

DRACONIS

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EXT. MONTREAL - NIGHT

The city sparkles under a half moon. Northern lights eerily paint the sky with slashes of green.

SUPER: MONTREAL, QUÉBEC, CANADA - DECEMBER - FIFTEEN HOURS OF DARKNESS

INT. SEBA'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

SEBA (Sebastian, agelessly between 30 and 50) in a shitty, studio apartment. Cot. Chair. Lamp on a sad end table. Plywood nailed over windows. Piles and piles of books.

SEBA (V.O.)

Contradiction. Hypocrisy. Irony? I think about murder in service of life a lot these days.

Seba squats in the chair, sweating like a junkie, smoking hand-rolled, unfiltered cigarettes, trying to focus on a book. He looks gaunt, skin tight on his frame. His clothes worn long past useful life, like the figure they hang on.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)

Particularly since Cernavâș. In nineteen-forty seven a plane went down near Cernavâș, a remote village in the mountains of Romania.

He's reading *Le Sentiment Tragique De La Vie* (Tragic Sense of Life) by Miguel de Unamuno. He's twitchy and strange. Moments of pure calm followed by feral darting. He obsessively checks an archaic text pager.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)

All aboard killed. Eh... Mostly.

EXT. SEBA'S APARTMENT - POOL AREA - NIGHT

Seba paces around the pool. Algae grows in one foot of water. The building for people at the bottom of society: junkies and prostitutes, illegal immigrants, the desperate.

SEBA (V.O.)

Within two weeks most of the villagers were dead, either from a mysterious poisoning or murdered by fellow villagers.

Still with the cigarette and the book, though he has trouble focusing. He doesn't fit here, yet he does.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Rumors spread of a demon roaming the  
area, cursing the village, bringing  
pain and death.

A young woman locks her door, going to work, late shift. He  
watches her hungrily, then forces himself to turn away.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
It took far too long, but finally  
some sociopathic general unilaterally  
ordered the fire bombing of the  
entire area. Those that buried the  
bodies described what they found as  
'not recognizably human'.

EXT. SEBA'S APARTMENT - ROOF - NIGHT

Seba looks out over the city. Sirens in the distance. Gun  
shots? A couple YELLING at each other nearby.

SEBA (V.O.)  
That was the third time humanity  
narrowly avoided extinction from the  
parasites.

The pager BUZZES. *Relief. 'Marcus Lavoie, Hochelaga-  
Maisonneuve, Rue Ontario E.'* With a detailed description.

He copies it into a Moleskine and deletes the message.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Simultaneously another device gets the same message. This  
device looks completely different, like an industrial  
version: a *HackRF Pager Interceptor*.

FOOTSTEPS. Hands. CORMICK (20-something, unearned macho-bro  
vibe) stares in horror and excitement. He hurries off.

EXT. CITY SLUMS - NIGHT

Seba wanders trying to locate his target.

He eyes a homeless guy on the sidewalk. Seba is hungry.  
Barely anyone around. He angles towards the guy when he  
finally spots his target: MARCUS (30's seedy street dealer).

A car stops next to Marcus. He leans on the door and talks  
to the passenger. An exchange made: cash for a baggie. Seba  
checks his Moleskine. This is the guy.

Marcus clocks Seba as the car pulls away. He scurries swiftly down the street. Seba curses and hurries to follow.

A hundred yards back a foot touches down. Cormick on a red and black electric bike...

Marcus walks a couple blocks. He's sure he's being followed. He ducks into...

INT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

Marcus takes the first half flight and draws a gun. He parks at the turn with a clear shot on the door.

The door opens. He raises the gun...

Just an old lady. She yells at him in French.

MARCUS

*Pardon.*

He retreats up the stairs with regular glances back down.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Marcus emerges and backs away from the door, gun raised. Waits. Waits. Nothing emerges. He relaxes.

A figure climbs over the lip of the building from the sheer drop. Seba stands up behind Marcus.

Marcus hears and SPINS a moment too late! Seba KNOCKS the gun away and PUNCHES him in the face. It's a gritty, dirty street brawl but Seba quickly has the upper hand.

Seba PINS Marcus down on the tar rooftop. Marcus panics.

MARCUS (IN FRENCH)

*You want the cash? Take it, fuck!  
Take it! Is this Gagnon? Is that what  
this is? I told him I wasn't there!  
Goddamn it! I swear! Christ!*

Seba ignores him. He brandishes a *Fanger*, a fork-like knife with two short tines, and jabs it into Marcus' neck! Blood squirts out under pressure! Seba quickly covers the wound with his mouth.

MARCUS (IN FRENCH) (cont'd)

*Shit! What the fuck are you doing?!*

Seba is in ecstasy. Marcus' eyes lose focus.

Marcus reaches for the dropped gun. It's close... In reach... Just another inch...

Seba presses Marcus' hand into the roof with one finger. Marcus loses the strength to resist as he fades.

Seba's gauntness softens. His skin flushes. He looks younger, more vital. The blood is the greatest drug ever...

Four large hands grab Seba and yank him up. He's still high from the blood and fumbles to react. Two THUGs hold him.

Cormick is there, face obscured by a motorcycle helmet. He jams an odd knife into Seba's stomach and triggers a switch. *HISSSS-TOK!* Seba flinches!

Cormick yanks the knife out and looks at it. A glass reservoir in the middle of the blade is filled with blood.

In that moment Seba and Cormick's eyes meet. Seba is shocked and angry, and Cormick is shocked and stunned.

Cormick runs.

THUG ONE	THUG TWO
Hey, where are you going?!	What are we supposed to do with this guy?!

CORMICK  
(panicked)  
Not my problem! You should probably stab him in heart!

Cormick disappears down the stairs as the stunned thugs look at each other.

THUG ONE  
What the fuck? Is he serious?

THUG TWO  
Coby didn't say anything about a hit.

Seba slows his breathing and tenses. The thugs are momentarily off guard...

He wraps a leg around Thug One's leg. With the leverage he dislocates the arm of Thug Two. SCREAMS and PANIC.

Another raw street brawl! Seba POKES his fingers into eyes, SMACKS ears, JAMS throats, KICKS them in the groin!

He recovers the Fanger and STABS holes in Thug One's face. The guy HOWLS and tries to push him away. In the distracted moment Seba SHOVES him over the lip of the building.

Cormick emerges from the building just as Thug One IMPACTS the sidewalk feet from him. Bystanders SCREAM!

That leaves Seba to deal with Thug Two.

He FLIPS the guy around and SLAMS his head into the corner of a chimney! Then a couple more SMASHES to be sure.

He rushes to the lip of the building: Cormick runs to his fancy electric motorcycle across the street.

Too late. A crowd gathers around the body below.

He checks his stomach wound and shoves his fingers in with a wince. *Time to disappear.* He turns away.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - STREET - LATER

ALLY LAGARDE (late 30's) parks her old SUV on the street. She's a plain-clothes detective whose no-nonsense attire has slipped a little with the years.

Police are cordoning the scene off with police tape. A forensics photographer is just getting going. Ally pulls on rubber gloves and climbs out.

An officer in uniform meets her: GWIN MATTES (20's) is a woman with a stocky workout build bordering on androgynous. She moves with the clipped efficiency of the new on the job.

ALLY

Officer. You the first on the scene?

GWIN

Yes, ma'am. Gwin Mattes. We have a body on the street. Took a fall from the roof.

ALLY

Anyone touched the body? Been up to the roof?

GWIN

Not yet. It was just me and Officer Jacques. We've been keeping the public away till backup arrived. You got here right after them.

Another officer stands by the body of Thug One. JACQUES (30s veteran) nods familiar greeting.

ALLY

Evening, Jacques. What do you have?

JACQUES

*Salut, Ally. Jumper. Got stabbed by every branch on the way down.*

Ally crouches for a look. A bunch of double holes in the guy's face. No trees nearby. Her eyebrows raise.

ALLY

You'd be surprised how often guys repeatedly stab themselves in the face with a fork before accidentally slipping off the roof of a building.

JACQUES

That so?

ALLY

It's a fucking epidemic.

He smiles. Gwin is nonplussed.

JACQUES

Do you want me to flip him?

ALLY

Gonna check out the roof first.

GWIN

I'll take you.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Ally and Gwin emerge to the bloody scene followed by several other officers and the photographer.

GWIN

*Crisse! Pardon, ma'am.*

ALLY

Invoke all you need.

Ally points to several areas for the photographer to cover, then crosses to Marcus. Gwin trails after.

Ally looks at Marcus' neck.

ALLY (cont'd)

This guy apparently had fork issues too.

GWIN

(nervously)

Maybe they were fork buddies.

Ally snorts a laugh. Gwin grins and relaxes a little.

Ally waves the photographer over. SNAP SNAP SNAP. The photographer nods and backs off. Ally and Gwin carefully flip the body. Gwin clocks Marcus' face and shies back.

ALLY

You squeamish around bodies, Mattes?

GWIN

No, ma'am.

Ally continues inspecting, waiting. After a moment.

GWIN (cont'd)

I knew him. I mean, I saw him on the street. Had a couple interactions. Not much, but... still. Marcus--

ALLY

The decedent.

GWIN

His name was Marcus.

ALLY

Only in the reports. Here he's decedent one.

Gwin is uncomfortable with that. Allison softens.

ALLY (cont'd)

Look, you have to have distance to remain objective.

GWIN

Yes, ma'am.

ALLY

And drop the ma'am. I'm not that old.

GWIN

Yes, ma'am.

Ally smiles.

GWIN (cont'd)

Strange wound. Strange weapon? Serial killer?

ALLY

Only in the movies. Here it's just an interesting detail.

Ally moves to the other body. Gwin right next to her.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Didn't know this guy?

GWIN  
Nope, just a decedent to me.

ALLY  
(testing)  
What would you say happened here?

GWIN  
Had a row with a chimney?

ALLY  
Two jokes already. You're getting the hang of this.

Gwin looks it over considering.

GWIN  
I'd say... this guy was the last to die. It looks like he... impacted the bricks three or four times. Whoever did that wasn't worried about the guy on the sidewalk anymore so that happened before this. Marc-- the decedent, decedent-- er, one? I don't think he died in the same fight. He might have been dead already too.

Ally looks over the body and the surrounding area without touching anything as the photographer does his job.

ALLY  
Agreed. Someone worked this guy over. Sidewalk guy too. This whole rooftop screams violent disagreement. But you're right, decedent two if we're going in order of inspection, wasn't part of the dance.

The photographer nods done. Ally inspects the body and finds a tattoo on the wrist.

ALLY (cont'd)  
This guy is a Hollow Man. Money on our faller being one too. Both bruisers. Decedent one, not so much.

GWIN  
What's this?

Gwin stares at something on the ground.

It's a blood splatter. Very different from the others. Darker, fibrous. What would normally be straight line splatter streaks are bent and branched, and they turn towards the body of Marcus. As if reaching for him...

ALLY

Those drips are flowing against the grade. What the hell?

At that moment JACOBS and BASTANABEE (grizzled veteran detectives, 30-40s) who ran out of fucks to give a decade ago barge onto the roof like they own the building.

JACOBS

Okay, everybody back up. This is our show now. You, what's been moved? Who is Mattes? You here?

GWIN

Here, sir.

Gwin crosses to him. Ally gets ruffled. Jacobs clocks her.

JACOBS

Stand down, Lagarde. We got this.

He sends Bastanabee her way. Ally clenches in anger. Bastanabee motions to calm down.

ALLY

Dispatch tapped me.

BASTANABEE

I know, but this is something we're tracking. Take an early night.

Ally glances over the scene again: Tattooed wrist under expensive watch. Two holes in Marcus' neck. Blood drips the wrong direction. She's itching to work the case but...

She meets Gwin's eyes. Jacobs pats Gwin on the back. Something in Gwin's eyes is pleading, and frustrated.

Ally turns to Bastanabee.

ALLY

You got this? Or, *you got this*.

BASTANABEE

(holds her eyes)

*We got this.*

(MORE)

BASTANABEE (cont'd)  
 (breaks a smile)  
 Jacobs and I will be at Le Cochon  
 d'Étain Friday. Join us. Beers on us.

ALLY  
 (a beat, a sigh)  
 All right. Have a good night.

As she goes, Jacobs calls out orders.

JACOBS  
 Stick to the three T's: triage, tag,  
 and transfer. Anything not direct  
 cause or effect goes to the clean-up  
 crew. We all have places to be.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

Ally emerges onto the street and angles for her SUV.

JACQUES  
 Done already?

ALLY  
 Turns out, I forgot my dancing shoes.  
 Have a good night.

She gets in her SUV, grabs the radio, and stops.

She thinks for a moment, eye on the body across the street.  
*Damn it, this one was interesting...*

She crushes it down and raises the radio.

ALLY (cont'd)  
 Detective Lagarde clearing from  
 scene, handing off to Jacobs and  
 Bastanabee. Out.

She STARTS her SUV. KNOCK at the window. It's Gwin. Ally  
 opens the windows

ALLY (cont'd)  
 Officer Mattes?

GWIN  
 (considers her words)  
 I was wondering if maybe you thought  
 this scene is all a bit... odd?

ALLY  
 (playing dumb)  
 How do you mean?

GWIN

Do you normally get superseded at the scene? I thought hand-offs like that happened after initial determination.

ALLY

Sometimes. Not always.

GWIN

Thing is, Marcus-- decedent one or whatever, he was small time, been around for years. Maybe not an angel, but people sort of accepted him as part of the scene.

ALLY

This scene? This scene is a sewer.

GWIN

Sure. But the others, like you said, expensive. Too expensive for him. Either as employer or target. And then suddenly those two don't want to ask me anything. Just send me home--

ALLY

Look, Mattes, good work here, but to be honest, this looks like a typical deal gone wrong. Let Jacobs and Bastanabee handle it. They've got it. Take an early night.

Gwin searches for someone on her side. Doesn't find it.

GWIN

(flat)

Yes, ma'am. You have a good night.

Gwin hurries away. Ally winces guilt, but it's too late now.

As Gwin moves to join Jacques on the sidewalk she glances up at the roof. Jacobs is at the edge, staring back.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

An over-sized open floor plan with giant picture windows and million dollar city views. Expensive furniture covered callously in the clutter of the unself-aware, born rich.

BETS (20's sickly) sits in a lounge with an IV tube leading from a medical pump to her shoulder.

Cormick slams the door behind him. She perks up.

BETS  
Did you get it?

He stands there still coming down from his adrenaline high.

BETS (cont'd)  
Cormick! Did you get it?!

CORMICK  
Yeah, yeah... Hey, your Fluoro is  
out.

She glances at the empty infusion pouch hanging from a  
stand, its tubing still taped to her collarbone.

BETS  
Oh, right, I forgot.

She doesn't seem concerned. This isn't the first time.

CORMICK  
Bets, I can't just call up my father  
for that. I have to plan for when he  
isn't there. You said you were going  
to see the oncologist--

Bets yanks the needle from her collar port.

BETS  
I forgot, alright? It doesn't matter  
if you got it. *Did. You. Get it?*

CORMICK  
(defensive)  
Yes. I got it. Hold your nips, tiny  
tits.

BETS  
Pinch yours, limpy limp dick. It's  
been hours.

He sets the knife on the coffee table in front of her. Her  
smile is a mile wide. She grabs it and runs to the wet bar.

CORMICK  
Bets, it was fucking nuts! He was  
feeding on some junkie when they  
grabbed him. Right on top of the guy.  
Attached to him like a tick--

BETS  
Let's do this on the stream!

CORMICK  
 (still shaken)  
 Fuck. Yeah... fuck, okay...

He crosses to a computer and launches an app called SKRATCH (similar to Twitch). Takes a moment to log in.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 It was a Goddamn mess. Those hires were fucktards. I got the blood and told them to clean up. Instead one face plants the sidewalk right in front of me. No idea what happened to other guy.

Bets returns with two shot glasses filled with blood.

BETS  
 Doesn't matter. They're just meat heads. You got me this. You're fucking fire, Cormick.

She kisses him hard. He brightens.

They appear on screen. The 'room' fills with viewers.

CORMICK  
 Fuck, only two hundred.

BETS  
 There will be a million by tomorrow.

Bets raises her glass.

BETS (cont'd)  
 Greetings, fellow Hemogoblins! You'll never guess what vintage we came across tonight! That's right! Cancer can get pegged! Here's to immortality!

She CLINKS his glass. Cormick grins. He glances at his glass: The blood creeps slowly up the side.

His smile falters. She downs her shot and looks at him: 'come on!' He forces his grin and tosses his back.

They throw the shot glasses across the room, breaking something. She LAUGHS and hugs him.

His giant smile matches her-- a painful flinch and it drops a notch. His eyes, suddenly scared...

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - NIGHT

Seba rings an intercom. He stands at the gate of a huge reconstruction Chinese compound set on a wooded hill. It's far from the surrounding houses but with views of the city.

VOICE (V.O.)

*Oui?*

SEBA

It's Seba.

No response. He waits.

SEBA (cont'd)

Sebastian. The only one that comes here in the middle of the night. Come on, the sun isn't going to sleep in.

Another beat. Finally the gate buzzes and swings open.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - FOYER - NIGHT

A MALE THRALL meets Seba, one of Sheng Nu's entourage, emo meets leather meets Chinese period. Sexually fluid.

SEBA

I'll need some fresh blood.

The Thrall is put out but nods. SHENG NU (Asian also somewhere between 30 and 50) descends stairs to greet him. She wears clothes to match the architecture, a modernized version of a period silk Chinese Hanfu. Rich colors and stylized dragons. She moves with power-woman confidence.

SHENG NU

(demanding)

What happened?

SEBA

I'm in no condition to talk here. I've been holding this wound open for hours. If I don't deal with it soon it will harden. I'd rather skip a *hard excision* just for a stab wound.

Sheng Nu nods to the Thrall and leads Seba further in.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Seba and Sheng Nu sink into couches. The chamber is a period recreation of a Chinese sitting room. The furniture is lush, ornate and expensive. The floor gorgeous stained wood.

But that ends at the walls. Walls and ceiling are seamless LED walls displaying an endless time-lapse: A view from a mountain top: the sun rises, crosses the sky, sets golden over a distant sea, the moon fills the sky, lighting wispy clouds, sets and the sun returns to go again. Once a minute.

SHENG NU

It didn't used to take an open wound  
to convince you to visit.

SEBA

I've been in one of the dark periods.  
I didn't think you'd want to be  
around that.

A FEMALE THRALL delivers a crystal pitcher of blood and a tumbler as well as a hand towel for Seba to wipe his bloody hand. The Thrall has a fresh bandage on her arm.

SHENG NU

It's been years. More than a decade.  
That's a long period of dark. I could  
have helped. I've been there before.

SEBA

I know.

She raises an eyebrow. *Do you?*

SEBA (cont'd)

(sighs)  
Yes, I do know.

He drinks. Sheng Nu leaves it and gestures to the wound.

SEBA (cont'd)

I was feeding on my usual offering  
from *les flics*. Three guys jump me in  
some sort of misguided hit.

SHENG NU

Professionals?

SEBA

Two were heavies. Pretty sure they  
were. I took care of them. The  
knifer, no, I don't think he was.

SHENG NU  
The knifer got away? How?

SEBA  
Just took off. They asked what to do  
and he yelled... something...

He frowns, trying to remember.

SHENG NU  
He left them. He wasn't with them.  
Maybe he hired them?

SEBA  
Maybe.

SHENG NU  
He just stabbed you and left.

SEBA  
Yep.

SHENG NU  
Plain old knife.

Seba starts to reply then stops himself: *was it?*

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
Here, on me. Try again.

She sits closer. He reluctantly turns and looks her in the eyes. She holds her hands to either side of his head. He slows his breath. She SNAPS her fingers.

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
You are on the rooftop. Where are  
you?

She SNAPS again. He isn't hypnotized but he is focused. He closes his eyes. Breathe in, out.

SEBA  
I am on the rooftop. The man is weak.  
He fights like a snared fox. I have  
him. I pierce him. I drink.

*SNAP!* We see stylized cuts to what he describes. The time-lapse day flitters by all around them, the light shifting, changing. Sheng Nu's voice is ethereal.

SHENG NU  
You drink. You sate the thirst.  
Draconis sleeps.

SEBA  
Draconis sleeps.

*SNAP!*

SHENG NU  
Where are you?

SEBA  
I drink. But I am disturbed.  
Interrupted. Hands pull me. Hands  
hold me.

SHENG NU  
Hands.

SEBA  
Hands.

The vision: Him held, a tattoo, an expensive watch.

*SNAP!*

SHENG NU  
There is a man. There is a knife.  
There is a man with a knife. There is  
a knife with a man.

The vision: Cormick swings the knife in slow motion.

SEBA  
There is a knife. The knife is in me.  
There is pain. Clear like ice. Like  
cold. Like the sun after rain. Deep.  
The knife, it jumps. It jumps while  
inside. It jumps.

SHENG NU  
Like the sun. There is a knife. The  
knife jumps.

*SNAP!*

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
Then the knife is gone.

SEBA  
The knife is gone. The pain remains  
but the knife...

*SNAP!*

SHENG NU  
See the knife.

SEBA

I see the knife. Two edges. No, not two edges, two blades. Between the blades...

SHENG NU

Between the blades. See between the blades.

*SNAP!* The vision: the strange knife.

SEBA

Between the blades is glass. Between the blades is blood in glass.

His eyes snap open. She is right there staring at him.

SHENG NU

(sour)

He stole your blood.

SEBA

*Merde...*

Sheng Nu takes up her glass to drink.

SHENG NU

Once, long long past, I let a *Shao* get close. He was very clever. Knew what I was but kept it from me. Or, helped me keep it from myself. He stole from me with the intention of gifting it to a *Dūdū*. A war lord, you understand? Ruler of a million souls.

SEBA

Did it turn the *Dūdū*?

Sheng Nu doesn't answer immediately. Finally...

SHENG NU

No, it consumed him. Then his death caused a war that killed thousands, but that's how things were then.

Seba starts to relax.

SHENG NU (cont'd)

But it turned the *Shao*. I think he just licked the empty cup clean but that was enough. Took me days to catch him. He'd infected a dozen by then but they were consumed as well. We were lucky. That time.

Seba stiffens. He looks at the bloody towel.

SEBA  
Survival is rare.

SHENG NU  
Yes. Very very very rare.  
(sips)  
Be. Sure.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - MORNING

The sun rises over the city.

Sunlight cuts through the picture windows. The leading edge lands on Cormick. He jumps like someone touched him with a lit cigarette.

He's a mess. Vomited on himself, dark baggy eyes, pale. He scrambles to his feet and backs away from the spill of sunlight cutting the floor.

He trips over something and falls: *Bets. Bets' body.*

Eyes wide and dry. Mouth wider than possible, lips stretched back. Skin like shrink wrap on bones. She is very very dead.

CORMICK  
What...? No no no no no no! Bets...

Cormick is distraught. He sobs over her.

The light creeps closer. He pulls her body into the shadows.

CUT TO:

Cormick duct tapes blankets to the windows on top of the blinds. Even that might not be enough.

BANGING on the door. He panics, eyes falling on Bets' body.

The door BURSTS open. Three TOUGHS storm in, followed by COBY (30's), a successful street thug in an expensive suit.

COBY  
Mister Vale! Good morning. Well, not actually good, is it?

Two of the Toughs corner Cormick. The third scopes the place. He ends with Bets, nudges her with his toe.

CORMICK  
Don't touch her, you shit-bird!!

Tough One pats him on the cheek like he's a child. The dismissive gesture is more threatening than a smack.

TOUGH ONE

Language.

Coby sweeps open a curtain, sunlight pours in. Some falls on Cormick. He leaps back in pain. The two Toughs behind grab him and hold him. The sunlight inches away.

COBY

I rented you two men. Last night. Recall? It seems they didn't make it home. Last night. After the job.

CORMICK

Come on, Coby, they're not my responsibility--

COBY

Actually they were. You paid to use them. But our deal was for intimidation only. You assured me, no violence necessary. Certainly not the type of violence that would result in Bastian dead on a sidewalk.

CORMICK

That wasn't me. That was after--

COBY

And Luis dead on the roof. I have yet to get the details. But I don't think they are going to help your case.

CORMICK

Coby, come on. They were just muscle.

Coby stares at him in a contained fury.

COBY

Just. Muscle.

He casually takes out a gun and SHOOTs Cormick in the knees. Cormick SCREAMS in agony!

COBY (cont'd)

Just knees.

Coby finds the Bloodjack knife.

COBY (IN FRENCH)

*What the hell is this shit?*

Cormick is in too much pain to answer. Coby figures out the mechanism. He peers closely at the glass reservoir, a bit of blood still inside.

COBY  
 Is this-- is this blood? Is this  
 for--  
 (realization)  
 You were hunting *Le Videur*! Did you  
 hire my men to hold him? *Espèce de*  
*riche épais*!

He points. The Toughs haul Cormick up in an echo of the Thugs holding Seba.

COBY (cont'd)  
 Did they hold him for you? So you  
 didn't have to get your hands dirty?  
 So you didn't have to risk yourself?  
 So *this* would be easy?

Coby JAMS the knife into Cormick's stomach and TRIGGERS it. *HISSSS-TOK!* Cormick convulses in agony!

He sets the knife on the coffee table in front of Cormick. The reservoir full with blood.

COBY (cont'd)  
 It takes a while to die from a  
 stomach wound. Take your time.

He sits in a chair and watches Cormick. Cormick writhes in pain. Desperate for help that isn't coming.

Coby's phone pings. He glances at it.

COBY (cont'd)  
 On second thought, I don't have time  
 to waste on you.

He heads for the door, waving the third Tough to follow.

COBY (cont'd)  
 (to the others)  
 Make sure he's dead before you leave.  
 And don't forget the slugs in his  
 knees.

Coby leaves without a look back.

The two remaining Toughs immediately raid Cormick's fridge.

TOUGH ONE  
 What the hell is *Le Videur*?

TOUGH TWO

Some sort of boogeyman. Not a real thing.

TOUGH ONE

Coby thinks it's real.

TOUGH TWO

They say *Le Videur* has three wings and a head like a horse full of venomous stingers. They say a lot of shit. It's like chupacabra. No one has actually seen it.

Curled up on the ground Cormick notices that his wounds are healing, his breath calming...

TOUGH ONE

You say so. Has that *pignouf* joined his stiff girl yet?

Tough Two crosses to Cormick and nudges him with his toe.

TOUGH TWO

Hey. You dead?

CORMICK

No.

Cormick JUMPS up and grabs him. But this guy is trained muscle. He fend off Cormick and PUNCHES him a couple times.

Cormick STUMBLES back. Tough Two draws his gun. Cormick is getting used to pain. He recovers quickly and CHARGES.

Tough Two shoots Cormick but Cormick keeps coming! Cormick tackles him, they SMASH into the glass coffee table!

Tough One rushes from the kitchen, gun ready. Cormick STRUGGLES with Tough Two. Keeping the gun away he grabs a piece of coffee table glass and STABS over and over.

Tough One opens FIRE! Cormick just takes the hits! He grabs Tough Two's gun and FIRES back. Tough One DIVES for cover!

Tough Two still has some life and GRABS Cormick. Cormick BITES him! Just a normal human bite, but enough to get the gun under Tough Two's chin and pull the trigger! *Boom!*

Cormick RISES and trades GUNFIRE with Tough One. They both HIT each other but Cormick SHRUGS it off.

CORMICK (cont'd)

Her name. Was Elizabeth.

Tough One limps away in terror. Cormick marches on him, gun BLAZING. The guy doesn't make it to the door.

Cormick collapses, panting. He moves to Tough One. Wounds bubble and ooze. Not dead yet. Wheezing... Blinking...

TOUGH ONE

*Non... Je t'en supplie... Fuck...*

Cormick taps him lightly on the cheek.

CORMICK

Language.

Cormick SLURPS the blood as it leaks from the wounds...

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ally SLURPS a glass of red wine at a table.

A MIDDLE AGED MAN approaches and awkwardly asks her a question in French. She half stands and laughs uncomfortably nodding. They shake hands and he also laughs uncomfortably.

A first date for people who have never met in person. The date proceeds in jump-cuts. They chat in unsubtitled French.

- He tells a bombastic story. She tries to maintain a smile.

- They order. Occasionally interrupt each other, apologies.

- A moment eating in awkward silence.

- A waiter drops a glass of wine nearby, the red liquid splashes to the wood floor and splays out in a pattern... a pattern like the blood on the roof. Ally contemplates the splatter...

- Her date asks her a question. Her attention returns to him, flustered and distracted.

- Another uncomfortable lull in the conversation. Their eyes both elsewhere. Hers to the now clean floor.

- They stand at the door and shake hands. Smiles forced. He exits as soon as he can. She drops the smile.

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - DAY

The Postes de Quartier 14 (PDQ, Québec police station) is familiarly stale: Fluorescent lighting, worn linoleum, coffee machine that hasn't been cleaned properly since 2009.

Ally stares at her computer. Unfocused. After a moment she looks up to see if anyone noticed her spacing.

Across the bullpen, Jacobs laughs with some cops. She frowns. Her thoughts shift, something bothering her.

She pulls up old case files. Jacobs and Bastanabee cases. File after file have similar details: *Pending. Unsolved. Closed Without Resolution.* Lone victims, death due to *exsanguination*, massive blood loss. None touched since initial reports, zero follow-up.

She closes them and thinks.

INT. PDQ 14 - PATROL BULLPEN - DAY

Ally pulls up a chair at Gwin's desk. Gwin waits.

ALLY

I had a date last night. New guy.  
Through Bumble.

GWIN

Oh? Uh... How was it?

ALLY

Awful. He couldn't wait to get out of there. Honestly, I couldn't either. He was so boring my mind kept wandering. We both knew it. I just couldn't stop thinking about... stuff.

Gwin nods and waits. This isn't about the date. Finally.

ALLY (cont'd)

I told you to drop the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve case.

GWIN

You did.

ALLY

Yeah, well, in the middle of my terrible date I remembered something. I dug up some older cases. Specifically J and B cases. They're clean but they aren't right.

GWIN

Single victims. Death due to blood loss. Method inconclusive. Unsolved, Inactive or Suspended.

Ally gives Gwin a look.

GWIN (cont'd)  
Technically, none of them are the  
Hochelaga case.

ALLY  
Cheeky.

GWIN  
Did you see the other cases? The ones  
Jac-- J and B didn't sign?

ALLY  
Other cases?

GWIN  
Yeah. Another twenty-seven actually,  
though the style is the same as J &  
B's. I think it was still them but  
they got other officers to sign off  
to spread it around.  
(a beat)  
Your name is on six of them.

ALLY  
Mine? Well, look, we all handle a lot  
of cases. We're over-worked.  
Sometimes we cover for each other.  
File the paperwork so it's in on  
time, that sort of thing.

GWIN  
Two cases you were on sick leave.

ALLY  
You give a verbal. It's just the way  
it is.

Gwin sits back, expression going flat.

GWIN  
Yes, ma'am.

ALLY  
(sighs)  
Fuck you. Two when I was sick? Fine,  
show me the dirty.

Gwin smiles and leans back in.

GWIN  
Something else is weird. They happen  
like clockwork, once a week.  
(MORE)

GWIN (cont'd)  
 Nothing linked in ViCLAS, but the  
 pattern's there. Maybe it is a serial  
 killer?

ALLY  
 You and your serial killers.

GWIN  
 Worse. A serial killer with cops on  
 the take?

ALLY  
 Alright, we peel this open a little  
 more. Carefully. Discretely. Show me.

INT. SEBA'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Seba crouches by a threadbare area rug.

SEBA (V.O.)  
*'If your existence is such tragic,  
 painful irony, why don't you just  
 kill yourself?'* Thanks for the pro-  
 tip, doc. How might I go about that?

He sighs and rolls back the rug. Firm hits at two points on  
 the floor. CLICK. A section pops up an inch.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Can't hang. Can't drown. Can't poison  
 myself. Can't slit my wrists or fall  
 on my sword. Literally, not  
 metaphorically.

He lifts the flooring away. In a hollow is a large trunk. A  
 key and a combo open it.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 If I shoot myself in the head, I'm  
 more likely to become a lobotomized  
 blood fiend. Sunlight would bake my  
 brain and turn me into undead beef  
 jerky, and we're back to lobotomized  
 blood fiend. I could burn to death if  
 there was time for it to reach the  
 heart, but the blood would take over  
 like a panic attack long before that.

Medieval weapons and armor, somewhat modified with modern  
 attachments. He callously pushes them aside and draws out an  
 odd knife: a Heart Shredder, all jagged point and no blade.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)

I'm not even sure I could reliably blow myself up. Don't get me wrong. It is possible. If I really set my heart to it I might pull it off. But as they say, if you come for the king you better not miss.

INT. METRO - NIGHT

Seba rides the metro. Bored, just like everyone else.

SEBA (V.O.)

Right around Christmas, seventeen ninety-three, I thought maybe the guillotine was the answer. Clean cut, off the head, stop the heart. Turns out I wasn't the first to consider that. It didn't work. Enough of the nervous system survived to keep the heart limping along, and then...

INT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRS - NIGHT

Seba climbs the stairs like he's unhappily going to work.

SEBA (V.O.)

I don't know the details, but that was the second time humanity narrowly avoided extinction from the parasites.

He reaches the door to the roof. VOICES. Suddenly alert, he shies back. He slinks back down, wary.

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Ally and Gwin review the report. Gwin reads. Ally paces, thinking. She stops and crouches by a large blood stain.

GWIN

That's Marcus.

ALLY

Decedent one. He looks like the anomaly, but here he's actually the norm. Blood loss like other cases.

Ally turns to the blood stained chimney.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Decedent two, one of the heavies.

She turns away. Seba crests the lip of the roof behind the chimney and hides in its shadows.

Ally follows splatters on the ground leading to the edge.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Decedent three. The faller.

GWIN  
According to witnesses, he fell from the rooftop to the street, and soon after some other guy jumped on a motorcycle and drove off. Presumably the killer.

ALLY  
Not clear yet.

GWIN  
The tattoos are noted here. You said they were... What?

ALLY  
Hollow Men. Hired heavies for corrupt rich guys. Usually just muscle for show or serious bouncers for exclusive events. Sometimes it's making threats, maybe breaking some things. Rarely actual violence but that's not outside their job descriptions.

Seba lurks, hidden in the shadows. He turns to his Moleskine and notes: 'Hollow Men'. Then slips to another hiding spot.

Gwin compares photos to the ground around her.

GWIN  
Fourth stain is gone. The one that dripped upslope? There aren't even any CSPs. I'm not crazy, right? They took those pics?

Seba cocks an ear.

ALLY  
It's been scrubbed. This isn't just a paperwork issue anymore.

GWIN  
So, was it blood from our killer?

Seba pauses writing. That's getting close to the truth.

ALLY

Maybe. Read me the witness report on motorcycle guy again.

GWIN

(reading)

Guy comes out the front. Body falls from the roof. Guy runs across the street to a bike and leaves.

ALLY

In that order?

GWIN

Not clear.

ALLY

Do we even know if bike guy should be a suspect?

GWIN

Witnesses thought so.

ALLY

Do we have anything on the bike?

Gwin pulls a blurry printout from the folder.

GWIN

Security cam at the *dépanneur* caught this. Covered license plates, so yeah, probably involved.

ALLY

This genius covers his plates, then rides a luxury organ-donor kit away from the scene.

GWIN

Looks expensive. Trace the bike?

ALLY

Trace the bike.

Seba slinks away.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Cormick's father, EDRIC VALE (imposing business-man, 60's) stands at the picture windows, staring out at the city. He holds a kerchief over his nose. The three bodies lie nearby.

Cormick sits on the couch, head in his hands, clothes dark with dried blood, eyes fixed on Bets' body.

CORMICK

The drugs weren't working.

EDRIC

They work. She didn't take them.

CORMICK

She did. Mostly. Maybe she forgot sometimes. But it didn't matter 'cause we found out about this... these... people or whatever. They never get sick. They never get... it's something in their blood--

EDRIC

In their... blood.

CORMICK

I know it sounds ridiculous, but you get their blood and you take it--

EDRIC

Take it. Transfusion?

CORMICK

Drink it actually--

EDRIC

Oh, okay. You drink their blood.

CORMICK

Yeah, gross, I know. But trust me, not a joke. And I found--

Edric turns on him.

EDRIC

So your cure was you two become vampires. Do I have that right?

Cormick stays silent, fuming. Edric points at Bets' body.

EDRIC (cont'd)

How'd that turn out?

Cormick flinches.

EDRIC (cont'd)

You killed her.

CORMICK

Me?! She drank it herself! She's the one that found it--

EDRIC

But you got it for her, didn't you? You are a child. A spoiled child refusing to grow up, entertaining fantasies of magical 'get out of jail free' cards.

CORMICK

(quietly)

I don't know why it didn't work for her. It worked on me.

Edric spots the knife and snatches it up.

EDRIC

What the hell is this?

CORMICK

It's a Bloodjack knife. There's a guy online, sells them to cosplay vampire hunters. But he makes them legit for authenticity. It's for--

EDRIC

I can see what it's for. Whose blood is this? Some poor, random guy you and your dumb girlfriend decided was a vampire? Are they dead too? Is it one of these guys?

CORMICK

It's mine.

EDRIC

Come on, Cormick.

Cormick pulls up his shirt. His scars hardened over.

CORMICK

It's *my* blood.

He's grown a spine. Edric is taken aback. He looks around trying to regain dominance, points at the Toughs.

EDRIC

Who are they then?

CORMICK

They were left to make sure I died. I didn't. 'Cause it worked.

Edric can sense he's losing the power position.

EDRIC  
Alright, get out.

CORMICK  
What?

EDRIC  
That's why you called, isn't it? To clean up your mess again? Get out and let me take care of this. I'll deal with you later.

Cormick digests that then nods. He looks at Bets, then turns for the door.

EDRIC (cont'd)  
Leave your bloody clothes, you fool.

Cormick heads for the bedroom. Edric looks at the knife, then pockets it and takes out his phone.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Cormick stands by his fancy bike next to a dumpster. He stares at nothing, quivering with anger. Suddenly he EXPLODES! KICKING the dumpster over and over.

CORMICK  
(screaming)  
Fuck you fuck you fuck you!

He PUNCHES the dumpster and is SHOCKED at the pain. He folds over, something definitely broken.

He looks at his hand. One finger clearly dislocated. But after a moment... SNAP. It's back in place. He stares.

He grabs his helmet and jumps on his bike.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Cormick flies from the underground garage. A taxi HONKS at him. He guns it. The electric motor HUMS.

He rides aimlessly, occasionally feeling self-consciously at his stomach wound. Slowly, he loosens up.

He takes off his helmet and TOSSES it away. *Don't need that anymore.* It HITS a passing car! The windshield SPIDERS!

They HONK angrily. He flips them off. He's still bitter but he feels a little better now. He guns it into the night.

INT. BOUTIQUE DISTILLERY - NIGHT

Oak. Brass. Steel. All polished and oiled. The distillery is more steampunk art than machinery. This is a place that sells the process as much as the product.

Two WORKERS service the tanks and other plumbing. Coby sits at a table in the large open floor. He has several bottles of whisky arranged for tasting.

He pours a splash into a tumbler, swirls, sniffs, sips. This isn't pleasure, he's checking quality. He makes some notes, sets the tumbler aside by two others.

A Worker raises his voice angrily in French. Seba stands across the room, gazing up at the large tanks.

Agitated, Coby controls himself and hurries over.

COBY (IN FRENCH)

*How can I help you? Perhaps we can speak better in the lounge?*

SEBA

Three men on a rooftop. One falls from the heights. One falls in battle. And one falls... where?

Coby freezes. His men clock the change and reach for guns. Coby quickly shakes his head and waves them out.

COBY

*Monsieur.*

SEBA

(a long beat)

*Monsieur.*

Seba strolls, admiring the room.

COBY

I didn't know.

SEBA

Know what?

COBY

Know that *crisse de niaiseux* was using my men to... harass *Le Videur*. It won't happen again.

Seba comes to the table. He sniffs the tumblers one by one.

SEBA  
No?

COBY  
I assure you it's taken care of.

SEBA  
Is? Or will be?

COBY  
The girl was gone before I got there.  
OD by the appearance. I left him with  
a 'sure thing' and two men to wait  
till it had run its course.

SEBA  
And?

COBY  
(confused)  
And?

SEBA  
Has it run its course?

Coby starts to speak but stops. Confusion turns to concern.  
Seba sets down the last tumbler and steps up into Coby's  
face. Coby avoids his eyes.

SEBA (cont'd)  
You haven't heard from them.

COBY  
Are they dead?

SEBA  
Yes.

COBY  
You?

SEBA  
No, not me.

Coby startles at that, if not him...

Seba takes out his Moleskine.

SEBA (cont'd)  
Where?

COBY  
*Le un McGill*. Penthouse. Name is  
Vale. Cormick Vale.

Seba nods and writes that while still uncomfortably close.

COBY (cont'd)  
What about the others? On the roof in  
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve? You?

Seba doesn't answer. He finishes writing and carefully puts  
the Moleskine in his pocket.

SEBA  
Yes.

COBY  
(shaking)  
They didn't know.

Seba waits an uncomfortably long time. Finally...

SEBA  
Happens. Not your cross.

COBY  
Yes. It is.

Seba stands staring at him. Coby continues to look away.

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - DAY

Gwin stops at Ally's desk and sets down a laptop.

GWIN  
The bike.

ALLY  
The bike.

GWIN  
It's a Curtiss One. Handmade.  
Specialty.

Ally types that into a web page for the SAAQ (Quebec DMV).

ALLY  
There were... three sold in Toronto  
and... two sold in Montreal.

GWIN  
Recently?

ALLY

Ever. That bike costs one-hundred twenty thousand new. Neon arrows are more subtle.

GWIN

Montreal names?

ALLY

Tesco. Martine Tesco.

Gwin types searches into her laptop.

GWIN

Tesco... Fund manager, bike collector, very visible. He's sixty-seven and weighs a hundred twenty kilos. I don't think this is our man.

ALLY

Cormick Vale.

GWIN

I see an Edric Vale, executive at Neurovis Biotechnologies. Wait, Cormick is his son. Twenty-eight. A real *prince de merde*.

Gwin spins the computer to show a picture of Cormick.

ALLY

(nods)

We start with him.

Ally suddenly closes the laptop. Jacobs and Bastanabee just entered the Bullpen. Jacobs walks their direction.

JACOBS

Lagarde. Mattes. Trying to wrap up our report from the other night. You got a look at our faller, didn't you?

ALLY

Just a glance as I was heading up to the roof, why?

JACOBS

Anything worth reporting?

Ally makes a show of thinking. She turns to her computer and types into a blank doc, 'NO BIKE' The monitor is out of Jacobs' eye line but Gwin clocks it.

ALLY

Hm. Doesn't look like I noted anything. Didn't really give it more than a once over though. Any leads?

JACOBS

Dead end. We got a person fleeing the scene but no license or description.

Gwin blinks at that. Jacobs shifts his attention.

JACOBS (cont'd)

How 'bout you? Notice anything worth following up on?

GWIN

No. Honestly, that was my first homicide. I wasn't really taking note of much at that point.

JACOBS

Gotta thicken that skin. Likely not your last. Gonna put this one to bed.

He wanders off. They exchange a look.

Jacobs joins Bastanabee and sits for a moment. Bastanabee raises an eyebrow.

JACOBS (cont'd)

Yep. A problem.

Bastanabee nods.

INT. ELECTRONICA NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

The BEAT is intense. Cormick DANCES with abandon.

He hits on some girls. Rejection. He scowls into a drink.

He's drunk. He sobs. People steer clear.

CORMICK

Bets...!

He THRASHES on the dance floor. It's not a mosh-pit for anyone but him. People steer clear.

He hits on a girl who's clearly wasted. No rejection yet.

He gets her into a secluded hallway. He tries to make out with her. She weakly pushes him back.

He changes tactic and BITES her neck. It goes badly. She FIGHTS him off, SCREAMING.

At first he looks shamed, but then angry. He grabs her to bite again. He's stronger than her, but you can't be all vampire when they thrash about and hit you the whole time.

A couple of PUNKS see the commotion.

PUNK ONE (IN FRENCH)

*Hey! Get the fuck off her!*

They push him off. Again, he's meek but quickly pivots. *I'm a fucking vampire, fuck these guys!*

He comes at them, PROVOKING them. It's all egos.

PUNK TWO (IN FRENCH)

*Step back, little man. Go home to Mommy or we carve you out.*

CORMICK

You think you can carve me out? You gonna take a piece of me? Try!

Cormick THROWS punches. Punk One PULLS a knife and SHANKS him twice. Blood SPLATTERS the floor.

Cormick STUMBLES back. The Punk One looks shocked. *Fuck did I do?!* Everyone freezes.

Cormick looks down at the blood in SHOCK. Then shock turns to LAUGHTER. He looks at the punk and SNATCHES the knife.

To the horror of the others, he DRAGS the knife across his own chest! Blood flowing fast. But then...

The cut t-shirt shows a long wound knitting back up.

He LICKS the knife. The others freak out and run. He WAGS his tongue at them, loving it.

INT. QUIET BAR - NIGHT

Gwin enters. Not a lot of people but enough.

She wanders through. The bartender nods to her. She nods back and keeps going. She finds Ally in a booth in the back.

Gwin sits. Ally has line of sight to the door. A WAITRESS is there before Gwin is even settled.

WAITRESS (IN FRENCH)

*Drink?*

Ally has a beer.

GWIN (IN FRENCH)

*Just water.*

The Waitress moves off.

GWIN

No date tonight?

ALLY

Wait, you're not 'six-foot-two, sapiosexual, fluent in sarcasm'?

GWIN

(smiles)

No, I'm 'French bulldog with a fedora'. I thought you were 'has the perfect interrogation room for a date'.

ALLY

(laughs)

I do actually. It's the one on the end. You're saying that's not a great hang out?

GWIN

(laughs)

Oh no!

The Waitress drops off the water and moves off.

ALLY

(turning sour)

No, I'm 'always team player, never team member'.

GWIN

(smile falls)

Don't say that.

ALLY

It's okay. It happened so slowly I didn't even notice the boiling.

GWIN

I wanted to be a cheerleader.

Ally blinks skepticism. Gwin is *not* cheerleader material.

GWIN (cont'd)  
Honestly I just wanted to be around  
the other girls. I did everything I  
could to fit in, but, you can guess.

ALLY  
I bet you could beat them all up.

GWIN  
Yep. For sure.

Awkward lull. Both sizing each other up.

GWIN (cont'd)  
So...

ALLY  
You sure you want to lift this rock?  
Whatever crawls out, we can't put it  
back.

Gwin considers, then takes out her notebook, tears off a  
page and slides it across the table.

ALLY (cont'd)  
The kid's address. Good job.

Ally slides a phone over to Gwin.

ALLY (cont'd)  
No texts. No email. Voice only. Don't  
mix it up with your other phone.

GWIN  
Serious?

ALLY  
Yes. I don't know but, yes. I don't  
want to find out after. So it's i's  
and t's from this point on.

Gwin pockets the phone nonplussed.

ALLY (cont'd)  
You think I'm over reacting?

GWIN  
No. I guess not. I just-- Shit. I  
just thought it was all a bit suss. I  
figured I'd convince you and you'd  
take it from there.

ALLY

You did convince me. I am taking it.  
I'm just taking you with me.

GWIN

And then... what? We take it to IA?

Ally finishes her beer, tucks a ten under the empty bottle.

ALLY

Sure. Probably. Let's talk to our  
trust fund biker and we'll see.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Cormick SLAMS the door open. The place is clean, cleaner than it ever was. He crosses to a large faceted mirror art piece on the wall.

It reflects dozens of pieces of him. He admires his hardened wounds with apprehension and pride.

He launches the Skratch app and starts a stream. His online handle is TruVamp28.

He stands back and waits, shirt off, face blank, knife from the club in one hand. The Skratch 'room' slowly fills.

Text scrolls up the side. Commenters asking what the show is. Some want to know where "6AllBetsOff6" is. He watches the user count. It crosses 1000.

He raises the knife and cuts his chest across the distinct scar from the club, making an X right through the middle of a giant tattoo of a dragon on his chest.

It bleeds... then the blood crawls back into the wound. The cut 'knits' closed with a leathery texture. Some commenters are impressed. Some write 'POSER'. Others declare 'FAKE'.

While Cormick streams, Seba climbs up onto the deck in the background. Seba clocks the camera and ducks from view.

Someone on the stream comments, 'the fuck was that behind him?!' Cormick sees it just before it scrolls off the screen. He frowns in concern.

He kills the stream. He stares across the room. Nothing.

CORMICK

Coby?

Nothing.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 (bravado)  
 You back for your guys? What's left  
 of them?

He moves slowly to investigate. Knife at the ready.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 You're in for a disappointment.

Makes his way out to the deck... no one there.

Seba is wedged up in the corner of the ceiling like a spider. Just as Cormick passes underneath Seba drops!

They WRESTLE! Cormick is strong but Seba is experienced.

Cormick STABS with the knife. Seba SLAPS it from his hand like it's a toy.

Cormick RUSHES Seba to throw him off the deck! Seba turns it around and TOSSES Cormick through the plate glass windows into the penthouse.

Seba climbs past the massive shards. Cormick retreats.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 Yo, *calme-toé*, man! It was just a  
 little blood. What's the big deal?

SEBA  
 You broke the rules.

CORMICK  
 Rules? Is there an organization of  
 vampires? An order? A coven?  
 (pronounced like  
 woven)

SEBA  
 (pronounced correctly)  
 It's pronounced coven you idiot.

CORMICK  
 (still wrong)  
 There is a coven! Let me in! Make me  
 one of you!

Seba rolls his eyes and pulls out the Heart Shredder.

SEBA  
 There is no cov-- *marde*, you're a  
 waste of time.

Seba JUMPS Cormick and furniture is the casualty. Seba STABS Cormick repeatedly but never where it counts! They THRASH around the room in a knock-down, drag-out fight!

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - HALL TO THE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Ally and Gwin exit the elevator. A CRASH from inside puts them on alert. They draw guns and knock.

ALLY  
*Police de Montréal! Ouvrez la porte!*  
 Open the door!

No response. The CRASHING inside continues.

The door is locked. Gwin KICKS it over and over. Ally spots a fire extinguisher. She SMASHES the glass and grabs it.

ALLY (cont'd)  
 Move!

She SLAMS the door handle repeatedly. Finally breaking it. Gwin gives another KICK and the door FLIES open.

The extinguisher is damaged and SPEWS suppressant. Ally TOSSES it into the room. Gwin darts in.

ALLY (cont'd)  
 Wait! Shit.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Seba is over Cormick, Heart Shredder knife POISED over his chest, Cormick STRAINING to hold it back!

GWIN  
 Drop the knife!!

They ignore her. Ally takes a SHOT!

Seba is HIT! He rolls off of Cormick. Fire suppressant FILLS the room! Cormick SCRAMBLES to his feet and RUNS for the balcony! Seba LEAPS up and TACKLES him!

Cormick kicks him off and STUMBLES through the shards of the window, cutting himself and stumbling to the railing.

Seba stands and looks at the cops.

GWIN (cont'd)  
 Down! Now! *À terre! Maintenant!*

Seba turns and CHARGES Cormick! Ally and Gwin OPEN FIRE, hitting him in the back! *PAP! PAP! PAP!*

Seba tackles Cormick and takes both of them over the railing. They SLAM into the sidewalk five stories down!

GWIN (cont'd)

*Crisse!*

Ally and Gwin RUSH to the railing. Below, two bodies on the concrete. They run out the door to the stairs.

EXT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - STREET - CONTINUOUS

Cormick and Seba moan in pain. Broken limbs SNAP back into place. Cuts HEAL up. A few bystanders look on in shock.

Cormick STRUGGLES to his feet. Next to him Seba UNFOLDS into a low crouch, almost ready to go again...

Cormick panics! He BOLTS into the street--

*BAMM!!* A city bus HITS him full speed! He's DRAGGED under!

People SCREAM! The bus SCREECHES to a halt 200 feet down the road, a smear of blood in its wake.

Seba grabs the dropped Heart Shredder and struggles up. He chases after, his legs not quite working yet.

Cormick is gone. Seba approaches and finds a torn-off arm lies under a wheel. Sinuous fibers of gore grow from the torn off stump, already attempting to regrow something...

Ally and Gwin emerge from the building. Bystanders impede them. Seba grabs the severed arm and hurries away.

Ally moves towards the bus and sees the smear of blood on the ground and no sign of any bodies. People are emerging from the bus looking shell shocked.

Behind her, Gwin tries to deal with the bystanders while calling the incident in. Ally hurries back into the building.

INT. CORMICK'S PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ally searches the penthouse frantically. Gwin appears.

GWIN

What are you doing? I've called it in! Don't touch anything!

ALLY

Just to have those two Chads kick us out and paper over all this? We need to get what we can before that happens again.

GWIN

What? No! I've called it in. We can't--

Sirens approaching. Ally spots the computer. On and unlocked. She hurries to it. Gwin hesitates

ALLY

Get your phone out. The burner. Over here. Quickly.

Gwin joins her a bit confused. Ally grabs the mouse.

ALLY (cont'd)

Record the screen.

Gwin raises her phone. Ally quickly brings up files, web history, emails, Skrtch videos, chat rooms. As much as she can to briefly show to the camera. Gwin looks sick.

GWIN

This is tampering.

ALLY

We're not erasing anything. We're just saving it before gets lost in the system.

Gwin glances towards a noise from the hall.

GWIN

They're here.

ALLY

Just a few more.

Gwin pockets the phone and turns away.

GWIN

No. That's enough.

Ally spots the *Pager Interceptor* on the desk. On impulse she pockets it. Gwin freezes. *That's over the line.*

Before she can say anything, police enter, guns up. Decision time. Ally holds Gwin's eyes for a second, then turns to the police, badge held up. Gwin raises hers as well.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT

Seba crouches by a fire. He tosses the severed arm in and watches it burn. An unidentifiable mass of leathery hide, sinew, teeth, bone and scales has formed at the stump. The start of something before lack of life halted the growth.

Seba pushes the grotesque arm deeper into the flames.

INT. NEUROVIS BIOTECHNOLOGIES LAB - DAY

Medical equipment lines the room. Edric follows TECHNICIAN ONE in. Two other TECHNICIANS stand nervously to the side.

TECHNICIAN ONE

He's been here since we got in. He's locked in Hematology. He's refusing to leave until he talks to you.

EDRIC

(put out)  
I'll deal with him.

Edric waves the Technician back and knocks.

EDRIC (cont'd)

Cormick? It's me. Open the door.

After a moment the door clicks. Edric opens the door...

Dim in the room. The only light comes from the glass-door storage fridges. Edric enters cautiously.

Movement in the corner. Cormick hiding in the dark. Dozens of empty blood bags litter the floor around him.

CORMICK

I'm sorry, I didn't know.

Edric takes in the scene. Concern quickly turns to anger.

EDRIC

Cormick, you feckless brat. Do you not realize how bad the penthouse situation is? You can't just act like that didn't happen. You have to--

He double takes the blood bags.

EDRIC (cont'd)

Is this the vampire thing? Dammit, this is my business! You don't just get to have this swept away!

He glances back to see if any technicians are in ear shot.

CORMICK

*This can't be swept away.*

He stands into the light: He's monstrous. A large percentage of his skin was damaged by the bus. It didn't grow back naturally: Tough leather. Chitinous shell. His left arm ends in a demonic, three fingered claw. His face gnarled.

EDRIC

What-- what is this?!

CORMICK

A bus. I was dragged. It took off a lot of skin. Broke a lot of bones. It... It ripped off my arm.

EDRIC

When?!

CORMICK

Last night. This morning. Five or six hours before dawn. I couldn't go home. That's where it happened. I had to go somewhere safe. This was all I could think of. I knew I would heal, but I didn't know it would be... like this.

He looks numbly at his strange arm.

EDRIC

The blood. It was your blood in the knife.

CORMICK

Yes, I told you it was.

Edric isn't listening, he's thinking. He turns on a computer terminal and pulls up files.

EDRIC

There was some sort of parasitic virus attached to red blood cells.

He plays a video. It looks like spiders riding each cell.

EDRIC (cont'd)

We couldn't determine much before they all died. They think it was due to exposure to UV.

CORMICK

(nods)

The sun. I can't go out into the sun.

EDRIC

This is why you keep saying you're a vampire, because of this thing in your blood? This thing... that's keeping you alive?

Cormick nods dejectedly.

EDRIC (cont'd)

(ecstatic)

This is amazing. Do you realize the potential for this? A treatment for large area burn victims for start.

(eyes Cormick's arm)

Limb loss regeneration? The military will pay through the nose! Does it repair other damage? Infection? It must. Viruses? Cancer? My God. What if it cures cancer?

CORMICK

It didn't cure Bets' cancer.

EDRIC

(dismissive)

She must've had a negative immune response. Perhaps pre-dosing with the patient's stem cell to suppress immune reactions. Or what if it's a blood type compatibility? Can we transplant the organism to the patient's own blood first?

CORMICK

But what about me?

EDRIC

Yes, we need to get you into a lab. We need lots of samples. You'll have to recall all you know about this.

(out the door)

Tremblay! Get Bédard and Caron from the front. Graves, have Chen prepare a lab for long term stay. No windows. One of the inner labs. Level five security.

Technician One leans into the room.

EDRIC (cont'd)  
Schedule the tests at night so the  
subject can be moved safely between--

CORMICK  
What are you doing? I'm not some  
fucking test subject!

EDRIC  
You are now. All your life has been a  
waste. Now it finally has value.

A pair of security GUARDS appear.

EDRIC (cont'd)  
Restrain him.

They are shocked at Cormick's appearance but move to subdue  
him. But that claw is now a *weapon!*

Cormick LASHES out and SLASHES Guard One. The Guard STUMBLES  
back in surprise!

Cormick grabs Guard Two and SMASHES him into a fridge!  
Broken shards of glass CUT into his face and neck!

Guard One pulls a taser! BZZZT! It has no effect through his  
armored skin! Cormick THRUSTS his claw into the Guard's  
stomach and LIFTS him off the ground! Then THROWS him away!

Edric and the Technicians flee. But the security doors are  
locked! They fumble for key cards...

Cormick STALKS them! He rips into the Technicians with his  
claw over and over. Blood fountains across the room.

Edric cowers in shock but remains defiant.

CORMICK  
I've always been a test subject to  
you, haven't I? A failed test  
subject. Never your son--

He pushes all emotion down.

EDRIC  
Cormick... I-I'm sorry...

Too little, too late. Cormick raises his claw but hesitates.

CORMICK  
(hardens)  
Yeah, 'sorry' runs in the family.

He SLASHES his father's neck and drinks.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Fingers type on a pager like the one Seba has. A street address, a description, a name: *ALISON LAGARDE*

Jacobs finishes thumb typing just as Bastanabee approaches with a couple of beers. He clocks the pager as Jacobs sets it down. They exchange a look, Bastanabee unsettled. Jacobs resolute. *It's done.*

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NAVE - NIGHT

A handful of homeless people huddle for warmth by a small fire off in the corner.

SEBA (V.O.)

There was a period, around a thousand years ago, that people considered the time of miracles.

Seba sits in the pews, holding out against the hunger. Again. Twitching, smoking, scribing in his Moleskine.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)

Or time of demons depending on who was the focus of attention. Saints and relics. Witches and possessions. That sort of thing.

Once again, his pager buzzes his relief. He checks it, then hesitates, contemplating. Then stood and crossed himself.

As he leaves he notices the homeless people have fallen asleep. He crosses to them and stands over them ominously...

Then he puts out their fire with his foot. He pulls the blanket of one further up to keep him warm.

EXT. ALLY'S APARTMENT - STREET - NIGHT

Ally returns home. The street is uncomfortably empty.

SEBA (V.O.)

There was a woman in Auvergne who could do miraculous things.

She walks to her apartment unaware that Seba is stalking her. He drops his cigarette and steps on it.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Climb hundred-foot walls like a spider. Read the thoughts of the weak, know their pasts, predict their futures, dominate their minds.

She turns and peers down the street. No one there.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Speak any language. Recall any detail. She could even make objects disappear. *Witchcraft*.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Ally climbs to her apartment. The shadow of a figure passes the window on the stairwell. She doesn't see.

SEBA (V.O.)  
 But you know Teller, of Penn and Teller, once said, 'Sometimes magic is just someone spending more time on something than anyone else might reasonably expect.'

She enters her apartment. Seba descends the stairs from the roof. He lurks in the shadows. Her door closes.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 Hundreds of years watching people and learning, taking chances with no fear of injury or death is more than anyone might reasonably expect.

He approaches and rests a hand on the door. Can he sense inside? He turns away.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
 They burned her at the stake. Twice actually. And still the heart needed to be chopped up.

INT. ALLY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Ally puts things away, preparing dinner.

SEBA (V.O.)  
 That was the first time humanity narrowly avoided extinction from the parasites.

Ally spins brandishing her gun. She was *not* unaware.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Before that, I don't know. I wasn't  
around.

Seba is in the apartment, sitting casually in her arm chair,  
rolling a cigarette. He's not threatening at all, but  
perhaps a little twitchy...

SEBA  
Your friend can join us.

A beat. Gwin emerges from a coat closet. Gun trained on him.

GWIN  
You have the right to retain and  
instruct counsel without delay. You  
have the right to remain silent--

SEBA  
You intercepted the page. Didn't you?

GWIN  
We don't discuss active  
investigations.

ALLY  
Where's Cormick?

Gwin stares daggers: '*What the fuck?*'

ALLY (cont'd)  
You read him his rights and freedoms.  
(to Seba)  
You understand the charter?

He waves it off. He doesn't care.

SEBA  
You found something in his penthouse.  
Ah. He was getting the messages. Yes?

She points at the *Pager Interceptor*.

ALLY  
Pages from the police? Pages naming a  
target? But not for Cormick. He was  
intercepting them. So... you?

Gwin narrows her eyes and tightens her grip on the gun.

SEBA  
(smiles)  
A more interesting question is why  
they picked you as a target.

ALLY

Can you name them? The ones that sent the pages?

His twitches are more frequent. His fingertips look like gnarled leather. The cigarette isn't coming together. He crumples the remains, stuffs them in his pocket.

SEBA

Not my problem.

He stands. They re-train their guns on him.

GWIN

Watch it. You're not going anywhere.

ALLY

Are you a vampire?

Gwin shoots Ally a look. *What the hell?* He hesitates, a smile playing on his lips.

SEBA

Do you think I'm a vampire?

GWIN

No.

ALLY

Maybe.

He raises an eyebrow. Ally gives Gwin dagger eyes.

ALLY (cont'd)

Cormick thought so. He said as much online. Claimed you gave him vampire blood to cure his sick girlfriend and make them both immortal. Not sure how all that played out. No one has seen her in a week.

He stares at her silently, his demeanor more serious. Gwin picks up on the good-cop bad-cop angle.

GWIN

I'm sure you didn't give him anything like that. It sounds like emo cosplay when you hear it out loud.

ALLY

Except... you both fell five stories. To concrete. And somehow you both got up. *And* ran away. Also, there's Cormick's macho Skratsh video.

GWIN

Oh, yeah. There is that video.

SEBA

Video.

ALLY

The stream where he cuts himself and appears to heal back up.

GWIN

Probably fake. But the video also caught you climbing onto his balcony.

Seba looks between them, settles on Gwin.

SEBA

Are you a good person?

She adjusts her grip on the gun.

GWIN

Yes.

He digests that then turns to Ally.

SEBA

You? Are you a good person?

She holds his stare for a moment before answering.

ALLY

I try.

He suppresses a full body convulsion, swallows hard. Nods.

SEBA

Cormick is succumbing to Draconis.

ALLY

Draconis?

SEBA

It's what happens if we are not careful. And Cormick is very not careful. It makes him a serious problem, for everyone. If you catch up with him, kill him. Fast as you can. Specifically, destroy the heart. No stupid wooden stake nonsense. Scrape it out, put it in a blender, whatever. Burn the body for good measure. Just. Be. Sure.

They're shocked. He turns towards a window.

SEBA (cont'd)  
I'm hungry so I'm going to leave now.  
Please don't make this difficult.

GWIN  
I don't think so.

Gwin moves to grab him. He effortlessly takes away her gun and FLIPS her on her ass before she can react.

BAM! BAM! Ally SHOOTs him twice in the chest. No reaction. He CROSSES the room in a flash and YANKS away her gun.

Gwin is back up as he engages Ally. BLOCK. PUNCH. SWEEP. He easily deals with both of them.

In short order they are both on the ground.

They look up stunned. He pokes at his wounds. They have already stopped bleeding. He sighs.

SEBA  
I asked you not to make this  
difficult.

He climbs out the window.

They rush to the window and find him free climbing crazy fast to the roof!

Ally grabs her gun off the ground and runs out the door. Gwin climbs out the window after him.

Ally takes the steps three at a time to the roof.

EXT. ALLY'S APARTMENT - SIDE AND ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Ally BURSTS onto the roof gun ready.

Seba is right there. He grabs her gun and open palms her in the sternum. she slams back against the door.

She raises her hands in surrender.

ALLY  
Okay! Okay!

He gives her a look and turns away.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Just tell me why? What is happening  
to Cormick? Convince me.

He hesitates.

SEBA

Imagine an infection that killed nine out of ten, but the tenth became an unkillable murderer and vector for more infections. How long before it's a pandemic that threatens human existence?

ALLY

So, tell us what it is. Help us fight it. There are experts and teams--

SEBA

Unkillable murderer. How long before someone weaponizes it?

She stops. He tosses her gun at his feet and walks off. When he reaches the next roof, he jumps down and disappears.

Ally catches her breath, considering.

GWIN (O.C.)

(distant)

Help...?

She hurries to the lip and look down.

Gwin is frozen on the side of the building.

ALLY

What the hell are you doing?

ALLY (cont'd)

Attempted pursuit of suspect. Can you open this window, maybe?

Gwin sulks around next to Ally's desk, side-eyeing Jacobs and Bastanabee. They are having a laugh across the bullpen with Jacques. Good old boys. Ally keeps an eye on her.

Gwin has had enough. She beelines for them. Ally intercepts.

ALLY (cont'd)

Okay, nope. Come with me.

INT. PDQ 14 - KITCHEN - DAY

Ally makes her coffee.

ALLY

Those fuckers set you up.

GWIN

You can't just confront them. We have to take this carefully.

GWIN (cont'd)

How--

Jacques enters. They shut up. He senses the silence.

JACQUES

Ladies.

ALLY

Jacques.

He puts a dirty mug in the sink and awkwardly leaves.

GWIN

How do I know those Chads aren't going to take a shot at me?

ALLY

We don't. But they are unlikely to try the same thing twice. And it doesn't look like our mysterious guest would be inclined to follow through any ore than he did last night.

Gwin held the coffee, waiting for it and her to cool.

GWIN

I'm sorry, ma'am. I got out of line.

ALLY

No 'ma'am'. You're anger is justified.

GWIN

We need to take this to IA then, right?

Ally doesn't respond.

GWIN (cont'd)

We agreed. What is it?

ALLY

I don't trust Rousseau. I've seen him with the— What'd you call them? The Chads.

GWIN  
I've seen Jacques with them and he  
doesn't seem bad.

Again no answer.

GWIN (cont'd)  
Ally, come on. We have to trust the  
system at some point, otherwise what  
are we even doing here?

ALLY  
Okay. We'll bring it to IA.

INT. PDQ 14 - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Ally leans on the conference table. Paperwork arrayed in front of her. *Pager Interceptor* front and center. Across from her is an Internal Affairs officer, MICHAEL (40's, pencil pusher) sitting next to the imposing STATION COMMANDER. Gwin stands back, letting Ally handle it.

Ally points at a printed log of messages.

ALLY  
The pages go back several months,  
but, as you can see, police reports  
indicate this has gone on much  
longer. And most recently, sir, they  
sent my name and address to this hit  
man.

MICHAEL  
By pager.

ALLY  
Yes.

MICHAEL  
Which you know because of that page  
interceptor.

ALLY  
Yes.

MICHAEL  
A page interceptor you two took from  
a scene without logging it into  
evidence control.

Gwin shoots a worried look to Ally.

ALLY  
I don't think that's relevant here--

MICHAEL  
Which you used to monitor private  
communications without a warrant.

She stops talking.

MICHAEL (cont'd)  
Did this killer attack you? Pursue  
you? Did you see them?

ALLY  
(hesitates)  
No.

Gwin stared holes into the back of Ally's head.

MICHAEL  
No. So how do you know that these  
pages are going to a killer? How do  
you know it's Jacobs and Bastanabee  
that are sending them? How do you  
know you were an actual target?

GWIN  
(floored)  
Why are you turning this back on her?  
We brought you clear evidence--

MICHAEL  
Some of these reports have Lagarde's  
on them. Several suspiciously timed  
ones based on her attendance records.

ALLY  
Gwin, you really didn't do much here.  
You should just stay out of this.

Michael glanced to the Station Commander. A silent exchange.

MICHAEL  
You should know, you both are already  
under administrative review.

Ally snapped back to him.

GWIN  
What? On whose complaint? Those two  
Chads--?

MICHAEL

I can't divulge that information. But I do know that you both should probably stop talking. Considering the mishandling of evidence--

ALLY

That's on me. Don't hold her responsible for that.

He stops and stares at them both in turn.

MICHAEL

Alright, given *your* mishandling of evidence, I'm placing you on administrative leave during review. It will be paid leave, but I have to do a proper investigation into the allegations against you--

GWIN

Just her?

ALLY

Gwin...

MICHAEL

And Jacobs and Bastanabee. I am obligated to open inquiries based upon officer complaints.

GWIN

Really? Are they being put on leave?

MICHAEL

No.

GWIN

Why not?

The Station Commander finally chimes in.

STATION COMMANDER

Officer Mattes. You have a good record but you are dangerously associated with this situation. Consider this a reprimand. Focus on your beat and keep your nose clean, and we won't have to speak again. Clear?

Ally gives her a look. *Shut up.*

GWIN

Yes, sir.

He turns on Ally.

STATION COMMANDER

You're a good detective, but I'm not going to pick sides here. Take your licks and let the process play out.

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - LATER

Gwin stomps away from the conference room. Ally follows. Michael takes the evidence and heads to his office.

GWIN

Why did you do that? Why did you take all the heat?

ALLY

Because we just got our asses handed to us. I'm senior enough to survive suspension. You would've been sacked.

GWIN

Not if you'd been straight! Not if you'd told them everything! Why did you lie? You could have told him about the attack! I'm sure the cameras in your building caught him coming or going! Why--?

ALLY

Because you can't just trust everyone to see things right. They won't. You play the gray or you lose to the ones that do. And it's not even a level field for us! You know that!

Gwin steams but doesn't answer.

ALLY (cont'd)

I don't know how much more we can do here.

GWIN

I'm not giving up.

ALLY

I'm not asking you to. I'm asking you to give it a minute and not do anything till we can find a new angle. Okay?

No answer.

ALLY (cont'd)

Okay?

Ally gives her a look. Gwin finally nods. Ally walks away.

Gwin stands with her arms crossed. She notices Jacobs across the room. Sipping coffee. Chatting with BAD COPS ONE, TWO and THREE.

He meets her eyes and raises his coffee cup in mock 'hello' with a shit-eating grin. She storms off.

Bastanabee enters and catches his eye.

JACOBS  
'Scuse me, gentlemen.

Jacobs heads for his desk. Bastanabee intercepts.

BASTANABEE  
(quietly)  
Got it.

Jacobs sits. Bastanabee hands him a Post-It note. Jacobs types 'ALAGARDE' as the user name and types in the password on the Post-It. They are in Ally's account.

Emails. Searches. Files. Jacobs opens a folder. Pictures: Rooftop blood splatters. Cormick's bike from a security camera. The bike from promo pages. Bastanabee points.

BASTANABEE (cont'd)  
There.

Details about Cormick, his address, his father, etc.

JACOBS  
We need to scrub this.

BASTANABEE  
IT will notice.

JACOBS  
No, I mean scrub *this*. We aimed him at Ally. He didn't do it. No 'all clear' text back. No finder's fee hit the accounts. Nothing. He knew she wasn't a legit target. Now we've blown the connection.

BASTANABEE  
So? We play it cool. It'll fade.

JACOBS  
No, this guy, this... Cormick? He can burn us to the ground. Did he talk to her? We now know who he is.

(MORE)

JACOBS (cont'd)  
Does he know who we are? I say we  
move before he does.

BASTANABEE  
Move?

Jacobs doesn't respond. Bastanabee gets it.

BASTANABEE (cont'd)  
Whoa, how do we even know this is the  
guy? How old is he? Late twenties?  
This is just a kid. *Un des nôtres*  
have been calling in hits for two,  
three decades. Maybe more. No way  
this kid is *Le Videur*.

JACOBS  
It's not the same *Le Videur*. Gino and  
Ferrad passed him to us. Some old  
sicko just passed it to this kid same  
same. You really want to debate this?

Bastanabee backs off but doesn't look fully on board.

INT. NICE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Ally sits alone. A glass of red wine untouched on the table.  
She stares at it, defeated.

Someone takes the seat opposite her: Seba. She tenses,  
watching. He signals for a WAITER. She tries to read him.

ALLY  
I usually know the name of my date  
*before we sit down.*

No response. The Waiter offers a menu. Seba waves it away.

SEBA  
(points at her wine)  
*Un verre de la même chose qu'elle. Et  
la burrata.*

WAITER  
*Très bien, monsieur.*

The Waiter moves off.

ALLY  
'The burrata'?

SEBA  
It's very good.

She raises an eyebrow. *Not her point.*

SEBA (cont'd)  
Still need to eat. Blood alone  
doesn't sustain a body.

ALLY  
So... an appetizer. And then...

SEBA  
Not tonight. Though I will have to  
figure something out soon. Seems you  
closed that particular restaurant  
just before they set you aside.

The Waiter returns with his wine.

ALLY  
I'm curious. The holes. Not your  
teeth I assume?

He smiles, displaying a distinct lack of fangs.

SEBA  
It is far more difficult to bite  
through human skin than people  
imagine. Not to mention how messy it  
can be.

ALLY  
So some sort of fork? Not a salad  
fork I assume. So Jacobs and  
Bastanabee offer you up a meal and  
you get your utensils ready?

Seba swirls and sniffs the wine, non-committal.

ALLY (cont'd)  
I'm right though, aren't I? Jacobs  
and Bastanabee. They're your guys.

SEBA  
(shrugs)  
I had an understanding with them, and  
others before them. Throw me the  
rotten ones the system can't pin  
down, the ones that deserve justice  
but never face it, and I will make  
donations to their 'particular  
causes'.

ALLY

And you think they only sent you murderers deserving of death?

SEBA

Of course not. But they weren't innocents either. How selective would picking them randomly off the street be? It was flawed but worked for... for a very long time.

ALLY

How long?

SEBA

A century, give or take.

ALLY

*Crisse!* That's thousands. Tens of thousands-- How old are you?

He sizes her up.

SEBA

Seven hundred years or so. I don't remember exactly.

ALLY

Murdering has been good for you. You don't look a day over five hundred.

SEBA

(steams)

Do you know what I was before? I was a *chevalier*, a knight, from Auvergne. Sworn to defend the weak and uphold justice. Then every fortnight for seven hundred years, when the pain became unbearable, I killed just to keep existing. I pay for every past sin by committing fresh ones--

He cuts himself off and calms.

ALLY

So... why not just put yourself out of your misery?

He grins bitterly and shakes his head.

SEBA

I don't get such an easy out.

She waits for more. He sips his wine, silent.

ALLY  
You are very lonely.

He smiles at that.

SEBA  
*Toi aussi.*  
(subtitled: As are  
you.)

*That's not comfortable.*

ALLY  
Mine isn't by choice.

SEBA  
Isn't it?

Now she's the one not responding.

SEBA (cont'd)  
What do you want?

ALLY  
I want justice.

He snorts derision.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Fine. I want to... be a, I guess a  
better person--

SEBA  
Acceptance. You want acceptance.

*That's even more uncomfortable.*

ALLY  
What do you want?

SEBA  
I want to kill Cormick.

ALLY  
Not acceptance?

SEBA  
There is no acceptance for me. Only  
responsibility.

The Waiter sets a plate between them.

WAITER

*Burrata aux tomates et menthe  
fraîche, sur baguette, nappée d'un  
demi-glace balsamique. Bon Appétit.*

The Waiter leaves. Seba lifts his fork and takes a bite as he considers her.

SEBA

Let this go. You're a good detective from what I've heard. Wait out your suspension and acceptance will come. As for your questionable co-workers...

He stands to leave.

SEBA (cont'd)

Questionable people tend to do more questionable things. *Bonsoir*, Alison Lagarde.

ALLY

*Bonsoir...?*

A *question*. He hesitates and takes the measure of her.

SEBA

Sebastian Étienne de Clermont.  
(a beat)  
Seba to my friends.

A tight smile. A nod in parting. He walks out the door.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

A wall with the faint outlines of missing picture frames. In their place is a paper with a generic human outline on it. On it is written a name: 'Sebastian Étienne de Clermont'

Ally and Gwin sit in folding chairs across from it, staring.

GWIN

Ordered cheese, took one bite, and left?

ALLY

Burrata. Yes. And a little wine.

GWIN

Did he pay for it?

ALLY  
Oh, yes. Comped the entire meal. Cash  
apparently. They seemed to know him.

GWIN  
(sly grin)  
Fucking vampires, right?

ALLY  
(sighs)  
I don't know... Maybe. He certainly  
thinks so. But not like you think. He  
was wearing a cross for God's sake.

GWIN  
He's pretty sexy, though, so that  
part checks out.

Ally gave her an amused push, *get outta here*.

GWIN (cont'd)  
So... does this count?

ALLY  
Count?

GWIN  
As a new angle?

ALLY  
(sighs)  
Yeah. It counts.

MONTAGE

- Ally searches databases for 'Sebastian Étienne de  
Clermont', crossing off each source as they turn up nothing.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Still nothing in any registry. That  
name just doesn't have a record.

Gwin is at a laptop at the dining table.

GWIN  
Are you sure it's real?

ALLY  
Feels like it is. But if it's seven  
hundred years old he probably uses  
modern aliases. What have you got?

GWIN  
Auvergne, France is very pretty.

Ally grunts understanding.

- They eat delivery and review notes.
- Photos of Jacobs and Bastanabee are added to the wall with their names. Then a blurry printout of Cormick. Soon more notes, photos, printouts, news articles. It doesn't have the red string, but this is a murder board.
- One is asleep while the other taps at a keyboard.
- Ally hovers over a dozen case files spread out on the floor. She picks one up and skims it.

ALLY

'Triage?' Not the word I would use.

Gwin pins an article about a church receiving money from an unknown source to the wall.

GWIN

Context?

ALLY

Almost all of these have the same Initial Observation note: 'Triage on scene.' I mean, if it's an emergency situation, sure. But a cold homicide?

Gwin joins her and picks up one of the reports.

GWIN

'Triage.' 'Tag.' 'Transfer.' Transfer to whom?

ALLY

Presumably *l'identité judiciaire*.

They check. Page after page, some variation of that. No department mentioned.

ALLY (cont'd)

There's never any follow up. This is something. But only if we can connect it to J & B.

- Gwin checks her phone. Her face goes white.

GWIN

Ally, he has another video...

INT. NEUROVIS BIOTECHNOLOGIES LAB - NIGHT (STREAMING VIDEO)

A Skratch stream goes live. A shot of the lab. Looks like it's been through a storm. Lights flicker ominously. Symbols painted in blood darken the white surfaces.

The bodies of Edric, the Technicians and the Guards have been positioned like macabre supplicants. The stream is under Cormick's username and the room fills quickly. The comments full of people LAUGHING and SKEPTICAL.

Cormick steps into frame. He stands blankly for a moment. The room goes nuts. The numbers are in the tens of thousands. The comments all over the map.

Finally he looks around as if considering his surroundings in new light.

CORMICK

The change doesn't happen at once.  
But the moment it begins is sudden  
and instant and crushes you like a  
brick house.

He looks at his claw arm.

CORMICK (cont'd)

There is still pain. A lot of pain.  
And there is a cost. But it's good.  
It's good, because you know it's not  
bullshit. It is a deal with a price  
to be paid. I paid that price  
willingly.

He glances to his father's body in the background.

CORMICK (cont'd)

And there is a test. You don't choose  
the blood. The blood chooses you. It  
chooses you or you die. Bets, she--  
Fuck, Bets...

He tears up. After a moment he pushes all that down.

CORMICK (cont'd)

There are no sure things. The options  
are binary: Death... or unbounded-  
life. Nothing, or everything. Rot, or  
Übermensch. I know what I am.

He straightens.

CORMICK (cont'd)

There is a... coven.

(MORE)

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 (correct  
 pronunciation)  
 For... I don't know how long, they  
 have controlled. They have guarded  
 the gates of access. They alone  
 decided life and death. They want to  
 get rid of me.

His clawed hand gestures to himself.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 No. I do not serve. Not anymore. I am  
 the first of this new generation, but  
 I won't be the last. Together we will  
 erase them. This will be my legacy.  
 DM me if you want the blood.

He stands a moment, then kills the stream.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

A Thrall holds an iPad for Sheng Nu as she watches the  
 Skratch stream. She is furious.

SHENG NU  
 He thinks we're a fucking coven.  
 Fine, we'll try the code on him. Tell  
 Seba I'm taking the reins.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gwin puts on her jacket over her uniform and straps on her  
 belt with her gun and other tools.

GWIN  
 We should be there.

Ally doesn't move.

ALLY  
 I can't. I need to keep my head down.

Gwin looks unsure.

ALLY (cont'd)  
 Go. Your uniform is camouflage. Use  
 it. I'll keep digging on my end.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

- Ally watches Cormick's Skratch video on loop.

She combs through the comments, cross checking usernames on a police server crawler. Most of them are teenagers and nobodies. But then one stands out.

GX7HW1083V10, the message: *'Your arm regrew in six hours. We call it Draconis. DM to join The Coven and learn everything.'*

INT. EDRIC'S OFF-BOOKS CONDO - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

- Cormick looks at the same message. He chews on it. *Is it legit?* He decides, hits 'Message' and starts typing.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

- Ally Googles 'Draconis' and gets a bunch of star constellations and pictures of fantasy dragons.

ALLY

Not helpful.

INT. NEUROVIS BIOTECHNOLOGIES LAB - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

- Police swarm the place. Bodies are covered. Multiple photographers document it.

- Employees sit for interviews, wracked with tears. News media is all over, trying to get in, get pictures.

- Gwin enters the grim scene, looks around. She knows more than anyone what this is.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Cormick rides his bike. He ignores stop lights and other rules of the road. He's invincible.

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Bastanabee hurries up to Jacobs. He holds up his phone. On it, stills from traffic cameras of Cormick on his bike.

BASTANABEE

*Ville de Montréal* has a hit on the bike. MAPID-M reports an eighty percent chance of match across twelve cameras.

JACOBS

That's him.

INTERCUT

- Ally checks the user name. Existed for less than 24 hours.

ALLY

Burner account.

The trace leads to a city server hub. The final IP is dynamic and unreliable. But the hub is in the wealthiest area of town.

- Gwin peers down at the empty blood bags. After a moment she waves forensics forward and directs them.

- Cormick leaves an upscale neighborhood. The road winds up a forested hill in the middle of the city: Mount Royal.

The road ends at the gates to Sheng Nu's compound.

- Jacobs is walking and talking on the phone, a smile forced on so they could hear it in his voice.

JACOBS

...just a little TikTok video with fireworks. Yes, have the paperwork right here, it totally slipped my mind. I swear, I'll have it to you first thing. And I've got a Tim Horton's gift card here with a little something on it for your trouble. Yes, any calls for Rue des Cèdres Noirs. Thanks, Legrite. You're a gem.

He hangs up just as he enters the police armory. Automatics. Shotguns. Ammo. Flash bangs.

Bastanabee is there with Bad Cops One, Two and Three. They look to him and he nods. It's a go.

- Ally tries to access the burner account: encrypted.

ALLY

Okay, what about Emo-boy.

Cormick's account is open, but requires authorization. Ally rifles through a stack of papers. Digs one out.

ALLY (cont'd)

How about... 'Illegal Cheese Import'.

An old warrant. She enters the number into a form for access to the server as a member of Law Enforcement. Now she waits.

- A Sargent walks on the scene and orders Gwin to step away. She tries to offer information but is waved off. She shuts up and retreats.

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE

Cormick parks the bike. The gate rolls open...

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - PREPPING ROOM - NIGHT

Cormick is led into the compound. Flames light the way. He's suspicious. The Thralls THRUM a low, hypnotic CHANT. No one speaks to him. No one meets his eyes.

They take his jacket. Then his clothes. Piece by piece. They have no particular reaction to his hard skin or clawed arm.

His wariness softens, realizing he's being pampered. *Like a prince.* They dress him in robes and jewels. *I have arrived.*

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - LATER

They guide him to an ornate throne room. Vaguely Chinese in reds, golds, and blacks. Gas burners all around, including in a raised fire pit in the center. Half a dozen Thralls in monkish robes, CHANTING.

Sheng Nu sits on an ornate chair across the fire. A figure brandishing a partizan (spear-like weapon) stops behind him in the entry between two burning braziers.

The figure lowers the partizan to horizontal, a 'bar' across the door. The long blade resting in the flames of a brazier.

SHENG NU

You stand in a room more than ten  
centuries old. It was carried half  
way around the world, board by board,  
stone by stone, and rebuilt here.

Cormick steps up onto a platform in the center with the fire pit. The thralls all around bow their heads.

SHENG NU (cont'd)

Every step you took to reach this  
chamber was taken one million times  
over by those who came before you.  
They, like you, were special.

(MORE)

SHENG NU (cont'd)

Their blood, your blood, was not  
consumed. Their blood, your blood,  
survived. Their blood, your blood,  
imprisons Draconis.

He grins like a kid on Christmas morning. *Finally, he is given his due.* He raises his arms out: *exalt in me.*

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - CONTINUOUS

Outside, the metal of the gates bends open. An truck strains, pulling a cable hooked to the bars till the gap is wide enough for a man.

Jacobs and Bastanabee and the two other cops stroll towards the damaged gate. Armed and armored for violence.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Sheng Nu rises and steps forward.

SHENG NU

We are not monsters. We are guardians. Predators who thin the herd when necessary, but also protect it from each other. You stand on the knife's honed edge. A knife that lays bare the existential heart of the decisions we must eternally face. Alone we are nothing but the casual hand of chaos. Sworn we are woven into the invisible fabric of history, knights of balance and order.

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - YARD - CONTINUOUS

The cops infiltrate the compound. They scurry to cover, check for threats, move inwards. They encounter no one.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Sheng Nu holds Cormick's gaze across the fire.

SHENG NU

Speak the code and be accepted.

She lifts a double sided spike and rests the points between her palms. Cormick finds a similar knife lying before him.

He picks it up. Behind him the one with the partizan steps forward silently, shifting the blade forward into a lax ready position. The blade is glowing red hot.

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
*I keep the silence. I feed with  
 discipline. I guard the blood. I do  
 not breed. I do not burn the veil. If  
 I fail, take my heart.*

She brings her hands together, piercing both palms. Blood drips into the fire between them. She meets Cormick's eyes.

The cops creep down the hall towards the ceremony chamber...

The figure behind Cormick lifts the partizan overhead...

Sheng Nu waits with held breath...

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
 Speak the code and be accepted.

Cormick stares into the fire. Finally...

CORMICK  
 No.

Sheng Nu lets out her held breath, disappointed.

CORMICK (cont'd)  
 No. I'm immortal. Why should I swear  
 to anyone! Now that I'm finally--

The figure with the partizan draws back and THRUSTS it at Cormick's back!

At that exact moment, Bastanabee enters the room and FIRES his shotgun! The figure is HIT in the shoulder!

They stumble and the partizan GLANCES of Cormick leaving a BURNT GASH!

The figure FALLS! The hood DROPS: *it's Seba!* He SPRAWLS on the ground! The partizan dropped!

Cormick STUMBLES in agony, but not impaired. His eyes dart around, trying to understand...

The Thralls panic! The Cops BLAST away at them! BAM! BAM! BAM! Picking them off one by one!

Sheng Nu YANKS the double spike from her palms and LEAPS the fire pit!

Bad Cop One FIRES and misses! A chunk of pedestal blasted away! The fire sputters out, gas leaking from the damage.

A massive fight ensues! The Thralls get in the way and then get SHOT! Each one agony for Sheng Nu.

Seba faces off against the Bad Cop two and Three. His left arm hangs useless. He manages to recover the partizan with his good hand and SWING low! Bad Cop Two falls, hamstrung!

He throws the weapon into the air and flips it to aim down as Bad Cop Two slides towards him. He stands and grabs it, then jams it down into the cop's exposed back!

BLAM! Bad Cop Three FIRES, missing Seba but SPLINTERING the handle of the partizan! Seba THROWS the fractured handle at Bastanabee to distract him then charges!

Sheng Nu SLIDES under Bad Cop One's gunfire and KICKS his legs out from under him! He reaches for his sidearm but she SLAPS it away.

She stabs the spike into his left side! It parts the armor. He GRUNTS in pain. PUNCHES her. She FLIPS the spike and STABS him on the right. He PUNCHES her again.

Bastanabee tries to BLAST Cormick with his shotgun but most of the shots BOUNCE off the armored skin. Cormick closes in.

Bastanabee BEATS him with the butt of the weapon. He would have the upper hand if Cormick wasn't half monster.

Bastanabee drives Cormick back towards the fire pit. They struggle for control of the shotgun, the barrel inching closer and closer to Cormick's face...

Seba YANKS away Bad Cop Three's weapon! The cop pulls a knife. He slashes Seba across the chest! Again. Then again.

Seba gets in hits, but he still only has one hand and the body armor mutes the blows. It's not going well for him.

Bad Cop One slows from his wounds. Sheng Nu STABS to the left. Another to the RIGHT. Again LEFT. RIGHT. LEFT. RIGHT. LEFT.

Bad Cop One COLLAPSES. Sheng Nu turns to aid Seba.

She KICKS Bad Cop Three in the knee! He DROPS part way but SLASHES her thigh!

The distraction is enough for Seba to GRAB his helmet lip and jump past him, YANKING his head back!

Sheng Nu flips the spike to Seba and Seba JAMS it into Bad Cop Three's exposed neck! Blood FOUNTAINS!

Seba lands and looks to Bastanabee and Cormick. They fight closer and closer to the snuffed out fire.

Bastanabee KNOCKS Cormick back and swings the barrel of his shotgun around under Cormick's chin...

Seba sees the exposed gas pipe and yells...

Cormick pushes the shotgun aside... Bastanabee pulls the trigger...

KABOOM!!! The gas IGNITES! An EXPLOSION rocks the chamber!

The floor and wall ERUPT as the pipes EXPLODE!

Everyone is caught in the blast! One wall of the building EXPLODES out!

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - CONTINUOUS

Jacobs jumps up from leaning on the Volvo as the blast and fireball erupt from the back of the compound. Something has gone very wrong.

SMASH CUT:

EXT. MEDIEVAL FRENCH VILLAGE - DAY/NIGHT (FLASHBACK/MONTAGE)

- The distant past. Dreamlike, slow-motion, dirty, harsh.

French Chevaliers (Knights) on armored horses ride into a medieval village. The land racked by war. Smoke plumes in the distance. Mud caked soldiers all around.

A rider removes his blood splattered helmet: Sebastian. A priest stands outside a church holding a reliquary aloft. Seba lowers his eyes and crosses himself.

- Night and an enchantingly beautiful woman catches Seba's eye: YSORIA (exotic 30-50). She looks out of place, confident and unafraid of the soldiers. Her dress is simple but projects hidden wealth and power. Her eyes intense. Her smile enigmatic. Villagers avoid her and cross themselves.

SEBA (V.O.)

Ysoria.

- Day. Battle. Extreme slow-motion moment in time. Seba is a landslide TEARING through untrained foot soldiers.

YSORIA (V.O.)

Sebastian.

- Night. He is in a church praying as a squire helps remove his armor. A priest attends wounded about the nave.

Ysoria dismisses the squire. She holds Seba's eyes as she works the straps. He is stoic. She is uncomfortably close.

- Day. Battle. Extreme slow-motion moment in time. Seba roars as a halberd PIERCES his armor!

- Night. He is wounded, shaking from the pain. He likely won't live out the night. Ysoria is there. He looks to her, hungry for her. He doesn't want to die not knowing her.

She knows and leans close. He pulls her in for a painful kiss. But then she is pulling his clothes away, licking his wound, riding him, their bodies becoming one.

- Day. He wakes violently to the sun streaming through the window. Ysoria is gone. The sun burns. He hides from it. A confused servant flees from him.

- Night. The village is aflame. Seba stumbles through it in his broken armor, wielding a broadsword. People lie dead or writhe in pain. His killing of them is a painful mercy.

In the square, the remains of an execution stake still burning. Dozens of dead and wounded here.

A figure crouches over a body, feeding. It turns: Ysoria. She has been burned but has regrown. Her skin a shell an armor of monstrous spikes and unnatural forms. She is feral.

Tears in his eyes, he raises his sword to end her... but he hesitates. A flash of recognition in her eyes. She falls to her knees before him, exposed. Still he stays his hand...

INT./EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - DESTROYED CHAMBER - NIGHT

Seba jerks awake to agony. He's pinned under heavy rubble.

SHENG NU (O.S.)

(wheezing pain)

The sky is lightening. Sunrise is  
maybe thirty minutes away.

Seba can't move much. He arches to look back for her.

She's impaled on debris and mostly buried in rubble.

SEBA

Where?

She points out to the unobstructed sky past the trees.

SHENG NU

That way is East. It will hit me almost as soon as it clears the horizon. You might have another five minutes. How trapped are you?

SEBA

(inspects)

My lower legs are crushed. I can't feel them. Can't get any leverage.

Sheng Nu nods and looks around. The blade of the partizan is in reach. She stretches for it.

SHENG NU

Here. Don't miss it.

She tosses it to him.

SEBA

How does this help?

SHENG NU

Cut yourself free.

SEBA

I can't cut the stone.

SHENG NU

(rolls her eyes)

Cut your legs off.

He gives her a *WTF* look. She shrugs.

SHENG NU (cont'd)

They'll grow back. It's more of a chance than I have. We are still responsible. One of us has to survive. One of us has to make sure.

He looks at his legs. She collapses from the effort.

SHENG NU (cont'd)

Better get started. As you say, the sun isn't going to sleep in. Cut through the tendons of the knees. No time to break the bones.

He grips the blade, getting up the nerve to start. He CUTS into one leg and stifles a SCREAM.

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
You big baby. They're just legs.

SEBA  
(laughs painfully)  
Keep talking. Distract me.

He starts again. Sheng Nu looks out over the city.

SHENG NU  
Seba. Se-bas-ti-an. I can't remember the last time I actually said your name out loud.

SEBA  
What are you talking about? You said my name just this week.

SHENG NU  
I mean your full name. Seems like forever. I've never asked, do you have anyone? Out there? Anyone you care about?

Seba cuts in silence for a moment.

SEBA  
No. Sort of. I don't know. I did, years ago. Several times. You know how it is. They die. They are born, they live, they die, and we go on. I got tired of it. Caring hurt too much.

SHENG NU  
(nods)  
I had children. Ten. Lords want lots of children. I don't know why. They always end up fighting over his remains. Ten children before I drank the blood. Which I only did out of spite. Silly me.

SEBA  
What happened to them?

SHENG NU  
Six were killed in a secession war. War. Ha! Just a violent family disagreement with hundreds of innocents in the crossfire.

(MORE)

SHENG NU (cont'd)

Over in a week. One survived by becoming a monk. Two ran off. The last took the throne. Held it for five years. Then he was in the ground too.

SEBA

Did any of your blood survive?

She raises an eyebrow.

SEBA (cont'd)

Sorry, bad word choice.

SHENG NU

Yes, some survived. I eventually tracked them all down. And after kept track of their descendants. I was able to keep that up for more than two hundred years. Then there were just too many, too widely dispersed.

SEBA

Do you know if any descendants are alive today?

Sheng Nu ponders for a moment.

SHENG NU

One hundred and twenty-two thousand three hundred and eleven, according to DNA. Assuming no recent births or deaths.

SEBA

*Crisse.*

SHENG NU

All told about six hundred and fifty thousand descendants. Give or take.

Seba cuts his legs, grunting, sweating, agony.

SHENG NU (cont'd)

You have any descendants?

SEBA

No.

SHENG NU

None?

SEBA  
I joined *l'Ordre des Chevaliers de la Veille* when I was thirteen and took a vow of celibacy.

SHENG NU  
How long did that last?

SEBA  
(smiles)  
Mostly till I was turned.

SHENG NU  
'Mostly.' So when you say 'no', you really mean, 'none that you know of.'

SEBA  
(smiles)  
Pretty sure it's a no.

SHENG NU  
Don't you care if someone might be out there?

SEBA  
I'd rather not care about humans, seeing as I need to feed on them to survive.

SHENG NU  
(after a moment)  
I find I care deeply about humanity. My blood, as you say, makes up a not insignificant portion of it.

Time passes. Soon the sun rises, the bright light creeping down the side of the building. Reflected light already hurting.

Sheng Nu stares at the horizon, growing emotional.

SHENG NU (cont'd)  
Seba. We live far beyond when any of us should. But the end eventually does come for us. This is my time. I need you to make sure of that. And then you need to continue. Protect them. For me.

Seba is nearly through the second leg, grunting as he saws.

SEBA  
I'll try.

SHENG NU

*De grâce.*

Seba strains to meet her eyes. He is emotionally torn but resolves as the sun descends on her.

SEBA (IN FRENCH)

*I swear on my order and my honor I  
will do this.*

She smiles sadly, tears in her eyes.

SHENG NU (IN CLASSICAL CHINESE)

*Thank you, my truest friend.*

SKRUCH! He cuts through the leg and pulls himself from the rubble. Their eyes meet, nothing more to say. He pulls himself across the shadowed ground to her.

The sunlight FALLS on Sheng Nu's shoulder and part of her head. Her eyes FLUSH red with blood and she HOWLS in agony! Her hands reach for him, grasping!

He JAMS the broken partizan into her chest! And again! And again! She THRASHES involuntarily, desperate to escape!

The sun CREEPS down her body. Her skin DARKENS in blotches where the light hits, then BLACKENS. Still she SCREAMS... Still he cuts, sawing like a butcher...

Suddenly her screams cut off, mouth still wide, eyes still wild, hands still holding him. Be he pulls back and throws something into the sunlight: *her shredded heart!*

It hits with a SPLATTER of blood, but the splatters keep moving, crawling across the stone, reaching for the shadows as they bake in the sun and blacken till they finally stop.

Sheng Nu is gone. The sunlight clips Seba's shoulder and he ducks away in pain, scrambling for the shrinking shadows.

He pulls himself into the building as sunlight chases him, SPLASHING on the floor of the exposed chamber.

Across the room in a shadowed alcove, a bare chest with a scar damaged dragon tattoo. *Cormick*. He's missing limbs. Most of the head is a stringy mess.

He hesitates. Sunlight cuts the floor between them deciding for him. He drags himself to a doorway and down the stairs to the safety of darkness below.

INT. ALLY'S LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

Ally stares out the window, nothing to do but wait.

Something eats at her. She turns to her computer.

She finds a site for **The Global Pathogen Forecasting Initiative**. It has an interactive pandemic calculator. She plugs in parameters: infection rate, survival rate, etc.

She hits 'run'. Three numbers increase fast. Faster. She stares with a sinking feeling. The numbers stop: 8.3 billion infected, 99.9% mortality, 7 months, 12 days, 9 hours.

A BLOOP startles her: email.

She tears herself away from the pandemic results: The warrant was conditionally accepted. *Blah blah blah. Don't care.* She dives into Cormick's Messages.

She sifts through a ton of nonsensical messages from nobodies till she finds one from the burner account.

Message: *'What you are experiencing is Draconis, the blood acting without proper guidance. There is an order. If you commit to the code, we can teach you what you need to know. Come alone. 1 Rue des Cèdres Noirs.'*

She takes a photo of the screen with her phone with her finger pointing at the address and texts it to Gwin.

She straps on her sidearm. Her phone vibrates: 'OMW'

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - SUNSET

Ally sits in her SUV. The truck with the cable to the gate next to her. All is quiet.

After a moment, a police cruiser pulls up next to hers. Ally and Gwin both get out and silently acknowledge each other.

They draw guns and climb through the bent open gate. The damage to the main building is visible to the east.

INT./EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - DESTROYED CHAMBER - DUSK

Ally crouches by the dehydrated husk of Sheng Nu. Heart ripped out and tossed aside. Long fingers of blood spread out from the body. When Ally stands back, it almost looks like the silhouette of a winged creature...

GWIN  
One of them?

ALLY  
Seems like.

Drag marks in the dirt and dust lead them inside.

GWIN  
I've got bodies. No movement.

ALLY  
Yeah. Unlikely, but check.

They move quickly from body to body checking for life.

GWIN  
Hey, this one is a cop. I think it's  
André, from tactical. Knife wounds.

ALLY  
This one in Bastanabee.

GWIN  
Oh shit. Do you see Jacobs?

She notices the drag path again. It leads to stairs down.

ALLY  
Not yet. I'm going down.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - STORAGE ROOM - DUSK

She finds Seba propped against a column, legs from the knees down an unrecognizable mass: sinew, exposed bone, pulsating veins, gnarled leather, shiny shell. They look mis-formed and incomplete. He watches her waiting, unconcerned.

SEBA  
Did you see Cormick's body up there?

The bloody remains of a Thrall lie nearby. She trains her gun on Seba, but he's clearly not a threat.

She kneels at arm's length to check Seba's legs. She startles: *His legs grow back before her eyes!* Not in a normal way. The calves too short, the feet too long, and wide, and clawed...

ALLY  
What's wrong with your legs?

SEBA  
I cut them off, otherwise I'd be  
dead.

She deadpans him.

SEBA (cont'd)  
(sighs)  
If not handled right regrowing can  
have issues.

ALLY  
Issues. What should you have done?

SEBA  
Fresh blood. A lot of it, the entire  
time it regrows to come back human.  
That Thrall was too long dead, but  
beggars and choosers and all that.

ALLY  
Does it hurt?

SEBA  
Yes, it fucking hurts.

Gwin descends the steps, gun ready. She takes in the scene.

GWIN  
*Crisse!*

Gwin gestures back up the stairs with a tilt of the chin.

GWIN (cont'd)  
You do that?

SEBA  
Not by myself. Your buddies came  
uninvited. Shotguns and propane turn  
out to be a bad mix. But, again, *did*  
*you see Cormick's body?* It's  
important.

(blank stares)  
He might be hard to identify. He's  
missing some parts. But he still has  
that stupid tattoo. I saw him... over  
that side, in an alcove, before  
coming down here.

ALLY  
No.

GWIN  
No. We checked all the  
bodies.

Seba's demeanor changes.

SEBA

Shit. You two need to get the hell out of here. Right now.

ALLY

Why?

SEBA

He's still up there and now he's more dangerous than ever.

Gwin moves for the stairs.

GWIN

I'll clear the building.

SEBA

No! That's a terrible idea!

ALLY

No. You don't know what you're walking into.

GWIN

Okay. Then we book him and call it in.

SEBA

Also a terrible idea.

Ally hesitates. Gwin sees it.

GWIN

Look, you bring in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve murderer, all is forgiven. He can't stand yet, he can't fight us on this. We won't get another chance.

Seba sees Ally come around to the idea.

SEBA

Fuck.

ALLY

Tell him his rights.

GWIN

You are under arrest for the murder of Marcus Lavoie, Bastian Gagnon, and Luis Martel...

SEBA

No! You don't understand! You can't handle him! I'm the only one who knows how to deal with this!

She reads him his rights as they flip him on his stomach. Without working legs they quickly have his hands bound.

ALLY  
Tactical can handle Cormick.

SEBA  
There's no more Cormick! He lost his  
head! He could blood frenzy.

They don't understand. He nods at his legs as they drag him  
to his feet.

SEBA (cont'd)  
That! Except head. Full Draconis!  
Nothing but a thing driven to eat!

ALLY  
We'll ask for Animal Control too.  
(to Gwin)  
Ready? One, two, three.

They lift him by the arms.

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - NIGHT

Ally and Gwin stuff Seba into the back seat of Ally's SUV.

GWIN  
(into radio)  
Dispatch, Unit five-two-three at one  
Rue des Cèdres Noirs on Mont Royal.  
Unsecured compound, signs of prior  
explosives and small-arms fire,  
approximately twenty-four hours old.  
Possible suspects still on site.  
Request tactical.

ALLY  
You fill them in. Meet me at the  
station later.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Unit five-two-three, negative on  
tactical. Location is flagged as a  
film set for that time period.

GWIN  
I am on scene with confirmed  
casualties. Scene is not secure.  
Repeat, request tactical.

SEBA  
However many, it won't be enough.

Ally starts her SUV. Seba catches Ally in the rear view mirror. His look gives her pause. She starts the car.

INT. PDQ 14 - HOLDING - NIGHT

Seba sits on a bench alone in a cell. His still healing legs stretched out long in front of him.

Five criminals in the next cell shy as far away as possible.

A WATCH OFFICER raps on the bars and Seba struggles up. He leans on the wall to walk as he is led to...

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

There is a lot of activity in the Bullpen. Chatter from Tactical getting ready at the compound buzzes under the general murmuring.

Seba's entrance causes a dip in the talking. Heads turn. He's unfazed. The Watch Officer gives directs him to an interrogation room.

INT. PDQ 14 - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Half a dozen people monitor the Tactical assault on the compound. Radio chatter fills the room and various screens show body-cams, drone angles and other views.

Ally stands near the door. Jacobs cozies up to the Station Commander. Michael from Internal Affairs hovers nearby looking grumpy. They all pause to watch Seba lean on the room's windows as he passes.

STATION COMMANDER

Those legs are something.

JACOBS

Some sort of extreme body mod, probably.

STATION COMMANDER

You've been busy, Lagarde.

MICHAEL

While under suspension...

STATION COMMANDER

Yes, Michael. But she caught this weirdo and it looks like in addition to a lot of unsolved crimes, he may have killed some of our men. That's earned her some slack. Maybe a medal.

ALLY

(beaming)

Thank you, sir.

JACOBS

This is pretty big. Maybe someone with more experience should run the interrogation.

STATION COMMANDER

Don't be an asshole, Jacobs. This is her dance. She landed the suspect, she gets to run point. Looks like he's ready for you.

ALLY

Yes, sir.

Jacobs meets her eyes from across the room: Cold calculation. She exits, radio chatter behind her.

TACTICAL COMMANDER (O.S.) (IN FRENCH)

*Alpha One, relocate to the north ridge. Confirm clear field of fire. Entry team breaches in five...*

INT. PDQ 14 - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Seba sits cuffed to the metal table. He doesn't look particularly put out. Ally sits opposite. They stare at each other, gauging. Finally...

ALLY

There was a body. At the compound.

SEBA

There were a lot of bodies at the compound.

ALLY

You know the one I mean.

Seba sits for a moment, reflecting.

SEBA

Sheng Nu. She was... my oldest,  
closest friend.

ALLY

Was she-- did you consider her a...

SEBA

Vampire is appropriate, even if we  
don't live up to the mythology. Yes.

ALLY

You want to tell me what happened?

SEBA

Your coworkers blew up a building.  
She was trapped. The sun was rising.  
There was no way for her to avoid it.

ALLY

Wouldn't the sun have killed her?

SEBA

No. Well, it would have killed *her*,  
basically cooking her brain, but in  
most cases enough of the parasite  
survives to keep the body going.  
Which is very bad.

ALLY

So you...

SEBA

Killed her first, yes.

Ally gives him a raised eyebrow: *admitting that?*

SEBA (cont'd)

She made me swear to it. I did. I cut  
out her heart with a broken blade,  
tore it free with my bare hands, and  
threw it into the sun. To be sure.

*Disturbing.* Ally digests that.

ALLY

Are there others?

SEBA

Vampires? Not in Montreal, just  
Cormick. More than two in a city like  
this and the death rate gets hard to  
conceal.

(MORE)

SEBA (cont'd)

Sheng Nu actually stopped killing over a century ago, but she was special. She had a way of drawing very committed followers who would bleed for her. I could never pull it off.

ALLY

Sounds like a cult.

SEBA

*Peut-être.* Yes, I suppose. But is that worse than killing people?

Ally doesn't have an answer.

SEBA (cont'd)

When I was a chevalier, my lord, both the one in heaven and the one on earth, was righteous and good and whomever I was sent to raise my blade against was of the devil and sin. I never stopped being a chevalier, but I stopped believing in such clarity.

ALLY

And that made it okay to murder people? To feed?

SEBA

Do you think that made it okay to murder people?

ALLY

No, of course not.

SEBA

What would make it okay?

ALLY

Nothing would make it okay.

SEBA

No? Police never kill anyone?

ALLY

That does happen. That's different.

SEBA

How?

ALLY

There are rules for police use of violence.

SEBA  
And those rules are strictly  
followed? All the time?

ALLY  
You know they aren't.

SEBA  
And when they aren't, that's bad?

ALLY  
It's not that simple.

He doesn't answer, but his eyes say, *no, it isn't.*

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Tactical moves into position with precision and speed. Gwin is led to the TACTICAL COMMANDER by another officer.

TACTICAL COMMANDER  
Officer Mattes. I hear you were first  
on scene and helped secure a murder.  
Good job.

GWIN  
(proud)  
Thank you, sir.

TACTICAL COMMANDER  
Stay close. I may have questions.

INT. PDQ 14 - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Ally adjusts some papers.

ALLY  
What is your interest in Cormick  
Vale?

SEBA  
You mean, why do I want to kill him?

ALLY  
Yes.

SEBA  
Because he stole my blood.

ALLY  
So... retribution?

SEBA  
No. Containment.

ALLY  
You said... you feel responsible? For  
Cormick?

SEBA  
Don't you feel responsible? For  
stopping Cormick?

ALLY  
Of course. It's my job.

SEBA  
Congratulations on getting what you  
wanted there, by the way. Is it  
everything you hoped for?

She doesn't answer.

SEBA (cont'd)  
What are you willing to sacrifice to  
keep it?

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - VARIOUS - NIGHT

The Tactical Commander looks around and nods.

TACTICAL COMMANDER  
Okay, go go go.

The cops infiltrate the compound, armed and armored.  
Professionals covering each other as they move quickly from  
cover to cover.

Tactical police climb the stairs, guns at the ready,  
clearing floor after floor.

INT. PDQ 14 - CONFERENCE ROOM/DETECTIVE BULLPEN - NIGHT

The Station Commander and his people monitor the action.  
Other officers gather at the windows to the room to watch.

INT. PDQ 14 - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Ally is off balance. She doesn't show it, but he sees it.

ALLY  
This isn't about me.

SEBA

No?

ALLY

It's about you. You've made a lot of extraordinary claims.

SEBA

*Oui.* Let's talk about those. Isn't it absurd for me to claim I'm over seventy much less over seven hundred? How can I be a vampire when I don't even have fangs and you can see me quite clearly in your one-way mirror there? Why should you believe me when I claim a team of heavily armed men with automatic weapons and Kevlar armor can't handle a spoiled, wanna be influencer who's already lost a few body parts?

He stretches his legs into view. Massive, three-toed claws at the end of an extra long leg of leather and scale with a digitigrade second, backwards knee. Almost fully healed.

SEBA (cont'd)

I wonder how that's going?

Voices leak through the one way glass. Something is up.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Two cops enter the dark attic at the top. Claws GRAB one and PULL him into the rafters. Blood RAINS down. The other fires up into the dark. A figure DROPS on him. STROBES of gunfire almost reveal what it is.

Two cops rush to the steps and call out. A dark, leathery thing jumps down the steep stair and sweeps them to the floor.

INT. PDQ 14 - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

People in the Conference Room can't tell what's going on but they know something isn't right.

STATION COMMANDER

What was that? What just happened?

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - VARIOUS - NIGHT

The thing leaves the bodies and rushes off. Police bodies lie bleeding out.

The thing moves fast in the dark castle-like house, up the walls, across the ceiling, dropping on victims, ripping them apart. They SHOOT. No effect.

The chatter on the radio is panicked. They are getting taken out. They don't know what they are dealing with.

Gwin hears unfolding crisis and grows more and more horrified...

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - NIGHT

- Ally emerges from the Interrogation Room to a station three levels of activity higher than when she went in.

ALLY

What's going on?

WATCH OFFICER

Tactical is encountering resistance. They-- I don't know. No one knows.

ALLY

Get the detainee back to holding.

The Watch Officer nods and moves to get Seba.

Ally spots Jacobs across the room. His eyes are on Seba, full of danger. He turns the other way. She follows.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Two cops see a form cross a hall and enter a room. They fire, then approach the door cautiously. The thing comes through a wall and lays into them.

Gwin grows panicked as it descends into chaos. The Tactical Commander is a model of control under pressure.

TACTICAL COMMANDER (IN FRENCH)

*Commit the reserve! Reinforce at the stairs! Maintain formation!*

GWIN

That's not a person! They need to know what they are up against!

TACTICAL COMMANDER  
Clear the area! Velise! Remove her!

Another officer rushes to pull Gwin away.

GWIN  
You need to pull them out! They're  
getting slaughtered!

INT. PDQ 14 - ARMORY - NIGHT

Ally follows Jacobs to the armory. The ARMORER is glued to the police radio like everyone else.

Jacobs checks back down the hall. No one there.

JACOBS  
Hey!

ARMORER  
Sorry, Detective. Uh, what--

JACOBS  
Everything's going pear shaped up  
there. I'm staging to deploy.

The armorer slides a clipboard to him.

ARMORER  
Right. What do you need?

Around the corner of the hall, Ally over hears and thinks.

INT. PDQ 14 - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

She returns to find people rushing about, concern on their faces. She stands outside the Conference Room windows, looking in at the chaos. She is an island of calm among it.

STATION COMMANDER (O.C.)  
What do you mean 'the rounds are  
ineffective'? What are they firing?  
B.B.s? Tell them to double up on  
tear-gas and flash-bangs!

She looks down to find her badge in her hand. Decision made, she turns with purpose.

INT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Police shoot and throw flash bangs. Spot fires burn...

The thing stands slowly casting a shadow on a wall from firelight: *demonic*.

A cop turns to run out of the front entrance. Something flies down from the staircase and flattens him.

The cop turns as claws GRAB his head and pierce the helmet and goggles!

A body FLIES across the courtyard. It IMPACTS the broken gate and drops to ground. The cops outside scatter back.

Gwin is at a loss, calling frantically on the radio for a response, any response. None comes. The Tactical Commander stares numbly. She tries to get him to do something but he ignores her. Everyone is rushing to figure out what to do.

INT. PDQ 14 - ARMORY/HOLDING - NIGHT

Jacobs emerges from the armory with a canvas duffel, presumably full of weapons.

He walks with purpose and confidence.

Down the stairs to Holding. He stops at the window. The Watch Officer nods greeting.

JACOBS

Emergency medical transfer. Rush job.

The watch officer gives him a look and pulls out a form.

WATCH OFFICER

Which detainee?

JACOBS

The one with the exposed leg wounds, obviously.

WATCH OFFICER

Oh. Already processed.

JACOBS

Already--? By who?

WATCH OFFICER

Lagarde. You just missed her.

Jacobs goes wide-eyed.

EXT. SEBA'S APARTMENT - POOL AREA - NIGHT

Lightning. Then thunder. Rain is coming.

Seba and Ally cross the disgusting pool area. A drug addict sees him with his weird legs and assumes it's a bad trip.

Seba clocks an small propane tank next to a dejected BBQ.

SEBA

Grab that. Tank and hose. Meet me in  
apartment thirteen.

EXT. SHENG NU'S COMPOUND - GATE - NIGHT

Gwin sees something leap from the upper level. Cormick has become DRACONIS! He is man and dragon and demon all in one. His chest tattoo is deformed by the regrown hide into dark stripe patterning. His head is a distended maw, all fangs.

He leaps and glides over on leathery wings, disappearing into the forest, heading for the city beyond...

Gwin stares in shock: *Oh, fuck.*

Gwin's car is blocked in by all the police vehicles, She's not going anywhere anytime soon. But... Cormick's abandoned bike. She grabs a tactical helmet.

GWIN

(into radio)

Dispatch, Unit five-two-three.  
Officers in danger. Tactical units  
down.

INT. SEBA'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Seba pulls back the rug and unlocks the large trunk. He takes out the patchwork armor, part chain mail, part leather, part plate. Also inside are several bladed weapons.

Ally enters with a propane tank. She has her radio on her.

GWIN (V.O.)

(on radio)

Suspect at large in populated area,  
moving from Rue des Cèdres Noirs Mont  
Royal toward the Plateau. Subject has  
abnormal anatomical features...

ALLY

Abnormal features?

He lifts out a bladed weapon, half spear, half sword: a *glaive*. He duct tapes the hose from the propane to the handle of the *glaive* and puts the tank in a canvas backpack.

SEBA

It manifests different each time, but what's the same is his skin is now thick armor. You need to cut through that to destroy the heart.

He jams a pair of short spears into the wood floor.

SEBA (cont'd)

These won't be enough to kill him, but he'll feel them more than bullets. If he gets too close, poke him with these 'til I can get to you.

She shakes her head, shying away from the weapons.

ALLY

No... No. I can't. Not my war. I got you out so you could deal with him.

SEBA

*Des conneries*. Why are you here? In this room? With me? Why have you done all the things that led you to now?

She stumbles over her answer.

SEBA (cont'd)

For hundreds of years I have done what I must, whether I felt like it or not, whether I was allowed to or not, for one reason: I am a Chevalier.

She meets his eyes, afraid of what he's saying.

SEBA (cont'd)

*Toi aussi.*  
(subtitled: As are you.)

Her gaze turns to the spears. After a moment she yanks one from the floor and looks it over, feeling it's weight.

ALLY

Do I get cool armor too?

SEBA

No.

Armor on, he swings the backpack over his shoulders.

SEBA (cont'd)  
*D'accord?*

She retrieves the second spear and nods.

ALLY  
*Ouais.*

EXT. CITY STREETS - GWIN'S BIKE - NIGHT

Gwin speeds through the city trying to locate Cormick. Her phone rings. She answers on AirPods.

GWIN  
Go for Mattes.

EXT. CITY STREETS - ALLY'S SUV - NIGHT

Ally and Seba skid in the rain around a corner.

ALLY  
It's me. Where are you?

INTERCUT

GWIN  
*Ally, dieu merci,* I thought you were going to stay on the bench. I wouldn't blame you.

ALLY  
Never. I got your back. Seba says he's ready, but we need intel!

GWIN  
There's a lot of chatter. He's heading into the Plateau. I'm on Rue Rachel, just crossing Saint-Denis.

ALLY  
Don't engage. We're on our way!

Gwin divides her attention between the police radio and the phone/AirPods.

RADIO (V.O.)  
...sighted in the Plateau Mont-Royal,  
near De La Roche and Marie-Anne.  
Subject considered...

Seba pokes awkwardly at the GPS. Ally slaps his hand away.

She speeds on the bike, weaving through traffic.

CRASH! Ahead of them, cars collide! Cormick is in the street! He roars and runs to a building. He climbs!

GWIN

Got him! West on Brebeuf! Rooftops!

Seba leans in unnecessarily close to the phone mic.

SEBA

Keep the police back! Use them to corral only! Don't engage! They will only make it worse!

Ally pushes Seba back so she can see the GPS.

GWIN

(into radio)

Suspect is moving Northwest on Brebeuf. Recommend... all units maintain distance. Do not engage unless necessary.

EXT. CITY STREETS - COP CRUISER - NIGHT

Two COPS speed in pursuit.

GWIN (V.O.)

(from radio)

Request, do not engage unless necessary.

PURSUIT COP ONE (IN FRENCH)

*We don't go after a cop killer? Who the fuck does she think she is?*

They speed on, sirens blaring.

EXT. CITY STREETS - JACOBS SUV - NIGHT

Jacobs weaves past traffic. Red and blue strobes from the light bar inside his windshield flash the interior. He listens to the radio chatter trying to zero in on the location.

EXT. CITY STREETS - ALLY'S SUV - NIGHT

Ally drives like a maniac. On the sidewalk. Down the median. Bypassing the chaos caused by the growing crisis.

Cormick jump/glides from one building to another. He carries a body.

SEBA

There. Get ahead of him.

She SKIDS to a stop. He grabs the glaive and backpack from the back and is on the move.

Then he jumps and climbs a fire escape to the roof.

EXT. CITY STREETS - ROOFTOPS - NIGHT

Seba reaches the top. Rain hazes everything.

Seba spots Cormick on the next rooftop, hunched over a body. Dagger teeth rip into the neck and pull away chunks of flesh, spilling blood across the flat building top.

Seba turns on his propane and lights the gas. The flame splashes onto the blade, heating it up red hot. Rain evaporates as it hits the metal. TSSSS! TSSSS! TSSSS!

SEBA

Hey! Cormick!!

Cormick zeroes on him from the other roof. He CHARGES!

Cormick JUMPS and glides 30 feet into Seba! Seba SWINGS his flaming glaive SHEARING off a chunk of hide!

Cormick HOWLS in pain and anger. He folds his wings and CLAWS at Seba! Bits of armor rip away!

SWING! CUT! STAB! KICK! They exchange blow after blow!

Suddenly GUNFIRE from another roof! Both take HITS! The cops FIRE indiscriminately.

A bullet glances off his propane backpack. Seba swings it away from the oncoming fire and ducks, worry on his face.

INTERCUT

GWIN

Who's firing!? I said don't engage!  
You're making it worse!

Ally directs people to safety. She clocks the cops firing.

ALLY  
Gwin! Get them to pull back!

GWIN  
I'm trying! They aren't listening!

Cormick LEAPS across! He LANDS on two of the shooting police! Two others flee.

He RIPS the arm off one! The other scrambles back shooting! BANG! BANG! BANG! Cormick is on him in seconds!

Seba runs and JUMPS! His legs let him jump far, but almost not enough! He CATCHES the lip and SCRAMBLES at the edge.

Finally he ROLLS onto the roof next to Cormick. He THRUSTS his burning glaive! Cormick TWISTS away and FLEES across the rooftops. Seba gives chase.

Gwin watches Seba pursuing Cormick.

GWIN (cont'd)  
This isn't going to work! We need to box him in! A warehouse or something!

ALLY  
Yeah... yeah, you're onto something.

Ally skids to a halt and climbs out to yell to Seba.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Seba! We need to trap him!!

He looks down at her. She shows it with her hands: right hand into the open palm of her left.

ALLY (cont'd)  
Trap!! Trap!! We have to corner him somehow!!

Seba looks around desperately. In the distance he sees it: his abandoned church. He points.

SEBA  
The church!! Saint-Henri's is abandoned! Herd him to the church!!

Ally jumps back in her SUV and peels out.

ALLY

(into phone)

Gwin! There's an abandoned church off Granier! If we can get him inside we can corner him! Spread the word!

GWIN

I don't have the authority! They won't listen to me!

ALLY

Gwin, you've been bossing me around for weeks. Rank is not the issue.

Gwin checks the map on her phone, then takes a breath.

GWIN

(into radio)

All units, we're forcing it to ground! I need five cars on Boul St-Joseph. Three cars block off Granier at the Saint-Henri! Lights and warning shots only! I have a friendly up there swinging a sharp stick at our target! You shoot him, I shoot you! Clear?

A couple officers SPEED down the street. They track the action on the roof. Gwin comes over the radio.

PURSUIT COP TWO

*Ouais?*

PURSUIT COP THREE

*Ouais.*

The driver SPEEDS ahead.

Dozens of police cars RUSH to cut off Cormick. Sirens BLARE. Panicked people SCRAMBLE to get clear.

Gwin turns down the boulevard. She speeds past officer after officer leaping from their cruisers. Police aim guns and spotlights up. Ready...

GWIN

Only shoot to keep it moving to the church! Get it to go to the church!

Cormick veers towards them. They OPEN FIRE and FLASH their spotlights!

When he turns back, Seba is there SWINGING his glaive!

Gwin looks down the long boulevard.

GWIN (cont'd)  
We need to clear the church!

ALLY  
On it!

Ally pulls hard up to the church. A patrol car SKIDS to a stop next to her. Jacques jumps out and draws his gun.

JACQUES  
Detective Lagarde. Having a night out on the town?

A moment of panic: *Can she trust him?*

Jacques checks the safety and holds it at the ready away from her. He reads her reticence and nods deference to her.

JACQUES (cont'd)  
I'm on your side. Just tell me what you need.

Ally smiles relief.

ALLY  
We need to clear the building.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - APSE - NIGHT

A dozen homeless people have taken refuge inside.

ALLY  
Out! Everyone out! Now!

HOMELESS ONE (IN FRENCH)  
*This is a place of sanctuary!*

ALLY  
Not anymore! It's coming this way!

Jacques helps guide the people out the doors.

ALLY (cont'd)  
You go with them.

JACQUES  
I got your back.

ALLY  
Sorry, Jacques, you're not equipped for this. Your gun is useless.

JACQUES

Then I'd better find something more effective.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT

Cormick makes a Beeline for the church. He leaps off a roof leaving Seba trapped on the high building.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - APSE/NAVE - CONTINUOUS

Cormick SMASHES through the large stained glass window over the apse!

He LANDS heavily in the center of the nave.

A HOMELESS GIRL hid rather than leave. She sees the *monster* and PANICS. She BOLTS for the door!

Cormick LOCKS onto her! She's a goner...

Suddenly Ally is there! She SWINGS her short spears, DODGING claws. But she's no match for something that she can't hurt.

Cormick BATS aside her spears and PINS her down. His claws DIG into her side!

She SCREAMS, jabbing impotently at Cormick with her weapons, unable to get leverage...

A brass thurible HITS Cormick in the head and it scrambles back. Jacques swings it on its chain like a morning star. He DRAWS Cormick away.

JACQUES

*À moi, démon!*

ALLY

No! Run! You can't hurt it!

JACQUES

But I can get it away from you!

He SWINGS the thurible around his head, then in to HIT! Swing again, HIT! He backs away, Cormick pursues him!

Cormick grabs the thurible and yanks Jacques close. Claws DIG into his chest! Teeth BITE his shoulder and chest!

Jacques falls! Cormick looms over him...

Ally STRUGGLE to her feet and RUSHES in! STAB! STAB! Two in the back! Cormick lurches away in pain, dragging Jacques by the chest.

Cormick glances at her, but then notices the smashed stained glass window above. *Escape...*

ALLY

No...

She ATTACKS and leaps away! She stumbles... Cormick turns on her, DROPS the Jacques and charges...

And Seba is there SWINGING the glaive, CARVING away hide, DRIVING it back! It turns and scrambles up a column, disappearing deeper into the rectory.

Ally rushes to Jacques. He looks up at her, blood running from his mouth, unable to speak. She takes his hand.

ALLY (cont'd)

I'm here. I'm here. I'm here.

Seba looks down at him.

SEBA

Is that a bite?

ALLY

Among other things.

SEBA

Let me look. Go see how far away help is.

Ally switches places with Seba and hurries to the door.

As soon as she steps away. Seba leans down to Jacques.

SEBA (cont'd)

You've been bitten. I am sorry. I and everyone thank you for your bravery and sacrifice.

Jacques' eyes find him as Seba takes up one of Ally's spears resting next to them. Seba pushes the spear between his ribs. Seba holds Jacques' gaze as the officer shudders and convulses, life slipping from his eyes.

At the door Ally looks out. She sees Gwin approaching on her bike, police cruisers close behind.

ALLY

Almost here--

She turns to find Seba rushing off into the church complex.

She rushes back to Jacques and sees one of her spears covered in blood. She checks his pulse. Nothing. She turns towards where Seba ran off, grabs her spears and follows.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT

Gwin zips up on the bike and finds several displaced homeless people milling about. She herds them back as police converge on the church. Gwin takes charge.

GWIN

Set up a perimeter! This is a hostage situation going forward!

They hesitate. She turns on them.

GWIN (cont'd)

Do you have a problem following orders? Set up containment and hold!

They snap to and move to obey.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Seba stalks Cormick through the back halls of the church. It's dark. No light but street lights through windows.

Cormick BURSTS from hiding! Seba THRUSTS his glaive! Cormick climbs, then DUCKS through a door and is gone!

Ally is in a different hall. She hears the moment of action and freezes. All is quiet again. She continues...

Seba creeps forward. *Was that a scraping sound?* Into the Chapter House. On high alert, tense and scared...

Again Cormick CHARGES, SWINGING claws! Seba SWINGS the glaive keeping him back! Again he flees and out-runs Seba.

His eyes follow the sound of his claws. He's moving up.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - STORAGE LOFT - CONTINUOUS

Seba climbs the stairs and enters an open storage loft near the roof. He can sense Cormick's here...

Cormick DROPS from the rafters! He KNOCKS the glaive from Seba! The backpack straps tear, it TUMBLES away!

The flames from the glaive IGNITE folded tapestries.

Ally hears the action above her and hurries to the steps.

Seba is in a hand-to-hand fight with Cormick! He moves on Seba, SWINGING claws! Seba retreats, BATTING the claws away! But still Cormick gets HITS in!

Ally bursts into the loft and takes it in. The fire spreads fast. The wood of the old church ready fuel.

She rushes forward to attack! Seba sees her, eyes wide.

SEBA

No! Get out of here!!

She stabs at Cormick with both blades! He spins with roar and back-hands her! She falls and her weapons tumble away! He leaps at her and his jaws bite deep into her arm!

She SCREAMS in agony! Seba tackles Cormick and they roll away.

He got Cormick off her but he can't hurt Cormick and his metal armor is being torn apart! Ally holds her wound and looks around frantically. Her weapons are gone but...

ALLY

The fire!! Use the fire!!

Seba clocks the flames to his left! He throws his weight and ROLLS them both into the flames! But now Seba is on top!

Cormick BURNS!! Seba holds him in the flames. But Cormick claws carving off chunks of flesh! The rising flames LICK at Seba's arms! Lighting his clothes! He's burning too!!

He won't outlast Cormick, but he can't let up...

Then Ally is there with the glaive.

SEBA

Stay back!

ALLY

You're burning! You won't out-last him!

She PLUNGES the hot flaming glaive into Cormick's chest, right at the heart! Cormick ROARS!!

SEBA

You need to hold til he's dead! We have to be sure!!

ALLY

Get out of the fire! You're burning!

SEBA

No! I'm keeping him from you! We hold! We hold! We hold! We hold!!

Together they HOLD, Cormick BURNING outside and in! THRASHING and TEARING chunks off of a burning Seba.

Ally LEANING on the glaive, trying not to shy from the heat! Her clothes CATCH fire! Still she HOLDS the glaive down!

Sudden, violent death throes WRACK Cormick! Flames erupt from his mouth and eyes and chest! Finally, he ceases moving. Finally, *Cormick is dead.*

Ally DRAGS Seba out of the fire and smothers the flames on his body! But the adrenaline wears off. She COLLAPSES.

They have won but are badly burned and surrounded by fire. She looks at him in agony. He half rises, his skin already forming into leathery hide. She's losing consciousness...

Seba clocks Ally's arm: blood from the bite oozing out. Near his hand, one of Ally's spears. He takes it up and stands. She is on her knees, coughing, doesn't see him.

He raises the spear high, point towards her chest, grip tight, jaw set... he hesitates.

She struggles towards the railing, safety forty feet below. But the smoke, the fire, the fall... There's no way...

Seba grabs her and runs for the railing. Behind them, the propane canister explodes. He leaps over the railing...

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NAVE - CONTINUOUS

They land in the pews, his body taking the impact of their fall, protecting her. She looks to him in shock. The wind is knocked out of him and lots of things are broken.

The fire has spread throughout the church. Burning wood falls from the beams. Flaming debris piles up, blocking the exit! *They are trapped!*

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Gwin stares up at the flames ERUPTING from the roof of the church. Several officers rushed to the door of the church.

GWIN

Ally! What's happening in there!  
There's a fire at the roofline!

ALLY (V.O.)

(coughing)

He's down... Cormick is dead...

GWIN

Ally! Did you say he's down? Are you  
okay? You sound bad!

ALLY (V.O.)

We got him... but we're trapped...

Gwin grabs an officer hurrying away from the building.

GWIN

Target is down, but I have people  
inside. We need to get to them!

PURSUIT COP FOUR

We can't get past the flames! Fire  
trucks are five minutes out!

Gwin looks to the church. That's going to be too long.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NAVE - CONTINUOUS

The ceiling is ABLAZE and FALLING in chunks. Seba pulls Ally  
back. Their safe space is shrinking...

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Gwin jumps into Ally's SUV.

GWIN

Ally, get back from the doors! I'm  
coming in!

She drives up the steps and low speed SMASHES the doors!

*The doors hold.* Gwin reverses and HITS them *again!* Then  
*again!* Finally the SUV BREAKS through!!

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NAVE - CONTINUOUS

The SUV rams the burning debris aside! It JUDDERS to a stop  
in the middle of the pews.

Gwin jumps out and helps Ally into the truck.

Seba moves to follow but suddenly Gwin pulls her gun.

GWIN

No. You leave here under arrest or not at all.

Gwin is *shaking*. She tosses a pair of handcuffs at his feet.

SEBA

(sighs)

We've been here before.

GWIN

No. You're a murderer, no different than Cormick. You have to face justice!

He stops. He looks at his hand, burnt to a nub but already showing signs of growing back as a claw. His chest, muscle and bone exposed in huge gashes, gradually closing up to leather and shell. Jagged teeth filling in missing ones...

SEBA

You're right.

Fire all around, getting closer. Burning bits falling from the ceiling. He looks down at the handcuffs.

SEBA (cont'd)

*Comme promis*, Sheng Nu.

He bends down. When he stands again he's holding a broken length of burning wood: A *stake* actually.

He holds out the stake to her. She blanches.

GWIN

No... I didn't mean that. I can't just kill you. I can't do that...

SEBA

She's in no condition to do it. I can't do it myself. *It won't let me.*

GWIN

No. Ally? Tell him! Tell him to just turn himself in!

Ally struggles to rise, coughing violently.

ALLY

Gwin... let him go. We need him... In the future... If it happens again...

SEBA

If it happens again it won't be  
because of me.

ALLY

But... We need...

SEBA

They will have you.

GWIN

No. No, it's wrong.

SEBA

Sometime what's necessary and what's  
right aren't the same thing.

Gwin stares in horror at the stake. The fire closes in.

ALLY

Sebastian Étienne de Clermont...

Seba meets Ally's eyes.

ALLY (cont'd)

Thank you, for... Thank you.

SEBA

It has been a long time since a  
chevalier slew a dragon.

He holds out the burning stake to Gwin.

SEBA (cont'd)

Just be sure.

They stare at each other intensely.

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Ambulances and fire trucks arrive. The SUV bursts through  
the doors and sputters to a stop clear of the building.

Gwin leaps out and guides them to Ally in the back seat.  
Jacques' body is in the rear cargo space.

The Paramedics quickly to take charge. Gwin steps back.  
Several POLICE approach her with questions, seeking orders.

JACOBS (O.C.)

Stand down, Mattes, I'm assuming  
command. No one takes action without  
my authorization.

Jacobs charges onto the scene exuding authority. The gathered police hesitate. Who's in charge?

JACOBS

Alright everybody, the three T's still apply here: triage, tag, and transfer. Anything that can be left for clean-up, leave it where it lies.

On the stretcher, Ally raises an arm to get Gwin's attention. She can't talk past the oxygen mask, her eyes plead. Gwin looks questioning, and then it clicks.

GWIN

Transfer. You're going to bury this.

Jacobs snaps back to glare at her.

JACOBS

What did you say?

GWIN

What clean-up crew? Who? When?

JACOBS

Officer, you are way out of your lane! Four of our own were murdered up on Mont Royal less than a day ago, and you want to question me on what department is going to do the fucking lab work?

He gets right in her face.

JACOBS (cont'd)

I think it's time you cleared the scene.

She stares back not flinching, but not responding. He stays in her face another second then turns back to the others.

JACOBS (cont'd)

Alright, I want two-and-two's. Count and cover all exits. I need to know if there's anyone else inside and we need to push back that crowd...

He moves off. The officers gathered around naturally reorient on him. As soon as he is far enough...

GWIN  
 (into radio)  
 Dispatch, Unit five-two-three.  
 Confirm whether there was a stand-  
 down or non-response advisory in  
 place for one Rue des Cèdres Noirs  
 prior to the events of last night.

A beat.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 Affirmative. Location had a non-  
 response advisory on file, entered at  
 twenty-two forty-seven, listed as a  
 film shoot.

GWIN  
 (into radio)  
 Dispatch, confirm who entered that  
 advisory.

A longer beat.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 Advisory was entered by Detective  
 Sergeant Brian Jacobs. No supporting  
 permit attached in the system.

She turns and finds Jacobs giving orders. One of the  
 officers notices her, follows her gaze to Jacobs, and then  
 looks back to her. He gives her a small, sympathetic smile.  
 A moment of solidarity and understanding.

GWIN  
 (into radio)  
 Who's this? Legrite?

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
 Yes, ma'am.

GWIN  
 (into radio)  
 Thanks, Legrite. Preserve that  
 advisory and send me the full audit  
 trail.

She turns away from the scene.

SEBA (V.O.)  
 Contradiction. Hypocrisy. Irony.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NAVE - CONTINUOUS

Seba lies in the center of the church. The burning stake lodged in his chest. The fire's close. He is already dead. Parasite blood crawls from his body in long fingers, seeking life, forming an impression: a demonic silhouette, wings spread, trying to escape his corpse...

SEBA (V.O.)

Everybody romanticizes vampires,  
conveniently ignoring the fact  
they're really just serial killers  
with good PR.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM 37 - NIGHT

Ally jerks awake.

It's late. No one in the room but blinking monitors. A bag of blood drips slowly into her arm.

Disoriented, she sits up. Then rips out the tube and drinks straight from the blood bag.

SEBA (V.O.)

It's easy to say, 'well, look in the  
mirror, humans are monsters too!'  
We've all heard that stupid trope. It  
tells you nothing except the speaker  
is a lazy nihilist.

Emptied, she drops the bag as her senses slowly return. Her eyes return to the empty bag in shock and understanding.

A beat of silent panic. She scans the room. She peels the bandages from her arm. Patches of leathery skin, flecks of shell.

She climbs from the bed.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM 39 - NIGHT

Ally ducks in. Clothes on a chair. She quickly dresses.

A moan from the bed. She freezes. No other noise.

SEBA (V.O.)

The truth is that everyone is an  
idiot or an asshole at some point in  
their lives. Even the vampires.

She tip-toes over. A bandaged man sleeping fitfully. He's hooked up to a lot of machines, getting fluids, etc. She stares for a long time.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL - NIGHT

Ally moves briskly towards the elevators.

Machines beep alarm. Behind her nurses hurry to the Room 39. A uniformed officer stands watching them run off.

SEBA (V.O.)  
Some will deny it. Some will be  
consumed by it.

Ally enters the elevator unseen. Her hands shake. She wipes blood from her mouth. The doors hold... hold... hold... then close on her shame.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Some will hide from it in shame.

EXT. DESTROYED CHURCH - DAY

The church is a blackened shell. Gwin walks in and crouches at the spot where Seba burned. A faint outline remains.

SEBA (V.O.)  
But some will turn and face it, and  
when they fail, stand back up and  
swear to do better the next time.

A glint catches Gwin's eye. She crosses to a rubble pile.

SEBA (V.O.) (cont'd)  
Hopefully, that will be enough to  
keep the monsters at bay.

Gwin reaches in and pulls out the remains of the glaive.

SEBA  
This is the fourth time humanity  
narrowly avoided extinction from the  
parasites.

Gwin takes the glaive and walks away.

SEBA (cont'd)  
I doubt it will be the last.

SMASH TO BLACK.