

THE WHISPER

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FADE IN:

FLASHBACK - EXT. TOWN OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND - EVENING

SUPER: Gloucestershire England - 1908

The lights in the town of Gloucestershire are seen as the evening sun begins to set.

EXT. LOCKE MANOR - EVENING

A beautiful large, gated home is seen in the distance.

INT. LOCKE FAMILY STUDY - EVENING

Identical twins ISABELLA and ISADORE LOCKE (10), Caucasian play in the study of their brooding father MANDOR LOCKE (45), a Caucasian as his rail-thin wife ELIZABETH LOCKE (30), a Caucasian sit humming and knitting nearby.

Isadore SLAPS Isabella across the face.

ISABELLA

Ouch!

She starts to CRY. Mandor runs over to Isabella and hugs her.

MANDOR

Sweetheart, are you OK? Isadore,
why did you strike your sister?

ISADORE

She wouldn't let me play with the
dolls, father! I hate her!

Isadore runs over to Elizabeth's side.

ELIZABETH

Why do you hate your sister? You
should always love each other no
matter what.

MANDOR

Apologize to your sister, Isadore!

ISADORE

I'm not apologizing to her! Why do
you love her more than me? You
always treat her better than me,
always! I will not apologize!

MANDOR

Then go to your room, young, lady
and think about what you've done!
Now!

Isadore marches toward the door.

ELIZABETH

Isadore! You apologize to your
sister. Isadore!

Isadore angrily looks back at her father rocking Isabella and
storms out of the study, just as their butler WILLIAM OVERLY
(50), an African enters and addresses Mandor.

WILLIAM

Sir, Mister Raymond Chapman is here
to see you.

MANDOR

Thank you, William. Please show him
in.

William nods and steps out.

ELIZABETH

Mandor, I'm going to check on
Isadore.

She exits the study. Mandor looks down at Isabella.

MANDOR

Now, now beautiful. I'll have a
talk with your sister later and I
promise she will never strike you
again.

ISABELLA

She is always mean to me. Why does
she hate me, father?

MANDOR

She doesn't hate you. I'll deal
with Isadore when she calms down,
now run along while daddy talks to
his guest.

ISABELLA

Yes, father.

Isabella walks out of the study. William escorts a frazzled
RAYMOND CHAPMAN (50), a Caucasian into the study.

MANDOR

Raymond, how nice it is to see you.

Raymond bends down and kisses Mandor's ring.

RAYMOND

Thank you for seeing me on such short notice.

MANDOR

Please, have a seat. Can I pour you a drink?

RAYMOND

No, no, thank you.

MANDOR

What brings you all the way here from Wiltshire?

Mandor pours himself a drink.

RAYMOND

There is something you should know. It's about Angus Hughes' son, Jacob. His boy forced himself on my oldest daughter Ruth, and now she's having his child.

Mandor puts down his drink.

MANDOR

I see.

RAYMOND

Mandor, I want him to pay for what he's done, but I need your permission as Grand Warlock to proceed.

MANDOR

This is disturbing news. But, as you know, using spells and curses for retaliation is strictly forbidden. Such permission must be granted by the council.

Raymond POUNDS his fist on the table.

RAYMOND

They will never approve this! Angus is on the council and with his friendships and business dealings with the other members, they won't punish his son! Please, Mandor!

Raymond drops to his knees in front of Mandor and clasps his hands in a pleading motion.

Mandor places his hand on the shoulder of Raymond.

MANDOR

Taking actions into your own hands will only lead to trouble, Raymond. Allow the council to decide Jacob's fate, and I promise a fair and impartial decision will be made. If he is found guilty of these allegations, he will suffer the full force of my power.

Raymond raises his stare to meet Mandor's eyes.

RAYMOND

Thank you for your support, Mandor. Then I will look forward to bringing this to the council.

Mandor eases away from Raymond and takes a sip of his drink. He makes his way to a large desk that sits beside a window. He shuffles through a stack of bottles filled with liquid.

MANDOR

Now, in the interest of justice for your daughter, may I ask what spell were you hoping to use?

Raymond rises to his feet and stands tall. He takes a deep breath before speaking.

RAYMOND

The Whispering Death.

MANDOR

Raymond, that is the most deadly curse we have, and as such it has been banned! No exceptions.

RAYMOND

I know, my Lord, but I want him to suffer just like my daughter did while he was raping her!

Mandor thinks for a beat.

He nods his head.

MANDOR

I'll prepare a meeting of the council for later this week. In the meantime, get home safely, my friend. You have a long ride back to Wiltshire.

Mandor gestures over to William.

MANDOR

William will show you out.

RAYMOND

Thank you again for seeing me. May peace be with you and your family.

Raymond bows and William closes the main doors. Mandor sighs as he proceeds upstairs.

SUPER: Atlanta Georgia - 2017

PRESENT DAY - EXT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - LATE EVENING

INT. GIA CHESNIK'S APARTMENT - 22ND-FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The Atlanta skyline is seen from the balcony of the 22nd floor apartment, as heavy rain pelts the city below.

Standing on the balcony in her nightgown is a gorgeous, Caucasian model, GIA CHESNIK (22).

The wind blows into the apartment moving the curtains and whisking Gia's long black hair back and forth. Her eyes are glassy and she SOBS uncontrollably.

Behind her in the apartment, clothes are laid out on the bed.

Gia wipes her eyes, clutching her cell phone tightly against her ear.

GIA

Pick up the phone, dammit! Adrian, pick up the phone!

The RINGING stops and Adrian's voice mail is heard.

ADRIAN (V.O.)

"This is you-know-who, I'm not at you-know-where, so leave a message after you-know-what and I'll get back to you when I can."

GIA

Adrian, where are you?! I need to see you! Why haven't you called me? You promised you would come here tonight! I need to be with you, Adrian!

Gia drops the phone and wipes her tears. She staggers back inside and picks up a piece of paper on her nightstand and begins writing. She finishes the note and drops it on the bed next to her red silk top. Then --

She runs toward the balcony and jumps over the railing --

A loud CRASH followed by SCREECHING tires is heard below.

EXT. ADRIAN STEELE'S BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

ADRIAN STEELE (27), an African American with a long scar running down the left side of his face, approaches the building after his morning jog.

INT. UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Homicide Detectives WAYNE WILKINSON (32), a Caucasian, and DARRYL PERRYMAN (40), an African American, watch Adrian from an unmarked Impala parked across the street.

Perryman nudges Wilkinson.

PERRYMAN

Is that him?

WILKINSON

Yeah, that's him.

They watch as Adrian greets the building DOORMAN then enters the building.

PERRYMAN

Call it in.

Wilkinson picks up the POLICE RADIO.

WILKINSON
 Dispatch, this is Car 1141. Please
 alert Captain Whitman that the
 suspect Adrian Steele has just
 entered his building. Over.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Affirmative, Car 1141. I'll pass
 this to Captain Whitman.

WILKINSON
 Thank you. Awaiting instructions.

Wilkinson lights a cigarette and Perryman sips from his
 coffee for a moment. Then --

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Car 1141, Captain Whitman says to
 pick up Steele.

WILKINSON
 Roger that.

INT. ADRIAN STEELE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Adrian is getting dressed in his bedroom when there's a KNOCK
 on his front door. He walks over and looks through the
 peephole.

ADRIAN
 Who is it?

PERRYMAN (O.S.)
 Adrian Steele, this is the Atlanta
 Police. We need to speak with you.

ADRIAN
 The police? What is this about?

PERRYMAN (O.S.)
 Mr. Steele, please open the door.
 We have a warrant for your arrest.

Adrian reluctantly opens the door in disbelief.

ADRIAN
 A warrant? What for?

Perryman steps forward with hand-cuffs.

PERRYMAN

Adrian Steele, you're under arrest for murder. You have the right to remain--

ADRIAN

What murder?!

PERRYMAN

Anything you say can be used against you in a court of law. Do you understand your rights?

ADRIAN

I need to contact my lawyer. This is bullshit!

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER/INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Adrian sits nervously in the interrogation room, with numerous bruises and abrasions visible.

Wilkinson and Perryman sit across him with a tape recorder in the middle of the table.

PERRYMAN

Can you tell me where you were yesterday?

ADRIAN

I met some friends at a club. What's all this about?

PERRYMAN

Do you know Ben Jenkins?

ADRIAN

Yes, he's a good friend of mine.

WILKINSON

What about his wife, Kim?

ADRIAN

Yes, Detective, I know them. What is this all about?

PERRYMAN

They were found dead, and we have an eyewitness placing you at the scene.

Adrian's face lights up in shock and disbelief.

ADRIAN
What?! Ben and Kim are dead?

WILKINSON
We're asking the questions, Steele.
What were you doing at their home
yesterday?

Adrian rubs the side of his head. He takes a deep breath.

ADRIAN
Ben called me over to talk to Kim.
She thought he was having an affair
and he wanted me to talk to her --
But I assure you they were both
alive when I left.

Perryman glares intently at Adrian.

WILKINSON
Why would he ask you to talk to
her?

ADRIAN
Because Kim was a very jealous
woman. Ben knew she had a temper. I
went over to help calm things down.

Perryman smirks as he glances at Wilkinson.

PERRYMAN
You mean lie for him?

ADRIAN
I mean, I went over there to help
my friend calm down his jealous,
temperamental wife!

PERRYMAN
Our eyewitness said he saw you
arguing with the victim's wife --

Wilkinson brings his attention to scratches on Adrian's neck.

WILKINSON
Is that how you got those scratches
on your neck?

ADRIAN
I was scratched by Kim, but--

PERRYMAN
So the tissue under her fingernails
is yours then.

ADRIAN

Man, this is bullshit! She accused me of lying for Ben and threatened me if I didn't tell her who Ben was seeing. She got very angry and reached for Ben and scratched me by accident. I told her they were crazy, and I left!

The door opens and Adrian's curvy, African American lawyer HOPE ATKINSON (25) walks in, taking immediate notice of the scratches and bruises on her client's face.

HOPE

Cut the recorder off, this interview is over! Adrian, what happened to your face, did they assault you?

Adrian shakes his head.

ADRIAN

No, the scratches are from Kim and my face is from the asshole in my cell.

HOPE

What happened?

ADRIAN

Nothing, he approached me and things got a little rough... So, when am I getting out of here?

Hope motions Adrian to come with her out of the interrogation room.

Perryman rises to his feet and raises his hand.

PERRYMAN

Not so fast, counselor, we have grounds to hold your client until further test results are concluded by the crime lab. We found some skin under one of the deceased fingernails. We believe they belong to your client.

HOPE

That's enough fishing, Detectives.
My client has not been charged, and
we have a preliminary hearing this
afternoon, so stop trying to pin
three counts of murder on him
without any clear-cut evidence!

Wilkinson cuts off the tape recorder. The Detectives depart
the interrogation room.

ADRIAN

This is bullshit, Hope! I didn't
kill anyone!

HOPE

These are very serious allegations.
They want to pin these and another
death on you.

ADRIAN

What other death!?

HOPE

A woman by the name of Gia Chesnik.
You know her?

ADRIAN

Yes, I know Gia. Why?

HOPE

She was found dead this morning.
Her body's all over the pavement
outside her building. The police
think she was pushed. How well did
you know her?

Adrian thinks for a beat and moves to the other side of the
room. He faces opposite Hope.

ADRIAN

Not that well, she's just a model I
met a week ago in England. She had
some emotional issues, I mean --

HOPE

Did you sleep with her?

Adrian sighs.

He turns to face Hope with a guilty expression.

ADRIAN

Yes, but it's complicated. I was supposed to meet up with her this morning, but I was thrown in here -
-

HOPE

That's great, their timeline doesn't add up then. Now what about Ben and Kim, what happened to them?

ADRIAN

Ben was messin' around with my cousin Jessica. He said Kim would kill him if she ever found out he was cheating on her. I went over there to calm her down and she scratched me swinging at Ben and then I left. That's it.

HOPE

They're trying to pin this on you, so keep your mouth shut. I'm headed back to the office. I'm going to see if I can pull some strings and get a Judge to get you out of here.

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - CELL 265 - LATER

Adrian is returned to his cell, where CLARENCE DOBY (42), a tattooed muscular African American built like a football player, greets him.

CLARENCE

Welcome back, pumpkin! Did you meet with your lawyer?

Adrian leans against the cell wall ignoring Clarence.

CLARENCE

I asked you a question! I said, did you meet with your lawyer?

ADRIAN

Yes, I met with my lawyer. Why?

CLARENCE

Look, sweetheart, I suggest you make the best of our living arrangements and start enjoying my company.

ADRIAN

Look, Bubba or whatever your name is, I don't want any trouble. I'll be out of here today, so all I want is to be left alone. We clear?

Clarence approaches and grabs Adrian's arm and SLAMS him up against the wall.

CLARENCE

Look, you cocksucker, you just do what I say, when I say it or you're gonna get hurt --

Adrian forcefully pulls away from Clarence.

ADRIAN

I thought I made myself clear this morning, asshole! I'll tell you again -- don't fuck with me!

Clarence GRASPS Adrian by the throat and lifts him off the floor.

CLARENCE

Do you think because you're rich, I'm supposed to treat you differently? You don't think I know about you and all that money you have!? Do I look dumb to you, cocksucker?

Adrian GASPS for air and kicks the cell bars. A nearby OFFICER hears the commotion and pulls out his whistle and BLOWS --

OFFICER 1

Let him go, Doby! Goddammit, I said let him go!

CLARENCE

This motherfucker's gonna die today!

OFFICER 1

Open Cell 265! Open 265!

The cell door slowly open. A team of OFFICERS rush into the cell and attempt to subdue Clarence.

OFFICER 1

Let go of him, Doby! You're killing him!

Clarence releases Adrian. Adrian slumps to the floor unconscious. Clarence starts fighting the Officers -- throwing one against the side of the cell, as another Officer reaches for his TASER.

The taser hits Clarence in the chest. He falls to the floor twitching.

Officer 2 takes Adrian's pulse.

OFFICER 3

How is he!? Is he gonna make it?

OFFICER 2

He's alive, but he'll be sore when he comes to.

Officer 2 stands and looks down at Doby's unconscious and battered body.

OFFICER 2

Get that piece of shit out of here!
Take him to the infirmary and when he wakes up, take him to solitary.

OFFICER 3

Yes, sir. Will you be informing Director White of the incident?

Officer 2 sighs as he walks out of the cell.

INT. DETENTION CENTER INFIRMARY - AFTERNOON

DR. PAUL ROBERTS (40s) Caucasian, and NURSE SUSAN WALKER (30s) African American are monitoring Adrian's vitals when Adrian slowly comes to and tries to speak.

DOCTOR ROBERTS

Don't try to speak. You got beat pretty bad. A minute or two more and we wouldn't be having this conversation.

ADRIAN

What happened?

DOCTOR ROBERTS

Doby strangled you. Fortunately for you, the Officers on patrol got there in time.

Adrian tries to sit up.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
Here, let me help you.

Dr. Roberts assists.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
You're the second person Doby's put
in here in a month! They should
hurry up and ship him straight to
State Prison.

Adrian points to the water.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
Do you want some water?

Adrian nods. Dr. Roberts hands him a glass of water. Adrian slowly takes a sip, but coughs and spits the water out.

Dr. Roberts holds the glass and helps him with another small sip.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
You're going to be sore for a few
days, young man. I suggest you
massage the area around your throat
and you'll be fine.

Adrian nods his head slowly and closes his eyes.

INT. DETENTION CENTER/ 5TH FLOOR - LATER

The elevator doors open on the 5th floor and Nurse Walker steps out of it, pushing Adrian in a wheelchair. The pair is escorted by a GUARD down the long corridor and into Director White's office.

INT. DIRECTOR WHITE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The Guard closes the door behind Adrian who wheels himself toward the desk where DIRECTOR THOMAS WHITE (52), Caucasian, heavy-set sits.

DIRECTOR WHITE
Good Afternoon, Mr. Steele. My sincerest apologies for the earlier incident with Clarence Doby. He should have been sent to state prison a few days ago, but his trial was rescheduled. Anyway, I was just informed that you are being released--

ADRIAN
It's about time.

DIRECTOR WHITE
Sorry for bringing you all the way up here, but given how important you are, I wanted you to hear it from me first. I'm sure you'll think twice about any legal actions or negative publicity you might pursue against us concerning this unfortunate incident. Mr. Doby is in confinement, so you can return to your cell and pick up your belongings for release.

ADRIAN
That won't be necessary Mr. White, but I'll definitely take suing you into consideration.

Adrian turns and wheels himself out of the office. He looks up at the Guard with a smug expression who is waiting in the hallway.

ADRIAN
Get me out of here!

Adrian and the Guard proceed down the hall.

EXT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - AFTERNOON

Outside Gia Chesnik's building, a CRIME SCENE POLICE VAN and a POLICE CRUISER is parked. A YELLOW TARP covers the spot and body where Gia Chesnik fell.

INT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A CSI TEAM darts back and forth from the elevator to the exit. Hope walks through the revolving doors and approaches DETECTIVE SERGEANT WALTER JOHNSON (45), African American.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
Hope, glad you made it. The moment I saw Adrian's name I figured I'd better call you before the media found out.

HOPE
Thanks for looking out for us, Walter. How have things been?

Detective Johnson scribbles in his notepad before glancing back up at Hope.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Not too good for my stomach after seeing what's left outside, but things are well otherwise. I was promoted to Detective Sergeant last year, thanks to you!

HOPE

Congratulations on your promotion, Detective Sergeant. My client thanks you for testifying on his behalf against the wishes of the prosecution. Even though he did six months upstate for nothing. Did they ever find the gun or is your partner still looking for it?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Abrams died a few months ago. Cancer.

HOPE

My condolences, Walter... So what do we have here?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

The victim was Gia Christine Chesnik, 25. From the looks of it she was a model of some kind. There were no signs of forced entry and the door was locked from the inside. We found several sets of fingerprints, semen, her personal diary... and get this, a suicide note.

Hope appears intrigued. She walks over to the elevator.

HOPE

Can I go up and look around?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

You know better than that, Hope. I can't let you snoop around an active crime scene! I called you here to let you know that Adrian's name is all over her diary and I believe we'll find those are his fingerprints and fluids up there.

HOPE
Can I see the diary?

Detective Johnson considers.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
Fine, but this stays between us.

He crosses over to a bin of collected evidence and retrieves a diary in a zip-lock bag.

Hope pulls it out and flips to a random page.

HOPE
(reading)
June -- "Dear Adrian, these past few days have been amazing. I go to bed thinking of you, I wake up thinking about you. You're like a drug I can't put down. I'm going mad just thinking about the next time we'll be together!"

She and Detective Johnson exchange a glance.

HOPE
"Adrian, where are you? I can't handle this. I cancelled all of my engagements. I need your arms around me. I need you, Adrian!"

Hope flips the page and continues reading.

HOPE
"...Adrian, it's been three days. I can't think clearly without you..."

Hope shakes her head and closes the diary.

HOPE
Can I see the suicide note?

Johnson retrieves the suicide note.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
Listen, do you have time for lunch?

HOPE
Walter, Adrian's sitting in lockup for a crime he didn't commit. Having lunch with you is the last thing on my mind right now.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

And by the look of that ring
outline on your finger, it should
be the last thing on yours, too.
Now Detective Sergeant, can I
please see the damn note?

Detective Johnson sighs and hands it over. Hope reads --

HOPE

"Being without you is tearing me
apart! Not making love to you is
killing me and I can't go on living
if I can't be with you. Goodbye,
Adrian. I will always love you..."

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Now that's deep. But what the hell
does Adrian have to make this woman
take a swan dive?

HOPE

I don't know, but something isn't
right.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

You want to hear something strange,
Hope? The victim was a lesbian!
Everyone we interviewed confirmed
it.

Johnson reaches for some photos and hands them to Hope.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Look at these pictures, she's
seriously hugged up on this one.

Hope scans the pictures with intensity. She holds one up to
Detective Johnson.

HOPE

Do we know who this woman is?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Her name is Katherina Surapova.
She's another model, Russian. But
you don't have to be a detective to
figure what's going on. Here's her
info --

Johnson hands Hope Katherina's contact information.

HOPE

Was the victim bisexual?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Not according to the testimonies of the doorman and her neighbors. They saw her with plenty of women, but no men... Until Adrian.

HOPE

Hmm. Well, thanks again Walter for contacting me. This helped a lot.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Consider us even. And I can understand your worries, Hope, this just doesn't add up.

Hope's cell phone RINGS. She answers.

HOPE

Hello? Assaulted?! Is he--
(frantic)
Oh my God! I'm on my way.

Hope hangs up.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Is everything OK?

HOPE

That was the detention center, Adrian's been assaulted.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Get out of here. I'll update you as things develop.

HOPE

Thank you.

Hope proceeds out through the revolving doors.

EXT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - AFTERNOON

Hope dashes through the rain toward the entrance.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - MAIN LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Hope enters and checks in at the main desk, just as Director White approaches.

DIRECTOR WHITE

Ms. Atkinson, how are you?

HOPE

What the hell happened? What kind of place are you running here?

DIRECTOR WHITE

Everything is under control. Adrian's doing fine, he's just a little shaken and...

HOPE

He already had bruises from that lunatic! Why was he in the cell with him?

DIRECTOR WHITE

Processing mishandled his paperwork, and we're short staffed due to city budget cuts.

HOPE

You better pray he forgives you or I'm closing this fucking place down!

DIRECTOR WHITE

Mr. Steele and I spoke earlier and he didn't mention a lawsuit. If he needs anything, anything at all, just call me.

Director White passes Hope his business card.

DIRECTOR WHITE

He's at Inmate Release waiting for you. My apologies again.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - INMATE RELEASE - LATER

Adrian sees Hope walking into the release area.

ADRIAN

Hope, over here!

Hope gives Adrian a hug.

HOPE

Adrian, what happened?

ADRIAN

My cellmate went postal.

HOPE

Are you hurt?

ADRIAN

My neck hurts a little, but I'll be OK.

HOPE

It's not the first time this shit has happened here. An inmate was killed two years ago over a box of cereal.

ADRIAN

Look, I just want to go home and wash this place off me. I've had enough for one day.

Hope nods and they walk down the hall.

HOPE

Sorry, I had to leave earlier, but I had to follow up on the Gia Chesnik case. She wrote all about you in her diary... And she addressed her suicide note to you.

Adrian glares with shock at Hope.

ADRIAN

Really?

HOPE

Apparently you meant the world to her. All of this after a week of knowing her? How long did it take for you to get in her pants?

ADRIAN

Hope, you don't understand--

Hope stops walking and stares at Adrian.

HOPE

Then make me understand, Adrian!

ADRIAN

I don't know if I can.

HOPE

Adrian, Gia Chesnik was a fucking lesbian! She didn't fuck men! Surprising, right?

Adrian shakes his head "no" as they continue walking down the hall.

HOPE

She loved women her entire life,
then meets you and falls head over
heels in love in seven Goddamn
days? You're Adrian Steele, the
lesbian changer!

ADRIAN

Well, I wouldn't say that--

HOPE

And there's Ben and Kim! If I'm
counting correctly, that's three
dead bodies associated with you!

Adrian looks over to Hope and sighs.

ADRIAN

I know how this looks, Hope, but I
swear I can explain --

HOPE

You better.

They reach the door and see the rain is coming down hard.
They push them open and make a mad dash toward Hope's
MERCEDES BENZ 500 SL.

INT. HOPE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Hope starts the car and they proceed out of the parking lot.

HOPE

I have to stop by my office before
I take you home, I forgot to get
the state a document for my trial
next week.

ADRIAN

No problem.

HOPE

Now, start from the beginning, and
you better not leave anything out!

Adrian takes a moment to gather himself and then he begins.

ADRIAN

A couple of months ago I contacted
my cousin, Jessica Locke, in
England to plan a family reunion
with all of my remaining family
members.

(MORE)

ADRIAN (CONT'D)

I knew my Great-Great Grandfather was from England, so I decided to hire a professional ancestry firm to track down everyone on my parent's side and provide me with a list of living relatives. I paid for all of their airfares and hotels, and I invited Ben and we left for England...

FLASHBACK

SUPER: ONE WEEK EARLIER

INT. LONDON ENGLAND - HEATHROW AIRPORT - MORNING

Adrian and BEN JENKINS (27) an African American, proceed down the crowded HEATHROW AIRPORT TERMINAL to customs.

BEN

This place is huge!

He notices a suit in the Mall Shop Window.

BEN

Look at those prices. What's a pound worth in dollars?

ADRIAN

I don't know. Jessica should be waiting outside by now.

BEN

Oh no, not her. She's probably upset with me. I haven't seen her since she was 16. I wonder if she still has those big ole juicy--

ADRIAN

Ben, that's my cousin. Try to behave yourself.

Ben takes off his wedding ring and places it in his pocket. Adrian looks over at him.

ADRIAN

Oh, hell no! Kim's not going to kill me because you want to reminisce about a fling you had with my cousin ten years ago!

(MORE)

ADRIAN (CONT'D)
 You know how jealous Kim is! Put
 your ring back on!

Adrian and Ben reach the front of the line and approach
 separate customs booths.

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT - LATER

Adrian and Ben exit the airport with their luggage in tow.
 Adrian starts looking around when a loud horn BEEPS.

JESSICA
 Cousin Adrian! Adrian, over here!

JESSICA LOCKE (26) mixed race, busty, very attractive, jumps
 out of her car and runs toward Adrian.

Jessica gives Adrian a hug and kiss and stares over at Ben.

ADRIAN
 Hello, Jess! You look great, Cuz!
 Are you able to buy drinks yet?

JESSICA
 Yes silly, I've been legal for
 years now.

Jessica looks at Ben and smiles.

BEN
 Hello stranger, long time no see.

ADRIAN
 And he's married now, right Ben?

JESSICA
 Well, well, well, if it isn't Ben
 "I can't call anybody" Jenkins. How
 are you doing? It's been a long
 time, what -- 10 years? Why didn't
 you call me after I left Atlanta?

BEN
 Sorry, Jess, I never thought we
 were going to be together, so I
 didn't --

She interrupts.

JESSICA
 Didn't what? Bother! It's OK and I
 see you moved on, right?

Jessica rolls her eyes at Ben. Everyone starts walking toward her parked car.

JESSICA

Cousin Felix is here too, he's waiting on more relatives to arrive, they should be here before we kick off this evening. Memema Emira is here too.

ADRIAN

Really?

JESSICA

She just turned 107 and she scares the shit out of me. She's been here for two days, and all she does is tell stories about the family back in the day. She's a freaking family encyclopedia, and her memory is razor-sharp.

ADRIAN

I haven't seen her since I was a child, but I'm sure she has some really good stories about my Dad and Grandfather. Hey, anyone hungry?

BEN

Yeah, I could eat something.

Ben scans Jessica's body up and down. She catches him looking and smiles.

Adrian, Ben, and Jessica proceed into the car and away from the airport.

EXT. LOCKE FAMILY RESIDENCE - LATE EVENING

Adrian, Ben, and Jessica make their way toward the front entrance of the generations-old home.

INT. LOCKE FAMILY RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Adrian, Ben, and Jessica walk in. EMIRA (MEMEMA) LOCKE (107) caucasian, very old and fragile, is speaking to numerous FAMILY MEMBERS in the living room.

ELDER EMIRA

When I was your age, parents were treated with better respect than they are today. All of these youngsters showing their asses. Yeah, times sure have changed...

Emira notices the new arrivals and moistens her TOOTHLESS MOUTH.

ELDER EMIRA

(to Adrian)

Hello, honey. What's your name, sweetie?

ADRIAN

Hi Auntie. I'm Adrian, Adrian Steele.

ELDER EMIRA

You're Frederick's little boy! I remember seeing you when you were just a little pup.

ADRIAN

Yes Auntie, I remember you too.

ELDER EMIRA

You were always getting into things. I remember you well, you were one ugly ass baby when you were born. You had two black eyes, but you sure did grow into your looks! Except for that scar--

Adrian stifles a sarcastic laugh.

ADRIAN

Thank you, Auntie... I think?

ELDER EMIRA

What happened to your face, child?

ADRIAN

I was injured in a car accident several years ago. The accident that killed my parents.

ELDER EMIRA

Oh, that's right. I heard about that. What a shame, child. I'm sure it wasn't the curse that killed them.

She points to a portrait of Isabella hanging on the wall.

ELDER EMIRA

Did you know your Great-Great
Grandfather had a curse placed on
him?

ADRIAN

I'm sorry, Auntie, did you say a
curse?

Emira turns and looks at Ben and Jessica.

ELDER EMIRA

Who are you, precious?

JESSICA

It's me, Jessica.

ELDER EMIRA

Oh yes honey, you're Walter's
little girl. You know your daddy
got VD when he was 16. He came
running into the house holding his
little penis. That's before he
joined the Royal Air Force and
married your momma. Let's see, that
was 22, or was it 30 years ago.

JESSICA

Memema!

ELDER EMIRA

(to Ben)

And who are you, honey?

Ben points to himself in confusion.

ELDER EMIRA

Yes, young man, I'm talking to you.

BEN

My name is Ben, I'm Adrian's
friend.

ELDER EMIRA

I don't know you. You said you are
a friend of who?

BEN

Adrian.

Emira shakes her head in confusion.

ELDER EMIRA
Sweetie, can someone get me
something to drink?

ADRIAN
Memema, you said something about a
curse?

Adrian leans in closer to Emira.

ELDER EMIRA
You're Frederick's little boy. Did
you know your father peed the bed?
That's right, he didn't stop peeing
the bed until he was about 13 years
old. All you Steele boys did that.
I bet you did too.

The family members chuckle as Adrian lowers his head in
embarrassment.

ADRIAN
No, ma'am, it must have skipped me.
I never peed the bed.

Emira points at the portrait of Isabella.

ELDER EMIRA
Isabella and her sister Isadore
Locke were my first cousins.

ADRIAN
Uh, OK... Who are they?

RELATIVES begin to gather to hear Memema's story.

ELDER EMIRA
They were twin sisters. Isabella
was my Great Grandfather's Father,
Matthew's mother, who died in 1922.
Rumors started to spread throughout
that your Great Great Grandfather
Dominic slept with both sisters...

Everyone that sits in front of Emira leans in with interest
as she tells her story.

ELDER EMIRA
Dominic Steele was a beautiful,
light-skinned African and Italian
man who worked for my Uncle Mandor
at his cannery. My Uncle was very
protective when it came to his
daughters, especially Isabella.

(MORE)

ELDER EMIRA (CONT'D)

Isadore and Isabella's relationship was always shaky because of Isadore's jealousy over Mandor's love for Isabella. Being a mighty Warlock and the town's leader, Uncle Mandor had to make sure anyone who married his daughters would care for them not only financially, but be fit to be his successor after his death. He immediately took Dominic under his wing, hoping one day to turn over the business to his stepson, but when rumors of Dominic's infidelity spread, Mandor became very suspicious...

FLASHBACK - EXT. LOCKE MANOR - AFTERNOON

SUPER: Gloucestershire, England - 1921

INT. LOCKE MANOR - DOMINIC AND ISABELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Two hands cover Dominic's eyes. Their hands drop, and Dominic sees a provocative gown on the beautiful frame of his wife.

She pushes him onto the bed and gets on top of him, removing her clothes. Dominic takes off his clothes, and they begin to make love.

INT. LOCKE MANOR - DOMINIC AND ISABELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Isadore Locke rolls over and looks over at Dominic and smiles.

ISADORE

I can see why my sister loves you,
Dominic: you're a fantastic lover.

Dominic looks over and notices it's Isabella's twin sister Isadore and jumps out of bed.

DOMINIC

Isadore, what is this!? Get out of here before Isabella or someone sees us!

Isadore laughs and jumps out of bed. She starts getting dressed.

ISADORE

Don't worry, lover, my beloved
sister went into town with father
this morning. I couldn't resist
having you.

She laughs and sits up in the bed.

DOMINIC

You're insane, Isadore!

ISADORE

If you think I'm insane, wait until
I tell, father.

Dominic grabs Isadore's wrist.

DOMINIC

I don't know what kind of game
you're playing, but no one will
ever believe you!

ISADORE

That's a chance I don't think
you're willing to take Dominic.
Once father finds out, there's no
telling what he'll do to you!
You've never seen an angry Warlock
before, have you?

DOMINIC

I swear if anyone finds out about
this I'll--

Isadore glares at Dominic with vengeance and determination.

ISADORE

You'll do whatever I say, that's
what! We'll do this until I say
stop! Do you understand!?

The main door opens and Isabella yells upstairs.

ISABELLA (O.S.)

Dominic, come down and look what
I've brought!

ISADORE

Go! Run to your wife, Dominic. But
remember what I said!

Isadore walks out of the bedroom laughing.

DOMINIC

Coming Bella, I'll be right down.

ELDER EMIRA (V.O.)

After Isabella's tragic death, Dominic fell into a deep depression. One evening Dominic got so drunk he tried to explain to Mandor what happened, but his words were taken out of context. Mandor, in anger ordered Dominic to his room, and cousin Isadore had plans of her own.

FLASHBACK - INT. DOMINIC AND ISABELLA'S BEDROOM - DAYS LATER
- MORNING

SUPER: Gloucestershire, England - 1922

Intoxicated, Dominic slowly opens his eyes. He believes he sees Isabella lying by his side.

DOMINIC

I knew this was a horrible nightmare. I--

ISADORE

It's no nightmare lover, I finally have you for myself.

Dominic realizes it's not Isabella.

DOMINIC

Isadore! Do you have no shame?

ISADORE

I told you, I get what I want!

DOMINIC

You're mad! I could never love a vile woman like you!

ISADORE

Look at me, Dominic! I am Isabella, we are the same and you can have her again!

DOMINIC

You could never be my Isabella! You may have the same physical appearance, but only one of you can ever have my heart!

The door SLAMS open. An angry Mandor enters the room.

MANDOR
What the hell is this?!

A naked Dominic and Isadore sit up in the bed.

DOMINIC
Mandor, this is not what it looks
like! Isadore, please explain--

ISADORE
Father, Dominic forced me into his
bed!

MANDOR
He did what!?

ISADORE
Dominic was drunk and he, he, took
advantage of me. He kept calling me
Isabella!

Dominic is ashamed and angry.

DOMINIC
Mandor, she's lying! I would never
do this. I loved Isabella--

Mandor looks over at a naked Isadore.

MANDOR
Get out of his bed and put some
damn clothes on!

Dominic jumps out of bed.

DOMINIC
Mandor, I loved Isabella with all
my heart, why would I do this to
her memory!?

MANDOR
Never speak Isabella's name again!
I'm standing here looking at you
with my daughter just hours after--
I want you out of here! Get out!

Dominic stares at Mandor with a pleading expression. His
hands clenched together.

DOMINIC
But what about my son?

MANDOR

You have no son! I'll raise him as my own. I never want him to know about you. You betrayed our family!

DOMINIC

You can't do this Mandor! You can't take my son away from me!

A devilish and evil smile appears on Isadore's face.

ISADORE

I will raise him as my own.

MANDOR

Isabella would still be alive if you'd taken her with you.

DOMINIC

I don't know what you heard Mandor, but I assure you, I was only gone for a few minutes. How could I ever know she would stumble and hit her head!

Dominic attempts to stifle his tears, but they slowly begin to fall from his heavy eyes.

Mandor lunges forward at Dominic with an outstretched hand.

MANDOR

And then you rape, Isadore!?

DOMINIC

I didn't rape her! I would never rape anyone, Mandor nor would I betray Isabella, I loved her--

MANDOR

I told you never to--

ISADORE

Yes, father, he kept yelling at me. I tried fighting him off me, but he was too strong.

Dominic's body trembles. His lips quiver as he rapidly shakes his head "no."

DOMINIC

Mandor, she's lying!

MANDOR

I curse you, Dominic Steele! I
curse you and your bloodline
forever!

ELDER EMIRA (V.O.)

Now, I don't know the exact words
used, but when the story was told
to me, Mandor got so angry he burst
a blood vessel in his forehead. It
is said that as long as the curse
is placed upon the Steele
Bloodline, they will never find
happiness. Whoever hears the word
"Bella" let that name bring ecstasy
and pleasure and a short agonizing
death by their own hands. Isadore
Locke was evil when she got into
Isabella's bed that night, and
Mandor was a powerful Warlock with
unimaginable powers...

A strong wind rushes through the room after the curse is
spoken by Mandor, shutting wooden shutters and flowing out of
the open window. Dominic gathers his belongings.

Isadore smiles as she watches near the bedroom door.

DOMINIC

You placed a curse on me for loving
your daughter and rejecting a witch
that would lie to your face! I'm
going to the authorities!

Dominic moves his body to hurry off.

MANDOR

My boy, I'm the authority in this
town. I control everything,
including the police.

DOMINIC

I have no doubt of your control
over this town, Mandor, but how
could you dismiss me after loving
me as your son?

MANDOR

Isabella is dead! She died so my
new son could live, and I will
never forgive you. You are no
longer my son, now get out!

He gazes at Dominic threateningly.

DOMINIC

I'm leaving! You can put a curse on me, but it won't change the fact that I loved Isabella and I loved you!

He starts to move then turns back --

DOMINIC

I'm coming back to get my son, do you hear me, Mandor? I'll be back!

Mandor laughs smugly.

MANDOR

Then you will die.

Dominic grits his teeth and continues on, stopping by Isadore.

DOMINIC

Shame on you, Isadore!

Dominic exits.

PRESENT DAY - INT. LOCKE FAMILY RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Elder Emira wraps up the story.

ELDER EMIRA

Dominic never did return. Around Christmas of that year, he was committed to a mental hospital and died from acute depression. Isadore became pregnant with Dominic's child and had a baby boy named Saul. After Mandor died, your Grandfather Matthew Steele took over the Cannery and married an American nurse by the name of Sheila Perry. In 1945 your father, Frederick Steele, was born.

ADRIAN

So, whatever happened to Isadore?

ELDER EMIRA

Isadore married a member of parliament by the name of Peter Wilkerson. They had a daughter, Anita, before they were both killed in a plane crash over the Andes in 1956.

(MORE)

ELDER EMIRA (CONT'D)
And Anita's brother Saul had a son
named Victor Mandor Locke.

ADRIAN
That's some story, Auntie.

ELDER EMIRA
Remember, you must know your past
before you know your future.

Emira looks around the room.

ELDER EMIRA
I'm looking forward to seeing all
of you again tonight. But for now
I need to rest. I'll tell you more
when I awake.

ADRIAN
Wait, Memema -- you mentioned the
word, Bella...

Elder Emira turns to Adrian with a grave expression.

ELDER EMIRA
You fool! Never say that word, even
in jest! It's very powerful and
dangerous. It should never be
spoken, especially by you!

ADRIAN
Ok, Ok. I'm sorry --

Emira shakes her head in disbelief. She is led into her
bedroom by a relative. She turns back and yells to Adrian
once more --

ELDER EMIRA
Remember, you should never speak
that word! Do you hear me?!

Emira COUGHS and her door closes. Adrian turns to Ben.

ADRIAN
Wow, have you ever heard anything
like that before?

BEN
She said if you speak the word you
will have ecstasy and pleasure!

Adrian rolls his eyes and grins.

ADRIAN

Yeah, and then there will be an agonizing death. Shit Ben, I didn't believe anything she said.

BEN

I know what I heard. Saying "Bella" will get you laid and trust me, brother, you need to be laid! Bella, Bella, Bella!

ADRIAN

Stop fucking around, Ben! Some of that may be exaggerated from what really happened.

Adrian glances around the room and shakes off the events of what just transpired.

ADRIAN

Hey, let's go meet the rest of my family, then I need to call Hope. She just finished a very big murder case and I want to find out how it went.

BEN

What's going on between you two?

Adrian glances over at Ben with a look of confusion.

ADRIAN

We had an attraction at first, but after the car accident and the deaths of my parents, I saw her differently.

BEN

I think she's in love with you.

ADRIAN

Leave it alone, Ben. There will never be anything between us. Do I care for her? Yes, but look at me, look at my face, do you think anyone wants to be with a freak like me?

BEN

But you're also rich as hell. Trust me, someone will get you.

Jessica approaches.

JESSICA
Adrian, go introduce yourself to
our other cousins.

Adrian nods and crosses over to greet his relatives.

Ben and Jessica head outside alone.

INT. LOCKE FAMILY RESIDENCE - LATER

The relatives are all dressed up in upscale cocktail attire, mingling and putting on their coats.

A loud SCREAM is heard. Adrian and Ben run down the stairs. Jessica is crying by Emira's room door. The other family members run to see the commotion.

ADRIAN
What is it? What happened?

JESSICA
It's Memema... She's dead!

ADRIAN
Dead?

JESSICA
I think her heart just stopped.

Adrian walks into the room.

INT. EMIRA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A light on the table is on and Memema's teeth are floating in a glass. Memema's mouth and eyes are open. Adrian sits on the edge of the bed and holds her hand.

ADRIAN
There was so much I wanted to know.
Rest in peace, Memema.

He kisses her hand and places it down beside her BIBLE, which is opened by her side. Adrian looks curiously at the highlighted pages and picks it up --

ADRIAN (V.O.)
I looked in her Bible and noticed a
family tree. The name before the
last branch on the Steele tree was
Victor, followed by me.

INT. LOCKE RESIDENCE - GLOUCESTERSHIRE ENGLAND - MORNING

Adrian and Jessica are drinking coffee in the kitchen.

ADRIAN

So, tell me about Victor.

JESSICA

I don't know much about him, other than he owns a massive tech conglomerate called SolarTech.

ADRIAN

I've heard of it. Whose son is he again?

JESSICA

That would have been a good question for Memema. I believe his Grandmother was Isadore Locke and his father was her son, Saul. So his mother would be Saul's wife, Roxanne.

Adrian thinks for beat with a quizzical expression.

ADRIAN

Is there someplace that keeps birth records?

JESSICA

Yes, but most of the people in this town were born at home, so there are no records that I know of.

Jessica taps her fingers on the counter as she takes a sip of her coffee.

JESSICA

The person to speak with about that is Maedeen Forester. She assisted with hundreds of births for towns members dating back to the early 40s. If anyone knows, Maedeen does.

EXT./INT. JESSICA'S CAR - MAIN STREET - AFTERNOON

Jessica's car drives along the road with Ben and Adrian inside.

ADRIAN (V.O.)

Ben, Jessica and I proceeded to Maedeen's house.

(MORE)

ADRIAN (CONT'D)

When we got there, her house had been demolished. We learned that Maadeen had died not too long ago from cancer, but left all of her birth documents with her Goddaughter, Terri Scarver. We found where Terri lived and proceeded to her home.

EXT. SCARVER RESIDENCE - LATER

The car pulls up in front of a small but modest cottage. Adrian, Ben and Jessica exit the car and walk up to the front door.

ADRIAN

Let me do the talking.

Adrian rings the doorbell. The heavy-set TERRI SCARVER (45) opens the door and rests her eyes on Adrian.

TERRI

Hello, may I help you?

ADRIAN

Are you Terri Scarver?

TERRI

Yes.

ADRIAN

My name is Adrian and this is Ben and Jessica. Do you know Maadeen Forester?

TERRI

Yes, but Ms. Forester died some time ago.

Adrian nods his head. He glances over at Ben and Jessica before returning his focus to Terri.

ADRIAN

I know, we are inquiring about some birth records she kept. Can you help us?

TERRI

Madam Forester's records are personal and cannot be released.

ADRIAN

Please, Ms. Scarver, we lost our Aunt recently and we were wondering if you could just check the records to see if one of Madam Forester's clients is related to us.

TERRI

I do understand, but--

ADRIAN

I'm sure I can make a small donation to you for your service.

TERRI

Please come inside.

INT. SCARVER RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Adrian, Ben and Jessica go inside.

TERRI

Have a seat. Can I get you some tea?

ADRIAN

That will be fine.

BEN

None for me, thank you.

JESSICA

Yes, please. You have a lovely home, Ms. Scarver.

Terri enters the open kitchen and places a pot of water on the stove.

TERRI

Thank you, my dear. We've lived here for quite some time. We were in the middle of remodeling when my husband passed. I just couldn't see myself finishing it.

She looks inside a large beautifully painted storage locker.

JESSICA

I'm sorry for your loss, ma'am.

TERRI

It's quite alright, sweetie, he had heart issues-- Oh, here it is.

Terri takes out three large binders numbered 1,2 and 3 wrapped with a large leather tie and a brass buckle.

BEN

Those books look very old.

TERRI

Madam Forester became a midwife back in the late 30s. She must have birthed over a thousand children!

ADRIAN

Ms. Scarver?

TERRI

Call me, Terri.

ADRIAN

Terri, we're looking for a man by the name of Victor Locke.

Terri ponders this name as she continues moving about.

TERRI

Victor Locke, the chairman of SolarTech?

ADRIAN

Yes, we believe he was a relative of Emira Locke.

TERRI

Then he would be in volume 2.

Terri opens up Book 2 and looks for Victor's name.

TERRI

I don't see a Victor Locke posted in this book. Let me look at Volume 1 again.

Terri closes Volume 2 and looks in Volume 1 again.

TERRI

Ahh, here he is! Victor Mandor Locke, born 5/22/58 to a Saul and Roxanne Locke.

Adrian smiles with a satisfied grin as he nudges Ben.

ADRIAN

Do you have anything on a Saul Locke?

TERRI
Let me check.

Terri looks back through the first book.

TERRI
Yes, Saul Locke born 4/17/1923 to
Dominic Steele and Isadore Locke.

Jessica, Ben, and Adrian all share accomplished glances with one another.

Jessica leans forward.

JESSICA
Are you sure? I mean is there any
way your records could be wrong?

ADRIAN
Memema was right, Isadore had Saul
out of wedlock from my Great-Great
Grandfather Dominic, nine months
after my Grandfather Matthew was
born.

Ben and Jessica nod, up to speed.

ADRIAN
Let's go visit, Victor.

EXT. SOLARTECH CORPORATION - LATER

Adrian, Ben and Jessica make their way toward the entrance of the large, looming building marked "SolarTech Corp."

INT. SOLARTECH CORPORATION - CONTINUOUS

Adrian, Ben and Jessica exit the elevator on the penthouse floor. They approach the reception desk where the genuine and beautiful receptionist, TAMARA (20s) mixed race, very beautiful greets them.

TAMARA
Hello, can I help you?

ADRIAN
Yes, we're here to see Victor
Locke. Is he in?

TAMARA

I'm sorry, Mr. Locke stepped away for a business meeting, but I'm expecting him back anytime now. Can I ask what this is about?

JESSICA

Yes, there was a death in the family, his Aunt passed away last evening. We're here to inform him and ask if he will be attending the funeral service.

Tamara looks at Victor's schedule.

TAMARA

Mr. Locke is booked the entire month.

ADRIAN

The entire month?

The office door opens, VICTOR LOCKE (54), mixed race, tall, slim, well-dressed carrying a long-handled umbrella walks in. He looks them up and down.

TAMARA

Good evening Mr. Locke, can I get you some tea?

VICTOR

No Tamara, but I will have a scotch on the rocks.

Ben turns to Adrian.

BEN

(quietly)

He knows it isn't raining, why is he carrying that umbrella?

ADRIAN

It always rains in London.

Victor glances at Adrian with focus on his long scar.

VICTOR

And who are you?

ADRIAN

Hello, Victor... I'm your cousin Adrian Steele, from The United States.

Victor thinks this over for a moment while he stares at Adrian.

VICTOR
Sorry, I don't know you.

ADRIAN
It seems you don't know your family in Gloucestershire either. We're here to tell you that Aunt Emira died yesterday.

VICTOR
Aunt Emira?

ADRIAN
Yes, Emira Locke.

Victor moves farther into the room. He places his umbrella down and takes a seat as he releases a sigh.

VICTOR
I'm sorry my good man, I don't know any of my relatives in Gloucestershire.

ADRIAN
I know you're very busy running all of this, cousin, but we only stopped by to relay the news of her death to you. If you can free up some time in your busy schedule, I would like to talk to you about something.

Victor walks back near Adrian.

VICTOR
Adrian, right?

ADRIAN
Yes.

Tamara delivers Victor his drink. He swirls the ice round and round. Victor sits down.

VICTOR
Adrian, there is nothing to discuss. I appreciate you stopping by, but I have no intentions of going to a funeral for someone I don't know.

Victor looks over at Tamara.

VICTOR
Tamara, please show Adrian and his party to the elevator.

TAMARA
Yes, Mr. Locke.

Adrian turns around in anger.

ADRIAN
You're not a Locke, Victor, you're actually a Steele. Your real name is Victor Steele!

Victor glares at Adrian with confusion and intrigue. He places his glass on the table.

VICTOR
Excuse me?

ADRIAN
You heard me! Since you want to be an asshole, I thought you'd want to hear what I wanted to speak with in private about.

Victor thrusts himself from the chair and inches towards Adrian with a menacing stare.

VICTOR
How dare you come into my office and insult me! Tamara, please hold my calls. Mr. Steele, come with me!

They go into his office and close the door.

INT. VICTOR LOCKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Adrian glares up at Victor.

ADRIAN
Look, you snobby asshole! I tried to get you alone to tell you this. I've never treated anyone like this before, but I don't appreciate your attitude towards our family.

VICTOR
I'm not a snob nor am I a fool! How much do you want to keep this silent?

ADRIAN

How much do I want? You ignorant, arrogant piece of shit! Look, I don't need your money because I'm already a wealthy man! I just came here today to tell you about your Aunt's death and give you the opportunity of attending her funeral.

Victor chuckles sarcastically as he leans against his desk.

VICTOR

I'm sorry my good man, I know meeting me for the first time was not the highlight of your day, but-

ADRIAN

Really, but the offer still stands. The service is in two days. I'll leave my number and the address to the service with your secretary.

VICTOR

Why, certainly.

With a sinister smile on his face, Victor extends a handshake to Adrian. Adrian hesitantly shakes it.

INT. SOLARTECH CORPORATION - CONTINUOUS

Ben and Jessica are flirting in the waiting area as they depart the office door. Adrian strides toward them and then stops when he sees Tamara, and suddenly has an idea.

He changes direction and saddles up next to her.

ADRIAN

Thank you for your help. What did you say your name was?

TAMARA

Tamara. And you're welcome!

ADRIAN

Can I tell you something, Tamara?

TAMARA

What is it?

Adrian leans in and WHISPERS --

ADRIAN

Bella...

He backs away from her ear and sees her staring at him, glassy-eyed.

TAMARA

You're so handsome! We have to be together! Please stay with me!

She grasps his hand. Adrian looks at her, confused. He pulls his hand away in disbelief. Tamara is seen crying as she extends her arms out for Adrian.

TAMARA

Please don't leave me!

Adrian hurries out of the Victor's office.

INT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING (PRESENT DAY)

Adrian is making drinks. He's looks at Hope's body from the corner of his eye.

ADRIAN

Here you go, one Amaretto and Pineapple juice.

HOPE

Thanks.

ADRIAN

Can I ask you a question?

HOPE

Sure.

ADRIAN

Did you believe me?

HOPE

About the curse?

ADRIAN

Yes.

HOPE

I've seen and heard a lot of things during my stint as a defense lawyer, and if I didn't know you, I would have called you a liar and left, but I do know you. And I do believe you.

ADRIAN

I didn't know how you were going to explain this to anyone or better yet, get a jury to believe you. Just explaining all of this to you sounds crazy.

HOPE

We definitely have to prepare for the worst. That's why we need evidence.

ADRIAN

Evidence? How are we going to get that? I can't say it without someone dying.

Adrian's phone rings.

ADRIAN

Hello?

VICTOR (O.S.)

Hello, Cousin. It's Victor.

ADRIAN

Victor, what's ...?

VICTOR (O.S.)

You said you were not going to tell anyone about me.

ADRIAN

I didn't tell anyone...

VICTOR (O.S.)

Well someone did, I'm all over the London Times today. They're calling me a fraud. SolarTech's shares are down 40%.

ADRIAN

I assure you, Victor, I told no one. Are you sure your office isn't bugged?

VICTOR (O.S.)

I get my office scanned daily.

ADRIAN

Why didn't you come to the funeral?

VICTOR (O.S.)
 I gave it a lot of thought and
 decided not to attend, plus I don't
 have a receptionist anymore. Tamara
 is dead. She took her life right
 after you left.

Adrian's face goes pale.

ADRIAN
 Oh no! I'm so sorry... I mean, I'm
 sorry for your loss.

VICTOR (O.S.)
 I'm in Atlanta on urgent business,
 can we meet for drinks tonight?

ADRIAN
 Sure, where are you staying?

VICTOR (O.S.)
 The Ritz Carlton in Buckhead. I'll
 be in the bar around eight.

ADRIAN
 I'll see you there.

Adrian hangs up. He glares at Hope with a loss for words and
 a flat expression.

INT. VICTOR'S HOTEL ROOM - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Victor hangs up the phone. In the distance, a Female Flight
 Attendant uniform is draped over a chair, a STEWARDESS (20s)
 African American is lying naked in the bed crying. Her eyes
 have a glazed and glassy look. Victor walks into the bedroom.

STEWARDESS
 Where did you go, Victor? Come back
 to bed, I need to have you next to
 me. Please make love to me again,
 please? I love you.

Victor lights his cigarette and takes a drink of his scotch
 and finishes getting dressed.

VICTOR
 I love you, too.

INT. RITZ CARLTON BAR - EVENING

Victor sits at the bar drinking. Adrian walks in and makes his way toward the bar.

VICTOR
Over here, Adrian.

Adrian approaches Victor cautiously.

ADRIAN
Victor, what brings you to Atlanta?

VICTOR
You, dear boy, you. I have a few things to clear up here, then I'm leaving.

ADRIAN
Why do you want to see me?

The BARTENDER approaches and interrupts their conversation.

BARTENDER
Can I get you anything?

ADRIAN
Yes, I'll have a Blue Moon with two orange slices.

VICTOR
I'll take another double shot of your finest malt scotch.

BARTENDER
Coming right up.

The Bartender walks over and pours some beer into a mug from the tap.

ADRIAN
You could have at least sent flowers.

VICTOR
Let's cut the shit, Adrian. I know you killed, Tamara!

The Bartender brings Adrian and Victor's drinks. Adrian has a shocked expression.

ADRIAN
What? How did you--

Victor sips from his scotch glass, then turns to Adrian.

VICTOR
I know all about the curse.
(a beat)
You can say I'm an expert on it.

Adrian shakes his head in confusion as he stares hard at Victor.

ADRIAN
How did you find out about it's
power?

VICTOR
From my Mother when I was 18. She
always wanted the best for me.

ADRIAN
Your mother, Roxanne Locke?

VICTOR
Yes, she told me if I wanted
something, I should take it in
droves. I used the gift as I call
it, for the first time after my
18th birthday.

Victor sips from his glass. A larger sip this time.

VICTOR
Oh, cousin Adrian, you should have
seen them beg for me. The first few
were difficult to get through
emotionally, but once you get the
hang of them crying and waiting for
them to die, it becomes much more
tolerable. I even whispered the
word to you. But I see you are
immune to its power.

ADRIAN
How many women have you killed,
Victor?!

VICTOR
A hundred, maybe two? I actually
lost count.

Adrian stares at Victor with shock as Victor looks directly at his drink.

ADRIAN
And what if I take this information
to Interpol and the FBI?

VICTOR
Let's see, "Hello constable, I
whispered into a woman's ear today
and my words made her kill
herself."

ADRIAN
I have someone that believes me,
someone the authorities trust.

VICTOR
Ah, Ms. Atkinson.

ADRIAN
Yes, but how--

Victor shifts his focus to Adrian who looks on in disbelief.

VICTOR
I know all about your pathetic
life, cousin. I know all about your
wealth, and I even know what makes
you tick. So, you want to play
games? Well, I'm going to up the
ante.

ADRIAN
Victor, you're fucking insane!

VICTOR
Insane?! You killed the woman I
loved!

ADRIAN
I'm sorry about Tamara, I didn't
know what would happen--

VICTOR
Bullshit! Why would you say that
word then!?

ADRIAN
Emira, never told me it's true
power. I'm sorry!

Victor slams his fist on the counter and spins his seat in
Adrian's direction.

VICTOR

I loved Tamara, she was my life.
She knew me like nobody else. She
never did anything to you, but you
took all that away from me. Now...

Adrian lowers his head, breaking his stare with Victor.

ADRIAN

I'm sorry, Victor--

VICTOR

Now I'm going to make you suffer
just like I did! How does it feel
knowing that the one you love, the
most important person in this world
is going to die an agonizing death?

ADRIAN

I didn't know--

VICTOR

You didn't know, what!? That she's
been working for me since she
graduated college? That I took over
her career and got her first
modeling assignment with Vogue?
You've taken all that away from me.

Victor sips his drink.

VICTOR

Who would have known that I would
be sitting face to face with
someone who knew about my secret,
our secret, and the things that
we've done?

Adrian rapidly brings his eyes back to Victor with a look of
purpose.

ADRIAN

How do I turn it off? How do I get
rid of the curse?

VICTOR

You can't get rid of it, silly boy.
You'll have to stay with them or
die before they do and you don't
look like a man that's going to
stay with anyone for more than a
few hours, right?

Victor turns around.

VICTOR

I'm not going to lie, cousin, the next few days are going to be very tough for her. Well, that's if she doesn't try and fight it. You wouldn't believe how many of them die within the first couple of days. You always hear people say "have strength", well in this case, having strength will kill you fast.

Victor smiles and takes a sip of his scotch.

VICTOR

I'm surprised you're not going through withdrawals. For me, using the gift is like taking cocaine, you keep doing it and doing it.

Victor stands up and pushes the stool close to the bar.

VICTOR

I lacked confidence and judgment at first. I couldn't fathom what was going to happen or how this was going to change my life. Gabrielle was my first. She lived down the street and her father was in the wine business. Gabby was so beautiful, but her death was a test for bigger things to come. You always remember your first, right cousin?

Victor starts to laugh.

VICTOR

Not knowing when or how I will do it is priceless. It could come from a phone call thousands of miles away. One word is all it takes to end a life, but you should know all about that, right cousin?

ADRIAN

Please Victor, please don't involve Hope.

In one swig, Victor finishes his drink and walks towards the exit.

VICTOR

You should have thought about that before you took Tamara from me.

ADRIAN

Do you hear me, Victor!? Please
don't do this!

Victor walks away.

ADRIAN

Victor!

INT. HOPE ATKINSON'S OFFICE - EVENING

Hope gets off of the elevator. The light in the office is on.

HOPE

Donald, is that you?

DONALD EVANS (25) African American, tall, peers out from
around the corner.

DONALD

No, it's the boogey man. Yes, it's
me!

HOPE

Where are you on your closing
arguments?

Donald stares at Hope with frustration as he throws a file of
papers on the desk.

DONALD

I know this is very important to
the firm, but this is not my first
rodeo, I can handle this trial.

HOPE

We have a lot riding on an
acquittal. This is our first gang-
related case.

DONALD

This is not a gang-related case
Hope, our client is the son of a
mob Don, who could kill us if we
lose.

HOPE

I stand corrected. So what's your
take on the trial so far?

Donald sits back in a chair beside the desk. He rubs his
forehead and glances off from Hope.

DONALD

The state has a very strong case, but their witnesses are weak. I killed them during cross, but I saw some of the jury members and I believe we may have some minor worries, but we have a lot of reasonable doubt. I'm considering putting Salvatore Rossi on the stand. If I can get the forensic expert in first and follow-up with the movie ticket booth operator, then I can call Salvatore to the stand.

Hope nods her head in agreement.

HOPE

OK, then let's do it, we need to strengthen his alibi. Do you think he did it, I mean did he kill that boy?

DONALD

I don't know, but I think we should have passed on this one. Coming on board this late into a trial is a disadvantage for everyone, especially the client. Taking over for someone else never sits right. Where's Adrian?

HOPE

I dropped him back at his condo and came here. He's been through a lot in the past 48 hours.

Donald lunges up from the chair, grabs hold of Hope's hand and turns her around. He gazes into her eyes with a passionate stare.

DONALD

Do you know how I feel about you?

HOPE

Yes, Donald, I know. That's why there can never be anything between us. I don't want to mix business and personal feelings. I told you this already if you're going to keep pushing yourself on me this way, things are going to have to change.

DONALD

So, what happened in Paris was a lie?

HOPE

Look, we were both drunk that evening. We said and did things we shouldn't have. I never meant to lead you on like that, and I've apologized to you before--

DONALD

So, you're in love with him?

HOPE

Does it matter?

DONALD

You can't always be there for him, he's going to have to grow up without you one day!

Hope takes in his words. Then --

HOPE

Sorry for distracting you from your case.

Hope pulls away from Donald and leaves the office with haste and never looking back.

INT. BEN AND KIM JENKINS HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Hope and the heavy-set medical examiner DR. ELLIOT GREEN, (60s), walk inside the home of Ben and Kim Jenkins.

HOPE

Jesus, what's that smell?

DOCTOR GREEN

Decomposing blood. The police left the crime scene as is.

Hope points to the bedroom.

HOPE

That's where they were discovered.

They walk into the room.

INT. BEN AND KIM JENKINS HOUSE/BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Green inspects the crime scene with a keen sense of focus as he moves about the room.

DOCTOR GREEN

There's a lot of blood, but no sign of spraying anywhere... It seems Mr. Jenkins just bled out.

HOPE

The police report has Ben laying on the bed and then falling to the floor. There are some blood stains on the top of the mattress and some on the side of it.

Doctor Green directs his attention to a specific area. Hope turns her eyes to his direction.

DOCTOR GREEN

Well, from the position where he was found it looks like she stabbed him repeatedly and then turned the knife on herself.

HOPE

She must have been very rageful.

DOCTOR GREEN

It doesn't take much especially if the one you love is unfaithful.

Hope glares at Doctor Green with an inquisitive stare.

HOPE

Doctor, do you think this is consistent with a murder or suicide?

Doctor Green ponders this for a beat with a thoughtful expression as he scans the crime scene.

INT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Adrian gets out of bed and staggers into the bathroom. He picks up his cell phone and dials Hope's number.

HOPE (O.S.)

Hello?

ADRIAN

Where are you?

HOPE (O.S.)
I'm on my way to the county morgue
with Dr. Green, you OK?

ADRIAN
I'm fine, but I need to talk to you
about Victor. Can you meet me
later?

HOPE (O.S.)
Can you just tell me over the
phone?

ADRIAN
It's very important that you don't
answer your phone again until we
meet, promise me you'll do that?

HOPE (O.S.)
Donald's case is today and I have
my office calls forwarded to my
cell. Adrian, what's going on?

ADRIAN
I'm coming down to the morgue, just
wait for me in the lobby, OK?

Adrian hangs up the phone.

EXT. COUNTY MORGUE - LATER

Hope and Dr. Green arrive at the County Morgue.

INT. COUNT MORGUE LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Hope and Dr. Green show the DESK CLERK some paperwork. She
signals for the COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER, who leads them to
the cadaver freezer.

INT. CADAVER FREEZER - CONTINUOUS

The County Medical Examiner shows Dr. Green the bodies of Ben
and Kim.

MEDICAL EXAMINER
Here's Benjamin Jenkins and
Kimberly Anderson-Jenkins. If you
could help me move the bodies to
the examining area, you can start
your examination.

Dr. Green helps roll out the bodies, then pulls back the cover exposing Kim Jenkins.

DOCTOR GREEN

Hope, please move the light closer.

Hope complies with no hesitancy or signs of being fazed from the sight of the dead bodies.

HOPE

Is that OK?

Dr. Green nods.

DOCTOR GREEN

We have an African American female in her late twenties with knife wounds to both wrists and carotid artery. She is approximately 5' 5" and slightly--

HOPE

Dr. Green this is not a full autopsy, we can fill in the formalities later.

DOCTOR GREEN

Hope, from what I initially see and without going through a complete autopsy, this woman died by her own hands. There are no signs of a struggle or any defensive wounds. Her fingernails are clean except for Adrian's tissue from the scratch and the obvious caked on blood belonging to her husband. Let's examine Mr. Jenkins.

Dr. Green moves the gurney carrying Kim away and moves the gurney carrying Ben under the bright examination lights. The cover is pulled back exposing Ben.

DOCTOR GREEN

Oh dear...

Hope's eyes ignite with suspicion.

HOPE

What?

DOCTOR GREEN

This was definitely a crime of passion. Look at his hands.

Hope leans in closer to the body of Ben. She eases her head around his hands. She shakes her head.

HOPE

I don't see anything.

DOCTOR GREEN

That's my point. He must have been asleep. Look, the first incision was right under the heart and the last seven are all over the chest cavity. He was lying down when this happened. He rolled off of the bed and onto the floor. From the position of the body in the photos, his last breaths were trying to reach the phone. Do you have his belongings?

HOPE

We have their phones, clothes and laptops.

DOCTOR GREEN

Can I see his phone?

HOPE

What is this about?

DOCTOR GREEN

I don't know, but I have a hunch.

Dr. Green turns on Ben's cell phone. He looks at the last few numbers called from it.

DOCTOR GREEN

Didn't you tell me Ben and Adrian recently came back from England?

HOPE

Yes, they went there for Adrian's family reunion.

DOCTOR GREEN

They were gone for a week, right?

HOPE

Yes.

DOCTOR GREEN

It looks like Ben called Ms. Anderson twice, but he called someone overseas 15 times.

Hope crosses her arms with pursed lips as she ponders this.

HOPE

Ben returned home and Kim looked in his phone and found all of these phone calls to England. She called the number and must have heard another woman's voice.

DOCTOR GREEN

And in a jealous rage, she stabbed Ben. When she realized what she'd done, she killed herself.

Hope has an aha moment across her face.

HOPE

Will you testify to that?

INT. COUNTY MORGUE MAIN LOBBY - LATER

Hope departs the elevator and heads towards the lobby. Victor approaches Hope and speaks in an American accent.

VICTOR

Hi, are you Hope Atkinson?

HOPE

Yes, can I help you?

VICTOR

My name is David, I'm a friend of Adrian. He told me to tell you he was running late. He wanted me to pick you up.

HOPE

That's so sweet of him, where was he?

VICTOR

He's stuck in a meeting. This way, please.

Hope and Victor leave County Morgue.

EXT. COUNTY MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

Hope and Victor walk towards the parking deck.

VICTOR
You can either ride with me or
follow me there. I'm sure he'll
bring you back to your car.

Victor points at his car.

VICTOR
I'm over here.

INT. VICTOR'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Victor gets into the driver's side and locks the doors.

HOPE
David, what do you do?

VICTOR
I'm in the extermination business.

HOPE
Really? It must be hard getting rid
of all those pests.

VICTOR
Not as hard as you may think.
You're an Attorney, right?

HOPE
I have a small firm, yes.

VICTOR
If I tell you something will you
hold it against me?

HOPE
What is it?

VICTOR
Adrian didn't want me to tell you
this, but--

Hope's demeanor shifts to apprehension. She shakes her head.

HOPE
Tell me what?

Victor leans in closer to Hope's ear.

VICTOR
Bella...

INT. COUNTY MORGUE LOBBY - DAY - 30 MINUTES LATER

Adrian quickly walks into the County Morgue. He waits by the door entrance. Dr. Green walks off the elevator towards the entrance doors.

DOCTOR GREEN

Adrian?

ADRIAN

Yes. Do I know you?

DOCTOR GREEN

It's been a long time, but I was friends with your father, Fredrick.

ADRIAN

How did you know it was me?

DOCTOR GREEN

Your scar, son. So where's Hope? She said she was meeting you here.

ADRIAN

How long ago was that?

DOCTOR GREEN

About 25 or 30 minutes ago.

ADRIAN

What was she wearing?

DOCTOR GREEN

She was wearing a gold skirt and a white blouse.

Adrian walks to the DESK CLERK.

ADRIAN

Have you seen a woman with a gold skirt standing here?

DESK CLERK

I saw a woman, but she was with a man and they left together.

ADRIAN

Do you remember what the man looked like?

DESK CLERK

Yes, he had a short haircut, slim build and he was carrying an umbrella.

ADRIAN

Thanks.

Adrian starts rushing toward the front door.

DOCTOR GREEN

Did you find her?

ADRIAN

She's in trouble. I have to go.

DOCTOR GREEN

Is there anything I can do?

ADRIAN

Pray.

Adrian runs through the main doors and into his car.

INT. ADRIAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Adrian pulls out his cell phone. His car screeches down the street.

ADRIAN

Is this the Ritz Carlton in
Buckhead!?

RITZ RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Yes, can I assist you?

ADRIAN

Do you have a Victor Locke staying
there?

RITZ RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Mr. Locke checked out this morning.
Is there anything else I can assist
you with?

ADRIAN

No, thank you.

Adrian abruptly hangs up and proceeds towards HARTSFIELD-JACKSON International Airport.

EXT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Victor and Hope walk up to the main door of Adrian's building. Hope's face is expressionless and her eyes are glassy. The Doorman greets them.

DOORMAN

Ms. Atkinson, it's very nice to see you again. Mr. Steele is not at home, can I assist you?

Victor hands him \$20.

VICTOR

No, we'll wait for Mr. Steele in his apartment. Here you go, sir.

DOORMAN

Thank you, sir! This way, please.

The Doorman opens the door.

Victor and Hope walk towards the elevator. Hope is holding Victor's arm tightly and starts kissing him.

The Doorman looks on as the elevator door closes.

INT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door of the apartment eases open and in steps Hope followed by Victor. Victor turns on the lights.

VICTOR

So this is how you live, cousin.

Hope kisses Victor.

Victor pulls away from her. She lunges forward and kisses his neck. Victor jerks away.

VICTOR

Stop it, sit down and leave me alone!

Hope takes off her shirt, grabs at Victor's pants and starts undressing him.

HOPE

No, I want you now! Don't push me away!

VICTOR

I said leave me alone!

Victor SLAPS Hope hard across the face. She falls down on the couch.

VICTOR

I don't want you, I don't need you
and I don't love you! You're just a
piece of flesh to me!

Hope's body shakes and she sweats as her body continues to
tremble. She begins to cry.

HOPE

Don't say that, I love you!

Victor strokes his hand down Hope's face.

VICTOR

It's going to be a such a shame to
watch you die.

The doorbell RINGS. Victor goes to the door and looks through
the peephole.

DONALD (O.S.)

I know you're in there, Hope! I
tracked your phone, so open the
door!

Victor gestures to Hope.

VICTOR

Come here!

Hope gets off the couch and walks towards the door.

VICTOR

Who is this?

Hope looks through the peephole.

HOPE

Donald Evans, he works with me.

VICTOR

Why is he here?

HOPE

I don't know. I can get rid of him.
Is that what you want, Victor?

VICTOR

He'll mess up everything.

DONALD (O.S.)

I'm not leaving until I see you,
Hope, open the door!

VICTOR
Get rid of him!

HOPE
If I get rid of him can we make
love?

VICTOR
Get rid of him or I will!

Victor goes into the bedroom and Hope opens the door.

DONALD
What took you so long!?

HOPE
I was--

Donald scans Hope from top to bottom as he bobs his head in
confusion at the sight before him.

DONALD
Where is Adrian and why are you
half dressed? Where's your shirt!?

Hope leans against the door. Her face shows dissatisfaction
and boredom.

HOPE
I told you, Donald, I don't want
you.

DONALD
Why are you acting weird? What's
wrong with your eyes?

HOPE
There is nothing wrong with me
Donald, I feel great. Adrian's not
here. What do you want?

Donald looks around.

DONALD
The client went to pieces on the
stand. The prosecutor broke him
down and caught him in lie after
lie. There was nothing I could do.
The jury is in deliberation and
there should be a verdict soon.

Donald hears movement in the bedroom.

DONALD

Whoever you are in the bedroom, get out here now! Hope, who's back there?

Hope shrugs her shoulders. Donald stares off towards where the bedroom is located.

HOPE

I'm afraid you're going to have to leave, Donald, we can talk about this another time. Thank you for stopping by, but this can wait until--

DONALD

Who's in the bedroom, Hope!?

HOPE

Um, I--

DONALD

Hope, the doorman told me that Adrian was not here. He said you were up here with someone else?

HOPE

Victor!

Victor walks out of the bedroom clapping.

VICTOR

Very good, young man. You are very observant.

Donald draws his eyes together in suspicion as he glares at Victor.

DONALD

Who are you? What have you done to Hope?

VICTOR

The same thing I'm going to do to you.

Victor rushes Donald. Donald punches and pushes away. Victor staggers back into the large bookcase and drops to the floor.

Donald runs towards the door and Victor gets up. Donald unlocks and opens the front door.

DONALD

I'm going for help, I'll be back in
ahhhhhh--

Victor is standing behind Donald breathing hard while holding his long umbrella handle. The umbrella handle is a long double-edged blade. The long blade is impaled through the left side of Donald's back coming out through his stomach.

Donald falls to the floor GASPING for air. Hope looks down at Donald with a glassy-eyed expressionless stare.

VICTOR

Sorry mate, I tried to make it as
painless as I could, but you had to
push it.

Donald extends his hand while he looks up at Hope. Blood runs out of his mouth as his eyes begin to close. Victor pulls the blade out of Donald's back and wipes it off on Hope's shirt.

Victor places the blade back into the umbrella casing and throws Hope's bloody shirt back on the floor next to Donald's body. Victor looks at his watch.

VICTOR

Put on another shirt, we have a
plane to catch.

Hope grabs another blouse out of the hallway closet and they walk out of the front door.

Donald's fingers twitch.

EXT. HARTSFIELD-JACKSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Adrian parks his Maserati and runs inside the airport.

INT. AIRPORT DEPARTURE COUNTER - CONTINUOUS

TRAVELERS are standing in line checking in their luggage. Adrian runs up to the front of the line and jumps in front of several waiting passengers.

ADRIAN

I need to speak with whoever's in
charge, please!

TICKET AGENT

Excuse me, sir, you just jumped the
line, I need for you to rejoin at
the back of the line.

ADRIAN

I don't need a ticket, I need to see Airport Security immediately, can you call them for me?

Adrian's breaths are rapid. He leans in closer to the agent.

TICKET AGENT

You need to go to customer relations, they can assist you there.

Adrian slams his fist on the counter. The ticket agent nods her head and forces a smile at the guests behind him.

ADRIAN

You don't understand, my friend has been kidnapped and I think they're trying to take her out of the country --

TICKET AGENT

I can't help you here sir, but customer relations is down the corridor. Someone there can assist you.

She looks at the next CUSTOMER.

TICKET AGENT

Can I help you, sir?

CUSTOMER

Yes, we have two tickets to Miami--

Adrian runs and arrives at the Customer Relations desk and taps on the shoulder of the DESK AGENT.

DESK AGENT

Good Afternoon sir, can I help you?

ADRIAN

Hello, you have a few flights leaving for London. I believe my Cousin is on one of those flights, and I need to stop the planes from departing.

The Desk Agent chuckles as she hears the words from Adrian. She stares at him hard.

DESK AGENT

Sir, we can't stop a departing flight, that's against policy.

ADRIAN

Then how many flights do you have
leaving for London today?

She looks at the computer screen.

DESK AGENT

We have 5 flights leaving for
London this evening.

ADRIAN

Do you have a Victor Locke on any
of them?

The Desk Agent shakes her head to the side and pouts her
lips.

DESK AGENT

Again, sir, I cannot give you that
information. It's against
regulations.

ADRIAN

It's a matter of life and death!
My, my girlfriend is being held
against her will and if I don't
stop him, she's going to die!
Please help me! Please?!

She looks at Adrian's face and back at the computer screen.

DESK AGENT

I cannot assist you sir, but I can
tell you that there is nobody by
that name on any of the passenger
lists I have. Have a good day, Sir.

Adrian sighs. He nods his head and forces a slight grin over
his face.

ADRIAN

Thank you!

She looks up and Adrian and speaks quietly --

DESK AGENT

You might want to check the smaller
Airports like Charlie Brown
Airfield. He may have booked a
private jet.

ADRIAN

Thank you, ma'am! Thank you!

Adrian turns around and runs out of the airport to his car.

EXT. CHARLIE BROWN AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Jets are landing on the runway at CHARLIE BROWN AIRFIELD. Propeller Airplanes are in the HANGERS being worked on by mechanics.

Victor's limousine pulls up to the hanger. Victor gets out of the limousine followed by Hope. She staggers out and onto the pavement. The LIMO DRIVER observes.

VICTOR

Please forgive her my good man,
she's a little car sick.

Victor looks at Hope with tired eyes. Her body is slightly limp.

VICTOR

The more you fight it, the faster
it consumes you.

Hope holds Victor tight around his waist. He gives the limo driver a large tip.

A mid-sized JET GULF STREAM G6 is parked inside the hanger. They walk up the jet's stairs and the Pilot WALTER HUMPHRIES (50s) African American, walks out of the cockpit and stands outside of the plane's door.

HUMPHRIES

Good day, Mr. Locke, will there be
two traveling today?

VICTOR

Yes Humphries, please make
arrangements for two to London. How
long before we take off?

HUMPHRIES

A few minutes, Sir. I'm still
waiting on our itinerary to be
approved. Would you like champagne
for you and the lady?

VICTOR

Yes, champagne will be fine.

Victor and Hope enter the aircraft.

EXT. ADRIAN'S MASERATI - CONTINUOUS

Adrian's car is proceeding down the highway at great speed. The car proceeds off the exit and sharply turns the corner.

INT. SOLARTECH'S AIRPLANE - DAY

The pilot steps into the cabin and calls to Victor.

HUMPHRIES

Sir, we've been cleared for take-off. We'll be taking off shortly.

VICTOR

Thank you, Humphries.

HUMPHRIES

Will the lady be OK? She's not looking very well.

Hope is stretched out in the seat. Her head is off to the side and her eyes are bloodshot and barely open.

VICTOR

She's just afraid of flying. She'll be fine.

Humphries nods and steps out. The sound of the jets engine ROARS.

Hope stirs in the seat and rolls over to face Victor. She looks at him with a longing but weak expression.

HOPE

Why don't you love me, Victor? I've done everything I could to please you.

VICTOR

It'll be over soon, my dear. Try to enjoy the flight.

EXT. ADRIAN'S CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Maserati crashes through the gates of the airport. Adrian hops out and spots the SolarTech Jet as it slowly rolls out of the SolarTech hanger and heads toward the runway.

A fast approaching TSA PATROL CAR with their lights flashing is seen in the distance.

Adrian jumps into a parked baggage car and moves into the path of the Corporate Jet, waving his arms wildly.

ADRIAN
Hey! Stop the plane!

The jet jolts to a stop and the doors to the jet open. Humphries looks out of the door.

HUMPHRIES
What the hell are you doing?! Move that cart out of the way, you dumb sonofabitch!

Victor appears behind Humphries out of the doorway, his umbrella in hand. He glowers down at Adrian and CLAPS.

VICTOR
Adrian my boy, good work on finding us. I underestimated you!

ADRIAN
Where's Hope?

VICTOR
She's in here of course!

He looks back inside the cabin.

VICTOR
Hope my darling, there's someone here that wants to see you.

HUMPHRIES
Should I get rid of him, Mr. Locke?

VICTOR
No, that won't be necessary. The police will handle that for us. Hope, look who's here to say goodbye to us--

Hope steps out by Victor holding his arm.

HOPE
Yes, my love?

Adrian's face flashes with relief. He YELLS over the roaring jet engines.

ADRIAN
Hope, come with me! Walk down the stairs and let's go!

Adrian sees Hope's body tremble as she perspires.

HOPE

I'm not going anywhere with you.
I'm going with Victor, I'm in love
with him!

ADRIAN

No you're not, Hope! You're under
the curse. Remember the curse? You
only think you love him. You need
to stay calm and don't fight it.
Come with me, I'm going to get you
to a hospital.

VICTOR

No you're not, cousin. My wife and
I are leaving.

Victor turns and gestures to Humphries.

VICTOR

Let's go, close the door.

ADRIAN

Your wife?

VICTOR

Ah yes. We got married today
Adrian, she's now Mrs. Hope Locke.

ADRIAN

You dirty, sonofabitch!

Adrian runs up the jet stairs and grabs Victor by the collar
and throws him out of the door as he stumbles down the stairs
and to the airport tarmac.

Victor's umbrella flies out of his hands as the roaring jet
engines blow the umbrella away from the plane.

Adrian punches Victor again and he flies back against the
plane's front wheels.

Victor gets up and starts running away and Adrian runs after
him. Humphries runs up to the approaching TSA Patrol Car and
points towards the direction of the scuffle.

Victor picks up his umbrella and ducks into a deserted
hangar.

INT. AIRPLANE HANGER - CONTINUOUS

Victor slowly hides in a corner of the darker side of the hanger's interior. Adrian sneaks into the hanger behind him.

ADRIAN

You can't hide, Victor! You have a lot of explaining to do to the authorities. Especially trying to explain the deaths of at least a hundred women!

Victor unsheathes the blade from the umbrella casing, as Adrian searches for him.

ADRIAN

Why did you have to marry her?

VICTOR

That's the only way to get her out of the country legally.

ADRIAN

Why not just let her die?

VICTOR

And miss out on you watching her lust after another man? Where's the fun in that?

Victor looks around the corner as Adrian turns his back in the dim lit hangar.

Victor lunges out and slashes Adrian across his chest. He ducks back around the hangar corner. Adrian winces in pain as blood begins to soak his shirt.

ADRIAN

Come out and face me like a man!

Adrian walks to the far side of the hangar.

ADRIAN

I said, come out Goddammit!

Victor looks around and sees Adrian holding his sliced stomach. Blood fills up in the palm of Adrian's hand as he grimaces in pain.

VICTOR

See what you made me do? Look at you, you're bleeding all over the place!

ADRIAN

Wait until your shareholders hear about your extracurricular activities! You'll be lucky if they keep you on the board after this.

VICTOR

You'll never live to tell, I'll see to that!

A biplane exceeding the speed limit comes down the tarmac and in the direction of the hangar doorway.

Adrian runs out of the doorway and dives out of the way, just missing the plane's propellers.

Victor sees Adrian and lunges after him -- landing right in the path of the biplane's propeller!

Victor's eyes grow wide and he scrambles to get out of the way, but it's too late -- the propeller slices through Victor's body, tearing it to pieces and sending his head flying into the hangar doorway.

Adrian watches the horrific scene in disbelief. He looks over at the shreds of Victor's body lying in all directions. Victor's legs are still twitching.

Hope runs down the tarmac to where Adrian is laying.

HOPE

Adrian! Adrian! Are you OK?

Hope kneels on the ground. Adrian covers Hope's face, shielding her from the blood and gore. She holds Adrian tightly in her arms.

ADRIAN

I thought I lost you today, I thought you were going to die.

HOPE

The only thing I can remember is talking to your friend David.

ADRIAN

David? No, that was Victor, remember me telling you about him.

HOPE

Shit, was I--?

ADRIAN

Yes, you were and you got married too.

Hope looks at her hand and spots on her finger a single silver band. She grits her teeth in disgust and pulls it off and tosses it away.

POLICEMAN (O.S.)

Don't move! Stay right where you are!

Adrian turns to see several charging TSA AGENTS and AIRPORT POLICEMEN running over with their weapons drawn.

ADRIAN

I'm too sore to get up.

The policemen handcuff Adrian.

HOPE

I'll get you out of jail tonight or first thing in the morning. Once they piece all of this together, they'll drop all the charges.

ADRIAN

Are they going to believe you?

HOPE

Let's hope so.

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - NIGHT

The GUARD places Adrian into a cell and walks away as he slams the cell door shut.

A bandage is wrapped across Adrian's stomach with little red patches showing. He places his belongings on the top bunk and looks over at the man sleeping on the bottom bunk.

Adrian slowly walks over to the sink and turns on the water.

He reaches down and touches his wound and splashes some water on his face and towels off. He lowers the towel and Clarence Doby is standing right behind him.

CLARENCE (O.S.)

Well, well, well look who the fuck it is.

Startled, Adrian turns and gulps, taking a step back with a fearful gaze.

ADRIAN
Clarence, I thought you were in
solitary confinement?

CLARENCE
You have to be one of the luckiest
men alive, but no one's gonna help
you this time!

Clarence slowly walks towards Adrian with a closed fist.

ADRIAN
You don't have to do this, Doby.

Clarence lunges and grabs Adrian by the neck and pins him
down on the bottom bunk. Adrian tries to speak, but the
weight of Clarence on top of him is too much. He tries to
gain leverage, then faintly WHISPERS --

ADRIAN
Bella...

Clarence releases Adrian's neck. Clarence's eyes are glassy.

CLARENCE
Oh my God, did I hurt you?

Clarence begins to weep and drops to his knees.

CLARENCE
Will you let me love you? Can I
make love to you? Please can I?!

Adrian backs away and holds his throat. Clarence starts
crying hysterically.

ADRIAN
Doby, I want you to get in your
bunk and go to sleep. I don't want
to hear a word from you, do you
hear me!?

CLARENCE
Yes, my love, I hear you.

Adrian gets into his bunk and while staying alert, listens to
Clarence crying in his bunk below.

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - MORNING

OFFICER 1 approaches Adrian's cell.

OFFICER 1
Open up cell 234!

CLARENCE
Don't come in here! Leave him alone
you motherfuckers! You're not
taking my, Adrian!

Adrian walks out of the cell and starts walking away with
Officer 1 as he looks back at Clarence.

Clarence SCREAMS again. Several of the Officers draw their
batons and storm into the cell.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - INMATE RELEASE - CONTINUOUS

Hope waits for Adrian at inmate release. They walk out of the
Detention Center holding hands.

EXT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Adrian looks up at the sky as he shields the sun from his
eyes with his hand while he squints.

HOPE
I just came from the hospital.
Donald's going to make it. He lost
a lot of blood, but he's in stable
condition. Your Doorman saved his
life.

ADRIAN
How?

HOPE
He saw Victor and I leave the
building and not Donald. He came up
to check your apartment and found
Donald and called for an ambulance.

ADRIAN
So, what was it like being under
the curse?

HOPE
Have you ever been locked in a dark
closet and couldn't get out?

ADRIAN
No, but--

HOPE

I tried everything I could to fight it, but I had no control over myself. The more Victor talked, the more I wanted to please him. Now I know how those poor women felt before they died.

ADRIAN

How are you going to deal with my involvement with the deaths of Tamara, Gia and Katherina?

HOPE

I need to report it to the police since I am an officer of the court.

ADRIAN

I understand.

Hope starts to laugh.

HOPE

I'm just messing with you! You're not guilty of anything malicious. Even if I told the Police or DA, you'll have to demonstrate and prove all of this. So you'll have to promise never to use the curse again.

ADRIAN

I promise, but there has to be a way of breaking it?

HOPE

Maybe someone in the Locke family can reverse the spell.

She thinks a moment. Then --

HOPE

Hey! I'm a Locke now, right? Maybe I can do it!

ADRIAN

It's got to be someone with Locke blood. I know, Memema's family Bible!

HOPE

Family Bible?

ADRIAN

The one on the nightstand in Memema's room the day she died. It had all the family members from Mandor to me. I need to contact Jessica to see who's on our family tree that's still living.

They reach Hope's car and get inside.

INT. HOPE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Adrian looks down at a NEWSPAPER on the passenger seat and picks it up as he sits down.

The front headline reads: *"SolarTech CEO Dies, New Alleged Wife Inherits Company."*

ADRIAN

What's this? You have complete control of SolarTech now?

HOPE

Apparently. But don't worry, I want nothing to do with it.

ADRIAN

You don't want to run a Fortune 500 company?

HOPE

No, I don't--

Hope grabs Adrian's hand.

HOPE

To be honest, Adrian, all I ever wanted was for us to be together. I loved you from the moment we met, but you treated me like we were related.

ADRIAN

Are you still under the curse?

Hope's face goes flat. Her eyes wide as she meets the gaze of Adrian.

HOPE

I'm serious, Adrian. I see things a little clearer now.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

After what I experienced with Victor, I'm not holding back my true feelings anymore. If you don't want me, just say no and we can go back to how things were before, but I need to know right now if I should pursue my feelings for you or just leave you alone?

ADRIAN

You should always fight for the one you love. You should--

Hope grabs Adrian and pulls him close to her. They passionately kiss.

Adrian breaks the kiss and looks at Hope. They both start laughing.

INT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Adrian dials a number on his phone.

ADRIAN

Hi Jess. It's me, Adrian.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Adrian, how are you?

ADRIAN

I have some bad news. Victor's dead.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Somehow I expected that.

ADRIAN

He used the curse on Hope to get back at me for using the curse on Tamara.

JESSICA (O.S.)

So you did kill her?!

ADRIAN

I used the curse on her, but I didn't know it was going to do that.

JESSICA (O.S.)

Memema told you not to use--

ADRIAN
Ben is dead, too.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Oh my God! How is his wife taking
it?

ADRIAN
It's a long story Jess, and I'll
explain it to you another time, but
I have another issue to speak with
you about. Memema's Bible.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Yes, the one next to her bed?

ADRIAN
Yes, that one. I need a name from
the family tree.

EXT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Adrian walks out of his apartment building and down the
street past a diner and hails a cab.

In the diner's window, a Breaking News Update flashes on the
television. The Headline news banner scrolls -- *"Three
inmates at the Atlanta Detention Center escape."*

INT. INSIDE THE DINER - CONTINUOUS

The headline news banner scrolls across the bottom of the
television screen. A "Breaking News Alert" is posted on the
screen. A news anchor, BOBBY LITTLE (30s) African American,
speaks.

BOBBY LITTLE
This is Bobby Little, Channel 9
News. It's just been reported that
three inmates from the Atlanta
Detention Center escaped this
afternoon. Clarence Doby, Chris
Allen and Gerald Hawkins
overpowered several Officers,
killing one and injuring three
others before escaping through an
unlocked rear door...

INT. QUANTUM BOOKSTORE - DAY

Adrian walks into the store as KWAN KAUN (66) Hindu, Skinny is dusting off the books on the shelves.

KWAN KAUN
Can I help you?

ADRIAN
Yes, I'm looking for a book on
curses and spells?

KWAN KAUN
What kind of curse and what do you
want the spell to do?

ADRIAN
I don't want to put a spell on
anyone. I'm inquiring about a curse
that someone has put on me or
should I say, my family's
bloodline.

Kwan nods his head in understanding and ponders this for a beat.

KWAN KAUN
There are many, many curses and
spells young man, but you have to
believe in them before they will
work. Most people don't believe so,
what kind of curse was placed on
you?

ADRIAN
My father's father's father was
cursed by a powerful Warlock and I
have the curse now.

KWAN KAUN
Go on.

ADRIAN
Who can break the curse, a First
Cousin, Uncle, maybe an Aunt?

Kwan leans against the small desk in the shop as he glances at Adrian with disappointment.

KWAN KAUN
My friend, if a curse is placed on
you, only the immediate family can
break it.

(MORE)

KWAN KAUN (CONT'D)

If a father placed it, then the father, son, daughter or cousin can remove it. If the Sister then a Brother, Son or Daughter of the Sister, so forth and so on.

ADRIAN

So my only chance is to get someone in my immediate family to break it. How do they do it? What can break the curse?

Kwan reaches up on the bookshelf and pulls down a book. He opens the book.

KWAN KAUN

It's very important that the one who breaks the curse uses their blood to seal the forgiveness of the original curse and they must believe. Do you hear me, they must believe?

Kwan reads from the page. Adrian writes down the passage.

ADRIAN

So, they will have to read this and the curse will be lifted?

KWAN KAUN

Yes, but it must be spoken word for word and sealed with three drops of their blood on the paper you wrote on.

Adrian finishes writing down the passage and hands Kwan a stack of bills.

ADRIAN

Thank you, Sir, you've been a big help.

Adrian walks out of the vintage bookstore.

EXT. OUTSIDE QUANTUM BOOKSTORE - CONTINUOUS

Adrian enters the street and his cell RINGS.

ADRIAN

What do you have, Jess?

JESSICA (O.S.)
 Her name is Anita Wilkerson-Tandy,
 she's Victor's Cousin. Isadore was
 Anita's Mother and Victor's
 Grandmother.

ADRIAN
 That's great!

JESSICA (O.S.)
 And get this, she lives in
 Birmingham Alabama. That's close to
 you, right?

ADRIAN
 Yes. Text me her address and phone
 number.

JESSICA (O.S.)
 Good luck and be careful.

ADRIAN
 I will.

Adrian hangs up the phone and dials Hope.

HOPE (O.S.)
 I was just thinking about you.

ADRIAN
 Jessica found Victor's first cousin
 Anita, she lives in Birmingham
 Alabama. Do you want to join me?

HOPE (O.S.)
 Sure, I was preparing for a case,
 but it can wait.

ADRIAN
 I need to get a few things from my
 apartment and then I'll pick you
 up. I'm contacting Anita to let her
 know we're coming. See you soon.

Adrian hangs up and hails a taxi. A taxi pulls up and he gets
 in.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Adrian calls to the DRIVER.

ADRIAN
Fifty-First and Westchester,
please.

The driver nods and begins driving.

Adrian cellphone BEEPS. Jessica's text with Anita's information comes in.

The taxi pulls up to the front of a building. Adrian exits the car.

INT. PARKED SILVER KIA SERENTO - CONTINUOUS

In a SILVER KIA parked across the street, Clarence Doby watches Adrian exit the taxi and talk to the Doorman.

Clarence CRIES and MUMBLES to himself, ducking down.

CLARENCE
My Adrian! I need you, Adrian!

EXT. ADRIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

The building VALET drives Adrian's Maserati to the front of the building. Adrian gets in and drives off.

The Kia follows behind.

INT. SILVER KIA - LATER

Clarence follows as Adrian's car comes to a stop outside of Hope's apartment building. Clarence parks a little ways back.

He watches as Hope gets into Adrian's car, even seeing them kiss through the back windshield.

Clarence ragefully POUNDS the steering wheel and drives off after Adrian's car.

INT. ADRIAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Adrian and Hope hold hands as Adrian drives.

ADRIAN
I contacted Anita and she's
expecting us.

HOPE
Is she going to help you?

ADRIAN
I haven't asked her yet.

HOPE
She needs to know what's going on.

Adrian sighs hopelessly.

HOPE
Anyway, I received a call from Peter McIntosh, one of the board members of SolarTech. They have an emergency board meeting scheduled for next week. Since I'm Victor's successor, they need me to come to England for a vote.

ADRIAN
Are you going?

HOPE
McIntosh hinted that they may try to buy me out.

ADRIAN
Hinted?

HOPE
Yes, from what he implied, they don't want me to head the company.

ADRIAN
We'll see about that, we're going!

HOPE
I told you before, I didn't want to run SolarTech. My goals have nothing to do with running a company I know nothing about, plus if Victor built it, it has to be shady.

ADRIAN
Nevertheless, you have control of SolarTech and--

HOPE
My mind is made up Adrian, I'm going to sell my shares in it. I'm a lawyer, not a CEO.

Adrian maintains a serious and concerned expression over his face while he glances over at Hope.

Hope smiles. Adrian returns the favor with a smaller grin.

ADRIAN

Get some rest. Birmingham is about two hours away, we should get there before midnight.

EXT. TANDY RESIDENCE - BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA - EVENING

Adrian drives up to the Tandy residence. There is a speaker box on the main gate. Adrian pushes the button on the box.

PERRY (V.O.)

Hello, may I help you?

ADRIAN

This is Adrian Steele, Mrs. Tandy is expecting me.

The huge gates open and Adrian's car drives through toward the back of the house.

As the gates close, Clarence runs through them and ducks out of sight behind several bushes.

EXT. GARAGE PARKING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Adrian parks the car near the back of the residence, passing by a SECURITY GUARD STATION where a SECURITY GUARD (20s) African American, waves them through.

The back door to the mansion opens and PERRY CANADY (47) African American, walks outside. Adrian and Hope get out of the Maserati.

PERRY

Welcome. My name is Perry.

ADRIAN

Nice to meet you. I'm Adrian, and this is Hope Atkinson.

They all shake hands.

PERRY

Please follow me. I'll show you to your room.

Clarence quietly looks around the corner of the house. Adrian, Hope and Perry walk into the house. Clarence takes cover in the pool house.

INT. TANDY MANSION INTERIOR - EVENING

Perry leads Hope and Adrian up the long spiral staircase.

HOPE
Wow, this is beautiful.

ADRIAN
It sure is.

Hope's eyes look down onto the massive living room area.

INT. TANDY MANSION / GUEST BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Perry opens the door to the guest bedroom and places their bags on the bed as Adrian and Hope shuffle in behind him.

PERRY
I hope you enjoy your accommodations. Breakfast is at 9:00.

ADRIAN
Thank you, Perry.

Perry exits and closes the door.

Hope stretches across the bed.

HOPE
Oh, my God Adrian, this bed is wonderful.

Adrian lays across the bed next to Hope.

ADRIAN
I haven't been this close to you before.

HOPE
Do you feel differently towards me now?

ADRIAN
Nah.

They begin to kiss. Hope undresses. Adrian looks at her and smiles.

HOPE
Let's see what kind of trouble we can get into.

Adrian reaches over and turns off the light.

INT. POOLHOUSE - EVENING

Clarence is huddled against the wall crying uncontrollably, looking up as the light in the guest room turns off.

INT. TANDY MANSION - MORNING

Adrian looks out the window at the beautifully manicured backyard area.

ADRIAN
This place is beautiful!

HOPE
I can't wait for the tour.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

ADRIAN
Yes?

PERRY (O.S.)
Breakfast will be served in 15 minutes.

ADRIAN
Thank you, we're on our way.

Hope adjusts her dress and kisses Adrian.

HOPE
Everything will be OK, I'm sure she'll help you.

INT. TANDY MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Adrian and Hope walk out of the bedroom and down the spiral staircase. JASON TANDY (57), sits at the kitchen table reading the paper.

JASON
You must be Adrian and Hope. I'm Jason Tandy, nice to meet you.

HOPE
It's a pleasure to meet you, Jason.

ADRIAN
Hello Jason.

JASON
Please, please have a seat. Perry!

Perry walks out of the kitchen area.

PERRY
Yes, Mr. Tandy.

JASON
Can you get our guests something to drink?

ADRIAN
Yes, some coffee for me, please.

HOPE
I'll have a coffee, too.

JASON
Three coffees please Perry. Make mine with a shot of brandy.

Perry smiles.

PERRY
Yes, sir.

JASON
When Anita told me she had another cousin, I couldn't believe it. I was so used to seeing Victor, I never knew there were other relatives. I'm so sorry to hear about his passing.

Adrian and Hope look at each other. Their demeanors unpleasant at hearing the words from Jason.

ADRIAN
It broke us up in pieces, too. Is Anita coming down?

JASON
She'll be down in a few. You know women, she has to make a grand entrance.

Adrian and Hope laugh.

JASON
So tell me, what do you do?

ADRIAN
I dabble a little with investments, but I mainly travel and have a good time. And you?

JASON

I own a mortgage and real estate company. I'm the biggest Commercial Realtor in Birmingham.

HOPE

Jason, I love your home.

JASON

Thanks, but it's all Anita's work. I just give her the money.

EXT. TANDY GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The garage alarm is deactivated and Perry walks into the garage and unlocks the door to the pantry and gets a jar of strawberry preserves.

Clarence charges in and Perry is startled, dropping the jar of preserves on the floor.

PERRY

Who in the blazes are you and what are you doing here!?

Clarence is holding a large wrench. The wrench comes down on Perry's head. Clarence's arm begins coming up and down over and over again splattering Perry's blood into Clarence's face as his arm swings upwards.

EXT. TANDY GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

The Security Guard tip-toes around the perimeter, hearing the commotion coming from inside the garage. He places a hand over his gun and slides along the edge of the garage, then peers in the window --

His eyes grow wide as he sees Clarence standing over Perry's lifeless body, covered in blood.

He quickly ducks away from the window and holds still.

INT. TANDY MANSION DINING ROOM - MORNING

Adrian, Jason and Hope walk into the dining room. The dining room table is covered with breakfast food.

JASON

Where is Perry with our coffee?

ANITA (60), walks down the long spiral staircase, a beautiful silk dress flowing around her medium-frame. She is wearing a DIAMOND "DANCING GIRL" BROOCH.

JASON
Honey, you look gorgeous!

Anita and Jason kiss.

ANITA
Thank you, darling.

JASON
Anita, this is Adrian and his friend, Hope.

Anita looks Adrian up and down.

ANITA
So we're cousins?

ADRIAN
Yes, yes we are. Nice to meet you.

ANITA
Victor never told me about our extended family.

ADRIAN
He wasn't a big believer in finding us. You have many, many relatives waiting to meet you.

ANITA
So, what's this pressing issue you need to discuss with me?

They all sit down at the breakfast table.

ADRIAN
Well, Anita, it's about Victor. He's responsible for many deaths.

Anita is shocked. Her eyes wide and mouth ajar.

ANITA
What?

ADRIAN
He had a hand in the deaths of at least a hundred or more women throughout Europe and some here in the States.

ANITA
You're talking about the curse?

HOPE
You know about that?

Anita directs her hands at the decor of the lavish home.

ANITA
Look around you, Victor paid for
most of what you see.

ADRIAN
I don't understand?

ANITA
I found out what he was doing years
ago! So he paid for my silence, and
I promised never to discuss this
with anyone and in return, he
continued to provide me with all
the luxuries you see here.

Hope leans forward in what appears to be disgust at what
Anita has done.

HOPE
You knew about this monster for
years and allowed him to get away
with killing all those innocent
women?

ANITA
Don't sound so bitter, child, I
really didn't have a choice.

HOPE
You're damn right I'm bitter! That
crazy motherfucker almost added me
to his list!

Anita nonchalantly waves Hope's outburst off.

ANITA
Please keep your voice down.

ADRIAN
Anita, we can't bring back any of
those women, but you can help us
put a stop to this.

ANITA
Help you do what?

ADRIAN
Remove the curse on the bloodline
of my family.

ANITA
But Victor was a Locke.

ADRIAN
No Anita, he's actually a Steele
using the Locke name.

INT. TANDY MANSION DINING ROOM - LATER

ADRIAN
So, only you can help break the
curse once and for all.

Anita shifts her eyes as she takes the information in.

ANITA
And he married Hope?

HOPE
Yes.

ANITA
So that leaves you to take over
SolarTech?

ADRIAN
Yes, she was already approached by
the Board of Directors to
relinquish Victor's seat.

ANITA
I want SolarTech.

ADRIAN
What?

ANITA
I want SolarTech and in return,
I'll help you.

Adrian turns to Hope.

ADRIAN
What do you say?

HOPE
You know how I feel about this. If
we can end this now, let's do it.

ANITA
Do we have a deal?

Anita looks over at Jason.

ADRIAN
Yes, we have a deal. Now, I have something for you to read, but you have to read it word for word. You'll also have to put three drops of your blood on the paper to seal the spell.

The kitchen door swings open and a bloody Clarence enters with a bloody wrench. He walks over and looks at Adrian.

CLARENCE
Adrian, I'm so happy to see you. I missed you, baby!

ADRIAN
Doby?!

Anita studies the bloody tool in the hands of Clarence with confusion.

ANITA
What is this, who are you?

CLARENCE
Shut up, bitch! Are you sleeping with my Adrian, too?

Clarence walks over to Anita. Jason stands in front of her.

JASON
I don't know who you are, but we don't keep money in the house, now get out of here before I--

ADRIAN
Jason, please be quiet!

Clarence looks over at Hope.

CLARENCE
You little bitch! I saw you kissing my Adrian yesterday!

He grabs her by the throat.

Clarence's lifts the wrench to strike Hope.

ADRIAN
Clarence, stop it!

Clarence stops the wrench in mid-motion.

CLARENCE
I followed you from Atlanta. I had to be with you, Adrian, I just had to hold you. I can't let anyone come between us again!

Adrian pleads to Clarence with desperation.

ADRIAN
Let her go, Clarence. She could never come between us or our love because she's my sister!

CLARENCE
Your sister!? Then why did you two share the same bed last night? Do you think I'm stupid, do you think you can lie to me and make me look like a fool?!

ADRIAN
Listen to me, Clarence: if you love me then put down the wrench. I'll come over to you, so we can be together.

Clarence starts to shake.

CLARENCE
All I want to do is love you!
That's all, I just want to love you!

Clarence starts to cry and looks down into Hope's eyes. The hand holding the wrench begins to raise.

CLARENCE
She's going to stand in my way, she's going to stand in our way of ever being happy together. She has to die!

ADRIAN
Clarence, please don't do this. She doesn't have to die.

CLARENCE
You can only have one lover!

Clarence raises the wrench above his head and before the wrench strikes Hope, a gunshot is heard and Clarence slumps over on top of Hope.

The Security Guard is standing in the doorway of the kitchen pointing his service revolver. Adrian runs over to Hope and lifts Clarence's motionless body off of her.

ADRIAN

Oh my God, are you OK?!

Hope looks up at Adrian.

HOPE

Get rid of this fucking curse
Adrian, I can't keep going through
this!

Adrian hugs Hope and kisses her.

The Security Guard looks over at Anita and Jason.

SECURITY GUARD

That man killed your assistant,
Perry. He's in the garage, dead.

Anita is stunned.

ANITA

Oh my God, not Perry!

Adrian takes Anita's hand.

ADRIAN

Anita, I know this is a shock to
you, but you now see what the curse
can do. You have to believe in what
you speak before the curse can be
broken.

Adrian hands Anita the words that are scribbled on a paper.

ADRIAN

I need for you to read this word
for word. Remember Anita, you have
to believe.

ANITA

Yeah, sure.

ADRIAN

Let's go into the next room, so
we'll have a little privacy.

Adrian and Anita walk towards the study.

JASON
Do you need me to go with you?

ANITA
No dear, we'll be fine.

HOPE
Adrian?

ADRIAN
I know. I love you, too.

INT. TANDY'S MANSION STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Adrian and Anita enter the study. Adrian closes the heavy sliding doors. Anita takes a deep breath.

ADRIAN
Are you ready?

ANITA
Yes.

Anita holds the piece of paper tightly and slowly reads the words.

ANITA
All is forgiven, and all is
cleared, the curse is lifted,
there's nothing to fear. Those who
are cursed and have taken their
life.

A strong breeze flows heavily through the open window opening the study doors.

ANITA
The end of this curse is now in
sight. No more agony, death, or
pain and to love you to death will
never remain.

The strong breeze rushes out of the window violently closing the doors.

ANITA
A gift of forgiveness is well in
hand, I break this curse on your
family's clan.

The study is quite. Anita takes off her Diamond Brooch and pokes her finger. Three drops of blood fall on the paper.

ANITA
Is that it?

ADRIAN
I don't know.

ANITA
How do you know if the curse is broken?

ADRIAN
I'll have to whisper it to someone.

A scared and nervous Hope enters the study.

HOPE
Then try it on me, I've already been through it and know what to expect.

ADRIAN
If I try it and it doesn't work, then you're gonna die. And I can't lose you again!

HOPE
You don't have a choice. If it's not broken, then don't let me out of your sight. As long as I'm with you, I won't die.

ADRIAN
Are you sure about this?

HOPE
Yes, do it before I change my mind!

Adrian looks over at Anita and Jason. He returns his attention to Hope and nods.

ADRIAN
I need for you both to leave the study. If the curse is still present, you won't be affected.

Anita and Jason look at Hope. Anita grabs her hand, lets it go and exits the study.

HOPE
I love you, Adrian.

ADRIAN
I love you, too.

Adrian leans towards Hope's ear and softly whispers.

ADRIAN
Bella.

FADE TO BLACK: