

SMOKE & MIRRORS

written by

Teddy McCormick

INT. FUNERAL - NIGHT

It's a small church, sparsely populated.

At the front is a coffin with a woman in it: PENELOPE, 40.

IONA, 12, stands alone in front of the coffin.

She stares at her mother's body, fights back tears.

A dark figure enters the room.

His steps are light, but purposeful.

As he nears the front, PETER, 45, and HEIDI, 52, both sitting in the front, notice him.

Peter is a bear of a man, with the hair to prove it. Heidi's eyes are a pure sapphire blue, and her breaths frost the air in front of her.

Peter gasps and snarls when he sees the newcomer. Instinct draws him to his feet, but Heidi pulls him back down.

HEIDI

This is not the place.

PETER

(a little too loud)

This is not his place.

The man ignores them, if he even hears them.

He stands next to Iona, who doesn't notice him.

The man kneels next to her. We see his face: he is ISAAC, 42. His hair is neat, his face clean-shaven. His eyes are gentle now, but there's something dangerous hiding in them.

ISAAC

You can cry.

That was all she needed. Iona bursts into tears.

Isaac puts his arm around her, and she immediately turns into him, cries into his shoulder.

Peter snarls again; this time Heidi tenses up, too.

Isaac looks up at Penelope's body. Nods solemnly; "Goodbye."

He stands, turns to the pews. Special attention to Heidi and Peter.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I'm aware you don't want me here.  
Thank you for allowing me to pay my  
respects regardless. I won't impose  
any longer.

Peter cools off, just a bit.

Isaac turns to Iona.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Come. It's time for us to go.

Peter's eyes flare. Heidi's eyes are suddenly entirely blue.  
Iona is confused.

PETER

Like hell!

Peter barrels towards Isaac, hairier than he was a moment ago, larger, more muscular. A cold wind blows around Heidi.

Iona is startled by them.

Shouts from the rest of the pews - some afraid, a couple coming to join Peter.

Isaac pulls his cloak over himself and Iona, and it falls flat to the floor - they've both disappeared.

Peter yells, throws the cloak aside as if he expects to find Isaac and Iona flat beneath it. He looks around, sniffs the air.

He barrels out a side exit, the others from the pews on his heels.

SUPER: FIGMENT

Heidi closes her eyes, meditates for a beat. Then she follows after Peter, her feet never touching the ground.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Isaac and Iona stand in the middle of an alley. Iona is confused, and more than a little afraid.

Isaac kneels next to her. She doesn't pull away from him, but she doesn't accept his comfort anymore, either.

IONA

Are you kidnapping me?

ISAAC  
If I have to.

Iona takes a step back.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I made your mother a promise. This  
will be much easier if you trust  
me. At least for a little while.

Iona looks at him like he's crazy.

IONA  
No! I know who you are, and-

Isaac waves his hand, and though Iona's mouth keeps moving,  
no sound comes out. She stops, surprised.

Isaac holds up a finger, looks around.

He glances back at her.

ISAAC  
Your mother had a secret. You could  
tell it was there, but you never  
knew what it was, and were smart  
enough to never ask.

Iona hesitates.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I'm the only person alive who knows  
what it was.

The sound of PEOPLE RUNNING grows from outside the alley.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
We're out of time. Am I kidnapping  
you or not?

Iona looks at him.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Peter charges down the sidewalk on all fours. He stops  
outside the alley, sniffs, looks inside.

There's nobody there.

He keeps running, the others close behind him.

INT. FAMILY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Isaac and Iona sit across from each other, a plate of nachos between them.

Iona chows down, but Isaac just stares at her.

Beat.

ISAAC  
You look just like her at your age.

IONA  
That's what everyone says.

Isaac nods.

ISAAC  
She was teaching you?

Iona stops eating. Sits up straighter, proud.

IONA  
Yes.

ISAAC  
Conjuration, I assume?

She nods.

IONA  
And Heidi was teaching me the Nordzauber.

ISAAC  
I see. How are your fundamentals?

IONA  
I know the Twelve Words and eight of the Nine Runes.

ISAAC  
Your Gebaren?

Iona looks away.

IONA  
Heidi says they're sloppy.

ISAAC  
How old are you? Twelve?

IONA  
I'm thirteen in a month.

ISAAC

That's four years and eleven months  
too old to be sloppy with your  
gestures. We'll start there.

Iona groans.

IONA

But the Gebaren aren't even  
important for conjuration!

ISAAC

They are for Nordzauber. And  
besides, I'm not teaching you  
conjuration.

IONA

But mom-

ISAAC

Penny is dead.

It hangs there for a beat. It's unsettling for both of them.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

If I was half the conjurer she was,  
that's what I'd teach you. But I'm  
an illusionist, so you'll study  
illusion.

Beat.

IONA

Fine.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The apartment is sparse. A worn sofa faces an empty TV wall  
mount and a bookcase, crammed with everything from pop  
fiction to ancient tomes.

The walls have various runes and sigils written all over them  
in ash. A small bag of charcoal leans against one wall.

Isaac carries a sleeping Iona inside. He lays her down on the  
sofa.

EXT. ENCHANTED FOREST - DAY

Iona wakes up on a bed of flowers, with a blanket of rich  
furs.

ISAAC (O.S.)  
...Not like I've lost anything  
while I was gone.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
But you have, Isaac. Nature abhors  
a vacuum. You're talking as if you  
can just walk back in as if you'd  
never left.

ISAAC  
And you're talking as if everyone's  
already forgotten I existed.

Iona stands, unsteady on the soft moss beneath her feet.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
They may have.

Isaac snorts.

ISAAC  
Not after last night.

Iona walks towards the voices. She sees Isaac sitting in  
front of a small waterfall, facing it.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
Speaking of.

As she gets closer, Iona sees FIG, a woman, about 30. Her  
eyes are covered by a narrow veil, and she has living,  
writhing snakes instead of hair. She wears torn jeans and a  
graphic tee.

Isaac turns and sees Iona.

ISAAC  
Good morning.

Iona can't take her eyes off Fig.

FIG  
I have preparations to make. I'll  
be there soon.

She disappears into mist.

Iona just stares.

IONA  
Am I dreaming?

Isaac waves a hand, and the forest disappears. In its place is the apartment from earlier. Fig and the waterfall disappear.

Iona stumbles back.

Isaac waves his hand again, and the forest comes back.

ISAAC

In a month or two, you'll be making  
your own decorations.

Iona's overwhelmed. She tears up.

IONA

Can you turn it off?

ISAAC

What?

Iona starts crying.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Damn it.

He waves a hand, the forest disappears, and they're back...

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

...in the middle of the kitchenette.

Iona just stands there, crying.

ISAAC

I know you're going through a lot,  
but the fact of the matter is...

He stares at her.

He's out of his depth.

Beat.

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

Iona stares at herself in the mirror.

Her eyes are red from tears, but she's not crying anymore.  
She's stone-faced. A little angry.

She takes a breath. Leaves the bathroom.



INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Isaac stares out a window. Doesn't react to Iona.

IONA  
What's her secret?

ISAAC  
There's time for that later.

IONA  
You said you'd tell me.

ISAAC  
Later.

IONA  
Now!

Isaac turns to look at her. The entire room darkens with his mood.

ISAAC  
That is the last time you will take  
that tone with me.

Iona recoils as shadows tug at her.

Then, just like that, the room is bright again, and Isaac looks out the window.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I didn't ask for this either, you  
know.

IONA  
What do you mean?

Isaac sighs.

ISAAC  
I've never taken an apprentice  
before. Had no intention to. It's  
all the worst parts of parenting  
without the companionship.

He looks at her.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
We killed our master.

Beat. Iona nods.

IONA

Harold of the Blue Sky. He was a bad guy.

ISAAC

I'm not exactly a champion of justice myself. And you're my rival's daughter.

He looks back out the window.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I've been trying to figure out how well to teach you. Trying to decide what gaps I can leave in your training that you're the least likely to notice and that are most likely to protect me in thirty years.

Beat.

Isaac gestures at the sofa. Iona sees a suit and jacket in her size draped over the back.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Get dressed. We have to play the game.

INT. FLAMEL'S - NIGHT

An upscale wizard's club. Think jazz club meets Hogwarts. The band is just a bunch of hovering instruments playing themselves, and all the lights are candles. The bartender has scales.

The customers vary wildly. A nine-foot tall horned ogre shares a table with a pair of heavily-muscled dwarves with ornately braided beards.

A woman with the lower half of a snake coils in one corner, talking with a sharply-dressed wizard in a tailored suit. A boy about 17 years old dressed in matching attire stands off to one side.

A turbaned yogi hovers at a table with a pointy-hatted wizard who's at least 150 years old.

And in the far corner, Peter sits with a man and a woman who look as burly and bestial as he does.

Isaac and Iona walk in. Everyone they pass gives them full attention, though attitudes vary between "I can't believe it's really him" and "That son of a bitch."

Peter doesn't notice Isaac yet, but Isaac notices Peter. He nudges Iona, gestures.

ISAAC  
Is he going to be a problem?

Iona sees him. Stiffens.

IONA  
Yes.

ISAAC  
Thought so.

IONA  
We should go.

ISAAC  
Not unless you want a target on our backs.

IONA  
But if we stay-

Isaac drags her onward. They sit at a table in the middle of everything. Isaac sits tall, but Iona looks around, nervous.

ISAAC  
Stop that. You're making everyone think you're weak.

IONA  
I am weak.

ISAAC  
All the more reason not to let them think it.

She stops looking around, but she still looks nervous.

Isaac looks at her. Swears under his breath.

He stands. Snaps at the "band."

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
(loud)  
Hey. Hey!

The band stops.

Everyone stares at him. Iona goes pale.

Peter notices them for the first time. There's murder in his eyes. He's instantly a little hairier.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Don't you know anything a little  
more modern? How about some Norah  
Jones?

Beat. The instruments turn towards the bartender. She looks at Isaac, then back to the instruments. Nods.

They play some Norah Jones.

Isaac sits down. Looks at Iona's panicked face, leans in.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
The Silver Rule of illusions: when  
you're weak, project strength.

IONA  
You're not weak.

ISAAC  
I've got a weak spot the size of a  
twelve-year-old girl. And you're  
making it bigger with each panicked  
glance around the room.

Iona sits up straighter, stares dead ahead.

IONA  
You'll protect me, though.

Isaac shrugs.

ISAAC  
I won't die for you.

A ghoul (dry, peeling skin, sharp teeth, claws) at the next table stands up.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
(not so fast, asshole)  
I will kill for you.

Beat. The ghoul hesitates.

Sits back down.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
But I won't die for you.

Peter slams to his feet, knocking over the table. He and his companions are in full beast-mode.

PETER

He can't take all of us. Not all at once.

A few others around the room shift into more favorable positions. The combat-averse move towards the exits.

IONA

Peter, wait-

Isaac holds up a hand to quiet her.

He props his feet up on the table.

ISAAC

No. I can't kill all of you. I can kill about half of you, though. Give or take.

He glances around the room.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I'd say flip a coin, but it won't be random. It'll be the first half. So what do you say? Who's willing to die so someone else can kill me?

Peter takes a step forward, but before he can get further, the ghoul leaps, twisting in the air to let all four clawed limbs point towards Isaac.

Iona SCREAMS.

Isaac snaps his fingers, and the ghoul is just gone. No explosion, no puff of smoke, just gone.

Peter GROWLS, but everyone else in the room backs down, goes back to their conversations.

Peter's friends hold him back; he shrugs them off and storms out the exit.

Iona breathes heavy, but she keeps it together.

Isaac nods at the bartender, who comes over to his table.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Rum, whatever you have that's darkest. She'll have water.

The bartender nods, turns to leave.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Oh, and?

She turns around.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

If I ever see the the he-wolf in  
here again, I'll burn the place  
down.

Beat. The bartender's breath catches. Iona's eyes widen.

BARTENDER

Yes, sir.

Beat. She goes back to the bar.

Isaac leans back in his chair, hands behind his head,  
perfectly at ease.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID

Something like deep space. Stars and galaxies everywhere.  
It's beautiful and vast.

In the galaxies, a woman's figure, made of shadows. We can  
only see her from where she blocks out the stars behind her.

The sound of a HOWLING WIND grows until it's deafening.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is quiet. Iona lies on the sofa, eyes open.  
She sits up.

EXT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment building is one of the crummier buildings in  
one of the nicer parts of town.

Iona slides out the front door. She looks around, nervous.  
She walks down the street, but quickly switches to running.  
She disappears around a corner.

Isaac steps outside. Sits on the front steps.

Iona runs past from the opposite side of the street, like she just went in a circle. She runs past Isaac without noticing. Disappears again.

Beat.

She reappears from the side she left. Walks up to Isaac. Looks around.

Isaac gets up, walks inside.

Beat.

Iona follows.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Isaac holds the door for Iona. Iona's scared, but also angry.

IONA  
You can't... I was just...

ISAAC  
I told you I'd kidnap you if I  
needed to.

Iona's eyes glow blue, and a white glow trails from her hand as she gestures angrily.

IONA  
Heidi was right about you, wasn't  
she?

Isaac is not amused.

ISAAC  
You're going to get hurt if you  
keep up like this.

IONA  
What are you going to do? Disappear  
me like you did that ghoul?

ISAAC  
This ghoul?

The ghoul is standing behind her. She jumps back, hands up in a defensive gesture.

Isaac SNAPS, and the ghoul disappears. SNAPS again, and it reappears. SNAP, disappear. SNAP, reappear.

Iona's too confused to stay angry.

She reaches for the ghoul. Her hand goes right through him.  
Isaac is still pissed.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
The Golden Rule. Strength is  
weakness. Say it.

IONA  
Strength is weakness?

ISAAC  
Strength is weakness. As a group,  
they were strong. But as a group,  
they were easy to manipulate.

IONA  
...He was there before us, though.

ISAAC  
And?

IONA  
But you...

Iona realizes how much she doesn't know.

IONA (CONT'D)  
And the bartender?

ISAAC  
What about her?

IONA  
She looked really scared when you  
said you'd burn down the bar, but  
that was all-

ISAAC  
I carved a rune in the basement  
about twenty years ago. I checked,  
it's still there.

IONA  
But you wouldn't really-

ISAAC  
You seem to have gotten the wrong  
impression. Everything your mother  
said about me was true.  
Everything... about half of what  
Heidi and Peter said about me was  
true.



He steps closer to her. Towers over her.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I wouldn't burn the bar down? I've  
done it before. That very one.

He kneels, gets in her face. Iona's close to tears.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
It was crowded that night, which  
meant the man chasing me wasn't  
able to get out.

He takes a breath. Calms down a little.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Maybe that makes me the bad guy.  
But I'm alive, and I'll do what it  
takes to stay that way.

Iona's face hardens.

IONA  
I won't. I'd rather die than do  
something like that.

Beat. They stare at each other.

ISAAC  
You might.

Beat.

Isaac walks back to his bedroom.

INT. ISAAC'S WORKSHOP - DAY

An old auto body shop that's been mostly cleaned out. One corner still has a handful of tools and parts.

One of the longer walls has been covered, floor to ceiling, in bookshelves. One of those rolling library ladders is mounted to it.

An old schooldesk sits in the middle of empty floorspace; a whiteboard floats in midair a few feet in front of it.

Isaac and Iona stand off to one side of the room, on some padded floor mats. They're both wearing exercise clothes.

Iona performs a complex gesture.

Isaac slaps her arm with a thin baton. Iona winces.

ISAAC

Sloppy.

Iona continues. Isaac slaps her again. She grits her teeth.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Elbows up.

Iona takes a breath, tries again. Isaac slaps her again. She's not able to hold back a cry of pain.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Elbows up!

Iona's eyes are watering, but she tries again.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Finally! Keep going.

She does. He slaps her again. She grits her teeth; tears run down her face.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Elbows up!

IONA

I'm trying, okay?!

ISAAC

Oh! You're trying. That's fine, then. I thought we were just goofing off and wasting time. As long as you're trying, your opponent won't mind if your spell fails, they'll just let you keep trying until you get it right.

Iona gives one of those exaggerated sighs only a kid her age can do properly.

IONA

You know what I mean!

Isaac slaps her arm again. She cries in pain.

ISAAC

There are a thousand ways you may die one day, but I swear to you, it will not be because I let you get sloppy because "you were trying."

Iona glares at him. Maybe she didn't before, maybe she won't in an hour, but at this moment, she hates him.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Again!

A COUGH.

Fig stands in a far doorway, backpack casually hanging from her shoulder.

Isaac nods at her. Turns back to Iona.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Pushups. Go.

Iona grumbles, gets down into pushup position as slowly as possible.

CUT TO:

Isaac and Fig stand in one corner, watching Iona do the sloppiest, laziest pushups.

FIG

Harold would've hurt you for pushups like that.

ISAAC

I've still got the scars. Let me worry about my apprentice.

FIG

I'm worried about you. She's gonna get you killed.

Isaac walks over to Iona. Fig follows.

Iona pretends she's been trying harder as Isaac approaches, but Isaac snaps to get her attention.

ISAAC

Up.

Iona stands.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

This is Fig. You saw her before.

FIG

Pleased to meet you.

ISAAC

She's my...

He looks at her.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Mother?

Iona stares at the teenage-looking Fig. Fig smirks.

FIG

He's adopted.

ISAAC

We'll take a break for now. Let's get some lunch, and then we've got a meeting.

Fig snarls, but he ignores her. Iona runs off before he changes his mind.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - EVENING

Heidi and Peter stand in front of PENELOPE REMEMBRANCE HUGHES' grave, along with UPDIKE, 57.

Updike is a sallow-looking older man you'd be forgiven for thinking was sculpted out of wax. His face is tattooed to look like a skull.

Peter seethes with grief and anger. Heidi's just sad. Updike is emotionless.

UPDIKE

I thought he died.

HEIDI

Twice so far.

PETER

Third time's the charm.

Updike looks at them.

UPDIKE

No, I really thought he died.

Peter grimaces.

PETER

You think it's necromancy?

Updike shrugs. Heidi scoffs.

HEIDI

He's an illusionist. Faking things is what he does.

(MORE)

HEIDI (CONT'D)

There are days I doubt Harold  
himself is actually dead.

UPDIKE

Regardless, each day that passes is  
another he can spend indoctrinating  
her.

PETER

She's strong. She won't bend so  
easily.

Heidi snarls.

HEIDI

She went with him willingly enough.

PETER

He hardly gave her a choice.

UPDIKE

I just hope he truly intends to  
reclaim his territory. If he goes  
to ground again, she may be truly  
lost.

Peter shakes his head.

PETER

He faked his death because he knew  
we'd find him if we kept looking.  
It's not a question of if we find  
them, it's when.

ISAAC (O.S.)

I'm afraid you have the wrong  
impression.

Heidi and Updike jump. Peter looks at them, confused.

Isaac appears from behind a tree. Peter doesn't react at all.

PETER

What? What's going on?

Heidi glares at Isaac.

HEIDI

What did you do to Peter?

PETER

Who? It's him?! Where?

ISAAC  
I didn't do anything to him. I'm  
just standing in his blind spot.

UPDIKE  
Why let us see you? You think we  
won't kill you?

Peter gets into a fighting stance, facing generally towards  
Isaac, but he still can't see Isaac, and that spooks him.

ISAAC  
Because you're reasonable. You  
wouldn't try to kill me just for  
trying to make peace.

Icy claws form over Heidi's fingers.

HEIDI  
Want to bet?

ISAAC  
I have no intention of hiding.

HEIDI  
Except from Peter.

Isaac gives her an annoyed look.

ISAAC  
I have promises to keep. That  
doesn't mean we have to be enemies.

UPDIKE  
I'm afraid it does, son.

ISAAC  
Think about what's best for Iona.  
She'd like to be able to see you.

HEIDI  
You wouldn't let us near her.

ISAAC  
No?

He whistles. Iona and Fig step out of a nearby copse of  
trees, but don't come nearer.

PETER  
Iona!

She waves, but Fig steps in front of her.

Heidi gives Isaac a disbelieving look.

HEIDI  
You're either braver than I  
thought, or far stupider.

She waves her hand, and a gigantic icicle spears through  
Isaac's chest... right through, as though he were a ghost.

Or an illusion.

ISAAC  
So which is it? Brave, or stupid?

Heidi swears in some Germanic language.

UPDIKE  
Son of a bitch.

PETER  
What happened?

The camera PANS around to view the scene from the opposite  
direction, revealing Isaac - the real Isaac - barely ducked  
out of the way of the icicle. He leans against it, sweating.

Iona and Fig watch from the copse, though Iona looks  
confused.

HEIDI  
It was all an illusion. He was  
never here.

Isaac and his illusion speak simultaneously. His voice isn't  
the least bit stressed.

ISAAC  
I didn't kill Penny.

HEIDI  
Then who did?

PETER  
He has to be close, doesn't he? You  
can't spin an illusion from across  
the city!

Updike scoffs.

UPDIKE  
If anyone can, it's him.

The real Isaac sighs, stands up straight. Dusts himself off.

ISAAC  
I'll be in touch.

His illusion disappears.

HEIDI  
Fan out. Shoot a flare if you find  
him.

They nod, and each one runs in a different direction.

Updike runs right past Iona and Fig. Fig covers Iona's mouth  
as he does.

Isaac shakes his head. Morons.

He walks over to Iona and Fig. They watch as Heidi, Peter,  
and Updike disappear in their different directions.

ISAAC  
What did you learn here?

IONA  
I don't...

She thinks.

IONA (CONT'D)  
I feel like you want me to say  
"Don't trust them," but-

Isaac laughs.

ISAAC  
That's not a bad lesson, but it's  
not what I was going for.

FIG  
The Bronze Rule: Show people what  
they expect to see, and they won't  
question it.

ISAAC  
Despite what Heidi may have  
believed, I came with honest  
intentions. But when it was clear  
all they wanted to do was fight, I  
let them think they'd been right  
all along.

IONA  
And it almost got you killed.



ISAAC

"Almost" is a bit much. But yes,  
trusting others is always a risk,  
especially for an illusionist.

IONA

I trust Heidi. And Peter.

FIG

Then you're a fool.

Isaac holds up a hand; "Cool it."

ISAAC

I'm sure they earned that trust.  
But Penny's death will have  
ramifications beyond your  
understanding, and you need to  
prepare yourself for what may come.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

HAZY, appears 35, looks out over the city. He wears a sharply  
tailored suit, and has a smokeless blue flame where his left  
hand should be.

He looks at his "hand." Colors ripple through it.

A COUGH behind him.

Hazy turns, sees Isaac and Iona standing nearby. Isaac  
smiles.

Hazy sighs. His hand goes back to blue as he turns back to  
the city.

HAZY

Did you have to bring her?

Isaac considers.

ISAAC

Do I have to bring her anywhere?  
She's my apprentice, I choose to  
bring her.

Hazy rolls his eyes. Isaac and Iona move up next to him.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Ohhh. It's been a part of you so  
long, I'd forgotten. Apologies.

He turns to Iona.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Your mother took his hand.

HAZY  
Made a candle out of it.

IONA  
(what the fuck)  
That was a real hand?

Hazy grunts. Isaac laughs.

HAZY  
I assume you have a reason for  
coming here?

ISAAC  
Iona's been having trouble with her  
Gebaren.

HAZY  
Oh, fuck you.

ISAAC  
(to Iona)  
Hazy studied alongside Heidi. A  
couple years her senior, if I  
recall.

IONA  
Did you all... know each other?

Isaac and Hazy laugh - Hazy's is a little bitter.

ISAAC  
Show him your Salutation.

Iona steps back and moves her arms and hands in a complicated  
series of gestures. Hazy watches side-eyed.

HAZY  
If you're not going to try, I'm  
just going to leave.

Iona freezes, looks at Isaac. Isaac glares daggers at her.

Iona takes a deep breath, straightens her back. Begins again.

Hazy watches closely. Iona does her best to keep up with his  
commands as he gives them.

HAZY (CONT'D)  
Stop. Do it mirrored. Backwards  
from there. No, still mirrored.  
(MORE)

HAZY (CONT'D)

Yes... Now back to normal. Stand on one foot, I'm not joking. Okay. Both feet, eyes closed.

Iona finishes. Looks to Hazy, then Isaac. Isaac looks at Hazy.

Hazy considers.

HAZY (CONT'D)

How long have you been teaching her?

ISAAC

Six months, now. But she studied under Heidi for...

IONA

About three years.

Hazy sighs. Looks at Isaac. Nods away.

Iona rolls her eyes, looks out at the city, as Isaac and Hazy step away to talk privately.

As they depart, Iona mutters an incantation. Her ears flash for a beat, which she hides with a carefree hair toss.

She hears them as clearly as if she was standing next to them.

HAZY

I'm a busy man.

ISAAC

I don't begrudge you taking care of things in my absence. But now that I'm back, I think you'll find you have more free time.

HAZY

You arrogant son of a bitch. I'm not some little peon you get to-

A brilliant FLASH, and Hazy hurtles over the edge of the building.

Iona gasps.

Isaac reaches out a hand, and Hazy freezes in midair, then rockets back to land at Isaac's feet.

He hits the ground hard, coughs and gasps. His clothes are singed, his eyes bloodshot.

Isaac kneels, leans in close, whispers; Iona still hears.

ISAAC  
You think my time away has dulled  
me.

HAZY  
Not at all-

ISAAC  
If you didn't need a hand to teach  
her, I'd take your other one right  
now. You know that.

HAZY  
I do, I do, I'm sorry-

Isaac stands.

ISAAC  
Will you teach her, or not?

HAZY  
I will. I swear it. She'll be  
better than Heidi, if you want it.

ISAAC  
I want it.

HAZY  
It's done.

Isaac nods. Looks at Iona, and they both head for the stairs.  
Iona's eyes linger on Hazy as she departs: "Sorry."

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Iona walks behind Isaac. Silence for a beat.

IONA  
Why is it so important that I  
master the Gebaren?

ISAAC  
I told you, I'm not teaching you  
conjuring.

IONA  
But they're not important for  
illusions either. Like, more  
important than conjuring, yeah, but  
it seems like you really want me to  
master them-

Isaac stops. So does Iona.

He doesn't turn around.

IONA (CONT'D)  
I get it. You're my master and I  
shouldn't question you. Fine.

He looks at her.

ISAAC  
What did your mother teach you  
about the Other Place?

IONA  
Like, where dead souls go?

ISAAC  
Figures.

He keeps walking.

IONA  
Wait, why?

A beat. She runs behind him.

IONA (CONT'D)  
Isaa... sir! Why do you ask?

INT. ISAAC'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Iona shoots a jet of fire from her hands as Isaac watches.  
She stops. Laughs.

IONA  
That was pretty good! Wasn't it?

Isaac nods.

ISAAC  
You should make it feel hotter.

IONA  
Yeah, but it'd still make someone  
duck.

ISAAC  
Probably.

Iona considers.

IONA

But like so, if you're an illusionist. Wouldn't everyone just assume it's an illusion? How do you trick someone who knows you're lying?

ISAAC

The iron rule of illusions: If you can't convince someone a lie is the truth, convince them the truth is a lie.

IONA

Meaning?

Isaac flicks a finger towards Iona, and a small stream of fire streaks towards her. She doesn't dodge... until it hits her shoulder, and she shrieks in pain.

She drops to the ground, clutches her shoulder. She looks at him, betrayal in her eyes.

IONA (CONT'D)

I didn't think you'd...

ISAAC

Exactly.

She's in tears.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Let me see it.

Iona moves her hand. It's not a huge burn, but it's already blistering.

Isaac lays his hand over it. Iona cringes, then relaxes.

When he pulls his hand back, there's a nasty scar. Iona doesn't notice, she's just so glad the pain is gone.

Then she looks at the scar. Oh, gross.

IONA

Is that forever?

ISAAC

You're a wizard. Nothing needs to be forever. But as long as you're my apprentice, you'll keep it as a reminder.

IONA  
Reminder of how you're sadistic?

ISAAC  
A reminder to duck. Get up and do  
it again, but this time make the  
fire green.

She gets to her feet. Takes a breath.

She shoots green flame at the wall. As she does, the wall  
EXPLODES.

Before the dust clears, there's sparks and flames and shards  
flying through where the wall used to be. They're under  
attack.

Just as the attack dies down, one more EXPLOSION.

Silence.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Did we get him?

The dust clears. Hazy and three more wizards step through the  
rubble.

HAZY  
Let's get the hell out of here.

The LACKEY WIZARD who spoke before looks at him.

LACKEY WIZARD  
Shouldn't we make sure he's dead?

HAZY  
If he survived that, we're toast  
anyway. Come on.

LACKEY WIZARD  
...That's not very comforting.

ISAAC (O.S.)  
Yet very astute.

Hazy freezes, gags. Oh, fuck.

His lackeys jump, raise their hands, ready for action.

Hazy takes a breath. Turns to Isaac in full fury.

HAZY  
No. No! I will not die here!

He sticks his flame-hand up in the air.

HAZY (CONT'D)

Do you hear me? I will not!

His hand grows, grows, engulfing him, incinerating his lackeys who all scream in pain, and soon all you can see is fire.

Then a single dark spot appears in the fire. The spot grows, sucking the fire down like water draining from a bathtub.

As the fire disappears, it reveals Isaac and Iona standing behind the "drain." Isaac moves his arms rhythmically. His eyes are black pits full of stars.

Hazy appears as the flame dies, terrified. Isaac finishes draining the fire, stops moving. His eyes return to normal. He's furious, but it's a contained rage. Focused.

ISAAC

Believe it or not, that was dumber  
than your first attack.

HAZY

H-how... that was...

Isaac keeps his eyes locked on Hazy. Iona looks around, confused and terrified and intrigued.

ISAAC

Iona. Leave.

IONA

Where?

ISAAC

Now.

She hesitates. Then she picks a direction and sprints.

Hazy doesn't bother running. He'd accepted this possibility before he even arrived.

HAZY

You're no illusionist.

ISAAC

I'm a very good illusionist.

His eyes turn black again.



ISAAC (CONT'D)  
But I'm not just a very good  
illusionist.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Iona paces back and forth. Fig reads a magazine.  
The front door opens. Isaac steps inside.  
Fig doesn't look up.

FIG  
You okay?

ISAAC  
I'm alive.

FIG  
That's not what I was asking.

ISAAC  
I'm alive.

Fig looks up, a little worried.

Iona cocks her head.

IONA  
What?

ISAAC  
This complicates things and  
accelerates the schedule besides.  
And we're going to need Heidi.

Fig shakes her head.

FIG  
Is she even an option?

Isaac and Fig look at Iona.

IONA  
For teaching me? Seriously?

ISAAC  
What if she thinks I'm out of the  
picture?

FIG  
 She wouldn't think you were out of  
 the picture if she killed you  
 herself.

Isaac swears under his breath.

IONA  
 I can convince her.

FIG  
 No one can convince her.

IONA  
 I can.

ISAAC  
 You're sure?

Beat. Iona nods.

Isaac takes a breath.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
 Do it.

He goes to his room.

INT. HEIDI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Thick furs are the main decorating motif, along with  
 scrimshaw. Lots of tall bookshelves.

Heidi sits at a desk, stares at a flickering candle.

She takes a deep breath. Lets it out slowly.

The door opens. Peter walks in, knocks on the door as he  
 does.

PETER  
 Knock knock. I've been calling-  
 He sees the candle. His arms get a little hairier.

PETER (CONT'D)  
 Who is it? Updike?

Heidi shakes her head.

HEIDI  
 It's Penelope's code.

PETER  
Iona?

HEIDI  
It has to be.

Beat.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
Do we trust her?

PETER  
Don't be ridiculous.

HEIDI  
I could take that two ways.

Peter glares at her.

Heidi stands.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
Fine. Get Updike.

INT. SMALL CHURCH - NIGHT

The sanctuary could maybe sit fifty people. The whole place is run down, but still functional.

Iona sits in one of the pews. She twitches her fingers.

Heidi walks in. Sits next to her.

HEIDI  
Hello-

IONA  
Don't freak out. Please don't freak out.

Heidi's alert. She examines the room.

HEIDI  
What did you do?

IONA  
I swear it's okay.

HEIDI  
This is a trap.

She stands. Holds her arms out, ready for trouble.

IONA

No! No no no, it's not.

Heidi's eyes flick around the room, land on Iona. They linger there.

HEIDI

Is he here?

Iona nods.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Show me where.

Beat.

IONA

Are you going to attack him?

HEIDI

Iona, he-

IONA

You can't. You have to swear that you'll at least talk to him first.

Beat.

Heidi nods.

Iona nods back. She nods towards the pulpit.

Heidi looks. Sees Isaac standing at the pulpit.

Long claws of ice form around her fingers, but she doesn't attack yet.

ISAAC

Tell Peter and Updike they can come in, too. They'll want a say.

HEIDI

I came alo-

ISAAC

Don't.

Beat.

Updike walks in. Peter emerges from the shadows behind Isaac; if Isaac is surprised, he doesn't show it.

Peter stands next to Isaac. Isaac looks at him, perturbed, but doesn't say anything.

Updike sits next to Iona. Nods politely.

UPDIKE  
Miss Iona.

IONA  
Mister Updike.

HEIDI  
Can we get to the point?

ISAAC  
I won't lie to you and tell you I  
harbor no ill will. I am, however,  
willing to lay down the hatchet.  
End hostilities, permanently.

Updike is shocked; Peter just laughs, and Heidi rolls her eyes.

HEIDI  
Even if we could believe you-

ISAAC  
No progress without risk.

HEIDI  
And what are you risking, exactly?

Isaac walks over to Peter. Looks him in the eyes.

Slaps him across the face.

Peter grabs Isaac by the throat, but doesn't crush him.

PETER  
What the hell was that?

ISAAC  
Proof.

Beat. Realization hits Heidi.

HEIDI  
He's really here.

Peter looks at her. Back to Isaac. Snarls. He lifts Isaac up; Isaac gags.

Heidi raises her arms, readies a spell.

Iona jumps over Updike to stand in front of Heidi. Updike clambers to hold her back.

IONA

No! You promised!

Heidi doesn't look at her, but she stops her spell.

Peter breathes faster. His teeth are too big to fit in his mouth. But he lowers Isaac.

Isaac coughs, clears his throat, then stands up like nothing happened.

HEIDI

Playing at bravery doesn't mean  
you're not still a coward.

UPDIKE

I think you should tell us what  
you're after.

Isaac licks his teeth. Takes a breath.

ISAAC

I need you to continue training  
Iona. You can teach her whatever  
you want as long as her Gebaren are  
the focus.

Beat. Nobody's sure how to react. Peter's teeth shrink.

PETER

You took all this risk to get us to  
teach Iona?

ISAAC

I need you to actually teach her,  
though. None of the sloppy shit she  
got away with before.

HEIDI

You can't teach her Gebaren?

ISAAC

You think I'd do a better job?

HEIDI

Not better than me, no, but...

PETER

What's the catch?

ISAAC

No catch. But she stays with me.  
She's still my apprentice.

PETER  
 (to Heidi)  
 No. This is ridiculous. There's  
 clearly something else going on,  
 and if he won't tell us-

ISAAC  
 Fine. I tried. Let's go, Iona.

Heidi's ice-claws glow for a beat.

HEIDI  
 Hold it.

Beat.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
 Updike, what do you think?

UPDIKE  
 (realizing)  
 You were the one who killed  
 Hazleton.

Heidi looks at Updike.

HEIDI  
 Hazy's dead?

Updike just looks at Isaac.

ISAAC  
 He attacked me.

UPDIKE  
 No doubt. But that means you gave  
 him the opportunity. He was  
 teaching Iona her Gebaren, wasn't  
 he?

Isaac nods.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)  
 You're not brave. You're desperate.

ISAAC  
 I'm... motivated.

UPDIKE  
 This has to do with why you  
 kidnapped Iona in the first place?

IONA  
 He didn't kidnap me. Not really.

ISAAC  
As she says.

UPDIKE  
But yes.

Isaac nods.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)  
Interesting.

HEIDI  
What is it? Do you know what's  
going on?

UPDIKE  
I have a better understanding of  
what I don't know.

PETER  
Great. Sounds useful.

UPDIKE  
I propose we take the deal.

Iona sighs, relieved.

HEIDI  
You're certain?

UPDIKE  
How can I be, given who we're  
dealing with? But nonetheless.

Heidi looks back at Isaac. Isaac smiles.

HEIDI  
We train her at my lab. Not yours,  
not neutral ground. Mine. And  
you're not welcome.

ISAAC  
Fig can bring her.

Heidi scoffs.

HEIDI  
You and that viper. Fine.

ISAAC  
I expect results, and quickly.

Heidi lowers her arms. The whole room relaxes.



HEIDI  
Is Iona ready for that?  
(to Iona)  
Do you know what he's asking for  
you, girl?

IONA  
Can't be worse than him.

Isaac looks at Heidi.

ISAAC  
She'll make me look soft.

Heidi nods.

IONA  
Wait, really?

She looks at Isaac, worried.

ISAAC  
Let's go.

HEIDI  
Tomorrow?

ISAAC  
Tuesday is fine.

Isaac shoves past Peter.

Iona gets up, follows Isaac out the door.

Heidi looks at Peter, Updike. Nobody's sure what to think.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The apartment is still recognizable, but has several new illusory decorations. One window looks out on Tibetan mountaintops, the window next to it a tropical beach. The wallpaper shifts slowly with fractal patterns.

Iona sleeps on the sofa. Her eyes shoot open suddenly.

She looks around.

Fig walks over with a frying pan full of burnt scrambled eggs.

FIG  
Do you know how to make omelettes?

Iona sits up, hesitates.

IONA  
What's happening?

FIG  
I want an omelette.

IONA  
Where's Isaac? Why didn't he wake  
me up?

FIG  
He's in the shower. Get off your  
ass, I'm hungry.

IONA  
Are we not training today?

Fig throws up her hands, stomps back to the kitchen.

Iona gets up.

INT. ISAAC'S DINING ROOM - DAY

A small offset from the rest of the apartment, barely  
deserving to be called a "room." Fig and Iona sit at the  
table.

Fig eats an omelette, very happy. She feeds some to her snake  
hair.

Iona sips a cup of tea. She's convinced she's in danger.

Isaac walks in, sits at the table. He's dressed, but his  
hair's still wet from the shower.

He picks at his teeth.

Beat.

Iona sips her tea.

Beat.

A thought occurs to Iona.

IONA  
What day is it?

Isaac looks at her. His face is inscrutable.

ISAAC  
May eighth.

IONA  
Oh.

Beat.

IONA (CONT'D)  
Um... are we going to train?

Isaac shakes his head.

ISAAC  
We do have some errands.

Beat.

IONA  
Can we visit his grave?

ISAAC  
Not today. Too predictable. We'll  
go Friday afternoon.

Iona nods.

IONA  
I'm surprised you remember... when  
he died.

Isaac looks at her.

ISAAC  
What do people say about me and  
your mother?

IONA  
Um... You're enemies. You were  
enemies. But... Peter says you used  
to be friends. Updike thought you  
might have been, like, boyfriend  
and girlfriend.

Isaac snorts, shakes his head.

ISAAC  
I loved your mother, but not like  
that. Even when we hated each  
other, we...

Beat.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I'm not without regrets.

IONA  
They said you got along with my  
dad. Before...

ISAAC  
Before Penny murdered him? Yeah.

IONA  
It was in self-defense.

ISAAC  
Self-inflicted self-defense. Penny  
had her good moments, but she was  
still a wizard.

Iona's conflicted. She's desperate for more information, but  
doesn't like the idea that her mother wasn't perfect.

IONA  
She said he attacked first?

ISAAC  
Your mother tried very hard to be a  
good person. Your father actually  
was one. He trusted her so much  
that when he found her... strategy,  
he couldn't see it as anything but  
a plan.

IONA  
Her "strategy?"

FIG  
Any good wizard has a plan for  
every contingency. How to survive  
another Dragonflight. Or... how to  
kill everyone you know.

ISAAC  
If you're smart, you've already  
started thinking about how you'd  
kill me.

He looks at her. She nods. He's satisfied.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Aaron didn't have a proper wizard's  
paranoia. He couldn't imagine why  
she'd have a plan for him. He was  
heartbroken and terrified and  
reacted poorly.  
(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
She was caught off guard and  
reacted the only way she knew how.

Beat. Iona isn't sure how to process that.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
You'd couldn't possibly have called  
us friends at that point, but if  
there was a single moment we went  
from rivals to enemies, that was  
it. Aaron was too good for the  
world, and she made him pay for it.

FIG  
(to Iona)  
He tries to think of it as just her  
fault so he doesn't have to blame  
himself.

ISAAC  
It's like I said. I'm not without  
regrets.

Beat.

IONA  
(quiet)  
Mom never told me any of this.

ISAAC  
There's more to come.

IONA  
I don't know if I want to know  
more.

ISAAC  
I don't care.

He gets up.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Let's get to those errands.

INT. FANCY SUITE - DAY

Penthouse, glass walls, open floorplan. Very ritzy.

Iona looks around, searching for something. Isaac meditates  
on the floor, eyes closed.

IONA  
This was Hazy's place?

No response.

Iona finds a picture of Hazy. She grabs it.

IONA (CONT'D)

Found one.

Isaac opens his eyes. She displays it; he nods.

ISAAC

Make him.

Iona takes a deep breath. The picture glows, and projects a perfect facsimile of Hazy in front of her.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Good.

IONA

Is this why we're here? I couldn't practice this at home?

ISAAC

Heidi will be here soon.

IONA

What?!

Hazy flickers.

ISAAC

Careful.

Iona concentrates, Hazy returns to normal.

IONA

I can't-

ISAAC

Talk to me through him.

Iona's mouth keeps moving, but Hazy speaks instead of her.

HAZY

I can't do this. Even if I could keep the illusion convincing, Heidi has so many codes and passphrases, she'll know immediately.

ISAAC

I taught you this. What's the golden rule?

HAZY  
Strength is weakness. But-

ISAAC  
Heidi's codes and contingencies are  
one of her greatest strengths.

Isaac stands.

HAZY  
So I'm supposed to make it her  
weakness?

ISAAC  
You don't need to make it anything.  
It already is. Exploit it.

Isaac walks over to a bookshelf, drags his finger along the  
books, looking for one.

HAZY  
How?

Isaac grabs a book, flips through it.

ISAAC  
Why would she use codes and  
passphrases?

Hazy freezes. Iona thinks hard.

IONA  
To protect herself. She can't be  
caught by surprise, she can always  
know if there's danger.

ISAAC  
How does that make her vulnerable?

IONA  
It doesn't?

ISAAC  
Suppose I were to get a hold of the  
appropriate code for a situation.

Iona understands. She speaks through Hazy again.

HAZY  
The code will convince her she's  
safe, so she won't be looking for  
us.

ISAAC

Here.

He holds the book out to Iona. Scribbled in the margin: "It's warm tonight." "Reminds me of home."

HAZY

He just wrote it down?

ISAAC

Don't judge him too harshly. It was hidden, more than just physically. If he were still alive, we wouldn't have been able to find it so easily.

He shakes his head, disappointed.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

He didn't care about setting things up to last beyond his lifetime. That, you can judge him for. She's here.

Isaac disappears, followed immediately by Iona.

Heidi walks in.

HAZY

Heidi.

She glares at him.

HEIDI

It's warm tonight.

HAZY

Reminds me of home.

Heidi relaxes.

HEIDI

Damn it, Hazy. I thought he'd killed you.

HAZY

Who? Isaac?

He laughs.

HAZY (CONT'D)

Not for lack of trying.



HEIDI

He's never been as good as he thought.

The camera PANS around 180 degrees to reveal Iona and Isaac watching, next to the wall.

Heidi walks to a small bar, pours herself a vodka.

HAZY

Sure, help yourself.

She downs the drink. Thinks about another, decides against it.

HAZY (CONT'D)

Are you here for me, or were you hoping to loot the place?

Heidi looks at him. She's angry.

HEIDI

You were working with Iona and you didn't tell me?

HAZY

I don't report to you.

Iona looks at Isaac. Gets an idea.

HAZY (CONT'D)

And you're one to talk. What happened to Penelope?

Isaac looks at Iona. "Interesting." He nods.

Heidi raises an eyebrow.

HEIDI

What?

Iona stares at Isaac as her mouth keeps moving along with Hazy's.

HAZY

You were her closest ally. Everyone assumes it was Isaac, but I'm not so sure.

Heidi looks at Hazy. Considers.

HEIDI

I have my own doubts on that front.  
Penny had her secrets, none of them  
harmless.

Iona's eagerness comes out in Hazy's tone.

HAZY

So? What happened?

Heidi looks at him.

HEIDI

I came here to make sure you were  
alive. You are.

She walks to the door.

HAZY

Heidi.

She stops.

HAZY (CONT'D)

You really hate him, don't you?  
Isaac?

HEIDI

I liked him a lot better when he  
was dead.

She leaves.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Fig lounges on the sofa, reading an ancient tome bound in  
leather.

Iona sketches on the wall with her finger, brilliant flowers  
and vines growing as she "draws."

The room around Iona gets darker. It's almost imperceptible  
at first, but soon the edge of the room has all but  
disappeared.

Fig realizes what's happening just as Iona's engulfed in  
darkness.

FIG

Iona! Iona!

Only Iona is visible, but she can't seem to hear Fig.

FIG (CONT'D)

Isaac!

Iona just keeps drawing until even the wall is gone. It's just her in the black.

She doesn't notice anything until the blackness IGNITES WITH STARS.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID - CONTINUOUS

Iona scrambles to her feet, startled, terrified. She stands in empty space.

A sound like the WIND, quiet, hiding.

IONA

Fig? Hello?

In the galaxies behind Iona, a shadow, a woman's figure. As Iona turns, the figure fades back into stars.

IONA (CONT'D)

Isaac?!

A voice like a roaring sun.

THE VOID

HELLO CHILD

Iona looks around, panicked, in tears.

IONA

Who's there? What's going on?

No response.

EXT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Fig and Isaac run into the living room. Iona floats in the middle of the room, her eyes full of stars.

ISAAC

Shit.

FIG

What do we do?

Isaac's eyes go black. His voice gets deeper, louder. Bigger.

ISAAC

GET OUT.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID

The woman's figure, visible only by the stars it blots out behind it, dances behind Iona.

THE VOID  
THERE IS SOMETHING WE REQUIRE

IONA  
What?

The figure reaches towards her. Iona feels something, recoils.

THE VOID  
IF WE ARE NOT GIVEN  
I WILL TAKE

Iona takes a deep breath. Stops panicking, gathers herself.

IONA  
You'll have to.

She extends her arms in a defensive posture.

A gentle GIGGLE comes from all around her.

THE VOID  
YOU ARE POWERLESS HERE

Isaac's voice; it's loud and quiet simultaneously, like he's shouting from a vast distance.

ISAAC (O.S.)  
Iona!

IONA  
Isaac! Help!

THE VOID  
HE CAN NOT HELP US  
WE ARE ALONE

Iona looks around. She's scared, but determined.

IONA  
Fine! I don't need him!

The GIGGLE again. The woman dances around her, caresses her back. Iona spins around, but can't see anything.

The stars wink out, one by one. Darkness encroaches.

Just as it seems like the darkness will win, a hand grabs Iona's shoulder and yanks her backwards.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Iona falls from midair, hits the floor hard.

Isaac is on all fours next to her; he vomits.

Iona gasps for breath, the wind knocked out of her.

Isaac stands. Wipes his mouth.

He sits on the sofa. Stares at the wall, deep in thought.

Iona finally gets air back in her lungs. She cries on the floor.

Beat.

ISAAC

We were young and inexperienced.  
And desperate.

Fig watches from the hallway, stoic, emotionless. Iona still can't stop crying; it's not clear she's even listening.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID

Stars wink out and reappear as if a black sheet drifts among them.

ISAAC (O.S.)

We were afraid Harold was immortal.  
We'd tried to kill him once by  
then, and we knew we wouldn't get a  
third chance. He had safeguards, a  
plan for everything we could think  
of, everything anyone could think  
of. So we looked for something  
else, something it wasn't possible  
to plan for.

Slowly, all the stars wink out until it's just empty blackness.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

We found it. Or, I thought we found  
it. Then I thought we'd created it.

(MORE)

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Now, I'm not so sure it cares about  
cause and effect like that.

ZOOM OUT to reveal a massive black human shadow bigger than  
you'd ever thought possible.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I'm still not sure what it is. I  
think there are rules, but they're  
not like ours. They're... sideways.

The shadow leans over, examining one arm of one galaxy. One  
star in that arm. One planet orbiting that star. One  
continent on that planet. One city on that continent. One  
window in that city. It looks in on:

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Inside the apartment, the window darkens just a bit, then  
goes back to normal.

ISAAC

There wasn't any existing magic  
that could interact with it, much  
less control it. We built it  
ourselves.

Iona's got herself back under control. She lies on her back,  
listens.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

It worked better than we could've  
hoped... unprecedented power. Wars  
have been fought over what we  
stumbled into ass-first. We killed  
Harold and fantasized about using  
it for more, but... there were  
risks.

IONA

What kind of risks?

Isaac looks at her.

ISAAC

There's power out there. Strange  
power, power beyond time and space.  
But now you can't use the power  
without drawing... it.

IONA

"Now?" It wasn't always there?

He shrugs.

ISAAC

Like I said, time is funny there.  
Maybe it always was. Maybe it  
hasn't gotten there yet. But  
there's an intelligence to it, and  
it knows us.

Isaac looks at her.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

It knows you. It's wanted you your  
entire life. Maybe before.

IONA

My whole life? Why haven't I seen  
it before now? What changed?

Beat.

IONA (CONT'D)

Mom died. That's what changed. Is  
it what killed her?

ISAAC

Get some sleep. You need to be  
ready for Heidi tomorrow.

IONA

What if it comes back?

Isaac stands.

ISAAC

It will.

IONA

Tonight?

He shakes his head.

IONA (CONT'D)

How do you know that?

He walks away.

He passes Fig. She looks at him as he does, watches him go.

Beat.

She sits next to Iona.

FIG  
If it was up to me-

ISAAC (O.S.)  
Fig.

Beat. Fig glares at Iona. Iona's not sure what to think.

FIG  
You have no idea the sacrifices  
we've made.

She leaves Iona alone.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - MORNING

Iona drips sweat, bends over, gasps for air. You can see her breath, it's so cold.

HEIDI  
I didn't say you could stop.

Iona clenches her eyes shut. Stands up again, sticks her arms out in front of her.

The lab is sparse, white. Cold, literally and figuratively.

Heidi stands in front of Iona, arms held in a specific angle. Iona mimics her pose.

INT. HEIDI'S ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

In contrast to her lab, this room is warm and soft. Fur rugs, thick blankets, massive stone fireplace.

Peter and Fig sit across from each other. Fig examines Peter with innocent curiosity; Peter glares at her with malice.

FIG  
You're sure it's not one of the  
deep curses?

PETER  
(teeth clenched)  
I'm sure.

FIG  
Because it still sounds a lot like  
some of the curses I've made. I  
remember one-



PETER

My father was a shapeshifter. His  
father was a shapeshifter. His  
mother was a shapeshifter. It took  
me decades to master.

FIG

But whenever you get mad-

He's getting mad. And hairy.

PETER

I have complete control of my form.

FIG

Just not your temper?

He growls.

A SLAP from Heidi's lab. They both look towards the door.

Peter shakes his head.

PETER

She needs to cool it.

FIG

Spare the rod, spoil the child.

Peter glares again.

PETER

This isn't necessary. She feels  
betrayed and she's taking it out on  
Iona.

Fig cocks her head, suspicious, but amused.

FIG

Why are you telling me this?

PETER

I... I worry about her.

He softens, his hair recedes. He starts balding a bit.

PETER (CONT'D)

Is Isaac... she's eating enough,  
right? I know training is tough,  
needs to be tough, but is he-

Fig looks away, bored now.

FIG  
He's too soft on her. She's going  
to get hurt.

Peter relaxes, nods.

PETER  
She's still young. She has time.

Fig looks at him. Says nothing.

Another SLAP from the lab. Peter cringes.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - MORNING

Iona lies on the floor, clutching her face. Her eyes are wet,  
but she's not crying yet.

Heidi towers over her.

HEIDI  
Is that it? Is that all it takes to  
bring you to tears?

IONA  
(angry)  
I thought you were my friend!

HEIDI  
I was! Now I'm your teacher.

She shoves Iona with her foot.

IONA  
Stop! I'm getting up!

HEIDI  
Don't get up, be up!

Another shove, but Iona blocks this one.

Iona makes a fist, but it's immediately encased in ice and  
frozen to the ground.

Heidi leans in to her face.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
You get to hit me one time. One  
time only.

The ice drops off Iona's fist. They stare each other down.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Beat.

Iona stands up. Sticks her arms out.

IONA

Can we keep going?

Heidi chews on her tongue.

Assumes the same stance.

HEIDI

Keep up.

EXT. QUIET STREET - DAY

Fig and Iona walk down the street. Fig wears a large hat and dark sunglasses instead of a veil. There are only a handful of people around.

Four people across the street notice Iona and Fig, start paying them a lot of attention. They don't look friendly, but their hoods and high collars make it hard to get a good idea of what they look like.

Fig notices, but says nothing. Looks at Iona.

Beat.

IONA

What?

FIG

You tell me.

Iona looks around. Sees the group. Immediately acts like she didn't notice them.

IONA

What are they? Wizards?

Fig shrugs.

FIG

This way.

The group crosses the street. Fig ushers Iona into an alleyway.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Iona rounds a corner in the alleyway, sees it's a dead end.

IONA  
Wait, this is-

She turns around. Fig is nowhere to be seen.

The group is, though.

FIG (O.S.)  
Handle it.

IONA  
I'm exhausted! Heidi just-

The group lowers their hoods, revealing decrepit skin and sharp teeth. Ghouls.

One of them speaks. His voice is high-pitched and unpleasant.

GHOUL  
That's her. I'm positive.

He gestures to one of the others.

GHOUL (CONT'D)  
Keep an eye out.

That one nods, disappears around the corner.

Iona takes a deep breath.

IONA  
Listen up, fuckwits.

They chuckle.

IONA (CONT'D)  
You caught me at the right time. I just got out of a few hours of training, so I'm tired enough to let you off with a warning.

They laugh harder.

GHOUL  
You're so generous.

They move closer, claws out.

IONA

Not so generous I won't make the warning physical. I'm thinking a tooth each.

They hesitate, ever so slightly.

IONA (CONT'D)

Or maybe I'll take ears. I don't want to think about what you've been putting in your mouths.

GHOUL

Be more worried about what we will be putting in them.

IONA

Hopefully some toothpaste. I can smell your breath from here.

GHOUL

Enough of this. Kill her before her master-

ISAAC (O.S.)

Before I what?

Isaac rounds the corner, dragging the body of the lookout behind him. The lookout is missing its feet.

The ghouls jump and hiss. One of them just books it and climbs up the wall; Isaac watches and laughs.

GHOUL

Isaac! We were just-

ISAAC

I know what you were doing. I don't care. Go ahead.

They're confused. They look at each other.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Iona can take care of herself. I just wanted to make sure she remembered to let one of you live to tell the tale. She gets bloodthirsty when she's tired.

GHOUL

I... she...

ISAAC

Go ahead, Iona.

IONA  
Should I take their ears like I  
said?

ISAAC  
I missed that part. You told them  
you'd take their ears?

IONA  
As a warning, if they just left me  
alone.

Isaac groans.

ISAAC  
No, you can't... did she really say  
she'd let you go if you gave her  
your ears?

A hesitant nod from the ghouls.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Damn it, Iona. How many times do I  
have to tell you, warnings make you  
look weak.

IONA  
I was tired! If you want me to kill  
them-

ISAAC  
No! A deal's a deal. Once you've  
offered it, you can't take it back.

He sighs. Looks at the ghouls.

The ghouls look at him. At Iona. At each other.

IONA  
So which is it?

GHOUL  
We'll...

They look at Isaac again.

GHOUL (CONT'D)  
We won't just... Do you...

ISAAC  
Forget it. Just kill them.

GHOUL  
Wait! Wait!

It takes a deep breath. Clenches its eyes.  
 Uses a claw to slice its own ear off; screams.  
 The other follows suit. They toss the ears at Iona's feet.  
 Iona coughs.

IONA  
 Both ears.

GHOUL  
 You didn't...!

Iona flexes a hand. It starts glowing.  
 The ghouls cut off their other ears. Throw them.  
 They don't hesitate, just climb up the walls, run away.  
 Iona laughs. Picks up the ears, holds them lightly; gross.  
 Fig appears next to her, shakes her head at Isaac.

FIG  
 You should've let her-

ISAAC  
 Let her what? Get mauled to death?

FIG  
 If she can't handle three ghouls-

ISAAC  
 She did fine from where I'm  
 standing. You're too hard on her.

FIG  
 Only once you showed up to help her  
 bluff. She would've figured  
 something out, I'm sure.

Iona laughs again. Isaac too.

FIG (CONT'D)  
 What?

ISAAC  
 Take those ears from her, they're  
 disgusting.

FIG  
 I don't want to-

ISAAC

Fig.

FIG

You don't talk to me like-

Isaac's angry.

ISAAC

Do it!

Fig snarls. But she walks over to Iona, snatches the ears.

FIG

What do you expect me to do with them?

ISAAC

You'll see in a second. Let's go.

Fig sighs. Isaac disappears around the corner. Fig and Iona follow.

EXT. QUIET STREET - CONTINUOUS

As Fig and Iona round the corner, Isaac is gone, and the LOOKOUT is still there, leaning against the wall.

He jumps when he sees them.

IONA

Your friends will probably want these back whenever you see them next.

She gestures to Fig.

Fig is more confused than the ghoul, but she hands the ears to the ghoul.

IONA (CONT'D)

And for real, brush your teeth.

She keeps walking. Fig and the ghoul share a moment of confusion, then Fig follows Iona and the ghoul walks down the alley looking for his companions.

Iona and Fig walk in silence. Fig stares at Iona, sorts things out.



IONA (CONT'D)  
Were ears the right choice? Or  
should I have done teeth? Or a claw  
or something?

Fig finally understands. Iona eats it up.

FIG  
I knew... I knew something was  
weird about him. I knew. I just  
didn't think...

IONA  
Didn't think I was a freaking boss?

Fig's confusion is replaced with surprised respect.

IONA (CONT'D)  
So are we cool now, or are you  
gonna keep hazing me?

Fig chews on her tongue.

FIG  
I can tone it down.

EXT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Fig and Iona walk up to the apartment. Isaac stands on the  
steps, waiting.

He's pissed. At Fig.

ISAAC  
I need to be able to trust you.

IONA  
It's fine! I'm-

ISAAC  
Inside. Now.

Iona goes inside.

INT. ISAAC'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Fig and Isaac's shouts carry, but not quite well enough to  
make out what they're saying.

Iona walks over to the window. Looks out and sees a field of  
stars.

She freezes.

A voice like a gentle breeze.

THE VOID  
Be calm. You are safe.

Iona is not calm.

IONA  
Isaac!

She turns to the stairs, but they're lost in darkness; she finds herself trapped in something like a spotlight. She's still in Isaac's apartment, but if she were to walk three feet in any direction, she'd be somewhere else.

THE VOID  
You are very clever, earlier. We are proud.

A shadow like a hand reaches from the darkness around her. She steps back, and almost stumbles into the darkness behind her.

A GIGGLE comes from every direction at once.

THE VOID (CONT'D)  
There's so much we can teach us.

IONA  
No. No!

She brings her arms up in a defensive position.

The voice EXPLODES into its full force.

THE VOID  
YOU CAN NOT RESIST US  
IF YOU WILL NOT GIVE  
I WILL TAKE

IONA  
You'll... you'll have to!

Her arms glow as she moves her hands in a series of defensive gestures. A ROAR like a RAGING FIRE grows and grows until-

It's gone. She's back in the apartment, like nothing is wrong.

And Isaac and Fig are looking at her.

Isaac's not smiling. But he's happy, or maybe proud.

ISAAC

We need to do something drastic.

He leaves. Iona scrambles to follow.

INT. FLAMEL'S - NIGHT

Isaac and Iona walk into the bar. This time, Iona walks with the same confidence as Isaac. The patrons all nod towards them with at least feigned respect. The band plays Norah Jones.

The bartender walks towards their table, but Isaac waves him away before he gets there.

IONA

But I'm hungry.

Isaac looks at her. She shuts up.

Isaac stares at the band.

ISAAC

Look carefully. Do you see him?

Iona looks at the band. Behind the band, there's a small shimmer, like a pane of glass is leaning against the wall.

IONA

I see him.

ISAAC

He's harder than me, but I suspect not as bad as Heidi. You're going to-

Someone walks past Iona. Drops a small charm on her lap.

IONA

What?

Time slows to a crawl.

Isaac is barely able to throw a shield around himself, as an EXPLOSION IMMOLATES THE ENTIRE BAR.

Isaac's shield saves him from the worst of it, but he's still thrown backwards.

Iona's charm GLOWS BLUE, and the flames fan around her, keeping her safe.

Everyone else in the bar dies. The shimmer behind the band shatters into sand.

The explosion even takes down the adjacent buildings.

Time returns to normal.

Isaac stumbles to his feet, covered in sweat, his eyes bloodshot.

Iona freezes, panicked, stunned.

Isaac's scared for the first time that we've seen.

ISAAC  
We need to leave, now. I'm weak,  
and you're in danger.  
I can't...

Iona tries to stand, falls on her hands and knees.

Isaac tries to pull Iona to her feet, but he falls to the ground.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Where's Fig when you-

He turns around and sees Heidi, Peter, and Updike.

Heidi's eyes are steely. Updike hides his emotions. Peter looks around, horrified.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Shit.

Peter rushes over to Iona, scoops her up, carries her like a baby as he checks that she's okay.

Heidi's left hand is encased in razor-sharp ice. Updike's head is wreathed in a dark halo. They're ready for a fight.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
I didn't think you had it in you.

HEIDI  
Don't talk.

ISAAC  
If you want-

A BLAST of ice and snow, and Isaac is completely imprisoned in ice, unable to move an inch.

HEIDI  
Let's just kill him.

UPDIKE  
I'm inclined to agree.

IONA  
No! I need his help!

HEIDI  
Don't be stupid.

UPDIKE  
With what?

IONA  
It's coming for me.

The three of them share worried glances.

PETER  
What is?

HEIDI  
Lies he's told her.

PETER  
I don't know. He seemed desperate  
before.

HEIDI  
Why would he be desperate to save  
her?

UPDIKE  
Even if it's for selfish reasons,  
can we risk it?

Heidi snarls, walks right up to Isaac. Stares at him.

HEIDI  
Can we risk letting him live?

Isaac disappears, solid ice in his place.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
No! NO! I had you!

Iona relaxes.

Updike scans the area, wary.

UPDIKE  
He'll run. He can't take all of us  
in a fair fight.

ISAAC (O.S.)  
What's fair about it?

They circle up, back to back. Peter's remarkably un-hairy.

PETER  
Let's just leave. We have Iona.

HEIDI  
He won't let us. He needs her for  
something.

Isaac's voice comes from every dark corner in the bar.

ISAAC (O.S.)  
I don't need her. She needs me.

UPDIKE  
If we're leaving, we need to do it  
now. If he's not attacking, he's  
gathering his strength.

Heidi gives one last glance to the pillar of ice.

Could it be...?

UPDIKE (CONT'D)  
Heidi!

Heidi waves a hand at him; "Shut up."

ISAAC (O.S.)  
You're in over your heads. You're  
going to get Iona killed. You're  
going to get everyone killed.

Heidi walks over to the ice.

A smile spreads over her face.

Peter and Updike watch her, cautious.

ISAAC (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I'll be watching from the ashes.

Heidi pulls her hand back; a massive icy javelin forms.

She hurls it through the ice.

Isaac reappears as the javelin pierces his heart.

The ice he was trapped in SHATTERS; he's slashed by the shards, pinned to the ground by the javelin.

Dead.

IONA

NO! NO!

Iona runs to him, panicked.

PETER

Is he really...?

Heidi breathes heavily. She's terrified despite herself.

She stops; gets control of herself.

HEIDI

Or he wants us to think so.

Beat.

PETER

Iona, we need to go. Now.

IONA

I'm not going anywhere with-

Heidi's eyes FLASH, and Iona slumps to the ground, unconscious.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - NIGHT

Iona awakens, chained to the wall.

Peter, Heidi, and Updike stand around her.

UPDIKE

There she is.

PETER

Iona! Are you okay?

IONA

Where's Isaac? What happened?

She starts to remember; hopes she's wrong.

HEIDI

God knows.

Iona's scared.

IONA  
I need him! I need him now!

UPDIKE  
I don't think you do.

IONA  
You don't understand! There's a-

PETER  
Iona. Stop.

He walks over to her, puts a hand on her shoulder.

PETER (CONT'D)  
Take a breath. Do you trust us?

IONA  
I don't know! Yes! But you don't  
know about-

PETER  
If you trust us, then trust us.  
Relax, just for a minute. Assume we  
know what we're doing.

Iona's skeptical, but she calms down a little.

UPDIKE  
We're not novices, dear. Do you  
think you know more than us?

IONA  
No, but-

UPDIKE  
But nothing. We've been doing this  
a long time. We've been fighting  
him for a long time.

PETER  
Just relax. You're safe here.

Iona takes a deep breath.

IONA  
...The chains?

HEIDI  
You're safe. You're also a risk.

UPDIKE  
You've spent a lot of time with  
Isaac. There are... dangers.



PETER

Tell us what you think is happening.

IONA

The thing that killed my mother is after me.

UPDIKE

What thing?

IONA

It's... I don't know what it is. It's dark and starry. He didn't say it, but I think it's something from the Other Place.

Heidi laughs. Peter and Updike glare at her.

IONA (CONT'D)

I've seen it!

PETER

I know. But... I just, we need you to consider... What if you haven't?

IONA

What?

UPDIKE

Isaac is more cunning than all of us put together. If he had any of us alone for as long as he had you, I don't doubt he could convince us the moon was falling and only he could stop it.

Iona understands what they're getting at.

IONA

Oh, no! No no no, it's not like that, he really-

Peter squeezes her shoulder.

UPDIKE

Iona. What if it is like that?

PETER

We're not saying you're wrong. Maybe it's all true.

HEIDI

It isn't.

Peter gets a little hairier.

PETER

Heidi!

Heidi's shocked, angry.

UPDIKE

I mean, Peter...

PETER

No!

He turns back to Iona.

PETER (CONT'D)

Maybe you're right. Maybe everything you saw is real, and we'll look into it.

He shoots a glare at the others, then looks back at Iona.

PETER (CONT'D)

But maybe... maybe the world's greatest illusionist, and your mother's greatest adversary, was lying to you.

The possibility starts to sink in. Iona's overwhelmed but keeps it together.

PETER (CONT'D)

Which is harder to believe? If you were in our shoes, what would you think?

Beat.

Iona's voice is quiet.

IONA

But... could he... I don't think...

HEIDI

It would be a great victory for him, to turn you against us. You see that?

Iona nods.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Nobody in all of history has pierced the Veil.

(MORE)

HEIDI (CONT'D)

In all likelihood, there is no  
Other Place.

IONA

He said he built new magic...

UPDIKE

Do you know how difficult it is to  
build a new magic? Ancient masters  
have tried and failed.

Iona really starts to understand. She can't keep it together.

IONA

I'm gonna throw up.

PETER

I know it's a lot-

She dry heaves, but there's nothing in her stomach.

Peter looks at Heidi.

PETER (CONT'D)

Can we please...?

Heidi grimaces. She waves a hand, and Iona's chains  
disappear; Iona drops, but Peter catches her.

Iona sobs. Peter rubs her back.

PETER (CONT'D)

It's okay. We've got you. It's  
okay.

INT. HEIDI AND PETER'S HOUSE - SUNRISE

The house is quaint and tidy. Lace is a strong decorative  
element. A little bowl of grandma candies sits on a coffee  
table. There's an old tube TV in the corner.

Heidi, Peter, and Updike sit around the coffee table. Peter  
drinks something hot.

Iona sits at the dining table across the room, eating a bowl  
of sugary cereal.

HEIDI

The question needs to be asked,  
even if we don't have an answer.

UPDIKE

"Is he really dead?"

PETER

This is the problem with illusionists. Everything about how things happened makes me want to say yes. But the fact that everything makes me want to say yes makes me want to say no.

HEIDI

He's faked his death before.

UPDIKE

That convincingly?

Heidi nodded.

HEIDI

And more. We buried the corpse. Penny could tell somehow, but I thought she was being paranoid.

UPDIKE

So there is a way to tell. We need to figure out what she could sense.

IONA

Um.

Everyone looks at her.

IONA (CONT'D)

We also need to talk about if there's really something coming to... kill me.

Heidi sighs.

PETER

You're right. Tell us-

HEIDI

This is not pressing.

PETER

It is if she's right.

UPDIKE

To be fair, is determining Isaac's status particularly time-sensitive? If he's dead, he's dead, if he's not, he's not. And regardless of what we think, we're going to behave as though he's alive for at least the next decade.

Heidi takes a deep breath. Sighs.

HEIDI

Fine. Tell us about your demon.

Iona's a deer in the headlights.

IONA

Um, it's... like... a star-thing. I think I dreamed about it a couple times. Isaac said he and my mom used it to kill Harold, but that it came back when I was born.

UPDIKE

What did he tell you about the magic they built for it?

IONA

Not a lot. It didn't play by the rules? I think he said it was sideways.

Heidi looks at Peter. "This is ridiculous."

UPDIKE

But it never actually attacked you?

IONA

No, it attacked.

Heidi looks at her, now barely intrigued.

IONA (CONT'D)

I was on the sofa, and suddenly I was, like, in outer space? But there was a shadow thing shouting at me. Isaac dragged me back somehow and I threw up. He saved my life.

UPDIKE

Or he convinced you he did.

An awkward beat.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)

Something else I've been chewing on. Why try so hard to teach Iona her Gebaren?

PETER

Red herring?

UPDIKE

He went to a lot of personal risk  
to lie, then.

IONA

I think Gebaren were important to  
fighting the thing that's after me.

Heidi's done with entertaining that line of thought.

HEIDI

That's one theory. I think it was  
in his own interest.

PETER

How do you figure?

HEIDI

Gebaren are the bedrock of  
defensive magic. If he really  
intended to keep Iona as an  
apprentice, he'd know she'd be a  
target. He needed her to be able to  
defend herself.

UPDIKE

But why not teach her himself? He  
knows plenty of defensive magic.  
And why use Gebaren rather than  
something he's more familiar with?

HEIDI

That's exactly it. He needed  
something she couldn't use to see  
through his illusions. If he wanted  
her to buy this Other Place story,  
she couldn't be familiar enough  
with his magic to see his lies.

IONA

I mean...

They all look at her.

IONA (CONT'D)

Either way, you can keep teaching  
me, right?

Heidi scowls at her.

HEIDI

A master needs to be able to trust  
her apprentice.

Iona shrinks.

Peter glares at Heidi.

PETER  
Okay, Iona, let's get you some  
sleep.

IONA  
But I want to hear-

PETER  
I'll tell you everything we  
discuss.

IONA  
And-

PETER  
And I'll make sure Heidi considers  
your side of things.

Heidi looks away.

Iona nods, gets to her feet. Peter leads her to a back room.

Updike looks at Heidi, serious.

UPDIKE  
Between you and me. What do you  
think?

Heidi gives him a look.

HEIDI  
About the Other Place?

UPDIKE  
All of it. What're the odds she's  
really in danger, and we just  
killed the one person who knew how  
to keep her safe?

HEIDI  
Low.

Updike nods slowly.

UPDIKE  
I agree. Low.

He sighs. Leans back.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)

But not zero.

Heidi chews on her tongue.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)

We need to talk to Fig.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - DAY

Updike and Heidi stand in front of a mirror; instead of a reflection, they see Fig facing them.

FIG

I am a busy woman. There is more to my life than one illusionist. If you say you killed him, so be it.

UPDIKE

I don't expect you to confirm anything one way or the other. But Iona is convinced she's in danger.

FIG

She is. Imminently. I didn't figure you cared, seeing as all of your actions this far have served to increase the risk. Or are you asking how to finish the deed?

HEIDI

(to Updike)

This is pointless. We can't trust her. Nothing she says will-

FIG

If that's all, I'm in the middle of something.

UPDIKE

We want to protect her.

FIG

Prove it.

UPDIKE

If you do want to keep her safe, convincing us of the danger will accomplish just as much as whatever you're working on, won't it?

Fig hisses again. But she considers his words.



She lowers her hand.

FIG  
How much do you know?

UPDIKE  
Just what Iona claims to know. That  
Isaac pierced the Veil and  
something from there wants her.

FIG  
Not something from the Other Place.  
Someone who's there presently.

HEIDI  
If you're so impatient, speak  
clearly. What do you mean?

FIG  
Unless she's out now. She was  
always willing to pay more than  
Isaac was, and now he's not here to  
stop her.

HEIDI  
Who?

Updike realizes. His face contorts in fury.

A cruel smile crawls across Fig's face.

FIG  
Updike understands.

UPDIKE  
You lie.

HEIDI  
What? You know...

She looks at Updike.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
No. That's not possible.

Heidi glares at Fig.

UPDIKE  
You lie!

Fig laughs.

Updike blasts the mirror with a burst of energy; it SHATTERS.

INT. HEIDI AND PETER'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - DAY

Iona lies on a frilly bed, already asleep. Peter sits in a chair next to the bed, looking through a magazine.

He sits up straight. Sniffs the air.

His muscles bulge, his teeth grow. Danger.

Heidi and Updike storm in, and Peter's on his feet.

HEIDI

AWAKE.

She raises a hand, and Iona lifts into the air, jolts awake, terrified.

IONA

No! What!

Now she's terrified and confused.

IONA (CONT'D)

Peter?! Heidi?

PETER

Heidi, what's going on?!

HEIDI

We want the truth, girl!

IONA

What truth?

HEIDI

If you won't tell us, we'll rip it out of you!

PETER

Heidi!

Updike holds Peter back as Heidi extends a hand forward; Iona's head jolts back, and her eyes fade to black.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID

Stars.

The gentle voice.

THE VOID

Isaac. Be reasonable.

Isaac floats in space, barely conscious.

THE VOID (CONT'D)  
The rules don't apply here.

Isaac stirs.

THE VOID (CONT'D)  
There is no hope. There is no  
despair. No victory. No defeat.  
There is only me. Only us. Only  
you. Alone forever.

Isaac's eyes shoot open. His perspective shifts; he doesn't  
change position, but now he's standing instead of laying  
down.

ISAAC  
Death is an illusion.

THE VOID  
You know all about illusions, don't  
you?

ISAAC  
I know more about death.

A GIGGLE.

The voice changes to the MASSIVE ROAR it was before.

THE VOID  
NOT AS MUCH AS ME

Isaac grits his teeth.

ISAAC  
Empty threats.

The voice grows louder, angrier. It presses in on Isaac,  
tries to crush him with sound.

THE VOID  
I AM POWER  
WE ARE ETERNITY  
THIS IS THE BEGINNING

Beat. Isaac's sad.

ISAAC  
It's too far, Pen. Even for me. I'm  
no altruist, but I might try to  
stop you even if my life didn't  
depend on it.

A giggle.

THE VOID  
HYPOCRISY

ISAAC  
Think what you want. You can hold  
me here as long as you like, but I  
gave Iona everything she needs to  
beat you. You're as stuck here as I  
am.

THE VOID  
A WAY OPENS

He cocks his head, listening to something.

ISAAC  
No. No! Not NOW!

Another giggle.

Isaac panics, shouts to nobody we can see.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Stop! You don't know what you're  
doing! STOP!

INT. HEIDI AND PETER'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - DAY

Peter's a scrawny little man. Heidi's in tears. Updike is on  
his knees.

Iona floats in the air in front of them, stars in her eyes.

Iona seems to gain awareness. Her eyes still stars, she  
floats down, lands on her feet in front of the bed.

She looks at the others. Looks at herself.

She closes her eyes. Wavers. When she opens her eyes, they're  
normal again.

IONA  
...Mommy?

HEIDI  
How could she...? Penelope would  
never... I don't...

PETER

Penelope made compromises, but they  
were always for the greater good.  
Would she really...

Heidi looks at Iona as if seeing her for the first time.

Iona's dazed, in tears. Heidi drops to her knees, embraces  
Iona. They both cry.

INT. ISAAC'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Fig stands in front of a circle of ash; a pillar of smoke  
obscures the inside of the circle.

FIG

Isaac, this one was bad. I think  
you lost something. I think I lost  
something.

The smoke fades away, revealing PENELOPE.

Penelope, big smile, examines herself.

PENELOPE

Oh, Fig. You've outdone yourself.  
Of course I always suspected he was  
reviving, but thought for sure  
nobody could come back from the  
Void so intact. I shan't  
underestimate you again.

Fig's shocked, terrified, furious. She grabs her veil, rips  
it off, revealing brilliant eyes like gemstones.

She glares at Penelope; Penelope stares right back, with eyes  
full of stars.

Fig stumbles backwards.

FIG

No. No!

Penelope smiles, advances towards Fig.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - DAY

Heidi runs in circles around the lab, preparing defenses.  
Peter and Updike finish scribing a runic circle around Iona,  
who's too emotionally exhausted to keep crying.

HEIDI

This isn't... if those maniacs really built this themselves, I can't know how my defenses will react. Iona might be standing there one second, Penny the next. They have a blood connection, there's a lot she can do with that.

UPDIKE

We have to do something.

HEIDI

Do you see me twiddling my thumbs?

She finishes. Brushes her hair out of her face.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

That Rotzak! Telling the truth the entire time. If he'd just lied a little, maybe we would've believed him!

UPDIKE

It was unexpected.

PETER

Iona, are you okay? Do you... feel anything?

Iona shakes her head.

They finish the circle. It flashes, then disappears.

PETER (CONT'D)

That should give us some warning if she tries to get in your head. Probably.

IONA

She's not... something's different. I didn't know there was anything happening before, but there was, and it's not happening anymore.

HEIDI

Is that good or bad?

Iona has no idea.

Peter swears.

UPDIKE

Are we sure Isaac's dead?

They all look at him.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)  
If he's not, we could really use  
his help right now.

They all look at Iona.

IONA  
I... I don't...

PETER  
Do you have a code? Any secret way  
of communicating?

IONA  
No. I don't... yes! Yes! There is  
one thing I can try!

PETER  
Then let's do it!

IONA  
It's at his workshop.

Peter looks at Heidi. She shakes her head.

HEIDI  
I'm not even sure I can keep you  
safe here. If we leave-

PETER  
If we can't keep her safe here,  
what's the difference?

HEIDI  
There's a massive difference! Just  
because we can't be sure doesn't  
mean our odds go down drastically  
if we step foot out that door!

IONA  
But it's my mom! Surely she  
wouldn't...

She can't say it. Nobody else can, either.

Beat.

PENELOPE (O.S.)  
Surely I wouldn't what?

INT. HEIDI'S ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Penelope leans against the door to Heidi's lab, nonchalant.

PENELOPE

Kill you all? Of course not, don't  
be ridiculous. Open the door.

Beat. Penelope smiles.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Or don't. I've got nothing but  
time. Let's just chat.

Beat. Her smile fades. She affects a voice.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

"Penny, it's so good to see you! We  
thought you were dead!" Why, thank  
you, it's good to see you too! I  
was dead, but it's no big deal.  
You'll see soon enough.

Beat. She laughs.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry, that came off as a  
threat, didn't it? I just mean,  
sooner or later, you'll die, right?  
And in the grand scheme of things,  
it'll be "sooner." Even if I don't  
kill you all now - and I really  
might not - you're still going to  
eventually. It's unavoidable. For  
you.

Beat. She gets annoyed.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Time doesn't work like I thought it  
did. I've only had myself to talk  
to for a long time, and I've gotten  
very good at it.

Beat. She GROANS LOUDLY.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - CONTINUOUS

Peter, Heidi, and Updike are in battle positions by the door.  
Iona hides behind Peter.



PENELOPE (O.S.)  
 That doesn't mean I won't get  
 bored! Or angry! I can wait  
 forever, but not patiently!

Everyone speaks quietly, almost whispering.

IONA  
 It doesn't even sound like her.

Updike gives her a sad look.

UPDIKE  
 It does, though. When she was  
 young... it does.

PENELOPE (O.S.)  
 Fine! We'll do it like this!

A BLAST; the door rattles, but holds.

HEIDI  
 What do we do?

Peter looks around.

Another BLAST.

PETER  
 We can't take the front door.

HEIDI  
 There isn't a back door.

UPDIKE  
 Blow a hole open?

HEIDI  
 The walls are too strong. The door  
 is the only thing we could possibly  
 break down.

BLAST.

She thinks. Swears under her breath.

HEIDI (CONT'D)  
 No. I've trapped us here.

Beat.

IONA  
 I have an idea.

Everybody looks at her.

IONA (CONT'D)  
It's... not a good one.

INT. HEIDI'S ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Penny gathers energy in her hands, hurls it against the door; a huge, final BLAST, and the door SHATTERS.

INT. HEIDI'S LAB - CONTINUOUS

Iona and the others just have time to hop into a portal leading to a snowy wasteland.

Penny dives for the portal, but it closes just before she can reach it.

Penny SCREAMS; the walls shake.

She charges out the door.

Beat.

She walks back inside, sniffs the air.

She smiles.

PENELOPE  
You almost had me. But our ties go deeper than you can ever know.

She pulls at the air, rips away an illusion hiding Iona in the corner.

Iona has a rune drawn in blood on her forehead.

IONA  
Actually, Heidi thought of that.

Penelope looks around.

PENELOPE  
Where is she, anyway? And the others? They can't hurt me.

She turns back to Iona.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)  
Or are they really gone?

Iona shrinks back against the wall.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)  
Did you sacrifice yourself for  
them? Is that what just happened?

She grabs Iona's chin. Penelope's eyes turn into stars.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)  
Very heroic.

She stops. Something's wrong.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)  
What's going on? Why aren't you...

She looks at the rune on Iona's forehead.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)  
What is that? Some sort of  
protective...

She wipes it off. SNARLS.

Iona TRANSFORMS INTO A MASSIVE BEAR, pins Penelope to the  
ground.

The bear speaks with Peter's voice.

PETER  
You'll never get her.

Penelope SCREAMS in anger.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

Iona, one fingertip bloody and bandaged, leads Heidi and  
Updike down the sidewalk, all of them sprinting. Iona's short  
of breath, but Heidi and Updike are hale and hearty, chanting  
under their breath.

Iona stops in front of a sushi place. She bends over, catches  
her breath.

Heidi looks behind them, wistful, if only for a moment.

UPDIKE  
Here?

Iona nods.

UPDIKE (CONT'D)  
Is there a key?

Iona steps to the sushi restaurant. A pair of PATRONS try to walk out, but Iona holds the door shut.

The patrons stare, confused.

PATRON  
Hey! Open the door!

Iona draws with her finger on the glass of the door: a complicated series of runes, invisible to all but her.

UPDIKE  
This seems a little highly-  
trafficked to be a workshop.

IONA  
It's a back door. If it still  
works.

Then she pulls the door open, revealing Isaac's workshop.

INT. ISAAC'S WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS

They all enter from right next to the hole Hazy blew in the wall.

Updike can't help looking around, curious. Heidi scans the area for threats. Iona catches her breath.

IONA  
Is Fig here?

Heidi sees the circle of ash.

HEIDI  
This was how she came back.

She examines the ash.

UPDIKE  
Penelope? Who summoned her?

HEIDI  
Fig?

IONA  
She wouldn't. I don't think.

UPDIKE  
(ignoring Iona)  
Possible, but unlikely.

She considers.

Heidi looks at Iona. Gestures to the ash.

HEIDI  
What do you know about this?

IONA  
N-nothing. At least, I never saw  
him do anything like this.

She considers.

IONA (CONT'D)  
Honestly, I'm not sure I actually  
saw him attack anyone ever. I guess  
Hazy?

Heidi looks at Updike.

HEIDI  
It looks like whoever it was, was  
using a variant of Paul's Calling.  
I could try it, see if we can bring  
Isaac back.

UPDIKE  
But in doing so, open us up to  
attacks from god-knows-what. Other  
Things.

IONA  
Wouldn't that be bad? Like, bad?

HEIDI  
Yes.

Beat.

UPDIKE  
Do it. Iona, we need to keep an eye  
out. Activate any defenses he has  
left. I'll see what I can do about  
this hole in the wall.

Iona hesitates; Updike hurries to the hole.

Heidi kneels next to the circle of ash, starts performing a  
complicated series of gestures.

Iona notices. Stares.

IONA  
What are you doing?

HEIDI  
Concentrating.

Iona kneels next to her.

IONA  
No no no, those gestures. Gebaren.  
I know those ones.

Heidi looks at her.

HEIDI  
I didn't teach them to you.

IONA  
Isaac used something like them when  
Hazy attacked. Sucked all the fire  
out of the room.

Heidi considers.

HEIDI  
Show me.

IONA  
I don't think I can remember them  
myself, but seeing you-

HEIDI  
Whether or not you remember what he  
did could be the difference between  
summoning Isaac back from Hell, and  
summoning something else.

Iona's eyes widen, then she steels herself. Nods.

IONA  
Okay.

EXT. THE STARRY VOID

Isaac drifts, legs crossed, meditating.

Something tugs at him. His eyes open.

Beat.

It tugs again. He turns his head to look.

ISAAC  
I'll be a son of Zeus.

INT. ISAAC'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Heidi and Iona stand in front of the circle of ash, which is filled with a column of smoke, just like before.

IONA

When do we know if we summoned a monster?

ISAAC (O.S.)

I've been called worse.

The smoke fades, revealing Isaac. He smiles, and Iona runs to hug him. Isaac lets her, but doesn't hug back, just looks at Heidi.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

You used Paul's Calling?

HEIDI

A variant. Iona helped me with some of the particulars of your new magic.

Iona lets go, takes a step back.

Isaac shakes his head.

ISAAC

I hadn't taught her any of that yet, just the defensive ones.

IONA

I watched you when you fought Hazy.

Isaac grins, impressed.

ISAAC

That I did. You wouldn't have made a terrible apprentice.

IONA

(hurt)

I thought I was your apprentice?

ISAAC

You know it's more complicated than that.

HEIDI

Can you stop Penelope?

Isaac sighs.

ISAAC

You did better than anyone could've expected, but there's only so much you knew about.

HEIDI

It didn't work?

ISAAC

It did. But there are costs. I lose a little bit every time I come back.

HEIDI

Every time?

UPDIKE

I knew it.

ISAAC

Fig spent years practicing for it, and I still lost more than I'd like. You half-assed it based on some similar magic you could recall, and what Iona saw one time.

HEIDI

What's the cost?

ISAAC

I'm dry as a bone. Not a lick of magic left.

Iona's shocked. Updike shakes his head. Heidi spits.

HEIDI

So this was for nothing?

ISAAC

I'm more than my magic. But we don't have much time. We need to leave.

HEIDI

She sensed the Call?

ISAAC

She senses Iona.

HEIDI

Should we leave her behind?

IONA

What?



ISAAC  
Just let Penny eat her and ascend  
to godhood, great plan.

He jogs towards the exit.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
Shall we?

As he reaches the door, the entire wall DISAPPEARS. The ceiling, now lacking support, collapses on top of all of them.

Updike throws a shield above himself and Iona, while Heidi blasts beams of force at the rubble that would hit her, disintegrating it.

Isaac barely dives outside.

EXT. RUBBLE - CONTINUOUS

Penelope stands on the other side of where the wall used to be, grinning like a fox.

PENELOPE  
Isaac! Or whatever's left, it looks  
like. Out of juice?

ISAAC  
Oh, Penny. I tried to spare you all  
this trouble.

Heidi floats above the debris, ready for battle, but too nervous to start anything.

PENELOPE  
You know me. Have to do things the  
hard way.

ISAAC  
Even when the easy way would spare  
you so much grief.

Penelope glares. He struck a nerve.

PENELOPE  
You think I still care at all about  
Aaron?

ISAAC  
I was talking about your daughter.  
But yes, good point, your husband  
is another example.

Penelope sighs. She looks at Iona and Updike as they emerge from the debris.

PENELOPE

You don't understand eternity like I do. If you did, you'd know there's no cost that isn't worth paying.

ISAAC

I guess if you didn't mind killing the man who loved you...

Penelope snarls.

Iona grits her teeth. This is really her mother?

PENELOPE

If I didn't mind killing him, just think what I'm willing to do to you.

ISAAC

Promises, promises.

Penelope moves towards Iona. Isaac is in the way, but that doesn't bother her; she barely notices him.

He glances at Iona, stern but eager: "Do something."

Iona looks at Isaac. Takes a deep breath.

Heidi prepares to attack Penelope, but-

Penelope stops right in front of Isaac. She's surprised. He stares her down.

PENELOPE

You're really going to make me do this? You're powerless.

ISAAC

You just need to learn the same lesson over and over again, don't you?

Penelope swipes a hand, telekinetically hurls a nearby steel bar at him; the bar sweeps right through him.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

You are nothing next to me.

Unnoticed by Penelope, Iona slips away; Updike follows her lead.

Penelope holds up her hands. Her eyes glow and her hair lifts, buoyed by unseen force. All of her focus is on Isaac, who just stands there, smiling, unaffected by whatever she's trying.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Spend the next ten thousand years practicing, I could beat you with a word.

Penelope stops, catches her breath.

Heidi drifts to the ground, drawing Penelope's gaze just a little further away from Iona.

Penelope looks back at Isaac.

PENELOPE

You're powerless.

She's furious, frustrated.

ISAAC

I understand if you're frustrated.

Iona and Updike get around a corner; they're out of sight now.

HEIDI

Enough toying with her. Let's fight.

ISAAC

That's a terrible idea. You? Fighting her one on one?

Now Penelope and Heidi are both confused.

HEIDI

But you...

ISAAC

Oh, no, sorry. I'm powerless. Not a drop of magic left. I can't do anything to help.

He considers.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Although... I guess I'm still imposing enough a figure to make an adequate distraction.

Penelope doesn't just glow, she IGNITES with fury and power.

ISAAC (CONT'D)  
How'd I do, mom?

Heidi is blown back. Isaac just laughs and disappears.

Heidi stops herself in midair. She's scared, but she readies an icy spear.

Penelope glares death at her.

PENELOPE  
Don't be worth the effort.

Heidi hesitates.

Penelope shoots straight up into the air at a hundred miles an hour.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Iona and Updike run off the street and into the park. Isaac runs next to them.

ISAAC  
That was perfect. Couldn't have done it better myself.

IONA  
Why is she so different?

ISAAC  
This is her first time back. My first time wrecked me. Couple that with how much she'd grown to rely on the Void in our last fight, I'm not surprised it's taking its toll.

UPDIKE  
So you did kill her?

ISAAC  
It didn't take.

Iona's betrayed.

IONA  
You told me the Thing killed her!

ISAAC  
Iona, she is the Thing. I needed  
you to trust me enough to let me  
teach you how to kill her for good.

IONA  
Kill her?

Updike grunts approvingly.

UPDIKE  
Glad there's a plan.

ISAAC  
There was a plan. It relied on  
about a year more of practice.

IONA  
Then what are we gonna do?

ISAAC  
Probably all die. But I aim to  
annoy her as much as I can  
beforehand.

Updike stops running. Iona and Isaac stop, turn to face him.

UPDIKE  
I won't give up hope so easily.

ISAAC  
That's fine. I really don't care.  
In fact, if it means you'll try  
harder, I'm all for it.

UPDIKE  
I've been around a long time.  
Penelope has power and talent, but  
she was never as technically  
skilled as me.

ISAAC  
Okay. Let's go, Iona, I guess he's  
got this.

Isaac jogs forward. Iona hesitates, watches Updike.

UPDIKE  
You are infuriating.

Beat.

He starts running again. Iona runs alongside him.

Something like a METEOR slams into the ground in front of them.

The dust clears; Penelope is here, and she's PISSED.

PENELOPE

It's time to end this.

ISAAC

Iona! She's stronger than you!

IONA

(no shit)

I know!

ISAAC

But it's her connection to you  
that's her greatest strength! She's  
going to absorb you, like I did the  
fire!

Penelope's voice reverberates; it's like the universe itself is speaking.

PENELOPE

ENOUGH

She puts a hand up, and Isaac flies backwards, hits the ground hard.

Updike holds his arms out; the skin on his arms blackens and chars and falls off, leaving vicious, spiky, bladed bones, claws the size of butcher knives.

Penelope STOMPS, and the ground around Updike reaches up to entomb him. He's sucked into the earth.

Penelope turns to Iona.

Iona puts her arms up in defensive gesture.

Penelope advances.

Iona throws a fireball at her, but Penelope doesn't even duck, and it dissipates harmlessly against her.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

I know his tricks. You're  
powerless.

A BONY CLAW bursts from the ground, grabs Penelope's ankle.

She snarls at it. Then it DRAGS HER INTO THE GROUND.

Iona looks around, terrified.

She picks a direction and starts running.

The ground beneath her feet EXPLODES. Penelope soars out of it, bloody and shredded.

Updike leaps out behind her, his face sunken and bloodless.

UPDIKE

You think death is your domain? I  
spoke the language of the grave  
before you were born!

PENELOPE

THE UNIVERSE IS MINE  
I HAVE NO MORE NEED FOR DEATH

Her wounds FALL OFF. It's like they were all costume makeup. Even the tears in her clothing fall, leaving her whole and unharmed.

Nearby, Isaac stirs.

Updike takes a step back, surprised. He steels himself.

Penelope throws a GLOWING ORB OF STARLIGHT at Updike. It moves faster than the eye can see, hurls him away.

Heidi swoops in, catches him, lands next to Iona.

IONA

Why are you doing this?! Why me?  
I'm your daughter!

PENELOPE

ESSENCE OF ESSENCE  
IN YOU, WE CREATED MYSELF  
IN MYSELF, ETERNITY

IONA

I don't understand!

PENELOPE

YOU DO NOT NEED TO

Isaac gets to his feet. He's behind Penelope; he starts stumbling over to them.

Heidi readies a spear of ice.

HEIDI

We'll stop you.

PENELOPE  
YOU CANNOT

Iona sees Isaac, a quick flash in her eyes. She looks back at Penelope.

IONA  
No. We can't.

Penelope laughs. Heidi and Updike look at Iona; Heidi's still in combat mode, Updike is horrified.

UPDIKE  
We can't give up.

IONA  
There's nothing we can do. She can only be stopped by her weird magic. Right?

PENELOPE  
DON'T THINK THE PITIFUL AMOUNT  
ISAAC TAUGHT YOU IS ENOUGH TO  
DEFEND YOURSELF

IONA  
No, probably not. At the very least, I'd have to catch you off-guard. Which I couldn't do with you staring at me.

Penelope stops laughing. Iona is up to something.

IONA (CONT'D)  
Of course, if Isaac was lying about being powerless, and he managed to get right behind you...

Penelope SHRIEKS, wheels around to see Isaac right behind her, arms crossed.

She reaches out, and shadows shoot from her hand, entwine Isaac, lift him up in front of her.

PENELOPE  
THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU WILL-

ISAAC  
Oh, no, don't worry. I'm spent.

Penelope hesitates, confused, furious.

Isaac sighs.



ISAAC (CONT'D)

It was a good thought. It makes perfect sense that I'd lie about being out of magic. Solid gamble on Iona's part. But unfortunately, no, I really am dry.

Penelope GROWLS.

PENELOPE

ALL THE SAME, I THINK IT'S TIME WE-

IONA

Hey mom.

Penelope, startled, turns around to see Iona right behind her, rhythmically moving her arms, with eyes full of stars.

Iona pulls her arms apart. Penelope EXPLODES into stars, is ABSORBED ENTIRELY by Iona.

Iona's eyes BURN LIKE THE SUN. She lifts into the air; light shines out of every pore in her body.

As the light fades, she hovers in mid-air, eyes still glowing.

Updike and Heidi don't know what just happened, or what to do.

Isaac chuckles.

Iona looks at him like he's an ant, but does nothing.

UPDIKE

(horrified)

What did you do?

ISAAC

She used her enemy's strength. The connection Penny wanted to take advantage of went both ways.

HEIDI

You knew it would work like that?

ISAAC

I hoped it wouldn't come to that. I'd prefer nobody had this level of cosmic power.

He looks at Iona.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Well. Nobody other than myself.

Iona closes her eyes. When she opens them, her eyes are starry voids. Once more, and they're back to normal.

She drifts back to the ground.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

That's enough trouble for one day,  
I think. I'll see you around, Iona.

He turns to leave.

Iona's voice echoes.

IONA

No.

She doesn't need to do anything. Isaac lifts an inch into the air, drifts over to her.

IONA (CONT'D)

You used me.

ISAAC

I handed you deific power.

IONA

To save your own skin.

ISAAC

This didn't go like you think it  
did. Put me down, I need to show  
you something.

Iona cocks her head. She's unthreatened; she's perfectly aware of how powerful she is.

She releases him. Before his feet touch the ground, he  
DISAPPEARS INTO THIN AIR.

Iona chuckles. Laughs. Laughs louder.

Heidi and Updike are terrified.

Iona's laugh ECHOES WITH POWER.

FADE OUT

THE END