. A black cat (a Nebelung specifically) relaxes contently on the glass coffee table between a fruit bowl and a marble chess set, around which are arranged a settee and two armchairs. DIAHNNE TORRANCE sits on the settee while reading a copy of '*Dangerous Lady*,' by Martina Cole. She is dressed in a white gown and has an engagement ring. Just as she turns the page, the door opens and BERNARD LOCKE - whom we now see is wearing a blue suit and a white tie with a red spot on it, plus his own engagement ring - walks in. DIAHNNE puts down her book and goes to him.

**DIAHNNE**

Darling, I was wondering where you disappeared to.

She puts her arms around his neck and BERNARD places his own arms around her waist.

**BERNARD**

Just taking care of some business, sweetheart.

**DIAHNNE**

Father's finally coming home tonight, so we can start planning the wedding.

**BERNARD**

Wonderful. I still can't believe Mr Torrance gave us his blessing. He's truly a great man.

**DIAHNNE**

Just like you.

A VOICE cuts in.

**VOICE**  
**(O.O.S.)**

I'll say!

ANIKA enters the room with a smug expression on her face.

**ANIKA**  
(Cont'd)

You've got to be something special to survive just one date with Dragon-breath there.

DIAHNNE glares icily at her.

**DIAHNNE**  
Hello, Anika. Good day at work?

**ANIKA**  
I'll say!

She walks over to the table and grabs an apple from the fruit bowl, taking a big bite out of it.

**ANIKA**  
(Cont'd)

We've been getting loads of calls about some jerk in a mask.

**DIAHNNE**  
Tell someone who gives a hoot, brat.

**BERNARD**  
Now, now, my love, I myself witnessed something rather... interesting that fits with what Anika just said.

DIAHNNE takes a few steps back from him.

**DIAHNNE**  
Do tell.

**BERNARD**  
There was a man, a detective I think. He possessed a Seal a lot like ours.

He opens his blazer to reveal the iron padlock belt buckle and gestures to it.

**BERNARD**  
(Cont'd)

Except I saw him use three different Keys of a unique design. He called himself 'the Masked Rider.'

ANIKA claps her hands in recognition.

**ANIKA**  
That's the one! That's what those callers said his name was!

The Masked Rider  
Episode 3: "A Fool and His Money, Part 1"

**DIAHNNE**

Masked Rider, huh? Well, Father might not be too pleased about this.

**BERNARD**

Oh, I don't think we have to worry about him anymore.

**DIAHNNE**

Why's that?

BERNARD smirks and clenches his fist. Sparks flew from his knuckles and his eyes flash for a second.

**BERNARD**

I dealt with him.

49. EXT. STREET- DAY

An ambulance speeds past the traffic, sirens blaring.

50. INT. AMBULANCE- CONTINUOUS

RENÉ is lying unconscious on a trolley in the back of the ambulance with an oxygen mask over his face, attended by two PARAMEDICS.

51. INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

BERNARD, DIAHNNE and ANIKA stand close to each other, laughing evilly together as the cat on the table watches with a strange glint in its feline eyes.

TO BE CONTINUED...