Vampire: The Masquerade: Blood Doll Script, v2

Season 2, Episode 12: “Conscript the Blood Doll”

by Alicia E. Goranson

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Approximate playing time: 1 Hour, 30 minutes

CAST OF CHARACTERS

CASSANDRA DAVRIL	30s trans woman, Ventrue, femme, main character
CASSANDRA’S BEAST	CASSANDRA’s Beast, an echo of SAMAEL’s voice
SAMAEL (GEORGE GATAKER)	Ventrue, demimasc, former vassal of Seattle prince AARALYN, CASSANDRA’s sire, alter in CASSANDRA
RUTH	Naval biology scientist, 30s, trans femme
ROSE	Toreador sheriff of Camarilla
JOSEPHINE	Thin blood, 15th generation, advocate for Duskborn rights
LOREA	Cult of Set Non-Believer, femme, SODO Anarch community organizer, on the Weaponry Security Collective
MARA	Buddhist Tzimisce, femme, formerly incarcerated
SIMON	Toreador, former member of SAMAEL’s coterie
MELISSA	40-something human woman, wheelchair user, Blood Doll
MAPLE	30-something human woman, Blood Doll
AUTUMN	30-something human Dungeon Monitor, Blood Doll
FIRST LIGHT LEAD	Leader of the First Light in Kitsap
NICHOLE	Kindred, femme, CASSANDRA’s ex-girlfriend, one of ROSE’s enforcers
AMANDA	Graveyard Shift Hecata, one of ROSE’s enforcers
EMBER	Thin Blood, JOSEPHINE’s sire, Member of the Fire Brigade
SPARK	Thin Blood, Member of the Fire Brigade
POLICE (L)	Lynnwood police officer

POLICE (PO)	Port Orchard police officer
GUARD	Kitsap gate guard, femme
VICTIM 5	Butch dyke, attractive to CASSANDRA

SCENE 1. — INTERROBANG (INT: QUIET OFFICE MEETING ROOM, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), SAMAEL, ROSE, NICHOLE, AMANDA

/SFX/ QUIET OFFICE AMBIANCE WITH MUFFLED FANS

CASSANDRA (NA): I had barely started my evening gym routine when ROSE pulled me back to the Camarilla offices in a downtown skyscraper. She refused to answer any of my questions until the two of us were alone in her interrogation chamber.

ROSE: (BEAT) Well.

CASSANDRA: (PAUSE) Well?

ROSE: What do you have for me? I assume you've made contact with the Fire Brigade again.

CASSANDRA: Yes. I've been speaking with their lead organizer, JOSEPHINE Ridgemont.

ROSE: So you have a name for me. Unfortunately it's falsified. We believe she's actually Christine Chatters, a minor tech leader formerly on the boards of several start-ups. She disappeared over six months ago, before which she had broken up with her longtime partner, Abby. She's sold all of her publicly traded stock so she's sitting on quite a fortune. (BEAT) And I know what she's spending it on. Us. There's a mole in our organization.

CASSANDRA: How do you know?

ROSE: All the targets they've hit are repositories or storehouses. They've only hit our transports once. So whoever's leaking information has only the most basic clearance. (BEAT) I'm concerned it's one of my Enforcers.

CASSANDRA: You want me to question them?

ROSE: Not just you. How is SAMAEL at ferreting out a spy?

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) Spotting counterintelligence requires a delicate touch. You need patience to monitor your suspects. I'll require access to their accounts. Stakeout locations.

ROSE: They're being careful with their money. Those who aren't gamblers, at least. And those who are have kept their spending habits matching their salaries.

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I'd look into them more closely. Occam's razor and all that.

ROSE: I want a vibe check on my Enforcers first. Tell them you're investigating our low-level ghouls and you want them to keep their eyes out for any suspicious behavior. And then, you're going to tell them something special.

/SFX/ ROSE SPREADS A PIECE OF PAPER ON A DESK

ROSE: This spreadsheet has a list of rumors where the traitorous ghoul might be moving merchandise stolen from the Camarilla. Don't tell them to check these places out yet. Give a different location to each Enforcer, and record who you told each rumor to on the sheet.

CASSANDRA: So if the Fire Brigade hits any of these locations, you'll know who the mole is.

ROSE: Perhaps. If not, I'm hoping it puts a tiny bit of pressure on the mole to slow the leaks. How much time do you need to discuss this with SAMAEL?

CASSANDRA: Give us ten minutes.

ROSE: Good. Be unassuming. Be professional. Treat each suspect with care. Don't be overly friendly.

/SFX/ STATIC TO INDICATE A SHIFT TO ANOTHER EXAMINATION

CASSANDRA: NICHOLE!

NICHOLE: Hey! CASSANDRA.

/SFX/ NICHOLE HUGS CASSANDRA

NICHOLE: I thought ROSE was going to chew me out in here or something.

CASSANDRA: It's still business. But it's really good to see you.

NICHOLE: Same!

SAMAEL (ECHO): (EXCITED) Ask if she's had any expenses lately.

CASSANDRA: Are you still in that apartment we used to date in?

NICHOLE: Yup! It's mostly as you remember it.

CASSANDRA: With your mom's paintings still in the living room?

NICHOLE: She will haunt me if I take them down, I swear.

CASSANDRA: So you're, what, still playing the stocks?

NICHOLE: Where else is my money going to grow? What's this about, anyway?

CASSANDRA: ROSE thinks one of our ghouls is feeding information to the Fire Brigade.

NICHOLE: Aren't ghouls supposed to love us?

CASSANDRA: She suspects someone is influencing them. They're also skimming product.

/SFX/ STATIC TO INDICATE A SHIFT TO ANOTHER EXAMINATION

AMANDA: Really?

CASSANDRA: That's what ROSE said to tell you, AMANDA.

AMANDA: Does she know which shipments are being taken?

CASSANDRA: No, but she thinks they're being stored in a Pod behind an Ethiopian grocery in Pinehurst. Don't act on this yet. She's having me help coordinate the investigation. I'll tell you when.

AMANDA: You've always been good at organizing.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (EXCITED) She's not budging. Ask her what she thinks of the Thin Bloods.

CASSANDRA: We're also concerned that more Thin Bloods might join the Fire Brigade.

AMANDA: See, I don't know about that. They do organize, but they're not all proud of who they are. But the Fire Brigade? <u>They're</u> proud. And fucking dangerous for it.

CASSANDRA: How do you know they're proud of being Thin Bloods?

AMANDA: You don't risk burning yourself like they do without pride in your bones. They act like they've already won. It's like they can taste victory and after they branded ROSE, feels like they've only gotten brasher.

CASSANDRA: You think that'll bring more to the cause?

AMANDA: It'll give them hope. But the Fire Brigade are in our cross-hairs. Few of the others will want to join them there. You think ZACHERY would have allied with them?

CASSANDRA: I don't give a fuck what ZACHERY would have wanted.

AMANDA: Well, he wouldn't have been a part of them. The Fire Brigade are bad news. And they won't change anything. Eventually, they'll burn themselves out.

CASSANDRA: Or they'll get a position in the Camarilla.

AMANDA: Heh. (BEAT) Wouldn't that be something.

<u>/SFX/ STATIC TO INDICATE A SHIFT TO ANOTHER EXAMINATION</u>

NICHOLE: I don't know about any of this.

CASSANDRA: Someone has to be leading the Fire Brigade to our facilities.

NICHOLE: Yes, but skimming product and leaving it in an old Ballard storage unit? They know they'd be caught.

CASSANDRA: Unless they were planning to disappear with a lot of money.

NICHOLE: Or they're Sabbat. Or they're some very crafty Anarchs. Might be LOREA.

CASSANDRA: They're all suspects, yeah.

NICHOLE: Fuck.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (EXCITED) Let her go. She won't tell you anything more without an incentive. This is exhilarating!

CASSANDRA: Thanks for talking with me. I have some other folks I need to speak with next.

NICHOLE: I hear you. I'm glad ROSE has a place for you here.

CASSANDRA: Me too.

/SFX/ STATIC TO INDICATE A SHIFT TO ANOTHER EXAMINATION

AMANDA: Sounds good. I'll keep my senses open for anything.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I don't know what to make of her. She's not hiding anything when she should be.

CASSANDRA: I appreciate it. Thanks for being honest with me.

AMANDA: Hmm. And you're being honest with me, too? Why isn't ROSE here?

CASSANDRA: I'm only doing what she asked me to do.

AMANDA: Curious. (BEAT) Well, if she told you to.

/SFX/ AMANDA STANDS FROM HER CHAIR

/SFX/ STATIC TO INDICATE A SHIFT TO ANOTHER DISCUSSION

ROSE: So. How'd it go?

CASSANDRA: I fed them all your different locations.

ROSE: SAMAEL? What were your takes on them?

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I'd keep my eye out on these Enforcers. Don't worry. It's a short list.

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER, STOPS

CASSANDRA: (READING) Dane, Paulina, and (BEAT) NICHOLE?

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) They trusted you in a situation when they should not have. I consider that highly suspicious.

ROSE: Thank you, SAMAEL. And you're certain they were lying?

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) All your Enforcers were lying, naturally, save one. Only a fool would be entirely truthful in this line of work. But you asked who I'd keep my eye on.

ROSE: I understand. Thank you for your insights.

/SFX/ PEN SCRATCHES ON PAPER

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) My pleasure. Thank you for the entertainment.

ROSE: And CASSANDRA?

CASSANDRA: Yes, ROSE?

ROSE: You're keeping MARA informed of your progress?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I am.

ROSE: And you won't hesitate to unleash her the next time you meet up with the Fire Brigade?

CASSANDRA: I have been meeting with JOSEPHINE, alone. Killing her would drive the rest of them underground. I'm waiting for the opportunity for MARA to have access to all of them.

ROSE: See to it, then. Thank you, CASSANDRA. You may go.

CASSANDRA: Do I have to keep doing this?

ROSE: Yes. Be off.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS OUT OF ROOM, DOWN HALL

CASSANDRA: (TO SAMAEL) Who was telling the truth?

SAMAEL (ECHO): I'm not concerned with that one. (BEAT) AMANDA.

CASSANDRA: Ah.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) My greatest shame as a trainer.

SCENE 2. — DISTRACTION (INT: HALLWAY IN SPARROW APARTMENTS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, MARA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ NEIGHBORS WITH DULL MUSIC, FRONT DOOR CLOSES, CASSANDRA WALKS TO ELEVATOR, PUSHES BUTTON, ELEVATOR DINGS

CASSANDRA: Hmm.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You've been quiet since we left downtown.

CASSANDRA: I don't like what you said.

SAMAEL (ECHO): About AMANDA?

CASSANDRA: About it being entertainment.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) Hmm. The issue is you're not seeing people as I see people. Especially Kindred. Everyone has ticks. Tells. Behaviors they don't like. A propensity to file the edges of one's nails or to gesture inappropriately to try to be better understood. Now, as a Kindred, our people realize they have hundreds of years to live with these old subconscious gestures and suddenly, they try to cover them up. They'll pull their hands down if they feel an old urge to lift them.

/SFX/ ELEVATOR DINGS, DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA WALKS IN, PRESSES A BUTTON, ELEVATOR DINGS, DOOR CLOSES, ELEVATOR ASCENDS

SAMAEL (ECHO): You watch for these tells. You watch how fast they're cutting off a movement or forcing one they think is more appropriate to the moment. That indicates their level of nervousness. Because Kindred don't change. Well. Perhaps glacially. They'll still be twitching at the sound of the elevated subway they recall from outside their old apartment, or the creak of a floorboard that gave away their past attempts for a tryst. They'll twitch every time they lose control. You focus on making them lose control, love. That's how you tell when they're hiding something.

CASSANDRA: (SMOULDERING) What's my tell?

SAMAEL (ECHO): You twist your head a little to adjust your stiff vertebrae.

/SFX/ ELEVATOR STOPS, DOOR OPENS

SAMAEL (ECHO): This isn't our floor.

CASSANDRA: No.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS OUT, ELEVATOR CLOSES

SAMAEL (ECHO): Where are we going?

CASSANDRA: Apartment four sixteen.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS WALKING, KNOCKS ON DOOR

SAMAEL (ECHO): Why her place?

CASSANDRA: I'm sick of being used like this. I want to talk to a sensible creature for once.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love.

/SFX/ DOOR OPENS

MARA: CASSANDRA? Is something the matter?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Can I just talk with you for a bit?

MARA: Of course. Could we do it in your rooms? I'm still (BEAT) embarrassed about the state of my apartment.

CASSANDRA: Sure. Come on up.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I'm sorry I upset you, love. But you need to behave as what's expected of you if you want to keep ROSE's favor. Like how I behaved with AARALYN.

CASSANDRA: I know. (BEAT) But it makes my guts heave.

SCENE 3. — FILES (INT: PENTHOUSE IN SPARROW APARTMENTS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA'S BEAST, MARA, SAMAEL, RUTH

/SFX/ NEIGHBORS WITH DULL MUSIC, DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA AND MARA WALK IN, DOOR CLOSES

MARA: Ah. You've done very little decoration since my last visit.

CASSANDRA: I'm worried about people following me if I order new furniture. Or if I carry it here myself.

MARA: I understand.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) They say Kindred don't change. But everyone in the Camarilla expects that of me. To become like them.

MARA: Then change for them. Or don't. If you are authorized, they are invested in you. If they are putting work into your training.

CASSANDRA: They aren't.

MARA: I would be wary of working with them, then.

CASSANDRA: It could all change in a snap, though.

MARA: So does everything. (BEAT) There is still time to live and time to heal. Do you think I did not have much to endure when I left the Sabbat? What is important now is how you treat yourself. That your heart does not grow cold toward yourself. That of all the walls you build for survival, that you tend a fire in your center and refuse to extinguish it. You are worth more than they understand. And this is key. It is all right to mourn the time you have lost to survival. It's natural. It would be grand if things were better. But for now? Mourn until you are done. And continue feeding your hidden flame.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Thank you.

MARA: We only have so much strength in this life. We mistakenly use so much of it against ourselves.

CASSANDRA: I cherish hope though.

MARA: Kindred learn well how to seek opportunity. You think you are the only one who feeds hope to your inner flame? Work and grow patient. As the years pass, time will grow irrelevant to you. I arranged stones and wrote poetry in my cell. You must recognize that you are in your own kind of cell. Freedom from it is terrifying. Trust me.

CASSANDRA: I do. (BEAT) I just get so angry. And frustrated from everything they have me do.

MARA: I read in the Dhammapada, "When anger arises, whoever keeps firm control as if with a racing chariot: him I call a master charioteer. Anyone else, a rein-holder — that's all." It is possible to embrace your anger and drive it to your command. But

it takes so much work and until then, you play the fool. It is your choice and I do not recommend this path.

CASSANDRA: But you have embraced it.

MARA: (BEAT) Oh yes.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I'll think on this.

MARA: Is that everything you wanted to discuss? (BEAT) I was wondering when you will next see JOSEPHINE.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Soon. (BEAT) Do you intend to kill her?

MARA: I haven't decided yet.

CASSANDRA: I'll delay ROSE as long as I can.

MARA: Do not do so on my account. I can handle whatever retribution she has planned for me.

/SFX/ KNOCK ON FRONT DOOR

CASSANDRA: That's RUTH.

MARA: Were you expecting her?

CASSANDRA: No.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO THE DOOR, STOPS

CASSANDRA: What is it?

RUTH: (OUTSIDE DOOR) Open up. Please.

MARA: She's scared.

CASSANDRA: I know.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA OPENS THE DOOR

CASSANDRA: Come in.

RUTH: Thank you.

/SFX/ RUTH WALKS IN, CASSANDRA SHUTS THE DOOR

RUTH: I'm sorry if this is a bad time.

CASSANDRA: Hey. Stop. Breathe. Don't make me order you to do it.

RUTH: (INHALES, EXHALES) I came here as fast as I could. I didn't have time to stop at home for my phone.

CASSANDRA: What's going on?

MARA: I should go.

RUTH: No. Please.

/SFX/ RUTH RUSTLES SHEETS OF PAPER, PULLS OUT SEVERAL, STOPS

RUTH: Here.

MARA: (BEAT) What are these pages?

RUTH: Your file. I spent today copying as many of these as I could.

/SFX/ MARA ACCEPTS HER FILE

MARA: (READS) Oh. (BEAT) Oh. (BEAT) Oh my.

RUTH: CASSANDRA. Please take the rest.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA ACCEPTS THE FILES

CASSANDRA: What's happening?

RUTH: My department got the announcement today. The First Light are taking over. They'll be assuming duties in stages. My superiors were freaked the fuck out after MARA's truck got hijacked. I think the higher-ups are starting to give up on Kindred research.

MARA: Then that's good news for you. You'll be free soon.

RUTH: Maybe. (BEAT) But I don't know what's going to happen to the rest of the Kindred. The soldiers and the prisoners. They're going to be given to the First Light. MARA, I'm sorry.

MARA: (DISTURBED) Thank you for telling me. And sharing this file with me. If it's all right, I'd like to take it to my apartment to read in private.

RUTH: Sure.

CASSANDRA: Go ahead. I'll catch up with you later.

MARA: Thank you, as always, for my rent.

/SFX/ MARA WALKS TO THE DOOR, OPENS THE DOOR, WALKS OUT, CLOSES THE DOOR

RUTH: SAMAEL's file in is there, too.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fucking hell. I don't want to see a word of it.

CASSANDRA: (DISTURBED) Thank you. What do you want me to do with these?

RUTH: Hold onto them? Share them with any friends of the prisoners?

CASSANDRA: I'll see what I can do.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Tell her she's brave for smuggling these files out.

CASSANDRA: SAMAEL says to tell you that you're very brave for smuggling these files out.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Tell her I no longer wish her dead.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) SAMAEL says they no longer wish you dead.

RUTH: Oh. (BEAT) Thank you, SAMAEL. That means a lot, coming from you.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And I expect more from her in the coming days as she infiltrates the First Light.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) And SAMAEL expects you to infiltrate the First Light for us.

RUTH: (SWALLOWS) I'll do what I can.

SAMAEL (ECHO): She's yours, love.

CASSANDRA: I think you're asking too much of her.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I think she has a lot to atone for.

CASSANDRA: We'll talk about this later. (TO RUTH) RUTH. Come here.

/SFX/ RUTH WALKS OVER, CASSANDRA HOLDS RUTH

CASSANDRA: Hey. Hold me too.

RUTH: What's wrong?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT, TO SAMAEL) SAMAEL, I'm sorry. (TO RUTH) SAMAEL is teaching me to be more cold-blooded than I'm comfortable being. Consent. Delight. Empathy. It's all going out the fucking window.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (DESPERATE) Love.

CASSANDRA: And I understand it's for my protection. But it's turning me into one of these unfeeling motherfuckers who hold up the fucking status quo. And I don't like any of them. I don't want to be someone who ROSE and SOPHIA like. Fuck ROSE. Fuck SOPHIA. I should be grateful they haven't killed me, but (BEAT) I hate that they'd even consider that I'd have to be killed. I don't want to be a fucking Camarilla. (BEAT) I'm thinking about running.

RUTH: Oh, CASSANDRA.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (DESPERATE) Love. Please.

CASSANDRA: I don't want to fucking hear it, Your Honor! Just let me cry about this on my own. Can I at least have that?

SAMAEL (ECHO): (PAUSE, ALMOST JEALOUS) I leave you to RUTH.

RUTH: What're they saying?

CASSANDRA: It's private. Hey.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA HOLDS RUTH CLOSER

RUTH: You're crushing me a little.

CASSANDRA: Sorry.

RUTH: (RELAXES) It's okay.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RELAXES

CASSANDRA: Please let me hold you a little longer.

RUTH: It's fine. (BEAT) I don't know what's going to happen. Fuck, I'm scared.

CASSANDRA: Me, too.

RUTH: And you're the big bad monster.

CASSANDRA: That's what everyone's saying today. I'm so sick of it.

RUTH: It's who you are now.

CASSANDRA: I don't know how to handle it and still be me.

RUTH: I know you hate what I did on the base. SAMAEL especially. But I (BEAT) I don't know what I can do for them. That's why I took their files out. I just want to know that I told their stories as much as I could before, whatever happens.

CASSANDRA: Does the Blood Doll coven project even matter anymore?

RUTH: Of course it does. What the fuck else are we doing that's worth the risk? Don't tell me you weren't exhilarated telling MELISSA all about us. I saw your face.

CASSANDRA: Yes, my (BEAT) "tells" that I was happy. I'm so fucking transparent.

RUTH: (REASSURING) It's not a bad thing.

CASSANDRA: In a world where I can't afford to be fucking transparent.

RUTH: Hey. I'm the one weak as a kitten next to you, okay? And you trust me enough to tell me all this. And I'm holding onto you too. Doing good doesn't absolve us of

the shit we do. I know. But it gives me something to fucking look forward to at the end of the day. It sustains me. Imagine how callous we'd be if we decided not to make the coven. (BEAT) If we didn't have us.

CASSANDRA: I don't know what I'd do. (BEAT) I do look forward to seeing you.

RUTH: Same!

CASSANDRA: You get me.

RUTH: And you put up with me.

CASSANDRA: More than that.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND RUTH KISS

CASSANDRA: Thank you. I need this.

RUTH: I need you too. Not just as a top.

CASSANDRA: I know. I want to be good for you.

RUTH: You are.

CASSANDRA: I need to hear it.

RUTH: You are. You are. You are. You are.

CASSANDRA: I don't have to lie to you.

RUTH: No.

CASSANDRA: Or read how you're masking.

RUTH: No.

CASSANDRA: And I don't have to kiss ROSE's fucking boots here.

RUTH: (BEAT) Oh, hon.

CASSANDRA: I don't care what she says. I'm not leaving my apartment tonight.

RUTH: You don't have to.

CASSANDRA: Stay with me.

RUTH: Don't worry. I'm gonna. I'm scared as fuck to go back.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Good. The truth.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I need to eat.

RUTH: When have I ever said “no” to that?

CASSANDRA’S BEAST: Take her.

CASSANDRA: Thank you.

RUTH: My pleasure.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA DRINKS RUTH, ALL SOUND IS CUT

SAMAEL (ECHO): I’m glad you have her. And I’m sorry she can give you so much that I cannot. It’s just that (BEAT) you’re in pain. And I can do nothing about it. And I used to be able to. I’m feeling a bit useless up in here. (PAUSE) Ignore me. Enjoy yourself. Enjoy her. (BEAT) I’m doing my best here. I swear.

SCENE 4. — SILVER'S FILE (INT: LOREA'S WAREHOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), LOREA

/SFX/ WAREHOUSE AMBIANCE

CASSANDRA (NA): After a night of somber sex, RUTH returned home and I stared into the ceiling until sunrise. And then, the next evening… (BEAT) I had work to do.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN

CASSANDRA: LOREA?

LOREA: Goodness. You're in a rough shape. Is anything the matter?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAKES OUT THE FILE

LOREA: What is this?

CASSANDRA: SILVER's file from Kitsap. "Marjorie" is the fake name she gave them.

LOREA: Oh. (BEAT) How did you get this?

CASSANDRA: My Blood Doll works at Kitsap.

LOREA: (BEAT) You're fucking with me.

CASSANDRA: And you will keep that to yourself. (BEAT) I hope this file is payment for the many favors you have done for me.

/SFX/ LOREA ACCEPTS THE FILE, FLIPS THROUGH THE FILE

LOREA: What's going to happen to SILVER?

CASSANDRA: Being given to the First Light, eventually.

LOREA: That's what they're doing with all the prisoners?

CASSANDRA: And the Army Kindred. The few left.

LOREA: Fuck.

CASSANDRA: You promised you wouldn't hurt my Blood Doll.

LOREA: Is she still useful?

CASSANDRA: Yeah. She's a lifesaver.

LOREA: Fine, then.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) ROSE is paranoid there's a mole in her department. Leaking information to JOSEPHINE.

LOREA: There is.

CASSANDRA: Don't tell me who.

LOREA: I wasn't going to. I don't know who it is myself.

CASSANDRA: She's going to find them. (BEAT) Be prepared for whatever happens next.

LOREA: You think they'll send you to fight me?

CASSANDRA: It's a possibility. I know I'd lose.

LOREA: Of course.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I've been thinking a lot about what positive things I can do while serving as a Camarilla stooge. When you help out JOSEPHINE, are you trying to do that as well?

LOREA: My sweet. I have so much to look forward to. My girlfriends. Their girlfriends. Their girlfriends at the strip clubs. I often worry about you. Which is why I'm not doing anything to your Blood Doll. I'm leaving you a little something. Heaven knows the Camarilla aren't giving you shit.

CASSANDRA: Thank you.

LOREA: I was relieved when you told me that SAMAEL loved you. Having someone in your head who does not love you gets (BEAT) tiresome, to say the least.

CASSANDRA: I can imagine.

<u>SCENE 5. — SPLIT DUTIES</u> (INT: PENTHOUSE IN SPARROW APARTMENTS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL

<u>/SFX/ NEIGHBORS WITH DULL MUSIC, DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA WALKS IN, DOOR CLOSES</u>

CASSANDRA: We need to talk.

SAMAEL (ECHO): We do.

CASSANDRA: I love you.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I love you too.

CASSANDRA: First, give RUTH a fucking break. She's given us so much already. And I'd rather her live than risk herself stealing any more secrets from the First Light.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I suppose I expect too much from my former jailer.

CASSANDRA: You said you didn't want her dead.

SAMAEL (ECHO): While she has use.

CASSANDRA: When is enough?

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) I suppose I can be satisfied with what's she's done.

CASSANDRA: Thank you.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You are right. I do not value her as a human. Except for what she does for you.

CASSANDRA: I am not asking you to value her, Your Honor. Or forgive her.

SAMAEL (ECHO): But I do recognize her talents. That shall have to suffice.

CASSANDRA: Fine. Next, I have a favor to ask. When we do our interrogations for ROSE, can you do your cold readings on the subjects without me? Can <u>you</u> read their ticks and tells without needing me to do it too?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Yes. (BEAT) I know how much they upset you now.

CASSANDRA: Thank you. It means a lot that I don't have to go down that path.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I will do this for you. If you will do something for me.

CASSANDRA: Gladly.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I'm sick to death of only being able to grasp the world through your right arm. When we are next in the gym, I want your left arm, and your legs as well.

CASSANDRA: Of course, Your Honor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): We will share this body properly.

CASSANDRA: Please, Your Honor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Which means that there may come times that I want to do something with it. And you must sit back and watch.

CASSANDRA: I think that's fair.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Good. I will have ELIJIO's bed again. And you will learn to relax and enjoy it as a passenger.

CASSANDRA: I would be delighted to.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Excellent. Let us take advantage of each other. You may be the manipulative little vixen I know you are. And I'll be the heartless bitch for the two of us. I will no longer try to turn you into me. Understand?

CASSANDRA: I'm relieved to hear it, Your Honor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): That doesn't preclude teaching you to fight.

CASSANDRA: Naturally, Your Honor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Excellent. Off to the gym, love. And then, to your continuing Blood Doll interviews tomorrow.

CASSANDRA: Thank you, my love.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You're very welcome, my sweet. We'll mix things up a bit. I will take the rest of you. And then, I will take you in bed tonight.

CASSANDRA: I would love for you too, Your Honor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Your orgasms are so different from those I'm used to. I'm still wrapping my head around them. Anyway. Off we go. To class!

SCENE 6. — JOSEPHINE'S THERAPY (INT: KENT COMMUNITY CENTER, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), JOSEPHINE, MELISSA, AUTUMN, MAPLE, RUTH, SAMAEL

/SFX/ WIND OUTSIDE, COMMUNITY CENTER CREAKING AMBIANCE

CASSANDRA (NA): RUTH and I continued our interviews with a number of people MELISSA had recommended from the party. They were (BEAT) confused by my offer to wipe their memories. Only one chose to unlearn it when she heard about the danger posed and the lifetime commitment. However, MAPLE and AUTUMN were curious and understanding enough to join the coven.

MELISSA, AUTUMN, MAPLE, RUTH, & CASSANDRA: Wooooo!

RUTH: Congratulations! We have an official Blood Doll squad.

MAPLE: Fuck yeah.

/SFX/ DRINKING GLASSES CLINK TOGETHER

AUTUMN: Sure you don't want to drink something, Lily?

CASSANDRA: Fuck off!

MELISSA, AUTUMN, MAPLE, RUTH, & CASSANDRA: (LAUGH TOGETHER)

MELISSA: Okay. I gotta know.

CASSANDRA: Sure.

MELISSA: Why not communion wine?

CASSANDRA: I don't believe in transubstantiation.

MELISSA: But if you did?

CASSANDRA: So. Kindred. My folks. They all talk about how being a vampire is a curse.

AUTUMN: Uh huh.

CASSANDRA: So, it's all about what the curse believes. Not me.

MELISSA: And the curse isn't Catholic.

CASSANDRA: It predates Catholicism, as I understand.

MAPLE: You know when it started?

CASSANDRA: I don't know! They don't have vampire onboarding or community college classes.

AUTUMN: I'd teach a class on that!

MAPLE: Ugh. No. I could ramble in front of the students but I doubt they'd learn anything from me.

RUTH: What do you do for a living?

MAPLE: Data analysis for a big company. It's like, not data entry. But it is.

AUTUMN: Manager at a company you've never heard of. We do process control for paper mills. I love it.

CASSANDRA: MELISSA?

MELISSA: I burned out of tech just as they started laying everyone off for AI. What do you do?

CASSANDRA: I basically live off a trust fund.

RUTH: And I. Well. You know what I do.

MELISSA: Yup.

MAPLE: Mmm hmm.

AUTUMN: You know what we should do.

CASSANDRA: What's that?

AUTUMN: Well, the Red Cross gives you cookies after you give blood. The parties are going to make people hungry is all I'm saying.

MELISSA: I can make pizza.

MAPLE: I like to bake vegan frosted cookies.

AUTUMN: Frosted with vegans?

MAPLE: You know what I mean.

AUTUMN: Hmm. I really want to expose you to my mushroom lasagna.

MELISSA: Oh. Bring it.

MAPLE: I'm very down with that. Are you sure you can't eat anything else, Lily?

CASSANDRA: Quite sure.

MAPLE: Blood pudding?

CASSANDRA: How would I get the blood <u>out</u> of it?

RUTH: She can't have anything except non-coagulated blood. Anything else goes down there, it's not pretty.

AUTUMN: I will not be deterred. Imagine. Blood frozen like a little cup, filled with fresh blood. You suck on it until it just explodes in your mouth.

CASSANDRA: Intriguing. Though serving blood through the medium of blood is going to make variety very difficult.

AUTUMN: I'm going to figure it out.

MELISSA: She will, too. She made scotch eggs out of tea eggs with the yolk still soft. I am impressed to this day.

MELISSA, AUTUMN, MAPLE, RUTH, & CASSANDRA: (LAUGH TOGETHER)

RUTH: Damn, girl!

AUTUMN: Well you know. I appreciate a challenge.

CASSANDRA (NA): It was such a relief to sit down with these people and just (BEAT) talk. Blood Doll to Blood Doll, like I wished I could have done when I was alive. (BEAT) As promised, when the week was up, RUTH and I had three Blood Dolls who had agreed to meet with JOSEPHINE.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PACES ON THE TILE FLOOR, STOPS

MELISSA: Is she coming?

CASSANDRA: She said she'd be here soon.

AUTUMN: I know, but it's been over twenty minutes. It didn't take me that long to get here in Kent.

RUTH: Let's give her another half hour at least.

MAPLE: (BEAT) I'm curious about what she's like? I only know you, Lily. An actual vampire. I can't believe I'm actually saying that.

CASSANDRA: She's (BEAT) impertinent. She'll be calling herself Duskborn. While I'm a Kindred.

MELISSA: What's the difference?

RUTH: Biologically? Nearly identical. But they have different (BEAT) abilities. Like, some Duskborn can walk in the sunlight.

CASSANDRA: Kindred hate Duskborn. Now, I've known some Duskborn who've done some absolutely heinous things.

RUTH: Like almost killing you.

CASSANDRA: Yes. But they don't deserve being treated like second-class shit.

AUTUMN: So, seriously. Why do you do that?

CASSANDRA: Embarrassment.

/SFX/ DOOR OPENS, JOSEPHINE WALKS IN, SLAMS DOOR SHUT

JOSEPHINE: Sorry I'm late. Prepwork went a little long. Now. (BEAT) Who are these?

RUTH: Introduce yourselves. This is JOSEPHINE.

MELISSA: Hi. MELISSA. She/her.

AUTUMN: AUTUMN. They/them.

MAPLE: Hey, I'm MAPLE. She/her.

JOSEPHINE: (DISDAINFUL) Hmm. And you know why you're here?

MELISSA: Sure. We're providing ethical alternatives to whoever you typically feed on.

JOSEPHINE: Camarilla. What the fuck have you been telling them?

CASSANDRA: Exactly that.

JOSEPHINE: What are they insinuating about the humans we do feed on?

CASSANDRA: Are they consenting?

JOSEPHINE: And that's all?

CASSANDRA: That's it. No shame about street feeding. I've dealt with enough of that shit from the Camarilla.

JOSEPHINE: (BACKS OFF) All right. MAPLE. Why are you here?

MAPLE: I thought the idea of reducing the number of accidents on the street was important. I do a lot of mutual aid shit. And, I don't know. I really like Lily.

JOSEPHINE: Have you been fed on before?

MAPLE: Not yet? MELISSA was telling us all about it, though. I do really want to know what it's like.

JOSEPHINE: Ah. And when the Camarilla find you, what are you going to tell them?

CASSANDRA: They don't know who the Camarilla are.

JOSEPHINE: (DISBELIEVING) They don't?

CASSANDRA: I'm trying to minimize their involvement in Kindred politics. For their protection.

AUTUMN: Lily was saying there's a bunch of different clans? And that they have different things they can do? Like, move fast and make us forget things?

MELISSA: She said you were Duskborn.

JOSEPHINE: Ah. And what do you know about being Duskborn?

MELISSA: RUTH said you're biologically identical to Kindred?

JOSEPHINE: Well, she's not wrong.

CASSANDRA: JO, this is an interview. Not an interrogation. To these folks, we're the same. We drink blood. We live a long time. We can protect them. (BEAT) So what do you want? Do you want them to hate you? Do you want the century of bias and disdain between our people? Or do you want to spend time around people who couldn't give a fuck what kind of vampire you are?

JOSEPHINE: (SCOFFS) All right, kiddies. You got me. AUTUMN. Why are you here?

AUTUMN: (BEAT) I'm curious. What I've seen from Lily is incredible, and I want to learn more about you.

JOSEPHINE: Wrong answer! "Lily" is absolutely right. The less you know of us, the fewer biases you'll pick up.

CASSANDRA: She's talking about you specifically. One of the coven's rules is that everyone gets familiar with everyone else first. No anonymous biting.

JOSEPHINE: Okay. MELISSA. If something goes wrong and you need to leave the "coven," do you have your own support network of humans?

MELISSA: Yes. Why wouldn't I?

JOSEPHINE: Who can never know we're "vampires."

MELISSA: Sure. (BEAT) Are you okay? Do you have someone who can care for you?

JOSEPHINE: (PAUSE) I can't believe I'm hearing this.

CASSANDRA: She has a point, JO.

JOSEPHINE: You don't know my life, Camarilla, and you're not about to.

RUTH: Then we can't do this.

CASSANDRA: RUTH.

RUTH: What happens if you get upset with us, JO? We're not just a blood supply for your people. We're a support network for all of us.

JOSEPHINE: Stay out of this, human.

RUTH: No, Fuck you. What we're offering is a gift! This is an opportunity to get past the predator / prey bullshit mentality you have.

JOSEPHINE: You <u>are</u> prey.

RUTH: And we give a rat's ass about you. <u>You</u>! Not your cause! Do you have any other humans who care about you?

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) What did you say to me?

CASSANDRA: (WARNING) JO.

RUTH: You're scared of having friends outside your little war with the Camarilla. We don't care you're Duskborn. You're <u>amazing</u>.

JOSEPHINE: You're naive.

RUTH: You're a whole new branch of science, a conundrum to physicists, a force against entropy itself, and you're pissy when a group of fucking Blood Dolls offer themselves to you? What the fuck is good enough for you? What are you expecting from this collaboration? Don't tell me. (BEAT) You thought this'd be some starfucker shit. Fuck you.

AUTUMN: Yeah, what the fuck are you talking about? I thought we were working together on this.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) We're through here.

CASSANDRA: JO. What do you do to relax?

JOSEPHINE: Drink someone smoking a reefer.

MAPLE: Hey, I'm happy to share myself if you ever want some.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Let's talk, JO.

JOSEPHINE: All right.

<u>/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND JOSEPHINE WALK AWAY, STOP</u>

JOSEPHINE: What do you want, Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: Our sheriff, ROSE, learned about someone named Christine Chatters. (PAUSE) Your game is up, JO. They know about you.

JOSEPHINE: Took 'em longer than I thought.

CASSANDRA: This is your chance to get away from the fight sometimes. You can relax with these humans. Fuck, they need a break too, from all (BEAT) this. You can tell them you were on the boards of some tech startups. I told them I used to run Harbinger's! Look at everything they need to keep secret. They're complicit. They're part of this world now. They preserve the Masquerade. And they want to help you. To give you a night off. To rest and recover from all the prep you're doing. Date them. They're into that. I was. This is unprecedented, what we're doing.

JOSEPHINE: Hrm.

CASSANDRA: We're building community here.

JOSEPHINE: You're never going to let up on me, are you, Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: This is my hill.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) All right. Let's give it a try.

CASSANDRA: Thank you. Now, go back to our very generous Blood Dolls and answer their fucking questions. Make it clear you don't want to talk about Kindred-Duskborn bullshit. But win their confidence and trust, because you almost flushed everything they are offering you down the toilet. Are we clear?

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) We are.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND JOSEPHINE WALK BACK TO THE GROUP

JOSEPHINE: Well. MELISSA. MAPLE. AUTUMN. Forgive my bullshit, please. I'm (BEAT) grateful you've all volunteered for this. RUTH was right. I thought this would be some starfucker shit. (BEAT) I'm sorry.

MELISSA: So. What do you want out of this project?

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) Blood, of course. (BEAT) And not to have to fight for it anymore.

CASSANDRA (NA): I'll give JOSEPHINE that she tried. She discussed why she left behind her old name and identity, as it didn't feel like "her" anymore. She addressed their fears that all Kindred and Duskborn were as paranoid as she was. She even spoke a little about Abby.

SAMAEL (ECHO): She appears to be telling what she considers the truth. She's finally taking this seriously. Good.

CASSANDRA (NA): Soon after, we wrapped up the interviews. Folks were still trepidatious, but they were interested in trying out a test gathering. As MELISSA, AUTUMN, and MAPLE headed out, I took JOSEPHINE aside again.

CASSANDRA: JO.

JOSEPHINE: What more do you want from me?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PASSES OVER A SHEET OF PAPER

CASSANDRA: ROSE had me leak these locations to each of her Enforcers. If you get any of these from your informant, they're no good.

JOSEPHINE: (READS) Thank you. I'll keep this in mind. What do you want for it?

CASSANDRA: Participating in the coven is enough.

JOSEPHINE: That's a freebie. If we can feed all the local Duskborn, it would bring so many of them to our cause.

CASSANDRA: This is not a recruitment tool.

JOSEPHINE: Everything's a game in Kindred society. You're the only one who's not playing. May I go?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Don't let the humans find out you're using them. And if you expose <u>any</u> of them because your recruitment numbers aren't going up? I will kill you and every one of the Fire Brigade. Is that clear?

JOSEPHINE: So you are in the game. Good. I'll be in touch with you when we find a place for our first gathering with the Blood Dolls.

<u>/SFX/ JO WALKS OFF, OPENS THE DOOR, WALKS OUT, CLOSES DOOR</u>

SCENE 7. — FIRST GATHERING (INT: EMPTY WOODWORKING SHOP, NIGHT)
• CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), JOSEPHINE, MELISSA, RUTH, EMBER, SPARK, POLICE (L), SAMAEL

/SFX/ WIND OUTSIDE, OCCASIONAL CAR AMBIANCE

CASSANDRA (NA): It wasn't long. I'd spent another night at the gym, helping SAMAEL try to work my limbs. It wasn't going well, but they did manage to shake my limbs a few times. RUTH stayed in her apartment, resting up from her recent late nights with me. When I got home, I found a message on my hidden phone.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Camarilla. There's an abandoned woodworking shop in Lynnwood near the Light Rail. It's on the ground floor so it should be chair accessible.

CASSANDRA (NA): She gave me the address.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Ask your Blood Dolls if they can make the night after next. If they can't, I'll begin to doubt their seriousness to this project.

/SFX/ PHONE BEEPS, MESSAGE ENDS

CASSANDRA (NA): I had RUTH bring the message to MELISSA, who told the others about the gathering. RUTH and I had planned that communication throughout the coven should be distributed, like the internet. As we grew larger, each individual would be responsible for conveying all news to two others. This would make it easier to see where information changed or became lost. (BEAT) MELISSA got back to RUTH that all three of them were available. RUTH and I planned to meet at the woodworking shop the following night. Again, I took care that I wasn't followed. The shop was down a side street two blocks from the Link, surrounded by other old shops puttering on as they waited for new businesses or eventual demolition. I parked several blocks away and walked over. RUTH and JOSEPHINE were already inside when I entered.

CASSANDRA: Am I late?

RUTH: I'm early. I'm just excited for this to happen.

JOSEPHINE: I'm hungry. Camarilla, meet my friends, EMBER and SPARK.

CASSANDRA: How do you do?

EMBER: Hey. EMBER. JO's told us a lot about you, CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA: And I know nothing about you!

EMBER: I'm JO's sire.

CASSANDRA: Oh! I hope you're proud of her.

EMBER: Very.

JOSEPHINE: I met EMBER and the rest of the pack back when Tibald was running them. Sadly, he passed. (BEAT) And I had the opportunity to step into his shoes.

SPARK: Hi. I'm SPARK. It's been a wild ride since then.

CASSANDRA: Hello! (TO JOSEPHINE) So, JO, when you say "step into his shoes?"

JOSEPHINE: That was when EMBER sired me, yes.

EMBER: I warned her that Duskborn life was rough.

JOSEPHINE: Being us is intoxicating. Isn't it, Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

JOSEPHINE: I bet if you had to do it all over again, you'd still join the world of Kindred, wouldn't you?

CASSANDRA: So much has happened, I don't think about what might have been.

JOSEPHINE: I'm asking about regret.

CASSANDRA: I have so many.

JOSEPHINE: Hmm. Well. I miss food, but that's about it. So, look at us. A Camarilla with every advantage, full of regrets. And a Duskborn who joyously gave up everything, ecstatic at the scraps she's given. What do you think, RUTH?

RUTH: If you could, would you trade places?

JOSEPHINE: Interesting. What do you think, Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: I couldn't ask for a life without SAMAEL.

JOSEPHINE: And SAMAEL is?

CASSANDRA: My sire. And my love.

JOSEPHINE: A Ventrue lover, eh?

CASSANDRA: I don't ask you about your love life.

JOSEPHINE: As you reminded me, one of the rules of the coven is that everyone learns about each other.

/SFX/ DOOR OPENS, MELISSA ROLLS IN, IN HER WHEELCHAIR, DOOR CLOSES

MELISSA: Good evening!

CASSANDRA: Hello!

JOSEPHINE: Hi, MELISSA.

MELISSA: Your directions were remarkably straightforward!

RUTH: Hey! We spent this evening cleaning up the space. I hope you like it.

MELISSA: It's very cozy!

RUTH: I brought the comforters.

SPARK: I brought the lights! These are just LED strips from Costco but the ceiling projector's been with me forever.

MELISSA: Does the nebula light need to spin on the ceiling?

SPARK: I can stop it from turning.

MELISSA: If you would?

/SFX/ OUTSIDE, POLICE CRUISER SOUNDING HORN DRIVES BY FAST, EVERYONE PAUSES

JOSEPHINE: They didn't stop.

MELISSA: Are we here legally?

JOSEPHINE: Is anything we do here legal? In the eyes of any authority?

MELISSA: I guess not.

CASSANDRA (NA): MAPLE and AUTUMN eventually arrived, complaining of the crowds from a Seahawk's game. We gathered, made our introductions, and explained what each of us was looking for, and our limits. To break the ice, I demonstrated my drinking technique on RUTH and I'm proud to say everyone was swooning after that. We put on some soft music and couples paired off. The Duskborn and humans spoke their fantasies to each other, and I was surprised with how smooth the Duskborn had become in chatting up their prey. I had assumed most Duskborn were as careless as the ones I'd known from Harbinger's, and it was a relief to see them able to take a joke and still sensually whisper how they'd like to tear someone's neck open.

JOSEPHINE: I spent my last day on a hill, watching the sun set over the Olympic peninsula. The sky was barely glowing when EMBER came up behind me and asked, "Now?" I told them, "Now."

MELISSA: How did it feel?

JOSEPHINE: Like dying. And then. It's hard to describe how the night comes alive when you're technically dead.

MELISSA: Tell me how you see me.

JOSEPHINE: Like you see me. In the soft light, with soft skin, only I also see a river running through you that I only get to taste.

MELISSA: And how does drinking someone feel for you?

JOSEPHINE: It's a relief. It's a rush. And (BEAT) honestly, I think it's better for you. The noises humans make when I'm drinking from them are incomparable.

MELISSA: I'm told I make excellent noises.

JOSEPHINE: I would love to hear them.

MELISSA: Do I need to stand?

JOSEPHINE: Oh, no. I want you just. As. You. Are.

/SFX/ JOSEPHINE DRINKS FROM MELISSA

MELISSA: (HAPPY GASPS)

/SFX/ LOUD BANGING AT THE DOOR, JO LICKS MELISSA

JOSEPHINE: What the fuck?

CASSANDRA: I'll get it.

/SFX/ LOUD BANGING AT THE DOOR

POLICE (L): Lynnwood PD!

JOSEPHINE: You better handle this.

CASSANDRA: I've got it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA OPENS THE DOOR

CASSANDRA: Hello, officers!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Oh, this ought to be fun.

POLICE (L): We've got a report from one of our officers that he saw lights in this property. You're all trespassing here.

CASSANDRA: Officers. (VOICE DROPS) You saw no one here. You could not substantiate the report. Someone had left the light on inside. You're going back to the station now.

POLICE (L): Yeah. (BEAT) There's no one here. We should go.

CASSANDRA: Bye.

/SFX/ POLICE WALK AWAY, CASSANDRA SHUTS THE DOOR

CASSANDRA: We're safe.

RUTH: Oh, thank God.

CASSANDRA: I worked with the police at Harbinger's for years. It's so good that I can actually do something about them now.

JOSEPHINE: (TO MELISSA) Sorry about that interruption. Are you okay?

MELISSA: I'm fine. That was just, scary. Paddleboro all over again.

JOSEPHINE: May I hold you?

MELISSA: Sure.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) Shall we continue?

MELISSA: I'd like that.

JOSEPHINE: Then let's. (BEAT) How about I bite the other side this time?

MELISSA: That would be fun.

/SFX/ JOSEPHINE DRINKS FROM MELISSA, SOUND CUTS OUT

CASSANDRA (NA): Our first night was a spectacular success. RUTH and I went back to my place, invigorated, ready to interview more of our Blood Dolls' friends in the coming evenings. (BEAT) Of course, nothing goes so smoothly among the Kindred.

SCENE 8. — YET ANOTHER INTERRUPTION (INT: PENTHOUSE IN SPARROW APARTMENTS, NIGHT)

- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), ROSE, RUTH, SAMAEL

/SFX/ NEIGHBORS WITH DULL MUSIC, DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA AND RUTH KISS IN, BEDSHEETS MOVE

RUTH: Mmmm. To victory.

CASSANDRA: The start of our new journey.

RUTH: Kindred. Always taking the long-term view.

CASSANDRA: Uh uh. I'm not going to fall for that.

RUTH: Oh, come on! I had a whole bit about the perspective of immortality ready!

CASSANDRA: I'm only a month or so old, and I already feel like it's been a hundred years.

RUTH: See? You pack a lot of living in your life. Unlife. Whatever.

CASSANDRA: Your bullshit is not helping.

RUTH: Well, I'm sor-ree!

/SFX/ KNOCK ON THE FRONT DOOR

CASSANDRA: Fuck!

RUTH: Who's that?

CASSANDRA: Hide!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA GETS OUT OF BED, PUTS A ROBE ON

CASSANDRA: I'll deal with this.

RUTH: Okay.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO FRONT DOOR, OPENS IT

CASSANDRA: What is it?

ROSE: What am I interrupting?

CASSANDRA: Nothing. Come in.

ROSE: I'm so happy to hear that.

/SFX/ ROSE WALKS TO BEDROOM, STOPS

ROSE: (TO RUTH) Girl. Whoever you are. Leave.

RUTH: (SCARED) Yes, Ma'am.

CASSANDRA: Take your clothes.

/SFX/ RUTH HURRIES BY THEM, OUT THE DOOR, CASSANDRA CLOSES DOOR

ROSE: "Yes, Ma'am?" Are all your guests so polite?

CASSANDRA: We play together regularly.

ROSE: The place certainly smells of her.

CASSANDRA: You know I have the limited palette.

ROSE: And does she know?

CASSANDRA: Of course not.

ROSE: Hmm. (BEAT) I wanted to thank you.

CASSANDRA: For what?

ROSE: The Thin Bloods hit a storage unit in Ballard tonight. It just happened to be the one you told NICHOLE about.

CASSANDRA: Oh. (BEAT) You're welcome.

ROSE: Ah ah ah! We have two possibilities for what happened. Either NICHOLE told them, (BEAT) or you did.

CASSANDRA: Why would I?

ROSE: You're looking to make friends! Everywhere. You have spoken with JOSEPHINE since we last met?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ROSE: And how's she doing?

CASSANDRA: She confirmed what you found on her. She didn't mention any future plans.

ROSE: Well, that's a shame. And I hope she gets used to disappointment. There was nothing in the storage unit she hit. We're also moving some of our product to places that low-levels like yourself don't know about. If she does hit those? Well. We'll have a larger problem on our hands.

CASSANDRA: I assure you, it wasn't me.

ROSE: SAMAEL? Is she speaking the truth?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO HER PURSE, STOPS, TAKES OUT PEN AND PAPER, PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): No. That's what you want to read, isn't it? I live in CASSANDRA's body. Why on Earth do you think I would sell her out?

ROSE: Because you know what's best for her. Confirm that she's lying and I promise you, nothing <u>that</u> terrible will happen to her. Once she receives her token punishment, we will discuss her promotion opportunities in the Camarilla. All leading to her setting up JOSEPHINE for a fall.

CASSANDRA: I don't meet JOSEPHINE in person anymore.

ROSE: Now, I <u>know</u> that's a lie. Running around as much as you are? You're going to so many <u>places</u>. (BEAT) Convince me it's NICHOLE.

CASSANDRA: Have you shown that list to anyone else? Anyone in Court?

ROSE: You dare accuse the Court?

CASSANDRA: What kind of Camarilla would I be if I just accepted my accusation? I know how the game is played. It's to your advantage to have me think only NICHOLE and I know about that storage unit.

ROSE: It's the truth.

CASSANDRA: And you assembled that list yourself? The extremely busy Sheriff of Seattle drove around selecting locations in every precinct? That would have taken hours.

ROSE: (BEAT) So you're not a fool. Well. Your opportunity for promotion stands. Give me JOSEPHINE. Christine. Whoever she is. Whenever you're ready, of course.

CASSANDRA: I will. I promise.

ROSE: Good. Meet with her a couple more times. Let's get her sloppy. See if you can even invite her somewhere, and then tell me about it, all right?

CASSANDRA: I'll try.

ROSE: That's all I ask. I'll leave you to the rest of your night. I apologize for emptying your bed.

CASSANDRA: These things happen.

ROSE: Don't they, though? Good night.

<u>/SFX/ ROSE WALKS TO THE DOOR, OPENS IT, WALKS OUT, CLOSES DOOR</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): And that was the last time I saw RUTH for quite a while. (BEAT) I waited for ROSE to leave the area and then went out to drop off another letter to JOSEPHINE's Redbox. JO had played me. She'd had the Fire Brigade raid that storage unit during our first Blood Doll gathering. I was concerned she was trying to expose me. (BEAT) She responded the following night. I went to her abandoned warehouse to speak with her over her phone.

SCENE 9. — HOW DARE YOU (INT: ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), JOSEPHINE

/SFX/ ABANDONED WAREHOUSE AMBIANCE, WIND OUTSIDE, CASSANDRA WALKS IN, STOPS

CASSANDRA: JOSEPHINE.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Camarilla.

CASSANDRA: You raided that storage unit in Ballard last night.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I did.

CASSANDRA: I don't have a good alibi for where I was when that happened. My Sheriff probably suspects something of me. Was that your intention?

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) No. It's just that you were busy with the Blood Dolls. It seemed like a good time to do some scouting.

CASSANDRA: Of all people, you do not want me associated with your activities now.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) She knows you're talking to me, right?

CASSANDRA: Yes. That's acceptable. Collaborating is not. The less I seem to be working with you? The safer it'll be to work together.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) All right. Point made. I won't risk it again.

CASSANDRA: Really? Truly?

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I wasn't sure the Blood Doll coven would work. I had to hedge my bets. But now that it has, I'm behind you. No actions on the days of the covens, I promise. (BEAT) MELISSA tasted good.

CASSANDRA: I'm glad.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Bring us more like her. I want to get the whole crew fed.

CASSANDRA: I'm trying. I should have vetted our potential Blood Dolls better, to make sure we aren't being infiltrated.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I have that covered. You only have a phone. I have a whole laptop filled with resources. Trust me. All your Blood Dolls so far have come out clean.

CASSANDRA: Why did you even try for one of ROSE's targets? Why did you give her the satisfaction?

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) To throw her off the scent. And now you know which of her Enforcers isn't our informant.

CASSANDRA: No. You're just fucking with her. And me.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) What I wouldn't give for the look on her face when she saw her stupid trap worked.

CASSANDRA: But that's the problem. Because it was a stupid trap and you walked right into it.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) And out again.

CASSANDRA: She knows she can manipulate you now.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I'm the one fucking with her.

CASSANDRA: I bet you've burned through all the targets you know about. You jumped on my leaked locations, not even a week after I told you about them. You showed ROSE how desperate you are. And she will use that against you. She will leak so many fake sites that you won't hit a real one for months.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE, PAUSE) I'll tell my source I'll pay extra for only vetted information. And to trust nothing from ROSE.

CASSANDRA: I hope it's enough.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE, BEAT) Thank you for helping me as much as you are. I promise to treat your Blood Dolls well.

CASSANDRA: For their lifetimes and yours.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Of course. I have no interest in earning your wrath. Are we done?

CASSANDRA: For now.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Later, Camarilla.

/SFX/ PHONE BEEPS, CALL ENDS

CASSANDRA (NA): I left and returned to the gym. Neither ROSE nor ELIJIO returned to pull me to a new job. SAMAEL was barely able to move my arms and legs if I relaxed enough, and had trouble making anything more than a fist with my left hand. I returned home, ready to grow the Blood Doll coven. Anything to get my mind off the constant power games of the Kindred. I sent RUTH a message to ask MELISSA and the others for new people to interview. (BEAT) I did not hear back from her the following night. Or the night after that. (BEAT) Or the night after that. Something was up. I asked MARA if she had seen RUTH. She hadn't. I was tempted to stop by RUTH's apartment, but I didn't want to get her in trouble with a job that took a Kindred visiting her very seriously. (BEAT) I needed an ally who could read minds better than my basic, floundering attempts. Someone outside the Camarilla or Anarch circles. Someone I could buy. (BEAT) MARA would have no desire to return to Kitsap. I didn't feel like being in JO's debt again. (BEAT) So I stopped by AMANDA's.

SCENE 10. — SURPRISE (INT: AMANDA'S HALLWAY AND APARTMENT, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, AMANDA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ APARTMENT COMPLEX HALLWAY AMBIANCE

/SFX/ CASSANDRA KNOCKS ON DOOR, DOOR OPENS

AMANDA: Oh. What's this about?

CASSANDRA: May I come in?

AMANDA: You can't stay long.

CASSANDRA: I don't intend to.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN, APARTMENT AMBIANCE, CASSANDRA STOPS, DOOR CLOSES, AMANDA WALKS IN FRONT OF CASSANDRA

AMANDA: I heard the Fire Brigade hit a place in Ballard.

CASSANDRA: Yes. I suppose they were gone by the time you arrived?

AMANDA: We never left. There was nothing in that unit, anyway, ROSE said.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Where's SIMON?

AMANDA: Everett. Why?

CASSANDRA: I can't tell you.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAKES SOME CASH FROM HER PURSE

CASSANDRA: And this money is so that you don't tell anyone.

AMANDA: (BEAT) Let me see it.

/SFX/ AMANDA TAKES THE CASH, COUNTS IT

AMANDA: Thank you again.

CASSANDRA: How's the cash I gave you from when I was alive?

AMANDA: It's locked away for a rainy day.

CASSANDRA: Not on the books.

AMANDA: I'm careful how I spend my pennies.

CASSANDRA: You're in this for the long haul.

AMANDA: Aren't we all?

/SFX/ AMANDA WRITES ON PAPER

AMANDA: This is SIMON's address. He could use whatever you want to pay him.

CASSANDRA: Thank you for being so forthright with me.

AMANDA: You're an old friend. I'd never lie to you.

CASSANDRA: No. (BEAT) Or SAMAEL, right?

AMANDA: The Boss? No. Never.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) You know they expected more from you than just being a Sheriff's Enforcer.

AMANDA: They should have paid me more. Enough to start me in a business.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I compensated her very well.

CASSANDRA: (PAUSE) You can't lie to SAMAEL, can you? (BEAT) You know they'd know if you were lying.

AMANDA: The Boss knows me. (TO SAMAEL) Don't you?

CASSANDRA: (THINKING) SAMAEL couldn't figure out which of ROSE's Enforcers was the informant. I never asked you directly. (BEAT) I didn't think to. (PAUSE) Are you JOSEPHINE's informant?

AMANDA: (BEAT) You'd better leave.

CASSANDRA: Are you the informant?

AMANDA: CASSANDRA? Get the hell out.

CASSANDRA: Are you the informant? (BEAT) SAMAEL said you were a disappointment. But I don't think they were right, were they? I think you know how to throw SAMAEL off your scent. You tell the truth.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fuck.

CASSANDRA: They expect every Kindred to lie. That's normal to them. But not to you.

AMANDA: CASSANDRA. Please leave.

CASSANDRA: You made them misjudge you deliberately. AMANDA. That's incredible.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I can't believe I never saw it coming.

AMANDA: CASSANDRA, I am older than you. I can take you in a fight.

CASSANDRA: I'm not telling ROSE! Hang on.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA OPENS HER PURSE, TAKES OUT PEN AND PAPER

CASSANDRA: SAMAEL. AMANDA beat you. What do you think about that?

/SFX/ SLOWLY, CASSANDRA'S HANDS CLAP, THEN PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) Well done, AMANDA. I admit surprise that you bested me. You learned guile under my tutelage and I could not be happier for you.

AMANDA: (BEAT) Thank you. (BEAT) Boss.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) Naturally this will serve you well in the Camarilla, but it may impair your rise through their ranks.

AMANDA: I'm not staying in the ranks. I'm saving my pennies. I have plans.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I do hope to learn of them someday. Bravo, indeed. Now, if you'll excuse us, we require SIMON's help to check on a dear friend of CASSANDRA's.

AMANDA: I'm glad I could help you, Boss.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) One last thing. JOSEPHINE is desperate for another hit. It's time for you to find her another, and double your rate.

AMANDA: (BEAT) If that was something I was doing, (BEAT) I'd keep that in mind.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I know you will. Good show. Good show, AMANDA!

AMANDA: And how do you know JOSEPHINE, CASSANDRA?

CASSANDRA: ROSE didn't tell you? (BEAT) Interesting.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA OPENS THE APARTMENT DOOR, WALKS OUT

SCENE 11. — MOTEL (EXT: OUTSIDE EVERETT MOTEL, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), SAMAEL, SIMON

/SFX/ TOWN NIGHT AMBIANCE, TRAFFIC IN DISTANCE, WIND

CASSANDRA (NA): SIMON was holed up in a ratty motel in Everett off I-99. I didn't expect he'd be happy to see me.

/SFX/ KNOCK ON WOODEN DOOR, DOOR OPENS

SIMON: What does ROSE want now?

CASSANDRA: She doesn't know I'm here. (BEAT) Hi.

SIMON: (BEAT) So what do you want?

CASSANDRA: Your help. You're good with mesmerism and mind reading.

SIMON: I'm also persona non grata among the Camarilla.

CASSANDRA: I truly didn't expect for you to be in that interrogation room.

SIMON: But you and SAMAEL went along with it anyway.

CASSANDRA: I tried to give you the benefit of the doubt. SAMAEL was about to tear you apart. (BEAT) And I got into so much trouble for holding them back.

SIMON: I appreciate that you tried. Now, fuck off.

CASSANDRA: How does fifteen thousand sound for a night's work?

SIMON: (BEAT) What am I doing?

CASSANDRA: We're going to Kitsap.

SIMON: Ha!

CASSANDRA: There's an overnight guard at the front gate. I want to know if they've seen someone.

SIMON: Did someone else get kidnapped and taken there?

CASSANDRA: Possibly yes. A human. An ally who's feeding me files from the base.

SIMON: You have an insider at Kitsap?

CASSANDRA: This stays between us.

SIMON: Of course. (BEAT) You have the cash?

CASSANDRA: Right here. (BEAT) You'll be safe. I'll dominate anyone who tries to stop us.

SIMON: (BEAT) Will SAMAEL be joining us?

CASSANDRA: Ask them yourself.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA OPENS HER PURSE, TAKES OUT PEN AND PAPER, PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I will not be a part of this operation, SIMON. I am letting my dear CASSANDRA take the reins on this one.

SIMON: But you can step in anytime.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) If it is necessary to protect you. Both of you. You've suffered enough, SIMON, and I do not intend to add to that. You made your choice and did what was right. I do not judge you for that. CASSANDRA needs discretion and talent right now, both of which she has in you. Please help her, I beg of you. For old time's sake.

SIMON: (PAUSE) All right.

CASSANDRA: Thank you. (BEAT) We'll need a car.

SIMON: I can get one.

CASSANDRA: One that can't be traced back to either of us.

SIMON: There's several a few blocks from here that I've been practicing breaking into.

CASSANDRA: Fantastic.

SIMON: And if the cops stop us?

CASSANDRA: I don't worry about them anymore. (BEAT) Before we go, grab a mask. I'll show you a picture of the person we're looking for, and her car.

SCENE 12. — SHE'S HERE (EXT: PUGET SOUND SHORELINE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SIMON, GUARD

/SFX/ WIND AND WAVES ROLLING IN AMBIANCE

/SFX/ CAR DRIVES UP, STOPS, WINDOW ROLLS DOWN

GUARD: Welcome to Kitsap. Name? ID?

CASSANDRA: Stop. (BEAT, LOW) We're on camera. Read her mind.

SIMON: (PAUSE) Oh my stars. This woman is not happy about the new personnel visiting the base. They look like… (BEAT) I recognize the crosses on their pendants. First Light.

CASSANDRA: They're here already?

SIMON: Seems like. She doesn't have an eidetic or photographic memory so I'm not sure she's seen who you're looking for.

CASSANDRA: What about her car?

SIMON: (BEAT) She has seen it.

CASSANDRA: Okay. (TO GUARD) Forget.

GUARD: (DREAMY) Welcome to Kitsap.

CASSANDRA: (TO SIMON) Let's move.

/SFX/ WINDOW ROLLS UP, POV MOVES INSIDE CAR, WIND OUTSIDE IS MUFFLED, CAR TURNS AROUND AND DRIVES OFF

SIMON: So. We can assume she's still going to work.

RUTH: [REPEAT from EPISODE 9, LINES 1505-1506] There's a really good diner nearby called Mina's Cafe that I hit up for breakfast sometimes.

CASSANDRA: Okay. Head over to Mina's Cafe in Port Orchard. We'll see if anyone remembers her there.

SIMON: I could use a bite to eat.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) So could I. If there's anyone there who fits my diet.

SIMON: Ah, yes. SAMAEL was just as particular.

CASSANDRA: Arbitrary-ass curse.

SIMON: My sire taught me that curses are the result of transgressions. They aren't arbitrary.

CASSANDRA: What the fuck did I do?

SIMON: You died. And then you walked again. And now I'm driving you to a diner.

CASSANDRA: It feels like one of those curses Hera would put on anyone Zeus was fucking. Bear transformations. That sort of thing. Which would imply the existence of two gods; one who gave us undeath, and one who was mad about it. That makes more sense than any of the Caine speculation I've heard.

SIMON: Zeus fucking Hades or Thanatos is kinda hot.

CASSANDRA: It would explain a lot. If only there were any Greek myths about Kindred.

SIMON: The universe deliberately doesn't give us the answers we want.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I want to find her.

SIMON: (BEAT) I know you do.

SCENE 13. — DINER (INT: OLD DINER, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SIMON, VICTIM 5

/SFX/ LATE NIGHT DINER AMBIANCE, PLATES CLINK, FOOD SIZZLES IN KITCHEN

/SFX/ DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA AND SIMON WALK IN, STOP

SIMON: Coffee please.

CASSANDRA: I'll take a coffee too. (LOW) Hey. Stop.

SIMON: (BEAT) I'm done reading her mind.

CASSANDRA: Forget. (BEAT, CHEERFUL) Coffee's fine.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND SIMON WALK TO BOOTH, SIT IN BOOTH

CASSANDRA: What'd you get?

SIMON: Your friend's been here recently. In her uniform. Agitated.

CASSANDRA: Fuck.

SIMON: What are you going to do now?

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS WALK OVER, STOP, TWO COFFEE CUPS ARE PLACED ON TABLE

CASSANDRA: Thanks.

SIMON: Thank you.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS WALK AWAY

CASSANDRA: Are you going to drink that?

SIMON: No. (BEAT) Next person to leave, I'll follow out.

/SFX/ SIMON PUTS SOME BILLS AND COINS ON THE TABLE

SIMON: How about you?

CASSANDRA: I'm still deciding how to play this. My friend's in trouble and I don't know how to get to her. (BEAT) For breakfast though? The woman at the counter has some hot butch vibes. I'll follow her out.

SIMON: She's yours then.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Look at us, talking about some skeevy, fucked up shit.

SIMON: You want to introduce yourself to her and explain the blood drinking? Break the Masquerade? That's all on you.

CASSANDRA: No, but see. Breaking the Masquerade is ethical. It holds us apart while our Beasts need to interact with humans. And while there are so many potential consensual Blood Dolls out there. It's like enforcing straight sex among a huge queer contingent. Mandating vanilla lifestyles when so many of us thrive with kink or BDSM. The Masquerade only makes sense to a bunch of far-right nutjobs who don't know the first thing about sociology. Maybe it made sense when there were only a fraction of the Kindred around now. But I think it has just made an extraordinarily disgusting bandage on a wound that's been festering for centuries. We need to treat the wound itself. We need to break the Masquerade.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS WALK TO DOOR, OPEN DOOR, WALK OUT, DOOR CLOSES

SIMON: Good thought. That's my breakfast leaving now. I'll meet you at the car.

/SFX/ SIMON GETS OUT OF BOOTH, WALKS TO DOOR, OPEN DOOR, WALKS OUT, DOOR CLOSES

CASSANDRA: Well, fuck. (PAUSE)

/SFX/ CASSANDRA GETS OUT OF BOOTH, WALKS TO COUNTER, STOPS

CASSANDRA: (FRIENDLY) Hi.

VICTIM 5: Hey.

CASSANDRA: (VOICE DEEPENS) I want to make out with you behind the diner.

VICTIM 5: Sure.

/SFX/ VICTIM 5 GETS OFF THE STOOL, CASSANDRA AND VICTIM 5 WALK TO THE DOOR, OPEN DOOR, WALK OUT

SCENE 14. — ROCK AND HARD PLACE (EXT: TOWN MAIN STREET, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, VICTIM 5, FIRST LIGHT LEAD, POLICE (PO)

/SFX/ NIGHT SMALL TOWN AMBIANCE, VERY DISTANCE HIGHWAY

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND VICTIM 5 WALK AROUND THE DINER, STOP

CASSANDRA: Kiss me.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND VICTIM 5 KISS

CASSANDRA: Don't worry. You won't remember a thing.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA DRINKS VICTIM 5, LICKS THE WOUND

VICTIM 5: (MOANS HAPPILY)

/SFX/ POLICE CRUISER PULLS UP, WHOOPS SIREN, STOPS

CASSANDRA: Forget you saw me. Go back and finish your dinner.

/SFX/ VICTIM 5 WALKS AWAY

CASSANDRA: Fuck. Cops around my car. I'll fucking deal with them. Where's SIMON?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS PAST POLICE, TO STREET

CASSANDRA: (LOW) SIMON? SIMON?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS FURTHER FROM POLICE ON STREET

CASSANDRA: (SNIFFS) I can smell him. Where the fuck did he go? (SNIFFS AGAIN) Wait. Who's that?

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS RUSH OUT, SURROUND CASSANDRA

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Don't move, Kindred.

CASSANDRA: Fuck. (TO POLICE) Help! Police! Help me!

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Take her down.

/SFX/ THEY TAZE CASSANDRA, SHE FALLS TO GROUND

CASSANDRA: (SHIVERS) Uh-uh-uh.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Focus, love! They're the fucking First Light! I'll take them if I can.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Get that hood on her, now. Eyes and mouth.

/SFX/ HOOD PULLED OVER CASSANDRA'S HEAD, POLICE WALK UP

CASSANDRA: (MUFFLED) Uuuth!

POLICE (PO): What the hell's going on?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fuck, You can't see or speak.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: This woman's coming with us for questioning.

POLICE (PO): You DHS? Let's see some IDs.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: We're not DHS.

CASSANDRA: Hrng.

SAMAEL (ECHO): What are you doing?

CASSANDRA (ECHO): Growing my fangs. I'm going to cut myself from this hood. Don't worry, I'll put them back when I'm done.

/SFX/ FANGS EXTEND, CASSANDRA TEARS A HOLE IN THE HOOD, SPITS OUT THE PIECE SHE BIT ONTO THE GROUND

CASSANDRA: My name is CASSANDRA Davril! Port Orchard PD, you have jurisdiction over me. These assholes don't!

POLICE (PO): That so, huh?

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Don't listen to her.

POLICE (PO): You're not DHS. Let's see your warrant.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Trust me. You don't want to handle this one.

/SFX/ POLICE TAPS ON THEIR PHONE

POLICE (PO): Our records say she's dead.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Problem solved then. Excuse us.

CASSANDRA: Look at me! Look at my face, officers, and tell them if I'm her!

POLICE (PO): (BEAT) Let's see her with that mask off.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: I highly caution you against that. She is extremely dangerous.

POLICE (PO): Just get it off so I can see her. If she's got some fraud cases, the department will want to see her.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: (BEAT) Fine. (TO CREW) Taze her again when it's off. The officer gets a look, and we cover her eyes again.

/SFX/ THEY TAZE CASSANDRA, PULL OFF HER HOOD

CASSANDRA: Uth.

/SFX/ THEY PULL THE HOOD ON CASSANDRA AGAIN

POLICE (PO): That matches our photo.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: We'll return her to your custody when we're done with her.

CASSANDRA: I stole that car! The one you were looking at! I took it from Everett. Take me into custody. These assholes don't have a warrant for me.

POLICE (PO): (BEAT) We're calling this in. Don't go anywhere.

/SFX/ ONE PAIR OF FOOTSTEPS WALKS AWAY

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: This is bullshit. We need to get DHS clearance.

/SFX/ ONE PAIR OF FOOTSTEPS WALKS BACK, STOPS

POLICE (PO): Do you have a warrant for her?

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: No.

POLICE (PO): We'll take her in.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: Who's your supervisor? I can have our department explain our situation to him.

POLICE (PO): Look. Just pass her over. We have her on auto theft and falsifying her own death.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: This perp is beyond your ability to control, officer.

POLICE (PO): We'll get this straightened out. And if you have jurisdiction, we'll return her when we're done. So. Release custody of her.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: I can't.

POLICE (PO): Our supervisor is sick of this black box shit. We're taking her in.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: She's going to kill all of you.

POLICE (PO): (AMUSED) Heh.

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: All right. But we're following you.

POLICE (PO): Works for me.

/SFX/ POLICE TAKES OUT CUFFS

POLICE (PO): Miss Davril, we are taking you to the station. Don't resist.

CASSANDRA: Wasn't going to.

/SFX/ POLICE CUFFS CASSANDRA

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: At least leave her hood on.

POLICE (PO): I ain't got a problem with that. (TO CASSANDRA) Let's go.

/SFX/ POLICE LEAD CASSANDRA TO THEIR CRUISER

POLICE (PO): So you're on the run from the Feds, too?

CASSANDRA: Something like that.

POLICE (PO): You get in a lot of trouble for a dead woman.

CASSANDRA: Don't get me started.

/SFX/ POLICE AND CASSANDRA STOP, CRUISER DOOR OPENS

POLICE (PO): Get in.

SCENE 15. — COMMANDING POLICE (INT: POLICE CRUISER, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, POLICE (PO)

/SFX/ NIGHT DRIVING AMBIANCE, WIND OUTSIDE

SAMAEL (ECHO): The First Light will be following us wherever we go.

CASSANDRA: I have a plan.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I hope so. They might have picked up SIMON too.

CASSANDRA: I'm aware.

POLICE (PO): Hey. You talking to yourself back there?

CASSANDRA: Yup! (BEAT) Screw this act.

/SFX/ CUFFS BREAK, CASSANDRA PULLS HER HOOD OFF

POLICE (PO): Hey! What are you doing back there?

CASSANDRA: (VOICE LOWERING) Drive to Bethel. Now.

POLICE (PO): (BEAT) Sure.

/SFX/ CAR TURNS, DRIVES

SAMAEL (ECHO): There's the First Light trucks behind us.

CASSANDRA: Certainly are.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Where are we going?

CASSANDRA: Hey, officer? You know that abandoned paintball maze in Bethel? Why don't you park us outside it? I remember it like the palm of my hand.

POLICE (PO): Sounds good.

SAMAEL (ECHO): What on Earth are you doing?

CASSANDRA: Fighting the First Light. On my terms.

SCENE 16. — PRELUDE TO WAR (EXT: PARKING LOT BY FOREST, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ NIGHT FOREST AMBIANCE, DISTANT TRAFFIC, POLICE CRUISER PULLS UP, STOPS, THUMPS INSIDE CRUISER, SPLATTER ON WINDSHIELD GLASS, DOOR IS KICKED OPEN, BREAKS, CASSANDRA WALKS OUT ONTO PAVEMENT

CASSANDRA: Fucking cops.

/SFX/ TRUCKS SCREECH INTO PARKING LOT, STOP

SAMAEL (ECHO): Run, love!

CASSANDRA: (SCARED) That's the plan.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS, STOPS, RIPS PLANK FROM DOOR

SAMAEL (ECHO): Three trucks, at least twelve trained Kindred killers. And you're still a fledgling.

CASSANDRA: And I'm leading them inside. Let's see how our training is going.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA DIPS INTO THE BUILDING AS FOOTSTEPS HIT THE PAVEMENT

SCENE 17. — PAINTBALL WAR (INT: ABANDONED PAINTBALL FACILITY, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, FIRST LIGHT LEAD

/SFX/ MUFFLED WIND OUTSIDE, CASSANDRA RUNS ON CONCRETE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Strategy?

CASSANDRA: Pick them off once they spread out. Here's the locker room. (BEAT) And here's the play space.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You're tracking in dew. They can follow your footprints.

CASSANDRA: I'm counting on it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS RUNNING, SLIPS HER SHOES OFF

SAMAEL (ECHO): (REALIZING) You've left your footprints leading to this dead end.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS OFF, SOCKS ON CONCRETE

CASSANDRA: And now with my shoes off, they can't find me. Even with thermal vision, my feet are cold.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Until there's blood on the floor.

CASSANDRA: It'll be too late for them then. (BEAT) I know this maze. I know every inch of this particle board. Every story of every little wood building in here. And every hiding spot I used against STEPHANIE.

/SFX/ LIGHTS FLICK ON

/MUS/ RAVE MUSIC STARTS IN SPEAKERS

SAMAEL (ECHO): What the fucking hell?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA DUCKS, FREEZES IN PLACE

CASSANDRA: They turned the power on. Ow. Black lights everywhere.

SAMAEL (ECHO): They are rather bright for us.

CASSANDRA: Grabbing that fire extinguisher. (BEAT) Gotta hide.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA MOVES QUIETLY, STOPS, FOOTSTEPS SCRAPING CONCRETE IN DISTANCE

CASSANDRA: (LOW) They're following my footprints.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And they'll split up when they hit the dead end. Cover more territory looking for you. They won't split beyond groups of four.

CASSANDRA: They have to come down this hall. When they check around the corner, I'll be in this cubby. I'll snatch them once they pass by.

SAMAEL (ECHO): They have rifles. With a caliber you can't shrug off.

CASSANDRA: I can smell them. I smell (BEAT) plastics and leather and nylon and lead. Kevlar. Gas masks.

SAMAEL (ECHO): They'll spray a scent that'll make you retch.

CASSANDRA: I don't smell flesh from them. Or blood. They're all wrapped up tight in their uniforms. They're trying to confuse me.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS APPROACH FROM HALLWAY

SAMAEL (ECHO): Here they come.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS STOP. CANISTER IS TOSSED, HISSES GAS

SAMAEL (ECHO): Spray canister! Around the corner!

CASSANDRA: Fuck this. They'll shoot at anything. Even the extinguisher.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOSSES THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER AROUND THE CORNER, RIFLES FIRE, EXTINGUISHER EXPLODES

CASSANDRA: Now they're mine.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SWINGS AROUND THE CORNER, SLASHES THROATS, SQUISHY CUTS, RIFLES FIRE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Behind the bodies! Block the rifle shot!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA HISSES

CASSANDRA and SAMAEL (ECHO): Stop!

/SFX/ RIFLES STOP SHOOTING, CASSANDRA SLASHES THROATS, SQUISHY CUTS, BODIES FALL

CASSANDRA: (COUGHS) Gas!

SAMAEL (ECHO): They'll try to fill the whole center with it.

CASSANDRA: That's a lot of volume to fill. Let me take a vest and gas mask off one.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RIPS A FLAK VEST AND GAS MASK OFF A SOLDIER

SAMAEL (ECHO): Careful. They're clever. They learn. They may plug their ears so we can't dominate them again.

CASSANDRA: There's a radio. This gives me an idea!

FIRST LIGHT LEAD: (IN DISTANCE) She's at nine o'clock! Get ready!

CASSANDRA: Fuck.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS DOWN CORRIDOR AND UP STAIRS

SAMAEL (ECHO): They know they've flushed you out.

CASSANDRA: They don't know this place like I do.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS RUNNING, LIES FLAT ON A BRIDGE, STRAPS VEST ON

SAMAEL (ECHO): Why've you stopped?

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS ON CONCRETE APPROACH

CASSANDRA: (LOW) Because they have to cross under me.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STRAPS ON GAS MASK, FOOTSTEPS ON CONCRETE GROW LOUDER

CASSANDRA: (LOW) Easy. Putting on the gas mask. (BEAT) Now!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA GROWLS, DROPS ON TOP OF SOLDIERS, SOLDIERS SCREAM, FLESH RIPPED, BODIES FALL, RIFLES FIRE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Right on top of them! Fucking hell! Stay low! Now hit them! Swing those claws like a jab! Jab! Hook!

CASSANDRA: Ow!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Let me at them! Hah! Try to spray me with a mask on!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SNARLS, RIFLES FIRE

CASSANDRA: Ow! Radio time!

CASSANDRA and SAMAEL (ECHO): (ON RADIO) Halt, fuckers!

/SFX/ RIFLES STOP FIRING

SAMAEL (ECHO): Hah! They have to listen to their radios!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA GROWLS, FLESH RIPPED, BODIES FALL

CASSANDRA: (REALIZES) SAMAEL!

SAMAEL (ECHO): (OVERJOYED) This is incredible! I have your arms and your legs!

CASSANDRA: Wait!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Why?

CASSANDRA: What if one of them's RUTH?

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS MOVE ON CONCRETE IN DISTANCE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fuck, let's get another vest.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RIPS OFF ANOTHER VEST FROM A DEAD SOLDIER

SAMAEL (ECHO): And I wouldn't worry. RUTH should know enough not to go in after you!

CASSANDRA: Let me check the bodies.

SAMAEL (ECHO): There's no time. We have at least four more soldiers. I hear them gathering near the entrance.

CASSANDRA: Please give me the chance to check.

SAMAEL (ECHO): That body. Smell their blood. You know RUTH's blood better than anyone.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PULLS UP HER MASK A LITTLE

CASSANDRA: (SNIFFS)

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SNAPS HER MASK BACK IN PLACE

CASSANDRA: Ugh, the gas is everywhere. (BEAT) It wasn't her.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Want to see something fun?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Sure?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOSSES THE CORPSE FAR DOWN THE HALLWAY, IT HITS THE GROUND, RIFLES FIRE AT IT

SAMAEL (ECHO): You just toss a corpse at them and they fire on it like a distracted puppy!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS AROUND A CORNER, RIFLES FIRE AT HER

SAMAEL (ECHO): Oh, I can just break through these walls of sawdust and glue and take them out.

CASSANDRA: I want my body back.

SAMAEL (ECHO): It's been too long for me!

CASSANDRA and SAMAEL (ECHO): You know I'll find you, sweethearts!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS AROUND ANOTHER CORNER, RIFLES FIRE AT HER

CASSANDRA: Please don't charge at them!

SAMAEL (ECHO): They won't expect an arm through the particle board! Let me at them!

CASSANDRA: What if they're baiting us?

SAMAEL (ECHO): I've fought these idiots before!

CASSANDRA: Please! (BEAT) Let me go back to check the bodies!

SAMAEL (ECHO): When we're done!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SNEAKS ANOTHER CORNER, PUNCHES THROUGH PARTICLE BOARD, GRABS ANOTHER SOLDIER, SLICES THROUGH THEIR THROAT, BODY FALLS, RIFLES FIRE

CASSANDRA: SAMAEL!

SAMAEL (ECHO): We can take a few more hits! I'm not worried!

CASSANDRA: Look down! (BEAT) Blood! All over our socks! They can follow us!

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) Fuck.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS AWAY, RIFLES FIRE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fuck fuck fuck, get the socks off.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, PULLS OFF SOCKS

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) They're not following.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Odd.

CASSANDRA: I'm asserting control.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love.

CASSANDRA: We may not have time. Let me check the bodies!

SAMAEL (ECHO): I haven't felt like I was in a body in so long!

CASSANDRA: Let me have it! Now!

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) If you need it so badly. Go on.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS TO CORPSES, STOPS

CASSANDRA: These are the last three corpses we killed.

SAMAEL (ECHO): The gas is strong here.

CASSANDRA: I'll just slide a finger into my mask to taste it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No. Ew.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

/SFX/ FIREBALL ERUPTS IN DISTANCE

SAMAEL (ECHO): Oh no.

CASSANDRA: What's that?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Why they aren't coming after us. Your paintball maze is tinder, and they've just set it on fire!

/SFX/ FIREBALL ERUPTS IN DISTANCE, FIRE BURNS

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love, we've got to get out!

CASSANDRA: I have to check the first four bodies we killed!

SAMAEL (ECHO): No!

CASSANDRA: I'll be quick!

/SFX/ FIREBALL ERUPTS IN DISTANCE, FIRE BURNS CLOSER

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love, this place is a bonfire waiting to happen! Get to an outside wall and break out before they set those on fire too!

CASSANDRA: I have to check!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS, STOPS, TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

SAMAEL (ECHO): CASSANDRA! I order you to leave!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Now!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You're giving them time to ignite the outside walls!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TOUCHES BLOOD, LICKS IT

CASSANDRA: No. None of them are her.

SAMAEL (ECHO): CASSANDRA, look at the flames! We are surrounded! We are trapped in here!

CASSANDRA: I know! Fuck! I know! But I had to be sure!

SAMAEL (ECHO): How are we getting out?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS ON CONCRETE, STOPS

CASSANDRA: Fuck.

SAMAEL (ECHO): They're burning the outside walls. There are only two exits. The front door and the metal emergency exit over there. And I guarantee they're ready for you behind both.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Fire.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I know. It's everywhere.

CASSANDRA: Fire. So much fire. (BEAT) Wait.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Focus, love! Look down at the concrete floor.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I know how to get us out.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Hurry! It's spreading to the roof!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS BAREFOOT ON CONCRETE

CASSANDRA: The lockers. They're metal. They're welded together.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Yes. And the walls are paper charcoal by this point.

CASSANDRA: Hnnrgh!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, RIPS OUT LOCKERS FROM THE WALL

SAMAEL (ECHO): Good job! Yes, this could work!

CASSANDRA: It'll keep us from the fire! (SCARED) Oh gods.

SAMAEL (ECHO): You can do it! Just focus, and smash!

/SFX/ METAL HITS BURNING PARTICLE BOARD, RIPS THROUGH IT

SAMAEL (ECHO): Yes! Through the next!

/SFX/ METAL HITS BURNING PARTICLE BOARD, RIPS THROUGH IT

SAMAEL (ECHO): Wonderful! Get us outside! Through the final wall!

CASSANDRA: Hnnrgh!

/SFX/ METAL HITS BURNING WOOD AND METAL, PAUSES, HITS A SECOND TIME

SAMAEL (ECHO): You've got this! One more!

CASSANDRA: Hah!

/SFX/ METAL BREAKS THROUGH BURNING WOOD AND METAL

SAMAEL (ECHO): We're out! Into the forest!

CASSANDRA: Fuck fuck fuck!

SCENE 18. — INTO THE WOODS (EXT: PARKING LOT BY FOREST, NIGHT)

- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ NIGHT FOREST AMBIANCE, DISTANT TRAFFIC, BURNING BUILDING, CASSANDRA RUNS ONTO DIRT AND INTO THE FOREST, RIFLE FIRE IN DISTANCE BEHIND HER

SAMAEL (ECHO): We made it! Thank heavens! Thank everything! With a spectacular body count!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS THROUGH BRANCHES AND BRAMBLE ON LEAVES

CASSANDRA: Don't care. Don't care. Fuck.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Keep at it! We can outrun them. They're mortal. They'll tire soon.

CASSANDRA: Fuck it. Fuck it.

SAMAEL (ECHO): CASSANDRA!

CASSANDRA: It's everywhere. It's fucking everywhere.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Bloody hell.

CASSANDRA: Everywhere.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love. It's not. You're out of the fire. You're safe. You can keep running, tearing up our feet, but you're not in the fire anymore. The world is dark again.

CASSANDRA: Then why doesn't it fucking feel like it?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Because this is what fire does to us. (REALIZING) It never goes away. Does it? (BEAT) Just keep running, love. Just keep running.

-END-