Vampire: The Masquerade: Blood Doll Script, v2

Season 2, Episode 14: “Embroil the Blood Doll”

by Alicia E. Goranson

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Approximate playing time: 1 Hour, 50 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
HANK	Anarch, 30-40s, masc
SIOBHAN	Gangrel, femme, full time mutual aid provider, SODO Anarch community resource distributor
MELISSA	40-something human woman, wheelchair user, Blood Doll
ENOCH	Ventrue Elder, gender long forgotten
HELENA	Enoch’s Lictor, Ventrue
ESTHER	Salubri, femme, AARALYN’s minister, chosen to replace former minister, appointed as a favor to the Salubri clan to end bloodshed
VICTIM 1, 2	CASSANDRA’s former victims on the street
ELIJIO	Lasombra, SAMAEL’s boyfriend, masc
SOPHIA	Ventrue, Seattle prince, femme
KINDRED GUARD	Kindred guard at the Elder’s skyscraper Court

ARTURO	Malkavian, masc, SODO Anarch community protector, “guard dog,” excellent watcher

SCENE 1. — INQUEST TRIAL (INT: GREAT COURTROOM, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA'S BEAST, SAMAEL, HELENA, ENOCH, ELIJIO, ROSE

/SFX/ QUIET AMBIANCE, MURMURING WALLA

ENOCH: CASSANDRA. Davril. You, an abomination, stand before us now. You disgust us by your presence. We are reversing the Prince's decision that authorized your creation. Welcome (BEAT) to your execution.

ELIJIO: Permission to address the Court!

ENOCH: Denied, accused ELIJIO. We understand our Lictor HELENA told you that the accused CASSANDRA would not face her Final Death in our Courtroom. We bade her say this before we had finished our review of the charges against the accused CASSANDRA. We were repulsed to learn of her involvement in the deaths of Prince AARALYN, her fledgling BRIAN, Sheriff JUDITH, and Minister SAMAEL.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Starving. Desperate. We need to feast.

CASSANDRA: (ON THE EDGE OF GOING FERAL) Permission (HOLDS BACK SELF) to address the Court.

ENOCH: Your time to defend yourself will come.

SAMAEL (ECHO): As if they'd listen.

CASSANDRA: What evidence rules against me?

HELENA: Silence, accused.

/SFX/ HELENA SMACKS CASSANDRA'S FACE

ENOCH: No. She is correct. We only have her testimonial and a dearth of physical evidence to connect her to these Final Deaths. That said, we have known coincidence on our nights-upon-Earth. One, perhaps two Kindred deaths, we can understand. But four? That is more than many Kindred hunters accrue in their entire lifetimes. (BEAT) However, the Ventrue Ephorate expect a detailed report on these repugnant slayings. This Court will continue until its duty has been fulfilled. Thus, the accused fledgling's execution will be delayed until the report is complete. Unless she fails to comply with the Court's directives. In which case, we see no further need of her.

CASSANDRA: (HOLDING HERSELF TOGETHER) I (BEAT) understand.

ENOCH: Make no mistake. We abhor diablerie in any form. It sickens us. Even if you bear no fault for the diabolic act, you benefit from it. You reek of it. Kindred who partake in this act are not fit for even the most vile of our societies. Your Final Death will come at the hand of this Court. When it has finished with you. Until then, we request you live to answer our questions. Providing answers says to us you are a civilized being. Withholding them confirms you are an animal, and we

will permit no such detestable creatures in our court. (BEAT) Do you remain civilized before us?

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Hungry. As deep as we have ever known.

CASSANDRA: (STRUGGLING) I do. (BEAT) I'm trying.

ENOCH: Yes, your Beast must be quite the nuisance. Do hold yourself together. You will be fed before you go feral. Now. Family name?

CASSANDRA: Davril.

ENOCH: Given name?

CASSANDRA: CASSANDRA.

ENOCH: And you are but a fledgling.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Fight. Eat one of them.

CASSANDRA: (STRUGGLING) Yes.

ENOCH: You came into SAMAEL's service three years ago?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And he was taken by the kine six months after that?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And then (BEAT) the murders started. (PAUSE, WAITS FOR HER TO ANSWER, RESUMES WHEN SHE DOES NOT) Did Prince AARALYN and her progeny BRIAN die shortly after SAMAEL's capture?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And JUDITH died two days after that.

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And you were present at all these deaths?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And SAMAEL died two months ago?

CASSANDRA: (SAD) Yes.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And they'd only be happy if I'd stayed that way.

ENOCH: And you were present at that death as well?

CASSANDRA: (SAD) Yes.

ENOCH: If one were a Kindred, we would advise them to stay far away from you. (BEAT) What was the nature of Prince AARALYN's death?

CASSANDRA: By the T2M. BRIAN's perversion of Banu Haqim magic, performed by an Embraced computer. It killed him too.

ENOCH: (BORED, EXPECTING THE ANSWER) Evidence?

CASSANDRA: I destroyed the six phones the T2M was working through. I kept the seventh to destroy the TAM.

ENOCH: And where is the seventh now?

CASSANDRA: I don't know. Probably underwater, I lost it on the dock where JUDITH died.

ENOCH: So, there is no evidence to prove this "T2M" caused the murders of Prince AARALYN and her progeny.

CASSANDRA: I didn't die. Neither the TAM nor the T2M seemed interested in immediately killing me, as a human.

ENOCH: Circumstantial evidence at best. Where is the progeny's body?

CASSANDRA: Cremated by the Anarchs in the war that ensued.

ENOCH: Did <u>any</u> Camarilla inspect the corpse after its Final Death?

CASSANDRA: No.

ENOCH: And JUDITH?

CASSANDRA: LEVIATHAN consumed her.

ENOCH: Were there other witnesses?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: Who?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I don't recall.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love. They can tell if you're lying.

CASSANDRA: I'm a dead woman. (BEAT) I don't remember.

ENOCH: Do we detect the scent of a vulgar animal in our Court?

CASSANDRA: Does the Gift also bear with it Perfect Recall?

ENOCH: How did LEVIATHAN arrive? Was the horn sounded?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

ENOCH: And how was the horn acquired?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I don't recall.

ENOCH: Curious. And two months ago. How did SAMAEL meet his Final Death?

CASSANDRA: Self diablerie. They bit off their own tongue to feed me their blood until I was granted the Gift. And in my hunger, I took the rest of them, wholly by instinct. They did not resist.

ENOCH: Evidence?

CASSANDRA: Ask them yourself.

ENOCH: We do not entreat with abominations in this Court.

CASSANDRA: They are ready to provide witness testimony.

ENOCH: You show bestial symptoms before us.

CASSANDRA: I answered your question truthfully. SAMAEL witnessed their own diablerie. Ask them yourself.

ENOCH: Do you know what we are, fledgling?

CASSANDRA: An Elder serving the Ephorate.

ENOCH: We are Passion. We are the terror of the night sky crushing you. We are your shriek at the morning sun. We are the vengeance of the Divine, repulsed at your presence. We are the Sublime.

CASSANDRA: The Sublime is also the emptiness of Infinity. The wasteland of solitude.

ENOCH: (BEAT) Since you know of Edmund Burke, you know we are the sibling of Beauty, only born of pain and the overwhelming of the senses.

CASSANDRA: You're just a god like me.

ENOCH: (DISMISSIVE) And what aspect of Creation do you represent?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) The soul, transparent.

ENOCH: What is the difference between transparency and emptiness?

CASSANDRA: Transparency reveals the Will. The universal drive to exist that Arthur Schopenhauer wrote about. I <u>am</u> that Will.

ENOCH: He also wrote that the Will inflicts dissatisfaction and desire upon us.

CASSANDRA: Gracious Elder. I desire to live another day. I desire to tell you the truth. And I fear these are mutually exclusive.

ENOCH: You would hold the truth hostage from us, knowing what we are? Knowing our power?

CASSANDRA: I would ask what good my word has been so far. What value would any more of my words have to you? I don't have any evidence. (BEAT) We are not beings who leave behind evidence.

HELENA: You especially, it seems.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I understand this Court is pain and torment. But if I were to see tomorrow, I would also know this Court is good to its word. Still, I'm just a fledgling. What use am I to this venerable Court?

ENOCH: (PAUSE, BORED) We have verified the basic events. We may further this investigation tomorrow night. Take her away.

ROSE: Permission to address the Court.

HELENA: Sheriff? (DISMISSIVE) Your item is on the docket.

ROSE: And what is my item, again?

HELENA: (BEAT) An inquiry into the competency of the current Prince, SOPHIA.

ROSE: And among my evidence, what is Item five B?

HELENA: (BEAT) CASSANDRA Davril.

ROSE: Venerable Court, I humbly request you do not dispose of my evidence before I am able to present it.

HELENA: Gracious Elder?

ENOCH: (BEAT) Your evidence shall be allowed to speak on your behalf (BEAT) before its disposal.

ROSE: Bless this venerable Court.

ENOCH: We will hear your concerns tomorrow night. (BEAT) Take the fledgling away.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STANDS, CHAINS RATTLE, FOOTSTEPS AS SHE IS ESCORTED AWAY

ENOCH: Next, we will hear from the Sheriff's Enforcers. The one called AMANDA. Take the chair.

SCENE 2. — DINNER (INT: UNDERGROUND PRISON, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), CASSANDRA'S BEAST, ROSE, VICTIM 1, ELIJIO, SAMAEL

/SFX/ WATER DRIPS, CHAIN RATTLING AS CASSANDRA WALKS WITH ROSE

ROSE: Come along.

CASSANDRA: (STRUGGLING TO HOLD HERSELF TOGETHER) Yes, ROSE.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND ROSE WALK, STOP, CELL DOOR IS UNLOCKED, DOOR SQUEAKS OPEN

ROSE: Inside.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN, CHAINS CLANK, CELL DOOR SHUTS, IS LOCKED, CASSANDRA STOPS

VICTIM 1: (BREATHING) Oh, fuck.

CASSANDRA: (STRUGGLING) Who's this?

ROSE: Your dinner.

VICTIM 1: Fuck! Let me out!

ROSE: You've drunk from her before. We're aware of your dietary restrictions.

CASSANDRA: (STRUGGLING) Why not a blood pack? There's an empty fucking blood pack in the cell across from me.

ROSE: I would have left you one. But Lictor HELENA insisted you have live prey.

VICTIM 1: I'm not prey! My name is BRENDA!

CASSANDRA: Why would she do that?

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Drain her. I want every drop of her.

ROSE: I told her you don't like to kill.

VICTIM 1: You don't have to kill me. You can take anything you want from me. All my money. My girlfriend can get you more.

CASSANDRA: Get her out of my cell.

ROSE: Enjoy her conversation, if nothing else. But, everyone's hungry after they've been staked. Go ahead. Prove me wrong.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Drink her dry. Now!

CASSANDRA: Fuck you and fuck HELENA.

ROSE: Is that any way to thank me for keeping you alive? (BEAT) And we'll be taking down SOPHIA together.

CASSANDRA: I can't wait.

VICTIM 1: I'll do whatever. Please.

ROSE: (BEAT) Well?

CASSANDRA: (PAUSE) Thank you, ROSE.

ROSE: I'll have one of the ghouls clean up the corpse during the day. Have fun playing with it!

/SFX/ ROSE WALKS AWAY

VICTIM 1: I know you don't want to hurt me.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I don't get the final say.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STEPS TOWARD VICTIM 1, CHAINS CLANK

VICTIM 1: You don't have to.

CASSANDRA: Distract me. Where do you live?

VICTIM 1: Central District. My girlfriend and I rent a town house near Powell Barnett Park.

CASSANDRA: Must be nice in the summer.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) It is. Where do you live?

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: In her tomb.

CASSANDRA: You're standing on my floor. Your hand is on my bars. Everything from that concrete wall to that one is mine.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) Have you ever been outside at all?

CASSANDRA: And you're mine too.

VICTIM 1: Please. Don't.

CASSANDRA: I don't want to. But I don't make the rules.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO VICTIM 1, CHAINS CLANK, STOPS

CASSANDRA: You smell good.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, EYES CLOSED) Thank you.

CASSANDRA: I have to drink you now.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, EYES CLOSED) Drink?

CASSANDRA: Your blood. We're vampires. You're not walking away from this.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, EYES CLOSED) Oh God.

CASSANDRA: But I'm not walking away from this, either. So let's be cell mates. As long as either of us are going to last. What do you say?

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) I'm. (BEAT) Okay.

CASSANDRA: So here's the problem. I'm <u>really</u> hungry. I know I can't stop myself. I've done this before. If I (BEAT) bite your neck, I'm not going to be able to stop drinking. You're going to go cold. And die.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, SMALL) Okay?

CASSANDRA: So I need you to bleed on the floor. You stop after a couple pints, and I'll lick it up. I'll draw (BEAT) This. On the floor.

<u>/SFX/ CASSANDRA DRAWS A LARGE CIRCLE ON THE CONCRETE FLOOR, CHAINS CLANK, STOPS</u>

CASSANDRA: That circle will hold about two pints.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, SMALL) Okay.

CASSANDRA: When your blood reaches the edges, you rip a sleeve off your shirt, and tie it tight over the wound. You'll make it to tomorrow.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, SLIGHTLY REASSURED) Sounds good.

CASSANDRA: I want you to see tomorrow. It would make me feel better if you made it to tomorrow.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, SLIGHTLY REASSURED) Yeah.

<u>/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAKES A FEW STEPS BACK, CHAINS CLANK, STOPS</u>

CASSANDRA: Now, I'm going to look away.

<u>/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS HER HAND UP AND DOWN THE CELL BARS, CHAINS CLANK, STOPS</u>

CASSANDRA: The bars in this cell. See? The edge right here is sharp. Cut yourself with it. Fill the circle. Then run to that corner, away from me, and bind yourself up. I should be all right. You got the plan?

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED, SLIGHTLY REASSURED) Yes. I got it.

CASSANDRA: Good. I'm not doing great. Go!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS AWAY, CHAINS CLANK, STOPS

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) Okay. Starting!

/SFX/ VICTIM 1 RUBS ARM ON CELL BARS, LIQUID DRIPS ON CONCRETE FLOOR

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Oh, that blessed scent.

CASSANDRA: Not now. Not now. Not now.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: We've lost so much. Only one of us will survive.

CASSANDRA: Fuck. Fuck. (BEAT, TO VICTIM 1) How're you doing?

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) I'm trying to fill the circle! It's slow!

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Let's speed it up.

CASSANDRA: She deserves to live. She deserves to live.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: You feel the hole left in us by the stake. Fill it. Fill it with her blood.

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) I'm squeezing it out!

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: It smells so fresh.

CASSANDRA: Please. Faster!

VICTIM 1: (TERRIFIED) It won't come any faster this close to the skin!

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: So let's cut deep.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) BRENDA.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Now.

CASSANDRA: Run.

/SFX/ VICTIM 1 RUNS TO CELL CORNER, STOPS, CASSANDRA RUNS TO BLOOD POOL, CHAINS CLANKING, STOPS, LICKS BLOOD

CASSANDRA: (BREATHING DESPERATE) Huh. Huh. Huh.

VICTIM 1: (UTTERLY TERRIFIED) I'm sorry! It's all I could do!

CASSANDRA: It's. It's not enough. (BEAT) It's not enough!

/SFX/ SOUND CUTS, SILENCE

CASSANDRA (NA): So I ate her.

/SFX/ SOUND RETURNS, CHAINS CLANK

CASSANDRA: (PANTS FOR FIVE SECONDS, SLOWS) Fuck.

/SFX/ OUTSIDE CELL, FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, MORE CHAINS CLANK, STOP, NEIGHBORING CELL OPENS, FOOTSTEPS ENTER, CHAINS CLANK, CELL DOOR CLOSES, CELL DOOR LOCKED, FOOTSTEPS DEPART

ELIJIO: (DISTANT IN ADJACENT CELL) CASSANDRA?

CASSANDRA: Oh gods. ELIJIO.

ELIJIO: I'm so sorry.

SAMAEL (ECHO): What possessed him to turn us in?

CASSANDRA: Why'd you do it?

ELIJIO: They would have caught you anyway. HELENA said, if I helped, that's time off my sentence.

CASSANDRA: Fuck you.

ELIJIO: What choice did I have? When a Lictor comes to you, you comply or you run and I don't have the stomach to run forever from the Camarilla! (BEAT) She said they wouldn't kill you.

CASSANDRA: You believed her.

ELIJIO: It doesn't make a difference what I believed. What should I have done? Died my Final Death and then have you die yours anyway? Is that what SAMAEL would have wanted? (BEAT) You're saving those miserable cretins who were there with you during JUDITH's demise. Allow me to save myself too, if you would.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I am rather perturbed at the entire Camarilla. Hundreds of years of service and this is how they're treating me and mine?

CASSANDRA: SAMAEL's a bit pissed at everything and everyone Camarilla!

ELIJIO: I don't blame you, love. (BEAT) We have our prisoner's dilemmas to work through.

CASSANDRA: And I just killed someone I didn't want to.

ELIJIO: Who?

CASSANDRA: BRENDA.

ELIJIO: Who's BRENDA?

CASSANDRA: I don't know! They put her in a cell with me! (BEAT) I couldn't help myself.

SAMAEL (ECHO): She's just the first. (BEAT) We're going to kill so many Camarilla. I will drown Elder ENOCH in a tidal wave of blood. Mark my words.

ELIJIO: I’m sorry you had to do that.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) We have to get out of here.

ELIJIO: No chance of that.

CASSANDRA: Then we have to make our time here worth it.

ELIJIO: They’re listening, you know.

CASSANDRA: I don’t care. How are things supposed to get worse? (BEAT) I don’t want to die again.

ELIJIO: I’ll remember you and SAMAEL. Tell me what you’d like me to remember. Tell me what you want me to tell others about you and them.

CASSANDRA: (PAUSE) All right. Tell them, at least, for myself. I tried to make things better. For all of us. (BEAT) But it wasn’t good enough. I don’t know if anything can be.

SCENE 3. — HERESY (INT: GREAT COURTROOM, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, HELENA, ENOCH, ROSE, SOPHIA

/SFX/ QUIET AMBIANCE, MURMURING WALLA

ENOCH: Return the accused CASSANDRA.

/SFX/ WALLA QUIETS, CASSANDRA WALKS BACK IN, CHAINS CLANK, SITS

ENOCH: Has the accused's memory of the events of JUDITH's death returned? Or must we pry them from your cold, dead brain?

SAMAEL (ECHO): We have to give them someone, love. I recommend SIMON. We need AMANDA to keep helping the Fire Brigade. And I'd never ask you to give up ELIJIO.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) ELIJIO was present. He stole LEVIATHAN's horn for me.

/SFX/ CROWD MURMURING WALLA, SUBSIDES

SAMAEL (ECHO): What have you done?

ENOCH: This matches the supposition we heard.

CASSANDRA: But he didn't know JUDITH was the target. I told him we needed LEVIATHAN to kill the Army Caitiff who would be there.

ENOCH: Why would the kine's Caitiff have been present?

CASSANDRA: Same reason as JUDITH. For the phone with the TAM's code on it.

ENOCH: Did you set them against each other?

CASSANDRA: I did. ELIJIO is blameless.

SAMAEL (ECHO): A good move. They suspected ELIJIO already. But this will not help us.

ENOCH: The Court will decide what justice is to be established. (BEAT) Now, to the current case before the Court.

SOPHIA: Not this again.

HELENA: Gracious Elder. The Court presents Item five B of ROSE's motion. CASSANDRA herself.

ROSE: (TO CASSANDRA) CASSANDRA?

/SFX/ ROSE WALKS TO CASSANDRA, STOPS

ROSE: Please identify the ledger I'm holding for the Court.

CASSANDRA: Let the record show that ROSE is holding my ledger of finances from when I operated Harbinger's during Prince SOPHIA's rule. (BEAT) Long may she reign.

/SFX/ ROSE OPENS THE LEDGER

ROSE: The penmanship is quite clear. I submit this ledger to the Court.

SOPHIA: (BORED) Objection.

ENOCH: On what grounds, dear Prince?

SOPHIA: Surely I cannot be held to task for the shoddy business practices of a human under me. Particularly one who was not even ghouled.

ENOCH: Relevance, Sheriff?

ROSE: I'm about to explain, Gracious Elder. And now I present Item seventeen C. CASSANDRA, do you recognize this ledger?

CASSANDRA: No.

ROSE: So I present this second ledger. And this third ledger. Seventeen D. CASSANDRA has seen neither of them, as seventeen C holds the finances from Krafthaus after she left. And seventeen D contains my personal records of my activities as sheriff, every night for three years. I submit these for the Court's analysis.

SOPHIA: What analysis? What is the point to any of this?

ENOCH: Please summarize your accusations, Sheriff.

ROSE: Certainly. Our enforcement expenses – salaries, equipment, bribes – quintupled after Harbinger's was converted to the Krafthaus. And Krafthaus barely doubled its income. I am not including the additional time required to find and dispose of the additional bodies, the additional unauthorized Kindred, and the additional Masquerade breach humans who learned of us.

SOPHIA: Again, this is folly and supposition.

ROSE: And Krafthaus was run by a ghouled human, to your earlier point, Your Excellency.

HELENA: Your conclusion, Sheriff?

ROSE: The Prince cannot manage her own finances. Her staff asked her repeatedly to restore Harbinger's and she turned every request down. Her administration is hemorrhaging money and I can prove this because the contents of AARALYN's warchest are almost gone. What will the Seattle Camarilla do without that buffer?

SOPHIA: Enough. I tire of these idle speculations.

/SFX/ CROWD MURMURING WALLA, SUBSIDES

ENOCH: We will have order. These are grave accusations.

ROSE: I'm not done. I call on Item five B again. CASSANDRA, the night before the Sabbat raid on Harbinger's, what did Prince SOPHIA tell you?

CASSANDRA: She said she would pull out our security. She requested that I ask the Anarchs for replacements.

ROSE: And how did the Anarchs respond?

CASSANDRA: That it was obvious she was planning to attack them that night. With the security she had pulled from Harbinger's. She hoped that with additional Anarchs in the club, there would be fewer of them on the ground.

SOPHIA: What right does a human have to question my orders?

ENOCH: Sheriff?

ROSE: This was a very basic tactical error. As indicated in item fifteen A, the battle went poorly. We were fortunate that none of us died our Final Deaths that night. I have itemized twenty-one other events in which Prince SOPHIA's tactics would be questioned by the simplest Ventrue fledgling.

HELENA: These accusations border on insubordination.

SOPHIA: Agreed.

ROSE: The Court is hungry for evidence which I am too happy to provide. Shall I continue with the fact that we've regained no new territory since the Prince's reign began? Or that the Thin Blood's activities are costing us goodwill with our business partners, who don't even trust us to house their goods?

SOPHIA: Cease her rampant falsities!

ENOCH: Enough. (BEAT) We would have a brief recess to review the evidence. Take the abomination to her cell, ROSE.

ROSE: My sincerest thanks, Gracious Elder. (BEAT) Your Excellency. (TO CASSANDRA) Move out.

CASSANDRA: Yes, ROSE.

SOPHIA: (DISMISSIVE) Why are we even sanctioning such motions against me, Gracious Elder?

/SFX/ CROWD MURMURING WALLA, CASSANDRA STANDS, ROSE AND CASSANDRA WALK OUT, CHAINS CLANK

SCENE 4. — TERRIBLE FREEDOM (INT: UNDERGROUND PRISON, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA'S BEAST, ROSE, VICTIM 2, SAMAEL, HELENA

/SFX/ WATER DRIPS, CHAIN RATTLING AS CASSANDRA WALKS WITH ROSE, THEY STOP, CELL DOOR IS UNLOCKED, OPENS

ROSE: In you go.

CASSANDRA: Where's ELIJIO?

ROSE: Taken to the next phase of the trial.

VICTIM 2: Oh, fuck.

ROSE: Anyhow, I see you have a new roommate again. Much nicer than a blood bag, isn't she?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN, CHAINS CLANK, DOOR SHUTS, DOOR IS LOCKED

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: What a delectable morsel.

CASSANDRA: (SARCASTIC) Thanks.

ROSE: No. Thank you for your testimony. I'll expect you back tomorrow. We have a lot more evidence to defend.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) I'll be there.

ROSE: Good. Carry on then!

/SFX/ ROSE WALKS AWAY

VICTIM 2: Are you (BEAT) a vampire?

CASSANDRA: (TIRED OF THIS DANCE) Yes.

VICTIM 2: (PAUSE) Are you going to kill me?

CASSANDRA: I don't know. Probably.

VICTIM 2: Why?

CASSANDRA: Okay, let's play a game where you shut up and I don't eat you. How does that sound?

VICTIM 2: (SHAKES HEAD YES) Mmm.

CASSANDRA'S BEAST: Drink of her. I command you.

CASSANDRA: I'll feed when I have to.

SAMAEL (ECHO): We're not long for this world.

CASSANDRA: I'm painfully aware.

SAMAEL (ECHO): I'm not certain ROSE is doing anything but pissing off the Elder.

CASSANDRA: She's Toreador. She has to be the center of attention.

SAMAEL (ECHO): We should consider not cooperating with her. If we call out her motion as a farce, it might win us some points with Elder ENOCH.

CASSANDRA: I'm really done with playing Camarilla games.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) Apologies. Old habits.

CASSANDRA: Do you think you can get us out of here?

SAMAEL (ECHO): I'm always seeking opportunities. But I see none so far.

CASSANDRA: Great.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Are you going to eat your supper?

CASSANDRA: I can probably go until tomorrow without feeding.

VICTIM 2: Are you (BEAT) talking to yourself?

CASSANDRA: All right.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO VICTIM 2, CHAINS CLANKING, RIPS OFF A PIECE OF VICTIM 2'S SHIRT AND STUFFS IT IN VICTIM 2'S MOUTH

VICTIM 2: Mmmmth!

CASSANDRA: I meant it when I said, shut up!

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE CELL

CASSANDRA: Enjoy being alive a little longer. Over in that corner. Away from me!

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE CELL STOP, VICTIM 2 WALKS TO CORNER, STOPS

HELENA: Are you bossing your food around?

CASSANDRA: She's not the only thing that won't shut up around here!

HELENA: And here I was, about to do you a favor.

CASSANDRA: I thought the Gracious Elder wanted me dead.

HELENA: Elder ENOCH would prefer not to have to replace a Prince so early in her reign. They would prefer you cease your defense of ROSE's "evidence." May I come in?

/SFX/ HELENA UNLOCKS CELL DOOR, OPENS IT

CASSANDRA: What are you doing?

HELENA: Delivering an order. Recant your testimony to ROSE's motion. Or die. Right now.

CASSANDRA: I'm going to die anyway.

HELENA: What's that in your corner?

/SFX/ HELENA WALKS INTO CELL TO VICTIM 32

VICTIM 2: (SCARED) Mmmmth. (TERRIFIED, MUFFLED SCREAM) Mmmmth!

HELENA: Poor thing! You muffled it with a cloth.

/SFX/ HELENA PULLS THE CLOTH FROM VICTIM 2'S MOUTH

VICTIM 2: (PANTS) Please. Please don't-

/SFX/ HELENA SLASHES VICTIM 2'S NECK, LETS THE BODY FALL TO THE CONCRETE FLOOR

HELENA: Well, I suppose you're going to starve now. You should have eaten her earlier.

CASSANDRA: Fuck off.

HELENA: (PRETENDING TO REALIZE) Oh, right! Because you're going to die anyway. (BEAT) A rather nihilistic view, don't you think?

CASSANDRA: I see no hope before an angry Elder.

HELENA: Oh.

/SFX/ HELENA WALKS OUT OF THE CELL, STOPS

HELENA: Well. On my count. I'll give you ten seconds.

CASSANDRA: What?

HELENA: The door to your cell's open. I can't imagine how that happened! Wasn't ROSE the last person to see you here?

CASSANDRA: (REALIZING) Fuck you.

HELENA: She must have let you out. I can't imagine why. You were doing so well, defending her "evidence" in Court. Perhaps she decided to reward you by offering you your freedom.

CASSANDRA: I'm not leaving.

HELENA: As I said. You'll have to the count of ten. And then I'll kill you for trying to escape. The Court doesn't look favorably on those who try to avoid justice.

CASSANDRA: You're using me to discredit ROSE.

HELENA: It's her own fault, really. Ten.

CASSANDRA: I said, fuck off.

HELENA: Nine. Eight.

CASSANDRA: No.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (SCARED) Love.

HELENA: Seven. Six.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Run or she'll destroy us.

HELENA: Five. (BEAT) Four.

SAMAEL (ECHO): This is it.

HELENA: Three.

CASSANDRA: Fuck.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS OUT OF CELL AND DOWN THE CONCRETE CORRIDOR

HELENA: Two. One. What's done is done.

/SFX/ HELENA PUTS A SWITCH, ALARM SOUNDS

SCENE 5. — ESCAPE, PART 1 (INT: OFFICE HALLWAYS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, KINDRED GUARD

/SFX/ WIND OUTSIDE, ALARM BLARES, CASSANDRA RUNS DOWN HALL

CASSANDRA: Fuck! Fuck!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Turn right here! Guards coming up!

CASSANDRA: What do I do?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Grow your nails! Claws!

CASSANDRA: Okay!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Now. Dig your claws into the drywall! Up the wall! Over the guards!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA HITS WALL, STICKS CLAWS INTO DRYWALL, SKITTERS OVER

KINDRED GUARD: Fuck! Get her!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA LANDS ON GROUND, RUNS

SAMAEL (ECHO): Nice! Turn left! And outside!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS RUNNING

CASSANDRA: The door's shut.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Jab your way through! You've got this!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PUNCHES OPEN DOOR, METAL DOOR BREAKS OPEN, KINDRED GUARDS RUN TOWARDS HER FROM BEHIND

KINDRED GUARD: Grab her! Stop her!

CASSANDRA: What now?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS OUTSIDE

SCENE 6. — ESCAPE, PART 2 (EXT: DOWNTOWN SEATTLE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, KINDRED GUARD

/SFX/ DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC, WIND, CASSANDRA RUNS ON CONCRETE

CASSANDRA: Fuck.

SAMAEL (ECHO): We're downtown. The waterfront's behind us, to the west. But they'll catch us if we try for it.

/SFX/ WIND RUSH, STOPS

KINDRED GUARD: Stop, Ventrue!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PUNCHES GUARD TWICE, GUARD FALLS TO CONCRETE

CASSANDRA: The fast ones aren't too strong.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Not typically. We've got to get off the street!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS INTO AN ADJACENT ALLEY

SAMAEL (ECHO): Alleys won't help.

CASSANDRA: It has a water grate.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, RIPS METAL WATER GRATE FROM PAVEMENT

SAMAEL (ECHO): We're going down into the drainage?

CASSANDRA: Not yet.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA THROWS THE METAL GRATE HIGH UP ONTO THE SIDE OF A BRICK BUILDING

CASSANDRA: We're going up. I embedded that grate in the wall so it can be our stair to the fire escape.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA JUMPS, PULLS HERSELF ON GRATE, CRAWLS UP METAL FIRE LADDER, RUNS UP METAL STAIRS

SAMAEL (ECHO): Stop!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS

SAMAEL (ECHO): Walk slowly! They just came into the alley.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS QUICKLY UP METAL STAIRS

CASSANDRA: Okay.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Check them! (BEAT) Good. They're clustered around the storm drain. They think you dropped into it.

CASSANDRA: Going to the roof.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, REACHES UP, HEAVES SELF ONTO THE ROOF

SAMAEL (ECHO): Hurry!

KINDRED GUARD: (BELOW) She's up there!

CASSANDRA: Fuck!

SAMAEL (ECHO): We're spotted! Run!

CASSANDRA: Where do we go now?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Somewhere we can break line of sight.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS ON ROOFTOP, LEAPS FROM ONE ROOFTOP TO THE NEXT, LANDS, RUNS

CASSANDRA: That skyscraper under construction. Next to the one we escaped from.

SAMAEL (ECHO): What about it?

CASSANDRA: We break in.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And lose them inside?

CASSANDRA: They'll expect that. So we go up.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Up is a one-way trip, love. You can probably survive a plummet to the Earth but you won't be moving after that. At all.

CASSANDRA: It's okay. I've got something I've always wanted to do.

KINDRED GUARD: (FAR BEHIND HER) There she is! Get her!

CASSANDRA: First. Oh, this is going to be nasty.

SAMAEL (ECHO): It's all glass around that floor of the skyscraper ahead.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, TEARS UP A PIECE OF RAIN GUTTER FROM THE ROOF

CASSANDRA: Hrgh!

/SFX/ RAIN GUTTER SNAPS OFF

SAMAEL (ECHO): What are you doing with that rain gutter, love?

CASSANDRA: Protecting my arm. (BEAT) Here goes!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA JUMPS

SAMAEL (ECHO): We'll smack that glass!

CASSANDRA: I know. Hah!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PUNCHES THROUGH GLASS, SHATTERS, SHE HANGS ON EDGE, PULLS HERSELF IN

CASSANDRA: I didn't want to slash up my arm when I punched through the glass. I figured the gutter would work as armor.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Good show!

SCENE 7. — ESCAPE, PART 3 (INT: SKYSCRAPER UNDER CONSTRUCTION, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, KINDRED GUARD

/SFX/ WIND AMBIANCE OUTSIDE, CASSANDRA RUNS UP STAIRS

SAMAEL (ECHO): There's so many floors ahead of us.

CASSANDRA: Lucky I don't get tired.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Everyone has their limits. Except Elders. But they can't be arsed to leave their chambers.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS FROM DOWN BELOW

KINDRED GUARD: She's heading to the top floor!

SAMAEL (ECHO): What's the plan when we get up there?

CASSANDRA: I'd never have considered it when I was alive. But it's true. The world is paper now.

SCENE 8. — ESCAPE, PART 4 (EXT: TOP OF SKYSCRAPER UNDER CONSTRUCTION, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ WIND RUSHES, TRAFFIC FAR BELOW, CASSANDRA RUNS ON TOP FLOOR GIRDERS

CASSANDRA: A building under construction? Always has these enormous cranes on top.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And what will you do with it?

CASSANDRA: Climb it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA CLIMBS UP THE CRANE

CASSANDRA: Got to get to the top of it.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Balance, love.

CASSANDRA: I have balance. Now! What's that at the end of the crane?

SAMAEL (ECHO): A lowered cable. With a hook at the end.

CASSANDRA: And what's hung off the cable?

SAMAEL (ECHO): (REALIZES) No.

/SFX/ AT THE TOP OF THE CRANE, CASSANDRA RUNS DOWN THE CRANE

SAMAEL (ECHO): You can't possibly be considering that.

CASSANDRA: I'm strong enough to rip it free now.

SAMAEL (ECHO): From the cable. That enormous, disgusting American flag.

CASSANDRA: It's massive. It's the size of a parachute.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fucking hell!

/SFX/ AT THE END OF THE CRANE, CASSANDRA SLIDES DOWN THE CABLE, WIND RUSHES

CASSANDRA: Down the cable!

SAMAEL (ECHO): You'll shred our hand!

CASSANDRA: We'll heal.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TEARS THE FLAG FROM THE CABLE

SAMAEL (ECHO): (TERRIFIED AT RECKLESSNESS) Fuck, love!

CASSANDRA: Halfway ripped! It'll only get easier from here!

SAMAEL (ECHO): We’re almost at the bottom!

CASSANDRA: Hah!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS HER SLIDE, PULLS IN THE FLAG’S CORNERS

CASSANDRA: Just gotta (BEAT) pull in the flag’s corners. (GRUNTS)

SAMAEL (ECHO): The guards are having a hell of a time over on the rooftop.

CASSANDRA: Let them. (BEAT) Okay, got all the corners. (BEAT) Can Kindred fly?

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WORRIED) Let’s find out.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA JUMPS OFF THE CABLE, FLAG BILLOWS OUT, CASSANDRA SOARS THROUGH THE AIR, WISH RUSHES

CASSANDRA: (SHOUTS IN EXCITEMENT) Wooooooooow!

SAMAEL (ECHO): There’s the waterfront! The waterfront, love! You made it! You really made it! Ha, ha!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA HITS THE CONCRETE GROUND, DROPS THE FLAG, WATER LAPS

SAMAEL (ECHO): There’re still cameras everywhere. Get in the water!

CASSANDRA: Done and done.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS ONTO THE BEACH, SPLASHES INTO WATER, POV GOES UNDERWATER

SCENE 9. — HIDE ME (INT: ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, JOSEPHINE

/SFX/ ABANDONED WAREHOUSE AMBIANCE, WIND OUTSIDE, CASSANDRA RUNS IN, WET DRIPPING

CASSANDRA: Fuck. Where's JOSEPHINE's phone?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STOPS, PICKS UP PHONE, TAPS ON PHONE, LINE PICKS UP

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) What do you want, Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: I need to disappear. I have the entire Camarilla force after me!

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) What the fuck did you do?

CASSANDRA: I ran from an inquest. I ran from an Elder.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Consider running back.

CASSANDRA: JOSEPHINE!

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I don't need the heat.

CASSANDRA: I'm looking for how you travel around the city and not get spotted.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) The drainage tunnels. Stolen trucks. Electrical tunnels. We have the whole city mapped out.

CASSANDRA: They'll be searching the drainage tunnels.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Noted. Okay. First, let's get that scent off you. Over against the wall, you'll see a cabinet?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO CABINET, STOPS

CASSANDRA: Yeah. I'm there.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) The combination is eighteen, twenty-nine, twelve.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TURNS THE COMBINATION LOCK, CABINET OPENS

CASSANDRA: Okay.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Grab one of the plastic bags and rip it open. It's full of talcum powder and dirt. Douse yourself with it. Your Kindred comrades won't be able to recognize your scent. Next, your clothes. There's more in the cabinet. They'll be loose on you but they're better than the blood-soaked rags you're in.

CASSANDRA: Thank you. One last thing.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I'm giddy at what you'll owe me after this.

CASSANDRA: MELISSA. The Blood Doll. I want her address. I'm thirsty.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Is that a breach of the coven's rules?

CASSANDRA: I'm not asking for anyone else's. RUTH knows her address already.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) Why aren't you going to see RUTH?

CASSANDRA: They are expecting me to head for the Anarchs in Sodo. I need to wait for the heat to drop.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) All right. I'm texting you her address. Memorize it. And then destroy the phone.

CASSANDRA: On it. Thank you.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) I don't run on thanks, Camarilla. Be sure to pay me when you're on your feet again.

CASSANDRA: That won't be for a while.

JOSEPHINE: (ON PHONE) If anybody is, you're good for it. MELISSA has my contact number. Ask her if you want to chat with me again.

CASSANDRA: I appreciate it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SNAPS THE PHONE INTO PIECES, SOUND IS CUT

SCENE 10. — FOR A SIP (INT: MELISSA'S HOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, MELISSA

/SFX/ WIND AND LIGHT TRAFFIC OUTSIDE, KNOCK ON DOOR, WHEELCHAIR ROLLS TO DOOR

MELISSA: Coming!

/SFX/ WHEELCHAIR STOPS, DOOR OPENS

CASSANDRA: Hi.

MELISSA: Oh. I didn't expect you here.

CASSANDRA: JOSEPHINE gave me your address. I hope that's okay. RUTH has been here too, I believe?

MELISSA: Yes. It's fine.

CASSANDRA: Sorry it's so late.

MELISSA: I've been up for hours. I have insomnia.

CASSANDRA: Would you mind if I came in?

MELISSA: Do you need an invitation?

CASSANDRA: Not to enter your house. I'm not repelled by doorways. But I wouldn't come in unless you asked.

/SFX/ WHEELCHAIR ROLLS BACK

MELISSA: Welcome. (BEAT) Actually, stay by the door. You smell funky.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN, CLOSES DOOR

CASSANDRA: Yeah. I'm kinda on the run and I kinda need a drink.

MELISSA: Oh. Are you in trouble with (THINKS) the Camarilla?

CASSANDRA: At a scale that's hard to describe. I can't stay long.

MELISSA: Ah. (WINKS) No time to make blood tea or anything.

CASSANDRA: That's more AUTUMN's thing anyway.

MELISSA: She inspires me to up my cooking game. (SIGHS) Don't take too much, all right?

CASSANDRA: You'll be fine. Thank you.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA DRINKS MELISSA, LICKS

MELISSA: Mmm. I think I need a cookie.

CASSANDRA: One other thing. JOSEPHINE said you have her number?

MELISSA: She gave me a phone to text her on?

/SFX/ MELISSA PASSES OVER A PHONE TO CASSANDRA

MELISSA: Here.

CASSANDRA: Thanks.

MELISSA: Are you sure you'll be okay?

CASSANDRA: I don't know. I'm doing what I can.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TYPES IN PHONE

CASSANDRA: (WRITING) "J. It's C. Pass on a message to your contact "A." Tell her to tell Sheriff "R" to meet me at this address northside. Alone."

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAPS, SENDS MESSAGE, PHONE BEEPS

CASSANDRA: That should do it.

MELISSA: Who's "Sheriff "R""?

CASSANDRA: Someone who's been screwed over as hard as I've been. I'm hoping this makes us both the enemies of my enemy.

SCENE 11. — ALLIES? (EXT: SUBURBAN ALLEY, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, ROSE, SAMAEL

/SFX/ NIGHT SUBURBAN AMBIANCE, TRAFFIC IN DISTANCE

SAMAEL (ECHO): I don't like the thought of working with ROSE.

CASSANDRA: I can't stand it either. But she's taken heat for my escape. Her loyalty to the Camarilla leadership should be in crisis.

SAMAEL (ECHO): And if she's here to capture you? She puts HELENA in a very awkward position if she returns with you.

CASSANDRA: Which is why we're watching the meeting spot from around this corner. (BEAT) Someone's coming. (BEAT) It's her.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (BEAT) She seems to be alone.

CASSANDRA: I don't see or smell any other Kindred. That's a good sign.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Godspeed.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO ROSE, STOPS

ROSE: (SURPRISED TO SEE HER) Oh! CASSANDRA?

CASSANDRA: It's me.

ROSE: That's a good disguise. I couldn't smell you either. How did you manage to contact AMANDA about meeting you here? We had her watched.

CASSANDRA: Probably not well while you were out looking for me.

ROSE: Apparently we misjudged where we should put our resources.

CASSANDRA: She has a phone.

ROSE: I'll be sure to search her for it. And destroy it.

CASSANDRA: Don't hurt her.

ROSE: You are out of favors. (BEAT) But I'll grant you this one more.

CASSANDRA: SOPHIA has to go. HELENA has to go.

ROSE: I know. They've suspended me from my position. They're tearing apart the south for you. They even sent an envoy to the Anarchs to request your arrest, with a handsome reward.

CASSANDRA: That's why I'm up here. So. What happens now?

ROSE: HELENA laid into me about “disturbing the natural order.” She’s pissed because Elder ENOCH originally approved of SOPHIA’s role as Seattle Prince. It reflects badly on them if SOPHIA is found to be incompetent.

CASSANDRA: So we make her look incompetent.

ROSE: That’s not hard. But HELENA will cover up for her.

CASSANDRA: Does HELENA care more for money or territory?

ROSE: Money makes relationships happen. That said, relationships have not been happening as much recently. The Seattle Camarilla have a reputation for stagnating.

CASSANDRA: So losing territory would weaken what authority the Camarilla have left.

ROSE: SOPHIA will send every Camarilla Kindred to their Final Deaths before she gives up another inch.

CASSANDRA: So we push the Camarilla into chaos. (BEAT) What do you say we give the Fire Brigade their largest score yet?

ROSE: Where are you thinking?

CASSANDRA: SOPHIA’s Courthouse. Does anyone live there except her Blood Dolls?

ROSE: (BEAT) No one lives there now. SOPHIA takes her meals from some very exclusive clubs in town.

CASSANDRA: Most of the Fire Brigade can day walk.

ROSE: Fucking “JOSEPHINE.” Always holding something back.

CASSANDRA: She probably was saving that as an ace up her sleeve. Maybe she’ll spend it for us if we give her the official Camarilla Court.

ROSE: (BEAT) Tell that bitch in person that she is not forgiven for what she did to me.

CASSANDRA: You’d trust her with a job like this though, wouldn’t you?

ROSE: (BEAT) Lot of cameras in Queen Anne.

CASSANDRA: Fewer than at ENOCH’s Court downtown. I assume you have the key to SOPHIA’s Courthouse.

ROSE: (BEAT) I do.

CASSANDRA: I’ll make sure JOSEPHINE gets it.

ROSE: (LAUGHS)

CASSANDRA: You have a better idea?

ROSE: That piece of shit?

CASSANDRA: That piece of shit.

ROSE: There're security guards there during the day.

CASSANDRA: And what are humans going to do against Thin Bloods?

ROSE: (BEAT) I don't know if I want to be a part of this.

CASSANDRA: And what's your plan when you go back to work under SOPHIA? Where do you think she's going to put you?

ROSE: (BEAT) I was told Elder ENOCH would listen to reason. (BEAT) SOPHIA is no Prince. She has the ambition but lacks the cunning. If I give you this key, she will tear the Camarilla apart looking for who gave it to the Thin Bloods.

CASSANDRA: I'll make sure JO gets the key back to you as soon as she's out.

ROSE: (PAUSE) Fuck. (BEAT) Okay. I'll give you an address. I'll pick it up there.

CASSANDRA: With your permission, I can get a message to the Anarchs to invade your territory as soon as the Fire Brigade are done. They'll destroy Camarilla businesses. And set up shop on Camarilla street corners.

ROSE: And what prevents war?

CASSANDRA: You won't be coordinated to counterattack. SOPHIA will be too busy rolling heads.

ROSE: <u>None</u> of my people die.

CASSANDRA: I'll warn the Anarchs, no deaths. But your people aren't stupid. They can tell when SOPHIA is ordering them into a fight they aren't prepared for.

ROSE: They'll still have to choose.

CASSANDRA: So give them advice about what to do. (BEAT) Tell me the Camarilla don't deserve to be in turmoil right now. Until a proper Prince sits on the throne.

ROSE: What's <u>your</u> angle? You're still dead before the Camarilla.

CASSANDRA: HELENA's the key. The Elder only acts through her.

ROSE: You want to mess with her head.

CASSANDRA: Until she tells the Elder I'm dead, or I'm harmless.

ROSE: (BEAT) So I'm just a pawn in your game against her.

CASSANDRA: We both need this to happen. So why not use each other?

ROSE: Because I don't like being used. (BEAT) But. Yeah. (BEAT) Before I even think of giving you this key, repeat your promise that no one dies. Tell the Anarchs, any Final Deaths, there will be war.

CASSANDRA: You have my word. No one dies.

ROSE: And if this key isn't back where I request it? I will hunt you to the ends of the Earth for the Gracious Elder.

CASSANDRA: Fair.

ROSE: (BEAT) All right. (BEAT) Fuck, I can't believe I'm working with the Fire Brigade.

/SFX/ ROSE PASSES A HEAVY KEY TO CASSANDRA

CASSANDRA: Thank you. How will I get in touch with you again?

/SFX/ ROSE WALKS AWAY

ROSE: You won't. We're done. And may whatever God there is have mercy on us.

/SFX/ ROSE'S FOOTSTEPS FADE OUT

SAMAEL (ECHO): She's gone.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAKES OUT JOSEPHINE'S PHONE, TAPS ON IT

CASSANDRA: Okay. I'm texting JOSEPHINE. (WRITES) "J, it's C. You won't believe what I have for you."

SCENE 12. — THE KEY (EXT: FOREST, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, JOSEPHINE

/SFX/ NIGHT FOREST AMBIANCE

JOSEPHINE: (FLUMMOXED) What do you have?

CASSANDRA: The key to Prince SOPHIA's Courthouse.

JOSEPHINE: Oh no no.

CASSANDRA: Which only has human security during the day.

JOSEPHINE: La-la-la. Not listening.

CASSANDRA: This is the biggest score you'll ever hit.

JOSEPHINE: Granted. And if I burn the fucker down, what chance, exactly, do I have for getting in it?

CASSANDRA: You're not getting in it.

JOSEPHINE: Time and patience. I'm still getting the Duskborn together.

CASSANDRA: You are a pariah in the Camarilla's circles. They are not scared of you. This scares them.

JOSEPHINE: ROSE looked pretty scared when I branded her.

CASSANDRA: Who do you think gave me this key?

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) Why?

CASSANDRA: To replace the Prince. Think of it. You tried to join under SOPHIA. But she's incompetent. She doesn't recognize that even giving you a spot in Court might be advantageous. Now, another Prince? Might.

JOSEPHINE: There's a whole lotta hope on that "might."

CASSANDRA: Are you turning down the chance to throw the Camarilla into turmoil?

JOSEPHINE: They'll step up their hunt for us.

CASSANDRA: They'll be too busy recuperating from when the Anarchs hit them. Once the Anarchs hear SOPHIA's Court is gone? And all the Camarilla paperwork within it? Without backups? Or electronic copies? With their bureaucracy gone, the Camarilla will be in shambles.

JOSEPHINE: You do know how to wine and dine a girl. (BEAT) I take out SOPHIA's Courthouse. I go to LOREA and ask to join the Anarchs again. She says "no" this time? She's a bigger fool than SOPHIA.

CASSANDRA: I knew you'd see the silver lining.

JOSEPHINE: Gimme that key.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PASSES OVER THE KEY TO JOSEPHINE, PASSES PAPER TO JOSEPHINE

CASSANDRA: As soon as you're done, dump the key at that address. I'm talking immediately after. ROSE cannot be seen without it.

JOSEPHINE: I could screw her over again.

CASSANDRA: You could. And then she'd come for me. And I think you want ROSE in your pocket when the new Prince comes in.

JOSEPHINE: (PAUSE) I'll leave the key at this address. Immediately after we flee the building.

CASSANDRA: I also drew up the floor plan to the building on these papers. You know how to disable the sprinklers and the alarms?

JOSEPHINE: (READS) Once I've cut power to the basement? Yes. (BEAT) Relax. It'll be a smoking ruin tomorrow night.

CASSANDRA: Good. (BEAT) I borrowed the phone you gave to MELISSA, but I gave it back to her. I'll stop by her place if I need to contact you again.

JOSEPHINE: A day operation'll be rough. We'll need everyone on tap to manage something this big. Especially when the cops arrive. (BEAT) I'm looking forward to it.

CASSANDRA: One last thing. I need to get to South Seattle. Where they're looking for me.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) One of my crew can give you a ride.

SCENE 13. — BEDTIME (INT: WEST SEATTLE HOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, RUTH, LOREA

/SFX/ QUIET AMBIANCE, WIND OUTSIDE, KNOCKING ON DOOR

RUTH: What the fuck?

/SFX/ RUTH WALKS TO DOOR, OPENS DOOR

CASSANDRA: RUTH. Can I come in?

RUTH: What's going on? I heard the Camarilla are up in arms trying to find you.

CASSANDRA: Getting here wasn't easy.

RUTH: Come in.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS IN, RUTH CLOSES THE DOOR, CASSANDRA STOPS

RUTH: Ugh. You smell like the garden my grandmother never takes care of.

CASSANDRA: How's your work with LOREA going?

RUTH: Fine. It's just security. It's boring. What happened to you?

CASSANDRA: The inquest started. The Lictor freed me to set up the Sheriff. It's complicated and I will tell you everything. But first, I need to talk to LOREA. Here. In person. Now.

RUTH: I'll text her that it's an emergency.

/SFX/ RUTH TAPS ON HER PHONE, PHONE BEEPS TO INDICATE MESSAGE IS SENT, PHONE BEEPS AGAIN

RUTH: She says she'll be right over.

CASSANDRA: Good. Things are fucked right now. And they're only going to get worse.

RUTH: I picked a hell of a time to join your world.

CASSANDRA: And I'm glad you're still alive. (BEAT) I want to kiss you, but I'm gross.

RUTH: I've been escorting packages all night. I'm gross. Kiss me anyway.

/SFX/ THEY KISS

RUTH: Fuck.

CASSANDRA: I may have to spend the night here, if that's all right.

RUTH: That's fine. Tell me everything.

CASSANDRA: All right.

/SFX/ SOUND FADES OUT, AND THEN FADES BACK IN TO INDICATE THE PASSAGE OF TIME

CASSANDRA: And I'm so relieved they aren't keeping any more Blood Dolls there.

RUTH: I'll say. Fuck. It's going to be a blood bath anyway.

CASSANDRA: Yeah.

/SFX/ KNOCK ON DOOR

RUTH: It's open!

/SFX/ DOOR OPENS, LOREA WALKS IN, SHUTS DOOR, WALKS TO CASSANDRA

LOREA: What's this emergency about?

CASSANDRA: Okay. I know your feelings about going to war with the Camarilla.

LOREA: Oh no.

CASSANDRA: But what would you say to a skirmish? Where no one tries to kill each other.

LOREA: What have you gotten me into?

CASSANDRA: Tomorrow, during the day, JO and the Fire Brigade will infiltrate and burn down SOPHIA's Courthouse.

LOREA: (INCREDULOUS) During the day?

CASSANDRA: The Camarilla will lose all their paper records. And the Court itself.

LOREA: SOPHIA will go on a rampage.

CASSANDRA: Exactly. They'll be in turmoil tomorrow. The absolute last thing they'll need-

LOREA: Is for the Anarchs to go fucking up their businesses. Why are you doing this to me?

CASSANDRA: Because SAMAEL and I want to see the Camarilla in turmoil. We want to see them pay for fucking with us like they have.

LOREA: Is that why you smell like a rotten dog house?

CASSANDRA: The Elder ordered my execution.

LOREA: (PAUSE) There's an Elder in Seattle?

CASSANDRA: And since when do Elders get involved in street fights? They'll look to SOPHIA to resolve the conflict and they're going to be disappointed.

LOREA: And why do I want a new Prince again? SOPHIA's been absolutely lovely for us.

CASSANDRA: Because it's out of your hands.

LOREA: What if I don't want to tip the scale?

CASSANDRA: Ask your crew if they can resist messing with the Camarilla while they're at their lowest.

LOREA: (BEAT) You really set all this up.

CASSANDRA: Fuck the Camarilla.

LOREA: (BEAT) I'll talk with the others. HANK too. More territory wouldn't hurt. I do have merchandise that needs moving. And if they'll be in turmoil anyway.

CASSANDRA: You get it.

LOREA: I don't like it.

CASSANDRA: No one dies, no one goes to war.

LOREA: (BEAT) I wish I had more time to go over this.

CASSANDRA: It has to be tomorrow. Everyone else is set up for this.

LOREA: You are very thorough.

CASSANDRA: I can't afford to be anything less.

LOREA: (BEAT) Fine. I'll advocate for this. Fucking under duress though.

CASSANDRA: Good luck.

RUTH: What about me?

LOREA: Would you fight with us?

RUTH: I'm fucking pissed at what the Camarilla did to my girlfriend. You fucking better believe I'm in.

LOREA: That's the spirit. Come with me. You, CASSANDRA, stay here. Don't leave. And don't fuck anything else up. (BEAT) That said, you better hope that if SOPHIA goes, they send someone worse in her place.

CASSANDRA: That's out of my hands. (BEAT) Thank you for employing RUTH.

LOREA: She's a strong one. Definitely earns her keep.

RUTH: Thank you.

CASSANDRA: JO will be coming back to you if she pulls this off.

LOREA: Don’t remind me. Owing her a boon. Why must my life be like this? (BEAT) Come along, RUTH.

RUTH: See you, hon.

CASSANDRA: See you.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA AND RUTH KISS, LOREA AND RUTH WALK TO DOOR, OPEN DOOR, WALK OUT, CLOSE DOOR

<u>SCENE 14. — LIFE DURING WARTIME</u> (EXT: SEATTLE STREETS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), RUTH, LOREA

<u>/SFX/ TRAFFIC NIGHT CITY AMBIANCE, POLICE SIRENS, FOOTSTEPS RUNNING ON PAVEMENT</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): The next night was everything I'd hoped for. (BEAT) I woke and put the news on. The city fire department had put out the blaze. The building was not salvageable. The Camarilla had been ordered not to use technology by SOPHIA, so they must have started frantically rushing to each other on the most desperate game of telephone on their own. As I watched the news, LOREA stepped into the AirBnB.

LOREA: It's on. Let's roll.

CASSANDRA: And HANK?

LOREA: (SEETHING) It's just my crew.

CASSANDRA: All right.

CASSANDRA (NA): And I was off with a squad of Anarchs, and RUTH, dressed in Goodwill disguises we intended to lose on the streets at one in the morning. Smashing windows.

<u>/SFX/ GLASS WINDOWS SHATTER</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): Punching Camarilla.

<u>/SFX/ PUNCHES HIT BODIES, BODIES FALL</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): Breaking safes.

<u>/SFX/ METAL IMPACTS, HEAVY METAL CRACKING</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): And lighting fires as we fled.

<u>/SFX/ MOLOTOVS THROWN, WOOD CATCHES FIRE, FOOTSTEPS RUN</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): I fled so fast from those.

RUTH: (SHOUTS) Wooooo!

CASSANDRA (NA): It was terrifying. The cops did arrive as we ran. And I fucking told them to go home and they did. And in the middle of the city, I drank from RUTH on the sidewalk, in the open, and there wasn't anything anyone could do about it.

RUTH: (EXCITED, FROM BEING DRUNK) Yes. Yes.

CASSANDRA: I want to do so much more of this.

RUTH: Someday.

CASSANDRA: Yes.

<u>SCENE 15. — SUBMISSION</u> (INT: LOREA'S WAREHOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), LOREA, JOSEPHINE, ESTHER, ARTURO, RUTH, SOPHIA

/SFX/ <u>WAREHOUSE AMBIANCE, EXCITED CHEERS FALL TO EXCITED MURMURS, FOOTSTEPS WALK IN, STOP</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): We returned to LOREA's warehouse to figure out our next steps. What territory they wanted to take. HANK and SIOBHAN were still conspicuously absent. But then, JO arrived.

JOSEPHINE: LOREA! (BEAT, TO CASSANDRA, WITH RESPECT) Camarilla.

LOREA: JOSEPHINE.

JOSEPHINE: Tell me it doesn't feel good to work together!

LOREA: I was impressed by your work.

ARTURO: Holy shit, JO. You completely trashed their Courthouse!

JOSEPHINE: Even with a floor plan, we were still working by the skin of our teeth. (BEAT) Camarilla, your key was delivered to the promised location.

CASSANDRA: Thank you!

JOSEPHINE: My pleasure. Being in those fucking halls while wrecking the place was an <u>incredible</u> buzz.

ARTURO: I fucking bet!

JOSEPHINE: Security was a joke. But now. LOREA.

LOREA: Yes.

JOSEPHINE: I want <u>in</u> the Anarchs.

LOREA: I'll take SPARK.

JOSEPHINE: That was the initial offer. Things have <u>changed</u>. I have helped you bring your enemy to catastrophe and unrest. What (BEAT) do I get for my troubles?

LOREA: I'll recommend to my comrades that the Fire Brigade become official allies of the Seattle Anarchs.

JOSEPHINE: Not good enough. I. Want. In.

LOREA: You've shown yourself very capable, with the assistance of the Sheriff.

JOSEPHINE: You're going to nickel and dime our glorious triumph?

LOREA: Above the ground allyship is a lot for Duskborn.

JOSEPHINE: I. Want. In.

LOREA: We are a collective. Stay. Party with us tonight. You've earned that. Tomorrow, we'll discuss your entry into the Anarchs. And I will be on your side.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) I accept that. Shake.

/SFX/ LOREA AND JOSEPHINE SHAKE HANDS

LOREA: Enjoy the celebrations.

JOSEPHINE: I will. And your answer tomorrow.

/SFX/ JOSEPHINE WALKS AWAY

JOSEPHINE: (IN DISTANCE) Hello friends. Guess who burned down the Courthouse this afternoon!

RUTH: She's got a good heart. She helped set MARA free too.

LOREA: She's a snake, waiting to come inside to strike.

CASSANDRA: She's true to her word. You seriously can't blame her for wanting to be a part of a support network?

LOREA: She's a rock star. She'll shirk her responsibilities and only go for the things she wants to do. She's not the type to do co-op work, or anything that requires drudge. The real work that needs doing. She's not serving her crew as much as herself. (BEAT) Tell me you don't see it, CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) She's given away a lot to be where she is now.

LOREA: She is who she is. And Kindred don't change.

/SFX/ EXCITED MURMURS SETTLE INTO QUIET, FOOTSTEPS APPROACH

LOREA: What the fuck?

CASSANDRA: (SHOCKED) Holy shit.

ESTHER: I surrender. I surrender!

/SFX/ ESTHER WALKS TO LOREA, STOPS

LOREA: ESTHER?

ESTHER: I surrender myself before my most hated enemies. You are free to do with me as you wish. But I am a wellspring of information and I come of my own free will.

CASSANDRA: What's going on?

ESTHER: What did you expect, burning down the Prince's Courthouse? SOPHIA's gone ballistic. She's ordering interrogations for everyone in Court.

SOPHIA (ECHO): All of you! To your suites! I will have the truth from you if I have to pluck out your teeth myself!

ESTHER: She's halted all activities until she discovers who gave the Thin Bloods the key to the building. Which means most of the Court are on house arrest now. She even sicced Lictor HELENA on them.

SOPHIA (ECHO): Lictor, they are all conspirators until you can prove otherwise. Spare no torment from them.

ESTHER: Things are extremely bad now and I've run at the first opportunity.

LOREA: Why should we keep you?

ESTHER: I'm quite valuable. Things will settle down eventually. Perhaps with a new Prince. I can't describe how frenzied the Prince has become. She accused me of being the Thin Blood's informant. Me. She said I wanted her seat, as Regent again. (BEAT) Oh. (TO JOSEPHINE) You there. Thin Blood.

JOSEPHINE: JOSEPHINE.

ESTHER: Ah. So we have you to thank for the current condition of the Prince.

JOSEPHINE: Every word from your mouth is the sweetest nectar. Please. Continue telling us of the current state of your Prince.

ESTHER: Unreasonable. (BEAT) So. (BEAT) Who gave you the key?

JOSEPHINE: (LAUGHS) Is that what you're here for?

ESTHER: Well, I didn't know you'd be here. So, obviously not.

JOSEPHINE: (BEAT) She's yours, LOREA. She won't get a drop of information from me.

ESTHER: I hope you realize that any chance of you becoming Camarilla is slaughtered and cast to the void.

JOSEPHINE: I was mistaken on my crusade. You're not worth joining.

ESTHER: Oh? So you're with the Anarchs now?

LOREA: We'll discuss that later.

ESTHER: Oh! (SMILES) My mistake.

JOSEPHINE: Fuck you.

LOREA: All right. Take her to the cells.

ESTHER: Take care JOSEPHINE. CASSANDRA. Oh, if you have any Blood Dolls about, I am a bit peckish. My escape was harrowing and exhausting. And I'm happy to tell you all about it!

/SFX/ ESTHER IS ESCORTED AWAY, FOOTSTEPS FADE OUT

LOREA: That doesn't speak well of the Court right now.

CASSANDRA: SOPHIA is destroying her own power base. Taking territory should be easy.

LOREA: Like taking sweets from babes. I wish she wasn't making it so easy. I'd have an excuse not to do it. (BEAT) Sun's rising soon. Get home.

RUTH: Yes, LOREA.

CASSANDRA: See you tomorrow.

LOREA: I shall. I never thought the fall of the Camarilla would be so obnoxious.

<u>SCENE 16. — TERRITORY</u> (EXT: SEATTLE STREETS, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), RUTH, SAMAEL

<u>/SFX/ TRAFFIC NIGHT CITY AMBIANCE, FOOTSTEPS RUNNING ON PAVEMENT</u>

CASSANDRA (NA): The next night, LOREA crew surged north, from Capitol Hill to Montlake and Eastlake. They fought with any Camarilla they ran into. And drove them away. They set up shop on street corners, outside queer bars, and even brazenly on Pike Street, in front of the cops. RUTH and I fought alongside them. It was invigorating to watch her take down Kindred better than any human I'd worked with. We had downtown surrounded. Resistance had been minimal. The Camarilla must have been hemorrhaging money.

SAMAEL (ECHO): If you had asked me a week ago if I'd be ecstatic to witness the downfall of the Camarilla, I'd have said you were out of your mind. But now? It is the very Balm of Gilead that soothes my tumultuous disgust of everything the Camarilla have become. I would see them ashes before the week is out.

CASSANDRA: What of ELIJIO?

SAMAEL (ECHO): He'll survive this. If the Prince threatens his life, she will learn why you do not do something so rash to a La Sombra.

RUTH: I suppose you're okay now, hon? They won't be coming after you anymore?

CASSANDRA: I'm not their priority now. But we'll see what they remember when the dust settles.

RUTH: At least you can stay with me and the Anarchs.

CASSANDRA: For now.

SCENE 17. — THE ANSWER FOR JO (INT: LOREA'S WAREHOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), LOREA, JOSEPHINE, HELENA, RUTH, ARTURO

/SFX/ WAREHOUSE AMBIANCE, EXCITED MURMURS

CASSANDRA (NA): The following night, LOREA held another celebration. And again, only half the Anarchs attended. HANK and SIOBHAN were nowhere to be seen.

LOREA: I don't like this. Only half of us here. It's going to make keeping territory very difficult.

CASSANDRA: Where are the others?

LOREA: South. Doing mutual aid, terrorizing DHS. Selling my merchandise. Exploiting my goodwill towards them. What the fuck do they think they're doing, leaving us in the lurch?

RUTH: Splitting?

LOREA: (PAUSE) We can't operate as two factions.

ARTURO: I went over to see HANK and the others. They seem cool but, (BEAT) they don't want to see you, LOREA.

LOREA: The feeling is growing to be mutual.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, STOP

JOSEPHINE: Well.

LOREA: Well.

JOSEPHINE: It's been two nights. You've had time to discuss our joining your faction of the Anarchs.

LOREA: What's this talk of factions?

JOSEPHINE: Please. Anyone can see what's happened to you. There's HANK's people, who hate me, and your people, who tolerate me. Fortunately, you're also the faction who's kicking the most ass. These new territories you've taken are yours, not the other faction's. To the victor go the spoils, and I am keen to lend my power to you.

LOREA: (BEAT) We did discuss it.

JOSEPHINE: And?

LOREA: My "faction" are pleased to ally themselves with the Fire Brigade.

JOSEPHINE: "Allyship?" What's this bullshit, LOREA?

LOREA: We will take you public as having protected status among the Seattle Kindred.

JOSEPHINE: "Protected status." How will you protect us from the other half of your crew?

LOREA: It is an honor few other Duskborn have ever achieved.

JOSEPHINE: I'm not looking to be other Duskborn. I want in.

LOREA: You asked me to take this to the collective and I did. I said you wanted in. I said you should be invited in. They said they'd be most comfortable working <u>with</u> you. Not with you as part of <u>us</u>. You had the past two nights to make your case to them. I saw you out partying with them. You know they tolerate you. You know they like fighting next to you. And you want more? Take what you fucking got.

JOSEPHINE: Has <u>any</u> marginalized group been satisfied with "taking what they fucking got?"

LOREA: I can't do any more for you. But the Fire Brigade are welcome here.

JOSEPHINE: Oh, can we stay here?

LOREA: This is a fucking warehouse. You're welcome to crash in the guest space or the cells. But there's nowhere to <u>live</u> here.

ARTURO: Uh, LOREA?

LOREA: What is it?

ARTURO: There was a guest at the gate. We let her in.

LOREA: Why would you do that? Who is it?

<u>/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS APPROACH</u>

CASSANDRA: Oh, fuck.

<u>/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, STOP</u>

HELENA: Hello again.

CASSANDRA: Lictor HELENA.

HELENA: Greetings Anarchs. LOREA. Apologies for my intrusion.

LOREA: Why are you here, Lictor?

HELENA: I came alone. I wanted to update you on the situation with the Camarilla.

LOREA: We're fine. We know enough about what's going on with you.

HELENA: Yes, I'm sure ESTHER was most forthcoming with information. (BEAT) SOPHIA stepped down from her office.

LOREA: (PAUSE) Who is Regent?

HELENA: I am.

LOREA: And you came alone. How unfortunate. Surround her.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS SURROUND HELENA, STOP

HELENA: (UNFAZED) I am here as Regent to make certain requests. I request ESTHER be returned to us. A ransom will be paid, of course. I request that you abandon the territories you have newly taken. And I request that the abomination CASSANDRA be summarily executed. Whether by your hand or my hand, I don't really care.

LOREA: You're funny.

HELENA: If you do not agree to these three requests, I see no reason not to declare war on the Anarchs.

LOREA: You don't have the organization. You don't have the numbers.

HELENA: Nor do you. Your own crew, cut in twain. You'll never hold your territory. The half of you. (BEAT) It was good while it lasted. You've earned your celebration. And now it's time to sober up and pay the tab.

LOREA: Kill her.

HELENA: With my Elder in the city? If I don't return in the next hour, do you, all of you, think you could stand up to a Ventrue Elder? (BEAT, VOICE DROPPING) Back. Down.

/SFX/ FOOTSTEPS SLOWLY MOVE AWAY

LOREA: So you're pretty strong too.

HELENA: I'll take my leave. You have forty-eight hours to comply. When you do kill CASSANDRA, I would appreciate her head. She hasn't lived as us long enough to dust.

CASSANDRA: Fuck you.

HELENA: (BEAT) Are you really worth enough to the Anarchs to go to war over? Are you the fairest? Are you Helen of Troy?

/SFX/ HELENA'S FOOTSTEPS WALK AWAY

LOREA: I'm calling HANK and SIOBHAN in.

CASSANDRA: I hate the thought of running. But I will now. For you.

LOREA: No one's agreed to anything yet. And Elders despise getting their claws dirty. Rest. For now.

/SFX/ LOREA'S FOOTSTEPS WALK AWAY

RUTH: What'll happen to you?

CASSANDRA: Take me home. I want to fuck you. And drink you. While I still can.

SCENE 18. — SELL OUT (INT: GEORGETOWN BAR, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, CASSANDRA (NA), HANK, LOREA, SIOBHAN, RUTH

/MUS/ ALEXANDRA VALENTINE'S "VICTORY ASTERISK" TRACK PLAYS ON THE RADIO

/SFX/ BAR AMBIANCE, DRINKING, CASUAL WALLA

CASSANDRA (NA): The next night, HANK and SIOBHAN finally decided to meet with LOREA at a local bar.

HANK: So it sounds as if you've gotten yourself in a bit of a quagmire.

LOREA: Those were her demands.

SIOBHAN: You start a war? That's on you.

LOREA: That's how it is then?

HANK: Sure seems that way.

LOREA: And what about CASSANDRA?

HANK: She can run.

CASSANDRA: Hmph.

RUTH: I don't think she will.

LOREA: That's still a pretext to war. And do you think the Regent will stop at us?

HANK: Probably not at first.

SIOBHAN: She already came to us.

LOREA: (SURPRISED) What?

SIOBHAN: She gave us some bullshit about how her beef was against you, not us.

LOREA: So she's driving a wedge between us.

HANK: It was already there, comrade. You have your priorities, with the Thin Bloods, and we have ours, with DHS.

LOREA: You'd let her attack us?

HANK: No. You'll agree to the first two requests. You'll tell her CASSANDRA will be good. And you'll leave it at that.

CASSANDRA: (DISBELIEVING) Uh huh.

LOREA: I'm telling you, she's not going to accept that. The Elder wants CASSANDRA dead.

HANK: It's a negotiation tactic. She'll drop it.

LOREA: I promise you, she won't.

SIOBHAN: So offer her something else in exchange.

LOREA: Like what?

HANK: Ooo. I've been waiting to drop this one on you since I thought of it. (BEAT) Give them the Thin Bloods.

LOREA: My comrades discussed this already. The Thin Bloods are our allies now.

HANK: So sell them out. Them or CASSANDRA.

LOREA: (BEAT) There has to be something else we can offer them.

HANK: I'm sure there is. But those are the easiest ones I can think of.

LOREA: Get fucked.

HANK: The Thin Bloods have been nothing but trouble.

LOREA: Then let them be useful. Accept them into your half of the Anarchs. They will love fucking up DHS and the brownshirts.

HANK: I'm not playing babysitter.

LOREA: I have, now, in my employ, a trained Kindred hunter.

RUTH: Ex-Kindred hunter.

LOREA: Apologies. A human. Who has been instrumental in helping us take the territory around downtown.

HANK: Taking territory is not defending it. You're spread too thin.

LOREA: Then fucking join us! Or I'll have to return it to the Camarilla!

SIOBHAN: That'll be for the best.

LOREA: And when the Regent abdicates for an actual competent Prince?

HANK: I mean, that's why we didn't attack them after the Courthouse burned down.

LOREA: So you're leaving me to die.

HANK: You have money. You'll come out of this fine. (BEAT) I recommend everyone in your faction be offered the chance to join ours. And after your faction becomes only you, you make whatever promises you need to secure your safety with the Camarilla. Sell out the Thin Bloods. Spend your existence living well. (BEAT) We'll continue as the official Anarchs of Seattle.

LOREA: It all comes back to the Fire Brigade, doesn't it?

HANK: It's not worth losing the Anarchs over. Pick your battles. And take what you can from the ones you lose.

LOREA: Fuck this.

/SFX/ LOREA STANDS, WALKS AWAY

CASSANDRA: Do you want us to come with you?

LOREA: Leave me alone!

/SFX/ LOREA WALKS TO DOOR, OPENS DOOR, WALKS OUT, CLOSES DOOR

CASSANDRA: So. You'd really have her kill me as an option.

SIOBHAN: Negotiation's an art. The request that you die is ridiculous.

CASSANDRA: You haven't stood before an Elder in Court. They're fucking serious.

HANK: No, I believe you. But you're just pressure for her to offer up the Thin Bloods. I know how the game is played. I'm sorry you're caught up in it.

CASSANDRA: (PAUSE) I'm going out to see LOREA.

RUTH: Do you need company?

CASSANDRA: I'm just going to check on her.

RUTH: (WORRIED) Okay.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STANDS, WALKS TO DOOR, OPENS DOOR, WALKS OUT, CLOSES DOOR

SCENE 19. — ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT (EXT: GEORGETOWN BAR, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, LOREA, ROSE

/MUS/ ALEXANDRA VALENTINE'S "VICTORY ASTERISK" TRACK PLAYS ON THE RADIO, MUFFLED

/SFX/ WIND, DISTANT TRAFFIC, MUFFLED BAR AMBIANCE

CASSANDRA: (SNIFFS) I recognize that scent. Around the corner.

SAMAEL (ECHO): (CONCERNED) Love.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS AROUND CORNER, STOPS

CASSANDRA: ROSE.

ROSE: Hi, CASSANDRA.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Attack her!

CASSANDRA: Why?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Attack her now!

CASSANDRA: Hah!

/SFX/ BODIES HIT, STRUGGLE

ROSE: (STRUGGLING) You may have a Ventrue's strength.

/SFX/ BODY PUNCH

ROSE: (HURT) Oof. But I've fought worse than you. And more at once.

/SFX/ ROSE PUNCHES CASSANDRA, USES FORCE TO TRIP HER, CASSANDRA FALLS TO THE GROUND

CASSANDRA: Ugh.

ROSE: You'll barely scruff my boots.

CASSANDRA: (ANGRY) Why?

ROSE: Why kill you?

/SFX/ ROSE KICKS CASSANDRA DOWN

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) Ah!

ROSE: Because the Regent said I could be Sheriff again if you die.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STRUGGLES TO HER FEET, ROSE KICKS HER DOWN

ROSE: A shame you anticipated my attack. This is going to take even longer.

CASSANDRA: Fuck this.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA SLASHES ROSE'S BOOTS, SLICES LEATHER

ROSE: You ruined my boots. Well. I was going to kill you anyway.

/SFX/ SOMEONE SEIZES ROSE FROM BEHIND

ROSE: Urgh!

/SFX/ ROSE STRUGGLES

LOREA: Yes. You probably could have killed her. If you hadn't made so much fucking noise.

/SFX/ BODY IMPACT

ROSE: Urgh!

LOREA: Get up, CASSANDRA.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STANDS

CASSANDRA: Thank you.

LOREA: I've tangled enough with JUDITH. This is nothing.

ROSE: Fuck! Off!

LOREA: Now we have another hostage to offer in your place. Let's add ROSE to our cells and send HELENA a little card explaining the situation.

CASSANDRA: I like the sound of that.

LOREA: And I'm curious to see what a former Sheriff is worth, ROSE.

ROSE: I'm not worth anything to them. Why do you think I'm fucking here?

CASSANDRA: You took their offer seriously. If HELENA thinks you could be Sheriff again? You're worth something.

ROSE: She really wants you dead.

CASSANDRA: Lil old me? Versus a Camarilla Sheriff? You're bluffing. And she sent you alone.

ROSE: Alone was all I needed.

LOREA: Too bad. She'll be paying for you now. Maybe she's not as clever as she thinks she is.

SCENE 20. — TERRIBLE PLOTS (INT: WEST SEATTLE HOUSE, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, RUTH, LOREA, SAMAEL

/SFX/ QUIET AMBIANCE, WIND OUTSIDE, DOOR OPENS, CASSANDRA AND RUTH WALK IN, DOOR CLOSES

CASSANDRA: Hey. You.

RUTH: Hi.

/SFX/ THEY KISS

RUTH: I really appreciate that you've been bathing.

CASSANDRA: Yes, but I suspect that's how ROSE found me.

RUTH: Oh.

CASSANDRA: It's okay. I'll just have to get stinky again before I go out.

RUTH: Ah. (BEAT) Will you fuck me before you apply the funk?

CASSANDRA: Of course.

RUTH: Mmm. I wonder how the other Blood Dolls are doing. I'd ask them but I'm basically in witness protection.

CASSANDRA: I'm very scared for them right now. JOSEPHINE hasn't said a thing about them. But that could change if she needs leverage. (BEAT) If she's sold out to the Camarilla, she's taking them down with her.

RUTH: I can tell them if there's a breach.

CASSANDRA: So can I.

RUTH: If you're still free.

CASSANDRA: I know.

/SFX/ THEY KISS

CASSANDRA: I know.

/SFX/ DOOR KNOCK

RUTH: LOREA.

CASSANDRA: I'll get it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO DOOR, OPENS DOOR

LOREA: Heya.

CASSANDRA: Come in.

/SFX/ LOREA WALKS IN, CASSANDRA SHUTS DOOR, THEY WALK TO RUTH, STOP

LOREA: I wanted to talk to you before I made my decision.

CASSANDRA: Me or the Fire Brigade.

LOREA: Or something else.

RUTH: Like what?

LOREA: ROSE.

CASSANDRA: Elder ENOCH really has their heart set on my Final Death.

LOREA: I know. Why is that?

CASSANDRA: The Elder has to be almost a thousand years old. I imagine it's something that happened during that time, that made them hate diablerie so much.

SAMAEL (ECHO): It's not personal.

CASSANDRA: SAMAEL has something to say. I'll get a pen.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS TO HER PURSE, TAKES OUT A PEN AND PAPER, PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) It's not personal. It's purely bureaucratic. The Ephorate hate having to admit that diablerie is a normal part of existence among the Kindred. They learned from their own sires that diablerie is a break in the social order, and they can't have that. Everything must be bound by rules. Embraces. Final Deaths. Anything outside their rule is barbarity and must be condemned. They cannot abide knowing of diablerie and letting it be.

CASSANDRA: Have they ever known someone like us, who work together in the same body?

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I can't say. They probably have. They've seen everything. And they probably killed them anyway for good measure.

LOREA: Is it really that cut and dry?

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I doubt ENOCH truly cares about CASSANDRA now. Most likely this is Lictor HELENA trying to clean up on her Elder's behalf.

RUTH: And if we faked CASSANDRA's death?

LOREA: (BEAT) How would you go about doing that?

RUTH: HELENA said she'd accept her head.

CASSANDRA: I'd rather not lose mine.

RUTH: LOREA. You have access to the city coroners, don't you?

LOREA: I don't like where this is going.

RUTH: We know someone who can surgically alter faces. (BEAT) We just find a body with hair like CASSANDRA's, give the head to MARA, and you have your evidence!

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) That's very good. It only matters how much HELENA actually wants CASSANDRA dead. If she doesn't care, she'd accept that as evidence. But if she really means it?

CASSANDRA: We'd need a backup plan.

LOREA: What else? You can't run. I'd still have to go to war with them.

RUTH: Yeah and HELENA dominated a room full of Anarchs.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) I was rather powerful myself once. I was a little younger than the Regent before my Final Death, but I'm fairly certain I could have dominated her. And convinced her of CASSANDRA's death. Even implanted a memory of her killing CASSANDRA, so she could return to the Elder with good news.

LOREA: (BEAT) And how would we pull that off? If she puts up any resistance whatsoever, she can easily block your attempts.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) If she was sufficiently secured and distracted, I could perhaps pull it off.

LOREA: That's a lot of "ifs."

RUTH: Yeah, and she's probably ungodly strong. We'd have to get some serious boat chains to use on her.

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) Like the ones you used on me.

RUTH: (APOLOGETIC) Yes.

CASSANDRA: How long do you need to do your work, love?

/SFX/ PEN SCRIBBLES

SAMAEL (ECHO): (WRITING) Hours. Days, preferably. I do have a shortcut, but it will require multiple attempts.

RUTH: Okay. So. How do we get her in chains?

CASSANDRA: We beat her up with something that even a Kindred of her stature couldn't withstand. (BEAT) LOREA? You have contacts with all the construction unions, I assume?

LOREA: I do.

CASSANDRA: Excellent. And Regent HELENA has shown us she's not afraid to show up before an enemy, alone.

LOREA: She's certainly not afraid to show up against you. But she'd suspect a trap if you asked her to come to a place you specified, by herself.

CASSANDRA: Then I need to sweeten the deal. Can you get me a phone?

LOREA: I doubt the Regent uses technology.

CASSANDRA: Not one she has to use. A specific brand. One that requires biometrics to open.

LOREA: I'll hit up whatever pawn shop I need to. Give me details.

RUTH: Hopefully it won't come to doing any of this. If the head works. Right? (BEAT) Right?

SCENE 21. — COME FIND ME (EXT: PUGET SOUND BEACH, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, LOREA, HELENA, ROSE, ESTHER, RUTH

/SFX/ WIND AND WAVES AMBIANCE

CASSANDRA: Okay. Let's do this.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Ready?

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Yes.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) MARA did a good job with the head. Got your phone ready?

CASSANDRA: I hope we don't need it. I'll be listening in. Tell me if you end up giving her the tablet. I'll be on it, on video.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Okay.

/SFX/ ON RADIO, LOREA WALKS, STOPS

LOREA: (ON RADIO) All right. Prisoners?

ESTHER: (ON RADIO) Yes, LOREA.

ROSE: (ON RADIO) Get this over with.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Yes. Let's get me paid.

/SFX/ ON RADIO, THREE SETS OF FOOTSTEPS WALK, STOP

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Punctual! I approve.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) As promised, one ESTHER.

ESTHER: (ON RADIO) I was treated with civility.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) I hope we don't have you running off again.

ESTHER: (ON RADIO) I hope I will not be accused of helping the Court's enemies from here on.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Without evidence, you have my word.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) And as a bonus, your former Sheriff.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) ROSE? Did you succeed?

ROSE: (ON RADIO) No. Apologies.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) At least you made the attempt.

ROSE: (ON RADIO) I do find it curious what changed in LOREA after my capture though.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) I trust you'll pay extra for her.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Certainly. (BEAT) Congratulations, ROSE. You won. SOPHIA has retired to her estate in Ontario. We are still vetting who will take her place.

ROSE: (ON RADIO) I wish my evidence had had <u>anything</u> to do with that.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Such is the way. (BEAT) LOREA? What else do you have for me?

LOREA: (ON RADIO) We've retreated from the areas we took from you in the last few days.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Good! You're lucky we didn't charge you for the damage you did to our businesses. But I understand. We don't want another war with you, either.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Thank you. And for your last request.

<u>/SFX/ ON RADIO, SOMETHING HARD HITS THE GROUND</u>

LOREA: (ON RADIO) I trust there will be no war between us?

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Ah. CASSANDRA's head. Let me smell it. (BEAT) It could very well be her corpse.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) You have what you asked for. Give me my money so I can go.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Exchange the prisoners for this satchel, please. Now.

<u>/SFX/ ON RADIO, ESTHER AND ROSE WALK TO HELENA, ENFORCER WITH BAG WALKS TO LOREA, DROPS BAG, RETURNS TO HELENA, ALL STOP</u>

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Thank you. Our business is concluded, then.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Is it? (BEAT) Enforcers, free ESTHER and ROSE.

ESTHER: (ON RADIO) Oh, thank heavens. I despise manacles.

ROSE: (ON RADIO) Thank you.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) But now. Before I go. (BEAT) Why did you prevent ROSE from killing CASSANDRA, only to end up killing her yourself?

LOREA: (ON RADIO) I acted first as a friend. And then as a strategist. I don't want war.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Ah. But this face!

<u>/SFX/ ON RADIO, SLICE THROUGH MEAT</u>

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Inside? Slices and sutures. Very well done, by the way. (BEAT) Where's CASSANDRA?

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Our business is over.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) I am WILLIAM's age. I'm fairly certain I could take you and your entourage in a fight.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Yes. I suppose.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) I would very much like to see CASSANDRA again. The Elder doesn't like loose threads hanging about.

LOREA: (ON RADIO, PAUSE) Here. On this tablet.

/SFX/ LOREA WALKS TO LOREA, PASSES HER A TABLET, WALKS BACK

LOREA: (ON RADIO) Say hello to Regent HELENA, CASSANDRA.

CASSANDRA: Hi.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Oh, CASSANDRA! You thought that construct would buy you your life?

CASSANDRA: No. I thought it would answer how much you cared about my death.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Where are you?

CASSANDRA: Let's cut to it. I want to meet with you.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Why? You know I'm going to kill you.

CASSANDRA: Because I have something you want more.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) Oh! And what is that?

CASSANDRA: This phone I'm holding. (BEAT) I went back to the waterfront where JUDITH died. I recovered it from under the dock. Good news. It still works.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) You think it's worth your life?

CASSANDRA: This phone has the code for the TAM on it. The method by which AARALYN and BRIAN died. And what got JUDITH killed. It is evidence. And you don't have any. Elder ENOCH spent the whole start of my trial lamenting that there was no evidence. But here it is. (BEAT) Tell me this isn't worth my life.

HELENA: (ON RADIO, PAUSE) I would be very interested in presenting that to the Court.

CASSANDRA: Then it's settled. Tomorrow night. Eleven o'clock. Meet me on the roof of the skyscraper with the Camarilla's offices and ENOCH's Court. We can discuss the exchange like civilized Kindred.

HELENA: (ON RADIO, BEAT) On the roof.

CASSANDRA: Feel free to inspect it so you know I didn't leave any traps on it.

HELENA: (ON RADIO, BEAT) Very well. See you there.

CASSANDRA: Just you and I.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) You're afraid?

CASSANDRA: Yes.

HELENA: (ON RADIO) So why don't we negotiate over this device?

CASSANDRA: Because in-person is how the Camarilla negotiate. I want to stand before you (BEAT) and walk away. So I'll believe that you won't come for me.

HELENA: (ON RADIO, BEAT) Eleven o'clock. I'll be there.

CASSANDRA: As will I.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA CUTS THE CALL, TABLET BEEPS

CASSANDRA: (RELIEVED) Urgh.

RUTH: You really think she'll come alone?

CASSANDRA: She knows I can't take her.

RUTH: And when she finds out your phone is a fake?

CASSANDRA: I won't tell her (BEAT) until it's too late. Okay. We need to haul those chains up to that crane. The one on that skyscraper they're building beside the Camarilla's.

SCENE 22. — SHE LIKES ME (EXT: TOP OF CAMARILLA'S SKYSCRAPER, NIGHT)
- CASSANDRA, SAMAEL, HELENA, RUTH, KINDRED GUARD, LOREA

/SFX/ WIND RUSHES, TRAFFIC FAR BELOW, METAL DOOR OPENS, TWO FOOTSTEPS ON ROOF APPROACH, DOOR CLOSES, FOOTSTEPS STOP

HELENA: Where in the fresh hell is she?

KINDRED GUARD: I don't see her, your Excellency.

/SFX/ CRANE ON ADJACENT SKYSCRAPER MOVES OVER ROOFTOP

HELENA: You are fucking playing with me. She's on the crane on the roof beside ours.

/SFX/ CRANE STOPS, CASSANDRA JUMPS ONTO ROOF

CASSANDRA: Hello again. HELENA. And her plus one.

HELENA: I was wondering how you'd get up here. Who's working the crane?

CASSANDRA: LOREA. Don't worry. She'll leave.

HELENA: We had security hunting for you downstairs.

CASSANDRA: I want to live. Assure me of that and I'll tell you where the phone is.

HELENA: I'm amazed it still works after so much time underwater. Did you test it?

CASSANDRA: Yes. Here are photos of its screens.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA TAKES OUT PAPERS

HELENA: Take those pages from her.

KINDRED GUARD: Yes, your Excellency.

CASSANDRA: I said, I only wanted you and me here.

HELENA: And what are you going to do about that?

/SFX/ KINDRED GUARD WALKS TO CASSANDRA, TAKES PAPERS

KINDRED GUARD: I'll take those.

/SFX/ KINDRED GUARD WALKS TO HELENA, PASSES OVER PAPERS

CASSANDRA: You see, it still has the T2M app on it. And the file system.

HELENA: These are most likely faked. (BEAT) Place yourself in my custody. After I've verified the phone has what you say, you may leave.

CASSANDRA: Oh, certainly. Shall I cut off my own head while I'm at it? How do I know your word's any good?

HELENA: Simple. You're still evidence. Return to the trial. If the phone's data is admissible, you'll be rewarded.

CASSANDRA: With my life?

HELENA: The Gracious Elder would smile upon your presence and deem what is worthy for one such as you.

CASSANDRA: Or you could tell them you killed me.

HELENA: And why would I do that?

CASSANDRA: The Gracious Elder hungers to wrap up this inquest and return home. I can disappear for a long time. Don't tell me you've never hid anything from the Gracious Elder before.

HELENA: I'm starting to doubt you <u>have</u> any evidence.

CASSANDRA: But the thought that I might is enough to stay the Elder's hand, isn't it?

HELENA: Procedure must be maintained.

CASSANDRA: I bet. (BEAT) Send your Enforcer away.

KINDRED GUARD: Me?

HELENA: Why?

CASSANDRA: So we can talk.

HELENA: What's stopping us?

CASSANDRA: You're in terrible shape. Your courthouse is burned, your records lost. You're desperate for anything to wrap up this sham of an investigation and send you home. You didn't come for evidence. You came to negotiate. Like you said you would. (BEAT) Send her away so we can talk.

HELENA: Hmm.

CASSANDRA: Unless she's heard too much already.

HELENA: Point.

<u>/SFX/ HELENA SNATCHES THE KINDRED GUARD'S NECK</u>

KINDRED GUARD: (CHOKING) Uth! Uth!

HELENA: Leave us.

/SFX/ HELENA CASTS THE KINDRED GUARD TO THE FLOOR, WHO HURRIES TO THE ROOF DOOR, OPENS IT, LEAVES, AND CLOSES IT

HELENA: We have our privacy. (BEAT) The phone's a fake, isn't it? What are you offering?

/SFX/ THE CRANE MOVES AWAY FROM CASSANDRA

CASSANDRA: You still have a mole in the Camarilla. Someone let the Fire Brigade in SOPHIA's courthouse. And leaked targets to the Fire Brigade.

HELENA: Oh. (BEAT) I'm intrigued.

CASSANDRA: Now, I don't want to tell you who they are.

HELENA: If we took you in, you would eventually.

CASSANDRA: No. You'd get answers from me, yes. And they'd be whatever you wanted to hear.

HELENA: Sometimes, that's all I need.

CASSANDRA: I think your Beast is like mine. It craves the truth, more than anything. And torture is not the tool to use for that.

/SFX/ THE CRANE STOPS, LETS ITS CABLE SWING, PULLS TOWARD CASSANDRA AND HELENA

HELENA: True. What are you suggesting?

CASSANDRA: What can you offer me that might incline me to rat out my co-conspirators?

HELENA: A full pardon guaranteed for them?

CASSANDRA: Tempting.

HELENA: I'm very good at temptation.

CASSANDRA: And what about me?

HELENA: Stand in court. Name the conspirators. The Gracious Elder will look upon you with relief.

/SFX/ THE CRANE SWINGS ITS CABLE AND HOOK CLOSER

CASSANDRA: Bullshit.

HELENA: Fuck. Your crane!

/SFX/ THE CRANE'S GIANT HOOK SMASHES HELENA INTO THE WALL, HELENA COLLAPSES TO GROUND

CASSANDRA: One crane hook to the body won't kill you. But. (TO LOREA, ON RADIO) Drop it, LOREA.

LOREA: (ON RADIO) On it.

/SFX/ THE CRANE'S GIANT HOOK DROPS ONTO HELENA'S CHEST ON FLOOR

CASSANDRA: That crane hook's pretty heavy. I think you'll be stuck there a while.

HELENA: (GURGLES BLOOD) Fuck. You.

CASSANDRA: Here's where I get to be honest. I'm not telling you anything. I have nothing. This was a ruse to get you up here. Alone. And now.

HELENA: (IN HORROR) What are you doing?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA'S CUTS HER HAND, BLOOD DRIPS

CASSANDRA: Oh, I've cut myself. (BEAT) Long ago, Prince AARALYN tried to claim me by forcing me to drink her blood. She said I would forget my love, and adore only her.

HELENA: (IN HORROR) Get that away from my mouth.

CASSANDRA: I think that's exactly where my blood belongs.

HELENA: (FURIOUS) I'll never love you. You're a fledgling.

CASSANDRA: I know. (BEAT) But I have all night with you. And my darling Blood Doll left me with some blood packs.

HELENA: (FURIOUS) Fuck. You!

CASSANDRA: All I need to do is get lucky once. And once you love me, you'll do anything for me.

HELENA: (LAUGHS)

CASSANDRA: You'll love me enough to tell the Gracious Elder that you really did kill me.

HELENA: (PAINED) They'll send. Someone to check. On me.

CASSANDRA: Who's your Sheriff now?

HELENA: (PAINED) We reinstated. ROSE.

CASSANDRA: And who tried to set her up to discredit her? Who threatened to kill her if she didn't kill me? (BEAT) We had a nice long talk after we took her hostage. No one's coming for you. ROSE will see to it.

HELENA: (PAINED, STRUGGLES) Fucking. Hell.

CASSANDRA: Drink up. There's plenty more where that came from.

HELENA: (PAINED, STRUGGLES) Mmmph.

CASSANDRA: It's all right. I only have to get lucky once.

/SFX/ HELENA STRUGGLES, SOUND FADES OUT, SOUND FADES BACK IN, HELENA IS NOT STRUGGLING

SAMAEL (ECHO): Keep your focus on her eyes. Do not lose eye contact.

CASSANDRA: Hi, HELENA.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) Go fuck yourself.

CASSANDRA: You've taken so much of my blood. It's only a matter of time.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) Tell me your human self wouldn't be aghast at what you've become. What you're doing.

CASSANDRA: My ethics are not what they were.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) You may have a truthful Beast, but I can see it hungers for power. You're enjoying this.

CASSANDRA: Hardly.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) Oh. (BEAT) I. I-I-I love you, CASSANDRA. (PAUSE) Is that what you want to hear?

CASSANDRA: I know you're fighting me. But it's okay. You can stop.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) You can't help being the way you are. You're a Ventrue. That's why SAMAEL chose you.

CASSANDRA: (ANNOYED) They chose me for love.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) You think they would have wasted their blood on someone unworthy of the clan? You claim to be ethical. So tell me why you've repeated the cycle of your abuse. With me. Dripping blood into me. Like you hated having done to you.

CASSANDRA: (ANNOYED) I'm still me.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) No. You're not. I know it feels that way, because you're a fledgling. But it's only a matter of time before you kill your first Blood Doll. And after that? It get easier.

CASSANDRA: (ANNOYED) Is that all you have left? Words?

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) I know how much you care for Blood Dolls. In fifty years, though, after you've taken out so many, you've forgotten the count? You'll realize what an

idiot you were. How disposable they are. But it's all right. You'll know how to find them. You'll know what pretty words to tell them to bring them to your bed.

CASSANDRA: That's not me.

HELENA: And how long it takes before you get sick of them.

CASSANDRA: Shut up and drink me.

/SFX/ RADIO SQUAWKS

RUTH: (ON RADIO) CASSANDRA?

CASSANDRA: (ANNOYED AT INTERRUPTION) Yes? I'm busy.

RUTH: (ON RADIO) Would you check the fucking sky?

CASSANDRA: (LOOKS UP) Oh.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) That is certainly the sun!

CASSANDRA: No.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Fuck! We were so close!

CASSANDRA: I'll bring you inside. We'll wait in the closet under the stairs and start again tomorrow.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) Of course. You haven't done shit to me so far. I'm curious which of your ethics you'll break next to charm me.

CASSANDRA: RUTH? Can you lift the crane hook off her?

RUTH: (ON RADIO) Yeah. Gimme a second. (BEAT) Uh, LOREA showed me how to do this before she left.

CASSANDRA: No rush. (BEAT) Okay, there's a rush.

RUTH: (ON RADIO) The key's not turning. Maybe something happens if you leave it in there for too long?

CASSANDRA: Can you move the crane at all?

RUTH: (ON RADIO) The buttons aren't doing anything. Something's fucked up. I need to go over the steps again.

HELENA: (STRUGGLING) Eh! Eh!

CASSANDRA: Okay. I can try to lift this hook off you. You don't have much of a chest left under it.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) If you'd be a dear.

CASSANDRA: But first, I need to chain you up.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) Darling? You've lost. It's time for you to flee.

CASSANDRA: I can't have you attacking me after I get the crane hook off you.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA ATTACHES CHAINS TO HELENA, CHAINS CLANK

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) I bet you have a Blood Doll. Tell you what. I'll say you're dead if you give her to me.

CASSANDRA: Okay, I'm done with the chains.

HELENA: (DREAM-LIKE) ROSE has been to your apartment, hasn't she? I bet she'd tell me who your Blood Doll is.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA STRAINS TO MOVE THE CRANE HOOK, HOOK SCRAPES A BIT

CASSANDRA: (STRAINING) Hngh!

/SFX/ HELENA ROLLS RIGHT, HOOK SCRAPES A BIT

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love, the sun will be up any minute now.

HELENA: (STRUGGLING) Hah!

/SFX/ HELENA ROLLS LEFT, HER BODY SNAPS, HOOK HITS THE FLOOR

HELENA: (PAINED) It's off me.

CASSANDRA: (AMAZED) Shit. You broke your own spine. (BEAT) Come on.

/SFX/ HELENA CRAWLS ON THE FLOOR TOWARDS CASSANDRA, CHAINS CLANK

HELENA: (PAINED) You know what's great about chains?

/SFX/ CASSANDRA RUNS TO DOOR, OPENS METAL DOOR

CASSANDRA: Get inside! Quick!

HELENA: (PAINED) They're weapons. When the person you're holding down (BEAT) is stronger than you.

/SFX/ METAL CHAINS WHIP

CASSANDRA: Hrgn!

/SFX/ CASSANDRA IS PULLED TO THE GROUND, HELENA LEAPS ONTO HER

HELENA: (PAINED) We're attached, you and I. Your blood in both of us. My chains on both of us. I pulled you to the ground. Let's keep you there. Until the sun rises.

CASSANDRA: (GRUNTS) You'd sacrifice yourself for a fledgling?

HELENA: (PAINED) I only need a little time to kill you. Then I can go inside.

/SFX/ HELENA BITES CASSANDRA'S SHOULDER, BREAKING BONE

CASSANDRA: Ow!

HELENA: Now. I broke your shoulder. Let's work on the rest of you.

CASSANDRA: (GRUNTS) I have something special just for you.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA PULLS OUT A CLAY POT FROM HER COAT, AND THROWS IT AWAY, BLOOD SPLATTERING

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) I bet your Beast is very hungry now. After all my blood, I bet it wants some of the good stuff.

HELENA: (FRUSTRATED) No!

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) Stolen by ROSE. Some pure. Unadulterated. Elder vitae.

HELENA: (FIGHTING HER BEAST) Fuck. Off.

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) All the way over there. Off of me. Elder ENOCH feeds you this. Why don't you go get it? Go on.

HELENA: (FIGHTING HER BEAST, GROWLS)

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) It's spreading all over the floor. It'd be a shame to waste all of it.

HELENA: (FIGHTING HER BEAST) I'm not leaving you.

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) Tell your Beast that. Deny it. Go on.

HELENA: (FIGHTING HER BEAST, PANTING) Fuck!

/SFX/ HELENA AND HER CHAINS SCAMPER OFF CASSANDRA TOWARD THE BLOOD PACK

CASSANDRA: (PAINED) Getting up!

/SFX/ HELENA GROWLS, LICKS UP THE BLOOD FROM THE GROUND, CASSANDRA STANDS, OPENS THE METAL DOOR

SAMAEL (ECHO): The sun's almost up!

CASSANDRA: (TO SAMAEL) I know. (TO HELENA) HELENA! I'm leaving the door open!

/SFX/ HELENA GROWLS, LICKS UP THE BLOOD FROM THE GROUND

CASSANDRA: You can come in any time!

/SFX/ HELENA GROWLS, LICKS UP THE BLOOD FROM THE GROUND

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) Fuck it.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA HURRIEDLY RUNS THROUGH THE METAL DOOR

SAMAEL (ECHO): Sun's nearly up!

/SFX/ INSIDE, CASSANDRA FALLS DOWN STAIRWELL, HITS FLOOR

CASSANDRA: Fuck. Got to get in the closet.

/SFX/ INSIDE, CASSANDRA OPENS THE METAL CLOSET DOOR

SAMAEL (ECHO): It's up! It's-

/SFX/ SOUND IS CUT, SOUND RETURNS, CASSANDRA OPENS THE CLOSET DOOR, STEPS OUT

CASSANDRA: Is she?

SAMAEL (ECHO): Dead? Check the chains outside for dust.

/SFX/ CASSANDRA WALKS UPSTAIRS, OPENS METAL DOOR, STEPS OUTSIDE

CASSANDRA: They moved the crane off the roof.

SAMAEL (ECHO): Love! Look!

CASSANDRA: (BEAT) A hole in the floor. (BEAT) There's something glinting in it.

SAMAEL (ECHO): The chains! CASSANDRA, she's-

/SFX/ HELENA LEAPS OUT FROM THE HOLE WITH A BLOOD CURDLING SCREECH, CHAINS RATTLE

CASSANDRA: Fuck!

SAMAEL (ECHO): She's still alive! Run! Run!

/SFX/ HELENA SHRIEKS, RUNS ACROSS THE ROOF

CASSANDRA: (TERRIFIED) Shit!

SAMAEL (ECHO): Run!

-END-