

PRIDE OF THE MAGI

Written by

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INT. CAVE S.E. TURKEY - DAY

Archeologist, DR. THEODORE EICHMANN (60s), and his two assistants explore a dark tunnel. One ASSISTANT documents POV style behind a camera. Flashlights move over the walls as they head down the tunnel.

SUPER: GOBLEKI TEPI, SOUTHEASTERN TURKEY

EICHMANN

(soft German accent)

Mind your step in here gentleman.
We're walking where no human has
walked in nearly 12,000 years.

The second assistant, ALEXANDER NEWMAN (Late 20s), eager but impatient, looks around at the bare walls dubiously.

NEWMAN

Come on, Professor. There aren't
even any carvings on the walls.

EICHMANN

Many important discoveries have
been made at the end of
unremarkable tunnels. Ah...

The tunnel dead ends, and Eichmann leans in, examining the wall before them muttering quietly to himself in German.

NEWMAN

Well that's a load. Why did they
even dig this?

EICHMANN

Dig? Did you see tool marks on the
walls that I missed?

NEWMAN

Well, no, but-
(examining the wall
closer)
Son of a...A natural formation
wouldn't do this.

EICHMANN

Correct. So how is this tunnel so
perfectly shaped?

Eichmann fiddles with one of the stone outcroppings.

THUNK!

The entire back wall separates back and slides open with a rumble. Dust and small rock particles rain down.

On the other side of the door is a huge round chamber with a domed ceiling. Carvings of animals and humans engaged in various ceremonies cover the walls.

EICHMANN (CONT'D)

Carvings like this shouldn't be here. We're far below the oldest part of the site.

As they move into the chamber, the depictions change into scenes of battle, humans battling what appear to be human-like demons.

EICHMANN (CONT'D)

These are far more complex than they should be.

(to the camera)

Make sure you get these on camera, son.

NEWMAN

It's like the Pyramid Texts.

EICHMANN

This predates the Pyramid Texts by over 6000 years. Quickly, Alexander, lights.

Newman drops chemical glow sticks around the chamber. He stops short in front of a large alcove.

On it two ORNATE CLAY JARS, sealed, rest on a raised T-shaped platform.

Leaning close, Newman studies one jar ordained with drawings of humans wielding the elements.

NEWMAN

Professor. An alter of some kind. Similar to the columns on the surface, but no carvings. And these jars.

Eichmann joins him.

The other jar displays image of a single human surrounded by demons with blazing eyes standing on piles of the dead.

EICHMANN

The two jars, these must be the oldest intact example of human pottery ever found- Oh, mine Gott in himmel...

Embedded in the wall behind the pedestal is an ornate circular gold carving depicting god like beings passing through a glowing portal while a fierce battle rages.

EICHMANN (CONT'D)

This...this isn't possible. There are no gold deposits anywhere near here. Are you getting this?

The camera operator puts their thumb up in view of the lens.

NEWMAN

So it's fake then?

EICHMANN

No. We dated samples from the sealed entrance.

(To the camera)

Back up a little and get the whole altar area.

The camera backs away.

NEWMAN

You think it's an altar?

Newman picks up the jar with the demon like depictions on it to compare it to the wall.

EICHMANN

(continuing to look at the carving)

Perhaps a tribute or a memorial of some kind? No signs of sacrifice...

Rumbling. Dust falls and Newman hastily puts the jar back. It stops the second the jar is back on the pedestal.

EICHMANN (CONT'D)

(turning to Newman)

What did you touch?

NEWMAN

Sorry, Professor, I just got a little excited. I mean, we've got the whole thing on video, its fi-

EICHMANN

One of these days you will be the death of me.

CRUNCH!

A huge stone lands squarely on Eichmann, killing him.

Newman has a second to scream before the whole cavern begins shaking. More rocks.

He backs away and knocks the jar he picked up onto the floor. It shatters. Fine, purplish dust plumes into the air like a mushroom cloud.

CRACK!

The carving on the wall splits across the middle. A brilliant golden light irradiates from within.

RUMBLE! The shaking increases and more rocks fall.

Panicked, Newman and the camera operator try to make it to the entrance. A huge rock plummets directly into Newman killing him and knocking the camera person to the ground.

The camera lands on the ground pointed up at the cracked carving glowing with light. The purplish dust sucks in the energy coming from the crack and starts glowing with its own sickly power.

It slowly moves amoeba-like through the air towards the camera as rocks continued to fall then LUNGES forward.

THUD!

BLACKOUT:

The image of the gold fresco fades in.

SUPER: PRIDE OF THE MAGI

The fresco fades out and is replaced by:

MONTAGE: EVOLUTION OF MAGIC

- Early depictions of human cave paintings, early petroglyphs, etc.

- Ancient magical cultural images from India, China, Japan, Africa, Celtic, Egyptian, Syrian, Babylonian, Persian, Native American, etc.

- Black and white photos

- Silent films
- Television and movie clips
- People in costume at various cons

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

A bus with an advertisement for the play Harry Potter and The Cursed Child pulls away from a tall office building in midtown.

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

INT. NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE - DAY

CASSANDRA (30s), a dark haired woman of Greek or Italian descent with her dark hair pulled back in an extreme ponytail exits an office labeled "John Patrick Armstrong, Director - Climate Task Force."

She speaks with a distinct Queens accent as she strolls through the office bullpen like she owns it, because as the mayor's appointed head of Emergency Management for the whole city, she does.

CASSANDRA

I'm sorry, but that's the mayor's final decision. There's just no room in the budget next year.

JOHN PATRICK "JACK" ARMSTRONG, (30) a gay Irish American from Boston with sandy blond hair and shockingly blue eyes follows close behind her, his hands full of heavily annotated notes.

The definition of the hot gay nerd. He wears off the rack chinos and a white dress shirt with sleeves rolled up that fit VERY well. His collar is unbuttoned, but sports a loose designer yet understated tie.

JACK

Cassandra, I wrangled every climate activist in town to back this. If I go back to them with nothing-

CASSANDRA

(stopping to respond)
You did amazing work. Maybe next year.

Cassandra turns and strides towards the elevator.

JACK

(following after her)

We've got passengers wading through
waist deep water to get to trains!
People dying in flooded basement
apartments. Hurricanes-

Cassandra stops and pushes the down button.

CASSANDRA

The mayor has other priorities he's
focused on right now.

JACK

The mayor's presidential ambitions
are not my concern, the fate of the
city and the planet is what should
be at the top of his list.

CASSANDRA

Careful, Jack. You may be the
climate wiz kid from Boston, but
the mayor will only let you push so
far. Now, go smooth over things
with your climate friends and leave
the contractors to me.

The elevator doors open and Cassandra steps inside.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

(pushing the door close
button)

Look, you lost this one, but you've
lived to fight another day. Keep
that in mind.

The elevator doors close, leaving Jack alone. He sighs,
shoulders slumping, and looks over to the glass conference
room where his team waits.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Jack sits at the conference table, dejected. As his team
members burst out of the conference room in various moods of
anger, shock, and disbelief.

ELENA (30s), a no-nonsense African American woman stands
across the table from him.

JACK

You gonna pile on now?

ELENA

What happened?

JACK

Everything was on track. Then
Cassandra just walked in and said
no.

ELENA

She's always been the harbinger of
disaster. Your problem, Jack, is
you don't play the game. You have
to push people - schmooze when
necessary. You have to connect
before they'll hear what you're
saying.

JACK

Isn't that why I brought you on?

ELENA

I can only help you so far. The
rest you have to figure out on your
own. Now, I suggest you go out
tonight. Get stupid wasted, flirt
with a cute boy. Who knows, you may
even get lucky.

JACK

I'm terrible at flirting.

ELENA

I know. I've seen you try. All the
more reason to go out. You need all
the practice you can get.

Elena leaves Jack alone.

INT. OFFICE BULLPEN - DAY

Jack walks to his office, past team members packing and
leaving for the day.

His cell phone rings. He pauses in the middle of the room and
answers.

JACK

Hello?

SANDOVAL (V.O.)

Jack!!! Rumor has it you're free
for the day.

JACK
Sandoval, how do you know that?

SANDOVAL (V.O.)
I have my sources.

Jack looks over his shoulder.

Elena gets on the elevator, cell phone in hand. She mouths "You're welcome" to him before the doors close.

JACK
Do you have spies everywhere?

SANDOVAL (V.O.)
They're called friends, Jack. You should try making more sometime. You know, besides Vic and I.

VIC (V.O.)
Hi, Jack!!!

Jack continues to his office.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY, CONTINUOUS

Jack gathers his belongings from his full but well organized office filled with plants.

JACK
Hi, Vic. I suppose I shouldn't be surprised you two are together. What are you up to this time?

SANDOVAL (V.O.)
What? It's only your 30th birthday? Why would we be up to anything?

JACK
Because you're always up to something, and I'm the one who usually has to pay for it somehow.

He slings his bag over his shoulder and leaves.

INT. OFFICE BULLPEN, CONTINUOUS

Jack pushes the down button and waits.

SANDOVAL (V.O.)
I don't know what you mean.

JACK

Two years ago, you flew the three of us to Vegas for my birthday and then took me to a strip club and bought me a lap dance.

SANDOVAL (V.O.)

He was hot!

JACK

He was straight!

SANDOVAL (V.O.)

I don't see the problem.

JACK

The point is, I'm not interested. I'm gonna go home, open a nice bottle of Burgundy, put on The Science Channel, and try to forget this day ever happened and that's final.

He hangs up as the elevator door opens and he gets on.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - DAY

Jack exits the revolving door onto the street and comes to a dead stop at the sight of-

SAMUEL SANDOVAL (late 20s), gay Native American from the Navajo tribe looking pleased as punch wearing a bright tank top and tight pastel shorts standing in front of a black car with the door open.

Next to him smiling conspiratorially is VICTORIA "VIC" DIAZ (late 20s), a Hispanic pan-sexual female in white capris and a sleeveless coral blouse sporting long flowing dark hair.

SANDOVAL

We're not taking no for an answer.

JACK

I am going to kill both of you.

VIC

Oh, come on, you know you love us. Now, in the car old man.

JACK

Fine. Where are we going?

VIC
Nothing extravagant.

SANDOVAL
Just a chill happy hour at Apollo's
Chariot.

JACK
Fine. But just happy hour, and no
trying to set me up with anyone
this year, I mean it!

VIC
Wouldn't dream of it.

SANDOVAL
What was wrong with the last guy?

JACK
He was a porn star!

SANDOVAL
I don't see the problem.

JACK
I give up.

VIC
It's easier that way, trust me.

The three pile in the car and head off to Hells Kitchen.

EXT. DARKENED NYC ALLEY - EVENING

A young 20-something gay man runs down a dark alleyway. He turns a corner and jumps into a dark doorway, heaving in breaths, terrified.

He slowly peers out looking down the way he came. Seeing no one, he relaxes a bit. Steps out. Satisfied he's not been followed, he turns to-

GRUNT!

A black gloved hand latches on to his throat lifts him off the ground with ease, turning and slamming him back into the door.

A cloud of glowing purple spores envelopes his head and plunges into his mouth as he opens it in a vain attempt to scream.

His eyes go wide with panic as they begin to glow while he struggles against the iron grip. The glow of his eyes gets brighter.

SIZZLE!

His eyes burn out of his skull and he goes limp. Smoke trails from the sockets.

The black gloved hand tosses the now dead body to the ground in disgust like so much trash. Two figures, a man and woman, step into view with eyes glowing purple.

HIRUD (O.C.)

Such a waste. No potential at all in this one. Go! Find me another one. And be more selective this time.

The two figures bow and slip back into the shadows.

EXT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - EVENING

Sandoval closes the door to a black car as Jack looks over the neglected plants outside the bar.

JACK

Aiden really should take better care of his plants.

SANDOVAL

You and your plant obsession!

JACK

Just happy hour! After that, I'm done.

VIC

We wouldn't dream of keeping you out.

JACK

Now I know you're up to something.

SANDOVAL

Always so suspicious.

JACK

You'd give Loki a run for his money how you play with your words.

SANDOVAL

Please! I'm much better looking than Hiddleston, plus my tricks are always about bringing joy.

JACK

Well that makes me feel a lot better.

VIC

It should, could you imagine if he used his powers for evil?

Jack rolls his eyes as Sandoval opens the door.

INT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - EVENING

The mid-sized gay bar with the charm of a hole in the wall and the comfort of a martini bar, mixed with a hint of theme park Greek mythology, look's crowded for a happy hour because it's comfortably full.

A smiling Elena stands at the front of the crowd with a glass raised.

BAR PATRONS

Happy Birthday, Jack!

Jack stands frozen in disbelief staring at them as they applaud and cheer.

JACK

I don't think I need to imagine.

SANDOVAL

This is what happens when you won't let me throw a surprise party for you at your house.

VIC

(kissing him on the cheek)
Happy Birthday, chica. Now go to the bar and get a birthday beverage.

She swats him on the rear sending him on his way. As he's walking, Elena latches on to his arm.

ELENA

Happy Birthday, boss.

JACK

Tell me why I shouldn't fire you
for not giving me a heads up?

ELENA

Cause you know you couldn't run
that place without me, and I
wouldn't be a very good deputy if I
didn't make sure you unwound now
and then.

JACK

Fine...a reprieve this time, but
that's your one.

ELENA

(laughing)

It's always my one. Happy Birthday.
(kissing him on the cheek)
Now enjoy yourself, I have to go
rescue my current boytoy before
Sandoval tries to convince him he's
not really straight...again.

She disappears into the crowd.

JACK

That happened one time!

INT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT'S BATHROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jack exits and passes JASON (30), tall, dark hair, muscular,
scruffy, and movie star good looks, going in. He flashes a
dazzling white smile and winks at Jack.

Jack double takes in confusion before heading back to the
bar. TREYVON (20s) a furious African American guy plants
himself in front of Jack.

TREYVON

Explain to me why I shouldn't throw
this drink in your face!

JACK

Hello to you too. Enjoying a night
at the Chariot?

TREYVON

All the work we did for you! The
compromise! And we get nothing?!

JACK

How did you find out about that?

TREYVON

That's what you're worried about?!

JACK

Look, the mayor pulled the plug at the last minute, not me. I'm just as upset as you are, but there's nothing I can do. Maybe next year-

TREYVON

Oh, don't give me that next year bullshit. Maybe if you learned how to talk to people-

Jason suddenly swoops in, wraps his arm around Jack and plants a kiss on his lips.

JASON

Jack! Babe, there you are. Sorry I'm late, I got hung up at the office.

(to Treyvon)

Hi! I'm Jason, and you are?

JACK

(befuddled)

Uh...Jason, this is Treyvon, head of the New York Climate Collective.

JASON

So nice to meet you. Well, I hate to tear you away, but it is long past time I got you your birthday shot! My apologies, Trayvon, you know how it is.

Jason drags Jack away from a stuttering Treyvon.

TREYVON

We're not done here!

COUCH AREA OF APOLLO'S CHARIOT

Jason leads Jack to an empty booth and Jack slides around the table into the middle of the plush curved couch.

JACK

Thank you so much for that rescue. I was about to have a drink in my face.

Jason slides in next to him and casually puts his arm on the back of the couch, giving Jack his full attention.

JASON
Couldn't let the cute birthday boy
be accosted at his own surprise
party.

JACK
Can I buy you a drink? It's the
least I can do.

Jack waves over one of the cocktail boys.

JASON
Such a gentleman. Sure! I'm a
simple girl with simple needs, just
a vodka soda.

JACK
Well, at least let me get you good
vodka.

JASON
(thick with double
meaning)
Whatever's closest works for me.

JACK
(to the cocktail boy)
My usual, and a Ketel and soda for
my companion.

The cocktail boy nods and heads to the bar.

JACK (CONT'D)
So, how'd you know it was my
birthday?

JASON
The whole bar shouted your name
when you walked in, kinda hard to
miss.

JACK
Right.

JASON
Of course, I'd be hard pressed to
miss you walking into anywhere.

JACK
Oh...um...thanks, I guess.

JASON
 (bemused)
 Relax. I've already kissed you so
 no need to be nervous.

The drinks arrive.

JACK
 Just a little...confused, I guess?
 I'm just not sure what's going
 on...

JASON
 (laughs and leaning in)
 I'm hitting on you! Did you not
 know that?

JACK
 Oh! Well, I...ummm...I'm the worst
 at noticing. And I'm terrible at
 flirting.

JASON
 Awe, that's adorable. To be honest,
 I'm a bit out of practice myself.
 But I saw you and had to take my
 shot.

JACK
 Oh!
 (shy smile)
 Hi.

JASON
 Hi.

JACK
 I'm Jack.

JASON
 Jason. It's really nice to meet
 you.

The both smile at each other as they drink.

A flyer is shoved in Jack's face by BRYAN (20s), a too-gay-to-function twink with spiky dark hair wearing a sleeveless Pride tank and periwinkle short shorts.

BRYAN
 Donation to this year's Pride fund?
 The festival theme is "Let Them See
 Your Light."

JACK

Bryan! Are you really shilling for Pride at my surprise birthday happy hour?!

BRYAN

Please! I hit all the birthday parties this time of year. Gotta raise the money somehow.

(to Jason)

Hi there!, Bryan with a "Y." Can I interest you in donating to the Pride fund?

JACK

Sandoval not keeping you on a leash tonight?

BRYAN

That's only on Thursdays. Besides, my very sexy boyfriend is playing the "is he straight or confused" game with your deputy's current boy toy.

Jack looks over finds Sandoval doing his best to seduce Elena's guy.

JACK

If I promise to double my donation will you go rescue him? I can't let that happen to her twice.

BRYAN

Done!

Bryan swishes away into the crowd.

JACK

Sorry about him, he acts like he's the head twink solely responsible for funding all of New York Pride.

JASON

It's ok. I just thought I might need to rescue you again.

JACK

Bryan I can handle...but, you know...if you wanted to pretend I needed rescuing again...

JASON

And you said you were terrible at flirting.

They kiss again, and this time it's much more than a peck.

APOLLO'S CHARIOT - THE HIGH-TOPS - CONTINUOUS

Bryan saunters over to Sandoval, Vic, Elena, and Elena's boyfriend, MARCOS (30s) a sweet Italian meathead.

BRYAN

(to Sandoval)

Ok, babe. You can call it off, it worked.

SANDOVAL

They're into each other and you got your donation?

BRYAN

Yep! Take a look.

They look over at Jack and Jason making out on the couch. Vic sighs and takes a \$20 out of her pocket and surrenders it to a satisfied Sandoval.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

I even got him to double his donation this year.

SANDOVAL

You are utterly shameless!

BRYAN

It's part of why you love me!

SANDOVAL

(kissing Bryan)

I mean, you're not wrong.

BRYAN

Well, I gotta go, hun. Got another event to get to. Bye!

He kisses the girls on the cheek and gives Marcos a playful swat on the butt before flitting away.

VIC

That one is a handful!

SANDOVAL

You have no idea.

MARCOS
(to Sandoval)
So are we done flirting? Like, I
did ok?

VIC
(quietly to Elena)
You do like them big and stupid
don't you.

ELENA
You try finding a quality
intelligent straight man in this
city.

VIC
Pass.

ELENA
Come on, Marcos. Take me home and
remind me why I keep dating you.

MARCOS
Yes, ma'am.

Elena drags Marcos out of the bar like a puppy.

VIC
So sad.

SANDOVAL
Five more minutes, I'd have had him
eating my ass like nachos.

VIC
(swatting his arm)
I meant Elena! She keeps dating
these vacuous straight guys who
think working out is a whole
personality.

SANDOVAL
Oh, he's not for keeping. More like
a catch and release situation.
Speaking of keeping, where's your
better half?

VIC
Jessica? Got hung up at work. The
rash of mysterious deaths...
They're still trying to figure out
what's going on.

SANDOVAL

None of your EMT's have any thoughts?

VIC

We haven't gotten to a scene yet where someone's still alive, so nothing. Besides the burned out eyes.

SANDOVAL

Weird.

VIC

I'd rather not think about it tonight. Shall we go stop Jack from embarrassing himself with a lengthy public make out session?

The two push through the crowd to the making out Jack and Jason. Vic stops a cocktail boy as he passes and whispers something to him. He nods and heads off.

SANDOVAL

So if you guys ever come up for air, we've got Aiden getting the special birthday shots ready.

The guys break off from the make out session.

JACK

Oh, hey, Sandoval...Vic. Umm...this is Jason.

JASON

Vic, lovely to meet you. And Sandoval, nice to see you again.

JACK

Wait, you've met?

JASON

Sandoval flew an excursion flight I had a few weeks ago with some of my archeology students at Columbia.

SANDOVAL

I may have invited him tonight thinking you two would get along.

VIC

(swatting his arm)
You're not supposed to say that part!

SANDOVAL

He'd have figured it out, besides,
I tell him everything...eventually.

The two guys get off the couch and head with Vic and Sandoval to the center of the main bar.

CENTER OF APOLLO'S CHARIOT MAIN BAR

AIDEN (40s), makes an entrance behind the bar. A huge muscle bear of a man, he has short cut hair, a full beard, and a voice and laugh that bellow from deep within.

AIDEN

My friends!!! Welcome!!! So sorry I haven't been able to greet you before now. The trials of a bar owner. Now, I understand I owe you all a round of my CME shots for someone's birthday. Let's get it started!

JASON

(to Jack)
CME shots?

JACK

Coronal Mass Ejection. It's a bar trick shot with fire. They're delicious and impressive, but no one can figure out how he does it.

JASON

Oh...

Aiden juggles bottles, shakers, liquors and mixers, producing six shots layered with red, orange and yellow. He strikes a single match and slowly waves it over the shot glasses.

AIDEN

Let there be LIGHT!

He snaps his finger.

FOOSH!!!

Tongues of flame leap from the shot glasses eight feet into the air. The crowd cheers in amazement.

Aiden stares at the shot glasses, clearly a bit shocked.

VIC

Wow, way to go all in for Jack's birthday, Aiden!

AIDEN

Yeah...well, you know me. I'm a god! Never miss an opportunity show off a bit.

JESSICA (30s), a no nonsense Dominican homicide cop from Harlem, makes her entrance.

JESSICA

I'll say, I saw that from the front door, thought I might have to call in an explosion.

Aiden heads out from behind the bar to join them.

VIC

Mi corazon! So sorry you got stuck at work. Everything ok?

JESSICA

Nothing I want to talk about now. I just really need a drink and an excuse to celebrate.

AIDEN

Well said! No bad news tonight!

Aiden hands out the shots and saves the last for himself.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

(raising the shot glass)
A blessing for you, my friend. May your sun always rise, may your music always sing, may your exploits be legendary, and to your heart happiness bring.

SANDOVAL

Huzzah!

They all echo Aiden's sentiments and take the shot.

AIDEN

Now, bar owners privilege, you get the big birthday bear hug!

Aiden goes in for the hug. Just before they connect-

ZZZAP!

A golden spark leaps from Aiden's chest to Jack's, hidden by the hug. Jack's eyes bulge then flash with magical power.

Aiden jerks away looking concerned. Jack bounces back collapsing into Jason's arms.

JASON

Jack? Jack, Are you ok?

Jack gives a sharp intake of breath as Jason helps him up. He shakes his head but remains disoriented.

VIC

How much have you been pounding?

JACK

No...no...I'm fine, just a little dizzy.

SANDOVAL

That shot hit you pretty hard.

JACK

I'll...I'll be fine.

AIDEN

Maybe I should take you to the back.

COCKTAIL BOY

Aiden, we're out of Titos up here. I need your key for the liquor room.

AIDEN

Ok, Ok. Jack, just stay here and don't move, I'll be back in a sec. Fucking Chads and Beckys...

Aiden heads off. Jason helps Jack to a bar stool.

JACK

Maybe I should head home.

SANDOVAL

You sure?

JACK

Yeah, you know I...uh...don't party like this often...

JASON

I can get him an car.

JACK
You don't have to do that.

JASON
It's fine. I'll take care of it.

Jason puts Jack's arm over his shoulder and helps him towards the door as Sandoval and Vic look on.

JASON (CONT'D)
Just tell me your address and it's all good.

JACK
Don't worry guys, I'll be fine.

EXT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - NIGHT

Jason helps Jack out the door and as Jack passes the plants outside the door, they come alive, restored to health, and add new growth in seconds.

JACK
(still disoriented)
You really are a gentleman....

JASON
Just not passing up a chance at someone smart and sexy who cares about others and the planet. And is not insufferably obsessed with himself.

JACK
You're funny...

JASON
And you're drunk, but I'll take it.

The car pulls up and Jason opens it and puts Jack in.

JASON (CONT'D)
Now, my number is in your phone, but at least text Vic or Sandoval when you get home.

Jack gives a thumbs up. Jason closes the door.

Aiden bursts as the car pulls away.

AIDEN
Where's Jack?

JASON

I put him in an Uber. He'll be fine. By the way, the plants out here look amazing.

As Jason heads back into the bar, Aiden sees the new plant growth then stares after the car.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

Jack stumbles out of the car. Stands up. Gets his bearings. Walks unsteadily.

The plants grow in bursts as he passes. He double takes then shakes his head as if to clear it.

He climbs the steps of his apartment building and stops to admire a bush outside before he continues onward.

RUSTLE!

He turns back at the sound. The bush is in full bloom. He backs away slowly in fear and dashes into the building.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack bursts through the door, slams it shut, and falls back against it in fear, panting.

It's a tidy apartment, well appointed and has slightly more plants than seem necessary. His roommate, TIM (30s), comes out of the kitchen carrying a drink.

TIM

Have a good time at your birthday thing? Sorry I couldn't come, I've got a huge report due at work tomorrow... Are you ok?

JACK

I'm fine. Just need some water.

Jack walks towards the kitchen, and as he passes the many plants they spontaneously grow. An orchid sitting on the coffee table goes into full bloom.

TIM

Uh, Jack. What's going on?

Jack slowly examines the orchid.

JACK
I thought I was seeing things. This
can't...

CRASH!

Jack spins around to see Tim's glass shattered on the floor. His eyes and hands are glowing with menacing purple energy.

TIM
An earth mage. Die in the name of
Hirud!

Tim hurls a ball of purple energy at Jack, who jumps out of the way. It barely misses him, leaving a charred mark on the front door.

JACK
What the fuck!

TIM
Hirud commands your extermination!

Jack, now trapped in a corner, throws up his arms. Suddenly, the vines of a spider plant wrap themselves around Tim's arm and yank it upwards.

BLAST!

He misses.

Jack dives towards the kitchen. A large philodendron wraps its leaves around Tim's legs.

Growling in anger, Tim blasts every plant in sight.

BLAST! BLAST! BLAST!

Jack falls. He backs up in desperation into the wall.

Tim slowly walks over to Jack and stands over him menacingly.

TIM (CONT'D)
This little show of magic is
pitiful, Earth Mage. None may
oppose the oneness with Hirud!

He raises his hands to blast Jack into char.

ROAR!

Light fills the room. Tim throws back his head in a silent scream. A beam of pure light bursts through his chest and he's reduced to a pile of ash.

Standing in the doorway, head grazing the nine foot ceiling, is a glowing god-like figure of the Greek god Apollo with his arm raised.

He lowers his hand and his form resolves down into Aiden. A shocked Vic and Sandoval stand behind him.

Jack's mouth hangs open in shock.

AIDEN

(rushing to Jack's side)

I told you I was a god. And I'm really struggling not to make a Terminator reference right now.

Aiden helps Jack off the floor.

JACK

What is going on, Aiden?

AIDEN

Hirud infected your roommate. Now that you're connected to magic, you're a threat to him. We've got to go.

JACK

Ok, those were words, but not ones that make sense. Magic?!

Vic yanks Jack out of Aiden's hands, examining him for injuries.

VIC

Jack, are you ok? How's your head? Dizzy at all?

Vic continues examining Jack, not giving him a chance to answer. Sandoval is still staring at the ruined apartment.

VIC (CONT'D)

Sandoval, make yourself useful and get Jack some water will you.

(beat)

Sandoval?

JACK

I'm fine, just a little shaken, that's all.

SANDOVAL

Dude! You're a freaking god! And magic is real! This is AWESOME!!!

AIDEN

Yes, it's all amazing, but we have to go before Hirud sends more drones.

JACK

Who is this Hirud and why does he want me dead?!

AIDEN

I promise I'll explain everything, but we have to go. Now!

INT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - NIGHT

Aiden leads the trio through the hopping night crowd to a door just to the left of the performance area, and ushers them inside.

INT. APOLLOS CHARIOT, AIDEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Aiden closes the door to his office behind them and the sound from the loud bar is cut to nothing. It's a much more spacious office than one would expect.

Looking out of place is a huge floor to ceiling mirror in an ornate gold frame on one wall.

Aiden locks the door, touches the doorframe, which pulses once with a golden glow before walking past them to the mirror.

JACK

Ok, Aiden. I think we've been remarkably patient with you, considering. What is going on?

AIDEN

Not here.

VIC

Not here?! Then why'd you bring us back if not to tell us here?

AIDEN

I brought you here so Hirud can't get to you.

Aiden looks at the mirror. His eyes glow gold.

Aiden places his hand directly in the center. The surface ripples as if he'd touched still water.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

I've opened the portal and made it safe for you to step through.

SANDOVAL

A magic portal? Wicked!

Sandoval steps through with no hesitation.

VIC

Well, I've always wanted to check going through a magic portal off my bucket list.

Vic takes a deep breath and steps through after him. Jack crosses his arms and stares at Aiden, unmoving.

AIDEN

I promise you, Jack. The answers to everything you want to know are on the other side. Trust me.

Jack stands there for a minute, then he sighs and follows the others through, Aiden following right after. The mirror ripples then returns solid and still.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM - NIGHT

The three stand at the top of wide marble stairs on a raised dais, mouths agape staring a gigantic cavern. The domed ceiling towers above them. A miniature sun shines down.

Down in the center of the cavern is a white marbled floor the circumference of which is lined with bookcases filled with books and scrolls appearing to cover the vastness of the entire time of written human history.

In the center hovers a giant globe of the earth, slowly rotating, featuring every minute detail of the planet in real time.

Covering the rest of the floor are display cases housing treasures and trinkets from every civilization over the last 12,000 years. The three start slowly walking down the stairs, staring in wonder as Aiden trails behind them.

VIC

This...this is...I don't have the words.

SANDOVAL

Is this your home Aiden?

AIDEN

No, I have a loft in Chelsea. This is more my...sanctum. In here I keep and preserve the treasures of mankind's history.

SANDOVAL

You have a sanctum. That is the coolest thing ever!

They reach the bottom of the stairs. Vic and Sandoval each head in different directions to examine artifacts. Jack idly looks at the nearest bookcase filled with scrolls, pretending to be disinterested.

Vic stops at a case featuring seven scrolls open and suspended in the air, beautiful flowing script enhanced by the soft light.

VIC

The writing is beautiful. Looks a little like Greek.

AIDEN

Those are the only surviving copies of Sappho's seven poems. She had such a lovely soul. One of the very few of you to truly understand the depth and power of love.

Vic's eyes go wide with awe.

VIC

You knew Sappho?!

AIDEN

Of course, who do you think gave them to me?

Aiden leaves a dumbstruck Vic to walk over to Sandoval, who's staring up at a six foot tall stone rectangle intricately carved in a meso-American style.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Ah, the model for K'inich Janaab Pakal's tomb lid. I told him it was a bit too on the nose for me, but Pakal always did like to go big.

Sandoval slowly turns to Aiden.

SANDOVAL

Do you have anything from the
history of my people?

Aiden solemnly puts his hand on Sandoval's shoulder.

AIDEN

I have many things from the history
of the Diné, and I'd be happy to
share them with you and your
people. It's why they're here. It's
why all of this is here.

Tears spilling from his eyes, Sandoval embraces Aiden in a
fierce hug, barely whispering out a thank you in his native
tongue.

Aiden releases Sandoval, squeezes his shoulders and then
leaves him with his thoughts to walk over to Jack.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

No questions from you, Jack? I'd
think as a scientist you'd be full
of them.

Jack faces him, holding a scroll from the bookcase.

JACK

Lost pages from the Bible?

AIDEN

No, I have originals over there.
(indicating a section on
the other side of the
room)
Not that the church today would be
interested in them. There's been a
lot...lost in translation. Though
I'd say they got Paul's obsession
with patriarchy pretty spot on.
That is a scroll from the library
of Alexandria, specifically the
comedy section.

Jack stares at the scroll. Gingerly puts it back.

SANDOVAL

The library had a comedy section?!

AIDEN

Of course! You don't think I'd go through the trouble of convincing Demetrius to found the place and not make sure he included comedy do you? I still can't believe I had to rescue books from fires there not once but twice!

JACK

Ok, Ok, Ok, I've been more than patient with this whole Gandalf routine. What is going on? You say you're a god, but what does that mean? And what does all this have to do with us.

AIDEN

You're right. I'm sorry, it's just been so long since I could share this with anyone. Over here.

Aiden leads them to the giant rotating earth.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

So, you've seen my original form.

Aiden grows into the towering Apollo.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

In ancient Greece, I was known as Apollo, but I've gone by many names over the millennia.

His form cycles through dozens of sun gods from mythology all over the world, then back to Apollo.

He closes his eyes and raises his hands. A golden ball of light swirls into being between them.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Now just relax, this might feel a little...weird.

He opens his eyes. They're blazing with magical power. Three beams of energy leap out of the glowing ball and encompass the heads of the three friends and the world flashes blank in a burst of golden light.

FADE TO:

EXT. EMPTY MIDDLE EAST PLAIN - DAY

SUPER: GOBLEKI TEPI 12,000 B.C.E.

A pastoral setting fades into view at the center of which is glowing circular portal of energy.

An ancient tribe of humans arrives cautiously and are greeted warmly by towering golden figures of men and women.

AIDEN (V.O.)

My people are from a higher dimensional plane than this one. We first arrived 14,000 years ago through a portal in what is now modern Turkey, at a site you call Gobleki Tepe.

The ancient tribe stare up at the godlike figures in wonder and fall to their faces prostrating in fear.

AIDEN (V.O.)

My mother was the leader of our expedition. She saw in your people a possibility for greatness.

A beautiful woman steps forward from the glowing assembled gods and kneels before the leader of the tribe and gently helps him to his feet, indicating they all should rise.

AIDEN (V.O.)

She resolved to treat you as equals, to teach you what we knew. You see, where we were from, a flow of energy surrounded and sustained us, but here...here it was magic.

The golden woman gestures above and a glorious rainbow fills the sky.

MAGIC HISTORY MONTAGE

- A god uses magic to plow a field and grow the wheat.
- A god redirects water into irrigation furrows.
- A god gathers clouds for rain as children dance with glee
- A council of the gods is held around a fire and Aiden's mother speaks passionately.

AIDEN (V.O.)

But my mother didn't want you to just rely on us for everything, so she decided we would give you the gift of magic.

- Aiden's mother stands eyes closed holding the hands of a young man. A spark of golden energy leaps from her chest to his and he goes rigid with shock. She catches him as he collapses and helps him upright.

AIDEN (V.O.)

And so, the first Earth Mage was born.

- His eyes glow. He gestures and the nearby plants grow. The other gathered tribesman and gods begin to celebrate.

AIDEN (V.O.)

Not long after that, the first Sea and Sky Mages joined him.

- A teenage boy manipulates water as villagers carry over another teenage boy who's injured and covered in blood. The Sea Mage kneels at his side in concern. He uses water magic and the boy's injuries heal.

JACK (V.O.)

She gave magic to everyone.

AIDEN (V.O.)

No, not everyone. We gave it to those who by their nature ensured balance and harmony in their tribes.

- A young Chinese woman makes the fog of the floating mountains swirl around her before, much to her delight, she lifts off the ground to fly.

JACK (V.O.)

And who was that?

AIDEN (V.O.)

The Chinese called them the people of the southern wind. Sandoval's people refer to them as two spirited.

VIC (V.O.)

Wait! Are you saying-

- The first Earth Mage turns to another young man and kisses him passionately in excitement. Then they embrace.

AIDEN (V.O.)

Yes. Of all the people on earth,
only queer people can have the gift
of magic.

- The Sea Mage teenager hugs his boyfriend and kisses him
after healing him.

- The Sky Mage stands with her female betrothed in a marriage
ceremony before a priest.

AIDEN (V.O.)

For two thousand years, we lived
among you, training the Magi,
teaching what we knew, and your
race flourished.

- The magi do similar feats as the gods.

AIDEN (V.O.)

But not all of us were convinced
you should be treated as equals.
One believed we were superior and
that you should be our slaves.

- A god converses in secret with a clan chieftain.

AIDEN (V.O.)

He convinced a clan chieftain that
if mages were sacrificed, the gift
could be transferred. A lie so he
could hijack their gift, increase
his power, and overthrow my mother.

EXT. A VAST EMPTY FIELD - NIGHT

A moonless night hangs over a large circle of stones
surrounded by lit torches. At the center of the circle stands
a clan chieftain waiting in front of a male god.

Standing at equidistant points around them are three mages,
arms raised to the sky and eyes blazing with magic.

Gold energy leaps out of the god into the mages. They
convulse in agony. Life energy drains out of them, leaving
lifeless husks that collapse to the ground.

The god enveloped in writhing purple energy, laughs in
triumph.

Portals suddenly appear. Gods and Magi step out, Aiden's
mother at the fore.

AIDEN (V.O.)

We got word of what he was planning
and went to stop him, arriving too
late to save the mages.

The purple wreathed god lashes out with energy at the
arriving gods and magi.

BOOM!

Some fall. Most shield themselves. Aiden's mother lashes out
with a beam of pure magic. The purple god stops it
effortlessly, laughing.

The other gods join in, adding their own beams to her, as the
power increases, the purple god looks concerned, then afraid.

CRACKOOM!!!

The purple god vaporizes back into the clan chieftain, who
screams, enveloped in a cloud of violet energy, as he and
everyone else is blown off their feet.

AIDEN (V.O.)

We thought it was over.

FADE TO:

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM - DAY

The light around their heads fade and the three shake their
heads to focus as Aiden's shimmers back into his human form.

AIDEN

Somehow he survived. The explosion
turned him into a sort of magical
parasite.

VIC

Like a leach? Ugh, gross!

AIDEN

Actually, yes. He can no longer
draw power directly from our home,
so he infects the minds of magic
users, feeding on their connection
to magic. This is Hirud.

JACK

But Tim acted normal. He knew me.

AIDEN

Hirud wipes away the personality of the host, making them drones, but retains their memories in his hive mind.

SANDOVAL

And like any hive, the more there are-

VIC

The stronger it gets.

JACK

But none of this explains why magic was gone and is now back.

Aiden faces the turning globe.

AIDEN

Hirud's infection spread like a plague. Thousands died. We tried to fight, but he was too fast. So we did the only thing we could to save your world.

Aiden turns back to them.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

We decided to leave and close the portal behind us. Cut off from magic Hirud finally fell, and the war of magic was over.

SANDOVAL

But you stayed.

AIDEN

Someone had to make sure the temple was buried, so the portal wouldn't be opened again. We believed Hirud destroyed, but the fate of your people was too much to leave to chance so I volunteered to stay and watch over you.

JACK

So you were wrong. About Hirud.

AIDEN

He must have reopened the portal, or magic would not be back.

JACK

So what now?

AIDEN

Well, you must train. With your magic awakened you're a target and you need to learn to defend yourself. The two of you have a choice.

VIC

What do you mean, a choice?

AIDEN

I didn't bring you here just because you're Jack's friends, or mine. You're both mages. I can connect you to your gift, or I can remove it and shield you from Hirud's infection.

SANDOVAL

Are you kidding?! Who wouldn't want magic?

AIDEN

This gift comes with responsibility.

SANDOVAL

Oh, I know this one, with great power, yada, yada, yada. Let's do this!

AIDEN

Not so fast. The Magi are teachers and leaders, but they're also protectors. To accept the gift of magic is to agree to fight. It's not a choice to make lightly.

JACK

A choice I wasn't given.

AIDEN

I know, and I'm sorry about that. Had I known I would never have connected you without your permission. A Magi is sworn to protect the tribe, even at the cost of their own life.

JACK

I don't have a tribe, Aiden!

Silence hangs in the air. Vic walks over to Jack and puts a hand on his arm.

VIC
You have us, Jack.

Jack looks momentarily ashamed. She hugs him, letting him know it's ok.

VIC (CONT'D)
How long is another matter. How are we gonna be safe out there for a day?

Aiden places his hand in the center of Sandoval's chest and then Vic's. They pulse with a single glow of power.

AIDEN
I'm shielding you both for 24 hours. Go home. Think on your decision, but tell no one. There's no way for you to tell who's infected and who's not. Come back to the Chariot tomorrow and tell me your decision.

JACK
What about me?

AIDEN
Since your home is no longer safe, you can crash at my place.

JACK
Terrific.

AIDEN
Look, I know I'm asking a lot. Hirud intends to make drones out of everyone who can wield magic, and slaves of the rest. I'll respect whatever decision you make, but I'd be honored to have you by my side.

EXT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Two figures with glowing purple eyes enter a door to an abandoned warehouse, looking around to be sure they weren't seen

INT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The two figures walk across a floor littered with metal parts. They stop at a raised platform and kneel, heads down. A figure wreathed in a purple glow with glowing eyes faintly appears in the darkness.

HIRUD

What have you learned about the
destruction of your fellow drone?

One drone looks up. A moment passes.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

What? WHAT?! NO!!!!

Hirud lashes out with a chaotic stream of purple energy, annihilating the drone looking up.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

An Earth Mage?! One of the old gods
must still be here.

Hirud composes themself and continues on.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Well then. Opportunity knocks.
(to the kneeling drone)
Spread the word amongst my hive. I
want the identity of this remaining
old god. He won't be far from the
Earth Mage.

The drone bows low, retreating from Hirud's presence.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Once that is done, nothing will
stand in my way.

INT. VIC AND JESSICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vic walks into her darkened apartment. She's greeted by a talkative blue Persian cat. She turns on the light, drops her keys in a bowl next to the door, and scoops her up.

VIC

Hey, Cori. Jessica not make it home
to feed you yet? That's strange,
she usually texts me about that.

Vic walks down the hallway and into the open galley kitchen and feeds the grateful Cori.

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN

VIC

I don't suppose you have an opinion
on what I should do about the whole
magic thing.

Cori continues eating ignoring her owner's words.

VIC (CONT'D)

Yeah, I suppose not.

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

Vic walks into the perfectly and simply appointed living room
of cool blue and green tones and stands looking around,
unsure of what to do. Her phone rings.

VIC

Hello?

(beat)

Hey, Mike. No, Jess isn't with me.
Did you try her cell?

(beat)

Well, she left the Chariot a couple
hours ago. She didn't meet you at
the scene?

(beat)

Oh, ok. Well, I'll have her call
you the minute she gets home.

Vic hangs up the phone and looks at it confused. Keys in the
door. Jessica comes in, looking wiped.

VIC (CONT'D)

Hey babe! Work kept you out late.

JESSICA

Yeah, lots of pressure from up top
for results.

Jessica trudges to the kitchen and pours a glass of water.
The cat rubs against her legs. She ignores her.

VIC

Mike just called me. He was worried
he didn't see you at the scene on
28th.

She finishes the glass and puts it in the sink, turning and
walking past Vic.

VIC (CONT'D)

Jess?

JESSICA

I was at another scene near 52nd.

VIC

Oh, well, I told him you'd call
when you got home.

JESSICA

I'll brief him in the morning. I'm
headed to bed.

She continues towards the bedroom without looking back.

VIC

Jess. Are you ok?

JESSICA

I'm just really tired.

VIC

I was hoping- um...something
happened today that I- really
wanted to discuss with you.

JESSICA

I don't really have the emotional
bandwidth to talk right now.
Tomorrow, ok?

She disappears into the darkened bedroom without another
word. Cori hops up on the couch staring into the bedroom,
tail twitching back and forth.

Vic walks up and stands next to her cat, scratching her
behind the ears.

VIC

I know, Cori. She didn't seem like
herself to me either.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Jason and Jack exit iced coffee in hand and head to a table
on the half full patio.

JASON

I gotta say, I was a little
surprised to hear from you. The way
you left the Chariot, I wasn't sure
you'd remember.

JACK
Yeah. Sorry about that.
It's...complicated.

They sit down at the table.

JASON
Having a few too many is
complicated?

JACK
Something like that. It was a rough
day...at work.

JASON
Is that why I had to rescue you
last night?

JACK
You mean, Treyvon? Partly. He's a
climate activist upset the mayor
axed my budget increases for next
year.

JASON
Budget politics. The worst.
Columbia is the same, I'm
constantly fighting to justify my
funding, much less get more, and
I'm just preserving history, not
the planet.

JACK
Doesn't feel like I can preserve
much of anything lately.

JASON
I'm sure you do what you can.

JACK
I certainly thought so. But lately
it's gotten...

JASON
Complicated.

JACK
Yeah. And the risks...

JASON
I's sure you'll figure it out.

JACK
Maybe.

JASON

Look, I know we just met, but I feel like you don't leave anything on the table when it comes to protecting what's important to you.

Jack considers as he sips his coffee.

JACK

So, you teach at Columbia.

JASON

Skillful dodge. Yep, archeology. And when it comes to risk, you'd be surprised the lengths you have to go to in order to preserve important historical artifacts, or even begin studying them.

JACK

Really?

JASON

Absolutely, my mentor died at a dig site last year. Personally I think it's because of inadequate funding, but Columbia claims it was undue risk. Just nonsense.

JACK

I'm sorry to hear that.

JASON

Thanks. It can be a hazardous job. Dig sites are dangerous sometimes.

JACK

You make it sound like Indiana Jones. I thought that was more fantasy than anything.

JASON

For the most part it is.

JACK

For the most part? Don't tell me you're out there swinging over chasms with a bull whip.

JASON

Not, exactly.

He leans forward conspiratorially.

JASON (CONT'D)

Can I tell you a secret?

JACK

Sure.

JASON

I search the dark web checking out black market antiquities sales. It's mostly fake, but sometimes an authentic item shows up. So I move money around and figure out a way to acquire it if I can.

JACK

How does Columbia feel about that?

JASON

It's a grey area, but I'd much rather get a slap on the wrist and get it in a museum than see a piece of human history disappear into a private collection.

JACK

Isn't dealing with that world dangerous?

JASON

Maybe. But it's worth it. You feel the same way about your work I'm sure. I mean, wouldn't you risk it all to save the planet?

JACK

I...I hadn't though about it that way before.

JASON

See! I knew I liked you.

They smile at each other, both definitely knowing this was not going to be a last date.

INT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - NIGHT

It's post happy hour and the bar is hopping. The latest driving beat music videos are playing and Sandoval is waiting at the bar near the office, practically vibrating with excitement. Vic makes her way across the crowded bar.

VIC

You're still a yes?

SANDOVAL

How could anyone say no to this?

VIC

You know this could mean...the use of force against people, right? I remember the mess you were when you left the Air Force after Afghanistan.

Sandoval's face goes dead serious for a moment.

SANDOVAL

Being a guardian is different than what I was ordered to do. What I watched happen.

VIC

As long as you're aware going in. I'm here for you regardless.

SANDOVAL

Thanks for that, truly.

A beat and the buoyant Sandoval is back.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

Besides, it's magic! What's the worst that could happen?

He makes a beeline for the office. Vic follows, head shaking.

As they arrive at the office door, Jack opens it and ushers them inside, closing the door behind them.

INT. AIDEN'S OFFICE AT APOLLOS CHARIOT - NIGHT

The three of them stand in front of Aiden's desk, no Aiden in sight.

SANDOVAL

Where's our favorite god?

JACK

Said he had some things to prepare in the sanctum, but for us to come on in whenever you got here.

SANDOVAL

Well, no time like the present!

He hurries over to the mirror and places his hand against it's smooth surface. Nothing. He tries again.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

There a secret password to get it to open? Do we need poppers?

VIC

(laughing)

Jesus, Sandoval.

SANDOVAL

Oh come one. It's always a good time for a poppers joke.

Jack steps up to the mirror as Sandoval drops his hand.

JACK

You don't have access to the magic yet. I have to do it this time.

He places his hand in the center and his eyes glow briefly before the surface starts rippling.

SANDOVAL

I guess that proves being relaxed isn't necessary.

JACK

Not all of us share kinship with a gaping hole, Sandy.

Vic snorts with laughter. Jack smirks. Steps through the mirror.

VIC

You walked into that one. Or rather, it walked through you.

She follows Jack, laughing. Sandoval stands mouth agape before chasing them through.

SANDOVAL

Hey! I said never to call me Sandy! And I am NOT a gaping hole.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM - NIGHT

They stand on top of the marble staircase, again marveling at the sight before them. Sandoval comes through the portal.

SANDOVAL

-I am young and...tight...Wow, that's never gonna get old.

VIC

Where's Aiden? He hiding in here
somewhere?

JACK

I don't know. He came through about
30 minutes before you guys got to
the bar. He should be here.

AIDEN (O.C.)

Just making sure things were ready
for you.

The three jump as his voice is coming from behind them. They
turn and see Aiden standing in front of the rippling mirror.

VIC

You trying to give us a coronary?

AIDEN

You didn't think the mirror just
went here did you?

Aiden waves his hand in front of the mirror and an arch of
icons light up around it.

He places a hand on an icon resembling a mesa and ushers the
others through before following.

EXT. THE TOP OF A TALL ARIZONA MESA - DUSK

The three marvel at the beauty. Red-ish gold light gleaming
off the multicolored rock strata.

SANDOVAL

Home. This is home. Navajo land.

AIDEN

I thought it fitting to connect you
to your magic here. To honor your
ancestors.

Sandoval turns to Aiden, eyes glistening with tears.

SANDOVAL

I'm ready.

Aiden places his hands on Sandoval's shoulders.

AIDEN

Over half a century ago your great grandfather helped save this country and the Diné as a member of the Wind Talkers. Today, you become not a Wind Talker-

Aiden shimmers into god form.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

-but a Wind Rider.

A golden light arcs from Aiden to Sandoval. He glows bright with magical power. The radiance subsides, leaving just his eyes glowing.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Welcome brother Sky Mage.

Aiden steps back, and for a moment, nothing happens. Then the wind swirls around Sandoval, first a stiff breeze, then a whirlwind. He laughs with delight and leaps into the air, soaring skyward.

JACK

You said that flying required months of training?

AIDEN

I suspected his advanced knowledge of aeronautics might let him do this early, though I wasn't expecting it on his first day.

VIC

He's always been an over achiever. What's happening to the clouds?

Sandoval hovers in a vortex of white clouds. Lightning cracks across the sky. Then the clouds disperse and he streaks down before pulling up sharply and gently floating to the ground.

SANDOVAL

That was...that was...wow! Vic, you gotta try this!

VIC

Well, I guess I'm ready as well.

AIDEN

This place was just for Sandoval.
I've got a nice deserted island in
the South Pacific all set up where
you can all practice your skills
freely. Lets go.

He waves his hand over the portal and touches one of the revealed icons and the four step through.

MONTAGE MAGI TRAINING

- Vic, et al, standing on a beach. Aiden connects her to magic.

- Vic manipulating water, levitating it, making shapes, transitioning between water vapor, liquid, and ice.

- Jack in the forest manipulating plants, grasping the others with vines and branches.

- Jack on a mountain trying without much success to manipulate earth. Trying to light a fire but only getting smoke.

- Sandoval soaring around the island, swooping past startled birds that squawk at him in annoyance.

- Sandoval creating a shield of swirling air to protect himself as Vic hurls hardened spheres of water at him, and Jack tries to throw earth, but ends up with mostly pebbles.

- Vic sending a geyser of water at Sandoval, breaking through his air shield and knocking him off his feet. She rushes to his side, and as he's laughing, heals the cut on his arm with her magic.

EXT. ISLAND FOREST - DAY

Jack stalks away from the laughing Vic and Sandoval. The foliage parts in front of him as he goes. Several meters into the forest he hurls a small stone into the underbrush in frustration.

AIDEN (O.C.)

You're aggravated.

JACK

Is this the part where I get the Gandalf encouragement speech?

Jack plops down on a tree trunk. Huge elephant leaves arch up to add a back to his "chair."

AIDEN

I'm a god, not a wizard. And what kind of god would I be if I didn't offer counsel to my friend. Wanna talk about it?

JACK

What am I doing wrong? Sandoval could fly on his first day, Vic handles water like a boss and I suspect could cure cancer right now if she put her mind to it. But me?

AIDEN

What about you?

JACK

Where's the fire? The telepathy? Other than being a glorified gender swapped Poison Ivy, I can't do anything you say I'm supposed to.

AIDEN

You of all people should know plants bloom when they're ready, and not before.

JACK

I'm not a plant...they've just always been easier for me to understand. How am I supposed to stop a demon god like Hirud if I can't even throw a descent sized pebble?

AIDEN

By realizing you don't have to do it alone. We're all connected to you, Jack. The sooner you realize that, the sooner you'll understand where your true power comes from.

He squeezes Jack's shoulder and gets up to head back to the clearing.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

That's enough training for now. This island might be outside the normal flow of time but you can't hide out here forever. Besides, I'm sure you could use a drink.

(MORE)

AIDEN (CONT'D)

Maybe even some time with that hot
archeologist?

Surprised by the suggestion, Jack forgets about the elephant
leaves holding him up and he falls back over the trunk.
Laughing, Aiden helps him up.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

I see he's already got you head
over heels.

Jack sputters trying to reply.

JACK

He's not...I mean...I just...

AIDEN

Sure. You mind?

Aiden indicates to the now overgrown path from the clearing.
Resigned, Jack gestures and the plants pull back, opening a
path and they both head back to the others.

EXT. BAR PATIO - NIGHT

Jack and Jason sit outside at a high top cheering for a drag
queen who's just finishing up her number.

DRAG QUEEN

Thank you, bitches!!! Be sure to
check us out on the main stage at
The Pride Festival this Sunday at
3PM!!! Now drink up and tip your
bartender during the break. And get
those bills ready cause these
queens are even better the second
time around!!!

She disappears into the back as the crowd cheers.

JACK

Thanks for coming out tonight. I
needed to decompress a little.

JASON

My pleasure! Two dates in as many
days. I didn't peg you for a fast
mover.

JACK

I'm not. Not usually. It's just...recently it seems like enjoying good things when they happen is something I should maybe try.

JASON

So I'm a good thing?

JACK

So far.

JASON

Not the ringing endorsement I was hoping for, but I'll take it.

JACK

Sorry, it's just my usual trademark cynicism about relationships rearing its ugly head.

JASON

Sandoval did warn me about that.

JACK

Of course he did.

JASON

Relax. He just told me first impressions aren't your thing. That you might seem standoffish, but if I looked past that, you're a wonderful guy who has the biggest heart he's ever known. You've got some great friends there.

Jack takes another drink, a bit embarrassed.

JASON (CONT'D)

Why do you do that?

JACK

Do what?

JASON

Keep yourself so closed off.

JACK

You noticed that.

JASON

At your party. With everyone but Sandoval and Vic, you maintained a pretty distinct emotional wall. Well, besides me. I hope that wasn't just the booze.

JACK

It wasn't. I just...I felt like I could trust you. Haven't felt that way in a long time.

Jason reaches across and takes Jack's hand.

JACK (CONT'D)

People have always been hard for me. Being the science kid who questions everything in a super religious household didn't exactly help me relate.

JASON

You must have been a handful.

JACK

I hated going to church. I didn't understand why they couldn't answer what I thought were very basic questions.

JASON

So more like a holy terror.

JACK

My mother was beside herself. Then one of the priests offered to take me under his wing and set about answering my many questions.

Jack takes a breath and a drink. Unsure of whether to continue.

JASON

You were thrilled someone was finally taking you seriously.

JACK

He took me to science museums, lectures, and art galleries. I was utterly enamored with him. He even got me to be an altar boy, which thrilled my mother to no end.

JASON

I sense there's a "but" coming.

JACK

One Sunday after mass, he... well... let's just say I found out why he had invested so much time and energy into a 12-year-old boy.

JASON

I'm so sorry.

JACK

I refused to return to church after that. I couldn't tell my mother why, it would kill her. She was devoted to the church.

JASON

What did you tell her?

JACK

Something about not wasting my time with myth and fables. It broke her heart. When I came out my freshman year of college my family decided that had been the real reason all along and I never said otherwise.

JASON

They cut you off.

JACK

Worse. They stopped including me in stuff. I was disinvited from Thanksgiving a few years ago. They rented a big house on the cape for the whole family, sibling's in-laws included, and "forgot" to make sure there was a bed for me.

JASON

You think you'll ever tell them?

JACK

Not sure it would make a difference. Father Mulvaney died. Besides, there's so much water under that bridge. They've made their choice. So yeah, connecting with people? I guess I missed that class.

JASON
Well, you get an A+ from me.

JACK
How so?

JASON
I'm guessing that's not your go to
second date story.

JACK
You mean on the rare occasion I
have a second?

JASON
Yes. I'm willing to bet you haven't
even shared that part of you with
Vic and Sandoval.

JACK
They know my relationship with my
family is strained, but yeah, I've
never told them why.

Jason gets out of his chair and comes around to Jack, kissing
him gently.

JASON
Thank you.

JACK
What was that for?

JASON
For letting your walls down. It
takes real courage to do that.

Jason cups Jack's face.

JASON (CONT'D)
And I DO see you.

Something significant passes between them.

JASON (CONT'D)
Let's get out of here.

Jason pulls Jack out of his chair.

JACK
Um...ok, where are we going?

JASON
With great risk comes great reward.

INT. JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack and Jason burst through the bedroom door furiously making out and ripping each others clothes off. Clothes fly in every direction and they tumble onto the bed and begin making love.

EXT. NYC ALLEY - DAY

Two EMTs load gear back into an ambulance. Vic approaches.

A woman's body lays on the ground behind police tape. She looks dressed for a night out, but for the burned out eyes. A lesbian symbol silver pendant around her neck catches the morning light.

VIC
Anything new this time?

EMT 1
No. DOA. Burned out eyes. No other
apparent cause of death.

CRIME SCENE

Vic heads under the police tape. She kneels next to the body, examining her. Looks around. Police talk with nearby pedestrians, but none seem to be looking at her.

Looking back down, her eyes glow with magic and she reaches down to touch the dead woman.

JESSICA (O.C.)
Vic?

Vic jerks her hand back. Looks up to see her wife.

VIC
Jess! Sorry, I didn't know you were
here.

She stands.

JESSICA
What are you doing?

VIC
Spot checking my EMTs. I go out
every now and then to see how
they're doing.

JESSICA

You didn't tell me. I thought that was over when you took the promotion.

VIC

New program. Helps me stay abreast of any new needs that crop up.

Hurriedly changing the subject.

VIC (CONT'D)

This is another one. How many now?

JESSICA

15. Someone is hunting gay people. The mayor is going apeshit.

VIC

Anything new? Any leads?

JESSICA

The usual so far. Religious extremists, far right fascists, white nationalists. Pride month always brings them out of the woodwork, but nothing tying back to anyone specific. If we had a clue how...

VIC

It's so sad.

Vic moves closer to the dead woman.

JESSICA

It is. She had such power in her. Such potential.

VIC

You knew her?

JESSICA

She helped run that spoken word thing we'd go to every so often. And I'd seen her at the Chariot once or twice. Don't you remember?

Vic looks at her with a mix of concern and suspicion.

VIC

No. I don't.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM, THE LOUNGE - DAY

It's a huge oval space equipped like a high end Manhattan penthouse. A giant nearly IMAX sized screen dominates one portion of wall, and a futuristic Batcave style computer station another.

Sandoval is at the immense fully stocked wet bar with Jack making everyone drinks. Vic is at the computer.

SANDOVAL

Sun-puter time is over, Vic! It's cocktail time!

JACK

Sandoval's right. Even I find it obsessive.

(to Sandoval)

And we're not calling it that.

Sandoval shrugs and hands him a drink and takes one to Vic.

VIC

Just checking to see if there's any more information from the autopsies of Hirus's victims. Now that I know what's happening maybe I'll see something useful.

JACK

It's magic, Vic. What's an autopsy going to say?

VIC

Maybe nothing. But according to this, all the victims are showing a strange spore infection in their mucus membranes.

JACK

How is that strange?

VIC

By itself, it's not. You'd be surprised how quickly dead bodies attract decomposition organisms.

SANDOVAL

Don't get her started or we'll be here all night!

VIC

What's strange about it, is I don't recognize the species.

(MORE)

VIC (CONT'D)

There shouldn't be anything not native to North America, but this one is definitely not.

JACK

You know all the spores native to North America?

Vic does a quick search.

VIC

You know all the plants native to North America.

JACK

Point.

VIC

This one is native to a small area in southeastern Turkey.

SANDOVAL

Didn't Aiden say that Gobleki place was in Turkey?

JACK

He did.

VIC

That must be how Hirus is infecting people. Not just magic, but with the spores too.

JACK

That doesn't help us, Vic!

VIC

If there's a biological component maybe I can cure it.

JACK

Aiden said it couldn't be cured.

VIC

Aiden hasn't faced this in 12,000 years. Maybe something has changed.

SANDOVAL

We should let Aiden know.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM - CONTINUOUS

The three approach the portal and Jack's phone rings. They look startled as he pulls it out.

SANDOVAL

We get service in here? Aiden really is a god.

JACK

It's Jason.
(answers it)
Hey!

JASON (V.O.)

You busy?

JACK

A little, why?

JASON

(V.O.)

Remember how I told you I do a little black market trading on the side to acquire items for the museum.

JACK

Yeah. Why?

JASON (V.O.)

It seems like this one particular entrepreneur decided he wants to acquire my money, and perhaps me, and keep the artifact. I'm kinda hiding from his goons in an abandoned warehouse and could really use your help.

JACK

Send me your location and stay put. I'm on my way. And Jason, you better still be alive when I get there.

JASON (V.O.)

I'll do what I can.

Jack hangs up.

VIC

What do you need?

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

Darkness presses in around several empty warehouses on the water. Streets and alleys around them are shrouded in black as functioning lights are infrequent.

Under one of the few operating street lights a golden portal spirals open and Jack, Vic, and Sandoval step out. Jack summons the icons and touches one and the portal shimmers out of view.

VIC

Are we sure about this?

JACK

It didn't sound like we have a lot of time. Now come on, and keep it down.

The three creep down a darkened alleyway. Broken pallets and parts of wooden crates are strewn about. They come to a turn. Jack peers around the corner. Nothing. He waves them forward.

CRASH!

Jack and Vic turn, startled. A sheepish Sandoval hunches next to an overturned stack of crates. Jack gives him a "What are you doing?!"

SANDOVAL

I never said I was stealthy.

Jack rolls his eyes. They creep forward again.

VIC

Is your telepathy finally working?

JACK

Not exactly. It's more like a sense of where he is.

Jack points across an empty lot at a large building right against the water that seems darker than all the others. Ominous. Evil.

SANDOVAL

Oof. I'll take evil lairs for 1000 please, Alex.

VIC

Why would Jason meet an antiquities dealer here?

JACK

How should I know? Where do black market dealers usually meet?

VIC

Casinos? Hotel suites? Monte Carlo?

JACK

This isn't a Bond movie.

VIC

Says you. I'd make a fantastic Bond girl. Especially for that new hottie girl 007.

SANDOVAL

As true as that is, shouldn't we be getting in there and saving your new boyfriend?

JACK

He's not my-

He cuts off when he sees their "yeah, sure" looks.

SANDOVAL

Please, I've already ordered your J&J monogrammed hand towels.

JACK

We'll table that for now. Lets go.

They sneak up to the building, slide around to the river side and find a door slightly open and quietly slip inside.

INT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The three sneak across the building interior past tall empty industrial metal shelving and metal scraps strewn about. Muffled sounds come from the far end of the cavernous space.

They pull up short. Across an empty area strewn with debris is Jason, feet dangling a foot off the floor, his throat clutched in the hands of a huge muscled man with eyes blazing with sickening purple energy.

Aghast, they watch as the purple aura creeps down the drones arms and moves up Jason's neck. Jason's eyes widen in panic and lock briefly with Jack's.

JACK

Jason!

Jack's scream spurs Sandoval into action. He summons a softball ball sized swirl of air between Jason and the drone and expands it violently, throwing the two away from each other. The drone lands loudly in a pile of scrap.

Jason smacks into a wall, but Sandoval catches him with a cushion of condensed air, lowers him to the floor, unconscious. The three rush over.

JACK (CONT'D)
 (kneeling)
 Vic!

Vic kneels across from Jack eyes glowing, water condenses around her hands as she lays them on Jason. A glow surrounds him and the visible scrapes, cuts, and bruises fade.

VIC
 He's banged up a bit, but he'll be fine.

JACK
 He's still out.

VIC
 It's better if he wakes on his own. I healed what I could. Inside the brain is more complicated.

JACK
 Can you tell if he's infected?

VIC
 I don't think so. Your telepathy is the only sure way.

Jack's eyes glow and he places a hand on Jason's head.

VIC (CONT'D)
 Is it working.

JACK
 I...think so, just barely.

His eyes go dark suddenly.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I had it for a second. He's fine.

Crashing metal and an animal-like growl comes from the direction the drone was thrown in. They turn as the drone slowly rises from the pile of junk, eyes pulsing with power, surrounded by the purple glow, wounds healing.

DRONE
Die, filthy mages!

He hurls a bolt of deadly purple energy at them. Sandoval blocks it with a shield of air, deflecting it into the shelving where it explodes with power, toppling them.

More bolts. More deflections. More explosions. The building begins to shake.

SANDOVAL
One of you want to do something before the building comes down on us?

JACK
You see any plants in here?

SANDOVAL
You really need to fix that earth hang up, Jack!

VIC
I got this.

Vic stands up and gestures, eyes glowing with power. Water from the river crashes through the windows high above them like a tidal wave and swirls into a huge cylinder shape before freezing solid.

Vic hurls it at the drone and it slams into him like a pile driver, smashing him into the far wall, and through it, leaving a giant circular hole in its wake.

SANDOVAL
Nice one, Vic.

Jack scoops up Jason.

JACK
Go after him. Assuming he survived, immobilize him or something. Maybe Aiden will know what to do with him.

VIC
What about you?

JACK
I've got to get Jason somewhere safe. Maybe by the time he wakes up I'll think of a way to explain this.

SANDOVAL

We got this. Meet us at the sanctum.

Sandoval hurries out the hole in the wall.

VIC

You sure about this?

JACK

Yes, go. I'll be fine.

SANDOVAL (O.C.)

Come on, Vic! We got a walking fungal infection to deal with!

Vic looks at Jack, unsure, but nods and heads after Sandoval. Jack looks down at the unconscious Jason and turns to head back towards the portal.

EXT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Vic exits the hole in the wall and stops next to Sandoval, who's staring at the six foot tall ice cylinder, the far end plowed into a pile of junk against the wall of another building.

VIC

Be ready.

Vic's eyes glow.

SPLOOSH!

The cylinder melts instantly to a huge puddle of water. There's no sign of the drone. Sandoval blasts apart the pile of junk with a torrent of air, but still no drone.

SANDOVAL

Dammit! I did not have, chasing a possessed drone on my bingo card today.

VIC

See if you can track him from the air, and I'll go after him on foot. Maybe we can pick up a trail.

Air whirls and Sandoval is in the sky, while Vic takes off away from their portal. She turns a corner and nearly plows into Jessica coming down the alley with her gun drawn.

VIC (CONT'D)

Jessica?

JESSICA

What the hell are you doing here?

VIC

Ah..I...What are you doing here?

JESSICA

My job. Bodies were found near this area. We got a tip about suspicious activity going on so Mike and I are checking it out.

VIC

Where's Mike?

JESSICA

You haven't answered my question.

VIC

I...I can't tell you right now, but I promise we'll discuss this at home.

JESSICA

What? Vic!

Vic hurries off, leaving a concerned and confused Jessica.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jason lies on Jack's couch, a damp cloth on his forehead. Jack slowly cleans up the remnants of the conflict with his infected roommate. Jason's eyes flutter open and he winces in pain.

JASON

Ow...

He puts his hand to his head and tries sitting up.

JACK

Easy there, Indiana Jones. You got clocked pretty good.

Jack helps him to a sitting position and hands him a glass of water.

JACK (CONT'D)

You really should rethink him as a role model.

JASON

Indy didn't have such a dashing young scientist to rush to his rescue.

JACK

Flatterer.

JASON

Well, its the best way isn't it? But maybe you're right. Two life threatening situations in one year is probably enough for one lifetime?

JACK

Two?

JASON

If I hadn't gone back for more light sticks I'd have been in the cave with my mentor and his other assistant.

JACK

I didn't realize it was that close.

Jason shrugs.

JACK (CONT'D)

Do you remember anything from tonight?

JASON

Not really. I remember ducking out after seeing the big guy show up rather than my contact. Hiding. Him finding me right before you and your friends showed up, and then nothing. Why? Did anything weird happen?

JACK

No. Nothing weird. I guess seeing the three of us scared him off so he dropped you...on your head.

JASON

Good thing I've got a thick skull.

He stands a little unsteadily.

JACK

You should stay and get some rest.

JASON

I've got to go poke around and see why I was set up. Besides, you're clearly doing some...redecorating?

He indicates to the burned up plants and destruction in the room.

JACK

Oh, that. Um...I got up this morning and decided I- just hated everything.

JASON

Clearly.

JACK

Are you sure it's wise to go poking around?

JASON

Poking around the dark web. Trust me, I won't be meeting anyone anytime soon, much less in a dark warehouse.

JACK

Well, if you're sure you feel up to it.

JASON

It's an Uber ride home. I'll be fine.

Jason pulls Jack to him and puts a hand on his cheek.

JASON (CONT'D)

I owe you one.

JACK

You don't owe me anything.

JASON

Oh, I definitely do.

Jason kisses Jack thoroughly.

JASON (CONT'D)

And I expect you to collect.

He swats Jack on the butt and saunters to the door.

JASON (CONT'D)

Call you tomorrow?

JACK
Yeah...sure...

Jason winks at him and is out the door, closing it behind him. Jack stands there dumbfounded.

EXT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A shadowed figure creeps around outside Hirus's main hideout. It steps through a shaft of dim light. The drone the magi fought earlier. He slips through a door.

INT. DARKENED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The drone slinks to the end of the warehouse and kneels before the raised platform with a dozen more drones. Hirus, in a huge purple god-form, the evil opposite of Apollo, steps out of the darkness.

HIRUD
Ah, the failure returns.

He lifts off the platform into the air and floats down to the floor in front of the assembled drones.

THWACK!

He backhands the drone with no warning, sending him tumbling.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
How could you be bested by barely nascent Magi, one of whom can hardly move plants?!

The drone crawls back to his knees. Hirus grabs his chin.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
I went through all the trouble of setting up the perfect lure and you can't even handle that?!

He lets go in disgust and floats back into the air.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
You didn't even present enough of a threat to call out the old god from wherever they're hiding. Are you really the best this millennium has to offer?

Hirus looks over the assembled drones.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
Nothing to say for yourselves?

He looks at the blank faces for a moment.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
No, I suppose not.

Hirud floats towards the recently arrived drone.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
I don't know why I bother. Talking
to you all is rather like talking
to a wall, and just as useful.

Hirud alights in front of the drone.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
Better to put the power back where
it's more effective.

He hurls out his hand. Eyes blazing over a sickening smile he
sucks power out of the kneeling servant.

FOOM!

The drone rears back in pain, mouth open in a silent scream.

FZZZZZZ!

Eyes burned out, body blackened, the drone collapses.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
In me.

Hirud floats up to the platform again and turns in the air to
face the gathered drones.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
Now that I know the identity of the
three mages it should be mere
child's play to put one of them in
enough danger to lure my sibling to
their death.

Hirud cackles with laughter.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM, THE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Vic works at the computer console as Sandoval stands over her
shoulder. Jack enters the lounge.

JACK
I take it the, um...bad guy...got
away.

VIC
We settled on drone.

SANDOVAL
Yeah, bad guy is so Batman '63
cliche.

JACK
Good, cause I felt weird saying it.

VIC
I've been using Aiden's system-

SANDOVAL
Sun-puter.

VIC
System! -to trace the drones, or
find a gathering place, anything
that might lead us to him or give a
hint as to his plan. But...nothing.

JACK
Nothing?

VIC
It's not like I can type in Evil
Demon God Lair and get a pinned
location on Google maps.

SANDOVAL
You tried though didn't you.

VIC
(beat)
Yes. Nothing but World of Warcraft
dungeons.

JACK
So what's our next move?

VIC
I got nothing?

SANDOVAL
Wait. Why is my boyfriend on that
monitor?

Sandoval points to one of the monitors where a news report
shows Bryan being interviewed.

CHIRON: CITY WORRIED ABOUT PRIDE FESTIVAL SAFETY

VIC

I had the system searching for references in news broadcasts to the Hirus murders.

SANDOVAL

Unmute it. Can you put it on the big screen?

VIC

Lemme see...

Vic does some typing and mousing.

She clicks and 3D images appear in front of each screen.

JACK

What is that?

VIC

Three dimensional magic interface.

SANDOVAL

So cool. How does it work?

VIC

I'm guessing like this.

She scoops up the image of the news broadcast with five fingers and tosses it in the direction of the wall screen and Bryan's face covers the wall in perfect 3D.

She raises her hand like a symphony conductor raising the volume and Bryan's voice can be heard.

BRYAN

So let me be clear. The organizers and sponsors of the Pride Parade and Festival are in unanimous agreement. Just like after the Pulse Nightclub shooting. We will not be silenced, we will not be intimidated, and we will not cower in fear. Pride will go on like it has for over 50 years. We will celebrate the lives of our fallen brothers and sisters. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and every other color of the rainbow. We are all connected. And as one you are gonna see our light shine!

Cheers break out from the people gathered behind Bryan. They begin chanting "Let Them See Your Light."

VIC

Damn Sandoval. You certainly picked a twink with balls of steel.

SANDOVAL

You have no idea.

Jack swipes his hand over the big screen muting the image and sending it back to the computer station.

JACK

He's impressive, but we still don't know what to do next.

VIC

Well, I have to head home and try to explain my presence on the warehouse docks to my wife. If she's still talking to me afterwards I'll see if maybe she has any leads.

JACK

I'll wait here for Aiden to come back.

SANDOVAL

Suit yourself. You know how to reach us if you need us. I gotta go kiss my boyfriend and tell him how amazing he is- and make sure he's safe.

JACK

Maybe suggest a lower profile.

SANDOVAL

Like that's gonna happen.

Vic and Sandoval leave the Lounge. The portal pulses twice, leaving Jack alone in the sanctum.

INT. VIC AND JESSICA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Vic opens steps in, heavy with concern, tossing her keys in the bowl.

She sees Jessica's keys and hears the TV on. Sighing, she closes and locks the door.

VIC
Babe? I'm home.

APARTMENT HALLWAY

VIC (CONT'D)
Jessica?

She walks down the hall and into the living room.

APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

The TV is on a news channel and Jessica sits on the couch, stroking the cat in her lap.

VIC (CONT'D)
Babe. Did you hear me come in?

Jessica turns off the TV. Silence stretches into uncomfortableness. Just as Vic goes to say something-

JESSICA
You know, I've been sitting here, trying to come up with any number of reasons as to why you would have been near the dock warehouses tonight.

VIC
I can explain that.

Jessica stands and crosses her arms.

JESSICA
You told me you were out with the boys. At the Chariot.

VIC
I was. I mean I was before.

JESSICA
And you just decided to take a trip alone over 40 blocks south to what? Feed the seagulls at night?

VIC
No, I was, well-

JESSICA
Look, I hate this, but after tonight, and the murder scene the other day. I have to ask you or I wouldn't be doing my job.

She takes a deep breath.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
You don't have anything to do with
these murders do you?

Vic stares at her in stunned silence.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Please tell me you don't-

VIC
No! I can't believe you'd even ask
me that. Why would you even think-

JESSICA
We found another body in a
warehouse not far from where I saw
you.

VIC
Jessica-

Vic steps to her and grasps her arms.

VIC (CONT'D)
I promise you. I had nothing to do
with the murders. Nothing.

Jessica desperately looks into her wife's eyes. Then a huge
weight lifts.

JESSICA
Oh, thank god! You've been asking
all kinds of questions about the
murders. I was beside myself. So
why were you there?

Vic takes a beat. Waring with not lying to her wife and not
being able to tell her the truth.

VIC
I...I can't tell you.

JESSICA
Can't or won't?

VIC
I...

JESSICA
Vic. You don't know anything about
these murders do you?

Vic looks at her, pained in her silence.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

Oh my god you do!

VIC

It's not what you think.

JESSICA

Then what is it? Why would you know anything? Why were you there?

VIC

It's- this huge thing fell into my lap. I can't tell you about it but it's HUGE and important and I have to see it through.

JESSICA

Bullshit! We had a deal! It's why you took the promotion at EMS. I'm the shield, it's my job to protect and yours to heal. We can't both be out in the field, or whatever this is, if we want to have kids.

VIC

I know that, but this is different. Look, I didn't go looking for it, but I can't walk away either.

JESSICA

That's not good enough, Victoria. I'm your wife.

VIC

I want to tell you, but I can't. I just need you to trust me.

Before Jessica can answer, the ring of her cell phone splits the air. She looks at it in frustration. Answers.

JESSICA

Yeah, Mike. What is it?

(beat)

Shit. Where?

(beat)

Meet you downstairs when you get here.

(beat)

Then I'll be right down.

She hangs up the phone and heads to the bedroom.

VIC
 Jess, wait. Is it another murder?

Jessica exits the bedroom clipping on her badge and carrying her sidearm.

VIC (CONT'D)
 Is it?

JESSICA
 Yes.

VIC
 Where?

She turns at the door grabbing her keys.

VIC (CONT'D)
 Jessica, please. It could be important.

JESSICA
 (beat)
 Belvedere Castle in Central Park.
 Clearly dumped to be found.

VIC
 Thank you.

JESSICA
 You're my wife. I trust you. But this conversation isn't over.

She opens the door.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 And Vic, you know me well enough to know-

She pulls out her gun, checks the chamber and holsters it.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
 I can take care of myself.

She pulls the door closed a little too hard, leaving Vic in silence, a tear running down her cheek.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WOODS NEAR BELVEDERE CASTLE - NIGHT

Jack, Vic, and Sandoval hide in the woods looking across the 79th St Traverse at...

The lit up location where the body was left. Cops swarm the other side of the pathway under Jessica's watchful eye.

SANDOVAL

Damn, Vic. Look at those boys jump when she speaks.

VIC

She's pretty ticked at the moment.

JACK

At you?

VIC

The job never makes her bark at people like that.

SANDOVAL

Remind me never to piss her off.

VIC

She adores you. It's my head she wants to rip off right now.

JACK

Can we focus please.

VIC

Jess said this was the body was left like it was meant to be found.

JACK

Hirud is trying to draw us out.

VIC

I don't think the message was for the NYPD.

SANDOVAL

Creepy. And not at all concerning. Shouldn't we have, I don't know, a god with us if we're gonna face another god.

JACK

This is strictly recon. We find out where Hirud is holed up and we get out. I left Aiden a note about it, but he's dealing with a drag queen issue. Something about the Drag Race rider for tonight.

Vic and Sandoval "ugh" in unison.

SANDOVAL

That's gonna take hours. So we are on our own.

JACK

That's why we don't get caught. Sandoval, any tracking skills you haven't mentioned?

SANDOVAL

Really, Jack? You ask the "Indian" about tracking skills? I'm a fighter pilot. Might as well ask you to talk to the plants.

Jack looks taken aback, but then cocks his head in thought. He slowly creeps back into the woods away from the other two.

CENTRAL PARK FOREST

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

Jack? Jack, I was kidding.

They follow him through the trees until he stops.

JACK

You're right about the plants.

Jack places his hand on the ground. His eyes glow.

VIC

Wait, he is? You can talk to the plants?

JACK

In a sense. Dragging a dead body through the woods is going to do a lot of damage. There's going to be a lot of...pain is the closest word. They'll be putting a lot of energy into repair and healing...there! Follow me.

Jack moves through the woods following a trail only he can see.

CENTRAL PARK - THE RAMBLE

He crosses worn paths and asphalt trails and leads them south towards The Lake.

They pass a stone archway.

SANDOVAL

Guys, I think we're headed toward the Ramble cave. But that was mostly sealed up in 1934.

The other two stop and stare at him.

SANDOVAL (CONT'D)

What? I can have layers. My point is, it's a pretty secluded spot. Most people would walk right past it, not knowing it's there.

JACK

Well, someone knows, cause that's where the trail leads.

They continue on, more cautiously. A set of rough stone stairs appears out of nowhere, hidden by the brush.

CENTRAL PARK - THE RAMBLE CAVE

They move cautiously down the curved stairway set against a bouldery cliff face and to a clearing on an inlet. The cave is shrouded in darkness in the curve of the hill. Water laps in the distance. They slip silently towards it.

SANDOVAL

I've got a bad feeling about this.

JACK

Now is not the time for a Star Wars reference.

Sandoval gives a Han Solo like shrug.

FOOM!!!

Three blasts of energy send the trio hurtling to the ground without warning.

THUD!

Sandoval and Vic are out cold. Jack groans in pain, struggling to get up. He moves to Vic first.

JACK (CONT'D)

Vic! Vic! You gotta wake up. Vic!

He shakes her. Three figures emerging from the lake, dripping with water and shrouded in sickly purple energy. Jack shakes Sandoval.

JACK (CONT'D)
Sandy! Sandy! Wake up! Vic!

In desperation, Jack's eyes blaze with magic. He tries moving earth or stones as the three enemies stalk ever closer, but only succeeds in feebly moving pebbles.

Panic.

He gestures. Trees, vines, and bushes lash out at the oncoming adversaries. They're effortlessly incinerated.

DRONE
You really are pathetic aren't you,
little earth mage. Hardly a match
for the might of Hirud. Allow me to
put you out of your misery.

The three stop and the drone holds out his hand. A ball of raging purple energy coalesces above it, growing and pulsing with destruction. He lifts it and prepares to throw it-

FASHOOM!!!

The sun itself seems to streak down from the sky, impacting the ground in a blast of light and heat, revealing Aiden in all his sun god glory. The warm glow washes over Vic and Sandoval and their eyes snap open.

AIDEN
Not on my watch.

A gesture and the two other drones crisp to dust. Jack, Vic, and Sandoval stare in amazement.

AIDEN (CONT'D)
And as for you, time for you to get
off this ride.

Aiden blasts a ray of sun-fire that turns night to day, punching through the chest of the Hirud drone. It promptly falls backwards, slams into the ground, and crumbles to dust.

Aiden dusts his hands off and turns, shifting into his human form, and extends a hand to Vic and then Sandoval.

AIDEN (CONT'D)
Y'all really should consider your
nighttime excursions more
carefully. I'm not always gonna be
around to pull your butts out of
the fire.

SANDOVAL

That was...that was AMAZING!

VIC

Thank you, Aiden. If you hadn't been here...

AIDEN

A little more training and any one of you-

He puts his hand on Jack's shoulder.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

-would have been able to handle those three.

HIRUD (O.C.)

You always did see more in the humans than was there, brother.

Aiden whirls around towards the voice coming from the cave, stepping between it and the three magi, returning to his god form. Hirud's pulsing purple god form steps out of the darkness and glowers at the four of them.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

I guess I shouldn't be surprised mother asked you to stay behind.

JACK

Hirud is your BROTHER?

Aiden looks at Jack apologetically then back at Hirud.

HIRUD

Oh, left that part out did he.

AIDEN

You ceased to be my brother the moment you turned against your family and killed mages for power.

HIRUD

They aren't worthy of our gifts! None of you could see that. All they're good for is conduits to feed our magic or slaves to worship at our feet. We are GODS!

AIDEN

They're more than you can possibly comprehend.

(MORE)

AIDEN (CONT'D)

But you, you're nothing more than a parasite, Hirud. One I'll happily extinguish.

HIRUD

You might want to ask your earth mage about that first, dear brother.

Magic swirls around Hirud and his form resolves down into Jason. The blood drains from Jack's face.

HIRUD/JASON

Hi, Jack.

Aiden returns to his human form as Jack tries to rush past him and restrains Jack from behind. Tears stream down Jack's face as he screams.

JACK

You let him go you son of a bitch!!!

HIRUD/JASON

Oh, I don't think I'm gonna do that. You see I'm so grateful to him and his mentor for freeing me at Gobleki Tepe.

JACK

This whole time-

HIRUD/JASON

I rather enjoyed your little mating dance. Watching. Whispering in Jason's ear. Listening to your little secrets. The ones you've told no one else.

Jack's eyes go wide.

HIRUD/JASON (CONT'D)

Oh, and the sex? The sex was great, Jack.

JACK

AAAAAAAAAAGH!!!

Jack lunges again. Sandoval and Vic hold him back.

AIDEN

This ends now, Hirud.

JACK

Jason has to be in there. You have to save him. Please!

HIRUD/JASON

Listen to him beg! You picked a great one, dear brother. Fortunately, I have no intention of letting this vessel die today.

All around them, purple glowing eyes appear in the woods. Dozens of drones awaiting Hirud's call. Aiden shifts to his god form and power blazes around him.

AIDEN

It doesn't matter how many you've infected. It's still just you.

FOOM!!!

He hurls golden power at Hirud, who shift into his own god form and answers with his own blast. The beams connect and sparks of power discharge in all directions. They seem evenly matched but Aiden steps closer and closer to Hirud.

The ground begins to shake. Power vibrates the very air. Aiden looks back at Jack, barely restrained by Vic and Sandoval, arm outstretched. Eyes pleading.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

I won't let you kill them, Hirud. Not again.

HIRUD

Sentiment. Such nonsense.

Hirud pours on more power.

AIDEN

Sandoval! Air shield!

SANDOVAL

What?

AIDEN

Air shield! Now!

Sandoval creates a whirling dome of super condensed air around the three mages. The light around Aidan starts to pulse and grown brighter. Jack looks desperately at Aiden.

JACK

Aiden! What are you doing?

AIDEN

Ending this. Remember, Jack, you've always had everything you need.

Aiden is so bright he's like looking directly at the sun itself. Jack realizes what's about to happen.

JACK

Aiden! No! Don't do this!

Aiden smiles and looks directly at Jack.

AIDEN

Fly you fools.

JACK

NOOOOO!

Vic yanks a wall of water between them and Aiden. It solidifies into ice.

BOOOOOOOOM!!!

A huge explosion turns the world white. The three are blown back. Each use their element to catch themselves, landing rough but unharmed.

Darkness. A whine of noise. Muffled sounds. Hearing and sight return.

The three struggle to their feet and look at the smoldering crater where Aiden had just been. Debris floats slowly to the ground. Aiden is gone.

VIC

Aiden...

They stand, staring. Nothing makes sense. Then they hear cackling triumphant from above. Looking up they see Hirus, floating high above the crater. Madness incarnate.

HIRUD

I can't believe you did that! And for nothing! Hahahahaha!

The three magi tense for conflict.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Need you more proof that I am superior?! Apollo is dead and Hirus lives!

He looks down at the magi prepared for a fight.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Oh, you teeny tiny magi. So small.
So vulnerable.

JACK

Come down here you sick fuck, and
I'll show you how vulnerable I am.

HIRUD

How delightful! The little earth
mage thinks he's a threat. What are
you gonna do? Throw pebbles at me?

More laughter.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Just look at you three, it's so
pathetic I'm feeling generous. In
fact I'm grateful. If not for your
severe incompetence my brother
wouldn't have revealed himself and
I wouldn't have had the opportunity
to kill him. You have my thanks.

Jack screams at him in rage.

HIRUD (CONT'D)

Such passion. A pity you couldn't
channel it into something more
useful. Because you see, without
him, you're not even a nuisance to
me. What sort of light will they
see shining without a sun god? My
darkness will be endless. But fear
not, I'm going to do you a favor.
I'll save your deaths...for last.

Hirud streaks away into the night laughing maniacally as the
glowing eyes disappear into the darkness. The three magi
stare at him leaving. Lost. Defeated. Unmoored.

A gasp!

Vic turns. Jessica stands at the edge of the woods, gun out,
staring wide-eyed at Vic surrounded by water suspended in the
air. She looks down at her. Fear floods her face.

VIC

(dropping the water)
How long have you been standing
there?

(beat)
Jessica?

Jessica backs up slowly, gun in hand. Ready.

JESSICA
What...what are you?

She takes two more steps back, then flees into the trees.

VIC
Jessica, wait!

Vic dashes after her.

Pained steps take Jack into the crater and he collapses to his knees, hands digging in the earth he could not control. Tears fall.

He looks at Sandoval, who backs away in horror at what has just happened. A swirl of air and he is gone, retreating onto the night sky.

Dead silence. Despair. Jack throws back his head and screams into the darkest night. The sound of ultimate suffering.

EXT. NYC STREETS - NIGHT

MONTAGE - JACK IN DESPAIR

Jack plods along the streets alone; His face bloodied and smudged with ash and dirt, cloths ripped and soiled, hands caked with dirt, he does not care.

- He sees Aiden welcoming him to the Chariot the first time

- Aiden introducing him to Vic and Sandoval

- Aiden pouring his birthday shots

- A fire truck goes by

- Aiden showing them the sanctum

- Aiden encouraging him in his magic training

- An ambulance

- Aiden looking at him before his death

- No, he doesn't want to see that. He trips over a short fence at the base of a tree and braces himself against the trunk. A branch moves down as if to comfort him. He swats it away and moves on. The real pain comes.

- Jason's face smiling at him in the bathroom hallway of the Chariot
- He and Jason laughing over coffee
- Jason smiling at him in his apartment
- He shakes his head. No more.
- Their first kiss real kiss
- The first time they made love
- Morning light coming through the window caressing Jason's sleeping form. Jack lying there taking it all in. Jason's eyes open and he smiles. The first morning smile.

Jack grabs the sides of his head and screams.

JACK
STOOOOOOOP!

FLYER GUY
Ok, dude! Chill. I just wanted to
give you this flyer for Pride.

EXT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - NIGHT

Jacks eyes suddenly see the 20-something gay standing in front of him with a flyer in a hand outstretched. He takes it out of reflex.

FLYER GUY
Stay on your meds, my guy.

He hurries off. A shell shocked Jack sees where he is for the first time. He's at the door to Apollo's Chariot.

EXT. THE TOP OF A TALL MESA IN ARIZONA - NIGHT

Sandoval exits the portal and waves it closed. He stands there seemingly stoic, vibrating with undirected fury. His eyes blaze with power and he looks into the dark sky.

Inky black clouds appear as if summoned. They swirl madly overhead. The wind roars, echoing his rage. Rain begins to hammer down, sideways, and even back up again. Still he stands ramrod straight.

Lightening streaks the sky over and over and over. Thunder booms as the latticework of power covers the sky. Still he does not move.

Night becomes day with each flash and the violence of the storm grows ever more destructive. Animals flee for cover. He shakes visibly with the effort of using so much magic. Finally it's too much.

The power winks out of his eyes as suddenly as it came. His body recoils at the release of so much energy and he collapses to the ground.

Slowly he wraps his arms around his knees and softly rocks back and forth. The rain stops. The clouds disperse. Soon, the only water falling is his tears. The only sound, his aching sobs.

INT. APOLLO'S CHARIOT - NIGHT

The front door opens, and Jack emerges into an empty bar, lit only by safety lights. Stools are upturned on the bar and table tops. Jack closes the door behind him and feels the emptiness of the space.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM - CONTINUOUS

Jack emerges from the mirror portal and pauses again at the top of the stairs. The grandeur of so much preserved human history provides no comfort. He plods down the marble stairs.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM, THE LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jack heads to the bar. He pulls up a stool and grabs a bottle of scotch. Putting the Pride flyer on the bar top, he pours himself three fingers. He tosses it back. His shoulders slump. Defeated and spent. He pours another drink.

EXT. THE TOP OF A TALL MESA IN ARIZONA - NIGHT

All is still. Stars look down from a cloudless sky. Sandoval sits staring into the space. A pinprick of light appears in the far distance. A fire. Intrigued, Sandoval stands and gently lifts into the air and flies towards it.

EXT. THE BASE OF A MESA - NIGHT

A modest fire is tended by an old Navajo man in simple garb. Sandoval lands lightly outside the circle of light and approaches.

SANDOVAL
 (in Navajo)
 Hello friend. May I join you and
 warm myself by your fire?

OLD MAN
 (in Navajo)
 Of course grandson. You are always
 welcome by my fire.

The old man smiles gently at him. Sandoval takes a step back
 in fear. His grandfather is long dead.

SANDOVAL
 Chindi-

OLD MAN
 Peace. I mean you no harm,
 grandson.

Recognition.

SANDOVAL
 Old Age Woman's greeting to Naayéé!
 Neizghání. You cannot be my
 grandfather. He passed from this
 world long ago.

OLD MAN
 True. But his body and spirit
 became part of the very land around
 you. His love, kindness, and wisdom
 still live on. Even in the very air
 that sustains you.

SANDOVAL
 But how-

OLD MAN
 There are those in this world, and
 other worlds before, far older than
 the old god who gave you the power
 to ride the wind, young one.

SANDOVAL
 You're one of the Holy People.

OLD MAN
 I am an old man tending a fire,
 talking to a young man in deep pain
 who needs a friend.

Tears well up in Sandoval's eyes. He sits by the fire.

SANDOVAL

I don't know what to do,
grandfather. I thought I was going
to be a guardian, a defender. But
just like Afghanistan, innocent
people are dead and I could do
nothing. This time it was my
friend.

The old man pokes the fire.

OLD MAN

Why did you first decide to fight
in the skies?

SANDOVAL

Because all I've ever wanted to do
is fly.

OLD MAN

Is that the only reason?

Sandoval looks at him for a moment.

SANDOVAL

No.

OLD MAN

Why then?

SANDOVAL

My great grandfather, the one I'm
named after, he was a Wind Talker.
He left home to fight for us. To
fight monsters and help kill a
great evil.

OLD MAN

So like Changing Woman's sons you
wanted to do the same.

SANDOVAL

Yes. It's foolish, I know.

OLD MAN

Choosing to risk your life to
battle evil is never foolish,
grandson. Only choosing to ignore
it.

SANDOVAL

But what if I'm not strong enough?
What if more people die because I
can't stop it?

OLD MAN

Death is a part of life. It cannot be avoided, only respected. Be at peace with that.

Sandoval looks into the fire. Considers. The Old Man stands and tosses the branch into the flames.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

It has been many years since one of the Diné rode the winds as a protector.

The Old Man turns to him and Sandoval stands in respect.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

You carry within you the spirit and honor of your people, grandson. That is your greatest strength, and why no evil can truly stand against you.

The Old Man places his palm on Sandoval's chest.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

But even more than that, you carry within you the spirit of the Thunderbird itself.

Tiny sparks appear at the corners of the Old Man's eyes.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Its protection is ferocious and it's wrath devastating when provoked.

Deep thunder booms in the distance. Sandoval's eyes go wide.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Now go, grandson. You have a family that needs you. Know that the power of the Diné will always be here. And so will I.

Tears. Sandoval embraces the Old Man in a tight hug.

SANDOVAL

Thank you, grandfather.

The Old Man smiles in the hug and releases him. Sandoval calls the wind and floats into the air. He turns and heads into the sky. He pauses and looks back, but the old man and the fire are both gone without a trace.

INT. AIDEN'S SANCTUM, THE LOUNGE - NIGHT

Jack sits at the bar drinking. Half the bottle of scotch is gone. The portal activates. Vic enters the lounge. She pulls up a stool, grabs a glass and slugs back a shot of whiskey.

VIC
Mind if I join you?

JACK
The merrier the more- er...

He's very drunk.

VIC
I need to get on your level.

JACK
So, Jess?

VIC
We're not divorced...yet.

She takes another slug.

VIC (CONT'D)
I told her everything, Jack. Kinda had to since she saw me go all Mera and watched a god explode.

She pours another.

JACK
How'd she take it.

VIC
After the yelling stopped, better than I expected. She just needs a little space to process it.

JACK
Mine turned out to be the evil demon god the whole time, so I win.

VIC
No argument there.

They both laugh, enjoying the gallows humor.

JACK
We are so fucked.

VIC
Soooooo fucked.

JACK

It's not all bad. Now I don't have to worry about convincing folks to save the planet from climate destruction if we can't...you know...save the planet.

VIC

Morbid but true!

They clink their glasses and both down another shot. The portal sounds again Sandoval charges into the lounge.

SANDOVAL

Guys! Guys, guys, guys, guys, guys!
You'll never guess what just happened.

VIC

You found out Britney is free?

Vic and Jack roar with laughter.

SANDOVAL

No! I saw my grandfather.

VIC

Your grandfather's dead.

SANDOVAL

Well, it wasn't really my grandfather, more like his essence in one of the Holy People, or maybe the Thunderbird, I'm not really sure. But he talked to me about our power and gods older than Aiden and how we're family, and-

JACK

Do you know what he's talking about?

VIC

Sounds like he's been at the pipe again.

JACK

Now who's being racist.

VIC

I meant a weed pipe you ass!

JACK

Slut!

SANDOVAL
GUYS! I think we can beat him.

VIC
What?

SANDOVAL
He let us live because he thinks
we're not a threat.

JACK
Well, we're kinda not.

Vic grabs Jack's arm. Her eyes pulse with power and a glow
sweeps over Jack. He snaps to sober attention.

JACK (CONT'D)
Did you just heal my drunkenness.

VIC
Shut up and listen, Jack.

SANDOVAL
Hirud thinks you're useless because
you can't move earth, create fire,
or do the telepathy thing, right?

JACK
Yes, thank you for reminding me.

SANDOVAL
But you can manipulate plants?

JACK
Yeah, so?

SANDOVAL
What about fungus?

JACK
It's fungi, and- Oh, my gods.

VIC
What? What did I miss?

SANDOVAL
Come on, Vic! How am I the smart
one right now. If he can manipulate
the fungi and you can heal fungal
infection...

The light bulb goes off.

VIC

Then together we can yank the bastard out of Jason. Sandoval that's brilliant!

JACK

But Aiden said Hirud's infection kills the host mind.

SANDOVAL

I don't think so. Something my grandfather reminded me of. The essence of who we are, the mind we possess is the sum of our memories and experiences. So if Hirud has Jason's memories he has to still be in there somewhere.

JACK

That's all well and good, but we don't know what his plan is. We don't know where to find him.

Jack plops down on the bar stool looking at the Pride flyer. "Let Them See Your Light" emblazoned across the top. He shakes his head and looks away

SANDOVAL

We'll figure it out!

VIC

Look at you with the intelligent thinking. I knew it was possible.

SANDOVAL

So much for not seeing our light.

Jack's eyes jerk back down at the flyer.

JACK

What did you say?

SANDOVAL

Hirud made that crack about not seeing our light without a sun god.

Lightbulb. Jack slowly stands up, flyer in hand.

JACK

Son of a bitch! I know what his plan is.

He turns to face them.

JACK (CONT'D)
I know what he's going to do-

He smiles.

JACK (CONT'D)
-and I have a plan.

Hope. Suddenly, Vic bursts out laughing.

JACK (CONT'D)
What the fuck, Vic?

VIC
I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I'm sure the
plan is brilliant. It's just-

JACK
What?

VIC
It would have sounded a lot more
inspiring from someone who doesn't
look like he just came out on the
wrong end of a mud wrestling match.

She continues giggling. Sandoval can't help but join her.

JACK
Ok, OK! Yuck it up guys. Obviously
we're gonna need to change clothes.

They continue laughing until-

COMPUTER VOICE
Final protocol activated.

SANDOVAL
Um, what was that?

The huge screen activates and the face of Aiden fills it.

AIDEN
Hey, guys. If you're seeing this,
it means I can't be with you as you
face Hirus. I'm sorry about that.

The trio move to stand together and watch the screen.

AIDEN (CONT'D)
I know you must be afraid, and I
wish I could be there, but know
that I'm not worried.
(MORE)

AIDEN (CONT'D)

You three are among the best souls
I have encountered in my time on
your plane.

Vic smiles at Jack and grabs one hand. Sandoval does the same
and grabs the other.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

It is your bond that makes you
special. The bond of chosen family.
Something forged in fire and
unbreakable. It's something Hirus
can never hope to understand.
Remember that, because it is that
bond that will defeat him. For no
matter how many drones he has
infected, there is still only one
of him and he is no match for the
three of you.

Jack looks at Vic and Sandoval. Believing for the first time.

AIDEN (CONT'D)

The Magi were more than just
defenders and teachers. They were
symbols. Symbols of hope, and when
you face Hirus you should be
dressed like it. Since I knew you
wouldn't be interested in the
traditional garb of the mages, I
took the liberty of creating
something a little more 21st
century for you. Good luck my
friends. Now go kick his ass.

The screen winks off and the three look around confused.

THUNK!

The huge screen wall retracts into the ceiling. Brilliant
light streams from a chamber beyond, lighting up the trio.

JACK

That...that is just perfect.

VIC

He is so not gonna be ready for us.

SANDOVAL

Fucking awesome.

EXT. PRIDE FESTIVAL MAINSTAGE, CENTRAL PARK - DAY

The parade has ended. People stream into the open field towards a large crowd already gathered at the main stage where a pop star is entertaining the masses.

Rainbows and sun symbols are everywhere and on everyone. Signs and placards abound to cheer, admonish, and resist. Community and family are the watchwords of the day.

BOOM!

A fountain of purple energy erupts beneath the center of the stage. Hirus emerges from beneath. He floats above the stage before the crowd. Silence hangs as everyone freezes.

HIRUD

Rejoice, humans! For your god has finally arrived! Your world as you know it is over. Before the sun sets this day, those who are not my drones will be bowing at my feet as slaves! Today-

SANDOVAL (O.C.)

Oh, please! Worst bad guy speech ever! You know this town is full of writers right?

HIRUD

Who dares?!

JACK

We do.

The crowd parts and reveal the Magi in FULL BATTLE GARB.

Sandoval in brilliant WHITE LEATHER, the turquoise Thunderbird emblazoned across his chest. Silver thunderbolts gleam down his arms, matching boots strapped on his feet.

Vic in shining OCEAN BLUE LEATHER. Waves crash up her arms and legs. A gold Caduceus agleam in the sun on her left breast.

Jack in bright GOLD LEATHER. Red flames embossed up his arms with matching red fingerless leather gloves and boots. A bright blue Earth, shining on his chest right over his heart.

HIRUD

How dare you challenge me on my day of ascension.

JACK
(to Vic)
Would you hose him please.

VIC
Gladly.

She yanks a geyser of water from pipes beneath the park and hurls it against Hirud. He slams against the back of the stage wall and falls to the floor.

Sandoval takes to the air, sends a stream of pressurized air to keep him there.

JACK
You know the city is gonna be pretty pissed about that.

VIC
Let them. We survive this and I'll take the heat.

Jessica appears, dressed in a mix of Pride and cop gear.

JESSICA
Now that was impressive.

VIC
Thanks, babe.

JESSICA
I don't suppose that's it?

JACK
No such luck. You bring back-up?

JESSICA
As many as we could spare.

Cops appear on the perimeter of the clearing, rainbows and suns adorning their uniforms.

JACK
I like the new look.

JESSICA
Wasn't my idea. Once that amazing wife of mine proved magic was real it just started happening.

SANDOVAL
Uh, guys. Wanna hurry this up, he's not gonna stay down long.

Hirud shows signs of pushing back.

JACK

Right. Have your people get as many out of the park as you can so he can't infect any more. We don't know how many are already infected, but safe to say anyone trying to leave isn't.

JESSICA

Got it. Stay safe, babe.

Jessica kisses her and then jogs away barking orders.

JACK

Ok, Sandoval, let him up.

SANDOVAL

You sure about this?

JACK

No, but if this is gonna work, we need to piss him off.

Sandoval releases the airflow. Hirud leaps up, raging.

HIRUD

Insects! Do you not understand the power of Hirud?!

The eyes of people all over the clearing light up with purple energy. Dozens, then hundreds. They slowly turn and begin to encircle the trio as the uninfected flee.

VIC

Congratulations, Jack. You wanted him angry. He's angry.

Sandoval lands and the three back up to each other.

SANDOVAL

Yeah, we might not have thought this through.

Hirud floats over to them.

HIRUD

What now, little mages? What was the plan? Piss me off and then die?

JACK

You got the piss you off part right. Vic?

VIC

Let's do it.

Sandoval nods and a whirlwind swirls around them, trapping one female drone. She snarls and charges. Jack gestures. Her body freezes, unable to move.

HIRUD

What have you done?

JACK

Your infection isn't like it was before, Hirud. To survive those thousands of years you bonded with a fungus, which I can control.

VIC

And I can heal.

Vic surrounds the head of the drone with a sphere of water. The purple glow slowly creeps up her body out of the eyes, ears, and mouth into the sphere.

The water sphere moves off the head of the drone. She promptly collapses to the ground, quickly followed by the frozen solid sphere.

HIRUD

Impossible!

VIC

Not really, just standard 21st century medicine. Don't bother trying to reinfect her. I supercharged her immune system against you.

HIRUD

You'll never cure them all before I kill you.

SANDOVAL

Who said that was the plan?

JACK

There may be hundreds of infected drones, but as someone reminded us recently. There's only one of you.

Jack's eyes blaze as he snatches control of the spores in Hirud's body. Hirud snarls in rage. A sphere of water engulfs his head, and the hundreds of drones hurl bolts of purple energy into Sandoval's air shield.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

JACK (CONT'D)
Hurry, Vic. I can't hold him long.

VIC
Working on it.

Vic tries to pull out the spores, but it's slow and she's struggling. Jack grunts with the effort. Sweat beads on his forehead. Sandoval goes down on one knee under the force of the drone blasts.

JACK
Vic?

VIC
I'm working on it!

JACK
Vic!!!

VIC
I said I'm-

FOOOOOM!

A blast of energy from Hirus shatters their control. They hurtle dozens of feet and smack the ground hard. Sandoval is out. Vic can barely move. Jack struggles to get to his feet.

The drones are on them. They're yanked up and pushed to their knees before the approaching Hirus.

HIRUD
Jack, Jack, Jack. Did you really think that would be enough? That your puny power could stop a god?

JACK
Pretty much, yeah.

HIRUD
Such arrogance. I'm going to enjoy taking your life personally.

Hirus grabs him by the neck and lifts him off the ground.

HIRUD (CONT'D)
But not before you watch your friends die.

The god's arm raises towards the unconscious Sandoval. Energy pulses in his hand. Vic looks up at Jack. Jack struggles against Hirus, eyes blaze with magic.

JACK

No-

Time slows. Then-

JASON (O.C.)

(faintly)

Jack...Jack...can you hear me? I'm here Jack. I've always been here. I believe in you, Jack...I see you...

JACK

(whispers)

Jason?

Hirus pauses, looks at Jack.

HIRUD

What did you say?

Jack looks up at Hirus. Suddenly it all clicks. He understands. Vic. Sandoval. Jason. Aiden. Jessica. The Earth, Sky, and Sea. Chosen family. Community. Even Hirus.

Jack smiles.

JACK

I get it now.

HIRUD

What?

JACK

We're all connected.

Hirus looks confused.

Rumble.

The earth starts to tremble.

RUMBLE!!!

The earth cavitates. Hirus is confounded. Jack's eyes blaze.

JACK (CONT'D)

Sorry about this, Jason.

FOOSH!!!

Jack's fists erupt in flames and he slams them into Hirus's chest, sending him hurling away end over end. He slams into the ground.

Jack drops to the earth, landing on his feet.

FOOSH! FOOSH!

Balls of flame blast the drones holding Vic and Sandoval dozens of feet away.

RUMBLE!!!

He punches the ground and it roars out from them like a wave. Drones fly into the air before it. The earthen wave stops. A semicircular six foot high ridge around them.

Vic pulls Sandoval to his feet healing him.

VIC

And you thought the city was going to be mad at me.

JACK

Like you said, we survive this, they can yell at me all they want.

Hirus pulls himself out of a furrowed crater. He stalks toward them raging.

HIRUD

You think this changes anything?! I am still a god, and there are still only three of you.

AIDEN (O.C.)

Come now, brother. You of all people should know, no mage stands alone.

The trio whirl around. Aiden stands atop the newly formed ridge line.

HIRUD

You! You're dead!

Aiden shrugs.

AIDEN

I got over it.

HIRUD

You're going to fight me? I'll just kill you. Again!

AIDEN
I didn't come to fight, brother.

He smiles.

AIDEN (CONT'D)
That's why I brought them.

Dozens of Magi crest the top of the ridge. Eyes blazing with magic. Dressed for the Pride festival.

SANDOVAL
Now that's what I'm talking about.

JACK
You've been busy.

AIDEN
Turns out you have a lot of free time when you're dead. Should I tell them how to cure the drones?

Jack's eyes pulse with magic.

JACK
Already done.

Aiden points to Hirus.

AIDEN
What about him?

JACK
Oh, we got this, right guys?

VIC
Abso-fucking-loutly.

SANDOVAL
We so got this.

For the first time in millennia, Hirus feels fear. They attack.

Fire. Water. Lightning. Earth. Ice. Wind. They are relentless. Hirus never stood a chance.

The world hasn't seen this since before recorded time. Three fully realized Magi attacking in concert to protect their chosen family. It's glorious.

CRACKOOM!!!

One final combined blast and he is down. Hirud heaves in exhaustion and fear as Jack looms over him, Vic and Sandoval at his side.

HIRUD
If you kill me, you kill your
precious Jason.

JACK
I'm not killing you, Hirud.

He yanks the demon god off the ground by his throat.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm ending you. Now give me back my
BOYFRIEND!

Jacks eyes blaze and his hand glows with the yellow power of the sun as he slams it into Hirud's forehead. The god screams in agony and terror as the purple glow is sucked out of his body into the blazing golden energy around Jack's hand.

Hirud's body shrinks back into the form of Jason as Hirud is yanked out of him. Jack lets him go for Vic to catch and the he throws the golden ball of energy high into the sky.

It's followed by an excoriating beam of light from Jack. It connects with the ball.

BOOOOOOOM!

A rainbow pattern of glittery particles covers the sky.

Hirud is gone.

Jack drops to his knees next to Jason, where Vic is busy healing him.

VIC
Is it over?

JACK
It's over.

Jack puts a hand on Jason's chest and caresses the side of his head in concern. Jason's eyes flutter open and he finds Jack. A warm smile.

JASON
You heard me.

JACK
Of course I did. We're connected.

Jack practically yanks Jason off the ground onto a tight embrace.

All over the clearing, Magi are helping newly freed drones to their feet. Healing. Explaining. Some of the Earth and Sea mages are making repairs to the park with their magic.

Aiden approaches the group as a crowd begins to form.

AIDEN

Well done, my friends. Especially you, Jack. To use pure magic like that. Truly impressive.

JACK

I was pretty motivated. You might have mentioned you weren't really dead.

VIC

Yeah, we put a pretty heavy dent in your whiskey collection at the lounge drinking to your demise.

Jessica joins them and puts her arms around Vic.

SANDOVAL

Uh, they did, not me.

AIDEN

Yeah, sorry about that. It was kinda necessary to gather all these new mages.

JACK

Fine. But no more faking your death for at least a year.

AIDEN

Deal.

VIC

What are you going to do now, Aiden. With Hirus gone.

JACK

You could use the portal and go home.

AIDEN

And leave you guys? Who would run Apollo's Chariot? Besides, we've got a new generation of Magi to train.

JASON

(to Jack)

Guess you've got a whole new career to think about.

JACK

It's same career. Except now I have the power to actually save the earth.

JASON

Well, I hope there's room in your busy schedule for me.

JACK

You did hear me call you my boyfriend, right?

JASON

I most certainly did.

AIDEN

Vic, Sandoval, what's say we let the city know Pride is back on, shall we?

He forms a golden sun above his hand. Vic and Sandoval look confused at first, then smile in gleeful understanding. They follow him to the center of the clearing.

JASON

What are they doing?

Jack smiles.

JACK

Making a promise.

Vic and Sandoval gesture. High above the air shimmers with water vapor. Aiden launches the energy ball skyward.

FLASH!!!

The biggest most perfect rainbow NYC has ever seen stretches from horizon to horizon, filling the sky. The city erupts with cheers. Hugs. Joy fills the air.

Around them a celebration roars, but Jack and Jason only have eyes for each other. Smiles. A kiss, full of possibility.

Overhead the rainbow shimmers.

FADE TO BLACK: