

PIRATES

PENGUINS



AND A

# Phantom Thief

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# Pirates, Penguins, and a Phantom Thief

NaNoWriMo '13

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# Contents

Chapter One . . . . .	1
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# Chapter One

The searchlight of a helicopter swept past him, missing by less than a foot.

Pete recoiled back, deeper into the shadows of the old fashion gargoyle and gritting his teeth against the pain. For a moment he held his breath, fearing detection.

The helicopter passed without taking in the surroundings, and Pete could breath again. They must have done a more through scan while he was out, and only avoided detection by the shadows and luck.

Pete smiled grimly at the thought that he'd only remained hidden because of the cape Corrina had picked for him to wear. It was showy and a little outdated in person but the dark lining had not only kept him hidden but also snagged on the old gargoyle.

The rough cold concrete of the museum roof decorations made for a horrible thing to crash into face first, but it was better than falling off the roof.

Looking down he could see the swarm of police officers searching the area. Probably with the intent of finding a body, or his body more precisely. They must have thought he'd fallen into the water after being shot.

Pete rolled over to his good side and exhaled with a harsh

hiss. His head reeled, probably a combination of blood loss and blunt trauma.

When he came round again, the slight pool of blood and heavy stain suggested the bullet had hit somewhere on his left.

Shrugging out of his cape, Pete took a look at his side. Damn police, his radio was in that pocket. At least it wasn't his slippers which were hiding in his right pocket, but losing radio contact with his accomplice made things harder for him.

Why had the police firing shots? It really wasn't like the police force to fire shots at him, especially when he failed to get the goods stolen in the first place.

Pete tugged his scarf off and packed it into the wound. That'd have to do for now, it looked like the bleeding could be stopped. The wind of helicopter blades brought his attention back to return to knowing immediate danger now was being discovered.

The second helicopter passed overhead, casting light into the deep shadows on the other side of the building before joining the first which was sweeping the waterways now, illuminating the throbs of officers wading into the shallows and searching on boats with giant lights.

He leaned his head back against the cold concrete gargoyle and squeezed his eyes shut. Two more moments to catch his breath and gather his wits. Deep exhale. The waterway escape was gone. Time for plan B.

Waiting for the third helicopter to finish its own sweep over the roof, and holding onto the gargoyle when the wind threaten to toss him, Pete bid his time until he could make a dash to the air ventilation system.

Pete moved to pry the lid off and hissed when the pain spread over his midsection again. The muscles screamed when the lid got caught on a loose bolt. Damn it. Pete put his back into it, ignoring his side's protest.

Nothing.

The lid was now jammed in a position of half opened, half closed, and it wouldn't move in either direction. Any preparation before the heist must have been ruined by neglecting to undo one little bolt. That, or fate decided this was time for him to be caught.

The strain forced him over and he heaved, every gut motion triggering a jolt that caused another.

The moment he could breath again he shoved away from the uncooperative ventilation system and stumbled back to the refuge of the gargoyle's shadow. Its stone wings hid him from the next helicopter sweep, but he knew that time was running short and waiting wasn't an option. He needed to distract the police long enough to find another way into the building's air ducts.

An idea came to him as he huddled against the cold cement. With the police swarming the waterways, maybe he could work up a frenzy that'd buy him enough time to get in. He ran his hand over the pair of penguin-skin slippers in his

pocket, thinking about the risks.

He'd need the helicopters to be drawn away from the rooftop long enough for it to work. Pete looked down at his blood stained outfit. It'd make sense for him to take most of it off if he'd fallen into the water, the cape would really drag him down. It might be just enough bait to keep the police from turning up the search empty handed. Damn it, he liked this cape, it'd proven to be lucky.

Pete shrugged it off and pulled the slippers out of the pocket. The sleek oily feathers felt soft.

Putting them away in the safety of his vest, he rolled the cape into a ball. Now he needed something to weigh it down, just long enough for it to hit the water. A loose brick from the banister where he'd tumbled did the trick.

He studied the sky and smiled when he noticed that all the helicopters had gathered over the water at the moment. There was a small crowd looking at something, must be a false alarm. Well, he could provide them with another.

He hurled his weighted cape over the edge and as far as he could and heard a soft splash some ways out. The brick sunk quickly, leaving the cape to unfurl in the rough currents. Some police officers had already spotted it and called others over. Pete just hoped they didn't see it fall from the sky.

The police swarmed like ants on a donut crumb, helicopters and boats pitching in to provide search lights while others searched the nearby waters for any more pieces of him.

Now or never, Pete thought, clenching the slippers.

**The rest of the chapter has been skipped until further research has been done.**

A quick list of what it should contain:

- The main villain, soon to be mayor Mullings encounters our hero Pete while he's trying to escape.
- Mullings admits to being the one who shot at Pete and promises to destroy him.
- Mullings decides to shot himself and frame it on the phantom thief, ruining the phantom thief's reputation for never seriously hurting anyone during heists. Spoiler: Pete saves him after the bullet accidentally hits an artery.