



A Lone Voice Crying Out in the Wilderness

BY RYAN MURPHY

It had been years (fifty-three to be exact) since the infamous Patterson-Gimlin footage surfaced and while some of the world remained fascinated by the video, most had deemed it to be an orchestrated hoax. In some ways, the fiasco caused by the famous Trappers defined his life. Yet, there was plenty of living left to do. Atop a frosty mountain, located somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Northwest's sprawling forestry, the large sasquatch stared out at the night sky. Observing nature was one of his favorite past times. It was quiet, peaceful and provided little risk of getting caught... again. Ever since his banishment from the world of Monsters, he liked to refer to himself as "John." Many great American heroes had been called such. There was John Wayne and John Rambo to name a few. Most of the world knew him by a different name though—BIGFOOT! Though confined to Washington State, exile had a few perks. For one, the air usually smelled like pine trees. And a nearby farm provided an endless supply of honey while locusts often frequented the woods; a perfect combination for honey and locust sandwiches! Games, like Howling Echo, usually occupied his time. Though maybe not much of a competitive game, Howling Echo was

John's way of trying to engage the world again. "Ahoogaaa!" John roared. As usual, there was nothing but the lonely reminder of his own echo. "Ooogaaa!" Nothing. "Raaakaa Raaa!" Again, nothing. Then, something ferocious. Surprisingly, it wasn't his own echo. It was a howl that was both terrifying and familiar. Then, out of nowhere, it struck! John whipped his upper body in an effort to shake off whatever was grabbing hold of his shoulders and neck. Instinctively, the sasquatch fell to his knees and then to his back, however, the attacker would not let go as they both rolled and thrashed about inside a large mud puddle. Using his size advantage, John mounted his attacker, pinning his arms to the floor. They were now staring at each other, muddy face to muddy face. "Uncle!" cried the mystery creature. A smile exposing huge, gleaming teeth came over its face. "Lukas!? Is that really you?" "Good to see you," replied Lukas, the werewolf, who was just as hairy as his old friend but a foot and a half shorter in size. "How did you find me?" "Your footprints are kind of hard to miss. Probably how Patterson and Gimlin got ya..." John's mud drenched head bowed towards the ground in embarrassment. The two old buddies chatted about the golden days of Monsterhood until Lukas' face turned awkwardly sad. "We've lost many Monsters since you left." "Nessie?" "Goes by Esther. She's a Trapper now." John's heart sank. "Come back, John. Monster Trappers are becoming a problem. I've heard stories. Frightening stories." "I don't know," John mumbled. "Well, think about it, would ya? Halloween will be here soon." "Halloween?" John said. "The plan is to reveal the truth about Monsters on their goofy, little holiday. Just envision the continual, ever-lasting FEAR that we can harvest from making Monsters truly known!" John sighed. "Would you think it over? Remember, we need that fear..." It sounded rather plausible, but something did not seem quite right to John. "I'll be back. Have your answer ready. I'll only ask once." Lukas disappeared into the forest while an odd thought overwhelmed John. Why couldn't I become a Monster Trapper? But first, John was in definite need of a bath. He slowly descended the mountain towards a nearby lake. Before he had the chance to slip into the cool water, a noise interrupted his plans. "Lukas, that you?" But it wasn't a howl. The sound was softer, more pleasing to the

ear; like a baby cooing. John crept closer to the small basket along the lake's edge. It was a baby. A human baby! With excitement, John cried out. Over the hills and trees, the sound travelled—a lone voice crying out in the wilderness.

