

SERPENT'S FLOCK

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FADE IN

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - NIGHT

PASTOR DAVID HAYES (mid-late 50s) walks through the woods with a flashlight. He stops at an old well.

Pastor Hayes takes a signed photograph of Carlson Wright out of his pocket and drops it into the well.

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Hayes sits at his desk, with a Bible closed. He flips to a random page and saves it with a bookmark.

There is a knock at the door. Pastor Hayes doesn't respond. The door opens; it is DANA GREENE (20s), his assistant. Dana enters and closes the door behind her.

DANA

Yes?

PASTOR HAYES

I'm waiting for a phone call. As soon as it comes, we're going for a walk.

INT. FARAH'S APARTMENT, - SAME

CHASE (34) sits on the couch, playing a violent video game. FARAH (late 20s) watches him, while drying her hair.

FARAH

Are you coming with me?

CHASE

Where are you going this time of night?

FARAH

Tomorrow, you doofus. Church. I told you I was going to church. Are you coming?

CHASE

That would be a resolute nope.

FARAH

Why not? It won't kill you. The service is only an hour.

CHASE

I could spend an hour of my life listening to some old man wax spiritual about sin and salvation, while having two or three hoes and an underage boyfriend on the side. Or, I could spend an hour doing something that's not a waste of time.

Farah takes a seat on the couch beside Chase.

FARAH

You don't have to be such an ass about it. And you owe me, may I remind you. I went to that barf fest when-

CHASE

Beerfest, you mean?

FARAH

I said what I meant. Beer is gross, but I went anyway. I was being supportive. You owe me.

CHASE

Flip a coin on it.

FARAH

Seriously?

CHASE

Yes. Heads, I go.

Farah rummages through the couch cushions to find a coin. She finds a nickel. Farah flips the coin. It lands on heads.

FARAH

Must be God's will. Heads. You go.

CHASE

Fuck me with a pitchfork.

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Dana still waits. Pastor Hayes has his feet up on his desk and his eyes closed.

His telephone rings.

PASTOR HAYES

Get that, will you, Dana?

DANA

Yes, sir.

Dana answers the phone.

DANA
(on phone)

Pastor David Hayes' office. Dana Greene speaking. What word can the Lord give you tonight? Are you a member here? I don't know a Caleb Wright? Oh. Do they need something? Oh. My condolences to your family. Absolutely. I'll do that. Bye.

PASTOR HAYES
Carlson?

DANA
Yes. He passed away. You were waiting for that call?

Pastor Hayes gets up from his chair.

PASTOR HAYES
Let's go for a walk.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - DAY

Farah drives; Chase is in the passenger's seat, fiddling with his tie.

FARAH
Nervous?

CHASE
About?

FARAH
Going to church.

CHASE
Nothing to be nervous about. I hate wearing ties. It is way too hot for this shit. It's like eighty degrees and I'm wearing long sleeves.

FARAH
You could have worn short sleeves.

CHASE
I don't have a dress shirt with short sleeves. They look stupid.

EXT. ANOINTED SHEPHERD BAPTIST CHURCH - SAME

Members and visitors go in, single file. DEBBIE is at the door, handing out programs.

Debbie gives Chase a program; he gives it to Farah. Debbie puts her arm out to block their way inside.

DEBBIE
 Visitors? I don't recognize these
 beautiful faces.

FARAH
 Thank you. We are visiting.

DEBBIE
 (to Chase)
 You look thrilled to be here.

CHASE
 I'm not. I didn't-

DEBBIE
 Sarcasm. Honey. Sarcasm. Did you
 lose a bet?

FARAH
 Coin toss.

DEBBIE
 Nice. Enjoy the service.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Pastor Hayes is on the pulpit with his Bible open. Farah and Chase sit seven rows from the front.

PASTOR HAYES
 Turn with me to the book of Mark.
 Chapter three.

Chase notices SACHEL MANNING (17) staring at him from two rows in front of where he and Farah are seated.

Farah elbows Chase.

FARAH
 (whispering)
 Pay attention.

Chase watches Pastor Hayes, but doesn't listen to a word being said. Chase tunes out the sermon, but notices Pastor Hayes' eyes hardly moving from Dana, who is sitting in the front row.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Debbie listens to and watches the goings on in the sanctuary through the cracked door. She sees that Chase has fallen asleep.

PASTOR HAYES
 All to your feet, please. I ask,
 now, that any who are in need of
 prayer to come forward.

Debbie opens the door completely and waves to get Pastor Hayes' attention. She points out the sleeping Chase.

Pastor Hayes descends from the stage, taking the microphone with him. While all in the congregation are standing, they watch Pastor Hayes go to the end of the seventh row.

PASTOR HAYES

(to Farah)

He's with you?

FARAH

Yes.

Farah kicks Chase in the shin. He wakes up, with all eyes on him. Pastor Hayes speaks into the microphone, but talks directly to Chase.

PASTOR HAYES

What's your name, son?

CHASE

Chase.

PASTOR HAYES

Chase what?

CHASE

Chase Davis.

PASTOR HAYES

(to congregation)

Let us stretch forth our hands to this son of God, Chase Davis. Stretch forth your hands and stand with me, as I pray for him.

Farah covers her face as every person in the congregation reaches toward Chase.

PASTOR HAYES

Father in Heaven, glory be to your name. I stand before you on this day, asking that you keep this man, Chase Davis, who is as much a son of yours as Jesus Christ, keep him close to your bosom. And open his heart, heavenly Father, to receive your word and your salvation. Let the church say Amen.

EXT. CHURCH, PARKING LOT - SAME

Chase leans against his car. Farah removes her makeup with moist wipes.

CHASE

I once had a boner in seventh grade and was forced to do a joint assignment with the girl I liked. I always considered that the most awkward and embarrassing moment of my life. It's been officially bumped down to second place.

FARAH

It's your own fault for falling asleep.

CHASE

His fault for being boring. He's full of shit, FYI.

FARAH

Don't say that. That is blasphemous.

CHASE

Putting vegetables on pizza is blasphemous. That guy is a charlatan. "As much a son of yours as Jesus Christ?" Who says shit like that?

FARAH

It sounded earnest to me.

CHASE

Of course it did.

Chase sees Satchel again. Satchel waves it him. Chase flips him a middle finger. Farah smacks Chase with her purse.

FARAH

Are you flipping off a kid? What is your problem?

CHASE

Think he's gay?

FARAH

What?

CHASE

He was staring at me in there. He had this look on his face like he wanted to lick my butthole.

FARAH

Okay. It is time to go. Let's go.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Satchel sits in the front pew alone. ERVING and SELENE MANNING (both late 40s) wait at the door for him.

SELENE

It's time to go, Satch. What are you doing in here?

SATCHEL

Existing.

ERVING

Come on. Let's go exist elsewhere. I feel like having a steak. Anyone else?

SATCHEL

Steak. Yay.

Satchel joins his parents at the door leading to the vestibule.

ERVING

Satch, can you believe that guy fell asleep in service. Funniest thing I've ever seen.

PASTOR HAYES

Hilarious.

Pastor Hayes has appeared behind the family. Erving, Satchel, and Selene move aside.

ERVING

Your sermon was a blessing, Pastor. I, we, needed to hear your word today. Right, Satchel?

SATCHEL

Yup. Excuse me, David.

Satchel leaves. Pastor Hayes gives him a very wide berth as if he is afraid to touch Satchel.

SELENE

Satchel Manning, don't disrespect a man of God.

SATCHEL

I didn't.

EXT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

Farah and Chase walk to her car.

CHASE

That was ass.

FARAH

It wasn't that bad. Kind of cheesy, but cheesy can be endearing.

CHASE
Cheesy ass. I pick the next one.

FARAH
Sure. Whatever you say.

CHASE
Going back tomorrow?

FARAH
Yes. You too.

CHASE
Like hell I am. I did my time.

FARAH
You fell asleep.

CHASE
So? You didn't say I had to stay
awake.

FARAH
Fine. Don't go. Stay home and after
service, I'll see if any of the men
there are single. Some of them were
surprisingly attractive.

CHASE
Damn you.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - DAY

Farah and Chase have arrived early. Chase takes his blazer
off.

CHASE
Too hot for this nonsense. They
should put the ac on forty-six.

FARAH
Everybody else should freeze to
death because of your hot flashes?
Suck it up.

Satchel, Selene and Erving enter the church. Satchel stares
at Chase.

CHASE
(to Farah)
He's doing it again.

FARAH
Don't start.

Satchel blows a kiss at Chase and laughs when Chase looks
horrified. Selene approaches Farah and Chase.

SELENE

Hi, there. Are we staying awake
this time?

CHASE

I'll try to.

FARAH

He will. I'm Farah. This fool is
Chase.

SELENE

I'm Selene. And this is Satchel.

Selene grabs Satchel by his sleeve and drags him to Farah
and Chase.

SELENE

Satchel this is-

SATCHEL

Farah and Chase.

Satchel holds his hand out for Chase to shake. Chase accepts
it.

SATCHEL

Your hand is cold.

Satchel goes into the sanctuary. Selene yells after him.

SELENE

I didn't forget, young man. You
still owe Pastor Hayes an apology.

Erving joins Selene and smiles at Chase

ERVING

Sleepy?

CHASE

No. Potentially bored, but not
sleepy.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

The choir performs Amazing Grace. Chase and Farah sit at the
end of the sixth row from the front.

Chase squirms and shivers. He puts his blazer back on. Chase
looks at the palm of the hand that Satchel shook. It is
abnormally dry, flaky and peeling.

EXT. CHURCH, FRONT YARD - SAME

Farah and Chase watch little kids playing tag. Erving slaps
Chase on the back.

ERVING

Good job, man. I knew you could do it.

CHASE

Do what?

ERVING

Open your ears and your heart to the word. You stayed awake, you must have needed to hear what was said.

CHASE

If you say so.

Pastor Hayes and Dana come out of the building and go around to shake hands and hug the people still outside.

CHASE

My cue to leave.

FARAH

Will you knock it off.

The church door swings open. Selene drags Satchel out of the building and over to Pastor Hayes. Pastor Hayes keeps his distance.

CHASE

Or maybe I won't leave. What's this about?

ERVING

Last Sunday, Satchel was rude to the pastor. Called him by his first name and implied that he's not a man of God.

CHASE

Brazen little shit. Oops. My bad.

ERVING

No apology needed. He's always been strange. It's just gotten worse since the news.

FARAH

News?

ERVING

Satchel has a brain tumor. Inoperable. Pastor Hayes has done miracles before, but they only work for those who believe.

CHASE

Miracles? Seriously? I don't believe that bull-

An ear-piercing scream disrupts every conversation. Everyone turns to ROELLA (6) who is holding her face and has blood dripping from her hands.

ROMI (8) backs away, looking apologetic.

ROMI

I didn't mean to. She jumped right
in front of me!

Pastor Hayes runs to Roella. He kisses his forearm before moving her hands out of the way. Pastor Hayes touches her face and her nose stops bleeding.

PASTOR HAYES

You're fine, aren't you?

Roella feels her nose and looks at her hands. All the blood is gone.

ROELLA

I guess so. Thank you.

PASTOR HAYES

Don't thank me. Thank the Lord.

Chase looks at Satchel. Satchel follows Pastor Hayes with his eyes as Pastor Hayes goes back inside.

Dana goes to Chase and gives him a business card.

DANA

I'd like to invite you to a private
prayer session, Chase.

CHASE

Seriously?

DANA

Yes. Seriously.

CHASE

No, thanks.

Farah accepts the card for him.

FARAH

Thank you.

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Hayes is in his private bathroom holding his forearm under running water. There is dark blood running from two bite-like puncture wounds in his arm.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Chase has a jar of sugar scrub in his hand. He reads the directions out loud.

CHASE

Shower as usual. Rinse thoroughly.
Apply scrub. Massage in circular
motion. Rinse. Use twice weekly.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Farah sits on the bed, playing a game on her tablet. Chase walks across the room to rub his arm on the side of her face.

FARAH

What are you doing?

CHASE

Am I smooth?

FARAH

Sure. I guess.

CHASE

Am I really?

FARAH

You smell like parfait.

CHASE

I smell delicious. Wanna eat me?

FARAH

Nope. Diet.

CHASE

I hate you.

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Hayes is in a meeting with GLENDA WRIGHT (60s), wife of Carlson. He sits beside her and holds her hands while he prays.

PASTOR HAYES

Father God, I come before you
humbled and meek. I ask that you,
grant this newly widowed daughter
of yours peace of mind and
tranquility of spirit. Let her
mourn only for a time, but take joy
in knowing that her dear husband,
the man that you made and sent to
her, is waiting for her in your
kingdom. Amen.

GLEND A

Amen.

Pastor Hayes takes a photo of Glenda off of his desk.

PASTOR HAYES

Your autograph, please. We'll stick this one on the prayer request board. I'll have every saint in the congregation going before God on your behalf.

GLEND A

Thank you, Pastor and bless your heart. I feel better. I really do.

PASTOR HAYES

Good.

Glenda signs the back of her photo and gives it back to Pastor Hayes.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

Chase wakes up and realizes that Farah is gone. Her cellphone is still on the nightstand.

Farah comes into the room, fully dressed for church.

CHASE

Going back to Fakeville.

FARAH

I've never heard of Fakeville, but I am going to church. Didn't think you wanted to go back. So, snooze on, lazy.

CHASE

The preacher man is using black magic and you still trust him?

FARAH

I don't need to trust him.

CHASE

Then why bother going? Why are you on the religious thing anyway? Did I miss something?

FARAH

You miss a lot. You should come. Your jail-bait admirer might miss you.

CHASE

Admirer?

FARAH
Satchel? Is that his name? What a
weird name.

Chase jumps out of bed.

FARAH
That's what gets you moving?
Something you want to tell me?

CHASE
I need to ask that boy something.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase waits impatiently. Erving and Selene come in. Chase
expects Satchel to be right behind them.

ERVING
Chase. You're back.

CHASE
Yeah. I'm back.

SELENE
Good to see you.

Chase watches more people come into the building.

CHASE
How's Satchel?

ERVING
Not well today. She wanted to drag
him here today, but--

SELENE
If he would just stop being
stubborn he would be healed.

Selene bursts into tears and runs into the sanctuary.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Chase takes a seat beside Farah in the tenth row from the
front.

FARAH
So?

CHASE
He's not here.

FARAH
Aww. You poor thing. Missing your
infant boyfriend.

CHASE

Can you not say such things, here.
Of all places. You know he's dying?
You heard that, right?

FARAH

I did. Maybe he's just embracing
it. As an early entrance ticket.

CHASE

What?

FARAH

He dies. He goes to heaven. Sooner
is better than later, right? Maybe
he's not bothered by it, but
relieved.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase looks at the photos of the members and visitors on the
bulletin board. Debbie stands behind Chase.

DEBBIE

Where's your wife?

Chase doesn't turn around to see who's talking to him.

CHASE

I don't have one.

DEBBIE

No? You came here with a lady,
didn't you?

CHASE

We aren't married.

DEBBIE

You live together, don't you?

Chase turns around and Debbie smiles.

DEBBIE

I'm just messing with you. She's in
the nursery. She told me to tell
you.

CHASE

There's a nursery here? Why?

DEBBIE

Because babies and toddlers are
disruptive.

INT. CHURCH, NURSERY - SAME

Chase stands at the door of the nursery while Dana plays peekaboo with a baby. There are about a dozen babies and toddlers (1-3yrs old) in the nursery.

JACKIE, IDA and LUCA are the nannies on duty. Luca is in the rocking chair with a sleeping baby. Ida and Jackie pick up toys, pacifiers and lovies.

LUCA
(to Chase)
Look. Another "baby man".

CHASE
Another? Where?

LUCA
You.

CHASE
Not.

FARAH
She is so cute. Isn't she cute?

Chase looks around as if he doesn't know who Farah is talking to.

FARAH
(to Chase)
I'm talking to you, you fool. They already know she's cute.

CHASE
I guess. They all look the same to me. Well, except the super ugly ones. Can we go, now?

FARAH
Yeah. When all these cute babies are gone.

EXT. CHURCH, FRONT YARD - SAME

Farah and Chase walk to the car. Dana runs up behind them.

DANA
Chase. Wait.

Chase and Farah stop for Dana.

CHASE
Yo.

DANA

I didn't introduce myself properly last time we spoke. I'm Dana Holloway-Greene.

CHASE

Okay.

Farah smacks Chase with her purse.

FARAH

Nice to officially meet you, Dana. I see you following the pastor around. Are you his assistant?

DANA

That's a way to put it. I have to go. I hope you two have a blessed day.

Dana scurries away, leaving Farah puzzled and Chase suspicious.

CHASE

That's a way to put it? Weird ass chick. What the hell is going on at this church?

FARAH

Watch your language.

CHASE

I am. Trust me.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Chase looks in the full size mirror at his skin. The backs of his arms look a bit scaly compared to the rest of his body.

Chase wets his arm with a soaked washcloth. He uses a bit of sugar scrub to remove the scaly skin.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Chase is on the bed, web-surfing on his tablet. Farah joins him with a towel wrapped around her head.

FARAH

Parfait again. Yummy.

Farah licks Chase's shoulder. Farah looks at his tablet screen and sees the subject of his search. Chase searches for information on Satchel Manning.

FARAH

You stalker.

CHASE

Not stalking. That kid knows something. Bingo. Only had to look through six pages.

FARAH

Bingo, what?

CHASE

Birth announcement. He'll be seventeen next week. Born June 16, 2000.

Chase appears to be deep in thought after announcing Satchel's birthday.

FARAH

Hello? Is that important? He was born in June. Is the conception date a clue to this mystery as well? My guess would be late October '99. Chase? Hello? Chase?

Farah waves her hand in front of Chase's face. He snaps out of his trance and continues searching.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - DAY

Chase has taken a seat at the end of the very last row. Farah enters the sanctuary and whispers in his ear.

FARAH

Your infant boyfriend is here.

Chase doesn't respond. Satchel walks quickly by Farah and takes a seat on the end of the second row from the front.

FARAH

Why are you sitting way back here?
Let's move up.

CHASE

I'm staying right here.

FARAH

What's wrong?

CHASE

Something. Not sure what. But, something.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase leans against the wall that the bulletin board is on, waiting for Farah. Satchel stops beside him and takes a push pin out of the board.

Satchel holds the pin up for Chase to see.

SATCHEL

Don't underestimate these things.
They can be life changing.

Debbie joins Satchel and Chase in front of the bulletin board. She holds a photo and marker out to Chase.

DEBBIE

Your autograph, please.

Chase accepts the photo. It is of him from the first visit.

CHASE

When was this taken?

DEBBIE

First visit.

CHASE

I realize that. I'm asking at what time? I didn't pose for this. Matter of fact, I didn't give anybody in this building permission to take it.

DEBBIE

We have cameras all over the property. Why so upset? You are very photogenic.

CHASE

Thanks, but that's beside the point.

SATCHEL

Come on, superstar. Sign it.

Chase signs the back of the photo. Satchel takes it and pins it to the board.

SATCHEL

Now you'll be famous.

Satchel walks away, while Chase follows him with his eyes.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Farah drives; Chase is in the passenger's seat, staring out of the window.

FARAH

Hello. Hola. Bonjour. You awake over there.

CHASE

Yep.

FARAH

If I join Anointed Shepherd will you join, too?

CHASE

Not a chance in hell.

FARAH

Wow. Somebody's got 'tude.

CHASE

There's something fucked up going on at that church. You really can't see it?

FARAH

What I see is a bunch of people who want to do right.

CHASE

You don't need church or a Bible to do right. Just do it. If you need a book to tell you to be a good person, then you're not a good person.

FARAH

So, I'm a bad person, now?

CHASE

You tell me? Why this obsession with religion?

There is a long silence between Chase and Farah before she answers.

FARAH

My mom told me, when she was pregnant with me that she wanted to walk to the store up the street from the house. It took her twenty minutes to find her keys. By the time she got there, the place had been robbed and the owner shot dead.

Farah waits for Chase to react. He doesn't.

FARAH

I was thinking, what if those lost keys weren't just her being scatterbrained?

CHASE

What if a tiny little angel flew down from heaven and hid them from her so she wouldn't walk into harm's way?

FARAH

You are just determined to reject the possibility of--

CHASE

Coincidence? No, I'm not, because that's exactly what that was. She could have been hit by a car on the way there.

FARAH

But she wasn't. If she had died that day, I would have too. I wouldn't be here right now. It could have been God.

CHASE

God wasn't looking out for the owner of that store. Did he have any kids?

FARAH

I don't know. Now, that you mention kids, how many should we have?

CHASE

Zero and three fourths.

FARAH

Asshole.

CHASE

What your language, daughter of God. I told you the first time we spoke face to face that I don't want any kids.

FARAH

You could have changed your mind. All those cute little babies must have-

CHASE

They didn't. My mind isn't the issue. I'm sterile.

There is another long silence between Chase and Farah.

FARAH
And you're just now telling me
this?

CHASE
Deal breaker?

FARAH
Maybe.

INT. APARTMENT, HALLWAY - DAY

Chase pulls luggage out of the closet. Farah walks by him.

FARAH
Running away with your infant
boyfriend?

CHASE
Please stop.

FARAH
Since I'm not invited, I'll host a
Bible study and have the attendees
rub all their righteous, Jesus
loving cooties on your stuff.

CHASE
You do that. Record it so I'll know
what to burn.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Chase sits at a table by himself. GREGORY and GEORGE (twins,
49) enter the restaurant. Chase waves them over to his
table.

Chase stands up to hug George and Gregory.

GEORGE
How you doin' man?

CHASE
I'm alive.

GREGORY
We see. You look a bit skinny.

CHASE
Lost a bit of mass. I'll gain it
back.

Chase, George and Gregory take their seats.

GREGORY
So? What's what? What are you into?

GEORGE

What? You mean 'who'? Still a
whore?

CHASE

Never was one.

GEORGE

Boy, please. You have everybody
else fooled, but not us.

GREGORY

What's wrong, cousin?

CHASE

Nothing. I just--

GEORGE

Want to see the rest of the family?
I know, but you know how they are.
I saw your dad the other day.

CHASE

You told him I was coming home?

GEORGE

No.

CHASE

Good call.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - DAY

Chase looks at the bulletin board, in search of his own
photo. Debbie stands behind him. He has his blazer buttoned
up and is visibly shivering.

DEBBIE

Cold?

CHASE

Freezing. What is the ac on?
Iceberg?

DEBBIE

Seventy-five. Where it stays. It's
not up there.

CHASE

What's not?

DEBBIE

Your picture. Pastor Hayes took it
down.

Chase turns around to look at Debbie. Debbie steps closer
and whispers.

DEBBIE

Your name's not Chase, is it?

CHASE

What's it to you?

DEBBIE

Nothing. Where's your not wife?

CHASE

I'm guessing you already know.

DEBBIE

She's in a meeting with Pastor Hayes. She didn't tell me to tell you. I just felt like it. What's your real name?

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Hayes sits at his desk. Farah is in the chair across from him.

PASTOR HAYES

You've made up your mind already, haven't you?

FARAH

Yes, but--

PASTOR HAYES

But?

FARAH

I want Chase to be a part of this, but I can't force him. I wouldn't force him, even if I could. I just don't see how we can keep the peace between us when our convictions are so different.

PASTOR HAYES

You two live together?

FARAH

Yes. Mainly because it's cheaper this way.

PASTOR HAYES

Is the money saved worth it?

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase drives. Farah, who is in the passenger's seat, stares at him until he notices, then looks away. They keep this going back and forth until Chase has had enough.

CHASE

What?

FARAH

Nothing.

CHASE

Nothing my ass. What did that crooked ass witch-doctor say? He told you to dump me, didn't he?

FARAH

No. No, he didn't.

CHASE

I heard that. You hesitated. He said something about getting rid of me. I know he did.

FARAH

Your words. Not his.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - NIGHT

Pastor Hayes is at the well. He drops the signed photo of Glenda Wright into it.

Pastor Hayes emerges from the woods. Dana is waiting for him.

INT. CHURCH, OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Hayes and Dana share a bottle of wine. There is a knock on the door.

Dana puts the wine bottle and both glasses in a mini fridge before opening the door. It is CALEB WRIGHT (40ish).

DANA

Caleb?

CALEB

Yeah.

DANA

Come on in.

Pastor Hayes stands up and gives Caleb a hug.

PASTOR HAYES

Your mother was a good woman. I'll miss her. Take comfort in knowing that your parents are in God's kingdom. A kingdom that is open for you too.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - SAME

Chase sits on the toilet lid, web-surfing on his tablet. He searches Anointed Shepherd Baptist Church.

The first three pages are all direct links to obituaries and funeral announcements.

CHASE

The fuck...

Farah bangs on the door.

FARAH

Chase? Are you pooping or sneaking around?

Chase opens the door and holds his tablet up for Farah to see.

CHASE

I don't poop. I take manly shits. An angel of death likes your church. One funeral a month like clockwork for two straight years.

Farah reads the the search results and shrugs.

FARAH

Nothing suspect about this. They were all old people.

CHASE

I have a theory. He's using these old people as human sacrifices to power his black magic.

FARAH

Stop. Stop that before God smites you.

CHASE

If he intended to, he would have done so years ago.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - DAY

Chase drives; Farah is in the passenger's seat. They are at the church and see two police cars and an ambulance parked out front.

There is a crowd of people gathered, many of whom are crying. Chase parks the car.

CHASE

I'll be right back. I'm going to see if the service has been cancelled.

FARAH

Roger.

EXT. CHURCH, FRONT YARD - SAME

Chase finds Erving trying to comfort Selene.

CHASE
What's going on?

ERVING
Pastor Hayes died early this morning.

CHASE
He did?

SELENE
He was found in his office with no pulse. They were too late. God rest his soul.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase returns, but doesn't start the car up immediately.

FARAH
What's up?

CHASE
Hayes died. The service has been changed to a vigil. If you want to stay, I'll wait out here.

FARAH
No. Let's go. Free day, I guess. Movie?

CHASE
My turn to pick.

Chase pulls out of the parking lot and sees Satchel hanging out on the front steps of the church.

CHASE
I'm thinking maybe my theory was a bit off.

FARAH
You think that now? The man had to die for you to stop falsely accusing him of witchcraft?

CHASE
I said a bit off, not completely wrong.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - DAY

Chase has parked at the cemetery. Farah is in the passenger's seat.

FARAH

I'm surprised you wanted to come.

CHASE

I didn't want to come. I had to.
I'm doing recon.

FARAH

Do you know what recon means?

CHASE

Yes, I do, smartass. I'm in the middle of an investigation. I'm in PI mode. Don't question my methods, woman.

FARAH

You came to this man's funeral to find proof that he was wicked. I don't question your methods. I'm questioning your sanity right now.

EXT. CEMETERY - SAME

Chase stands to the back of the crowd that has gathered around Pastor Hayes' plot.

When mourners take turns dropping white roses into the grave, Chase realizes that Satchel is present. Satchel has two roses. He drops one into the grave and smiles at Chase

Satchel joins Chase and hands the extra rose to him.

SATCHEL

For you.

CHASE

I'm not into men or children. No thanks.

SATCHEL

I'm not gay, superstar.

CHASE

Superstar? I've heard that before.
But why--

SATCHEL

You'll have an entourage of one.
Wasn't that the plan?

Chase is horrified by Satchel's words. He backs away and hurries back to the car without accepting the rose.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Chase sits on the bed, deep in thought and clearly troubled. Farah opens her purse and waves a white rose in his face.

FARAH

Earth to Chase. Your baby lover asked me to give this to you.

CHASE

Burn it.

FARAH

What's on your mind?

CHASE

Death.

FARAH

A specific one or in general?

EXT. APARTMENT, PARKING LOT - DAY

Farah is on the way to her car. Chase parks his car beside hers and gets out.

CHASE

Going somewhere?

FARAH

To church.

CHASE

It's Wednesday.

FARAH

Bible study and wanted to talk to Dana. I tried to at the funeral, but she was completely out of it.

CHASE

That chick is weird. Don't let her crazy rub off on you.

FARAH

I talked to Selene this morning. Dana wasn't just Pastor Hayes' assistant. She was his god daughter. Cut her a break.

CHASE

Can I go?

FARAH

Why?

CHASE
Satchel might be there.

FARAH
Head over heels, aren't you?

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Farah is in the driver's seat. Chase is in the passenger's seat. Chase sees Dana walking across the parking lot.

CHASE
There she is. You should try to catch her before she goes inside.

FARAH
You're waiting out here for Satchel?

CHASE
I'm waiting out here to prepare myself to be flash frozen in there.

Farah gets out and closes the car door. Chase watches her run to the front door of the church.

Dana reaches the door after Farah. She is distant and refuses to make eye contact. Dana hurries around the building to enter through the back.

Farah returns to the car.

CHASE
What the hell is she doing?

FARAH
I don't know. You should have heard her voice. She sounded terrified. That's not normal is it?

Chase and Farah are startled by knocking on the trunk of the car. Chase checks his side mirror; it is Satchel.

Satchel walks around to Chase's window.

SATCHEL
Superstar. You came to see me?

Farah bursts out laughing.

FARAH
(to Satchel)
Is your mom here?

SATCHEL
Yes, she is.

FARAH
(to Chase)
Lock the doors, please.

Farah gets out, leaving the keys in the ignition. Satchel goes around to the driver's side and takes a seat in the car. Chase is speechless and just stares at him.

SATCHEL
How did you come up with 'Chase'?
Did you just throw a bunch of names
in a hat and pick one?

CHASE
Who are you?

SATCHEL
That's a question you should be
asking yourself, Dom.

Satchel stares into Chase's eyes and smiles.

SATCHEL
Do you see these? Both of my
parents have brown eyes. Did you
notice? So how did mine get this
color?

CHASE
What do you want?

SATCHEL
Retribution would be justified, but
I'll go with closure. Can you give
me that?

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Farah finds Selene in the crowd waiting. She taps Selene on the shoulder.

SELENE
Farah. Glad you could make it.

FARAH
Me too. Have you seen Dana?

SELENE
No. She's probably in the pastor's
study. The replacement will be here
tonight.

FARAH
That was quick. How is she doing? I
tried to to talk to her, but she
seemed a bit overwhelmed.

SELENE

I'm sure she is. She's a strong girl. She'll be fine.

The front door opens. PASTOR JONATHAN WILLIS (50ish) walks in with his wife JENNIFER (mid 40s), his son OWEN (16) and daughter JORDAN (13).

PASTOR WILLIS

Good evening, saints. I'm Jonathan Willis.

EXT. CHURCH, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chase and Farah walk back to her car.

FARAH

Did you see Dana inside?

CHASE

No. Maybe she went home. How about the new guy? Like him so far?

FARAH

I guess. He seems down to earth. You suspect him of being a warlock yet?

CHASE

No, but I'm keeping eyes on him.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Dana sits at the base of a tree near the well. She stands up and looks inside of it.

There is a flimsy ladder inside the well. She tests the stability of it before climbing down into the well.

Dana uses the flashlight on her keys to see. Movement and low hissing can be heard, but the well appears to be empty.

DANA

Lord, be with me.

The hissing gets louder. Dana mumbles a prayer under her breath before offering her forearm.

DANA

Serpentem submittere.

A spectral snake appears around the bottom of the well. Dana stands in the center of its coils.

The snake tightens around Dana too quickly for her to react.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - DAY

Chase and Farah sit at the end of the seventh row from the front. Jennifer, Owen and Jordan sit on the first row. Selene emerges from the back and whispers in Jennifer's ear.

The choir has just ended a song. Selene goes up to the pulpit.

SELENE

Thank you, choir. Praise his name.

The congregation applauds.

SELENE

For those of you who were not here on Wednesday, our new shepherd has arrived. I am honored to introduce Pastor Jonathan Willis. His wife Jennifer is sitting here. Please welcome her and their children before you leave today.

FARAH

(whispering)

No Dana? I saw her car outside.

CHASE

She was probably abducted by aliens.

EXT. CHURCH, FRONT YARD - SAME

Chase waits for Farah while she talks to Debbie and Erving. Roella and Romi invade Chase's personal space and stare at him.

CHASE

Yes?

ROMI

I'm Romi. What's your name?

CHASE

Chase.

ROMI

Her name is Roella. Isn't it ugly?

ROELLA

My name's not ugly. You frog!

Roella tries to slap Romi over the head, but Chase stands between them.

CHASE

Can you not?

ROELLA

Not what?

CHASE

Fight. Can you do me a favor?

ROMI

Yes. For a dollar.

Chase takes his wallet out and removes two single bills.

CHASE

Can you find out where Dana is?

Romi and Roella take off running. They dart around the yard, to talk to anyone who will listen. Romi and Roella race each other back to Chase.

ROMI

Miss Dana is missing.

CHASE

Missing?

ROELLA

They looked at the camera stuff and she went into the woods in the back but never came out.

Chase gives Romi and Roella a dollar each.

CHASE

Thank you.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Chase strolls to the edge of the woods and stands there. His cellphone dings, indicating a text message.

The message is from Farah. It reads: Where are you? Let's go.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Chase drives; Farah is in the passenger's seat.

FARAH

She's missing and no one has called the police?

CHASE

I wouldn't take the word of those rugrats.

FARAH

But they weren't wrong. They have cameras all over the place.

CHASE

All hidden, I'm guessing. No other way they could take pictures of people without permission.

FARAH

They checked the camera footage and saw her go back there, but why was she back there in the first place?

CHASE

I was close to finding out.

FARAH

Where are you going? This isn't the way--

CHASE

I know the way home, chick. I need a new scrub.

INT. GROCERY STORE - SAME

Chase is in the Health & Beauty section, looking at the skin creams. There are two jars of sugar scrub in his hand basket.

FLIRTING WOMAN stands very close to him and bends over to look at items on the bottom shelf. Chase looks down at her and snickers.

CHASE

Am I in your way?

FLIRTING WOMAN

No.

Flirting Woman stands upright and reaches around Chase to get a jar of skin cream off the shelf.

FLIRTING WOMAN

You look nice. Just coming from church?

CHASE

Thank you and yes.

FLIRTING WOMAN

Your wife made you go, didn't she?

CHASE

I'm not married.

FLIRTING WOMAN

Good.

Flirting Woman takes a piece of paper and pen from her purse. She writes her phone number down and puts it in Chase's pants pocket. She keeps her hand there longer than needed and fondles him through his pants.

FLIRTING WOMAN

Praise the Lord.

CHASE

Amen.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Chase gets back into the driver's seat. Farah is texting someone.

FARAH

It took that long to get a scrub?

Chase plops his bag down in Farah's lap.

CHASE

I needed something else. There are too many choices.

Farah looks in his bag. In addition to the scrubs, there are three different brands of skin cream.

FARAH

Nobody is ashy enough to need all this.

Chase shows Farah the back of his hand, which is peeling and scaly.

FARAH

Eww. Never mind then.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Chase is fresh out of the shower. One of his new scrubs is half empty. He places all three jars of his recently purchased skin cream on the counter and opens them all.

Chase examines his skin the mirror before applying one layer of each cream to his whole body.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Chase takes Flirting Woman's phone number out of his pants pocket. He adds the number to the contacts in his phone and saves her as PRAYER WARRIOR.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chase is on the couch playing a video game. Farah picks up her purse and heads to the door.

CHASE
Bible study?

FARAH
Yes. And I'm hoping to find more information about Dana. I've watched the news. No missing person report. Nothing in the news paper. It's like she either never existed or no one cares that's she gone.

Chase pauses his game to kiss Farah before she leaves.

CHASE
Don't disappear on me. I will file a report.

FARAH
Sir, yes, sir.

Farah leaves, Chase closes the door behind her. He returns to the couch and picks up his phone.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Farah is at the church, circling the parking lot. Dana's car is gone from where it had been parked.

Farah parks and takes out her cellphone. She calls Selene

FARAH
(on phone)
Hi. Are you here? I'm outside.
Dana's car is gone. She has? Wow.
Okay. I was just worried about her,
but if you...Sure. I'm coming in
now.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Farah enters just as Chase emerges from the bathroom. He wears nothing but a towel.

CHASE
Welcome back. What's with the face?
That's not a good face.

FARAH
Dana's car was gone, but she's still nowhere to be found and the people at that church don't care.

CHASE
Maybe she's not missing. Just decided to take a break.

FARAH

That's what Selene said. She said Dana has done this before. She'd just leave and be gone for days at a time and come back like nothing happened.

CHASE

Case closed then. I'll bet you a cheesecake she'll be in church Sunday. Let's shake on it?

Farah snatches the towel off of Chase.

FARAH

I am unhappy. Cheer me up.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - DAY

Chase and Farah have arrived early. Chase is being kept company by Roella. They sit in the front row.

ROELLA

Do you think my name is ugly?

CHASE

No. I think it's unique. Do you know how it was chosen?

ROELLA

My nana told me that it's her name and Papa's name mixed up.

CHASE

Oh really?

ROELLA

His name is Roland and Nana's name is Gabriella.

CHASE

Clever.

Dana emerges from the door beside the pulpit that leads to the choir room. Roella gets up and runs to Dana.

ROELLA

Miss Dana! Miss Dana! You're back.

Roella tries to hug Dana, but Dana seems to not notice the girl. Dana goes over to a window and stands in the sunlight pouring in.

CHASE

(to Dana)

Cold or trying to get a tan?

Dana doesn't reply. Chase gets up from his seat and goes over to Dana.

CHASE

Needed a break? Where did you go?
Atlantic City? I'm hurt that you
didn't invite me?

ROELLA

What's wrong with you, Miss Dana?
Why are you being so weird?

CHASE

(to Roella)

Roe, can you go find Farah for me?

ROELLA

Yes!

Roella runs out of the sanctuary. Chase and Dana stare at each other until Roella returns with Farah in tow.

FARAH

Dana! You're back. Are you okay?

ROELLA

She's not. Something's wrong with
her. She won't talk.

Pastor Willis and Jordan emerge from the choir room.

PASTOR WILLIS

Good morning. Is there a problem?

FARAH

No. Who said--

PASTOR WILLIS

I have amazing hearing. This is the
Dana that I've heard about? What is
the problem?

Chase tries to leave, but Pastor Willis walks into his path.

PASTOR WILLIS

What's your name?

ROELLA

Chase. His name is Chase. I like
his name.

PASTOR WILLIS

An excellent name. Can you
enlighten me? Please. What issue
can I help you with?

CHASE

You can get out of my way.

Pastor Willis steps aside. Chase leaves the sanctuary.

EXT. CORNER STORE - SAME

Chase sits on the curb outside the store, drinking a beer. A white SUV parks near him. THOMAS "TJ" MICHAELS (mid-late 30s) sticks his head out of the window.

TJ

Yo!

It takes Chase a moment to realize who TJ is. When he does, Chase stands up, but pretends to still not know

CHASE

Yo back at you.

TJ gets out of his car and slams the door with more force than needed.

CHASE

Trying to break your own shit?

TJ

Long time, no see.

CHASE

And I've seen you where and when?

TJ

I don't look that different do I?
It's TJ. TJ Michaels.

CHASE

Oh. Okay.

TJ

You still don't remember? Shawn was
my best friend. Remember now?

Chase crushes his empty beer can and tosses it in the trashcan.

CHASE

What's up? You live around here
now?

TJ

That would be too much of
coincidence, wouldn't it? Erynn
told me you would be here. Time,
place, date. On point, as always.
She's never wrong, is she?

CHASE

Maybe. Maybe not. I guess we'll never know.

TJ

We know. We know for damn certain. Don't we?

Chase walks away from TJ and heads back to the church on foot. TJ yells after him.

TJ

Erynn says 'hi'!

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase looks at the bulletin board. He sees a picture of Dana. He hears a rustling sound behind him.

Chase turns around. Dana is right there. Chase looks closely at Dana's eyes. For a split second, her pupils are oval and elongated.

CHASE

How long did you know Hayes?

Dana looks confused at first, as if she doesn't understand the question.

CHASE

David Hayes. How long did you know him?

Dana bursts into tears all of a sudden and stops just as quickly. She gets up in Chase's face. Chase can hear very low hissing coming from Dana.

CHASE

What the fuck?

Ida scurries by them in a hurry to get to the bathroom. She has a baby in tow. Ida is carrying the baby out and away from her body.

IDA

Poop explosion. Ran out of wipes. Gosh darn it.

Dana follows Ida and the baby with her eyes. She keeps eyes on them until they are in the bathroom and keeps staring even after the door closes.

Chase snaps in front of Dana's face. She doesn't respond. Chase notices a tattoo on Dana's neck that resembles a horned snake wrapped around a sword.

CHASE
What the fucking fuck?

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Farah drives; Chase is in the passenger's seat using his tablet.

FARAH
Something's wrong wi--

CHASE
Dana. No shit. They should not allow her around any of those kids.

FARAH
What? I don't mean she's dangerous or anything. I mean, I think she's traumatized. I don't think church people really encourage therapy like that. At least not the secular kind. If she wanted to talk to somebody, she probably went to Pastor Hayes, but she doesn't have him anymore.

CHASE
She's not herself anymore.

FARAH
What do you mean? And how can you even say? You barely know her. You look busy over there. Still in PI mode?

CHASE
Yes, I am.

Chase searches for 'Erynn Patton'. The results direct him to a self-published book about clairvoyance (title: Visions, Violence and Violations).

CHASE
Pathetic bitch.

FARAH
Excuse me?

CHASE
Not you.

INT. CHURCH, NURSERY - SAME

Dana stands at the nursery door, looking around the room. The babies and nannies are gone. There are a few toys, blankets, pacifiers and stuffed animals left lying around.

Dana takes a knit blanket and a pacifier from the nursery and leaves.

INT. A LEAF OF TEA BOOK STORE - DAY

RACHAEL (mid 20s) sits on a stool at the register when Chase walks in. She jumps up and pretends to be busy.

CHASE
Good afternoon, Slacker.

RACHAEL
I'm not slacking.

Rachael is upset at first, but gets over it once she gets a good look at Chase.

RACHAEL
So, what can I help you with?

CHASE
I'm looking for a book called
'Visions, Violence and Violations.'

RACHAEL
Dumbass title, but we might have
it.

Rachael uses the computer next to the register to check the inventory.

RACHAEL
We have two copies. Lucky you.

CHASE
I only need one.

Rachael retrieves a copy of the book from the storage area in back. Before ringing it up, she reads the author bio.

RACHAEL
Erynn S. Patton. She's a psychic. A
real one?

CHASE
So she says.

RACHAEL
I knew one when I was a kid. He was
old as shit. He would tell me stuff
that would happen and then it
happened. But nobody else believed
me. They would say I was making it
up just to make him look good.

CHASE
Were you?

RACHAEL

Of course not. Why would I do that?

CHASE

To entertainment a senile old man.

RACHAEL

He wasn't senile. He was a retired engineer. He died still knowing all that nerd shit.

CHASE

Okay. I believe you.

RACHAEL

Do you really?

INT. ERYNN'S STUDIO - SAME

ERYNN (24) sits on a futon, smoking a joint and listening to opera. She gets up and goes to the extra large calendar hanging on her wall.

Erynn uses a purple lipstick to circle June 30th on the calendar. She fills in the square with "DOM 4:18."

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Farah has just parked outside the apartment building. Her cellphone goes off.

FARAH

(on phone)

Hello. Yes. What's wrong? Say what, now? Oh my god. Really? That is terrible. I feel so bad for them. Of course I will. However I can help.

Farah hangs up her phone. She stays in her car, staring at nothing in particular. Tears fall from her eyes.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - SAME

Chase sits on the closed toilet, web-surfing on his tablet. Farah bangs on the door.

FARAH

I'm going out.

CHASE

Goin to church?

FARAH

Yes.

CHASE

It's Monday

FARAH

It's not really a service.

Chase opens the door and sticks his head out.

CHASE

What is it then?

FARAH

Selene called me. Apparently, two of the babies at the church passed away.

CHASE

The fuck?

FARAH

Yeah. They were both found unresponsive early this morning.

CHASE

And you still don't think some fucked up shit is going on there?

FARAH

I don't know the cause. It could have been SIDS or they could have had a heart problem.

CHASE

Bullshit. That is a mountain of bullshit and you know it. There's something evil at that church. Stop making excuses already.

FARAH

Anyway. I'm going to show support.

CHASE

Supporting a bunch of fake ass, crooked ass heathens.

FARAH

Your little friend Roella she--

CHASE

Is not a baby so I know she didn't die. That brat is like six.

FARAH

Her brother was one of the babies that died. Can you flip your asshole switch to off, please?

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - NIGHT

Chase is alone. He looks at the pictures on the bulletin board and feels something touch his leg. It's Roella.

CHASE

Roe.

ROELLA

My brother died.

CHASE

I heard. I'm sorry.

ROELLA

Everybody said he's in heaven now.
When do I get to go?

CHASE

What's the hurry? It'll be there.

ROELLA

Do you think he'll stay a baby
forever?

CHASE

No. I think heaven has a nursery
and the babies grow up together.

ROELLA

Oh. Okay.

Roella disappears down the hall. Satchel comes out of the sanctuary.

SATCHEL

Dom.

CHASE

Not now.

SATCHEL

When?

CHASE

When what?

SATCHEL

When would be a better time for
you?

EXT. STUDIO APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Chase stands on the sidewalk, drinking a beer. Erynn comes out, with a joint in hand.

ERYNN

You're late.

CHASE

Were you expecting me?

ERYNN

Duh. What do you--

CHASE

Want? You're a psychic and you don't know?

ERYNN

I can't see everything. Why are you here? You have a lot of nerve seeking me out.

CHASE

Is that supposed to be threatening?

ERYNN

No. I don't need to threaten you. Karma will have you. What do you want?

CHASE

I need your help.

ERYNN

Of course you do. And I should help your scum ass why?

CHASE

Not for me. For the babies at my church.

Erynn laughs.

ERYNN

You're a church goer now? The end is nigh.

CHASE

Two of them died.

Erynn stops laughing and glares at Chase.

ERYNN

And you care?

CHASE

I do.

ERYNN

I almost believe you. Almost. But I know you're the biggest fucking liar in the western hemisphere so...

CHASE

Okay. I'm done.

ERYNN

You might be done, but it's not over. Asshole.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chase is in bed, web surfing on his tablet. Farah enters the bedroom with a box full of knitting supplies.

Farah plunks the box down on the bed, hitting Chase in the process.

CHASE
I didn't feel that at all.

FARAH
You don't feel much, do you?

CHASE
I forgive you. What's all that junk?

FARAH
I'm learning how to knit.

CHASE
Church Lady transformation phase two.

FARAH
Shut up.

CHASE
So?

FARAH
So, what?

CHASE
What happened to the babies? I know you heard something.

FARAH
I heard more than I wanted to.

Chase drops his tablet on the bed and gives Farah his complete attention.

FARAH
They both had severe brain damage and showed signs of being suffocated.

CHASE
Okay. Was not expecting that.

FARAH
Who would be? These babies live in opposite directions. Die in similar ways on the same day. It's eerie. They, the doctors I mean, suggested that it might be a virus.

CHASE

You buy that garbage? You know damn well--

FARAH

No, I don't and neither do you.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - DAY

Service has just ended. Most people have left, some stay to socialize.

Chase stands, with his back against the wall, while people pass by him. Farah is at the front talking to Dana.

Satchel takes a seat at the end of the aisle across from where Chase is standing.

SATCHEL

Superstar.

CHASE

What's going on around here?

SATCHEL

I don't know. I feel something unpleasant whenever I'm here.

CHASE

Cheap shots. Do better.

SATCHEL

I wasn't talking about you. Still full of yourself, I see.

Chase sees Farah at the front waving for him to come to her. He motions for her to come to him instead. Farah grabs Dana by the arm and drags her along.

Dana pulls away from Farah and keeps her eyes on Satchel.

FARAH

You two became BFFs pretty quick.

SATCHEL

We sure did.

Chase ignores Farah. He watches Debbie talk to Roella on the other side of the church. Roella holds a baby doll that is wearing footie pajamas.

CHASE

Why are the kids never in here?

FARAH

Children's church is in the back. We've been coming here how long and you just now noticed?

CHASE

I never cared. I was just asking.

Farah realizes that Chase is speaking specifically of Roella.

FARAH

That poor munchkin. That little one-piece was her brother's. She said it still smells like him.

Satchel's nose begins bleeding profusely. He pulls his shirt up over his face to catch the blood.

Chase looks disgusted. Farah is genuinely concerned.

FARAH

Satchel, are you okay?

Satchel nods and gets up from his seat. He walks by Dana. Dana backs away from him and bumps into the wall.

FARAH

I'll go find you a towel. I'll be right back.

Farah runs out of the sanctuary. Chase watches the interaction between Satchel and Dana. He can hear very low hissing.

Satchel lowers his shirt, which is completely soaked in blood. He grabs Dana by the forearm with his hand still bloody.

Dana's blank expression changes to one of fear.

DANA

Help me.

SATCHEL

I can't.

Farah returns with two towels, but Satchel's nose has already stopped bleeding.

Dana removes her arm from Satchel's grip. Her facial expression goes back and forth between indifferent and frightened.

Dana runs away crying and leaves through the choir room.

FARAH

I missed something, but do I even want to know what?

SATCHEL

No. You don't.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Farah is in the driver's seat, Chase is in the passenger's seat. They are still in the church parking lot.

CHASE

Are you still in denial?

FARAH

Shut up.

CHASE

That's how it is? You hate that I was right.

FARAH

Maybe you are, maybe not. I think Dana needs professional help.

CHASE

I think she needs to be dunked in a pool of holy water.

FARAH

Cue topic change! Selene asked Debbie to tell me to tell you that they are looking for an on site grief counselor.

CHASE

And why would I care? I'm not grieving.

FARAH

No shit. I nominated you for the position. You're more articulate than I am and a better listener.

CHASE

You didn't. I'm giving you a goddamn swirly when we get home.

FARAH

You don't have to take it. I just thought you would consider it. At least for your tiny little friend.

INT. CHURCH, NURSERY - SAME

Dana looks around the room. There are fewer items left behind than the last time she was in there.

Dana looks in a portable playpen and finds a teether wedged in the corner. She takes it.

After searching more, Dana finds a sippy cup under the changing table. Dana doesn't notice, but Roella is standing at the door watching her.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - SAME

Farah pulls out of her parking spot. Chase looks out of the window. He sees Satchel standing off to the side of the church.

All the blood is gone from Satchel's shirt.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

Farah reads a knitting how to book. She has dumped all of her supplies out on the bed.

Farah's cellphone dings to alert her of a text message. The message reads: Pray for our saints. We have lost two more babies this morning. There will be no nursery available this Sunday.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chase sits on the couch, playing a video game. Farah paces the floor.

FARAH

It could be a virus, right?

CHASE

That only affects babies and not the older kids. Or teens. Or adults. When has that ever happened?

FARAH

They have weak immune systems.

CHASE

So do old people.

FARAH

You just want it to be something evil.

CHASE

You've seen evil with your own eyes and still deny it. What is the benefit?

FARAH

I'm not in denial. I'm just open to consider other possibilities. I can't imagine how those people feel right now. Losing a child really has to be the worst thing ever.

CHASE

Worst than a spouse? I always thought that would be worse.

FARAH

Maybe to somebody without kids, but those women. They carried those babies for nine months. Felt them kicking and flipping around. They expected first days of kindergarten, awkward middle school pictures, prom and college graduation. To have that all snatched away, it's so cruel.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - DAY

Bible study has been cancelled. Members are at the church to make dinners and condolence baskets for the grieving parents.

Farah helps in the kitchen. Chase sits on the floor, drinking a beer.

The front doors open. Pastor Willis and DR. WREN CAMERON enter. Dr. Cameron has a medical kit with her.

PASTOR WILLIS

(to Chase)

Drinking alcohol in the house of God? Really?

CHASE

Book and verse where the drinking of beer is prohibited?

DR. CAMERON

Where is the nursery?

CHASE

It's not a virus.

PASTOR WILLIS

And you know that how? You have a medical degree from where?

CHASE
Snarky preacher is snarky.

PASTOR WILLIS
(to Dr. Cameron)
The nursery is that way. Let me
know if you need anything else.

Pastor Willis takes the beer can out of Chase's hand.

PASTOR WILLIS
No beer in this church. Not God's
rule. Mine.

INT. CHURCH, NURSERY - SAME

Chase stands at the door, watching Dr. Cameron collect
surface samples from the rocking chair, changing table,
playpens and toybox.

DR. CAMERON
What is your theory?

CHASE
It's too far-fetched for your
academic mind.

DR. CAMERON
My mind is open. Try me.

Jennifer Willis appears behind Chase before he can respond.

JENNIFER
(to Chase)
If you're not busy, we could use
some help in the kitchen.

CHASE
There are already five thousand
people in there. How much more help
can you really need?

DR. CAMERON
He's helping me. After I'm done
here, this room will need to be
disinfected.

CHASE

I'm your man, doc. Bleach or ammonia?

DR. CAMERON

Bleach.

JENNIFER

Okay, then. Since you're being useful, I guess I'll leave you two alone.

CHASE

Good plan. I like it.

EXT. CHURCH, REAR - SAME

Chase gathers a commercial mop bucket, a mop, a 3-pack of sponges, an empty spray bottle and a bottle of bleach from the storage shed.

He uses the water hose to fill the bucket. Chase sees Satchel coming out of the woods with blood dripping from his nose.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - DAY

Farah has just parked and turns the ignition off. Chase is in the passenger's seat. He puts his hand on the key so Farah can't remove it.

CHASE

Leave them.

FARAH

If you're just going to sit outside, why'd you even come?

CHASE

PI mode.

FARAH

If you say so.

EXT. CHURCH, REAR - SAME

Chase goes to the woods behind the church. He stands at the edge of the trees, hesitant to go further.

Chase hears a rustling and low hissing coming from somewhere in the woods. He goes forward, following the sound.

Chase finds Dana standing near the well. Dana is unusually happy to see Chase. Her speech is robotic.

DANA

Chase. Hello. I am glad to see you.

CHASE
Why? Since when did you like me?

DANA
I like Chase. I like you.

CHASE
Are you feeling okay?

Dana shifts around uncomfortably before smiling very wide.

DANA
I am good.

Dana, unexpectedly, pulls Chase into a bear hug with his arms pinned down. She squeezes him too tight. Chase screams as two of his ribs are fractured.

CHASE
Let go! Let go!

Dana hisses in Chase's ear and squeezes tighter. Chase is no longer able to speak and eventually passes out. Dana let's Chase's limp body fall to the ground.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Farah sits on the end of the eighth row from the front. The offering plate is going around.

Farah drops ten dollars into the offering plate and hands it to the person beside her.

Farah takes her cellphone out and sends a text message to Chase. The message reads: WHERE ARE YOU?!

EXT. CHURCH, REAR - SAME

Chase wakes up still in the woods. He gets up, clearly in pain, and brushes the dirt and debris off of his clothes.

Chase takes a look inside the well. He uses the flashlight on his phone to see, but visibility is still very poor.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Farah weaves around people who stand around talking. She makes a beeline for the front door, but Debbie and Selene block her path.

DEBBIE
(to Farah)
In a hurry?

FARAH
Yes. Have you seen Chase?

SELENE

Was he not in service? I didn't even notice.

FARAH

He never came in. Never mind. He's probably outside already.

SELENE

He's a big boy. He can be on his own for a minute, can't he? I wanted to tell you that I--

DEBBIE

We.

SELENE

We came up with the idea to form a women's group here. Would you care to join?

FARAH

Women's group? For what? I mean, what would you be doing?

DEBBIE

Woman stuff. Hang out. Outreach. Charity here and there, but mostly just us women of God, bonding together as sisters in Christ.

FARAH

Sounds...exclusive.

SELENE

That's the point. You notice how we got two male pastors in a row? They could have got a woman if they really wanted to.

FARAH

Who's they?

DEBBIE

Bishop Matthews and all ordained ministers in our network who are eligible to vote. Eighty percent men.

FARAH

I'll think on the group thing, but I gotta go.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase is in the driver's seat. Farah gets in the passenger's seat and slams the door shut.

FARAH
Where were you? I texted you--

CHASE
Six times. I got them.

FARAH
And it didn't occur to you to reply
to one?

CHASE
It occurs to me right now, that
you're not my mother. So stop
questioning me.

Farah opens her mouth to say something and closes it again. She puts her seatbelt on, crosses her arms and stares straight ahead.

Chase starts the ignition, but is unable to hide his pain. Farah watches him out of the corner of her eye.

INT. APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Chase holds two ice packs on his torso. Farah bangs on the door.

FARAH
(off screen)
Chase. What's wrong? Don't say
'nothing', I know it's something.

Chase doesn't respond.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Farah is in bed, on her phone. Chase gets in bed while trying to hide how much pain he's in.

FARAH
You okay.

CHASE
Perfect.

Farah playfully smacks Chase's torso with the back of her hand. Chase flinches.

CHASE
Ow.

FARAH
Uhuh. Fractured ribs? How did that
happen?

CHASE
Don't worry about it.

FARAH

Worrying is in a girlfriend's job description. Would you want to be with somebody who didn't give a damn?

CHASE

Trust me. Let this one slide.

FARAH

Are you going to the hospital?

CHASE

Ice and pain reliever. I'm not driving all the way there just to hear that. I'll be fine.

FARAH

Fine. Be that way. I know what I'll do. There are cameras everywhere, even outside. I'll ask Selene or Debbie to see if they can get the video from the outside cameras.

CHASE

Do that and you'll be newly single.

FARAH

Seriously? Maybe I should be.

CHASE

Maybe.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - DAY

Chase has just gotten home from work. He is parked outside the apartment building surfing the internet on his phone.

Chase reads the most recent obituaries. One of the obits states that the deceased had once been healed by a miracle working preacher.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

Farah is dressed and ready to leave for church. Chase sits at the table in nothing but basketball shorts.

Farah leaves without either of them saying a word to each other.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Selene and Debbie wait at the sanctuary door for Farah.

DEBBIE

Farah, have you decided yet?

FARAH

Decided what?

SELENE

Girls' club. No boys allowed.

FARAH

Oh. That.

DEBBIE

You sound so enthused.

FARAH

It's not that I'm not interested,
it's just that there--

SELENE

May be an issue of discrimination?

FARAH

No. I was going to say, there are
more important things going on
right now. Can't this wait?

DEBBIE

Probably.

Ida and Luca go into the sanctuary.

FARAH

No nursery today?

DEBBIE

No nursery until further notice.
Can't risk it, ya know?

EXT. EVA'S HOUSE - SAME

Chase rings EVA'S (60ish) doorbell. She answers it after
looking through the curtains.

EVA

Can I help you?

CHASE

Maybe. I'm looking for a healer.

INT. EVA'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Chase and Eva sit on her couch, having tea.

EVA

My father's obituary was done by my
brother. I asked him not to include
that.

CHASE

Really? Why? Seems like something worth sharing.

EVA

I didn't see it happen so I'm not sure if actually did.

CHASE

Skeptic.

EVA

Yes. And?

CHASE

I'm not judging. I am, was, too. But I've seen it.

EVA

Then why are you here? Whoever performed the trick you saw could probably do it again.

CHASE

He can't. He died. Maybe you heard of him. David Hayes.

EVA

No bells.

CHASE

Anointed Shepherd Baptist Church.

EVA

Look. I'm not a religious person. I don't keep track of preachers and churches. It's all horse poo to me. My brother is all into it. I'll see if I still have the program from the funeral.

Eva disappears into another room and returns with the funeral program.

EVA

Here you go. This is my brother's home church. That's the pastor and ministers on the back. They would know more than I do.

INT. APARTMENT, OFFICE - SAME

Chase is back home. He scans the photo from the back of the funeral program and enlarges it on the desktop monitor.

Chase sees EVANGELIST GENIE EVANS has a small tattoo on her forearm. It is the same design as one on Dana's neck.

Genie's tattoo is barely visible, due to her robe sleeve. Chase crops the photo to be only of Genie'S tattoo. He uploads it to the internet and does a reverse image search. There are no results.

CHASE

Of course. That would be too easy wouldn't it. I'm not giving up though. I'm on to you fake ass preachers. I know you're hiding something.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase has printed out a picture of Genie's tattoo. Service has just ended. People come pouring out of the sanctuary, including Satchel.

Chase grabs Satchel by the arm when he walks by. He holds the picture up for Satchel to see.

CHASE

Have you seen this before?

SATCHEL

What if I have?

CHASE

Are you in on it?

SATCHEL

I am in on nothing and also everything. Are you busy Friday?

CHASE

No. Why?

SATCHEL

Erving wants to go rafting. I'd love to have a guest.

CHASE

Would you?

SATCHEL

Yes. I would. Coming?

CHASE

Not a chance.

Dana comes out of the bathroom and panics when she sees Satchel. She tries to run away, but Satchel grabs her and drags her to Chase.

Satchel shows Chase the snake tattoo on Dana's neck and lets her go. Dana runs into the sanctuary.

SATCHEL

Good luck with your investigation.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Roella sits on the pulpit, holding her doll. She watches Dana go from person to person, smiling and acting friendlier than she usually is.

Romi runs to the pulpit and pulls Roella up by her arm.

ROMI

Your mother is looking for you.
It's time to go.

Roella leaves her doll. She and Romi leave the sanctuary. Roella keeps her eyes on Dana until the door closes.

EXT. CHURCH, PARKING LOT - SAME

Chase walks to his car when he feels something hit him in the back.

He turns around and sees Farah picking up her shoe.

CHASE

What was that for?

FARAH

For being an ass to me.

TJ Michaels sneaks up behind Chase and startles him.

TJ

Howdy.

Farah is puzzled and waits for an explanation from either of them.

TJ

(to Chase)

Is this your wife?

FARAH

Girlfriend. And you are?

TJ

Ghost from the past. Right, Dom? I mean Chase.

Chase leaves TJ with Farah and goes around the back of the church.

TJ

So, how long have you known him?

FARAH

I don't think I do know him.

EXT. CHURCH, WOODS - SAME

Chase is at the well. He tests the stability of the ladder before climbing down.

Chase uses the flashlight on his phone to see better. The bottom of the well is littered with photographs.

Chase sees the crumpled photos of Carlson and Glenda Wright among others.

Upon further inspection, Chase finds a pacifier, a teether, a sippy cup, a blanket, and Roella's doll. He picks the doll up and intends to climb out of the well.

A mark on the wall gets Chase's attention. He aims the flashlight at it. It is the same design as Genie and Dana's snake tattoos.

EXT. CHURCH, REAR - SAME

Chase exits the woods and sees Dana watching him from a distance. He tries the rear door of the church, but it's locked.

Chase runs around the opposite side of the building, which takes him to the front yard. He finds Jackie.

CHASE

Where's Roe? Is she still here?

JACKIE

No. They just left.

CHASE

Oh. Shit. I mean shoot. Can you give this to her? You'll probably see her before I do.

JACKIE

Sure. No problem.

Chase gives Jackie Roella's doll.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase sits in the driver's seat, watching Farah talk to TJ.

Farah points Chase's car out to TJ who waves at Chase. Chase pulls out of his parking spot and speeds out of the lot.

EXT. CHURCH, FRONT YARD - SAME

Jackie talks to Luca with Roella's doll tucked under her arm.

JACKIE

Isn't your dad a doctor? Maybe you should ask him.

LUCA
He is, but he lives five states
away.

JACKIE
Mail him a sample.

LUCA
That is so not how science works.

Dana interrupts their conversation.

DANA
(to Jackie)
I will take.

JACKIE
Take what? Oh. You mean the doll.
Here. Give it to Roe when you see
her.

Jackie tosses the doll to Dana. Dana catches it and goes
around the side of the church.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chase lounges on the sofa watching tv, with the sound low.
Farah comes in and takes a seat on the arm of the couch.

FARAH
What's on your mind?

CHASE
Too much.

FARAH
Your friend told me something
interesting things about you.

CHASE
He's not my friend.

FARAH
Acquaintance. Associate. Colleague.
Whichever. You know a relationship
built on deception will eventually
fall apart, don't you?

CHASE
I never lied to you about anything.
And if you are that willing to
believe what some random ass person
tells you, then your relationships
are doomed anyway.

FARAH

So hostile.

CHASE

Not hostile. Just honest. I don't know what he told you and really don't care, but did it occur to you to question how he found me? You don't find that weird? I didn't tell him where I was.

FARAH

He said he saw you at the store up the street from the church.

CHASE

Yes. But he found me at the church. How did he know I was there unless he was following me?

Farah ponders this question for a moment before giving up.

FARAH

Fine. You win this round. I'm going to bed. I have no energy left to argue.

INT. FIRE OF HEAVEN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH - DAY

Chase waits in the lobby, still wearing his work clothes. Evangelist Genie Evans comes out of the ministers' office to meet him.

GENIE

Good afternoon, sir. Chase Davis?

CHASE

Yes. Sorry, I'm late. There was a car accident.

GENIE

It's not a problem. I should pray for those involved.

CHASE

Good thinking. The cars involved were tore up.

GENIE

What can I do for you today? In need of a word from God? I'm assuming you don't have a church home.

CHASE

I'm not here about the church. I'm here about that tattoo on your arm.

Genie's demeanor changes from welcoming to hostile.

GENIE

What about it?

CHASE

You tell me. There's this weird girl at a church that I've been wasting my time going to. She has that same tattoo on her neck. After Pastor Hayes died, that's David Hayes, she started acting even weirder, like almost not even human. And, a handful of babies at the church have died. I find it very suspicious that it hasn't been mentioned in the paper or on the news. Somebody is doing excellent damage control. On top of that, there is an old well on the church property, that has that same snake on the wall. So, tell me, preacher woman, what's going on?

GENIE

We're not having this conversation right here.

INT. MINISTERS' OFFICE - SAME

Chase takes a seat. Genie locks the office door.

CHASE

You knew Hayes?

GENIE

Not personally. I knew of him.

CHASE

What's the snake mean?

GENIE

You just jump right into it, don't you?

CHASE

Babies are dying, so yeah.

GENIE

Whatever you've assumed about Pastor Hayes, is most likely way off the mark.

CHASE

Is that so?

GENIE

You have a very accusatory tone and your body language is harsh.

CHASE

Dead babies. Dead. Babies.

GENIE

Were any of them yours?

CHASE

No, but does it matter? Is it true or false that you and or Hayes has been using the lives of people for black magic.

GENIE

That would be false. Just like thinking the worst of people, don't you? Is it people in general or just us God-fearing folk? You aren't a saint yourself, so you can quit finger pointing.

Chase and Genie stare at each other for a moment.

CHASE

I'm waiting.

GENIE

David Hayes was a keeper of a Serpentine Token, one of Lucifer's creations.

CHASE

But it's not black magic?

GENIE

It's not magical, it's spiritual. The first owners used the Tokens to kill whoever they wanted. All they had to do was give the snake some personal belonging of the target.

CHASE

How did Hayes get one?

GENIE

Probably assigned to him by Bishop Matthews. The Tokens are pretty mellow as long as they're fed. Not aggressive and don't bite. Most of the time.

CHASE

You still consider yourself a woman of god?

GENIE

I am. We don't keep the snakes for fun. If we don't keep them fed, they well go hunt. Would that be better?

CHASE

I haven't seen any snake slithering around that dumb church and it wasn't in the well either.

GENIE

Then it's out hunting. Hayes was it's keeper. Now, that he's dead, who feeds it?

CHASE

Dana. Can it be killed?

Genie laughs.

GENIE

Yes, but you won't do it.

CHASE

Tell me how.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase drives home. His cellphone dings, indicating a text message. He tries to read it while driving and nearly slams into the car in front of him.

Chase pulls over at a gas station to read the message. It is from Farah. The message reads: Your little friend passed away this morning. Her funeral will be Saturday.

Chase drops his phone and just sits there, staring off into space.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase storms into Anointed Shepherd and peeks in the sanctuary. He walks back to the nursery and finds Ida flinging holy oil all over the room

CHASE

Is Jackie here?

IDA

She went to the bathroom. Feel free to join us. We are going to bless this room and drive the spirit out that has been taking our babies from us.

CHASE

That spirit has a name spelled D-A-N-A.

IDA

D-A-N-A. Dana? What kind of name is that for an unclean spirit?

CHASE
Seriously. You people...

INT. CHURCH, WOMEN'S BATHROOM - SAME

Jackie is at the sink, washing her hands. Chase bursts in, startling Jackie.

JACKIE
What are you doing? This is the girls' room.

CHASE
I know. Did you give Roe her doll back?

JACKIE
No, but I'm sure she got it back. Her parents might want to have it buried with her. Poor thing. Jesus keep her soul close.

CHASE
Cut that bullshit. I asked you to give it to her, but you didn't, did you?

JACKIE
Why are you so angry? I gave it to Dana. I'm sure Dana didn't keep it.

CHASE
You seem sure about a lot.

Chase leaves and Jackie is confused.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - SAME

Chase leans against the wall with his eyes closed. He hears very low hissing and opens his eyes. Dana has appeared out of nowhere and is standing very close to him.

Dana's pupils change from round to slit several times. Chase tries to push her away from him.

CHASE
Back up.

Dana doesn't move. Chase grabs her by the shoulders and attempts to move her with more force, but he is incapable.

Dana is firmly planted. She stares intently at Chase, while hissing.

Jackie comes out of the bathroom. Dana moves away from Chase before Jackie sees them so close.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Farah is in the closet comparing two black dresses. Chase packs a suitcase.

FARAH
Going on a trip?

Chase doesn't respond. He goes into the bathroom and returns with a jar of sugar scrub.

FARAH
The funeral is at eleven.

CHASE
I'm not going.

FARAH
I guess I shouldn't be surprised.
Too inconvenient for you? You have
big plans this weekend? You
probably have some woman waiting
for you.

Chase stops packing and glares at Farah. Her back is turned to him, so she doesn't notice. He softens his look just as she turns around.

CHASE
You know me so well, don't you.
Tell me, where am I going and why?
Since you have psychic powers.

Farah hangs both dresses on the closet door. She puts her index fingers to her temples to mimic a psychic.

FARAH
You're going to...visit a place of
great meaning. Something happened
there...that changed your life. You
are going to make peace with
yourself.

CHASE
You don't have the gift. I heard a
rent-a-witch say the exact same
thing on an infomercial last week.

FARAH
Witches and psychics are not the
same thing.

CHASE
What-fucking-ever.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - NIGHT

Chase drives down the highway. His cellphone buzzes to indicate an incoming call. Chase puts the caller on speakerphone.

CHASE
Hello and what do you want?

ERYNN
(speaker)
Did she tell you?

CHASE
Who is this?

ERYNN
Erynn.

CHASE
How did you get my number?

ERYNN
I didn't need to get it. I wanted
it and dialed it. Right on the
money. As always. Did she tell you?

CHASE
Yes.

ERYNN
And?

CHASE
And...it is what it is. If that's
the only way, so be it.

ERYNN
Mr. Hero, ladies and gentlemen. I
am so proud of you. You've finally
grown up. I have a surprise waiting
for you. I think you'll like it.
Later, Superstar.

Erynn hangs up. Chase ends the call and turns the radio on. He flips through stations until he lands on one playing a sermon. RADIO PREACHER is reading/teaching from Genesis Chapter 3.

RADIO PREACHER

'Now the serpent, was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord had made.' That's what it says right here in the word of God. What we know about serpents, they are sneaky, they are crafty, but they are also cowardly. They hide. The serpent doesn't leave itself exposed and open. It fears for its own safety, it' own wellbeing.

Chase turns the station to Hip/Hop.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Chase has just gotten out of the shower. His jar of sugar scrub is empty and on the sink.

Chase checks his skin in the mirror. His shoulder is still peeling.

EXT. RIVER BANK - SAME

Chase watches an empty raft float by.

FLASHBACK

OCTOBER 1999 (text on screen)

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

SHAWN (16 yo) pumps air into his single person airboat. DOMINIC (17 yo) stands by watching, with one hand in his pocket.

SHAWN

You are such a pussy.

DOMINIC

I can't swim.

SHAWN

That's what life jackets are for.

DOMINIC

No. Nope. Not. Negative. Ain't doing it.

SHAWN

Pussy.

YOUNG ERYNN (7) joins them. She closes her eyes for a few seconds and reopens them.

YOUNG ERYNN

Emmaleigh. You both like a girl named Emmaleigh. And Dom is mad at you for taking credit for all the work he did on the group assignment, Shawn.

SHAWN

No, he's not.

YOUNG ERYNN

I'm never wrong. Am I, Dom?

DOMINIC

Never hasn't happened yet. You might be one day.

YOUNG ERYNN

I'm never wrong. You're jealous of my brother, aren't you?

DOMINIC

Your brother is nothing to be jealous of.

SHAWN

What's that supposed to mean?

DOMINIC

You're short and your head is shaped funny. Why would I want that?

Young Erynn looks suddenly horrified and runs off. Shawn has finished inflating his airboat.

SHAWN

I'll be right back. Making sure that simple brat went back to my dad. And I also want a beer.

DOMINIC

They let you drink beer?

SHAWN

Shh! Keep it a secret.

Dominic waits until Shawn is out of sight to take a clear push pin out of his pocket. He pokes little holes in the airboat and tosses the push pin in the water.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. RIVER BANK - SAME

Chase stares off into space. He doesn't realize that EMMALEIGH (33) is standing behind him.

EMMALEIGH
Learned to swim yet?

Chase snaps out of it and turns around.

CHASE
Em.

EMMALEIGH
Dom.

CHASE
I'm going to guess that you didn't
just happen upon me.

EMMALEIGH
Of course not. Erynn told me you
would be here. I have no idea how
she got my number. I wouldn't give
it to her even if my life was in
jeopardy.

CHASE
What can I do for you?

EMMALEIGH
Is that rhetorical?

CHASE
No. You want something.

EMMALEIGH
Right now? You have a girlfriend,
don't you?

CHASE
Yes, I do.

Emmaleigh laughs and wraps her arms around Chase's waist.

EMMALEIGH
Does that matter right now?

CHASE
I feel like I'm being pranked.

EMMALEIGH
By me?

CHASE
By life.

INT. MOTEL - SAME

Chase sits on the end of the bed wearing only boxers.
Emmaleigh gets dressed.

EMMALEIGH
Feeling guilty?

CHASE

Yes.

EMMALEIGH

Aww. Poor baby. You'll forgive yourself one day.

CHASE

No, I won't.

EMMALEIGH

Come on. It's just a little fun. What good is living if you can't enjoy it?

CHASE

I don't know.

EMMALEIGH

You used to be more lively. You look like you just came from a funeral.

EXT. CEMETERY - SAME

Farah walks back to her car. Jackie catches up to her.

FARAH

Jackie.

JACKIE

Chase stayed at home?

FARAH

He's out of town.

JACKIE

Oh. He was acting really strange the other day.

FARAH

Strange how?

JACKIE

He was really mad that I didn't give Roe her doll back. I mean, I know what it meant to her, but Dana gave it back. Why wouldn't she?

FARAH

That is strange. Did he say anything else?

JACKIE

Not that I can recall. Is something bothering him? He's seems so hostile sometimes. No offense to you. I'm not saying--

FARAH
That I have horrible taste in men?
I didn't take it that way, but now
that I think about it...

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - NIGHT

Chase drives in silence. He dials the number of Genie Evans with one hand.

When Genie answers he puts her on speakerphone.

GENIE
Yes, boy?

CHASE
How dare you.

GENIE
What do you want now?

CHASE
More info.

GENIE
Specifically?

CHASE
How do I make myself more appealing
to it? I mean, it wouldn't normally
want someone like me, so what
should I do to change that?

GENIE
Okay, hero. Come see me tomorrow
evening. Not before five.

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Chase has just returned from his trip. Farah comes out of the bedroom dressed for church.

FARAH
Enjoy your trip?

CHASE
No.

FARAH
No? Wasn't expecting that. Jackie
asked about you.

CHASE
Yay.

FARAH
What's going on?

Chase goes into the hall bathroom and closes the door. Farah grabs her purse and leaves with tears falling.

INT. F.O.H. PENTECOSTAL CHURCH, MINISTERS' OFFICE - DAY

Chase sits in the chair across from Genie's desk. Genie sits behind the desk. She slides a worn, leatherbound book across the desk to Chase.

GENIE

Pages seventeen and twenty nine.

Chase does a quick read of the noted pages.

CHASE

So, this has happened before.

GENIE

Only once that's on record.

CHASE

I guess asking Dana for its name would be a waste of time.

GENIE

Before you barrel in there, head first, you need to understand something.

CHASE

I understand perfectly fine. She's--

GENIE

Dead. She has been since it consumed her. It's not her that's been walking around and talking to people. It's using her body as a container. Her soul is trapped, but it won't be returned to her body. It won't tell you its name. You have to find it. Pastor Hayes may have written it down someplace.

CHASE

In his office?

GENIE

His office at the church would have been cleaned out. Try the study at his house.

EXT. DAVID HAYES' HOUSE - NIGHT

Chase goes around to the side of the house. There is one light on in the kitchen.

Chase tries the window and it opens easily. He climbs in through the window, but is in pain due to his sore ribs.

INT. DAVID HAYES' HOUSE - SAME

Chase is in the kitchen. He tip toes across the room and looks both ways down the hall.

Chase opens a few drawers to see if there's anything useful in them. He hears a rustling sound and freezes.

Chase peeks out into the hallway, but doesn't see anyone. He goes down the hall as quietly as possible.

Chase sees the door of the study open. He flips the light on and Dana is sitting on the floor in the corner with her eyes open.

Dana shifts around, but doesn't seem to notice that Chase is there. Chase looks around the room before moving.

To avoid making the floor creak, Chase steps out of his shoes. He takes two steps forward and waits for Dana to move; she doesn't.

Chase tip toes across the room slowly. He opens the top drawer of Pastor Hayes' desk. Chase watches Dana out of the corner of his eye while looking through the drawer.

Chase hears hissing coming from Dana. She stretches and slithers across the floor like a snake. Chase takes the whole drawer out.

Dana stands without using her legs, much like a snake ready to strike. Her voice is mixed with aggressive hissing.

DANA

Like Chase. I like Chase. Like me?

Chase backs away from Dana. She follows him.

DANA

Like me? Chase like me?

Chase raises the drawer, ready to smack Dana over the head with it, but stops when she starts crying.

Chase continues backing away, but lowers the drawer, careful not to let anything fall out of it.

CHASE

Dana?

DANA

Yes. No. Mish...Mish..

Dana lunges at Chase and bites his forearm. Chase backs away, trying to get to the door.

DANA
Mish...Mish...

CHASE
Dana? Dana can you hear me? Tell me
the name of the thing.

Dana falls to the floor.

DANA
Mishael.

Chase drops the drawer and runs from the study.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase is parked in a mostly empty lot. His sweats profusely
and in pain.

Chase's cellphone rings; he doesn't answer it.

INT. APARTMENT, BEDROOM - SAME

Farah sits on the bed with her cellphone to her ear. The
phone rings but no one answers. Chase's voicemail message
plays.

CHASE
(voicemail)
Chase Davis is unavailable. Leave a
message or I'm not calling back.

Farah hangs up and calls him again. His voicemail message
plays back three more times.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - DAY

Chase looks at the bulletin board. He sees a photo of TJ.

TJ Michaels come out of the sanctuary with a huge smile on
his face.

TJ
There he is. I--

CHASE
Knew I would be here because Erynn
told you. Yeah. Got it.

TJ
Moody.

CHASE
Fuck off already.

TJ
That language in the house of God.
You are brazen.

CHASE
Why are you here?

TJ
I have a meeting with Pastor
Willis. Is that okay with you?

CHASE
Perfectly fine. Stalker.

TJ chuckles and goes into the bathroom. Chase takes the photo of TJ from the bulletin board and checks the back for a signature.

The photo is signed. Chase puts the photo in his pocket. Jordan comes from the direction of the nursery.

CHASE
What's up?

JORDAN
Nothing. What are you doing?

CHASE
Existing.

JORDAN
Loitering. Isn't that what it's
called when you just stand around
doing nothing?

CHASE
Loitering. How can I loiter in a
church? The doors are open for
anyone.

TJ comes out of the bathroom.

JORDAN
(to TJ)
Did you wash your hands?

TJ
I thought about it, but decided
against it.

Jordan makes a disgusted face and runs into the sanctuary. TJ laughs.

TJ
Kids are weird. Bible study is
starting soon. You coming in?

CHASE
No.

TJ goes into the sanctuary, shaking his head in disbelief. Dana comes into the building, hair and clothes in disarray.

Chase is on guard, ready to move if she comes toward him. Dana ignores him completely. She goes straight to the sanctuary.

EXT. CHURCH, WOODS - SAME

Chase is at the well. He drops the photo of TJ in.

CHASE
My last evil deed.

SATCHEL
Is it?

Chase is startled by Satchel.

CHASE
Save him. If you don't, you're not much better than me, are you?

SATCHEL
Your logic is lopsided. Failure to save is not equal to murder.

CHASE
Anything else? Have you run out of judgement yet?

Satchel walks away; Chase watches him until he is out of sight.

INT. CHURCH, VESTIBULE - NIGHT

Chase sits on the floor. Farah comes out of the sanctuary with TJ. They are very close and smiling.

TJ
(to Farah)
I'm not leaving yet. I have a meeting with the pastor.

Farah notices Chase sitting on the floor and stops smiling.

FARAH
(to Chase)
Why are you here?

CHASE
Because I can be. You two look adorable together.

TJ
Is that supposed to be sarcasm?

CHASE
Nope.

Pastor Willis comes out of his office.

PASTOR WILLIS

(to TJ)

Come on in.

Chase waits until Pastor Willis returns to his office. He jumps up, pushes TJ aside and runs into Pastor Willis' office.

INT. CHURCH, PASTOR'S OFFICE - SAME

Chase slams the door and locks it. TJ bangs on the door from the outside.

TJ

(os)

Hey! Open this door! Dominic, you jackass!

PASTOR WILLIS

(to Chase)

Dominic? Is that your real name?

CHASE

Sure is. You like it?

PASTOR WILLIS

I'm assuming that you need something from me and you're not just acting like a toddler to amuse yourself.

CHASE

Did you know about it?

PASTOR WILLIS

What 'it' are we talking about?

CHASE

The snake.

PASTOR WILLIS

Who told you? And why?

CHASE

Someone and because I asked. Based on your response, I now know that you know and you weren't planning to do anything about it, were you?

PASTOR WILLIS

Nothing I can do.

CHASE

Horse shit. Try again.

TJ

(os)

What is he telling you, Pastor?
Don't listen to a word he says.
He's a liar.

PASTOR WILLIS

How do you know him?

CHASE

High school. The snake. Will you
kill it?

PASTOR WILLIS

No.

Pastor Willis unlocks the door and holds it open.

PASTOR WILLIS

(to Chase)

I think I know who 'someone' is.
I'll be giving her a call. Have a
nice evening.

TJ

(to Pastor Willis)

What did he tell you? It's all
lies.

CHASE

Honestly, fuck both of you.

Chase leaves the office. Farah stands right outside the door
and is in complete shock.

EXT. CHURCH, PARKING LOT - SAME

Chase unlocks his car, Farah has followed him.

FARAH

What is your problem? Have you lost
your mind talking to the pastor
like that?

CHASE

If you had a mind you would talk to
him like that. He's fucking trash.

FARAH

TJ was right about you.

CHASE

I'm sure he was.

FARAH

I'm moving out this week. Saving
money is just not that important
anymore.

CHASE

Okay then. Are you expecting me to cry?

FARAH

No, but I did expect you to care.

Farah storms off. Chase watches her cross the parking lot and get into her car.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Satchel jumps down into the well. He lands safely and picks up the photo of TJ.

Satchel wipes the photo off on his pants and puts it in his pocket.

Satchel climbs out of the well. Dana watches him from a distance, but he pretends to not notice her.

INT. CHURCH, PASTOR'S OFFICE - SAME

Pastor Willis is alone with Jennifer. She sits on his desk. Pastor Willis is on the phone.

The phone rings five times before someone answers.

PASTOR WILLIS

(on phone)

Hello? I need to speak to Bishop Matthews. I'm not leaving a message. Willis. Jonathan Willis. That's none of your business. Okay. Tell him, it's in regard to a serpent.

INT. APARTMENT, OFFICE - SAME

Chase sits at his desk, with the door closed. He can hear Farah stomping around the apartment, throwing things and slamming doors.

The printer spits out a single page. Chase folds it up and seals it in a yellow mailing envelope that already has other papers in it.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Pastor Willis is at the well. He takes a minister's robe out of a black trash bag and throws it in.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

Chase sits on the counter, eating a bowl of cereal. Farah stops short of coming into the kitchen when she sees Chase.

Farah glares at Chase before storming out and slamming the door shut.

CHASE
Have a nice day.

INT. ERYNN'S STUDIO - SAME

Erynn looks at her calendar for July. She has spray painted DOM and SHAWN across the whole month.

Erynn hastily packs a bag, grabs her keys and leaves.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase is parked in the lot of a fast food restaurant. He has ordered enough food for three people.

Chase has a burger in one hand, his cellphone in the other. From his contacts he selects "Prayer Warrior".

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - NIGHT

Chase is parked on a residential street with the engine running. Flirting Woman knocks on the passenger's side window.

Chase unlocks the door; Flirting Woman gets in.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Satchel sits in the front row, staring blankly into space. He looks very tired/worn out.

Satchel's nose begins bleeding profusely, but he does nothing to stop it. He is struggling to keep his eyes open.

SATCHEL
Erynn...

INT./EXT. ERYNN'S CAR - SAME

Erynn speeds down the road. She suddenly looks horrified.

ERYNN
Not yet. Wait until I get there.

Erynn drives faster with tears running down her face.

INT./EXT. CHASE'S CAR - SAME

Chase pulls up to a USPS mailbox. He drops the yellow mailing envelope in and pulls off.

Chase drives to Anointed Shepherd and parks as far away from the building as possible. There are a few other cars there.

Chase reaches into his backseat to get a bag. A pair of panties are on top of the bag. Chase flings them aside and pulls the bag into the front seat.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Chase climbs down into the well with his bag. He uses the flashlight on his phone to see.

From out of the bag, Chase pulls a small hunting knife. He slices his hand. He drops the knife and removes a fine paintbrush from the bag.

Chase uses his own blood as paint. He paints over the snake symbol on the wall of the well. Chase drops the paintbrush.

CHASE

Mishael, Serpentem veni.

Chase takes two dropper bottles out of his bag: one of Frankincense, one of myrrh. Chase puts a dropper full of each under his tongue and pours the rest out.

EXT. CHURCH, PARKING LOT - SAME

Erynn arrives and jumps out of her car as soon as it's parked. She looks around the lot and sees Chase's car parked alone, far away from the building.

Erynn runs to the church. She stops in her tracks when she sees Selene standing outside the front door crying. Selene is on her phone

SELENE

He won't listen to me, Erving. He's in the sanctuary. He won't let Pastor Willis or anybody touch him. Debbie and Jackie have been praying for him from a distance, but it's not enough.

Erynn goes inside the church.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Erynn watches Satchel from the door for a moment.

ERYNN

Shawn.

SATCHEL

Baby E.

Erynn goes to the front and takes a seat next to Satchel. His shirt and pants are covered in blood.

SATCHEL

Are you mad at me?

ERYNN

Yes.

SATCHEL

Is 'I told you so' coming? Please say no.

ERYNN

It won't do much good now will it?

Erynn puts her arm around Satchel. He rests his head on her shoulder.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Chase sits in the bottom of the well, drinking red wine straight from the bottle.

Chase hears rustling and hissing coming from above him. Dana slithers down the side of the well and curls up in front of Chase.

CHASE

Serpentem submittere.

Dana closes her eyes. Her slimy, corpse is regurgitated by the spectral snake.

Dana's body decays into dust in a matter of seconds. The snake stares at Chase, waiting for direction.

Chase has the knife in his hand. He stabs himself in the chest. Chase purposely waits until his last breath to speak.

CHASE

Serpentem festum.

The snake swallows Chase whole and takes on his appearance. The two die as one, but only Chase's body is left.

INT. CHURCH, SANCTUARY - SAME

Erynn rubs Satchel's hair and kisses him on the forehead.

ERYNN

Time to go.

SATCHEL

Yep. Bye, Baby E.

Satchel dies.

EXT. WOODED AREA, BEHIND CHURCH - SAME

Pastor Willis and Jennifer stand at the well, looking down into it. Jennifer shines a flashlight down.

Pastor Willis takes his cellphone out and makes a call.

PASTOR WILLIS

(on phone)

Hello, he did it. His body is still here. No, just his. Okay. See you later.

Pastor Willis hangs up his phone.

JENNIFER

Bishop Matthews?

PASTOR WILLIS

Yes. He wants me to do the funeral graveside. Closed casket. No notice to the family.

JENNIFER

What about that Farah woman? Won't she-

PASTOR WILLIS

She's just his girlfriend. No one cares what she thinks. Legally, the girlfriend label means absolutely nothing.

INT./EXT. FARAH'S CAR - DAY

Farah is at the cemetery, sitting in the driver's seat. She appears to be in a daze, as Chase's funeral has just ended.

TJ knocks on the passenger side window. Farah unlocks the door for him. TJ gets in.

Farah and TJ sit in silence for a moment. TJ points to Selene and Erving who walk back to their car.

TJ

Those people right here are something.

FARAH

Yeah.

TJ

This is so...

FARAH

Do you think it was guilt?

TJ

What?

FARAH

He stabbed himself in the chest. That's not a normal way to commit suicide. I mean there is no normal way, but that's needlessly brutal unless-

TJ

Please stop. I have a feeling that this is going down the "maybe there was something I could have done" road. Let's not.

FARAH

I'm just trying to find an answer, just one. I got nothing from Pastor Willis or Jennifer. I went to the funeral home and was shut out. They wouldn't talk to me. I went to the police. Another slammed door. Something isn't adding up and nobody will tell me anything.

TJ

I don't have an answer for you.

FARAH

What about his family? You know them. Did you tell them?

TJ

Yes. They were far less emotional than you are. So, what does that tell you about the kind of person he was?

EXT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

Farah gets the day's mail. She sees that the yellow envelope is from Chase, but has no return address.

Farah opens the envelope and looks in it. There inside is a typed letter, a newspaper clipping, a birth certificate, and instructions on how to kill a serpentine token.

Farah reads the letter first.

CHASE

(v.o)

Dear Farah, I'll skip the sentimental bullshit and get straight to the facts. Seventeen years ago, I caused an accident that led to the death of a classmate. I didn't expect him to die, but when he did, I wasn't that upset about it. His sister Erynn told everybody that it was my fault, but nobody believed her. Nobody except my family.

(continued from previous)

CHASE

(v.o.)

She's a psychic and she's never wrong, but when a seven year old pointed me out as a killer, everyone brushed her off. They believed her when she had good things to say. Take that as you may. Next, I found out the cause of the baby deaths at your church. It wasn't a virus. It was a snake. For more info go see Evangelist Genie Evans at Flame of Heaven. Lastly, whatever TJ told you about me is probably true, especially if it was all bad. I'm an asshole and don't deserve forgiveness so I'm not asking for any. I just wanted to apologize for wasting your time. I hope you find someone of higher quality to devote your life to. Sincerely, Dominic Haskins AKA Chase Davis.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN - SAME

Farah takes a good look at everything else in the envelope before throwing the whole thing in the trash can.

INT./EXT. TJ'S TRUCK - DAY

TJ is parked outside Farah's apartment building. Farah opens the passenger's side door. There is a newspaper in the seat.

TJ moves the newspaper so Farah can sit down. Farah gets in and takes the paper.

FARAH

Still getting the news on paper. Go digital.

TJ

Big pass on that. I'm too old school.

Farah looks through the newspaper and reads the obituaries. She sees the obit of Genie and is visibly shaken.

TJ

What? What happened?

Farah folds the newspaper back up.

FARAH

Have you ever been to Flame of Heaven?

TJ

No. It's a pentecostal church. I'm strictly baptist. Why? You want to visit? I'm willing for you. Just once.

FARAH

Great. Let's go then. I wonder if their service has started yet.

TJ

You seem eager. Ready to get hit by that holy ghost and speak in fake gibberish?

FARAH

No. I'm in PI mode.

TJ

What?

FARAH

Nothing.

TJ pulls out of the parking lot.

EXT. F.O.H PENTECOSTAL CHURCH - SAME

Farah and TJ walk across the parking lot. Erynn waits by the door for them.

TJ doesn't notice her until they are closer. He looks ashamed.

TJ

Didn't expect to see you here.

ERYNN

But I expected you. Hello, Farah.

FARAH

Hello, person. Do I know you?

ERYNN

I'm Erynn.

THE END