

FALLING STARS

by

Julie Rogers

Based on the fantasy
Falling Stars
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

Looks like the Titanic cruising at 30 knots. Closer: QUEEN MARY.

SUPER: September 1, 1939

INT. QUEEN MARY - FIRST CLASS DINING - NIGHT

Obscene Cunard luxury. Floor-to-ceiling columns. A crystal inlaid ceiling dome extends through two decks.

DEPUTY SECURITY OFFICER CARLETON GAYE (37, white), patrols the area. An all-American, barrel-chested A.J. Squared Away.

BOB HOPE (36) mans the capacitor, a spoof of the *The Big Broadcast of 1938* musical. Gaye scans the room. The party's on, but PASSENGERS are unnerved. He sees it in their eyes.

BOB HOPE

Thanks for the memory of faults that you
forgave, of rainbows on a wave, and
stockings in the basin when a fellow
needs a shave...

The song kicks up a wave of off-key SCAT SINGING and CHITTER.

Ship SWAY out of the blue takes the room to startled silence. Gaye sidesteps, employs his sea legs, goes on. Bob rejoins:

BOB HOPE

Thanks for the memory...some folks slept
on the floor, some in the corridor, but
mine was more exclusive. My room had Gents
above the door...

Gaye stops by an empty table with place cards for VISCOUNT CLAUDIUS FALLON and VISCOUNTESS AGNETHA FALLON. He tucks the cards inside his uniform and continues his foot patrol.

Tips his hat on the way out the door. Strides chop-chop into a maze of scullery and baker's stations, dodging COOKS and SERVERS in tourist-class kitchen. He's got a ways to go.

Gaye catches a SERVICE LIFT with SERVER and a covered tea cart.

GAYE

Going up?

Server lifts the drape, revealing three rows of life jackets.

SERVER

Lifeboat stations, sir.

Gaye nods. They ride up one level and he's off again, a sharp left into a portside corridor, TOURIST CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS.

Drills past DECK HANDS rigging blackout curtains over windows.

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

A GERMAN U-BOAT with its snub-nosed bow prowls the depths. Its conning glides past with the Running Red Devil emblem.

INT. QUEEN MARY - NIGHT

Gaye clips by GENTS HAIRDRESSING, packed with PATRONS. A left at a double stairwell, right into another long corridor. He rounds the bulkhead and stops short at FEMALE ISOLATION WARD.

THROUGH THE DOORWAY

A solid glance tells Gaye everything: VISCOUNT CLAUDIUS FALLON (7, white), sobs into the folds of his sister's dress, his arms pinned around her lifeless body.

VISCOUNTESS AGNETHA FALLON (9, white), dressed in the day's Bonnie Jean frock, has surely met with a slip and fall. Gaye observes bruises black as the hair braids piled atop her head.

DR. DEWEY LANGSTON (36, white), darts past an ATTENDING NURSE to meet Gaye at the door. He's a nervous, wiry Brit sporting premature greying ginger buzzed to the scalp.

LANGSTON
Let's chat out here.

Langston heads around the corner. Gaye follows.

RECESS - ROPE STORAGE

Langston fishes out a pack of cigarettes.

LANGSTON
Smoke?

He tilts the pack toward Gaye, its paperboard quivering.

GAYE
(declining)
Obliged.

Langston lights up and leans against the bulkhead. Bridges his forehead with his toking hand.

LANGSTON
Feck me, what a cockup.

GAYE
How's that?

LANGSTON
I bodged it.

Langston glances back toward the ward.

LANGSTON
Poor sod, in there blubbing his eyes out. I thought I could give him a little more privacy with her up here.

Checks his watch.

LANGSTON
Dear God, it's been three hours already.
We'll a fair bit of pong in there shortly
if I don't get cracking.

Gaye studies Langston. *He doesn't know yet, does he?*

GAYE
Germany invaded the north coast of Poland.
Langston's eyes widen, and he drops his gasper.

LANGSTON
You're fibbing me.

Gaye idly regards the smoldering stub on the hull.

GAYE
Before dawn.

Langston fetches the stub and puts it out.

LANGSTON
Bloody Jerries. Are they close?

GAYE
We diverted course.

LANGSTON
And where have I been? Well, here, I suppose.

He lights up another.

LANGSTON
Ah, well. We're in a wrench either way.
So here's it. We admitted her viscountess
yesterday at fifteen hundred. Fever,
dyspnea, sick as a parrot. She's been
head down the loo since they boarded.

GAYE
I see.

LANGSTON
Gave her scopolamine, three hours' fluids,
pulled her off at twenty-twenty. Temp
normal, good skin turgor, no cyanosis.

GAYE
All right.

LANGSTON
She took a late dinner, and I discharged
her to bedrest in her stateroom.

GAYE
Okay.

LANGSTON
Nurse Eddy, first shift, mentioned she
saw the two of 'em taking a cuppa on the
promenade at oh-nine-hundred.

Not a parka or a cap between 'em, mind you. Legging it around the sundeck.

GAYE

All's wet with the bed rest.

LANGSTON

Hell's to yes, and then they alert crew she's feeling a bit ropey, and she goes into cardiac arrest right then and there.

GAYE

On deck?

LANGSTON

Outer deck, in front of God and the rest.

Langston takes a long drag.

LANGSTON

How did he think they would manage all alone? No carer, no mum.

GAYE

Cardiff is probably locked down.

LANGSTON

I know, I know. Commander Fallon pigeoned a letter my way too. But I'm telling you mate, I'm bugged. Now I have to ring him up and say what, exactly?

GAYE

You reviewed their medicals?

LANGSTON

That I did. Somewise I didn't sort her out, though. They've both got it, and it's rare. We've no setup to deal with such as that.

Langston groans.

LANGSTON

Gor blimey, what if I lose the lad as well? These are *nobs*, mate. Mark my word, I'll get my cards for this.

LANGSTON/TOMMY (PRE-LAP)

Did you get a look at those shiners on her?

INT. U-HAUL MOVING VAN - MOVING - DAY

TOMMY LUCAS (9, white) reads aloud from his tablet to his mom, JUNE LUCAS (35, white), who's driving.

Dark stuff. June glances down at Tommy's tablet as he scrolls to the next *Philly's Argosy* header.

CLOSE ON GRAPHIC

An avant cityscape over black, accentuated with pulp fiction mustard yellows, neon greens, and candy apple reds.

Underneath the header is the title. "Bad Blood: The Case of Claudius Fallon," by Miles Cochran.

JUNE

Gas, snacks, and drive, or would you like to stop and eat in a restaurant?

Tommy raises his nose in thought.

TOMMY

Gas and snacks. There's two more episodes.

June's good for it, however a break from this fare may come.

JUNE

Gas and snacks it is.

(beat)

Gateway Arch on your right. Remember it?

Tommy lowers the clip-ons on his glasses and raises a cling shade on the passenger window. The van treks past St. Louis's iconic monument. Tommy follows it up with his gaze and grins.

TOMMY

Way cool.

JUNE

Would you like to ride to the top sometime?

TOMMY

Did you know it's earthquake proof? It can sway up to eighteen inches in either direction and withstand winds up to one hundred fifty miles an hour.

JUNE

(chuckling)

And that makes me feel so much better somehow.

TOMMY

I'm not scared of it.

Flips up his clip-ons, flashes an all-canines grin her direction. His are extra long, his blue eyes sparkling. Tommy's black, bowl-cut shag shimmers in sunlight.

JUNE

Better drop that shade again.

He does so, back on his tablet.

TOMMY

What do you think was wrong with them?

Traffic ahead. June signals.

JUNE

Hold that thought--

TOMMY

I think they both had the same cancer as me.

JUNE
 (back on task)
 No, Tommy. You have PNH.

TOMMY
 (scrolling)
 But--I just saw something in here about
 paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria...

How it rolls off the tongue. Her little bookworm, proud of him.

JUNE
 Probably not. Not back then.

June mentally props up to answer some difficult questions.

JUNE
 This was nineteen thirty-nine, right?

TOMMY
 Yuppers.

JUNE
 We've come a long way with treating leukemia.

Tommy swipes up on his tablet.

JUNE
 All the symptoms for the four types they
 knew about then were pretty similar.

TOMMY
 Bruising?

JUNE
 Fatigue, weight loss, infection.
 (beat)
 She might've had something called mixed
 lineage leukemia. Or Li-Fraumeni syndrome.
 Her brother, as well.

TOMMY
 What's Li-Fraumeni?

JUNE
 A mutation that allows cells to divide
 abnormally. It causes a wide range of
 cancers. With all kinds of weird stuff.

TOMMY
 Like the pissed-mortem bruising?

JUNE
 Postmortem. Occurring after death.

Tommy checks his tablet.

TOMMY
 Oh, right. The doctor was pissed.

JUNE
 He was in a tough spot. The way her
 disease progressed was--well, *off*.

Tommy breaks into a cloak-and-dagger grin.

TOMMY
Like she really had something else all along?

JUNE
Is this a spoiler alert?

TOMMY
Her illness really came from a family curse.
They were sick vampires. Like me.

June cuts her eyes at Tommy.

JUNE
We've been over this before, Tommy.

Tommy's busy on his tablet again.

EXT. U-HAUL MOVING VAN - MOVING - DAY

The van takes the next access road off I-44. It's a *Venture Across American and Canada Supergraphics* fifteen-footer showcasing the Manson impact crater. Iowa plates.

TOMMY (O.C.)
I know, I know.

A pregnant pause.

JUNE (O.C.)
I assume we're going to find out more in the next two installments?

INT. U-HAUL MOVING VAN - MOVING - DAY

No tellin', Tommy's smize her only clue. June gooses him.

JUNE
I'm really at your mercy, aren't I?

TOMMY
(back on tablet)
Uh-huh. There's *yes-wayzee* more coming up.

EXT. QUEEN MARY FEMALE ISOLATION WARD - NIGHT

LANGSTON
We need to get her to cold storage until I can sort this out.

GAYE
What about the boy?

LANGSTON
(grinning)
All yours, Gaye. You got a way with the ankle-biters.

Langston takes a long drag on his cigarette. Gaye looks down. Not something he really wants to take on.

LANGSTON
Next pint's on me.

Gaye hesitates before stepping through the hatch.

INT. FEMALE ISOLATION WARD - NIGHT

Claudius, prostrate over his sister, looks like he hasn't changed his clothes or combed his curly-wild black hair in days. He wears a sailor shirt and tweed trousers.

CLAUDIUS
(whispering)
In manus tuas, Domine...in vita sive mors...

Gaye turns back to Langston.

GAYE
You get what he's saying?

LANGSTON
Bits and bobs. My first-year Latin's pretty dim. *Super, subter, vomito*. Something about her hands, I think.

CLAUDIUS
(sobbing)
Oh, Anya...

Gaye steps forward.

GAYE
Viscount Fallon.

A bit too loud. The attending nurse takes a step back.

Claudius turns, snot and tears dribbling over his lips. His red-rimmed eyelids and pitch-black eyes scream pain.

Gaye takes a knee and removes his hat, gaze toward the floor.

GAYE
Lieutenant Commander Carleton Gaye at your service.

Claudius slumps against the berth, never breaking his stare. A shuddering gasp fogs the air between them. Gaye sees *that*.

Gaye collects himself, about to speak--when the boy raises his head and soundlessly chitters like a hungry feral cat.

GAYE
(beat)
We need to move her viscountess someplace more private. You can come with her, by all means.

Not what the naval surgeon wants him to say. Gaye, zeroed in on Claudius, ignores Langston. The boy pulls an envelope from his britches and holds it out.

GAYE

For me?

More spellbinding observation. Gaye glances at the envelope. *It's addressed to him somehow.* He breaks the seal.

JULES FALLON (V.O.)

Dear Officer Gaye...by now you are likely midway to the States, and aware that Claudius cannot be allowed to return. I have taken the liberty of posting a sum of seventeen hundred US dollars to your family's factory in Hoboken in exchange for your help.

(beat)

Your transport is stowed on F Deck Forward, and in it you will find a Fisk Case for Agnetha's burial. The lad must report to Baker Cure-for-Cancer Hospital in Eureka Springs at once. I trust you will drive him there. He has further instructions for his sister's interment Stateside, as she also cannot return to Cardiff at this time.

(beat)

When Claudius grows hungry, he must consume blue-rare meat. Considering his illness, this is best.

(beat)

It seems war is upon us once more. If we survive it, I will send for the lad in due time. Would you so kindly visit him whenever you are nearby? I fear that he will recover only to live alone in this world. I shall remain forever in your debt.

(beat)

Cordially, Commander Jules Fallon.

Gaye looks up at Claudius, still staring a hole through him.

GAYE

Viscount, I have your father's orders to transport you and your sister to Baker Hospital after we dock. I understand he has made special arrangements for both of you on F Deck Forward.

Langston looks like he's about to shit a brick.

GAYE

It's my duty to take you to F Deck immediately.

EXT. ARCHWAY QUICK MART - DAY

A one-off convenience store with a gaudy neon arch just off the interstate. The U-Haul rolls up to the gas pump.

INT. ARCHWAY QUICK MART

CHELSEA DUMONT (17, black, hair in cornrows), HUMS and stocks a countertop food warmer as June and Tommy approach the door.

Chelsea takes in the van, June's height, and the starch-white kid tricked out in a big-bucks, red satin lined Victorian vampire cape. *Under a Chicago Bulls bomber jacket.*

Chelsea can't see any eyes behind those Ray-B's, either. Mom's nondescript by comparison, slim in her skinny jeans, sweatshirt, and a high, black ponytail. Her eyes are blue.

Both wear N-95's. Chelsea straightens. *Ain't no trouble.*

CHELSEA
(brightly)
Welcome to Archway.

June's eyes crinkle into a smile. Tommy runs straight for the candy counter. Chelsea continues her busywork while June gets fountain sodas and Tommy raids the candy aisle.

CHELSEA
Shopping baskets over there, right behind you.

The boy turns--*only his head*--creepy. Chelsea swallows. Mom--mask down, sips her coffee and looks up. She's pretty.

JUNE
(to Tommy)
Looks like you're going to need one.

Tommy, a stash of candy kangarooed in his jacket, stares at Chelsea a few seconds longer before crab-walking his way to the stand. He aimlessly dumps the load into the top basket.

Chelsea snickers to herself and turns aside. More busywork.

A NOISE. June's already at the counter with coffee and a red cherry ICEE. Chelsea reaches around the sneeze screen.

CHELSEA
What else can I get for you?

June browses the countertop food warming unit.

JUNE
Is the pizza as good as it looks?

CHELSEA
Why I subscribe to every dieting app there is, yes ma'am.

June chuckles, blue eyes bright. Chelsea's heavy in the hips but not obese by any stretch.

JUNE
They've got pepperoni, Tommy. See? It's red.

Odd. Chelsea conceals her nerves with an all-business grin.

CHELSEA
Will that be one, or two?

JUNE
Two, please.

CHELSEA
Pepperoni?

JUNE
Yes.

Chelsea ladles the slices into takeout boxes while Tommy wags an overstuffed shopping basket toward the counter.

June hoists the loot on the countertop. Chelsea grabs the scanner and pulls the basket around the sneeze screen.

CHELSEA
Let's see.
(beat)
You like your candy, don't you?

TOMMY
I eat only red things.

And Mom lets him get away with that? Chelsea swallows.

CHELSEA
Maybe top this off with a *red* apple?

Tommy groans.

JUNE
That's a great idea. Where are they?

CHELSEA
Just behind you, on Aisle Two.

Chelsea tries to ignore Tommy's glare while she HUMS, scans, and bags enough Red Food Dye #40 to rot out anybody's tongue.

TOMMY
That's from *Dark Shadows*.

Tommy flips up his clip-ons, blue eyes fixed on Chelsea.

CHELSEA
I take it you'll be back here in January to see Jack Darrow, huh?

TOMMY
He's coming to Fan Expo?

CHELSEA
Got the email this morning. How cool is that?

Tommy's thumbing on his smartphone.

TOMMY
January fifteenth. That's a *Friday*, Mom.

June returns to the counter with two Red Delicious apples.

JUNE
Sure, a Friday could work.

June opens her cellphone wallet, fishes out a credit card, and sticks it in the countertop card reader.

CHELSEA
 If I can get the day off, I'm at the live
 Q & A and Rewatch Party for sure.
 Everybody says he looks a lot like Frid.

TOMMY
 He does.
 (thumbing on his phone)
 Oh, *man*. He's got a CGC Signature Series.

CHELSEA
Spendy. Got a nine-point-eight Dr. WHO last year.

TOMMY
 Sweet. A *D* or *Blade's* better value. Even a low
 five on those brings a good collector's price.

Impressive, kid's got some brain. Chelsea slides the sack of
 goods around the sneeze screen.

CHELSEA
 Now I'm wishing he'd been around last year
 to keep me from wasting all my money--

TOMMY
 I can help you out this year.

Chelsea blinks at him.

CHELSEA
 You'd do that?
 (to June)
 He really seems to know his stuff.

JUNE
 A walking microprocessor.

CHELSEA
 Well--if it's okay with your mom, you
 could friend me on Wiz's Facebook page.
 I'm Chelsea Dumont, by the way.

Tommy doesn't look to June for permission, she notices.

JUNE
 It's fine. June and Tommy Lucas.

Tommy's tiny thumbs hover over his smartphone screen.

CHELSEA
 Oh. I'm Martha underscore whoosis, lowercase.

TOMMY
 Got it.

Chelsea's cellphone PINGS on the counter. Tommy turns away,
 his cape shimmering under the store's LED tube lights.

CHELSEA
 See you online, then.

Chelsea watches the pair leave. June hoists the U-Haul's rear
 hatch up a couple of feet and stows the mega-bag of candy in
 the rear. She hustles the rest toward the cab.

CHELSEA
So that's how she does it.

INT. PHILLY'S ARGOSY - DAY

A cracker box office on a busy street in Philadelphia.

ELISE ANDERSON (24, white) ducks into the office juggling a backpack, briefcase, and an armload of manuscripts. An OLD WHITE WOMAN in hiking gear follows her.

PERCY MCWATTERS (24, white), bent 45 degrees over his desk, continues typing zero to sixty. He glances up.

PERCY'S POV

He sees only Elise, not the old woman in lockstep with her. He gives Elise a flash-in-the-pan grin. Busy as usual.

PERCY
How's the trip?

Elise deposits her load on an adjoining desk. Dumps the documents in her inbox. Sets the briefcase on the floor. The old woman circles the desk and sits in Elise's chair.

ELISE
Good, good.

Elise gives the old woman a "keep a lid on it" look. Pulls out an Eagles tumbler from the bottom drawer. Heads to the water station behind Percy's desk.

PERCY
Gram laid to rest?

ELISE
(eyeing the old woman)
More or less.

PERCY
Your two rescheduled.

Elise frowns as she fills her tumbler.

ELISE
The Cockroach?

She glances over Percy's shoulder. He's working on a press kit for MILES COCHRAN, the brainchild behind "Bad Blood."

CLOSE ON HEADSHOT

Cochran's a fifty-something blow-hard, jowls doubled into dewlaps, *not* the loveable Pillsbury Doughboy.

PERCY
Four-thirty. Happy Hour.

ELISE
Figures. What's he want?

PERCY
Got a killer ending. For Gaye.

ELISE
Done already.
(beat)
Mostly.

PERCY
Yup. Told him so.

ELISE
I should cancel.

PERCY
Up to you.

Elise leans against the wall and sips her water. Across the bullpen, the old woman aka GRAM nods vigorously.

PERCY
Got an invite.

ELISE
We did?

PERCY
Fan Expo.

ELISE
No shit? Really?

PERCY
Cochran did.

Percy's done for the moment. He swivels to face Elise.

ELISE
Jesus. You know we can't do that. He
can't even manage fan mail.

PERCY
You're probably right.

ELISE
Holy hell. What're we going to do?

PERCY
You ghostwrote it. Prep him.

Elise turns and fills her tumbler again.

ELISE
This is nuts.

PERCY
He's--my cousin.

Elise, bamboozled, points her tumbler at him.

ELISE
What's that? Cochran?

PERCY
Yup.

ELISE
You're--related?

PERCY
Sixth removed.

ELISE
He's--Gaye's--

PERCY
Nephew.

ELISE
You're related to Gaye?

PERCY
As it happens.

ELISE
Holy Shinola.

Elise crosses the room to her desk. Gram's standing by the window and pointing at an envelope in the pile of fan mail. Elise separates it from the others, its return address:

Tommy Lucas, 22 Fairmount, Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72632

Elise takes a seat and begins sorting fan mail. Behind her, Gram strains to push Tommy's envelope over the edge...and, *budakai!* It finally falls into Elise's briefcase.

EXT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - EUREKA SPRINGS - NIGHT

The U-Haul lumbers up a steep gravel drive toward an elegant historic home surrounded by an ostentatious prairie garden.

INT. U-HAUL MOVING VAN - PARKED - NIGHT

Tommy's fast asleep under a sherpa blanket. June wakes him.

JUNE
We're here.

INT. FAST HORSES - NIGHT

A swank art gallery off Eureka Springs' Main Street fray. Racehorse portraiture--exquisite paintings in chiaroscuro and sfumato style. Beasts real enough to charge off the wall.

CALLAN MASTERS (36, white) locks the door with his cellphone and looks out the window at Christmas decorations going up.

A solid stock of sinew and bone like the horses he paints, Callan wears his black hair in a flawless fade. His daily attire: dress pants, a button-down shirt, cap-toe Oxfords.

He flips the shop sign CLOSED and takes a broom to the floor.

INT. FAST HORSES - SUPPLY OFFICE DOORWAY - NIGHT

Lights out. Movement. Callan props the broom against the wall and goes to a wall-mounted biometric reader. It illuminates. He looks into the capture camera and a door BUZZES open.

Inside, a medical grade fridge HUMS on a shelf. When Callan opens it, luminous blue light floods the hallway. In the fridge are 30 1 mL Luer glass syringes in a Monster rack.

Callan closes the fridge, leans against the door jamb, and remixes the luminous blue liquid using volumetric inversion. Pops the top, and the room goes dark again.

HALLWAY RACK

Callan reaches for an Inverness coat on his way out the back door. His shoulders briefly and abnormally flare, reposition. He frowns, adjusts his neck, and licks blue goo from his teeth.

EXT. FAST HORSES - NIGHT

Callan steps out the back door into an alley with his tablet in hand and the coat draped over his arm.

His nostrils flare as he shuts the door. Turns toward the smell.

CALLAN

A sick one.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - NIGHT

The real deal replete with monumental hearths, hardwood floors, and carved crown moldings. All the frills.

WALT (62, white) and LILLY LUCAS (59, white) fawn over Tommy and June with smiles and hugs.

LILLY

Oh dear, what is this you have on?

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Callan walks behind a row of backstreet shops. He turns again, following the odor with his eyes.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Walt helps Tommy, eyes half-mast, out of his coat and cape.

WALT

Have a seat right there, little man.

Tommy sinks into a claw-footed couch. He's unsure about handing off his stuff but too tired to protest.

WALT
I'll just put these over here on this wicker
Wakefield, the one nobody can sit in.

EXT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

A nondescript door off the alley. Callan enters.

INT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

A subterranean dining experience with a cave. Beyond prime time,
few PATRONS. Callan takes a table by an indoor aquifer.

He parks his tablet on the table as TOBIAS (38, Caddo) stops
by with a menu. A gregarious and busy sort fighting a paunch,
he wears a Yakuza bodysuit inked on both arms and shoulders.

TOBIAS
Callan Masters, as I live and breathe.

CALLAN
Tobias.

TOBIAS
It's been two weeks. Were you at the downs?

Callan shakes his head.

CALLAN
Painting Season.

TOBIAS
I see. Menu, or your usual?

CALLAN
Usual is great.

TOBIAS
Sure thing.

Tobias grins and hustles away.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Walt, Lilly, and June sit at a large dining table for an
elaborate loose-leaf tea operation. Tommy's fast asleep on
the claw-footed couch across the room.

Lilly fusses with a sieve and arranges June's cup just so.
Walt methodically blows on his tea to avoid drinking it.

LILLY
Cream?

JUNE
No, thanks.

June dutifully sips hers.

JUNE
The moving van arrives tomorrow at nine.

LILLY
Oh. I didn't know that.

JUNE
Now you do.

LILLY
We'll eat early, then.

June glances over at Tommy, fast asleep.

JUNE
I'm afraid Tommy has first dibs on you,
Mom. Trust me, he won't eat anything
tomorrow that he can't carry in one hand.

LILLY
Well, he has to eat.

WALT
Breakfast tacos?

He's talking about the food trucks. Lilly wrinkles her nose.

JUNE
Loaded with tomatoes. He's really into
red foods lately.

LILLY
I could make strawberry pancakes--

June places a hand over her mom's.

JUNE
Maybe tomorrow night?

Lilly doesn't try to hide her disappointment.

WALT
We haven't done breakfast at supper
in a while.

He takes an ever so tiny slurp of tea.

INT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

Callan frowns at his tablet. Tobias tops off his Lambrusco
and serves him a blue-rare mignon with the fixings.

TOBIAS
Some light reading?

CALLAN
Anything but.
(glaring at the tablet)
An old friend of mine wrote some of it
from his ship logs. Retired Navy.

TOBIAS
Wartime?

CALLAN
World War Two.

TOBIAS
No kiddin'? D-day?

Callan rolls up his sleeves, exposing a blackwork tattoo on his right forearm. Tobias refills his water.

CALLAN
No. Before that. His shithead nephew got involved though, and ruined it.

TOBIAS
I hate it when that happens.

Callan cuts his steak. It bleeds on the plate.

TOBIAS
Did they get it right for you?

CALLAN
It's lovely.
(beat)
Heading out to the in-laws for the holidays?

TOBIAS
Erm--they would be coming here.

CALLAN
That so?

TOBIAS
Yah, wife's making me spaz with the whole white glove thing. Got me running the kids over to the mall in Springdale twice a week.

Callan grins, an old joke.

CALLAN
Gee, what am I missing?

TOBIAS
Man--don't you even start.

Tobias scurries away.

Callan chews his mignon thoughtfully and continues reading Part II of "Bad Blood: The Case of Claudius Fallon."

INT. QUEEN MARY - TOURIST CLASS - NIGHT

FOUR STEWARDS including the bellboy-sized GUNNER (20, white, one of the flanks) transport Agnetha's body on a litter.

Claudius walks behind the litter, head down. Gaye follows.

GAYE (V.O.)
The viscount didn't speak to me directly until our arrival at the motorcar hold, F Deck Forward, nearly an hour later. Timing the body's transport was tricky, for we were approaching dinner, and the eye is very smart.

No amount of mental arrangement can arrest a glance of what one supposes one sees.

Past the ironing station with THREE STEWARDESSES in winged white caps at the pressing machines, backs turned.

Four meters ahead, a stateroom door opens. A startled MAN and WOMAN hedge in the doorway before SLAMMING the door shut.

Gaye grimaces.

CLAUDIUS
(reciting softly)
In manus tuas, Domine...in vita sive
mors...reditum eius anima...reditum eius
anima ad me...

The procession takes a hard left at the first inboard corridor. The shopping section of the ship, FLUFF ALLEY.

Gaye sees the stairwell is in full use, TOURIST-CLASS PASSENGERS togged to the bricks going up to dinner.

A gentle delay of one ivory Schiaparelli 20-button opera glove...raised to the lips of a WOMAN, her garnet-red lips formed into a pristine and perfect "O".

GAYE
Clear the gangway, please! Make way,
ladies and gentlemen!

PASSENGERS scramble. Gaye sees it all at once: the steady stream of BODIES and HANDS on the handrails scurrying upward, SHOPPERS standing aside with their bags, BARBERS rotating their PATRONS' chairs away, Claudius's chest heaving.

GAYE
Belay there!

The four stewards snap their legs into a precise halt, the two flanks making right and left faces toward the body. Claudius spins to face Gaye, black eyes drilling him.

GAYE
Viscount, do you need to rest?

A nib of that odd chittering again. Claudius shakes his head.

EXT. SERVICE LIFT - NIGHT

The body transport exits the lift and makes a hard right into a two-tone grey corridor portside. Six exposed pipes 13 inches in diameter snake along the ceiling.

GAYE (V.O.)
The home stretch from D Deck amidships was a working alleyway called Burma Road, where our chance encounters were more likely stewards, stewardesses, or crew. Or so I'd hoped.

A sea of humanity--STEWARDS and PASSENGERS alike--parts like high tide. Hats off, heads lowered, kneeling, court curtsies.

Gaye glances down at the gilded crowns and tops of WOMEN'S FASCINATORS they pass. Blinks rapidly and redirects his gaze.

The procession continues through 50 meters of passengers paying their respects to the dead viscountess.

INT. F DECK - NIGHT

Motorcar and cargo hold. Noisy, humid, isolated. The body transport continues between rows of cars toward a green WOODIE.

GAYE (V.O.)

A 1937 Packard Station Wagon waited for us exactly where Fallon said it would be.

Claudius breaks away and goes to the passenger side. Cracks the door, wriggles inside, and retrieves something. Shimmies out.

He hands another note to Gaye, goes to the tailgate, flips it down like a pro. Gaye walks around back to take stock.

GAYE (V.O.)

None of us had seen a Fisk mummy before.

In the wayback, lampblack carbon metal glistens like some nine days' wonder. A metal coffin adorned with angels, thistles, oak leaves, acorns, and a face window.

Gaye glances down at the note, then back at the Woodie.

JULES FALLON (V.O.)

Claudius will likely insist his sister is not dead, that he must remain with her. Give him immunity to do what he must.

GAYE

Okay. We need to place the gurney inside, transfer the Fisk to the bilge, and--

GUNNER (O.C.)

Crikey! 'e bit me!

Gaye turns. Gunner backs away from the tailgate, his right hand coiled unnaturally, dark liquid dripping from his arm.

A SOFT THUD against the Woodie's rear wheelbase.

Gaye's there on the double. Claudius slumps against the tire.

GAYE

Viscount, are you all right?

Claudius--*panting*--pale gums exposed, long canines flecked with blood and fully bared...

CLAUDIUS

(whispering)

So--sorry.

GAYE

(whispering)

I know you're hungry.

INT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

Callan continues reading.

CALLAN
(to himself)
That I was.

Tobias stops to trade his empty plate with a bread pudding.

TOBIAS
Tea with?

CALLAN
(reading)
That'd be lovely.

TOBIAS
Nice tat, by the way.

Tobias goes on, talking over his shoulder.

TOBIAS
I think I deserve one just like it
somewhere in here given all my holiday
demands, you know. Just sayin'.

Callan smiles and continues reading.

CALLAN
Never mind the tea, old friend.

INT. F DECK - NIGHT

Claudius prepares a bedroll in the Woodie's wayback alongside the Fisk. Gaye primes two space heaters near the tailgate.

A SERVER arrives with a domed serving plate. Gaye takes it from him and sets it on the tailgate.

GAYE
Viscount, the hold really isn't sufficient to
accommodate you for more than one night.

The boy's nostrils flare. He slides closer to the food.

CLAUDIUS
I can't leave. She could wake up.

He really believes it, doesn't he? Gaye points.

GAYE
There's a house phone in the mail room.

Claudius lays the dome aside, grabs the blue-rare tenderloin with both hands, and tears into it. Blood runs down his arms.

GAYE
(observing the mess)
You'll--call me should you need
anything else before morning?

Claudius looks up at him, chewing, face smeared with gore.

CLAUDIUS
I shall.

GAYE
Perhaps we can post stewards to watch her
while you shower in your stateroom tomorrow.

EXT. QUEEN MARY - MORNING

The liner clips across the water at a steady pace. Outer deck
teems with strolling PASSENGERS, some playing croquet.

INT. MAIL ROOM - INTERCUT - MORNING

Gaye's on the horn with Langston (in the INFIRMARY).

LANGSTON
Lad was a wee bit *peckish*? Gunner drags
in looking like he pulled his arm out of
a hasher, and I'm thinking, *what's the
stupid bloke gone and done now?* And
that's it? *Peckish?* You're joking me.

GAYE
How bad?

LANGSTON
Thirteen stitches.

GAYE
How's he taking it?

LANGSTON
I put him on three weeks' light duty, and
his grip-up's bodged for a couple more.
How do you think?

GAYE
I'll check on him, then.

LANGSTON
We really can't afford another row about
any of this, right? You've got a tight
leash on the little nutter?

Gaye glances over at Claudius. He's perched on the Woodie's
tailgate, a Kennedy tackle box next to him. He wears a clean
starched shirt and breeches, hair bound into a tidy pigtail.

He's duly sketching his sister's face, stopping now and then
to peer at her through the face window. He's a southpaw.

Gaye hangs up and starts switching heaters with fans.

Claudius works with a variety of pin nibs and charcoal, an
emboldened style with whorls and loops emerging. He's equally
as skillful with his right hand when he switches.

GAYE
You're quite good at that.

CLAUDIUS
I've swot at it a bit.

Gaye glances into the face window, unprepared for the shocker. Agnetha's skin is as smooth and unblemished as the day she was born. Gaye collects himself.

GAYE (V.O.)
I made a mental note to ask Langston about that too, and managed to talk the boy into a social visit with Mum and Nonna.

EXT. STATEROOM B450 - EVENING

Gaye listens at the door. Low-slung LAUGHTER. He KNOCKS.

GAYE (V.O.)
Both women were stir-crazy by then, and when they got wind of the viscount's visit, they forgot about any maritime danger, discarded beach pajamas for Sunday best, and ordered a two-quart flan caramelized with eighty proof rum.

Gaye's MUM (57, white) flings open the door, talking in whispers, her day dress disheveled. She's discarded the belt.

MUM
Ay-up, you're here. I'm sitting this one out.

Gaye steps inside after her. In the parlor, NONNA (77, white) hails with a stiff upper back in her bias-cut gown. She's in fierce competition with Claudius over a game of Gin Rummy.

Claudius has his sleeves rolled up and elbows on the table. His hair is curly wild, and he's actually enjoying himself.

MUM
(aside to Gaye)
Such a darling little lamb. A bit stroppy, but nothing black pudding and flan can't fix.
(beat)
After he gobbled down that awful bloody thing they brought up from the kitchen.

GAYE
Doctor's orders.

MUM
Ah--the lurgy. Well, if you're asking, I'd say he's a titchy thing all right. I suppose he does need all the piss and vinegar he can get. We could use a few more days to fatten him up.

Gaye surveys the remains of blood sausage, crackers, pastries, and flan on a serving cart pulled alongside the table.

MUM
He said the flan was scrummy and had three helpings. Or was it four?

NONNA

Four.

(to Gaye)

I hope you haven't come to fetch him yet, dear boy. We're hot up in here.

Nonna cuts her eyes at Claudius, a coy disdain she usually reserves for cronies she's played a half century against.

NONNA

Don't you give me any more of your cheek now, lovey.

GAYE

Viscount.

CLAUDIUS

Hullo.

His smile bares symmetric, pearl-white teeth and cuspids fully unleashed. Clearly tipsy. He pushes a stack of chips across the table and buys another card.

MUM

We started up noughts and crosses, but he wanted to play cards like the big boy he is.

Mum retrieves her tulip glass of Cognac and plops down beside him. Gaye walks over behind Nonna. Yep, a piss-poor hand.

MUM

(to Nonna)

Maybe you should go out whilst you have something decent.

CLAUDIUS

She doesn't.

NONNA

Maybe I do, maybe I don't.

She discards a card for another.

NONNA

We'll suss this one out.

(aside to Gaye)

Cheeky little monkey. He gives me those eyes and makes me all fiddly.

Mum ruffles Claudius's hair and pinches his cheek.

MUM

Will make all the girls randy someday.

INT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

Callan stares grimly at his tablet. Tobias plants the check and a to-go bag on his table.

TOBIAS

Here's some extra, courtesy the chef. He says your pants are looking loose again. Funny, he never tells me that.

Callan sips the remainder of his Lambrusco. Tobias starts clearing the table.

CALLAN
Thank him for me.

TOBIAS
I--forgot your tea.

CALLAN
No harm done.

TOBIAS
Jeez. I'm getting old, man.

CALLAN
I don't think that's it, really.

TOBIAS
No?

CALLAN
Hey, do you think the chef might prepare
flan sometime?

TOBIAS
For you, sure thing.
(onto the next task)
I'll ask.

Callan continues reading on his tablet.

EXT. QUEEN MARY - OUTER DECK - NIGHT

Gaye and Claudius walk along the deck under a waning gibbous moon. They stop at the railing and look out at the horizon.

GAYE
Is there nothing more we can offer you
besides blue steak?

CLAUDIUS
Aye, it is best. It is more...human.
(beat)
Our blood is bad. She and I, we are cursed.

GAYE
A mutation, perhaps?

CLAUDIUS
We crossed bloodlines against God's will.

Elbows on the taffrail, he continues talking while Gaye listens.

GAYE (V.O.)
He explained that his father had roots in
Ireland and an ancestry of vampires. His
mother, Baroness Claudella Scurlock, was a
druid out of Milford Haven. He and his sister
were hybrids, and they were dying.

Gaye is flabbergasted.

GAYE
You're not joshing me, are you?

CLAUDIUS
Nay. He foraged for us. He brought home
horses' blood from Brecon Beacons in flasks--

GAYE
Hold on. How did you say he does this?

CLAUDIUS
He mesmerizes them first, then nips them on
the hocks and draws some off with a hose.

Claudius continues talking while Gaye listens.

GAYE (V.O.)
Fallon? A vampire? As war loomed in Europe,
the boy explained, Fallon sent out his
bailiffs to capture some wild Welsh ponies and
began stocking his farm with them.

GAYE
You never learned to forage for yourself?

CLAUDIUS
We didn't need to.

GAYE
Why did you bite Gunner, then?

CLAUDIUS
He annoyed me.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Late-night tea is done. Walt straightens the chairs around
the dining table. Lilly takes the tea tray into the kitchen.

June pulls an old quilt from a hall closet and covers Tommy.
She raises a finger to her lips as Lilly approaches.

It's as good a place to sleep as any, even if Lilly didn't
plan for it. June removes his shoes and gathers his regalia.

JUNE
(whispering to Lilly)
Good night.

INT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

Tobias gives a thumbs up from the kitchen pass as Callan
takes the stairs toward Main Street. Callan nods goodbye.

TOBIAS
(prepping utensils, to CHEF)
He really needs a woman. I've tried
fixing him up, but he--
(beat)
Oh, and he wanted me to ask you--

Tobias stops. For the life of him, he can't remember.

EXT. GROTTO WOOD-FIRED GRILL - NIGHT

Callan window-shops on Main, those quaint and one-off craft shops sprawled along the City of Stairs. A step back in time. Romanesque, Neo-Victorian, and Gothic architecture tumbles into Eureka's historic downtown.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Scales up the side of nearby Miles Mountain. BARFLIES on last call on a balcony. A LIVE BAND strikes up "Electric Avenue."

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

Callan turns from the window display and listens. Coat draped over one arm and his to-go bag on the other, he steps into the street and begins a series of full straddle, syncopated catch steps and paso dobles. The naughty Samba.

He performs smooth drops, turns, and a couple of sharp spot Voltas--traveling diagonally across the street in precise Latin cross steps, knees tightly connected as trained.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Getting around the creaks is a twitchy ordeal. June handles the classic U-shaped staircase and its wooden risers with the same falter-funk slither she's used since high school.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

Callan has it all--smooth strides on one level and a solid, tight base. Sharp, quick feet. Full hip rotation and rib cage projection. Fluid shoulder weave. Precise syncopation.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

He's captured the attention of the balcony party.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

June makes it to the top landing when floorboards GROAN. Freezes. Listens. Tommy SNORES below.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Tommy's eyes flutter. He flips over on the couch, asleep.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

WHISTLES from the tavern balcony. Callan turns, walking backward, arms outstretched, tattoo aimed at his audience.

CALLAN
It slips from the mind, heart, and soul.
All of this, hold loosely. What you now
see, you release. So mote it be.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

Something odd on the balcony. Crowd zombie stares for two clicks before everyone takes out their cell phones, checks them.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

Callan fades into the darkness.

EXT. WOODED RIDGE - NIGHT

Just off dimly lit Crescent Drive, a kerosene camping lamp swings freely as a FIGURE scales the ridge.

EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

A single jail gate with a deadbolt. Hands pop the lock.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

By the lantern, it's Callan. He sheds his coat and hangs it on a railroad spike in the dolomite wall.

He's in an abandoned quarantine jail dynamited into existence sometime during the last century.

The rearmost jail cell is set up to paint using a 1946 three-legged stool with a tractor seat near a filigreed metal easel. Two racks of custom metal storage cases line the walls.

Callan opens a metal case and pulls out a roughed-in stretched canvas. He unlocks his tackle box.

TIME CUT

Callan's busy painting, tablet and Wi-Fi hotspot nearby.

Behind him, MALE WRAITH (ALFONZO, 25, Latino, smallpox victim) face and arms covered with disfiguring blisters, stands on the other side of the bars.

He distends his belly and pretends to be stuck.

ALFONZO
 ¿Estás jugando?
 (grinning at Callan)
 Uh-oh.

He drops through the bars like the ghost he is. Callan's seen the old trick before, a bit bored with it.

CALLAN
 Alfonzo.

ALFONZO
 Viscount.
 (beat)
 You bring my *cacao* this time?

CALLAN
 On top of the case.

Alfonzo stumps to a storage case where a chocolate-covered cherry truffle minted with a red "C" sits. He can't eat it, but *the smell!* Olfactory heaven. He watches Callan paint.

ALFONZO
 You look a little tense, Claudio.

Callan switches the paintbrush to his right hand.

CALLAN
 I may have a problem, yes.

Alfonzo walks around in front of him.

ALFONZO
 Low revenue? Leaky roof? Horny woman?

CALLAN
 No, no, and no.

He glances down at his tablet. Alfonzo follows his gaze.

ALFONZO
 That? Did someone unfriend you in there?

Callan grins.

CALLAN
 You're catching on.

Alfonzo crosses his arms.

ALFONZO
 These and many more things, uh-huh.

CALLAN
 What they're writing could expose me, Alfonzo.

Alfonzo's eyes grow wide.

ALFONZO
 No. In the bulletin?

CALLAN
 Online story.

ALFONZO
What's it say?

CALLAN
So far, it tells about my arrival here.

ALFONZO
Si.

CALLAN
In nineteen thirty-nine.

Alfonzo looks at him dumbly.

ALFONZO
So? It's nineteen forty-five.

Callan continues to paint.

CALLAN
We're a little past that, remember?

Alfonzo's counting on his fingers.

CALLAN
It's twenty twenty-seven.

ALFONZO
(lip synching)
Twenty-seven.
(beat)
Oh. *Madre de Dios*.

Alfonzo fingers a cell bar. It goes through. He pulls it back.

ALFONZO
So. Time flies. What else?

CALLAN
If anyone finds out the truth about me, I
could lose my shop, my home--

ALFONZO
Pooh. You just make them all forget you, no?

CALLAN
That only goes so far. They could still
come after me. Study me...

His core fear. Callan drops his paint brush.

CALLAN
Shit.

He stands. Alfonzo obliviously grins and splays his arms.

ALFONZO
You come live here with me.

Callan smiles bitterly.

CALLAN
I might not be able to afford those
chocolates for you anymore, either.

Alfonzo's mouth drops open. The dilemma hits home.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Under a mountainous ruffled duvet, June awakens to two wide blue eyes looking down at her.

TOMMY
Where's my cape?

June's barely awake.

JUNE
On the chiffonier...

TOMMY
The what?

JUNE
The dresser. Right over there.

Tommy straightens.

TOMMY
You smell like old flowers.

June giggles. Tommy's perched on the top step of the chamber stool. The Gettysburg's just *that* high. June reaches for him.

JUNE
Careful stepping down, okay?

TOMMY
I got it, I got it.

He hangs onto her hand briefly, jumps to the floor, and darts across the room. June yawns and raises a finger--

TOMMY
I know, I know.
(cramming into his sneakers)
Teeth, face, hands, armpits. I got it, Mom.

June smiles.

JUNE
I'll get you a clean T-shirt.

June creeps down the chamber stool, opens a suitcase, and checks the weather on her cellphone. The MUSICAL TOOTHBRUSH THEME "Drac's Got Plaque" plays from the bathroom.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - BATHROOM

June tosses a Chicago Bulls Space Jam T-Shirt on the counter, a razor-back T for herself. She leans against the doorjamb.

TOMMY
 (still brushing)
 I'm going with Grandpa to get tacos.

His grin oozes blue toothpaste. June chuckles.

JUNE
 Better rinse that again.

He sticks his face under the tap.

EXT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - MORNING

A stately white one on Historic Loop 62-B with a wraparound porch and a front turret.

June nervously directs the U-Haul, backing in fits and starts across the yard, dangerously close to the porch. She waves.

JUNE
 Kill it!

The truck heaves to a stop. June hesitates before unlatching the roll-up door and hoisting it upward.

The driver's door opens and Walt cranks one leg out.

Lilly scowls from her vantage point on the porch. FOUR MOVERS trailing out of the house stop to observe.

Chocked between boxes and piles of packing blankets in the center of the van is a standard adult metal casket.

WALT
 What's this?

JUNE
 That is where Tommy has Zoomed with you and Mom for the past two years.

Tommy bounds across the front porch. No cape today, but he pops down his clip-ons against the sun's assault.

TOMMY
 My room's dope!

JUNE
 (to movers)
 I need all of you over here.

TOMMY
 Tell them it's fragile.

JUNE
 This piece has some sensitive technology. No hand trucks. You'll need to carry this inside the conventional way.
 (to Walt)
 Let's lower the ramps, okay Dad?

EXT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - MORNING

A four-bedroom Victorian painted electric lavender across the street. Three hooded hair drying stations sit on the porch.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - DAWN'S HAIR GLAM - MORNING

A single room is dedicated to a hair salon.

CASEY WENNER (11, white) perches on the windowsill. A very blend-in kid with a mousy face and brown hair. She watches the activity at 22 Fairmount.

Next to her, a cellphone call on hold with FIDDLE MUZAK.

DAWN WENNER (35, white), a buxom blonde in a salon apron, kvetches over a crapped-out hot water heater. She's armed with a crescent wrench but doesn't know what to do.

CASEY
Er, Mom? What kind of doctor did you
say it was?

The cellphone CRACKLES. Dawn frowns at it. More MUZAK.

DAWN
I'm sorry, what?

Dawn grabs a broom and starts sweeping.

CASEY
The people moving in next door.

DAWN
Oh. Pearl didn't say. She didn't know
much at all, really.

Dawn straightens, looking for something.

CASEY
(still watching the activity
across the street)
It's over by the nail station.

Dawn spies the dust pan.

DAWN
Of course.

Dawn walks across the room to retrieve the dust pan.

CASEY
I think it's an undertaker.

DAWN
Get outta here.

CASEY
I'm serious. I just saw them take a
coffin inside.

Dawn joins her at the window.

For real? DAWN

Uh-huh. CASEY

I do wish Pearl had known more.
(snatches up cellphone)
I'll text Katie. She'll find out.

She glares at her phone, the logistics defying her.

(muttering)
Damn plumber. Where is he?

I got it. CASEY

Dawn surrenders the phone to Casey and stares out the window.

Maybe while you're on there, Google how
much morticians make?

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - FRONT TURRET (LATER)

Tommy's Rube Goldberg device is a half-couch casket with a split lid for funeral viewing. It's tungsten steel with a high-gloss image of the Andromeda and Milky Way galaxies merging 3.75 billion years from now.

The casket sits on a movable bier, scaffolding that allows it to pitch, sway, and heave--a full 4DX cinematic experience.

It's also smack in the middle of the room.

Walt, standing beside Tommy, takes it all in.

Are we going for the Capitol Rotunda
here, little man?

Right there in the center, yes.

Lilly shakes her head.

(aside to June)
This is not the place for his room or
that, dear.

All we need to do is close those beautiful
French doors when we have company.

Walt inspects the room outlets.

I guess we can run a power source--

TOMMY
Nope, look here, Grandpa.

Tommy taps a floor plug underneath the casket with his toe.

TOMMY
I don't know about the amps, though.

Walt squats by the outlet.

WALT
How much you need?

TOMMY
Thirty, I think.

WALT
Yeppers. We're going to need a new floor box.

INT. TWO DUMB DAMES CHOCOLATE SHOP - DAY

June pays at the counter and hands Tommy a paper bag. He plucks out a chocolate-covered cherry truffle (like the one in Callan's cave) and pops it into his mouth.

Walt and Lilly are knee-deep in animated conversation with another COUPLE in the store, old friends.

Tommy--*he's outta here*--heads for the red double doors. June squeezes past the neighborly conversation after him.

JUNE
Wait up, Tommy.
(to Walt)
We'll be outside.

WALT
Good enough. We need to get over to the hardware store by three, though.

June checks her watch.

JUNE
Okay.

LILLY
(aside to the neighbor)
He's a regular handful these days.

EXT. BASIN PARK HOTEL - DAY

Tommy, clip-ons up, studies Flatiron Flats across the street.

TOMMY
That one's *lit*.

JUNE
Let's wait up for Mom and Dad, okay?

June can just make out her parents among window shoppers along the stretch toward Basin Park. She points at the fountain in the center of the park.

JUNE
You missed where it all started, you know.

TOMMY
Later. We need to go that way.

Clip-ons down, he steps out into the street.

June lunges for his hand. Tommy leads the charge past quirky, one-off shops dedicated to kites and kaleidoscopes, coffee, tinctures, handcrafted furniture, meteorites, and yard art.

He's homing toward something else. June follows.

Tommy pauses at an alley staircase, two flights of weathered cedar going down to Center Street. He hops from one foot to the next. June catches up, Walt and Lilly a few yards behind.

WALT
Where we headed, June bug?

JUNE
Just one more stop, I think.

Tommy takes off down the stairs.

EXT. FAST HORSES - DAY

An art gallery near a couple of defunct sawmills off the beaten path. Tommy heads straight for the entrance.

JUNE
(to Walt and Lilly)
What's this?

LILLY
That's Callan Masters's art gallery.

JUNE
Tommy, stop right there.

He does. June walks over to him. He's sucking wind.

JUNE
Slow down, catch your breath.

TOMMY
Okay.

JUNE
Give me the candy.

Tommy groans, but does as told. June pulls a bottle of hand-sanitizer from her wristlet.

JUNE
 Hands out, palms up.
 (sprays his hands)
 Two minutes, no touchy.

TOMMY
 Okay.

Yep, he's worn himself out just getting here. He stumps off.

JUNE
 How long has this been here?

WALT
 Well, ah--

LILLY
 Five or six years, I think.

WALT
 Lilly wants a *Knicks Go*.

LILLY
 He won the Pegasus World Cup.

Walt rubs his thumb and fingers together. *Spenny*.

JUNE
 (snickering)
 The print, or the real deal?

LILLY
 Why, I have the perfect place for either one.

Walt mutters something inaudible. June follows Tommy inside.

INT. FAST HORSES - DAY

Callan is in the middle of a lively debate with a group of INVESTORS at the far end of his studio. His nostrils flare.

INVESTOR ONE
 Nope, I'll call you on that. Non-fungible markets just shifted to blockchains.

Callan leans out of the group to watch the boy in horn-rimmed glasses and a Chicago Bull's T trotting across his studio...

INVESTOR TWO
 Blockchain's a flash in the pan.

...and the boy's mom on his heels, her well-cut shoulders enhanced by a racer back tank and legs that go on forever in skinny jeans. Yep, he's interested.

INVESTOR THREE
 I'd do it.

INVESTOR TWO
 And they'll all be dead next year.

CALLAN
 An interesting choice of words.

The boy fidgets but keeps a respectful distance from the merchandise. His mom leans in and speaks gently to him.

INVESTOR TWO
(to Callan)
It's true. Of all people, you should know.

The boy turns and pops up his clip-ons, ice-blue eyes trained on Callan. Callan ducks back into the investor's huddle.

CALLAN
It might be a process, but it's not a dying one, no.

Callan wants to see more, but all too soon she takes the boy's hand and they walk out.

INT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - DAY

Walt wheels his antiquated SUV next to an AUDI E-TRON in the drive at 22 Fairmount. The SUV alights with one last lurch.

WALT
Looks like your hoss made it okay, June bug.

June smiles from the jump seat. Tommy's fast asleep in her lap. Lilly, one hand braced on the dash, looks back at Tommy.

LILLY
Bless his little heart. He wore himself out already, didn't he?

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - FRONT TURRET (LATER)

Tommy's casket goes full tilt, bank, and whirl as June and Lilly enter his room. Walt stands a few feet away, watching.

WALT
Some thingy, huh?

LILLY
It does all that?

WALT
(rapping the lid with his knuckles)
My turn, buddy.

LILLY
Oh, *Walt*.

WALT
Huh? I can fit in there.

As the casket settles to geometric horizon, DOORBELL RINGS.

JUNE
So that's how it sounds.

LILLY
I'll get that.

Lilly yanks one of the double doors closed with an all-hands-on-deck directive for June to get the other one.

WALT

Go on, see what they're selling. We're all over this and hotter than a TSA checkpoint in here.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Lilly peers around the casing and through the decorative glass panel. She opens the door with a flourish.

LILLY

Dawn, hello! What a nice surprise!

Dawn Wenner stands on the porch in her salon apron beside Casey, who's embracing the warmer weather in shorts and T-shirt. Casey bears a wicker basket covered in red gingham.

DAWN

Lilly?
(hugging her wildly)
Well of course it's you!
(looking at her hands)
Haven't seen those in a while.

LILLY

Oh, fall gardening, you know. My nails are a mess. I'll be in soon, I promise.

DAWN

You better, hon. We can't have you going around town looking like that.

LILLY

(to June)
You remember Dawn, don't you dear? I think you two were in the same class.
(to Dawn)
My daughter, June?

A faint spark of recognition from Dawn with far less warmth.

DAWN

Oh, sure! You went off to--

LILLY

Medical School.

JUNE

Chicago.

CASEY

You're the doctor?

LILLY

(proudly)
She is. An oncologist.

Casey takes out her cellphone.

CASEY

Could you say that again?

DAWN
Sweetheart, wherever did those manners of yours go?

CASEY
But I thought you want me to--

DAWN
(firmly)
Casey.

LILLY
It means she helps people who have cancer, honey.

DAWN
(to June)
Well, you're just as slim and gorgeous as ever!

Dawn smiles daggers. June's concocting a civil reply when Tommy opens one of the doors and pokes out his head.

Casey's on it quick as a cat's sneeze, craning to see around him. Lilly's eyes flash an all-points bulletin to June.

LILLY
We're still in a bit of a mess here, I'm afraid, or we'd invite you inside.
(to June)
I don't suppose Walt needs any help in there?

TOMMY
Nope.

JUNE
I'll check.
(beat)
Nice to see you again Dawn, and to meet you, Casey.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - FRONT TURRET - DAY

The casket goes full-tilt. June shuts the doors behind her.

TOMMY
Who's that?

JUNE
The neighbors. Maybe go out there in a minute and say hi?

TOMMY
Not today. I need to monitor him.

The casket settles and the split lid opens a crack.

WALT (O.C.)
Man, this is awesome.

The lid drops again for all systems go. June eavesdrops on the ongoing conversation at the front door.

LILLY (O.C.)
Tommy's about your age, I think.

CASEY (O.C.)
I'm eleven.

LILLY (O.C.)
Well, Tommy just turned nine. June adopted him as a baby, and unfortunately, he has cancer.

June white-knuckles the door handle.

DAWN (O.C.)
My stars, Lilly! That's awful. I'm so sorry.

LILLY (O.C.)
Yes, yes. We take it one day at a time.

JUNE
(to Tommy)
Will you keep these doors shut a couple more minutes, please?

TOMMY
Is that your idea, or Grandma's?

June gives him a don't-mess-with-me look.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

June crosses the foyer as the conversation continues.

DAWN
Does Tommy attend school?

LILLY
St. Elizabeth's, when he feels up to it.

DAWN
Why, that's right around the corner. Casey catches the school bus downtown. She'd be happy to walk with him, won't you, sugar?

Casey suppresses a full-on glower.

LILLY
Oh, I imagine Walt will drive him most of the time since June will be commuting to her clinic in Rogers--

JUNE
You know, weather permitting, I think Tommy would enjoy walking to school with Casey now and then.

LILLY
Honey, are you sure about that?

JUNE
I don't see why not.

DAWN
 Well, then. It's a date!
 (through her teeth to Casey)
 Give them the muffins, dear.
 (nodding toward the B&B yard sign)
 Feel free to text me at the number
 anytime, June.

EXT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - STOOP - DAY

Casey's pissed, but Dawn has passed that mark already.

CASEY
 Mom.

DAWN
 Oh, don't you Mom me. Sometimes, Casey,
 you really don't know when to shut it.

CASEY
 But you said--

DAWN
 No. No ma'am. I said...well, good night,
 the stuff that goes on between these
 walls stays between these walls.

Casey fishes out her cellphone and thumbs the screen.

CASEY
 Well, in case you wanted to know, the
 stuff going on between those walls comes
 with four hundred grand a year.

DAWN
 You're serious?

CASEY
 You could change your sexual orientation and
 give it a go if you want. I don't mind.

Yep, that pissed her off for real.

DAWN
 Casey Denise. How can you even think that way?

Dawn's most disapproving look.

CASEY
 Just sayin'.

DAWN
 News flash, young lady. Your mother is
 eternally straight, even if the majority
 of men are assholes.
 (turns to go inside)
 And you didn't hear me say that last
 word, either.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

UNDEAD LUCAS (Tommy) flies a big-ass frigate in a dogfight inside the asteroid belt Kuiper, MARTHA_WHOOSIS buzzing circles around him in an interceptor.

EXT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

Pitch dark but for a thin beam from a Tiffany floor lamp. Sheets over the windows for now. The casket pitches and rolls.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - INTERCUT

Shrapnel fills the screen. Incoming Zoom pops up in a sidebar.

TOMMY
Dammit.

INT. DUMONT HOME - DEN - NIGHT

Chelsea, playing on a large TV screen, pulls out one of her earbuds. Someone's hailing her from another room.

CHELSEA
Hey, Undead. I gotta go help with the turkey.

Tommy hovers in space a moment.

TOMMY
Damn. Okay. Are you back online Thursday?

CHELSEA
Depends. Friday for sure.

TOMMY
Out, then.

Tommy signs off and picks up the Zoom. TUDOR MOLLY (MOLLY SHRIVER, 28, white) is onscreen in a headset and an oat mask.

MOLLY
Talk to me, Undead Lucas.

TOMMY
What's that on your face?

MOLLY
Colloidal oatmeal.

TOMMY
Not your best look.

MOLLY
(chuckles)
How's the new digs?

TOMMY
Killer. I'll send you a video of my room.
It's all old and creepy like Collinsport.

MOLLY
Moved in already, huh?

TOMMY
Yeah, take a look at this.

Tommy shares a video, a CGI holographic collation and teaser for Fan Expo. Actor Jonathan Frid (holograph) is in an interactive live chat with Jack Darrow, *Dark Shadows*' new lead as Barnabas Collins in the television remake.

ON SCREEN

FRID
I thought the bite as directed was terribly exaggerated, you know. There was even time in there to call the police and arrest me.

DARROW
(laughs)
Right there with you, mate. It was all rather gauche to me.
(bares fangs)
Not anymore, though.

MOLLY
OMG, really? Fan Expo? You're going?

TOMMY
Yup. Can you meet us there?

MOLLY
Oh, yeah. I'm *in*. Oh, wow.
(beat)
How's the rest of Eureka?

TOMMY
We meet the new Teach on Friday.
(beat)
Do you think I'll have to do extrapolations the first week?

MOLLY
M-mm...mid-semester, probably not. I'm always here if you need me, though.

TOMMY
I miss you already. Do you think you can come visit without the oatmeal sometime?

They laugh.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

June's work station is a triple-bay black desk outfitted with multiple USB ports, gadgets. A virtual keyboard projects onto three monitors. One for EHR, one for labs, one for emails.

June shuttles between them using a lab stool. She signs out of two, moving to the emails. A search brings the *LA Times*.

The article reads "Knicks Go extends winning streak with victory in Pegasus World Cup." An AP photo of jockey Joel Rosario and the dapple-gray thoroughbred.

JUNE
So he *did* win it.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: INT. FAST HORSES - DAY

Tommy's running on fumes, June can tell. She steals a glance at Callan while she talks to Tommy. *Damn, he's hot.*

JUNE
(to Tommy)
We'll come back and stay longer, okay?

She takes Tommy by the hand.

END FLASHBACK

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

June studies the photo of Knicks Go a moment longer.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - MORNING

June, hair in a high ponytail and dressed for work in turquoise scrubs, KNOCKS on Tommy's door.

JUNE
Tommy? You ready?

She zips a Baggie with medicine bottles and pulls out her cell phone. The door cracks open, and June does the rest.

Tommy, dressed in jeans and a T-shirt, wags a duffle bag stuffed with electronics toward the door.

JUNE
(texting)
Temps dropped. You'll need your jacket.

June crosses the foyer and opens the front door as Walt's Land Rover lurches to a stop in the drive. She waves.

Tommy drags the duffle bag across the foyer and shrugs on his bomber jacket. June finishes her text and glances down.

JUNE
Are you sure you need all that?

TOMMY
I'm there all day, aren't I?

June squats.

JUNE
Yes.
(holding up baggie)

I texted Mom with instructions, but you know the drill. Folate and prednisone again at dinner, okay?

Tommy takes the Baggie and tosses it in the duffle bag.

TOMMY
Roger dodger.

June gives him an acceptable side hug and zips up the duffle.

JUNE
Let me help you with that.

EXT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - MOVING - MORNING

Yo-yoing down Kingshighway.

INT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - MORNING

Walt wheels the SUV into a California stop and yaws right of the Crescent Hotel, down Prospect. Tommy leans out the window and looks at the sky through his clip-ons. Ducks back inside.

TOMMY
Can we pull over?

EXT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - MORNING

Wheels into St. Elizabeth of Hungary's parking lot and stops.

INT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - PARKED - MORNING

Walt KILLS the engine. From this vantage point they can see the historic church's rotunda and the Stations of the Cross. Construction nearby, the priest's carport newly enclosed.

WALT
Looks like they got your schoolhouse done.

TOMMY
That's it?

WALT
Yep.

TOMMY
The website shows pink ceilings, marble floors, a ginormous chandelier, and red candles.

WALT
(pointing)
In the rotunda over there, it does.

Walt hugs the steering wheel and looks around.

WALT
 There's a magic here you won't find many
 other places, Tommy. Do you understand?

Tommy looks down. He could use some about now.

WALT
 If you respect these things, this will be
 a peaceful place.
 (making a fist)
 Knuckle bump?

Tommy grins and leans across the console for a solid one--
 and spies a chrome-plated Goddess of Speed hood ornament, a
 1937 Packard Six in the parking lot just two cars down.

TOMMY
 How long has that been here?

He's out of the SUV in a flash.

EXT. SERIES II LAND ROVER - PARKED - MORNING

Tommy's several yards away before Walt unhinges himself.

WALT
 Hold up there, Tommy.

EXT. WOODIE - PARKED - MORNING

Tommy walks around the wagon in awe. Army green. *Check*. Wood-
 grain dash. *Check*. He stands on tip-toe and peers inside. A
 built-in radio trimmed in chrome. *Check*.

TOMMY
 It's a thirty-seven, isn't it?

WALT
 Correctomundo. A one fifteen C.

TOMMY
 It's not a kit, though?

WALT
 Nope. It's the real done-deal.

TOMMY
 Have you seen it around here before?

WALT
 I...have. But I don't recall who owns it
 at the moment.

TOMMY
 Somebody does. Somebody who lives around
 here, right?

WALT
 I would think so.
 (beat)
 You know, I think Lilly cooked you some red
 pancakes. We probably ought to head on over.

Tommy scans the parking lot. It's Fallon's and he knows it.

EXT. FAST HORSES - EVENING

Callan hangs the last of four oversized ornaments in front of his shop. The wind kicks up, batting them about. He climbs down and lugs the step ladder back inside.

INT. FAST HORSES - EVENING

He flips the shop sign CLOSED and glances up at the track lights. *Off again.* He sets up the ladder and climbs up.

The door sensor CHIMES open. Callan sighs. It's past dinner, and these lights are really pissing him off. He doesn't look.

CALLAN
Welcome in. Feel free to look around.
I'll be done here in a minute.

A CELLPHONE RINGS, not his. He keeps working.

FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)
Hi, there. Doctor Lucas.

Callan turns a tick too suddenly, and the ladder twitches. He rights it using a flamenco stomp, but *she's* there sure enough in two quick strides, a firm grip on the ladder's side rail.

JUNE
(big blue eyes on him)
I got you.
(on her cell)
He has a PICC line? Okay. Let's stay with
IV Raltitrexed, take it down to two-point-
four mL on this cycle.

Perky banter on the other end. Callan's lost in admiration.

JUNE
(on her cell)
Yes, fifteen minutes. Thank you.
(to Callan)
Hi, I'm June. I know it's late--um, I didn't
see the sign posted that you were closed until
after I came in. I-I'd like to see *Knicks Go*,
I'm thinking a Christmas gift for my mother?

CALLAN
Surely.
(he points)
Knicks is right over there.

He watches her walk across the studio. Turquoise scrubs and a duffle coat, high ponytail.

CALLAN
Yes, there. Third from the end.
(stepping off ladder)
I'll put this up, back in a minute.

INT. SUPPLY OFFICE

He props the ladder against the wall and takes a breath. Grabs his cellphone off the desk and takes his sleeves up an extra roll as he walks back out into the studio.

June's still admiring the painting.

JUNE
This is lovely. You're a lefty.

CALLAN
Yes, I am.

JUNE
How much?

CALLAN
This one's twelve-five.

A flicker of disappointment in those blues.

CALLAN
I have a new *Knicks* off site, slightly smaller but equally nice, for ten.

JUNE
I'd like to see it.

His stomach growls.

CALLAN
You hungry?

JUNE
Starved. But I can't tonight. My parents have had my son since breakfast, and I need to go rescue them.

Callan grins. *Imagine that.* She pulls out a business card.

JUNE
I'm on call this weekend. Free next Friday, though.

CALLAN
Next Friday it is, then.

JUNE
Meet here and walk? You can text me when you're ready.

CALLAN
Fair enough.
(tucks the card in his shirt pocket)
I'll have the painting here for you.

JUNE
May I--look at that?

His tattoo. June pops out a pair of red reading glasses and takes his right forearm in both hands to study it.

JUNE
Did you design this?

CALLAN
I did.

JUNE
I'm normally not a fan, and I usually
advise patients to remove them, but this
one's really nice.
(takes off cheaters)
So--next Friday night?

CALLAN
Until then.

Callan locks the door behind June and watches her walk away.
Switches off the lights, stands in darkness.

CALLAN
Dammit.

INT. PHILLY'S ARGOSY - NIGHT

Percy slouches at his desk, eyes glued to his computer
screen. Elise reads over his shoulder, and Gram, over hers.

Percy swivels his chair to face Elise.

PERCY
That's the end?

Gram stiffens before Elise does.

ELISE
Mostly. Like I said.

PERCY
It doesn't work.

Gram places her hands on Elise's shoulders.

ELISE
It's all I've got.

PERCY
From ten journals?

ELISE
I only saw one.

PERCY
He's got more.

ELISE
Where are they?

Percy reaches for his cell phone.

PERCY
I'll find out.

ELISE
I'll rethink it.

She crosses the anteroom to her desk and sits. Gram follows. Elise thumbs through a Moleskine journal. Lays it aside. Scrolls her computer screen back to "Bad Blood" Part III.

EXT. QUEEN MARY - DOCKED - HUDSON PIER 90 - DAY

Tickertape and hoopla along the pier, a relieved Welcome Home. Heavy pedestrian and motor traffic on the wharf.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - DAY

Rolls down the unloading ramp onto the tarmac.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - DAY

Gaye, still in uniform, steers the car through the shoreside frenzy. Claudius watches quietly from the passenger's side.

GAYE (V.O.)
I felt for the lad even more then, with
no one to greet him.

Gaye spots Mum in an embrace with POPS (58, white) and Nonna in a wheelchair. He pulls over and waves.

EXT. WOODIE - PARKED - DAY

Pops passes a deli bag and a Guard coat through the driver's window. Gaye examines the coat. Its inner pockets pack a roll of greenbacks, a US Atlas, and a convincer.

POPS
You'll make sure the boy gets everything
he needs?

GAYE
(nodding)
Unless we get gummed up, I should be back
late Sunday.

Nonna sits by the passenger's window and glares at him.

NONNA
The little dearie, now--we won't see him
again for yonks, will we?

CLAUDIUS
Latter October, perchance.

Nonna clamps her hands on the door shell and leans forward.

NONNA
Oh, give me a peck, sweet one.

Claudius does. Pops places a hand on Gaye's shoulder.

GAYE
Abyssinia, Pops.

MUM
Off you go.

And they're off.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - DAY

Turns on Canal Street toward Holland Tunnel.

EXT. HOLLAND TUNNEL - DAY

The Woodie picks up speed as it starts through the tunnel.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING THROUGH TUNNEL

Claudius turns around in the seat to follow the gleaming, cream-colored tiles as they clip by.

Gaye tunes the RADIO to WMCA 570 AM, Hoboken's Knickerbocker Broadcasting. They continue onto Jersey City's 12th Street.

RADIO AD
Now playing, *The Wizard of Oz* comes to the screen in a magnificent presentation of Technicolor, songs and dances, camera wizardry, and spectacle.

GAYE
I hear it's a good picture show.

RADIO AD
A whiz of a wiz he is, and yet with all his magic,

CLAUDIUS
Fancy I'll see it, yes.

RADIO AD
Even old Oz himself couldn't work the wonders of this season's rainbow lollipop of entertainment--

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING

The station wagon continues down US Route 1. In the rear window is the dark outline of the Fisk coffin in the wayback.

GAYE (V.O.)
I could not help but think that should he survive, I hoped perhaps he would see it one day.

RADIO AD
(fading out)
A super-super that's worth every penny. You'd have to be pretty old and crotchety not to like it...

INT. SEIP CAFÉ IN EASTON, PA - EVENING

An uptown Manhattan-style dining experience. Designer wallpaper and waitstaff in tux aprons. Prime chops, oysters on the half-shell, dandelion salad, gourmet coffee.

Claudius dives into his blue-rare steak with his bare hands, earning whispers and stares from UPPER CRUST PATRONS.

GAYE
(sliding over the plate)
Let me cut that for you, Viscount.

A vicious glance from Claudius, but he contains himself.

EXT. SEIP CAFÉ IN EASTON, PA - EVENING

The silver interurban Liberty Bell tram line RACHETS around the town rotary with ENGINE KNOCK from working steep grades.

Claudius watches with curiosity. He turns to Gaye.

CLAUDIUS
I can drive her if you like.

EXT. WOODIE - ROUNDABOUT - PARKED - EVENING

Claudius fetches a cushion from the wayback while Gaye adjusts the bench seat forward. In the driver's seat, the boy's just tall enough to see over the steering wheel.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

Route 22 to Harrisburg, a rural two-laner winding through the Appalachians. Their headlamp beams bounce along as they go. Gaye engages Claudius in an animated conversation.

GAYE (V.O.)
To pass the time and to calm my own nerves, I told the viscount about exhibits I'd seen while on furlough at the New York World's Fair,

EXT. TRYLON & PERISPHERE - NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR - DAY

Gaye rides in awe with hundreds of other spectators on the world's longest escalator leading from a 610' high white spire, the Trylon, toward a huge globe, the Perisphere.

GAYE (V.O.)
Including the Trylon and Perisphere, and Electro the Westinghouse Moto-Man.

INT. WESTINGHOUSE BUILDING - NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR - DAY

A seven-foot automaton weighing over 265 pounds with gold aluminum skin counts on his fingers with jerky movements, eyes flashing from red to green.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

Gaye mimics Moto-Man while Claudius howls with laughter.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - DAY

Gaye drives. They approach a gaggle of jalopies, sharecroppers camped in the ditches. Household goods are strewn about.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - DAY

The wagon swings into the oncoming lane and rides the center stripe for the duration of roadside spillover.

GAYE (V.O.)

As it turns out, he was familiar with our dusters, black blizzards, and other economic lecheries.

The Woodie continues across a sparkling new truss bridge as WORKERS lay in the finishing touches.

GAYE (V.O.)

He also understood the goals behind the Works Progress Administration.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

Claudius drives while Gaye dozes.

GAYE (V.O.)

But what got to me was how we blew past the Appalachian trail and Pittsburgh while I slept the first time, and the southern part of Illinois, the second. *Both were physically impossible.*

The wagon banks a hard left off the highway. In the wayback, a DULL THUD and shift. Gaye jerks upright out of his catnap.

The headlamps bob over a gravel parking lot, a roadside gas station and diner. A few cars and trucks parked about.

GAYE

Where are we?

CLAUDIUS

Morrellton, it seems.

Gaye checks his watch.

GAYE

Already?

CLAUDIUS

Aye.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

A clapboard shack, STEAK DINNERS emblazoned across the front.

GAYE
Well, look at that.

Claudius grins at him.

INT. DINER - NIGHT - LATER

Gaye pays their tab at the counter. Glances out the window.

GAYE (V.O.)
And the other things he did.

THREE SAUCED HOODLUMS loiter around the Woodie, one dangling a bottle of giggle water. They point and laugh. Claudius is halfway across the lot already, headed straight toward them.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

The single arc lamp in the parking lot needs new rods. It HISSES and BUZZES on and off.

Gaye hits the front door reaching for the gun under his coat. Ahead of him, Claudius stops. A curious readjustment of his shoulders. He's--taller somehow.

The goggle-eyed hoodlums back away and stumble toward an old pickup parked on the far side of the lot.

GAYE
Viscount!

The hoodlums pile in the pickup and lead-foot it out of there. Gaye catches up with Claudius, who turns.

By the lamp's weak beam, the boy's head *does* look larger somehow, veins knotted along his neck.

INT. TOMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The casket is closed and motionless.

JUNE (O.C.)
Lights out, Tommy!

The routine. The rules.

EXT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

The half-lid raises. Tommy dangles a remote that kills the Tiffany lamp. The casket is silhouetted against moonlight streaming through the sheet-draped windows.

INT. JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

June continues reading *Philly's Argosy* on her computer.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

The wagon pulls out of the parking lot onto a rural highway.

GAYE (O.C.)
You're aware it's my duty to deliver you safely?

CLAUDIUS (O.C.)
I am.

GAYE (O.C.)
And you've seen I carry a firearm?

CLAUDIUS (O.C.)
I have.

INT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

Gaye drives. Claudius dials the radio through two stops of STATIC. By ambient light, he looks normal again.

GAYE
You must realize, son, that some people, in their ignorance, may try to kill you.

CLAUDIUS
They can try.

A sweet waltz. Claudius smiles at Gaye. TURNS UP THE VOLUME.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - NIGHT

Continues down the two-lane highway.

CLAUDIUS (O.C.)
Opus thirty-nine, number fifteen.

GAYE (O.C.)
Haydn?

CLAUDIUS (O.C.)
Brahms.

TIME CUT

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - MORNING

Rumbles over dirt-shod Main Street, Eureka Springs. Victorian and Romanesque architecture with plenty of limestone.

Several frontline businesses are boarded up. The Woodie turns up a steep mountain road and pours on the THROTTLE.

GAYE (V.O.)
 Baker Hospital was located on the north crest of West Mountain, categorically the lofty side of town, and a true test of one's carburetor.

EXT. BAKER HOSPITAL - MORNING

The "castle in the sky," an elegant four-story monstrosity constructed from massive stones. Roman arches. A red mansard roof. A grand entry porch with a massive staircase.

EXT. WOODIE - MOVING - MORNING

The wagon pulls past the portico to park. Claudius gets out.

Chipper-looking PATIENTS sit on loungers by the entrance. Gaye nods as they walk up the entry steps.

PATIENT #1
 G' mornin'.

PATIENT #2
 Howdy-do.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - MORNING

A grand lobby decked out in velveteen, tapestry, and carved wood framed with Baker's paint choices: salamander orange and lavender. A NURSE in a white-aproned uniform greets them.

NURSE
 You must be Claudius.
 (stooping)
 Welcome to the Ozarks, Viscount. Come, have a seat. I'll tell Doctor Tassemon you are here.

Claudius wanders over to a posh waiting area. Gaye pulls the nurse aside and talks to her. She looks down respectfully.

NURSE
 I'll let the doctor know. He'll probably want to see her too.

EXT. WOODIE - PARKED - MORNING

DR. EARL J. TASSEMON (37, white, portly with a cue ball) walks with a cane and leads the charge toward the wagon, his Oxfords scritch as he goes. Gaye and Claudius follow.

GAYE (V.O.)
 Earl J. Tassemon is one of several osteopathic physicians on Baker's payroll. He uses a cane--an old sawmill injury from his teens, he says.

Gaye opens the wayback. Tassemon stiffens. Fishes out a pair of cheaters from his lab coat. Stoops and peers into the Fisk's face window. After a moment, he straightens.

DR. TASSEMON
 Viscount Fallon, come.
 (taking Claudius by the arm)
 Look at her now. If I open this, her
 viscountess will no longer remain as
 unblemished an beauteous as she now is.

Claudius peers into the face window with him.

DR. TASSEMON
 A nicer way to recall her, don't you think?

A single tear rolls down Claudius's face.

GAYE (V.O.)
 I think I realized then the boy's
 greatest ordeal: the chance he'd
 outlive everyone he loved.

INT. 22 FAIRMONT QUEEN ANNE HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Tommy sits on a stool and reads on his tablet. June decorates turnovers with red icing. She pops a dollop in her mouth.

TOMMY
 I saw the Woodie.

JUNE
 (checking the oven)
 The what?

TOMMY
 The Packard. In the story.

JUNE
 You mean, the one that Gaye--

TOMMY
 Drove across the country. That one.

JUNE
 Where?

TOMMY
 The parking lot at school. Grandpa saw it too.
 But he couldn't remember who owns it.

JUNE
 Someone probably has it here for a car show.

TOMMY
 On Thanksgiving?

The turnovers are done. June adds them to a food bag.

JUNE
 Not a great place to stop, I know. But
 it's time to head over to Mom and Dad's.

TOMMY
Do you think he got well?

JUNE
I haven't gotten that far.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DAY

The house is dominated by Lilly's pumpkin collection: Caspers, Jack-Be-Littles, Cinderellas, Tiger-Striped, Warty Goblins. Ceramic, glass, metal, velveteen, and more.

June and Tommy let themselves in. Tommy is dressed in full garb today. He raises his clip-ons and takes it all in. Walt's stoking logs in the fireplace.

JUNE
Look, don't touch.

TOMMY
I have to count them.

He pulls out his tablet. Walt turns from the fireplace.

WALT
Take your coats and capes?

TOMMY
Only my coat.

Tommy drops his bomber jacket on the floor and continues his calculations. June frowns, picks up the jacket, and heads into the dining room with her food bag.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Lilly's outdone herself again. The dining table is loaded: sweet potato casserole, bacon-wrapped asparagus, butter rolls, hot water cornbread, Cajun black-eyes, pumpkin soup.

June looks for a place to squeeze in the turnovers. She gives up and places them on a nearby sideboard.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Lilly checks the turkey in the oven. Walt pulls a countertop grill out of the cabinet.

LILLY
What's that for?

WALT
A little something for Tommy.

June pulls a top sirloin steak out of her food bag.

JUNE
It won't take long.
(aside to Walt)
He likes it medium.

LILLY
But I need you to finish carving the turkey and say grace.

JUNE
Dad, you go ahead. I'll watch the grill.

Walt waves off them both.

WALT
I got it, I got it. Turkey's as ready as it'll ever be. Take it away, June bug?

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

June sets a twenty-four-inch platter of deep-fried turducken on the one spot reserved for it on the table and studies the Thanksgiving spread. None of this food is red.

June places a plate with her turnovers at Tommy's spot while he continues his pumpkin calculations in this room. Walt and Lilly take their seats.

LILLY
Why don't you sit across from me, Tommy?

June usually sits across from Lilly. She quickly switches the plates. Lilly frowns. Tommy plops down, busy with his tablet.

LILLY
You'll need to put that away while we say grace.

TOMMY
Did you know you have two hundred seventy-three pumpkins in this house?

WALT
That sounds about right.

LILLY
My lands. That many, really?

TOMMY
Thirty-one in the foyer. Sixty-six in the drawing room. Eighty-nine in the living room. Forty-two in the dining room. Twenty-seven in the kitchen, and eighteen on the stairwell.

WALT
(stirring his iced tea)
From thirty-nine boxes in the attic.

Lilly's speechless.

TOMMY
Arithmomania. It comes with my condition.
(shows Lilly his tablet)
See? I must count everything first and--

LILLY
You need to remove all that, young man.

TOMMY
No can do. I got a bad sunburn yesterday.

JUNE
That's the first I've heard about this, Tommy.

TOMMY
Even my eyeballs hurt.

WALT
Nothing grace and a good meal won't fix.

JUNE
Show me.

TOMMY
(looking down)
Well, it was there this morning.

LILLY
I thought he overdid it yesterday,
myself. But nobody's asking me.

WALT
No, we're not.

JUNE
Just hang your cape over the back of your
chair like we do in restaurants.

Tommy understands. *Do it now, wear it later.* Off they come.

LILLY
You mean, you let him wear that out in public?

JUNE
He thinks it keeps him from getting sunburned.

WALT
And there's that. Shall we pray?

TIME CUT

Food goes around, but Tommy keeps passing. Walt gets up to tend the steak. Lilly can't help herself. She's up, whisking away Tommy's plate, shoveling servings from each dish.

LILLY
(picking up Tommy's fork)
You need to try a bite of each thing.

June looks on with worry. Tommy scowls at his plate.

When Lilly squeezes his arm, Tommy bares his teeth. Growls.

JUNE
That's quite enough, Tommy. Go sit down, Mother.

Lilly's frozen, her face screwed into a flabbergasted pout. Tommy bolts out of his chair and runs out of the room. Walt returns with the steak.

WALT

I think that might be a good idea, Lilly.

Walt slides the not-red plate aside, replaces it with the steak. Lilly punctuates how hurt she is by replacing the fork just so.

JUNE

(calling)

Tommy, steak's ready.

Tommy wanders back into the dining room. Sits. Looks down at the steak, then the plate of not-red and the turnovers.

TOMMY

Can I have a new plate of turnovers that haven't received any cross-contamination?

June gets a plate from the sideboard, adds two new turnovers, slides it across to Tommy. He pops one in his mouth.

JUNE

(haltingly)

Would it be okay if Tommy spends the night with you all next Friday night?

Enough to momentarily distract and please Lilly.

LILLY

Is someone going out?

Tommy stops chewing. June groans.

WALT

I don't think it's any of our business.

Lilly cuts her eyes at Walt.

JUNE

Just someone from the office. A working dinner, you know.

TOMMY

What's a working dinner?

WALT

One that works.

LILLY

Oh, you quit that.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - KITCHEN - LATER

June and Lilly wash and dry dishes. Walt puts them up.

LILLY

You really shouldn't coddle him so much.

Walt shares an uncomfortable glance with June.

JUNE

It's more important that we don't derail his confidence at this time, Mother.

LILLY

While he runs ramshackle over everyone around him? That kind of behavior won't fly five minutes at St. Elizabeth's, and you know it. He needs to learn some manners or he's in for a world of hurt.

BEGIN FLASHBACK MONTAGE: INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

TOMMY (6) stands in front of the commode in pajamas.

TOMMY

Uh--Mom?

He opens the bathroom door. June, robed, enters and sees a toilet-full of blood. She takes a knee for a heart-to-heart and flushes the commode.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - DAY

A brutal bone-marrow biopsy from the left hip with a Jamshidi needle. Tommy (6) lies on his side and clutches June's arm. He squirms and sobs.

INT. INFUSION CENTER - DAY

Tommy (6) sits on pillows that raise him to infusion height in a medical recliner chair. PIVC tubing runs from his arm to an IV bag hanging overhead. June sits beside him, monitoring.

Black circles under his eyes. He's on oxygen, gaze half-mast.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

JUNE

He's already in a world of hurt, Mother.

LILLY

Oh, I realize he has special problems, honey.

JUNE

You have no idea.

Lilly makes a sweeping gesture toward Tommy's empty chair in the dining room where his cape and clip-ons remain.

LILLY

And none of that has anything to do with helping him get better.

JUNE

Don't you ever let him hear you say that.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SPICE GIRLS CRANKING. June pumps those guns, a post-Thanksgiving, de-stress workout at her Tonal station.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

Rockin' A Thrilltown Donkey Rodeo, gamers riding revenant donkeys side-saddle, the strategy to stay strapped in and dodge sanguineous bites. Tommy's racking up some real points against player BLUE GUMMY.

EXT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

Going full buck-and-whirl.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

Tommy lays aside the controller and cracks open the half-lid. Tries to shimmy out with the casket in full motion.

EXT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

Tommy's ribs ram the flange and he sprawls headlong on the floor. He gasps in pain and grabs his side.

TOMMY
Donkey balls.

Tommy listens. SPICE GIRLS CRANKING. He smiles through his pain and at the casket, still going full tilt.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - NIGHT

A pillowcase belching candy and shoes trick the sensors.
Flippin' yeah, it works!

EXT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - NIGHT

Tommy shoots out the front door and bounds down the porch steps. He doesn't have a jacket, but he has his cellphone. His breath steams the air as he runs across the front yard.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - CASEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Casey aka BLUE GUMMY continues playing *Rockin' A* against UNDEAD LUCAS on the gaming console on her bed.

ON SCREEN

UNDEAD LUCAS isn't moving anymore, though. Casey frowns.

CASEY
(on headset)
Where'd you go?

She goes to her window to check up on Tommy just as he ape walks around a pothole in front of their house and takes off running again.

CASEY
What a dork.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Tommy HUFFS down the hill and stops when he sees the Woodie is no longer there. Nonstop shivering now, arms crossed.

TOMMY
I'll find you, revenant.

He turns to go home.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

June powers down her Tonal and drapes a towel around her neck. Listens. *Odd*. She looks down the hallway toward Tommy's room. One of the double doors is open.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT

June stops at Tommy's bedroom door and watches the casket go tilt-a-whirl a couple of times before closing the door.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

June takes a seat at her workstation and finds the bookmarked page in *Philly's Argosy*. She continues to read the series.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Institutionally sparse and tidy white. A bed, a chest of drawers, and a screen. The only perk is the balcony overlooking the Elysium of the Ozarks.

EXT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - BALCONY - MORNING

Gaye sits on a patio chair while Claudius, barefooted, dangles his legs between the porch railing. He eats a steak.

GAYE (V.O.)
Under Tassemon's purview, we were permitted to have room service and a private dining experience on the balcony. Claudius was scheduled to receive his first treatment after breakfast.

CLAUDIUS
(chewing)
You'll stay with me?

GAYE (V.O.)
Treatment for the various and
sundry types of ailments that
checked into Baker's ward
were primarily injectables
five to six times a day.

GAYE
Of course.

GAYE (V.O.)
In those days we called them
hypos, the rapid delivery of
liquids through a hollow,
carbon steel needle into the
skin.

CLAUDIUS
Is that a conch of thunder I hear?

Gaye doesn't hear it. Not a cloud in the sky, either.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Claudius sits on the hospital bed nervously clasping and
unclasping his hands. Gaye paces. Checks his watch.

The door opens and Tassemon enters, followed by TWO ATTENDING
NURSES. A tight-run system: one pushes a medical cart over to
the dressing screen while the other lays out a mess kit on
the hospital bed: a gown, toiletries, and towels.

Tassemon gimps behind the medical cart. Outside, the sky has
suddenly grown black.

DR. TASSEMON
(to Gaye)
Pop-up thundershowers. We get them regular
around here in autumn.
(to attending nurse)
No need to gown him for the first one.
We'll start with two cc's subscapularis.
(to Claudius)
Come, step behind the dressing screen here
with me if you will, Viscount.

Gaye watches the nurses go in behind Tassemon. Shadow
movements behind the screen, figures lurking on the walls. An
efficient flop-drape of the boy's shirt atop the screen.

DR. TASSEMON (O.C.)
I need more light.

One nurse steps out to switch on a bedside lamp. Gaye shifts
his weight and continues observing.

GAYE (V.O.)
Injectable Formula Four, we all would
later find out, contained traces of
hydrochloric acid, salt, potassium
phosphate, and water--all guaranteed to
burn on entry in a very nasty way.

The screen starts to RATTLE, yaw, and tip. Tassemon stumbles
out, fighting for a foothold. The screen SLAMS to the floor.
The medical cart pitches and hurls hundreds of ampoules.

Gaye freezes. Tassemon's flat on his ass. One nurse blacks out. The other (VICKERS) flattens against the wall in terror.

Gaye looks up about the time SOMETHING very large and black flushes down from the ceiling.

The creature that drops in front of Gaye is well over six feet upright, breeches coiled up to its calves. In the din Gaye can just make out the face, the pigtail. *It's--Claudius?*

But the masseters are far more pronounced, sharp cranial ridges ear-to-mouth and skull bossing. Distended veins bore out of his skin everywhere. And he's changing still.

Nurse Vickers VOMITS. Rain SLAMS against the windows like wadcutters. Tassemon grips the edge of the hospital bed and attempts to stand.

Gaye edges backward. The small of his back rams the doorknob. He watches fifty or more ampoules levitating up, up...

Gaye looks up. *The ceiling's on fire.*

Tassemon looks up. *The ceiling's teeming with pit vipers.*

Nurse Vickers looks up. *The ceiling's swarming with ghoulish, weeping patients.*

Gaye falls to his knees and shields his face. When he looks again, the creature has changed more. He's coming toward him.

It now has proboscises on each shoulder, hands attached by wrists at the tops of the acromion processes. Tightly cockled membranes--*bat wings*--unfold from the shoulders.

Gaye looks down at the feet--*rearward-facing now*--gnarled toes hooking the floorboards behind. When the talons come in, it's undoubtedly unpleasant. The creature's face twists in pain and it SCREECHES.

Tassemon, Gaye, and the attending nurse vise their heads in agony. The creature springs toward Gaye and sails overhead toward the ceiling. The downdraft knocks Gaye over.

The ampoules suspended mid-air BLAST downward like gunfire.

Gaye watches the creature crawl overhead through the flames. He blacks out.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Gaye wakes on a hospital bed, evening sunshine in his eyes. Tassemon is standing over him. Gaye tries to sit.

DR. TASSEMON
There now. Take it slow, sailor. You took quite a blow to the noddle.

Gaye looks around for Claudius. He's sitting outside on the balcony looking no worse for wear. *Unbelievable.*

DR. TASSEMON
The boy's at himself again, or verily what he
wasn't when that squall came through.

GAYE
You saw it, as well?

DR. TASSEMON
Let's just say I'll recommend we suspend his
treatment and review. He doesn't like needles.

The room around Gaye is all tidied up, not a trace of what
went on before. Gaye looks up at the ceiling.

GAYE
The fire...

DR. TASSEMON
I saw snakes up there, myself, and Nurse
Vickers, all the faces of patients who've
ever wept in front of her. Enough to tip
anyone's teakettle.

Tassemon hands Gaye a note.

DR. TASSEMON
Meet me there after seven. I think we
need to run this one up the flagpole.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

Gaye walks past boarded-up storefronts and stops by a
nondescript building with a door grill. Fishes out the note.

GAYE (V.O.)
The address Tassemon slipped me was one
of the surviving speakeasys in town.

EXT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

Tassemon, wearing a breakwater raincoat, comes chop-chop
around the corner. They shake hands.

DR. TASSEMON
Officer Gaye. How fare you this evening?

GAYE
Better, thank you.

Tassemon raps on the door with his cane. The grill opens.

HUSKY VOICE
Jax.

DR. TASSEMON
We're thirsty.

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

A bar, billiards, nickel-in-the slot. Reserved nods from the BARKEEP and PATRONS as Tassemon gimps ahead of Gaye with his ginger ale toward a booth in back.

Tassemon props his cane on the wall and sits stiffly. Gaye sets down his hooch and takes a seat.

DR. TASSEMON
About the boy. He won't survive a week in the lopsided lap of this power-of-mind-over-body nonsense, you know.

A shocker right off.

GAYE
Is that what this is?

Tassemon weighs in Gaye's reaction. Sips his ginger ale.

DR. TASSEMON
I met the commander and his wife at the hospital briefly last spring. I think his endeavor is more about getting the viscount out of the country than curing him. Europe's going up in smoke, wouldn't you agree?

Gaye knocks back his beer.

GAYE
It looks that way, yes.

DR. TASSEMON
Baker's formulas--they don't work.

GAYE
You mean, for the boy's exceptional condition--

DR. TASSEMON
For anyone.
(sips his drink)
We'll get back around to that. Let's go over what happened in the room.

GAYE
Let's.

DR. TASSEMON
I think the boy has leukemia, but that obviously doesn't explain everything.

GAYE
No, it doesn't.

DR. TASSEMON
My evaluation is, he and his sister are dhampyres. Has he told you about this?

GAYE
Some, yes.

DR. TASSEMON
He's never turned on you?

BEGIN FLASHBACK MONTAGE: INT. FEMALE ISOLATION WARD - NIGHT

Claudius, slumped against the berth, raises his head and soundlessly chitters like a hungry feral cat.

EXT. MORRELLTON DINER - NIGHT

The curious readjustment of the boy's shoulders. His height.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE

INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

GAYE
Not entirely. Not like this morning.
(beat)
He bit one of our stewards, though.

DR. TASSEMON
Did he feed on him?

Not on Gaye's watch, by golly. He stops drinking.

GAYE
No, of course not, I--

DR. TASSEMON
He doesn't have the compulsion to feed on humans, you see. Did the steward turn?

GAYE
(beat)
Well--no.

DR. TASSEMON
I suspected as much. But it harms the boy when he turns. If anything, that's what will kill him.

Gaye's mug quivers as he sets it down.

DR. TASSEMON
If I were flying solo, I'd have referred him somewhere else from the start.

GAYE
But you're not.

A bitter pill. Tassemon stares at his drink.

DR. TASSEMON
There's the bald horror and unbounded gall of it all.

Tassemon continues talking while Gaye listens.

GAYE (V.O.)

In kinder times he'd completed his certificate in biochemistry and toxicology in Minnesota and his osteopathic training in Missouri. He'd married a Georgia debutante and started a highfalutin practice in Alpharetta until drinking became a problem. A divorce and eight months later, he joined Baker's staff, and he'd managed to stay sober for seven.

GAYE

What's in the formula?

DR. TASSEMON

We all signed confidentiality agreements. Nobody knows. And I don't have the equipment to test it.

GAYE

If you had said equipment, would you?

Tassemon leans forward and lowers his voice.

DR. TASSEMON

Oh, I can, and I will. Snaking it out, that's the trouble.

(sits back)

I have to play my cards right.

They continue conversing.

GAYE (V.O.)

Tassemon had planned to leave the hospital for a couple of months. Baker was largely absent, he said, preparing for his day in court. It seems that Norman G. Baker lighted upon the cancer-cure profession after stamping through rural towns in southern Indiana working in machine shops. He formed a vaudeville troupe for staging his own mental shows and founded K-TNT Radio for his own proxy summaries and rages about aluminum cookware, X-ray, and vaccines. Baker declared he could diagnose cancer from handwriting, praised Hitler, and slurred doctors in general as *belly-and-throat-cutting medicos*.

Gaye sits back.

GAYE

Good Lord.

DR. TASSEMON

If they arrest him, they'll go after the hospital.

GAYE

What'll you do?

DR. TASSEMON

I'll agree to testify and pray to the high heavens I don't land in the big house with Baker. And look for more work to bankroll the ex-wife.

GAYE

There's nothing here to cure the boy, then?

DR. TASSEMON

Baker doesn't have it. But I do. He assigned me to the viscount, and it's within my right to moonlight some trials.

GAYE

What about his treatment at the hospital?

DR. TASSEMON

I'll switch the formulas out with oral sugar water and decline nurse assistance for a couple weeks. After this morning, I seriously doubt any of the staff will want to rotate with me in there, anyway.

GAYE

There's no way to keep a lid on this?

DR. TASSEMON

Not to worry. We've all seen enough already to shake the aplomb out of our tree. I'll remind the staff that his viscount is a client of privilege and his affairs, confidential.

GAYE

Much obliged.

DR. TASSEMON

It goes both ways. The boy's survival could be a real feather in Baker's cap.

GAYE

You'll need funding for that.

DR. TASSEMON

And the commander's blessing.

GAYE

Maybe not.

Gaye continues talking while Dr. Tassemon listens.

GAYE (V.O.)

At the risk of showing my hand too early, I explained that Fallon had released ample funds for the boy's continued care, enough to get him started. We could keep the commander updated on his progress and petition for more money when necessary.

DR. TASSEMON

I might have to relocate the boy sooner than later, you know. You've seen the crawl.

(beat)

Another one?

GAYE

I think I ought to.

Tassemon signals the barkeep and grows quiet for a minute.

DR. TASSEMON
 This isn't an old sawmill injury, either.
 (beat)
 Swamp rattler. Sawmill's a story I can go
 about my day with.

GAYE
 You're lucky.

How he knows it.

DR. TASSEMON
 It still gets to me, and our viscount knew it.
 I saw pit vipers on the ceiling.

GAYE
 Battle Stations twenty-one. Ship fires.
 (beat)
 How does he do that?

Tassemon slides his glass from hand to hand, studying it.

DR. TASSEMON
 The amygdala.

GAYE
 Pardon?

DR. TASSEMON
 Primal responses. His illness prevents his
 bite from turning anyone, but his abilities
 to mesmerize are fully intact.
 (leaning forward)
 On the level, here--while we're all worried
 sick about the little baboon, I'm telling you,
 what he does with human memory is exceedingly
 primal, and therein lies his power.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - TOMMY'S BATHROOM - DAY

Tommy groans as he shrugs on a long sleeve T over a line of
 line of bruises expanding across his ribcage.

JUNE (O.C.)
 Time to go, Tommy!

INT. E-TRON - MOVING - MORNING

June pulls into the same parking spot where the Woodie was.

JUNE
 (checking her phone)
 With five minutes to spare.

She gets out, Tommy a little more slowly. He leaves his
 bomber jacket in the footwell.

JUNE
 (texting on phone)
 Don't forget your jacket.

June leads the way by the Stations of the Cross. Tommy complies, dragging the jacket along the sidewalk behind him.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY ROTUNDA - MORNING

SISTER OF MERCY MADELINE NYGARD (37, white) waits at the door. She wears a grey habit, navy-blue veil, white stockings, a huge silver cross, and fuchsia running shoes.

Tommy makes a squint-eye at her cross. Flips down his clip-ons.

JUNE
 (aside to Tommy)
 What are you doing?
 (to Sister Madeline)
 Sister Madeline, I'm June, and this is Tommy.

Tommy looks down at Sister Madeline's feet.

TOMMY
 (mumbling)
 Hullo.

SISTER MADELINE
 How about those kicks, Tommy?
 (giggles, to June)
 One tradition I disregard. Too many ankle injuries in the digs.

JUNE
 I can imagine.

TOMMY
 Do you dig up bones for a living?

SISTER MADELINE
 Only now and then, by accident.
 (stoops to Tommy's height)
 I'm really into plants.

Tommy studies her eyes and the smize wrinkles around them.

TOMMY
 Hmmmm.

SISTER MADELINE
 Come, come inside.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY - ROTUNDA - MORNING

A night ceiling with gold, pointy stars. Pink intrados and arches. Life-size statues of holy people in the vestibules.

Super-slick marble for sock skating. A jumbo-jet portrait of Jesus praying or maybe stargazing. Yes-way too many crosses.

SISTER MADELINE
 We assemble here daily before class, mass on Fridays. The classroom's this way.

Tommy flinches as June pulls him along.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY CLASSROOM - MORNING

A windowless building with six armchair desks set out in two rows. Tommy eyes a thick orientation packet. *Mom stuff.*

TOMMY
May I go outside?

JUNE
(considering)
Put on your jacket.

Tommy turns. He winces as he shrugs it halfway on.

SISTER MADELINE
(after him)
Why don't you pick out your favorite saint on the grounds and tell me about them when you come back, Tommy?

Tommy hightails it to the parking lot. No Woodie. He tosses his jacket on top of the E-tron's frunk. Heads down the hill.

Tommy scales the embankment toward creepers and underbrush. *There.* A POSTED sign. A few feet behind it is--*yep, a cave.* With--a deadbolt. *Cool beans.* But he's gotta head back now.

EXT. E-TRON - MORNING

June and Sister Madeline are already by the car. *Ruh-roh.* Tommy needs to come up with something smart.

TOMMY
Does the church have a catacomb nearby?

SISTER MADELINE
Good question, Tommy. Did you find a cemetery?

TOMMY
No. A catacomb.

SISTER MADELINE
You mean a tunnel?

TOMMY
A burial vault.

SISTER MADELINE
Really?

TOMMY
(pointing)
Right over there.

SISTER MADELINE
Eureka does have a number of grottos--

JUNE
That's private property, Tommy.

SISTER MADELINE
I think your mom's right.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - CASEY'S ROOM - SUNRISE

Casey, dressed for school, shrugs on her backpack and heavy-steps it down the stairs. Glances out the front window.

THROUGH WINDOW

A freakin' shitshow, the kid tripping across their yard under a golf umbrella. A vampire cape pinned to his school jacket, a Samsonite briefcase as big as he is. Granny clip-ons too.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - AT WINDOW - SUNRISE

Casey steps back quicklike. Peers around the casing.

THROUGH WINDOW

A motion-sensor floodlight snaps on. Tommy jumps back.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - AT WINDOW - SUNRISE

CASEY
What a freak.
(opens door)
What's with the cape?

EXT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - SUNRISE

Tommy goes on, head down. Casey SLAMS the door and catches up, dodging his monster broolly.

TOMMY
Part of my uniform.

CASEY
Halloween's over, you know. Your teacher
will make you take it off.

Tommy doesn't answer.

CASEY
(tugging one of his safety-pins)
And send you home with a bill for
destruction of school property.

Tommy stops and looks at her.

TOMMY
Don't touch those.

He takes off again, right on Prospect.

CASEY
Okay, okay. Just sayin'.
(catching up)
What's with the granny shades?

TOMMY
I have sun sensitivity.

CASEY
You mean, like a vampire?

TOMMY
I am.

He bares his teeth at her. Casey gives him a dirty look.

CASEY
That's creepy, you know. Maybe you should
keep those inside on your first day.

TOMMY
Maybe you shouldn't tell me what to do.

Tommy jumps over a groove in the sidewalk. Casey lags behind.
He takes a right on Crescent Drive.

CASEY
Don't you have a backpack?

TOMMY
(over his shoulder)
This has a combination lock.

Casey shrugs off her backpack.

CASEY
You don't need that.

Tommy stops. Turns.

CASEY
See? Zipper clips.

Tommy pops up his clip-ons to look. Casey dodges the broolly.

CASEY
Hey, watch the Mary Poppins.

TOMMY
(tilting the hilt away)
My bad.

He's off again, flea-hopping over the sidewalk grooves.

MAGNOLIA FOOT PATH

Hidden in the underbrush, three TEEN HOODS dressed in thrift
shop Gangsta on stripped-out mountain bikes smoke and eavesdrop.
BIGGER HOOD zeroes in on Tommy, the cape. Smirks. Flicks away
his cigarette.

BIGGER HOOD
Punk.

PROSPECT STREET

Casey stumps after Tommy.

CASEY
Who's going to steal from you at a church school, anyway?

TOMMY
I'm not worried about that. It's for keeping things out.

CASEY
You mean like silver or garlic or, hang on a minute, a mirror or a crucifix, maybe?

TOMMY
All that. Or a communion wafer.

CASEY
Well, excuse me but, good luck. It *is* a Catholic church, you know. What's wrong with a communion wafer?

TOMMY
It's not red. I eat only red things.

CASEY
Of course. I saw you sneaking out on Thanksgiving, by the way.

TOMMY
What's it to you?

CASEY
Where'd you go?

TOMMY
Just looking for a shortcut.

CASEY
Believe me, around here--you don't ever want to do that.

TOMMY
Why not?

CASEY
Ticks. They're everywhere.
(her best Dracul imitation)
And they drink your blood.

Tommy grins at her.

TOMMY
Would they be red?

CASEY
Ew--now you're just being gross.

They continue walking down Crescent Drive.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY CLASSROOM - LATER

Tommy finishes his cape demo for class with a flourish.

His classmates are TRENT "BUMBLEBEE" BUSBY (white, 12, in a tricked-out yellow wheelchair), STACEE RAINS (white, 10, wears a beanie, tic disorder), GERARD MIRAVAL (Latino, 11, very fidgety), and DELIA COOK (white, 9, flaming red hair and a cochlear implant).

They APPLAUD politely.

SISTER MADELINE
Thank you, Tommy.

She starts unpinning the cape from Tommy's jacket. He recoils but doesn't resist. He's got an audience, after all.

Delia signs something.

SISTER MADELINE
Delia. Use your voice.

DELIA
(haltingly)
That's rad. But he needs red eyes.

Stacee twitches but doesn't say anything.

TRENT
I've got some red contacts for when I'm
Bumblebee.

Gerard grins at Trent.

GERARD	TRENT
(chanting)	(joining in)
Bumblebee, bumblebee...	Bumblebee...

SISTER MADELINE
Lid on it.

Gerard and Trent grow quiet.

SISTER MADELINE
Your turn's tomorrow, Trent. Gerard, give
me a hand.

Gerard launches out of his chair and goes up front. She hands him the safety pins as she takes them out of Tommy's jacket.

SISTER MADELINE
Capes, like jackets and habits, must be
folded and stowed in a certain manner.
We'll go over how to do this before we
identify what Stacee brought today.

Stacee has a brown box on her desk, a few holes in the top.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY - LATER

The church's freestanding bell tower DIGITALLY CHIMES THREE. Trent, Gerard, Stacee, and Delia file out to the lower parking deck where FOUR VEHICLES, their rides, wait.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY CLASSROOM - DAY

Tommy hangs his school jacket beside the others. He pops down his clip-ons, heaves his Samsonite off his desk, and drags his umbrella as he goes.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY PARKING LOT - DAY

No Woodie. Tommy's bummed. Sister Madeline walks out after him.

SISTER MADELINE
Hold up, Tommy.

Tommy turns.

SISTER MADELINE
Are you walking?

Tommy nods.

SISTER MADELINE
I have an errand. I'll walk with.

TOMMY
Okay.

She closes the classroom door behind her. They walk.

SISTER MADELINE
I checked out that cave you found.

TOMMY
You went down there?

SISTER MADELINE
No, title records. It was once a county quarantine jail during a smallpox epidemic.

TOMMY
Is it haunted?

SISTER MADELINE
Like most things around here, I'm sure.

TOMMY
Can we go in and see it?

SISTER MADELINE
I'm afraid not. Someone bought it in 1945.

TOMMY
Bummer.

SISTER MADELINE
Yes. And you're talking to someone who really digs caves.
(giggles)
Cornny, I know.

TOMMY
What about a class project?

SISTER MADELINE
There's an idea. But not on site.

All kinds of disappointing. Tommy trudges on.

SISTER MADELINE
Well, I'm headed that way. You'll make it home okay?

TOMMY
Left and left.

SISTER MADELINE
See you tomorrow.

As she turns to go, Tommy spies the Woodie pulling into the church parking lot! He waits until Sister Madeline is a safe distance away before he runs *hubba-hubba* back down the hill.

EXT. WOODIE - PARKED - DAY

Tommy's sucking wind, and no one's in the wagon when he arrives. He sets down the Samsonite and the umbrella. Holds his side. Scans the parking lot. Where did the driver go?

BIGGER HOOD (O.C.)
Hey! Bloodsucker!

Tommy spins. Three Teen Hoods we saw before school ride circles around him on their bikes.

TRAILHEAD

Callan's nostrils flare. *The kid*. He hears the commotion behind him. Backtracks and stands behind a tree. Watches.

The Bigger Hood skids to a stop. Picks up Tommy's umbrella.

BIGGER HOOD
What's this?

Breaks it over his knee. Tommy lunges at him. The hood shoves him down. Tommy's doubled up on the pavement. SMALLER HOODS drop their bikes and amble over as the bigger one kicks him.

MAGNOLIA FOOT PATH

Casey walks home. She sees the fight and ducks behind a tree.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY PARKING LOT - DAY

Tommy passes out. Callan hurdles the hedge and runs straight for the fight. His shoulders reposition and his jaws extend. One look, and the smaller hoods scramble for their bikes.

The Bigger Hood stands his ground until Callan leaps on the roof of the Woodie and GROWLS. The three hoods vamoose.

CALLAN
 (spellcasting)
 This memory, what haunts your sleep, bind
 it here, this be its keep. And so it is.

DOWN THE STREET

Standing pedaling, the hoods are freaked, riding neck and neck. The Bigger Hood suddenly shifts from terrified to zombified. He rides his bike in a circle and mutters.

BIGGER HOOD
 Whatcha gonna do, whatcha gonna do...

The other hoods lapse into the same behavior, riding in circles.

MAGNOLIA FOOT PATH

Casey's outta there too, backtracking. She rips down the trail for a few yards before lapsing into a crawler walk.

CASEY
 Whatcha gonna do, whatcha gonna do...

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY PARKING LOT - DAY

Callan jumps down from the Woodie's roof. Tommy's shirt is torn, revealing some gnarly welts already. Callan's features reset as he yanks off his Inverness coat and drapes it over Tommy.

Tommy comes to. Straightens his glasses.

TOMMY
 (raising up)
 Did they take my--

CALLAN
 Easy does it. Go slow.
 (glances at the Samsonite)
 No. No, they didn't. It's still over there.

He helps Tommy sit.

TOMMY
 (grimacing)
 I'm good.
 (flips up his clip-ons)
 Who are you?

CALLAN
 I'm Callan.

TOMMY
 You're Callan Masters?

CALLAN
 Guilty.

TOMMY
My grandma thinks you're hot. She wants
one of your paintings.

CALLAN
(grinning)
She should come by the studio sometime.

TOMMY
We were in there last week, but we
couldn't stay very long, and I need to
ask you, do you paint Welsh ponies?

A rather pointed question Callan must evade for now.

CALLAN
Just racehorses.

TOMMY
Oh, well. I guess I better go home.

CALLAN
Is home close by?

TOMMY
Just over there, four-point-two minutes
if you Google.

Callan helps Tommy to his feet. He drapes his Inverness over
his arm and picks up the Samsonite.

CALLAN
Shall I carry this? It's pretty heavy.
I'll walk with you, okay?

TOMMY
(brushing off his jeans)
Uh. Okay.

Callan scoops up the mangled umbrella.

CALLAN
Toss this?

TOMMY
Guess so.

Callan tucks it under his arm.

TOMMY
Do you know who owns this car?

CALLAN
She's a beauty, isn't she?

TOMMY
I really need to find the owner.

They start walking.

CALLAN
Perhaps someone who goes to the church?

TOMMY
That's what Grandpa said.
(folds down clip-ons)
Don't you need to get back to your studio?

CALLAN
Lunch break.

TOMMY
Really? It's sorta late for that.

CALLAN
Busy day.

They walk in silence for a few steps.

CALLAN
What's your name?

TOMMY
Tommy Lucas. Me and my mom just moved here from Chicago. She's an oncologist, and I go to school at the church.

CALLAN
Really? I didn't know they had a school.

TOMMY
It's new, for kids in special situations like me. I have a blood disorder they say is cancer, but it's really an anomaly, a curse on my bloodline.

Hmpf, familiar.

CALLAN
That so?

TOMMY
Yes, I come from a line of vampires.

CALLAN
You don't say?

TOMMY
Nobody believes me, but it's true.

He bares his teeth.

CALLAN
Those are some biters, all right.

TOMMY
I have a cape, and a casket in my room too. It's a 4-D console when I'm not using it for a bed or streaming TV. Standard adult model, serial number zero-nine-seven-B-two-M-six-D. It's way cool.

CALLAN
You're really not messing with me, are you?

TOMMY
Nope.

He hops over a groove in the sidewalk.

CALLAN
What grade are you in, Tommy?

TOMMY
Third, supposed to be in fourth, but Mom and Sister Madeline and my tutor Molly didn't want me to stress out because it makes my red blood cells explode.

CALLAN
Really? That sounds painful.

TOMMY
Not so much. I just have to aim straight when I take a leak at Grandma's.

Callan's unsure how to respond to that one.

TOMMY
Well, this is me.

EXT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - DAY

Callan regards the house fondly.

CALLAN
(murmuring)
The old Brighton place.

TOMMY
I'd invite you in for a rare steak or something, but Mom's not home yet, and I don't know how to cook.

Another aside that's too close for comfort. Is this just chatter, or does the boy know something?

CALLAN
That's very generous of you. Much obliged.

TOMMY
What's obliged?

CALLAN
M-mm--another way of saying thank you.

He hands over the Samsonite to Tommy, who tries very hard not to flinch under its weight.

TOMMY
Do you think those creepoids live around here?

CALLAN
No. They won't be bothering you again.
(beat)
Promise me something? Let your mom know you got hurt after school?

A lead balloon.

TOMMY
 (muttering)
 Whatevs.

He turns away and stumps toward the house.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - GARAGE - DAY

Tommy tosses his ripped, long sleeve T into the bottom of a garbage bin. Raises his clip-ons. Yep, she'll never see it.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - DAY

Tommy shudders as he settles in. He has on an identical fresh T, but he's sweating bullets. Tommy pulls his blanket up to his chin, POWERS ON the screen, and reads *Philly's Argosy*.

EXT. ODD FELLOWS CEMETERY - DAY

A variety of crypts and headstones. An old one, crest and dips surrounded by thick foliage.

The Woodie and TWO FORD MODEL AA work trucks are parked near a fresh-hewn plot, a companion crypt inscribed SCURLOCK.

Gaye (in his Cunard issue) walks with Claudius (in black court dress and a shirt with lace cuffs) toward the crypt, a plot where a GRAVE DIGGER and TWO CEMETERY HANDS are lowering the Fisk. A PRIEST meets them at the crypt.

NORMAN G. BAKER (white, 57), wearing a dark pin-striped suit and a lavender necktie, ducks out from behind one of the work trucks and comes forward to greet them. They shake hands.

GAYE (V.O.)
 I hadn't expected to meet Norman Baker
 this trip, as Tassemon didn't anticipate
 his return before the end of the week.

EXT. FORD MODEL AA WORK TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

In the truck bed sits a contraption: a maroon, air-powered pipe organ with fifteen glimmering flues. Baker takes a seat on the organ bench, cracks his knuckles, and launches into some EAR-SPLITTING CARNY WHEEZE, Brahms's Opus 39, No. 15.

GAYE (V.O.)
 He'd invented the Calliaphone, an organ
 designed to mechanically play a handful of
 vaudeville tunes from paper rolls. It could
 be played manually as well, as he was doing
 now, and with some degree of skill.

The grave digger and cemetery hands remove their hats and line up alongside Gaye and Claudius as the MUSIC continues.

EXT. BAKER HOSPITAL - DAY

Gaye, in civvies, walks out to the Woodie with Claudius.

EXT. WOODIE - PARKED - DAY

Gaye extends his hand toward Claudius to shake goodbye.

GAYE (V.O.)
My orders were to store the Woodie in our
factory in Hoboken until the boy summoned me.

Claudius sidesteps the handshake and throws his arms around Gaye.

GAYE (V.O.)
I couldn't shake the pit in my innards,
though, as I farewelled him.

Gaye takes a knee and gives the boy a bear hug.

GAYE
Promise me, Claudius, that you will draw
a little every day.

Claudius tearfully nods.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - EVENING

Tommy's vision blurs. He magnifies the page, shivering nonstop.
The lid opens, and June's smile drops the minute she sees him.

EXT. TOMMY'S CASKET - EVENING

June, straight from work in her scrubs and lab coat, lifts
Tommy out of the casket and carries him out of the room.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - NIGHT

Callan pulls a vintage-style black umbrella with a brass
parasol handle from a display stand, perfect for any old-
world vampire. MANAGER comments from the front counter.

MANAGER
I'm trying 'em out.

Callan pulls out a second one just like it.

CALLAN
I'll take two.

INT. HOSPITAL ER ROOM - NIGHT

Tommy's on the gurney and hooked up to an IV. June sits
beside him. MALE ER DOCTOR walks in.

ER DOCTOR

(to June)

The good news is, no broken ribs. We ought to get out ahead of this with antibiotics and repeat the protime if he experiences more pain or bruising. I'll send you home with prn filgrastim injections if you agree.

June nods.

JUNE

That should take care of us until we can get his next infusion rescheduled.

ER DOCTOR

Good enough.

(to Tommy)

You'll need to take it easy for a few days, okay, buddy?

TOMMY

You mean, I have to miss school?

ER DOCTOR

(to June)

Well, that's an uncommon complaint.

(to Tommy)

This week, yes.

(to June)

I'll get these orders in.

The ER doctor walks out. Tommy's crying. June takes his hand.

JUNE

Are you ready to tell me how this happened?

Maybe. Maybe not.

TOMMY

I-I tried to jump out of my bed.

JUNE

What? When? Why?

TOMMY

Thanksgiving. To see if I could do it.

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

INT. FAST HORSES - EVENING

A *Knicks Go* framed Alma-Tadema style sits in the gallery against a wall. Callan paces in front of it, looking at his cellphone. Finally, he texts:

Your painting, ready at six.

CALLAN

Maybe she forgot.

Paces some more. His phone PINGS. He looks at it.

See you then.

CALLAN
Well, damn.

EXT. FAST HORSES - EVENING

Global warming and a hot date. June wears a nautical pullover sundress and strappy sandals, hair back in a narrow headband. She walks clip-clip down the sidewalk, hesitates at the door.

CALLAN
(through window)
It's unlocked.

He's dressed in his usual business casual, windbreaker and broly just in case. She's stunning--and equally nervous.

INT. FAST HORSES - EVENING

JUNE
Can you believe this weather?

CALLAN
Only in Eureka. Come in, I have it over here. I can bring up the track lights if--

She walks past him.

JUNE
No need.
(admiring)
It's perfect. And this amazing vintage frame.

CALLAN
I don't normally frame before appraisal, but that one seemed to fit.

JUNE
Mom's going to love this.

EXT. E-TRON - MOMENTS LATER

Callan places the wrapped *Knicks* in the car's boot. June taps the button to lower the hatch.

JUNE
Thank you for accommodating my budget.

CALLAN
Doctors have budgets?

JUNE
Don't get me started.
(beat)
Where are we off to?

CALLAN
Rogue's Manor? I got a table there.

A flicker of disappointment in those eyes again.

CALLAN
I hope that's all right.

JUNE
It's an elegant place. I haven't been there in years.

INT. ROGUE'S MANOR - NIGHT

A historic craftsman sprawl for fine dining and weddings. They sit in a box window facing the courtyard with leather-bound menus and place their orders with a WAITER.

JUNE
Um--are you sure you wouldn't rather go with medium?

WAITER
He orders it that way every time.

Callan nods. They hand off the menus and the waiter's gone.

JUNE
(leaning forward)
Food-borne illness can be fatal, you know.

CALLAN
(leaning in)
I'm aware, yes.

JUNE
You've been sick before?

CALLAN
At least five or six times. Listeriosis, I believe? Not from here, though.

JUNE
And yet you--

CALLAN
I like to eat it that way.

JUNE
My son's going through a rare meat phase. At first I thought it was like eating dirt, you know, but at least he agrees to have his steaks cooked medium.

CALLAN
I've never much hankered for dirt, myself.

June claps her hand over her mouth to stifle a snort.

JUNE
Oh, time out. It's really not any of my business what you choose to sink your teeth into, is it?

Callan shifts in his seat. *One way to say it.*

CALLAN
Tell me more about your son.

TIME CUT

They continue talking over wine and dinner.

CALLAN
He really thinks he's a vampire?

JUNE
With a disease much like Claudius Fallon.

Callan fumbles his fork.

CALLAN
I think my steak just moved.

JUNE
Serves you right.

CALLAN
This is from the story?

JUNE
Yes. Fallon's the vampire in the story
with Li-Fraumeni.

Callan stifles a cough. *What the hey?*

JUNE
My opinion, the disease he and his sister
inherited. In the story. It's a genetic
mutation that makes children susceptible
to a variety of cancers like leukemia.

CALLAN
I see. So, was this vampire cured?

JUNE
It seems he was. If you want, I can share
it with you. Supposedly he was a street
artist right here in Eureka for a while.

CALLAN
Written by a tourist.

JUNE
Oh, don't you know it.

CALLAN
Your son, he can't go outside much?

JUNE
When he does, he usually wears sleeves
and carries an umbrella. Which, by the
way, he'd love yours.

CALLAN
I just happen to have another one like it
with his name on it.

JUNE
Really? I can pay you for it.

CALLAN
 No can do.
 (looking out window)
 Sweat or snow, it's almost Christmas. My gift.

JUNE
 You're very kind. This meal, better than before.

CALLAN
 My pleasure. But what happened here, really?

JUNE
 You mean--

CALLAN
 In this restaurant.

JUNE
 It's really off limits.

CALLAN
 Like how I order my steak?

JUNE
 Yes. Like that.

CALLAN
 We could've gone somewhere else. Anywhere.

JUNE
 Yes, we could have. That would've been easy.

CALLAN
 You prefer difficult?

JUNE
 I prefer...remaking memories.

CALLAN
 Is that what we're doing?

JUNE
 (beat)
 He proposed to me at this very table and
 died in a boating accident a month later.

Callan takes it in.

CALLAN
 You outlived him.

An oddly obvious conclusion. June's not sure what to say.

CALLAN
 You found Tommy instead.

JUNE
 I did. And I will probably outlive him
 too, but I'm glad for every single day
 I've been his mom.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - NIGHT

The shops are closed, windows bright with Christmas spangles. Callan and June window-shop. She steps out into the street with him and points out a constellation before clouds cover.

JUNE
(at a store window)
What do you think about these?

CALLAN
Some ferlies, some havers.

JUNE
British?

CALLAN
Scottish.

JUNE
Wonders and rubbish, right?

CALLAN
You got it.

JUNE
Show me.

He puts his arm around her and points out the differences. A nearby TAVERN BAND strikes up something Latin.

CALLAN
Mariachi next door.

He executes a spot Volta and a drop-turn into a double step.

JUNE
Did you train professionally?

CALLAN
Amateur. New York City.

June walks along, watching him dance in the street.

JUNE
You are full of surprises. Salsa?

CALLAN
Samba.

JUNE
You're--very good.

CALLAN
I've swot at it a bit.

JUNE
Scottish?

He spins to a stop.

CALLAN
Welsh.

He offers his hand.

CALLAN
Come here, I'll teach you.

JUNE
My hips do not move that way.

CALLAN
Says you.

JUNE
Don't say I didn't warn you.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

They start with a basic whisk and move on to harder steps.

A sudden DOWNPOUR has them running for the nearest awning.

Callan gives June his jacket and opens the umbrella.

Rain hurls down the streets, an onslaught untamed by culverts, underdrains, and levees.

They dodge their way through the rain, hugging the sidewalks.

He gives her the umbrella and scoops her up in his arms, a couple of flawless spot Voltas as he goes.

June is laughing when he sets her down in front of his store.

END MONTAGE

EXT. FAST HORSES - NIGHT

CALLAN
I have some towels inside.

She strips off her sandals and shakes out the umbrella.

TIME CUT

Callan returns to the porch with beach towels. June's gone.

She's in the street, wading back with something in her arms.

CALLAN
I thought the general idea was staying dry.

JUNE
It was, up to a point.

CALLAN
What did you find?

JUNE
Christmas. Floating down the street.

Callan looks up. One of his outdoor ornaments is missing.
June laughs and hands him the ornament. She's soaked now.

JUNE
I haven't had this much fun in a while.

CALLAN
Clearly you haven't.

Callan lays aside the ornament. He whisks one of the towels under and over, the figure-eight flourish of a veronica, cocoons her, and kisses her. She pulls away briefly.

JUNE
That was sneaky.

She doesn't stop kissing him, though. Nor is she aware of his shoulders coiling outward, the tips of his acromion processes protruding. To his dismay, he's turning. He pulls her closer.

CALLAN
I want to show you something, but I must carry you one more time.

June's still caught up in kissing him.

JUNE
Sure, let's go.

TIME CUT

A creature looking less and less like Callan springs along the vacant hillside carrying June and flies into the woods.

EXT. FOOTHILLS ROCK FORMATION - NIGHT

Stunning basins trenched out by running water, polished as smooth as the inner shell of an abalone. Callan lands nearby with June, asleep on his shoulder. He waits until his shoulders reset before he sets her down and wakes her.

CALLAN
Expergiscimini.

June rubs her eyes.

JUNE
Did I--?

CALLAN
You did.

JUNE
How rude of me.

CALLAN
You have a lot on your plate.

JUNE
(yawning)
That moves.

CALLAN
Look behind you.

June admires the rock formation with her fingers.

JUNE
It's stunning.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Clothes cast aside, floating and turning with the eddies.

Callan and June lay coiled together on a rain-washed basin, hijacked leaves joining their dance.

He memorizes every tilt and whorl of her, following droplets where they stipple and weep along June's alabaster skin.

She follows his touch with those bright blues as the air grows blonde between their breaths.

Skin on skin they glisten as rainfall combs their backs, rise and fall, shadows lurking in pursuit.

END MONTAGE

INT. E-TRON - NIGHT

Callan gets in behind the wheel and shuts the door. In the back seat, June sleeps soundly, wrapped in his Inverness. He gazes at the gauges, bells, and whistles. Not the Woodie.

CALLAN
Well, shit.

EXT. E-TRON - MOVING

Turns into the drive at 22 Fairmount. The garage door opens, and the car goes inside.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - NIGHT

Callan carries June, still asleep, past Tommy's room. Takes a step back. The closed casket gleams in the moonlight. He looks at it curiously before continuing down the hallway.

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANN HOME - JUNE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

He lays June on her Jenny Lind and removes his Inverness. She's wrapped in a dry beach towel. He lingers, watching her sleep.

TIME CUT

June opens her eyes, puzzled by the amount of sunlight pouring into her room. Reaches for her cellphone bedside. It's not there. Sits up quickly. *I'm wearing a beach towel?*

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BATHROOM - MORNING

The mirror proves she's a muddy mess. June twists a leaf out of her hair. Turns her back to the mirror and looks. *Wow.*

INT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - GARAGE - MORNING

June opens her E-tron's passenger door. On the seat, her clothes, shoes, purse, cellphone, and Tommy's new umbrella are lined neatly in a row. She walks around to the hatch and opens it. Painting's there too. *Except--how?*

JUNE

Oh, shit. I'm on call.

She runs back to retrieve her cellphone.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DAY

The time of year when Lilly trades out pumpkins for Teddy bears. In the foyer, in the living room, on the stairwell.

INT. WALT'S STUDY - DAY

Tommy squares up a stack of notebook paper on Walt's rolltop desk beside a couple of broken bears Walt's repairing. He fiddles with his mechanical pencil and starts writing.

TOMMY (V.O.)

A yea verily long time ago, a mysterious force of attraction called gravity drew celestial bodies toward each other in space. Some didn't end well. They wiped each other out, for real. Others did a disco bump and spun off in different directions.

Tommy's phone (FaceTime) RINGS. He picks up. Chelsea sits on a couch in her den with a stack of books.

INTERCUT

CHELSEA

Undead, are you okay? I missed you online last week.

TOMMY

I ran into some complications. But I'm better now.

CHELSEA

Good to know. Where are you?

TOMMY

(showing her)

In Grandpa's study, with some busted bears and a shitload of homework.

CHELSEA
 Oh yeah. Me too.
 (beat)
 Hey, I'm reading that story you told me about.

TOMMY
 Yeah?

CHELSEA
 Yuh-huh, it's creepy as hell. Are all those places real?

TOMMY
 Yuppers. The Woodie too.

CHELSEA
 Holy Mother. You mean Fallon actually lives there?

TOMMY
 Yep.

CHELSEA
 For real? You've met him?

TOMMY
 I'm not sure yet. But I think I have a way to find out.

CHELSEA
 Well, I gotta finish this next part. Catch you online later?

TOMMY
 Sure thing.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Chelsea thumbs to the next section of "Bad Blood" on her tablet and continues reading.

INT. HOBOKEN FACTORY OFFICE - DAY

Gaye, wearing a factory apron, takes a seat on a stool beside windows grimed with soot, overlooking the Hudson River. He rips open a letter.

GAYE (V.O.)
 The third week the boy went radio-silent,
 and I fretted until I received a post a
 few days later from Basin Park Hotel.

Gaye angles the letter for more light and squints to read.

EXT. BAKER HOSPITAL - DAY

Norman Baker drives away in his WHITE CORD CONVERTIBLE.

GAYE (V.O.)
 When Baker headed out for his court appearance,
 Dr. Tassemon put his plan in action.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Dr. Tassemon sits bedside in deep conversation with Claudius.

GAYE (V.O.)

After some discussion, the Viscount said he thought he could induce his own tonic immobility, or at the very least mesmerize those attending him into believing he was dead.

INT. BASIN PARK HOTEL - SUITE - NIGHT

Tassemon's home and laboratory. He works over some foamy flasks.

GAYE (V.O.)

And while we were years away from reversal agents, Tassemon apparently concocted his own, should they need it.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - NIGHT

An Art Deco HALLWAY WALL CLOCK reads 7:30 P.M.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Claudius vomits into an emesis bucket by his bed. Tassemon draws up an injection. An ATTENDING NURSE stands nearby.

DR. TASSEMON

(to nurse)

Go on, I'll stay with him for a while.

As soon as the attending nurse closes the door, Tassemon pockets the injection. He and Claudius exchange glances.

DR. TASSEMON

(looks in the bucket)

A little more of that when you can, Viscount. We shouldn't go down there too soon.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The Art Deco HALLWAY WALL CLOCK Reads 11:30 P.M.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Tassemon listens to Claudius' chest with a stethoscope. He lays very still. His lips and nailbeds are blue.

GAYE (V.O.)

He had a right good show of it by half past eleven, Tassemon said. The viscount appeared, for all intents and purposes, dead as a doornail.

A NURSE comes in as Tassemon covers his face with a sheet.

DR. TASSEMON
Bring me a gurney, please.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tassemon pushes a gurney, his cane hooked over the handles.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Tassemon rolls the gurney into an elevator, and the door shuts behind them. By the dial sweep, they are going DOWN.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - MORGUE - NIGHT

Claudius isn't the only body that night, however. DR. W.D. DULL (white, 47), wearing a dinner jacket, has also arrived to pronounce another sheeted PATIENT on a gurney.

DR. DULL
(writing his report)
A fine evening to you, sir.

Tassemon nods, takes a clipboard, and begins his report.

GAYE (V.O.)
He was a nasty chump, every bit as bull-headed as his name implied, Tassemon said. He had a hankering Dull was onto them.

DR. DULL
(opening a drawer)
Help you put him in here?

Tassemon flashes his clipboard, a note attached to it.

DR. TASSEMON
No. I have orders from the family for his immediate burial upon pronouncement.

Tassemon can see beads of perspiration soaking through the sheet covering Claudius. Dull narrows his eyes.

DR. DULL
I see your letter, yes. But you know Baker has to sign off on all transfers.

Dull keeps talking.

GAYE (V.O.)
Housekeeping rules, he said.

Dull turns away to his cadaver. Tassemon lifts the sheet, then lowers it. He straightens, removes his cane from the gurney.

DR. TASSEMON
I suppose you're also aware that Baker could be gone for weeks this time.

Tassemon pounds his cane on the floor and continues talking.

GAYE (V.O.)

At that point, Tassemon knew he was on the clock to get the boy out. He announced that he would under no uncertain terms defy the wishes of the Queen's Commander at Arms, that he'd get Baker on the horn immediately.

EXT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Tassemon storms out and slips into an alcove off the hallway. He studies his watch's second hand, waiting.

GAYE (V.O.)

He waited a fitting amount of time required to gimp to the nearest house phone and back.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Tassemon pokes his head inside the doorway. Dull is gone, his clipboard on the floor. Dull's half-sheeted patient and Claudius remain undisturbed. Tassemon smiles.

EXT. BAKER HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A HAULING TRUCK idles with a casket in back at the loading dock. The door flies open and Tassemon rolls out the gurney.

INT. HAULING TRUCK - PARKED - NIGHT

A SEXTON helps Tassemon with the dead weight of the boy into the passenger's side and SLAMS the door.

EXT. HAULING TRUCK - MOVING - NIGHT

Speeds down a dark country road, BUMPING and SPUTTERING.

INT. HAULING TRUCK - MOVING - NIGHT

Around the jolts, Tassemon produces a syringe of his revival serum from his lab coat and uncaps it with his teeth.

He's set to inject the boy's thigh when Claudius stutters awake, all teeth and cuspids in Tassemon's face.

DR. TASSEMON

Viscount!

EXT. HAULING TRUCK - MOVING - NIGHT

Sexton (O.C.) YELLING.

The truck swerves toward a ditch and rights its course.

GAYE (V.O.)
 The boy's mesmeric ability had fooled even him, Tassemon said. And as he'd mentioned beforehand, the boy really didn't care for needles.

INT. BASIN PARK HOTEL - SUITE - DAY

Tassemon works at his lab while Claudius sits by a window and sketches what he sees outside.

GAYE (V.O.)
 With the empty casket placed in the crypt by his sister, the boy was free to stay in hiding while the Tassemon developed the blood serum Claudius would take for the rest of his life--however long that might be.

INT. BAKER HOSPITAL - DAY

Tassemon stands in front of Baker's six-sided desk for a tongue-lashing. Baker yells at him from the other side.

GAYE (V.O.)
 And while certain levels of indiscretion weren't beyond Baker, exhuming the boy's body wasn't one of them. The only remaining power that silver-tongued grifter had was to fire Tassemon on the spot.

EXT. MAIN STREET EUREKA - DAY

Several CUSTOMERS mingle around Claudius's art display on the sidewalk and admire. They converse and pay him cash.

GAYE (V.O.)
 After Baker Hospital closed its doors, Claudius began hawking his artwork on the street. Much of his ability to confound the memories of those around him was already well underway. Patrons who wanted more of his art could never seem to find him again.

EXT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - DAY

Walt opens the front door to a carefully manicured June.

WALT
 Y'all get wet?

June walks inside.

JUNE
 Look who's fishing.

WALT
 Lilly asked first. I got tacos with tomatoes.

JUNE
Thanks. We'll have to head out soon to
beat the cold front.

TIME CUT

INT. E-TRON - PARKED - DAY

June and Tommy, coats on, get into the E-tron.

TOMMY
Did you ask him if he paints Welsh ponies?

June's answering a text.

JUNE
Who?

TOMMY
The painter guy. Your working date.

JUNE
How--?

TOMMY
He's like the only single dude around
here, right?

June finishes her text.

JUNE
I have to go get some hanging hardware
from him next week for Grandma's
painting. I could ask him then.

TOMMY
You really got it?

JUNE
Yep.

How to ask, how to ask.

TOMMY
Do you think he could go to Fan
Expo with us?

JUNE
Oh, I don't know, Tommy. That's a
big ask.

TOMMY
Yup.

JUNE
I'll have to think about it.

EXT. E-TRON - MOVING - DAY

Pulls into the same cemetery Claudius is recorded to be buried in, now EUREKA SPRINGS CEMETERY. The car winds along an asphalt drive to the rear of the property and stops.

EXT. E-TRON - PARKED - DAY

Tommy's out in a flash, headed straight toward a flat marker.

TOMMY
(pointing)
Is this it?

JUNE
That one, yes.

Tommy studies the headstone.

TOMMY
Sylvia Milford?

June bends down to brush away the leaves covering it.

JUNE
Yes. She was your birth mother.

TOMMY
She was younger than you are.

JUNE
Yes, she was.

Tommy gazes in another direction.

TOMMY
I need to go over there.

He takes off, steam curling off his bomber jacket. June checks the temperature on her phone.

JUNE
Just a few more minutes, Tommy.

Tommy runs toward an older section. June follows. He stops at an above-ground companion crypt carved from white marble and traces its faded, Tristram-style letters with his fingers.

TOMMY
Come look at this!

June can't read them yet. Tommy pulls out his cell phone.

TOMMY
Don't you get it? From the story?

SCURLOCK.

TOMMY
Did you get to that part yet?

JUNE
Yes. Yes, I did.

She walks around it while Tommy snaps photos.

JUNE
Let's get a few more pictures and talk
about this in the car.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Sun flicks through an air hole in the ceiling. Callan is on an exhausting painting jag. Shoes off, shirttail out.

Alfonzo pops through the jail bars, looking worried. The canvas Callan paints on spans the entire cell.

ALFONZO'S POV

He can't go around it, so he walks through it. Now he can't see Callan. He comes back through the canvas and stands close.

ALFONZO
Es loco, Claudio. You should go home, no?

CALLAN
(switching hands)
I have to go open the shop now.

Callan loses his grip and the brush falls to the floor.

ALFONZO
See? Is no good for you.

CALLAN
(bending to retrieve it)
This is fine. She's the problem.

ALFONZO
How so?

CALLAN
She's gorgeous.

ALFONZO
Really? Like Milja?

BEGIN FLASHBACK MONTAGE:

MILJA DUMONT (16, black) scrubs windows at BASIN PARK HOTEL, a spitting image of Tommy's friend, Chelsea. A nearby television ANNOUNCES Hawaii has just annexed to the US.

Callan (appearing 15) walks past her and tucks some money into her work apron.

Callan and Milja run hand-in-hand along the West Mountain foothills in the rain, laughing. He picks her up and spins.

They share a bed, but not just for sex. Books piled in one corner mean school's in session. He's teaching her to read.

Milja (appearing 23) runs to greet Callan (appearing 16) at the front stone arches of HARDING UNIVERSITY. Across the mall are PICKETS and BANNERS of MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Callan and Milja eat in a local (white) soda fountain and try to ignore insidious overtones from other PATRONS. She fingers a RUBY ENGAGEMENT PENDANT and talks to him quietly.

Callan sits and sketches in the foyer of a boarding house. Milja rushes inside. She's crying. He reaches for her.

MILJA
They killed him, Callan!
(falls to her knees)
Oh--they shot him in Memphis!

Milja (appearing 28), dressed as a secretary, sits outside the courthouse on a bench and eats a sack lunch with Callan (appearing 17). A tense exchange swelling into an argument.

Milja removes the RUBY PENDANT and tries to give it back to him. When he refuses to take it, her rage heightens.

We see Callan get up from the bench and walk away. Milja sits in a stupor. The PENDANT drops from her hand onto the sidewalk.

Callan (appearing 20) pulls the Woodie in front of a quaint parsonage. Milja (appearing 65) lugs a sack of groceries inside. Steps back outside. She doesn't recognize him.

MILJA
We already own a Kirby, sir.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE

Callan looks down.

CALLAN
More than Milja. I'm falling for her, I think.

ALFONZO
¡Ay, Dios mío! So, you make her forget?

CALLAN
I have to.

INT. E-TRON - PARKED - DAY

The cemetery talk. June gets inside, adjusts the heat, and blows on her hands. Tommy gets inside and thumbs through his photos.

JUNE
Okay. In the story--

TOMMY
The Scurlock crypt is where Fallon's sister is buried.

JUNE
Right. Hear me out?

TOMMY
Okay.

JUNE
People who write pulp fiction like--
what's his name?

TOMMY
Miles Cochran.

JUNE
Yes, well--sometimes they visit the places
they write about and select real buildings
and locations to use in their stories.

TOMMY
Is that all you think he did?

JUNE
Scurlock might one of his relatives. He
just added it to the story.

TOMMY
You absolutely don't think Fallon is real?

JUNE
What's that?

TOMMY
Absolutely and positively.

JUNE
It's just a story, sweetie.

The sad truth. June squeezes his hand.

JUNE
It was incredible, Tommy, really. And yes,
I'd like to know what ultimately happened to
Dr. Tassemon and Claudius Fallon.

TOMMY
Then why won't you help me?

June puts her phone down.

JUNE
Tommy. We've been over this before. When you
reach a certain stage, a bone marrow
transplant will put your cancer in remission.
The disease Claudius had in the story was
untreatable. He didn't conjure some spell or
take a magic potion to cure himself. Those
things just don't exist, honey.

Tommy lip trembles, and he starts to cry. June reaches for
his hand again. He pulls it away and looks outside.

JUNE
Tommy. Tommy, look at me.

He finally does.

JUNE

You are going to get over this. It doesn't make any difference how you got it. The treatment and the outcome remain the same.

TOMMY

But I like being a sick vampire.

JUNE

That's just it, don't you see? You don't have to be sick to be a vampire. And you don't have to be a vampire because you're sick.

TOMMY

I can be a well vampire?

JUNE

You certainly can.

Tommy looks down.

TOMMY

But he was just like me.

JUNE

That's what good stories do.

EXT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - DAY

The E-tron pulls into the drive. Tommy heads straight to the porch and picks up a VASE with red roses. June follows.

TOMMY

They're for you.

June studies the card. Unlocks the front door. Tommy follows her into the kitchen as she reads the card.

INT. 2 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

TOMMY

Looks like it was a success.

June tucks the card back inside the envelope.

JUNE

I imagine it's just a standard thank you. For making such a large purchase. For Grandma.

Nope, not it. Tommy crosses his arms.

TOMMY

I think what he really wants is to go out and suck face with you again.

JUNE

(hands on hips)
What's that? *Tommy Lucas.*

TOMMY
(grinning)
At Fan Expo.

He takes off for his room.

INT. TOMMY'S CASKET - DAY

Casey peers over the edge at Tommy, who's inside.

CASEY
Holy crud, it does all that?

TOMMY
More. Come on in, I'll show you.

EXT. 22 FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ANNE HOME - PORCH - DAY

June and Dawn sip frozen margaritas on patio loungers. Dawn pulls out a vape pen.

DAWN
You mind? It's been a week.

June shakes her head. Dawn takes a slow drag and holds the vapor a moment before exhaling. Bridges her forehead.

JUNE
Is Casey all right?

DAWN
Now she would be. Little shit.
(sniggers)
Four--no, five sets of guests, Thanksgiving rush, and she just--freaks.

JUNE
Really?

DAWN
She comes home with F's and picks fights at school, then *open sesame*, she's back. I don't know what to think.

JUNE
An FSH panel might be helpful.

Dawn regards her blankly.

JUNE
Hormone levels. With her doctor.

DAWN
Of course. I had female problems when I was her age. You think that's it?

JUNE
Certainly worth checking.

DAWN
Well, yeah--that makes total sense.
(beat)

She's still weirded out about walking Tommy to school, though. That one's beyond me.

JUNE

No worries. She's a good kid.

DAWN

Pisses me off. She'll be the rest of the semester getting her grades up.

JUNE

I'm glad you let her come over to play video games with Tommy today.

DAWN

Does he really have a coffin in his room?

JUNE

It's his video game console.

DAWN

Aside from being god-awful bizarre, I bet that cost you a chunk of change, huh?

JUNE

Worth every single penny.

DAWN

You're a good mom, you know that?

JUNE

That's--very kind.

DAWN

I really mean it.

(beat)

Then again, before things get too chummy, I need to tell you something.

JUNE

Okay--

DAWN

I think Casey is Tommy's half sister.

June fumbles her drink and grabs her right calf.

DAWN

Cramps?

JUNE

(standing)

Didn't see that coming.

DAWN

Tommy's mother is Sylvia Milford, right?

JUNE

(walking it out)

Yes.

DAWN

She's the one my ex was still married to while he was banging me.

JUNE
You're sure about that?

DAWN
Garrison?

JUNE
Any idea where he might be?

DAWN
Nope. I don't want to know.

JUNE
You're certain--Casey--you and Garrison...

DAWN
I was exclusive with the sumbitch, if that's what you're implying.

JUNE
Pretty much, yeah.
(she sits)
If Casey really is his half-sibling, there's a good chance she could be a donor.

Dawn regards her blankly.

JUNE
Tommy's going to need a bone marrow transplant sometime in the next year. The closest genetic match is usually a parent, sibling, or half-sibling.

DAWN
You mean, she can donate this--

JUNE
Bone marrow. It's similar to donating blood platelets.

DAWN
Can she get money for that?

JUNE
She can if she's a match.
(beat)
It's a bit of a process. Casey would have to agree to it.

DAWN
Does it involve needles? She hates needles.

JUNE
It does, unfortunately. One in each arm.

Dawn's eyes narrow.

DAWN
How much money?

JUNE
Last I checked, the going donor rate was ten thousand.

Dawn stiffens.

DAWN
Oh, I think I can definitely talk her
into that.

INT. PURPLE PASSION B&B - CASEY'S ROOM - DAY

Casey storms into her room, Dawn on her heels.

CASEY
Mom.

DAWN
Oh, don't you *Mom* me. We need a new roof and
four new commodes. Good night, where do you
think that kind of money comes from?

CASEY
Not from my arms!

DAWN
No. No ma'am. She said...well, it was one
in each arm, that's right.

CASEY
I am *not* related to him.

DAWN
You might be.

CASEY
See? See there? You really don't know, do you?
(plops on bed)
I'm grounded, anyway.

Dawn's cooking something. A smize.

DAWN
I could amend that. You could go to Fan Expo.

Casey groans and covers her head with a pillow.

EXT. AUDI E-TRON - MOVING - DAY

On I-44, a four-lane divided highway.

INT. AUDI E-TRON - MOVING - DAY

June drives. Callan's in the passenger seat, scrolling on his
tablet. Tommy's stretched out asleep in back.

JUNE
How far along are you?

Farther than he wants anyone to know.

CALLAN
It seems rather complex for his age. Do you think he understands it?

JUNE
He read most of it to me.

CALLAN
Wow. Smart kid.

JUNE
Who also thinks those things in the story actually happened.

CALLAN
I can see why you're concerned.

JUNE
I guess we'll find out at the *Philly's Argosy* autograph party, won't we?

Callan's counting on it.

EXT. AMERICA'S CENTER PLAZA ENTRANCE - MORNING

A solid line of cosplay outside the security checkpoint. St. Louis, come on down! *Geek out*. Callan and June (plainclothes) and Tommy (in vampire drag) wear matching fang masks.

Tommy breaks out of line and runs toward AHSOKA TANA (Molly). They hug. Dr. Who's MARTHA JONES (Chelsea) joins them.

Callan takes in Chelsea, looking way too much like Milja. *She's even wearing the wedding pendant*. Awkward.

JUNE
(to Chelsea)
What a lovely necklace.

CHELSEA
Thanks. I got it from my Aunt Milja.

They chatter. Callan looks away and steels himself to step through this. The doors open, and the line moves forward.

INT. AMERICA'S CENTER - MORNING

Miles Cochran hulks over a small display table, a sweaty mess signing free trading cards or fifteen-dollar "Bad Blood" comic books. Callan and Tommy stand in line.

A FEW LINES OVER

June waits to meet Elise Anderson with *Philly's Argosy*.

COCHRAN
(twirling a card, to Tommy)
Card or a book?

Callan steps forward and lays money on the table.

CALLAN
Let's get you a copy.

COCHRAN
Smart man.
(handing over copy)
This one's already signed.
(to Tommy)
Love the mask. It works.

TOMMY
But--I still have a question.

Cochran pops on a kitchen timer.

COCHRAN
Make it quick, we're on the clock.

TOMMY
Does Fallon still live in Eureka Springs?

COCHRAN
(pursing lips)
I get some version of that one all the time.

Tommy shifts his weight impatiently. Cochran leans in.

COCHRAN
Let's just say I had a whole lot more
about Claudius Fallon that ended up on
Philly's cutting floor.

TOMMY
So--you're saying it's possible?

Cochran sits back.

COCHRAN
Anything's possible.

The timer goes off.

TOMMY
That was a fast thirty.

COCHRAN
As time can fly.

Tommy scowls at him.

CALLAN
I'd like an autographed card, if I may.

All sorts of trouble. Cochran fumbles for his pen and hunches over the tiny table like Gru.

COCHRAN
Name?

Callan leans in--so terribly, terribly close.

CALLAN
An old friend.

ELISE ANDERSON'S TABLE - MORNING

June trades Elise her own business card for a signed NGC7293 Cosmic Eye of Sauron trading card.

JUNE

Here's our address. He sent his letter a few weeks ago.

ELISE

I will look into this and get back to you.

COCHRAN'S TABLE - MORNING

Vurp with nowhere to run. Cochran stumbles backward out of his chair, puking, staggering through the display banner into a cowboy trot toward the nearest fart-and-hurl.

TOMMY

What did you do to him?

CALLAN

He did it to himself.

TOMMY

Really? Just like that?

Callan's watching Cochran very calmly. A little too calmly.

TOMMY

Hello! Maybe you can tell me why we're still standing here? After all that waiting, he didn't even answer my question.

CALLAN

He couldn't.

TOMMY

Why not?

CALLAN

He didn't write the story.

TOMMY

Really? How do you know?

CALLAN

He couldn't answer your question.

TOMMY

Well--who wrote it, then?

CALLAN

I'm going to find out.

TOMMY

How?

CALLAN

At the panel.

TOMMY

You better, because this is serious stuff.

CALLAN
I know.

Tommy takes off, disappearing into the crowd. June walks up.

JUNE
What gives?

CALLAN
Cochran was a bust.

June follows Callan's concerned gaze.

JUNE
He'll calm down.
(unrolls a flyer, Darrow baring fangs)
A shame. I had better luck than you two
all the way around.

Callan's nostrils flare. He's distracted by something else.

CALLAN
Oh, no.

STADIUM ENTRANCE - MORNING

Tommy's collapsed on the floor. Chelsea and Molly lean over him. June pushes through the crowd ahead of Callan.

EXT. GATEWAY ARCH - NIGHT

TOMMY'S POV

For an art guy, he's *yes-way* ripped while he scales glammed-out stainless steel with Tommy on his back. He looks down. *Ruh-roh*.

That's a long way down, and they're swaying left...and right...

INT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - ICU ROOM - DAY

TOMMY'S POV

Mom's over him, all serious-like.

JUNE
Tommy...Tommy. I have to step outside for a
minute, sweetie. But Callan's here, okay?

Tommy blinks at her. *No, he's not.*

CALLAN (O.C.)
Go ahead, I've got you covered.

June examines the PICC line on Tommy's right arm. The left one's blown, and this site doesn't look much better.

JUNE
We may have to switch to a central line.

Callan pulls up a chair as June leaves. Tommy drifts off. Once the door shuts, his eyes pop back open. Callan's on it.

CALLAN
Are you uncomfortable?

TOMMY
(trying to sit)
Nope.

CALLAN
Go easy there. I think they want you to rest.

TOMMY
I'm not sleepy.

CALLAN
Weren't you--?

TOMMY
Nope. Faking it.

CALLAN
The whole time?

Tommy raises his nose.

TOMMY
Did we just climb the Gateway Arch?

Callan smiles knowingly.

TOMMY
Yeah? That was trippin'.
(taking stock of his situation)
You didn't drop me, did you?

CALLAN
No, we got down okay.

TOMMY
Yeah. You flew.

Callan nods.

TOMMY
You're *him*.

CALLAN
I am.

TOMMY
I knew it.

Which means he's slipping somehow.

CALLAN
You--did?

TOMMY
That first day I found your studio, yep.

Tommy looks at the bag on his IV pole.

TOMMY
Are they giving me the same stuff you got?

CALLAN
No, unfortunately, it only works for me.
Your mom says you need a bone marrow
transplant.

TOMMY
No, I don't. I just thought of another way.

CALLAN
Maybe you should get some sleep. We can
talk about it later.

TOMMY
We only have one chance to get this right.

Tommy begins peeling a dressing off his left arm. Callan
stands, unsure what he should do.

TOMMY
You've got to turn me.

CALLAN
Pardon?

TOMMY
You heard me. You need to bite me. Your vampire
subclass lives longer than mine, obviously.

CALLAN
It won't work. You'll just run more of a
risk for infection.

A discolored cubital fossa, the perfect plateau for biting.

TOMMY
No one will see it here, and there's a
good artery too.

CALLAN
It won't help you, Tommy.

Tommy stretches out his arm farther.

CALLAN
This won't be pretty, you know. I'll need
to put you to sleep.

TOMMY
No, you don't. Just do it.

Callan glances over at the ICU's observation window.

CALLAN
First things first.

He crosses the room and rotates the miniblinds shut. As he
turns, he grows--head grazing the ceiling, stooping and
coiling into a snap-to across the room, fangs in and out of
Tommy's arm before his face registers the pain.

CALLAN

Somnum.

Tommy drifts off while Callan catches the blood drips in his hand and goes to the bathroom sink to wash out his mouth.

He's just finished replacing the bandage on Tommy's left arm when June returns.

JUNE

Good news.

(smiling)

That Chelsea. Clinical ethics aside, I ought to hire her.

CALLAN

How come?

JUNE

She talked Casey off the fence. She's coming tomorrow.

Well, shit. Biter's remorse already.

CALLAN

She's a match?

June crosses the room, checks the PICC line.

JUNE

We don't know yet. There's a chance.

CALLAN

Are you spending the night here?

JUNE

Yes. I have to.

CALLAN

I'll set this up for you.

Callan crosses the room and pulls out a sleeping cot while June continues checking Tommy. She straightens, notes the miniblinds, and adjusts them.

June crosses the room and helps Callan stretch sheets over the cot. They both sit.

JUNE

I can drive you back to the hotel.

CALLAN

No worries. I'll catch the metro.

June looks down.

JUNE

This didn't exactly turn out the way--

Callan clasps her hands.

CALLAN

Don't even go there.

JUNE
Well--I mean--

CALLAN
Somnum.

June goes limp. Callan lowers her to the cot and holds her hand. Tears come, sloppy ones he doesn't try to stanch.

CALLAN
No longer in your heart and head, be gone
after all is said. I decree it best. I have
loved you, and I release you. So be it.

EXT. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Callan springs along the parking lot and flies away.

EXT. CLIFFSIDE BOARDWALK - NIGHT

HAMMERING nearby. Callan, drenched in sweat and soiled from running, hangs under the deck in hiding.

EXT. BASIN PARK HOTEL - BASIN PARK - NIGHT

A gallows is going up, BUILDERS HAMMERING (PRE-LAP).

INT. CALLAN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Callan's sprawled on an Empire sofa in the front room of his cottage. A heap of liquor bottles under the coffee table, enough to tank and elephant. HAMMERING continues.

Callan opens one eye. Sunlight streams through cracks around the door facing, *so bright*. The brass door fitting jounces, SOMEONE working it. He regards it dully.

CALLAN
Enough already!

He strains to sit. Cradles his head in his hands and groans.

CALLAN'S POV

His sight's piss-poor in broad daylight. A dark--but skinny--figure looms in the doorway.

JUNE (O.C.)
Where do you keep the garbage bags?

Callan slumps on the coach in stupor. *June, really?*

FROM KITCHEN

Drawers, cabinet doors OPENING and SHUTTING. Callan dozes.

A TING on the coffee table. Callan stirs. All his high-octane stash is gone. A pitcher of water and a mug of something highly acerbic on the table. He counts the tea bags.

CALLAN
I--don't drink it that way.

JUNE
You do now.

He looks up at her. Yep, she's pissed. Picks up the mug.

CALLAN
This could really punch it the other way.
She crosses her arms and waits.

CALLAN
Just sayin'.
He strangles down a sip.

JUNE
It's freezing in here. Where's the thermostat?

CALLAN
Down the hallway.

While she's gone, he pours the tea into a barf bucket he keeps by the couch. She returns and sets a glass of water in front of him now. She has his cellphone.

JUNE
Where's your charger?

CALLAN
The kitchen, I ken.

JUNE
You didn't get any of my texts or calls?

More RUMMAGING in the kitchen. He sets the water aside.

CALLAN
I think it needs a new battery.

She pops her head around the corner.

JUNE
Really? It seems to be charging just fine.

Callan closes his eyes.

INT. CALLAN'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

June notices a stake of Moleskine ledgers on the counter. She opens one and starts reading.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Gaye is on his deathbed. He's on oxygen and his breathing, labored. Callan sits beside him.

GAYE
One's missing.

Bedside is a stack of Moleskine journals.

GAYE
You have to--

CALLAN
I will, old friend. Do not worry.

GAYE
Promise me, Claudius, that you will
draw a little every day.

END FLASHBACK

INT. CALLAN'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

June's back, looking Callan over.

JUNE
You need a shower. Come on.

Callan makes a couple of attempts to stand before he
flounders after her toward the bathroom.

INT. CALLAN'S HOME - BATHROOM - DAY

June only turns the RIGHT knob. Callan begins looking for the
buttons on his shirt. She stops him.

JUNE
In you go, all of you. When we have more
tonic alertness, we'll talk.

She shoves him inside, shuts the shower door behind him.
Fuck, it's freezing. He reaches for the left knob.

JUNE
Oh, no, you don't. Sit down and take it
like a big boy.

Callan sits on a corner bench as told, shivering nonstop.

CALLAN
I'm awake now.

June puts her cellphone on the bathroom counter where he can
see a timer running.

JUNE
Two minutes.

She pulls up a stool and sits.

JUNE
I'm going to ask you a question. And you
are going to tell me the truth.

CALLAN
Okay.

JUNE
When did you move into this house?

CALLAN
Nineteen forty.

JUNE
I don't believe you.

CALLAN
Then why did you ask?

JUNE
The truth, please.

CALLAN
I just told you.

June stands.

JUNE
No, you didn't.

She begins pacing, head down.

JUNE
You didn't tell me how you could occupy a house before you were born. You didn't tell me why you drive a 1937 Packard. You didn't tell me how it is that no one can seem to remember when your gallery opened. You didn't--

The phone timer goes off. June glances at it, then the shower. *The thing in the shower isn't human.* It ROARS at her.

Only one thing to do. June raises a finger.

JUNE
You--put those up.

Callan collapses against the wall and slides down to the seat. June pulls a towel from the sink counter, opens the shower door, and drapes it around him. She kneels.

JUNE
You haven't heard yet, have you?

Guess not. Callan blinks at her. June begins to cry.

JUNE
For all you have suffered, you saved my son.

CALLAN
Tommy's alive?

JUNE
When he showed me his infusion site, I didn't believe him. All his labs came back normal. No one knows what to make of it.

Callan's wondering just how that happened too.

CALLAN
He didn't get the transplant?

JUNE
No need. He's fine. Casey made out like a bandit with a years' worth of gummy worms from Archway and whatever else Chelsea promised her.

CALLAN
He's--really okay?

June nods.

CALLAN
You were supposed to forget me.

June's eyes narrow.

JUNE
So that's how you do it.
(tucking the towel around him)
It didn't work.

CALLAN
I didn't want it to.

JUNE
I'm glad. I never want to forget you.
(helping him stand)
So, this thing you do. It'll be our secret, okay?

CALLAN
You won't--study me?

JUNE
Oh, I'll be scoping you out regularly.
Just not in that way.

He steps out of the shower after her.

CALLAN
I'll outlive you.

JUNE
At the rate you're going, I wouldn't be so sure.

CALLAN
How do we do this?

JUNE
We'll start with something bland.

CALLAN
That's not what I meant.

JUNE
If there's one thing you should realize by now, Viscount--I can deal with you.

CALLAN
I never doubted it for a minute.

She turns and goes toward the kitchen. CABINETS, POTS & PANS shaking and baking. Callan turns to the mirror. Yep, he looks like shit. Better brush those biters, too.

June sticks her head back through the doorway.

JUNE
Just curious. What's your vaccination status?

CALLAN
(brushing)
Cholera, typhoid, polio.

JUNE
The oral ones, okay. Nothing else?

CALLAN
I don't like needles.

JUNE
That's obvious. And how old did you say you were again?

CALLAN
I didn't.
(spits in the sink)
One Hundred One.

JUNE
Wow. Dental work?

CALLAN
Nope.

JUNE
Amazing. Yearly exam? Prostate check?

CALLAN
No.

INT. PHILLY'S ARGOSY - DAY

Elise types at her desk, answering Tommy's fan mail. We follow onscreen. Seated next to her, Gram looks on.

ELISE (V.O.)
Dear Tommy, all of us at *Philly's Argosy* want to thank you for your continued readership. We make every effort to answer our fan mail in a timely manner.

INT. QUEEN ANNE HOME - JUNE'S BATHROOM - DAY

Tommy rocks out to the MUSICAL TOOTHBRUSH THEME "Drac's Got Plaque." *Feelin' good*. Lilly looks around the door facing.

ELISE (O.C.)
It's our goal to give our readers the best in speculative fiction, and we hold our contributors to the highest standard.

LILLY
Food truck burgers?

TOMMY
(around the toothbrush)
Medium rare?

Lilly smiles.

LILLY
We leave in five.

She goes. Tommy continues brushing.

ELISE (O.C.)
The role of Claudius Fallon as written in
"Bad Blood" remains a work of fiction,
and we can neither confirm nor deny the
existence of such a person living in
Eureka Springs today.

Tommy continues brushing, good day to be alive and all that,
when--*holy Godzilla*, for one-coconut, two-coconut, he's staring
down a piranha-jaw remodel like something streaming on Marvel in
the bathroom mirror. Then *brain freeze*, he's back.

ELISE (O.C.)
We would encourage you to check with your
local voter registration office or the
department of motor vehicles. Yours
Truly, Elise Anderson.

Tommy turns off his toothbrush. Lowers it. Reaches across his
body and touches his shoulder. *Donkey balls*.

THE END