

SOMEWHERE INBETWEEN

"Helpless"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. RUN-DOWN BUILDING - NIGHT 1

Pan across a filthy, rubbish-strewn floor, tracking a RAT as it scurries across the floorboards.

Pale, sickly yellow light seeps into the room, and outside the sound of a light fall of RAIN filters inside.

The rat pauses to nibble at a discarded food wrapper, the faint SCRUNCH as it chews the only sound to be heard.

SPLAT! A heavy BOOT stamps down into frame and squishes the unfortunate rodent.

Someone MUTTERS from off screen at the mess that caused, scraping the boot sole along the floor for a moment.

Pan across a little further as the boots start to walk on - and then with a heavy THUD, a BODY is dropped into frame.

It's a young girl, dark-haired and pretty, BLOOD trickling from two puncture wounds in her neck - but she's still breathing.

The boots move away from her, leaving her shivering on the floor as more VOICES can be heard.

VOICE #1

The hell is that?

VOICE #2

Uh, I dunno. What time is it?

VOICE #3

After ten.

VOICE #2

Then I guess that makes her
'supper.'

There's a chorus of CHUCKLES before one pair of boots struts back over to the terrified girl. She looks up as a shadow falls over her...

... and into the leering features of a VAMPIRE, unshaven and in need of a good meal or three.

VAMPIRE #1

Evening, precious.

GIRL

P-please... don't... don't hurt
me...

(CONTINUED)

VAMPIRE #1

(rolls eyes)

Oh, right, 'cause that'll make me
not want to eat you.

The girl's eyes bulge and she lets out an involuntary SOB,
which gets a LAUGH from the vampire.

He stands, affording us a good look around the room at last -
sparsely furnished, full of scavenged furniture and
appliances.

The Vamp calls over to his two colleagues - both scrawny,
street-level thugs like he is.

VAMPIRE #1 (cont'd)

So how're we gonna do this? Cut her
into three pieces, take an arm or
leg each, what?

VAMPIRE #2

We could start by just-

Something CREAKS overhead, and the three vamps snap to
silence, looking up to the ceiling.

VAMPIRE #3

What was-

VAMPIRE #2

Ssh!

VAMPIRE #3

'Ssh'? The hell good will that do?
That's a louder sound than the one
I just made!

VAMPIRE #1

Will you two can it?

The first vampire raises a hand for silence as he stalks
slowly forward, his eyes fixed on the patchwork ceiling.

VAMPIRE #1 (cont'd)

There's someone up there...

The other two vamps exchange glances, then start to spread
out, ready for the intruder.

The lead Vamp points to one section of the ceiling, and his
comrades nod as they get into position to attack.

They hear a CREAK again, right where the Vamp is pointing,
and the trio brace themselves...

And with a CRASH, part of the ceiling on the other side of the room EXPLODES outwards as something smashes through!

The vamps spin round, but in the cloud of dust and plaster that's been kicked up, they're too slow to react as a dark shape BLURS towards them.

SNIKT! Vamp #2 staggers back, hands going to his throat - and as his horrified colleagues watch, his head lolls backwards, the neck sheared clean through!

VAMPIRE #3

What the- Anton!

Vamp #2's body hits the deck with a THUD, and as #3 turns round, trying to get his bearings on the fast moving attacker, all he gets is a glimpse of someone in a long, black coat and fedora, before there's a solid THUNK.

Pull back as he stares down at his chest - a STAKE has been punched cleanly into his heart.

VAMPIRE #3 (cont'd)

Oh...

He sinks to his knees then CRASHES face first to the ground. Vampire #1 quickly drags the Girl to her feet, alert as he snaps his head round the dim room.

VAMPIRE #1

Don't move, or she dies!

The girl is still SOBBING, and the Vamp shakes her and barks for her to shut up.

This takes his attention away for a moment, and he doesn't see the figure rising from the shadows behind him...

The Vamp's senses twig at last, but as he starts to turn it's already too late...

SHINK! There's a flash of silver as something SLICES lengthways down the vamp's body.

He stays perfectly still for a long beat. The shaking Girl cautiously opens one eye, then takes one tentative step forward...

... and the Vamp's two dissected halves separate and fall to the floor with a wet THUMP.

The Girl SHRIEKS as she hops away from the grisly scene - and bumps straight into her mystery saviour!

She SCREAMS, her nerves stretched to their limit, but the figure grabs her with two firm, pale-skinned hands.

(CONTINUED)

FIGURE
(soothing)
It's alright. You're safe now.

The Girl's still halfway between crazy and petrified, but with one smooth movement, the figure releases her, reaches up and sweeps away its fedora.

Long curls of peroxide BLONDE HAIR tumble into view, and the Girl's look turns to one of surprise as she sees her unlikely rescuer at last.

It's TWIST. She offers the Girl a grin as she ruffles a hand through her hair.

TWIST
Sorry about the hat. Keeping up appearances, you know?

A beat. Twist realises the Girl's not going to answer.

TWIST (cont'd)
O-kay... well, off you go.

Another beat. Twist's eyes flick left and right - is she missing something?

TWIST (cont'd)
(slowly)
You may go.

GIRL
A-a-am I... am I...

TWIST
Safe? Yeah. Free to go? Also yeah.
Starting to annoy me a little?
Yeah.

The Girl gets the message at last, spinning on her heel and tearing out of the room as fast as she can. Twist calls after her:

TWIST (cont'd)
And get that bite checked out,
okay?

She mutters as she stoops to retrieve her fedora.

TWIST (cont'd)
Kids...

Blowing some dust off the hat, she flips it neatly round and up onto her head, casting glances down at the fallen vampires before heading for the exit.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
I guess you'd be proud of me if you
could see me now.

The light spilling into the room glints off Twist's weapon -
and it's the unmistakable blade of Chris' KATANA.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
Okay. So I'm not scoring many
points for fashion, but results are
what count, right?

Twist pauses in the doorway to survey the scene one last
time. She nods, satisfied.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
Besides, if we're not doing all
this, who else is gonna save the
world?

Twist leaves the room, letting the door close behind her with
a SLAM as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2

INT. VAN - NIGHT

2

Up close with Twist as she noodles away on her mp3 player, brow creased in concentration.

She's inside the van, which has been refitted a little since we last saw it - maps are fixed to the walls covered with dots, crosses and other symbols, better seats have been set up in the rear, and there's a sling of webbing across the ceiling for luggage and weapons.

The van is rocking a little, in motion as we pan slowly across from Twist's position at the rear.

TWIST (V.O.)

I realised the other day that I've been talking for a few weeks now and I haven't said much about what anyone else is up to. Well. Trust me to rectify this oversight.

JULIE is next up, curled up on one of the seats with a blanket draped over her, trying to snatch a little sleep.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)

Julie's kind of taken over since you... you know. Nobody complains much - I'm not the leadering kind, after all, and she's easily as smart as you are. Smarter, actually.

(beat)

She says she'll think about losing you when she allows herself time to think, but we've all heard her crying when she thinks nobody's around to listen. I'm sure not about to bring it up with her, though, and I doubt the others are either.

We pan past Julie to find SYREN and DIEGO - Diego is reading from a magazine to Syren, who idly plaits her hair as she listens. She chuckles occasionally at whatever he's telling her. Her clothing is a lot more contemporary this time round.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)

Syren? Well, our resident diva's started earning her keep. Once she figured out how quickly she could pick up pretty much any song she's ever heard, she started gigging. Yep, you heard correctly.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
 When we roll into a town that needs a singer for the night, she steps up and earns us some cash to go into fuel and snacks for the next trip. I think her opinion on the 'you' situation is that you're coming back one day. End of story. Nobody's got the strength to argue with her on that one.

Diego peers at the magazine, baffled by what he's attempting to read, but Syren taps him eagerly on the shoulder to start again, and with a resigned sigh he continues.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Since Sanctus left to carry on looking for you, Diego opted to stay behind and help out. It's good to have a fighter like him around. Especially one who's kind of easy on the eye.

(chuckles)

Okay, okay, but you know what I mean. He's a good guy. I think he sees gaps in our skill set that popped up when you went, so he's doing his best to fill them.

Panning past those two we arrive at the front, and driving the van is DANYAEL, his eyes on the road as he drives on through the rain outside.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And then there's my boy Spook. Diego's been teaching him some more moves, carrying on where you and him left off, and I have to say he's getting pretty good at it. Beyond that, he's the same old Danyael. Knows everybody, keeps us connected and doesn't mind doing most of the driving.

(beat)

I guess that's everything.

Danyael calls back into the van:

DANYAEL
 There's a truck stop in a few miles. Shall I pull over?

Julie stirs from her chair and answers:

JULIE
 (sleepy)
 Yeah. Just for some food. And coffee.

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

Danyael nods, eyes back on the road as we look out through the rainswept windshield, and as a sign rolls towards us indicating that the truck stop is at the next exit ramp, we CUT TO:

3 INT. TRUCK STOP - DINER - NIGHT

3

The team are sat round a table inside the almost deserted diner. Tinny music plays from the in-house stereo as the tired-looking troops study the menu.

After a few unsuccessful attempts to find anything appetising, Diego passes the menu to Twist.

DIEGO

I think I will settle for coffee.

DANYAEL

Again?

DIEGO

Is that a problem?

DANYAEL

Just, you know, I haven't seen you really eat since... we met, actually.

DIEGO

(shrugs)

I don't get hungry.

DANYAEL

Yeah, neither do I, but I have a pretty good excuse. What's yours?

TWIST

Boys!

(snaps fingers)

Hot food and beverages, stat.

DANYAEL

You haven't said what you want yet.

TWIST

Oh, you know me. Get me... something. It's not like I'm fussy.

Danyael stands, and Diego rises to follow him as they head over to the counter.

Twist glances across to Syren and sees she has her eyes closed, humming along to the music.

Shaking her head, Twist turns towards Julie, who's dropping off to sleep again, giving her a gentle nudge.

(CONTINUED)

TWIST (cont'd)

Jules?

She starts as she wakes up, rubbing her eyes.

JULIE

Bathroom?

Twist points, and Julie rises to head over. Twist glances round the diner, empty save for a few lonely truckers, and sighs as she puts the menu back down.

SYREN

I like this song.

TWIST

You like every song.

SYREN

Yes, but I really like this one.

Twist concentrates - and realises she's hearing 'I Will Always Love You.' Syren starts to hum again, but a sharp nudge from Twist stops her.

TWIST

Nu-uh. Not ever.

Syren tries to pout, but it's clearly not an expression she's familiar with.

SYREN

I think I also need to visit the bathroom. Will you show me the way?

Twist lets out an exaggerated sigh, then stands and helps Syren up, the two girls heading into:

Twist pushes the door open and guides Syren inside, wrinkling her nose at the grubby bathroom.

TWIST

Jeez. You know, sometimes, it's a good job you're blind.

SYREN

Why?

TWIST

Just trust me. And please tell me you can find your way to the cubicle and back by yourself?

Syren smiles as she places a hand against the wall.

SYREN

I can find the way from here. Thank you.

TWIST

Alright. I'll be outside.

Twist departs, and Syren navigates over to the stalls, pushing open the nearest door - but then she pauses, frowning and looking round.

SYREN

Julie?

Cut over to see Julie, standing before one of the basins round a corner, out of sight of the door. She shuts her eyes - caught red-handed.

JULIE

Yeah, it's me.

SYREN

Sorry. I could tell it was you. I recognised your breathing.

Julie starts to ask how she knew that, but thinks better of it. As Syren heads over, Julie quickly tucks a small bottle of PILLS back up her sleeve.

SYREN (cont'd)

Is everything alright?

Julie quickly wipes her reddened eyes dry.

JULIE

Fine. I'm just, uh... I've probably got some coffee waiting.

She quickly steps past Syren and leaves, back into:

As she approaches the table, Julie sees that Danyael and Diego have taken a stack of local newspapers from a stand by the counter, and currently have them spread across the table.

She slides into her seat, gratefully grabbing the nearest mug of hot coffee as Twist munches lazily on an unidentifiable selection of meat and fries.

JULIE

(off papers)

Are these the latest editions?

DANYAEL

Looks like. Figured we may as well do this now before we hit town.

Julie nods, taking a paper Twist passes to her as Twist's voice-over resumes:

TWIST (V.O.)

This is how we find our way these days. The tried and tested 'Men In Black' technique.

The foursome start leafing through the papers, marking any stories of interest.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)

Before we roll into a new town, we check out the press and look for reports of anything weird going on. You know the kinds of things - murders, disappearances, sightings of freaky stuff - the usual. This means we're always busy and on the move which helps keep us all occupied.

Focus on Julie as she lifts her paper up, her attention snared by one article in particular.

TWIST (V.O.) (cont'd)

Julie's still doing her part to look for the cure too, saying that just because you're not here doesn't mean we can't finish what you started. Again, not gonna argue with that one. It seems to help her.

JULIE

Here's something.

She lays her paper down flat, drawing the others in as Syren returns to the table and is helped into her seat by Diego.

JULIE (cont'd)

Three sets of kids, all orphaned on the same night, all losing their parents to murders.

TWIST

Nice.

DANYAEL

One day, I'll remember to start getting creeped out by how easily stuff like that interests us.

JULIE

(reading)

Apparently, the parents all knew one another, and the police are looking to see if there are any more connections between the victims.

She pushes the paper towards the others as she reaches into her bag, taking out her laptop and setting it on the table.

DIEGO

That sounds unusual enough for us to take a look.

TWIST

Hey, say what you like, but we are not adopting any of those kids. We've already got too many new mouths to feed.

(to Diego)

No offence.

DIEGO

None taken.

(taps newspaper)

Julie, perhaps you could-

He looks up and sees that Julie is already typing away at her laptop.

JULIE

Already doing it.

She peers at the screen, rotating the laptop to show the others what she's found.

JULIE (cont'd)

I ran a search for anything resembling cult activity in the area, see if we're in some kind of hotspot for ritual attacks.

SYREN

'Hotspot'?

TWIST

She means a place where bad stuff happens a lot.

SYREN

Oh. Like Cleveland?

A beat.

JULIE

Anyway... there's about a half dozen news reports from the last year or so, cases of mutilated livestock and bizarre graffiti left on churches, focused around the area these kids are from.

DANYAEL

Sounds like a lead to me.

Julie nods as she turns her laptop back round, getting back to work.

JULIE

I'll keep looking, see if I can find anything specific.

TWIST

No chance these could just be three pairs of the unluckiest people in the world?

DIEGO

(off paper)

Not according to this. It says that all the victim died in similar ways - attacked by edged weapons and then having various organs removed.

Syren grimaces at this, and Twist glances down at her food, which suddenly resembles what Diego is talking about - but with a shrug, she carries on eating.

Danyael yawns, stretching his arms out as he does so, then idly scratches the back of his head.

DANYAEL

Maybe we should find somewhere to set up for the night?

TWIST

I vote 'hotel.'

SYREN

So do I. I don't want to sleep in the van again. There's a draft.

TWIST

Yeah, that's Danyael snoring.

He grins, looking out through the diner's windows until he spots the neon signs advertising a motel on the other side of the freeway.

(CONTINUED)

DANYAEL

I'll go book us in. Who's got the petty cash?

Diego takes out his wallet and passes it to Danyael, but when he checks it he finds that there's only a few notes left.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

Hmm.

(to Syren)

We might require your services if we want to sleep somewhere warm again tomorrow.

SYREN

That's fine.

TWIST

Nothing ever gets you down, does it?

SYREN

(smiles)

Not really, no.

TWIST

Right!

She rises decisively from her seat.

TWIST (cont'd)

Let's see how many rooms we can get for what we've got. Jules, you staying here?

Julie nods, not looking up from her laptop.

JULIE

Yeah, I'll be a while longer. You guys go ahead without me.

Twist motions to the others and leads the way, Danyael offering his arm to Syren and leading her off screen. Diego pauses to lay a hand on Julie's shoulder.

DIEGO

Do not stay here alone all night, Julie.

JULIE

I won't.

(lifts mug)

I'm almost out of coffee.

She offers him a smile, and with a nod Diego exits.

5 CONTINUED: (5)

5

As soon as he's gone, Julie's smile fades again, and she turns back to her laptop.

Reaching into her sleeve, she discretely slips out the bottle of pills, popping the cap and shaking two out into her hand. With a last glance around, she knocks them back with a gulp of coffee, then gets straight back to work.

6 EXT. MOTEL - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

6

It's a little later on, and we're facing a row of three motel room doors, the sounds of occasional traffic in the background.

Twist steps out of the furthest door, ice bucket in hand, and heads for the ice machine at the end of the little passageway, pausing to examine the treats inside the candy vending machine.

Another door opens while she's engrossed in that, and she doesn't notice Danyael step up until he's right beside her.

DANYAEL

So...

Twist jumps a mile, turning and PUNCHING him on the arm.

TWIST

Damn it, Danyael! Don't do that!

DANYAEL

Do what?

TWIST

Sneak up on me!

DANYAEL

I didn't!

TWIST

Then why didn't I hear you?

DANYAEL

You were lost in Candy Gazing World. You wouldn't have heard an A-bomb hitting the freeway.

A beat. Twist shrugs. Good point. They step away from the vending machine and walk towards the ice machine. Noticeably not talking.

TWIST

You, er... you okay?

DANYAEL

Yeah. Yeah. I'm good.

(CONTINUED)

TWIST

Good. I'm glad. You know, we've been on the road non stop for a good while now, so, you know, I just, uh, wanted to make sure that, uh...

DANYAEL

That we're okay. I got it. I'm good.

(beat)

Really.

TWIST

Okay! Well. Uh...

She motions towards the ice machine with her bucket, and Danyael twigs what she wants and steps out of the way.

She lifts the lid and scoops the bucket through the ice inside, turning back to face Danyael as he lights a cigarette.

Another beat.

TWIST (cont'd)

Julie back yet?

DANYAEL

No.

TWIST

Right.

(beat)

I should, uh...

DANYAEL

Yeah. See ya. Big day tomorrow; knowing our luck.

TWIST

Yup.

(beat)

Night.

She heads off, a little hesitant, and Danyael watches her go as he takes a drag from his cigarette.

She unlocks her door, pausing to glance back over to Danyael before stepping inside:

Twist shuts the door and leans against it, letting out a breath. She closes her eyes and shakes her head, pushing away from the door at last.

DIEGO (O.S.)
Is everything alright?

She looks up - and sees Diego standing in the doorway to the bathroom, fresh from the shower and wearing just a towel.

He dries his hair as Twist looks at him, the ice bucket still in her hands.

TWIST (V.O.)
Oh, yeah... and there's something
else I should probably tell you
about.

Twist manages a smile as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8 INT. MOTEL - TWIST'S ROOM - MORNING

8

The gang have gathered in Twist's room, washed and dressed ready for a new door. The curtains are drawn, of course.

Julie has her laptop up on the small table by the TV, passing out sheets of printed paper to each of them as she speaks:

JULIE

Twist, Diego, you're going to check out the first murder scene, see what you can pick up there. Syren, Danyael you're taking site number two.

DANYAEL

And we're moving around in daylight because...

JULIE

Because if we wait until nightfall, whoever or whatever killed these kids' parents may put something bad into action, and we'd run out of time to stop them.

TWIST

Hey, that works for me. Non-vamps run around in the sun while us creatures of the night see what we can smell, right?

JULIE

That's the idea. I'm going to visit the kids at the orphanage.

She holds up an ID card, that proclaims Julie to be a fully-licensed employee of Social Services.

JULIE (cont'd)

After that, we'll all meet up at the third site and see what we've found.

Julie folds her laptop shut, and that's the signal for everyone to get up and get ready.

Danyael's gaze lingers on Twist and Diego as they talk to each other, broken when Syren lays a hand on his arm.

SYREN

Danyael?

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

He turns, sees Syren giving him a friendly smile, ready to move out, and turns back to Twist and Diego - and catches Twist looking back at him.

Danyaël breaks the gaze as he heads for the door, scooping up his backpack. Twist watches him leave.

DANYAEL

Who gets the van?

JULIE

Twist and Diego. I took the liberty of calling one of your local contacts, they're sending a car round for you and Syren. Tinted windows, naturally.

Danyaël nods, fishing the van's keys out of his pocket. He glances towards Twist and Diego and **TOSSES** the keys over.

Twist reaches - but Diego **CATCHES** them in mid-air. Twist glares at him, but he doesn't notice it.

Twist turns back - but the motel room door is already closing as Danyaël and Syren make their exit. She lets out a **SIGH** as we cut to:

9 EXT. SUBURBS - STREET - DAY

9

Looking towards a nondescript, middle-class dwelling, its doorway cordoned off with **POLICE TAPE**, as a rusty old Ford pulls up over the road, its windows tinted pitch black. The Ford's engine **SPLUTTERS** as it parks.

10 INT. CAR - NEXT

10

Danyaël grimaces as the engine makes a few more **COUGHS** and **SPLUTTERS** before finally shutting off.

DANYAEL

Remind me to find out who Julie called and make them watch some car adverts, okay?

SYREN

(wrinkles nose)
This car smells like... I don't know what, but it's bad.

DANYAEL

(looks across street)
That's our address, now all we need is a quick way in.

(CONTINUED)

SYREN

Can't we just walk in? I mean, the house is empty, isn't it?

DANYAEL

Well, yeah, but if two random people stroll into a crime scene off the street, the neighbours might get a little suspicious.

He peers up through the darkened windscreen - the morning sun is still high in the sky, making it difficult for Danyael to leave the car safely.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

(huffs)

Don't suppose you can cover that sun up, can you?

SYREN

(tilts head)

I could try...

DANYAEL

Never mind. Stupid idea. Guess we're waiting for a cloud or two!

Danyael settles back in his seat, but Syren has other ideas. She unbuckles her seatbelt and slips out of the car.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

Hey! What're you...

He trails off as she wanders out into the middle of the road:

11 EXT. SUBURBS - STREET - NEXT

11

Syren stands in a ray of sunlight, closing her eyes and soaking up the warmth.

She begins to HUM, softly at first but building in volume, slowly raising her hands towards the sky. She sways gently from side to side as she sings.

12 INT. CAR - NEXT

12

Danyael watches, jaw hanging, as a thin band of CLOUDS start to drift across the sky, darkening and blotting out a little of the sun!

13 EXT. SUBURBS - STREET - NEXT

13

Danyael cautiously opens the door - and sees that the clouds are forming a dark patch across the street and into the house!

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

He warily walks over to Syren as she stops humming and lowers her hands, looking pretty pleased with herself.

DANYAEL

You're a little creepy sometimes,
you know that?

SYREN

(shrugs)
I can only make it last a minute at
the moment. I'm trying to see if I
can do more.

DANYAEL

A minute's fine. Let's go.

Still glancing nervously up at the barely-covered sun overhead, Danyael takes her hand and leads her across the street, ducking down the side of the house as we cut to:

14 EXT. SUBURBS - STREET - DAY

14

A different side of town, and the black van is parked over an open manhole cover in the road, another police-tape adorned house in the background as we cut to:

15 INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT - NEXT

15

Down in the dark basement of the house in question, there's a loud, metallic BANGING as a DRAIN COVER in one corner rattles and shakes in its frame, before it POPS out of place.

Twist squirms her way up and out through the narrow opening, her clothes and face streaked with muck which she tries to wipe away.

TWIST

(grimaces)
Okay... yuck.

She looks over to a staircase leading to a door up in the wall, and we cut to:

16 INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY - NEXT

16

Twist opens the front door to Diego, who slips between the lines of police tape to step inside. He takes a moment to look her up and down.

TWIST

Told you I could make it through
that gap.

DIEGO

(grins)
I'm sorry I doubted you.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

TWIST

Meh, it happens. C'mon, let's check this place out.

Twist turns and heads back into the house, and as Diego pauses, sniffing the air as he picks up the bad smell Twist brought in with her, we cut to:

17 INT. ORPHANAGE - RECEPTION - DAY

17

Julie pushes through a set of glass doors and heads for the front desk of the aptly-named 'His House Children's Home,' the neatly-mown lawns leading up to the front gates visible behind her.

The RECEPTIONIST, a pleasant-looking woman in her fifties, looks up from her paperwork as Julie approaches.

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning, ma'am. How may I help you?

JULIE

(flashes ID)

Hello, yes, my name is Kate Challenor, I'm liaising with the police department on the case of the three youngsters whose parents were murdered?

RECEPTIONIST

Oh, yes. Terrible, dreadful thing that happened. Such adorable children!

Julie manages an insincere smile.

JULIE

Could I see them? I just need to get some statements, check their well-being, things like that.

RECEPTIONIST

(uncertain)

Oh, well, I'm not sure if I should-

JULIE

I'll be in and out in ten minutes. I promise.

The receptionist pauses for thought, then reaches for a phone as we cut back to:

18 INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

18

Back in the first house as Danyael FORCES the kitchen door open, waiting for Syren to enter before he wedges the door closed after them.

DANYAEL

Remember, don't touch anything. We don't want to leave anything that might let the police CSI their way onto our trails.

SYREN

'CSI'?

DANYAEL

(beat)

Just don't leave any fingerprints, alright?

SYREN

How should I find my way round?

Danyael thinks, then reaches into his jacket and takes out a pair of gloves, which he passes to her.

DANYAEL

Here. Put these on. I'll take upstairs, you start down here.

He heads off, leaving Syren in the kitchen as she slips on the gloves and starts to carefully feel her way around the room, and we cut to:

19 INT. HOUSE #2 - UPSTAIRS LANDING - DAY

19

Diego exits one room in the second house, not looking like he found anything helpful when she hears:

TWIST (O.S.)

Hey, Diego? In here.

She follows his voice over to a doorway covered with police tape, ducking under it and into:

20 INT. HOUSE #2 - BEDROOM - NEXT

20

Diego double takes at the sight before him.

DIEGO

Madre dios...

The walls, furniture and even ceiling are spattered with BLOOD. Two huge pools of the stuff have dried into the carpet, but there's still more than enough to cover almost everything in sight.

(CONTINUED)

Twist is crouched by the pools, a thoughtful look on her face.

TWIST

Smelt this when I came in. Kinda hard to miss this much.

The faint impressions of chalk outlines can be seen, but from the looks of them the victims were left in several pieces.

DIEGO

Any sign of what could have done this?

TWIST

Well, there's all that...

She nods towards the far wall, and Diego turns to see that a row of SYMBOLS have been drawn on the wall in blood.

He steps closer, squinting as he examines them - they're a bizarre mix of mathematical shapes and more obvious occult markings like eight-pointed stars, pentagrams and arrows.

DIEGO

What do they mean?

Twist takes out her digital camera, lining up for a shot of the wall.

TWIST

That's what Julie's job is to tell us. Say cheese.

He turns - and as the FLASH from her camera dazzles him, we cut back to:

21 INT. ORPHANAGE - LOUNGE - DAY

21

Julie is shown into a large, plain living room by another member of staff, who stays over by the door.

The white-walled, blue-carpeted room doesn't hold much beyond a huge sofa and a TV, but the six BOYS and GIRLS sitting quietly as they watch the TV seem to fill the space.

Julie glances back towards the woman at the door as she heads over to the kids, casually settling into an armchair next to them.

JULIE

What're you all watching?

The kids exchange silent glances, before the eldest, a blonde BOY of about nine, turns to her:

(CONTINUED)

BOY

TV.

JULIE

Oh. Anything good?

More silent conferral.

BOY

Spongebob.

JULIE

Really? That's my favourite.

The boy doesn't know what he should say, his gaze wandering back to the TV screen.

Julie takes a deep breath, knowing this could take her a while as we return to:

22 INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

22

Syren steps into the front room of the house, but pulls to a sharp stop, the colour draining from her face.

SYREN

(calls out)

Danyael? Danyael!

He hurries back down the stairs to join her.

DANYAEL

What? What did you-

He pulls up - the front room here is a similar scene to the bedroom in the second house. BLOOD is sprayed over the sofa, walls and television, with more fragmented chalk outlines.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

Yikes.

SYREN

This room is full of death.

She reaches for his hand and squeezes, and he puts an arm round her.

DANYAEL

It's alright. Whatever did this is long gone.

SYREN

So much pain...
(shakes head)
It enjoyed it.

(CONTINUED)

DANYAEL

Hmm?

SYREN

Whatever did this, whatever killed these people... it took a lot of pleasure from it.

She turns to him, her expression dead serious.

SYREN (cont'd)

Danyael... we have to stop this.

He nods solemnly, hugging her for again before his gaze falls on something up on the wall over the fireplace.

A row of SYMBOLS drawn in blood, identical to the markings Twist and Diego found.

23 INT. ORPHANAGE - LOUNGE - DAY

23

Back with Julie and the kids, as four of them sit quietly in one end of the room, idly colouring things in as Julie talks to two twins, MELISSA and JORDAN, both freckly girls of six.

JULIE

And so what happened then?

MELISSA

Then, we heard mommy shouting for us to stay in our rooms...

JORDAN

... and our daddy was yelling. He sounded pretty mad.

JULIE

What was he saying?

MELISSA

Um...

JORDAN

He said 'no, no,' and then something went bang, and I remember cause I said to Melissa 'something just went bang!'

MELISSA

Did not!

JORDAN

I did! And then we heard that... it sounded kinda like a dog barking.

(CONTINUED)

MELISSA

A big dog. Like the one Mrs.
Jablonsky has down the street.

The two girls start bickering over this detail, but as they do Julie blinks at something she spots:

Both girls have an identical MARK on the backs of their necks, a small red symbol that looks too neat to be a birthmark.

Julie tries to get a closer look, but hears raised voices and glances up - another staff member has joined the woman at the door, and is whispering urgently into her ear.

JULIE

Okay, girls, I have to leave for a second, but thank you for everything you've told me, okay?

JORDAN

'Kay.

MELISSA

Miss Kate?

JULIE

Yes?

MELISSA

Are you gonna tell us why we can't see our mom and dad?

Julie pauses, thrown by the simple question - but as she sees the two women by the door closing in, she quickly rises.

JULIE

Don't worry, honey. I'll sort all of this out for you.

She steps back, glancing round and spotting another doorway.

WOMAN #1

Miss Challenor? Miss Challenor!

Knowing she's been rumbled, Julie breaks and races for the door, the women giving chase as she throws it open and dashes out into:

Julie runs for the nearest exit, the two thankfully out of shape women trying to keep up.

WOMAN #2

Stop! Whoever you are, stop!

24 CONTINUED:

24

Julie doesn't look back, getting to a fire door and shoving it open, and as she escapes into the outside world, we follow out through the door and the glaring sunlight:

WHITE OUT:

25 EXT. HOUSE - STREET - LATER

25

The black van and Danyael's loaned car are both parked outside another standard suburban home as we cut into:

26 INT. HOUSE #3 - HALLWAY - NEXT

26

This time, the grisly murder scene is the staircase and hallway - the stairs and carpets heavy with blood.

Julie kneels by the chalk outline at the foot of the stairs, the rest of the team gathered around her.

JULIE

Looks like the first victim made it a little way back up the stairs, the second fell right here.

DANYAEL

Same M.O. as the other sites, too.

Julie stands, pointing towards another row of bloody symbols on the wall.

JULIE

Are these the same as in the other two houses?

Danyael nods, and Twist tosses Julie her digital camera.

TWIST

See for yourself.

Julie calls up the photo and compares the two - it's a match.

DIEGO

What do they mean?

SYREN

Something bad.

TWIST

(dry)

The fact that they're written in human blood would suggest that, Sherlock.

Julie frowns, studying the markings.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

They're summoning prayers. They have to be inscribed in blood for the spell to have any power.

DANYAEL

Summoning for what?

JULIE

I'm not sure yet...

She points to one of the symbols.

JULIE (cont'd)

... but I know I've seen this one before.

(turns to group)

It was on the necks of two of the kids in the orphanage.

TWIST

What? Are you saying they did it?

JULIE

No, I'm saying whoever did this marked those kids for a reason - and they'll be coming back to finish the job.

DIEGO

Then we have to protect them.

JULIE

Easiest way to do that is to get them out of the orphanage

TWIST

Uh, no.

JULIE

Excuse me?

TWIST

We can't kidnap six kids, Jules! Can you imagine the kind of heat that'll bring down on us?

DANYAEL

She's got a point...

JULIE

So what do you suggest?

TWIST

Stakeout.

(CONTINUED)

DIEGO

I agree. We don't need to put these children through any more trauma unless we have to.

TWIST

Diego and me'll take the first watch, the rest of you find out what killed their parents and go find where it lives, then we all go in and kick its tush together. Deal?

JULIE

(beat)

Twist, Diego, you're guarding the orphanage. Danyael, Syren, you're with me to help figure out what these markings are trying to summon, and then we'll go looking for the base.

TWIST

(beams)

I love it when a plan comes together. Especially when it's one of mine.

DANYAEL

(sighs)

It's gonna be a long night...

Julie looks back to the symbols, her dark expression an indication of how serious this is getting before we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

27 EXT. ORPHANAGE - FRONT GATES - NIGHT 27

The children's home is closed down for the night, a few rooms in the main foyer still lit up but all the smaller houses holding the kids themselves are dark.

The black van waits across the street, hiding under the dense foliage of one of the many trees lining the street.

28 INT. VAN - NEXT 28

Diego waits inside the van, his senses alert and his eyes locked on the gates.

He's disturbed by a soft SNORING sound, and turns to see Twist fast asleep in the chair next to him.

He gives her a gentle NUDGE, and she wakes with a JOLT, grabbing her baseball bat as she sits bolt upright.

TWIST

(dazed)

Whu? Wha? Are they here?

DIEGO

You were asleep.

TWIST

(beat)

Yeah? And? Didn't you think I might've liked to stay asleep until something happened?

DIEGO

(shrugs)

I thought it was best to keep you alert.

TWIST

No, you can be alert. You're the one who doesn't seem to go to sleep, like, ever.

Twist grumpily tries to settle back down, but she's awake now despite her best efforts. She turns back to Diego.

TWIST (cont'd)

Man, it's a good job you're so pretty. A lesser man would've been out on his ass by now.

Diego flashes her a quick grin.

(CONTINUED)

DIEGO

Twist...

TWIST

(eyes closed)

She's not here right now.

DIEGO

What's the matter with Danyael?

Twist's eyes flick open. She sits up, her body language betraying her sudden uncomfortableness.

TWIST

'Wrong'? Why would anything be, you know... wrong?

DIEGO

We spar together every other day now, and his fighting skills are improving steadily. I'm very pleased with his progress.

TWIST

So?

DIEGO

So, the one thing I can't seem to understand is... he seems to have some kind of unresolved personal business. Something he hasn't come to terms with inside his own mind.

TWIST

(guiltily)

Oh. Really?

DIEGO

You're his friend. You've known him far longer and better than I have. Has he said anything to you?

TWIST

(quickly)

No!

(off his look)

I mean, no, why would he have?

DIEGO

As I said - you're his friend.

TWIST

He doesn't tell me everything, you know.

DIEGO

He doesn't tell me anything at all.
I'm still earning his trust, I
think.

(beat)

Are you sure there isn't something
he needs to discuss?

Diego looks to her again, waiting for an answer, and Twist
squirms for a beat, before Diego's attention snaps back to
the orphanage.

DIEGO (cont'd)

Someone's coming.

TWIST

(exhales)

Oh, thank God.

Across the street, two more unmarked VANS roll to a stop
outside the front gates, their headlights already off.

Twist grabs her bat and prepares to jump out of the van, but
Diego holds her back.

DIEGO

Wait. Let's see what they want
first.

TWIST

(huffs)

Are you always this patient?

(beat; rolls eyes)

Silly me. Of course you are.

They watch the vans as their side doors slide open - and two
gangs of MASKED MEN pile out, clutching a variety of guns and
weapons as they race towards the main entrance!

TWIST (cont'd)

Satisfied?

She KICKS her door open and leaps out of the van, Diego
grabbing his sword and quickly following as we cut to:

Twist digs her phone from her pocket as she and Diego race
after the Masked Men, who have just SMASHED their way inside,
setting off a noisy ALARM as they pile inside.

She rapidly dials a number and presses the phone to her ear,
waiting for an answer as we cut to:

30 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

30

Syren dozes on the bed as Julie and Danyael get to work, various textbooks spread out around them. A map of the area has a large black 'X' drawn on it.

Julie is squinting at her laptop screen, making notes as she reads when her phone RINGS.

JULIE
(into phone)
Twist?

TWIST
(filtered; through phone)
Battle stations! A bunch of goons
just busted into the orphanage,
we're heading to intercept. Some
backup'd be good.

JULIE
We're on our way.

She snaps the phone shut and gets to her feet.

DANYAEL
Trouble?

JULIE
(off Syren)
Wake her up. We're leaving.

Julie pulls on her coat as Danyael gently shakes Syren to wake her up, and as he grabs his own jacket we cut to:

31 INT. ORPHANAGE - RECEPTION - NIGHT

31

Twist and Diego get to the broken doors, the alarm bells RINGING all around as they look for any sign of the gang.

TWIST
Split up! I'll head this way, you
go that way.

Diego nods and breaks left, and we stay with Twist as she runs down a corridor to the right, heading for:

32 INT. ORPHANAGE - CORRIDOR - NEXT

32

Twist barrels through a set of 'Staff Only' doors and sees two of the gang running down a long, plain corridor.

TWIST
Hey!

She sets off in pursuit, and we switch to:

33 INT. ORPHANAGE - HALLWAY - NEXT

33

Diego finds himself in a large foyer with two wide staircases leading upstairs, and spots a group of the masked men heading for a higher floor.

He races forward, JUMPS and neatly VAULTS over the bannister, getting a head start as he closes in on the nearest men.

The leader of the gang spots the incoming Diego and barks to his comrades:

LEADER

Slow him down!

Three of the men hang back, armed with a variety of close combat weapons like knives and clubs as Diego swoops in.

The first takes a SWING at his head, but Diego swings beneath it and CHOPS his sword across the man's calves, dropping him and sending him rolling back down the stairs.

The second man gets in front of him, knife in hand as he makes a few clumsy STABS. Diego easily dodges round them, getting him in an armlock and TWISTING his wrist to make him drop the knife.

His colleague closes in, but Diego KICKS OFF from his chest, sending him stumbling back and using the momentum to FLIP over his captive, painfully WRENCHING the man's arm round.

Diego KNEES him in the gut, SPINS him round and SHOVES him into the third man, and the duo flip up and over the bannister, yelling out as they CRASH into the next flight of stairs down.

His path clear, Diego resumes his pursuit as we rejoin:

34 EXT. ORPHANAGE - GROUNDS - NEXT

34

Twist KICKS open a fire door and finds herself out on the fields at the rear of the orphanage grounds.

The men she's after are heading for the houses where the kids sleep, splitting into two groups as lights switch on across both houses.

Twist hears the sound of incoming POLICE SIRENS and knows she doesn't have much time left - she picks a group and sets off after them.

Closing in fast, she readies her bat as the group of men slow down, ready to meet her.

TWIST

Okay, muddy funsters, time to-

(CONTINUED)

BANG! Twist staggers back - there's a BULLET HOLE in her chest!

Her jaw drops, and she looks up to see one of the masked goons lowering a smoking shotgun.

TWIST (cont'd)
You... you shot me!

Confused glances are exchanged - shouldn't this chick be dead?

Twist stomps forward, SWATTING the shotgun out of the goon's hands and CRACKING him across the head with her bat.

TWIST (cont'd)
Shotguns are for wusses anyway...

The rest of the goons back up, clutching their weapons tightly as they try to figure this out, until:

MASKED GOON
Oh, I get it... she's a vampire!

The goons all nod - and on cue, every one of them draws a STAKE! Twist pales.

TWIST
(meekly)
Mother...

As the goons advance, we cut to:

Danyael is driving at extreme speeds as he weaves through late-night traffic, Julie and Syren hanging on for dear life.

There's the BLARE of a horn as Danyael narrowly misses a BUS pulling into his lane.

JULIE
Damn it, Danyael! This evening will
be a failure if we all die!

DANYAEL
Quiet! I'm concentrating...

Julie shuts her eyes, not wanting to look as Danyael speeds on and we cut to:

Twist is deep in combat with the six remaining goons, fending off attacks and throwing KICKS and PUNCHES of her own, but there's too many to fight all at once.

She SHOUTS OUT as one rakes a KNIFE across her back, then a PUNCH lands across her jaw and a STAKE narrowly misses her heart as one goon goes for the kill.

She stumbles back, TRIPS and hits the deck, looking up as two stake-wielding goons loom over her...

... and with a swift SNIKT sound, both men stutter and fall, revealing Diego as he lowers his sword!

TWIST

Well, it's about damn time!

Taking the advantage back, she SWEEPS one goon down and ELBOWS him in the gut, TACKLING the next as Diego cuts down the next two in quick succession.

Twist PUNCHES OUT her final attacker when something across the field grabs her attention:

One of the goons' vans has made it onto the field, and a horrified Twist watches as the second group of men bundles six KIDS inside!

TWIST (cont'd)

The kids! Diego, they've got the kids!

She starts running, but she's much too far away. The van SPINS to face the exit in a cloud of dirt, roaring back off onto the road as the flashing RED and BLUE of police lights starts to fill the air.

DIEGO

Come on, Twist! We have to go!

TWIST

But-

DIEGO

Come on!

He drags her away, and we cut back to:

Twist and Diego make it back out to the front, but two POLICE CARS are already SCREECHING to a halt out front.

Cut off, Twist looks for a way out, but their path to the van is blocked - until Danyael's car SOARS into frame, RAMMING the first squad car at full speed!

It ROLLS back and hits the second, knocking both back as a woozy Danyael staggers out of his trashed car.

TWIST

Danyaël!

She hurries over to him, but as Julie and Syren hurry towards them, Diego is already ushering the group towards the van.

TWIST (cont'd)

The hell did you do that for? How many times - life is not like 'Burnout 3'!

DANYAEL

(groggy)

Got you... out... didn't it?

The dazed police officers are still pulling themselves out of their car as Diego throws open the van door, letting the team pile inside.

DIEGO

The raiders escaped with the children, but we-

JULIE

Don't worry...

She holds up her map, pointing to the 'X.'

JULIE (cont'd)

... we know where they're going.

The team pile into the van, and as Julie gets into the driver's seat, starts the engine and ACCELERATES away, the cops get off a few SHOTS at the fleeing van as we cut to:

Danyaël is sprawled in the back, Syren hanging onto him as Diego joins Twist and Julie in the front. She hands him the map.

JULIE

Correlated sightings to records of cult activity in the area, managed to get a common location. Narrowed it down further when I found there's a magical power line running straight through this place, right here.

She taps at the map, SWERVING around a slow-moving car ahead.

DIEGO

Are you sure?

JULIE

Whatever these guys are planning,
they've picked a good spot to pull
it off. There's enough power in
that line to refuel a power
station!

Twist grabs the dashboard as Julie shows she's as dramatic a
driver as Danyaël when she needs to be, and we cut to:

39 EXT. OLD BUILDING - NEXT 39

The van SCREECHES to a halt outside an old, disused building
that used to be an amusement arcade, and the team pile out
and head for the nearest door, passing the parked unmarked
van they were chasing on their way into:

40 INT. OLD BUILDING - NEXT 40

Diego BARGES the door open, revealing a wide, dusty room with
dozens of covered arcade game cabinets pushed to either wall.

The gang of goons, the terrified kids held amongst them, whip
round to face the intruders.

Twist takes point, levelling her bat at the leader.

TWIST

Sorry, but the brats are with us.
Got the eBay receipt to prove it.

LEADER

You people don't have a clue what
you're up against, do you?

TWIST

Remind me, Diego, how many of these
goons did we leave down and out
back at the orphanage?

Diego joins her, with the rest of the team flanking them.

DIEGO

Enough.

TWIST

So, you see, there's not much point
trying to-

LEADER

You don't understand! If we don't
cleanse these children, then we'll
all be-

DANYAEL

Eating through straws?

The Leader scowls, grabbing one of the twin girls and pulling her hair up, pointing to the mark Julie saw.

LEADER

You see this? Do you know what this means?

JULIE

I know what you'll be trying to use it for.

LEADER

What we'll be using it for?

(shakes head)

You're so wrong, it's not even funny.

(beat)

Their parents are the ones who did this to them. That's why we had to have them killed.

The team exchange puzzled looks.

DANYAEL

But... how?

LEADER

To stop a monster, sometimes you have to become one.

(beat; lowers head)

I wish I could say I didn't take some satisfaction in what I did, but...

JULIE

So who are you people? I mean, I'm guessing you're some kind of cult, but are you trying to say you're against what's been done to these kids?

TWIST

Correct me if I'm wrong, but we couldn't help but notice the demon summoning markings painted in freakin' blood on the walls back at these kids' houses.

LEADER

Protection spells. Trying to stop the summoning from working.

TWIST

Julie? That right?

JULIE
(uncertain)
I... I don't know, I'm sure-

LEADER
You have to let us finish this!
These children have been marked as
vessels for the spirits of Na'Grazi
by their own followers, and if the
ritual goes ahead then nothing will
be able to stop them!

TWIST
And how do you propose to get those
marks off?

The Leader pauses - then draws a KNIFE.

LEADER
There's no other way.

TWIST
Oh, hell no...

She makes the first move, breaking forward to attack as the others follow her.

One goon comes to meet her head on, and as Twist SMASHES her bat into his head, we switch to:

Syren, who SHRIEKS at a goon that charges her, BLASTING him off his feet and sending him hurtling backwards.

Danyael PUNCHES one man down and wrestles one child from his hand as he falls, herding the kid away from the battle.

Julie draws her gun, but as a knife is SLASHED across her arm, she YELLS and drops the weapon.

The goon prepares to stab again, but Diego steams in with a PUNCH that knocks the man off his feet.

In moments, all the goons are down except the leader, who has the last child gripped tightly in his arms. He backs up, the team advancing on him.

LEADER
No... no! Listen to me! There's no
other way! You can't get rid of
these marks once they've been cast,
it'll kill the vessel if you do!

TWIST
Pardon me for not taking the
kidnapper at his word.

LEADER

There's no time left to argue! The ritual will commence at midnight, and if we don't cleanse the vessels before then, we'll all-

BLAM! The cultist staggers back - and slowly looks down at the BULLET WOUND in his shoulder!

The team snap round and see Julie, calmly lowering her gun, and as the leader folds to the floor, Danyael swoops in to snatch the terrified kid back up.

TWIST

(angrily; to Julie)
The hell was that?

JULIE

A solution.

TWIST

You could've shot that little girl!

JULIE

I'm a better shot than that, Twist.
I wouldn't have taken it if I didn't think I could do it.

Twist stomps away and joins Danyael and Syren, who are keeping the children gathered together.

DIEGO

Was he correct? Is there any other way to remove these markings? And are the children destined to be vessels for some kind of evil spirits?

JULIE

I don't know... maybe.

TWIST

'Maybe'?

JULIE

I saw a passage in my research that mentioned something about the 'eternal mark of the vessel,' but I didn't... I hoped I'd translated it wrong.

SYREN

So what are we going to do? Can we stop the summoning, or are the children...

40 CONTINUED: (4)

She looks down at them, afraid to finish the thought, but Danyael pipes up:

DANYAEL

Maybe not...

All eyes turn to Danyael, who looks to Syren as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

41 INT. WAREHOUSE - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

41

A plain old warehouse, with forklifts in one corner, shelving stacks in another and heaps of pallets and crates dotted all around.

And in the foreground, an open-topped metal CAGE, a few feet high, with the six kids from the orphanage sitting quietly inside!

Pull back to find the team crouched out of sight behind a heap of lengths of tubing, watching the kids.

TWIST

Did I say how I don't like this plan yet?

DANYAEL

Not in the last minute.

TWIST

Good.

(beat)

I don't like this plan.

SYREN

I agree with Twist. This all seems very...

TWIST

Haphazard? Slapdash? Maybe even a little, oh, I don't know, crazy?

DANYAEL

Will you relax? The numbers add up on this one. It's all good.

He turns to Julie, who is typing rapidly into her laptop as Diego watches.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

Right, Julie?

She looks up, frowns, then looks back to her work. Twist quirks an eyebrow at Danyael's puzzled reaction.

TWIST

(dry)

Oh, yeah. Real confident.

We focus on Danyael again as he peers back over the tubing, his eyes on the kids as we hear:

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

DANYAEL (V.O.)
 Okay, here's how I'm seeing this...

PUSH IN on Danyaël before we cut to:

42 INT. VAN - NEXT

42

TITLE OVER - One Hour Earlier...

The team are assembled in the van, Syren with the kids clustered protectively around her in the back.

Danyaël is driving, the others sitting behind him as Julie fills her side of the cabin with open books.

DANYAEL
 We don't seem to be able to get the marks off these kids, right?

TWIST
 Tried licking my finger and rubbing 'em, so far nothing.

DIEGO
 She means 'no.'

Julie holds up her laptop to show the others - she has a diagram of the inscriptions seen on the walls of the victims' houses showing.

JULIE
 That cultist was right - these markings form a protection spell designed to counter the summoning ritual.

DIEGO
 So you were mistaken?

JULIE
 (beat)
 I didn't get the full story from what we saw. You have to include part of the ritual in the inscription for the protection spell, otherwise you can-

TWIST
 Yeah, yeah, we get the idea. You screwed up. Deal with it. Next problem.

Julie starts to answer back, but knows she was wrong this time so fights her retort back down.

(CONTINUED)

TWIST (cont'd)
How do we stop the ritual?

JULIE
We can't. Not without killing the kids.

They look back to Syren, who looks horrified at Julie's comment and pulls the kids a little closer to her.

TWIST
(weary)
We're not actually gonna do that...
(to Julie)
... are we?

JULIE
Of course not. I just haven't figured out a way around it all yet.

DANYAEL
And as I keep saying, I have.

JULIE
Danyael, don't take this the wrong way, but I've got years of expertise in this kind of thing behind me. What makes you so sure your plan will work?

Danyael cranes round to grin back at Syren.

DANYAEL
Faith.

JULIE
(impatient)
Look, this summoning was set in stone the second those childrens' parents put those marks on their bodies. We can't do anything about that, and if that cult leader was right we have...
(checks watch)
... less than an hour before the spell is activated.

DANYAEL
Then we'd better make sure we're set up by then, huh?

Julie looks away, obviously frustrated, and as a determined Danyael speeds on, we return to:

43

INT. WAREHOUSE - GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT

43

Back in the warehouse as Danyael ducks back down, looking at his watch.

TWIST

How are we doing?

DANYAEL

Two minutes to midnight.

TWIST

Hey, you said that without singing it. I'm impressed.
(off Diego's blank look)
Song reference. Never mind.

Julie closes her laptop and loads her gun with a loud CLICK, getting everyone's attention.

JULIE

Alright, let's get into our positions. Even if Danyael's right, we're only going to get one shot at this. Whatever happens to the kids, we can't let even one of them get out of this warehouse. Is that clear?

Nobody can meet her stern gaze - they know what following that order could mean.

JULIE (cont'd)

Is that clear?

DIEGO

We understand.

Syren raises her head suddenly, as if hearing something.

SYREN

It's time.

TWIST

Already? But Spook said-

DANYAEL

Let's assume my watch is slow.

Twist frowns, but follows Diego as he darts around the outside of the warehouse floor, keeping his eyes on the kids.

Danyael and Syren go to the other side, leaving Julie with her gun trained on the kids.

(CONTINUED)

As she watches, tiny slivers of LIGHT start to form in the air over the cage, and the kids look up as they're bathed in the soft luminescence.

Julie grits her teeth, squinting down her gun sights as we watch the rest of the team getting into place, flanking the cage on either side.

Twist watches as the points of light start to increase in size, hovering in the air above the cage and starting to PULSE softly with every second.

TWIST

You getting a bad feeling about
this yet?

She turns to Diego, his focus entirely on the kids, and turns back as she spots Syren and Danyael weaving in even closer to the cage.

The balls of light suddenly BLAZE with fierce energy, forcing the kids to shield their eyes, and in an instant they all ZAP down, covering each child in a flurry of crackling energy!

The kids cry out in fear, but as the energy courses over their bodies, something else begins to happen:

The childrens' bodies start to WARP and DISTORT, bulging impossibly and swelling as they start to grow in size, their features melting and twisting as the energy continues to swirl all around them!

Danyael reaches for Syren, holding her hand tightly and pulling her close.

DANYAEL

Are you ready?

SYREN

I... I think so.

DANYAEL

You can do this, Syren. You know
you can. You just have to believe
you can save them.

She takes a deep breath and nods at last, scared but trying not to show it.

Danyael looks back towards the kids - they're growing rapidly now, their bodies mangled into inhuman, monstrous forms as they push at the edges of the makeshift cage, which looks ready to pop at any second.

DANYAEL (cont'd)

It's time!

He hurries forward, leading her behind him as they approach Ground Zero for the transformation taking place, the possessed kids letting out WAILS and SHRIEKS as they struggle to free themselves.

Twist and Diego are also moving out of cover, hanging back with their weapons ready...

... until the cage finally CRACKS open, and the beasts within are unleashed with a chorus of ROARS!

DANYAEL (cont'd)

Now!!

Twist and Diego charge in, heading straight for the first creature as it begins to straighten itself up...

... and Twist tries not to panic as the beast rises to stand a full foot taller than her! No longer recognisable as the child it took over, the creature's jet black skin is covered with thick plates forming a second, armoured skin, and one long, twisting HORN juts from its head.

It ROARS and swings for Twist, who has to ROLL to avoid it, narrowly missing getting STAMPED on by the second monster!

TWIST

Danyael! Now would be an excellent time for your master plan to kick in!

Diego is trading attacks with another creature, its huge CLAWS clashing with his sword and showering the scene with SPARKS.

All the beasts' attention is focused on Twist and Diego, and this gives Syren a clear view of the nearest one.

DANYAEL

Okay, Syren... now!!

She takes a deep breath - and lets rip with a SCREAM, shrill in pitch and accompanied by a HAZE of swirling energy pouring from her open mouth!

It hits the creatures dead on, and with a HOWL of pain they stumble forward, staggering under the onslaught.

Julie vaults over her cover and rushes forward, one hand raised as she mutters an incantation - and her hand starts to GLOW with dark RED energy!

With a sound like metal tearing, a blaze of LIGHT starts to draw out from each monster, swiftly forming into the likeness of the creature itself.

(CONTINUED)

The bodies left behind rapidly revert to those of the children, their forms returning to normal as the spirits possessing them are forced out, and as Syren's scream finally dies down, three SPIRITS are left swirling in the air!

JULIE

Bannir!

The energy LEAPS from her hand, enveloping the spirits as they search for a new host, encasing them in a field of chaotically buzzing energy to a chorus of SCREAMS!

Diego grabs Twist and pulls her away, Danyael doing the same for Syren as Julie races forward to gather up the kids, the field around the trapped spirits burning more and more intensely...

... until with a loud SNAP it vanishes, burning an afterimage into the air as it fades away, the shrieks of the banished spirits echoing through the warehouse.

Silence falls. The frightened, rapid breaths of the kids can be heard as the team pick themselves back up, checking one another for injuries.

Danyael lets out a WHOOP of victory as he twirls Syren round by her waist.

DANYAEL

You did it! You did it!

SYREN

I did!

DANYAEL

I knew you could.

He KISSES her on the cheek, and Julie manages a small smile as she looks over each of the kids.

She checks the twin girls first, their bodies showing some cuts and bruising from the trauma of the transformation but otherwise okay. She gently lifts their hair and checks their necks - and the marks are gone!

TWIST

Well? Did it work?

JULIE

(relieved)

It worked. We're okay.

TWIST

Alright! Team Kickass one, team Evil nil!

(CONTINUED)

She grabs Diego and KISSES him - on the lips. He grins, but as Twist catches Danyael's eye, his suddenly subdued expression kills her own enthusiasm stone cold.

Julie is busy checking the rest of the children, but as she comes to the last boy, her smile drops.

JULIE

Oh, God...

DANYAEL

What? Everything okay?

Julie turns, her face saying it all - and the boy before her still bears the MARK of the ritual on his arm!

Julie starts to turn back to him, and the boy begins to GRIN, his eyes starting to glow a fierce, bright BLUE...

... and there's a BANG as Julie is thrown backwards, knocked off her feet by a wave of energy that floors the others too!

Diego gets his head up first, watching as the boy lets out a ROAR much louder than his size should allow, and in moments the telltale signs of the possession resume - his frame begins to stretch and distort, his bones SNAPPING in and out of shape as his torso twists and distends!

TWIST

Syren, quick! Get him!

Syren hurriedly gets to her feet, but she's wandered too close to the blossoming creature, and before Danyael can warn her, she's taken a mighty SWIPE to her chest, SWATTING her back through the air!

She lands several feet away with a THUD, landing in a crumpled heap as Danyael rushes to her side.

Twist slowly rises as the final creature, safe back inside its host, towers above her, once again BLAZING with energy.

DIEGO

What happened? I thought Syren forced them all out of their hosts?

TWIST

She either missed one, or this one got back in before Julie's spell kicked in. Either way...

(raises bat)

... it's game time.

She inhales - then CHARGES forward with a yell, taking on the mighty beast as it BELLOWS with rage!

Danyaël reaches Syren, but she's stunned, bleeding from a cut on her forehead as he cradles her.

DANYAEL

Syren! Syren, are you okay?

SYREN

I... I'm not... what...

DANYAEL

It's alright, I've got you. Come on.

He scoops her up, trying to carry her to safety but snapping round as he hears:

TWIST (O.S.)

Oh shiiii-

CRASH! Twist flies into both of them, the trio scattering to the ground as the inbound Twist bowls them all over.

The beast whips round to face Diego, who bravely stands between it and the rest of the kids.

He aims his sword at the monster as it THUDS towards him with heavy footsteps, his face defiant.

DIEGO

I do not want to kill you, *niño*... but that does not mean I won't.

The beast ROARS and SWIPES a heavy, clawed hand at him, but Diego dodges beneath it, getting ready to strike back...

POW! The creature's foot whips round in a blur of motion, catching Diego off guard and knocking him flat, his sword flying from his hand.

Winded, he can't react in time as the creature raises a foot over him, ready to stamp down and crush him...

Julie raises her gun - she's got a clean shot at the beast, its attention on Diego, but she knows full well what killing it will do to the child it's taken over. Her hand trembles...

And there's a SCREAM from the far side of the warehouse, an instant before the creature is caught in another BLAST of energy - projected by Syren!

Sitting up from the floor, the recovering Twist and Danyaël either side of her, she's got just enough power to keep the assault on the creature up for a few more seconds before she starts to wilt - but it's enough.

With a piercing SHRIEK, the spirit is wrenched free from the body of the boy, who FALLS back into Diego's arms as the spirit whips around the room overhead.

Julie snaps out of her amazement, dropping her gun and dashing forward as she readies her incantation again.

Diego scrambles to safety with the boy as Julie ZAPS the spirit with another stream of red energy, snaring its ghostly form at last!

Danyael catches Syren just as she faints away, and Twist jumps to her feet as she sees Julie hit the bullseye.

TWIST

Yes!

JULIE

Bannir!

There's a last HOWL from the spirit - and a trail of blue energy snakes quickly back down the beam coming from Julie's hand, making her jolt as it strikes her.

There's another SNAP - and the spirit is gone. Julie stumbles back a step, looking down at her hand, suddenly disorientated.

Julie lowers her hand, panting for breath, and surveys the scene around her - the kids are safe, and she watches as Diego checks the boy in his arms.

To his relief, the mark is gone. He smiles and nods back to Julie, who nods back and exhales at last, rubbing her weary eyes as we DISSOLVE TO:

Several police officers are still on the scene, talking to the fretful staff members present, the reception buzzing with activity.

One of the women looks around as the nearest officer steps away - and her jaw drops as she sees the six kids, sporting a few plasters and bandages, wandering obliviously into the foyer!

STAFF MEMBER

Oh, my God...

She rushes forward, sweeping up one of the twins in her arms as all attention turns to the kids. They're quickly surrounded by the thankful staff, as several officers hurry back outside:

45 EXT. ORPHANAGE - FRONT ENTRANCE - NEXT 45

They dash down the steps and out to the front gates, sweeping the streets for any sign of life - but all they get is the retreating rear of the van as it speeds into the night...

46 INT. VAN - NEXT 46

Danyael checks the mirror, but the cops don't seem to be following. He grins, turning to Twist in the passenger seat. She smiles back, turning to look into the van.

Diego is hanging on to Syren, who is sleeping off her night's exertion, a bandage round her head wound. She doesn't look in too bad shape.

Sitting alone at the very back of the van is Julie, her legs pulled close to her chest.

Twist frowns, glancing to Danyael, who nods for her to go back and talk to Julie.

Twist clambers out of her seat and over to Julie, settling in next to her. They sit in silence for a moment.

TWIST

You okay?

JULIE

Twist...

TWIST

'Cause, you know, if there was a prize for looking the least satisfied in a job well done, you'd be winning it.

JULIE

(sighs)

I'm fine. I just want-

TWIST

To be left alone? Yeah, I got that. I just want to know why first.

Julie doesn't look like she's enjoying this conversation.

JULIE

Twist, just... just give me a minute, will you?

TWIST

Why?

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

(snaps)

I don't have to explain myself to you!

Twist is rebuffed by that remark, and finally gets up, getting the message to leave Julie alone.

Twist heads back into the front, and as Julie's eyes fall on her holstered gun, a torrent of guilt washes over her face as we hear:

TWIST (V.O.)

So, that's the story so far. Kids safe, spirits banished, job well done, yadda yadda.

Julie turns her head round, curling up and grabbing a blanket to wrap round herself as we cut to:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

P.O.V. - VIDEO CAMERA

Looking through the lens of a camcorder, with Twist talking straight into camera.

Twist is silent for a long beat, putting her next few sentences together.

TWIST

I guess the worst part is the not knowing... you know? It's like, do we really accept that you're never coming back, or do we still get all hopeful and excited every time we hear from Sanctus again?

(beat)

I'd just like an answer, one way or the other. But, I also know I'm not gonna get one, so...

(beat; sighs)

I miss you. I miss you every day. I just... I just wanted a chance to say...

She hesitates, then reaches forward to shut the camera off, and after a beat of STATIC, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW