

**B L A C K   K I S S   S T I G M A T A**

Written by

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OVER BLACK

1986.

The drub drub drub of early 80s industrial music like Revolting Cocks or Throbbing Gristle or Skinny Puppy. Muffled...

CUT TO:

**INT. TABERNACLE - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT**

...loud now.

DOMINIQUE (20s, a broken angel battling her inner demons) writhes in a sea of dancing GOTHS. Sweaty and sexually charged.

**EXT. TABERNACLE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

A club advertised only by downward stairs and a neon sign that reads "Tabernacle."

Dominique leans against hoodlum lover SEBASTIAN (30s, a dark storm, always set to a low simmer).

She stares out into the void of night. He scans the crowd like a wolf in a den of thieves.

They smoke like it's the last thing they'll ever do.

**INT. TABERNACLE - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT**

Sebastian watches from the bar as Dominique slithers and slinks about the crowded dance floor.

They lock eyes. A seductive smile creeps to her lips. She gives him a "for your eyes only" performance.

**EXT. TABERNACLE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

A vintage muscle car, cherry red and waxed-to-a-sheen, pulls into the lot.

DAG (30s, a mouth as loud as his pornstache) steps out of the car, lights up a cigarette of his own. Surveys the crowd.

ON DOMINIQUE

She glances up at Dag. Acknowledgement in her eyes.

She flicks away her cigarette. Embraces Sebastian.

They share a deep KISS that lasts an eternity.

She breaks from him. Sebastian doesn't move. Keeps a GRIP on her hand.

Dominique tugs at his hand. Sebastian relents. Releases her.

She disappears downwards into the club.

Sebastian sucks down the rest of his cigarette. Pursues her down the stairs...

#### **INT. TABERNACLE - NIGHT**

...to the dance floor. Dominique disappears into the crowd.

Sebastian works his way across the room through frenetic dancing bodies. Each step is its own battle. Every shove from the crowd threatens to ignite Sebastian's temper.

From the bar, he watches Dominique as she flickers in and out of existence beneath the strobing lights.

ON DAG

Dag stares down Dominique. Predatory.

ON SEBASTIAN

Pink-mohawked PONY (30s, nonbinary, knows something about everything) and a small posse of COOL GOTH KIDS join Sebastian at the bar.

The boys jockey for Sebastian's attention. The girls coo and bat their eyes. Pony gives him a big hug.

Sebastian glances to the dance floor.

Dominique is gone.

#### **INT. TABERNACLE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

The red-lit, graffiti-covered bathroom isn't much bigger than the sink and toilet.

Dag studies himself in the mirror. Runs a comb over his mustache. Gives his reflection a shit-eating grin.

Dom watches from her perch on the toilet. Impatient.

Dag turns his toothy grin on her. Produces...

...an ornate GOLD-ETCHED AMPOULE, vaguely feminine in shape.

Inside: a blue honey-like substance.

Dominique stares at it. Watches the fluid churn inside its glass prison.

She reaches for the vial. Hesitates. Pulls her hand back.

Dag raises an eyebrow.

Dominique mulls it over. Relents. She reaches out again.

Dag grabs her wrist. Pulls the cigarette from his mouth. Blows the ash from the tip...

...SINGES it into her palm.

Dominique winces. Bites her lip.

Dag puts the cigarette back between his lips. Tips the vial upside-down over the burn.

A slow-forming drop peeks out of a tiny hole; he taps the other end and the droplet hits her wound.

ON DOM

It hits her like an ORGASMIC TSUNAMI.

Eyes cloud fully blue.

Mouth screaming...

...nothingness.

Oblivion overcomes her.

Dominique's body slides

... s l o w   m o t i o n ...

...to the floor.

The world crumbles...

...to a hazy...

...echoing...

...static.

In her peripheral vision...Sebastian, out of focus...a million miles away...BURSTS through the door. Sets upon Dag with a FURY of FISTS.

The ampoule...

...falls...

...to...

...the...

...ground.

It rolls across the stained floor. Into her waiting hand.

She crawls across the floor towards the door. Ignores the scuffle above her.

**INT. TABERNACLE - NIGHT**

Dominique emerges from the bathroom. BLISSSED out.

floats

across

the dance floor

The world around her WARPS and WARBLES to the beat. Every light pulses. Leaves a fading tracer in its wake.

The crowd around her...BLURS of COLOR and LIGHT...

She exits...

**EXT. TABERNACLE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

...out onto the sidewalk. Into the street. Unaware of the SPEEDING CAR bearing down on her.

A BLARING HORN. SCREECHING TIRES.

Sebastian jerks her out of the path of oncoming death.

Dominique's world goes black.

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

The studio is small. Cramped.

Laundry and books are strewn about the room. Paint supplies discarded in a corner against a stack of covered canvases.

Against the wall, a large painting of Sebastian. A loose interpretation made with a thousand hurried strokes.

ON THE BED

Sebastian sits hunched on the edge. Head low, glaring. At the bloody knuckles of his scarred fists. At the prison tattoo that reads "DOMINIQUE" along his wrist.

He turns his gaze to the other side of the bed where Dominique huddles, her face resting against her pulled up knees.

SEBASTIAN

You promised you were done.

Dominique stares into space. Bleary eyes and a raw, red nose from the aftermath of crying and coming down.

DOMINIQUE

So did you.

Sebastian glances down at his wounded knuckles again, relaxes clenched fists.

He reaches out to her. Runs his hand tenderly across her exposed thigh.

Dominique glares at him. There's a fire in her eyes.

Sebastian's shoulders sink. Dominique rolls away from him.

Sebastian stands. Resentful. He glances back at Dominique.

ON DOM

Tears in her eyes.

Sebastian sighs in frustration. Disappears into...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

...the bathroom.

Sebastian washes the blood slowly from his hands. Stares at his reflection in the mirror.

At the nose that's been broken too many times. At the tiny scars slashed across his brow and cheeks and lip. At the face aged by too many years of hard living.

**EXT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

CRACK!

Sebastian BATTERS a DEGENERATE (30s, sloppy drunk) against a brick wall.

Behind him, EDDIE DOWNTOWN (60s, smug wannabe gangster) watches on gleefully.

Sebastian pummels the man's face with a brutal right cross. The drunk man crumples to the ground. Coughs up blood through broken teeth.

Eddie motions for Sebastian to stop.

Sebastian delivers a final kick to the man. Backs away. Catches Dominique--dressed in a cocktail waitress outfit--watching from the doorway.

She stares at him. Horrified.

Sebastian's shoulders sink.

END FLASHBACK

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Dominique is fast asleep when Sebastian returns.

He strips out of his clothes. Slides into bed and wraps his arms around her. Her breathing is slow. Hypnotic.

Sebastian drifts off to sleep...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER**

CLOSE ON

The gold ampoule. A single drop hangs suspended from its opening.

DRIP

The drop falls...

DRIP

A second drops falls...

CUT TO:

Dominique stands in front of a television set, her body lit by the glow of the TV's screen playing dead air static.

In the static...a single whisper, then a chorus of whispers.

Dominique inches closer to the screen. Presses her palm against the glass.

DOMINIQUE

I see you.

She smiles. Caresses the television. Gasps quietly at the sensation of electricity coursing through her.

She pushes her body against the TV.

The TV screen takes on shape, long and phallic: a protruding, probing tentacle of static that moves up Dominique's thigh.

Another gasp from her lips.

She writhes slowly against the buzzing static. Runs her hands along the frame. Her hips sway and grind against the television.

A dark, viscous fluid drips down her thigh, leaving a puddle of black to collect at her feet.

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)

Dom?

Sebastian stands behind her. His fingers come to a rest on her bare shoulder.

Dominique turns on him. Her face...

...is NOT her own. Twisted flesh and vacant eyes.



She screams a banshee scream at him.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

--startles awake. Rolls over to find the bed empty.

He bolts upright. Sees Dominique standing at the window, staring out at the early morning sky over the city.

He drags himself out of bed with a small groan. Embraces her.

Dominique relaxes into his arms. Takes his hands into hers and kisses his scabbed knuckles.

Sebastian presses his face against her hair. Kisses her head.

She shivers against him.

SEBASTIAN

You're freezing. How long have you been up?

Dominique shrugs.

Sebastian yanks the duvet from the bed. Wraps her in it.

She turns into his arms. Looks up into his eyes.

He kisses her.

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

Sebastian turns on the hot water faucet in the tub.

Dominique arrives at the doorway. She bites her lower lip.

DOMINIQUE

Last night...

SEBASTIAN

It's okay.

DOMINIQUE

No. I shouldn't have...I mean...Can we start over? No more bullshit?

SEBASTIAN

No more bullshit.

The lip bite turns into a full smile.

Sebastian holds his arm out. Dominique surrenders the duvet, strips and slides into the steaming tub.

DOMINIQUE  
We should go out tonight. Just you  
and me. A real date.

Sebastian checks his watch. His face sours.

SEBASTIAN  
Fuck.

DOMINIQUE  
Late again?

Sebastian hurries into the bedroom. Dominique watches him get dressed through the doorway.

DOMINIQUE  
I saw God last night.

SEBASTIAN  
What?

DOMINIQUE  
She said I don't have to be afraid  
anymore.

SEBASTIAN  
You spoke to God?

DOMINIQUE  
Yes.

SEBASTIAN  
What are you afraid of?

DOMINIQUE  
I...nothing. Nothing at all.

Sebastian returns. Leans in for a lingering kiss.

SEBASTIAN  
Well maybe next time you can  
introduce me.

DOMINIQUE  
You don't believe me.

SEBASTIAN  
I love you.

DOMINIQUE  
I know.

Sebastian is lost in her eyes. Doesn't move.

She splashes him.

DOMINIQUE

Go!

Sebastian--

**EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - DAY**

--exits down the black painted stoop.

Past the blue mailbox. Past the shaggy HOMELESS GUY who lives at the bus stop. Past the bodega with the sleepy cat out front.

**INT. PAROLE OFFICE - DAY**

HOBBS (40s, wet mop) sits behind a tiny, cluttered desk.

Studies the file laid out in front of him. He doesn't bother to look up at--

Sebastian, sits across from him on a too small chair in the closet-sized office. Disinterested.

HOBBS

Still over at the County Shelter?

SEBASTIAN

Yup.

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY**

A dozen caged dogs bark up a chorus of fear and pain.

HOBBS (V.O.)

Good. Kowalczyk?

Sebastian enters through the back door. Tries not to make eye contact with KOWALCZYK (50s, sick of this shit).

The rotund man glances up at the clock. Glares at Sebastian from behind a stack of paperwork.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)

Still an asshole.

Sebastian dons a rubber apron. Grabs a mop. Starts his routine.

**INT. PAROLE OFFICE - DAY**

Hobbs turns a page in the file.

HOBBS  
He is indeed. How is the temper?  
Any problems lately?

SEBASTIAN  
Nope.

Hobbs glances up at him.

Sebastian steals a look at his scabbed hands.

SEBASTIAN  
I'm dandy.

HOBBS  
Meetings?

SEBASTIAN  
Twice a week.

**INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY**

A Narcotics Anonymous meeting in progress.

A YOUNG WOMAN (30s, seen some shit) waves her arms in the air as she speaks. Passionate. Determined.

Sebastian watches her intently. Rubs his sweaty palms up and down his upper legs.

HOBBS (V.O.)  
And how is that going for you?

**INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - LATER**

The same woman hands Sebastian a SOBRIETY CHIP.

On it: An upside-down triangle and circle motif emblazoned with the numeral II.

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)  
Yeah, it's great. All great.

**INT. PAROLE OFFICE - DAY**

Hobbs tics off a few boxes in the file with his pen.

HOBBS  
Good. Home life?

SEBASTIAN  
Fine. Great.

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

Dominique soaks in the hot bath, sucks on a cigarette.

HOBBS (V.O.)  
Still living with...

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)  
Dominique. Yeah.

DOMINIQUE  
(singing, in French;  
subtitled)  
*At a clear fountain...  
When going for a walk...  
I found the water so beautiful...  
That I bathed there...  
I have loved you for a long  
time...  
I will never forget you...*

A thump in the other room interrupts her.

DOMINIQUE  
Hello?

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

Dominique, dripping wet and clad in a towel, tiptoes into the studio. Looks around.

The room is empty.

She spots the gold ampoule resting on the television set.

HOBBS (V.O.)  
How is she doing?

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)  
Good. She's good. We're good.

**INT. PAROLE OFFICE - DAY**

Hobbs studies Sebastian. Doesn't believe him.

HOBBS

I am obligated to remind you that as a condition of your parole, both you and your living space must remain drug and alcohol free at all times.

SEBASTIAN

Of course.

Hobbs reaches into his desk. Produces a piss cup. Sets it firmly on the desk.

HOBBS

Last thing before you go.

Sebastian scowls at the cup, then up at Hobbs.

HOBBS

Please.

Sebastian doesn't move. Hobbs waits.

Sebastian sighs. Stands. Unzips. Hobbs watches. Indifferent.

Sebastian pisses into the cup. Disgraced.

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

Dominique sits in the steaming bathwater. Holds the gold ampoule up to her face.

She turns the vial to and fro. Watches the thick blue liquid glow in the morning sunlight. A faint static sound beckons her from inside the glass.

Dominique sets the vial down on the edge of the tub. Takes a deep breath.

Presses the lit cigarette into her palm. Into the wound from the night previous.

SIZZLE.

She clenches her teeth together.

The vial is opened.

A single drop...

Eyes cloud. Mouth screams silently. Static echoes in her ears.

Her body revolts. Water splashes out onto the floor. The vial falls from her hand onto the tiled floor.

Time f r e e z e s for a moment...

Then...

The world turns upside down.

She grabs at the slick edges of the tub. The bottom of the bathtub gives way. Her grasp slips.

She...

...sinks...

...into...

...the watery void.

#### UNDERWATER

The light of the bathroom dims as she falls away from reality.

Something...some THINGS...swim around her, their midnight shapes slithering like black eels in ink.

She REACHES for the diminishing light. FORCES herself upwards.

#### OUTSIDE THE TUB

The surface is covered in a thick membrane. She screams and claws at the impenetrable film.

She's sucked down back into the void. Into nothingness.

The water in the tub calms. Empty of any indication that Dominique had ever been there.

#### INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

Kowalczyk is long gone.

Sebastian hangs up his apron. Returns his cleaning supplies to the cabinet. He stops at one of the occupied cages on the way out.

The dog inside growls. Teeth bared.

Sebastian pulls a small treat from his pocket. Holds it against the cage.

The dog slowly moves towards him. Sniffs the air. Close enough now to lick his fingers. She accepts the treat.

SEBASTIAN

Good girl.

Sebastian slides his fingers between the bars, gives the dog a soft scratch under her chin.

The dog stares up at him with big, pleading eyes.

SEBASTIAN  
Yeah, I know. Me too.

**INT. PONY'S EMPORIUM - DAY**

The store is a junkyard of stolen goods and used records.

Pony chain-smokes behind the counter. Haggles with a PUNK (too young, too dumb) over a small pile of pilfered items.

Pony holds up a twenty dollar bill.

PONY  
Twenty bucks.

PUNK  
Fuck you, bitch! Worth way more than that!

PONY  
You want the cash or what?

The kid agitates.

PUNK  
Should kick your ass is what.

Sebastian appears behind the kid. Stares down at him.

SEBASTIAN  
Take the cash.

The punk spooks. Snatches the money. Bolts from the store.

Sebastian hands Pony a record pulled from the bins.

PONY  
So how's it feel to be back,  
*muchacho?*

SEBASTIAN  
Different.

PONY  
Yeah? World's a different place,  
man. Lot's changed since you went  
in. Punch Bowl's gone. Ricky,  
too...Beth's kid brother? He died.



SEBASTIAN

No shit?

PONY

Yeah man. Fuckin' yuppies bought it up, turned it into a goddamned frozen yogurt shop.

SEBASTIAN

No, Ricky...

PONY

Auto-erotic asphyxiation. Shit way to go.

Pony looks over the record.

PONY

You're gonna like this one.

Pony rings up the record. Pauses.

PONY

Listen. I...I know I shoulda come see you while you were inside.

Sebastian looks away. Won't meet Pony's gaze.

SEBASTIAN

Don't worry about it.

PONY

No, man. It was a real dick move. I fully cop to it. I wanted to, I really did. I just...

SEBASTIAN

I know.

PONY

I tried to look after Dom while you were gone.

SEBASTIAN

Thanks.

PONY

Nah, you're not hearing me. I TRIED. But...

SEBASTIAN

What?

Now it's Pony's turn to be uncomfortable.

PONY

Ah...Nothing. Forget it. I'm just talkin' out my ass...

SEBASTIAN

Fucking say it, Pony.

Pony meets Sebastian's glare.

PONY

Alright, so listen. After you went in, Dominique didn't exactly stick around, y'know?

SEBASTIAN

No, I don't know.

PONY

Like, she stopped showing up at Tabernacle. Stopped answering the phone. Stopped hanging out. I heard she even stopped working for Eddie Downtown. I mean duh, no shit, right? But then I tried to check in on her, like you asked me, yeah? Could never get her to answer the door. I thought maybe...well you know...

SEBASTIAN

What?

PONY

After that shit with Dag last night...

SEBASTIAN

She's not using again.

PONY

Hey hey, I'm not saying she is. And that crackhead deserved it either way, you ask me--

SEBASTIAN

She's not using.

PONY

Yeah. Yeah, ok. Toldja...talkin' out my ass.

Sebastian points to a battered music box behind Pony.

SEBASTIAN

Let me see that.

Pony pulls the box from the shelf. Hands it off.

Sebastian opens it. A fragile ballerina spins around in the center of the box as a tinny tune winds out.

Sebastian snaps the box shut.

**EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT**

Sebastian heads home. Record under his arm. Music box in hand.

Past the bodega where the cat hisses at him.

Past the homeless guy at the bus stop who scratches bloody marks into his own head and screams obscenities at no one on particular.

Past the mailbox spattered with new upside-down triangles and circles graffiti.

Up the red painted stoop and into--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

--the apartment. It's quiet. Dark.

Sebastian scans the room. Concerned.

SEBASTIAN

Dom?

He checks the bathroom...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

...empty.

Sebastian flicks on the light. The tub is still full of water.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - LATER**

--stands at the window. Stares out at the city.

He finishes a cigarette. Stamps it out in the overflowing ashtray next to him. Lights another.

He paces the room. Back and forth. Anxious. Frustrated.

Angry.

Sebastian grabs the bedside phone. Dials a number.

SEBASTIAN  
 Hey it's Sebastian...yeah...hey  
 listen, you seen Dom today?...no I  
 just wanted to check...thanks...

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 ...Have you seen Dominique?

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 ...is she...

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 ...missing...

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 ...looking for her...

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 ...if you see her...

Dials again.

SEBASTIAN  
 Mrs. Boucher?...Sebastian...wait  
 no, don't hang up! You haven't  
 heard from Dom have you? No I  
 know...I just...yeah, Yes...I  
 understand. Yes. Yes. If you--

He's hung up on. He smashes the receiver down.

**EXT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT**

Sebastian approaches a red velvet door in an otherwise empty alley. BRANDO (30s, large and in charge) guards the entrance.

BRANDO

Do my fuckin' eyes deceive me or  
is that Sebastian rollin' up on my  
motherfuckin' door right now?

SEBASTIAN

Brando.

The two men share a quick bro hug.

BRANDO

I ain't seen you in a minute.  
Heard you was doin' a deuce  
upstate.

SEBASTIAN

Early release. You seen Dom  
lately?

BRANDO

Not in a dog's age. What's up?

SEBASTIAN

Not sure. Eddie in?

BRANDO

Always.

Sebastian reaches for the door. Brando stops him.

BRANDO

He's gonna wanna whip your ass,  
you go in there.

SEBASTIAN

He can try.

Brando smiles a conspiratorial smirk. Follows Sebastian--

### **INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT**

--into the dark, smokey club. It looks like its 1930s namesake  
in both vibe and decor.

WAITRESSES dressed in rhinestones and tiny top hats circle the  
busy room. Take drink orders from the crowd of HIPSTERS and OLD  
MEN in suits.

Eddie sits at the back of the room with a BLONDE WOMAN (20s,  
impressionable). They watch the sultry LOUNGE SINGER on stage.

Her face is all but hidden in shadow, save for her large red  
lips. She croons and sways through a version of "Total  
Depravity" by The Veils.

LOUNGE SINGER

(singing)

*Asked my mother what went wrong...  
She said it's been bad all  
along...  
And you'd better face the butcher  
straight...  
You don't want to end up on his  
plate, so...  
Try to look away and I fail...*

Sebastian approaches the table. Eddie's attention breaks from the stage.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

You motherfucker.

SEBASTIAN

Eddie...

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

You got brass balls coming back here.

SEBASTIAN

It's important...

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Brando...

Eddie motions to his bouncer.

SEBASTIAN

Wait. Hear me out. You owe me for keeping my mouth shut...

Eddie chuckles to his date.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

You hear this fuckin' prick? It's like I said...brass balls. Alright kid, tell me why I shouldn't have Brando dropkick your thick skull into next week?

SEBASTIAN

Dominque's missing.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Why the fuck would I give a shit? I toldja not to get involved with that girl and did you listen?

SEBASTIAN

I--

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

No you did not. And now you come back here askin' for my help? Get the fuck outta here.

SEBASTIAN

Just ask around for me. Find out if anyone's seen her lately.

Eddie stares him down.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

No.

SEBASTIAN

No...

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

You heard me. The two of you together ain't nothing but bad news rolled up in a shit sandwich. Wherever she is, I ain't seen her and I don't wanna.

Eddie motions to Brando. Sebastian puts up hands. Backs away.

SEBASTIAN

You're a real piece of shit, Eddie.

Sebastian storms off. Eddie calls out to him.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Enjoy your freedom while it lasts, kid...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Sebastian enters the apartment. Throws his keys across the room. Strips off his coat. Angry.

He sits on the floor. Leans against the bed. Stares at the ceiling--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

--lit by the glow of blue faerie lights strung across it.

Dominique and Sebastian lay naked in bed. Eyes big with drug-induced euphoria. Post-coital bliss.

Dominique holds a polaroid camera above them. Snaps a photo.

SEBASTIAN  
Shit! I'm fucking blind!

DOMINIQUE  
One more...

She raises the camera up again. Purses her lips into a pout.

SNAP!

SEBASTIAN  
Enough. Enough!

Dominique giggles. Drops the camera next to them.

DOMINIQUE  
Grouch.

Dominique traces the tattoos on Sebastian's chest.

DOMINIQUE  
You think this is all there is?

SEBASTIAN  
What?

DOMINIQUE  
You know...this. Is this it? Is this all there is to the world?

SEBASTIAN  
I think no matter where you go, it's all the same shit, just a different coat of paint.

DOMINIQUE  
Fuck that.

SEBASTIAN  
What's gotten into you?

DOMINIQUE  
I'm bored. Aren't you bored?

SEBASTIAN  
Don't have time to be bored.

DOMINIQUE  
(in French, subtitled)  
"Who does not move forward,  
recedes..."

SEBASTIAN  
Stop.  
(MORE)



SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You know I don't know what you're saying...

Dominique motions to their apartment.

DOMINIQUE

Is this going to be the rest of our life? This shithole apartment. The club. You playing thug for Eddie. Don't you want...more?

SEBASTIAN

More what?

DOMINIQUE

I don't know. More anything. Like, let's get the fuck out of here. Pack our shit, give Eddie the finger and just disappear into the world. Go find our next adventure.

SEBASTIAN

Someday...

DOMINIQUE

Someday.

SEBASTIAN

Someday.

Dominique sighs. Slides off Sebastian and the bed.

DOMINIQUE

I gotta pee.

She disappears into the bathroom.

Sebastian stares up at the faerie lights on the ceiling. They blink and glow...

...become STARS in the cosmos. Sebastian watches CLOUDS swirl across the night sky full of colors.

His jaw clenches and grinds. The junkie smile. Then--

A CRASH. In the bathroom.

SEBASTIAN

Dom?

Sebastian bolts from bed. Bangs on the locked door.

SEBASTIAN

Open the door.

No response.

SEBASTIAN  
Open the door!

He throws his shoulder hard in the door. Breaks the door frame.

The door swings open to reveal--

Dominique.

Face down on the floor. Unconscious.

END FLASHBACK

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Sebastian looks over to the bathroom. The open GOLD AMPOULE rests on the floor, just under the tub.

He--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

--picks the ampoule up. Realization dawns...

...then FURY.

**EXT. TABERNACLE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT**

Dag--sporting a fresh black eye and swollen nose--sits in his car, shares a huge blunt with a TEEN GIRL.

He spots Sebastian storming towards the car.

DAG  
Oh fuck no...

Dag reaches into the glove box, pulls out...

...a small PISTOL.

He steps out of the car...

...is INTERCEPTED by Sebastian, who uses the open door to PIN the thug back against the car.

SEBASTIAN  
Where is she, Dag?

He opens and SLAMS the door hard against Dag again. Dag's grip on the pistol loosens. Sebastian grabs it.

DAG  
Fuck man!

TEEN GIRL  
Leave him alone!

Sebastian waves the gun at the girl. She screams.

SEBASTIAN  
Go home.

Teen Girl exits the passenger side in a panic. Scurries away down the block.

Sebastian turns his attention back to Dag. Presses the car door hard against him.

SEBASTIAN  
Where the FUCK is she, Dag?

DAG  
I swear man. I ain't seen her since last night!

SLAM!

Sebastian BASHES Dag with door again, knocking the wind from him. Cracks a rib.

Dag GASPS and CRIES out in pain.

DAG  
Fuck man, I dunno! I DON'T KNOW!

Sebastian pulls the vial from his pocket.

SEBASTIAN  
What's this? What'd you give her?

DAG  
I dunno man...something I ganked off the Slav...

Sebastian loosens his grip on the door. Dag falls to one knee.

SEBASTIAN  
Kazimir? You in with the Slav now?

DAG  
Yeah nah. Nah man. Not like that.

SEBASTIAN  
You stole from the fuckin' Slav?  
And gave it to Dom.

DAG

You got me wrong, 'Bastian! She came to ME. She was beggin', man.

Sebastian jerks Dag to his feet. Drags him to the trunk.

SEBASTIAN

Open it.

Dag unlocks the trunk.

SEBASTIAN

Get in.

DAG

What for?

Sebastian PISTOL WHIPS him across the face. If Dag's nose wasn't broken before, it is now.

Dag cries and whimpers. Clutches his bloody face.

Sebastian shoves him into the trunk. SLAMS the lid.

**EXT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - NIGHT**

Dag's car pulls up in front of a nondescript Butcher's Shop.

Sebastian sits behind the wheel. Thinks over his next move.

Breathes in. Breathes out. Fingers tap out a nervous rhythm on the steering wheel. One more deep breath--

He bursts from the driver's seat. Opens the trunk.

DAG

You fucking asshole! What are--

CRACK!

Another punch to the face stuns Dag.

DAG

Fuck! FUCK!

Sebastian pulls Dag out of the trunk. Drags him to shop's door.

Dag sees the store front. Eyes go wide. Panic.

DAG

Hold up man. C'mon! Your girl, wherever she is, she ain't in there, I fuckin' promise you man. We ain't gotta go in there...

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - NIGHT**

The interior of the shop glows under fluorescent lighting.

Behind the counter is THE BUTCHER (40s, Slavic), a massive brick wall of a man covered hands to elbows in blood and viscera from the slab of meat he chops away at with his blade.

He doesn't look up when Sebastian drags Dag through the door.

Sebastian shoves Dag into the counter.

SEBASTIAN

Tell the Slav I want to talk.

The Butcher CHOP CHOP CHOPS away at the meat slab, eyes focused down on the task at hand.

Sebastian glances around. Spies the closed-circuit camera above the counter trained on them.

CHOP CHOP CHOP.

The phone on the wall behind The Butcher rings.

He picks up the receiver. Listens. Nods. Motions to Sebastian and Dag to follow him into the back.

Dag throws one last desperate look at Sebastian.

Sebastian--

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - FREEZER - NIGHT**

--walks closely behind Dag. Shoves him every few steps.

The Butcher leads them through a cascade of red-stained plastic sheet strips.

Through the PIG CARCASSES in airtight plastic bags that hang on ceiling hooks.

To the sliding red metal door that opens up into...

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - BACK ROOM - NIGHT -  
CONTINUOUS**

...a large, antiseptic room. Empty but for a large metal table.

The Butcher leaves. Dag taps his foot on the floor. Nervous.

DAG

We shouldn't be here, man.

SEBASTIAN  
Shut the fuck up.

The Butcher wheels in a decrepit, wheelchair-bound man, KAZIMIR (70s, Slavic, quietly malevolent). He positions Kazimir behind the table. Exits.

The room falls silent save for Kazimir's wheezing breath.

Sebastian reaches into his pocket. Produces the gold ampoule and sets it down on the table.

Kazimir's eyes widen. Dag sweats. Sebastian stares.

Kazimir points a long, spidery finger at Sebastian.

KAZIMIR  
I do not know you...

He turns the finger to Dag.

KAZIMIR  
But you, you I know, yes?

DAG  
Kaz--

Behind Dag...

...The Butcher APPEARS. Wraps a PLASTIC BAG around Dag's head.

Dag struggles against the man and the tightening bag.

The Butcher DRAGS Dag from the room. The door SLAMS shut. The horrible, guttural sounds of Dag's SCREAMS and the Butcher's knife going to work ECHO through the walls.

Sebastian flinches. Looks away.

Dag's screams come to an abrupt stop. Sebastian looks back up to meet Kazimir's gaze.

Kazimir stares back, a curious smile etched onto withered lips.

KAZIMIR  
And you? What is your name,  
friend?

SEBASTIAN  
Sebastian.

KAZIMIR  
Sebastian.

The name rolls off his tongue like he's tasting it for the first time.

KAZIMIR

Why have you come to bother old Kazimir?

Sebastian motions to the ampoule.

SEBASTIAN

What's in the vial?

Kazimir's eyes light up.

KAZIMIR

A gift from the Goddess below. A very special gift indeed. Tell me, my friend, how has it come to be in your hands?

SEBASTIAN

I'm looking for a girl...she had this on her before she went missing.

KAZIMIR

Mm. I see. Perhaps then she was already lost, I think.

Sebastian's temper rises.

SEBASTIAN

Lost where?

KAZIMIR

Who's to say? Lost is lost.

Kazimir waves Sebastian away.

KAZIMIR

Go home, Sebastian. Forget you were here. Forget old Kazimir. This? This is not for you.

Sebastian pulls the gun from his belt. Points it at Kazimir.

SEBASTIAN

It's important I find her.

Kazimir clucks his tongue in disappointment but the smile does not leave his face.

KAZIMIR

My friend, I cannot give what I do not have. You have maybe come to the wrong place.

Sebastian keeps the gun pointed at Kazimir. A stalemate.

KAZIMIR

I see. Very well...

Kazimir motions at him to lower the gun. A tense moment passes before Sebastian relents.

KAZIMIR

Tell me, which hand do you favor?

Sebastian doesn't understand the question.

Kazimir ponders, then...

KAZIMIR

Left it is, then.

The Butcher again. GRABS Sebastian. FORCES his left hand flat onto the table. Palm up.

Kazimir holds up his left hand, reveals a massive BURN SCAR at the center of his palm.

KAZIMIR

One drop lifts the veil.

Kazimir holds up his right. Another scar.

KAZIMIR

Two drops show you the truth of the world.

Kazimir produces a BLOWTORCH. Ignites it...

SEBASTIAN

Wait. Wait!

The FLAME is applied to Sebastian's hand.

Sebastian struggles but doesn't cry out. Clenches his teeth and glares at Kazimir. Sweat pours down his face.

Kazimir opens the gold ampoule.

KAZIMIR

Three drops...

Kazimir shakes his head and clucks his tongue. He administers a single drop.



KAZIMIR  
Goodbye, Sebastian.

Sebastian's eyes cloud. Mouth screams silently. Static echoes in his ears.

A RAPID FLASH OF IMAGES

--Sebastian's dilating EYE.

--Dominique's radiant face. She SMILES lovingly.

--an OCEAN made of a thousand shades of blue.

--Sebastian and Dominique, their nude bodies ENTWINED.

--Sebastian and Dominique in close-up. Kissing. Blood pours from their mouths.

--screaming Dominique. Raging and vengeful.

--an upside down triangle and circle with an arcane symbol at its center, THE TRIGON MOON, flashes in black and white.

--black EELS slithering in the murky VOID.

--a sea of BLOOD splashing.

--Dominique. DEAD eyes. Face pale and clammy from an overdose.

--something AWFUL and COSMIC. Wetslick FLESH and alien eyes.

--Kazimir's laughing face, distorted like a funhouse mirror.

Sebastian--

**EXT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - NIGHT**

--dry heaves against Dag's car. The car's red paint refracts with a dull hum under the street light.

He wipes the spit from his wet lips.

In the reflection of the polished car paint, Sebastian sees a shadowy form looming over him. Hears a faint CHITTERING sound.

He spins, fists up...

...nothing.

Sebastian looks up and down the sidewalk.

Empty.

He--

**EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT**

--lurches along the empty street. Eyes wide and disoriented. Shivering.

Every light pulses. Leaves a fading tracer in its wake. He stops to clear his head.

He lights a cigarette in front of a dark storefront window. The lighter shakes in his hand. He stares at his reflection caught in a cacophony of colors.

Dominique appears from the shadows on the other side of the glass. No more than a ghostly reflection.

SEBASTIAN

Where are you?

Sebastian places his bloody hand against the window. Dominique responds in kind.

**INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

A tableau vivant.

Sebastian huddles against Dominique. His face and hands are a mess of bruises and blood. The aftermath of a brutal fight.

She cradles him in her arms. Her face wet with tears.

DOMINIQUE

I see you...I know you're not okay...that it makes you feel so alone...that what you need is just someone to be with you...to see the hurt inside...to see the pain...that the pain is the only way you can get someone to care about you...without that pain, you feel even more alone...

END FLASHBACK

**EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT**

Sebastian's mouth trembles. His expression falters.

Dominique steps back from the window. Disappears into the waiting shadows.

Sebastian steps away. Leaves a bloody handprint on the glass.  
He collapses onto a nearby bus stop bench. His head drops.  
He's all alone.

WHISPER (PRE-LAP)  
Sebastian...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

Sebastian's eyes open slowly.

SEBASTIAN'S POV

Someone is sitting next to him, out of focus...

His eyes snap open--

There's no one there.

Sebastian feels a lump in his pocket. Reaches in and pulls out--

The gold ampoule. The blue of its contents glows in the early morning sunlight.

**INT. PONY'S EMPORIUM - DAY**

Pony stands behind the counter. Inspects the gold ampoule in their hand.

PONY  
You really went to see the Slav?

Sebastian paces the store like a caged animal. Waves his bandaged hand at Pony.

PONY  
Remember Billy G.? Used to sell us crank back in the day? He started slinging rock and pussy for the Slav.

SEBASTIAN  
Yeah, I heard.

PONY  
Did you also hear the cops found him stuffed into the back of a Hyundai last year?

(MORE)

PONY (CONT'D)  
Eyes gouged out, his own dick  
shoved down his throat.

SEBASTIAN  
So?

PONY  
So who do you think put him there?  
Wasn't Mother fuckin' Teresa. The  
Slav found out he was skimming off  
the top.

SEBASTIAN  
Billy G. was a idiot.

PONY  
Yeah, well so are you if you went  
up against the Slav. Be happy you  
got to walk away with that boo-boo  
hand.

Pony holds the vial up to the light.

PONY  
Can I hold on to this?

SEBASTIAN  
No.

Pony pouts. Hands the vial back.

PONY  
She really worth all this?

Sebastian glares.

SEBASTIAN  
I need to find her.

PONY  
And then what?

**EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT**

The sky threatens rain.

Sebastian stands at the apex of the bridge.

He stares out at the water. At the gulls floating on the wind.

There's a ringing in his ears. It rises to a painful decibel.

The world around him dims.

**EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

Dominique walks several paces ahead of Sebastian. Dressed inappropriately for the weather. Sick from a recent drug binge.

Tears drip heavy black makeup from around her bloodshot eyes.

Sebastian fumes.

SEBASTIAN  
C'mon, wait a minute...

DOMINIQUE  
Go away!

She picks up the pace.

SEBASTIAN  
I was just trying to help...

DOMINIQUE  
Stop telling me what I can and  
can't do!

Sebastian jogs to catch up. Places a hand on her shoulder. She spins away to the railing overlooking the river.

Sebastian joins at her side. Careful not to set her off again.

Dominique watches the SEAGULLS soar in circles around the riverbanks in search of food.

DOMINIQUE  
(in French; subtitled)  
"When the cage is ready the bird  
is flown."

SEBASTIAN  
What?

A beat, then--

DOMINIQUE  
I just wish I could fly away.

SEBASTIAN  
Where would you go?

DOMINIQUE  
Higher than I've ever been. Up and  
up and up. Never come back down.

She leaves the railing. Doesn't wait for Sebastian.

She walks along the curb, arms outstretched like a high-wire act. Holds her hand out towards traffic. Dares the speeding cars to take her life.

END FLASHBACK

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

HOOOONK!

Sebastian snaps back to reality. Finds himself stood in the middle of the street as it pisses down rain.

A car is stopped inches from him.

DRIVER

Asshole!

Sebastian flips the car off as it passes him.

He looks around. Confusion.

He doesn't know where he is.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT - LATER**

Sebastian wanders the street in search of refuge from the torrential rain.

The neighborhood around him is dark and foreboding. Wet, black buildings all but hidden in blacker shadows.

Everything is closed. Lights off. Doors locked.

Only the glow of the moon reflected on soaked pavement illuminates the streets around him.

He ducks under a tattered awning that offers a sliver of dry space. Lights up a cigarette.

A CHITTING sound whispers out from a nearby alley. Something moves within the shadows.

Sebastian squints. Tries to see what's in the alley, but it's already gone.

More CHITTING. From the other side of the street. Closer.

Sebastian spots another shadow that disappears into the darkness before he can focus on it.

He flicks out his cigarette and hurries away from the sound and moving shadows.

A chorus of CHITTERING breaks out behind him. Louder.

Closer still.

His eyes scan up and down the block. Comes to a stop on a storefront lit by a single dim bulb.

He picks up the pace. Crosses the street to the entrance.

On the door, an old iron sign.

BEDLAM.

Below it, another sign, handmade.

OPEN.

Sebastian pulls on the door handle. Locked.

The THINGS hidden in shadow have almost reached him now.

Click click click.

The horrible sound like gnashing teeth louder still.

Sebastian finds the doorbell. Jams his finger into the button.

Nothing.

He presses it again. And again.

Glances over his shoulder in desperation.

The entire street behind him has disappeared into a murky blackness.

The CHITTERING is deafening.

SFX  
BUZZZZZZZ!

The door unlocks. Sebastian throws himself through the doorway and slams the door behind him.

**INT. BEDLAM - FOYER - NIGHT**

The building's foyer is small. Sparsely decorated in a way that looks as if it's been untouched for decades.

An elevator beckons him from the far end of the room. A red light glows above open doors.

Sebastian steps into the carriage. The elevator--

**INT. BEDLAM - ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

--is an antique, caged thing. Looks far older than the building that houses it.

Sebastian presses the single, triangle-shaped button. The elevator descends.

And descends...

And descends...

And descends...

And JARS to a stop.

Sebastian--

**INT. BEDLAM - NIGHT**

--steps from the elevator into what looks like an occult and oddities book store mixed with an old-fashioned parlor.

The decor is 70s-era occult hedonism--tapestries, lush ferns and potted plants, antique furniture.

Floral Tiffany lamps cast warm, low lighting around the room. A large rainbow flag hangs over a doorway to another room.

SEBASTIAN

Hello?

No response.

Sebastian circles the room. Slow. Cautious.

He stops at a tall bookshelf crammed full of old hardbound books, paperbacks, and occult ephemera.

His fingers trace along the book. Come to a stop on a hefty ornate tome marked with a wood print illustration of a nude woman on its spine.

He hesitates. Looks around.

Still alone.

He pulls the book off the shelf. Opens it.



The pages inside are written in an unfamiliar language alongside elaborate, esoteric drawings of deviant sex with strange flora and even stranger fauna.

He closes the book. Returns it to the shelf. Picks up a small but heavy FERTILITY IDOL.

Its features are a mashup between disfigured feminine bodies and squid tentacles. Cosmic horror carved in stone.

The faintest noise of static hums in his ears.

A FLASH

Dominique. Feral. Smiling. Darkness lurking behind her eyes and clenched teeth.

Sebastian rubs at his temples.

TALIA (O.S.)  
Like what you see?

Sebastian turns to see TALIA (40s but timeless, a Bohemian Witch with seduction on her tongue and danger in her eyes) stood in the doorway.

She's dressed in a long, revealing paisley robe and a smile that's started wars. Her long hair cascades across the length of her body.

SEBASTIAN  
I--

There's hesitation in his voice. He sets the idol back on the shelf.

Talia motions to the idol.

TALIA  
It's a Sumerian idol of Rebirth.  
Meant to bring good fortune to  
those who believe...

SEBASTIAN  
Do you?

TALIA  
Believe? Well...I believe it holds  
up books real well.

She winks and grins. Strides across the room. Extends her hand.

TALIA  
Talía. And you are?

Sebastian doesn't take her hand.

SEBASTIAN  
Lost. What is this place?

TALIA  
A place of knowledge for some. A  
refuge for others. What would you  
like it to be?

SEBASTIAN  
You got a phone?

TALIA  
The storm's knocked out the line  
I'm afraid. Why don't you have a  
seat...

Talia motions to the plush couch at the center of the room.

SEBASTIAN  
I should go.

TALIA  
Indulge me.

She smiles in a way that says "do as I say".

Sebastian relents. Takes a seat. Confused.

Talia sits on the overstuffed chair across from him.

TALIA  
Tell me your story.

SEBASTIAN  
Nothing to tell. I'm no one.

TALIA  
We're all of us something to  
someone.

Sebastian notices the silver pendant hanging from Talia's  
neck--the TRIGON MOON.

SEBASTIAN  
Your necklace...

Talia fingers the pendant.

TALIA  
A gift from my mother.

Sebastian reaches into his coat pocket. Pulls out one of the  
polaroids.

SEBASTIAN

Have you see this girl before?

He hands the photo to Talia.

TALIA

She's very pretty. A lover perhaps?

SEBASTIAN

She ever been here?

TALIA

Not as I recall, no. Why?

Sebastian's shoulders sink.

SEBASTIAN

Nothing. Nevermind. Just a coincidence.

TALIA

Are you familiar with Delusions of Reference?

SEBASTIAN

A what?

TALIA

It's when you experience a series of coincidences and believe them to be connected. Like finding patterns in otherwise mundane objects.

SEBASTIAN

So you're saying it's a coincidence?

TALIA

I'm saying the mind believes what it wants to believe. Even when presented with a different truth. For example, if I were to suggest to you something as simple as "triangles are everywhere you look", from now on you would see triangles in everything.

Talia motions to the idol.

TALIA

Look over there.

(MORE)

TALIA (CONT'D)

See how it takes on a triangle  
shape if you look hard enough?

Sebastian stares at the idol. At the triangular shape it takes on. At how it seems to undulate the longer he stares at it.

TALIA

You didn't notice it before...

Sebastian can't take his eyes off the idol.

It twists...

...and slithers on its pedestal.

TALIA

Can you see it?

Sebastian struggles to look away from the idol.

The sound of passionate breathing is heavy in his ear.

Slow...gasping...moans.

Sebastian pulls his attention away from the idol. Looks to Talia.

To her full, lush lips...

Her flush skin...

The way her cleavage is exposed beneath her robe...

The breathing in his ears grows...

Louder...

Faster...

Sebastian struggles to maintain consciousness.

SEBASTIAN

Who...are...you?

The world.

Goes.

Black.

**INT. THE VOID - NIGHT**

Nude bodies--wetslick with blood and sweat--writhe in a sea of black tentacles and strange alien organs.

The bodies shift and blend and change like kaleidoscope of sensual horror.

KAZIMIR (V.O.)

Two drops show you the truth of  
the world...

A giant, piercing demonic blue eye opens within the mound of undulating flesh.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

--awakens from the nightmare. Gasps for air. Sweat pours down his face.

He double checks his surroundings. Looks at the space next to him.

Still empty.

He--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY - LATER**

--sits at the kitchen table. Groggy. Rubs at the dull throb in his temples.

The gold ampoule sits on the table in front of him. Sebastian stares at it.

Contemplates...

He picks at the gory wound inflicted on his palm. Snatches the ampoule.

Unscrews the--

SFX

RIIIIIIIING!

The phone startles him. He picks up.

SEBASTIAN

Hello?

Heavy breathing.

SEBASTIAN  
Hello?

DOMINIQUE (V.O.)  
Sebastian?

She's crying. Her voice is far away. Mixed with glitching static.

SEBASTIAN  
Dom? Where are you?

DOMINIQUE (V.O.)  
Don't--

CLICK.

SEBASTIAN  
Hello? Hello?!

Static.

Sebastian slams the phone down.

SFX  
RIIIIIING!

Sebastian jerks the phone from the cradle.

SEBASTIAN  
Dom--

His shoulders slump. NOT Dominique.

SEBASTIAN  
I know. I'm not really feeling--  
no, I get it. Yes...yeah...I know.  
Alright, I'm on my way...right  
now...yes...

Sebastian--

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY**

--mops the floor. His wounded hand is wrapped in fresh gauze.

The world around him moves in slow motion. The barking dogs sound a million miles away.

Kowalczyk yells at him. Sebastian doesn't listen. Doesn't acknowledge him...

...until Kowalczyk places his plump hand on Sebastian's shoulder.

The world speeds up. The barking fills his ears like rushing water.

CRUNCH!

Sebastian's fist shatters Kowalczyk's nose. The fat man crumples to the ground.

Sebastian's on him now. Pummels the man with his good hand.

Over and over. Blood sprays the tiled floor--

Sebastian blinks.

Kowalczyk stands behind him. Yelling. Sebastian shrugs off the man's hand.

The fantasy remains unrealized.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

--storms into the empty apartment. Paces the room.

Full of adrenaline. He punches the wall.

SEBASTIAN

FUCK!

Sebastian turns his anger on the apartment.

Drawers are jerked from cabinets. Clothes ripped from the closet. Boxes emptied. Bed tossed.

The rage subsides. Leaves him exhausted. His shoulders and head drop in acknowledgement of the violent outburst.

ON THE FLOOR

An upturned box reveals dozens of polaroids spilled out. He collapses to his knees. Picks up a photo.

Him and Dominique. Happier times.

He flips through the polaroids.

--At the club. Embraced and kissing.

--Sebastian, younger. Too cool. Smoking.

--Dominique, clean. Smiling. Goofy.

--Sebastian and Dominique. Outside. Happy. Hopeful.

--The two of them among friends. Drunk. High as kites.

--Another club shot. Sebastian still too cool. Dominique frowning.

--In bed. Dominique spun out on drugs. Sebastian holds her tight.

Sebastian flips through several more. Stops on one.

ON THE POLAROID

Dominique sits in the lap of Eddie Downtown at The Speakeasy.

Her hand grips Eddie's shoulder. Eddie's hand rests on the inside of her thigh. Much higher than is polite.

His smile is wide. Hers...insincere.

ON THE NEXT POLAROID

A fancy hotel room. Eddie stripped down his undershirt and boxers. His hand is out in front of his face, blurry and washed out by the camera flash.

Sebastian--

**INT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT**

--storms into the room. Zeroes in on Eddie. Fists cocked.

Eddie spots him. Points an accusatory finger at him.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

I thought I told you--

POW!

Sebastian punches Eddie square in the face.

The old man reels backwards. Clutches at his spurting nose.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Da fuck?! You goddamned--

Sebastian tosses the polaroids at Eddie.

SEBASTIAN

You fucking her, Eddie? That why you wouldn't help?



Eddie looks down at the photos. Chokes out a laugh. He pulls himself back up to his feet.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN  
You got no idea, do you?

Sebastian lunges for Eddie. Is intercepted by Brando.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN  
Take him outside.

**EXT. SPEAKEASY - ALLEY - NIGHT**

Brando holds Sebastian against the brick wall. Sebastian struggles against the big man's grip.

Eddie supervises from afar.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN  
Go on, then. What are you waiting for?

Brando gives Sebastian an apologetic look. Cracks him across the jaw with his enormous fist.

Sebastian spits blood.

SEBASTIAN  
You don't gotta listen to this piece of--

CRACK!

A thunderous punch to the gut drops Sebastian to one knee. He gets back up.

BRANDO  
Just stay down man.

SEBASTIAN  
Fuck you...

Brando goes to work. A flurry of fists turn Sebastian's face to bloody pulp.

Sebastian collapses to the ground. Doesn't get back up.

Eddie kneels beside him.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN  
Your girl, she was tryin' to blackmail me, you stupid fuck.  
(MORE)

EDDIE DOWNTOWN (CONT'D)  
Thought she earned herself a big  
payoff with a coupla photos that  
didn't mean shit.

Sebastian glares through a swollen eye.

SEBASTIAN  
Where is she, Eddie? What'd you do  
to her?

EDDIE DOWNTOWN  
You just don't quit, do you? I  
told you, I ain't seen her. And I  
better not. Catch my drift? Get  
him outta here, Brando.

Eddie disappears back into the club.

BRANDO  
You done fucked up again, son.

Sebastian spits blood. Catches his breath. Glares.

Brando pulls Sebastian to his feet. Sebastian shrugs him off.

BRANDO  
Be smart. Stay away.

Sebastian--

**EXT. CITY STREET - DUSK**

--wanders the city.

Along empty streets. Through alleys. Past busy bars full of  
happy people.

He smokes. Spits blood. Contemplates the moment he's found  
himself in.

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT**

The overhead lights flicker on.

Sebastian slinks in. He walks the length of the room. Unlatches  
each cage.

One by one, the dogs escape their prison and make a mad dash  
for the open exit door.

All except one.

The dog with the big pleading eyes. She stares up at Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN  
Go on, you're free. Get.

The dog remains.

SEBASTIAN  
Suit yourself.

Sebastian collapses into the desk chair. Empties his pockets onto the desktop.

A pack of cigarettes. The polaroids. The sobriety chip.

The gold ampoule.

He lights up one of the cigarettes. Contemplates the items strewn out in front of him. Picks up the sobriety chip. Rolls it between his fingers.

It slips. Falls to the floor.

He doesn't pick it up.

The polaroids are next. He stares at the lurid images. Studies them. Tosses them back onto the table.

He undoes the gauze from his hand. The burn looks infected.

Sebastian removes the cigarette from his mouth...

...JAMS it hard into the blistered wound.

SCREAMS.

In pain. In RAGE.

He unscrews the vial. Hand shaky. He holds the vial over his palm. A single drop falls from its tip...

A RAPID FLASH OF IMAGES

--Sebastian's dilating EYE.

--an OCEAN made of a thousand shades of blue.

--a sea of BLOOD splashing.

--fists dripping with blood and gore

----the TRIGON MOON flashes and inverts

--black EELS slithering in the murky VOID.

--Dominique. DEAD eyes. Face pale and clammy from an overdose.

--something awful and cosmic. Wetslick FLESH and alien eyes.

--Sebastian's dilating EYE.

Sebastian convulses in the chair. Froths at the mouth.

The dog whimpers. Backs deeper into her cage.

SEBASTIAN'S POV

The air VIBRATES and WARPS. Colors BLEED. Reality blinks. The room is...

...BLACK and WET and BREATHING...

The lights overhead flicker. The room goes dark. The familiar chittering sound...from the darkness.

Sebastian rubs at his temples to clear away the haze. He rummages around in the drawers. Finds a flashlight.

CLICK.

Sebastian pans the flashlight around the dark room...

Something MOVES just beyond the flashlight's beam. Sebastian tracks it with the flashlight--

The THING moves too fast to be caught in the beam...

The light lands on the dog's cage.

Empty. Bloody.

Sebastian follows the bloody streak from the cage...

...down to the floor...

...along the length of the room...

...to a door leading into--

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - STAIRWELL - NIGHT**

--the stairwell.

Sebastian descends the stairs. Each step is an exercise in fear and determination. His breath is shallow, rapid.

Step by step...

...he follows the blood down into--

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - OFFICE BULLPEN - NIGHT**

--the abandoned office area.

Sebastian tracks the blood trail with his flashlight. It ends at the far wall.

ON THE WALL

The TIRGON MOON symbol. Scrawled in blood.

Sebastian approaches the giant smeared symbol. Reaches for it--

Something SLITHERS in the darkness. Wet. BIG.

Sebastian SPINS around--

The dog. She stares up at him. Wags her tail.

A sigh of relief. Sebastian kneels. Extends his hand.

SEBASTIAN  
C'mere girl. It's okay...

The dog contemplates his hand. Decides against it. Trots away into the darkness. Sebastian's shoulders slump.

He stands. Turns the flashlight back to the wall--

The bloody symbol is gone. The wall, clean.

RING! RING!

A nearby phone STARTLES him. Sebastian picks up the receiver.

Loud STATIC noise. The room vibrates...

...vertigo...

Sebastian--

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

--spits bile into the basin. Steadies himself against the sink.

The static hiss subsides. He rinses his mouth out. Splashes cold water on his face. Looks at his mangled mug in the mirror.

A cry. Faint, then louder.

Sebastian looks around for the source...

...the mirror?

His fingers search the edges of the mirror frame, looking for--

A LATCH.

The mirror swings open. Beyond it, another room. Black as night.

Louder crying now. From within the dark room.

SEBASTIAN

Hello?

No response. Just a familiar crying.

WHISPER (O.S.)

Sebastian...

A moment passes. Then...

...a decision.

Sebastian climbs over the sink, into--

#### **INT. THE VOID**

--the void beyond the mirror. Sebastian feels his way along the dark room's nondescript walls.

Inch by inch...

The walls narrow the deeper he goes.

Step by step...

The light of the bathroom shrinks and fades behind him.

Sebastian feels his way down the dark corridor. His fingers drag along the wet, soft walls. He presses on into the void until--

A large door.

Its surface is covered in hundreds of antique pages, each filled with the same type of drawings and incantations seen in Talia's space.

The air vibrates and hums around him. Grows louder. Painful...

Sebastian twists the door handle. Steps over the threshold into--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

--his apartment. As black and murky as the hallway behind him.

The blinding beams of a lighthouse flash in intervals through the windows of the room. Casts light on--

Dominique.

She sits on the floor. Back turned to Sebastian. Surrounded by hundreds more book pages that she scrawls on with charcoal and paint.

DOMINIQUE  
...you shouldn't be here...

Her voice is far away.

SEBASTIAN  
Is this real?

She doesn't respond.

Sebastian reaches for her. Grabs her shoulder.

DOMINIQUE  
...just let me fly away...

Dominique turns to him, her face...

...is a dozen FLOWERS. White and blooming.

Sebastian--

**INT. COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

--stares at his reflection in the bathroom mirror.

A single word is scrawled on the mirror in blood:

STOP

Sebastian looks down at his hand. Clenched in his bloody grip are several of the antique pages.

VOICE (O.S.)  
What are you doing?

Sebastian glances over his shoulder.

Kowalczyk stands in the doorway.

KOWALCZYK  
You're not supposed to be  
here...where the hell are the  
dogs?

Sebastian stuffs the strange pages into his coat. Pushes his way past Kowalczyk.

KOWALCZYK  
Hey, I'm talking to you...

Sebastian turns on the man. Grabs him by the shirt. Shoves him hard against the wall.

SEBASTIAN  
Say another word. Say one more  
fucking word.

Sebastian stares at him. Feral. Violent.

Kowalczyk's mouth falls open but nothing comes out. Sebastian releases his grip. The fat man falls to the floor.

Sebastian--

**EXT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT**

--stumbles to the station entrance. Descends the stairs into the station. The station--

**INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT**

--is devoid of life. Still and silent.

Sebastian stands alone on the platform. Sweaty. Wavering. His body threatens to collapse at any moment.

WHOOSH!

The familiar burst of wind and whistle announces a train's imminent arrival.

Sebastian--

**INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT**

--sits inside an empty train car. The world flashes by outside the window in colors that are all wrong.

He pulls the pages from his jacket.



On the first page:

**The TRIGON MOON etched in red at the top. Hooded figures at the bottom. Hands raised in worship.**

Sebastian flips to the next page:

**A drawing of woman's nude body. Splayed out in a similar fashion to da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man* with illegible latin words hand-scrawled across her skin.**

**Three blue tears drip from her eye. On each hand, a blue painted stigmata.**

Sebastian looks at his wounded hand.

The next page:

**A woman leaving her own body. She reaches upwards towards a chaotic storm in the black sky. Long tentacles extend out of the eye of the storm, reaching down towards the woman's extended fingers.**

On the last page:

**A line drawing identical to Talia's idol. Below it are hooded figures drawn in smeared ink. The lettering identifies it as *MATER TENEBRIS*.**

SEBASTIAN  
Mater Tenebris...

TALIA (V.O.)  
It's Latin.

Sebastian--

**INT. BEDLAM - NIGHT**

--looks up to see Talia. Sat across from him in her overstuffed chair.

TALIA  
It means "Dark Mother". The Goddess below.

Sebastian falls out of his seat. Stumbles back. Disoriented. He steadies himself on the back of the chair.

SEBASTIAN  
What...what's happening?

TALIA

The truth is revealing itself to you.

SEBASTIAN

Truth? What truth?

TALIA

Her journey is not yours to take.

SEBASTIAN

Her? Dominique?

Talia doesn't respond.

SEBASTIAN

What do you know?

Sebastian jerks towards her. Dizzy and unsure on his feet.

The lights around the room flicker.

TALIA

Return the blessing, Sebastian.

Sebastian looks down to his wounded hand. He's holding the golden ampoule.

He closes his fist around the vial.

SEBASTIAN

No.

A vibration ripples around them.

Sebastian--

**INT. SUBWAY TRAIN - NIGHT**

--collapses onto the floor of the dark train car. VOMITS until he dry heaves.

He looks up to see a TALL HOODED MAN stood at the far end of the car. The man's face is hidden by a hole-pocked hood. He grips the seat-backs with rotting black hands.

SEBASTIAN

What the fuck do you want?

No response.

Sebastian stands. Wipes the bile from his mouth. The Hooded Man remains motionless.

Sebastian starts towards him. Slow. Measured. The Hooded Man responds in kind. Each step matches Sebastian's.

Sebastian stops. Takes a step back. The Hooded Man does the same.

Sebastian takes a step forward. The Hooded Man repeats.

Another step. Repeated. Sebastian raises his fist. The Hooded Man repeats. Sebastian lowers his fist. The Hooded Man--

--SNATCHES his hand out. GRABS Sebastian by the throat.

Static SCREAMS in Sebastian's ears. Loud. Painful. Crippling.

He squeezes his eyes shut. Yells out--

Sebastian opens his eyes.

The carriage is full of late night commuters. They stare at his outburst. The Hooded Man is nowhere to be seen.

Sebastian stands. Composes himself.

The train comes to a jolting stop.

Sebastian--

#### **INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT**

--hurries away from the train.

A moment later, the Hooded Man exits the train. Follows at a distance.

Sebastian--

#### **EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT**

--stalks away from the station.

The Hooded Man emerges. Gives follow. Sebastian notices. Picks up speed. Turns a corner.

The Hooded Man follows a dozen paces behind.

Sebastian makes a sudden turn into an alley. Presses up against the brick.

Waits...

And waits...

Nothing.

Sebastian steps out of the alley. Fists ready. There's no one there. He turns--

THE HOODED MAN. Looming large over him.

The man throws Sebastian HARD into the wall.

He moves FAST. Launches himself at Sebastian. Long clawed fingers SCRATCH out at Sebastian. He grabs Sebastian by the throat with both rotted black hands. Squeezes.

Sebastian struggles, unable to break free of the man's powerful grip. The man's hood falls backwards. Reveals--

--A FLESH MASK of Sebastian's own visage. Stretched thin across a black skull that looks as if it's wrapped in plastic.

Where its mouth should be: a translucent tube churning with viscous black fluid jammed into a suckling sphincter.

Sebastian RECOILS in horror. The creature's grip tightens.

The world starts...

...to...

...fade...

Sebastian's fingers SEARCH and GRAB at the creature's face.

Desperate.

His fingers wrap around the creature's face apparatus. Pulls HARD on the tube protruding from its mouth hole. The tube dislodges. EJACULATES sticky black goo across Sebastian's face.

The creature SQUEALS a HORRIBLE sound like a dying pig. Falls back. Scampers away from Sebastian into the dark of the night.

Sebastian wipes away the black goo from his face.

DOMINIQUE (PRE-LAP)

What did you do?

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

Sebastian sits on the edge of the bed. Breath heavy. Labored.

His broken nose bleeds down his unshaven face and shirt. Fresh blood DRIPS from his hands.

Dominique paces in front of him. Seething. Scared.

DOMINIQUE  
What did you do, Sebastian?!

SEBASTIAN  
What I had to.

DOMINIQUE  
What you had to? Do you hear  
yourself? I was so close. So  
close! Don't you understand?

Sebastian stares at the floor.

DOMINIQUE  
Well?!

Sebastian doesn't move.

Dominique throws a lamp into the wall. It crashes to the floor,  
casts the room in ominous light.

DOMINIQUE  
Are you listening?

Sebastian looks at her. His eyes dark with righteous anger.

SEBASTIAN  
So what? I just sit back, let  
these assholes sell you shit and  
watch you OD again? Is that what  
you want me to say?

DOMINIQUE  
Is that what you think that was?  
Do you have any...ANY idea who  
that man was?

SEBASTIAN  
It doesn't matter.

DOMINIQUE  
We're fucked. We're so fucked.

She collapses in front of him. Tears stain her face.

DOMINIQUE  
Let's just go. Before anything  
else happens. Now. Tonight.

SEBASTIAN  
We're not leaving.

Dominique sobs into his lap.

DOMINIQUE  
You don't know these people.  
They're going to come for you.

Sebastian lifts her face up to his.

SEBASTIAN  
Let them.

DOMINIQUE  
And then what? What am I supposed  
to do?

CUT TO BLACK

SEBASTIAN (V.O.)  
Wait for me.

END FLASHBACK

**EXT. PONY'S EMPORIUM - NIGHT**

Sebastian stands in front of Pony's shop, face masked with crusty blood and black residue.

Pony stands in the doorway, dressed in a fluffy bathrobe and animal paw slippers. A joint dangles from their lips.

PONY  
You look like shit.

**INT. PONY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

The apartment above the store is a well-curated blend of kitsch and vintage decor. Pony sits cross-legged on the floor. Puffs away on their joint.

Sebastian sits across from them. Exhausted. Nerves frayed.

The antique pages are spread out between them.

SEBASTIAN  
I'm losing my fucking mind, Pony.

PONY  
I mean, we're all losing our  
minds. But this...this is some big  
time out there shit. Even for me.

SEBASTIAN  
I know how it sounds.

PONY  
It sounds cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs.

SEBASTIAN  
She was there...

PONY  
If you believe, I believe,  
*compadre*.

SEBASTIAN  
I don't know what I believe. But I  
know who can give us some  
answers...

On Sebastian's expression:

PONY  
No. No fuckin' way, man. Count me  
out.

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - NIGHT**

Behind the counter The Butcher chops away at a slab of meat. He doesn't look up when Sebastian bursts into the shop.

SEBASTIAN  
I want to talk to The Slav.

The Butcher ignores him.

CHOP CHOP CHOP

SEBASTIAN  
You listening asshole?

The Butcher glances up at Sebastian. Gives him the thousand mile stare. He raises his blade. Points it at Sebastian.

His mouth opens. Emits a terrible static hum noise.

The lights flicker. On. Off. On.

Off.

PONY (O.S.)  
What are we doin' here?

Sebastian turns to see Pony standing behind him.

Pony shifts in place. Nervous. Also relieved. There is no Slav here to fear.

The Butcher Shop is GONE. Empty. Dark. As if it never existed.  
Sebastian looks at the decrepit room around him.  
Confused. Disoriented.

SEBASTIAN  
He was here.

PONY  
Doesn't look like anyone's been  
home for a real long time.

Sebastian paces. Points.

SEBASTIAN  
He was fucking here! Right here!

PONY  
Alright. Alright. Listen. It's  
been a long night, yeah? Go home.  
Get yourself cleaned up. Get some  
fuckin' sleep. Try again tomorrow.

SEBASTIAN  
No! Now! There's no fucking  
tomorrow!

He pushes past Pony. Stumbles. Knees give out. Darkness comes.  
Sebastian crashes to the floor.

#### **EXT. CLIFF - NIGHT**

A dream.

Sebastian stands on a black stone cliff. Overhead a lightning  
storm rages. Slate-colored clouds churn in the heavy wind.

On the precipice--

Dominique. Dressed in a red wedding gown. Hands clasped around  
a bouquet of lilies. She stares at him with mournful eyes.

Sebastian stalks towards her. Reaches out to catch her before  
she falls. He screams her name but his voice is lost in the din  
of the storm.

Dominique smiles. Her hands release the flowers. Her arms  
stretch out. Catch the wind.

Sebastian reaches the edge too late.



She plummets.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

--awakens in his own bed. Groggy. Sore. Alone.

He pulls himself from the bed. Strips off blood and black-stained clothes. Hisses and winces.

Lurches to the bathroom.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

--hunches over in the shower. Arms pressed against cold tile. Head low. Eyes closed.

Hot water pours over him. Washes away the filth. Reveals fresh wounds and old scars.

The walls pulse and vibrate. Hum with static electricity.

He--

**INT. BEDLAM - NIGHT**

--opens his eyes.

Talia sits across from him. That smile.

SEBASTIAN

No...

The world--

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - NIGHT**

--shifts again.

Kazimir stares at him. Through him.

KAZIMIR

Lost is lost...

SEBASTIAN

NO!

Sebastian pounds his fist--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY**

--on the tiled wall.

He sinks down into a crouch at the bottom of the tub. Buries his head in his hands.

Sebastian--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY**

--sits on the floor of his ransacked apartment. Freshly showered and nude.

He sees the music box on the floor. Picks it up. Opens the lid.

The tiny ballerina spins in time to the music. The music winds down. Slows to a stop.

The ballerina freezes in time.

Sebastian stares at the figurine.

SEBASTIAN

Where are you?

Time passes...

Day becomes...

...night becomes...

...day becomes...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

BAM! BAM! BAM!

A knock at the door breaks Sebastian's trance.

Sebastian opens the door.

Pony bursts in, pushes past Sebastian.

PONY

Get dressed, man. We gotta get the fuck outta dodge.

Pony grabs clothes off the floor. Throws them at Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

What the hell, Pony?

PONY

Alright, so I kinda sorta held on to those pages you showed me after you went all fainting goat on me, right? I asked around. Inquired. Knocked on some doors. Found some shit out if, you will.

Pony stops his frenetic pace. Stares Sebastian down.

PONY

It ain't good, *amigo*. *Mater Tenebris*? It translates to--

SEBASTIAN

Dark Mother.

PONY

Well fuck me backwards. You read Latin now? Well did you also know that those pages came from a book called the *Nocte Librum*? And in this book, there's a doomsday cult known as the Daughters of the Infinite Moon? They're a real lovely bunch hellbent on raising the Dark Mother from her million year slumber. We're talking Armageddon. Ragnorak. End of fucking times.

SEBASTIAN

What's any of this have to do with Dominique?

PONY

Do I gotta spell it out for you, *muchacho*? Your girl's in tight with these fuckers. She's gotta be, right? How else did she get her hands on that blue shit?

SEBASTIAN

She had Dag steal it from The Slav--

PONY

Who stole it from this cult. Why do you think he was so quick to let you take it? He knew they'd come looking.

SEBASTIAN

None of that adds up.

PONY

Believe what you want. But  
whatever's in that little vial of  
yours? They're gonna want it back.

The lights in the room flicker.

PONY

Fuck. Fuck fuck fuck fuckity fuck.  
We gotta go.

SEBASTIAN

Not until I find--

The room goes dark.

SEBASTIAN

Pony?

No response.

Sebastian fishes a lighter from his pocket. Flicks it on.

He's alone in the room.

Sebastian exits--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS**

--in the dark hallway.

Sebastian creeps along the corridor.

SEBASTIAN

Pony...

Still no response.

Behind him, a familiar CLICK CLICK CLICK of chittering.

Sebastian points the lighter towards the sound.

Nothing.

He picks up the pace. Through the hall, down the stairs the the  
building's front door.

He--

**EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - NIGHT**

--bursts out onto the street.

The street lamps have gone dark, leaving everything overcast in fog and inky murk.

Sebastian sees THEM at the end of the road:

A quintet of hooded CULTISTS, too tall for ordinary men.

The Cultists move in unison towards him. They fade in and out of the fog as they approach, clicking and chittering beneath the heavy robes.

Sebastian clenches his fists.

A static hum BURNS in his head. He GRITS his teeth. Holds his ground until the pain in his head becomes too much.

He stumbles away from the Cultists. The sound dulls as distance he puts distance between them. His stagger turns into a RUN.

Down the street. Left through an alley. Right on another street. The path twists and turns.

Another left. DEAD END.

He backtracks but the the street twists and turns in different directions.

More dead ends.

Sebastian slows to a walk.

He's LOST in a maze.

He turns one more corner--

**EXT. STREET CARNIVAL - NIGHT**

--finds himself in the middle of a strange carnival of masked people in full swing.

Confused, Sebastian watches as the parade marches by. He feels eyes on him. Turns to find--

A YOUNG GIRL (6, too cute for this movie) dressed in a flower crown stands in front of him. Studies him from behind the giant cotton candy in her hand.

Sebastian half waves at her.

LITTLE GIRL  
She's not coming back.

Sebastian's expression falters.

SEBASTIAN

What?

The girls stares. Sebastian stands.

SEBASTIAN

What did you say?

The girl munches on the cotton candy. Sebastian takes a step towards her.

SEBASTIAN

Answer me!

The girl dashes into the crowd.

Sebastian gives chase. Gets lost in the crowd. Laughing people in MASKS point and SHOUT. FIRE-BREATHERS blast FIREBALLS up into the air around him.

Whispers float in and out of the cacophony. PARANOIA and PANIC set in.

Sebastian PUSHES through the crowd. Gets shoved back. Gets jostled around by the never-ending chaos of the revelers.

When he finally emerges, he finds himself in front of a familiar door.

Bedlam.

**INT. BEDLAM - ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Inside the elevator, Sebastian presses the triangle shaped button.

The elevator descends.

And descends...

And descends...

And...

The elevator comes to a JOLTING stop. The doors do not open.

Sebastian presses the button again. Nothing. PULLS at the doors. Nothing.

Slow PANIC. Button PUSHING. Fists BANGING.

The bulb over head fuzzes out. Darkness.

Sebastian breathes heavy in the cramped black box. Then...

The doors open to--

**INT. CHURCH - NIGHT**

A large worship space. Framed by massive red glass windows and lit by a hundred candles that glow blue.

At the center of the room: a large statue of the *Mater Tenebris* atop a black reflecting pool and an overflowing altar of flowers.

In the reflecting pool sits Talia. Her hair has been braided up into the top of her head, her pale body draped in black ceremonial robes that float on the water's surface.

In her hands, the *Nocte Librum*. She reads from the book, her voice an unintelligible whisper.

Sebastian approaches the altar. The golden ampoule in his pocket VIBRATES and HUMS.

He pulls the vial from his jacket. Drops it with a hiss when it SCALDS his fingers.

TALIA  
Hello Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN  
Where is she?

Talia places the *Nocte Librum* back on its pedestal. Rises from the water.

Sebastian finds himself staring at her taut body beneath the thin wet fabric.

Talia watches him watch her.

TALIA  
Who?

SEBASTIAN  
Don't fuck with me! I know the truth.

Talia smiles.

TALIA  
Which truth would that be?

SEBASTIAN  
Tell me where she is.

Talia steps from the pool. Approaches Sebastian. Her eyes stare deep into him.

TALIA

Is that what you want?

His gaze locks in on her shimmering body. The sound of passionate breathing rises in the shadows of the room.

Sebastian's will ebbs. His voice falters.

SEBASTIAN

Yes...

Slow...gasping...moans.

SEBASTIAN

Please...

Talia reaches down, picks up the ampoule from the floor. Hangs it on the long golden chain around her neck.

She circles Sebastian. Predatory.

Her fingers trace the folds of his clothes. Move up to his neck. Caresses his face.

Sebastian tries to resist. He's unable to move.

SEBASTIAN

Where is she?

Talia leans in close. Her lips almost on his.

TALIA

Let your journey end here. Let her go.

She kisses him deeply. Lets her robe slip from her body to reveal:

HUNDREDS of CIGARETTE BURN SCARS in a grid across her body.

Sebastian's eyes go wide.

SEBASTIAN

No!

He snatches the ampoule from her necklace. Shoves her away from him.

Sebastian holds the ampoule over his eye.

TALIA

Oh Sebastian, you poor fool.



A single drop splashes into Sebastian's eye.

A RAPID FLASH OF IMAGES

--Sebastian's dilating EYE.

--Black FLESH, wet and breathing.

--Dominique and Talia, naked and embraced and bloody.

----the TRIGON MOON flashes and inverts.

--black EELS slithering in the murky VOID.

Sebastian's body seizes...the room vibrates and shakes and warps...the ground beneath him disappears...

Sebastian falls--

**INT. KAZIMIR'S BUTCHER SHOP - FREEZER - NIGHT**

--hard onto a cement floor.

Sebastian pulls himself to his feet. Searches the freezing room with his eyes.

Kazimir's meat freezer.

Plastic bags, each filled with a body, hang from the ceiling like slaughtered cattle.

Sebastian pulls open the closest bag--

Comes face to face with a VERY DEAD PONY. Their eyes have been GOUGED from their skull.

SEBASTIAN

Pony...

Sebastian takes a moment to mourn his friend. He opens another bag--

KAZIMIR.

Then DAG...

Then KOWALCZYK...

After that, EDDIE.

The old gangster's eyeless head rolls from the bag. Lands on the floor with a THUD.

Sebastian recoils.

A body bag on the far side of the room wriggles.

Sebastian races to the bag. PULLS it open to find--

Nothing.

Sebastian stands alone amidst the carnage around him. Overhead, a sprinkler comes to life. Then another. And another.

SLAM!

The red door slides open.

Kazimir's Butcher stands at the threshold. His head resembles a skinned bull's head. Massive and horned. His hulking body is a patchwork of star tattoos.

The Minotaur stares him down. In his hand, an enormous cleaver at the ready.

Sebastian takes a step back.

The Minotaur stomps towards him. Swings his blade. Each swing slices open a body bag as he passes them.

SLICE!

Blood EXPLODES from each sliced open bag. Spatters the overhead fluorescents. The light of the room turns a gory shade of red.

SLICE!

Sebastian runs for the exit door.

SLICE!

At the exit door...

Jammed shut.

SLICE!

Sebastian throws his weight against the door. No good.

SLICE!

He turns in time to see--

The Minotaur's cleaver CUTTING downwards...

...narrowly misses him. The blade glances off the metal door in a shower of sparks. Sebastian STRIKES the Minotaur's ribcage with a hard fist.

The Minotaur grunts. Picks Sebastian up. SLAMS him to the floor.

Sebastian scrambles away. Slips and slides across the wet, bloody floor.

The Minotaur charges into him. The two men CRASH onto the soaked floor. WRESTLE for control of the cleaver.

Sebastian throws a bone-crunching ELBOW to the monster's face.

Forces the cleaver from the Minotaur's hand.

HEAD BUTTS the Minotaur. Twice.

Sebastian unleashes on the stunned man.

BLOW--

After BLOW--

After BLOW.

The Minotaur stops moving.

Sebastian lets his head roll back. Catches his breath. He doesn't see--

The butcher's blade in the Minotaur's hand. It cuts deep into Sebastian's side.

Sebastian SCREAMS out in rage and pain. Grabs the Minotaur's horns.

SNAP!

Sebastian twists the Minotaur's head. Breaks its neck.

Sebastian rises to his feet. Clutches the wound in his gut.

Stumbles to the red sliding door.

#### **INT. THE VOID - CORRIDOR**

Sebastian shuffles along the corridor. Blood drips onto the ground in his wake.

SEBASTIAN  
...Dominique...

At the end of the long hall--

A RED DOOR

The door is colossal. Carved with the familiar eclipsed moon within a triangle. The size and position of the shape changes the longer he stares at it.

Sebastian places his hands against the door.

Static noise builds in his head.

He pushes the thick door open. Steps through the threshold...

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Sebastian startles awake. Chokes down the bile in his throat.

DRIP.

He bolts upright. Catches his breath. Examines his hands. Both are free of any wounds.

DRIP.

The room is lit by the small nightstand light. Silent, except for...

DRIP.

The sound of water dripping into a full bathtub.

Sebastian pulls himself out of bed. Sways as if his head weighs a hundred pounds.

Stumbles to--

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

The bathroom.

In the darkness, Sebastian sees the full tub.

In it--

DOMINIQUE!

Eyes closed. Motionless.

Sebastian's eyes go wide. He falls into the tub. Pulls Dominique from her watery grave. He holds her wet, lifeless body against him. Cradles her.

SEBASTIAN

Wake up, baby. C'mon. Please! Wake up.

He holds her tighter...

Her eyes flutter. A cough. Another. Dominique's eyes open. She gags. Spits up water.

SEBASTIAN  
Dominique...

She looks up at him. Shivering. Eyes full of questions.

Sebastian rocks back and forth with her in his arms.

**INT. SEBASTIAN'S STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER**

Dominique sits on the edge of the bed. Wrapped in a towel. She stares off into space.

Sebastian kneels at her side.

SEBASTIAN  
I knew I'd find you again.

DOMINIQUE  
I was free...

SEBASTIAN  
No, baby. They stole you from me.

DOMINIQUE  
No. No!

Dominique stands suddenly. Moves away from Sebastian.

DOMINIQUE  
You've never cared about what I wanted. Only what YOU wanted. Why can't you just let me go?

SEBASTIAN  
I was trying to protect you.

DOMINIQUE  
This wasn't about you! None of this was about you, Sebastian! Haven't you figured it out yet? This wasn't for you!

SEBASTIAN  
I just wanted the truth...

DOMINIQUE  
The truth? Here's the truth then...

Dominique stares out at the void beyond the window.

DOMINIQUE  
The night I died...before they  
brought me back in that ambulance.  
I heard her. The Dark Mother.

SEBASTIAN  
No, baby. That's not real--

DOMINIQUE  
LISTEN! She told me how I could  
find her. What I needed to do to  
escape...

SEBASTIAN  
Escape what?

Dominique turns to meet his gaze. A tear rolls down her cheek.

DOMINIQUE  
You.

SEBASTIAN  
No...

DOMINIQUE  
Yes! Don't you get it yet? Your  
life was SMOTHERING me. The drugs.  
The club. Eddie. I wanted to get  
away. Wanted US to get away, but  
you were never going to leave. I  
tried and I tried and I tried but  
nothing was ever going change  
that.

SEBASTIAN  
You have changed that! We can  
leave. We can get the fuck out of  
this place and start over.

DOMINIQUE  
It's too late...

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Someone or something is at the door.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Dominique looks at the door. Sebastian steps in front of her.

SEBASTIAN  
Don't answer it.

BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

The knocking gets louder. Faster. The door shakes in its frame.

The room vibrates.

Dominique pushes past him. Pulls the door open.

Light fills the room.

SEBASTIAN

Don't go!

Dominique looks back at him. A kindness in her eyes.

DOMINIQUE

I'm already gone.

She steps into the light.

The door slams shut behind her.

Sebastian grabs the door. Tries to open it. Locked tight. He pulls hard on the handle. To no avail.

He pounds on the door.

SEBASTIAN

DOMINIQUE!

Sebastian unleashes fists and kicks on the door.

SEBASTIAN

Don't leave me here!

He collapses to the floor.

SEBASTIAN

Don't leave me...

#### **INT. THE VOID - INFINITY ROOM**

Sebastian stands waist-deep in a pool of black water.

Around him, an infinity room. Reflections within reflections within reflections.

There is no ceiling. Only the vastness of the cosmos bearing down on him. Stars twinkle in and out as they spin above him.

Sebastian gasps. Overwhelmed.

At the center of the room, amidst a large pool of black water...

...the *MATER TENEBRIS* made flesh.

The colossal creature LOOMS over him. Its feminine features shift and change among a sea of tentacles and black organs.

Dozens of women's bodies writhe against the monster's fleshy shell--some nude, others de-fleshed as the beast absorbs them into itself.

Sebastian stares up at its horror.

HOODED CULTISTS kneel along the edges of the lake of midnight water. Heads bowed in a chanting prayer that fills the room with humming air.

Talia wades through the water. Joins Sebastian at his side.

SEBASTIAN

What is this?

TALIA

This is the truth you wanted,  
Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN

No...

Talia places her hand Sebastian's shoulder.

FLASHBACKS

--Sebastian following Dominique downstairs past the neon red Tabernacle sign.

--Dominique's tear-streaked face.

DOMINIQUE

I don't need you to save me.

--Sebastian assaulting Dag against his red hot-rod.

--Sebastian following The Butcher through the red door.

--Kazimir's face.

KAZIMIR

This is not for you.

--Sebastian entering The Speakeasy through the red velvet door.

--Eddie Downtown's face.



EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Let it go...

-- Dominique at the bridge.

DOMINIQUE

...let me fly away...

END FLASHBACKS

Sebastian crumbles to his knees. The black water comes up to his chest.

SEBASTIAN

Please...where is she?

Talia steps past him. Approaches the *Mater Tenebris*. Caresses a wet, fleshy breast that emerges from within the pulsing body.

She removes the empty gold ampoule from her necklace. Presses it against one of several thick nipples.

It ejaculates thin ropes of thick blue fluid into the ampoule until the vial is once again full.

TALIA

Don't you see? She's here. The *Mater Tenebris* is all of us.

The Hooded Cultists remove their hoods. They are all women. Bald with a single burn mark at the center of their foreheads.

CULTISTS

(chanting)

All hail the Dark Mother! Goddess  
of the Below! Keeper of the Sky!  
Praise be her name!

Tears stream down Sebastian's face.

SEBASTIAN

No...No. No! No! NO!

Sebastian screams at her.

Talia approaches him. Stands defiantly over him.

Talia's skin cracks and peels. Falls away. Reveals black bone and serpentine muscles.

Talia stares down on Sebastian with large, black eyes. Her face ripples and distorts until Dominique's face looks upon him.

Talia/Dominique presses down on Sebastian's shoulders. He sinks lower into the black water.

DOMINIQUE  
Goodbye, Sebastian.

Sebastian disappears beneath the surface.

Into the black nothingness...

...deeper...

...and deeper...

...until he disappears...

...forever.

CUT TO:

**EXT. SPEAKEASY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK**

Sebastian, years younger, stands in front of The Speakeasy entrance. Smokes. Checks a few IDs.

Dominique exits from the door. Fresh faced. Innocent looking. Dressed in the club's waitress attire.

DOMINIQUE  
Can I bum one of those?

Sebastian fishes a cigarette from his pack. Hands it off to her.

DOMINIQUE  
Thanks.

Sebastian flicks a zippo open. Lights the cigarette for her.

Dominique inhales deeply. Cops a seat on the stairs. She shivers in the brisk night air.

SEBASTIAN  
Here.

Sebastian pulls off his leather coat. Offers it to her.

DOMINIQUE  
Now you're going to be cold.

SEBASTIAN  
Nah.

Dominique accepts the coat. Slides it over her shoulders. Pulls her feet from her heels.

DOMINIQUE  
Fuck, my feet are killing me.

SEBASTIAN  
First night?

DOMINIQUE  
That obvious?

SEBASTIAN  
Maybe.

DOMINIQUE  
Worked here long?

SEBASTIAN  
Long enough. What about you?

DOMINIQUE  
What about me?

SEBASTIAN  
How'd you end up at this joint?  
<too cheesy

DOMINIQUE  
You know the story. Had a boring  
life in a boring town working on  
my mom's boring farm. Decided I  
needed something...

SEBASTIAN  
...not boring.

DOMINIQUE  
Exactly.

SEBASTIAN  
Well maybe you came to the right  
place. Not a lot of boring around  
here.

DOMINIQUE  
That right?

SEBASTIAN  
Not as long as I'm here.

Dominique blushes. She's intrigued.

The door BURSTS open.

Eddie.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Hey Sweet Tits! I ain't paying you  
to sit on your ass out here. Get  
back in there and do your fuckin'  
job.

Dominique flicks away her cigarette. Hands back the jacket.

DOMINIQUE

Thanks for the cig...

SEBASTIAN

Sebastian.

DOMINIQUE

Dominique.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

I ain't getting any younger,  
honey.

DOMINIQUE

See ya around, Sebastian.

Dominique gives him a smile full of teeth. Scampers into the  
bar.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

Fuckin' broads. Never reliable,  
let me tell you.

SEBASTIAN

She seems alright.

EDDIE DOWNTOWN

I ain't fuckin' paying you for  
your opinion, kid. And stop  
fraternizing with them gals.  
They're nothing but trouble.

Eddie disappears back inside.

Sebastian lights another cigarette. Glances at the door.

For the first time...

...Sebastian smiles.

FADE TO BLACK