

BETRAYED BY EDEN

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FADE IN

EXT. PET STORE - DAY

SHAELYN MOORE (17, bored face) looks at puppies through the window. MOTHER and CHILD (4-6) come out with a new kitten.

CHILD
Mama, what do cats eat?

MOTHER
Meat.

CHILD
Where does meat come from?

SHAELYN
Animals. Meat is animals. Cats are predators, so they eat other animals. Little animals, like those cute little hamsters.

Mother glares at Shaelyn and drags Child away from the store.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

RAMEL (14) browses through metal collectibles. He sees a brass scale and uses two pennies to test it.

LILI (late 50s) watches him from her seat behind the counter.

LILI
(to RAMEL)
What you looking for? These are not toys.

Ramel takes the scale to the counter to pay for it.

RAMEL
My nana collects stuff like this. It's for her. Something over here smells good.

Lili points to a golden fruit in a clear, acrylic display case on the counter.

LILI
Smells delicious, don't it? It don't ever lose its smell either. I got this from my great-grandfather when I was younger than you.

RAMEL
Bullshit.

INT. PET STORE - SAME

Shaelyn looks at the white rats for sale. STORE ASSOCIATE approaches her to offer help.

STORE ASSOCIATE

Looking for a pet? Rats make great pets.

SHAELYN

So I've heard. Being white doesn't make them look better. They're actually uglier than the brown ones.

STORE ASSOCIATE

Okay. So, that's a 'no'? Are you a snake owner?

SHAELYN

No. Why?

STORE ASSOCIATE

Oh, some people feed their big snakes live prey. My ex-boyfriend had this massive boa constrictor that he fed a whole rabbit to. Coolest thing I've ever seen.

SHAELYN

You like watching living things die? I don't.

STORE ASSOCIATE

I didn't mean it like that. I mean, it's the circle of life and shit. Snakes have to eat too. We have to eat.

SHAELYN

We can eat without killing. Plants don't have feelings. Or blood.

STORE ASSOCIATE

Great. A vegan. Let me know if you need anything.

Store Associate leaves Shaelyn to help new customers who have just come in.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili has taken the fruit out of its case and holds it up for Ramel to see.

LILI

This fruit is thousands of years old. It doesn't age. Doesn't decay. Smells new, always.

RAMEL

Take a bite.

LILI

Hell no. It's not edible.

RAMEL

How do you know it's not edible if you never taste it.

LILI

I was told never to eat it. Not ever. No matter how hungry I was or how good it smelled. I'll keep it and leave it to one of my neices.

RAMEL

No nephews?

LILI

Three, but they are irresponsible, like most boys.

RAMEL

Generalizing. That is generalizing.

LILI

It's true. I hope your nana enjoys her new scale.

EXT. PET STORE - SAME

Shaelyn has three white rats in a clear carrier.

SHAELYN

(to rats)

Death is nigh for you hideous creatures. Circle of life and shit.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

DR. JAMES MOORE (late 50s) and his wife YVETTE (mid 30s) are get dinner ready. ELLIS (age 2) is in his high chair.

Shaelyn enters the kitchen with rats in carrier.

SHAELYN

(to ELLIS)

El, my little elephant. Give me kisses. And hugs. All the kisses and hugs.

JAMES

Hello, to you too.

SHAELYN

Greetings father and mother of my brother.

YVETTE

Are those rats? Eww.

SHAELYN

Rats make great pets. Don't they
baby elephant?

JAMES

(to Shaelyn)

Keeping them?

SHAELYN

Never. They are a gift for someone.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn puts the rat carrier on her desk. She sends a text
message to person saved as KING LION.

Shaelyn receives a response which reads: Sweet! Tools ready!

EXT. ANTIQUE STORE - NIGHT

Ramel, SERGIO (14) and TARIQ (14) stand in the rear of the
building. Sergio picks the lock.

SERGIO

Presto. I can't believe people
still use these bullshit ass locks
and no alarm.

Ramel and Tariq go inside. Sergio stays outside as the
lookout.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Tariq opens the cash register, but it is empty.

TARIQ

There's nothing in here. What's
that smell? I want pie now.

Ramel takes the golden fruit from its display and takes a
bite out of it.

RAMEL

Is edible. Tastes good. Retarded
old lady.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn receives a text message from KING LION that reads:
I'm outside. Bring the offering LOL

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn and KING (19) are on the curb by his car. King holds one of the rats.

KING

I think this one likes me.

SHAELYN

Or he thinks you have food for him.

KING

You didn't feed them?

SHAELYN

I gave them some potato chips. Does that count?

KING

Still not coming?

SHAELYN

Nope. Don't wanna. I'm tired. My bed needs me.

James opens the front door and yells at the them.

JAMES

Get lost, King.

KING

I can't. My sense of direction is impeccable.

JAMES

Impeccable? So is my left hook. Be gone.

Shaelyn gives King a kiss and pets the rat on the head.

SHAELYN

(to rat)

Rest in peace little vermin.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

Ramel, Tariq and Sergio walk to the store. Ramel walks slowly and bumps into things.

Sergio goes inside. Tariq notices that Ramel is acting strange.

TARIQ

What's wrong with you, man? Why you swaying?

RAMEL

I dont'know. I'm good. I'll wait out here.

TARIQ

You sure?

RAMEL

Yeah. I'll wait.

Tariq goes inside the store with Sergio. Ramel's vision is blurred. His heart rate has increased.

Ramel runs around the side of the building to vomit. He wipes his mouth on his sleeve. There are seeds left on his sleeve.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

James and Shaelyn share a bag of popcorn.

JAMES

Why do you like that weirdo? He looks so dingy.

SHAELYN

He smells washed. That's the important part.

JAMES

But you're not denying that he's weird.

SHAELYN

Nope. He is. Weird is acceptable.

JAMES

He needed you to get rats for him? He has a car and a job so-

SHAELYN

He was at work. Duh. You and Yvette should have another baby.

JAMES

What does that have to do with rats?

SHAELYN

Nothing. I think Ellis should have a playmate. I didn't have one and was bored shitless when I was kid.

JAMES

You're still a kid.

SHAELYN

My point is, being alone sucks. I'll be gone by the end of the year and he'll just have you old people.

INT. BANKS HOUSE - SAME

LHONDA BANKS (40ish) sits in the living room, watching tv. Ramel bursts in and immediately runs to the bathroom to vomit.

LHONDA
Mel? What's wrong, Mel? Your
stomach messed up?

Ramel doesn't respond. Lhonda follows him to the bathroom and finds him on the floor with his eyes open. The fruit is still in his hand.

Ramel hallucinates about a tropical paradise. A very tall tree is before him, bearing the same fruit that he stole.

All the fruit falls off. The tree shrivels up and dies. The paradise turns into a barren wasteland and Ramel loses consciousness.

INT. GARAGE - SAME

King takes each rat out of the carrier and nails them, still alive, to a wooden sign that has been painted white. He allows their blood to run down the sign then uses the blood to paint the message: PLANTS DON'T BLEED.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A crowd is gathered around the area where Ramel vomited. A tree has grown overnight that no one has ever seen before.

Tariq is in the crowd. He climbs the tree to get a fruit, but is stopped by WHITE SWORDSMAN (wearing, looks mid 20s). White Swordsman pulls Tariq down.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
(to crowd)
These are not to be eaten.

White Swordsman takes his sword from the scabbard. He points it at everyone gathered, in a threatening manner.

The crowd disperses except for Tariq.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
You have seen this fruit before?

TARIQ
Yesterday. My boy Mel ate one. Why
do you have a sword?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Because.

INT./EXT. KING'S CAR - SAME

King is in the driver's seat, Shaelyn is in the passenger's seat. They watch the crowd gathered around the bloody rat sign that was left outside a steakhouse.

SHAELYN

So classy.

KING

What? This is the most effective and most efficient way to get our message out. They're eating dead animals so why are they so horrified to see dead animals? Dead is dead. Animal is animal.

SHAELYN

I'm pretty sure none of those people would willingly eat a rat. But, it is kind of beautiful. Did you drown them first?

KING

No.

A police car pulls up to the scene and blocks their view.

SHAELYN

Punk ass cop.

KING

You should participate next time. You need to experience this. Just seeing the aftermath is not enough.

SHAELYN

I thought you guys were taking turns.

KING

We are. It's not my turn again for three more weeks.

SHAELYN

It's such a waste of money to buy them. Why not just catch some wild rabbits or something. They-

KING

No. They need to be white. White is a sign of purity. That's why wedding gowns are white.

SHAELYN

They should mostly be brown then. I'm sure most bridezillas are the biggest whores on Earth.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Ramel wakes up in bed. Lhonda, is in the chair beside his bed.

RAMEL

What happened?

LHONDA

You don't remember? You came home sick last night and fainted. I had to call an ambulance.

RAMEL

Tree.

LHONDA

What?

RAMEL

I saw this weird ass tree.

LHONDA

What did they put in that IV?

INT./EXT. KING'S CAR - SAME

King drives and sings along to the music. Shaelyn looks out of her window as they pass by the convenience store.

Shaelyn watches Tariq climb up the tree and grab a fruit.

SHAELYN

(to King)

What kind of tree is that?

KING

What?

SHAELYN

Never mind. You missed it.

King resumes singing. They arrive at a red light. Shaelyn sees BLACK SWORDSMAN (wearing black, sword in scabbard, looks mid 20s) sitting on the curb. Black Swordsman stares at her.

INT./EXT. LHONDA'S CAR - SAME

Lhonda parks in front of their house, just as Tariq arrives, eating the fruit that he took down. Ramel is in the passenger's seat and has it reclined and eyes closed.

LHONDA

Ramel, wake up.

RAMEL

Not sleep.

LHONDA

Your blockhead friend is here.

Lhonda lets Ramel's window down to yell at Tariq.

LHONDA

Mel is sick. Try again in a few days, Tariq.

TARIQ

He's faking.

LHONDA

He's not. Go away, boy or I'm calling your father.

Ramel lets his seat up and sees Tariq eating the fruit. He jumps out of the car, but is too weak to stand up and falls.

EXT. CAFE - SAME

James and Yvette are having lunch.

JAMES

Guess what Shae suggested last night.

YVETTE

That we go vegan? Fat chance. I love meat.

JAMES

No. Not even close. She said we should have another baby.

YVETTE

Seriously? Does she not know--

JAMES

How would she know? I didn't tell her and you never would. She said Ellis needs a playmate so he won't be alone.

YVETTE

Well, if she says anything to me, I'll tell her why that won't happen.

JAMES

She was alone for fifteen years. It never even occurred to me that she might be lonely. She also called us old.

YVETTE

You're old. I'm not.

EXT. BANKS HOUSE - SAME

Tariq holds the fruit out of Ramel's reach, because Ramel is trying to take it from him.

Ramel struggles to stay upright and focused.

RAMEL

Don't eat that.

Lhonda catches Tariq by the wrist to get a good look at what he's holding.

LHONDA

What is this? Something foreign?

TARIQ

I got it off a tree down the street

LHONDA

You dumbass. It could be poisonous.

RAMEL

It is. Don't eat that. I had one yesterday. Where is it? Did you throw it away?

LHONDA

It's in the trashcan. Give me this, boy.

Lhonda takes the fruit from Tariq. Tariq sees Sergio coming their way and runs to him.

LHONDA

(yelling at Tariq)

Don't you go get another one!

EXT. BRIDGE - SAME

Shaelyn and King stand on the bridge, watching the sun set.

KING

What do you want to be reincarnated as? I think I want to be a cat. A Maine Coon. A big thirty pound Maine Coon.

SHAELYN

I don't believe in that stuff. When I die, I'm dead. The end. No epilogue or encore.

KING

Why do you come here, then? And I'm not being an asshole. If you don't think there is life after death, then, doesn't that make life meaningless?

INT. BANKS HOUSE, BATHROOM - SAME

Ramel rummages through the trashcan to find the fruit, but it has decayed beyond the point of recognition.

A slimy, black "worm" weaves in out of ragged holes in the flesh. Ramel covers his nose because it smells terrible.

Ramel drops the rotten fruit back in the trashcan and collapses. Decay spreads from his hands and up his arms.

EXT. BRIDGE - SAME

Shaelyn has a tan, plush teddy bear in her hands. It wears a pink dress and a black, yarn wig.

Shaelyn removes a picture from her pocket of a tan woman, who wears a pink dress and has short, black hair.

KING

Your mom was cute.

SHAELYN

What a weird thing to say.

KING

Saying nothing would make this even more awkward. I can't relate. Do you remember anything about her?

SHAELYN

No. I only know what I've been told, which may or may not be true.

Shaelyn uses a short string to tie the bear to the rail.

SHAELYN

RIP, Mommy. I don't remember you, but I heard you rocked.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - SAME

Tariq and Sergio pass by while a game is in progress. PLAYER #1 stops the game and yells across the court at them.

PLAYER #1

Sergio! Yo, Serg! Where the money you owe me, my man.

SERGIO

I don't owe you shit!

PLAYER #1
A bet is a bet, my dude!

SERGIO
I didn't bet,shit. Nice try,
homie.

Tariq runs to a garbage can to vomit and drops the fruit in
as well.

SERGIO
You alright?

TARIQ
I probably shouldn't have eaten
that.

SERGIO
What is it?

TARIQ
I don't know.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shaelyn is at her sewing machine, with a book of baby
clothes patterns open. She flips through the pages and finds
a pattern for footed pajamas.

Ellis toddles into Shaelyn's room and goes into her open
closet.

SHAELYN
Baby elephant, I see you.

ELLIS
See you.

SHAELYN
Are you my baby elephant?

ELLIS
Elephant? I elephant.

Shaelyn takes a soft measuring tape from her desk drawer and
measures Ellis' height, inseam, arms and neck.

SHAELYN
I think I might be ready to make
something big enough for you to
wear.

Yvette comes into Shaelyn's room.

YVETTE
(to Ellis)
It's bedtime, El. Come on, rascal.

Ellis runs out of the room. Yvette looks both ways down the hall before speaking.

YVETTE

Your dad told me about your request.

SHAELYN

He did?

YVETTE

He did and it's not one that we can grant. I get where you're coming from. You know what kind of family I had, but we can't. Ellis wasn't an oops. He was the result of years of disappointment. I don't think we'll get that lucky again.

INT. BANKS HOUSE - DAY

Lhonda prepares to leave. She checks Ramel's room; he is not there. She knocks on the bathroom door, but there is no answer.

LHONDA

Mel? Are you in there? I'm on my way out. Mel? Ramel?

Lhonda opens the bathroom door to find Ramel's badly decayed corpse on the floor. A slimy, black worm slithers out of his eye hole. She screams.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - SAME

DRS. RENNAY FOSTER (late 30s) and DREW HALL (mid 30s) examine Ramel's body together.

DR. HALL

This is the grossest thing I've ever seen.

DR. FOSTER

I would have to agree with that, but don't quote me.

DR. HALL

Why not?

DR. FOSTER

We are supposed to be above gross out, but this. How did this even happen?

DR. HALL

He was discharged from the hospital yesterday morning, so how does a body get this decomposed in a day?

Dr. Foster sees a worm coming out of Ramel's ear. She removes it and places it on a petri dish.

DR. FOSTER
Look. We have a stowaway.

DR. HALL
Eww.

EXT. NEIGHBOORHOOD - SAME

Shaelyn walks down the street and sees a white cat. She follows it at a distance before trying to catch it.

SHAELYN
(to cat)
Come here, kitty. Let's see if you have a collar. No, no, no. Don't go that way.

Shaelyn follows the cat into an alley that is behind a seafood restaurant. She corners the cat and catches it.

SHAELYN
No collar? Seriously. You look expensive. And suspiciously clean. Did you escape?

Shaelyn takes the cat back to the street and keeps walking. A car horn honks, prompting her to turn around. It's King.

KING
(out of window)
Whose cat?

SHAELYN
I don't know. I just found it.

KING
Keeping it?

SHAELYN
No. I don't want it. I should take it to the pound.

KING
Bring it. Bring it. It's perfect.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE - SAME

James Moore, Dr. Foster, and Dr. Hall have a meeting.

DR. FOSTER

(to James)

Will we get more from you than a
furrowed brow?

JAMES

Yes. I need to speak with his
mother.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Tariq struggles to stay upright. He tries to signal help
from a doctor or nurse, but there is too much noise for them
to notice him.

Tariq vomits in the ER. His vomit is composed of mainly
seeds. He faints, which gets the attention of DR. IAN PORTER
(mid 30s).

EXT. GARAGE - SAME

King and Shaelyn stand outside talking to BEN (27).

KING

Look what Shae found for you.

BEN

Thank you, Shae. How kind of you.
Participating?

SHAELYN

No.

Shaelyn gives the cat to Ben, who holds it up by the scruff.

BEN

You, dear fluffy furball, will be
our best exhibit yet.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James interviews Lhonda regarding Ramel's condition before
and after his hospital admission. She has tears streaming
the whole time.

JAMES

I am recording this, for medical
purposes only. I must know, what
prompted the ambulance call.

LHONDA

He passed out. He's never fainted
or had a seizure or anything like
that.

JAMES

His behavior before then?

LHONDA

He threw up. Seemed like his stomach was upset. It happens to all of us.

JAMES

You said he had eaten a type of fruit that you've never seen before. Where did he get it?

LHONDA

That, I don't know.

The interview is interrupted by Dr. Foster, who sticks his head in the room.

DR. FOSTER

Dr. Moore, we need you in the ER. Like, right now.

JAMES

This can't wait? There are five mds on call-

DR. FOSTER

We have another possible case. He's still alive.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Drs. Moore, Foster, Hall and Porter are around Tariq's bed. He is stable and hooked up to an IV.

James checks Tariq's eyes with a pen light.

TARIQ

You trying to blind me?

JAMES

We're awake. Good. Can we have a name?

TARIQ

Where am I?

JAMES

The hospital. You came in alone. How did you get here?

TARIQ

I walked.

DR. HALL

What is your name? We need to call your parents.

TARIQ

Tariq. Tariq Ali. I need a phone. I need to call Mel.

DR. PORTER

Who is this Mel woman? A relative
of yours?

TARIQ

My boy Ramel. He was sick the other
day. Those weird ass
apple-pear-plum things, whatever
they are, they're poisonous.

JAMES

(to Dr. Foster)
Get Ms. Banks, please.

INT. GARAGE - SAME

Ben, Shaelyn and King are inside Ben's garage with the door
closed. Ben releases the cat, which immediately tries to
find an escape.

BEN

Why are you being so resistant,
Shaelyn?

SHAELYN

Because I can be.

BEN

But we need all the participation
we can get. We can grow. Branch
out. Spread worldwide.

Ben catches the cat and holds it on his work table. He grabs
a hammer and beats the cat to death with it.

BEN

(to Shaelyn)
I've done the hard part, now you
can be the artist.

King gets a white, wood sign and paint brush for Shaelyn.
She accepts it and uses the cat's blood to paint the
message: WE CAN LIVE WITHOUT DEATH.

BEN

Perfect.

Ben uses six tent stakes to nail the cat's body to the sign.
He puts both hands in the blood and puts bloody hand prints
on Shaelyn's face.

KING

Welcome to the club.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - SAME

Dr. Hall parks his car at the curb and digs the remainder of
Tariq's fruit out of the trashcan. Dr. Hall places the fruit

into a ziploc bag and writes SAMPLE 1 on the bag with a black marker.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili sits on a stool behind the counter. Black Swordsman comes in and pretends to be browsing.

LILI
(to Black Swordsman)
Did you miss me?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
No. Never. I hate seeing you. No matter what face you wear.

LILI
Hate? Are you allowed to hate anything?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Yes. I am. Without hate, love would be unknown. And here we are again. Again. And again.

LILI
And you love it.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

Dr. Foster stands at the base of the tree, trying to grab a fruit, but she is too short.

White Swordsman appears behind her and startles her.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Need some help?

DR. FOSTER
Yeah. I'm on a case and need a fresh sample.

White Swordsman gets a fruit down for Dr. Foster and gives it to her.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Don't eat it or let anyone else eat.

DR. FOSTER
I can't eat lab samples.

White Swordsman takes another fruit down and bites into it.

DR. FOSTER
That might be poisonous.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
It is.

White Swordsman walks away while Dr. Foster stares at him.

INT./EXT. KING'S CAR - SAME

King drives, while, Shaelyn looks at her face in the drop down mirror on the passenger's side.

KING

Are you going to wash that off?

SHAELYN

Eventually.

KING

How's it feel?

SHAELYN

What?

KING

To officially be a member?

SHAELYN

Fine. I guess.

KING

You have got to be the most neutral person I have ever known.

SHAELYN

Thank you.

KING

It wasn't a compliment, dorkette. You're just so...blah and whatever about everything. Seriously, what is the most evil thing you've ever done?

SHAELYN

Nothing.

KING

Nothing? Nothing at all? No pranks no skipping class or pretending to be sick? Ever trip a kid or push an old person? Nothing?

SHAELYN

Nothing.

KING

Okay. What is the kindest thing you've ever done? Secret santa? Blood donation?

SHAELYN

Nothing.

KING

Neutral. I challenge you to do something evil. Like, totally and unforgivably wicked.

SHAELYN

I have cat blood on my face and I'm not that bothered by it. Isn't that wicked enough?

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Drs. Foster and Hall study the fruit samples from the tree and the partially eaten one from the trashcan.

DR. HALL

Anything?

DR. FOSTER

Nope. I have no idea what this is. I have an image search going and soon as we get a match, we'll have somewhere to start.

DR. HALL

We should ask the owner of that property to cut the tree down.

DR. FOSTER

We need more evidence first.

The computer in the background dings, indicating a match found. Dr. Foster leaves the work station to verify.

DR. HALL

Indigenous to?

DR. FOSTER

Fables.

DR. HALL

Pardon?

DR. FOSTER

This match is for a painting of the Garden of Eden. This is bullshit. I need real answers.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Lhonda visits Tariq in a private room. He is in bed watching tv with the sound off.

LHONDA

Your father is on his way.

TARIQ

Finally. Where is Mel? I asked one of the nurses, but she wouldn't tell me. Is he here?

Lhonda is reluctant tell Tariq the truth. Dr. Porter interrupts them, before she can.

DR. PORTER

How are we doing Mr. Ali?

TARIQ

Swell.

DR. PORTER

Awesome. Quick question for you. Did your friend, Ramel, get his sample from the same tree?

TARIQ

Sample?

DR. PORTER

Fruit. The fruit, I mean, did it come from the same tree? As far as we know, it's the only one of it's kind, but--

TARIQ

Why?

DR. PORTER

We need to narrow down some options here. If he got his from elsewhere, we need to know where.

TARIQ

Go ask him.

Dr. Porter realizes that Lhonda has not told Tariq that Ramel died. Dr. Porter closes the door and locks it.

DR. PORTER

Ms. Banks?

LHONDA

Tariq, Mel is gone. I found him in the bathroom this morning. He was too far gone to be saved.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Shaelyn rummages through rolls of fabric in her closet. She chooses a roll of white terrycloth.

Yvette stands in the door with Ellis already asleep in her arms.

YVETTE

James told me tell you that he might not be home tonight.

SHAELYN

Message received.

YVETTE

Why do you always sound so bored?

SHAELYN

I am always so bored.

YVETTE

What are we making?

SHAELYN

Pajamas for my elephant.

YVETTE

White? Of all colors you choose the one color that every speck of dirt will show on.

SHAELYN

We're all specks of dirt anyway.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

RASHAD ALI (late 40s), Tariq's father, bursts into the room.

RASHAD

(to Tariq)

Get up. Get dressed.

LHONDA

Rashad, can you not be an asshole for one day?

RASHAD

Not in the mood, Lhonda. Not today.

Lhonda rips the hospital phone out of the wall and throws it at Rashad.

LHONDA

Mood? Your mood? I lost my son today and you think I give a damn about your mood?

NURSE #1 and NURSE #2 run into the room to see what the commotion is all about. Lhonda falls to the floor and cries.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

The lights are all off. Lili and Black Swordsman sit in the dark.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
You can hear it, can't you?

LILI
Of course. You can't make me feel guilty.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
You don't need to feel guilt. You need to feel empathy.

LILI
Empathy? Remind me how that's spelled.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Broken. She is completely broken.

LILI
She raised a thief. Her fault, not mine.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James explains to Rashad why Tariq shouldn't leave yet, while Lhonda sits in the corner.

RASHAD
This don't sound right.

JAMES
I know. It's horrifying.

RASHAD
I mean, I never heard of no fruit or vegetable that can do that. You sure it was something he ate? I'm not buying it.

JAMES
Even if there is a percentage of a chance that we are wrong, would it hurt for him to stay the night? Just for observation. If he takes a turn for the worse, this is the best place for him to be.

Lhonda glares at Rashad, waiting for a response. Rashad is uncomfortable being stared down by Lhonda and James.

RASHAD
Fine. Fine, but I have to work in the morning. Call me if anything happens.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

White Swordsman guards the tree. PROPERTY OWNER pulls up and gets out of his car.

PROPERTY OWNER
 (to White Swordsman)
 Are you a customer?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
 No.

PROPERTY OWNER
 Then beat it. Go hang out
 elsewhere.

White Swordsman doesn't move. Property Owner takes a camera out of his pocket and takes pictures of the tree.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
 They would turn out better with
 sunlight.

PROPER OWNER
 Thanks for the tip. Why are you
 here?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
 Because.

Property Owner takes a fruit from the tree to get a better look at it.

PROPERTY OWNER
 What is this? Doesn't look like
 anything I've ever seen.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
 Asking me?

PROPERTY OWNER
 Thinking out loud.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
 You've never seen it and you never
 will again after this one dies.

PROPER OWNER
 And you know this how? Get the fuck
 out of here, man.

White Swordsman takes a fruit from the tree and walks away eating it.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Drs. Foster and Hall continue to research the fruit. Dr. Foster has printed several paintings and drawings of the fruit but no real scientific evidence. Dr. Hall has fallen asleep at his work station.

DR. FOSTER
 What is that smell?

DR. HALL

What? Huh?

DR. FOSTER

You weren't napping were you?

DR. HALL

No. Of course not. Anything new?

DR. FOSTER

No. Three paintings. One in color.
Two amateur sketches done in
pencil. This is hopeless. What is
that? Something stinks.

Dr. Hall realizes the fruit that Tariq had partially eaten has decomposed into a slimy, black mess.

DR. HALL

Rennay, look at that.

Dr. Foster watches a slimy, black "worm" slither out of the remainder of the fruit.

DR. FOSTER

Can you go check on Ali? Run.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Tariq is asleep. Dr. Hall enters his room and checks his upper body for any signs of decay.

Dr. Hall is relieved that Tariq shows no signs of decomposition. Tariq's eyes open when Dr. Hall touches his arm.

DR. HALL

Sorry to wake you. How do you feel?

Tariq doesn't respond. Dr. Hall gets a whiff of something foul. He pulls back Tariq's blanket and sees the decay starting at his feet and moving up his legs.

Dr. Hall is too shocked to react, until NURSE #1 comes in.

NURSE #1

Dr. Hall? Oh my god, what is that
smell?

Nurse #1 looks at Tariq's lower body and screams as black decay spreads up. His skin shrivels and muscles atrophy before their eyes.

Nurse #2 runs into the room and immediately back away due to the smell. James comes into the room and watches Tariq's chest cavity collapse.

JAMES

What the fuck?

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili and Black Swordsman sit in the dark still.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
And there goes the second.

LILI
Smells so good.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Have you chosen one yet?

LILI
No, but I will. Younger than the
last. Much younger.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM - SAME

Dr. Hall stares, blankly at a wall. Dr. Foster joins him at the table, but he does not acknowledge her.

DR. FOSTER
Drew? You can go home. Taylor will
take over. Drew?

Dr. Foster waves her hand in front of Dr. Hall's face. He blinks in response to it, but does not move or speak.

INT. MORGUE - SAME

Rashad waits to see Tariq's body. When Dr. Porter removes the cloth from Tariq's corpse, Rashad falls apart.

RASHAD
That's not him. That is not my son!
Why he look like that?

DR. PORTER
We need your permission to do an
autopsy.

RASHAD
You want to dissect him like a lab
animal? No.

DR. PORTER
We need answers. Right now we have
nothing else to offer you.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili pours two glasses of wine. The only light is coming in from outside.

Black Swordsman opens his hand to show Lili a seed.

LILI

You found one for me? I knew you loved me.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

I despise you, but this is how it goes.

LILI

Until next time. Here, have a drink.

Black Swordsman accepts the wine and drinks the entire glass. His eyes are illuminated as burning embers.

LILI

Still beautiful, everytime I see them. Why do you hide them.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

I hide nothing. Take this.

Lili accepts the seed from Black Swordsman. It grows into a full ripened fruit in the palm of her hand. Lili changes into her "true" form, which is younger and more attractive.

LILI

You are too sweet. You really are.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

Fuck you.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM - SAME

Drs. Foster and Hall work on Tariq's body.

DR. FOSTER

Why are you still here?

DR. HALL

I need a conclusion. I don't like unanswered question.

DR. SKYE TAYLOR (late 20s) enters the autopsy room.

DR. TAYLOR

(to Dr. Hall)

You're still here? I thought you were leaving.

DR. HALL

I never said I would.

DR. TAYLOR

Dr. Moore told me what happened. That must have been cool to see.

DR. HALL

It wasn't cool at all. Seeing a fourteen year old boy decompose in real time is not cool. But, call it what you want.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

James takes a fruit from the tree and takes a picture of it. He sends a group text, with the picture attached, to all of his contacts.

Along with the attached photo he sends the message: If you see this, DO NO EAT IT.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn packs her handmade plush animals into boxes for her customers. She has at least a dozen orders on the way out.

James knocks on Shaelyn's door.

JAMES

Shaely, open up. I need to show you something.

Shaelyn opens the door for James and continues checking over her invoices and taping up boxes.

SHAELYN

I got your text, if that's what you want.

JAMES

I want you to see it in person and smell it.

Shaelyn takes the fruit out of his hand and pretends to lick it.

JAMES

Don't do that. Two boys died after eating these.

SHAELYN

Allergic?

JAMES

It's toxic.

SHAELYN

It smells good. This should be a body spray.

JAMES

Just don't eat it and if you see anybody with one, spread the warning. If it's not too much trouble.

SHAELYN

Sure. Whatever you say, doc.

Shaelyn tosses the fruit back to James.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

Property Owner has nailed a sign into the ground near the tree that reads: NOT FREE, PURCHASE INSIDE.

Property Owner climbs a ladder and pulls down all the fruit from the tree. He tosses them into a woven basket on the ground.

White Swordsman picks the basket up.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Thank you. That was so helpful of you.

PROPERTY OWNER

Nigga. If you don't put that down, I'm going to jail today.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Nigga? I am not familiar with this term. Is it slang for something?

PROPERTY OWNER

I swear to god...

White Swordsman's eyes turn to burning embers, but Property Owner does not notice this.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Harvesting. That's what you're doing. You weren't planning to sell these were you?

PROPERTY OWNER

Yes. That's is exactly what I plan to do.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

They are poisonous.

PROPERTY OWNER

You ate one and you're still alive. For some reason.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

I am very alive as I can't actually die.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn is at the post office, with her entire car filled with packages to be mailed.

King calls her cellphone and she puts him on speakerphone.

SHAELYN

What?

KING

You sound so happy to hear from me.

SHAELYN

I'm busy.

KING

I only called to invite you to a party tonight.

SHAELYN

Seriously? Who throws parties on Thursday?

KING

Cool people, that's who. Come. Join us. Be social.

SHAELYN

Yeah. Sure. Where?

KING

Ben's place. It's at eight. Want to ride with me?

SHAELYN

No. I'll drive, just in case I regret going and want to leave.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM - SAME

Dr. Hall is stretched out on the couch with his eyes closed. Dr. Porter enters the break room to use the vending machines.

DR. PORTER

Drew.

DR. HALL

Ian.

DR. PORTER

Why won't you go home?

DR. HALL

I can't.

DR. PORTER

We all need rest.

DR. HALL

I'm not tired. I am frustrated. Rest won't fix that.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

James sits at the table with his laptop open. Ellis runs into the kitchen and crawls under the table.

Yvette enters the kitchen with a towel over her shoulder.

YVETTE

I wonder where Ellis might be? Is he under the table?

Ellis crawls out from under the table and tries to run out of the kitchen. Yvette catches him.

YVETTE

Still nothing?

JAMES

No. Nothing useful.

YVETTE

Where's Shae? She's been gone all day.

JAMES

Orders to ship.

YVETTE

That takes all day?

JAMES

I don't know. Maybe with King.

YVETTE

Was she happy before we met?

James finally looks away from his computer screen.

JAMES

What kind of question is that?

YVETTE

She never seems happy. She just seems so uninterested in everything.

JAMES

She's always been that way.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

There are less than twenty people at the party. The music is insanely loud. The attendees drink alcohol and do drugs in plain view.

Shaelyn finds King and Ben in the kitchen. There is a cage on the table with a white rabbit in it.

KING
Welcome, Shae. Welcome.

BEN
You actually came. I am surprised.
Surprised, I say.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili and Black Swordsman sit in the dark, the only light is coming from outside.

LILI
She'll do it.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Maybe she won't.

LILI
She will.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

YOUNG BOY #1, YOUNG BOY #2 and YOUNG GIRL are around the tree. (They are all around 9)

YOUNG BOY #1
(to Young Boy#2)
Give me a boost.

YOUNG BOY #2
No. You're too fat. You might fall
on me.

YOUNG GIRL
Lift me. I'm not fat.

Young Boy #1 and Young Boy #2 lift Young Girl. She pulls down three fruits from the tree.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili drinks wine straight from the bottle. She holds it to Black Swordsman.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
No, thanks.

LILI
Human children are the dumbest
creatures on the planet.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
They are the most precious.

LILI
Enjoy those, precious little
thieving brats. And may all three
of you rest in peace.

INT. BEN'S GARAGE - SAME

Ben, King and Shaelyn are in the garage, while the party continues in the house. The white rabbit has been brought out with them.

Ben gives Shaelyn a hammer.

BEN

You know why we only use white sacrifices?

SHAELYN

White is symbolic of purity.

BEN

Exactly. And what is the significance of the color white being stained red?

SHAELYN

There is no significance. You're just trying to sound deep.

BEN

(to King)

Why must your girl be so difficult?

King is high and drunk. He just laughs and pokes the rabbit with a paint brush.

BEN

The staining of white with red, is a sign of the pure being defiled. You notice how repulsed and disgusted people are when they see blood? Do you think they'd react the same way, if blood was purple or blue?

SHAELYN

Probably not.

BEN

Stain this sacrifice. Show us and them and everyone who sees the sign, how repulsed and disgusted you are when you see them chomping and chewing on dead flesh.

Shaelyn is hesitant to kill the rabbit, until King pokes it in the eye with the paint brush handle.

Shaelyn bashes the rabbit in the head until it stops moving. Ben gets a new paint brush and a blank, wooden sign.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili applauds and laughs.

LILI

Good girl. You are getting so close.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

That was a mercy kill. I do believe her moron boyfriend would have tortured it.

LILI

Doesn't matter. She still did it. Little step and soon a big leap. Are you excited?

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Young Boy #2 and Young Girl are wheeled into the ER. Dr. Taylor listens to EMTs #1 and #2 explain to Dr. Porter what happened to them.

EMT #1

They ate something toxic

DR. PORTER

Fruit?

EMT #2

Yeah. How did you know?

Dr. Taylor runs from the ER.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, BEDROOM - SAME

James gets dressed. Yvette enters with Ellis sleeping in her arms.

YVETTE

Going back to work?

JAMES

Yes. Two more. Under twelve. I wouldn't be surprised if they're both dead by the time I get there.

YVETTE

You sound defeated.

JAMES

Maybe I am.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - SAME

Ben and King are in the kitchen. Shaelyn is in the living room, looking at her phone.

Ben takes a drink to Shaelyn. He has drugged her drink, but she does not realize, nor does King.

BEN
(to Shaelyn)
Have a drink.

SHAELYN
Thanks.

Shaelyn accepts the drink from Ben, but doesn't drink any of it. Shaelyn stands up.

SHAELYN
I'm going outside for a minute. I can't hear anything in here. Tell King if he asks where I am.

BEN
Will do.

Shaelyn goes out in the front of the house with her cup.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Young Boy #2 has passed away. Drs. Foster, Hall, and Taylor all watch from a distance as his body is wheeled away to the morgue.

DR. TAYLOR
What was his name?

DR.FOSTER
We don't know yet. He passed out on the sidewalk. A passerby called an ambulance.

DR. HALL
The girl is still alive?

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn pours her drink in the grass and looks inside the bottom of the cup.

Shaelyn uses her finger to feel a gritty substance in her cup. Shaelyn goes to her car to leave, but changes her mind.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili grabs Black Swordsman by the face and forces a kiss on him. He wipes the kiss off and Lili laughs.

LILI
What do you think her reaction will be?

BLACK SWORDSMAN

It's not funny.

LILI

Oh, but it is though.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn walks through the house looking for King and Ben, but they are nowhere to be seen.

SHAELYN

(to PARTY GIRL)

Where's Ben?

PARTY GIRL points upstairs. Shaelyn goes upstairs, where the master bedroom door is open. She sees King fellating Ben.

Shaelyn back away and descends the stairs without making a sound. King and Ben do not see her.

EXT. BRIDGE - SAME

Shaelyn is parked on the bridge that she tied the plush bear to. She looks over the railing at the water below.

Shaelyn removes the bear from the railing and throws it into the water.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn drives by the convenience store where the tree is. She sees two homeless men pick fruit from it. She doesn't try to stop them.

Shaelyn continues driving and stops at a red light near Lili's antique shop. Black Swordsman stands in the middle of her lane and won't move when the light turns green.

Shaelyn inches around him and flips him off.

SHAELYN

Get out of the road, dipshit!

Black Swordsman slices her driver's side tires out with his sword. Shaelyn is forced to park at the curb next to the antique shop.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili turns the lights on. She is back to appearing as an older woman.

Lili looks through the blinds at Shaelyn and Black Swordsman. Shaelyn has gotten out of her car and walks towards the store.

Lili opens the door.

SHAELYN

Can I wait in here, please? That
assclown just slashed my tires.

LILI

Come on in. Come in. Don't pay him
any mind.

SHAELYN

You know that guy?

LILI

Yes. He's an associate of mine.
He's always been a bit off.

Lili peeks around Shaelyn to look at Black Swordsman, who is still outside. He leans against the lamp post and his eyes are burning embers.

LILI

You look frazzled.

SHAELYN

I am. I just saw something that I
can never unsee.

LILI

I've seen a lot myself.

Shaelyn notices a fruit in a clear, acrylic display case on the counter.

SHAELYN

You weren't going to eat that were
you? My dad said it's toxic.

LILI

It is. It's just for decoration.

SHAELYN

Won't it rot?

LILI

No. Not ever. But anyone who ate it
would. They would decay from the
inside out.

INT. MORGUE - SAME

James looks at the remains of Young Girl. Her body is almost entirely decayed. A slimy, black worm slithers out of one of her eye sockets.

James picks the worm up and squishes it between his fingers. There is an usually large amount of blood left on his gloved hand.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Drs. Foster, Porter and Hall look over the few leads that they have. They have the paintings and drawings of the fruit, pictures of the deceased and microscope closeups of the slimy, black "worms".

DR. PORTER

If this is being translated properly then we are pointed to a make believe place of origin.

DR. HALL

It's all we have at the moment. Historically speaking, the existence of Eden was never proven, but it hasn't been disproven either.

DR. PORTER

It's a fairytale. And a bad one at that.

DR. HALL

It may have been a legend that got twisted and distorted into religious mythology, but it could have been a real place at some point, just lost to time.

An all-in-one printer/copier/fax machine spits out a notice for them. Dr. Foster retrieves it.

DR. HALL

More bad news?

DR. FOSTER

It's about the worm. It's not actually a worm. It's a snake.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili motions for Shaelyn to look outside.

LILI

Looks like your tow truck is here. Take this.

Lili gives Shaelyn her fruit, still in the case.

SHAELYN

What do I need it for?

LILI

You don't need it, but you might want it. Someday.

Shaelyn accepts the fruit and leaves the shop.

EXT. WOODED AREA - SAME

White Swordsman walks through the trees, dragging the end of his sword. The line that he has made, glows like fire before leaving the ground scorched.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn kicks her shoes off and sits at her sewing machine. She draws a quick sketch of a hideous beast with a crown on it's head. It has the body of a black bear, the head of a boar, with a red devil's tail and horns.

Yvette comes into Shaelyn's room.

YVETTE

Where's your car?

SHAELYN

I had it towed. Some hobo slashed two of my tires.

YVETTE

Did you call the police?

SHAELYN

No. For what?

YVETTE

Destruction of property.

SHAELYN

Not worth the hassle. I'm guessing the doc went back to work.

YVETTE

He did. He was called back. The case he's on is a mysterious one. Four fatalities confirmed. Likely connected, but no proof.

SHAELYN

They ate that weird fruit he showed us.

YVETTE

Yes, as far as they know.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - SAME

White Swordsman walks across the tracks when he spots another tree bearing the deadly fruit. OLD MAN knocks three of them down with his cane and catches them in a hat.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

(to Old Man)

Don't eat that! It's poisonous.

Old Man doesn't seem to notice White Swordsman. White Swordsman realizes Old Man is deaf and runs to him and waves in his face.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Hello. Can you hear me?

OLD MAN
No.

White Swordsman points to fruit then makes a slashing motion across his throat.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
You'll die. Get it? If you eat these, you'll die.

PREGNANT WOMAN comes out on the porch of the house closest to the tracks.

PREGNANT WOMAN
He can't hear you. What you want?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
This fruit is poisonous. Don't eat them.

PREGNANT WOMAN
Uhuh. Sure.

BABY'S FATHER comes out on the porch.

BABY'S FATHER
(to PREGNANT WOMAN)
They still ain't find them yet, so they're checking the hospitals.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Tell them, whoever 'them' may be, to check the morgue.

BABY'S FATHER
Who is this idiot?

PREGNANT WOMAN
Nobody.

White Swordsman continues on, but turns around to see Pregnant Woman take a fruit out of the hat and take a bite.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili puts on a record and opens a bottle of champagne. Black Swordsman polishes his blade with his shirt.

LILI
See? Completely painless.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Painless? For who?

LILI
Whom. I think. Is it who or whom?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Who cares.

LILI
She'll do it. She will.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
She might not.

LILI
She will.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - DAY

Shaelyn colors her sketch from the previous day. Her cellphone dings, indicating a text message.

Shaelyn looks at her phone. She grabs her purse and runs out of the house.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

A cab is outside waiting for Shaelyn. King pulls up and parks at the curb.

KING
This for you?

SHAELYN
Yes, it is.

KING
Why'd you leave last night. I was looking for you.

SHAELYN
I had a revelation.

KING
Revelation? About what?

The cabbie honks the horn.

KING
Where's your car?

SHAELYN
I'm going to pick it up.

Shaelyn gets in the cab and slams the door.

INT. MORGUE - SAME

James stands over the covered remains of Young Girl. On top of her body are pictures of what she looked like when alive.

Dr. Foster enters the morgue.

DR. FOSTER

Quick thinking on the nurses' part, wasn't it?

JAMES

Yup.

DR. FOSTER

I honestly didn't even think to do that. Maybe we should let the nurses take over.

JAMES

Sounds like a plan. I don't know how much longer I can take this.

DR. FOSTER

It is gruesome, but--

JAMES

It's not just that. I can handle gore. It comes with the job. Do you know how many miscarriages Yvette had before we had Ellis?

DR. FOSTER

More than two?

JAMES

Eight. I don't know what circumstances these kids were born under, but it destroys me to think that they may have been like El. A last hope. Only to be taken away like this.

EXT. AUTO REPAIR SHOP - SAME

Shaelyn's tires have been replaced. She has her keys out and is ready to leave. King honks his horn at her and jumps out of his car.

KING

Hello, there. I am the owner of a completely functional piece of technology known as a vehicle.

SHAELYN

No shit.

KING

Are we playing the Be Mad But Don't
Tell My Boyfriend Why game?

SHAELYN

There is no game.

KING

There is what then? PMS? Negative
feedback from a sale? What?

SHAELYN

You seriously don't know?

KING

No. But I would if you, you know,
tell me.

King follows Shaelyn to her car and looks through the
window.

KING

What is that? Freakiest looking
mutant apple I've ever seen.

SHAELYN

I don't think it's an apple.

Shaelyn unlocks her car door. King grabs her arm and turns
her around. Shaelyn sees a black spot on King's lip.

SHAELYN

What is that?

KING

What?

Shaelyn watches the spot spread across King's lips and face.
She closes her eyes for a second and when she opens them,
the spot is gone.

King leans in for a kiss on the lips, but Shaelyn blocks it
with her purse.

SHAELYN

I think I might have something
contagious.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn sits in her car, in the hospital parking lot. She
picks up the cup from the party and opens her car door.

Shaelyn watches a group of doctors go inside. She drops the
cup back in the passenger's seat beside the fruit and gets
out of her car.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn sees Dr. Foster standing at the nurses' station. Dr. Foster looks very unhappy.

SHAELYN

You look sad as fuck.

DR. FOSTER

When children are dying around you and you can't do anything about it, you tend to be sad.

SHAELYN

Oh. Where's--

DR. FOSTER

Morgue.

INT. MORGUE, VIEWING ROOM - SAME

James sits on a stool in the corner. Shaelyn knocks on the window between the viewing room and cold room.

James joins Shaelyn in the viewing room.

JAMES

What's up?

SHAELYN

You tell me. What's going on around here?

JAMES

We can't isolate the compound causing this. The victims decompose from the inside out after eating whatever the hell that fruit is and we have not been able to establish a connection beyond happenstance. Come in here, with me. I want you to see it up close.

SHAELYN

What?

INT. COLD ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn is dressed up in full scrubs and mask. James has her a few feet away from the remains of Young Girl. James unzips the body bag.

JAMES

Look at this. Don't touch, just look.

SHAELYN
How long has she been dead?

JAMES
Less than twenty-four hours.

SHAELYN
Wow.

JAMES
Yeah.

SHAELYN
I can't tell how old she was, she looks short. Maybe ten?

JAMES
Approximately.

SHAELYN
Her parents must be distraught.

JAMES
They don't know yet. We're waiting for someone, relative or police, to come calling, looking for a girl who fits her description. The nurses had the foresight to take before pictures of her.

EXT. CHURCH - SAME

CHURCH LADY and CHURCH MAN exit the building. Church Lady makes a terrible face and fans the air.

CHURCH LADY
What is that awful smell?

CHURCH MAN
Smell? What smell? Smells like rotten fruit.

CHURCH LADY
Rotten fruit and something dead.

Church Lady and Church Man descend the steps and see the body of Young Boy #1 in the bushes.

CHURCH LADY
Lord in heaven!

INT. FABRIC STORE - SAME

Shaelyn has a shopping cart full of supplies, which includes red felt.

Shaelyn's phone dings to indicate a text message. The message is from James (who is saved as Doc). His message reads: Another one. Already gone.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Dr. Taylor and Dr. Porter look over photographs and notes from all deceased.

DR. TAYLOR

This latest boy was found six blocks away from the tree. Assuming that there is only one tree, he didn't make it very far. Is it just me, or is death coming sooner with each case?

DR. PORTER

Maybe. Or it may just be their age and or size. The first two were pretty big for being fourteen.

DR. TAYLOR

Can't we just cut the tree down? That would make things a lot easier.

DR. PORTER

We could, but we don't own the property that it's on. We would have to get permission from the owner. One thing I want to know is, what were kids so young doing out alone?

DR. TAYLOR

That's actually a really good question.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn works on the deformed creature that she designed. Her cellphone rings. She puts the caller on speaker; it is King.

KING

Hello? Shae? Am I on speakerphone?

SHAELYN

You are. How can I help you?

KING

You can tell me why you're upset. What did I do?

SHAELYN

Your friend tried to drug me. Did you know?

KING
What are talking about?

SHAELYN
Ben. He gave me a drink last night,
but I poured it out. There was
something in the bottom of the cup.
I took it to my dad. They should
have the lab result back soon. And
his prints are on the cup.

KING
Okay. I was not expecting that.

SHAELYN
Never trust anyone. Isn't that what
they say?

KING
I'll call you back, Shae. Bye.

King hands up and Shaelyn ends the call.

INT. HOSPITAL BREAK ROOM - SAME

Dr. Taylor lounges on the couch, watching the news with the
sound off. A news segment shows a photo of Young Boy #2 and
Young Girl.

Dr. Taylor jumps up and runs out of the break room.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Shaelyn looks through the day's mail. She hears the front
door open and assumes it's Yvette and Ellis.

SHAELYN
Elephant, I'm in here.

JAMES
(o.s)
I see myself as more of a lion.

SHAELYN
Doc.

James enters the kitchen, yawning and visibly worn out.

SHAELYN
You are allowed to sleep. You know
that, right?

JAMES

Yes and that is what I plan to do.
For a few hours.

SHAELYN

By a few, I hope you mean eleven or
twelve.

James' cellphone buzzes. He has a text message from work.

JAMES

It's Skye.

SHAELYN

Tell her no, you can't come back.

JAMES

The girl and one of the boys have
been identified. They were
related.

SHAELYN

Two birds one, one stone.

JAMES

That was really insensitive.

SHAELYN

How? One less family to notify and
take through the whole identify the
body thing.

JAMES

I guess so. Well, I don't have to
do it. So, good night. I'm going to
bed.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - SAME

White Swordsman drags the end of his sword along the ground.
Sparks are created whenever it hits rock or pavement.

Player #1 and Player #2 play one on one. Sergio sits on the
sidelines. Player #2 notices White Swordsman and points him
out to Player #1 and Sergio.

PLAYER #1

(to White Swordsman)

Yo! My man! You, with the sword.

PLAYER #2

Dude, what are you doing? He might
be a psycho.

White Swordsman stops dragging his sword and gets closer to
the court.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Hello there, young gents. How are we doing this evening?

PLAYER #1

Fine. What are you doing?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Marking the quarantine zone.

PLAYER #2

What quarantine zone?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

(to Sergio)

There's been an outbreak, hasn't there?

PLAYER #1

Outbreak of what?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Of a sickness caused by eating a certain fruit from a certain tree at a certain location. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, fainting, fatigue, muscle weakness and eventually death. One hundred percent fatal. One hundred percent.

Sergio gets up to leave.

PLAYER #2

Is that what happened to Mel and Rig?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Precisely. But why? Why them? How did they come upon this particular fruit from this particular tree? Where did the tree come from?

PLAYER #1

You know something. Tell us.

SERGIO

I'm out.

Sergio leaves the basketball court.

PLAYER #1

(to White Swordsman)

What do you know?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

A lot.

White Swordsman goes back to where he left off and continues "marking the quarantine zone."

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - NIGHT

King leans against his car. Shaelyn comes outside, but doesn't want to get too close to him.

King and Shaelyn stand in an awkward silence for a moment.

SHAELYN

You called me out here. What do you want?

KING

I came to bridge the gap between you and Ben.

SHAELYN

There is no gap. Did you really come here to make excuses for him?

KING

It was just speed.

SHAELYN

And if I kicked you in the balls it would be 'just' a foot.

KING

Poor analogy is poor. He wanted to liven you up. So what? It wasn't anything dangerous.

SHAELYN

You are saying that he was justified in trying to drug me? Okay. Good night.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili and Black Swordsman sit with the lights off. The only light is from the burning of his eyes.

Lili licks Black Swordsman's ear and grabs his crotch.

LILI

And here we are. The deciding moment.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

Here we are. And here he comes.

LILI

He?

White Swordsman walks through the wall of the shop. He grabs a handful of Lili's hair and she changes into her true, young form.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Lili, are you behaving yourself?

Lili tries to free herself from White Swordsman's grasp, but he is too strong.

LILI

Ow! That hurts.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Yes, that is the point.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

(to Lili)

You deserve pain.

White Swordsman nibbles Lili's ear and bites her neck.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

(to Black Swordsman)

It's done. The garden is closed.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

King follows Shaelyn to the front door. Shaelyn realizes the fruit is still in her car.

King wedges himself between Shaelyn and the door.

KING

I am not accepting this as a break up.

SHAELYN

Accept it as a fuck off then. Your indifference to my wellbeing is unacceptable.

KING

Wellbeing. It wasn't arsenic. He's just-

SHAELYN

What to you?

KING

What?

SHAELYN

What is Ben to you?

KING

He's my mentor and friend.

SHAELYN

Friend? Isn't he thirty? That's like an eleven year age difference. Why would he want to be "friends" with a nineteen year old?

KING

That's why I put mentor before friend. What am I to you? And don't say ex, please.

Shaelyn can smell the fruit in her car. She takes a deep breath.

SHAELYN

Do you smell that? It smells great.

King sniffs around and inhales deeply.

KING

Yes, it smells like forgiveness with a hint of second chance.

SHAELYN

I'll--

KING

Sleep on it? And get back to me?

SHAELYN

Uhuh. Bye.

King tries to kiss Shaelyn but she dodges it. Shaelyn sees the black spot on King's lip again. It spreads across his lip both ways until his entire lower face looks black and decayed.

Shaelyn goes to her car to get the fruit out of the passenger's seat.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

The shop is lit by the burning eyes of Black Swordsman and White Swordsman. White Swordsman forces Lili to dance with him.

Black Swordsman operates the gramophone.

LILI

She'll do it.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

What are you willing to bet?

LILI

Nothing.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
So, you're not certain.

LILI
I am.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn hides the empty cup under the seat. She takes the fruit out of its case.

King stands behind Shaelyn and pulls her hair in a suggestive manner. Shaelyn sits in the passenger's seat and holds the fruit out to him.

KING
Mutant apple. Is it real?

SHAELYN
Can't you smell it? They are hard to come by. You can have this one. I'll get more later.

King accepts the fruit and smells it.

KING
It smells very sweet. Too sweet. I might die of diabetes if I eat this and I'm not diabetic.

Shaelyn gets out of her car and closes the door. She gives King a kiss on the cheek.

SHAELYN
Good night. Tell your mentor to go fuck himself.

King goes to his car while Shaelyn walks to the house. She waves at him; he waves back.

Shaelyn watches King get in his car and take a huge bite of the fruit. King drives away. A white cat crosses Shaelyn's path and hisses at her before running across the street.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili sits on the floor, naked and bruised. White Swordsman zips his pants up.

WHITE SWORDSMAN
(to Black Swordsman)
Your turn.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
No, thanks.

LILI
Hurry up, dumb boy. Hurry up and die.

INT./EXT. KING'S CAR - SAME

King is stopped at a red light. His cellphone rings; it is Ben.

King puts Ben on speakerphone.

KING

What's up?

BEN

Is your bitch still whining?

KING

Yeah. She'll live. She said she took the cup to her dad and all this bullshit.

BEN

Is that supposed to mean something?

KING

He's a doctor. The hospital can ID drugs. Little fun fact for you. She's full of shit, though.

BEN

How do you know? Maybe she did.

KING

Then she would have to explain to him what she was doing at your house. And speaking of your house, I'm on my way so don't fall asleep.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, MASTER BEDROOM - SAME

Yvette shakes James to wake him.

YVETTE

Wake up.

JAMES

I don't want to.

YVETTE

You have a text message from Skye.

JAMES

What does she want?

YVETTE

A Pregnant Woman is showing signs of poisoning from that suspicious fruit. She is in labor. Sent two minutes ago.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Pregnant Woman is on a gurney. Baby's Father argues with YOUNG GIRL'S FATHER

NURSE #3 and NURSE #4 try to break them up. Dr. Foster talks to Pregnant Woman.

DR. FOSTER

When is your due date?

PREGNANT WOMAN

Not today. Not for another two months. Please, I need somebody to go check on my uncle.

Pregnant Woman projectile vomits on Dr. Foster. The vomit is nothing but slimy seeds.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn sits on the floor with a pencil and sketch pad. She draws a picture of King, but he is skeletal from the chest down. The ground is littered with bitten fruit and a snake is wrapped around his neck.

James stands in Shaelyn's doorway.

JAMES

Going to back to work.

SHAELYN

Uhuh.

JAMES

What are you drawing? Can I see it?

Shaelyn holds her sketch pad up for James to see.

JAMES

That is phenomenal. You should have your art in a gallery.

SHAELYN

Thanks.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, WAITING AREA - SAME

Nurse #3 and Nurse #4 have successfully put some space between Young Girl's Father and Baby's Father while they yell at each other.

YOUNG GIRL'S FATHER

That was my baby girl, you worthless motherfucker! My baby!

BABY'S FATHER

Don't blame me for this shit. You didn't even ask us to watch her. That's on you, son. You shoulda took her with you instead of being the sorry ass deadbeat that you are.

NURSE #3

Calm down, please. We need you to calm down.

BABY'S FATHER

No, I'm not calming down. This bitch left his kid at the house and texted us an hour later to say, "Oh, I'll be back for her later". What kinda shit is that? Who does that? Now my girl in here dying and my baby might die and this punk ass motherfucker acting like he the only one with problems.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Dr. Hall and Dr. Taylor look at an encyclopedia of snakes.

DR. HALL

I contacted a colleague of mine in Georgia.

DR. TAYLOR

MD?

DR. HALL

Ph.D in Biology and obsessed with reptiles. This thing that we have here, hasn't even been discovered yet.

DR. TAYLOR

How is that possible?

DR. HALL

Thread snakes are the smallest. This gross thing is smaller. So, what does it eat? What prey exists small enough for it to feed on?

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - SAME

King gets out of his car and spits a seed in the street. He drops the core of the fruit in the dirt.

Ben opens the front door.

BEN

I saw that.

KING

Do something about it, freak.

King is struck by sudden abdominal pain; Ben notices.

BEN

Gas? You're aren't bringing your
farty ass in here.

KING

Ow, god dammit. Ow.

King is overcome with pain and falls to his knees. Ben realizes it is serious and runs to him.

BEN

What's wrong? What did you do to
yourself?

King passes out.

BEN

Nope. This can not be happening.
It can not. King?

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Pregnant Woman is unconscious. NURSE #5 notices a black spot on Pregnant Woman'S stomach. The spot grows and begins to spread.

NURSE #5

What the hell is this?

INT. OPERATING ROOM - SAME

Dr. Taylor performs an emergency c-section on Pregnant Woman. The decay has spread up to Pregnant Woman's neck.

Nurse #5 is given the baby. Nurse #3 checks to see if the baby is alive then runs out of the operating room.

INT./EXT. BEN'S CAR - SAME

Ben is behind the ambulance that has come to take King to the hospital.

Through his window, he sees a sapling sprout up from the ground where King spit the seed.

BEN

The fuck?

Ben opens his car door to go investigate, but the ambulance siren comes on. He closes the door and follows the ambulance when it pulls off.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

James has arrived and is immediately grabbed by Nurse #3.

NURSE #3
Come with me. Come see this.

JAMES
I have seen it.

NURSE #3
Not this, you haven't.

INT. NICU - SAME

James , Nurse #3, and NICU NURSE watch the baby in his incubator. He is hooked up to a heart rate monitor and has a breathing tube.

The black decay forms on the baby's legs, spreads up to his chest then recedes.

JAMES
What am I looking at?

NURSE #3
A miracle maybe? The most twisted miracle ever.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James is in the office alone, looking at a printout of the painting of the Garden of Eden. Dr. Porter comes into the office and takes a seat.

DR. PORTER
You don't look well rested.

JAMES
Neither do you.

DR. PORTER
I couldn't sleep.

INT. HOSPITAL, INFORMATION DESK - SAME

Ben stands at the desk, waiting to be acknowledged. RECEPTIONIST is on the phone and has her back to him.

KING
Hello...Is anyone here?

Receptionist spins around in her chair, with an annoyed look on her face.

RECEPTIONIST
(to Ben)
No, I'm invisible.

Receptionist spins back around and continues her conversation.

RECEPTIONIST

(on phone)

Yes. That is correct. No to the olives. Yes to the romas. That's all. Thank you.

BEN

Are you seriously ordering food?

Receptionist hangs up the phone and spins back around.

RECEPTIONIST

What can I do for you?

BEN

I'm looking for King Solomon.

Receptionist looks at Ben with great incredulity.

RECEPTIONIST

Check a Bible or history book.

BEN

He was just rolled into the ER. That's really his name.

RECEPTIONIST

And your relation to this person?

BEN

Cousin.

RECEPTIONIST

Lies.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

King wakes up on a gurney. His vision is blurry.

KING

What is going on here? Is this a hospital? Why am I here?

Nurse #1 checks King's legs.

KING

What are you doing?

NURSE #1

Checking for necrosis. How do you feel?

KING

Terrible.

King takes his cellphone out of his pocket. He calls Ben via speed dial.

EXT. HOSPITAL, PARKING LOT - SAME

Ben's phone dings to alert of a text message. The message is from King. It reads: Where are you?

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - SAME

A small group of people are gathered around the new tree. LARGE WOMAN takes a fruit down and takes a bite out of it.

LARGE MAN smacks it out of her hand.

LARGE MAN

Are you retarded? That could be poisonous.

LARGE WOMAN

It tastes good. Smells good. We should take the rest.

SKATER BOY takes pictures of the tree with his phone.

SKATER BOY

This wasn't here earlier. How could somebody plant this without being seen?

White Swordsman arrives on the scene.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

That is an excellent question, young man.

Large Woman takes more fruit from the tree.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Those are poisonous, doll.

LARGE MAN

I told you.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

King tries to leave, but is stopped by Nurse #2.

NURSE #2

Where do you think you're going?

KING

Home. Peace.

NURSE #2

Peace, my foot. You haven't filled out any paper work.

KING

Fill it out for me. So long.

King sees Ben stick his head in the entrance door. Nurse #2 gives King a clipboard with paper work to fill out.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - SAME

White Swordsman is back at the second tree. He takes a fruit down and goes inside the house that Old Man and Pregnant Woman shared.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn frames her sketch of skeletal King. She hangs it on the wall over her desk.

Ellis runs into Shaelyn's room carrying a plush lamb toy.

ELLIS

Goat?

SHAELYN

Not a goat. A sheep.

ELLIS

Sheet?

SHAELYN

Sheep. SHEEP. With p. SHEEP.

ELLIS

Sheep.

SHAELYN

Yes. Exactly.

INT. OLD MAN HOUSE - SAME

White Swordsman walks through the house and finds Old Man dead on the floor. His body has already decomposed down to the bone.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, WAITING AREA - SAME

King and Ben sit side by side while King fills out his paper work.

KING

Why am I here?

BEN

You passed out, you dimwit. Don't you remember?

KING

Oh. Oh, yeah. I ate that mutant apple.

BEN

Mutant apple?

KING

Yeah. Shae gave me this weird fruit. Tasted pretty good. I must be allergic to it.

Ben stands up.

BEN

Going to take a piss. Try to stay conscious while I'm gone.

EXT. OLD MAN HOUSE - SAME

White Swordsman drags Old Man's body out of the house by one foot. He leaves the body at the base of the tree.

INT. HOSPITAL, WAITING ROOM - SAME

King takes his clipboard to the nurses' station.

NURSE #4

(to King)

Thank you. Maybe you should stay. You look terrible. Hello?

King stares blankly off into space. He hallucinates seeing The Tree.

Two faceless men (one in white, the other in black) stand on either side of it. A young woman turns into a snake and slithers across the ground to him.

NURSE #4

Help over here!

The snake sinks its fangs into his foot. King begins to fall slowly.

NURSE #4

(to colleagues)

Catch him! Catch him!

King's entire body decomposes at once. His eyeballs disintegrate and multiple tiny snakes pour out of the sockets.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

White Swordsman stabs his sword into the trunk of the first tree. The tree begins shedding its fruit.

The fruit regenerates at an accelerated rate and falls off.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James interviews Baby's Father. James shows him a photo of the fruit.

JAMES

Did she eat one of these?

BABY'S FATHER

Yeah. There's a tree right outside her uncle's house. I swear to god, that tree came out of nowhere. It wasn't there last week.

JAMES

This tree is located on South 10th?

BABY'S FATHER

No. That old man's house is nowhere near there.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Shaelyn makes herself a sandwich. Her cellphone is on the table and vibrates.

Shaelyn checks her phone. She has a text message from James. The message reads: I need you to do something for me.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Ben has returned from the bathroom. He checks the waiting area, but King is not there.

He tries to go to the nurses' station, but the area is blocked. Ben peeks over the nurses to see the decayed body of King on the floor.

BEN

Oh my god. Oh my god. What the fuck just happened?

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn is parked on the street near the second tree (near Old Man's house). She calls James on speakerphone.

SHAELYN

It's here.

JAMES

Fully grown.

SHAELYN

Yes. There's a d-

JAMES

Can you get a sample for me?

SHAELYN

No. There's a d-

JAMES

Please. We need a fresh one. Two would be preferable.

SHAELYN

There is a dead body.

JAMES

What?

SHAELYN

There's a body. A rotten body on the ground right under the tree. I'm not getting out of my car.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

James has emerged from the office. He sees Ben standing out of the way, wiping tears from his face.

James takes a look at the rotten body on the floor.

JAMES

(to Nurse #3)

Name?

NURSE #3

King Solomon. Weird name.

JAMES

Is that crying guy family?

NURSE #3

I have no idea. I thought they were a couple.

James goes over to Ben.

JAMES

Hello. What is your relation to King?

BEN

Cousin.

JAMES

Really? You are aware of the cause of death?

BEN

What the hell could have caused that? I just went to the bathroom for two minutes and he looks like-

JAMES

Yes, but he's not the first. Has he eaten any exotic fruit recently?

BEN

Mutant apple. He called it a mutant apple. He passed out on the sidewalk, so I called an ambulance.

JAMES

Do you know where he got it from?

BEN

His girlfriend.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn has just arrived back home. She gets out of her car and sees a white german shepherd standing at the end of the street.

The dog watches Shaelyn until she goes inside.

INT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn watches the dog through the blinds. Yvette joins her.

YVETTE

What are we looking at?

SHAELYN

A wolf. It won't go away.

YVETTE

Wolf? That's a dog. Looks like a white GSD.

SHAELYN

Albino wolf.

YVETTE

I know what it wants. It's looking for a lamb.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn is at her sewing machine, working on the pajamas for Ellis. Her cellphone dings to alert of a new text message.

The message is from James. The message reads: Does King have a cousin named Ben?

Shaelyn responds: Not that I know of. Why?

James sends a new message: King...was here with a man named Ben who claimed to be his cousin.

Shaelyn sends the response: King was there? Why?

James sends a new message: CALL ME.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James is alone. He has his cellphone on the desk, waiting for Shaelyn to call.

His phone rings and he answers it.

JAMES

(on phone)

Why did it take you so long? Yeah.
I bet. Did you warn King not to eat
the fruit that--That's not what I
asked. Did you warn him? That's all
I needed to know.

Dr. Foster enters the office.

DR. FOSTER

You awake in here?

JAMES

Yes. Very awake.

Dr. Foster closes the door and takes a seat.

DR. FOSTER

You look disappointed.

JAMES

I am exactly that.

DR. FOSTER

I went to see the baby. He's still
here. The father just left, though.

EXT. HOSPITAL, PARKING LOT - SAME

Baby's Father walks to his car. Young Girl's Father waits at the car for him.

BABY'S FATHER

Fuck off, dude.

YOUNG GIRL'S FATHER

Not going nowhere until I get an
apology.

BABY'S FATHER

I'm sorry your mother didn't
believe in abortion.

Three gunshots echo around the parking lot.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James has put his feet up on the desk. Dr. Foster stands

JAMES

What? Seriously?

DR. FOSTER

He said the old man isn't answering
the phone. He went to check on him.
Elderly uncle of the...Wife?
Girlfriend? Baby mama?

The office door swings open. Dr. Hall is sweating and out of
breath.

DR. HALL

Need you both. Now.

DR.FOSTER

Drew, we--

DR. HALL

Shooting in the parking lot.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Yvette takes a covered container out of the fridge; it is a
fruit salad.

She has eaten half the contents when Shaelyn comes into the
kitchen.

YVETTE

I thought you were going to bed. I
would have shared.

SHAELYN

And I would have declined.
Thoughtful of you.

Shaelyn sniffs at the air, as the fruit salad smells very
strong.

SHAELYN

What's in that? I see some pears,
honeydew, mango and what else?

YVETTE

I don't know. I've never tasted it
before. I got it on my way home
from work. One of those little food
carts, you know, the foreign people
have their carts for the lunch
crowd. An old lady either doesn't
know what time lunch is or decided
to wait for the post-lunch,
pre-dinner hungry people like me.

Shaelyn inhales deeply.

SHAELYN
That smells really...

YVETTE
Really what?

SHAELYN
Nothing.

Shaelyn leaves the kitchen. Yvette is immediately overcome with stomach pain. She dumps the remainder of the fruit salad in the garbage disposal.

Yvette falls to the floor due to the pain and vomits a large amount of seeds.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn closes her door and locks it. She gets her sketch pad and pencil and takes a seat on the floor.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, OPERATING ROOM - SAME

Baby's Father has flatlined. Dr. Porter backs away from the operating table with tears streaming down his face.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Dr. Hall, Dr. Taylor and James mope. Dr. Taylor looks at the print out of the painting of the Garden of Eden.

DR. TAYLOR
There's only one tree?

DR. HALL
Yes.

JAMES
There's at least two.

DR. HALL
Really? Where's the second one located?

JAMES
Excuse me. I'll be right back.

James leaves the office.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, WAITING AREA - SAME

Ben sits in the corner, still crying and messing with his phone. James stands in front of him.

BEN
Yes?

JAMES

Do you know what King did with the rest of the fruit he ate? Did he still have it or--

BEN

He dropped it on the ground. As bizarre as this may sound, I saw a tree grow right before my eyes.

JAMES

From where he dropped it?

BEN

Yeah. How does that even happen?

JAMES

Presently unknown, but can you do me a favor. If it has grown on your property, can you cut it down, please?

BEN

Done.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Dr. Taylor is at the all-in-one printer retrieving the documents being printed.

James enters the office, but leaves the door open.

JAMES

There are three.

DR. TAYLOR

Three what?

JAMES

Death trees. Trees of death. That's what I'm calling them. How did the second one get where it is?

DR. TAYLOR

How did the third one get where it is? And, where is it anyway?

FLASHBACK

PREVIOUS DAY (on screen)

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

White Swordsman drops the basket of fruit.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

They are poisonous.

PROPER OWNER

You ate one and you're still alive.
For some reason.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

I am very alive as I can't actually
die.

Property Owner climbs down the ladder with the last fruit in
his hand.

PROPER OWNER

So, you're immortal?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Yes.

Property Owner picks up the basket and takes it inside. He
still has one fruit in hand when he comes out.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Don't eat that.

Property Owner takes a huge bite of the fruit and spits a
seed at White Swordsman.

White Swordsman laughs and walks away.

INT./EXT. PROPER OWNER'S CAR - SAME

Property Owner drives over train tracks near the house of
Old Man. He throws the remainder of the fruit out of his
window; it lands where the second tree has grown.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. PROPERTY OWNER'S HOUSE - SAME

White Swordsman sits on the hood of Property Owner's car.

A single light is on inside the house. White Swordsman hears
a loud thud and laughs.

INT. PROPER OWNER'S HOUSE - SAME

White Swordsman walks through the house and finds Property
Owner on the floor in the bathroom.

Property Owner is still alive, but fading.

PROPERTY OWNER

You. How did you get in?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

I let myself in. Do you see it?

PROPERTY OWNER

See it? What?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

The tree.

PROPERTY OWNER

Oh. I see it. It's...

Property Owner'S body is overtaken by sudden decay. White Swordsman drags his body out of the bathroom while giggling.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Yvette uses the house phone to call James. His cellphone goes directly to voicemail.

Yvette tries calling James three times in a row, but he doesn't answer.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn has headphones on. She sits on the floor drawing in her sketch book.

Shaelyn doesn't take her headphones off when her bedroom door is opened by Yvette. Yvette waves at her to get her attention.

SHAELYN

I can hear you.

YVETTE

I'm going to the hospital. I need you to stay here with El. Can you do that for me?

SHAELYN

Sure.

INT./EXT. YVETTE'S CAR - SAME

Yvette struggles to stay focused on the road. Her vision is blurry.

She pulls over on the side of the road and speed dials James.

YVETTE

Jamie. Come on. Answer your phone, dammit.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

Dr. Taylor looks at a map on James' phone. She shows him the screen and points to the places where the first and second trees are.

DR. TAYLOR
Someone may have dropped one here.
If there are more victims than we
know of, they could be at other
hospitals.

James holds his hand out for his phone.

JAMES
Four missed calls.

DR. TAYLOR
Shae?

JAMES
Three from the house and one from
Yvette.

James calls Yvette's cellphone.

INT./EXT. YVETTE'S CAR - SAME

Yvette has passed out at the wheel. A police car parks
behind her.

POLICE OFFICER gets out of her car and goes to the driver's
side of Yvette's car. Police Officer knocks on the window

POLICE OFFICER
Ma'am? Hello?

Police Officer opens Yvette's door and checks her vitals.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Black Swordsman and Lili sit in the dark, with the only
light coming from his eyes.

Black Swordsman sits on a stool. Lili sits on his lap.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Cow.

LILI
I'm not heavy.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
My leg is breaking.

LILI
Something else will break soon. Do
you know what it is?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
A heart.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James is in the office alone. He calls Shaelyn and puts her on speakerphone.

SHAELYN

(os)

Doc.

JAMES

Did you call me from the house phone?

SHAELYN

No.

JAMES

Where is Yvette?

SHAELYN

On the way to you.

JAMES

Why? What happened?

SHAELYN

A post-work fruit salad of unknown origin.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

White Swordsman walks down the street towards the house. He stops at the Moore house and looks inside their mailbox.

White Swordsman looks up and sees Shaelyn watching him from a window. The white dog runs to White Swordsman and follows him.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

James watches Yvette be wheeled into the ER. She has regained consciousness, but it confused.

YVETTE

Let me up. What are you doing to me? Let me go.

James rushes to her side.

JAMES

Yvette? I'm right here. Shae told me--

YVETTE

Shae? Oh, yeah. I told her to stay at the house with El.

JAMES

You ate--

YVETTE
I had a fruit salad.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

James has removed his lab coat. He sits in a chair pulled up to Yvette's bed.

YVETTE
How many so far?

JAMES
How many what?

YVETTE
Dead.

JAMES
I don't want to talk about that
righ--

YVETTE
Number.

JAMES
I'm not telling you. But we do have
a survivor.

YVETTE
Really? Where?

JAMES
In the NICU.

YVETTE
A baby? Aww. What is the story
behind the little survivor?

JAMES
He was delivered by emergency
c-section earlier.

YVETTE
Oh. The pregnant woman you were
called about?

JAMES
Yeah.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn sits at her sewing machine, working on the pajamas for Ellis. She adds a lamb applique to the chest.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Yvette is asleep. James sits in the chair watching her.

James checks the condition of her legs before leaving the room.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn is in bed, asleep. Ellis has escaped from his crib and climbs onto her bed.

Ellis sits on Shaelyn and smacks her in the face to wake her up.

SHAELYN

Elephant. How did you get in here?
What time is it?

Shaelyn looks at her phone to check the time, but her battery is dead. The charger had come out of the wall while she slept.

SHAELYN

Great. Just great. Where is your
mother? Hm? Where's Mommy?

ELLIS

Mommy gone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

James stands near the door with his back to the wall. The sheet has been pulled up to cover Yvette's face.

Dr. Taylor calls the time of death for Yvette. James covers his ears to avoid hearing it. He has tears streaming down his face.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, KITCHEN - SAME

Shaelyn straps Ellis in his high chair and gives him the whole box of cereal.

Shaelyn picks up the house phone to call James. He does not answer. His voicemail message plays.

SHAELYN

Your father is not answering his
phone. I guess we'll be hanging out
today. I finished your pajamas,
elephant. You're wearing it today.
I want the world to see my
creation.

INT. SHAELYN'S ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn helps Ellis get into the footless pajamas she made for him. Shaelyn checks her phone to see if the battery has a full charged.

SHAELYN

Yes! Phone is at full power. Let's go.

EXT. MOORE HOUSE - SAME

Shaelyn carries Ellis to her car while dragging his car seat with her free hand.

SHAELYN

Good thing your mother left your car seat here.

INT. HOSPITAL OFFICE - SAME

James sits in the office alone with the light off. The door is open.

Dr. Porter stands at the door.

DR. PORTER

James, go home.

JAMES

And do what?

DR. PORTER

Be with your kids. Be away from here.

JAMES

I never expected to have to do this again. I had to tell a three year old girl that her mother was gone and never coming back. It took two years for her to stop asking when Mommy was coming home. Now, I have to do it again.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn parks at the mall. Ellis is in the backseat. Shaelyn looks in her rearview mirror and sees the white dog run across the street.

ELLIS

Mommy gone.

SHAELYN

She's with Doc, I mean Daddy.

ELLIS

Doc Daddy.

SHAELYN

Exactly.

INT. MALL - SAME

Shaelyn stops at a bench and puts Ellis down on it.

SHAELYN

Elephant. You are heavy. I should have brought your stroller.

Party Girl comes up behind Shaelyn, startling her.

PARTY GIRL

I thought it was you.

SHAELYN

Yes, I am me. Who are you?

PARTY GIRL

Terrible memory. Ben's house. Bells ringing?

SHAELYN

Oh. You look different in good light.

PARTY GIRL

I heard about King. So fucked up. You seem to be taking it well.

SHAELYN

What am I taking well?

PARTY GIRL

His death. Did you not know? Wow. Okay. Maybe I wasn't supposed to share that.

Party Girl scurries away.

EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn walks towards the hospital with Ellis in her arms. She sees Dr. Taylor coming out and yells at her.

SHAELYN

Skye!

Dr. Taylor is visibly upset about seeing Shaelyn. She runs back inside the building.

SHAELYN

What the fuck? Oops. You didn't hear that last word.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

Shaelyn goes to the nurses' station with Ellis in tow. None of the nurses are at the station.

Dr. Taylor emerges from behind a 'personnel only' door.

SHAELYN
Where's Doc?

DR. TAYLOR
In the morgue.

SHAELYN
Another one? Tough.

ELLIS
Mommy gone.

Dr. Taylor bursts into tears.

DR. TAYLOR
Stay right here. I'll go get James.

INT. MORGUE, VIEWING ROOM - SAME

James is in a chair, staring at nothing. Dr. Taylor enters and takes a seat beside him.

DR. TAYLOR
Shae is here.

JAMES
Okay.

DR. TAYLOR
Nothing is okay. Everything is the opposite of okay. I hate this.

JAMES
Yeah.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SAME

James greets Shaelyn at the nurses' station. Ellis hugs James' leg.

ELLIS
Doc Daddy.

JAMES
El.

ELLIS
Mommy gone.

JAMES

Yes. She is.

SHAELYN

You mean gone, gone or...

JAMES

Gone.

Shaelyn backs away from James and Ellis; she runs out of the building.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn drives down the street and sees White Swordsman leaning on the first tree.

Shaelyn parks on the street and gets out of her car.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

White Swordsman helps himself to a fruit from the tree.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Good afternoon.

SHAELYN

How can you eat that?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

With these.

White Swordsman smiles really big to show all of his teeth.

SHAELYN

You know what I meant, smartass.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

I can't die.

SHAELYN

Can't or won't?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Can't, but if I could I wouldn't. Why would I? Do you feel bad yet, sinner?

SHAELYN

My brother's mother is--

WHITE SWORDSMAN

Dead. Your brother's mother. That's all. Nothing less or more. I guess she didn't really mean much to you, but your poor father. He must be in shambles.

SHAELYN

This tree can't stay here. Or the other one. Other ones. However many there are now.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

You want to kill it?

SHAELYN

I have to.

White Swordsman whistles and a white bird lands on the ground at his feet. He impales the bird on his sword.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

You have to kill it. Of course you do.

White Swordsman takes some of the bird's blood and smears it on a fruit still hanging from the tree. The fruit turns to ash.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

What sacrifice do you have to offer? Only the purest will do.

SHAELYN

I don't have anything, but I can get something.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

White only.

INT. PET STORE - SAME

Shaelyn looks at the small mammals for sale. Store Associate approaches from behind.

STORE ASSOCIATE

Looking for more rats?

SHAELYN

No. I think bigger.

STORE ASSOCIATE

Rabbit bigger or pig bigger? We only have mini pigs out back, but we have some sheep on the way.

SHAELYN

Sheep? Seriously?

STORE ASSOCIATE

Yes, but keep it to yourself. We aren't really supposed to be selling farm animals.

A honking horn outside causes everyone in the store to look toward the door.

STORE ASSOCIATE
And there's the truck. Come on.
Let's go see what they have.

EXT. PET STORE - SAME

Shaelyn and Store Associate are in the rear of the store, which is enclosed with a high gate.

There are several piglets, six hens and three lambs. Shaelyn kneels down to pet the whitest lamb.

SHAELYN
How much for this one?

STORE ASSOCIATE
Hold on. Let me ask the boss.

Store Associate sends a text message and waits for a response.

STORE ASSOCIATE
Fifty. Cash only. You do have a car, don't you?

SHAELYN
Yes, I do.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - SAME

Shaelyn returns to the convenience store, but White Swordsman is not there.

She continues driving and stops at Lili's antique shop. Black Swordsman is stands outside the door.

EXT. ANTIQUE STORE - SAME

Shaelyn keeps her distance from Black Swordsman. He looks around her to look in her car.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
For me?

SHAELYN
What?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
The little sheep. Is it mine?

SHAELYN
No. For the one in white. Is he
your brother?

BLACK SWORDSMAN
He could be. He's not here. I'll
keep it for him.

SHAELYN
Is that lady here? I don't know her
name.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Lilith. She is not. Anything else I
can do for you, sinner?

Shaelyn goes back to her car, but doesn't leave right away.
She sits there until the sun starts to go down.

INT./EXT. SHAELYN'S CAR - NIGHT

Shaelyn is woken up by the lamb chewing on her hair. She had
fallen asleep still parked outside the antique shop.

Shaelyn checks her cellphone and has several missed calls
and text messages from James. His last message reads: WHERE
ARE YOU? YOU HAVE EL'S CARSEAT.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, WAITING AREA - SAME

James is in a chair with Ellis on his lap. Dr. Foster takes
a seat beside him.

DR. FOSTER
Has she responded yet?

JAMES
No. Her phone is probably on
silent. I'm conflicted about
something. I was wondering if you
could help me.

DR. FOSTER
I'll try.

JAMES
King Solomon was not an unknown
patient to me. He was Shae's
boyfriend. I haven't told her that
he died.

DR. FOSTER
James, you have to tell her.

JAMES

Yes, but that's not all. The man who claimed to be his cousin said that Shae gave King that fruit. She gave it to him knowing that he would die if he ate it. I was going to ask her for clarification, but now I think I might just leave it.

DR. FOSTER

You can't really take some random guy's word for it. I don't believe they are related.

JAMES

Neither do I.

DR. FOSTER

Just wait. Maybe she'll tell you herself.

EXT. ANTIQUE STORE - SAME

Shaelyn knocks on the door of the antique shop. She has the lamb in her arms.

Black Swordsman opens the door.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

You're still here? Now you want me to keep it.

SHAELYN

I'm going to get my brother. I'm coming right back.

Black Swordsman accepts the lamb and closes the door in Shaelyn's face.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM, WAITING AREA - SAME

James has Ellis, who has fallen asleep, in his arms. Shaelyn comes into the waiting area.

JAMES

Get lost?

SHAELYN

Fell asleep. Are you coming home?

JAMES

Eventually. Not yet. This little thing he's wearing is cute. I'm surprised it's still clean.

EXT. ANTIQUE STORE - SAME

Shaelyn is at the door. Ellis is still in her car asleep. Lili opens the door (in her older woman form).

LILI

You're back. Need another?

SHAELYN

No. I came to get the lamb I left here earlier.

LILI

I haven't seen a lamb.

SHAELYN

I left it here with the nutball who slashed my tires. I need it back.

LILI

He's not here. He might be with his brother. Check around the tree. The first one.

SHAELYN

How'd you know there was more than one?

LILI

I know a lot. What's that in your car? You got a baby?

SHAELYN

My brother.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

Shaelyn leaves Ellis in the backseat of her car. She watches Black Swordsman and White Swordsman interact with each other before approaching them.

Black Swordsman has the lamb, which he hands over to White Swordsman before walking away.

SHAELYN

What are you waiting for?

WHITE SWORDSMAN

You. And now you're here.

While White Swordsman has Shaelyn distracted, Black Swordsman takes Ellis out of her car.

SHAELYN

Well, get to it then.

WHITE SWORDSMAN

What's the rush? In a hurry to get somewhere?

SHAELYN

Yes. Home.

Black Swordsman brings Ellis back to White Swordsman.
Shaelyn is just now realizing that Ellis is out of the car.

SHAELYN

What the fuck are you doing? Give
him to me!

Black Swordsman props Ellis up against the tree. White
Swordsman pulls out his sword and stabs Ellis straight
through the chest, impaling him on the tree.

Shaelyn falls to her knees, in shock, while the tree slowly
turns to ash.

INT. NICU - SAME

James stands at the incubator of the baby. His coloring is
normal and he is breathing on his own. NICU Nurse watches
them both.

NICU NURSE

I don't think he'll be here long.

JAMES

Who's coming for him?

NICU NURSE

Nobody, yet. He'll likely end up in
foster care.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - SAME

The tree has completely disintegrated. Ellis' body is on
fire, but not being burnt up.

Shaelyn crawls over to Ellis' body and is able to touch him
without injury to herself. She picks him up and cradles him
in her arms.

Shaelyn rocks Ellis while whispering.

SHAELYN

Elephant. My little elephant.

Shaelyn gets up and carries Ellis off the premises. Black
Swordsman and White Swordsman don't try to stop her.

INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - SAME

Lili smokes a cigar. Black Swordsman and White Swordsman
enter.

BLACK SWORDSMAN

Are we done here?

LILI

Not yet.

EXT. CHURCH - SAME

Shaelyn stands in front of the cross on the front lawn. She leaves Ellis' body at the base of the cross and keeps walking.

EXT. BRIDGE - SAME

Shaelyn sits on the rail with her feet dangling. She takes her wallet out of her pocket and drops it behind her.

A police siren sounds in the distance. Shaelyn jumps from the bridge. Black Swordsman and White Swordsman appear on the bridge and watch her land.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
We're done now?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
Yes, unfortunately.

BLACK SWORDSMAN
Unfortunate?

WHITE SWORDSMAN
I was having fun.

Black Swordsman picks Shaelyn's wallet up and opens it. He looks through it until he comes across a picture of her mother.

EXT. RIVER - SAME

Shaelyn's body floats downstream. She gets stuck on a large rock, on which Lili sits (in young form). Lili touches Shaelyn and checks for a pulse.

Lili steps into the water and drags Shaelyn's lifeless body to the shore.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

There are two police cars and an ambulance on scene. A crowd has gathered and watch from behind police tape.

Church Lady is in the crowd. Church Man comes to her side, ignorant of what has happened.

CHURCH MAN
What now? Don't tell me they found another dead baby.

CHURCH LADY
Then I can't tell you the truth.
What lie, Lord forgive me, would you like to hear?

CHURCH MAN
Have mercy on the young.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

James stands at the graves of Yvette and Ellis. Dr. Taylor is with him.

JAMES
What's on your mind?

DR. TAYLOR
Shae.

JAMES
Listening.

DR. TAYLOR
I don't believe she killed El. I don't believe it for one second. Do you?

JAMES
Ninety-eight percent of the time, I don't.

INT. MOORE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME

There are moving boxes stacked all over. Everything has been packed up except for two urns sitting on the mantle and one chair.

James is in the chair, staring at nothing. Dr. Taylor comes into the living room just as she is ending a conversation on her cellphone.

DR. TAYLOR
Snap out of it, doc.

JAMES
What?

DR. TAYLOR
You were zoned out.

JAMES
Oh.

DR. TAYLOR
The truck will be here in an hour. Are you ready?

JAMES
Yes.

FOUR WEEKS LATER (t.o.s)

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR - DAY

James and Dr. Taylor are in the elevator alone.

DR. TAYLOR

Excited?

JAMES

Very.

DR. TAYLOR

I am so happy for you. I'm trying
my damndest not to squeal.

JAMES

Feel free. I won't judge you.

INT. NICU - SAME

All the neonatal nurses are gathered to watch. NICU Nurse
hands the baby survivor to James.

NICU NURSE

Congratulations, James. He couldn't
have ended up with a better person.

James accepts the baby. He checks the baby's arms and legs.

NICU NURSE

He's fine. Perfect even.

INT/EXT. DR. TAYLOR'S CAR - SAME

Dr. Taylor drives. James is in the passenger's seat. As they
drive along, James can't help but turn around to check on
the baby.

DR. TAYLOR

He's fine.

JAMES

I see that.

INT. NEW MOORE HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME

James is in the kitchen. Dr. Taylor stares at the baby while
he is in his swing.

JAMES

(os)

You want coffee or tea?

DR. TAYLOR

Green or white?

JAMES

Green coffee? Is that a thing?

DR. TAYLOR
Funny. Tea. No sugar.

Dr. Taylor walks around the room and stops to look at the two urns on a book shelf. She picks up the urn containing Shaelyn's ashes.

JAMES
(os)
How's he doing?

DR. TAYLOR
He's still fine.

Dr. Taylor puts the urn back and takes the baby out of his swing. She notices that he has spit up. She wipes his mouth on a burp cloth and sees a few slimy seeds.

James comes into the living room with two hot mugs.

JAMES
Still fine?

Dr. Taylor folds the burp cloth to hide the seeds from view.

DR. TAYLOR
Still.

THE END