

DIVISION 9

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. TOKYO - BACKSTREETS - NIGHT

Neon haze. Soft raining. The city glows but feels hollow.

A WOMAN (30s), barefoot in a stained white hospital gown, shuffles through narrow alleys.

Her skin, pale. Her lips move, she whispers

WOMAN

Wait...

She walks past a drunk couple. One glances at her.

DRUNK MAN

Did you see that?

WOMAN

...under the ...

She flickers. He looks again. She's gone.

INT. SUBWAY STATION PLATFORM - NIGHT

The woman stands at the edge of the tracks. Still. Trains howl in the distance.

Lights above her glitch. Cameras above blink red.

INT. TRAIN OPERATOR'S CAB - NIGHT

The OPERATOR (50s), exhausted, squints, his smile vanishes as he sees what's ahead, he gasps.

TRAIN OPERATOR

Shit!

He HONKS the train horn, yanks the brake.

The woman stands on the tracks far ahead, her back to the train.

The train operator tries the Emergency stop. No response.

The horn BLARES for a second time. Then SCREECHING METAL. The train grinds to a stop, just inches past where she stood.

But she's not there.

INT. POLICE HQ - CCTV ROOM - NIGHT

A FEMALE DISPATCHER rewinds the station footage. No woman.
Just a ghost train.

FEMALE DISPATCHER
Nothing. We've got nobody on tape.

The train operator watches over her shoulder. Shaking.

TRAIN OPERATOR
She was smiling. I saw her smile.
It's happening again, isn't it?

She pauses the frame.

The reflection in the windshield a blurred female face. Wide
mouth. Many teeth. Too many.

INT. SUBWAY STATION PLATFORM - NIGHT

Fluorescent lights BUZZ above, the platform, deserted.

A station janitor KATO (50s), high-vis vest, mop in hand, the
sound of his tuneless HUM echoes as he wheels his bucket
along the tiles.

He stops to wring the mop. The water SLOSHES. He glances
toward the tracks.

A faint hum. Lights flicker. He freezes.

At the end of the platform, in shadow: the woman. Long black
hair obscures her face, stained white hospital gown, pale,
veiled, still.

Kato whispers, terrified.

KATO
...who's there?

No response.

KATO (CONT'D)
Station's closed.

He steps forward. She tilts her head, unnaturally slow.

From down the tunnel: the distant ROAR of a train.

But there are no trains this late.

The train THUNDER grows. Lights flicker. The woman lifts her face, the hint of a smile beneath her curtain of hair.

Kato stumbles back, falls, going down hard to the platform. He grabs at his ankle, winces in pain. His bucket tips water spilling across the tiles.

The train BLASTS past the platform in a rush of SCREECHING brakes, lights strobing the tunnel walls. Deafening.

Kato shields his face. Then looks up.

Through the windows of the passing cars, he sees himself.

Pressed against the glass. On fire.

His screaming face streaks by again and again in each window burning, clawing at the glass.

Kato gasps, clutching his chest.

The train vanishes into silence.

The platform, empty. Bucket water creeps toward the tracks, she's gone.

He exhales, shakily laughs.

CRASH. The mop bucket tips over by itself, filthy water spreading across the tiles.

He turns—

The WOMAN IS RIGHT BEHIND HIM.

She tilts her head. The veil slips back just enough to reveal her mouth.

Not human. A maw of endless, jagged teeth.

With a SHRIEK that rattles the platform, she pounces, jaws opening wider, wider—

SMASH TO BLACK. TITLE: DIVISION 9

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. TOKYO METROPOLITAN POLICE HQ - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

RIKU SHINDO (40s), gruff, bloodshot, brilliant. He pumps a cigarette into his mouth, lights up, in clear violation of building code.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

You were the last person to see the suspect alive.

Shindo exhales smoke. Leans forward.

SHINDO

He wasn't a suspect. He was a ghost wearing skin. How did he die?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Suicide.

SHINDO

Really. Maybe that's why you're from Homicide. How?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

He burned himself alive in the interrogation room.

Shindo stares blankly at the mirror.

SHINDO

I don't really feel like talking anymore.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Listen, we can do this...

SHINDO

Read me my rights and arrest me.

He doesn't even look at the interviewer.

SHINDO (CONT'D)

Otherwise, leave me the fuck alone. Please.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION/BULLPEN AREA - DAY

Shindo moves through the busy floor of the violent crime division. A largely male bastion, MEN work at desks arranged in tidy rows.

He overhears two junior detectives:

DETECTIVE 1
Division 9's still active?

DETECTIVE 2
I thought they shut that crypt down
in '02.

DETECTIVE 1
Only weirdos go down there. Or
screw-ups.

Shindo walks past, jaw clenched.

It could be mistaken for an accounting firm, were it not for the photos of victims, suspects and murder minutiae on the walls. Heads pop up as Shindo passes through.

Shindo arrives at a door marked: POLICE CAPTAIN. He opens the door, entering into:

INT. POLICE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

TWO MEN, CAPTAIN TAKEDA (50s) stern, political survivor at an oval table. ANOTHER MAN CHIEF INSPECTOR KAWABE (50s) Internal Affairs. Suit pressed, expression sharp. Precise. Voice like ice stands away, smoking a cigarette.

The Two Men leaf through folders, glance up as Shindo enters.

COMMISSONER
Detective Shindo, thank you for
coming on such short notice.
Please.

He motions him to take a chair across the table.

Shindo stands before a stone-faced commissioner.

COMMISSIONER
You're not suspended. You're
reassigned.

SHINDO
Where?

COMMISSIONER
Archive Division 9.

SHINDO
Basement? The X-Files dungeon?

COMMISSIONER
Fewer cameras. Less damage.

Shindo smirks, hollow.

INT. POLICE HQ - BASEMENT - DIVISION 9 - DAY

Dim lights. Dust. The room is books from floor to ceiling. And clutter, stacks of papers, reports. Ancient file cabinets. A solitary desk lamp FLICKERS. The sound, subtle but unnerving.

Also, photos, blurry and dubious. With her girlish good looks, SERGEANT YURIKA NAKAGAWA (30s) doesn't look like police; more like an MTV VJ. She does not turn around when Shindo enters.

YURIKA
I've been expecting you.

SHINDO
Have you? I've been assigned to work with you.

YURIKA
Well, isn't it nice to be suddenly so highly regarded. So ... who did you tick off to get stuck with this detail?

SHINDO
Actually, I've heard a lot about you. I'm looking forward to working with you.

Yurika smiles mischievously, telling us and Shindo she knows full well why he's here. She rises, moves past him to a stack of reports piled on the floor, begins to rummage through them.

Shindo's eyes move to Yurika's computer, focusing on the glowing text.

YURIKA
You're late. The spirits don't wait.

SHINDO
Great. One of those.

He sits heavily at the desk opposite her. Looks around.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
What is this place?

YURIKA
Cold cases. The coldest.

He scans the room, focuses on the many Kirlian photos of hands, feet, leaves etc., that line the wall.

SHINDO
Interesting pictures. What are they?

YURIKA
Measurements of the electrical discharge from living systems.

She gestures to a thick manila folder laid out on the desk.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
We had reports of a woman on the tracks, who suddenly disappeared. Like she was being spoken to.

SHINDO
Spoken to? By whom?

YURIKA
I don't know. That's why I think I'd run the CCTV footage through this. We can extract incredibly small details from a simple photographic print.

Yurika types in a few commands.

As Yurika speaks the CCTV footage undergoes a stripping process, as if layers of color and detail were being peeled away.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
We have limitations on how much information we can visibly perceive unaided. Using cutting edge computer software and technology we can detect hidden information, manipulate and enhance it.

Yurika works her mouse, clicks it on and off.

YURIKA (CONT'D)

The computer locates shades of grey that are imperceptible to the human eye, reassigning a new color value to them that we can perceive. There it is.

An amorphous form on the tracks. So amorphous in fact, that it could be just coincidental amplified background detail.

Shindo is affected by the picture, but dubious.

YURIKA (CONT'D)

Case #9348 The Blackout Bride of Shunjuku.

Shindo rolls his eyes.

SHINDO

A ghost story?

YURIKA

A pattern. Woman in white. Subway deaths. No body recovered.

She slides him a photo a blurred surveillance still of a woman in a hospital gown.

SHINDO

This a joke?

YURIKA

No. This is your first case.

SHINDO

Has anyone bothered to check the camera that shot this? The lens? Or if a diffusion filter was used?

Yurika hands him a camera in a sealed evidence bag.

YURIKA

It all checked out, I think from the information here, this is clearly some sort of poltergeist activity.

SHINDO

This information is the same reason you see photos of Jesus's face appearing in the foliage of an elm tree. Or a cumulus cloud. It's nothing more than a chance occurrence of light and shadow.

YURIKA
Either way, it's worthy of an
investigation.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - JANITOR'S CLOSET - NIGHT

Cramped, lit by a single swinging bulb. A battered kettle
WHISTLES on a hot plate.

Kato sits hunched on an upturned bucket. He smells of cheap
shochu. His mop leans against the wall.

Shindo stands in the doorway, notebook in hand.

KATO
I was finishing the late shift.
Last train came in empty. Or... I
thought it was empty.

Shindo waits.

Kato rubs his arms, like the memory makes him cold.

KATO (CONT'D)
One carriage had the lights out. I
go to check. She's sitting there.
White dress. Long hair. And she's
smiling.

SHINDO
At you?

KATO
Not at me. Through me. Like she
knew someone behind me. Doors were
locked. No way in or out.

Shindo makes a note.

SHINDO
What happened then?

KATO
I blinked. She was gone. Lights
came back on.

Shindo glances at him. Kato's eyes dart to the corner.

SHINDO
What's wrong?

KATO

I don't understand. I thought there was an investigation already.

SHINDO

I'm here apart from that investigation. I've reason to believe there may have been something overlooked.

KATO

Like what?

Suddenly the air is filled with the SHRILL SOUND OF SMOKE DETECTORS GOING OFF. Kato is up like a shot heading out of the room.

KATO (CONT'D)

Just a moment.

Shindo covers his ears until the ALARMS STOP, just as all the lights go out. Only the green glow from an emergency exit light lights the room.

Suddenly the lights pop back on. When they do Kato is standing in the middle of the room. As if he appeared out of nowhere.

KATO (CONT'D)

It's the devil! The devil!

Kato swallows. A muscle jumps in his jaw. Like he's back with us.

KATO (CONT'D)

She's still here. I can feel her watching.

From somewhere in the gloom a mop bucket rattles.

KATO (CONT'D)

Someone will pay.

Both men look over.

The bucket tips over by itself, water spills, runs across the floor toward them.

Shindo steps toward it.

Kato grabs his sleeve.

KATO (CONT'D)

Don't. She'll follow you home.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Rows of metal file cabinets stretch into the dimness.

The buzz of fluorescent lights.

Yurika, alone, pulls an old case file. She spreads documents across a desk, jotting notes.

A faint clang echoes down the row. She freezes, turns.

Nothing there.

She turns back, in a cabinet's polished surface, a distorted reflection of a woman stands behind her.

Hair hangs forward. Still.

Yurika whirls around.

Nothing there.

She exhales, shaken, turns back to the desk.

The papers are soaked through. Water dripping off the edges onto the floor.

She lifts one page. The ink runs like blood in the puddle.

Her reflection in the wet cabinet door smiles back at her though her face is still.

INT. SHINDO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Shindo enters, tosses his keys onto the table. Sparse. Lived in. A pack of cigarettes on the table, a case file. He lights a cigarette. A lighter that flickers once, oddly.

He opens the case file. Witness reports. Scribbled notes about a woman on the tracks, all describing her as if she disappeared into thin air.

A CCTV still... something about the smile haunts him, an unsettling, forced grin, sinister and manipulative.

INT. DIVISION 9 - DAY

Yurika is at her desk sorting files when Shindo enters, he holds a page with a swastika symbol up to her.

SHINDO
Recognize this?

YURIKA

Sure is a swastika, an ancient sign of good luck or protection. And?

SHINDO

The Janitor had one on the back of his hand last night. My guess he drew it there, to protect himself. Don't you think that's strange?

YURIKA

No. I think that man needs all the protection he can get.

Yurika throws an incident report on the table.

YURIKA (CONT'D)

Four jumpers in three months. All on the Chuo line out of Shinjuku station.

SHINDO

Plenty of people want out. Doesn't make it a ghost.

Yurika pushes a file toward him.

On the report: Time of death 3:33 AM.

YURIKA

Not plenty. Pattern. Same time, same station, same hour.

INT. SHINJUKU STATION - SERVICE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Yellow tape cordons a stairwell down to the Platforms.

Two Station Police guard the entry, one of them SERGEANT TANAKA (40s), thick build, eyes that don't leave you.

Shindo and Yurika approach. Shindo flashes his badge. Tanaka doesn't move.

TANAKA

Platform's closed. Suicide this morning. Still under review.

YURIKA

We're reviewing it.

TANAKA

Not your kind of review.

Shindo steps closer.

SHINDO

Our kind of review's the only one
that's gonna find out why it keeps
happening here.

Tanaka shifts his stance, squaring off.

TANAKA

You people like to chase shadows
and call it justice. Meanwhile, my
men clean blood off the tiles.

Shindo's jaw tightens.

SHINDO

Let us through.

Tanaka plants a hand on Shindo's chest. Firm. Shindo glances
down at it, shoves it away. The two men close distance a
breath from throwing punches.

Yurika's voice cuts between them.

YURIKA

If we can't go in, fine. Just tell
us what you saw.

TANAKA

I saw my brother under that train
last year. Same platform. Same time
of night.

Shindo's face shifts not sympathy, but recognition of a line
he's not supposed to cross.

TANAKA (CONT'D)

You think your ghosts care about
that? Stay the hell out of here.

He pulls the tape across the stairs, turns his back on them.

INT. KATO RESIDENCE GARAGE - DAY

The garage door isn't opening. Kato props a ladder up under
the garage door motor.

This is a problem Kato's dealt with before, he knows what
he's looking for: A RED RESET BUTTON on the motor unit.

As Kato reaches to push the button, his necktie drapes over the chain link drive. Kato presses the reset button, begins to dismount the steps.

But suddenly the MOTOR STARTS UP.

A startled look comes over Kato as he feels his necktie pulled taut. As it is towed into the motor.

Kato loses his footing. The ladder falls over, Kato's feet begin to kick and flail. The light from outside coming up like a sunrise as the motor door pulls the garage door open.

Kato's legs continue to kick and flail. He stops moving. Blood flushed face and bugged eyes, features of a dead man.

INT. IZAKAYA - NIGHT

Dim light. Cigarette haze. A tiny TV above the bar crackles:

ANCHOR (TV)
Another incident at Shinjuku
Station today. Authorities call it
an unexplained equipment failure.

Onscreen: blurred footage of commuters being evacuated.

Shindo sits alone, tie loosened, half a glass of whiskey in front of him. He watches the footage.

He takes a slow drag of his cigarette.

Reflected in the bar mirror, commuters outside rush past the window. To Shindo, they blur into a wave of identical faces faceless, hurried, already ghosts.

He blinks, shakes his head. The illusion is gone.

Shindo stares back at his drink a flicker of doubt cutting through his cynicism.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. KATO RESIDENCE GARAGE - NIGHT

Shindo looks into the garage as a MEDICAL DOCTOR examines the body on the ground.

Shindo turns, moves toward TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS making out a report. One of whom is peering at Shindo as he approaches.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
You seen upstairs?

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dark, curtains on the windows, candles burned low, a large brass ceremonial bowl on a table in the center of the room. Surrounded by bottle of dried herbs. And something else:

TWO LARGE DEAD ROOSTERS. One black, one white.

They lie next to the ceremonial bowl. Shindo steps up to study them, his attention is turned to:

THE REVERSE SWASTIKA

On the window. Shindo bends in to study it.

INT. KATO RESIDENCE GARAGE - NIGHT

Yurika stands on the ladder that Kato had used, studies the garage door motor, she wears latex gloves, carefully brushes something from the top of the motor into an evidence bag.

YURIKA
Find anything?

SHINDO
Yeah. Maybe.

Yurika dismounts, offers him the bag, filled with gray ash.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
Looks like ash.

YURIKA
Yeah. And it's everywhere.

Yurika runs her finger along the surface of Kato's car, traces a line through the dusty ash that covers the vehicle.

SHINDO

Problems with the wiring? It could be the motor shorting out. The apartment is old you know.

YURIKA

Checked the motor. It's in perfect working order.

SHINDO

Then what is it?

YURIKA

I don't know.

INT. POLICE ANALYSIS LAB - DAY

Some of Yurika's collected ashes are poured into a container and inserted into a x-ray spectrometer: a large metallic silver box like machine.

LAB TECH (O.S)

Ash is difficult to analyze because it's already reduced to carbon.

The Lab Tech flips a switch and the machine hums to life.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)

But if any metals are present, they'll emit a specific wave length that we can measure. You have any idea where this came from?

YURIKA

We think it came from a burnt electrical motor.

LAB TECH

The we'll probably see traces of copper or some conducting metal.

A readout begins to spew from the printer. The Lab Tech reads it, shakes his head.

LAB TECH (CONT'D)

No metals showing. No copper. No calcium, so we can rule out human origin.

The Lab Tech laughs.

SHINDO

What?

LAB TECH

Well, according to the readout,
there isn't even any carbon
present. I don't know what the hell
this could be.

Looks are exchanged all around.

YURIKA

Thanks anyway.

Yurika takes the bag with the rest of the collected ashes and
starts out of the room. Shindo follows.

SHINDO

Where are you going?

YURIKA

To get a second opinion.

INT. ICHIRO TAKAHASHI'S OFFICE - DAY

TAKAHASHI (50s), studies the bag of ashes carefully.

TAKAHASHI

Haven't seen this for a while. Not
since India, 1979.

SHINDO

India?

TAKAHASHI

It's called Vibuti. Also known as
Holy Ash. Technically it's an
apport.

YURIKA

Something that materializes out of
thin air.

Takahashi nods, opens the bag to take a piece of the ash and
rub it between his fingers.

SHINDO

Nothing just materializes out of
thin air.

TAKAHASHI

You've read the bible. The stories
about Jesus creating the loaves and
the fishes...

SHINDO
That's just a parable.

TAKAHASHI
In 1979, I witnesses a guru named
Sai Baba create an entire feast out
of thin air.

Shindo cuts him a dubious, sarcastic look.

SHINDO
Too bad you didn't take a picture.
You could have run it through your
computer and seen the entire last
supper.

TAKAHASHI
Vibuti is produced during the
presence of spirit beings. Or
bilocation, a phenomenon where a
person's energy is transported to
another place.

YURIKA
That energy could be what set off
the garage door opener.

Shindo shakes his head.

SHINDO
That or somebody simply activated a
remote control.

INT. METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL - PSYCH WARD - DAY

Shindo sits beside the train driver, Yurika near the door.
His hands bandaged, he's scratched something into them.

A sketchbook on his lap. Filled with dozens of drawings
faceless women with jagged mouths.

SHINDO
You braked for a woman on the
tracks?

DRIVER
I never said woman. I just... saw
her dress. Like hospital whites.
Then the lights died. I heard... a
siren. Old one. From the war. My
grandfather used to tell me...

He cuts himself off, realizing how insane it sounds. Shindo and Yurika exchange a look.

SHINDO
You said she smiled?

TRAIN DRIVER
No lips. Just... teeth. Too many.

YURIKA
Then she vanished.

TRAIN DRIVER
I saw her. I know I did. I think
she warned me.

SHINDO
Many people were there, they said
they saw nothing.

TRAIN DRIVER
I told you, I saw her.

SHINDO
Are you sure?

TRAIN DRIVER
Yes! You don't believe me?

Shindo pockets one of the sketches.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Banks of CCTV monitors hum. Shindo and Yurika sit side by side, cycling through hours of platform footage. Mostly uneventful drunks, cleaners, commuters. Then.

YURIKA
Some spirits don't pass on. Some
weren't meant to.

A frame stutters. In the corner: a pale blur, like a face staring up at the camera.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
There. Go back.

Shindo rewinds, frame by frame. The blur resolves into a burned face staring into the lens. Next frame, it's gone.

Then, the live feed glitches. Static across all the monitors.

On all screens: the Blackout Bride. Hair hangs, face blurred.

They freeze. The monitors blink back to normal.

SHINDO
Yeah. Nothing unusual here.

INT. SUBWAY - ABANDONED SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Yurika walks ahead with purpose. Shindo follows, annoyed.
They move through a narrow, pitch-black passage.

Flashlight beams catch rusted pipes and walls lined with peeling paint. Graffiti and forgotten shrines line the walls.

SHINDO
You don't find this... beneath us?

YURIKA
We're beneath everyone.

She stops at a concrete column near the site of the incident.
Nailed to it: a frayed rope circle with paper charms.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
Tsunawata. A warding ring. Older
than the subway itself.

SHINDO
A prop.

YURIKA
A warning.

She kneels and brushes aside the dust.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
The same ash. Look, burn marks. Not
from a modern fire, something
older. Ritualistic.

Yurika rises, moves to the column, her hand hovers over the rope ring nailed to the column.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
She's been seen here before. 1980.

She brushes the dust aside, revealing the charred, ritualistic burn marks underneath.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
1964. Maybe earlier.

SHINDO
Or maybe some bored kids with
lighter fluid.

A LOW RUMBLE rolls down the tunnel.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
Last train's long gone.

YURIKA
They say you can only see it from
here. Any closer, and it passes
right through you.

SHINDO
Sounds safe.

They reach a grated overlook into a side tunnel. Dead quiet.

The sound grows metal on metal, echoing deep in the dark.
DIM, YELLOW LANTERN LIGHT flickers to life down the tunnel.
Not modern. The kind you'd see in an old war film.

His phone alarm buzzes quietly 3:33 a.m.

The vibration under their feet grows into a metallic thunder.

YURIKA
Here it comes.

A distant WAIL drifts through the air. Not a train horn. An
air raid siren ECHOES, thin and distorted.

Shindo turns. The tunnel stretches longer than it should.

The oncoming beam flickers like an old film reel. The train
bursts past, a WWII-era carriage, windows black with soot.

Inside, passengers motionless, faces burned and blistered,
clothes, scorched rags. Every one of them turns their head as
they pass Shindo and Yurika, stare right at them.

The sound DEAFENING, bolts RATTLE in the wall. A chunk of
plaster falls from the ceiling, smashes near Shindo's feet.

Then the train vanishes into black.

Silence. Only the drip of water from somewhere in the tunnel.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
That train's been running since
1945. It never stops.

Shindo stares down the tunnel, expecting it to come back, exhales, glances at Yurika, who looks completely calm.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
Some places remember more than others.

Shindo stares into the black beyond the columns. He sees a woman in a hospital gown, half-hidden, watching.

He blinks, she's gone.

SHINDO
Coincidence. Electrical faults.
You ever been down here? Nothing works right.

Yurika spins, her flashlight beam flares into his eyes.

YURIKA
Coincidence? You think a hundred people throw themselves in the same place, same hour, decade after decade, because of bad wiring?

SHINDO
People don't need ghosts to jump.

YURIKA
I've seen this my whole life. You think I want to believe it? You think it's fun watching people get swallowed and no one talks about it?

She takes a step closer, raw emotion breaking through.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
Don't stand there acting like the world's just blood and paperwork.

Shindo meets her eyes, something unsettled there.

SHINDO
You're seeing things nobody else does. That's not a gift. It's a curse.

Yurika turns away, storms down the corridor. Shindo watches.

EXT. SHINJUKU STATION EXIT - NIGHT

Shindo exits the station, adjusts his coat collar. A MAN (40s), eyes bloodshot, drunk, grieving blocks his path, carries a folded umbrella like a cudgel.

MAN
You're that Division 9, right?
Ghost hunters.

Shindo keeps moving. The man steps in front of him again.

MAN (CONT'D)
My daughter jumped last month. You
people taking pictures of her body
for your little files Making
stories out of her?

Shindo stiffens.

SHINDO
We're trying to find out why it
keeps happening.

The man shoves him. Hard.

MAN
Why? Because she was weak! You
think you can explain that with
your monsters?

Shindo squares up doesn't shove back. The man pulls the umbrella up like a weapon.

Nearby commuters stare.

Yurika hurries over, putting herself between them.

YURIKA
Enough!

The man's chest heaves. Tears stream down his face. He drops the umbrella and staggers away into the rain.

The man slams a PHOTO of his dead sister into Shindo's chest.

MAN
She waited for that train every
day. Same time. Same place. Then
one night, she's ash on the tracks.
And you come sniffing around after
the fact? What good are you?

Shindo stays silent. The man leans in, shaking with rage.

MAN (CONT'D)

You're supposed to stop this. But
you don't even believe it's real,
do you?

The words land hard.

Shindo looks at the photo, a young woman smiling on a sunny day. Then he notices: in the corner of the frame, blurred, a figure on the platform. Pale.

The man grips his arm, desperate.

MAN (CONT'D)

If you walk away, she dies for
nothing. And the next one too. And
the next.

Shindo exhales, shoulders sink. The cynicism slips.

He meets the brother's eyes. For the first time, he looks like a man with skin in the game.

Shindo watches him go.

SHINDO

Everyone wants this buried.

YURIKA

What changed?

SHINDO

We're not waiting for permission
anymore.

EXT. SHINJUKU BACKSTREETS - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika weave through alleys, behind them two UNIFORM COPS linger half a block back, pretend not to watch. Shindo and Yurika stop. The cops stop.

Shindo notices first.

SHINDO

You see them?

YURIKA

Yeah.

They turn a corner into an underpass. Shindo quickens his pace. The uniforms follow.

Shindo veers into a narrow side stairwell. Yurika follows. They duck into darkness, pressed against the wall. The sound of the uniforms boots echo past.

SHINDO

IA doesn't tail you unless they're
worried what you'll find.

The two slip out the other side of the stairwell into the maze of alleys, disappearing into the night.

INT. STATION KIOSK - NIGHT

A tiny newspaper stand, shutter half-pulled. Stacks of sports pages and candy.

An ELDERLY VENDOR (80s), thin, shaky hands sits on a stool, smokes. Shindo and Yurika stand across from him.

VENDOR

It's not new. Not to me.

SHINDO

What do you mean?

The vendor's eyes glaze, remembering.

VENDOR

I was a boy. In 1945. When the B-29s came. We'd hear them before we saw them. Not engines. Footsteps. Heavy...one after the other...down the streets. Closer, closer. Then the sky lit up.

Yurika shifts, uneasy.

VENDOR (CONT'D)

The war never ended down here.

Shindo and Yurika exchange a look unsettled, hooked.

INT. DIVISION 9 - DAY

Shindo slouches in the back. Yurika upright, notes in hand, at a battered conference table. Case files stacked high.

At the head, Captain Takeda.

TAKEDA

I've had calls from bosses I didn't
know I had.

(MORE)

TAKEDA (CONT'D)

Each one asking why this Division
is sniffing around a string of
suicides the press already calls
copycats.

Shindo lights a cigarette, ignores the glares.

SHINDO

Maybe because people keep dying in
the same station?

Takeda slams a file shut.

TAKEDA

Stand down. Both of you. Stick to
your cold cases.

YURIKA

With respect, sir, if we bury this,
we'll be digging bodies out for
months.

Takeda cuts her off with a look that silences the room.

TAKEDA

You keep pushing, you won't have
desks to sit at.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Shindo knocks on the door of an old Showa-era house. A woman
answers, MRS. ENDO, (70s). Sad eyes.

MRS. ENDO

You're here about my daughter.
Again?

Shindo flips open the file.

SHINDO

Endo Rika. She was seen on subway
footage last week.

Mrs. Endo stiffens.

MRS. ENDO

My Rika died 40 years ago. During
the gas leak. Shinjuku station. You
people said it was accidental.

She points to the wall. An old framed photo, girl in a white
gown. Identical to the woman in the tunnel. Unaged.

MRS. ENDO (CONT'D)
But sometimes... she comes home.

Shindo stares. She opens a drawer. Pulls out a cassette tape.

MRS. ENDO (CONT'D)
I hear her on the machine. Every
year, same night.

She plays the cassette in her tapedeck. The tape hisses with static, then.

RIKA'S VOICE (TAPE)
Mama... it's cold under the
tracks... He's watching again. The
man with no hands...

The tape warps. Static increases. Then cuts.

And still, from the speakers:

FAINT WHISPER (NO TAPE):
Riku...

Shindo flinches. Wonders if anyone else heard that.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Shindo walks to his car. A black sedan idles nearby.

From the shadows, CHIEF INSPECTOR KAWABE steps out.

KAWABE
Detective Shindo.

Shindo freezes.

SHINDO
IA has business in the parking
garage.?

KAWABE
Division 9 has a history of...
overstepping.

Kawabe steps closer. His voice drops.

KAWABE (CONT'D)
You're poking areas not in your
jurisdiction.

Kawabe doesn't smile.

KAWABE (CONT'D)

The last thing this department needs is another scandal in the papers. People already think the stations aren't safe.

Shindo leans in.

SHINDO

Sounds like you're more worried about headlines, than bodies on the tracks.

KAWABE

You've been asking questions about Shinjuku Station. About 1945. That's not your assignment.

SHINDO

Funny. The bodies didn't get the memo.

Kawabe steps closer, lowering his voice.

KAWABE

You're poking into national security history. Suicides, tunnels, blackout records all classified. You think you're chasing a ghost, but you're chasing ghosts the government put to bed.

He slips a business card into Shindo's pocket.

KAWABE (CONT'D)

Do yourself a favor. Keep your nose in the archive where it belongs.

He pats Shindo's arm firm enough to be a warning, walks away.

Kawabe gets back in the sedan. It glides off into the dark, leaving Shindo alone in the cold hum of the garage.

Shindo watches him go, from behind him, a faint whisper:

VOICE (O.S.)

He's afraid too...

Shindo spins.

The parking garage is empty.

INT. POLICE BAR - NIGHT

Dim, smoky. Off-duty cops cluster at tables. Shindo sits across from KUDO (50s), ruffled, nurses a beer, ex-homicide, one of Shindo's few remaining friends.

KUDO

I hear now you're chasing fairy tales.

Shindo smirks, defensive.

SHINDO

You don't believe in fairy tales?
You ever read the budget reports?

KUDO

You were the one who told rookies:
Don't blink. Don't breathe. Just
follow the blood.

Shindo leans back, lights a cigarette.

Kudo studies him. Shindo exhales smoke, eyes flicker.

KUDO (CONT'D)

Careful, Shindo. You build a
reputation your whole life. You can
lose it in one case.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT - DREAM SEQUENCE

A lone COMMUTER, checks his watch 3:33 a.m. The station is deserted. The commuter's footsteps ECHO as they descend the stairs. Each step down, the light grows dimmer to the

PLATFORM

An air raid siren begins to WAIL. The commuter looks up the stairwell no one there.

A single flickering lantern hangs over the tracks wrong era, like something out of an old war photograph.

A low SLOSH sound. The commuter looks down, their shoes are standing in ankle-deep water. They gasp and suddenly they're

UNDERWATER

Bodies drift all around him in the dark, pale hands reach, eyes wide. A woman in a white hospital gown floats closer.

The Blackout Bride.

She reaches out, palm brushes the commuter's cheek, suddenly.

The air raid siren cuts off. A distant train HORN sounds.

The commuter steps forward. One step. Another. On the edge.

INT. SHINDO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - END DREAM SEQUENCE

Shindo jolts upright on the couch, gasps, drenched in sweat, case file open on his chest.

The same faint RUMBLE of a train fades from his ears, low, metallic, rhythmic. He looks around his apartment, alone.

He sits up. Blinks. The sound is inside his apartment.

Shindo rises. His feet step onto tatami, his feet are wet.

He looks down. Footprints. Bare. Small. Lead to the bathroom.

Water drips with each step. He follows, every nerve on edge.

The train sound grows louder, layered with murmured voices impossible to make out. He reaches the bathroom door. Hesitates. The handle is damp.

Shindo pushes the door open.

Nothing. Empty room.

The voices and rumble fade in an instant. He notices the mirror is fogged over. Words appear in the condensation:

RIKU

He stares. Heart pounds.

A sharp CRACK from the living room, the case file on the couch falls open on its own.

Shindo spins back toward the mirror, name is gone. Just blank glass and his own reflection.

He stares across at a case file: photo of the latest commuter suicide. A young woman, early twenties. Her shoes left neatly at the platform edge.

Across from that, Yurika's research folder lies open, wartime maps, old headlines, survivor testimonies.

He walks over shuts the file. For a moment, it looks like he's going to walk away.

Then, he notices his own reflection in the dark window. For a flicker, it isn't him: it's the burned version of himself he glimpsed on the tracks. Hollow eyes. Watching.

He blinks it away. Just his reflection again.

Shindo exhales, hard. Then: He grabs his coat, heads out.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Stacks of old civil defense documents. Shindo and Yurika sift through crumbling folders, coughing in the dust.

Shindo pulls a thin file: Civilian Casualty Report, 1945.

Inside: a sketch of burned victims, with a note: Witnesses describe young woman carrying a lantern. Did not survive.

YURIKA

It's her. First report.

Shindo studies the sketch. In the margin, a word scrawled in English by an American officer: Pattern.

Yurika moves, sits cross-legged on the floor, surrounding a photo with a circle of salt and written kanji.

SHINDO

What are you doing?

YURIKA

Sealing the boundary. Before tonight.

SHINDO

What's tonight?

She looks up at him, her eyes reflect light that isn't there. Shindo slams the cassette down on the table.

SHINDO (CONT'D)

The girl on this tape died before I joined the force. So tell me, how is she whispering my name?

Yurika doesn't blink, calmly points to the wall behind him.

YURIKA

Some names echo forward.

Shindo turns the Division 9 wall is covered in red-sealed files. He hadn't noticed how many.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
Every spirit leaves a trace.
Some... leave an anchor.

SHINDO
That's not an answer.

YURIKA
This division wasn't created to
solve cases. It was created to keep
them quiet.

She lifts a scroll tube from the archives.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
The original report. Endo Rika
wasn't the first. That tunnel's
been haunted since the war.

She unfurls a fragile paper: a ritual logbook from the
military police era. Handwritten symbols. Names crossed out.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
They tried to bind her.

Shindo sets the scroll and the sketch from the train driver
on his desk. The radio flickers on. Static. A whisper again:

RIKA (O.S.)
He sees me now...

The voice is identical to the one on the tape.

Shindo shuts it off. The lamp flickers, then explodes in a
pop of glass. Darkness.

In the mirror across the room: a flash of the Blackout
Bride's face, that grin. Then it's gone.

YURIKA
You're not the first skeptic to
join this division. But most don't
last past their first haunting.

She gestures to a photo on the wall a young man. Burned at
the edges. Shindo recognizes him.

SHINDO
That's...

YURIKA

Your partner. He requested this transfer. One week before he died.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Mrs. Endo stands in the room wielding an ornate knife. The room, similar to what was found in Kato's house:

Dark, heavy curtains on the windows, candles, a large brass ceremonial bowl on a table in the center of the room. Surrounded by bottle of dried herbs. And:

TWO LARGE DEAD ROOSTERS. One black, one white lie next to the ceremonial bowl.

THE REVERSE SWASTIKA On the window.

MRS. ENDO

She must be cleansed.

Candles are lit, suddenly all snuffed out by the breath of an unseen spirit. Mrs. Endo stands in the middle of the room whirling now as she senses a powerful force in the room with her. A force which seems to vibrate energy.

Shindo bangs on the door outside.

MRS. ENDO (CONT'D)

It's the only way.

A table in the room upends and flies through the air.

Mrs. Endo is knocked to the floor by the flying table. Dazed, she looks up to see: Rika holding the two dead roosters by their necks. A blank expression as she looks down at her.

We hear POUNDING from the other side of the door as Shindo tries to enter.

Rika's blank expression turns into a huge forced grin as she throws the roosters down onto her followed by the horrible screams of Mrs. Endo as live roosters peck at the face and neck of her mother. Then

Shindo shoulders in the door gun drawn, stops when he sees:

Mrs. Endo lies on the floor, her head near the upended table. The two dead roosters lying near her, but with her face and eyes bloody from the attack by the wild birds.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. MRS. ENDO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shindo talks with one PARAMEDIC as another PARAMEDIC zips the bag shut. Shindo nods, turns to Yurika, hunkered down amid the herb bottles scattered on the floor.

She picks up an old, crusted bottle with a handwritten label. Uncapped the bottle spills a grayish green herb on the carpet. She sniffs the herb.

Yurika rises, Shindo approaches, disturbed look on his face.

SHINDO
Coroners preliminary report says
the old woman bled to death. But
those wounds. I'd swear it looked
like her eyes were pecked out.

YURIKA
There's more ash on the floor
beneath her body. And look at this.

Yurika shows him the bottle.

SHINDO
What is it?

YURIKA
Mugwort. I believe it's a
ceremonial herb.

SHINDO
Mugwort, what, are we at UFJ or
something?

Yurika stares him down, Shindo focuses.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
So, this was a ritual killing?

YURIKA
No. The reverse swastika on the
window, these are all protective
devices.

SHINDO
Against what?

VOICE (O.S)
You can't be here!

Shindo looks to Yurika, they both quickly exit.

INT. MRS. ENDO'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika enter to see the Elderly vendor we've seen before, he grips an officers arm, speaks with intensity.

ELDERLY VENDOR
There is more to do, you must
finish. There is danger...

POLICE OFFICER
I'm not interested in you
superstition, get out now! Now!

The vendor notices Shindo and Yurika as they approach, pulls away for the officer, stares at them, turns to leave.

Shindo looks at Yukari.

EXT. MRS. ENDO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Shindo moves quickly, tries to catch up with the vendor.

SHINDO
Excuse me! Sir! Can I talk to you!?

The vendor stops, lets Shindo catch up with him.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
You remember me? I'd like to ask
you some questions.

The vendor walks away. Shindo persists, follows him.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
You were trying to protect these
people weren't you?

The vendor heads into the subway.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
You know they've been targeted by
something. Just tell me if they're
being punished for breaking some
code. I'm trying to help you.

The vendor stops, turns to Shindo.

VENDOR
This is not for you to know.

The vendor disappears into the subway.

INT. SUBWAY TUNNEL - NIGHT - DREAM SEQUENCE

Shindo in the tunnel alone. The tsunawata ring is gone.

He lights his lighter. Blue flame. Shadows pulse on the walls. From deep in the tunnel footsteps. Wet. Barefoot.

Shindo steps forward into the dark, walks into the Shinjuku tunnel, flashlight in hand. Tracks rattle somewhere far off.

On the wall beside him, a child's handprint in ash appears as if breathed onto concrete. He stops. Listens.

A faint, childlike voice:

VOICE (O.S.)
Shindo... why did you leave me?

His flashlight flickers. Then goes out.

Behind him, something moves. He turns.

INT. DIVISION 9 - 3:33 A.M. - END DREAM SEQUENCE

Shindo bolts awake in the office, still at his desk. Candlelight flickers.

Yurika reads an old file. An archival photo of Endo Rika on the Division 9 wall.

YURIKA
These deaths... They spike every
twenty years. Blackout
anniversaries. Firebombing dates.
It's not new, it's starting again.

Yurika sits cross-legged again, now fully inside a chalk-drawn ritual circle. She's chanting under her breath.

A photo of the Blackout Bride before her. Salt ringed around it.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
You were there. With her.

SHINDO
The tunnel. I heard... someone
called my name.

YURIKA
She's reaching backward.

SHINDO
Back to what?

YURIKA
To when it began.

She places a small, scorched child's shoe on the table.
Inside, a tag: Shindo, Riku 1987.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
She's reaching for you.

INT. YURIKA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A small, book stuffed one-room flat. Tatami mats. Old scrolls. Stacks of old newspapers and maps spread across her floor. A metro map, dozens of suicides marked in red pen.

A faded clipping from 1995: Mass Suicide at Shinjuku Station.
A photo of a TEENAGE GIRL clipped to the file.

Yurika's laptop screen glows database searches: Blackout
Bride sightings, subway suicides, WWII tunnel bombings.

She highlights passages, scribbles notes in the margins.

Stacks of old clippings, photocopied police reports, and
cassette tapes spread across a kotatsu table. Yurika at her
laptop, scrolls through a digitized archive.

Shindo sits cross-legged on the floor, studies the chaos.

SHINDO
You've been at this a while.

She doesn't answer. Just types, focused.

She pins a final string to the map. A web of deaths, all
pointing toward the same epicenter.

Shindo reaches for a stack of old photographs sepia-toned
snapshots from the 90s. He freezes on one:

A younger Yurika, ten years old, in a school uniform.

She stands in front of Shinjuku Station. Behind her, blurred
in the background, a knot of emergency workers.

Shindo flips it over. Written in faded ink: August 12, 1995.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
The day of the big group suicide.
You were there.

Yurika stiffens. Slowly closes her laptop.

YURIKA
My sister. She jumped. I was
supposed to meet her that morning,
but...I was late.

The silence stretches. Shindo studies her.

SHINDO
That's why you joined Division 9.

Yurika looks down at her hands.

YURIKA
My mother used to say that evil
follows evil. Once someone suffers
a misfortune, they'll always have
bad luck. I used to just think it
was more of her superstition.

Shindo sets the photo back down gently. His gaze softens.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
I blamed her you know. For all that
happened. I thought maybe she put a
curse on us, to punish us.

SHINDO
Punish you for what?

YURIKA
For abandoning the old ways. I was
raised to believe as she did, in
spirits, the unseen world. As I
grew up, I left all that behind,

Yurika reaches forward and turns the photo face-down.

INT. DIVISION 9 - DAY

Shindo flips through reports at his desk, cigarette burning
low. A TV in the corner blares a late-night talk segment.
Yurika watches, arms folded, tense.

BEGIN MONTAGE ON TV NEWS FOOTAGE / INTERVIEWS

A) COMMUTER #1 (young woman, office worker) standing outside Shinjuku Station.

COMMUTER #1
It's cursed. My grandmother told me
never to take that line after dark.

B) COMMUTER #2 (middle-aged salaryman), nervously laughing.

COMMUTER #2
...if you hear the footsteps before
the train comes, you're next.

C) University STUDENT, clutching headphones.

STUDENT
...it's control. Government
experiments. Frequencies in the
tunnels make you want to jump.

D) ELDERLY SURVIVOR (80s), hunched, filmed outside a hospital.

ELDERLY SURVIVOR
I heard the same sirens during the
bombings. The same... screams.

The ANCHOR cuts in, voice firm but uneasy:

ANCHOR (V.O.)
Officials continue to deny any
connection between incidents. But
the legend of the Blackout Bride
has become impossible to ignore.

END OF MONTAGE

Shindo snorts, flicking ash into a tray. Yurika doesn't look at him. Eyes fixed on the screen.

YURIKA
Fairy tales last longer than facts.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Shindo and Yurika sit across from MR. KOBAYASHI (80s), frail, blind in one eye.

His hands tremble as he pours tea into tiny cups.

KOBAYASHI

The sirens came first. We all ran underground. Crowded. Dark. Then the bombs fell. You could hear the city tearing apart above you.

Yurika leans in.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

There was a girl, nurse, I think. Pretty. Everyone said she carried a lantern to help the children. But she never came out.

His voice drops to a whisper.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

When the smoke cleared, we found the walls black with ash. And on the floor, her shoes. Nothing else. She's still there, isn't she? I hear her footsteps in my sleep. Same as then. Same as now.

Shindo stiffens. He doesn't want to believe, but the old man's certainty makes denial impossible.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A cramped, smoke-stained room.

A POSSESSED GIRL (20s) is cuffed to the table. Her hair hangs in tangled curtains, her fingernails chipped and bloody from clawing at the wood.

A younger Shindo across from her, tries to stay composed.

POSSESSED GIRL

He sees me now... He sees me now...

SHINDO

Who? Who's watching you?

Her head lifts slowly eyes wild, bloodshot.

POSSESSED GIRL

She's here too.

Shindo leans forward, voice hard.

SHINDO

Listen to me, you're safe here. No one's going to hurt you.

She jerks her hands forward cuffs clanging and grabs his wrist with sudden strength.

Her head tilts in an unnatural, twitching motion. Her eyes change black irises, too-wide pupils the same unblinking gaze as the Blackout Bride .

POSSESSED GIRL

Riku...

Shindo freezes.

From somewhere deep in the walls a faint, echoing siren begins to wail.

Shindo staggers, disoriented. The room around him flickers replaced by a WWII-era shelter. Dim lanterns. Panicked civilians packed shoulder to shoulder.

A YOUNG NURSE (20s) pushes through the crowd, carries a lantern. Her face, kind, resolute. She kneels beside a coughing child.

Then, the sound of planes overhead.

A deafening explosion. The tunnel shudders. Dust and screams.

The nurse lifts the child, a firestorm tears through the entrance, swallowing her.

As she burns, she turns her eyes are the Blackout Bride 's eyes. She smiles, horribly serene, as the flames engulf her.

The vision SNAPS. Shindo in the room, trembling, sweats.

Then flames erupt from the possessed girl's sleeves, crawling up her arms with terrifying speed.

Shindo shouts, yanks at her cuffs, trying to pull her away from the table.

SHINDO

Help! Get in here!

The fire races up her chest, her hair catching instantly. Her mouth opens and a chorus of whispers pours out, dozens of voices speaking in unison.

WHISPERS (OVERLAPPING)

Under the tracks... the man with no hands... she's watching... she's watching...

Shindo falls back as the heat surges. Smoke blinds him.

Through the flames, for just a heartbeat, he sees the Blackout Bride standing behind the girl, one pale hand on her shoulder.

The girl's eyes roll back, she collapses into the blaze.

Shindo stumbles toward her again but two other officers burst in, dragging him out as the fire consumes the room.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT

Shindo is drenched in sweat. He grips the edges of the desk.

SHINDO

That case... it never made sense.
No accelerant. No source.

Yurika studies him quietly.

YURIKA

Because it wasn't your case. It was hers.

She taps a file folder labeled: CASE #0001.

Shindo opens it.

Inside: a photo of a young boy himself, age 5 standing in front of the police precinct. Date: August 14, 1987.

SHINDO

That's not possible. I didn't come here until I was twenty.

YURIKA

You've been here longer than you think.

INT. PUBLIC HOSPITAL - PSYCHIATRIC WARD - DAY

A sterile room with reinforced windows. A YOUNG MAN (20s), gaunt, hospital gown, sits across from Shindo and Yurika. His wrists bear bandage marks. His eyes dart around the room.

YOUNG MAN

She smiled at me.

SHINDO

Who smiled?

YOUNG MAN

Everyone says she weeps. That's wrong. She smiled. Right before I stepped off. Like she wanted me to.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

She's still smiling. Right now. Behind you.

Yurika turns sharply, nothing's there.

The young man bursts into manic laughter, then slams his head against the table. ORDERLIES rush in.

Shindo and Yurika back out of the room, rattled.

In the hallway, Yurika whispers.

YURIKA

Every story's different. But they all end the same.

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Dim lighting. The quiet clink of tea cups. Old police commendations line the walls. Shindo sits opposite DETECTIVE EMERITUS KOIKE (70s), wiry, eyes that have seen too much.

Koike's hands tremble slightly as he pours tea.

KOIKE

Division 9 was different in my day. We didn't have specialists. Just the unlucky ones.

SHINDO

Unlucky how?

KOIKE

Tokyo's been trying to bury this since the war. The more you dig, the more she answers back. You want to know why she's here now? Maybe someone opened the wound.

Koike studies him a moment measuring.

KOIKE (CONT'D)

You don't remember, do you? The blackout. 1989. Shinjuku line went dead for thirteen minutes. Everyone thought it was an electrical fault.

Shindo frowns, shakes his head.

SHINDO
I was a kid.

Koike reaches into a battered file folder on the table, pulls out a faded piece of paper a child's drawing, edges yellowed.

It shows a long, thin figure with no hands, no face. Only a black void where the head should be. Crayon lines suggest a tunnel. Small stick figures cower at the far end.

Koike slides it across.

KOIKE
One of the survivors drew that.
Said the man with no hands told him
to stand still when the lights went
out.

Shindo stares at the drawing. His own stomach twists.

SHINDO
Why are you showing me this?

Koike leans forward.

KOIKE
Because you were the boy, Shindo.
The one who survived. And you're
the only one left.

Shindo's breath catches. His eyes flick to the faceless figure again.

For a split second, the paper seems to ripple, like something beneath it is breathing.

INT. ABANDONED SERVICE TUNNEL - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika walk through a dark, sealed-off passage, their flashlights sweep across flaking walls.

The beam catches crumbling bricks. Behind the plaster:

Charred bones pressed into the wall, half-melted into the structure itself.

Yurika recoils, hand over mouth.

YURIKA
They built the station on them.

SHINDO
Not just built. Buried.

He kneels, brushing ash from the bone. Beat.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
Tokyo's foundations... aren't steel.
They're bodies no one wanted to
remember.

The silence hangs. The tunnel groans around them, faint echo
of an air raid siren under the concrete.

Shindo stands, his flashlight trembling slightly.

SHINDO (CONT'D)
And now the city's paying for
forgetting.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Shindo opens a forgotten drawer. Inside: a toe tag. Endo
Rika. DOD: 1982. But the body is missing.

Suddenly, his phone buzzes a text message from an unknown
number: She's watching you sleep again.

He looks up, in the morgue mirror, the Blackout Bride stands
behind him.

He turns.

Nothing.

INT. TOKYO MUNICIPAL ARCHIVES - NIGHT

A cavernous, dust-choked records hall. Fluorescent lights hum
overhead.

Shindo and Yurika sift through endless shelves of wartime
ledgers and evacuation rosters.

Yurika runs her finger down a crumbling page. Stops.

YURIKA
Here. Look at this.

She turns the book to Shindo. A roster from March 1945.

A list of children evacuated during the firebomb raids.
Beside many names: a red line, signifying unaccounted for.

YURIKA (CONT'D)
Every one of these names... matches
a modern victim. Same families,
same station district.

Shindo frowns, traces the red marks.

SHINDO
Seventy years later, and they're
still crossing them off.

The two exchange a look, the implications sinking in.

Suddenly, a loud thud echoes in the hall. They whip around. A folder falls from a high shelf by itself, scattering papers.

Shindo crouches, picks one up. It's a child's drawing: crude crayon figures. A faceless woman in a long veil.

He stares at it, shaken.

INT. METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL - PSYCH WARD - NIGHT

Train driver on his bed, looking vulnerable in his hospital pajamas, staring out the window. A NURSE MAEDA enters the room. She appraises the man, reaches into her pocket.

NURSE MAEDA
Hello, I'm Nurse Maeda.

The train driver stares at her. She pulls an alcohol swab packet from her pocket

NURSE MAEDA (CONT'D)
You've had a bust day, and we're
going to give you something that
will help you sleep.

TRAIN DRIVER
I don't want a shot.

Train driver studies her closely as she opens the packet, approaching the train driver with a swab.

NURSE MAEDA
That what happens when you spit out
your medicine , so we have to do it
this way.

She grasps the train driver's arm as he squirms from her

NURSE MAEDA (CONT'D)
I promise you it won't hurt.

She pulls a syringe from her pocket.

NURSE MAEDA (CONT'D)
Just a little pinch.

Train driver pulls away.

TRAIN DRIVER
I said no.

Nurse Maeda places the syringe cap in her mouth, pulls off the syringe with a tug.

NURSE MAEDA
It will be over in a second.

SOMEONE APPROACHES THE UNSUSPECTING NURSE

Train driver sees the intruder.

TRAIN DRIVER
No! No! Stop!

NURSE MAEDA
Please behave.

From behind Nurse Maeda, we see what the train driver is protesting against. Not the shot. But the lady in White. Huge forced grin.

TRAIN DRIVER
No, please! Don't!

NURSE MEADA
Here we go.

TRAIN DRIVER
Stop it!

Determined, Nurse Maeda brings the syringe to his arm, then stops when she hears a step behind her. She turns to see

THE LADY IN WHITE

Mouth wide. Hug array of sharp teeth.

Nurse Maeda shocked, her hands reflexively raise, dropping the needle.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. DIVISION 9 - DAY

Shindo pores over the ritual logbook Yurika found. The handwriting becomes increasingly erratic near the final entries.

"She appears before death... not to cause it. To warn.

"The ones she can't reach they walk into the dark.

"Only he remains. No face. No hands. He pulls them under.

A name is scratched in the margins: TAKAGI JUNICHI.

Shindo flips to the most recent death on file Takagi, a bureaucrat who leapt in front of the train the same day Shindo saw the Blackout Bride .

YURIKA

The violence is escalating,
whatever she is, she's responsible
for the deaths of these people.
We've got to get to her before it
happens again.

SHINDO

What are you going to do?

YURIKA

Get help.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

A river of commuters floods the concourse suits, bags, the hiss of train brakes in the distance.

The hum of conversation blends with the tinny overhead PA announcements. Crowds surge through the concourse.

Shindo and Yurika push through, Shindo moves with the flow, scanning faces, Yurika is a few steps behind, eyes darting.

Behind them the elderly vendor stands, begins a slow rhythmic chant.

Without warning BUZZZZZZZZT! all the lights flicker, plunging the station into strobe.

A sudden clanging bell echoes through the station not the modern chime, but a deep iron alarm from another era.

Every ticket gate slams open at once with a mechanical SNAP.

Ticket gates flap wildly, clattering like bones.

Commuters gasp, confused, shaken, they SCREAM and scatter. Some fall, trampled in the rush.

Over the speakers the voice glitches mid-sentence.

High-pitched tape warble. Then:

P.A. VOICE (O.S.)
All civilians report to designated
air raid shelters. Repeat take
cover immediately.

The PA glitches a voice overlapping in static. The message repeats more static, more urgency.

P.A. VOICE (O.S) (CONT'D)
All civilians evacuate... all
civilians evacuate...

An old air raid order.

Shindo and Yurika freeze, the crowd churning around them.

For a split second, Shindo spots her: the Blackout Bride , standing motionless beyond the gates. Watching him.

Still. Barefoot. Her hair hangs like wet silk.

For a heartbeat, the rest of the crowd freezes not moving, not breathing.

Only Shindo and the Blackout Bride seem able to move.

The iron bell slams again.

She tilts her head slow, unnatural, flickers like a dying lightbulb.

Gone.

The regular PA returns mid-announcement. People blink, shake their heads, resume walking as if nothing happened.

Yurika steps up beside Shindo.

YURIKA
Did you?

SHINDO

Yeah.

They stand in the middle of the crowd's flow, they turn to the elderly vendor who nods, suddenly aware they're the only three who saw her.

INT. METROPOLITAN POLICE HQ - COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika stand before Captain Takeda and Chief Inspector Kawabe. On Takeda's desk: a stack of incident reports, commuter complaints, and a USB.

Takeda slams a folder shut.

TAKEDA

Two thousand commuters. Station evacuated. Half a dozen injured in the stampede. And Division 9 was right there in the middle of it.

Shindo leans back, trying not to smirk.

SHINDO

Funny. Nobody mentioned the part where the gates opened themselves.

Takeda glares, but Kawabe interjects, voice like ice.

KAWABE

You're embarrassing the department. First you chase suicides that aren't your case. Now you create mass panic.

Yurika steps forward, angry.

YURIKA

We didn't cause the surge. You've seen the footage.

Kawabe slides the USB stick across the desk.

KAWABE

What I see is Division 9 waving their badges around in front of cameras while people scream about ghosts.

Takeda exhales, weary.

TAKEDA

This division barely exists as it is. One more stunt like this, and they'll shut us down for good.

Shindo smirks, lighting a cigarette.

SHINDO

Maybe that's the idea.

Kawabe steps closer, lowering his voice.

KAWABE

Drop the station case, Detective.
Or next time, it won't be your
division they bury.

The silence is heavy. Shindo exhales smoke, meeting Kawabe's cold stare.

INT. SHUNJUKU STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

The station is nearly empty.

Last train long gone. Fluorescents hum overhead.

Shindo sits slouched on a bench, collar up, cap pulled low.

A paper coffee cup cools in his hands.

He's watching.

Across the tracks, an elderly man stands alone, toes just shy of the yellow safety line.

Shindo's eyes flick to the far end of the platform.

The Blackout Bride appears. Still. Silent. Barefoot.

The man stiffens, stares at her. His lips move in silent conversation, he turns and walks back toward the stairs.

Shindo exhales. Watches her.

She hasn't looked at the man once.

She's looking directly at him. We hear the LOW VOICE of the elderly vendor chanting.

TIME CUT - LATER

A young woman in office clothes emerges from the stairs, phone in hand.

She drifts toward the edge too close.

From behind an unseen force grabs her coat, yanks her back.

She stumbles, glances around in confusion, then hurries off.

Shindo scans the platform no one else in sight.

Except her.

The Blackout Bride stands in the same place.

Her head tilts unnatural, slow.

Shindo checks his watch. 3.33 a.m. Lights above dim. The LOW VOICE of the elderly vendor chants.

Suddenly, behind Shindo a SHADOW runs past. Shindo wheels around. She takes a single step toward him. And smiles.

FOOTSTEPS echo behind him. He spins, nothing there.

He looks back, the platform is empty.

INT. TUNNEL PLATFORM - NIGHT

Shindo stands at the exact spot. He sets down the train driver's sketch of the Blackout Bride . And waits.

From the dark, The Blackout Bride appears. Pale. Empty-eyed. Shindo doesn't move.

SHINDO

I'm not here to stop you. Just tell
me... who's pulling them under?

She raises a hand points behind him. He turns.

In the distance, a man shuffles to the tracks. Glassy-eyed. Shindo lunges grabs him seconds before the train passes.

When he turns back the Blackout Bride is gone.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Shindo types out his first ever Division 9 Incident Report.

SHINDO (V.O.)

Subject: Endo, Rika. Confirmed posthumous appearances consistent across four decades. Pattern behavior suggests intent to warn, not harm. Cause of manifestation unknown. Connection to suicide cluster probable. Conclusion: residual entity. Active. Benevolent. Unresolved.

He lights a cigarette. The lighter ignites immediately. He stares at it, flicks it off.

Still silent. Still alone.

Shindo, curious, opens the drawer Yurika showed him earlier.

CASE FILE #0001.

Inside: A missing persons report from 1987. Boy, age 5. Name: Riku Shindo. Status: Found, unclaimed. Notes: Did not speak for 6 days. Drew symbols in ash.

Beneath that: a photo. A child standing in front of the Tokyo police precinct. No adults. Just him.

Shindo stares. From the hallway:

YURIKA (O.S.)

You've been here longer than you think.

INT. MONITOR ROOM - NIGHT

Yurika alone. Watches old security footage on analog tape.

On screen: 1987. A young Shindo enters the precinct lobby. Dirty, barefoot. Walks past a wall of officers who don't seem to see him.

One frame glitches, a blurred figure beside the boy. Watches.

Not the Blackout Bride. Something worse.

Yurika leans closer. Her expression changes: Concern.

INT. POLICE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika stand at the front, flanked by projected stills from the rush-hour incident. Suicidal clusters, the Blackout Bride's flicker on camera.

Takeda slams a file shut.

TAKEDA

Division 9 just terrified two thousand commuters. Do you have any idea how many complaints I've fielded?

SHINDO

Complaints? People are dying. This isn't coincidence.

Takeda's eyes flick toward Kawabe, seated in the corner, calm, watching.

TAKEDA

Your job isn't to chase fairy tales. It's to keep the city calm.

YURIKA

Sir, if you'd look at the patterns...

TAKEDA

Patterns don't matter. What matters is we bury this before it spreads.

The room goes silent. Everyone looks at Shindo.

SHINDO

You'd rather protect the lie than the people.

Takeda leans forward.

TAKEDA

That's not a lie, Detective. That's policy.

He nods to Kawabe, who closes his folder.

KAWABE

You keep pushing, and you'll find yourself buried with the rest of them.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

The train rattles through tunnels. Shindo slouches by a window. The carriage, empty, it slows into the next station.

Doors slide open. Silence. The platform, deserted. Then.

DOZENS OF FIGURES shuffle aboard in absolute silence. Men, women, children... but all of them burned, faces blackened, clothes tattered, some still smoking.

They all take seats, stand surrounding him. Heads turned toward Shindo. None speak. Shindo stares, frozen.

The doors close. The train lurches forward.

He blinks. The carriage is empty again.

His phone BUZZES. He fumbles it out. A text from YURIKA: Did you see them too? The burned ones? They were in my dream. Same train. Same faces.

Shindo sits breath jagged. The train rattles into the dark.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika arrive at a deserted platform. A tip led them here, another suicide window. Lights flicker.

PA (V.O.)
Train approaching. Please stand
back from the platform edge.

They exchange a look, the last train has gone tonight.

ON THE TRACKS

A train barrels through, they see carriages are packed with burned passengers, pressed against the glass. Silent, smoking, mouths open in screams.

The train vanishes into blackness. PLATFORM LIGHTS DIE.

Another sound builds: another train coming... from the opposite direction.

Shindo grabs Yurika's arm. They're between two oncoming trains, both sides closing in. The tunnel walls shudder.

YURIKA
They're not stopping.

The trains close in, ghostly silhouettes spill onto the platform, walk through Shindo and Yurika. Soldiers in WWII uniforms. Women clutch lanterns. Children scream silently.

A FIGURE stops in front of Shindo. It's him. But burned. Hollow-eyed.

DOUBLE-SHINDO
You already chose this death.

The two trains are almost on them, the sound deafening, the ground splitting. Shindo shields Yurika, braces for impact
WHOOSH.

The lights return. The platform, empty. No trains. Silence.

YURIKA
You saw it too.

He can't answer. He's shaken, breathless, skeptic no longer.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Shindo and Yurika hunch over a wall of case files, maps, and photos. Cigarette smoke curls in the stale air.

Yurika draws circles on a map of Tokyo's subway stations.

YURIKA
Look. Every jump site lines up with
the old evacuation routes from
1945.

She connects the dots. The circles form a crude ritual sigil across the city grid.

SHINDO
It's not random.

Yurika pulls another file, dates of suicides. They fall on anniversaries of the fire bombings.

YURIKA
It's a timetable.

Shindo looks at the board, commuters, dead faces, black-and-white photos of bombed-out ruins overlap with modern maps.

SHINDO
If we don't stop it...there's
another one coming.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

INT. YURIKA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She sits in stillness, eyes closed, as if meditating.

Behind her, incense burns in a strange pattern.

Suddenly her eyes open. No fear. Just recognition.

YURIKA
He remembers now.

INT. POLICE HQ - EVIDENCE LOCKUP - NIGHT

A light flickers overhead light. A MALE FIGURE opens a locked drawer.

Inside: a VHS tape marked KUROKAMI 1987 INCIDENT FOOTAGE DO NOT DUPLICATE.

A hand takes it.

A faint reflection in a shard of broken glass:

A smiling woman. The Blackout Bride . Stands in the background.

This time she's not alone.

INT. DIVISION 9 - NIGHT

Dim lighting. Silence. Rows of ancient case files stacked in red-sealed boxes, the back wall lined with hundreds of case folders.

Some are stamped CLOSED. Some say REDACTED.

But some... begin to tremble. Paper rustling without wind.

CLOSE ON:

CASE #0314 SUBJECT: NAKAGAWA, YURIKA.

Status: UNCONFIRMED ENTITY.

Origin: Unknown.

A drop of ink or blood seeps down the label. Vanishes before it touches the floor.

A low rumble begins, grows, the sound of a train, muffled, as though it's charging through the walls of the vault itself.

The metal cabinets shiver.

CLATTER! A drawer bursts open. A file tumbles out, papers scattering. The pages are wet, stained dark, as if soaked in ash and blood.

The ink runs, letters smear then reform.

It spells: NINE.

On the wall, a single word bleeds through the plaster in dripping black:

RITUAL.

Dust sifts from the ceiling.

One of the file boxes bursts open.

A flurry of black ash spills onto the floor.

The ash scatters then coalesces, taking shape.

A series of wet, bare footprints form on the floor, walking away toward the darkness at the far end of the vault.

The rumble fades. Silence returns.

The footprints remain.

END OF PILOT