

Love Across Hades
an original screenplay by
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FADE IN:

INT. RESEARCH LAB - EVENING

JOEL CHRISTENSON, mid-thirties, Phd Researcher checks numbers on lab equipment. He is so academic you expect corduroy. The type of guy you know is smarter than you before he speaks. He is diligent, checks each number twice. Enters the numbers in his computer, waits for results.

He shows a tiny strain of disappointment when the results are not what he wants. He shrugs and starts over again.

He is unshaven, his lab coat is a mess of tiny blood stains. There are a dozen empty cups of coffee laying around.

There is a knock on the door. He does not hear or want to answer.

The door opens. REBECCA PIRLO MD, hematologist, 10 years older than Joel but the gym hours paid off, you expect her to teach yoga class.

PIRLO

Jeez Joel, have you gone home this week?

JOEL

Maybe yesterday.

PIRLO

No Joel, you have not left this lab in four days. Go home, the problem will be here tomorrow, and next week.

JOEL

Close. Too damn close. Almost there.

PIRLO

What is driving you? There is no deadline, no investor breathing down our necks.

JOEL

Maybe someone out there needs this now. A month later might be too late.

Pirlo walks over stokes his hair. Joel does not respond.

PIRLO

Tired men lose interest in the good things around them. Go home or I will get the Med team to send you home.

JOEL

Ok, ten minutes, my last baseline is almost done.

INT. CONDO LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Two tables filled with lab equipment that take up half the living room space. A centrifuge spins with vials of blood.

A double beep from one of the test equipment. Joel looks at the number and gives himself a high five.

His clothes, books, equipment are random piles all over the room.

His watch beeps. He takes a second or two then looks at it. Runs off to the bedroom in a hurry.

JOEL

Shit!

INT. CONDO BATHROOM - NIGHT

Joel dresses hurriedly. He checks his hair, every strand is in place. He picks up a shaver, puts it down.

JOEL

Nah!

INT. CONDO LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Joel walks over to the lab equipment, takes two vials of blood and puts them in the fridge. He takes one vial and puts it in his jacket pocket. On the way out he stops at the closet, rummages through clothing and picks up a woman's coat. He walks out the front door humming.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Joel walks briskly through the graveyard, stops and leans on a headstone. He talks to himself.

JOEL

So encapsulate the cell in the membrane with the enzymes then...

A ghostly figure rises silently out of a grave behind him.

The ghost slides over to Joel and envelops him and then backs off. He takes the vial of blood out his pocket and pushes his hand into the ghost.

The ghost takes form as a young woman. They embrace. The ghost CHRISTINE steps back. Christine looks young, pale as the leprechaun's niece with long red hair.

CHRISTINE
You are late sweetness!

JOEL
Nah! You can't even tell time.

CHRISTINE
True, but I know when you are not here. Been busy Mr Man?

JOEL
Little bit.

Joel takes her face in his hands and kisses her on the forehead.

CHRISTINE
Why do you still meet me here? I like surprising you.

JOEL
Romantic, like the first time every time.

Joel whips the coat around and puts it on Christine.

CHRISTINE
Sneaking me in your bedroom again?

JOEL
We have been through this, you have to blend in.

Joel takes her arm, Christine hangs on to his neck as they walk out the grave yard.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Joel sits at the table typing on his laptop.

JOEL
There done! See, told you five minutes. No sharing. Are you happy now?

CHRISTINE
I am happy. When I am here, you are just mine.

Christine looks through clothing the closet.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
You bought me granny clothes again? I am still a young woman, old man. It is you becoming grandpa.

JOEL

Grandpa? You are older than me.
Wait till the wrinkles start.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY.

A fourteen year old Joel stands behind a fence watching the softball team. He is staring at the pitcher Christine. Christine is older, a senior. The catcher points at Joel.

CATCHER

Hey Christine, your little fan is here again. True love is in the air.

Christine turns to Joel, smiles, waves. Joel smiles, looks at the ground.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

CHRISTINE

Be quiet, you have every man's dreams,
a girl friend that does not age,
does not get fat.

JOEL

Sweet! Then you can watch me eat again?

CHRISTINE

Are you guilty of something?

JOEL

Damn, I forgot your oranges!

CHRISTINE

The one thing Mr Man, the one thing that I can taste. You forgot!

Joel walks over and kisses her deeply.

JOEL

Start counting, be back before you get to five hundred.

CHRISTINE

Oooh that was nice!

JOEL

And you can pretend you don't look through my things.

CHRISTINE

I do.

(MORE)

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

But you don't even try to cheat.
Geez gimme something to get pissed
about.

Joel touches her cheek and walks out the door.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Joel hurries back with a bag of fruit and batteries. TWO THUGS come out the shadows and follow. He does not notice. They come up quickly and push him against the wall next to a garbage container.

THUG1

Give it, now!

JOEL

Ok,Ok guy...hand ..pocket...wallet..Ok

THUG1 looks through Joel's wallet.

THUG1

That is all dude, twenty four dollars!

THUG2

Got a secret pocket bitch?

JOEL

No pockets, day before payday man.

THUG1

You must live close, whatcha got in
your house?

JOEL

Can't do that man, take the money,
the cards, anything else.

THUG2 hits Joel in the face.

THUG2

Nah, we go to your house, we take
your shit.

JOEL

No! Can't do that.

The two men hit Joel and kick him until he is on the ground.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Christine picks Joel's clothes off the furniture. She stops, twists her head, drops the clothing.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The men walk off leaving Joel on the ground. One carries the bag of fruit. A hand reaches out to touch Joel on the head. The men turn, show no fear, they laugh.

THUG1

So what are you going to do girl?

CHRISTINE

I am not that kind of girl sailor.

The two men turn and walk away. The sound of metal dragging on the pavement makes them turn around again.

Their expressions turn to abject fear. They turn to run, but die in a blur of bodies being dissected quickly and violently. Their bodies are in small pieces, with their heads laying on the ground. THUG2 eyes blink slowly and close.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Joel lies flat on the couch. Christine puts an ice pack on his head. The sounds of sirens get louder and louder. Joel tries to lift his head.

CHRISTINE

Easy sugar, You should sleep! You got a bumpy head.

JOEL

Whoa, what the hell happened?

CHRISTINE

You stumbled in, were you in a fight?

JOEL

Geez, that hurt. I was robbed.

CHRISTINE

You always say don't fight, give them the money.

JOEL

I did. They wanted to me to bring them here, I said no.

Christine leans forward and kisses him on the lips.

CHRISTINE

Sir Galahad. Were you protecting my honor?

JOEL
Avoiding complications.

CHRISTINE
Hear those sirens? I am sure the
cops are picking up the pieces.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The police cordon keeps the crowd at the end of the street. There are ambulances, police cars and many uniformed police. A black detective comes out an unmarked car.

He looks like a man who buys his clothes without a woman's input. He is in a hurry, and looking annoyed. He is Sergeant ANDREW NEX. He approaches a uniformed policeman CALUM MCKAY. McKay looks like he should be playing rugby or throwing drunks out of pubs.

NEX
Damn, McKay, I was off in five
minutes. You did this on purpose,
must be the Irish in you.

MCKAY
McKay, Highlands, Scottish, McKay.
Damn, complaining like you have a
wife waiting.

NEX
Yea and where is your Missus? What
we got?

MCKAY
Sliced and diced. You could stir
fry those citizens.

NEX
Gangs?

McKay holds out a small plastic bag.

MCKAY
Nah. Better take a barf bag. These
boys died hard.

NEX
Just what I need to see before going
to bed. Goddamn Mac, five minutes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Body parts are strewn down the street and some into the alley. Nex stands to the side. He looks away from the mayhem of body parts, looking around.

NEX

This is all forensics Mac. Nothing here, gotta sift through this like finding weevils in the flour.

McKay leaves the forensic teams and gives Nex an item. Nex takes it and drops it quickly. McKay laughs.

MCKAY

Got a thumb. We may get an ID.

NEX

You notice something?

MCKAY

Just shish kebab.

NEX

There are no blood splatter patterns.

The Forensic TEAM LEADER looks around. Looks down at the body parts at his feet.

TEAM LEADER

Unofficially something very sharp and very hot. Officially I don't know. Whatever it was, it was damn quick.

Nex turns to look up and down the street.

NEX

Walk with me McKay. Take that side of the street.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Christine peels an orange in the kitchen. Joel sprawls on the couch. He stands up, but quickly sits down again.

CHRISTINE

Better take it easy.

JOEL

Orange?

CHRISTINE

You were asleep.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nex and McKay look into each shop of either side of the street checking for cameras. Nex steps into a Deli. McKay stops, looks up, sees an open window. McKay enters the building.

INT. CABANA DELI - NIGHT

Nex stands at the door of a small office at the back of the Deli looking at video of the small screen. The Deli OWNER attends to customers.

NEX

How come the time is ZERO ZERO?

OWNER

Time is broken, camera works though.
I never fixed it.

NEX

(under his breath)
Another damn idiot.
(Louder)
Hey, come back here!

The Owner locks the door, puts a "back in five minutes" sign on the door.

NEX (CONT'D)

What time is this? And who are these people?

OWNER

About 8:30. I know, the game ended.
Just strangers buying. That
guy, I know, local.

Nex backs up the video a minute, starts again.

OWNER (CONT'D)

Comes in often, nice guy, bought
batteries and fruit.

NEX

What fruit?

OWNER

Oranges. He asked me how I was. I
see him every week, Just being
friendly.

NEX

So where does he live?

OWNER

I don't know. This man he walks in,
he says hello, he buys, he asks how
are you. I say Ok, he walks out.

NEX

He pays cash?

OWNER

Cash, always. Always alone though.
He walks in, he walks out, never a
car.

NEX

Thanks! You erase this I will give
you a ticket for something, anything.

INT. APT BUILDING - NIGHT

McKay walks to the last door and knocks softly. No answer.
He gives the police knock, hard four times. The door opens,
a young woman CLARE with dreadlocks in blonde hair.

CLARE

What? Why?

MCKAY

Not to worry lady. I just got a
couple questions.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Clare, who is at the door?

CLARE

Police!

There is a flurry of activity behind the door. McKay smiles
at the young lady.

MCKAY

Tell your buddies, I am not interested
in your stuff or whatever they are
smoking in there.

CLARE

No?

MCKAY

No, just want to know if you saw
anything outside.

CLARE

No, just the sirens and the police.

MCKAY

Can I come in? Can I look out the
window?

Clare looks back into the house and then opens the door.

INT. CLARE'S APT - NIGHT

McKay walks in. He lets his hand slide carelessly to his holster, all the while smiling.

MCKAY

Good night gentlemen. Anyone look out the window before the sirens started?

MCKAY (CONT'D)

Nothing? No one?

CLARE

What happened?

MCKAY

Two people dead across the street. You had to see something.

McKay walks over to the window and looks out.

MCKAY (CONT'D)

You are the only people with a view. Nothing?

The guys shake their heads and mumble.

MCKAY (CONT'D)

Ok then. Thanks for helping.

McKay gets to the door, turns and points.

MCKAY (CONT'D)

Your closet is smoking.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Christine holds an ice pack to Joel's head.

JOEL

You are enjoying this a little too much.

CHRISTINE

Geez Mister Man, you have taken care of me for fifteen years. I like this.

Joel pushes her off gently and walks to the fridge. He peers in, pulls out a yogurt. He turn around and Christine is not there. He shows no reaction, walks to the couch put his feet up, opens the yogurt, takes a spoon full, swallows, extends his arms, and Christine appears in his arms.

JOEL

You have enough of my blood for three days.

CHRISTINE

If you give me too much, you give up the ghost my Joel. Hey laugh, that was funny.

JOEL

It even hurts to laugh. Shhh!

CHRISTINE

Ok, No more. Wanna play a game?

JOEL

No, cuz you cheat at everything. I need to be quiet for a while.

CHRISTINE

Okay. In the morning I can go shopping like Mrs Grandma.

JOEL

That will bore you to death.

They both laugh at this. Joel winces as he laughs.

JOEL (CONT'D)

You are getting careless. Don't want anything to happen to you.

CHRISTINE

Here? To me? Please JoJo, there are demons that are scared of me.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The forensics team are packing up equipment.

NEX

We'll leave it to the lab boys. We are just pissing in the wind until we ID the customer.

MCKAY

We can push on those folks upstairs. They saw something.

NEX

Don't push Mac. Step back sometime. People will spill, just give them the chance.

MCKAY
Hey, there she is.

Clare walks over to the two officers.

MCKAY (CONT'D)
Hey, tell me you saw something, come on. Detective this is Clare, Upstairs.

CLARE
I saw something, maybe nothing.

McKay turns to Nex, expecting a question. Nex nods continue.

MCKAY
Everything little thing is something. You don't want to meet this person next week, Ok.

CLARE
Maybe it was something.

INT. CLARE'S'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Clare clears her dishwasher. Behind her, out her window two guys hitting another man. The two men leave.

Clare turns to look out the window, Joel sits on the pavement his back against the building.

Clare reaches up to put two dishes away turns and sees a woman reaching out to the man.

She reaches down to pick up two glasses out the dishwasher, looks up and both the man and the woman are gone.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

CLARE
Well, it was quick, very quick. I thought she was giving a homeless guy change. Then they were gone.

MCKAY
Ok, Clare, Tell you what, if I need anything, will you help?

Clare nods her head and walks away. Nex looks up at Clare's window. There are two people looking out.

NEX
She likes you. She hardly saw me. She either wants to be rescued or is blowing smoke up your kilt.

MCKAY
She looks scared.

Clare steps up on the pavement on the other side of the street, when Nex calls to her.

NEX
Hey Clare.

When Clare gets back, Nex turns on the charm.

NEX (CONT'D)
One more thing, we need you to look at a tape for us. Can you?

INT. DELI - NIGHT

Nex and Clare are pinched in the small room. McKay stands outside. Nex fast forwards the video until he gets to Joel.

NEX
Is this the guy sitting on the street?

CLARE
I know that guy. But he is not homeless. He lives around here though.

MCKAY
Are you sure?

CLARE
I was couple dollars short in the Deli once and he just paid for me and said bye.

NEX
Ever see him with a girl?

CLARE
Once he drove by with a pretty girl going someplace fancy.

NEX
Clare, you have been the most help I have had all month. This wonderful gentleman is going to walk you home. Call us if you remember something, anything.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nex looks up at Clare's window again. The two faces withdraw. Nex steps into the middle of the street and waits for McKay to get back. They walk back to the crime scene.

NEX

Listen and learn model officer. You just became Clare's knight in shining armor.

MCKAY

What?

NEX

Bet you twenty bucks her name is on the lease and her brother or ex is living with her doing petty shit.

MCKAY

Two guys smoking dope.

NEX

Sweet Clare wants the big Scotsman to lay the smack down. Those big eyes said "help me."

MCKAY

Are you trying to piss me off?

NEX

Yes, it gets your attention. You Mr Shiny White Smile and blue uniform will let those two fucks know not to fuck with Clare.

MCKAY

She told us all she knew.

NEX

No, she did not. Every time you see her she will remember some more. You, fish, hook.

MCKAY

I can do that.

NEX

Yes you can. Now to the mystery man. He is local, he has a car but walks to work, hot babe. So he was down but....

MCKAY

Not sitting. Knocked down.

NEX

The girl came by, saw something, and took off like the 7PM train. Right?

MCKAY

So she saw the killer.

NEX

You just one brain cell short of
Detective Mac. Question is?

MCKAY

How come she was not killed?

NEX

No, question is, man walks out a
Deli with groceries, gets knocked
down, woman goes to help, they run.
Where the hell are the goddamned
groceries?

MCKAY

Victim took them?

NEX

Jesus Christ Mac. Someone was
filleting two dipsticks fifteen feet
away, you think he is picking up his
Florida fresh squeezed off the
sidewalk before he runs?

MCKAY

Only one person cool enough to pick
up the oranges and walk off with
them. The murderer!

NEX

Bitching! You are getting smarter
just hanging around me.

EXT. UNDERWORLD DESOLATION ALTAR

A stone altar sits in the middle of a dark desolate landscape. Two very large figures are standing behind the altar. They are the Ancient Ones, THE FALLEN, cast off from life above. RUMAN is the recorder of men's deeds, the Lord of Demons. OURIEL punishes the wicked.

Hundreds of dead are lined up before the altar. Two formless figures appear in great agony.

RUMAN

These are empty vessels. Their souls were shredded before they stepped over.

OURIEL

Ruman, why allow this thing to step back and forth across the void when we are forbidden?

RUMAN

Ouriel, even this has a purpose. We must know why.

Ouriel walks to the end of the altar and roars in anger.

OURIEL

I can end it all now.

RUMAN

Do not gamble another thousand years of banishment for one so insignificant.

Ouriel kicks the two formless blobs off the altar where they are trampled underfoot by the hordes of the dead.

INT. LAB - NEXT DAY

Joel waits impatiently for the results of his research simulation on his computer. Pirlo walks in.

PIRLO

See the magic of a good night's sleep.

Joel turns to answer her.

JOEL

Final stage of this test. Last in the series. I don't want to repeat it.

PIRLO

Whoa! We sent you home to sleep.
What happened to you sugar?

JOEL

Got robbed! Got hit.

PIRLO

Police?

JOEL

No need, never saw them, got clobbered
from behind.

PIRLO

Let me look at that.

JOEL

No need, nothing broken.

PIRLO

You remember Joel, that I am a real
Doctor right? I can take care of
you.

Pirlo takes Joel's head in her hands.

PIRLO (CONT'D)

Tell me where it hurts.

Pirlo checks Joel's head and eyes.

PIRLO (CONT'D)

Did you black out? Do you have any
memory loss.

JOEL

No and no.

PIRLO

Good sign! But you are going
upstairs.

JOEL

No need, I have to finish here.

Pirlo brushes her hand along Joel's temple. Joel takes her
hand away.

PIRLO

You scientist, me Doctor. Medical
institute, Ok. Upstairs, I will call.

JOEL

All right, If I have to repeat this
it will cost us three weeks.

PIRLO

Upstairs, take the test, you have a
head injury Joel.

Joel walks over and resets his instrumentation, punches some
instructions into his computer and walks to the door. He
holds the door open. Pirlo is on the phone.

PIRLO (CONT'D)

Olivier, hi, One of our team is on
the way. Head trauma. He is the
type to ignore symptoms so don't
believe a word he says.

JOEL

Hey! Not true. Who do I see?

PIRLO

Olivier, French, remember?

INT. MEDICAL TEST ROOM - DAY

Joel steps out a full body scanner and starts dressing. Dr
Olivier peers at the results sliding them up and down a large
screen.

JOEL

You look concerned.

DR. OLIVIER

If I had bad news I would look like
my mother-in-law.

Joel walks over, stands behind Doctor Olivier.

JOEL

Whoa, looks like a Picasso!

DR. OLIVIER

You want the medical explanation or
the French description?

JOEL

French please!

DR. OLIVIER

No fractures. See this area, slight
increase in temperature, your brain
is responding to trauma, healing
itself. Give it time.

JOEL
Subdural Hematoma?

DR. OLIVIER
No, you are lucky. Go home, no jogging, watch movies, eat too much, get a massage, one glass of wine, no painkillers. Got that?

JOEL
No painkillers, not even the good stuff?

DR. OLIVIER
I want to know what hurts and where it hurts. Relax, three days.

JOEL
How about two?

DR. OLIVIER
Listen you, blood guy, I am the head guy right. What is it with you and this work, work, work? Go home, be a lazy ass.

INT. LAB - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Joel grabs a metal padded case and stacks several vials of blood. He checks the lab computer.

JOEL
Shit!

Joel types quickly, brings up the cameras that records the experiments and rewinds to the time he left the lab.

BEGIN SCREEN VIEW

Pirlo looks at his computer, reviewing his last experiment. She types some more, takes a flash drive out her pocket, and copies data of his computer, sticks his report in her lab coat and leaves.

Joel checks the security access and views the logs of failed attempts from Pirlo.

END SCREEN VIEW

INT. CONDO - AFTERNOON

Joel sits at the kitchen table, cleaning a piece of equipment.
Christine sits at the window looking out.

CHRISTINE

I used to miss these lazy days.

JOEL

Not anymore?

CHRISTINE

Got busy. So tell me what are you
doing?

JOEL

Just making sure you can dance in
the sunshine again.

CHRISTINE

Frankenstein's monster did not end
well.

Joel does his Frankenstein monster walk.

JOEL

Victoor!

CHRISTINE

You won't be here forever, you know
that.

Joel walks over and sits by the window. Christine relaxes
and lays back against him.

JOEL

I promise to keep you happy and in
oranges for many years yet.

CHRISTINE

You are trying to keep me here. I
am trying to get you prepared.

JOEL

Just think, it could be another forty
years. I will be old and creaking
and no toothus.

CHRISTINE

Geez Joel, there is no old or young,
Just being and purpose. You are my
purpose. You are my reason.

JOEL

Those without reason?

CHRISTINE

They pass on to the great recycling plant. The light, the light, I see the light!

They laugh at this easily.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Still dreaming?

EXT. UNDERWORLD - NIGHT

DREAM SEQUENCE

Joel stands lost in a desolate place. He turns around. A large dark figure approaches him. He is not afraid. The figure turns away, and Joel follows. Smaller dark figures are pushed aside as the dark figure passes. Joel follows until the figure turns and points the way for Joel to go.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

CHRISTINE

Next time just say hello to your bodyguard. Don't be afraid to face your dreams.

The doorbell rings. Joel shrugs, walks to the door, opens it. It is Detective Nex.

INT. LAB - AFTERNOON

Pirlo and the Executive Director of the company are in the lab. She has two pages of printed material in her hand.

PIRLO

I am locked out of the system why?
I can't get in to the control computer.

DIRECTOR

Your conduct is bordering on the unethical Dr Pirlo. This is not how breakthroughs are reported.

PIRLO

I am telling you, he has it, he has done it, weeks or months ago, and never reported it.

The Director takes the pages, scans through them quickly,

DIRECTOR

Stable results, promising. First thing when he returns I will invite our researcher for a progress report. Don't mention this.

PIRLO

Why would he keep it quiet? This is recognition, money, fame. Why?

DIRECTOR

We will find out it good time. Thanks for the update. Ethics Dr Pirlo, ethics.

INT. CONDO - AFTERNOON

Joel invites Nex in and offers a seat. Nex nods no. Nex shows his badge to Christine across the room.

NEX

Detective Nex.

CHRISTINE

I can see it.

NEX

I appreciate the invite inside. Most people talk across the doorway.

JOEL

So what can I do for you, Detective Nex?

NEX

There was a murder, and robbery two blocks away. Were you robbed?

Joel points to his swollen head.

NEX (CONT'D)

Oh bet that hurt.

JOEL

Not much!

CHRISTINE

Yes, much.

NEX

You should have gone to the hospital, have someone look at that.

CHRISTINE

Smooth Nex, smooth.

NEX

Caught that eh?

JOEL

I did, full scan, nothing broken, big bump. A real doctor with lots of letters after his name said stay home.

NEX

So what happened?

JOEL

Simple, I got mugged. Two guys, I gave them the money. They got pissed I only had \$20, stomped on me a bit. I went down.

NEX

What happened after you were robbed.

JOEL

I don't have a clue.

NEX

Well those two men died on the scene within minutes of knocking you down. You had to hear something?

JOEL

Sorry to do the Sgt Schutlz on you, but I saw nothing, heard nothing.

NEX

Those men are now in bite sized pieces. There must be blood on you. Was there?

JOEL

I have blood on my clothes all the time, every day.

NEX

Tell me why.

JOEL

Look around.

NEX

Explain it to me. I don't get it.

JOEL

I am trying to save your life.

CHRISTINE

Better listen Nex.

JOEL

Ten years ago, my lab created Type
One Artificial Blood for the military.

Christine takes a science magazine from the table and throws it to Nex. The Magazine cover shows a med pack for the military. Nex looks at it and nods, throws the magazine back.

NEX

Whoa! Is that a thing? Tell me,
but keep it real simple.

JOEL

Yep, a quiet thing. Type One
Artificial Blood is just little PFC
balls carrying oxygen and carbon
dioxide. We tried them in a lipid
fatty emulsion mixture. Major fail
dude.

NEX

I am not a science guy. But don't
you have to be in a sterile lab, no
germs, no infection, stuff like that?

JOEL

We can boil it, radiate it, give
you a pack like a juice box. But,
it was no help with coagulation.

Nex gives the quizzical look. Joel continues.

JOEL (CONT'D)

It won't clot dude, you still bleed
out.

NEX

So how does it all work?

JOEL

You are on patrol, bad guy pops you.
Bam! Hospital is 20 minutes away.
Your blood pressure is dropping, you
are dying.

CHRISTINE

Your life is ebbing away Nex.

JOEL

The medics take a pack of this out,
pumps you up, you survive until the
ER. Got it?

Nex ties to read the display on an Aggregometer, stares at
it, turns back to Joel.

NEX

Damn! So is this artificial stuff
on your clothes too?

Christine laughs.

NEX (CONT'D)

I am the King of Smooth.

CHRISTINE

Yes, you are.

Joel takes a second before he gets it and smiles. He walks
to the fridge pulls out a couple vials of real blood puts
them on the table.

JOEL

Real blood, this one is mine, these
four are artificial; Type Three.

NEX

You skipped Type Two.

JOEL

You are a real Detective. Every
other lab is on Type Two. HBOCs for
the guys in white coats - was made
from real blood extract. Big
advantage; no need to match blood
type. But there are major major
issues; science talk, dimers; science
talk, cross linking molecules, fail
and fail. Major not ready dude.

NEX

So does that mean that you are the
only person with a successful Type
Three?

JOEL

I am the only person with Type Three
period. Encapsulated hemoglobin,
anti-oxidant enzymes. Boom!

NEX

Gonna be famous?

JOEL

Could be couple dollars or two.

Nex walks over and looks at a centrifuge slowly turning, picks up a vial and puts it back in.

CHRISTINE

Careful Nex, that table is dirtier than a pervert's keyboard.

Nex exaggerates lifting his hand off the table.

NEX

So where were you when he was out?

CHRISTINE

Here! In the shower, lady stuff.

NEX

Okaaay!

Nex heads to the door.

CHRISTINE

Leaving already?

NEX

Yep, didn't expect a man with a bump on his head working to save my life sometime.

CHRISTINE

Nex, like N..e...x. Do you know what your name means?

NEX

Not sure, some plantation long time ago.

CHRISTINE

You should change that name. Nex is Latin for violent death.

EXT. STREET - DAY

McKay waits at the squad car for Nex. He leans against the car door with one hand on the roof, and a pad in his hand.

NEX

Stop scaring the citizens.

MCKAY

Community policing.

NEX

My ass! Wassup! You followed me here?

MCKAY

Dispatch gave me an address. Figured you were working this one without me.

NEX

Yep, interviewed the victim up there.

Nex turns to look to the 2nd floor window and sees Christine sitting at the window. He waves slowly. McKay looks up to see Christine. He stares. Christine waves back at Nex. McKay stares.

MCKAY

Jesus H Christ!

NEX

Yes she is cute. Stop dreaming. Don't you have Clare to impress?

Christine leaves the window, but McKay still stares.

NEX (CONT'D)

Hey Scotsman, be useful, what is that?

MCKAY

I um..I..I walked the path, it takes five minutes to get from the scene to here.

NEX

Five minutes walking like you, or ten minutes stumbling cuz you just got your head stomped?

MCKAY

Ok, gonna do it again. Slow!

NEX

You should check on Clare before she gives up on you.

MCKAY

Yeah!

NEX

See you in morning 10AM. Time for beer, chicken wings and the game.

INT. APT BUILDING - DAY

McKay knocks on the door of Clare's apartment. She opens the door as if expecting someone else. She is surprised to see McKay. She tries to fix her hair.

MCKAY

I don't know what piece goes where
but it all looks good on you.

CLARE

Liar! So more questions?

INT. CLARE'S APT - DAY

MCKAY

Yes, just an old high school yearbook.
Could this be the woman? That one.

CLARE

I can't tell, she was across the
street. Never saw her face, only
they both have dark hair. Sorry.

MCKAY

Don't be sorry. Everything helps.
Are you okay?

CLARE

Yeah, I am Ok, why?

MCKAY

I just had the feeling you were being
crowded last time.

CLARE

Yes, sometimes I don't want my brother
and his idiot drug friends here.
That's all.

The door opens and Christine's brother walks in. He hesitates. McKay nods.

MCKAY

Still making a fire in the closet?

McKay walks back to the kitchen window looks out, walks back in the living room.

CLARE

Done?

McKay winks at Christine, looks directly at Clare's brother.

MCKAY

No, we need to get a team here, they will laser sight the distance from your window to the street. You don't mind a roomful of cops, do you?

Clare hides a smile as her brother's expression changes.

CLARE

I don't mind. So, do I expect a visit soon.

MCKAY

Very soon. Next time. Coffee?

CLARE

Coffee is good, but tea for me.

INT. CONDO - MORNING

Joel checks the research, checks the results on his laptop and restarts the simulation.

Christine walks over to Joel.

JOEL

Hell Yes! Okay lady, test time.

Joel takes a vial of artificial blood, tries giving it to Christine.

CHRISTINE

You do know you have to marry me to get your vial ways with me.

JOEL

I do, do you?

CHRISTINE

I do too.

JOEL

First, try the artificial vodka.

Christine takes the vial and drinks some quickly. She makes a yuck face.

JOEL (CONT'D)

That should have no taste.

CHRISTINE

To you maybe. To me it tastes like a hobo's armpit.

Joel watches her intently for reactions, she blushes.

JOEL

What, never seen you blush before.

CHRISTINE

Weird feeling like losing my balance.

JOEL

Think I know why. You my dear, you are hyperventilating.

CHRISTINE

Why? Talk sexy smart to me. I like it.

JOEL

We have Glomus cells, chemical receptors, like sensors. They measure oxygen and carbon dioxide. They tell us when to breathe faster or slower.

CHRISTINE

Why Mr Joel why?

JOEL

Because Mrs Joel, there is a difference between your lungs and your brain. One says I have oxygen, the other says I want oxygen.

CHRISTINE

See, that is hot.

JOEL

Not so hot, actually your CO2 levels are too low. That is why you are dizzy. But you are a genius, my dead Juliet a genius.

CHRISTINE

OK, I will accept your Nobel prize if I know what yer babbling about Sir.

Joel does a spin, and a couple celebratory fist pumps.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Don't wet yourself there sailor!

JOEL

Oh yes, now watch lover.

Christine watches him intently.

CHRISTINE
Sexy brain Joel.

Joel goes to the fridge, takes a vial of blood.

JOEL
This is mine.

Joel mixes his blood with the artificial blood. He gives it to Christine. She drinks. They wait ten seconds.

CHRISTINE
(Scarlett O'Hara voice)
Oh I feel it, Oh yes, Like burning
embers in my lustful soul. I can
birth babies.

JOEL
Oh stop, there should be no reaction.

CHRISTINE
There was. Not as good as 100% Joel.
You killed my southern belle. Damn
you Sir!

JOEL
Frankly my dear, you can stay for
weeks. I need to get to the lab to
correct the ratios.

CHRISTINE
No you don't. Dr French Bread says
you stay home in bed. Check your
head, you are not ready yet.

JOEL
Can't stay here, just too excited,
we are real close, sugar, real close.

INT. PRECINCT - MORNING

McKay sits at a computer checking for accident reports. A couple of detectives walk by and start teasing McKay. They are SANDERS and BIRD.

BIRD

Ticket fixing Mac? Must be a blonde.

MCKAY

Nah, checking an accident report.
Need a photo.

Sanders walks over, stands behind McKay. McKay has the school yearbook open next to the computer.

SANDERS

That is seventeen years ago Mac, you sure take your time solving a case.

MCKAY

Checking an accident, maybe someone I knew in high school.

SANDERS

Hey, so which one is you?

The Detective turns the pages and reads the student list.

SANDERS (CONT'D)

Hey Bird, come see McKay. Damn Mac you were a fat kid.

Detective Bird saunters over. Checks the page and slaps McKay on the shoulder.

BIRD

Glad you cleaned up. So what are you looking at?

MCKAY

Just double checking an ID.

SANDERS

Gonna give us a case Mac?

MCKAY

It might be tied into something Nex is working on.

BIRD

You two are tighter than a Republican in a gay bar. Wassup?

MCKAY

I only work with the best Jack.
Only the best.

BIRD

Mess up and both of you might be
back on traffic.

EXT. STREET - A WEEK LATER

Joel and Christine come up the steps out the park. McKay is in uniform, he turns his squad car around, drives down the block and parks. He is trying to make this look like he just bumped into them. He steps out as they approach.

MCKAY

Hey Joel! Officer McKay, working your case. I was here checking a witness. How is the head?

JOEL

All good. Detective Nex? I expected him back, been a week.

McKay motions for them to continue walking.

MCKAY

Nex had a case. The victims in your case stumped the lab boys, we were waiting on results.

CHRISTINE

Witness? So you can catch these people right?

MCKAY

Nah, witness saw no one she could identify.

JOEL

I get the feeling this is not a simple chat.

MCKAY

We always have questions.
(to Christine)
You look so familiar!

CHRISTINE

You stared at me long enough last week.

JOEL

Last week?

MCKAY

Sorry, I was so sure that I knew you. My Sis had a friend who had a friend, you know how it is.

CHRISTINE

I bet there is a question you want to ask.

MCKAY

This friend of a friend had an accident many years ago and died. Last name Halliday, you look so much like her.

CHRISTINE

You should have just asked that. Yes she died, she was my aunt.

MCKAY

I knew there was something there.

JOEL

Simples, see that was easy.

McKay slows, takes the briefest glance up at Clare's window, stops faces Christine and Joel. Christine notices the woman on the 2nd floor looking out the window.

MCKAY

Yes that was. I never asked your name.

CHRISTINE

Christine. Oh, did you tell Nex you are playing Detective?

MCKAY

Christine, just like your aunt?

CHRISTINE

Family joke. I am Christine Blair, she was Christine Louise. I have four cousins with the middle name Paddy.

MCKAY

Family tradition?

CHRISTINE

No, stupid uncles and whiskey.

McKay laughs at this.

MCKAY

I have those too. Well enjoy the
afternoon. Get well man.

McKay turns back to his car as Christine and Joel walk away.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

Christine spins around twice, like a dancer on a dance floor.

JOEL

You seem happy. Stupid uncles eh?

Christine watches McKay cross the street into Clare's
apartment building. Spins again.

CHRISTINE

Yes. Your love juice is working
Doc. No one has to die today.

INT. APT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

McKay knocks on Clare's door. She is not surprised to see
him. She leaves the door open and walks back into the
apartment.

McKay follows, walks into the kitchen, takes bottled water
from the counter and takes a drink. Sits at the kitchen
window.

MCKAY

Were they? Was that her?

CLARE

Yep. That definitely was her. They
seem happy together.

MCKAY

They are. They live in their own
bubble of themselves. Seems like no
one else matters.

CLARE

That's sweet. The lucky ones find
their life partner. She must still
be scared.

McKay stands up, looks out the window, kisses Clare and heads
for the door.

MCKAY

I don't think she scares easy!

INT. MCKAY'S APT - NIGHT

McKay looks through the files and photos spread over his kitchen table. He has a red circle drawn around Christine's photo. He dials Nex, but changes his mind, ends the call. Stubs his finger into the photo.

MCKAY

You! It has to be you.

McKay walks to his bathroom. The sound of water interrupts the music on his radio. He steps out the bathroom and Christine stands there looking at the photos.

MCKAY (CONT'D)

Whoa? How did you get in?

CHRISTINE

You should lock your doors.

McKay glances at his coat. His gun is in a holster under the coat. Christine notices.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Really McKay, you gonna shoot me?

MCKAY

Just being damn sure you don't have it.

CHRISTINE

Check!

McKay walks over, picks his gun out from his coat. Christine examines the photos carefully. She takes a side glance at him.

MCKAY

So who is that?

Christine throws the photo on the table.

CHRISTINE

I hated those bangs.

MCKAY

Oh saints in heaven. It is you!

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Light rain. Kids run to shelter, run to the school bus.

Two teenagers in a Chevy muscle car pull alongside a girl walking in the rain. The driver is PADDY.

PADDY

Hey nerdy girl, you wanna ride?

CHRISTINE

Everyone else turn you down Paddy?
I have to work pinhead.

PADDY

I know. Come on cousin, a ride home
and you get to work early.

Christine gets in the car. Another teen comes running up to the car. He is a heavy set teen with a football jacket. The YOUNG MCKAY.

YOUNG MCKAY

Paddy, can I ride with you?

PADDY

When I date your Sis, fatty McKay.

Christine gives Paddy the evil eye, Paddy gives her the shoulder shrug.

The car pulls off, tires squealing going too fast. The young McKay pulls his football jacket up to his ears walks in the rain.

He stuffs his books inside his jacket, and looks up to the sound of a cars crashing on the street in front the school.

INT. MCKAY'S APT - NIGHT

MCKAY

You! You died that day. What the hell are you?

CHRISTINE

McKay, you have an itch, if you scratch it you will bleed to death.

MCKAY

You killed those men.

Christine shrugs her shoulders.

CHRISTINE

Don't be pushy Mac. Will you arrest me? Put me on trial? Sentence me to death? Let it go Mac, let it go.

MCKAY

Maybe I can't arrest you, but I can arrest Joel.

CHRISTINE

You are at a very real fork in the road McKay. Let it go! Make the right choice.

MCKAY

There are two homicides that I cannot ignore.

Christine holds up three fingers.

CHRISTINE

Damn McKay, wrong choice!

Christine moves so fast that McKay has no time to point his weapon. A dark figure stands before him and a dark cloud surrounds his head. His eyes bulge and he tries to fight but his hands go limp.

He tries to say something but cannot. His head goes limp. Christine lays him on the floor gently, closes his eyes.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Come, I will take you to a safe place.

INT. PRECINCT - MORNING

Nex is early for his shift. Detectives Bird and Sanders act surprised.

BIRD

Strolling in on homie time, Nex?

NEX

Yea, your sister wears me out.

SANDERS

Rich doc shoots his wife, forgets to wipe prints off gun. You could make Captain with those cases.

BIRD

How about those real murders on your hands. No weapon, no witness. Gonna Sherlock that one Nex?

NEX

I do my thing. Anyone seen Mac, I had dispatch call, no answer.

SANDERS

He was in couple days ago, playing junior Nex, searching some dead girl.

NEX

Dead girl? What dead girl?

Nex logs in the computer at his desk. He searches history.

BIRD

Wednesday, Nine thirty.

BEGIN SCREEN - CONTINUOUS

Nex goes through search listings until he finds McKay's searches and opens the case.

He sits back on the chair, then sits forward closer to the screen, leans his head to one side, frowns.

There is a photo of a girl dead at a traffic accident. Nex hits enter and the photo fills the screen.

END SCREEN

NEX

No, no, shit like this does not happen.

BIRD
Something wrong Nex...Nex?

Next hits escape, closes the screen quickly.

NEX
Nah, nothing.

INT. LAB - MEDICAL TEST ROOM

Joel sits with Dr. Olivier.

DR OLIVIER
Have you been resting Professor?

JOEL
Followed your advice, little fatter,
but rested.

DR. OLIVIER
Just wanted to be sure. You do know
that I wanted to do this tomorrow.

JOEL
Why today then?

DR. OLIVIER
The suits want to see you. You have
your head down in work. Look up,
make sure you are noticed.

JOEL
Dr Pirlo?

DR. OLIVIER
Some people are too ambitious. Take
care of your head.

JOEL
So I am good to go.

DR. OLIVIER
As you people say, peachy.

INT. LAB - LATER

Joel reviews results on his screen. He is joined by the Director.

DIRECTOR
Word is you are near success. Should we all be excited?

JOEL
If you got that word from me, you would know that it is not true.

DIRECTOR
So how close are we to trial?

JOEL
We are near a couple brain aneurysms and million dollar lawsuits if I don't correct this.

DIRECTOR
Explain.

JOEL
We have no timed release. We need timed release and a change in the blood gases.

DIRECTOR
Time? Months? A year?

JOEL
Not long, we are nearly there. Weeks.

DIRECTOR
Weeks? That is damn good news. I should have consulted you first.

JOEL
You should have. Where is Dr Pirlo?

DIRECTOR
She is not in. Took a couple days off.

JOEL
She had access, she walked out with all my notes. I hope your non-disclosure contract has no loopholes.

DIRECTOR
What? Damn!

The Director turns to leave hurriedly.

JOEL

Don't mention the changes. She
doesn't know that.

INT. APT - MCKAY'S AFTERNOON

Nex leans on McKay's window, waiting on the forensic team. He is impatient, he is banging the window sill softly. The table is empty, there are no files.

NEX

Gimme something guys!

The Examiner looks up and shrugs. Nex paces between the window and the kitchen talking to himself.

NEX (CONT'D)

So he opens the door, someone he
knows. He pulls his gun...someone
dangerous. He does not shoot..someone
he can't shoot.

One of the uniformed officers move to interrupt. Another officer stops him.

NEX (CONT'D)

Question is, who is a killer that he
knows, but he can't bring himself to
shoot?

Nex takes McKay's phone out his coat pocket on the chair. Looks at last numbers dialed. It says Nex and Clare. Nex calls Clare.

CLARE (V.O.)

Hey Mac.

NEX

Clare this is Detective Nex.

CLARE (V.O.)

OK?

NEX

Wrong guy eh?

CLARE (V.O.)

Yes, I am waiting for Calum, he left
here last night a little excited.

NEX

Well, we got real busy. Sorry. But
what did you and Mac talk about last?

CLARE (V.O.)

Oh, he had the guy, the guy and the girl walk past outside. I think they are the same as that night.

NEX

Tell you what Clare I will come by later.

CLARE (V.O.)

And Mac?

NEX

We will explain later. Sorry.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Joel goes to the kitchen, gets bread, tries to make a sandwich. He is not doing a good job, the sandwich is sloppy. He grabs the sandwich and a drink and goes back to the couch.

Christine appears as he sits. She goes straight to the fridge, takes the vial of Joel's blood and takes two sips hurriedly.

JOEL

Hungry?

Christine points to his sandwich.

CHRISTINE

Angry?

JOEL

Pissed. Pirlo stole my work, ran off, maybe to the competition.

CHRISTINE

(mocking)

I am a Doctor, I can take care of you.

JOEL

Yep, that's her. Your problem?

CHRISTINE

I had to help someone cross over. It was not ...easy for me. Problem fixed.

JOEL

I have never seen you sad, wassup?

CHRISTINE

How was your day honey? Besides the wailing and the wicked and the dying? It was another day at the office.

Joel walks over and strokes her hair, pushes her to the table.

JOEL

Upset? Come, tell me, the details about the un-life. I want to know.

Christine sits at the table across from Joel.

CHRISTINE

Everything is want, the wanting drives the purpose, the purpose is the reason to continue.

JOEL

And your purpose?

CHRISTINE

My purpose is to keep you safe until you cross.

JOEL

My purpose is to keep you safe until I cross.

CHRISTINE

And that is I why I can be here. We have a single purpose.

JOEL

And those without purpose?

INT. APT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

Christine leads Joel down the hallway. She calls.

CHRISTINE

Here, let me show you. Look!

Two ghosts appear in the hall. They come to Christine, but back away quickly and return through the doors of the apartments.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

They want, but there is no living ying to the dead yang. So in the brief moments that they can slip over, their frustration and anger is what you feel.

Christine slides through the door, opens it from the other side and mentions for Joel to come.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

An old woman sleep in her chair, the TV is on, a cat scurries out the window. The ghost of an old man lingers in the room, he is pounding the table.

CHRISTINE

That woman is at peace, at last. He was an abusive husband. Now he is alone, unloved and angry.

JOEL

The window slamming and the Ooooh oooh! Call the exorcists.

CHRISTINE

If you ignore them, most will just go away. A couple bitter ones you will have to chase away.

Christine walks to the old man ghost, talks to him softly and sends him on his way. He dissolves into the air.

JOEL

Whoa, that simple?

CHRISTINE

I showed him an unpleasant alternative.

The old woman starts to stir so Christine and Joel leave hurriedly.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

JOEL

So what did you do over in that un-dead place? Details.

CHRISTINE

I was wandering. I knew I left too early. Then you called me that first time. You wanted me never to leave.

JOEL

Then what?

CHRISTINE

I removed anything that wanted to hurt me.

JOEL
 Those dreams, you, big, dark, bad
 ass, was that you?

CHRISTINE
 Yep, liddle old me.

Joel leans over and kisses her with a mouth full of food.

JOEL
 Damn, I make love to the Queen of
 the UnDead.

INT. PIRLO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rebecca Pirlo is on the phone making a deal for Joel's work.
 She is driving up the price.

PIRLO
 Don't argue. I have a Chinese buyer.
 So \$5 million it is, going once....
 twice....not too hard was it.

Pirlo takes a sip of wine.

PIRLO (CONT'D)
 I gave you an account number! No
 deposit by 11AM, no deal.

Pirlo puts the phone down, puts all of the paperwork and the
 flash drive in a case. Picks up the wine, walks to the window
 to enjoy the view.

Christine appears behind Pirlo, looks in the case, reads the
 first page, puts the paperwork back and waits for Pirlo to
 turn around.

Pirlo turns surprised, almost screams.

PIRLO (CONT'D)
 Who the fuck are you? I am calling
 the police!

Christine picks up Pirlo's phone, throws it to her.

CHRISTINE
 You don't have the time.

PIRLO
 What the hell do you want?

CHRISTINE
 I love a man, who loves me and you
 stole the purpose of our lives.

REBECCA

Joel? You are the one?

CHRISTINE

I am the One. And only.

Pirlo heads for the door, Christine catches her. Pirlo punches Christine.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Bitch!

Pirlo throws another punch.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Please!

Christine pushes Pirlo to the wall and drives a thin stiletto through Pirlo's head into the wall. Pirlo flops like a windsock on the wall.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Curious feeling, dying without pain.
Knowing it.

REBECCA

(screaming)

Why?

Christine takes Rebecca's hand and wipes some blood from the wound on Rebecca's forehead and shows it to her.

CHRISTINE

Oh, \$100 crossfits. Yer dressed for it. Listen, you gonna wake among the scum of the dead. They will try to shred you into liddy biddy pieces. Run baby run!

REBECCA

Take it all back, take it back.

Christine points and the contents of the case erupt into flames.

CHRISTINE

That flight is gone.

REBECCA

Oh God, let me down, get me off.

CHRISTINE

Oh God? So you are a screamer?

REBECCA

Please, I will leave, I will go away.

Tapping Pirlo's chest, making the heart beat noise.

CHRISTINE

Bup bup...bup bup. You are going away.

REBECCA

How long?

Christine transforms to her ghostly self.

CHRISTINE

Long enough for you to wish you were a better person.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Joel is asleep. Christine sits on the bed kisses him on the lips.

CHRISTINE

Let us go Mister Man.

EXT. UNDERWORLD THE PLACE OF WAITING.

Joel steps into a desolate landscape. He takes a tentative step forward and looks around. Joel heads towards a small hill. He walks up and looks around.

At the top he sees orbs of molten forms coming towards him. He does not back away but simply wait until they approach, roll up to him, he reaches a hand out, touches them quickly. He touches each of them in turn. They back off two feet and roll away.

There are darker orbs rolling towards him, they stop twenty feet away, he waits, but they do not approach. He steps towards them but they roll back. He steps forward again, they roll back.

Then the four orbs move quickly towards him, he senses dread, so he pushes his hand forward to mean stop, but they keep coming. He does the stop sign again silently screaming and the orbs slow.

He turns because over his shoulder is a large dark silent figure. Joel turns to look at the orbs are nearly on him. The large dark figure reaches out touches his shoulder, The orbs slow, he turns to them and silently pushes them away angrily. The orbs stop and retreat. He turns to the figure.

JOEL
What is this place?

CHRISTINE
It is the place of those who wait.

JOEL
What are those?

CHRISTINE
Those are the stranded ones, the
angry ones, they wait in vain.

JOEL
Who are you?

CHRISTINE
You must know.

JOEL
Why are you so big?

CHRISTINE
Am I? Why are you so small? What
do you want, really want?

Joel watches as the figure coalesces into a opaque Christine.

JOEL
Ah, you! Sugar and spice.

CHRISTINE
Why did you pick this place? You
have a dark mind Mister Man.

JOEL
Me? I thought you brought me here.

CHRISTINE
It is your place, it is what you
think it is. Fire and brimstone?

The scene changes quickly, gets softer, Joel can see Christine like a thermal vision, but she quickly disappears, he is back to the desolate scene.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Your mind is locked into fear that
you were taught. You have to let it
go.

JOEL
One step at a time.

CHRISTINE

There are no steps, they happen as you think them. You must want them to happen.

The orbs start back to Joel. They are larger and faster. He turns faces them and clenches both fist and imagines them stopping. The orbs stop, but do not retreat.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You must want them gone. Look.

Christine glances at the orbs and they are blown back two hundred feet into the landscape. A larger more dangerous figure approaches. It is a demon, baring fangs and sharp claws.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Your fear is his weapon. Remove it. Remove him.

Joel pushes like he is pushing a wall and the demon struggles to approach, but does not stop. He is still coming forward. Two more demons appear and start toward Joel.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You will die here if you don't. Now!

Joel bends his elbows, thumps both fists in the air like a Yes and the first demon is blown into the other two.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You want them gone. You need them gone.

Joel is angry, he takes his right hand, makes a fist does a back slap in the air and the demons are knocked back fifty feet.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Are you Merlin? What is all this and that? Just think it, Remove them!

Joel faces the demons and leans his head, the demons fly at him snarling. He stand his ground, the three demons are blown a hundred feet away. Joel watches them fall.

Joel turns and sees a solitary orb rolling past. The demons do not bother it.

JOEL

Why is he unafraid?

CHRISTINE

He is waiting for a woman. He has his purpose. He has peace.

JOEL

How long will he wait?

CHRISTINE

For him, time stands still.

INT. CONDO - NEXT DAY

Joel walks in his condo, checks the time. Christine sits at the window.

CHRISTINE

You look satisfied.

JOEL

Those new gas ratios gonna work. Almost there sugar.

Joel walks over and kisses Christine on the head.

CHRISTINE

Don't you have questions to ask?

JOEL

Yes, those damn dreams again.

CHRISTINE

Come on! You know they are not dreams. Not too bad for a man still alive. You getting there, that was all you.

Christine pokes him in the chest.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

What did you feel?

JOEL

Uncertainty. Confidence. Trust.

CHRISTINE

Focus your need. You must want it like you want nothing else in the world.

JOEL

So I can cross when I want.

CHRISTINE

You do that without me you may never return. You have not seen real evil.

JOEL

When?

CHRISTINE

You gotta learn to be final Jo. Put them down or something will follow you back here.

JOEL

Next lesson, I am ready!

CHRISTINE

Slowly Superhero slowly.

EXT. DESOLATION VALLEY ALTAR

Ruman and two of the Fallen are on the altar. Ouriel is below ripping lost souls apart in anger.

RUMAN

Ouriel, your anger has betrayed us before. We were punished by another thousand years.

Ruman reaches out and pulls Ouriel back to the altar.

OURIEL

She has sent another useless hulk to the Valley of the Damned. She has kept one safe from our reach among those who wait.

RUMAN

No one has challenged us in two thousand years. No one. Be careful brother. There is a reason in every event. She may be a favored one.

OURIEL

I will rid us of this bothersome thing.

INT. CONDO - LATER

Joel walks over to his lab equipment, takes new vials out, mixes it with his blood to give it to Christine. Before she takes it she stops.

CHRISTINE

In fifteen years you have never asked what I am. Why?

JOEL

I see you.

CHRISTINE

No, you see the girl you want to see. Look. I will be here, feel me.

Christine disappears but Joel does not see her. He stares, blinks, tries a side view nothing. Christine re-appears.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You know for a scientist you are really really one dimensional. Possibilities darling, possibilities.

JOEL

One more time.

CHRISTINE

It is like sex in the dark, you have to feel me. You eyes will lie to you.

Joel relaxes, gestures ready, ready. Christine disappears, slowly the large dark figure Joel's dreams takes form. He takes a step back.

JOEL

Why are you so big?

Joel steps forward and runs his hand along and into the figure. The figure changes into an opaque Christine.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Wow! That was you, Wow!

Christine picks up the blood potion and drinks it, and solidifies.

CHRISTINE

You are really hung up on size. Why?

They both laugh at this.

JOEL

Never seen my lover naked before. Yea, that you has bigger curves.

INT. GIFT SHOP - AFTERNOON

The gift shop is run by a Laotian woman MALY. She is forty something and very attractive. She is busy boxing a gift behind the counter. Joel waves. The couple start browsing.

MALY

Ah, the quiet man again. Lucky girlfriend or do you have to apologize often?

JOEL

Very lucky girlfriend.

MALY

And you sugar, graduation gift?

Christine laughs.

CHRISTINE

Anniversary.

MALY

Oh, it is you. You must have the magic to make him buy you flowers so often.

CHRISTINE

Me?

Joel turns to Christine.

JOEL

I really need an older you. This is getting embarrassing.

CHRISTINE

There is a price for everything. I could use another body. Do you want that?

JOEL

That price might be too high. Nah!

CHRISTINE

Pretty girls die all the time. Drunk boyfriends crash their cars remember? You might get a hot one.

The Gift Shop owner Maly walks over.

MALY

Tell me what you like baby or he is going to get something we girls can't use.

CHRISTINE

He is Mr Fashion Designer, he makes good choices.

JOEL

I want flowers today. Big red bunch.

Christine whispers in Maly ear.

CHRISTINE

Yellow.

Maly walks to the flowers and starts making a bouquet of flowers. She glances at Christine.

JOEL

Don't need a hot new body. She might have one of them annoying whiny voices, big boobs and feet too big and I would have to toss everything in your closet.

CHRISTINE

Any other answer it would have been snip snip!

Maly brings a bouquet of yellow roses, with one red rose in the middle.

MALY

The red rose is for you.

Maly gives the roses to Christine and their hands touch. Maly pulls her hand away quickly, takes a step back, and walks behind the counter to the cash register.

CHRISTINE

You saw me?

MALY

No...I don't know.

CHRISTINE

Yes you did. And I saw you. What would you call me in that village in Laos?

MALY

Nang Tani.

CHRISTINE

Lady of the Woods? Me? With snakes and spiders. Oh No!

Maly manages a half smile trying to be calm.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Give me your hand.

(MORE)

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

There is sadness in you. Ask the question, not a question, but the question.

Maly does not reach out until Joel nods the Ok. Christine gives the flowers to Joel, takes Maly's hand in hers gently.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Maly, she says to look under the stone at the foot of the stairs of the house in the country.

Christine lets go of Maly's hand, takes the flowers and smiles. Joel walks overs and pays cash for the flowers. Maly does not react.

JOEL

Lady, it is Ok. Thanks.

Maly takes a silk scarf from around her neck and puts on around Christine neck.

MALY

Khawp Jai. Thank You.

CHRISTINE

She will have peace when it is done.

The couple turn to leave the shop. Maly stares at them until that are out of sight through her window.

INT. CONDO - DAY - DAYS LATER

Joel is alone. He is staring at the screen.

BEGIN SCREEN

The screen label shows RESPIRATION RATE and a perfect graph forming in cycles.

END SCREEN

Joel stands up and does a silent football "Yes." The doorbell rings. It is Nex.

JOEL

I expected you before this.

NEX

Why, is there something I need to know?

JOEL
You are very thorough. Like me, you
re-check data.

NEX
The Missus?

JOEL
Not here. Coffee?

NEX
Thanks. The blood thing, you done?

Joel walks over to the table, gets a cup, pushes a button on
his coffee machine.

JOEL
Finishing. We got it man. This
time we got it.

NEX
Well you are the bleeding edge.

Joel hands Nex coffee.

JOEL
Good one. So, why are you really
here?

NEX
Your girlfriend, when did you meet?

FLASHBACK - EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

There is a graveyard across the street from a row of
restaurants. A TEEN JOEL is sitting on a gravestone. He
looks at a photo of a girl. The teenage Joel tears it into
little pieces, puts his Sony player on and tries to relax.

JOEL (V.O.)
I was sitting there wishing I had a
better girl friend and this girl
comes walking up to me and said "geez
you look sad."

He does not see the ghost rising out the grave beside him.
He sees her when she is out and coming towards him. He jumps.

TEEN JOEL
What the hell?

CHRISTINE
Hi.

TEEN JOEL

Hi? Hi? Are you dead? Because
dead people don't say "Hi". What
the hell?

CHRISTINE

Can you stop saying that? I really
don't want to go back.

TEEN JOEL

Are you really dead?

CHRISTINE

You think I lie underground to hide
from radiation? Of course I am dead
you twit.

Joel takes two steps backwards, Christine follows. She puts
her hand out and waits for Joel to touch her. He reaches
out slowly and touches the ghost.

Christine points to the row of lights across the street.

JOEL (V.O.)

She said she came to put flowers on
a grave and that we both just lost
somebody we loved.

TEEN JOEL

You don't bite necks and stuff like
that?

CHRISTINE

No, vampires are rotting corpses. I
am just dead.

TEEN JOEL

So what the hell do you want from
me? Who are you dead girl?

CHRISTINE

Christine.

TEEN JOEL

Christine? OK, so what are you doing
here?

CHRISTINE

I died without ever going dancing.
I want to dance once before I leave.
I can't leave this place.

TEEN JOEL

Why not? You just popped out a grave.
Don't know why you need me.

CHRISTINE

One drop of blood.

TEEN JOEL

Hell no. I do that, I turn into a Werewolf, Dracula, something. You are not biting me, dead Christine.

CHRISTINE

No biting. I need one drop Joel, just one. But you must want to give it to me.

Teen Joel hesitates then reaches into his pocket, takes a small knife, cuts himself and pushes his hand to the ghost. The ghost takes form as Christine.

Teen Joel looks the girl closely.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Yep, you came and wished for me. You would stand by the fence with those creepy weepy eyes saying " I love you Christine."

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

TEEN JOEL

Oh damn, that Christine! I never stared at..I just liked to...Oh, wait.

CHRISTINE

You like older girls eh Joel?

TEEN JOEL

What the.... damn, damn, holy smokes.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

The teen Joel and Christine leave the cemetery through the front gate. Joel stops.

TEEN JOEL

Geez! I am going out with a dead girl.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. CONDO - DAY

JOEL

So we walked out the cemetery, had pizza, listened to music, went dancing, became peas in a pod.

NEX

That is all romantic as hell Doc.
You met a girl in a graveyard and
fell in love. Do you believe
yourself?

JOEL

Swear man. It was weirder than it
sounds.

NEX

You two are weird, but happy weird.
You might be the blood guy, but you
ain't the truth guy.

JOEL

McKay already questioned us, you
know that.

NEX

I read his notes. Yes. Says your
girlfriend's aunt died in an accident.

JOEL

You guys don't speak?

Nex pulls a envelope out his coat, takes a photograph out,
shows it to Joel.

NEX

McKay died, brain aneurysm the Doc
said. Something popped, he was gone.
You know why?

JOEL

I am a research Doc, not a people
Doc.

Nex hands another photograph to Joel.

NEX

Rebecca Pirlo pinned to the wall
like a first dollar in a restaurant.
You know why?

JOEL

Dead? She ran off with my work.
Like really dead?

NEX

Really. I had a chat with your
company lawyer. She had calls from
China, and two calls to Eastern
Europe. You know why?

JOEL

She was looking for a buyer. Besides saving lives, we knew that this could also give athletes an undetectable performance boost.

NEX

Always money. But question is, who is your Guardian Angel? Four people are dead Doc and you know why. Do you know who?

Nex looks for a reaction in Joel. Joel hesitates and interrupted by the door bell.

NEX (CONT'D)

You are on that slippery slope from witness to accessory to murder. It is one way Doc. Come on, do you really want to go there?

Joel does not answer, opens the door and it is the Laotian woman Maly from the gift shop. Joel lets her in. Maly takes a long look at Nex with interest. Nex nods at her and leaves.

INT. CONDO - AFTERNOON

JOEL

Did I lose something?

MALY

The Nang Tani spoke to me. She says you must come save her now.

JOEL

Save who?

MALY

Save her! She says you MUST return to the place of your dreams. That they are keeping her, she broke the rules, she brought you over.

JOEL

But I can't go back, I don't know how.

Maly walks to the kitchen, She is looking in the cupboards.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Hey lady, what are you looking for?

MALY

If you don't go, they will shred her energy into the nothingness. You must feel her, she said you must.

JOEL

I want to save her, I don't know how.

Joel turns his back to Maly, he looks out the window, his hands on head. Maly hits him with a large pot and he crumbles.

MALY

You go now. She needs you.

EXT. UNDERWORLD THE PLACE OF WAITING - MOMENTS LATER

Joel rises slowly. He is a small dark figure. He remembers this place.

JOEL (V.O.)

This is the place of my mind. Think it, Joel think it.

The desolation changes to red hills of lava, like a Mars on fire. Joel switches back to the desolation.

JOEL (CONT'D)

So be it. Feel her, feel her.

Joel starts walking, and turning, searching, he turns slowly like a man feeling the wind with a finger. There are four orbs approaching, he sees them but continues turning. He stops turning and starts walking. The orbs are almost on him.

JOEL (CONT'D)

I do NOT have the time for this.

Joel punches the air angrily and the orbs are blown away out of sight. He continues walking.

His figure gets a little larger. He walks uphill where four figures larger than him wait. He continues upward with breaking stride.

One of the figures comes down the hill at him fast, he picks up the figure and hurls it behind him down the hill.

Two other figures come down the hill, he reaches through them both with his hands, the figures fall, he drops two throbbing red balls on the ground, and continues upward.

At the top the last figure hesitates, Joel walks up to the figure and pushes him down the hill. His figure gets larger.

EXT. UNDERWORLD THE PLACE OF WAITING

More figures rise out the ground, but he does not stop. They do not threaten but step aside. He approaches a group with one figure bent over helping another up.

He senses something and turns. The figure pulls the other to its feet and approaches Joel.

JOEL

There is something familiar about you.

MCKAY

(voice of McKay)

You must reach her in the Desolation.

JOEL

I am going.

MCKAY

You are walking, you are not going.
You do not have feet. You must go
THERE!

Joel concentrates, clenches a fist.

JOEL

There!

EXT. UNDERWORLD DESOLATION - HILLTOP

From the top of a hill Joel looks down into the circular valley with hundreds of figures down below.

JOEL (V.O.)

I can feel you.

Joel scans the valley for Christine. He does not see her. The figures all turn to look at him.

EXT. UNDERWORLD DESOLATION - VALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Joel approaches the large group, a single figure moving through the mass. He moves his hands like parting curtains scattering the closest orbs and other beings away.

JOEL (V.O.)

Faster, faster!

Joel looks at the dark figures in the middle of the pack and twists his head to the left, twists his head to the right

and the figures go flying left and right. He is cutting a path through the horde like a harvester through a corn field.

EXT. UNDERWORLD DESOLATION - ALTAR

Joel approaches the center, there is a stone altar in the middle. The four Fallen are standing on altar.

Ruman approaches followed by Ouriel.

RUMAN
Why are you here?

JOEL
Christine?

RUMAN
A living being has crossed with power.
That should never happen. Why?

JOEL
(emphatic)
Christine?

RUMAN
You are not yet for this place.

Joel clenches his fist, shakes and screams. It is a primal gut wrenching scream of pure anger and force.

JOEL
Aaaaaaaahhhh!

The force goes out like a shock wave blowing all the hundreds of figures away. When it clears there is only Joel, the four figures and the empty altar remaining. Joel's figure is as large as the four figures on the altar.

JOEL (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Christine?

Ruman glances at the altar and a section rises from the ground. Christine comes up surrounded and bound to six demons. She is drained, weak and almost gone.

RUMAN
We have been summoned here to deal with you. Mortals cannot break our rules. There is a price to pay. She will pay your price.

JOEL

She will come or I will break every rule that has ever been written, on every side through all time. She will come.

CHRISTINE

Joel, you will damn yourself to existence that even they do not know.

Ouriel grabs Christine by the hair.

RUMAN

You, you have grown with power in this place. You tread on demons. It is not what it should be.

CHRISTINE

You have been cast down. You have only demons and the wicked to console you.

OURIEL

You have chosen. We will show you pain and then we will show you more pain. Let it be.

The demons tear into Christine, she screams. Joel steps up the altar, his force slams the six demons into the back wall of the altar, he compresses them into one struggling mass and sets them on fire from below. They burn out of existence from bottom to top. Their screams fill the air.

JOEL

You fail to listen.

The four figures do not retreat. Ouriel approaches Joel, but Ruman stops him. Joel reaches Christine and pushes an arm into her chest and watches her wounds heal.

OURIEL

You are an abomination. You have broken the agreement from above. We have kept our place and not tread among the living.

RUMAN

This must be corrected, it must not happen. Go, we will decide.

Ouriel approaches Joel fast and knocks him off the altar.

OURIEL

It is time to end your existence!

EXT. DESOLATION VALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Joel gets up slowly, flexes his arms at his side, takes two slow steps and appears instantly on the altar crashing into Ouriel knocking him off the altar.

Joel follows him off the altar, and as Ouriel gets up opens his arms and slaps Ouriel head. Joel picks him up and tosses him over the valley ridge.

Joel turns to look at Ruman, when Ouriel comes flying back knocking Joel down. Ouriel picks Joel upright and pounds his head like a stake driving Joel into the ground. Joel is chest deep in the ground when he reaches out, pulls Ouriel's legs, taking him down. Joel comes straight out the ground, and stomps Ouriel into the ground until only Ouriel's arm sticks out, Joel takes the arm and drags Ouriel along like a plow.

Ouriel comes out the ground picks Joel up twenty feet into the air and they both fall on the altar. Two Fallen hold Ouriel.

RUMAN

It is not as it should be. Take her. There will be judgment too severe for you to contemplate.

INT. CONDO - NIGHT

Joel wakes up groggy and feels the back of his head. He tries to stand. He gets to one knee.

MALY

You find her?

Joel reacts with surprise, gets up and backs away.

JOEL

Lady, what the hell? What for?
Find?

MALY

You find her or you go back!

Maly lifts the pot to strike Joel again, Joel puts his hands to block, but is stopped by Christine.

CHRISTINE

He found me, broke all the rules of
the two realms to find me.

MALY

You are a good man.

JOEL

Two head injuries in two weeks.
Damn, you people will kill me.

Joel gets up, walks to the bathroom.

MALY

What will he remember?

CHRISTINE

The scientist in him will doubt it
ever happened. He will not want to
remember.

JOEL (O.S.)

Yes I do, something about a desert,
a fight, and Christine and oh shit,
it was McKay.

Joel comes out the bathroom.

JOEL (CONT'D)

It was McKay, it was McKay.

CHRISTINE

Yes it was.
(To Maly)
In the morning, he won't remember.

JOEL

You flower lady, what was at the
step?

CHRISTINE

Thank you. Come let me show you.

Christine places her palm on Maly's forehead and Maly smiles.
Maly walks to the door.

MALY

You leave her again, I get a bigger
pot.

Christine shuts the door.

CHRISTINE

Her Mom was murdered. The weapon
was hidden. They found it. Closure.

JOEL

So you are St Christine now?

CHRISTINE

Saints do not go to that place. You
came for me, wooh!

Christine mocks Joel.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

I am gonna break all the rules in
the universe. Damn Mister Man.

JOEL

Tell me about it in the morning.
Why the Flower Lady?

Joel walks over to the fridge and gives Christine the new
blood mixture.

CHRISTINE

She is from a culture that admits to
different planes of existence. And
I like her.

JOEL

Bed, no talk. Sleep.

CHRISTINE

Pffft, like that is gonna happen.

INT. CONDO - MORNING

The condo is empty. Joel's equipment slowly turns. The door bell rings, and rings again, and again. The door slowly opens and Nex steps in and closes the door behind him.

Nex checks the bedrooms, checks the closets looking for clothing, checks the drawers and finds only men's clothing, checks the closet and finds women's clothing.

Nex checks the size on the label. Turns walks back to the living room. Christine sits by the window.

NEX

Damn! You are a quiet as a --

CHRISTINE

Ghost? What? Found anything?

NEX

Yep! Found out you don't live here.
Tell me why?

CHRISTINE

Doing the Police Inspector thing
Nex?

NEX

No underwear, no toothbrush, no
jewelry, new clothing with tags.
Nothing says you live here.

CHRISTINE

Creepy Nex creepy, checking women's
undies?

NEX

No damn shoes. No woman exists
without a bunch of damn shoes. Tell
me why?

CHRISTINE

I don't crowd Joel. We share a
purpose. You should find will find
someone like that.

NEX

So Guardian Angel, people around you
suddenly stop living. Tell me why?

CHRISTINE

Is something is swirling around in
that logical head driving you crazy?

NEX

Joel and you are like some intertwined ying yang. One inhales the other exhales. People would kill for that.

CHRISTINE

So you are a poet too, Detective Nex. Yes, I would kill for that.

NEX

We have why. The how is a mystery. Question is, how does a woman ten pounds over a hundred kill two men in seconds with no effort.

CHRISTINE

Always about size with you guys.

NEX

Maybe not. Tell me about McKay. Was he on your list?

CHRISTINE

I have no list Nex. What about McKay?

NEX

Medical Examiner said he has a brain aneurysm. Very quick. Died like that!

CHRISTINE

See natural causes. Perhaps he made the wrong choice.

NEX

You are an oasis of calm with death around you. What are you? Some cute version of the Grim Reaper?

Christine laughs at this.

CHRISTINE

I have met him, all moody and morose.

NEX

And I am alive.

CHRISTINE

Maybe you made the right friends.

Nex takes one so Joel's blood vials, points it at Christine.

NEX

You are an enigma, or you are...

CHRISTINE

Dead? Let the words come out your mouth.

NEX

McKay made it personal. I will end it. I mean I will end this.

EXT. CONDO LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Joel walks into the lobby of his building. Two men in suits step in behind him. Joel nods, the men nod back. Joel heads for the stairs, the men take the elevator.

INT. CONDO - MOMENTS LATER

Joel goes over to the window and opens it. The doorbell rings. He opens it expecting Nex. It is the two men from the lobby. VICTOR HANIS and ANDOR GAZDA. They look like men who would watch a hanging for fun.

JOEL

Yes?

HANIS

Joel Christenson?

JOEL

Yes, and you?

HANIS

Victor Hanis and this is Andor Gazda.

JOEL

So how can I help?

HANIS

We have a business matter. We need your help. Can we talk?

Joel opens the door. GAZDA goes over to the window and shuts it.

JOEL

I get the feeling you want something.

HANIS

We are looking for your friend Rebecca Pirlo. We are just old friends.

JOEL

Friends would be stretching it.

HANIS

We saw your name on some of her paperwork. We thought we should ask.

JOEL

Paperwork gentleman, or lab reports?

HANIS

Yes, lab reports.

JOEL

Well, if you saw my name on that lab report it must mean that I did the goddamned work and I wrote the goddamned report. So you guys are not here because Pirlo is your friend.

GAZDA

We want this simple and no problems.

JOEL

So, Pirlo stole my work and offered it to you. Did you pay her? Bet you did. Did you?

Gazda looks and Hanis, and Hanis nods.

GAZDA

We pay, we get a product. No?

Joel laughs. The men look surprised.

JOEL

Listen tough guys, Pirlo double sold, double crossed you.

HANIS

How do you know this?

JOEL

Hard men just like you with a different accents, looking for product. They went away disappointed.

GAZDA

Disappointed?

JOEL

See, Mr Hungarian Gazda, Rebecca Pirlo is dead. Maybe she met men like you, maybe they paid her too. One buyer too many?

HANIS

Dead?

JOEL

Very, here.

Joel gets his phone, brings up the local news. The page shows research doctor murdered at home.

HANIS

Can you make this thing again?

JOEL

In a year, yes. Come back, I sell it to you then.

GAZDA

Why so long?

JOEL

Because she took my notes, my methods, everything, I have nothing. I am at the beginning again.

HANIS

So we have nothing.

JOEL

Nothing.

Gazda and Hanis exchange a couple words, in Hungarian.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Unless...unless...it was not at her house. I know where.

HANIS

You know where. Why tell us?

JOEL

I want my equipment back. Took me two years to build them. She has a boyfriend, tough shit like you. You could get it back. Let me call.

Joel picks up his phone. Gazda grabs his arm. Hanis nods and Gazda releases Joel. Joel picks up the phone and dials Nex's number.

NEX (V.O.)

What up Doctor Blood?

JOEL

Not much.

(MORE)

JOEL (CONT'D)

Hey did your girlfriend Pirlo leave
a large silver case with you?

NEX (V.O.)

You have a blood pressure problem,
Doc?

JOEL

Yes. We are willing to pay big money
to get that case back. Can you bring
it to the lab?

NEX (V.O.)

How many?

JOEL

Two, maybe two thousand for the case.

NEX

Now?

JOEL

Hey thanks man. Whew you saved my
ass.

INT. LAB - AFTERNOON

Joel uses his card to open the door. The two men follow.
He walks over to his computer, punches up the video of Pirlo
stealing his hard drives.

HANIS

I don't see her take a case.

JOEL

She turned the feeds off that time.

GAZDA

Your friend?

JOEL

He will be here. We wait.

HANIS

So what is this thing you do?

JOEL

We make blood. New blood keeps you
alive, strong or it can make an
athlete run all day.

There is a soft knock on the door. Joel opens the door,
steps aside to let Nex in. Nex is carrying a silver case.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Damn, you found it. Thanks!

NEX

Who are these people? You said two thousand dollars.

NEX (CONT'D)

I asked dude. Who are these people?

JOEL

We are just doing business. I just want my equipment back.

NEX

No witnesses Doc, step outside give me two grand, take the case.

Joel walks to his table, opens a drawer pulls an envelope with lab slips, gives it to Nex.

Gazda steps to the table pulls another envelope of lab slips.

INT. LAB HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Before Joel steps outside, Gazda pulls a gun, fires at Joel, but Nex shoves him out. Nex pulls his weapon, slips outside, shuts the door. Hanis pulls a large firearm and fires through the door. The door swings open.

NEX

Damn a fucking cannon, run!

Joel does not move. Nex fires two rounds into the open doorway. Hanis fires one shot that tears through the wall next to Joel.

NEX (CONT'D)

Go Doc!

Nex fires two more rounds and pushes Joel down the hall. His radio cackles.

NEX (CONT'D)

Get in here Bird. A shooter and a goddamned cannon.

Hanis and Gazda hear the radio, and come out shooting. Nex is trapped in the next office door. He peers out, but Hanis fires again and blows away corner of the door showering Nex with drywall.

Hanis advances and Gazda covers him. Joel steps back into the hallway with the case.

JOEL

Hey Hanis! Come get it.

Hanis looks up at Joel, fires a shot that goes past his ear. Joel ducks.

Nex shoots Hanis from the door, Hanis falls forward.

Gazda takes two shots at Nex, but is stopped when Bird announces on a megaphone.

BIRD (V.O.)

This is the police, how do you want
to end this?

Gazda takes another shot at Nex and runs through the stairway down the stairs. Nex takes the shells out Hanis' weapon and follows Gazda down the stairs.

INT. RESEARCH BUILDING STAIRWAY - DUSK

Nex chases Gazda down the stairs. He yells to Bird on the radio.

NEX
4th floor, south side, coming down.

BIRD (V.O.)
Ground floor, flush him down.

INT. RESEARCH BUILDING 3RD FLOOR LAB - MOMENTS LATER

Gazda opens the door to the third floor, runs in and hides in the darkened room behind a large sterilizer.

Nex follows, pulls his gun, whips out a flash light and advances slowly into the room. He steps behind a sterilizer and slides along, peering around the corners. He quickly steps past the third sterilizer, and sees the shadow of the man. Nex starts towards the man but his radio goes off.

BIRD (V.O.)
Still waiting Nex.

The shadow moves quickly. Nex looks down to turn his radio off. Gazda hits Nex. Nex hits Gazda twice, knocks him down, points his gun at Gazda, but is hit from behind by a bleeding Hanis. Gazda picks up his gun and points it at Nex.

GAZDA
You tell him, we are going out the north side.

Nex picks up the radio slowly.

NEX
Hey McKay, third floor going out the north side.

BIRD (V.O.)
Okay McKay here, copy that.

NEX
You know you can't make it.

Gazda lifts the gun, points it at Nex's head.

GAZDA
Your backup is gone. Move! Down the stairs.

A dark figure coalesces next to the three men. They turn in surprise.

INT. RESEARCH BUILDING 3RD FLOOR LAB

Gazda points the gun at the figure then at Nex, then back to the figure and fires.

CHRISTINE

Damn! Gazda gonna die!

Gazda loses his gun hand. He watches it bounce on the floor. Gazda loses his arm. He looks at Nex in shock. He crumples to the floor kneeling at Nex's feet.

Gazda looks up weakly at the figure of Christine.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

You are going to have trouble tying your shoe laces.

Gazda loses his head. Hanis groans, slumps weakly to the floor. Christine kicks Gazda's head over to Hanis.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Damn! You were shot. Die already!

Hanis loses his head. The figure turns to Nex.

Nex looks at his gun on the floor. Looks back at the figure.

Christine solidifies. Nex stares.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

Hey Nex.

NEX

What the hell hoodoo voodoo shit is this?

CHRISTINE

Told you to change your name.

NEX

Too late?

CHRISTINE

Nah. I can't kill you Nex. Joel thinks you got style. #needs one black friend.

NEX

You are a goddamn nightmare.

Christine does her best Nex imitation. She gets the pose and the tone.

CHRISTINE

Question is, man sees a dead girl.
What's he gonna do?

Nex manages a grin, picks his radio off the floor.

NEX

Bird, third floor, come on up. Men
down.

Christine disappears into the darkness of the room.

NEX (CONT'D)

Jesus H Allah. A goddamned dead
Ninja woman.

Nex sits on a pallet next to the bodies, hits the side of
his head twice.

NEX (CONT'D)

Nah, shit like this does not happen.

INT. CONDO - NEXT DAY

Joel opens small metal case. He has two silver packs of the
new artificial blood mix.

JOEL

How come you saved Nex, but not me.
I was trash talking some Euro hitman.
I expected you.

CHRISTINE

Who said I didn't? But you don't
know tough guy, do ya?

Joel walks over hugs Christine. Ruffles her hair.

JOEL

Yes you did. Here. This is it.
Success.

CHRISTINE

So it works? Gonna save lives, gonna
get a statue?

JOEL

Statue? No. I want royalties,
monthly deposits, bank drafts, direct
deposits.

CHRISTINE

Come on, you are not that shallow.
You have a bigger problem.

JOEL
Don't understand. What?

CHRISTINE
All these people that will be saved
from dying will piss off your new
friends in the underworld.

JOEL
Just a scheduling problem. We all
die anyway.

CHRISTINE
Those are angry bastards. They have
been pissed for thousands of years,
and you came and stomped on their
turf.

Doorbell. Joel walks over, opens the door without checking.
It is Nex.

INT. CONDO - MOMENTS LATER

Nex pushes open the door.

NEX
Don't you check to see who is at
your door?

JOEL
No need. Bad guys are dead. You
killed them.

NEX
That was stupid, trash talking a man
with a weapon. Where was this badass
bodyguard?

JOEL
Never saw her. Never showed up.

Christine steps out the bedroom.

NEX
There she is.

CHRISTINE
Hello Nex, nice day to be alive eh?

Nex turns, points his finger at Christine. He is about to
ask a question when the doorbell rings. It is Maly.

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)
Hey!

(MORE)

CHRISTINE (CONT'D)

The Flower Lady, that is what he calls you. Never says your name, just Flower Lady.

MALY

Say my name Doc, say my name.

The two women laugh at this.

JOEL

Ok, Maly, this is Detective Nex.

MALY

I heard about you. They like you.

NEX

Like me? So you come here often?

MALY

Is that your best pickup line?

NEX

No, I meant, how well do you know these two? How long?

MALY

Not long, same as you.

CHRISTINE

She makes friends easy.

MALY

Are you going to be my friend Nex? I can see why they like you.

NEX

I get the feeling you people are messing with me.

CHRISTINE

Kinda. You are still struggling with what you know and what you don't want to know.

JOEL

Last week, did you know artificial blood existed? Something new. Yesterday you learned something else.

CHRISTINE

Let it out Nex. Say it, come on, say it.

NEX

OK, Ok, who the fuck here is dead?
You blood Doc, are you dead?

JOEL

No Bro, I am like you, I like football
and beer.

NEX

You lady, Maly, flower lady, are you
dead?

MALY

Not with these boobs I am not.

NEX

Christine Halliday, died 17 years
ago, car accident, you?

Christine disappears. Her otherworld self appears, a large dark amorphous mass and moves towards Nex. Nex reaches out touches the mass. Christine re-appears and taps Nex on the shoulder.

JOEL

Hey, take yer hands off my girlfriend!

CHRISTINE

Are we good? Can we move on?

JOEL

You knew it for a long time Nex, why
not ask?

NEX

Ask what? Hey you, is your missus
dead? So how long you two, since --

CHRISTINE

Since I was

Christine does the broke neck thing. Joel holds back a laugh.

NEX

How the hell can you laugh at death?
Most people are scared of death,
dying, of passing over.

CHRISTINE

You are afraid of the what and the
where. Of what you will become, of
where you will be.

JOEL

I am still don't get it all.

CHRISTINE

Joel accepted. The first time he met me, he took me dancing.

NEX

You were dead then? You did not say she was dead man, you did not say she was dead.

JOEL

I left that part out. Acceptance will come slowly Nex. Let it happen.

NEX

Talking dead and plastic blood. Happens all the time.

INT. CONDO LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christine sits by the window. Nex accepts a drink from Joel.

NEX

So all this work was to bring a dead girl back to life. What about the saving lives speech?

JOEL

No, it really works. It will save a bunch of lives.

NEX

I came here to get you, to destroy you for Mac.

CHRISTINE

McKay is all right. Really. He is waiting for Clare, like I waited for Joel.

MALY

Nex, this girl is solid again, I think these two want to go wrap dumplings.

Nex turns to Joel to ask another question, but Maly takes his arm and leads him out the door.

INT. CONDO - MOMENTS LATER

JOEL

Wow, is she is going to get the third degree?

CHRISTINE

Don't think so. She is going to
reel him in like a fish. He won't
know what hit him.

INT. CONDO HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Maly takes the detective's hand as they walk down the hall.

MALY

You Ok? You seem troubled.

NEX

You knew about them?

MALY

Now you know it too. Walk me home.
This neighborhood is full of ghosts.

NEX

I can't accept this. The world is
not like this.

MALY

I will explain it to you over dinner.
Come on.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT - TWO DAYS LATER

Joel and Christine walk out the park using the stairs to the exit. Nex is at the top of the stairs, he sees them coming, he waits. Christine turns and waits.

JOEL

What?

CHRISTINE

He is here, the angry one, the punisher of demons.

Ouriel appears in a dark swirling cloud, coalesces into a foreboding demon figure.

OURIEL

Yes, I am here. Ruman may count your deeds, but I am here to punish.

CHRISTINE

The Four Fallen decide. Not you. Those are the rules.

OURIEL

Rules? You?

Ouriel sneers at Joel.

OURIEL (CONT'D)

You have no power in the flesh. I have come to cause your death.

CHRISTINE

Fool, you kill him here, you break your bond, you lose your right to eternity.

OURIEL

I am an Original, that cannot be.

Ouriel grabs Joel, but Joel hits him twice, hard. Ouriel lifts his head backs and laughs.

OURIEL (CONT'D)

See, here you are man, and all men die.

Christine transforms and hits Ouriel in the head hard. He steps back, turns to Christine, hits her in the chest hard, and she goes flying twenty feet back into the park.

Ouriel turns to Joel and lifts him off the floor. Nex comes running in, he pulls his gun.

NEX

Stop! Put the man down.

OURIEL

You can see me?

NEX

Yes bitch, put the man down.

Ouriel hisses in annoyance and slaps the gun from Nex, and throws him away like rag doll.

Ouriel turns back to Joel when he is hit by Christine, then again, and again. Ouriel grabs Christine and slams her into the ground.

Joel tries to hits him, but he has no effect.

Ouriel lifts Christine and slams her into the ground and hits her hard in the head into the ground.

Ouriel turns to Joel, picks Joel up and pushes his fingers into Joel's ribs. Joel bleeds into the wet grass.

OURIEL

This world will fade. I will be on the other side. Your punishment has just begun.

Ouriel disappears. Christine rushes to Joel's side, lays him on his back. Joel bleeds through two wounds in his side. Nex struggles to his feet, dazed, he staggers to Joel.

CHRISTINE

Stay alive, you cannot die by his hand, or he will have your power.

NEX

What the hell was that? Not this dead walking talking shit again.

CHRISTINE

He is very ancient from in the beginning of time. He exists to inflict pain.

NEX

Like a demon? That kind of crazy shit? Why is he killing Doc?

CHRISTINE

He will steal Joel's power if he kills him on this side. That thing will own his soul. You must kill Joel. I cannot.

JOEL

Nex, Nex, do this and save us.

NEX

Do what? Your blood, I can go get your blood.

CHRISTINE

Nex, he is dying, but you must kill him or that demon will own him. He will own us. Do it for us.

NEX

What? No, no no! I can't do that.

JOEL

Nex, give me your hand, give me your hand.

Nex takes his backup ankle weapon and puts the gun in Joel's hand.

CHRISTINE

He cannot kill himself. That is rule number one above and below. Do it! Nex!

Joel is fading, his eyes are about to close. Nex slaps him awake.

NEX

Hey, this counts as a good deed, right. When it is my time, I get points right.

JOEL

One thousand points and a pension. Points and a....

A single shot breaks the silence in the park.

EXT. UNDERWORLD DESOLATION

Joel stands up. Christine waits for him. He goes to her. He sees as she really is, a figure of pale blue shimmer.

There are others rising out the dust of the desolation, Some are dark, some are bright, they move slowly to the Valley.

Christine steps inside Joel's shimmer and steps out on the other side.

CHRISTINE

That felt good.

JOEL

This feels familiar, I have been here before many times, You have brought me here many times.

CHRISTINE

I did good! Mr Man, told ya.

JOEL

Who are they?

CHRISTINE

They are like you, the new dead.

Christine nods toward the Valley, where the newly dead are headed.

EXT. DESOLATION VALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Joel and Christine watch from the hill as the dead stream into the valley and are separated and sent on their way. Some to the left, some to the right.

CHRISTINE

Ruman takes account of all your deeds. He has a list of all the rules you have broken.

JOEL

That list must be long. Punishment?

CHRISTINE

You have proven that they cannot hurt you. Ouriel can only punish demons, and the Lost. And you are not lost. You confuse them.

EXT. DESOLATION VALLEY ALTAR

The Four Fallen wait for Joel and Christine. Ruman steps forward. Christine is lifted onto the altar.

Ouriel steps down in front of Joel looks into him.

JOEL

No, you don't, you do not own this soul.

OURIEL

I left you a dying husk, waiting to step over.

JOEL

I did not come here by your hand. You broke your own rules. Once again you have nothing.

RUMAN

Ouriel the council will decide. You damn us to another thousand years if you do.

OURIEL

We have been here for a thousand thousand, another thousand years does not matter. Breaking the bonds that keep us here is all that matters.

JOEL

We should finish that battle we started.

RUMAN

No!

Ouriel takes his place among the other Fallen. Ruman turns to Christine.

RUMAN (CONT'D)

You have broken the rules of separation. You have opened doorways between the quick and the dead that must be closed.

CHRISTINE

I would have broken them until my purpose was fulfilled.

RUMAN

And you, you have broken the rules that bind the heavens and below. We were cast here, you come of your own will.

Joel appears on the altar.

JOEL

I will break those rules until her purpose is fulfilled.

RUMAN

We have no power over you, your destiny is to pass from here into the other existence. Her punishment is to remain here and serve us.

JOEL

I have no destiny without her. If she stays, I stay. I will stay and break you and your rules for eternity and a day.

The Four Fallen turn to each other and Ruman steps forward again.

RUMAN

We are bound to this place, but we have power here and below, but none above. We have decided. This we can do.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Seven years hence.

Nex walks up to Maly, sits on the park bench beside her.

MALY

You done chasing criminals today?

NEX

Yep, I put them all away. It starts again tomorrow.

MALY

You see evil all day, it darkens your spirit.

NEX

Don't start with do something for my soul again. Sell flowers with you?

MALY

Yes, it is time to value this life. It prepares you for the next.

A six year old girl runs up to Nex.

GIRL

Daddy, daddy, we don't have ice cream.

NEX

Jeez, you could at least say Dad, I miss you, Dad, I love you Dad.

Nex picks her up and spins her around. A mother and six year old boy come walking by and sits on the next bench. It is Clare without the dreadlocks, looking very PTA. Nex does not recognize her. Maly waves to the little boy.

MALY

Hi!

CLARE

He is a little shy sometimes, but when he starts talking whew. He bugs me every day to come here.

NEX

Clare?

CLARE

Oh hi, detective. You look different.

NEX

Now I have to shave every day. You never called. I told you to call. I told you anything you need. Why not?

CLARE

It was too sudden and hard. I went back home, had a son, went to school.

MALY

Hey you, stop that! Leave her alone. Always the questions.

Maly touches the boy gently on the head.

MALY (CONT'D)

Are you going to say hello?

The little boy reaches into his bag, picks out an orange and brings it and gives it to the little girl.

MALY (CONT'D)

Did you say thank you?

GIRL

Thank You Joel.

Maly reacts, smiles, looks at the boy closely, smiles knowingly.

NEX

I bet your name is Rumpelstilkin or
Pumpkin, something like that.

BOY

No. But you can guess for a thousand
points.

NEX

Ok, a thousand points it is then
little man.

Maly gets up and sits on the bench next to Clare, shakes her
hand. The two children run off to play. Maly watches their
interaction.

MALY

I think they are going to be great
friends. We were waiting.

Clare looks a little perplexed, then smiles.

CLARE

Waiting for us?

MALY

Yes, now everything is as it should
be.

Maly looks at Nex and sees his confusion.

MALY (CONT'D)

Doc.

Nex turns to watch the children play.

NEX

That would make our daughter--

MALY

Yes.

Nex walks towards the children.

NEX

Shit like this is not supposed to
happen.

FADE TO BLACK