

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Dark Spirit"

written by
Robin Bernheim

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ACT ONE

FADE IN

THE NEW YORK SKYLINE AT NIGHT

The city at her proudest, adorned with the jewelry of glittering lights. As CAMERA PULLS BACK, we discover her opulence is merely the million dollar backdrop to:

INT. CHIC MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

where a black-tie soiree is in progress. Servants circulate among the well-heeled guests, proffering delectables on silver trays. CAMERA FOLLOWS a tray to a cluster of people gathered near a lacquered piano. ROGER HARDING, tall, dark and corporate, helps himself to an hors d'oeuvre and turns to WILLIAM TOUSSANT, 50, the evening's host. MIRIAM HARDING, Roger's sequined wife-ornament, listens with cocktail party intensity.

ROGER

I've got to hand it to you, old man.
That leveraged buy-out was a
brilliant maneuver.

TOUSSANT

(modestly)

I happened to be at the right place at
the right time.

LINDSEY WELLER, an exotic young woman in a slim black dress, approaches and hands Toussant a drink.

TOUSSANT

You're an angel.

He smiles at her, seems glad to have her near.

MIRIAM

Don't be so modest, William.
What's your real secret?

TOUSSANT

You know I never kiss and tell.

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ROGER

Forbes *is* calling you one of the most
successful entrepreneurs of the
decade.

A white-jacketed black servant, HECTOR OCALA, materializes at
Toussant's elbow. He speaks with a slight accent.

OCALA

Dinner *is* served, sir.

TOUSSANT

Thank you, Hector.
(with a gracious gesture
to his friends)
Shall we?

The guests begin to move towards the dining room. Toussant
follows them, taking a nervous gulp of his drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PENTHOUSE DINING ROOM - LATER

As the servants pour coffee and serve brandy, CAMERA PANS around
the table, picking up snatches of after-dinner conversation. An
older guest, ARTHUR MARCH, chats with his companion.

ARTHUR

It's a legitimate write-off, even
under the new laws. Wouldn't you
agree, William?

Heads turn to Toussant, but he doesn't respond. A light sweat dots
his brow, and he looks pale. Suddenly aware that a response is
required, he snaps back to reality, trying to compensate for having
tuned out.

TOUSSANT

You're absolutely right.

ARTHUR

(jovially)

It happens occasionally.

Arthur turns away, and Toussant leans over to Lindsey, seated to
his right.

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TOUSSANT

Stop it!

He wriggles and writhes, struggling to brush the imagined bugs away. To those on this side of reality, his thrashing resembles a bizarre, violent seizure. The guests start to get up and back off, alarmed. Emily Post doesn't have rules for this one. Roger moves to help Toussant.

ROGER

What's wrong?

TOUSSANT

(pure terror and paranoia)
He's here!

ROGER

(restraining him)
Just sit down and relax.

TOUSSANT

He'll kill me! He'll kill all of you!

He breaks loose and dashes from the dining room into

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Toussant stumbles across the living room as if grappling with an unseen demon. The madness has overtaken him.

TOUSSANT

Let me go!

Toussant struggles, choking, then as if thrown by his invisible opponent,

ANGLE ON TOUSSANT - SLOW MOTION

hurles himself through the glass window, tumbling into black oblivion.

EXT. CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDING - DAY

Bathed in the sanity of daylight.

INT. JOE MAXWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

MAXWELL *is* behind his desk when CATHY enters.

CATHY

You wanted to see me?

MAXWELL

Got a case that's tailor-made for you, Radcliffe. 'Wealthy industrialist poisoned by loyal servant.'

(dropping the file in front of her)
Park Avenue all the way.

CATHY

(wryly)

Good help *is* hard to find.

MAXWELL

They caught the bum last Friday.

CATHY

(leafing through the file)

What do we have on him?

MAXWELL

The guy's name *is* Hector Ocala. Police found the poison in his room. And it's not the usual junk off the streets, either. The lab boys say it comes from Haiti.

CATHY

Haiti?

MAXWELL

Get this -- it's used in some kind of voodoo ritual. Ocala's a self-professed high poo-bah, or whatever the hell they call 'em. His boss left him fifty thousand dollars in his will.

CATHY

It sounds like this one's pretty well sewn up.

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MAXWELL

It was -- until an hour ago. The p.d.'s claiming their defendant is incapacitated.

CATHY

What's wrong with him?

MAXWELL

That's exactly what you're gonna tell me.

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

Cathy and BRAD PHILLIPS, 35, an overworked attorney from the p.d.'s office who looks like he sleeps in his clothes, stride down the hallway.

BRAD

I'm telling you, he's in some kind of trance.

CATHY

Be serious, Brad.

They stop at a bank of vending machines.

BRAD

I am! All he does is sit in a corner of his cell and chant. He won't eat, he won't sleep, he won't answer questions. .
(scanning the candy bar machine)
You got a quarter?

CATHY

(digging in her purse
and handing him a quarter)
The last time I checked, "voodoo trance" wasn't grounds for dismissal.

BRAD

You put Ocala on the stand, and he's just gonna babble.

CATHY

This is the worst ploy for a postponement I've ever heard.

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BRAD

Don't believe me -- see for
yourself. Get an expert opinion.

He drops the coins in the slot and pulls the knob. Nothing happens. Frustrated, Brad bangs on the candy machine. Still nothing happens.

BRAD

You got another quarter?

Cathy kicks the machine, and a candy bar drops down. As she heads off:

BRAD

(calling after her)

You got a magic touch, Chandler.

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - EST. SHOT - DAY

INT. ANTHROPOLOGY BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Cathy checks the directory, then hurries to an elevator just as the doors are about to close.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Cathy squeezes into the crowded car. A few students hurry in after her, and she bumps into a man in a tweed jacket.

CATHY

Excuse me.

MAN IN TWEED JACKET

My pleasure.

She glances up at him politely, then steals another look -- realizing she's wedged against one of the most dangerously attractive men she's ever met. Though not classically handsome, there is a brooding quality about him that is irresistibly compelling. At the moment, there is an amused twinkle in his deep brown eyes. Cathy is suddenly aware of how close they're standing. She glances away shyly.

INT. ANTHROPOLOGY BUILDING ELEVATOR CORRIDOR - DAY

The elevator doors slide open. Cathy steps out, followed by the crowd of passengers who quickly disperse. Trying to appear inconspicuous, she casually glances back at her companion from the elevator -- whom she catches stealing a glance at her before disappearing down an adjoining corridor. Cathy approaches the information window.

CATHY

Can you tell me where Professor Stone's office *is*, please?

SECRETARY

Room five twenty two.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Finding the number, Cathy knocks on the appropriate office door.

ALEXANDER'S VOICE

Come.

INT. ALEXANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Cathy steps inside. The office *is* dark, lined with book shelves. Eclectic curios are everywhere -- statues, dolls collections of shells, strands of beads.

CATHY

Professor Stone, I'm -

She stops mid-thought, startled to find that the academician seated behind the desk *is* none other than the dark-eyed Adonis from the elevator.

ALEXANDER

Cathy Chandler. Please call me Alexander. My secretary told me you phoned.

CATHY

I hope I haven't caught you at a bad time.

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ALEXANDER

Not at all. Sit down.

(slyly)

Haven't we met somewhere before?

CATHY

Not officially.

ALEXANDER

So what can I do for you, Cathy Chandler?

CATHY

I've been told you're an authority on voodoo.

ALEXANDER

I know something about it.

CATHY

You spent five years in Haiti studying the customs, and you have a doctorate from Yale.

ALEXANDER

(impressed)

You've done your homework.

CATHY

So have you.

He studies her carefully, as if he can look into her soul.

ALEXANDER

Why would a beautiful lady D.A. want to know about voodoo?

CATHY

I have a suspect who appears to be in a trance. You're probably the only person in New York who can tell me if it's a put-on or not.

ALEXANDER

Voodoo is a way of life for some people.

He gets up and paces, fiddling with some of the curios on the shelves. His words weave a spell.

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ALEXANDER

Sweet as honey, bitter as bile. If
 you're on the inside, you're
 protected. If you're on the outside,
 you're the enemy.
 Their gods and demons are everywhere.
 (perching on the edge of his
 desk, fixing her with
 his gaze)
 They take all forms -
 birds, clouds, beasts.

Is it Cathy's imagination, or did he hesitate slightly before that
 last word?

ALEXANDER

They see things where we see
 nothing.

CATHY

What do you mean?

He picks up a shell from the desk.

ALEXANDER

What do you see?

CATHY

A shell.

ALEXANDER

(mystically)

No. The key to the universe. A
 beacon to the gods.

CATHY

What a beautiful thought.

She starts to give the shell back, but Alexander closes her hand
 around it, not taking his eyes off her. His hand lingers on hers a
 beat too long. His touch is magnetic.

ALEXANDER

Keep it.

(breaking the trance his
 words have created)

You have to forgive me for getting

(MORE)

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ALEXANDER (Cont'd)
carried away. I have a bad habit of lecturing -- especially when the audience is so captivating. You're probably bored stiff.

CATHY
Not at all.

ALEXANDER
You're too polite. You didn't come here for a seminar. You came here to ask a simple question which I really can't answer without more information.

CATHY
What kind of information do you need?

ALEXANDER
I'd have to see him in person.

CATHY
Would you mind going down there and having a look?

ALEXANDER
I was hoping you'd ask.

Alexander's tone indicates he's interested in more than just the research value of the project. Cathy's smile indicates she doesn't mind.

INT. VINCENT'S CHAMBER - DAY

In the flickering candlelight, Vincent comforts Kipper, whose face is stained with tears.

VINCENT
You're safe now. Everything is all right.

KIPPER
It was terrible, Vincent.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

VINCENT

It was only a dream. And dreams are nothing to be frightened of because they aren't real.

KIPPER

Why do we have bad dreams?

VINCENT

Because we have fears.

KIPPER

Even you?

VINCENT

Everyone does. If we weren't afraid, we wouldn't be human. But when we face those fears, they go away. Do you understand?

KIPPER

I guess so.

He curls up on the couch and stifles a yawn.

KIPPER

If I fall asleep, will I dream it again?

VINCENT

I don't think so.

Reassured, Kipper's heavy eyelids droop close. Vincent tucks a blanket around him.

VINCENT

(softly)

Sleep peacefully.

INT. JAIL CORRIDOR - DAY

A GUARD leads Cathy and Alexander to Ocala's cell.

GUARD

We get all types, but this guy's some thin' else. I don't want no truck with this dude, man.

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CONTINUED

They reach Ocala's cell. Huddled in the corner is a pathetic creature that rocks back and forth, chanting in a monotonous drone.

OCALA
Faites la magique, Papa Ougan,
Faites la magique, Gran Chemin
Ougan. Ce que je peux voir,
je n'en peux parler.

He repeats it continuously, oblivious to their presence.

CATHY
Does he know we're here?

ALEXANDER
It's hard to tell.

GUARD
(rattling the bars)
Hey -- you got company.

Continuing to chant, Ocala turns around, a shadow of his former self. His face is ghastly and gaunt, his glazed eyes sunk deep into hollows. Suddenly, the fire of recognition lights in his eyes. He lunges at them, held back by the bars.

OCALA
Beast!

Alexander and Cathy shrink back instinctively, Alexander shielding Cathy.

GUARD
Take it easy!

OCALA
(crazed)
Beast of the night! Faites la
magique, Papa Ougan!

GUARD
(over the din)
Looks like visiting hours are
over.

ANGLE ON CATHY

glancing back at Ocala, wondering what his words mean, as the guard leads them away.

INT. ADJOINING CORRIDOR - LATER

Cathy and Alexander head for the exit. Alexander seems distracted.

CATHY
What was he saying?

ALEXANDER
(thoughtfully)
It was an invocation against evil spirits. Most of it was, anyway.

CATHY
(carefully)
And the part about the beast?

ALEXANDER
A hallucination. I didn't like the sound of it at all.

CATHY
What do you mean?

ALEXANDER
It's nothing for you to worry about. All you need to know is that, in this expert's opinion, he's on the level.

Cathy looks concerned.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Downtown ethnic. A cab pulls up in front of a store bearing the sign "The Magic Eye". Cathy hops out and heads inside. The street people stare at her as she walks by -- this isn't the usual haunt of uptown girls.

INT. MAGIC EYE STORE - DAY

A boutique of the occult, selling everything for the do-it yourselfer, from crystal balls and manuals to candles, dolls, incense and amulets. Cathy approaches the girl behind the counter, who has her nose buried in a book. We recognize her from the party in Toussant's apartment.

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CATHY

Does Lindsey Weller work here?

LINDSEY

I'm Lindsey Weller.

CATHY

Cathy Chandler. I'm with the D.A. I'd like to ask you about the Toussant murder.

LINDSEY

I've already talked to the police.

CATHY

We've come up with some new information on our suspect. It seems he practices a religion called voodoo. I would imagine you're familiar with it.

LINDSEY

What are you getting at?

CATHY

I want you to tell me everything you know about Hector Ocala.

LINDSEY

I tried to tell the police, but they thought I was crazy.

CATHY

(simply)

I'm not the police.

LINDSEY

You'll still think I'm crazy.

CATHY

Try me.

A beat, then Lindsey decides to give it a shot.

LINDSEY

William Toussant and I became friends about six months ago.

(MORE)

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LINDSEY (Cont'd)

He came in here desperate. He was convinced this man who worked for him - Hector Ocala had put him under a curse. I thought he was a refugee from Bellevue -- at first.

CATHY

What convinced you he wasn't?

LINDSEY

His eyes. I've never seen anyone look so frightened. He literally begged me to help him.

CATHY

Did you?

LINDSEY

I tried, but I'm no expert. My parents lived in Haiti when I was a kid. I've seen some of the rituals, but that's about it. Everyone thinks I know more than I do.

CATHY

What happened the night of the murder?

LINDSEY

William phoned and insisted I come to the party. It was as if he thought my being there could protect him from Ocala's power.

(sadly)

It didn't.

CATHY

(the voice of reason)

Toussant was poisoned. He didn't die from a curse.

LINDSEY

That's what I keep telling myself.

(MORE)

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LINDSEY (Cont'd)
(frightened at the
memory)
But it wasn't poison that threw
him through that window. Ocala's
for real. And he's a dangerous
man.

INT. MAXWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Cathy stands in front of Maxwell's desk. Maxwell looks
annoyed.

MAXWELL
Come on, Radcliffe. This guy
is as phoney as a two dollar
bill.

CATHY
It's not going to be that
easy to prove.

MAXWELL
You're telling me he's the
wicked witch of the west in
disguise?

CATHY
All I'm saying is that no
matter what the reason is,
the p.d. may have a bona fide
claim.

MAXWELL
Are you kiddin'? We rollover on
this one, and we'll never hear
the end of it! You stick to this
clown day and night. He can't
keep up the zombie act forever.

CATHY
(shrugging)
You're the boss.

INT. JAIL CORRIDOR - DAY

Cathy heads towards Ocala's cell, then stops, stunned to see his body, covered by a sheet, being wheeled out on a stretcher. She hurries over to Brad Phillips, who stands near one of the medics.

CATHY

What happened?

BRAD

Massive cerebral hemorrhage.
According to the guard, the poor slob
had some kind of monster seizure and
then just checked out.

CATHY

No drugs?

BRAD

Nope. Natural causes. Could
happen to you or me.

CATHY

That's a comforting thought.

BRAD

(shaking his head)
Too bad, too. I could have made
legal history on this one.

CATHY

You're all heart, Phillips.

She leaves. Brad watches her go.

BRAD

Is it something I said?

EXT. CATHY'S APARTMENT BUILDING" - EST. SHOT - NIGHT

INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Twelve-hour exhaustion weighing on her shoulders, Cathy stops outside the door to her apartment and digs through her purse for her keys. She comes across the shell Alexander gave her. Smiling, she opens the door and steps inside.

INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark. Cathy flips on the light. She freezes, shocked at what she sees.

CATHY'S POV

Her apartment's been trashed in a deliberate, ritualistic way. Pictures have been hung upside down, furniture has been turned over. All the mirrors are shattered. There's a photo album on the floor, its contents scattered everywhere. Cathy looks up to see her name spray painted backwards in red on the wall.

ON CATHY

as her eye catches something even more horrifying.

CATHY'S POV

Next to the writing on the wall is a primitive drawing of a beast. It bears an uncanny resemblance to Vincent. As CAMERA FOCUSES IN ON the drawing,

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

INT. CATHY.'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cathy, horrified, crosses to the spray painted icon and touches it. The red paint comes off on her hand, still wet, staining her fingers blood red. A NOISE from the balcony makes her look up quickly.

CATHY'S POV

Vincent gazes in through the french doors.

CATHY

jumps, startled at first by his appearance. Then, remembering who it is, she hurries onto

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Vincent enfolds Cathy in his arms.

VINCENT

I came as soon as I sensed your fear.

CATHY

Did you see anyone leave?

VINCENT

No.

(puzzled)

Catherine, why would someone do this?

CATHY

The man I was investigating was a member of a cult -- a voodoo cult.

VINCENT

And he is responsible?

CATHY

(confused)

It doesn't make sense. He died

(MORE)

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CATHY (Cont'd)
 this afternoon.
 (a beat)
 Vincent, there's a drawing on
 the wall inside -

VINCENT
 (quiet, troubled)
 I have seen it.

CATHY
 What does it mean?

VINCENT
 I do not know.

On Vincent's concern,

CUT TO:

EXT. COLUMBIA ROSE GARDEN - DAY

CAMERA PANS through the verdant garden, FINDING Cathy and Alexander walking along a path.

ALEXANDER
 If you hadn't phoned this morning,
 I was going to call and warn you.

CATHY
 How did you know it was going
 to happen?

ALEXANDER
 They hit my apartment, too.

CATHY
 Someone had a busy night.

ALEXANDER
 (gently)
 Cathy, I don't want to frighten
 you, but it isn't over yet.

CATHY
 What makes you say that?

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ALEXANDER

I've seen how they work.
 Ocala was a powerful man, an evil
 man. He has followers -they feed
 off fear. His spirit is very much
 alive.

CATHY

What do they want from us?

ALEXANDER

Plain and simple, we're being
 blamed for his death. We're the
 enemy, and they're going to make
 us pay.

CATHY

I don't scare easy.

ALEXANDER

I know. It's part of your mystique.
 (brushing a stray lock of
 hair from her eyes)
 So beautiful -- and so strong.

She blushes at the touch of his hand. Their eyes meet. Cathy can
 feel her heart pounding. It's one of those moments when anything
 can happen -- if she lets it. She doesn't.

CATHY

It's getting late.

She starts to move away, but Alexander turns her towards him. His
 grasp is gentle but firm.

ALEXANDER

Have dinner with me tomorrow.

CATHY

I don't know if -

ALEXANDER

(almost a whisper)
 Say yes.

There is something irresistibly seductive in his flashing eyes.
 Cathy has no choice.

CATHY

Yes.

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CONTINUED

Alexander reaches past her and plucks a rose from the trellis

ALEXANDER
 (handing her the rose)
 Until tomorrow.

Cathy hesitates a beat, then takes the rose. She's beginning to succumb to his charms.

INT. FATHER'S CHAMBER - DAY

Father peruses one of the tomes from his library shelf. Vincent stands near. Father, answering Vincent's question, barely looks up, distracted by his own research.

FATHER
 It is known by several names -- chango, saneria, macumba, voodoo. It is the national religion of Haiti, though it's practice is strictly against the law.

VINCENT
 Because it is dangerous?

FATHER
 Because people who control by fear are dangerous.

Father puts his book back and turns his full attention to Vincent, scrutinizing him carefully.

FATHER
 Why this sudden interest in things that don't concern you?

VINCENT
 It's Catherine. Someone is trying to harm her.

FATHER (amused)
 With incantations and sorcery?

VINCENT
 With fear.

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CONTINUED

FATHER

How can you help her?

VINCENT

I'm not sure. That is why I must go see Narcissa.

FATHER

For what possible reason? I can tell you everything you need to know about such things.

VINCENT

You are a scientist. Narcissa understands the superstitions of the street.

FATHER

(impatiently)

She is a silly old woman who lives in a make-believe world. She isn't one of them, and she isn't one of us. I don't even know how you would find her.

VINCENT

She lives beneath the Circle of the Ancients.

FATHER

The way is dangerous. There is an endless maze of tunnels down there. You could be lost forever.

VINCENT

The tunnels are my home, Father. I could never be lost.

FATHER

No one has seen her for years. How do you know if she's still alive?

VINCENT

(simply)

The time has come to find out.

INT. D.A. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

EDIE sits in front of her computer, tickling the keys.
Cathy is behind her.

EDIE
These are your suspects in the
Levinson case. You want me to
run them for priors?

No Response. Edie glances up, noticing that Cathy is staring
into space.

EDIE
Earth to Cathy. Come in,
Cathy.

Cathy snaps to attention.

CATHY
Sorry. Where were we?

EDIE
What's his name?

CATHY
What makes you think it's a he?

EDIE
That look can only mean one of two
things -- either he's tall, dark and
handsome, or you just won the lottery.

CATHY
(not ready to admit anything)
Neither.

EDIE
Girl, you are a terrible liar.

CATHY
(not biting)
Run them for priors.

Disappointed, Edie turns back to her screen.

INT. TUNNEL DAY

Vincent makes his way down a deserted tunnel. He reaches what

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CONTINUED

appears to be a dead end. Mustering tremendous strength, he begins to move the rocks that choke the end of the tunnel, creating an opening. As he disappears through it,

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OLD TUNNEL - DAY

Vincent makes his way through a dingy tunnel filled with water and cobwebs, evidence it hasn't been traversed in years. The distant rumble of the subway causes bits of gravel to shake loose. Vincent wipes the dust from his eyes and continues on. He steps out of the tunnel and into

INT. CIRCLE OF THE ANCIENTS - DAY

An ancient-looking rotunda, resembling the remnants of a Greek ruin. Vincent glances around. Along the perimeter of the rotunda, like spokes branching out from a wheel, are arched entries to a myriad of identical tunnels. Vincent sweeps away the loose gravel on the floor, revealing a faded painting of a star. He follows its top point to the mouth of one of the tunnels and disappears inside.

INT. ROTUNDA TUNNEL - DAY

A steep decline. Vincent makes his way carefully down the tunnel, bracing himself against the walls to keep from sliding. The way levels out and widens -- and Vincent sees:

VINCENT'S POV

a light flickering in the distance.

RESUME

Vincent continues, coming to a rickety bridge over what appears to be a bottomless drop. He crosses the bridge and enters:

INT. NARCISSA'S CHAMBER - DAY

A small, cluttered space, done in early middle earth, that looks like it's been hollowed out of a tree. Shelves of odd

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CONTINUED

bottles filled with colorful liquids line the walls, giving the chamber the appearance of an apothecary shop. A car radiator steams in the corner, adapted to provide heat. Vincent approaches a table where NARCISSA, a small black woman sits, her back to him. She tosses out a handful of shells onto the table as if she were throwing dice. Her voice is flavored with a South Seas accent.

NARCISSA

Welcome Vincent.

She swings around. Her animated face is dominated by eyes brilliantly white with cataracts. Her vision is intuitive rather than ocular.

VINCENT

How do you know my name?

NARCISSA

Narcissa has seen. When you were a young boy, you used to play at the Circle of the Ancients. Narcissa was watching.

VINCENT

I need your help.

NARCISSA

(with a shrill laugh)

You come to a crazy old woman for help?

VINCENT

My friend may be in danger.

NARCISSA

Why should Narcissa help you?

VINCENT

We are kindred spirits. I am of neither world, just like you. We're different, which makes us the same.

NARCISSA

(slyly accepting his reasoning)
Who is this friend of ours?

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CONTINUED

VINCENT

From above. There are those who wish to hurt her. They broken into her home. Everything was turned upside down. The mirrors were shattered.
She is afraid it is the work of those who believe in voodoo.

NARCISSA

(nodding sagely)

The bizago. La culte des mortes. They put your friend under a curse.

VINCENT

There was a drawing on the wall -

NARCISSA

Drawing is veve. It is used to summon the spirit. Bizago work for the spirit Baka. Guardian of the crossroads. Keeper of the dead.

VINCENT

(anticipating the answer)

And this Baka -- what does he look like?

NARCISSA

A fierce beast -- like a lion. All who see him tremble. No magic is as great as Baka - no magic is as evil.

VINCENT

Magic is a state of mind.

NARCISSA

Magic is power. Watch your friend, Vincent. Watch day and night. See that the magic doesn't touch her. Watch with your heart.

VINCENT

There is no other way.

As Vincent thinks of Cathy,

CUT TO:

CATHY'S PICTURE

Perfectly manicured female hands drop it into a metal pot. The pot is ringed by a circle of red candles. A male voice chants in the background, accompanied by the SOUND OF A RATTLE.

MALE VOICE

Ayida-wedo, ma deese des serpents,
Quand vous venez, c'est comme un coup
de foudre.

The hands lower a snake, a mosaic of red and yellow markings on its side, into the pot. The chant is repeated.

MALE VOICE

Ayida-wedo, ma d'ese des serpents,
Quand vous venez, c'est comme un coup
de foudre.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

An underground garage. Cathy steps from the elevator and crosses to her car, gets inside. She begins to pullout when she feels something strange and uncomfortable. Concerned, she looks down -

CATHY'S POV

A large slimy snake, with the same red and yellow marking, has begun to wrap itself around her leg.

ON CATHY

She gasps and quickly slams on the brakes, sending the car into a spin. She throws open the car door. Adrenolin pumping, he grabs the snake and pulls it from her leg.

ANGLE ON THE SNAKE

It slithers down a drain in the garage floor and disappears from sight.

CATHY

Shaken, she sinks into the seat of her car and slowly catches her breath. FOOTSTEPS echo in the distance. Cathy quickly glances around, but it's too late. The receding footsteps have faded into silence.

EXT. ELEGANT OUTDOOR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A romantic setting near the water. CAMERA PANS PAST the little white lights that sparkle in the trees to an intimate table shared by Cathy and Alexander. Cathy, dressed elegantly for evening, is in the middle of animated narration.

CATHY

-- I heard footsteps, but it I didn't see anyone.

ALEXANDER

May I make a suggestion?

CATHY

Please.

ALEXANDER

Try the champagne.

CATHY

(taking the glass from him)

I guess I've been rambling on.

ALEXANDER

It's all right.

(putting his hand on hers)

You're safe now.

CATHY

(not referring to the case)

Am I?

ALEXANDER

(not referring to the case)

Not really.

He reaches under the table and pulls out a box wrapped in distinctively Bloomingdale lavender and white.

CATHY

What's this?

ALEXANDER.

An impulse. I went for a walk this afternoon and saw it in a window.

I thought it would cheer you up.

(as she opens the box)

You probably won't like it.

Cathy lifts out a gossamer, shimmery white dress.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
(overwhelmed)
It's beautiful. But I can't let
you do this.

ALEXANDER
Indulge me.

CATHY
I don't know what to say.

ALEXANDER
Then we should dance.

He pulls her onto the dance floor and holds her close. As they
circle, Cathy begins to let down her defenses.

CATHY
I'm feeling so confused.

ALEXANDER
About what?

CATHY
About everything.
(growing bolder)
About you. This whole thing has
brought us together so quickly.

ALEXANDER
Then it hasn't been so bad
after all.

CATHY
Alexander -- there was a drawing on
the wall of my apartment of a kind
of a -- creature.

ALEXANDER
The beast. La bete noire. A
god of great power. They say that
those who master the gods are
masters of the power.
(noticing that Cathy is
off balance)
Are you all right?

CATHY
Just a little dizzy. It must be the
champagne. I wish I could stop
thinking about what's happened.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALEXANDER

Let me change the subject.

Alexander tilts her chin up and kisses her gently. Their lips part -- and then are drawn together in a luscious, romantic kiss. As they embrace, CAMERA PULLS BACK, leaving them intimately entwined on the dance floor under the white lights, the crowning touch to a picture postcard of romance.

EXT. CATHY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Alexander walks Cathy to the front door and puts his arms around her.

ALEXANDER

You're sure you're going to be all right?

CATHY

I'm sure. It was just the champagne.

I could stay ---

It's a tempting offer, but Cathy resists.

CATHY

I'll be fine.

ALEXANDER

You'll call me if you're not?

CATHY

I promise.

She kisses him lightly, knowing that saying good-bye is the only way to prevent herself from asking him to stay.

CATHY

Thank-you.

ALEXANDER

For what?

CATHY

For giving me something else to think about.

ALEXANDER

Good-night.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Cathy closes the door. Alexander heads down the steps. CAMERA HOLDS on the greenery that lines the walkway, finding Vincent watching, carefully hidden. Stealthily, he moves to follow Alexander.

INT. CATHY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA FOLLOWS a crack of moonlight that spills from the window to the bed, where Cathy tosses and turns, moaning softly as if haunted by a terrible dream. Her eyes flicker open as she comes to consciousness. Queasy, in a cold sweat, she reaches for the lamp next to the bed. She flips the light on and starts to lean back when her eyes widen with shock and terror.

CATHY'S POV

Furry black objects scurry across the bedclothes. Tarantulas
Lots of them.

CATHY

jumps from the bed, choking down her horror. In a frenzy, she grabs the nearest loose object -- a heavy magazine from the night table. As she begins to swing at the spiders,

CUT TO:

A PICTURE OF CATHY SMILING HAPPILY

The male voice chants calmly, counterpointing Cathy's frenzy.

MALE VOICE

Nous nous rassemblons.
Nous arrivons au bassin.
Nous ne savons pas ce qui se
passe;
Mais nous ferons le travail.

The picture is lowered into a pot containing a tarantula. As the voice continues in English, WIDEN TO REVEAL

INT. LOFT - NIGHT

The pot, ringed with candles *in* orange skins, sits on a simply table. There are flowers to one side and a pile of coins-- the offering. This isn't Saturday matinee melodrama, but rather a study of the familiar made strange. A photograph of

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Ocala is propped against a black candle. Next to it is a photograph of Toussant propped against another black candle. A line runs the length of the table, with three bowls spaced evenly on it. CAMERA TILTS UP from this working man's altar to reveal that the voice we've been hearing belongs to Alexander Stone, a rational, modern man practicing an ancient ritual.

ALEXANDER

I have seen you, Lord Baka.
I have seen you in her.

Lindsey Weller steps into FRAME. She hands Alexander an opaque glass bottle, probably an old soda bottle. Alexander pours a clear liquid into one of the cups.

ALEXANDER

You have made yourself known, and we understand. We understand we must return to you her life so that we may increase in strength. Already your magic is working on her.

Lindsey hands him another bottle. He pours a liquid into the cup on the other end. The liquid is red.

ALEXANDER

(spreading his arms)
Come to us, Baka. Give us your strength and your power.

Stone looks up to something o.c. CAMERA FOLLOWS his gaze to

AN ICON

over the altar that matches the drawing in Cathy's apartment. It bears the same incredible resemblance to Vincent.

LINDSEY

I can feel him, Alexander.

ALEXANDER

The beast is close. He *is* very close.

EXT. ALEXANDER'S LOFT - DAY

Shrouded in the evening mist, Vincent hidden in the underbrush gazes up at the flickering light in the loft window.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

INT - CATHY'S APARTMENT - DAY (DAWN)

A quiet KNOCK. Cathy, in her robe, hurries to the door and admits Alexander. He takes her in his arms.

CATHY

I'm so glad you're here.

ALEXANDER

Shsh. It's all right.

CATHY

(frustrated at showing weakness)
I'm still shaking.

ALEXANDER

It's O.K. I would have been scared out of my mind.

(leading her to the couch)
Right now you're going to sit down and let me get you a hot cup of tea.

CATHY

I'll get it.

ALEXANDER

(making her sit)
You stay right here and relax.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The pink glow of dawn warms the kitchen window.

CATHY (O.C.)

The water's already on.

Alexander enters and spots the steaming kettle.

ALEXANDER

I see it.

He fills a cup with water, puts the tea bag in it, then takes a vial from his jacket pocket. He empties the vial into the tea and stirs it until it dissolves.

INT. CATHY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alexander enters, carrying the steaming tea.

ALEXANDER
(handing her the tea)
Here. This will make you feel
better.

She takes a sip.

ALEXANDER
Good?

Cathy nods.

INTERCUT:

EXT. BALCONY - DAWN

Vincent pulls himself over the railing and onto the balcony in time to witness what's happening inside.

INTERCUT:

INT. CATHY'S LIVING ROOM - DAWN

CATHY
I probably sounded hysterical on
the phone.

ALEXANDER
It's hard to resist a damsel in
distress.

They kiss lingeringly.

INTERCUT:

VINCENT

looking away sadly. It isn't something he cares to see.

RESUME - CATHY AND ALEXANDER

As they reluctantly separate:

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
What time *is* it?

ALEXANDER
(checking his watch)
A little before six.

CATHY
(sighing)
I have to get ready for work.

ALEXANDER
Are you sure you're up to it?

CATHY
I have to be.

ANGLE AT THE DOOR

ALEXANDER
(sincerely)
I'm here if you need me.
Remember that.

CATHY
I'll remember.

He brushes her lips with his and leaves. Cathy closes the door behind him. Her eye falls on the shell on the table near the door. As she picks it up, a NOISE from the balcony catches her attention. She crosses to the french doors.

EXT. BALCONY - DAY

Cathy steps outside and looks around. There's no one there. Vincent has slipped away. Worried, she steps back inside, sipping her tea.

INT. D.A. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

Edie punches some buttons and stares at the screen. Cathy gazes over her shoulder. It's business as usual -- except there's an uneasiness about Cathy (chemically induced) that we've never seen before. She's pale and disheveled.

EDIE
--two of them are clean. The rest
of these bozos' got records a mile
long.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
(anxiously)
There has to be a way of narrowing it
down.

EDIE
Not unless you can give me something
else to go on.

CATHY
I don't have anything else.

EDIE
What about a physical description?

CATHY
I don't have one.

As she pushes the hair out of her face, we notice her hand
shakes.

EDIE
Just tell me what you want me to do.

CATHY
(sounding defensive)
I don't know!

EDIE
You get out of the wrong side of
bed this morning?

Suddenly, a large black snake slithers across the top of the
terminal. Cathy recoils in horror.

ON CATHY

CATHY
Edie! Look out!

ON EDIE

Puzzled, she follows Cathy's gaze to the terminal. There's
nothing there.

EDIE
Look out for what?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
Don't you see it?

CATHY'S POV

The snake is clearly visible.

ON CATHY

She shrinks back, horrified.

INTERCUT:

INT. FATHER'S CHAMBER - DAY - ON VINCENT

playing chess with Father. Suddenly, he cries out in pain, clutching his temples. The force of Cathy's hallucination is having its effect on him.

FATHER
What's wrong?

Vincent writhes in pain.

INTER CUT:

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

Edie crosses to Cathy.

EDIE
Girl, what's gotten into you?

Cathy looks down:

CATHY'S POV

A snake curls around her arm.

RESUME

CATHY
Get it off of me!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

EDIE
There isn't anything there.

Edie's right -- there's nothing there.

INTERCUT:

VINCENT

doubled over in pain, head between his hands. Father bends over him.

FATHER
What is it?

VINCENT
Catherine -

INTERCUT:

INT. COMPUTER ROOM - DAY

Cathy's hallucination fades away, but she's confused and disoriented.

EDIE
Are you all right?

CATHY
I'm fine.

EDIE
I think you better sit down.

CATHY
(confused and embarrassed)
Leave me alone!

Cathy rushes out of the computer room.

INT. LADIES' ROOM - DAY

Cathy bursts inside. Alone at last, she struggles to calm down. She takes a few deep breaths, concentrating on relaxing. Feeling a little better, she crosses to the sink and splashes cold water on her face. She looks up to grab a paper towel and glances at the mirror.

CATHY'S POV

Cathy's reflection gazes back at her -- but her face has broken out in ugly red welts. Horrified, Cathy lifts her hand to her cheek--

ON CATHY

Her skin is as clear as ever -- but her terrified expression indicates she's seeing something else.

INTERCUT:

VINCENT

in a relapse of pain. Father tries to get him to swallow a tablet.

FATHER

Take this. It will ease the pain.

VINCENT

(refusing)

It won't help Catherine.

(struggling to get up)

I must go to Narcissa.

He stumbles out.

INT. CATHY'S CUBICLE - DAY

Cathy hurries into the cubicle, looking down, trying to hide her face. Her hand shaking, she picks up the phone and dials.

CATHY

(into phone, urgently)

Professor Stone, please.

(a beat)

When do you expect him? This is Cathy Chandler. Tell him to call me as soon as he gets there -- it's an emergency.

She slams down the phone. Maxwell's voice startles her. His manner is softer than normal -- he's clearly concerned. Edie is with him.

MAXWELL

You got a problem?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Cathy fights to seem normal, though she can feel the rug of reality being pulled out from under her.

CATHY

No.

Maxwell doesn't budge.

CATHY

Would you please let me get back to work?

MAXWELL

The work can wait if there's something wrong.

CATHY

There's nothing wrong!
(the paranoia starting to show)
Why is everyone so worried about me? I skipped lunch, so I'm a little shaky, that's all.

MAXWELL

Why don't you take the rest of the day off?

EDIE

That's an offer I couldn't refuse.

CATHY

(trembling with anxiety)
Can't you both just leave me alone?

Maxwell and Edie exchange a look. Cathy, realizing the cracks in her facade have begun to show, takes another tact.

CATHY

I guess you're right. I'm over-tired. I'll get a cab.

MAXWELL

I'll have someone take you home.

CATHY

No! I'll be fine. I'll check in later.

She quickly gathers up her briefcase and coat and hurries out of the cubicle.

INT. OFFICE AREA - DAY

Struggling to keep her eyes forward, Cathy makes the trek past the endless rows of desks. The secretaries and clerks stare at her as she passes, whispering and laughing. The whispers become louder and distinguishable.

The laughter grows cacophonous and surreal. Cathy swings around to confront her persecutors, but instead of seeing the secretaries, she sees: .

CATHY'S POV

Huge black ravens perched on the desks, cawing incessantly.

ON CATHY

The cawing continues, coming from all directions. Unable to stand the din, Cathy starts to run.

ALEXANDER'S VOICE

They feed off your fear -

LINDSEY'S VOICE

It wasn't poison that threw him through that window.

SECRETARY #3 VOICE

Did you see her face?

ALEXANDER'S VOICE

I would have been scared out of my mind.

The line between sanity and madness is all but obscured.

EXT. CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDING - DAY

Cathy hurries out of the building, and takes a deep breath. The fresh air seems to momentarily revive her. The hallucinations

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

have stopped. Spotting a telephone booth, she hurries over to it and steps inside. She drops the coins in the slot and dials.

CATHY
 (into phone, urgently)
 Is Professor Stone there yet?
 (anxiety darkens her face)
 Where is he?

An impatient man taps on the glass of the booth. Cathy turns away, trying to ignore him, and faces the opposite direction.

CATHY
 I don't want to leave a
 message! Just tell me
 where he is!

The impatient man taps on the glass again. Cathy looks around and gasps.

CATHY'S POV

The man's face is grotesquely distorted, covered with welts.

CATHY

chokes down a sob of horror and bolts from the phone booth, running recklessly into the street.

INT. NARCISSA'S CHAMBER - DAY

Vincent doubles over in sudden pain, clasping his head. Narcissa hovers near him.

NARCISSA
 Tell me what she is feeling.

VINCENT
 (anguished)
 Pain. Confusion. Torment.

NARCISSA
 (knowingly)
 It is the powder.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

VINCENT

A drug?

NARCISSA

Un coup l'aire. Powder from the
zombie's cucumber. Bisago make the
magic. Powder takes away the soul.

VINCENT

What's to be done?

NARCISSA

(crossing to the counter)
Narcissa will make the magic.
Bring your friend here.

VINCENT

There is an antidote?

NARCISSA

(scoffing at the notion)
Antidote! First the magic,
then the powder!

(pulling jars down)
Take from her any object of
the magic.

(waving Vincent off)
Go quickly!

INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cathy bursts in, pale, on the ragged edge. She flips on a
light and hurries into:

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

where she gazes into the mirror.

CATHY'S POV

Her reflection stares back at her. The welts have gotten
much worse.

RESUME

Feeling totally out of control, Cathy breaks down, sobbing. She spots the shell and picks it up, clutching it tightly, fighting to hang on to a shred of sanity. She becomes aware of a familiar TAPPING. Distraught, she doesn't move. The TAPPING continues. Cathy starts for the living room.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Vincent waits. Cathy steps outside, crying.

CATHY
(referring to the welts)
Look at me! Look what's happened!

VINCENT
(in pain from her
hallucination)
It's a drug. It isn't real.

CATHY
Yes it is -- look at my hands!

CATHY'S POV

The welts have spread over both hands. She still clasps the shell tightly.

RESUME

VINCENT
Let me have the shell.

CATHY
(like a stubborn child)
No.

VINCENT
(reaching for it)
Catherine, please -- it's in
your mind -

CATHY
You don't understand -

VINCENT
Let me help you -

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
There's nothing you can do!

CATHY'S POV

Vincent's face has become distorted, his hair matted, his features haggard like a death mask. His voice sound ominous and evil.

VINCENT
Give me the shell!

RESUME

Her expression is sheer terror.

CATHY
You're doing this to me, aren't
you?

VINCENT
Catherine -- please -- you must
come with me -- .

CATHY'S POV

Vincent's ghoulish image leers at her.

RESUME

CATHY
(making her choice)
Leave me alone! I never
want to see you again!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Vincent doubles over, stabbed not only by her words but by the anguish his presence is causing her. He has no choice. Crippled with pain, he crawls over the railing and disappears out of sight. Cathy's sobs subside. Glancing down at the shell, she hurries into:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cathy rushes to the phone. Like an addict needing a fix, she anxiously dials the number. Fidgeting with the shell, she waits for what seems to be an interminable period of time. Finally someone answers. The light of last hope dawns in her eyes.

CATHY

Alexander?

(plaintively)

Help me.

As she listens intently,

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. CATHY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

An expensive silk dress is dropped in a heap on the floor. Another is dropped on top of it. ANGLE WIDENS TO REVEAL Cathy standing in front of her closet, methodically pulling each item out and letting it fall at her feet. She isn't in a cliched zombi trance -- rather, she works with a diligent, singleminded purpose, like a determined, desperate child. At last, she comes to the beautiful white dress Alexander gave her. Relieved, she puts it on the bed. She slips out of her shoes and begins to change.

INT. ALEXANDER'S LOFT - NIGHT

Moonlight shines through the dramatic skylight. Stone opens the door, admitting Lindsey, who seems nervous.

LINDSEY

Where is she?

ALEXANDER

She'll be here soon.

Lindsey looks at the altar. The set-up is more elaborate than before -- there are more candles, and they're surrounded by stones, beads and shells. There is also a crucifix, and a plate heaped with fruit. The flowers and coins are where they were before, as are the pictures of Toussant and Ocala.

ALEXANDER

(sensing Lindsey's
uneasiness)

What's the matter?

LINDSEY

Nothing.

ALEXANDER

(intently)

She controls him, Lindsey. This is the only way the power of the beast can be returned to us. It's the only way to make things the way they were.

His sincerity is soul-piercing, his magnetism undeniable.

INT. NARCISSA'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

PAN from the shells on the table to Vincent and Narcissa.

NARCISSA

The shells have predicted it. It is too late for your friend. The magic has touched her.

VINCENT

You must come with me.

NARCISSA

(shaking her head)

Bizago magic is strongest at night. Too strong for Narcissa.

VINCENT

But she needs our help.

NARCISSA

(terrified for him)

You cannot go back. He knows you are here, Vincent. The priest who serves with his left hand. He will steal your soul.

VINCENT

He can't hurt me if I'm not afraid.

NARCISSA

(offended at his heretical attitude)

No! Bizago magic is real! You must leave now! Narcissa will not help you!

VINCENT

Let me take the antidote with me.

NARCISSA

There is no antidote without magic!

VINCENT

Where is it?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

NARCISSA
 (fearfully)
 He will steal Narcissa's soul!
 You must leave!

VINCENT
 (grabbing her by the
 shoulders)
 Where is it?

He follows her inadvertent glance to a silver vial on the counter and hurries over to it. As Vincent reaches for the vial, he accidentally knocks over a bottle. Its contents spill out, instantaneously igniting into a sudden fireball.

NARCISSA
 (her worst suspicions confirmed)
 He will not let you live!

Vincent grabs the vial and hurries out.

INT. ALEXANDER'S LOFT - NIGHT

PAN ACROSS the flickering candles. Alexander pours the liquids into the bowls. Lindsey is nervous, but she goes along with it.

ALEXANDER
 Bizago brings joy, it brings peace.
 Nous sommes les etoiles. Nous
 travaillons dans la nuit, mais nous
 sommes partout.

LINDSEY
 Le jour est la nuit
 Le fin est le commencement.

ALEXANDER
 We sacrifice a life to free the
 great and powerful spirit.
 The spirit of Baka,
 The spirit of the beast.

CAMERA PANS across the altar, coming to rest on Cathy's picture, which leans against a black candle. Alexander's hands place a knife in front of it -- an ordinary hunting knife, rusted from use.

INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - ANGLE ON A MIRROR

Cathy is now wearing the shimmery white dress. Her hair has been crimped, framing her face in waves. She leans into the mirror, and with that single-minded concentration, carefully and deliberately applies the final touches to her exotic-looking make-up, though her hands shake. Her lips are sensuously red; her eyes are dramatically highlighted with unusual colors. The effect is primitive and sensual. Satisfied with the result, Cathy turns off the light, moves quietly through the living room and slips out the front door.

INT. OLD TUNNEL - NIGHT

Vincent makes his way through the dark, narrow tunnel. The rumbling of the subway grows until it shakes loose a slide of rocks and gravel, knocking him to the ground. Bruised but undaunted, Vincent shields himself from the shower of stone and continues on.

INT. ALEXANDER'S LOFT - DAY

Alexander slides open the door. Cathy steps inside. She looks to him like a helpless child, dizzy and weak from the drug.

CATHY
(a tortured plea)
Help me?

ALEXANDER
I will.

CATHY
I feel so dizzy.

ALEXANDER
It's all right.

CATHY'S POV

She glances around the loft, startled by the strange sight of the candles and the altar.

ALEXANDER (O.C.)
(echoing what he said before)
You're safe now.

Cathy focuses on the pictures on the altar. They're blurry but distinguishable.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CATHY
(confused)
Toussant? William Toussant?

ALEXANDER (O.C.)
Relax.

Cathy spots Lindsey and starts to realize that the pieces are coming together -- and something is very wrong.

RESUME

CATHY
(fighting the mental haze)
Why is she here?

ALEXANDER
She's a friend.

Lindsey approaches Cathy with a cup.

CATHY'S POV

In her drugged state, Lindsey looks distorted, menacing.

RESUME

Cathy, frightened, backs away.

ALEXANDER
You have to drink it.
(turning to the icon)
Lord Baka, she is here. We offer
her life to free your spirit so
that we may reign in power.

RESUME

Cathy, fighting to come out of her haze, knocks the cup from Lindsey's hand. Alexander grabs her and wrestles her towards the altar. Cathy kicks and struggles, but in her weakened state, she's no match for him. Alexander grabs for the knife. As his hand closes around its handle, there is suddenly a great SHATTERING OF GLASS.

ANGLE ON THE SKYLIGHT

Vincent crashes through it, rolling to safety on the floor.

ON ALEXANDER AND CATHY

Alexander's face blazes- with the wonderment of a true believer witnessing a miracle.

ALEXANDER
Beast of the night!

Vincent snarls, and Lindsey backs up in terror, knocking over the altar -- and knocking herself unconscious. The candles fall over, igniting the contents of the bowls, which instantly burst into flames. The fire spreads quickly.

ALEXANDER
The power will be mine!

He raises the knife aloft and is about to plunge it into Cathy. Cathy struggles valiantly, but it isn't a fair fight. With a fierce cry, Vincent lunges at Alexander.

WIDE

The fire has continued to spread, providing a hellish backdrop to their struggle. Vincent throws Alexander down -- and he falls on his knife. Vincent grabs Cathy, and they escape through the flames.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CRIMINAL JUSTICE BUILDING - DAY

INT. D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY

Maxwell and two of his CRONIES share a cup of coffee.

MAXWELL
You goin' to the Garden tonight?

CRONIE #1
I'm sick of watching the Rangers lose. Besides, it'll probably be ten o'clock before I clean off my desk.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

MAXWELL

Did you hear about the twist on the Ocala case?

CRONIE #2

No.

MAXWELL

There was a fire in a loft down in the village. Police found enough of that voodoo poison to wipe out half the neighborhood.

CRONIE #1

No kiddin'.

MAXWELL

Yep. It belonged to a Columbia professor -- Alexander Stone. Seems he was into all that voodoo hocus pocus.

Cathy appears in the door, listening.

MAXWELL

Hey Radcliffe -- how you feeling?

CATHY

Great. You were right. I was overtired.

CRONIE #1

(turning back to Maxwell)

How do they know for sure this professor killed Toussant?

MAXWELL

Stone was a gonner when they got there, but his girlfriend confessed to everything before she cashed in. Toussant was a member of their merry band.

(shaking his head)

Can you believe it? A three piece suit like him?

CRONIE #2

Why'd they kill him?

CONTINUED

MAXWELL

He got cold feet. Didn't like what they were up to, so he threatened to go to the police. Stone had the girl poison him and plant the evidence on Ocala.

(shaking his head)

I tell ya, there are a lot of wierd people into a lot of wierd stuff in this town.

CRONIE # 2

You're tellin' me.

Cathy smiles in agreement, but her thoughts are far away.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SHELL

in Cathy's fingers.

WIDEN TO REVEAL:

EXT. PARK RENDEZVOUS - NIGHT

Cathy contemplates the shell. Vincent is at her side.

CATHY

(gazing at it thoughtfully)
How did he know, Vincent? How did he know about you?

VINCENT

Coincidence perhaps. He could have seen. He could have sensed.

CATHY

(agreeing with the last idea)
He did have incredible power.

VINCENT

Fear is a powerful emotion. To conquer it is the beginning of wisdom.

CONTINUED

CATHY
I'm not afraid anymore.

With all her might, she hurls the shell into the darkness.

CATHY
I want to pretend it never
happened.

VINCENT
The difference between fantasy
and reality is only what you
choose to believe in.

CATHY
I believe in you, Vincent.

She smiles at Vincent, and they embrace. CAMERA PULLS back as they
part. Vincent disappears into the mist.

FADE OUT

THE END