

INT. DREW'S APARTMENT - PHOENIX, AZ

A bare-bones apartment with a 90s model TV on the floor and a game console connected to it with a bean bag across the room, and the controller lying in front of it.

The sliding glass door is open, the screen door is closed.

It's a beautiful day outside. Birds are singing, and we can HEAR CARS going by outside, PEOPLE TALKING in the far distance, and children PLAYING.

As we move into the bedroom, though, a different story can be SEEN.

There's a mattress on the floor with pillows and covers strewn about, a desk nearby with a laptop turned off, an internet connection evident.

Not quite in the opposite corner is a stool with a young male, DREW, in his early twenties sitting with his back to our view. He faces out the window where the blinds are only slightly open.

As we SEE the front of him he is holding a pistol in his left hand on his lap. The chamber is open and we see one bullet inside.

He closes it, spins it around a few times, points it up underneath his chin and pulls the trigger.

There's a long pause with no noise.

DREW

Damn.

He looks at the gun, pushes the chamber open and notices the bullet is now lined up for the shot. At this, he drops the bullet out and flops the gun down on his bed, the bullet on the computer desk, and walks out the door.

We now see what Drew looks like, a nice pair of slacks and some decent dress shoes, a white-collared button-up shirt. He closes the glass door and grabs his keys off the kitchen counter, exiting his apartment and locking it behind him.

He hurries out to his car and gets in.

EXT./INT. BUSINESS OFFICE - DAY

Drew pulls up, gets out of his car and heads inside.

Once in, he walks up to the SECRETARY.

SECRETARY  
(bored)  
May I help you, sir?

DREW  
I'm here for my three o'clock  
interview.

The Secretary sighs and looks down at a book with pen in hand.

SECRETARY  
Your name...

DREW  
Drew Panton.

SECRETARY  
Have a seat, Mr. Panton. Someone  
will be out to get you in a minute.

Drew turns and sits down uncomfortably in one of the two nearby seats.

Meanwhile, the Secretary is calling into the office that the three o'clock appointment is here.

She finally stands up after hanging up the phone and looks in Drew's general direction.

SECRETARY  
He'll be out shortly.

She walks off toward the other side of the room and pours steaming coffee into a cup, sips it with some enjoyment, and goes back to sit at her desk.

A few people walk in dressed in business suits laughing, a local restaurant's cup in each of their hands and talking as they make their way passed the Secretary's desk and through another door.

Drew is noticeably annoyed.

He takes a big breath and lets it out slowly, a frown on his face. He looks down at his arms, pulls up the sleeve of the right arm and scratches at the redness of an evidently new tattoo there.

He glances over at the inside door when it opens, but it's a woman coming out who's a little older in years and she passes by him and exits the building.

He sighs again, looks up at the ceiling shaking his head and sits up straight in his chair to try to get more comfortable.

Finally, the door opens again and PRESTON steps out.

PRESTON  
Mr. Drew Panton?

Drew stands up, clears his throat and forces a smile on.

DREW  
I'm Drew Panton.

PRESTON  
Come in.

Preston doesn't look convinced of any kind of happiness, but seems congenial and polite nonetheless. He is dressed in a nice suit, probably worth more than Drew's last three paychecks alone, and a nice pair of gold-rimmed glasses. His hair is perfect, his suit pressed, his shoes polished.

The older man leads Drew into a small interview room and waves him to a seat, closes the door behind them, and sits down across from his young interviewee.

Placing a manila folder with some paperwork inside in front of himself, Preston sticks out his hand with a smile. As Drew shakes it, he says,

PRESTON  
I'm Preston Wills. It's nice to meet you. Nathan's been saying a lot of good things about you.

DREW  
(with some relief)  
He's a great man.

PRESTON  
That he is.  
(BEAT)  
Drew, though, I have to tell you; I have some concerns about your resume.

DREW  
OK.

PRESTON  
I'm concerned you won't last very long here. You've had six jobs in the past three months. Is there a problem I should know about?

Drew isn't sure how to respond, and it's good because Preston continues.

PRESTON

Someone like yourself is usually either just getting enough to party on the weekends and blow off working, or has some issues. I just want to make sure I'd be doing the right thing for my company. Would I be...?

DREW

Well, yeah.  
(not convinced)  
I'm a hard worker, and I do exactly what I'm told...

PRESTON

I'm not worried about that part, Drew. I have no doubt that you'd be a good worker. Nathan, and all of your previous employers have had good things to say in that department. Unfortunately, you've got a bit of a temper, and I need to hear you tell me you can control it.

Drew looks away, trying to think.

DREW

I know I have a few issues. I try really hard. I want to do well.

Preston leans back in his chair contemplatively, eyeing Drew for a few moments.

PRESTON

I wouldn't expect anything less from you. Nathan tells me you're worth me hiring. I'm willing to do it based solely on his say-so, but I'm afraid you're going to make a bad name for your friend if you don't hold up your end of the bargain.

Drew is quiet for a long moment, looking down at the table away from his interviewer. His breathing is audible.

DREW

Sir... Mr. Preston, I really just need another opportunity.

(MORE)

DREW (cont'd)  
One where I can prove myself. I  
feel this is where I can do that.

He looks up at Preston, hoping he sounded convincing.

Preston remains leaned back in his chair, waiting...thinking.

DREW  
(shaking his head)  
I just need one chance...

Preston lets out a long sigh, sits up, and pauses.

PRESTON  
I'm not going to lose any sleep if  
you fail me. If I were you,  
though, I'd be losing sleep if you  
fail your friend, and even more if  
you fail yourself. I'm giving you  
the job, but you're going to prove  
to me that I made the right choice.

Nodding his head,

DREW  
I will, sir.

Preston reaches out his hand again, and Drew shakes it once  
more. There are no smiles, just doubtful nods from both.

PRESTON  
Report here tomorrow morning at  
eight, sharp. Don't be late.

DREW  
I won't, sir. Thank you.

Drew opens the door and Preston walks him out the way they  
came. His final words are,

PRESTON  
I'll see you tomorrow.

Drew only nods with as much a smile as he can muster when he  
looks at the other, but when he turns away, it's easy to see  
his heart is not in it.

EXT. NATHAN'S HOME - FRONT PORCH, EVENING

NATHAN is a sharp-dressed Native American with a calm  
demeanor, and a first-glance-obvious positive attitude. He  
sits on a bench on the front porch of his million-dollar home  
with the latest, greatest cell phone to his ear.

NATHAN

Preston told me he gave you the job.

He listens a few moments.

NATHAN

I'm glad for you, Drew. I really am. I did this because I believe in you and...

Another pause to listen to his friend. We hear the sound of footsteps inside the house getting closer.

NATHAN

Look, man, I know you've had it rough lately, and things don't seem to be going your way. I felt if I could show you something good could happen to you you'd get a better outlook. I definitely...

Drew is talking again as Nathan's wife, SHAWNA, opens the screen door and steps out to hand her husband a glass of red wine, and then sits down beside him to enjoy the evening breeze.

NATHAN

I'm just saying, after all you've been through, you deserve something good to happen to you, you know?

He looks at his wife and shakes his head to let her know Drew's still messed up. She takes it in stride and looks out toward the setting sun with a half-smile.

NATHAN

Well, Drew, I'm your friend. I care, you know. You have a good night. Get lots of rest and show Preston you've got what it takes, OK?

Finally, after an evident parting from Drew Nathan hangs up ending the call.

SHAWNA

That poor kid...

NATHAN

Just don't tell him that. He needs to believe in himself. I don't want to think of him like that, you know?

SHAWNA

I know, hon. That's why I let you talk to him. If I did, I'd probably mess everything up.

Nathan laughs as she grins.

NATHAN

You wouldn't either. You're the sweetest woman in the world. That's why I married you.

He leans over to her and kisses her, then wraps an arm over her shoulder. She puts her arm under his and around his back, leans her head on his shoulder, and the two enjoy the sunset, and their glasses of wine.

INT. BUSINESS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Drew is standing in the front office once more, and Preston comes out with a simple straight face.

PRESTON

I just talked with your manager. She said you did an excellent job today and she's very excited to have you on her team. Keep up the good work.

DREW

Thank you, sir.

PRESTON

(nods)

We'll see you on Monday morning. Same time, alright?

DREW

Yes, sir.

PRESTON

Have a good weekend.

DREW

You, too, sir.

Drew exits the office.

INT. DREW'S APARTMENT - PHOENIX, AZ, EARLY EVENING

Drew enters his apartment closing the door behind him with a few bags of groceries and puts them away.

Then he walks into his bedroom, picks up the gun from his desk, loads the one bullet, turns the chamber a few times, puts the gun up against his throat once more, ready to pull the trigger.

As he looks out the window pondering, he notices something.

We SEE out the bedroom window across the street a truck with boxes in the back, and a girl unloading stuff into an apartment. After watching a few moments we realize she's doing this by herself.

Drew places the gun on the desk and walks out.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - PHOENIX, AZ, EARLY EVENING

Drew walks across the street and meets the young woman exiting once more to grab stuff from the truck.

DREW  
Can I help you?

PERSEPHONE  
(perturbed)  
Sure.

They grab some boxes and he follows her inside, puts them down where she notes him to do so, and they exit together to grab more.

He begins noting that she has tattoos on her back and arms, very unusual ... not the normal types of tattoos. These seem to be letters in another language or something. There are very few images of any kind. Her hair is black, and she has a very cute round face on her thin, almost anorexic body.

INT. PERSEPHONE'S APARTMENT - LATER

The two sit on small cheap chairs, having finished unloading the truck.

DREW  
I'm Drew.

PERSEPHONE  
I'm sure I don't care.

Drew is taken aback, unsure of what to say.

DREW  
Sorry...?



PERSEPHONE

I don't care what your name is. I appreciate your help. I really do. It's only, I don't want to be bothered here. I moved here to get away from people.

DREW

You moved into an apartment complex. You can't exactly avoid people here.

PERSEPHONE

I can try.

DREW

So, you want me to go...?

PERSEPHONE

That'd be great. Again, don't think I don't appreciate your help.

Drew looks like he feels pretty awkward, but lets it go as she closes the door behind him, and he walks back to his home.

INT. DREW'S APARTMENT - PHOENIX, AZ - EVENING

Drew sits once more on the stool in his bedroom, gun in hand. He verifies the bullet is still in the chamber, closes it, spins it, holds it up to his throat again, but this time, he hesitates.

A long moment goes by, and as it seems he is about to give up the notion to pull the trigger, he does it anyway.

Once again, nothing. He doesn't look surprised.

Opening up the chamber, the bullet is once more poised in position to exit on the next pull of the trigger.

EXT. - APARTMENT COMPLEX, MID-MORNING

Drew locks the door to his apartment and walks out to his car, not paying attention to the fact Persephone is across the street watching him, and begins heading toward him.

He gets in his car, and as he is preparing to close the door the passenger door opens and Persephone sits down, closing it behind her.

Drew looks over at her as she asks,

PERSEPHONE

Can you take me to the store?

Drew has a strong look of confusion on his face.

DREW

What happened to your truck?

She pauses.

PERSEPHONE

It's not running.

There's no way to tell for sure if she's lying or not, but he starts his car without a word, pulls out, and drives off.

As Drew drives, Persephone; in a pretty flowery dress with her black hair, black lipstick, and black eye-liner over deep brown eyes, tattoos up and down both arms and across the top of her chest (just what's noticeable, anyway); comments

PERSEPHONE

Are you upset with me?

DREW

(perturbed)

Should I be?

PERSEPHONE

I tell you to leave me alone, and then I ask you for your help.

(BEAT)

I'd be upset with me.

She looks away, almost as if hoping he'll forgive her.

He doesn't seem to notice or care.

DREW

I have enough fair-weather friends.

PERSEPHONE

Look, maybe this was a bad idea.

She opens the door as if to get out while the vehicle is moving. He slows and pulls over to the side of the road.

DREW

If you wanted out, you could'a just asked.

The two look at each other for several moments, waiting to see what the other will do.

Finally, she closes the door, looking straight ahead at the road.

PERSEPHONE  
(with resignation)  
I really need to go to the store.

DREW  
It's a good thing that's where I  
was headed, then.

He faces forward again, looks in the rearview mirror to make sure there are no cars coming, and pulls out.

DREW  
So, are you going to tell me your  
name?

PERSEPHONE  
Persephone.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MIDDAY

The two get out of his car. He has only one small bag with something unnoticeable in it, she two or three bags of groceries. The doors close, and she stands there looking down at the ground.

Drew walks toward his apartment.

Finally, Persephone looks up at him.

PERSEPHONE  
Thanks for the ride.

He stops in his tracks, pauses a moment, but without turning around says,

DREW  
You're welcome.

He walks to his door and unlocks it. She watches him until he enters and closes the door.

She waits a second longer looking after him, and then turns and walks to her place.

INT. DREW'S APARTMENT - MIDDAY

Drew goes over to the window to peer outside and sees Persephone walking up to her apartment.

Then he walks into the kitchen to put whatever it is he bought away.

INT. NATHAN'S HOME - MIDDAY

Nathan and his wife are dressed up, smiles on, and seem to be preparing for something as his wife brushes her hair in the bathroom, Nathan standing nearby.

He picks up his phone, dials a number and holds it up to his ear.

NATHAN

Hello, Drew.

(a pause)

What are you doing this evening?

There's a short pause as he listens to Drew's answer.

NATHAN

(in response)

Well, Shawna and I are going to a dinner party with some friends, and I was encouraged to bring a couple guests. I was wondering if you'd like to come with us.

There's a silent pause on the other end of the phone.

NATHAN

Drew...? You still there, bud?

Another pause as something is said, and finally,

NATHAN

Well, you're the only guest I have, then. Do you know anyone who might like to come along with us?

A strange silence now, as Shawna turns to look at him direct instead of his reflection in the mirror. She becomes her smile.

Finally,

NATHAN

Great! We'll be by to pick you and your friend up in about an hour or so. I'll see you soon.

Nathan hangs up the phone with a pleasant grin.

SHAWNA

This'll be good for him. He needs to get out and around people more often.

NATHAN

I agree.

He kisses her.

NATHAN

We'll leave in about forty minutes. Take the time you need.

She smiles at his back as he exits the bathroom. She turns to the sink to work on her face.

EXT. PERSEPHONE'S APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

The wind has picked up since the afternoon, and Drew stands outside Persephone's apartment and knocks.

Finally, the young goth chick opens the door. Her choice of outfits remains the same, and she looks almost sick to her stomach.

Drew is suddenly unsure if he should ask, but manages.

DREW

My friends are coming to pick me up for a dinner party. They asked me to bring someone. I was wondering...

PERSEPHONE

No.

DREW

Alright. I understand.

PERSEPHONE

No. I mean, you weren't wondering. I'm just the only person available for you to ask, right?

Drew looks appalled at her for a long moment, and then,

DREW

Screw you.

He starts to walk off.

PERSEPHONE

(deep breath)

Wait.

She doesn't look at him, and he doesn't really look back at her, just in her general direction.

PERSEPHONE

(tongue in cheek)

I didn't say I wouldn't go with you.

Drew is mad, now. He practically stomps back to her.

DREW

I'm not sure I want you to come!

PERSEPHONE

Then why'd you ask me to...?

He closes his eyes for a moment, then opens them.

DREW

Do you want to come with me or not?

PERSEPHONE

It's just ... I don't do very good around people.

DREW

I've noticed.

PERSEPHONE

Touché. When do we leave?

He looks down at her feet.

DREW

When my friends get here, and just as soon as you get some shoes on...

She looks down at her own feet, and pushes the door almost closed.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX / NATHAN'S SUV - EVENING

Drew and Persephone get into Nathan and Shawna's expensive SUV.

DREW  
Nathan... Shawna... This is my  
neighbor, Persephone.

NATHAN SHAWNA  
Nice to meet you, Persephone. Hello, Persephone.

Persephone doesn't respond.

Shawna looks back at the girl.

SHAWNA  
So, Persephone, where are you from?

PERSEPHONE  
Here.

Persephone doesn't look at her inquisitor for anything. For whatever reason, Shawna holds her impenetrable smile on like Teflon.

SHAWNA  
Drew, how'd you two meet?

DREW  
She was moving in. I went across  
to help her.

NATHAN  
How long have the two of you known  
each other?

Drew waits a moment to see if Persephone will answer. Needless-to-speak, she doesn't.

DREW  
Since last night.

SHAWNA  
One day. That's not very long.  
You're still getting to know each  
other, then...?

PERSEPHONE  
One could say that.

It is an excruciatingly awkward moment for all.

EXT. TRENT'S HOUSE - EVENING

The four of them exit the vehicle, parked among a line of cars on both sides of the street, and walk up to the house with all the lights on.

It's a nice neighborhood, uptown, well-to-do. The house is a million-dollar home not unlike Nathan and Shawna's.

The party is more social, and is taking place less inside than out behind the house by the large pool.

There are many expensive furnishings inside and outside the home, and the drinks aren't far behind in original purchase price.

PERSEPHONE

(quietly to Nathan and  
Shawna)

What's the occasion?

Shawna turns to her.

SHAWNA

The owners of the house have this party once every three months. It's just a tradition.

Persephone is noticeably uncomfortable, as is Drew. Neither are dressed for this event, and with a few stares from some of the other guests, it only adds to their discomfort.

TRENT

(a broad smile)

Nathan! Shawna! Welcome. Are these your guests?

NATHAN

Trent, this is Drew, and his new friend, Persephone.

TRENT holds out his hand to Drew who shakes it.

TRENT

Hi, Drew.

Then he turns to Persephone, not taking her absent handshake as a no. He reaches down, grabs her hand and kisses it softly on the back.

TRENT

It is a pleasure to meet you, Madame Persephone. The Beautiful Greek goddess, and queen of the underworld.



PERSEPHONE

Raped and tortured before being  
saved and returned to her mommy a  
warped and twisted deity who  
married the equivalent of Satan.

Trent is unsure what to make of this, a slight pause being  
the only measurable note of his evident thoughts.

TRENT

True. However, I don't believe a  
beautiful woman as yourself would  
ever have that misfortune.

She rolls her eyes over to Drew like a beg to be taken home  
after Trent turns back to Nathan.

NATHAN

(a smile)  
She's a bit nervous.

TRENT

Yeah. Hey, I gotta show you this  
new gun I bought. She's a beaut!

Trent takes an arm over Nathan's shoulder and the two walk  
down a hallway chatting up a storm.

Shawna turns to the two young adults.

SHAWNA

Let's go out back and grab  
ourselves a drink, shall we?

She's almost too happy for either the other two's taste, but  
they follow her through the throng of people in the dining  
room standing over the men at the table playing a game of  
poker. The money on the table is plenteous.

Shawna, Persephone, and Drew exit the back sliding glass  
doors to another large group of people sitting in lawn chairs  
near the pool with drinks in hand, and a flock of  
conversations meandering aimlessly through the air with no  
definitive pattern.

A pretty woman, with a somewhat skimpy outfit on, holds a  
tray of drinks. Shawna grabs one first, and Drew follows.  
They look at Persephone behind them.

Persephone puts her head down a little, but looks into the  
woman's eyes.

PERSEPHONE

I don't suppose you have blood in one of those.

FEMALE SERVER

(a broad smile)

No, but I could make one for you.

PERSEPHONE

Thanks.

The Female Server walks away into the kitchen.

SHAWNA

(to her two guests)

I'll be right back.

Shawna quickly walks into the house after the Female Server.

Leaning up against the counter as the woman makes the drink,

SHAWNA

I'm sorry for her attitude.

FEMALE SERVER

(almost laughing)

It's alright. She's a goth chick. I get that request a lot.

SHAWNA

So, you're obviously familiar with whatever that drink is, then...

FEMALE SERVER

Of course.

(looking at Shawna)

It's a Bloody Mary.

SHAWNA

(surprised)

Oh!

(BEAT)

I guess I'm not familiar with ... goths.

FEMALE SERVER

Admittedly, they do take some getting used to. I had a boyfriend who was into LARP-ing. Girls dressed up in Vampire outfits, blood dolls, the whole nine yards. It was kind'a weird. I don't much care for that world, and I broke up with him after the second one.

SHAWNA

Oh...

Shawna's smile fades for a moment, unsure of what the woman just told her, but her smile returns, and she exits back out to the pool.

Behind her follows the Female Server who hands the drink to Persephone.

FEMALE SERVER

Enjoy.

Persephone just nods as she takes a sip of her chosen drink. She is obviously uncomfortable, and she stands as close to Drew as possible without touching him.

They are both silent, and motionless beyond sipping their drinks.

A man and a girl on his arm, both almost completely wasted, walk ... er, swagger up to the two of them.

MAN #1

Hey, you two ... lighten up. It's a party.

WOMAN #1

(looks at the man, then at them)

Yeah. It's uh...party. You two should go somewhere else. You're mood is killing the atmosphere...

They swagger off into the house, leaning on each other, jovial.

PERSEPHONE

(quietly)

That was the general idea...

Behind Drew, a man stumbles and knocks him into the pool. As his arm passes near Persephone, she drops her glass, which shatters on the ground.

The man falls to the ground about the same time and cuts his hand on a piece of glass while Drew tries to right himself in the shallow end of the pool.

There is laughter from several people around the pool. Some even get the idea to join him, pulling off unimportant pieces of clothing and jumping in.

Drew is now standing up in three feet of water. He slams his fists into the water, pulls himself out of the pool, water dripping from his clothes in buckets, and picks up the guy who pushed him in. He pulls back an arm and swings hard, knocking the guy onto a woman sitting on a pool chair, knocking her back onto the grass behind.

The man gets up and goes for Drew as Drew makes another attempt to hit the man.

Back and forth the fight continues, Shawna stepping back with her hand over her mouth, screaming at Drew to stop. The people now in the pool stop to watch the goings-on.

Persephone just stands and watches, emotionless, while the person who was seated next to the woman helps her up and sees if she's alright.

It is at this moment Nathan and Trent emerge from the kitchen.

NATHAN

Oh, crap.

Nathan runs over to hold Drew, and Trent follows, pulling the stumbling-drunk off Drew.

TRENT

Enough, Robert!

ROBERT tries to take another drunken swing at Drew, but Trent's hold is stronger than the man's anger.

Drew rears forward and knocks the back of his skull into Nathan's face. Nathan instinctively lets go and Drew dives for Robert, pummeling him in the face.

Nathan grabs at his own face for a second, but despite the pain lunges at Drew and pulls him off Robert again, who has now gotten loose of Trent and is defending himself with a blow to Drew's gut.

NATHAN

STOP IT!

Drew pulls his arms free of Nathan and backs up, breathing hard and loud.

Drew is drenched, water running down his face. The front of Nathan's expensive suit isn't fairing much better.

Nathan looks down at his soaked outfit and shakes his head.

NATHAN  
(to Drew)  
I can't take you anywhere!

Robert falls onto the ground, too drunk, and injured, to stand now.

Trent allows it, and looks at Nathan with a saddened shake of his head.

TRENT  
Perhaps...

NATHAN  
We should go, Trent. I'm really sorry about this...

Still shaking his head,

TRENT  
It's OK, Nate. Robert gets like this when he's drunk.

NATHAN  
Still...

He looks over at Drew, mad. Shawna has since put her drink down and walks over to her husband.

SHAWNA  
Oh, honey... Your suit is ruined...

She wipes away at some of the water on the jacket and lifts her hand to let the water drip off. Then she flings it off of her hand.

Drew snuffles, wiping water off his face.

Persephone just stands there, looking at Drew who is sopping wet.

Trent decides on the routine party-recovery-system for events such as these.

TRENT  
It's alright, everyone. Just a misunderstanding. We got it straightened out. Everyone go back to what you were doing.

There are some mumbles from various people. The few in the pool decide it may be best to get out and do so in a semblance of order.

Nathan and Drew are both obviously upset, for various reasons. Nathan grabs Drew by the arm and walks him through the side yard gate and out to the front of the house.

NATHAN  
What the hell...?!

DREW  
He started it...

NATHAN  
I don't care who the f... I don't care who started it, Drew. I really don't give a damn! You can't keep doing that!

There is a long pause, and finally, Drew pipes up.

DREW  
Your nose is bleeding.

Nathan wipes under his nose, seeing a large amount of blood.

DREW (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry for hitting you.

Nathan droops his head down.

NATHAN  
I wish I could believe you, Drew.  
I really do.

Nathan walks back around the back of the house. Drew pauses a moment, looks around, more to think than to see, and then turns and follows.

EXT. TRENT'S HOUSE - LATER

Nathan, Shawna, Drew, and Persephone exit Trent's house, followed closely by the Host.

The four turn on the porch.

DREW  
I'm really sorry, sir.

TRENT  
It's alright, Drew. Stuff happens.

NATHAN

Yeah, well, we're going to work on seeing to it that kind of "stuff" never happens again, aren't we, Drew?

SHAWNA

Nate...

DREW

Yes, sir.

Persephone looks out at the car, seemingly eager to leave.

Trent, ever the optimist, smiles big.

TRENT

Well, you folks have a wonderful evening, and I'll see you two...  
(pointing at Nathan and Shawna)  
...next time.

Trent pauses only a moment, nodding to Drew and Persephone, and walks back in the house, closing the door behind him.

Nathan breathes in deep, and lets it all out at once. He swallows hard, looking like he wants to say something, but doesn't. Instead,

NATHAN

Let's go.

He turns and walks off the porch followed close by his wife.

PERSEPHONE

It was a cool fight.

Drew looks at his evening guest, shakes his head, and walks off to the vehicle. Persephone makes a face and does the same.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - LATE AFTERNOON

Drew pulls up in his car dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. Things seem normal for him; neither happy nor sad.

He gets out of his car and starts to head for his apartment when he HEARS something off behind him across the lot.

He turns to look and sees Persephone's apartment with a male inside the window. The male is loud, and finally he hears him say,

MALE #1

No! That's not what we agreed to!

He walks across the lot to her apartment, hearing more inaudible words as he gets closer.

Finally, he can HEAR the conversation as he gets about thirty feet away.

MALE #1

...you can get away with this? You know that wasn't the bargain, My Lady.

While her voice is somewhat strong, she still maintains her complete apathetic vocal tone.

PERSEPHONE

I don't care. I changed the deal. Live with it!

MALE #1

You can't do that.

PERSEPHONE

I just did. Now get out!

The door to her apartment opens, and a man dressed in some strange gang-like outfit with jewelry and tattoos (the likes of which he recognizes from Persephone) adorning his neck and arms, exits, walks straight passed Drew, out to a nice fancy car, gets in, starts the engine and takes off while Drew turns to face his neighbor who stands at the door.

She frowns at him, closes the door, and he HEARS it lock behind her, indicating he leave her alone. He takes the hint and walks away.

INT. DREW'S APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Drew sits again on the stool in his bedroom. The gun is in his right hand which lies in his lap. He stares out the window toward Persephone's apartment.

The gun chamber is open, and the bullet is inside.

He closes it, spins it, and holds it up to his neck, pressing hard.

He winces, and holds his eyes shut, his finger on the trigger.

A long moment passes. He seems calm.

PERSEPHONE (O.C.)

Hey.



Drew opens his eyes in a panic as his finger lights on the trigger and pulls.

He jerks back instinctively, but nothing comes out of the gun. He breathes hard, fear in his eyes as he recovers.

DREW

What are you doing?

He goes to the window and opens the blinds so they can see each other.

PERSEPHONE

May I come in?

As she walks away, he opens the chamber. The bullet is fourth in line to be released. Setting the gun on his bed, he exits his bedroom and goes to open the door for her.

She enters as soon as the door's open.

PERSEPHONE

How long?

DREW

How long what...?

She sits down on the bean bag while he closes the door.

PERSEPHONE

How long have you been trying to kill yourself?

He looks down at her, and then away.

DREW

Not that it's any of your business, but...

PERSEPHONE

Like the conversation I was having with that guy was any of yours...

He acquiesces.

DREW

I'm sorry. I didn't have the right to intrude. I heard loud voices from your apartment and was...

PERSEPHONE

Thank you for your concern, Drew, but I don't need it. Now, how long?

Despite the words she uses, she seems neither upset nor angry, just inquisitive.

Drew waits a long moment, leaning up against the wall.

DREW

I started when I was fifteen.

PERSEPHONE

...and you're what now; twenty-four?

DREW

Twenty-five. About ten years.

PERSEPHONE

Why?

He doesn't answer.

She decides to stand up.

PERSEPHONE

You always seem depressed.

DREW

That's because I am. Every day for ten years, ever since my family's neighbor cursed me.

PERSEPHONE

She cursed at you?

DREW

No. She said she was a witch. She cursed me...said I would be depressed for the rest of my life and never be able to kill myself.

PERSEPHONE

Great. Maybe the two of us can start a club.

(BEAT)

You know, depression is a gift. You should use it.

He doesn't respond.

There is a silence between them, but not outside. There are sounds of a car driving through the lot and parking not far away.

Doors open and close, and voices follow.

Drew walks to the window and looks out. Police are walking up to Persephone's apartment, and a manager is opening the door for them to go in.

DREW

You have visitors. Maybe you should go see what they want.

She walks over to stand beside him and they watch as the police enter the apartment, and before long carting her belongings out and into the back of a van.

DREW

What's going on?

She walks away from the window when one officer and the manager begin to walk toward Drew's apartment.

DREW

Does this have anything to do with what happened earlier?

PERSEPHONE

Hide me.

DREW

What? Why?

PERSEPHONE

Just do it. Please...

He lets out a breath, grabs her by the arm and puts her in his bedroom closet and covers her over in some sheets.

Moments later, there is a knock on his door.

He exits his room and goes to unlock the door.

DREW

Hello, James.

The apartment manager, JAMES, stands there with the officer.

JAMES

Hey, Drew. I've seen you with the new girl a few times. Do you happen to know where she might have gone?

He shakes his head.

DREW

No. I'm sorry, James. I don't.

OFFICER #1

'You mind if we come take a look  
inside, son?

Drew steps away and allows the officer to enter.

The officer looks around the living room and kitchen with  
quick glances, and then walks into Drew's bedroom.

The officer walks over to Drew's bed, seeing the gun on it.

OFFICER #1

'You got a license for this thing?

Drew walks over, pulls out a Manila folder and hands it to  
the officer.

The officer opens it up, pulls out the forms for the hand gun  
and reviews them, then puts them back inside and hands it  
back to Drew.

OFFICER #1

I appreciate your time.

The officer walks out followed closely by James.

JAMES

Drew's a good boy, Officer. He's  
one of our best tenants. He always  
pays his rent on time, and he...

The one-sided conversation fades away as Drew closes the door  
and walks into his bedroom to pull the sheets off Persephone.

DREW

Great! You wanna tell me why I  
just lied to a police officer?

She pulls herself out of the closet.

PERSEPHONE

As soon as they're gone, we need to  
leave.

DREW

What are you getting me involved  
in?! I have nothing to do with  
this!

PERSEPHONE

You're wrong.

DREW  
 I'm not wrong! You got yourself  
 into this mess, and you can get  
 yourself out!

She places her hands out palms down, the first time we've  
 seen her use them while talking.

PERSEPHONE  
 Not so loud. The very fact you  
 even know me makes you involved.

DREW  
 (almost a whisper)  
 What the hell did you do?!

PERSEPHONE  
 Look... I need to clear my name.  
 You need free of a curse. You help  
 me, I'll help you.

Drew eyes her with suspicion.

DREW  
 So, what, then...you're a witch,  
 too?

PERSEPHONE  
 Are you going to help me or not?

DREW  
 So you're a witch.

PERSEPHONE  
 Would you quit putting words in my  
 mouth?

DREW  
 You didn't deny it!

PERSEPHONE  
 I'm not! OK! I'm not a damned  
 witch.

DREW  
 Then how do you expect to cure me  
 of a witch's curse?

PERSEPHONE  
 Don't worry about it. Help me.

He gives out a sigh of exasperation.

DREW  
What do we need to do?

PERSEPHONE  
There's a box. I need to find it.

DREW  
A box. You want me to help you  
find some random box.

PERSEPHONE  
Yes.

DREW  
Where?

PERSEPHONE  
That's just it. I don't know where  
it is...

DREW  
You want me to find a box, and you  
don't know where it is?

PERSEPHONE  
No, I want you to help ME find a  
box and I don't know where it is.

He reaches a hand to his head, upset, angry, and confused.

DREW  
Not only are you insane, you're  
getting me in trouble with the law.  
It was a mistake to ever help you  
move in.

PERSEPHONE  
I tried to get rid of you.

Drew shakes his head.

DREW  
Alright. I'll help. Where do we  
go?

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DARK

Drew and Persephone make a quiet run to Drew's car and she  
climbs in the back, ducking down.

Drew starts the car and pulls out.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The traffic is somewhat decent for this time of night.

Hunched down in the back seat, Persephone remains, quiet and concerned.

Drew, unable to see his passenger in the rearview, maintains his eyes on the road, but it is painfully evident that his mind is far from it when Persephone speaks.

PERSEPHONE  
How much further?

With no response for several long moments, she asks again.

PERSEPHONE  
Drew, how much further?

DREW  
Hm?

PERSEPHONE  
Are you OK?

Drew "rouses" from his thoughts.

DREW  
Yeah, I'm fine. Why?

PERSEPHONE  
I just asked you a question twice.  
How much further?

DREW  
Oh. I don't know. A mile or  
two...

PERSEPHONE  
What's bothering you?

Drew becomes upset at her.

DREW  
What do you think's bothering me,  
Perse?

She doesn't respond, so he continues.

DREW (CONT'D)  
You're rude, obnoxious, and you're  
making my life miserable getting me  
caught up in whatever the hell you  
did. Wouldn't you be upset?

There's a long silence between them, and soon the car is pulling into:

EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT

DREW  
We're here.

He gets out, and helps her out more than a little rough, but she doesn't say anything.

DREW  
Where are...

PERSEPHONE  
SHH!  
(whispering)  
Be quiet! We don't want them to know I'm here.

DREW  
We don't?

It has the ring of an afterthought, and elicits no response as the two of them walk to a back door.

She pulls a set of keys from under her dress (Lord only knows where she was keeping them) and unlocks the big metal door.

INT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - NIGHT

The two walk inside.

DREW  
(whispering)  
Where are we?

As soon as he says it he realizes it was a mistake. Even his whisper echoes in the small hallway. She gives him "the eye" and he nods with a furrow in his brow.

She leads him through the hallway, still making more noise than either would like, and she slowly opens a door to a set of stairs.

They walk up the stairs to the second floor and she turns to shush him with a finger to her midnight-black lips.

The door opens smoothly and quiet and they pass the threshold with little noise.

Inside, a man can be heard speaking.



RAIDER

...and we join in celebration to you,  
oh Mistress of the Underworld.  
Your wisdom is beyond us, and we  
ask that you give us power in this,  
our undying devotion to you. May  
the gods bless you, and us, your  
humble servants.

CROWD

So be it.

There is chanting now as the group makes strange noises.

During this, Drew and Persephone walk along a catwalk, and by now are standing up behind the man and in the darkness, unseen by those few in the chairs in the small auditorium, view them as several of them take razor blades and cut themselves, bleeding into cups, on each other, and dripping blood into each other's open maws.

There are a few who strip down to start an orgy on one side.

Drew looks at them, but someone is behind them and grabs their shoulders. Both of them turn around.

SHANE

Hello, Persephone. I didn't expect  
to see you here tonight.

PERSEPHONE

Nor I, you, Shane.

INT. A SMALL DIMLY-LIT ROOM

RAIDER and SHANE stand by the door with another young male we recognize as the one who left Persephone's apartment just the day before.

Drew has his hands tied behind and to the chair. Persephone remains untied.

RAIDER

Welcome back, Precious One.

PERSEPHONE

I'm not back, Raider. I came to  
get what rightfully belongs to me.

RAIDER

You gave it up when you left. You  
cannot take it back. Finders,  
keepers, and all that.

Persephone turns her head away from him, more toward Drew.

Drew looks at her, and her at him.

DREW

What do you want me to do about it?

PERSEPHONE

I brought you here to help me, now help me!

DREW

Screw you!

RAIDER

She'd like that.

He follows his statement with a laugh.

PERSEPHONE

(with an evil tone)

Shut up, Raider!

RAIDER

(directly to Drew)

Oh, didn't she tell you...?

Persephone stands.

PERSEPHONE

(continuing evil tone)

I SAID SHUT UP!

Drew nods.

DREW

She did tell you to shut up...

PERSEPHONE

That's not what I meant by "help me," Drew.

DREW

It's all I've got.

Shane walks over to Drew and punches him. His chair falls back with him on it, hurting him bad. Then Shane looks over at Persephone, who remains standing.

RAIDER

You know the rules, Persephone. No one gets in, and no one gets out. Hell, you made them, sweet thing.

PERSEPHONE

...And in doing so, I have the right to change them.

RAIDER

It doesn't work like that. I'm in charge now. You left us. We will continue to follow your ways as ordained by you, but you, of all people, should know the law remains forever. It shall not be changed. Your rules. Your law. If anyone must abide by them, it's you.

SHANE

Stand by us, Persephone. Take your rightful place once more among our numbers, and we shall see our Glorious Day once more.

PERSEPHONE

You always were an ass, Raider. I can take it from Shane. He's just a flunky. You, however...

Raider walks over to Persephone, staring her down ... daring her.

RAIDER

I, however, am the one leading your flock, sweetheart. It is I who make the rules under the banner of the Law Code you designed. Your actions here today denote your errancy, and you will pay for  
(pointing to Drew)  
it with his life.

Drew is injured, but looks up at Persephone with concern.

She looks down at him with a pleading, sorrowful face.

At this, Shane pulls out a gun and aims it at Drew.

The trigger is pulled as we

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

Drew awakens with his head on Persephone's lap. She is unconscious.

The door is closed, and one small yellowish light hanging just inside the door shines dimly with a dinginess to it that screams to be turned off.

He rouses himself and sits up.

At this she wakes as well, her black mascara in streams down her face making her look the part of a full goth.

Her lipstick is mostly gone, and her lips look dry and chapped.

DREW  
What happened?

PERSEPHONE  
Don't worry. It's over now.

She sniffles.

DREW  
What's over?

Persephone stands up.

PERSEPHONE  
Are you alright?

DREW  
Yeah, I'm fine. Why?

PERSEPHONE  
We need to get out of here.

DREW  
You're telling me...

He stands up and follows her to the door.

She opens it with ease.

DREW  
It wasn't locked?

She turns to him.

PERSEPHONE  
No. Should it have been?

He shrugs, unsure of the answer.

As they leave, we see the room where he was laying on her lap.

On the spot where the chair still lies is a large pool of blood, and the rope is still tied to the back of the chair.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Persephone leads Drew to another room. Quietly opening the door, this room is a plush office with a sofa in the middle facing a desk against the back wall.

She leans over the sofa, and then steps back queuing Drew to close the door. He does.

Persephone calls out quietly at first.

PERSEPHONE

Raider...

A little louder.

PERSEPHONE

Raider...

RAIDER (O.C.)

(from the sofa)

Hm...?

Full tone this time:

PERSEPHONE

Raider...

RAIDER

Huh...?!

He sits up, obviously obstructed, and we see a young female's hand come over the top of the sofa in front of Raider's bare chest.

With groggy eyes, Raider looks at Persephone while the young woman rises up, the sofa and her arm barely covering a view of her naked chest.

GIRL #1

Oh, hey, Raider ... it's  
Persephone...

RAIDER

I know who it is, doll...

Raider gets up, his naked back to the camera, grabs a robe, puts it on, and walks around the sofa to stand in front of her. The girl follows suit while Raider talks.

RAIDER  
How'd you get out? ...And what's  
he doing...?

PERSEPHONE  
Where is it?

RAIDER  
Where's what, honey?

She seems mad and disgusted.

PERSEPHONE  
You know what I'm here for! I need  
it! Now!

Raider shrugs.

RAIDER  
I don't know what you're talking  
about.

Persephone walks up to him, grabs the collar of the robe and,  
unbelievably, lifts him off the ground.

Her tone changes again to the evilish, angry sound she had in  
the other room.

PERSEPHONE  
I'm not going to ask you again,  
Raider. WHERE IS IT?!

Raider is obviously hiding fear, laughing off her request.

RAIDER  
You really think going feral on my  
ass is going to get you what you  
want?

Persephone pushes him over the sofa. He falls backward, legs-  
over-head onto the floor, while the cute blonde-headed girl  
helplessly and inexorably watches. The other looks at her.

PERSEPHONE  
What's up, twat?

The blonde girl gets upset, but does nothing but pout.

Raider stands up, angry, but more embarrassed, as he  
straightens up his robe pulling it tighter this time and  
tying it around his waist.

RAIDER

These little stunts aren't going to get me to talk, Matron. I've told you before, and I'll tell you once more...

Persephone places a hand on the top of the sofa and jumps over, landing on the top of the sofa seat. She grabs Raider by the throat.

PERSEPHONE

(same evil voice)

You will tell me, or I will kill you!

Her nails cut into his throat, drawing blood.

Raider holds up his hands in surrender with an evil grin on his face.

It is about this moment that there is a knock on the door.

WORSHIPPER #1 (O.C.)

(Muffled from behind the door)

Are you OK in there, Sir?

RAIDER

(loud, around Persephone)

I'm fine. Don't worry. We're in no danger...

WORSHIPPER #2 (O.C.)

We heard Persephone's voice, Sir.

RAIDER

(angry)

I said we're fine. Go away!

He smiles up at Persephone.

RAIDER

(quietly)

See, I'm not in any danger, Persephone. Now, release me.

Persephone waits for a long moment, and then releases her death grip on his neck. Raider backs up against his desk, grabs a tissue from a box and wipes blood from his neck. Meanwhile, Persephone steps off the sofa and walks back around to stand next to Drew.

PERSEPHONE

It's your turn. You know I'm in no danger here, either. Let Drew and me go. I'll find it myself.

Raider laughs; slow at first, but increasing after a few seconds.

Not really looking at her, or anyone for that matter, he says,

RAIDER

Persephone...

(BEAT)

I welcome you to try. With the police on your tail, and my own people ready to kill you if they see you again after this little show, if you can find it, you can have it. Your male friend is on our hit list, too.

He looks behind him, and turns back to her.

RAIDER

There's the door. You can get out through there. Have a safe trip.

Persephone grabs Drew by the forearm and they walk across the room, open the door, and out they go.

After the door is closed, Raider snaps his finger at his blonde sex doll and points at the door. She jumps to action, walking over to the inside door, unlocks and opens it.

Worshippers dressed in black with guns in hand walk in; four or five of them.

RAIDER

I want Persephone and her new male friend, Drew, found, and killed. Bring their heads to me as proof.

WORSHIPPERS

Yes, Sir.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Persephone and Drew run out to his car. She clambers into the back seat, ducking down again, while Drew starts his car and pulls away.



DREW  
Where to, now?

PERSEPHONE  
I'm hoping you have a friend who  
can take care of us for a day or  
two.

DREW  
I'll see what I can do.

INT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Nathan and his wife sit at their dinner table having just finished evening meal. Nathan is reading the business section of a newspaper, Shawna the headlines, when they hear a car pulling up in their driveway.

Shawna gets up and looks out the window.

NATHAN  
Who is it, Hon?

SHAWNA  
Oh, god. It's Drew...

Nathan's interest now piqued, he sets the paper on the table and gets up to see for himself.

NATHAN  
What does he want now?

EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Nathan and Shawna come out the front door and walk over to Drew's car as he is helping Persephone out of the back seat.

NATHAN  
What's wrong, Drew?

DREW  
We need a place to stay for a day  
or so...

NATHAN  
Oh, no! No, no, no, no, no, Drew.  
You two are not staying here.

PERSEPHONE  
(now standing, pleading)  
Please, sir. There's no other  
place for us to go...

Shawna leans against her husband with a hand on his shoulder.

SHAWNA

It's alright, Nathan. It's just for a day or so.

Nathan turns to his wife.

NATHAN

Shawna, he's in trouble! Can't you see that?

SHAWNA

He's also your friend.

(whispering)

The only one he has...

(normal tone again)

He needs us. They both need us.

Nathan sighs, closing his eyes for a brief moment before looking up at Drew and Persephone.

INT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

Drew and Persephone sit on the bed a few feet apart from each other.

DREW

What now?

Persephone says nothing.

DREW

You got me mixed up in this. What did you really think I could do? Huh?

(stands up)

I mean, really, Persephone... You were involved with a cult? One that you evidently created, and now they're out to kill us both! One of them shot at me. I'm not sure why I didn't wake up dead. It would have been better than this... Hell, I've been trying to kill myself for ten years. I guess this is the only way I could do it!

PERSEPHONE

Shut up, Drew.

DREW

QUIT SAYING "SHUT UP!" You tell everyone to shut up. I'm not going to, OK?

(MORE)

DREW (cont'd)  
 I'm not going to do what you say  
 anymore. Once this is over, I hope  
 I never see you again!

PERSEPHONE  
 Consider it done...

At this, Drew looks surprised, like he wasn't sure she'd  
 actually think that an option.

PERSEPHONE  
 I didn't want you in my life. You  
 came to me, remember?

Drew is silent, realizing his error.

PERSEPHONE  
 I still need your help. I know I  
 don't know where to find what I'm  
 looking for, but...

DREW  
 Speaking of which, what are you  
 looking for? What's in that box  
 you want me to help you find?

She doesn't answer.

DREW  
 Your not answering me is getting  
 real old, lady!

PERSEPHONE  
 I can't tell you what's in it,  
 Drew, but I can promise you this  
 ... when, not if, but when we find  
 it, it will clear my name, and it  
 will get rid of your curse.

DREW  
 (trying)  
 Do you...  
 (BEAT)  
 You...  
 (BEAT)  
 I...

He finally just closes his eyes and sits back down in his  
 seat defeated. His face buried in his hands, elbows rested  
 on his knees,

DREW  
 Where do we go now?

PERSEPHONE

Tomorrow, we go to the desert.

Drew looks up at her like she's insane. She looks over at him.

PERSEPHONE

Rest. You're going to need it.

She stands up and walks to the door.

DREW

Where are you going?

PERSEPHONE

The restroom.

She opens the door, closes it behind her, and leaves Drew sitting on the seat with all his uncertainties.

INT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Nathan and Shawna sit on their sofa watching the news when Persephone walks in. She starts toward the kitchen, but stops and walks over to stand near the couch with her goth-chick mannerisms; arms to her side, ghost-like, her face wiped clean of her black face paint. She could be seen now as beautiful, if not before now.

Shawna and Nathan are laughing about something softly to themselves when the young woman stops near them. They look over. Nathan turns the television volume down.

SHAWNA

Hey, Perse ... you mind if I call you Perse ... what can we do for you?

PERSEPHONE

I wanted to apologize to you. Neither of you deserve to be put through what we're putting you through.

NATHAN

Oh, Perse, it's alright. You're a sweet, beautiful girl. I think Drew likes you.

PERSEPHONE

If he does, he's not showing it.

SHAWNA

Perse, you need to understand, Drew's had a rough past few years.

(MORE)

SHAWNA (cont'd)

He grew up hard, and he's always had to fight for everything he got. Don't be surprised if he feels he needs to fight to get you, even if that means fighting directly with you.

She doesn't smile, but a noticeable, if quick, change of demeanor crosses her face as she takes this moment in.

PERSEPHONE

Thank you, both, for helping us. I hope I can soon repay you for your hospitality.

Shawna carelessly waves a hand at her.

SHAWNA

It's nothing, dear. Nathan and I are the only friends Drew has, (and almost as an afterthought) other than you now. It's only right and fair that we should take the opportunity to help him out.

Persephone nods to them in thanks.

NATHAN

I got a call earlier this evening from Drew's boss ... said he didn't show up for work. Do you know anything about that?

She seems uneasy for a moment, but answers,

PERSEPHONE

He was with me. There's a - problem - and I need his help. I don't think he'll be able to go to work for a few days.

NATHAN

What's the problem?

PERSEPHONE

It's complicated.

SHAWNA

Obviously, sweetie...

PERSEPHONE

May I have a drink from your refrigerator?

NATHAN

By all means ... help yourself to anything in there.

Their infectious smiles seem to wane after Persephone turns and walks into the kitchen. They bicker for a few moments about this change of events almost inaudibly for a few seconds before turning their attentions back to the television, the volume back to where it was.

EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Drew awakes, looking around the room. The light in the window is enough to see everything inside, and the room is full of the things that were there the night before.

He gets out of bed in a pair of shorts and exits the room. He looks in the bathroom, living room, kitchen... Then he goes to the front door and as he turns the lock, he realizes it's unlocked already, and slightly ajar.

Drew goes outside and there on the front porch is Persephone in her regular outfit.

The moon shines down on the porch, highlighting her.

Drew sits down next to her.

DREW

It's kind'a cold out here.

PERSEPHONE

It is.

A long pause.

DREW

What are you doing out here, then?

PERSEPHONE

Thinking.

DREW

May I join you?

PERSEPHONE

Do I get a choice?

Another pause.

DREW

Were you uncomfortable?

PERSEPHONE

A little.

DREW

It's more uncomfortable out here,  
you know...

PERSEPHONE

Not for me.

DREW

In general, or...?

She waits only a moment to answer.

PERSEPHONE

No.

Drew puts his arm around her and pulls himself closer to her.

She seems a bit upset for a moment, but finally flings her hair a bit around her face and leans her head on Drew's shoulder.

EXT. DESERT - LATE MORNING

Drew and Persephone get out of Drew's vehicle in the middle of nowhere. Persephone is sitting in the front seat this time when she gets out. It's all desert to the mountains, and it's cold.

The unlikely duo stand next to each other with no jackets, shivering; Drew in his short-sleeved t-shirt, blue jeans, and tennis shoes; Persephone in her long flower dress and black low heels.

Both stare straight ahead at the mountains.

DREW

Are you sure about this?

PERSEPHONE

Yes.

She's the first to move away. Drew follows. Across the desert they walk for a long way before finally arriving at the foot of the mountains.

Persephone points out a small area on up in front of them.

PERSEPHONE

That's where we're going ... where  
my group holds initiation rites.

DREW  
What's this group called?

PERSEPHONE  
Atrum Dea. The Dark Goddess.

Drew gives her an odd look.

DREW  
What if they're in there?

She just climbs. Drew climbs beside her, and they make their way up the side of the mountain to an opening.

INT. CAVE - MID-DAY

The inside of the cave is dark and damp as the two make their way through a small tunnel and into a somewhat large cavern lit by torches attached to the walls.

Drew is able to see strange symbols on the floor and wall in red paint (blood?).

DREW  
Do you think they'll look for us here?

PERSEPHONE  
Likely. Don't worry, though. I have a plan.

DREW  
Oh, good...

PERSEPHONE  
First, I need you to perform an initiation rite.

DREW  
You what...?

She turns to look at him. In the dim light, she looks scary, even without her black makeup on her face.

DREW  
Why do I need ... hell, why would I want to do that?

She gives him a momentary harsh glance as she says,

PERSEPHONE  
I really don't have time to explain.



Drew rolls his eyes away and looks around, uncomfortable.

She pulls him to the center of the cavern and makes him kneel in the center of the biggest weird symbol, then walks to the edge, grabs a handful of dust and holds it over his head.

PERSEPHONE

What is your last name?

DREW

Panton.

PERSEPHONE

(loud, echoing in the  
cave)

You are henceforward guardian of  
the black, Drew Panton. Fulfil  
your mission. Step forth and rise  
from this ash the dutiful guardian  
I have named thee.

She releases the ash over his head.

He is caught by surprise for a second, begins to shake his head of the dust, but he stops and waits.

The two hear a sound behind Persephone, further in the cave.

She turns, and the two now see a young male, RAMIE, standing near a tunnel heading further inside.

RAMIE

Mistress...?

PERSEPHONE

Hello, Ramie.

RAMIE

What are you doing?

PERSEPHONE

I'm appointing a new guardian.

He looks devastated.

RAMIE

But, Mistress, I'm your guardian!  
What have I done to be relinquished  
of my position?

She stares him down under her brows.

Suddenly, her voice shifts into the evil tone she's only used a few times.

PERSEPHONE

You have not guarded me, Ramie. Some who have claimed to be my followers are coming here, even now, to destroy me. If you cannot fulfil your role, I must have another.

RAMIE

But, Mistress, I can fulfil my role. You know I will defend you to the death.

PERSEPHONE

Do so, now, then, and you shall be richly rewarded.

His eyes widen with a mix of fear and excitement. He swallows hard.

RAMIE

I will prepare to defend you right now, my Mistress.

He turns, walks back further into the cave, and comes back moments later with a large gun. Ramie walks past them, through the tunnel to the cave entrance.

Persephone grabs Drew's arm and pulls him up to his feet, a little rough, and somewhat strong for her tiny frame.

Persephone grabs a lit torch, and Drew follows her deeper into the cave.

DREW

What was that for...?

PERSEPHONE

(her voice normal again)  
To buy us some time.

The two make their way further into the cave, and soon arrive in a smaller cavern with a few bunks, boxes, crates, ice chests, and other sundry items for living.

As the two stand there looking around, Drew asks,

DREW

What are we looking for?

PERSEPHONE

A box.

She uses her hands to give him an idea of the size, nothing more than about the length and width of a shoebox, and about the height of a coffee mug.

DREW  
Oh... Right...

They both begin searching the room.

Persephone looks at Drew in the dim light.

PERSEPHONE  
You've got ashes in your hair.

Drew looks back at her, and then bends his head down and shakes it, using his hands to brush it out.

Then he continues to search alongside her. While Drew is searching on the other side of the room, she takes a gun, checks to make sure it's fully loaded, and puts it somewhere under her dress, not letting Drew see her do it.

They finish searching the room.

DREW  
I didn't find anything like what  
you're talking about...

She shushes him.

They both listen, hearing voices.

PERSEPHONE  
(whispering)  
This way.

She leads him back into the tunnel, and through a branching tunnel. She places the torch in a niche inside the tunnel, and then they walk in the dim light further in and around to a high point inside the main cavern where they can see Ramie talking to a few guys with guns.

While they talk in hushed tones, she pulls the gun from somewhere under her dress and holds it in front of her, preparing to aim it at the ones in the room.

The conversation gets a little louder.

WORSHIPPER #1  
Ramie, Raider has given us explicit  
instructions to kill the Matron.  
She must die. You know the rules.

RAMIE

Of course I know the rules.  
 However, I have taken an oath to  
 defend her to the death. She is  
 the Mistress, and her word is law.  
 You know I must abide by my oath.

WORSHIPPER #1

Have it your way.

At this, Worshipper #1 points his gun at Ramie, Ramie points his at Worshipper #1, and they both pull the triggers on their respective guns.

After the two fall backward, Ramie points his gun at one of the other two young men, but both of them shoot him first, effectively killing him.

WORSHIPPER #2

I'm willing to bet she's in here.  
 Help me search for her.

WORSHIPPER #3

Yes, sir.

They walk off toward the hall.

Persephone points her gun at Worshipper #3 who stands behind #2 and pulls the trigger. She hits him in the head. His body slumps over and falls to the ground while Worshipper #2 ducks behind the wall of the inner tunnel.

WORSHIPPER #2

It's useless, Persephone. Give up.  
 There are others outside the cave,  
 ready to kill you as soon as you  
 step out.

PERSEPHONE

I doubt that very much. You're  
 going to die, and there's nothing  
 you can do about it. You can  
 either die in service to your  
 Mistress and be received by her  
 Dark Majesty, or you can die and  
 spend eternity away from your  
 goddess. Your choice.

WORSHIPPER #2

What are you talking about? I  
 don't even believe in this stupid  
 religion of yours. I'm just in it  
 because Raider pays me well...

A shot rings out in the cavern, the bullet bouncing off the rocks not far from Drew and Persephone, both of which quickly back away into the tunnel.

PERSEPHONE  
(quietly)  
He's trying to fake us out.

We couldn't see it in the dark, but obviously now we can tell Drew is upset.

DREW  
(whispers)  
You shot that guy in the head!

PERSEPHONE  
(whispering back)  
It was him or us.

DREW  
(angry whisper)  
Yeah, you still shot him in the head!

PERSEPHONE  
(matter-of-fact)  
Having a change of heart, are we?  
Pull yourself together, Drew!

They are quiet now, and hear a sound of a foot slipping on the rock in the tunnel near them.

Persephone puts an arm to Drew to push him back in the cubby hole, and points her gun down the tunnel and fires off three shots in random directions.

The shots elicit a wrenching sound from Worshipper #2, followed by the sound of a body falling on the ground and the butt of a gun hitting right afterward, then a shot fired, hitting Persephone in the shoulder at which point she turns around hard and fast, falling against Drew.

DREW  
Oh, my god, Perse... Are you alright?

PERSEPHONE  
(painful gasping)  
What does it look like, stupid?

DREW  
Well, you obviously got him. Let's get out of here.

Drew jumps over the small wall of the cave into the main chamber and helps her down as she holds a profusely bleeding shoulder.

Drew holds her up as the two walk past the two dead bodies near the exit tunnel, and make their way out.

EXT. DESERT, DREW'S CAR - NOON

There's another vehicle parked behind Drew's. Persephone is in the passenger's seat. Drew gets into the driver's seat, closes the door, and puts the key in the ignition.

He turns the key. Nothing.

DREW  
This isn't good...

PERSEPHONE  
Figures... Raider wants me dead.  
He'll do whatever he can.

DREW  
I'm gonna make a phone call.

Drew gets out as he speed-dials a number and holds his cell up to his ear.

Moments later,

DREW  
Hi, Nathan. Um, Persephone's been injured, and my car won't start. Any chance...  
(waits)  
Yes, I know. I'm probably fired. I get it. Did you hear me? I said...  
(waits)  
We're out on some back street beyond the mountain. I'll give the phone to Perse. Maybe she can tell you where we are...

INT. DESERT, NATHAN'S SUV - AFTERNOON

Persephone holds a towel around her shoulder, obviously in severe pain. The three of them sit in silence. Finally, Nathan breaks it.

NATHAN

I can't believe I stuck up for you!  
Am I really that crazy...?

PERSEPHONE

(pain in her voice)  
Don't blame him, Nathan.

DREW

It's not my fault...

NATHAN

Make all the excuses you want,  
Drew. That's all you ever do.

PERSEPHONE

It's not his fault.

DREW

I really want that job,  
Nathan.

NATHAN

You don't act like it!

Everyone is silent again for a moment.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

You're always going to find an  
excuse, Drew. You don't want to  
work.

DREW

That's not true, Nate.

NATHAN

You know what, Drew?

DREW

Oh, come on, Nate! We've been  
friends for three years!

NATHAN

A real friend wouldn't go back on  
his word.

PERSEPHONE

Oh, my god, you two. Stop arguing!  
I'm dying over here!

Nathan makes to say something else, but shuts his mouth tight  
and clears his throat.

Drew and Nathan sit and stew in their anger while Persephone  
groans a couple of times off and on, shifting positions to  
try to find some comfortable spot where her arm won't hurt -  
to no avail.

NATHAN  
 OK, Persephone...  
 (he emphasizes her name)  
 ...do you have a hospital  
 preference?

PERSEPHONE  
 Yes. I prefer not to go to one.

Nathan shakes his head.

DREW  
 You're hurt really bad, Perse. You  
 need...

PERSEPHONE  
 I'll tell you what I need, Drew. I  
 need you to shut up and not take me  
 to the hospital. Both of you shut  
 up, for that matter.

NATHAN  
 Then where do we take you, 'cause  
 you two sure as hell aren't coming  
 back to my house...

DREW  
 Nathan...!

NATHAN  
 Drew...!

PERSEPHONE  
 (evil voice)  
 What did I just tell you two?

Both men swallow hard, but say nothing else. She waits a few  
 moments.

PERSEPHONE  
 Dump us off wherever you like,  
 Nathan. Here is fine. We'll make  
 it on our own.

Nathan's shoulders slump as he sighs again.

INT. NATHAN'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Shawna is seeing to Persephone's injury on the sofa in the  
 center.

Nathan sits forward uncomfortably on a nice plush La-Z-Boy.



Drew sits on the love seat on the opposite side of the living room trying to act aloof.

SHAWNA  
How's that, Perse?

Persephone groans.

PERSEPHONE  
It's better.

SHAWNA  
I never realized how hard bullets  
are to pull out of someone's body.  
You're quite the trooper.

Shawna stands up, now that Persephone's injury is fully dressed. She looks at Nathan, and then Drew.

SHAWNA  
As for the two of you... Both of  
you should duke it out in the front  
yard or something, because I will  
not have two grown men sitting in  
my house pouting and fostering  
anger while my patient needs rest.

Drew stands up and starts for the front door.

DREW  
It's OK, Shawna. I'll go outside.

NATHAN  
Thanks, Drew.

SHAWNA  
(looking at Nathan)  
It wasn't a choice for either of  
you. Both of you ... outside!  
Deal with this, or beat each other  
to a bloody pulp, I don't care, but  
neither of you is staying in  
here...

NATHAN  
(sighing once more)  
Yes, ma'am.

Nathan follows Drew out the front door and the two of them stand at the whitewashed railing on the porch.

Nathan chews at his cheek while Drew tries to avoid looking his direction.

NATHAN

You know, Drew, I'm really hurt.

Drew doesn't say anything ... just stands there.

Nathan continues...

NATHAN

I really put my rep on the line for you. I told Preston you'd stick it out. After only one day on the job, you're not showing up; not even calling in. I feel like...

(BEAT)

DREW

You feel like what...?

NATHAN

I feel like you don't respect me, Drew. I feel like you don't even care about our friendship.

Drew hangs his head, then glances over at Nathan for a split second, and finally,

DREW

That's the one thing I don't take for granted, Nathan. You're the only friend I've had for a long time.

NATHAN

You have a funny way of showing it.

Drew puts his hands to his face, effectively covering it, and then cups his straightened hands together over his nose. After a moment or two, he drops his hands back to the railing.

DREW

I didn't mean to do this to you, Nathan. I'm sorry. You were the only person I could turn to...

NATHAN

I know.

(BEAT)

I suppose that's my lot in life.

Nathan moves closer to Drew and puts a hand on his friend's shoulder.

NATHAN

I don't know what else I can do for  
you, but I'm still your friend,  
Drew. Just...

(BEAT)

Just don't make it a habit, OK?

Drew looks back at Nathan briefly, nods, and turns back to  
face the yard.

A few moments pass.

Just as Nathan puts his hand down at his side and is ready to  
turn around and go back inside, both men see it at the same  
time: a car with the windows down, and people in black  
hoodies and face-masks with guns drawn.

They both duck and run for the front door as bullets riddle  
the front of the house. They make it in unscathed.

Nathan pulls his wife down behind the sofa while Drew slams  
the door shut and runs for cover.

NATHAN

MY HOUSE!

DREW

Be happy you're alive, Nate!

SHAWNA

What the hell did you do to piss  
those people off?!

DREW

It's not me...

NATHAN

(looking at his wife)

Not me, either.

Persephone sits up on the sofa.

PERSEPHONE

I hate this...

She rolls off the sofa.

PERSEPHONE

We should get out of here. They'll  
come for me.

DREW

How'd they find us?

NATHAN

Not the thing to worry about, right  
now, Drew.

Car doors slam shut outside, and Drew is able to see four men out of the vehicle walking toward the house, guns in hand. Two walk toward the back, the others toward the front.

DREW

Damn it! We left Perse's gun in  
the car!

NATHAN

It's OK, Drew. I have a few guns  
in my room. Let's go. Ladies to  
come with...

The four of them duck and run into the center of the house, and into the Master bedroom.

Nathan unlocks a large safe in his room and pulls out some shotguns. He is a fast loader, handing one to Drew, one to his wife, and taking one for himself.

Nathan looks out his bedroom window as the two heading for the back walk passed.

He aims his gun and fires a shot at the man's side, effectively shattering his bedroom window and blowing a hole through the man's arm and side. He falls on the ground in sheer agony while the other one runs for the back.

Nathan turns his head to Shawna and Drew.

NATHAN

Hon, you cover the back entry.  
Drew and I have the ones at the  
front door.

Without any more words, Shawna runs out the bedroom door and heads for the back of the house, crouching against the hallway wall and aiming her gun at the draped door window.

While Persephone sits up against the bed in quiet pain, Nathan ducks against his bedroom door where he can see the front door. Drew moves across the hall to the bathroom doing the same from his vantage point.

The front door is kicked open and the two men aim their machine guns straight in and just strafe the living room.

Drew takes the opportunity to duck into the hallway, aim his shotgun, and pull the trigger, taking out the guy in front with a hole in the upper chest. The machine gun fire stops.

As Drew moves back against the bathroom door, he says nervously,

DREW  
I can't believe I just killed  
someone!

Nathan doesn't say anything, but the look on his face speaks volumes. He tosses two more shotgun shells across the hall to Drew who reloads his weapon.

WORSHIPPER #5  
We only came for Persephone and  
Drew. If there's anyone else here,  
just turn them over and we'll let  
you live.

Remaining hidden, Nathan yells back,

NATHAN  
I've got a better idea. We'll let  
you live if the two of you just get  
back in your car and drive away.  
How does that sound?

There is only silence.

Nathan looks at Drew, and Drew returns the gaze.

Nathan holds up five fingers and begins a countdown. On one, both of them lean into the hallway with their guns aimed at the front door and pull the triggers.

The man who was there before isn't in plain sight this time, but as the two look on, the man turns back into the doorway with his machine gun aimed and strafes the hallway.

Drew and Nathan are quick to pull back, both of them close to being grazed or hit.

While Nathan tosses more bullets to Drew and follows by reloading his own, they hear a shot behind them and Nathan turns his attention to the back of the house.

NATHAN  
(yelling)  
You alright, hon?

SHAWNA  
(yelling back)  
Fine. I got him... I think...

NATHAN  
You don't sound convinced.

SHAWNA

That's 'cause I'm not, sweetheart.

Nathan finishes loading his gun only moments after Drew, and then hears a sound outside his bedroom window. He turns to see a head sticking up. Nathan turns his weapon toward the man who ducks down. Nathan doesn't stop to think. He pulls the trigger aimed at the wall instead of the window, and they hear a sound of the man getting hit and falling on the ground.

Nathan reloads once more, very fast, and runs to the window to make sure.

On the ground, dead or dying, are two men in hoodies and face-masks, blood everywhere.

Nathan runs back to the doorway.

NATHAN

Shawna, we're leaving.

Drew gets up and moves passed Nathan into the bedroom to help Persephone off the floor.

Shawna shows up and the four of them get out to Nathan's SUV in record time, guns and ammunition in tow, stepping over the man Drew shot.

Nathan starts it up as the last of them get in and close doors, and he backs up around the other vehicle.

Drew rolls his window down and shoots a hole in the engine of the car, rendering it useless, and Nathan guns the engine and heads off down the street, neighbors looking on, some on their cell phones...

EXT. TRENT'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Trent opens the door to a knock. Nathan, Shawna, Persephone, and Drew stand before him.

TRENT

Nathan! Shawna! What's going on?  
Your house is on the news ...  
someone shot your place to kingdom  
come...

NATHAN

Yeah, part of that was us. We need  
a place to hide for a bit.

TRENT

Nathan, you know the police are looking for you. There's four young males dead around your property!

NATHAN

Again, that was us. They were trying to kill Persephone, here...

PERSEPHONE

...And anyone who stood in their way.

Trent shakes his head.

TRENT

Come in, you guys.  
(to himself: concerned)  
I'm gonna get myself arrested for aiding and abetting, or something...

The four of them enter the house.

INT. TRENT'S HOUSE

NATHAN

We're going to try and prevent that, Trent. We were only defending ourselves. It was a drive-by shooting to start with.

TRENT

Yeah, some of your neighbors said the same thing.

DREW

Well, at least we've got a few people on our side.

TRENT

You didn't park your car out in front of my house, did you, Nate?

NATHAN

No. We parked it in that wooded area nearby and walked here. Hopefully the police won't find it until we can get this straightened out.

Trent's live-in, RENEE, comes in; a beautiful woman in her early twenties; maybe half Trent's age. Her outfit speaks of the money both Trent and her, (or perhaps just Trent), make. She holds a crystal glass of champagne in her hand.

She is polite, and does a slight curtsy while nodding her head at each in turn.

RENEE

Hello, Nathan ... Shawna.

She nods at Drew and Persephone, the latter of which seems oblivious to her.

TRENT

Drew, Persephone, this is my girlfriend, Renee.

DREW

Nice to meet you.

Persephone just nods her head in the woman's general direction.

PERSEPHONE

(sleepy voice)

Can I lay down, now?

Suddenly, Persephone faints on the floor.

Drew is the first to bend down to her. Nathan, Trent, and Shawna follow immediately afterward. Renee folds an arm under her breast, lifts her wine glass a bit and says,

RENEE

Oh, dear...

INT. TRENT'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

Drew sits on the edge of a large bed. Persephone lies under the covers sound asleep. Shawna and Nathan stand at the doorway with Trent. Renee is absent.

SHAWNA

She's lost a lot of blood, Drew.  
I'm not sure she's going to make it  
if we don't get her to a hospital.

DREW

She said she didn't want to go.

Silence.



Finally,

TRENT

I've got a friend who's a doctor.  
He might be willing to help her at  
his house. That might resolve this  
matter.

DREW

What've we got to lose?

TRENT

I'll call him right now.

Drew stands up and walks out the bedroom door, leaving Nathan and Shawna to stand there alone looking after Persephone.

Drew walks into Trent's bedroom ... no one else is there.

Spotting a gun rack, he walks to it and finds it unlocked at the moment. He pulls out a handgun, opens it to see if there are any bullets in it, and finding none he puts a full cartridge in.

Holding it to his neck, he pulls the trigger.

Nothing.

He pulls the gun away and looks at it.

A sound at the doorway startles him.

TRENT

That gun hasn't worked in years. I  
still have to get it repaired.

Walking up to Drew, he adds,

TRENT

I'm sorry to interrupt you. Would  
you like a different gun?

Drew looks ashamed, but not embarrassed. He puts the gun into Trent's open hand and walks out.

Trent looks after him, then drops the cartridge out of the gun and puts both back in and locks the gun cabinet.

TRENT

Drew...

Drew stops at the doorway and turns as Trent turns to him.

DREW

Yes, sir?

TRENT

My friend, the doctor, agreed to see your girlfriend.

DREW

She's not my girlfriend.

TRENT

Oh, no. I'm sorry. Of course not. Your friend - who's a girl.

Drew looks at the man a second, then turns and walks away.

Trent watches him leave, and harrumphs.

INT. MALLARD'S HOUSE - EVENING

Trent's friend, MALLARD; an older gentleman with balding, greying hair, silver glasses, and a suit and tie; stands over Persephone's sleeping body. Her injury is undressed, and he dabs it with a Q-Tip (TM). He puts the cotton part he dabbed into a vile and closes it.

DREW

Is she going to be OK, Mr. Mallard?

MALLARD

She's a strong young woman. I'm sure she'll make it. She needs lots of rest. I'm just checking to make sure there's no infection.

Mallard stands up and walks to Nathan and Trent.

MALLARD

Can I speak with both of you a moment ... in private?

The three men walk away into Mallards private study, and the doors are closed.

TRENT

Mallard, you weren't lying to that poor kid out there, were you?

MALLARD

(a short laugh)

No, Trent. I sure wasn't. She will be fine with lots of rest.

(MORE)

MALLARD (cont'd)

She's near to a coma, but I think she'll be fine in a day or two.

NATHAN

So, what's the necessity for privacy, Sir?

MALLARD

Well, I did a quick search for "Persephone's" registered in this area. I also verified her last known address, which puts this one in the same apartment complex as your friend, Drew, there. You want to know what I found out?

NATHAN

Is it bad?

MALLARD

Not exactly. Just unusual. She's a human clone.

NATHAN

A what?

TRENT

A what?

NATHAN

Of whom?

MALLARD

Of what... Her DNA was taken from ancient mummified remains, reconstituted, and injected into a human egg. She's one of only two successful attempts at such, though I'm not sure who the other person is. As a doctor, I had access to much of the information, but would never have found it if I hadn't been specifically looking for her...

NATHAN

That could explain why she didn't want to go to a doctor.

MALLARD

That would make sense. She's a unique person.

TRENT

You can say that again.

MALLARD  
 (with a huge smile)  
 She's a unique person.

The other two men aren't quite up to the idea of the joke, but smile none-the-less as Mallard continues.

MALLARD  
 Anyway, her blood type is "AB" negative, so she's a universal receiver. I can do a quick blood transfusion. Would one of you two like to volunteer?

TRENT  
 I think we should offer that option to Drew, first, since he seems so eager to go.

NATHAN  
 What do you mean?

TRENT  
 Nathan, I saw him grab one of my guns out of my gun cabinet, put a full cartridge in it, and pull the trigger under his chin. Thankfully, the gun's trigger mechanism doesn't work.

NATHAN  
 I'll have a chat with him, Trent. Thanks for telling me.

CUT TO:

Drew is once more sitting on the bed near Persephone.

NATHAN  
 Drew...?

Drew looks up at his friend. Shawna, Trent, and Mallard are standing with him.

DREW  
 What?

NATHAN  
 Doctor Mallard says he can do a blood transfusion. We wanted you to have the first chance.

DREW

Well, she did anoint me with ash as her guardian...

SHAWNA

In that case, I'd better do it.

DREW

No, it's alright. She's my friend. You guys shouldn't have to...

SHAWNA

(interrupting)

Sorry, Drew. If you're her guardian, you can't do that very well feeling woosie after a blood transfusion.

Drew looks at Shawna for a moment, and then to Persephone when he feels her hand on his.

PERSEPHONE

(dry voice, groggy)

I made a good choice...

Drew turns to Shawna.

DREW

You've got a good point, if you don't mind.

SHAWNA

I wouldn't have offered if I minded.

MALLARD

Well, then. Let's get this underway.

Mallard steps forward, and Drew gets up and walks toward Trent and Nathan.

NATHAN

Drew, can I speak with you outside?

Drew nods, putting his hands in his pocket.

They exit a set of double-glass doors to the back yard and stand near Mallard's pool.

DREW

What's up?

NATHAN

Trent tells me you tried to shoot yourself with his gun.

Drew breathes in deep with his mouth open, looking away.

NATHAN

You wanna tell me why you're still on that kick?

DREW

It's not a kick, Nathan. I told you...

NATHAN

Yes, you told me about the witch. That doesn't mean you should tempt fate.

DREW

In case you haven't noticed, I've been tempting fate all day! Persephone's lying there in that bed, and...

NATHAN

You've tempted fate long enough with a gun. If you're going to continue, may I suggest going about it differently.

DREW

As my friend?

NATHAN

Absolutely, Drew. I wouldn't have come this far with you if I didn't believe in you. I don't like it, but I'm stuck with it, come hell or high water.

DREW

I make no promises, but as long as I'm Persephone's  
(fingers in air)  
"guardian"  
(hands down)  
I'll keep the gun pointed away from my brain.

Nathan places a hand on Drew's shoulder.

NATHAN

That's all I'm asking from you.

They go back inside and stand at the doorway to the bedroom Persephone is being treated in. Doctor Mallard has finished hooking Shawna to Persephone, and the transfusion is already underway.

Nathan walks over to stand beside his wife.

NATHAN

How are you feeling.

SHAWNA

A little light-headed, but I'm fine. Besides, I've given my blood up enough times, I'm more than familiar with this procedure.

NATHAN

I love you.

SHAWNA

(smiling big)  
I love you, too.

She grabs his hand and squeezes it.

DREW

You two are making me sick.

Shawna looks over at him on the other side of the bed.

SHAWNA

(still smiling)  
Shut up...

INT. MALLARD'S HOUSE - MORNING

Mallard is up early listening to some TBN-style minister talking about the grace of God extended to all people regardless of ethnicity, background, and other factors.

He is smiling when Drew walks in.

MALLARD

Good morning, young man.

DREW

The door to Persephone's room is locked.

MALLARD

Did you sleep well?

DREW

Uh, yeah... Can I see how she's doing?

MALLARD

She's fine, son. The blood transfusion went well. Both ladies are...

DREW

(interrupting)  
May I see her?

Mallard's smile turns to a straight face.

MALLARD

Young man, she needs her rest.

DREW

I realize that. I just want to go in there and be with her.

MALLARD

Are you in love with her, Drew?

Drew, despite his grogginess, puts on a confused and annoyed face.

DREW

In love...? You've gotta be kidding! She's ... my ... friend. I just want to make sure she's alright.

MALLARD

My word isn't good enough...?

DREW

I want to see her now, sir.

Mallard's face is more straight, actually closer to a frown.

He stands up on his old tired legs and walks toward Drew, passing Drew, and into the hallway. He politely knocks on the door.

MALLARD

Shawna...?

There's a stirring inside, and a few moments later Shawna unlocks the door and opens it. With her own tired smile, she looks at Drew.



SHAWNA

Hey, sunshine. Your girlfriend is fine.

DREW

She's not my girlfriend...

SHAWNA

I meant, girl ... friend...

DREW

Yeah, yeah.

Drew barges passed her into the room almost knocking Shawna against the wall nearby.

Persephone is lying on the bed asleep.

Drew walks over and tries to rouse her from her slumber. He keeps trying. Nothing he does seems to work. He pulls on her arm (the injured one) to try and get a response.

Drew finally stops and looks over at Mallard and Shawna.

DREW

What's wrong with her? I can't...

Seeing the faces the other two are making, and seeing Trent and Nathan now entering the room, he can tell something's amiss.

MALLARD

It's for her own good, Drew.

As Drew takes a couple of steps toward the small group, he asks,

DREW

What did you do to her?

He is mad.

TRENT

What needed to be done, Drew.  
She's drugged. She'll be sleeping  
when the police come to take her to  
jail.

Drew grabs a glass item from the dresser nearby, clinching it hard in his hand.

DREW

Over my dead body!

NATHAN  
 (his hands out)  
 Drew, settle down...

DREW  
 I WILL NOT SETTLE DOWN! I thought  
 you were my friend! I thought you  
 were going to help us!

NATHAN  
 Drew, I am your friend...

TRENT  
 It's me you're angry at, Drew.

MALLARD  
 ...And me, son. I'm the one who  
 called her in.

Drew rears back with the glass item in his hand preparing to throw it at the people before him. Shawna cringes, and Mallard is the first one to step back into the hallway, and Shawna joins him, scared stiff.

Trent and Nathan both remain.

NATHAN  
 Drew, you don't want to do this.

DREW  
 I don't want to do what, Nathan?!  
 Hurt you? Yes, I do!

TRENT  
 Nathan had nothing to do with this,  
 Drew.

DREW  
 (looking at Nathan)  
 You could have tried to stop them!

NATHAN  
 (more confident)  
 You're right, Drew. I could  
 have... I should have... But I  
 didn't. I didn't do it because  
 you're my friend, and you're  
 getting mixed up in stuff way over  
 your head. People are trying to  
 kill me and my wife and you because  
 of her...

Drew settles a moment, letting his arm down just a bit, but still maintaining a guarded stance.

He hangs his head a moment, thinking, but not long enough to allow the other two men to get over to him.

TRENT

Think about this, Drew. Is this what you want? To run for your life and possibly get yourself killed?

DREW

That doesn't matter anymore. Nathan, you know I don't care if I live or die. What I do care about is if Persephone lives or dies. I don't think she should have to die.

NATHAN

I agree, Drew. And if she's in police custody, she'll have the finest protection anywhere. No one's gonna waltz into the jail and shoot her.

DREW

It's so simple for you, isn't it?

NATHAN

Yes, Drew. It's very simple when it comes to the life of my wife and my best friend!

Drew is breathing very hard, confused and angry.

DREW

We can't allow them to do this, Nathan. She promised me...

He pauses, not sure of what to say.

NATHAN

She promised what, Drew...

(BEAT)

What did she promise you...?

DREW

She promised me that if I'd help her ... she'd help me...

NATHAN

The curse...?

DREW

Yes.

NATHAN

Drew, she's using you. I mean,  
look at her...

Drew glances back at the girl on the bed, her arms over the covers, tattoos up and down her arms and showing on her upper chest.

Looking back, he asks,

DREW

I don't see anything wrong with  
her.

NATHAN

Of course you don't, Drew. I'm  
your friend. It's my duty to help  
you when you're in trouble and  
can't see it for yourself. That's  
what friends do.

DREW

It doesn't matter, Nathan. I'm  
helping her. With or without you,  
I'm taking her out of this house,  
and I'm going to help her, just  
like I told her I would.

Nathan looks mostly let down, but maybe just a touch  
relieved. He looks over at his friend, Trent.

Trent looks back at Nathan.

TRENT

What?

Nathan pulls a fist around connecting with Trent's face,  
knocking him into the wall. Trent's head hits hard, knocking  
him unconscious on the floor.

DREW

What the hell...?

NATHAN

I can't let you do it alone, Drew.  
Like I said, you're my friend.

Shawna is standing nearby, seeing and hearing everything.

SHAWNA

Nathan...

NATHAN

Honey, I have to stand behind him  
this time. I believe it's the  
right thing to do.

Shawna looks upset, but shakes her head and says,

SHAWNA

You're crazy.  
(sighs)  
Let's do it.

Nathan turns to Drew.

NATHAN

Let's get her out of here before  
the police arrive.

DREW

Where's Mallard?

SHAWNA

He locked himself in his study.  
I'm betting he's calling the police  
again to let them know the change  
in our plans.

Nathan is already over to the bed helping Drew get Persephone  
out. The two men stand on either side of her and pick her up  
and carry her out the bedroom door.

Shawna grabs the keys to Trent's vehicle out of his pant's  
pocket and follows them out.

EXT. MALLARD'S HOUSE - MORNING

They exit the house and get Persephone in the back seat,  
buckled in, and then jump in themselves.

As they are getting in, they can hear police sirens coming  
down the street.

Shawna already has the engine started, so Nathan's in the  
passenger's seat.

She backs out of the driveway fast as a police car pulls up.  
It looks like he was preparing to cut her off, but she's  
driving fast enough that he stops before he would have.

Trent's vehicle hits the edge of the police car.

Inside Trent's vehicle -

SHAWNA

Oops! Sorry!

She shifts into drive and stomps on the gas pedal. The tires peel out as two other police cars arrive trying to cut her off, but Trent's car is already in motion, bouncing over the curb around one of the police cars and off down the street.

The police cars get turned and give chase, the first one driving between the other two since he's already facing their direction.

INSIDE CAR 1:

POLICE OFFICER

Vehicle proceeding east-bound on  
(road). Turning onto (street).  
Three cars in pursuit. Requesting  
back-up.

INSIDE TRENT'S CAR:

SHAWNA

Oh, god. I'm running from the  
police...

She is becoming nervous, shaking as she handles the car like a scared kid.

NATHAN

Calm down, honey. You're doing  
fine. Just focus on the road, and  
get us to our vehicle so we can  
switch out.

SHAWNA

If they haven't gotten it already.

Meanwhile, Drew is in the back seat trying to wake Persephone.

She is completely out, her head lying on his shoulder, arms literally dangling down over herself and the seat.

DREW

Wake up, Perse. I need you to wake  
up now.

NATHAN

She's been doped up pretty well,  
Drew. I don't think she's going to  
wake up any time soon.

DREW  
 (ignoring him)  
 Come on, Persephone. Please.

The car continues through back roads, and finally onto a highway.

NATHAN  
 Oh, no. No, sweetheart, this is  
 the wrong place to get on.

SHAWNA  
 Sorry. It was the fastest way I  
 knew of.

We HEAR a helicopter in the distance overhead.

NATHAN  
 We've got to get off this road  
 fast, babe. Take the next right.

SHAWNA  
 It'll take us a lot longer to get  
 to our vehicle if we do that.

NATHAN  
 ...And if we don't, that chopper's  
 gonna keep us in sight, providing  
 the officers quick directions  
 straight to us.

SHAWNA  
 You told me you wanted to go back  
 to our car. Where do you suppose  
 we go?

NATHAN  
 Well, it's too late. We've already  
 passed that exit. Take the next  
 one.

PERSEPHONE  
 (groggy voice)  
 Go to Raider's office.

NATHAN  
 What did she say, Drew?

Drew is quiet for a moment.

DREW  
 I don't think she knows what she's  
 saying.

PERSEPHONE  
I know exactly what I'm saying,  
Drew. Go there. Now.

DREW  
Do you realize what's happening  
right now...?

Though he finishes the question, about half-way through she adds,

PERSEPHONE  
I'm aware. Just do it.

Drew looks at Shawna in the rearview mirror.

DREW  
Take the next exit and turn left.

SHAWNA  
Are you sure about this?

DREW  
It sounds like she has a plan.

PERSEPHONE  
(quietly, painfully)  
Of course I have a plan...

Trent's vehicle enters the vacant lot of the building Persephone's and Raider's cult is stationed. It pulls around a back entry under a tin canopy.

Police sirens can be heard in the distance, getting closer and fast. The helicopter is lower and closing in trying to see what's happening under the tin canopy against the back of the building.

As the four of them get out of Trent's vehicle, Drew pulling Persephone out behind him and helping her in her weakened, drug-induced state, he asks her,

DREW  
Are you going to be OK with  
running, Perse?

NATHAN  
The good doctor gave you enough to  
knock you out for a day or two.

PERSEPHONE  
I've been in more than one drug-  
induced state with more drugs than  
I care to recall. This is nothing.



SHAWNA

That's nice and all, but those police cars are going to be here any second. Where do we...

PERSEPHONE

In there...

Persephone points to a door, and the four of them quickly make their way to it, Drew helping Persephone move along.

Persephone hands keys to Shawna who unlocks and holds the door open and Nathan allows Drew and Persephone to go in first.

INT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

They move quickly down a long hallway, and Persephone tugs on Drew when they get to a "T" to turn right.

PERSEPHONE

This way, quick.

They start down this new corridor, and Nathan is right behind them, Shawna right behind him.

A shot rings out through the hallway loud, stopping all of them in their tracks.

Drew looks at Persephone who looks up at him. The two turn to Nathan, who in turn turns to his wife still at the junction of the hallway. She's holding her chest, and slowly blood begins to fill up around her hands just under the center of her breast.

She swallows, her eyes wide staring at her husband.

NATHAN

(shaking his head)

No... No no no no no no no no no  
no no no no no...

She drops to her knees, stunned and not breathing.

Nathan bends down to her fast looking down the hallway to see some men running toward them.

Shawna looks up at her husband and lifts one bloody hand to his shoulder.

SHAWNA

(half-whispers)

Go, Nathan. Go now!

Another shot rings out, and Nathan ducks his head behind the wall. His wife has a new gunshot wound to the back of her neck, and she falls forward face-first on the ground.

Nathan stands up, scared and breathing hard. He turns to Drew and Persephone.

PERSEPHONE

We need to go, now, Nathan.

Nathan just nods his head, eyes wide in disbelief himself.

They run a few more yards down the hall until Persephone stops at an office door and opens it.

The three of them run inside just as another shot rings out.

Nathan slams the door shut and locks it.

NATHAN

That won't hold them for long.

PERSEPHONE

It doesn't have to.

She walks with Drew over to the back wall and stops, kneeling down on the ground.

PERSEPHONE

Push on that wall panel.

Drew is quick to do so, and the panel pushes back with some difficulty.

PERSEPHONE

When it clicks, push it to the right. It should slide easy.

(looking at Nathan)

Open that window.

Drew and Nathan both follow the directions rather fast.

Drew bends down to help Persephone back to her feet, and Nathan follows them in behind the wall to a very narrow corridor with a staircase going down into a low-lit basement of sorts.

Nathan pulls the wall panel back on its tracks and pushes it back into place.

Moments later they hear a loud gunshot, the sound of a door knob shattering, and more silence for a few moments.

MALE #2 (O.C.)

(muffled)

They've escaped out the window.  
Have the rest of the men search the  
grounds.

Everything goes quiet again, and they wait a long moment, no one daring to breathe.

Finally, Persephone tugs on Drew's arm, and with a finger to her lips to keep them quiet, the two men follow her down the stairs into the basement.

In the dim light of a dying fluorescent bulb, the three of them arrive in a small warehouse-like room with boxes and equipment.

Persephone and Drew turn to Nathan whose eyes are filled with tears.

DREW

Are you gonna be alright, Nate?

Nathan puts a hand to his head, sniffing and swallowing.

NATHAN

Shawna...

PERSEPHONE

There wasn't anything you could do  
for her...

NATHAN

I realize that, Persephone. That's  
not going to make it easy.

DREW

What do we do, now? How many  
people know about this place?

PERSEPHONE

It's the one secret I kept for  
myself, Drew. There are two secret  
entrances. The other is in a broom  
closet on the other side of that  
wall.

She points at a nearby wall that goes further toward the main portion of the complex.

PERSEPHONE

In there is where the majority of  
the cult's illegal activities are  
hidden.

DREW

Do you think the box you're looking for is in there?

PERSEPHONE

It's a possibility.

NATHAN

What box...?

DREW

She says whatever's in it will clear her name.

NATHAN

Then, are you going to clue us in as to what you're in trouble for?

Persephone looks away.

DREW

(angry)

Oh, come on! Can you at least tell us what's in the box?

Persephone stands up to Drew with some fury and gets right in his face.

PERSEPHONE

That box holds my life, Drew.  
That's all I'm going to tell you.  
As for what I'm in trouble for...  
(she glances at Nathan)  
It's not yet time.

She backs off a foot or so and sits down, woosie.

DREW

Then, when?

PERSEPHONE

When we find that box, I promise you'll understand everything.

Drew walks away to the other side of the room and sits on some crates.

Nathan moves over to Persephone and speaks in hushed tones.

NATHAN

Mallard told me and Trent that you're a clone.

She doesn't act surprised, but she doesn't respond immediately, either.

Finally, she looks up at him.

PERSEPHONE

The man who made me is my ... dad, for lack of a better word. He took cells from a long-dead Egyptian woman, replicated her DNA, and put them in a fresh human egg. Then he fertilized it with his own sperm and put it - me - in a volunteer woman I've never met. He raised me. He never left any of the details out. I was just an "it" to him. An experiment. I mean nothing.

NATHAN

Maybe to your dad, you're nothing, but not to Drew. He cares about you.

PERSEPHONE

Trying to make up for the loss of your wife...? You're sure taking it well.

Nathan is taken aback at her comment. He reaches back for a split second as if he wants to hit her, clenched fists and all, but stops himself.

NATHAN

You're a cruel little girl, aren't you....?

PERSEPHONE

I am what the good doctor made me, sir.

Now, Drew walks back over to them.

DREW

Is everything alright over here?

NATHAN

(looking at Persephone)  
Except for my wife, everything's fine.

Nathan turns and walks away a few feet.

Drew moves close to Persephone.

DREW  
What'd you do...?

Persephone doesn't look at him.

PERSEPHONE  
I'm going to go check to see if  
anyone's in the main section of the  
basement.

She carefully walks away toward the section of the wall that moves away, pulls a lever, and tries to move the heavy concrete door back, but is unable. Drew steps up, and it opens to a closet full of mops, brooms, and cleaning supplies.

Drew stands behind her, and Nathan soon joins them.

PERSEPHONE  
I don't want to spend a lot of time  
here. If it's here, I just want to  
find it and get out.

She steps in over a broom handle and carefully opens the closet door, peaking to see if anyone is in.

The lights are on, and it soon becomes clear that no one is in this portion of the basement.

She waves Nathan and Drew to follow her, and the three walk into the main section - a large basement with pillars holding up the complex, and crates and boxes stacked everywhere, in some places floor to ceiling.

Drew and Persephone immediately begin to search for the box, while Nathan leans up against some sturdy crates with his arms straight, holding himself up while hanging his head.

Moments pass, and then Drew calls Persephone over:

DREW  
Perse, could this be it?

He holds a small box about like a shoebox, and as she walks over, she's shaking her head.

PERSEPHONE  
No. It's about the right size, but  
I don't think what I'm looking for  
is in it.

Drew opens it for her when she's near.

PERSEPHONE

No. That's not it.

Meanwhile, Nathan opens up one of the boxes near him and looks inside. Drawing out a small bag of white powder, he looks surprised.

Persephone turns to see him, and Drew's attention focuses there soon afterward.

DREW

Is that what I think it is...?

PERSEPHONE

If you think it's crack, you're right.

NATHAN

How much of this stuff do you have?

PERSEPHONE

I don't have any, now. I quit, remember? Raider is in charge of this crap.

RAIDER

...And Raider now has you once more. I told my men to shoot you on sight. I see one of them got a good shot off.

The other three turn to see Raider walking into the basement behind Drew from behind a wall.

RAIDER

Although, I was more wanting them to kill you with those shots. I'll be having a long talk with them ... at least, the one's you haven't already killed.

DREW

So, you're not going to shoot us, yourself ... right now?

RAIDER

I'd love to. A good leader leads by example. However, the police are right outside, and they know you're here. Killing you would only serve to bring them inside, not keep them out. This is, after all, a holy place.

(to Persephone)

(MORE)

RAIDER (cont'd)  
So, Persephone, I always had a feeling you had a back way into this place. Now I'm sure of it.

PERSEPHONE  
A girl's gotta have her secrets, Raider. Where're your lackies?

He smiles with a snicker.

RAIDER  
They're upstairs. I can call them, if you'd like, but I figured when I heard your voice I'd just see what was going on for myself first. Do you think I need them?

PERSEPHONE  
You didn't wrest control of this organization from me, Raider. I gave it to you willingly. Is this how you repay your Mistress?

RAIDER  
It's how I repay traitors, Persephone, my dear. So, you want to tell me why the police are after your ass?

PERSEPHONE  
I don't think their interest is in my ass, Raider. They think I'm going around killing your people for kicks.

RAIDER  
...And you still think finding your box will help you, now?

PERSEPHONE  
It belongs to me, Raider. Everything in there was supposed to be with me when I left, and you sneaky little bastard replaced the box. Now, are you going to hand it over, or not?

RAIDER  
It's not down here, but I can assure you, it is quite safe, as is its contents. At least, for now.

PERSEPHONE  
You know what's in it, don't you.



RAIDER  
(a smile crosses his face)  
Of course. How else would I know  
that its contents are safe?

Nathan walks closer to stand beside Drew and Persephone.

NATHAN  
Who killed my wife? Was it your  
people or the police?

RAIDER  
Was that your wife, sir? She was  
quite beautiful.

Nathan makes to move toward him and beat him up, but Drew  
holds him back.

NATHAN  
You little asshole...!

DREW  
Don't, Nate. He's not worth it.

RAIDER  
No, Drew, he's right. It's OK. I  
can admit it. I'm an asshole. My  
men were shooting for Persephone.  
Still, your wife's death was a  
tragic mistake.

PERSEPHONE  
You're not planning on letting us  
leave here alive, so what are  
you playing at, Raider?

DREW  
He just wants to gloat, Perse.

RAIDER  
That, and I want to offer  
Persephone a rare, once-in-a-  
lifetime opportunity. I'll drop  
all of this right now for you if  
you'll agree to come back and stand  
beside me as goddess.

PERSEPHONE  
Not just no, Raider, hell no.

NATHAN  
He's just trying to break you,  
Persephone ... all of us...

RAIDER

No more than Persephone did her followers or myself, right, Love? It looks like she's already begun to break the two of you, or haven't you noticed?

Drew and Nathan both glance at each other, and then at Persephone.

RAIDER

Yeah, I thought you two would be smart enough to figure it out if I mentioned it.

Persephone turns to both men, Drew first, and then looks down with uncertainty.

RAIDER

I've already spoken with the police, gentlemen. I'll be happy to tell them that she used you if you'll denounce her right now. I'll just turn her over to the authorities, and the two of you can go home and forget this thing ever happened, if that's possible.

There's a short pause of contemplation from both men. Persephone looks worried.

DREW

You know, Raider, it seems to me you're just as good at manipulation as Persephone.

RAIDER

(to Nathan)  
...And you, sir?

NATHAN

My wife is dead. I have nothing to fight for.

RAIDER

(to Drew and Persephone)  
Then I guess it's just the two of you alone together. How sad...  
(he turns his head a bit)  
Let's take these two outside to the nice police officers.

A big group of followers walk out from behind the walls and take Persephone and Drew by the arms to lead them upstairs.

PERSEPHONE

OW! Not so hard!

Raider turns to watch them walk out as he places an arm over Nathan's shoulder in a palish way, putting his other hand in the pocket of his jacket.

After they're out of earshot, he says,

RAIDER

That was a wise choice, mister.

Raider pulls his other hand out of the pocket and throws white powder in Nathan's face, stepping away quickly so as not to get any on himself.

Nathan is caught by surprise, with no opportunity to get out. His eyes widen, and he begins to cough and soon goes dizzy and falls to the ground.

RAIDER

I should have mentioned, you don't want to breathe that stuff in. It'll get you really high. It'll wear off in an hour or two, and then you'll come begging for more, won't you, mister?

Nathan lies there on the ground, wide awake, and unable to move.

Meanwhile, about six followers are walking up the stairs with Persephone and Drew in tow. Both of them have a person on either side, holding their arms, and two are following behind.

When they reach the top of the stairs, a familiar face is there. He smiles at Persephone.

SHANE

Hello, Persephone.

As he glances back at Drew who is following behind, his eyes widen, and his jaw drops.

SHANE

He's ... I ...  
(looking to Persephone,  
hushed tone)  
I killed him...

She eyes him.

SHANE

You really are...

She pushes herself right up to him, leaning to whisper in his ear.

PERSEPHONE

(slow and deliberate)

Help us.

Shane stands up against the wall to get out of their way as the two holding Persephone pull her away from him, and the worshippers push Drew and Persephone down the corridor.

As soon as they've passed, Shane runs off down another corridor.

In front, Persephone makes a move to try to pull free of her captors. A short struggle ensues as Drew tries the same thing. However, a tug on Persephone's injured arm hurts her too much to continue, and when Drew sees it, he quickly straightens up.

She turns to look directly at him and shakes her head only slightly.

He nods in return, but it is evident he is uncertain as to her meaning.

Soon, the group is back to pushing their captives forward.

DREW

Why don't the police just come in and get us themselves?

PERSEPHONE

This building is actually registered as a church. They're not allowed to enter without a search warrant or direct invitation, barring a stronghold situation.

Drew seems to accept this explanation and continues in silence.

Only seconds from the main door to the building where the police await, Shane steps out from behind a wall with a gun aimed at them.

SHANE

Down!

Persephone drops, and Drew is quick to follow. The worshippers are too surprised to get down in time, and Shane pelts at least three of them before they can all get out of the way.

EXT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

The POLICE CHIEF is on the radio to headquarters.

POLICE CHIEF

Base, this is Unit 2. We've got shots fired. I repeat, shots fired inside the Atrum Dae Complex. Preparing to go inside. Do you copy?

FEMALE #1

10-4, Unit 2. Sending backup.

INT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

Drew is fast, pulling Persephone to her feet once the bullets have stopped and the two of them make their way to Shane who pushes them aside into the other hallway while maintaining his stance to fire.

As soon as they are safely down the corridor a ways, he follows behind them.

Once down the corridor and safely inside a room with the door locked, Shane looks at Persephone.

SHANE

This won't stop them for long.  
What can I do to help you further?

PERSEPHONE

You can tell me where Raider hid my box.

SHANE

How can you not know? You're...

PERSEPHONE

I'm powerful, but I'm not omniscient, Shane. Now tell me.

SHANE

He hid it in the Endeavor house under the floor.

PERSEPHONE

That...

She closes her eyes in frustration.

PERSEPHONE

Why?

SHANE

He said it would be the last place  
you'd look...

(BEAT)

What do we do about them?

He thumbs at the door.

PERSEPHONE

I have an idea.

EXT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

Additional police cars arrive on site, and a news helicopter hovers not far away.

Police officers are standing at the entrance, preparing to knock in the front door when one of the men on the far side hears a vehicle driving across the lot and turns to see a Range Rover. He puts a hand up to his head to shield his eyes. The vehicle pulls to the edge of the lot and goes out onto the street.

OFFICER #2

Someone's making a run for it.

POLICE CHIEF

Units 26 and 18, go after them.  
I'll have unit 42 join you.

OFFICER #3

Yes, sir.

Officers #2 and #3 get in their vehicle and take off.

As they exit into traffic, Raider walks out the front door to talk with the police. He doesn't look happy.

INT./EXT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

Persephone and Drew walk to a back door of a small shipping area. She opens the door carefully and looks out to see if anyone's nearby.

When she's satisfied, she grabs his arm and they exit the building and head off into the back lot, and make their way over the small wall into a housing area.

DREW

What's the big deal with the Endeavor house?

PERSEPHONE

The police did a drug run there a few weeks ago, and then marked it for demolition, which was scheduled for next week. I guess he was hoping it would get demolished when the place goes down.

DREW

And why wouldn't you have thought of it?

PERSEPHONE

Because, I ordered all my followers never to go there again.

DREW

Does your cult own it?

PERSEPHONE

No. Let's just get there.

During this conversation, the two walk through the yard of the house, out onto the sidewalk, and hurry down the street.

INT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX, RAIDER'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

Nathan is lying on the carpeted floor near Raider's desk, his back to it.

Shane is sitting in a chair, tied up and badly beaten. Three other men stand nearby with bloody fists. Among the decent-sized group of people are several other males and females, including the three we saw previously taking Drew and Persephone out who weren't shot.

Raider is furious.

RAIDER

I will NOT tolerate failure! You think I'm as soft as Persephone was on you, you're sadly mistaken!

He stands beside the window looking out the back, breathing hard.

Everyone is silent, some pretty scared.

Shane spits out a tooth.

SHANE

She is...

As soon as his mouth opens and the first word escapes, the closest man hits him again and the chair falls over on its side. Shane's arm is trapped underneath the back of it and he winces and grimaces in a conflagration of pain and fear. Even a growl escapes his open mouth and gritted teeth.

RAIDER

Thank you, Rick. I don't want him to say another word.

At this, he turns to his followers.

RAIDER

Regardless what you believe, Shane, she is not what she claimed to be. I've known her for a long time. Trust me, she's no goddess. Nor will she ever be.

WORSHIPPER #6

But her consort is still alive after being shot in the heart.

Raider turns to the young woman who spoke.

RAIDER

Blanks. This traitor was working in concert with her when he shot her.

SHANE

I WAS NOT!

Shane receives a kick to the gut by a different guy.

RAIDER

All of you ... listen to me, and listen well. They're heading to the Endeavor house. I want Persephone shot in the head. Dead! Do you understand me? And that bastard consort of hers, Drew... I want him mangled and twisted and brutally beaten before he takes a real bullet through his heart.



He looks at his minions, and they look back at him with uncertainty.

RAIDER  
NOW! NOW NOW NOW! GO!

Other than the three torturers, Shane, and Raider's latest sex doll, the entire group leaves the office.

As the last one is leaving...

RAIDER  
Get him off the floor and out of my sight. Mike, pull the car around and get me a gun.  
(now to himself)  
Persephone and Drew will die today,  
(slamming a fist down on his desk)  
And I'll probably have to do it myself.

WORSHIPPER #7  
What do you want us to do with that man?

She points at Nathan.

RAIDER  
Leave him. He's not going anywhere.

Everyone turns and leaves the room.

Nathan's eyes open, and he has a determined look on his face.

EXT. ENDEAVOR HOUSE - MIDDAY

The Endeavor House is a small home in a run-down neighborhood. Boarded up from the outside, it looks like no one has lived there in years.

The ground around the house is dirt.

A small wrecking crane sits on the front lawn.

INT. ENDEAVOR HOUSE - MIDDAY

Boards are broken and pulled away. A door is opened and we can see Drew moving through the small hole he's created in the boarded-up doorway, Persephone following him.

They walk in, continuing their conversation.

PERSEPHONE

We used this house as a meeting place when I first started the religion.

DREW

What happened? Why'd you give up your group?

PERSEPHONE

One of my members changed religion. I went to visit her, and she showed me the truth.

DREW

Is there such a thing as truth?

PERSEPHONE

You're breathing, right?

DREW

That's not the truth I was talking about...

PERSEPHONE

What other kind of truth is there?

Drew stops, not sure what to say.

DREW

Well, let's see if we can find a place in here where the floorboards have been pulled up, or broken.

They begin to search every room, starting with the kitchen they've just walked into.

Drew begins to check the floorboards near the cabinets. Persephone watches him a second, then walks into the living room.

Inside the living room we see that the place is empty of furniture. Only a couple of pictures hang on the wall, old paintings that look like they might have value.

She searches the floor of the room, trying to pull up carpet in various spots.

Drew soon walks in and helps her.

Next we see them in a small bedroom.

DREW

This is crazy. I think we've checked every square inch of the floors in this house. Do you think he lied?

PERSEPHONE

What about the closets?

Drew looks at her.

DREW

OK. Not every square inch.

Drew walks over to the nearest closet with her and opens the door.

Inside there is a small knothole in the wooden floor. The area around it looks like it's carved out.

Drew bends down and puts his finger in the knothole and pulls up. It comes away fairly easily, and Persephone gently pushes him aside.

She gets into it on her hands and knees and reaches in, pulling out a shoebox with dirt caked on the bottom. It looks warn.

From our vantage point we can see her open it and look through it.

DREW

Is everything in it?

She puts the lid back on and stands up, dusting the dirt off the bottom and sides.

DREW

Persephone...

At this moment, we HEAR cars pulling up outside. Persephone and Drew both turn their heads.

Drew quickly runs over to a window and looks out.

DREW

It's the old gang from the complex.  
(turning to Persephone)  
It doesn't look like they're here to chat...

PERSEPHONE

It doesn't matter anymore, Drew.

Drew walks back to her.

We hear the sound of machinery starting up.

DREW  
What's the matter?

PERSEPHONE  
I can end this. I can stop this  
whole thing right here, right now.

DREW  
Persephone, what's in that box?

Suddenly, a LOUD "CRASH" is heard from the front of the house.

Drew and Persephone both run to the living room to see a large hole in the front of the house, and the wrecking ball is being swung back around for another hit.

They both run for the back door, only to be met by three worshippers with guns in hand.

The wrecking ball hits the front of the house a second time ... "CRAAASSSHHH!"

They stop, and Drew pushes Persephone into the small hallway, and they run for one of the two bedrooms.

Drew closes the other bedroom door, and then follows Persephone into the first room, closing and locking the door.

They rush to the window, and Drew opens it and tries to push the boards off.

He fails, and turns to look at her.

She has a strange look on her face ... one we've never seen before.

PERSEPHONE  
(whispering)  
I told you I can stop this.

DREW  
(quietly)  
How?

She opens the box. From our angle, we can't see what's inside, but it is evident he does. He looks puzzled.

DREW  
What is that?

She looks up into his eyes, and responds calmly

PERSEPHONE

Salvation...

(BEAT)

After you inject me, you're not  
going to want to be near me.

A wiggling of the lock on the door lets them know that the others are coming.

WORSHIPPER #5

Open the door, you two.

Now from outside in the hallway, we see the three from the back door, and others are standing nearby.

WORSHIPPER #5

There's no escape.

We HEAR the door unlock, and there before them is Persephone, and boy is she mad. Her eyes seem to flame with some kind of bright smoke.

PERSEPHONE

I don't need escape. Did you  
really think you could kill me?

She waves a hand at Worshipper #5, and he flies up against the door of the other room knocking it open. He falls to the ground, the gun falling from his grasp as he's knocked unconscious.

The other two nearby look surprised ... then scared.

She turns to them with a fury no one could have imagined from this petite little woman.

She waves another hand at them and they, too, fall backward a few feet, landing on their backs.

The others standing behind them at the end of the hallway turn and run out the door.

One of them is able to stand back up and backs away as she approaches them. The other one lies there on his back, scared and shaking.

WORSHIPPER #8

Don't kill me, Matron! Please.

She stops and looks down at him.

PERSEPHONE

Kill you...? Why in hell wouldn't  
I want to do that? Are you more  
useful to me alive?

WORSHIPPER #8

(swallowing hard)  
Ye... Yes, ma'am.

EXT. ENDEAVOR HOUSE - MIDDAY

Another car pulls up. Mike, another Worshipper, and Raider step out; Raider from the driver's seat with a large gun in hand. He looks like he's ready to kill.

As he's walking up to the house, the Worshippers who ran out approach him, as if running for their lives.

WORSHIPPER #9

She took the serum.

RAIDER

(with a smile)  
I figured as much.

He reaches into a pocket of his pants and pulls out a syringe as he hands his gun to Mike, who already has a similar gun in the other hand.

Raider pulls the protective sheathe from the needle and stabs his forearm with it.

Everyone is silent as they watch him push the injector down, and the liquid slowly enter his body.

He breathes in hard, and then lets it out about as quick. When the syringe is empty he pulls it out of his arm. Then he bows his head, and suddenly falls to the ground.

MIKE

Are you alright, sir?

He hands a gun to one of the others nearby and reaches down to help him up. Raider accepts the assistance, and stands back up.

As Mike takes the gun back and hands it toward Raider, Raider's head is bowed, and soon we can see a similar bright smoke coming from his eyes ... a different color than Persephone's. He doesn't accept the gun.

MIKE

Sir...?

Raider lifts his head, and an evil smile crosses his face.

RAIDER

Fine!

He looks like he's breaking out of a straight-jacket and suddenly, everyone around him is knocked back onto the ground.

RAIDER

(an evil voice like  
Persephone's)

This ends ... here ... now!

They watch him as he walks off to the front door of the house, rips the wooden planks from what remains of the door, and he enters, undeterred.

Mike and the others begin standing up.

WORSHIPPER #10

This is out of control.

MIKE

I agree...

INT. ENDEAVOR HOUSE - MIDDAY

Inside, Raider enters. Persephone looks over. She is calm ... focused.

PERSEPHONE

Hello, love. Did you have a good  
time without me?

RAIDER

Yes. It just wasn't long enough.

He throws his arms her direction, and her body seems to take the brunt of an attack, but she looks completely undaunted by it. In fact, she laughs his attack off.

PERSEPHONE

Has it been that long? Have you  
forgotten?

As this conversation is taking place, Drew is walking down the hallway toward Persephone who stands in the walkway from the kitchen to the living room.

She turns to him, an odd smirk on her face.

As soon as she does, though, Raider takes the opportunity and runs to her, tackling her.

Now, her voice has switched into her evil tone again.

PERSEPHONE

Get off me!

She throws him off, and he lands in the living room on some rubble.

Both of them stand up, the fires in their eyes burning brighter, stronger than before.

RAIDER

Come on, Persephone ... you know you can't beat me. I taught you everything you know.

PERSEPHONE

But I learned too well, Raider. Father would have been pleased. Unfortunately, you killed him.

RAIDER

It was my pleasure.

She thrusts her hands toward him in anger, and he puts his hands up, holding back the brunt of the attack, but he looks obviously caught off guard.

He pushes, and the forces between them burn, being pushed back toward Persephone.

Suddenly, the forces explode between them knocking them both back.

Drew runs over to Persephone, who is lying next to the back wall of the kitchen.

She gets up and pushes him aside.

PERSEPHONE

(regular voice)

You don't want to touch me right now...

Drew turns as he hears sounds of footsteps coming into the kitchen. They both see Raider coming.

PERSEPHONE

Get out of here.

(evil voice)

NOW!



Raider throws up his arms at her again. Somehow, she manages to protect herself and Drew, while Drew makes his escape out the back door, but it is evident it takes a lot out of her.

She can't hold it for long, and finally she drops to the floor.

Raider stops and walks to her.

RAIDER

You have no idea how long I've waited, Persephone.

PERSEPHONE

Not very long, Raider. You were only restored to life a few months before me...

RAIDER

And as soon as I was able, I should have destroyed you. Unfortunately, father gave you the formula. He said he didn't trust me.

PERSEPHONE

I can't imagine why not.

While this conversation is going on, we watch Persephone's face, mustering every ounce of strength she has remaining within her.

PERSEPHONE

So, you waited until I made the formula, and then made a bid for power...

RAIDER

Now you're getting it.

PERSEPHONE

You copied the serum.

RAIDER

It wasn't hard, but what works for you wouldn't work for me. My DNA wouldn't use it. It had to be altered for my body.

PERSEPHONE

Then why did you leave mine here for me.

RAIDER

Because, I wanted this opportunity, sister. I wanted to show you just how powerless you really were. Besides, we both knew this day would come eventually.

PERSEPHONE

And, so, now you're going to kill me? Who's to say someone won't redo father's work?

RAIDER

Oh, I've seen to that. I destroyed his work when I destroyed his laboratory and killed him. I got rid of your DNA. Destroyed all the evidence.

PERSEPHONE

And yours...?

RAIDER

Mine is safely stored. I can recreate myself if I have to.

PERSEPHONE

If you want to.

RAIDER

Oh, I don't want to. At least, not yet. A bunch of me running around trying to take myself out?

(laughs)

That would be interesting...

(stops laughing)

But I'm not stupid.

PERSEPHONE

No, you're just too damn stubborn.

She thrusts her arms upward at him and he goes into the air about five feet and lands hard on the kitchen floor, his butt and back going through the floor.

He groans for a moment.

As he begins to pull himself up,

RAIDER

Nice shot, sis.

(standing up)

Now it's my turn.

Raider walks over to her and lifts her to her feet. Then he throws a punch to her injured shoulder.

She winces in agony.

Outside, Drew is standing, listening, and at an angle where he can see through the back door both Persephone and Raider, as the latter pummels the former in the stomach hard. Her body hits the back wall, and the wall gives way. Half of her body falls outside, the other half stays inside, and Raider knocks the back door down.

He looks over at Drew.

RAIDER

Hanging out? You know you're next, right?

Drew is furious. He runs at Raider and tries to tackle him only to be propelled away into the dirt on his back.

RAIDER

Oh, please. Don't even try. You can't do anything to hurt me.

MIKE (O.C.)

But maybe we can.

We now see all of the Worshippers/Followers who have been present making a half circle around the back yard, all of them looking at Raider.

Raider looks around at them.

RAIDER

Seriously...? You all think you can kill me?

WORSHIPPER #7

It shouldn't be too hard. We've got guns...

Everyone of them aim their weapons directly at Raider and fire. He throws up his arms and the bullets drop to the ground before they hit him.

RAIDER

You'll have to try harder than that.

They do. MULTIPLE SHOTS RING OUT through the neighborhood, ECHOING LOUD.

While Raider manages to stop most of them, a few make it through, if slowed down a bit, and hit his body, but bounce off.

He laughs again.

RAIDER

It'll take a lot more than that...

From behind, Nathan steps into the back doorway, aims a gun directly at Raider's back and fires.

Raider's eyes widen. He looks down at the hole in his chest where his heart is, blood rushing out. He turns to see Nathan staring him down.

NATHAN

Just for the record, I'm not coming back to you for anything.

Nathan aims the gun squarely between Raider's eyes and pulls the trigger once more.

Raider falls to the ground dead.

Mike walks over to Drew and offers a hand, helping him to his feet.

Drew nods, but runs over to Persephone who lies still and quiet.

He lifts her head and back up onto his knees.

DREW

Perse ... are you alright?

(BEAT)

Please, talk to me.

There is no movement. He looks worried.

The rest of the people walk closer.

DREW

Can we take her to a hospital, now?

MIKE

No. I'm sorry. She has always made it clear she can't go there. They won't treat her.

DREW

Why not?

MIKE

Don't know. She never would tell me.

Drew looks down at the young woman in his arms.

DREW

There's gotta be something we can do...

Slowly - deliberately - Persephone raises an arm up and touches Drew's face with her hand. Her voice is strained as she speaks.

PERSEPHONE

There is...

DREW

What?

PERSEPHONE

Get that box...

Drew looks at Nathan.

DREW

The box is in the front bedroom.

Nathan hurries off.

PERSEPHONE

Do you like me?

DREW

Yes. Of course.

PERSEPHONE

Do you want me?

Drew looks surprised for a second ... maybe embarrassed.

PERSEPHONE

I asked you a question.

Drew takes a deep breath.

DREW

I don't want you to die. I like ... I like being with you. You make me feel ... better.

PERSEPHONE

Oh, please, Drew. I'm not going to die. I'm just injured.

(MORE)

PERSEPHONE (cont'd)

(BEAT)

Do you like me as I am? Be honest.

At this, Nathan walks up and sets the box down next to Drew.

DREW

Well, I wish you'd smile once in a while, but I like you just the way you are, yes.

PERSEPHONE

Then give me the other injection.

Drew reaches down, picks up the other syringe, and pulls the protective sheathe off the needle.

He reaches over to her arm and sticks it in, pushing the injector down until it's all in her body.

After a few moments, the faint glow of the smoke from her eyes dies down.

PERSEPHONE

Now, get me somewhere where I can rest. I need to recover.

(BEAT)

Oh, and Drew...?

DREW

Yes...?

PERSEPHONE

Don't ever try to kill yourself again. Got it?

Drew gives a short laugh.

She smiles at him - for the first time.

We HEAR POLICE SIRENS in the distance, slowly getting closer.

Mike looks at Worshipper #10 and tosses him a set of keys.

MIKE

Get these three somewhere safe. The rest of us will stay and play cleanup with the police.

(BEAT)

It looks like we've got a lot of explaining to do...

INT. TRENT'S HOUSE - DAY

Trent and Nathan stand just inside the front door chatting.

NATHAN

I'm sorry I had to hit you.

TRENT

Hey, you know me... I always say  
"let bygones be bygones..."

(BEAT)

By the way, I'm really sorry to  
hear what happened to Shawna. Are  
you alright?

NATHAN

Yeah. Yeah. I'll be fine...  
Though I must admit, I miss her.

TRENT

No doubt, my friend. Hey, if you  
ever need anything - a shoulder to  
cry on, an ear to listen - you know  
how to get a hold of me.

NATHAN

I'll keep that in mind. Thanks.

The two men shake hands as Drew and Persephone walk out from the hallway, both smiling. Persephone now has a nice set of clothes that really make her look incredible. Drew is dressed in a suit.

NATHAN

You two ready?

PERSEPHONE

Yes. Thanks, Trent, for  
everything.

She holds out a hand. He takes it, just as before, and kisses the back of it.

TRENT

It was my pleasure, goddess of the  
underworld.

DREW

She's not a goddess anymore. She's  
turned over a new leaf.

PERSEPHONE  
 (looking over at him)  
 Drew, I was never the goddess of  
 the underworld.

DREW  
 Not even in your previous life?

PERSEPHONE  
 Nope.

NATHAN  
 Alright. Now that we've got that  
 straightened out, can we go?

They both nod, and the three of them walk out the front door  
 and out to Nathan's SUV, saying goodbye to Trent as they go.

EXT. ATRUM DAE COMPLEX - DAY

Many chairs sit under the tin roof of the far side of the  
 complex, and there are many people to fill them, while Drew  
 and Persephone stand in front of the minister as he  
 finishes...

MINISTER  
 Then, by the power vested in me, I  
 now pronounce you husband and wife.  
 Drew, you may kiss the bride.

Drew pulls the veil from over her face and they kiss.

The crowd whoops and whistles.

Then the two turn toward the crowd as the musician prepares  
 to play.

MINISTER  
 Ladies and Gentlemen, I am proud to  
 present to you Mr. and Mrs. Drew  
 Panton.

The crowd cheers as Drew and Persephone walk down the aisle  
 to the music, passing Nathan who looks up at them and smiles,  
 high-fiving Drew as the couple goes by.

As the cheers die down, Persephone leans over to Drew.

PERSEPHONE  
 Feeling depressed?

Drew laughs with a glance to her.



DREW  
Of course not.

PERSEPHONE  
Good. Wait till I tell you about  
my other business...

His eyes go wide and he looks over at her. He stops, and her  
with him.

DREW  
What other business...?

She just looks up at him with a grin.

...THE END...