

AEGIS

EPISODE 1 - WHAT ONCE WAS LOST

Written by

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EXT. CITY OF NICAEA - DAY

The large 4th century city bustles with activity under the dominating Imperial Palace as the sun sits low in the sky.

SUPER: NICAEA 325 C.E.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

EMPEROR CONSTANTINE (53) presides over a full grand hall resplendent in purple, gold, and jewels. ATHANASIUS (27), a bishop from Alexandria speaks before 300+ other bishops.

ATHANASIUS

This question of Christ's divinity must be resolved. I move this council declare Arius and his followers what they are. Heretics!

Shouts erupt from the participants.

INT. RITUAL SPACE BENEATH THE PALACE - DAY

ELKESAI (50s) an elder Gnostic mystic enters a large domed room with his apprentice BAKO (20s). Each is ROBED in the clothes of their order and Elkesai wears a GOLD MEDALLION engraved with a sun symbol encircled with runes.

Bako carries a LIT TORCH to a sconce on a nearby pillar. With difficulty, he magically takes flame from his fire and moves it to the waiting sconce. The separated flame flickers, but then stabilizes floating in the fixture.

ELKESAI

Keep your focus, Bako. The mind must be still to control the chaos of the flame.

BAKO

Yes, Master Elkesai.

He moves to the next pillar and repeats the procedure then moves to the next as his master watches on.

BAKO (CONT'D)

Master, I am still unsure.

As the light grows we see a LARGE GOLD ENCIRCLED HEXAGRAM inscribed in the stone floor surrounding a tall OBELISK OF ONYX inscribed with runes and other magic symbols.

ELKESAI

Speak your mind. Questioning is the beginning of knowledge.

BAKO

Much of the the ritual comes from Hosius. I do not trust him.

Elkesai gestures to the Bako's torch and a piece of flame separates and floats across the room to his palm.

ELKESAI

The emperor's advisor provided inspiration, it is true, but we crafted the underlying spell work.

He moves his hand towards the sconce nearest him and the flame floats to its place.

BAKO

I worry about the consequences of what we are doing. Does it not tread on mankind's free will?

ELKESAI

The Demiurge's influence blocks men from seeing the divine in us all.

He gestures and multiple orbs of flame separate from Bako's torch. With a flourish, he fills the remaining sconces.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)

Sealing him away frees us all to find the path to our own internal divinity. It might even quiet the riot going on above us.

BAKO

I'm just concerned-

ELKESAI

Peace my son. The council has considered this. All will be well.

The door opens and Gnostic Mystic Elders and Acolytes enter.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)

You must have faith that the universe will unfold as it should.

Bako looks unsure as the mystics take places around the hexagram. Elkesai places a hand on his shoulder.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)

Return to your room and meditate.

BAKO

But Master, I-

ELKESAI

I will not dishonor you by  
insisting you participate.

BAKO

Yes, Master.

Bako turns reluctantly and departs. Elkesai joins the other elders as acolytes stand in a larger circle behind them.

ELKESAI

My friends. Let us begin.

He and the other Elders stretch out their arms, chanting. Golden balls of energy appear in front of each mystic and expand into a hexagram matching the one on the floor. It pulses and inscriptions on the obelisk light up with energy.

The glowing star shrinks inward towards the now floating obelisk, both pulsing ever brighter.

EXT. CITY OF NICAEA - DAY

The clouds darken suddenly and grow, blotting out the sun. Lightning crackles. Thunder. Wind from nowhere kicks up debris in the streets. Frightened people run for cover.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Constantine looks up from his throne to the windows as the darkness descends on the city. He stands, concerned.

INT. BAKO'S ROOM - DAY

Bako sits, eyes closed. A ball of flame rotates before him. He opens his eyes and glances at the darkening window.

INT. RITUAL SPACE - DAY

A shriek as if reality is being torn pierces the air and Elkesai's eyes go wide in horror.

ELKESAI

NO! We must stop! We're opening the door not sealing him away! The Demiurge. He comes!!!

The others stop chanting. Shocked.

ELDER

The spell is already begun. Ending it now-

Another shriek as a dark ominous shadow begins to take shape.

ELKESAI

We must banish the obelisk. Cast it out of our world.

ELDER

While it's connected to the source of magic? The damage that could do!

SHRIEK!!! The shadow grows ever larger and more solid.

ELKESAI

We have no choice! The Demiurge would make slaves of us all!

His hands go back up and he begins a new chanting with the others. The glowing star goes brilliant white. The obelisk spins faster like a gyroscope until both are a spinning ball of light.

Elkesai closes his eyes and shouts the last words of his spell. BOOM!!! The mystic are blown over as the obelisk flashes out of existence, plunging the room into darkness.

INT. IMPERIAL PALACE - DAY

Darkness recedes and the light returns to normal. There is a moments quiet before the arguing begins anew.

INT. RITUAL SPACE - DAY

Groans fill the room as Elkesai struggles to a sitting position. He looks at his hands.

ELKESAI

What have we done?

HOSIUS (O.S.)

Something rather unexpected.

Elkesai looks up and sees a figure backlit by a torch in the stone hallway standing in the door, face hidden by shadow.

ELKESAI

Hosius!

He thrusts his hand out towards the torch behind the figure but nothing happens. He looks at his hands in shock.

HOSIUS

Unexpected indeed.

Swords unsheathe around the room as assassins step into view.

HOSIUS (CONT'D)

But my ascendancy is still assured.

He turns to leave as the assassins advance on the mystics.

INT. BAKO'S ROOM - DUSK

The ball of flame winks out and Bako's eyes fly open. Confused, he tries summoning it again. Nothing. He notices the light dimming through the window with the setting sun and goes to a nearby candle. He gestures. Nothing.

Confused, he gestures again, but stops as he hears shouts through the door. It BURSTS open and Elkesai falls through it. Breathing hard he turns and slams it shut, securing it.

BAKO

Master! What is it? What's wrong?

He turns, his front covered in blood, and slumps to the door.

BAKO (CONT'D)

MASTER!

He rushes to the man's side and grabs him, holding him up.

ELKESAI

We have been betrayed. You were right. I should have listened.

BAKO

We've got to get you help!

ELKESAI

No! No. It is too late.

BAKO

But the others-

ELKESAI  
The others are dead.

Bako pulls back in shock. Shouts get louder in the hall.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)  
You must go! Before they find you.

Bako hesitates, then begins packing. Elkesai braces himself against the door and pulls his medallion off as Bako returns to him. He holds the now bloodied pendant out.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)  
Take this and go.

BAKO  
Master...I can't leave you.

ELKESAI  
You must.

BAKO  
But, Master-

ELKESAI  
Bako. You have more potential than any student I have ever taught. You can fix this, but you must go. Now!

He shoves the medallion into Bako's hands as the door shakes.

ELKESAI (CONT'D)  
We are out of time. Protect what you have learned. And find a way to undo our mistake.

More pounding. Bako clutches the medallion to his chest, then pulls it over his head and hurries towards the window. He glances back one last time at his mentor, and is gone.

The door BURSTS open, sending Elkesai hurling away. He catches himself and turns to face the entering black clad assassin. Without a word, the assassin runs him through. Elkesai grunts in pain and slides to the ground dead.

The assassin looks around the room then goes to the window and looks out. In the darkness he misses Bako clinging to the wall beneath it, turns and leaves. Bako clutches the medallion hanging around his neck and whispers a prayer.

TITLE SEQUENCE: AEGIS

EXT. RESTAURANT DIPLOMATIQUE - NIGHT

On Pennsylvania Avenue, the high end French restaurant sits in view of the Capital Building. The fountain flows at the Navy Memorial just out front as pedestrians stroll by.

SUPER: WASHINGTON D.C. - PRESENT DAY

MICHAEL WALLACE (28), a stylish academic of Scotch-Irish descent hurries up with a STUFFED AGED LEATHER MESSENGER BAG and comes to a halt before the revolving door.

He pulls out a medallion from beneath his shirt and rubs it. It's the same one Bako wore, now showing the patina of old age. He shoves it back in his shirt, and heads inside.

INT. RESTAURANT DIPLOMATIQUE - NIGHT

Michael pops out of the door into a place that reeks of money and power. This is where the decision makers in DC come to eat. He looks around and spots GABE RUIZ (20s), sitting alone at a table. He waves to him and the MAÎTRE D' swoops in.

MAÎTRE D'  
Can I help you, sir?

MICHAEL  
HELLO! Hi. Yes. Just joining my  
boyfriend for dinner.

The maître d' looks over at the waiting Gabe.

MAÎTRE D'  
Ah, yes. Mr. Ruiz. He has been  
waiting. Right this way.

The maître d' guides him to the table. Gabe stands and Michael gives him a quick kiss in greeting.

MICHAEL  
Hi, babe! I am so sorry I am late.

MAÎTRE D'  
May I take your bag, sir?

Michael clutches the bag tightly.

MICHAEL  
No! Ah. No. Important...work  
things. Smithsonian related. You  
understand. But if I could have a  
chair to set it on, that would be  
great.



MAÎTRE D'

A chair?

MICHAEL

Yes, please.

The maître d' sighs and walks away. Gabe and Michael sit down at the table, Michael holding the messenger bag in his lap.

GABE

You know they have a coat check.

MICHAEL

I just want to keep it in sight.

GABE

What's in it?

MICHAEL

Work stuff. Like I said.

The chair arrives and Michael sets the bag on it.

GABE

Well, I'm just glad you made it. I had to drop the Senator's name so they wouldn't give our table away.

Michael peruses the menu then notices a strange smell. He glances at his bag to see a small black stain growing. Panic.

MICHAEL

(distracted)

Let's order! You want to split the duck fat fries?

GABE

I was thinking more the seven course tasting menu.

MICHAEL

Seven? Um. Seven courses?

Michael glances over at the bag. The stain is bigger.

GABE

It's our first anniversary!

MICHAEL

I, uh... It sounds like a lot.

GABE

It's a special night! I might even spring for the wine pairings.

(MORE)

GABE (CONT'D)

(sniffing)

Do you smell something?

Michael's eyes dart down at his bag. The stain is bigger.

MICHAEL

I'm sure it's nothing. You know,  
I'm not all that hungry. Maybe we  
could get something to go or-

GABE

What is that smell? Rotting meat?

MICHAEL

What, um, what smell?

Gabe sniffs the air and realizes where it's coming from.

GABE

Is that your bag?

MICHAEL

Don't be silly.

GABE

It is!

MICHAEL

It's nothing!

GABE

Michael. What's in the bag?

People at nearby tables start reacting to the smell.

MICHAEL

Gabe, we really should-

GABE

What's. In. The bag.

MICHAEL

Fine. But i don't what you to get  
how you get.

GABE

How I get?!

MICHAEL

I was on my way here and...I found  
a hawk that had been killed.

GABE

A hawk?

Michael plops his bag onto the table with a thud.

GABE (CONT'D)

Please tell me you did not bring  
the body of a dead bird into the  
most exclusive restaurant in DC!

He flips open the top of the bag to reveal the dead hawk. A large ragged chunk taken out by something with a great many sharp teeth. A black tar-like substance glistens in the wound and the flesh around it has begun to rot away.

Gabe covers his nose and mouth as the people near them begin reacting in revulsion. Napkins fly to faces. Retching. Gabe looks at him horrified. The maître d' appears, glaring.

EXT. RESTAURANT DIPLOMATIQUE - NIGHT

Gabe and Michael exit the revolving doors of the restaurant. The maître d' glaring at them, arms crossed from inside.

GABE

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THAT!!! Do  
you have ANY idea what I had to do  
to get those reservations?

MICHAEL

The smell was definitely not that  
strong before. It doesn't make  
sense decomposing so fast.

GABE

Reputation is everything in this  
town! I have to work with most of  
those people! Now I'm the guy who's  
crazy date made Secretary Neilson's  
wife throw up on a 3000 dollar Vera  
Wang!

MICHAEL

I didn't think-

GABE

That's the problem. You don't  
think!

MICHAEL

Look, I know I get carried away  
sometimes, but the hawk had all the  
markings of an unnatural attack. I  
had to take it for evidence.

GABE

Evidence?! That's what this is about? Your "magic is real" thing?

MICHAEL

Used to be! Used to be real. And that maybe it's back. I know my theory sounds obsessive but-

GABE

Obsessive? No! Obsessive is my thing with The Real Housewives of The Potomac. This is an addiction. I used to think it was a charming nerdy quirk. But this...I can't...

MICHAEL

What are you saying?

GABE

I'm saying I'm tired of coming in second place to THIS!

He points at the bag.

GABE (CONT'D)

I'm saying you have to choose. Me or this theory of yours.

Michael looks at him. Torn. He clutches the bag.

MICHAEL

Gabe...I...I can't.

GABE

Wow. Goodbye, Michael.

He turns and determinedly walks away. Michael watches, heartbroken. He takes a step after him, then stops. Head lowered he trudges off in the opposite direction.

NEARBY DARK ALLEYWAY

A SHADOWY CLOAKED FIGURE watches Michael walk away.

INT. THE RAVEN'S FIELD BOOKSTORE - DAY

The the warm and comfortably full store is filled with items from pagan religions across the world. As Michael enters the store dingding the entry bell, a tall Scandinavian woman stalks past him out the door.

The ring of the bell has barely ended when MORGAN CROWE (60s) makes her entrance like a queen, dressed in flowing black and green, red jewel at her throat. Long thick black hair cascades around a face that's at once ancient and ageless.

MORGAN  
(Irish accent)  
Dia dhuit, Michael, my boy!

MICHAEL  
Dia dhuit, Morgan. It's good to see  
you.

She embraces him warmly, but then suddenly steps back to look in his eyes in concern.

MORGAN  
What's wrong?

MICHAEL  
It's nothing.

MORGAN  
It's not nothing. There's a sadness  
clinging to your heart like a  
shroud. Is it Gabriel?

MICHAEL  
(sighs)  
Yes. You'd think being pan would  
increase my chances of finding  
someone compatible.

MORGAN  
Anyone who can't accept your whole  
truth isn't worthy of you, dear  
one.

MICHAEL  
So you keep saying. So,  
Business is going well?

He nods after the departing woman.

MORGAN  
Ah, yes. Bryn. She always says she  
wants the truth, but is never happy  
with what I tell her.

MICHAEL  
Your readings can be...pointed.

MORGAN

The truth often is. You could use one.

MICHAEL

With the Gabe implosion and after the way your last reading turned out? I'm good.

MORGAN

I foresaw a passionate love affair did I not?

MICHAEL

She suddenly moved to another state without even calling!

MORGAN

I foretold passionate, not lengthy.

MICHAEL

Ok, fair. But not why I'm here.

He holds up a large opaque sealed plastic bag and then walks over to the counter and sets it down.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I was out biking when I came across a dead bird.

MORGAN

A dead bird? You shouldn't have.

MICHAEL

Already cost me my favorite bag. And what's an archeologist without his favorite messenger bag.

He opens it and Morgan reacts as the stench assaults her then peers in. The body of the dead bird has decomposed almost completely into a viscous soupy black tar mess.

MORGAN

You always bring me the nicest things. What was it?

MICHAEL

Buteo jamaicensis. Red tailed hawk. I was hoping you'd have a thought.

MORGAN

A supernatural attack. And this tar like substance...hmmm...

She goes to a case filled with ancient tomes and selects a one. She flips through it returning to the counter.

MICHAEL  
You have something?

MORGAN  
I might at that. Here.

She stops, places the book down, and points to an illustration of a large savage dog like creature with long sharp fangs. Black saliva drips from its mouth.

MICHAEL  
Hmmm, my Acadian is a bit rusty,  
but... This says something about-  
even a bite being death...  
um...consuming the flesh leaving a  
black ruin. It guards the entrance-

He stops and looks up at her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
A hellhound?!

MORGAN  
Something not seen in many a year.

DING! Michael pulls out his phone to check it. On the screen:  
REMINDER: SECRET SERVICE VISIT 8:00AM.

MICHAEL  
Shit. I have to go.

He starts towards the door.

MORGAN  
Are you going to take that rotting  
bird carcass soup off my counter?

MICHAEL  
Of course! I'm so sorry.

He hurries back to the counter and hastily closes the bag up.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Morgan!

He exits and Morgan looks back down at the illustration.

MORGAN  
And so it begins.

EXT. AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, DC - DAY

Black SUVs pull up and Secret Service agents pile out of them. JAYLA COLEMAN (30s), a tall striking African American woman exits the lead vehicle.

SUPER: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

Jayla's phone buzzes. ON THE SCREEN from Jefferson:

*Hey there, sis. Back in town for the new acquisition. Dinner?*

She ignores it and heads inside.

EXT. STREETS OF NW WASHINGTON DC

Michael zips down a road on a bike past commuters. At an intersection, something huge, four legged, and dark flashes past him out of the corner of his eye. He swerves- HONK!!!

A car swerves. Michael stops and looks in the direction the it went. The shape flickers, disappearing. He looks up and freezes. Directly in its path- the African American Museum.

INT. LARGE OLD BARN - DAY

A HOODED FIGURE stands in a dark and shadowed room in the center of a large pentagram painted in blood. Arms outstretched, he chants over a large dish filled with water.

HOODED FIGURE/O'DELL  
Ego praecipio signatus ut non  
videaris

The water ripples and an image forms: Michael speeding into a loading dock.

INT. DR. STONE'S OFFICE - DAY

JEREMIAH STONE (AA, 47) and Jayla are chatting in the well appointed curator's office when Michael flings opens the door and flies into the room and stops at the desk, panting.

JEREMIAH  
Dr. Wallace! I informed you  
yesterday your presence was not  
required for this meeting.

MICHAEL  
I know, but you have to-



He breaks off, spying an ornate and ancient letter opener. A cut crystal caps the end, held by a delicate golden wiring. Celtic scripts runs down the hilt to a blade added recently.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Where did you get this?

He snatches it off the desk, entranced.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Do you have any idea what this is?

JEREMIAH

It's a letter opener my wife bought in Ireland.

MICHAEL

It's a slaite gréine, a light bringer. Legend says it can-

JEREMIAH

(standing)

Stop!

(to Jayla)

If you'll excuse me for a moment.

She nods and he goes around the desk and drags Michael away.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

This is not the time for your magic theory nonsense.

MICHAEL

Jeremiah, please. I think-

JEREMIAH

Enough! I gave you a job here as a favor to your mentor against my better judgement. If you do not want me reconsidering that, you will drop this childish fantasy.

He snatches the letter opener back from Michael.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

You're excused.

MICHAEL

But-

JEREMIAH

That will be all, Dr. Wallace.

He turns and goes back to his desk.

JEREMIAH (CONT'D)

My deepest apologies for the interruption, Agent Campbell.

JAYLA

Nothing related to the Vice President's visit tomorrow I trust?

JEREMIAH

Not at all! Dr. Wallace is just prone to flights of fancy when excited about Celtic artifacts.

He looks pointedly at Michael, who slinks out of the office.

EXT. AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM - DAY

Michael pushes his bike out of the loading bay and climbs on.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - DAY

The SHADOWY CLOAKED FIGURE watches Michael from across the street. In POV his vision highlights the auras of everyone in sight. Michael's is brightest by far, thrumming with power.

INT. AA MUSEUM EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

VP STACY JOHNSON (40s), a classy statuesque African American woman moves along the exhibit wall examining the collection of African artifacts with Jeremiah, flanked by agents. A reporter stands before a camera as crew finish setting up.

INT. MICHAEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Michael sits watching the closed circuit TV feed of the exhibit. Dejected, he turns it off and slumps out the door.

INT. LARGE CONJURING SPACE - DAY

The Hooded Figure looks into the viewing pool, watching the Vice President. He raises his hands over the image, a LARGE GOLD SIGNET RING with a hexagram gleams on his finger.

HOODED FIGURE/O'DELL

Ianuam aperio et legionem arcesso,  
obiectum irae occido  
VOLUNTAS MEA FIET!

INT. AA MUSEUM EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

The air behind the cameras ripples with heat then splits as a portal tears open to reveal a hellish fiery landscape.

REPORTER

Did it suddenly get hot in here?

A legion of hairless pointy eared demons spill into the room. Taloned hands and feet at the end of gangly limbs scrape menacingly on the marble floor. The lead creature opens it's razor toothed mouth and GROWLS.

The reporters and camera crew scurry back and the secret service agents dash to the VP's side, forming a barrier.

VP JOHNSON

Oh my God! What are they?

The demons block the hallway exits as the coal black eyes of the lead demon fix on the VP and points. The heads of every demon lock on her and growl. Weapons go up.

JAYLA

Doesn't matter. They don't get past us. Understood?

INT. AA MUSEUM CORRIDOR - DAY, CONTINUOUS

Michael steps out of an elevator and hears gunfire just as the reporter appears around the corner running. The man looks over his shoulder and screams as a demon lands on him slashing. The reporter falls, his body still.

Michael stares as the demon looks up at him. It starts towards him, but then looks back as if called, and scampers away. Michael looks down at the reporter's mangled body, then dashes away down the hall.

INT. HEAD CURATOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Michael bursts in, snatching the letter opener off the desk.

INT. AA MUSEUM CORRIDOR - DAY

Michael races down the corridor and into the exhibit hall.

INT. AA MUSEUM EXHIBIT HALL - DAY, CONTINUOUS

Smearred blood covers the floor. Bodies everywhere. The VP and Jeremiah are behind a phalanx of agents holding off the demons. Jayla sees Michael stumble in, aims, and fires. BLAM! The head of a demon behind him explodes. He hurries to her.

MICHAEL

Thank you!

JAYLA

You're welcome.

JEREMIAH

What are you doing here?

MICHAEL

Trying to help!

JEREMIAH

Now is not the time.

MICHAEL

Bullets aren't going to stop this.  
Let me try!

JEREMIAH

But-

VP JOHNSON

Let him try.

Jayla and the VP exchange looks, then she nods at Michael and he moves in front of the line. The lead demon looks up from a body. Blood drips from its fangs. Michael holds up the letter opener and takes a deep breath.

MICHAEL

Éadrom!

Nothing. The demon grins and creeps towards him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Shit. Um...Solas na gréine!

Still nothing. Michael backs up slowly.

JAYLA

What's going on, Dr. Wallace?

MICHAEL

Gimme a minute! I've never done  
this before. SOLAS NA GRÉINE!

The crystal flickers. The lead demon stops and snarls. Its ears flatten. The reaction ripples through the others. Michael studies the Celtic script in desperation.

JAYLA

Doctor?!

MICHAEL

The writing's damaged. Just something about "the beginning."

JAYLA

The beginning of what?

MICHAEL

I don't-

He breaks off and looks down at the artifact.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It can't be that simple.

The demons charge as Michael lifts the artifact over his head and takes a deep breath. The demons leap!

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

BÍODH SOLAS ANN!

WHOOSH!!! Light EXPLODES from the crystal.

INT. AA MUSEUM EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

The demons SCREAM in pain as the brilliant wave throws them back, killing them and obliterating the portal. Michael drops his arm and turns to look at Jayla. He smiles.

MICHAEL

Let there be light.

The room spins and he collapses to the floor.

INT. AA MUSEUM EXHIBIT HALL - DAY

Sounds slowly return to Michael and he opens his eyes to see Jeremiah leaning over him in concern.

JEREMIAH

Are you with us, Michael?

MICHAEL

I guess I'm not dead.

JEREMIAH

Not unless the afterlife smells  
like roasted meat that crawled up a  
horse's ass and died.

He extends a hand and helps him to his feet. They look around  
the room. Agents are checking for survivors.

MICHAEL

The Vice president?

JEREMIAH

Safe. Looks like I owe you an  
apology.

Before Michael can respond, Jayla approaches with an agent.

JAYLA

Dr. Stone. If you'll go with Agent  
Hall, he'll take your statement.

JEREMIAH

Ah, yes. Of course.

He nods at Michael who has become too absorbed in studying a  
nearby demon carcass to notice, then departs with the agent.

MICHAEL

This doesn't make sense. They match  
the description of pignus demons.

JAYLA

(incredulous)  
I'm sorry. Demons?

MICHAEL

But according to my research  
they're always led by a higher  
order demon. There wasn't one.

An agent reports in to Jayla.

AGENT 1

The story is contained. The network  
uplink hadn't been established.

MICHAEL

You're suppressing this?

JAYLA

Allowing a breach of this nature to  
become public knowledge could  
endanger national security.

MICHAEL

But the public needs to be warned-

JAYLA

Of what exactly? That "demons"  
attacked the Vice President?

She nods to the agents and they flank him. It dawns on him  
it's not for his safety.

MICHAEL

You saw what happened!

JAYLA

What I saw was the Vice President  
being attacked by creatures of  
unknown origin.

MICHAEL

And I saved her life!

Jayla holds up the letter opener. The crystal is blackened  
and cracked, the gold mesh deformed as if melted.

JAYLA

With an explosive device of unknown  
origin designed to stop them.

MICHAEL

I...ah...I can see why that might  
look...not the best.

JAYLA

I'll need you to come with us. The  
Secret Service has questions, Dr.  
Wallace.

MICHAEL

Right. Um. Where are we going?

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Huge monitors with live feeds line one wall. Several rows of  
top of the line computers manned by agents face them.

SUPER: N.T.A.C. (National Threat Assessment Center)

Jayla parades the staring Michael through the huge room.

MICHAEL

Ok, question sort of answered.

Jayla opens an adjoining door and ushers Michael in.

INT. NTAC CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Michael sits fidgeting at the end of a conference table. Jayla stands nearby. ROBERT CAMPBELL (late 40s) a serious and imposing man in the regulation Washington suit enters carrying a classified folder.

CAMPBELL  
Agent Coleman. Welcome back.

JAYLA  
Good to see you again, Director.

CAMPBELL  
Dr. Wallace. Bob Campbell. Welcome to the NTAC.

He shakes Michael's hand and sits down at the table.

CAMPBELL (CONT'D)  
I'm sure you understand we need to follow up with a few questions regarding this morning.

MICHAEL  
Sure. I am a little confused. The NTAC? What do you do here exactly?

CAMPBELL  
Well, we're a multidisciplinary team of researchers and agents who support law enforcement, schools, government, anyone really, to combat the ever-evolving threat of targeted violence impacting the US.

MICHAEL  
Ah. Ok. That's a lot.

CAMPBELL  
It doesn't fit on a bumper sticker, but it's what we do.

MICHAEL  
So why am I here?

CAMPBELL  
You impressed the VP with your actions and apparent knowledge of what you were facing.

MICHAEL  
So I'm not under investigation?



CAMPBELL

We ran a full background check on you before you arrived. Impressive credentials by the way. I'm satisfied you are not involved.

MICHAEL

Then why am I here?

CAMPBELL

Over the last 18 months or so, we've begun to see an uptick in what we call Un-Explainable Phenomenon.

Campbell slides pictures from the folder across the table.

CAMPBELL (CONT'D)

A boy in Secaucus who could suddenly heal with a touch when wearing an family ring. Reports of a large bird in the south west that can generate lightening. Strange animal deaths in central Virginia.

Michael looks over the images.

CAMPBELL (CONT'D)

After your performance this morning I think you may be able to help us.

MICHAEL

I was right.

CAMPBELL

I'm sorry?

MICHAEL

My theory. I've always believed that magic used to be real but something happened to cut it off. I've been gathering evidence to prove it for years. When my colleagues found out I was barred from field work as related to mere paperwork. This is conclusive proof that magic is. Possibly for months. Today was just the latest example.

Campbell looks over at Jayla and back at Michael.

CAMPBELL

I need you to tell me everything  
about this theory of yours and what  
it is you think we might be facing.

EXT. A SUBURB IN MARYLAND - DAY

Black Secret Service SUVs pull up to a suburban home. Agents in tactical gear labeled SECRET SERVICE spill out. Jayla exits her vehicle and draws her gun.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Campbell watches the live feed as Michael is escorted over.

JAYLA (O.S.)

Approaching the house.

MICHAEL

What's going on?

CAMPBELL

We're moving on a lead based on  
your theory.

MICHAEL

What lead?! The data you showed me  
didn't contain anything remotely  
actionable!

Campbell waves him quiet.

CAMPBELL

We've got eyes and ears on, Agent  
Coleman. The no-knock is  
authorized. Proceed with caution.

On the screen Jayla and the Agents arrive at the front door.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

The front door crashes in and Jayla and her agents spill into the house. Shouts come from the back. Jayla hurries around the corner, gun drawn, and comes to a screeching halt.

In front of her are seven terrified adults in cos-play costumes, hands raised around a large dining room table covered with Dungeons & Dragons game paraphernalia.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Campbell grits his teeth in embarrassment watching as Jayla orders the agents out of the home and talks with the traumatized players. Michael just shakes his head.

INT. DIRECTOR CAMPBELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Campbell sits behind his desk and Michael on a couch to the side as Jayla comes barreling into the room.

JAYLA

So are we to terrify every nerd on the east coast until we find a culprit?

CAMPBELL

Clearly we need some refining on our data analysis. Dr. Wallace has a suggestion.

JAYLA

Well, please do enlighten us.

MICHAEL

The team here doesn't have the knowledge to separate the fantasy leads from the real thing.

JAYLA

Clearly.

MICHAEL

I have a friend I work with to locate unique, rare, and authentic artifacts. I believe she can help us.

JAYLA

And who is this miraculously skilled friend?

MICHAEL

You would know her by the name she goes by online.

JAYLA

And what is that?

MICHAEL

Astarte.

There's a beat of recognition and Jayla's eyes go wide.

JAYLA  
ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?!

MICHAEL  
(to CAMPBELL)  
Told you she'd hate it.

INT. FEDERAL PRISON FACILITY, DC - DAY

A barred gate slides open to admit Michael and Jayla.

JAYLA  
I can't believe he authorized this.

MICHAEL  
Director Campbell is keeping an  
open mind. Why can't you?

JAYLA  
I'm still not entirely convinced  
you're not crazy.

MICHAEL  
So the whole demon attack was what?  
Mass hallucination? Gas leak? PCP?

JAYLA  
Advanced holographic tech.  
Bioengineered animals.

MICHAEL  
It's like talking to a parent in  
Sunnydale.

JAYLA  
What?

MICHAEL  
Never mind. Look, when we get in  
there, just let me do the talking.

JAYLA  
No promises.

INT. PRISON HOLDING ROOM - DAY

Michael enters the stark interrogation room followed by Jayla. At a table sits a Palestinian-American woman, TALLY HAMDAN (20s). She smiles and leans back nonchalantly as if she's not shackled to the floor and dressed in prison grey.

TALLY

Michael! Buddy! So good to see you!  
I'd give you a hug, but apparently  
I'm super dangerous.

Michael takes the chair opposite Tally at the table.

MICHAEL

Tally. You're in a good mood, all  
things considered.

TALLY

They'd need to crack my encryption,  
and the Bureau couldn't hack it's  
way out of a paper bag on fire.  
Does the suit speak?

JAYLA

Agent Coleman.

MICHAEL

She's head of the Vice President's  
detail.

TALLY

Am I supposed to be impressed?

Jayla stares her down, but doesn't take the bait.

MICHAEL

Play nice. I need your help, Tally.  
Have you seen the news lately?

TALLY

Don't exactly get a lot of access  
to technology in here. Something  
about my diabolical genius.

JAYLA

Your last document dump compromised  
national security!

TALLY

National Security? So France got  
pissy over what the "mean girl" USA  
says about them behind closed  
doors. Who cares?

MICHAEL

Jayla. Not helping.  
(to Tally)  
The Vice President was attacked.

TALLY

And this is my problem, why?

JAYLA

You smarmy, entitled, piece of-

MICHAEL

Jayla!

Jayla backs off and Tally smirks at her.

TALLY

Why are you here, Michael?

MICHAEL

I told you, the VP was attacked.

TALLY

That explains her. Why are you, the archeologist, here? What? Was she attacked by ancient pottery?

MICHAEL

It's not all pottery.

TALLY

It's a lot of pottery.

MICHAEL

She was attacked by demons, Tally.

TALLY

Really? Now that is interesting.

MICHAEL

We think-

JAYLA

We?

MICHAEL

I think, that magic is back.

TALLY

Huh. So you came to me to help because Miss Rod Up Her Ass here doesn't buy your theory and even if she did, the Secret Service boys are utterly inept in this field.

MICHAEL

Basically...yes.

TALLY  
Hmmm...tempting...but, no.

JAYLA  
See. A waste of time!

MICHAEL  
Jayla! Tally, please.

TALLY  
I like you, Michael, I really do.  
But the system I've been fighting  
asking me for help? Me. An open  
government socialist woman of color  
after all their secrets.

(to Jayla)  
I hope you at least can appreciate  
the deep irony in that.

(to Michael)  
I'm content to watch it burn.

JAYLA  
Come on, Michael. We're done here.

She bangs on the door and storms out when it opens.

TALLY  
Happy to be of help!

Michael stands resigned, and follows her out.

INT. CAMPBELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Campbell sits behind his desk taking in the report from  
Jayla. Michael sits on the couch looking over some papers.

JAYLA  
Any other brilliant ideas?

MICHAEL  
There is another source I can reach  
out to. But these suggestions from  
your researchers? Practically  
worthless.

JAYLA  
What did you expect from research  
on magic users with a grudge.

MICHAEL  
Better than this! I just really  
thought she'd help.

JAYLA

A selfish person like that? Please.

MICHAEL

She lost her sister in the West  
Bank two years ago, so maybe cut  
her some slack.

Red lights start flashing in the monitor room.

CAMPBELL

What now?

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Campbell bounds down the stairs from his office, Michael and Jayla behind him. An agent hands him a headset.

CAMPBELL

Talk to me. What have we got?

AGENT 1

Reports of a mass casualty incident  
at The Hamilton. Metro PD is  
responding.

CAMPBELL

What kind of incident?

AGENT 2

Reports sound a lot like the attack  
on the VP, sir.

JAYLA

Do we have any protectees at risk?

AGENT 1

No, Ma'am. But Senator Luis  
Rodrigues and several members of  
the Congressional Hispanic Caucus  
are present.

CAMPBELL

Put it on the main screen.

An agent's POV pops onto the screen as they leap out of their SUV. Metro PD Cops are present directing the patrons as they come running out of the building. Agents head in, guns drawn.



INT. HAMILTON RESTAURANT, LOWER LEVEL - NIGHT

Other agents and Metro PD are in view and they approach the large open double doors leading into the event space. They stop in the threshold, guns raised, almost unbelieving.

INT. HAMILTON EVENT SPACE - NIGHT

All around the large room tables are overturned and bloodied bodies lay bleeding, torn to shreds. Demons exit through the open portal. The last one looks back and smiles, razor sharp teeth dripping with blood, then exits. The portal snaps shut.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is eerily quiet. Agents stare unbelieving.

CAMPBELL

Do we have eyes on the Senator?

On the screen agents move through the room, checking. An agent turns a man's body over. His chest is ripped open.

FIELD AGENT (V.O.)

He's dead sir.

Silence.

CAMPBELL

See if you can find the other congressional members.

FIELD AGENT (V.O.)

Yes, sir.

CAMPBELL

DAMMIT!!!

Campbell yanks his headset off and throws it on a desk.

INT. HAMILTON EVENT SPACE - NIGHT

Jayla looks over the carnage of the attack as Michael kneels over the body of a dead woman.

JAYLA

What can you tell me, Dr. Wallace?

MICHAEL

Well, so far only that this woman is dead. Presumably from severe lacerations and blood loss.

JAYLA

That's not helpful.

MICHAEL

I'm an archeologist, not a medical examiner. I examine remains centuries dead! Not this.

JAYLA

You're the expert. If you can't help, what good are you to me?

He opens his mouth to speak, but-

JAYLA (CONT'D)

Never mind. Stay here and don't leave this spot until I send for you.

Jayla stalks off leaving Michael alone. He looks around in frustration and spots something. He kneels down and sees droplets of the black tar. He looks over to see Jayla talking to an agent, goes to call out but then reconsiders.

Standing, he follows the trail of tar through the ballroom towards a swinging door used by the restaurant staff.

FAR SIDE OF THE ROOM

Jayla discusses the scene with AGENT MARTINEZ (20s, Hispanic) and sees Michael heading through the door.

JAYLA (CONT'D)

I told him to stay in sight. Martinez, go make sure he doesn't lock himself in a closet or something.

MARTINEZ

Yes, ma'am.

She heads after him.

INT. HAMILTON SERVICE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Michael slowly comes through the door, following the ever growing trail. He comes across a the dead body of a Hispanic server.

It's mangled, torn, and showing the same signs of decomposition as the hawk. Past it are more similar dead bodies. He kneels to examine the first as Martinez comes through the door behind him.

MARTINEZ

Dr. Wallace, Agent Coleman sent me after- ¡Dios mío!

(into her comms)

This is Martinez. We've got more dead in the service hallway.

(to Michael)

Dr. Wallace, we need to secure this area.

MICHAEL

These are the only dead outside the main ballroom. Why?

MARTINEZ

I really need to get you-

In the air before her the hellhound shimmers into view and growls at her. She barely gets out a scream before it pounces, ripping her throat out. Micheal jumps to his feet.

The hellhound looks up and bares its bloodied teeth, growling at him as it inches closer.

BLAM!!!

A bullet slams into the hellhound. Its head jerks around to see Jayla standing in the doorway. It glares at her, growls, then shimmers out and disappears. She stands there for a beat then rushes to the body of Agent Martinez.

JAYLA

Dammit! I told you to stay put!

(in her comms)

This is Coleman. Agent down in the service hallway. Repeat, agent down.

MICHAEL

I just...I was following-

Medics burst into the hallway and surround the body of Martinez. One looks up at Jayla, head shaking. She storms back through the door to the ballroom, Michael on her heels.

INT. HAMILTON EVENT SPACE - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Jayla thunders back into the room, Michael close behind.

MICHAEL

Jayla, I'm sorry. I saw a clue and-

JAYLA

It's Agent Coleman, and as long as you are here, you are part of a team. You don't act without thinking! That is how you get people killed!

MICHAEL

I thought I might find something-

JAYLA

And did you?! Did you find something worth that agent's life?

A beat of silence as the weight of it lands on him.

MICHAEL

No. Nothing.

He looks across the room at the door as the body of Martinez is being wheeled out, covered by a sheet.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It just doesn't make sense.

JAYLA

None of this makes sense.

MICHAEL

No, I mean, those were the only people outside of the room that were killed, right?

JAYLA

As far as we can tell, yes.

MICHAEL

So why them? And why did it attack her immediately instead of me? What was it about her, that-

Something clicks in his head. He starts moving through the room, looking at bodies. He picks up a program.

JAYLA

What? What is it?

MICHAEL

What was this event for?

JAYLA

A fundraiser for the arts.

MICHAEL

Letras Foundation Gala.

JAYLA

Yes. It's a fund that supports hispanic arts and arts education.

MICHAEL

Think about it. An attack on the first black woman elected president-

JAYLA

And now on a gathering of some of the most influential Hispanic people in the country.

MICHAEL

And the hellhound went right for a Martinez after killing the hispanic wait staff.

JAYLA

We're looking for a white nationalist.

INT. PRISON HOLDING ROOM - DAY

Tally sits at the table and Michael enters holding an iPad.

TALLY

Back so soon? Where's your handler?

He opens the iPad and shows her video from the VP attack.

TALLY (CONT'D)

Impressive. But why am I interested in the latest CGI tech?

MICHAEL

It's the attack on the VP, not CGI. It's real. I know, I was there.

She grabs the device to watch. It flashes white.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I ended it with a Celtic artifact.

She tries to hand the iPad back.

TALLY  
Ok, Indiana Jones.

MICHAEL  
Please, you know I'm way more Laura  
Croft.

The screen flicks to the carnage at the Hamilton. She gasps.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
These folks were not so lucky. This  
is what I'm up against, Tally.

She looks up at him.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Someone is targeting minority  
members of the US government. Are  
you really content to sit on the  
sidelines while they destroy what  
little progress we've made?

He leans in to speak quietly.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Is that what your sister would  
want?

TALLY  
Low blow, Michael.

He waits. Tally leans back and takes a breath.

TALLY (CONT'D)  
Fine. I'll help.

MICHAEL  
Thank you.

He goes to the door and bangs. It opens.

TALLY  
I'm not done! I'll need access to  
my equipment and my accounts  
unfrozen. And a full pardon for  
crimes I "may" have committed.

MICHAEL  
Done.

TALLY  
Wait, really?

MICHAEL

You think I'd walk in here with  
just the emotional appeal?

He exits, leaving behind a shocked Tally.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Tally types furiously at a station in her normal attire,  
cyber punk/hipster. AGENT JOSH TAYLOR (20s), a nerdy tech  
guy, looms over her, as Jayla, Michael, and Campbell observe.

JOSH

Now why to you need to connect to-

Tally stops him with a finger to his lips.

TALLY

Shhhhhhh. Do I tell you how to do  
your job?

She goes back to working.

JOSH

But you need permission-

TALLY

Permission? That's cute.

JOSH

Sir, I'm very uncomfortable giving  
her this level of access.

CAMPBELL

Let her do her thing, Agent Taylor.

TALLY

Ok, I'm hooked into the system and  
I'm running my algorithms based on  
Michael's research.

JAYLA

How long do we expect this to take?

TALLY

Done.

JAYLA

What?

MICHAEL

Told you. What have you got?

TALLY

Narrowed it down to a few hundred white supremacists with connections to the occult.

JAYLA

Oh, that's all?

MICHAEL

It's more than we had.

TALLY

That's not the interesting part. Ever heard of a venato?

MICHAEL

I've read about them.

JAYLA

Venato?

MICHAEL

A device for tracking demons created by early Christian mystics in the 2nd century. Rumor has it the Vatican holds the only remaining two.

TALLY

There's one in Northern Virginia.

MICHAEL

Where?

TALLY

The private collection of Edward Aster.

MICHAEL

Edward Aster? The Edward Aster? CEO of Sitara Industries?

JAYLA

That complicates things.

CAMPBELL

I'm assuming you want this device?

MICHAEL

Yes, absolutely.

Campbell looks at Jayla as if she knows what she has to do.



JAYLA

Really?

CAMPBELL

It's too fraught politically for the White House. You know that.

JAYLA

Dammit!

She pulls out her phone and starts dialing.

JAYLA (CONT'D)

Worst. Day. Ever.

MICHAEL

What? Who is she calling?

JAYLA

My brother.

INT. JEFFERSON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jayla enters a huge modern office. JEFFERSON COLEMAN (30s), an African American man in relaxed upscale business couture, comes around his large glass desk to greet her.

JEFFERSON

La-La! Well look at you! Two years of pestering by text paid off!

He hugs her and kisses her on the cheek.

JAYLA

Hello, Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

Get you anything? Scotch?

JAYLA

I'm on duty.

JEFFERSON

I hope you don't mind if I do. It's not every day you acquire a major sports franchise and your big sister comes to visit.

He moves to a well stocked wet bar.

JAYLA

Yes. I saw the deal for the Commanders had closed.

He pours scotch into a rocks glass from a matching decanter.

JEFFERSON

This was supposed to be you, you know. I still don't understand why you walked away. Not that I'm complaining.

JAYLA

I had other priorities.

JEFFERSON

Really, La-La?

JAYLA

I hate that nickname and I didn't come here to argue, Jefferson.

He saunters over to a large overstuffed white leather couch and plops down, taking a sip of scotch.

JEFFERSON

Whatevs. So, what did you come here for?

JAYLA

I need a favor. An introduction.

JEFFERSON

To whom?

JAYLA

Edward Aster.

JEFFERSON

Really?

Jayla sits in the chair opposite him.

JAYLA

Politically it's too messy to go through my channels and I need to keep this away from the Washington rumor mill. It's sensitive.

JEFFERSON

You mean classified. Does it have anything to do with the recent attack at the Letras Gala?

JAYLA

How do you- Never mind. Will you set it up?

Jefferson sips his scotch. The moment stretches.

JEFFERSON

Yes.

JAYLA

Thank you, Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

Not so fast. You said favor. That implies I get something in return.

JAYLA

What.

JEFFERSON

Thanksgiving.

JAYLA

Absolutely not!

JEFFERSON

You want my help that's my price. Come sit at the same dinner table with Mom and Dad.

JAYLA

After what they did?!

JEFFERSON

They'll behave. You know mom loves a perfect holiday. Come on, La-La. Do it for me.

JAYLA

Why are you like this?

JEFFERSON

I'm the younger brother. It's in the job description.

JAYLA

Ugh! Fine! Fine. But just the dinner. I'm not staying.

JEFFERSON

Good. I'll let you know when the meet with Aster is set.

JAYLA

Thank you.

She gets up and heads to the door, Jefferson calls after her.

JEFFERSON

You're gonna love it. It's in the Catskills this year. Mom wanted mountain views.

The doors open and as she exits-

JAYLA

(under her breath)  
Hopefully near a cliff I can jump off of.

INT. THE RAVEN'S FIELD BOOKSTORE - DAY

The door dings as Michael enters followed by two sunglasses wearing agents. Morgan looks up from behind the counter.

MORGAN

Back so soon? And with arm candy!

He turns to the agents.

MICHAEL

I'll be right at the counter. Try not to linger like you're about to neuralyze someone.

The agents look at each other in confusion.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Never mind.

He heads to the counter as they awkwardly pretend to browse.

MORGAN

Interesting company you're keeping.

MICHAEL

Long story. I need your opinion.

He pulls out a photo from his bag of the Smithsonian attack aftermath and puts it in front of her.

MORGAN

Crime scene photos? You do know the way to my heart.

MICHAEL

What if I told you this was done by pignus demons but without a higher order demon leading them?

MORGAN

Not possible. Pignus require a demon of the fifth hierarchy or higher or they run wild.

MICHAEL

That's what I thought. But these were highly organized and aimed at a specific target.

MORGAN

A target? You saw them?

Michael pulls out a picture of a badly burned demon.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Extraordinary. What killed them?

MICHAEL

I used a slaite gréine.

MORGAN

Clever. Not many artifacts can stop creatures from different pantheons.

MICHAEL

There have been two highly organized attacks so far. I need to figure out how they're happening.

She looks down at the picture again and notices something.

MORGAN

That's odd. You see these lines on the demons forehead?

She grabs a sharpie from next to her register and fills in the lines on the photo. When she's done its a clear hexagram.

MICHAEL

How did I not see that?

MORGAN

They only appear after death.

MICHAEL

What causes it?

MORGAN

You need to brush up on your early Jewish mysticism. This demon was controlled by the Ring of Solomon.

MICHAEL

Of course!

MORGAN

You get the ring and you can order  
the demons back to hell.

MICHAEL

Thank you. Again!

He packs up the pictures and heads for the door.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Come on guys. Time to head back.

He stops as one of the agents lingers near the counter. The agent sheepishly puts a book on the counter titled "The Pagan Journey" and a rose quartz crystal.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Really?

MORGAN

Come now, Michael. You wouldn't  
begrudge me a sale would you?

MICHAEL

(smiling)

Of course not. We'll be in the car.

He and the other agent exit.

MORGAN

Welcome to the path, son.

She pats his hand and smiles at him warmly.

EXT. ASTER'S HOME, MCLEAN, VA - DAY

A black suburban pulls up to a palatial home with a vaguely European castle vibe. As Jayla and Michael exit the vehicle, Michael regards a large fountain in the circular driveway.

MICHAEL

Odd architecture choice. Most here  
go with colonial style.

JAYLA

He's a Brit with money. They have a  
thing for castles.

MICHAEL

Or an aversion to the American  
colonial period.

They approach the door and ring the bell.

INT. ASTOR'S LIBRARY - DAY

Michael and Jayla enter a huge room lined with with books,  
artifacts, and historical items from every period and  
culture. Pedestals cover the room with items on display.

MICHAEL

This...this is extraordinary.

JAYLA

I'll take your word for it.

He wanders the room pointing out various things.

MICHAEL

A first edition Don Quixote de La  
Mancha. Ptolemy's Geographia  
Cosmographia!

He stares at the ancient map on the wall, then the sword  
displayed on the pedestal beneath it catches his eye.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It can't be...

He reaches for it.

EDWARD (O.C.)

Durendal.

Michael whirls around. Standing in the doorway in exquisite  
relaxed chic is EDWARD ASTER (30s). Handsome and oozing  
charisma, the British man strides across the room to them.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Sword of Roland, paladin of  
Charlemagne.

Michael reaches out then hesitates.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Go ahead, it won't cut stone but  
it's perfectly safe to hold.

He picks it up and looks at it with amazement.

MICHAEL

It was supposed to be lost.

EDWARD

My team unearthed it on a dig in the Pyrenees. Glorious isn't it.

JAYLA

Mr. Aster, thank you for seeing us.

EDWARD

And you must be Agent Coleman. I'm interested to hear why Jefferson insisted I meet with his sister.

Michael gingerly puts the sword back in it's resting place.

MICHAEL

We understand you have a venato?

EDWARD

In fact I do. Though much like the sword it's more mystical qualities are not as advertised.

JAYLA

Yes, well, we'd like to borrow it?

EDWARD

Whatever for?

MICHAEL

We think-

JAYLA

I'm afraid that's classified.

EDWARD

Really? Curiouser and curiouser. Well, I suppose for a Coleman.

He walks over to the other side of the room and takes an ornate wooden box off of a shelf behind a large oak desk.

EDWARD (CONT'D)

Here you are. Though what you'd want with it is beyond me.

JAYLA

Thank you, Mr. Aster.

EDWARD

Edward, please! And tell your brother I'm always happy to help.



JAYLA  
I will. Well, we'd better be going.  
Dr. Wallace?

He's frozen, staring at a small ornate metal box on the desk.

MICHAEL  
Where did you get that?

EDWARD  
That? From an estate sale years ago. Cost me a lot of effort, though I really shouldn't have bothered.

MICHAEL  
It looks...familiar.

EDWARD  
Really? I've had it for ages.

Michael continues to stare, entranced.

MICHAEL  
But, how-

JAYLA  
We've really imposed on you enough.

She grabs Michael's arm and ushers him out of the room.

EDWARD  
Do come back anytime.

EXT. ASTER'S HOME - WOODS - DAY

The SHADOWY CLOAKED FIGURE watches from the trees as Jayla manhandles Michael out of the house and into the SUV. He slips away from the house as the vehicle pulls away.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Michael watches Tally and a group of tech people fuss over the VENATO, which looks like a cross between a sextant and a compass. Jayla enters and walks over to him.

JAYLA  
Anything yet.

MICHAEL  
Not since she shooed me away.

JAYLA  
What are they doing?

MICHAEL  
Whatever she tells them to.

TALLY  
Ok, I think we're ready. I've  
jacked this puppy into the threat  
tracking system and calibrated the  
exotic energy output-

JAYLA  
In english, please.

A map of the US appears on the main monitor and the screen  
ripples with magical energy. A red dot appears in Virginia.

TALLY  
Your demons are coming from there.

MICHAEL  
You created a demon GPS?! Tally,  
you're a genius!

TALLY  
I know.

JAYLA  
How sure are you about this?

TALLY  
The energy signatures match both  
attack sites. Wanna check my work?

JAYLA  
That's a large area to cover.

TALLY  
Please. Gimme a few hours and I'll  
tell you what their heart rate is.  
Assuming they have hearts.

JAYLA  
Get on it. Dr. Wallace, get started  
on how you'll stop this guy.

She heads past a shocked Michael to Campbell's office.

TALLY  
You? In the field? Ok.

EXT. ALBEMARLE COUNTY, WOODS - NIGHT

The sun has just set in the heavily forested rural area.

SUPER: ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jayla sneaks through the trees, Michael close behind her. Agents in tactical gear move through with them.

JAYLA  
Anything more specific, Astarte?

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Tally monitors them on a satellite image of the woods.

TALLY  
So you do know my name. Target is  
50 yards west, an abandoned  
farmhouse.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jayla motions a stop at the edge of the clearing.

JAYLA  
Anything on the owner?

TALLY (O.S.)  
Nothing definitive. A lot of the  
info for that area is fragmented or  
not online yet. I'll keep checking.

JAYLA  
How about enemy numbers?

TALLY (O.S.)  
Still calibrating. For now, one  
heat signature.

JAYLA  
How long do you need?

TALLY (O.S.)  
Couple minutes?

JAYLA

We'll hold then. I've lost too many agents to this bastard, I want to know precisely what we're up against before we move in.

INT. BARN, LARGE CONJURING SPACE - NIGHT

The hooded figure stands over the pedestal, hands outstretched, muttering. Demons stream out of an open portal.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jayla checks her weapon. Michael pulls out his necklace and rubs it. He looks over at Jayla and takes a deep breath.

MICHAEL

Listen. I want to apologize. About Martinez. I've been the lone voice for so long, I'm bad at relying on other people.

JAYLA

Thank you for that.

He nods and she notices him rubbing the medallion.

JAYLA (CONT'D)

What's the deal there?

MICHAEL

What?

JAYLA

The necklace.

MICHAEL

Oh, this? It's nothing.

TALLY (O.S.)

It's not nothing.

MICHAEL

Mind your business, Tally! Aren't you supposed to be calibrating?

TALLY (O.S.)

I'm multitasking. And it's Astarte when I'm working. Tell her.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

The SHADOWY CLOAKED FIGURE observes them from the darkness. He sees the necklace and silently pulls his sword.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

MICHAEL

My grandfather gave this to me when I was eight. It's thousands of years old. He told me our family had been protecting a secret about magic for centuries. The next morning they found him dead.

JAYLA

This is more than a theory for you.

MICHAEL

Yes. I believe he was murdered. With magic. I've spent my whole life trying to prove it.

Jayla rests her hand his arm.

JAYLA

I get it. An you're not the only one who had to learn how to do the team thing.

MICHAEL

You?

JAYLA

You're surprised? Stubbornness runs in my family. Took a lot of hard knocks in the marines to unlearn that. And to consider the opinions of others, even the more fanciful ones.

She looks at Michael and he nods, a slight grin at the small move towards each other.

TALLY (O.S.)

Ok, I'm set. Recalibration still only shows one figure in the barn.

JAYLA

Let's move.

They creep slowly across the moonlit open field.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Tally clicks away on the console.

TALLY

See, boys! That's how you- FUCK!!!  
Who didn't loop in the processors  
for the photo-dyne relay...

She trails off as red dots appear on the screen around the agents. A dozen. Two dozen. Hundreds. Tally stands in horror.

TALLY (CONT'D)

Oh, no...Guys! Get out of there!!!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jayla, Michael, and the team are halfway across the field when all around them demons burst from the tree line.

JAYLA

OPEN FIRE!!!

Agents push Michael behind them to form engage the demons and he's knocked down. Sitting up, he stops in shock.

The Shadowy Cloaked Figure charges out of the woods directly at him sword in hand. The cloak is yanked off to reveal ERYX (20s) a huge muscly dark haired man in Greek armor.

MICHAEL

What the fuck?!

Yards away, Jayla sees what's about to happen. She's too far.

JAYLA

Dr. Wallace!

The warrior leaps, sword up. Michael throws up his hands.

JAYLA (CONT'D)

MICHAEL!!!

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Eryx hurtles past Michael and slices in half the hellhound shimmering into view nearly on top of him.

Without breaking his momentum, he lays into the charging horde, churning through them. The demons pull back and Eryx takes a stance in front of the team to face them.

JAYLA  
Who the fuck is that?

MICHAEL  
I have no idea, but he seems to be  
on our side.

ERYX  
(to Michael/ancient Greek)  
*Why do you not protect yourself?*

JAYLA  
What is he saying?

MICHAEL  
I'm not sure.

GRARRRRG!!! From the surrounding woods a fresh round of  
demons rush out of the trees. Eryx calls to Michael.

ERYX  
*Protect yourself, Magos.*

MICHAEL  
I don't understand.

The demons charge again. Eryx meets them and the agents open  
fire. He hollers at Michael between swings of his sword.

ERYX  
*Aegis! AEGIS!!!*

He points at his neck between swings, dispatching demon after  
demon, but they keep coming. Jayla and her agents are pushed  
back. Michael looks down at his medallion.

MICHAEL  
I don't-

A demon breaks the line and leaps at him. In defense he  
throws up his arms and shouts.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
AEGIS!

The air around him ripples. The demon lands on him.

SKEEEEEAAAAA!!!

The demon shrieks in pain and flashes into dust. The action  
in the field halts as everyone looks at Michael, shimmering  
in the moonlight. The demons react in fear and dash back into  
the woods. The agents relax and Eryx lowers his sword.

JAYLA

You couldn't have done that sooner?

MICHAEL

I didn't know I could.

Jayla raises her gun as Eryx approaches, but Michael waves her off. He kneels in front of Michael, sword held out flat.

ERYX

*To you, Great Magos, I pledge my  
sword and my life, from now until  
my last breath.*

JAYLA

Michael, what's going on?

MICHAEL

I think he's pledging his sword to me. Sounds like a form of ancient Greek, but the dialect is strange.

Eryx looks at Jayla then Michael, and stands, sheathing his sword. He raises his hand to Michael's head. Jayla grabs it.

JAYLA

Whoa! Slow down there, Hercules.

Michael removes her hand, not breaking his gaze with Eryx.

MICHAEL

It's ok. He doesn't mean any harm.

He nods at Eryx, who cups his head gently with his hand.

ERYX

*Katalavainoun.*

Michael and Eryx both gasp as magic runs through them.

MICHAEL

Wow! That was...wow...

ERYX

(Greek accent)  
Do you understand me now?

MICHAEL

I do.

They share a lingering look before-



JAYLA

Would someone please explain to me what's going on?

ERYX

Apologies, Captain. I am Eryx of Thebes. I needed to acquire your language before we could speak.

JAYLA

And you just happened by? Wandering the forests of rural Virginia?

ERYX

The portal which freed me from the dimension I was trapped in brought me to this strange land days ago. I was tracking the hellhound when it led me to you.

MICHAEL

Days? The language you were speaking. How long were you trapped?

ERYX

I am unsure. The world is much changed. When I was trapped Constantine was Emperor of Rome. Who rules there now?

MICHAEL

Oh, my gods-

JAYLA

This is all very fascinating, but we still have a bad guy to catch.  
(into comms)  
Astarte, sit rep!

ERYX

You converse with a goddess?

TALLY (O.S.)

Oh, I like him.

MICHAEL

No, though she does think of herself as one.

JAYLA

The readings!

TALLY (O.S.)  
One human and just over a couple  
dozen demons in the barn.

JAYLA  
We can handle that. You-  
(pointing at Eryx)  
Stay put until we get back.

MICHAEL  
I really think he should come.  
Unless you've got another hot Greek  
warrior with an expertise in demon  
fighting in reserve.

JAYLA  
Hot?

Michael blinks hard not realizing he said that.

JAYLA (CONT'D)  
Fine. But you follow my orders.

ERYX  
Yes, Captain.

JAYLA  
It's Agent. Now let's go.

INT. BARN, LARGE CONJURING SPACE - NIGHT

The Hooded Figure is standing over the pedestal, muttering  
before the portal. Demons cluster in front of him. WHAM! The  
doors burst open and Eryx barrels in sword swinging.

The hooded man continues conjuring and several more demons  
come through the portal. He amps up the intensity until-

CLICK!

Jayla is standing next to him, gun against his head. He cuts  
off in mid chant. Michael appears at his side, hand  
outstretched. Behind, the open window they snuck in.

MICHAEL  
The ring please.

Jayla yanks off the hood revealing CONNER O'DELL (30s). The  
scruffy white man looks desperately from Jayla to Michael.

JAYLA  
The ring, or I'll blow your head  
off and take it from your corpse.

He slowly slips the ring off his finger. Michael puts it on and turns to the demons, hands outstretched.

MICHAEL

Exi hinc!!!

The demons freeze, then turn and dash back through the portal, which swirls shut behind them.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

O'Dell is cuffed escorted to a waiting van. Jayla, Michael, and Eryx glare at the departing conjurer.

TALLY (O.S.)

Facial rec says he's Conner O'Dell.  
White nationalist, Christo-facist,  
Incel, all the alt-right hits.

MICHAEL

Anything on how he might have ended  
up with the ring?

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Tally sits at her main console in front of the main display.

TALLY

No. There's nothing that suggests  
he'd know what it was, much less  
how to use it. He barely managed to  
finish a GED.

JAYLA (O.S.)

Anything new on the barn?

TALLY

Yes. Last owner of record was  
Exeter Holdings, but that went  
belly up in the housing crash. No  
record of who holds it now.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Jayla reacts as if she's made a connection.

MICHAEL

Does that mean something to you?

She glares at O'Dell and marches over, Michael on her heels.

JAYLA

Where did you get the ring? Who told you to use this barn?

He spits on the ground in front of her, and Michael lunges.

JAYLA (CONT'D)

Stop! He's not worth it. Besides, he'll talk, once he finds out how popular a pretty white boy like him is in federal prison.

O'Dell's eyes go wide as he's shoved into the the van.

TALLY (O.S.)

I might actually be starting to like you.

INT. NTAC CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Campbell sits at a table opposite Jayla, Tally, and Michael.

TALLY

And as far as I can tell, it all began and ended with O'Dell.

CAMPBELL

Well done everyone. The President and the VP are both satisfied the threat has been contained.

TALLY

So we're all free to go?

CAMPBELL

That's up to you. We agreed to cut you loose after this mission.

TALLY

Excellent!

She gets up to leave.

CAMPBELL

However! There's another option I'd like for you to consider.

She sighs and plops back down in the chair.

MICHAEL

What other option?

CAMPBELL

Given the rapid rise of UEPs, the President agrees with Dr. Wallace's assessment that magic has returned.

MICHAEL

What?

CAMPBELL

He's authorized a new secret unit here in the NTAC to deal with these magical threats and he wants you three to be the first members of the AEGIS Division.

MICHAEL

Ah... Teams aren't really my thing.

CAMPBELL

You are free to decline, of course, but this request-

Shouting is heard from outside the room.

CAMPBELL (CONT'D)

What the hell?

He's out the door as the other three follow him.

INT. NTAC CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The four of them exit the conference room and see Eryx, coming towards them, tossing agents off of him like rag dolls as they attempt to stop him.

MICHAEL

Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Everyone stop!  
Eryx, what are you doing?

The agents back off and disperse at a signal from Campbell and Eryx returns to a serene pose.

ERYX

Apologies, Michael Wallace, but these people refused to take me to you and I had to insist.

MICHAEL

Why?

ERYX

My sword and life is sworn to you.  
My duty is to remain by your side.

TALLY

Sexy and not afraid of commitment?  
Where do I get one?

MICHAEL

You're not helping.  
(to CAMPBELL)  
What happens to him?

CAMPBELL

Officially he doesn't exist.  
Obviously he's dangerous, so our  
thinking is protective custody.

MICHAEL

He's a 2000 year old Greek warrior  
with magic knowledge and experience  
I can't begin to quantify. Make HIM  
part of this AEGIS division!

ERYX

My sword is pledged to you, Michael  
Wallace, not to them, no matter the  
nobility of their cause.

Michael looks at him and back at Campbell. Torn. Finally-

MICHAEL

Fine! But we're a package deal. You  
want me, you gotta take him.

CAMPBELL

Agreed. He'll be a real asset in  
your secondary mission.

MICHAEL

Which is?

CAMPBELL

Determining why magic is back and  
who or what is responsible.

TALLY

Research! Right up our alley.

MICHAEL

YOU'RE staying?

TALLY

(to CAMPBELL)  
You'll let me do things my way?

CAMPBELL  
 AEGIS has been given broad  
 discretionary-

TALLY  
 Then absolutely! Someone's gotta  
 watch your back  
 (whispered to Michael)  
 ...instead of your ass.

She nods at Eryx before heading to her console. Michael looks  
 at her in shock before seeing Eryx has overheard.

MICHAEL  
 Sorry about her. She has no filter.

ERYX  
 As you say. She is right, however.  
 It is a nice ass.

JAYLA  
 Our first priority should be to  
 question O'Dell. He was getting  
 help or instruction from someone.

CAMPBELL  
 Our?

JAYLA  
 It was a direct request from the  
 White House. I don't make a habit  
 of refusing those.

CAMPBELL  
 Understood. Set up a-

TALLY  
 Uh, anyone know what an incubus is?

MICHAEL  
 Yes, why?

TALLY  
 We've got one on the Georgetown  
 campus.

CAMPBELL  
 Looks like you've got your first  
 mission. O'Dell will have to wait.  
 Someone find something less  
 conspicuous for Eryx to wear.

As the team heads out, Tally pulls out her phone and  
 surreptitiously texts someone: *I'm in.*

INT. VPOTUS HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

VP Johnson sits at her desk reading as Jayla strides in.

JAYLA  
I don't like this.

VP JOHNSON  
We have no choice. We don't know  
who else to trust. You're sure  
O'Dell was part of the Ilios.

JAYLA  
Yes.

VP JOHNSON  
15 years and now this. There are  
days I wish you'd never told me.

JAYLA  
I know. But if the Ilios is  
connected to this new threat-

VP JOHNSON  
What we're doing just got a lot  
more dangerous.

INT. FEDERAL PRISON CELL - NIGHT

O'Dell is alone in his prison cell, lying on his bed lit by moonlight from a small window. A shadow on the wall ripples and out steps a black clad figure. O'Dell jerks up in fear until he recognizes them.

O'DELL  
Master!

He falls to his knees before the figure.

O'DELL (CONT'D)  
I knew you would come for me!

The sound of sword being drawn. Fear.

O'DELL (CONT'D)  
No! Please! I did as you said! I  
ain't told them nothing! Please!

The sword swings. O'Dell's head hits the floor, followed by his body. The figure silently slips back into the shadow as blood pools on the floor glistening in the moonlight.

FADE OUT.