

DAGON'S ILLUSION

Pilot Script for a Supernatural Television Series

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Based on the novel and dramatic podcast
Dagon's Illusion with Coleman Luck

Registered WGA

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 INT. TOWER ROOM - NIGHT

1

Darkness. A roar of thunder.

A strange glow illuminates a man in his early 40's lying in a recliner chair with his eyes closed. He is viciously handsome with the intensity of a human Doberman. His dark hair lies matted as though he has just come from a long run in the rain. Or he is sweating from a terrible fever. This is ROBERT DAGON.

There is the sound of a beating heart.

DAGON (V.O.)

The Ancient Ones understood.
But we no longer believe what
they told us. The great
cataclysms that destroyed their
world came from outside the
world. And it was evil that
brought them.

CU DAGON'S FACE

The beating of the heart grows louder. His eyes move rapidly beneath his lids and his breathing grows deeper.

Slowly, an ethereal face appears just beneath his skin. It is Dagon's but in this face the eyes are open. From out of the beating heart comes a deep VIBRATION and an ethereal body rises from Dagon's flesh. It is attached to its source by a luminous silver cord. The body is a glowing duplicate of himself. For a moment, the second Dagon hangs above the form lying in the chair. He turns and looks down at it. Then he looks upward...and vanishes. The silver cord stretches up into the darkness.

The journey has begun.

2 EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

2

The ethereal body of Robert Dagon is high above the city of New Orleans. Beneath him is an ocean of glowing lights. But there is a disturbing strangeness about them. Out of them appear thousands of tiny, blood-red lightning bolts. They streak upward and vanish. With them comes an eerie sound. It is thousands of distant, echoing cries.

DAGON (V.O.)

The Ancient Ones understood.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

DAGON (V.O.) (CONT.)

They knew that when living
things die their spirits cry
out and streak upward like
burning flames.

Once more, he vanishes.

3 EXT. OUTER SPACE ABOVE THE EARTH - NIGHT

3

Now Dagon is high above the planet. The entire earth is covered with a sea of blood-red lightning bolts. Heavy clusters like fountains of death gush from all the cities.

DAGON (V.O.)

The Ancient Ones knew that the
whole world is dying.

POV DAGON

He turns and flies east toward the rising sun.

4 EXT. HIGH ABOVE THE CONTINENT - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

4

Below him is Florida. He moves beyond it out over the Atlantic. Then he stops and looks down.

The day is cloudless. Suddenly, he streaks down until he is several hundred feet above the water. Beneath him on the surface lies an undulating mass like a silver mantle. It is millions of dead fish, floating and rotting.

DAGON (V.O.)

And death is the sacrifice
demanded by evil.

He drops down until he is twenty feet above the sluggish, reeking mass. Slowly, it parts. He stares into the darkness of the ocean.

Far below, a blood-red light appears. There is a terrible groan as though the mantle of the earth is splitting. The light grows brighter. It is flowing upward.

DAGON (V.O.) (CONT.)

It was evil that created them,
the evil of the Fallen. And
it is evil that is calling
them again.

There is a hideous, echoing shriek. In the ocean appears a swirling vortex and all the dead fish are sucked into it. Then comes a roar that rises into thunder.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Out of the depths, she appears.

Surrounded by black clouds, and clothed with lightning, is a gigantic, shimmering form of incredible beauty with streaming hair and great, burning wings. Exquisite eyes of fire, stare outward as though awakening from a long sleep.

With another thunderous shriek, she grows thousands of feet tall. High above the ocean a raging, swirling dance begins. And roaring clouds are born.

5 INT. TOWER ROOM - NIGHT

5

Robert Dagon's ethereal body sinks into his flesh and vanishes. His eyes open.

DAGON
Morgulass...spirit of the
Nephilim.

6 EXT. STREET LEADING TO DAGON'S ILLUSION (TRACKING) - DAY

6

Endless thunder and lightning.

Sheets of rain pelt ancient trees on a street in the Garden District of New Orleans. Long strands of moss whip and swirl in the wind. Generations ago expensive carriages manned by slaves in livery drove down this street. But now it is empty. The new generation of wealth that lives here has run from the coming hurricane.

At the far end of the street is the gated entrance to a great, old mansion, one of the crown jewels of New Orleans. A sign in front reads:

DAGON'S ILLUSION - THE HEART OF MAGIC AND THE BLUES.

Next to the words is the symbol of a broken labyrinth.

7 EXT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - DAY

7

Like an aging goddess, she rises above the trees. The mansion is no longer the home of a family. Years ago, it became Dagon's Illusion, the most successful nightclub in the city. But this day every window is boarded. In the driveway, a single Mercedes van sits with its engine running. Thunder crashes and the rain falls harder.

8 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - MAIN FLOOR - DAY

8

The main floor of the club is empty. Only two small lamps struggle against the boarded-up darkness. But, even in the heavy shadows, this is a fascinating place. The rooms have been divided into performing venues. Most are fairly small, but one is large. Long ago it was the grand ballroom.

In Dagon's Illusion, world-renowned artists of music and magic perform their mysteries. And when they leave, their faces remain on the walls. The main hallway is lined with brilliant posters. Musicians and magicians hang side by side. Beneath them are lovely, old display cases. Normally they would be filled with memorabilia. But now they are empty, their contents packed away.

Voices come from one of the rooms. A man and woman are arguing loudly.

ELLISON (O.S.)

We are equal partners and we make equal decisions.

DAGON (O.S.)

About business. This is personal.

ELLISON (O.S.)

Personal? You don't think your death might have an impact on our bottom line?

DAGON (O.S.)

Forget our bottom line. When this is over all we'll be doing is suing the insurance company.

Into the hall stalks a tall woman in her late thirties dressed in an expensive running suit. She could have been a high-fashion model, except that her flashing eyes are incapable of holding a single vapid look. This is ELLISON CARTER. She is ice and fire, charm, brains and beauty, with a withering tongue, especially when dealing with idiots...such as the man walking beside her.

Robert Dagon is unshaved and dressed like a wealthy derelict. But in his eyes there is a strange darkness that whispers of danger. Somehow all of it comes together to create a facade of esoteric brilliance that flickers with enough fake, boyish vulnerability to drive stupid women absolutely wild. But Ellison Carter is not a stupid woman.

DAGON (CONT.)

We are wasting time.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

ELLISON

No, you are wasting time.
 Have you gone completely insane?
 Because of some stupid-ass
 fantasy you're going to sit
 here until the walls fall down?

DAGON

I can't go, Ellie.

ELLISON

Give me one damn reason. And
 none of the magical nonsense
 that you feed to the crowds.

DAGON

All I can tell you is that
 I've got to stay.

ELLISON

Then I'm staying with you,
 Robert. Let's just drown like
 a couple of pigs in a sewer.

From outside comes the sound of a horn.

DAGON

Your parents are waiting. Do
 you want to kill them? Get
 the hell out of here. Leave!

He pulls open the front door. Instantly, they're engulfed in
 wind and rain. She has no choice and she knows it. As she
 stalks out, she snarls at him.

ELLISON

If you die, so help me God,
 I'll find you in hell and murder
 your ass.

DAGON

Love you too. Drive safe.

Giving him a last, hateful look, she runs to van.

DAGON (CONT.)

DON'T FORGET EUSTACE.

He closes the door down to a crack, then watches as the van
 drives away.

9 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

9

Robert Dagon climbs the main staircase of the mansion. The wall beside it is covered with dark and mysterious paintings - the work of a great artist. Spread out is an ascending hierarchy of demons and angels rising in a collage from hell to heaven.

10 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

10

He leaves the staircase and enters the second floor. This level is an exclusive dinner club. Switching on a light, he steps behind a lovely, old Victorian bar. He opens a locked cabinet. From inside he removes a crystal rocks tumbler and a bottle of Johnny Walker Blue. Pouring two fingers neat, he takes a sip. As the wind howls, he looks around.

This is his world. On the walls hang half a dozen posters and his face is on every one. He is The Amazing Dagon...Master of Mental Illusion, Man of Incredible Power who can control minds and escape from hell itself.

On one poster, a small research submarine is trapped at the bottom of the ocean. Dagon's face is visible through the thick glass.

CAN THE AMAZING DAGON ESCAPE FROM 1000 FATHOMS IN THE TRENCH? FIND OUT THURSDAY AT 8.

On another he's chained in a pit filled with cobras. One sits on his chest staring down at his face.

CAN THE AMAZING DAGON ESCAPE THE PIT OF SERPENTS? FIND OUT WEDNESDAY AT 9.

On a third, he's strapped in a gas chamber with the fumes rising around him.

CAN THE AMAZING DAGON ESCAPE THE CHAMBER OF DEATH? FIND OUT SUNDAY AT 7.

But, somehow, the Robert Dagon behind the bar doesn't look quite like the hero in the posters. In his eyes, there is steely sadness. It's the look of a man who feels no fear because he can't feel much of anything at all.

From under the bar, he takes out an odd deck of cards. The colors on their faces are reversed. The backgrounds are black, while the symbols are white and blood-red.

With the touch of a professional, he ribbon-spreads the deck face up. Then, with a single flip, he turns the spread face down. On the back is his personal symbol...the broken labyrinth.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

Closing his eyes, Dagon moves his hand slowly back and forth above the spread. Finally, with one finger he stabs down on a random card. Opening his eyes, he pulls it out and turns it face up.

It's a single-ended King of Spades with the head of a skull. His eyes narrow. With a flip, he turns all the remaining cards face up. The rest of the deck is now blank. As he stares at them, the wind rises into a shrieking moan.

Ripping the Death King in half, he throws the pieces to the floor.

DAGON

Challenge accepted. Game on.

He stalks away.

11 EXT. ELLIE'S VAN DRIVING IN THE NINTH WARD - DAY

11

It's raining harder and the wind is fierce. Trash and debris blow across the road. Thankfully, there are no other cars present.

12 INT. ELLIE'S VAN - DRIVING - DAY

12

Ellie is behind the wheel. She struggles to keep the van going in a straight line. In the front passenger seat is her father, BILL CARTER, a man in his late 70's. In the back seat is her mother, ANNIE CARTER, also late 70's. Both older people are very frightened. It's white knuckle time. Annie is so scared she pulls a sweater over her head.

ANNIE CARTER

I can't look. Oh, God, we're going to drown.

ELLISON

Mother, please...

BILL CARTER

Ellie, would you like me to drive?

ELLISON

No, dad.

BILL CARTER

You're sure? You never did drive very well in bad weather. Remember when you rolled the car?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

ELLISON

I was seventeen in a snow storm.
I'm driving just fine.

BILL CARTER

All right, if you say so.
Just remember to turn into a
skid and not away from it.

Ellie shakes her head.

ANNIE CARTER

(peeking from behind
the sweater)

Why does he live in this part
of town? It's a horrible slum.

ELLISON

I don't know. Why does he do
anything? When he decides
something, you can't move him
with a forklift.

They pull up in front of a tiny decrepit house. Bill starts
to get out.

BILL CARTER

I'll get him.

ELLISON

No, he might not recognize
you.

BILL CARTER

What are you talking about?
He's seen me a hundred times.

ELLISON

You were in the room 100 times
when he was present. That
doesn't mean he's ever seen
you.

She jumps out and heads to the front door.

13 EXT. EUSTACE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

13

Pulling open the screen, Ellie pounds on the door.

ELLISON

Eustace, it's Ellie. Open up.

No answer. She tries the door. It's unlocked. She rushes
in.

14 INT. EUSTACE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

14

The house has only four shabby rooms with almost no furniture. Ellie goes from room to room.

ELLISON

Eustace, where are you? I'm not playing games. If you're hiding, come out right now or you're gonna be sorry. I'm leaving and if you don't come, you could die.

(beat)

Oh God, Eustace, where are you?

The house is deserted. She looks out the back door. Nothing.

15 EXT. EUSTACE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

15

Ellie runs from the house to the van and jumps in.

16 INT. ELLIE'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

16

She pulls the van back into the street.

BILL CARTER

Where is he?

ELLISON

(almost in tears)

I don't know. Gone. He has some other place where he does his art. He won't tell us where it is. He calls it the Hut.

ANNIE CARTER

He really does need to be institutionalized, dear. Anyone that big with such a pea-brain should be chained and surrounded with guard dogs.

ELLISON

Mother!

ANNIE CARTER

(whimpering)

Because of that retarded monster, we're probably going to die.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

ELLISON

Stop calling him a retarded monster. And we're not going to die.

BILL CARTER

Annie, maybe you should put that sweater back over your head. We don't want to distract her from her driving. You know how she does in bad weather.

ANNIE CARTER

I certainly do.

ELLISON

I'M GOING CRAZY. Will everybody just be quiet!

ANNIE CARTER

(pulling the sweater
back over her head)

Of course, you never listen to me anyway.

Ellie grits her teeth and tries not to crash the van. As she drives, she touches a button and turns on her phone.

17 INT. DAGON'S PRIVATE SUITE - DAY

17

The great mansion trembles in the wind. Robert sits in a large chair in his third floor suite. His eyes are closed as though meditating.

The rooms are an extension of the man - exquisite leather, stained-glass, cases filled with odd books and artifacts, and a wall-hanging covered with mystical symbols - Sumerian, Egyptian, Celtic, Chinese, all circling a mandala. The rooms are exactly what they appear - the lair of a Master Magician.

But in these rooms there is only one poster. It's an enlargement of a front page from the Chicago Tribune. The banner headline reads: MENTAL ILLUSIONIST MURDERER ESCAPES FROM SUPERMAX. Beneath it is the subhead: "Master Magician Robert Dagon Vanishes From Cell."

Dagon gets up, walks across the room and slides open a hidden panel on the wall. Behind it is a safe. Quickly, he works the combination and opens the door. Inside is an ancient wooden strongbox banded with iron and secured with a rusting lock. Suddenly, his cell phone rings. Irritated, he pulls it out.

(CONTINUED)

DAGON

Dagon.

Ellie's voice crackles out at him. She's yelling to be heard over the storm.

ELLISON (O.S.)

(yelling)

ROBERT...ROBERT...ARE YOU THERE?

DAGON

I'M HERE.

ELLISON (O.S.)

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH YOU.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?

DAGON

YES, BUT YOU'RE BREAKING UP.
WHERE ARE YOU, ELLIE?

ELLISON (O.S.)

EUSTACE....

But the phone goes dead.

DAGON

ELLIE? ELLIE!

(to himself)

What the hell has Eustace done
now?

He tries calling her back. It doesn't go through. With a dark look, Dagon puts the phone away. Removing the strongbox from the safe, he sits down in his chair. From his pocket, he pulls out a rusted key. Carefully, he inserts it. It takes a moment of turning and jiggling, but finally, the lock drops open. He lifts the lid. Instantly, a strange, low hum fills the room.

Inside, are three ugly sculpted lumps. Each is round and larger than a fist. Cautiously, Dagon picks one up and stares at it. Serpentine fossils appear to extrude from inside.

DAGON (CONT.)

Worm stone.

He sets it on the table, then lifts the second one. Two vaguely froglike shapes have been melded into one vile form. Their eyes seem to stare at him.

DAGON (CONT.)

Frog stone.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

Setting it on the table, he removes the last. Interwoven in it are four twisted, half-human faces.

DAGON (CONT.)

God stone.

He sets it with the others, creating a triangle. Mumbling strange words, he touches each stone.

DAGON (CONT.)

Soralash, soralash, leraxu,
vorilian...

(beat)

Soralash, soralash, leraxu,
morashtiban.

Then he leans back in the chair and closes his eyes. Opening his eyes, he picks up the God stone. It is glowing. There is a ROAR, A FLASH OF LIGHTNING...and the room goes dark.

18 INT. LUXURIOUS PENTHOUSE IN SKYSCRAPER - DAY

18

As the storm rages outside, a man in his mid-60's lies on a massage table. Once he was good-looking, but that was long ago. He has tried hard to maintain his youth with no success. His hair has been dyed very black and pulled back in a man bun. As he stares upward, there is a frightening darkness about him. This is DR. JACK CARSONS.

Standing above him is gorgeous woman in her mid-30's. Though she is very beautiful there is weakness in her eyes. This is AMELIA CORNELL. In her right hand, she holds a syringe with a long needle.

Tears begin running down Carson's cheeks.

CARSONS

(with deep emotion)

We've done it. We've done it.
It took so long, but she is
here, Amelia. I can feel her
presence above us. Her power
is growing and she is not alone.
The last great battle has begun
and we are the Archons of
Vision. I need to see him. I
need his strength. Send me to
the Garden of Joy.

Carefully, the woman slides the needle into a vein on his arm. The liquid enters his body. He gasps and chokes. Then he groans. Closing his eyes, he sees The Deepening.

The room vanishes in darkness.

19 ROARING REALITY OF DMT

19

Out of the darkness, they come. Patterns streak toward him. Complex, rushing, color within color. Chronons. Particles of time. Chaos. The Bridge of Realities. An avalanche of spirals scream toward him melting into the rushing war of the Time Wave.

Carsons screams.

The vision changes. The twisting patterns meld into lovely serpent rainbows. A blizzard of vipers weaves into the double helix of Time/Matter drawing all existence into the Inexorable Singularity.

Then it fades. Everywhere there is soft, lovely singing.

20 INT. GARDEN OF JOY - DAY

20

Slowly, Jack Carsons awakens. He is seated in a chair that has been carved from rock. It is covered with exquisite vines and flowers. He is in a garden so beautiful it could be Eden. Flying around him in slowly turning circles are tiny serpents with wings. Their bodies flow with iridescent light. The singing is coming from them.

Carsons looks around drinking in the beauty. Slowly, as though in a dream, he stands and begins walking. The garden is exquisite and flying serpents are everywhere.

Moving through the trees, he enters a large clearing. Above him rises the source of insatiable longing, a single tree that seems to reach to the stars and blazes with inexpressible Majesty. For it is far more than a tree. Its leaves and branches and limbs are the feathers and flesh and bones of a single ten-thousand-headed serpent. In an endless dance, they weave in the double helix of the Time/Wave Lord. From the tree comes the singing of angels.

Carsons shrieks in ecstasy, falls on his face and worships. The singing deepens.

21 EXT. STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS - DAY

21

With a terrifying rage, bands of the hurricane sweep through New Orleans. Signs are ripped off buildings and tree limbs streak through the air.

22 EXT. EUSTACE'S SHACK - DAY

22

Behind an abandoned warehouse in the Ninth Ward squats a pitiful shack. Mounds of old tires, trash and rusting junk hide it from the street. Sheets of rain tear at the shingles and wind hammers the walls. With each blast it looks like the building is going to fall apart.

23 INT. EUSTACE'S SHACK - DAY

23

Inside the shack flashes of lightning reveal a bizarre room. The walls and ceiling are covered with thousands of eerie paintings tacked upside down, sideways and crossways as though an art gallery has been plastered by a tornado. All are portraits, monstrosities of towering beauty and evil, faces of angels and demons raging in silent, screaming colors. Each is so real it could be a life study from another dimension. All bear a deep resemblance to the paintings on the walls of the mansion staircase. And all of them are being destroyed.

In the flashing darkness, hunched over a table covered with artist's materials, sits a huge, hulking form. With each flash, his wild hair and beard are silhouetted, but his face is not seen. This is EUSTACE TWINCH. He's soaked to the skin, and, sits as though frozen. But then, he snorts and shakes himself like a giant dog.

EUSTACE

Nose. Nose-nose. NOSE!

His nose is dripping. He sneezes and wipes it on his soaked T-shirt, then he hunches over again.

In his hand is a pastel crayon. He's trying desperately to finish a tiny detail on a portrait. But the paper is wet and the color isn't taking. He's drawing a face of ethereal beauty. It's a young woman and her eyes are closed either in sleep or death.

Suddenly, a blast of wind smashes a window, covering him with glass and ripping the portrait in half. For a moment, the hulking man sits frozen, then he starts shrieking with laughter.

EUSTACE (CONT.)

MOREGLASS, MOREGLASS, TRICKED
YOU SO, TRICKED YOU SO.

Choking with laughter, he begins banging his head on the table until it splinters. The slashed masterpiece drops into the filth.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Slowly, he rises to his full height of almost seven feet. For a moment, in the lightning, his face becomes visible. He's young, no more than 25. Small, narrow eyes stare out beneath thick brows. With a roar, he rushes out into the storm.

24 EXT. EUSTACE'S SHACK - CONTINUOUS

24

Instantly, he is lifted and thrown head first into the muck. But with the strength of sheer fury, he battles his way back up. As debris swirls around him, he raises his fists and SCREAMS at the sky.

EUSTACE
FRICKIN' FRUCKIN' MOREGLASS,
SO YOU SO YOU SO YOU. HA, HA,
HA, TOO LATE, ALL FINISHED.
FRUCKIN MOREGLASS. SO TIME,
SO TIME, SO TIME, TIME TIME.

With a snarl, he plows through the storm to the street. With bared teeth, he struggles on.

25 EXT. ELLIE'S VAN DRIVING ON INTERSTATE 10 - DAY

25

The freeway is empty except for Ellie's van. They're next to Lake Pontchartrain. Water is blowing into the road. Several times they almost crash.

26 INT. ELLIE'S VAN - CONTINUOUS

26

As Ellie struggles to drive, suddenly, her father leans forward and stares up at the sky.

BILL CARTER
What the heck is that?

Ellie bends over the wheel to look...and stares in amazement.

High above, a vague, churning shape the size of a mountain is slowly taking form. In the black clouds and lightning above the lake swirls a gigantic figure with burning wings. Around and around it flies with its arms outstretched and its hair streaming. Annie stares at it.

ANNIE CARTER
(shrieking)
OH, GOD, OH, JESUS HELP US.

In great circles of burning mist the being swirls faster and faster.

ELLISON
She's...dancing.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

In spite of the terror, there is a horrifying beauty about it. As the creature sweeps back and forth, suddenly, she swoops down over the van and, for an instant, Ellie sees her face.

Violet eyes of fire are veiled in lightning. Crimson lips are streaked with flames. In her is savage loveliness and endless hunger, the ravishing splendor of an angel from hell. For an instant, the woman and the seraphim stare at each other.

Then, the wheels of the van leave the ground. For a moment, all around them is fire and lightning. But, suddenly, there is silence and darkness.

And out of the darkness comes the sob of a little girl.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

27 INT. ELLIE'S VAN - NIGHT

27

Ellison Carter awakens and it isn't pleasant. Her hands are gripping the steering wheel and her head is reeling. Her eyes won't focus. Slowly, her vision clears. She swings around and stares. Her parents are gone.

ELLISON

What?

(beat)

Dad? Mom?

The interior of her van is ripped to shreds. The seats are caked with filth and she can barely see through the grime-encrusted windows. She is parked somewhere. A city street. Outside there is moonlit darkness. She squints through the windshield. Black skyscrapers stand silhouetted against a giant moon. Then she hears the sound of a little girl crying. Her jaw clenches and her eyes harden.

ELLISON (CONT.)

So that's what this is.

Grabbing the door handle, she pulls it and shoves. A rusting groan echoes in the stillness. Jumping out, she slams the door.

28 EXT. STREET IN THE CITY OF THE MAGI - CONTINUOUS

28

The slam thunders in the stillness. The sobbing is louder. Ellie stares up at the black skyscrapers. There is not a single light anywhere except the moon.

ELLISON

(snarling)

YOU WANT TO DO THIS, COME ON
DOWN.

In a seething rage, she stalks down the street toward a corner. A strange light appears high above. Between the buildings hangs a circle of seven stars and they are slowly turning.

ELLISON (CONT.)

YOU FILTHY BASTARDS!

The circle descends between the buildings and is lost from view. With a scream of rage, Ellie runs around the corner.

29 EXT. ELLIE'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

29

The circle is hanging low above the street. Beneath them in their light stands a terrified little girl. As she stares up at them, she sobs. (This is LITTLE ELLIE.) As Ellie runs toward them, the seven stars transform into seven glistening shapes. Each is tall and thin and wears a robe with a cowl that hides its face.

ELLISON
I'M OVER HERE, YOU SCUM. LEAVE
HER ALONE. LEAVE ME ALONE.

But before she can reach them, the glistening figures rise in the air taking the little girl with them. Ellie screams in rage as she watches them fly away. Clenching her fists, she trembles and sobs.

There is a crash of thunder and everything goes black.

30 INT. ELLIE'S VAN - DAY

30

Ellie awakens sitting in her van gripping the steering wheel and sobbing. Sheets of rain are pounding on the roof and windows. Jerking around, she sees her parents. They are staring at her with such horror that they can't speak.

ELLISON
Dad, mom...are you okay? What
happened? Where are we?

She looks out. They're parked in the middle an empty Interstate. Finally, her father croaks...

BILL CARTER
Where-where'd you go?

ELLISON
What do you mean?

BILL CARTER
That...thing...in the sky. It
picked us up...and you vanished.
Then we landed...and you're
back.

ELLISON
Can't talk. We've gotta get
out of here.

Starting the engine, she drives away.

31 EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - DAY

31

The hurricane is raging in a section of small, shabby businesses. All are boarded up. As lightning and thunder crash and roar, the hulking form of Eustace Twinch fights through the storm in water up to his waist. He is a huge man, but it takes all his strength to keep from being swept away. As he struggles, he is raging. After every blast he screams and shakes his fist at the sky.

As weird as it seems, it's as though the thunder and lightning answer him. Lightning strikes a tree not far away. It falls, but misses him.

EUSTACE
HA, HA, YOU MISSED, MISSED.
MISSED ME. PISS-PISS-PISS ON
YOU, FRUCKIN' MOREGLASS.

Wiping his eyes, he looks across the street. A sign on the wall of a building reads: LATROZH MORTUARY - SPECIALISTS IN CREATIVE ARRANGEMENTS. The front door is open. A casket floats out. Two more are floating nearby.

EUSTACE (CONT.)
HA, HA, HA, SEE, YOU SEE?
EUSTACE FIND IT. IT'S TIME,
TIME, TIME.

He heads toward the mortuary.

32 INT. MORTUARY - MOMENTS LATER

32

Eustace wades into the building. Chairs, sofas, flowers and caskets float in a giant soup. He flops through the debris, suddenly slipping and falling face down into an open casket. He is nose-to-nose with a shriveled corpse.

EUSTACE
YAAAAA!

Flopping out, he dumps the casket and the body falls on top of him.

EUSTACE (CONT.)
YUCK! GITTY GITTY AWAY.

Struggling to his feet, he wades out of the lobby.

33 INT. MORTUARY COLD STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

33

Eustace pushes into the mortuary cold storage room. In front of him is a wall of closed metal doors. He begins throwing them open one by one.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

EUSTACE

Where-where-where-where? Gotta
find. Gotta find. Not you,
not you, not you, not you.

He comes to the last door. Opening it, he stares inside, then pulls out the tray. On it lies a covered body. With a look of fierce sorrow, he pulls back the sheet. Tears begin streaming down his cheeks. He whispers...

EUSTACE (CONT.)

Steffie, they do it, they do
it so bad. But time, time
time. Yes, morning time.

On the tray lies a woman with a face of exquisite beauty even in death. It is the face of the portrait that he drew. Pulling out artists pastels from his pocket, he walks over to a wall. He draws a large perfect square and places strange symbols around the edge. As he draws, he mumbles and hums an odd tune. Four notes in a pattern. Over and over.

34 INT. MORTUARY COLD STORAGE ROOM - MINUTES LATER

34

Eustace's drawing is finished. It is a death's head. Over it is a crimson cross.

35 EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - DAY

35

The huge man stumbles down a street through a rushing river. In front of him, he pushes a white wooden casket. As the wind and rain lash, there is a hellish roar. Down from the sky streaks a bolt of lightning. It smashes into the lid of the casket. Eustace is lifted into the air and blown into the raging water. This time, he does not emerge. The scorched casket floats on.

36 INT. DAGON'S PRIVATE SUITE - DAY

36

Robert Dagon stands in the center of his room. The only light is from three candles in ornate candlesticks that have been carefully placed in a triangle. Beside each one is a sculpted stone with the god stone at the pinnacle. All of them are glowing. Dagon holds an ancient book. As he looks into it, his lips move in a whisper. Suddenly, the stones ripple with fire and a deep humming sound is heard above the storm. The humming changes into an intricate pattern of harmonic tones.

Picking up the god stone, he holds it out in front of him. Then he walks to a narrow door and opens it.

Inside, is a spiral staircase leading upward. By the light of the stone, he starts to climb.

37 INT. TOWER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 37

Dagon emerges from the staircase into the tower room. The ceiling is glass. All around him is a screaming roar and flashes of lightning, he lifts the burning stone.

DAGON
Morgulass...I call you.

High above, the hurricane becomes a slowly twisting vortex. In it appears the lovely terrifying face of the fallen angel. Dagon stares into her eyes.

DAGON (CONT.)
I...BIND...THE DESTROYER.

There is a SHRIEK and a flash. The glass ceiling of the tower is obliterated and Dagon is thrown to the floor. Then, the wind picks him up and throws him down the stairs.

38 INT. DAGON'S PRIVATE SUITE - CONTINUOUS 38

Dagon's apartment is a roaring hell. The boards have been torn from the windows and the glass is shattered. Books, pictures, lamps and furniture are crashing and smashing everywhere. The only thing that hasn't moved are the stones and candlesticks. In the shrieking wind they still burn peacefully. And the harmonic tones are louder.

Gripping the god stone, Dagon tumbles like a piece of debris toward another staircase.

MONTAGE BEGINS

39 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - STAIRCASES - CONTINUOUS 39

Robert Dagon crashes down what seem like endless flights of stairs...deeper and deeper into a world of eerie mist.

MONTAGE ENDS

40 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 40

Finally, he lands in a heap, unconscious, covered with blood and no longer holding the stone. Slowly, the roaring of the storm is replaced with MUSIC. An orchestra is playing a precise minuet.

DISSOLVE TO:

41 INT. MANSION OF 1865 - FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

41

Dagon opens his eyes to a reality that looks like a dream. He's lying on the floor in the main hall of the mansion. But it's not the mansion that he has known. Soft light comes from dozens of candles and oil lamps and mist drifts in the air. He stares around.

Beautiful people dressed in lovely gowns and stiff suits are walking by. Many of the men are wearing officers' uniforms. But, it's like a costume ball. The clothes are from 1865 and the uniforms are of the Confederate Army. The people don't notice him.

Out of the mist walks a woman. Once she was stunningly beautiful and the shadow of that beauty remains. But her hair has fallen out and her skin is covered with the pockmarks of disease and dissipation. Most awful are her eyes. In them is the endless hunger of evil. This is MELISSA MARON. Looking down at Dagon, she smiles.

MELISSA MARON
(with the honeyed
accent of the Old
South)

Robert, my dear, dear friend.
How good of you to come to my
funeral soiree. So many guests
are here to see me die.

She turns. A butler is behind her. He is a middle-aged black man in formal wear. (This is JOSHUA STAPLES.) He is very prim.

MELISSA MARON (CONT.)
If you would be so good as to
show our guest to his room.

JOSHUA
Yes, madam.

Melissa Maron bends down and extends her diseased hand. She is wearing a ring with a crimson half-moon.

MELISSA MARON
May I help you up?

Dagon draws away as though from a viper. The woman softly laughs.

There is a crash of thunder and the vision vanishes in darkness.

42 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

42

Deep gloom. Thunder and lightning crash. Slowly, Robert Dagon begins to regain consciousness. He is a bloody, filthy mess. The stone that he was holding is gone.

POV DAGON

Everything is a blur. He seems to be lying near the staircase in the hall on the first floor of the mansion. The storm is still shrieking. Brown water flows around him.

Between the lightning flashes, a new light appears. A vague form, carrying a flashlight, is fighting through the wind toward him. The figure bends down. It is Joshua Staples, who was the butler in the vision. But now he is dressed like a homeless person. His flashlight scans Dagon's face.

JOSHUA

HEY, YOU DEAD? If you dead,
ain't gonna spend my precious
time messin' with you.

Dagon moans.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Aw crap, you ain't dead. Be a
whole lot easier if you were.
But do I get it easy? Never.
Awright, gotta do somethin'
with you or you're gonna drown
in New Orleans gravy. Come
on, get your butt up, sewer
boy.

The figure drags him to his feet then drapes one of Dagon's arms over his shoulder. Dagon groans.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Yeah, I know, it hurts.
Probably broke your spine and
you're gonna be a multiplegic
for the rest o' your pitiful
life. Too bad. Let's move.
We gotta get higher.

Together, they stumble through the debris toward the staircase.

43 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - STAIRCASES - CONTINUOUS

43

Slowly, they climb.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

JOSHUA
 Fer a skinny dude, you as heavy
 as a ton o' pig poop.

44 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - THIRD FLOOR - MINUTES LATER

44

Out of breath, they reach Dagon's apartments.

JOSHUA
 Lord, why do I get these
 assignments? You got nobody
 else in the world that needs
 to get crapped on?
 (to Dagon)
 You got an attic in this dump?

DAGON
 What?

JOSHUA
 I SAID, HAVE YOU GOT AN ATTIC
 IN THIS DUMP? WE NEED TO GET
 HIGHER.

Weakly, Dagon points to a door at the back. They struggle toward it. Joshua throws it open. Beyond is a steep staircase leading upward.

JOSHUA (CONT.)
 Good Lord-a-mighty, awright,
 let's go. Move your butt.

45 INT. ATTIC STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

45

They start to climb again. Dagon is very weak. He leans heavily.

JOSHUA
 After this one I'm puttin' in
 for a transfer. I hear there's
 an openin' for a gymnastics
 coach at a lunatic asylum.

46 INT. MANSION ATTIC - DAY

46

Finally, they stumble out into a huge attic. Half of it is filled with boxes and furniture brought from down below to avoid the storm. But the other half is the storage area for stage magic illusions. There are mysterious cabinets and tables, steel frames with colorful curtains, sword boxes and a very real guillotine. The man drops Dagon onto a large couch. Then, falls exhausted into a chair.

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA

What'd I do to deserve this?
My karma must look like a
garbage truck full o' dead cow
parts. We'd better hope the
water don't get this high, but
you never know with these kinda
apocalyptic activities.

He shines his light around and sees the magic.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Well, look at this. Just your
average attic with a guillotine.

Not far away are three director's chairs. On each sits a
bizarre puppet that seems to be glaring at them. One is an
ugly dog. The second is a clown that would give children
nightmares. And the third is a witch who bears a striking
resemblance to Melissa Maron. A sign sitting on the floor
beside them reads: THE MYSTERIOUS MINDREADING PUPPETS.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Now there's somethin' you don't
see everyday. Mind readin'
puppets. And they are plug
UGLY. What do you use 'em for,
to torture little kids?

Turning, he shines his flashlight on Dagon. Then, he leans
close, examining his face.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Speakin' o' ugly, you look
like a ratty dog yourself.
Broken nose. Nice set o'
contusions. Probably got your
brains a little concussed.
One of your pupils is kinda
hinky. But, at least there's
no bloody bubbles spewin' outta
your nose. You smell like
toasted poop, but I ain't so
gorgeous myself.

He shifts the beam to his own grinning, bleeding face. Dagon
stares. It's the same man who was the butler in his vision.
Staples' smile grows wider.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Look like you seein' a ghost.
We ain't been formally
introduced yet, have we?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

46

JOSHUA (CONT.)
 Name's Staples, Joshua Staples.
 Pleased to make your
 acquaintance, Mr. Robert Arthur
 Dagon.

He grabs Dagon's hand and pumps it.

47 EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - NIGHT

47

Eustace Twinch isn't pushing a coffin anymore, but he's still fighting his way through the hurricane. Lightning strikes all around him. But now all he does is grunt and groan in rage.

He turns a corner. Ahead is a tall office building. Strangely, the only light to be seen anywhere comes from the top floor. In the mist the glow is very threatening.

POV EUSTACE

From the top of the skyscraper rises a huge, black column filled with lightning that reaches straight up into the storm.

Eustace stares up at it, snarls...then fights his way in that direction.

48 EXT. HELIX CORPORATION - NIGHT

48

Hellbent against the wind, Eustace struggles up to the sleek glass doors of the office building. A logo on the wall intertwines the word "HELIX" with the double-spiral symbol for DNA. Throwing all his weight against a glass door, he smashes through.

49 INT. HELIX CORPORATION - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

49

Eustace lands on the floor in a pile of glass. Struggling to his feet, he sees a sign that points toward the stairs and rushes off in that direction.

50 INT. LUXURIOUS PENTHOUSE - DAY

50

While the storm rages outside, Jack Carsons still lies on the massage table. Amelia sits in a chair beside him, staring at nothing almost as though in a trance.

Slowly, Carsons opens his eyes. Without rising, he looks around. More tears stream down his cheeks. Amelia sees and goes to him.

CARSONS
 (with deep emotion)
 Oh Amelia, I saw it all.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CARSONS (CONT.)

The past, the present and the future. He shared it all with me. He is coming. Our glorious Lord.

Before he can say another word, the door is kicked open with a CRASH. Standing like a drenched monster is Eustace Twinch. When he sees Carsons and Amelia he ROARS like an enraged bull and rushes toward them.

Amelia SCREAMS. Carsons struggles to sit up, but before he can do it Eustace's massive body slams into him and they land on the floor. Amelia tries to escape, but Eustace grabs her ankle. She falls on top of them. Eustace rises holding Amelia by her collar and Carsons by his man bun.

EUSTACE

CAUGHT YOU, NASTY POOPIES.
CAUGHT YOU, CAUGHT YOU.

Amelia shrieks. Carsons stares at the dripping human mass that holds them.

CARSONS

SHUT UP, AMELIA. SHUT UP!

She quiets, but continues whimpering. Carsons tries to speak calmly as though to a child.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Look, whoever you are, you came here because you need help. I am a psychiatrist. That's a kind of doctor. There's a bad storm outside and you are in trouble. We can help you, but you've got to let us go.

EUSTACE

What? What-what?

CARSONS

Your nose is bleeding. You need a bandage and I'll bet you're hungry. Is your tummy growling? We've got food. Do you like money? I've got a hundred dollars here and I'll give to you to spend on whatever you want. Does that sound like fun?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

EUSTACE

Money? Money-money-money?
Ha, ha, ha, ha.

CARSONS

How about dry clothes? You
don't like to be wet and stinky
do you? We'd like to be your
friends, wouldn't we, Amelia?

Blubbering softly, the woman nods.

EUSTACE

Friends? Friends-friends?

CARSONS

That's right, friends. But
friends don't pull each other's
hair. That's not a good thing.
So, let us go and we'll be
friends.

But Eustace doesn't let go.

EUSTACE

Poopy nasties play a game.

CARSONS

A game? We can do that. We
like games, don't we, Amelia?
Let's play a game...as long as
it isn't a hair pulling game.

EUSTACE

Roof game.

CARSONS

What?

EUSTACE

Roof game. Roof game.

Dragging them both, Eustace rushes toward the door.

CARSONS

Wait a minute, wait a minute.
Where are we going?

51 EXT. ROOF OF BUILDING - DAY

51

Still dragging them, Eustace pushes out into the storm on the
roof of the building. Instantly, Carsons and Amelia are soaked.
He drags them to the edge of the roof. Letting go of Amelia,
he screams at Carsons.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

EUSTACE
POOPY NASTY, YOU DO IT, YOU DO
IT.

CARSONS
(shrieking)
DO WHAT? WHAT DID I DO?

EUSTACE
HURT, HURT, HURT HER. KILL
HER. YOU KILL HER.

CARSONS
NO, I DIDN'T. WHOEVER SHE IS,
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. YOU'VE
GOT THE WRONG PERSON.

With a roar, Eustace lifts the shrieking man and throws him over the side. Amelia screams and runs. Eustace pays no attention to her. Leaning out, he watches Carsons fall eight floors and crash through a glass ceiling.

EUSTACE
Big turd go splat.

With a satisfied look, he shambles toward the door. Amelia is already gone.

52 INT. CORPORATE SWIMMING POOL - DAY

52

Eight floors below, Jack Carsons floats face up in the corporate swimming pool. At first it appears that he is dead. Blood flows from his ears and nose forming a crimson halo around his hair that has come loose from the man bun.

As the storm pours in through the gaping hole made by his body, his eyes flutter open. For a few moments, he continues floating then, with a groan, he turns and gropes for the side.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

53 EXT. BATON ROUGE MOTEL - NIGHT 53

Rain is falling hard. The parking lot of an upscale motel is jammed. The no vacancy sign is lit. Among the cars is Ellie's Mercedes van.

54 INT. ELLIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 54

Ellie's parents are asleep on a queen bed and her mother is snoring. Ellie is trying to sleep on the other bed, but she can't. Finally, she sits up. Her father whispers...

BILL CARTER

You can't sleep either?

ELLISON

No.

He gets up and goes to a small table with two chairs. He sits down and Ellie joins him.

BILL CARTER

Ellie, what happened to us back there? Something horrible appeared in the sky, then the van lifted off the ground and you vanished.

ELLISON

Lightning struck almost on us, Dad. We were stunned, that's all. We thought we saw things.

BILL CARTER

I wasn't stunned by lightning. And I know what I saw. Don't lie to me, daughter.

Exhausted, Ellie rubs her eyes.

ELLISON

I don't want mother to be frightened.

BILL CARTER

No need to worry about that. When she wakes up in the morning, she won't remember a single thing about what we saw.

(CONTINUED)

ELLISON

Why not?

BILL CARTER

That's just the way she is.
She blocks every frightening
experience from her memory.
It started a long time ago.
So what happened out there?

ELLISON

I'm not sure. I'm trying to
process it.

BILL CARTER

Talk about it. I've had some
terrifying experiences myself.
Maybe I can help you.

ELLISON

(the words come hard)
Before I came to live with you
and mom, some bad things
happened to me.

BILL CARTER

That first year with us was
tough. You were afraid of a
lot of things.

ELLISON

No, I was afraid of one thing.
I never told you about it
because I was scared you'd
think I was crazy and wouldn't
want me anymore.

BILL CARTER

(shocked)
Ellie, we loved you from the
first time we saw you.

ELLISON

I know that, but I was only
six.

BILL CARTER

Can you talk about it now?

She takes a deep breath.

(CONTINUED)

ELLISON

Before I came to live with you, almost every week I had a night terror. People say they're all in your mind, but I know they aren't. What I saw was absolutely real.

(beat)

I would be asleep and suddenly my eyes would fly open. From that moment, I was frozen. I couldn't cry out or move. It was always the same. Around my bed would be standing seven horrible, glistening *things* that wore long robes with hoods that hid their faces.

(beat)

In my mind, I would shriek for them to go away and leave me alone. But I couldn't make a sound. They would stand there looking down at me, then, very slowly, they would reach down and touch me all over.

She trembles. For a moment, she can't go on.

ELLISON (CONT.)

(with rage)

I...can still feel their fingers. It was like a rape, but not just of my body. They would reach into my mind. I could feel them there...groping, sucking. They got pleasure from my terror. They fed on it. When they were finished, they would lift me in the air and carry me away. And for so long, I couldn't do a *damn thing about it*.

BILL CARTER

I wish you'd told us. This explains so much. Where did they take you? Do you remember?

ELLISON

I've tried hundreds of times, but the memory is completely gone. I think they blocked it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ELLISON (CONT.)

I would wake up in the morning with a fever and covered with sweat. I felt so filthy. But a year after I came to live with you, they didn't appear anymore.

BILL CARTER

Did you tell your birth mother about all of this?

ELLISON

I didn't need to. She knew everything without my saying a word.

BILL CARTER

What do you mean?

Ellie struggles for words.

ELLISON

You...didn't really know anything about her.

BILL CARTER

We knew she had serious emotional problems and couldn't take care of you anymore.

ELLISON

(with a dark laugh
and a terrible
intensity)

She didn't have emotional problems, dad. My mother was evil. She told me that she had given me to them. She said that I belonged to them now. For years I lived with terror every night.

(beat)

I've tried hard to stop hating her.

(beat)

When I was seven years old, I learned how to fight them.

Robert Dagon lies on the couch with his eyes closed. Joshua Staples is lounged in the chair glaring at the old woman puppet.

JOSHUA

That thing's lookin' at me.

He shines his flashlight in her eyes.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

WELL, GO AHEAD YOU NASTY, OLD
BITCH...READ MY MIND. WHAT AM
I THINKIN'? I'll tell you
what I'm thinkin'. I hope you
rot in hell.

The puppet glares back in dead-eyed silence. Dagon lifts his head and stares at him.

DAGON

You're talking to the puppets?

JOSHUA

Been havin' a great
conversation.

Staples gets up and wanders a little way into the magic storage area. He stops in front of the guillotine and runs his finger over the blade.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

You ever think maybe all the
statues and idols we carve in
this world are really evil
monsters alive somewhere else?

He pulls the cord on the guillotine. The blade falls with a thud.

DAGON

Would you leave that alone?

Joshua shines his flashlight around the room and sees several antique oil lamps clustered on a table.

JOSHUA

Those lamps work?

DAGON

Just decorations.

JOSHUA

So, no oil in'em?

Dagon shakes his head. Walking to a lamp, Joshua takes out a cigarette lighter. Lifting the globe, he puts flame to the wick. The lamp starts burning.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (2)

55

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Well, this one's got oil.

As the light flickers, the room is filled with odd, weaving shadows. He lights another one.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

This one too. All right.
Anything to eat up here? I'm
starvin'.

DAGON

There might be some canned
food. Over in that corner.

He points to a corner where a weird, dripping rainbow is painted on the wall. Staples walks over and starts rummaging around.

JOSHUA

What is this? It's Spam.
It's *all* Spam. A hundred cans
of Spam. You run a five star
restaurant and your attic's
full o' *Spam*?

DAGON

I have an employee, that's all
he'll eat.

Joshua holds up a can.

JOSHUA

This is very disappointin',
Mr. Dagon. I have high
standards which I have laid
aside to drag your sorry ass
up here. And all I get is
Spam.

DAGON

Take it or leave it.

As Joshua walks back, he fumbles opening the can. Digging in his fingers, he pulls out a hunk of meat and shoves it in his mouth.

DAGON (CONT.)

I've got a question for you.

JOSHUA

(with a full mouth
and juice running
down)

Shoot.

(CONTINUED)

DAGON

Why the hell are you here?
Why didn't you evacuate the
city like everybody else?

Staples laughs.

JOSHUA

Cause I wasn't here to start
with. I was in Chi Town.
Hitchhiked a day and a night.
Barely made it for the first
rain.

DAGON

Do you have family here?

JOSHUA

Nope. Don't know a soul.

DAGON

Are you crazy?

JOSHUA

(laughing)
Well, the VA docs think so,
but what do they know?
(beat)
You want the truth, Mr. Dagon?
Well, I'll tell you the truth
'cause I think a psychic like
you would understand.

DAGON

I'm *not* a *psychic*. I'm a
mentalist.

JOSHUA

Whatever. Anyway, here's the
straight poop. I been travelin'
the country for the past five
years followin' The Call.

DAGON

The *Call*?

Dagon stares at the man.

JOSHUA

That's what I call it, The
Call. It don't come often,
but when it do, you listen.
No messin' around.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA (CONT.)

So when it came, I got up and got my butt in gear.

DAGON

And this 'call' told you to go drown in a hurricane?

JOSHUA

Naw, it said there was a dumbass psychic who wasn't gonna evacuate when he was 'sposed to and needed help. You know a jackass like that?

DAGON

So you came just to help me?

JOSHUA

Wrong again. You battin' zero today. I came 'cause I don't like pain. You know what happened to Noah when he wouldn't go to Ninevah? He got eaten by a whale.

DAGON

And you think you're Noah?

JOSHUA

There you go. Flunked another test. It wasn't Noah, it was Jonah and it wasn't a whale it was a big fish. I am seriously startin' to question your mental acuity, sir.

DAGON

I think I've died and gone to hell.

JOSHUA

Not yet, Mr. Dagon. But you do stand a very high probability of such.

As he stares at Dagon with hard eyes, he takes another bite of spam.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

56 EXT. CHICAGO ALLEY - NIGHT

56

Moonlight glimmers between old brick buildings. It's cold. Joshua Staples is lying on the cement under a pile of blankets. Only his closed eyes are visible. Suddenly, there is the eerie, sound of beautiful singing like an angel choir. His eyes fly open. He stares.

JOSHUA

Oh, no.

At the entrance to the alley, a brilliant, white mist is forming. In it appears a tall figure dressed in flowing light. Slowly he walks toward Joshua. Finally, he's standing over him. Joshua looks up at him in fear. The ANGEL'S face is lost in the light and the singing is louder.

ANGEL

Get up, Joshua. The time for sleep is over.

JOSHUA

But I just laid down and I been workin' my butt off for days.

(beat)

Oh, all right.

He sits up.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Where am I goin' this time? I gotta be honest, that last gig was nasty. An old folks home full o' senile satanists constantly asking for help drawin' their pentagrams. Gave'em all four points and they didn't know the difference. But it don't get much worse than that. Wouldn't you say I was kinda ready for somethin' at o' Club Med on a nice warm beach drinkin' juleps?

ANGEL

You're going to New Orleans and you've got to get there before the hurricane.

JOSHUA

Before the hurricane? Did you say *before*?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

ANGEL

Yes. And once you get there
you'll be told what to do.

Slowly, the figure vanishes and the singing with it.

JOSHUA

Well, ain't that superb? I
gotta say, the belly of a big
fish is soundin' better and
better.

There is a deep roll of thunder.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Just kiddin'. I'm on my way.

Scooping up his blankets, he heads out of the alley.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

57 INT. MANSION ATTIC - NIGHT

57

Staples is still scooping out Spam. Two empty cans are beside him.

JOSHUA

Mmmm, mmmm. they say Polynesians
love Spam 'cause it tastes
like people with a delicate
flavor o' chicken.

Dagon groans.

DAGON

Do you talk all the time?

JOSHUA

Only when I'm awake. You got
a headache? Your brains a
little concussed?

Before Dagon can answer, from somewhere deep in the house comes a horrible WOMAN'S SCREAM. It's so loud that it echoes above the raging wind. Staples almost drops the Spam.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

THAT...WASN'T...NO STORM.

The hideous SHRIEK comes again. Dagon struggles to his feet. Grabbing the flashlight, he heads for the stairs.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

WHERE YOU GOIN'?

DAGON

To see what that is.

JOSHUA

YOU CAN'T GO DOWN THERE.

Dagon ignores him.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

HEY, WAIT. I'M NOT STAYING UP
HERE BY MYSELF WITH THOSE DAMN
PUPPETS.

Staples hurries after him.

58 INT. ATTIC STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

58

Cautiously and painfully, Dagon makes his way down the stairs. Staples is right behind him.

JOSHUA

So, what are you gonna do if
you find a ax murderer, whack
him with a flashlight?

Dagon doesn't answer.

59 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

59

Wind, rain and debris are blowing through the house as Dagon and Staples emerge from the staircase into the first floor hallway. Even with the flashlight, it's hard to see in the blowing darkness.

A strange shape is visible near the front door. It looks like a long box. Dagon fights his way toward it. When they get close, they see that it's a white coffin covered with mud. It's tipped on its side away from them.

JOSHUA

(yelling over the
storm)

THAT'S A COFFIN, THAT'S WHAT
THAT IS.

They shine the light down. The coffin lid is open. Sprawled on the floor is the body of a beautiful, young woman. It's Steffie. She's wearing a white dress and is as pale as death.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

AND DEAR JESUS, THAT IS A
CORPSE. BUT THIS DON'T SOLVE
OUR LITTLE SCREECHIN' PROBLEM.
SHE AIN'T SCREECHED FOR A DAY
OR TWO.

DAGON

WE DON'T KNOW THAT.

JOSHUA

WHAT DO YOU MEAN WE DON'T KNOW
THAT?

DAGON

THE CLOSEST CEMETERY IS BLOCKS
AWAY. EVEN IN THIS STORM,
THERE'S NO WAY A COFFIN COULD
FLOAT HERE BY ITSELF. HOLD
THIS.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

He hands the flashlight to Staples, then bends down and struggles to pick up the girl.

JOSHUA
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOIN'?
PUT THAT THING BACK IN ITS
BOX.

DAGON
LIKE YOU SAID, DEAD BODIES
DON'T SCREECH.

JOSHUA
SO WHAT ARE WE DOIN' WITH THIS
ONE?

DAGON
MAKING SURE SHE'S REALLY DEAD.
GIVE ME A HAND.

JOSHUA
FEEL FOR A FRIGGIN' PULSE.

DAGON
CAN'T DO IT IN THIS STORM.

Dagon heads for the stairs.

JOSHUA
YOU ARE FLAT-OUT NUTS.

60 INT. MANSION ATTIC - MOMENTS LATER

60

Struggling and grunting, Dagon and Staples stumble into the attic and lay the woman's body on the couch. Then they slump in exhaustion.

JOSHUA
This is even worse than the
senile satanists.

DAGON
What?

JOSHUA
I said that is one cold, dead
carcass. But what do I know?
She's probably just takin' a
little nap after paddlin' her
coffin through a hurricane.

Dagon takes her wrist and feels for a pulse.

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Let me know when you get
somethin' so I can bow at your
feet for raisin' the dead.

DAGON

Shut up.

JOSHUA

Oh, for cryin' out loud. Step
aside. I've had advanced
medical trainin'.

DAGON

Medical training?

JOSHUA

That's right, *advanced* medical
training. You got a problem
with that? Now, if you don't
mind, I need to concentrate.

Carefully, he feels for a pulse.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

You will be surprised to know
that this young woman is no
longer among the livin'.

DAGON

Check for a breath.

JOSHUA

Your concussed brain has gone
shmatters.

DAGON

Just do it.

Joshua bends close to the girl's face. When he is two inches
away, suddenly her eyes flash open and she lets out a horrific
scream. Staples falls backward on his butt. The girl screams
again and starts thrashing.

Dagon tries to grab her, but she smashes him in the face with
an elbow.

DAGON (CONT.)

Give me a hand.

Together, they manage to hold her down. But as soon as they
do, her eyes roll up in her head and she goes limp. The men
sit trembling and panting.

(CONTINUED)

DAGON (CONT.)

Any time you want to bow at my feet...

JOSHUA

Awright, awright, so what are we gonna do here? When she wakes up, she's gonna go crazy again and she's as strong as a bull. We're too old for this, 'specially you.

DAGON

I've got a straight jacket in my escape equipment.

JOSHUA

Will a straight jacket work with a vampire?

DAGON

A vampire?

JOSHUA

Hey, this is New Orleans. Don't that vampire writer lady live here?

DAGON

You are *pitiful*.

JOSHUA

This girl was dead, now she's alive. That spells vampire.

Grabbing the flashlight, Dagon heads for the stairs.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Where you goin' now?

DAGON

To get the straight jacket.

JOSHUA

And leave me with this bloodsucker?

DAGON

If she wakes up, feed her some Spam. Cannibals love it.

61 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - THIRD FLOOR - NIGHT 61

On the third floor of the mansion, the hurricane is blowing with hellish ferocity. Dagon pushes through it.

62 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - THIRD FLOOR STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT 62

Dagon is in a large storage room. The door is closed. But there is constant pounding as flying debris crashes into it. He's rummaging through a large wooden box full of escape equipment. Holding the flashlight in one hand, he pulls out a collection of ropes, old chains, handcuffs, and leg irons.

DAGON

Junk, trash, crap, why do I
keep all of this garbage?

Finally, at the bottom he sees the straight jacket. Dragging it out, he heads for the door.

63 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 63

Dagon leaves the storage room and enters the storm. Suddenly, there is a flash of lightning and he is blown back.

VISION BEGINS

64 INT. MANSION OF 1865 - THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT 64

Slowly, Dagon awakens and struggles to stand up. His head is reeling. The storm has vanished and there is nothing but eerie silence. Stretching away in front of him is a long, grim hall lit only by candles. At the end stands a heavy, carved door that is ajar. From the other side comes a dim, flickering light. Suddenly, he hears eerie, whispering voices. The words are unintelligible as they whisper and laugh. Then one voice emerges.

MELISSA MARON (O.S.)

Robert...Robert...where are
you, Robert? Come to
me...Come...

As though in a trance, Dagon begins walking down the hall toward the door. On the walls hang portraits from the 1800's. One is of Melissa Maron when she was young and beautiful. The whispering laughter grows louder.

For a moment, Dagon stands in front of the door. He doesn't want to go in.

MELISSA MARON (O.S.) (CONT.)

What's the matter, Robert?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

MELISSA MARON (O.S.) (CONT.)

Is the great spirit warrior,
 master of darkness and light
 afraid to come in?

Finally, with a grim look, he pushes open the door and enters.

65 INT. MELISSA MARON'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

65

Dagon is in a bedroom of the Civil War era. A large four-poster bed with heavy, drawn curtains stands in the center. An oil lamp is burning on a table nearby. Everything is covered with dust and heavy cobwebs as though it hasn't been entered in a hundred years. Dagon stares at the bed.

MELISSA MARON (O.S.)

Reality is an illusion, isn't
 it, Robert? Time and space
 are a fool's dream. They exist
 only in our minds. One reality
 lies upon another like layers
 of skin on a corpse. And no
 one is aware. No one
 understands...until a curtain
 parts.

Slowly, an invisible hand draws the bed curtains apart. A billow of foul moths fly out and surround him. He brushes them away.

Lying on the bed is a body in a Confederate General's uniform. It is horribly rotted as though it has been lying there for a century. Lying next to it is the ancient corpse of a woman, turned on her side. Her fingers are frozen dug into the General's face. She has gouged out one of his eyes. Dagon is looking at himself on the bed in the uniform and the female corpse is Melissa Maron. No face in death ever revealed such rage.

MELISSA MARON (O.S.) (CONT.)

A love like ours, so filled
 with hate, is eternal, Robert.
 It isn't love that lasts
 forever. It is revulsion.
 I've left a gift for you, my
 love. But you must search for
 it.

There is another blast of lightning.

VISION ENDS

66 INT. DAGON'S ILLUSION - THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

66

Dagon is lying on the floor and the storm is raging. The flashlight and the straight jacket are beside him.

Grabbing them, he struggles to his feet and stumbles toward the attic door. At the bottom of the staircase, he freezes. Lying on the floor is an old photograph in an ornate frame. It's of him in the Confederate General's uniform with a beautiful woman in a wedding dress. (This is SONIA DAGON.) Gritting his teeth, he picks it up, shoves it under his arm and starts to climb.

67 INT. MANSION ATTIC - A SHORT TIME LATER

67

Dagon is almost finished strapping the unconscious woman into the straight jacket. Staples is looking at the photograph.

JOSHUA

You know, my ex-wife and me had one of these done. It was out in Dodge City. Old west kinda thing. She was a saloon whore and I was a cheatin' gambler. Sorta told the story of our marriage. That was just before I entered an extended fugue state. She took advantage of my impaired faculties to run off with my VA psychiatrist. And people say the government don't help vets.

(beat)

So, where's your wife?

DAGON

I'm not married.

JOSHUA

Oh, I get it. A little dalliance with a server girl.

DAGON

You don't get anything. Not that it's any of your business, but it's someone I lost a long time ago.

JOSHUA

My condolences. From the look o' that picture it was a LOOONG time ago.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA (CONT.)

(beat)
Straight jacket's kinda big on
her, ain't it?

DAGON

It'll do.

As Dagon finishes, the woman awakens and stares up at him.

DAGON (CONT.)

You're awake.

She struggles.

DAGON (CONT.)

It's okay, we're not going to
hurt you. We want to help
you. We've got you in something
to keep you from hurting
yourself.

She struggles harder.

DAGON (CONT.)

Are you thirsty?

JOSHUA

We got some cannibal food.

She just stares at them with an odd, chilling look.

DAGON

I'm Robert Dagon. You're in
the attic of my home. Can you
tell us your name?

No answer.

JOSHUA

We found you unconscious. Do
you know what happened to you?

She starts sobbing and shaking.

DAGON

Hey, it's okay. You're safe
now.

He tries to comfort her. But when he touches her shoulder,
she SHRIEKS and starts thrashing.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

JOSHUA
I see you got a special way
with women, Mr. Dagon.

68 INT. BUILDING STAIRWELL - NIGHT

68

Soaking wet and bleeding from dozens of gashes, Jack Carsons crawls up the building stairs. The worst gash has almost taken off his right ear. It hangs by a hunk of bloody skin. Groaning and gasping for air, he crawls out of the stairwell and through a door into a hall.

CARSONS
Oh god...oh god...damn it.
Damn it. I'm dyin'. I'm gonna
kill him. Oh god, my ear...I'm
gonna find him and kill him.
Gonna chop him up and feed him
to the dogs. My guts...my
head....

69 INT. HALL LEADING TO PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

69

Like a huge bloody rat, Carsons drags himself down the hall to his penthouse door.

CARSONS
Oh god...

He pulls himself up, pushes open the door...and almost falls in.

70 INT. LUXURIOUS PENTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

70

What Carsons sees infuriates him. Amelia is sitting on the massage table in the lotus position with her eyes closed.

CARSONS
WHAT...ARE YOU...DOING?

Her eyes fly open and she shrieks in terror. He stumbles toward her with his ear flapping.

CARSONS (CONT.)
(shrieking)
YOU'RE SITTING
HERE...MEDITATING?

AMELIA
(trembling)
Jack...you're alive.

She starts to sob.

(CONTINUED)

CARSONS
I'M IN AGONY AND YOU'RE
MEDITATING.

AMELIA
He threw you off the roof.
It's a miracle.

With great pain, Carson's eases himself into a chair.

CARSONS
I fell into the swimming pool...
and you didn't even come to
look for me?

AMELIA
(sniffling)
I thought you'd be a bloody
mess splattered all over the
sidewalk and I just couldn't
stand to see it. You know how
I hate blood.

CARSONS
YOU ARE A NURSE.

AMELIA
Oh, baby, you're alive. That's
all the matters. But look at
your ear. It's half cut off.
I think I'm going to be sick.

She starts to gag.

CARSONS
You dumb bitch, stop that or
I'll throw you off the roof
myself. Why are you still
alive?

AMELIA
I don't know. After he threw
you off he just ignored me and
I ran.

CARSONS
I've got broken ribs and I'm
messed up inside. Which was
made much worse because I had
to crawl up eight flights of
stairs. I need help.

(CONTINUED)

AMELIA

Baby, what are we gonna do?
The phones aren't working. I
tried to call the police. Oh
god, who was that monster?

CARSONS

We need mother.

A look of revulsion comes to Amelia's face.

AMELIA

Mother? Oh, Jack, do we have
to?

CARSONS

Do you want me to die in this
chair? Help me up.

He drapes his arm across her shoulders then, together, they stagger to a far corner of the penthouse that's lined with books. Pulling out a large volume, he drops it onto a table and fumbles it open. The inside has been gutted to form a box. Embedded in a thick pad are three, small, crystal skulls. Though they share a primitive ugliness each was made by a different artist in a different culture of the past. One is milky white, one is clear and the third is filled with dark shadows.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Help me get them out.

As he fumbles with them, Amelia takes one out and almost drops it.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Dammit, be careful. Lay them
out. You know the order.

She lines up the skulls in front of him.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Help me do this.

Carsons leans over, covering two of them with his hands.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Hold onto me. I'm dizzy.

She holds him around the waist.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Not so tight.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (3)

70

With a groan, Carsons leans over and lowers his forehead onto the skull in the center. Blood drips from Carson's nose and his ear flops forward. Amelia sees it and gags.

AMELIA

(whimpering)

Oh god, your ear...it might
fall off.

CARSONS

Shut up.

Suddenly, above the howl of the storm there is a high whistling wail. It grows louder and a deep vibration rumbles through the room. An odd vagueness fills the air and everything loses its hard edge of materiality.

CARSONS (CONT.)

Is it opening?

AMELIA

Not yet.

The vibration grows until the table is shaking. Carson's ear trembles like a bloody leaf. Amelia struggles not to puke.

AMELIA (CONT.)

It's...doing it.

A span of bookshelves across from them begins to dissolve, gradually transforming into an ancient wall of hand-cut stones slick with black mold and lichen. Set deep into it is a crude, wooden door.

CARSONS

Dammit, is it there yet?

AMELIA

Yes.

CARSONS

Okay, help me,

Raising up, Carsons drapes his arm over Amelia's shoulder. They stagger to the door and lift a rusting latch. With a rasping groan, it swings open. Beyond is a crude stone tunnel lit by a dim, flickering light. Moving slowly, they enter...and the door closes behind them.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

71 INT. ELLIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 71

Ellie and her parents are asleep.

CU ELLIE'S FACE

She's having a dream and it isn't pleasant. She breathes harder. Her eyes fly open.

Slowly, her face transforms into that of an eight-year-old girl.

DREAM SEQUENCE BEGINS

72 INT. LITTLE ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 72

LITTLE ELLIE, eight years old, lies in her bed with her eyes open. A stuffed dog is beside her. As she stares at the ceiling, she is terrified, but she can't move.

There is a soft, echoing wail.

POV LITTLE ELLIE

The ceiling vanishes and she is looking up into a starry universe. Out of the darkness, the circle appears falling toward her. She trembles trying to move, to cry out. But she can't.

As they enter her room, the stars transform into seven terrifying beings in shimmering robes. All that's visible under their hoods are burning eyes.

They stand around her bed. Their arms raise and they reach down toward her.

CU LITTLE ELLIE'S FACE

The face of the child transforms into the face of the woman. With the transformation, her look changes from terror to steel-eyed rage.

ELLIE

You thought you owned me, but
you don't anymore.

(beat)

Jesus Christ...

The beings freeze. For a moment, their hands hang above her.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

ELLIE (CONT.)
 BY HIS BLOOD I COMMAND YOU TO
 GO.

As though pulled into a screaming vortex...the beings disappear.

DREAM SEQUENCE ENDS

73 INT. ELLIE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

73

The tension on Ellie's face is gone. Her breathing is regular and she is sleeping in peace.

74 INT. MANSION ATTIC - NIGHT

74

The young woman in the straight jacket is still screaming and thrashing. But now she's off the couch and on the floor. Dagon and Staples are standing a short distance away trying to figure out what to do.

DAGON
 How long can she keep this up?
 It's been over an hour.

JOSHUA
 Aw, when I was in the nut house
 I saw people shriek for days,
 weeks. What we need is some
 hooch.

DAGON
 Some what?

JOSHUA
 Some booze.

DAGON
 You think this is the time to
 get drunk?

JOSHUA
 It's not for me, it's for her.

DAGON
 You want to get her drunk?

JOSHUA
 Not drunk, just peaceful.

DAGON
 That comes from your advanced
 medical training?

(CONTINUED)

JOSHUA

Naw, it comes from dealin'
with a whole pack o' freaked-
out winos.

DAGON

She's not a freaked-out wino.

JOSHUA

Whiskey's good for zombies
too.

DAGON

Zombies?

JOSHUA

You didn't like vampires, so I
thought I'd try a different
category.

DAGON

God help me, I'm stuck with a
shrieking madwoman and a
homeless lunatic.

JOSHUA

Once again I will overlook
your non-inclusive
discriminatory attitude.

After a few more unbearable shrieks, Dagon rushes toward the stairs.

JOSHUA (CONT.)

Where you goin'?

DAGON

Where do you think? To get
her drunk. The liquor's locked
up in the bar.

JOSHUA

Now you're thinkin' like a
medical professional. I'm
goin' with you. I sure ain't
stayin' up here with a shriekin'
zombie.

Strangely, when the men are gone and the woman is alone, the shrieking stops. She lies as though in a trance, but with tears running from her eyes.

In the darkness across the room, appears a tiny burning light.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (2)

74

She turns her head to look at it. It grows into a little star flashing in an empty universe.

Deep in the stacks of magic equipment stands an antique illusion. Mounted on a platform is a huge mirror in an ornate, Victorian frame. The flickering light is coming from inside the glass.

As thunder roars and rain pounds outside, the light grows brighter and larger until the whole attic glistens with shimmering rays. Slowly, the light leaves the frame and moves out into the room. It stops next to the woman and she is bathed in soft radiance. A figure is in the light. As she looks up at him, her eyes fill with tears and she whispers...

STEFFIE

Please...help me.

Hands reach down and touch the straight jacket. It falls from her. Then, gently she is lifted into the air and carried back to the frame.

For a moment, the light lingers in front of the glass. Inside the mirror appears a crystal staircase leading up into starry darkness. The woman is carried toward it. Held in arms of flashing splendor, she rises up the stairs. In the darkness, the stars begin singing.

And the vision fades away.

Reflected in the mirror are only the shadows of the old attic.

75 INT. MUSTY 1870'S LABORATORY - NIGHT

75

Amelia and Carsons are in a strange laboratory. It looks like it hasn't been used in a hundred years. Rustic wood walls are lined with dusty shelves. A table is littered with mysterious, old instruments. Twisted tubes connect blackened flasks and beakers to ancient jars lined with the residue of foul liquids.

On the shelves squat dozens of small cages. In them lie desiccated lumps of dirt that bristle with bone and fur and feathers. Everything in the room is overlaid with a thick mantle of mold. Eerie moonlight struggles to shine through a grime-incrusted window.

Carsons is sprawled in a large, antique office chair in front of a roll top desk. He's in bad shape and barely breathing.

AMELIA

Jack, we've got to go.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

CARSONS

My guts...I'm bleeding to death
inside. I...don't think...I
can make it.

AMELIA

Please, baby, you've got to.
Here, let me help you.

Making a monumental effort, with Amelia's help, Carsons pulls himself up, groaning and gagging.

CARSONS

I...hurt so bad...

AMELIA

Come on, baby, you can do it.

She props him up and they head for a door.

76 EXT. ANCIENT WOODEN STAIRCASE AND ALLEY - NIGHT

76

Amelia and Carsons move agonizingly down a set of ancient wooden stairs from the second floor of a rotting building into an alley. Leaving the alley, they emerge onto a frightening street.

77 EXT. SURREAL FRENCH QUARTER STREET - CONTINUOUS

77

Amelia and Carsons are standing on the curb of a cobblestone avenue lit by gas lamps. The avenue is empty. On either side, rise buildings from the late 1800's, but they swirl with surreal mist and smoke. Most of the windows are dark, but from a few come weird, flickering lights like the fires of hell.

CARSONS

I...can't stand up...anymore.

He slides to the ground. She bends over him.

AMELIA

(in tears)

Jack, don't die. Please don't
die.

Suddenly, there is a clattering racket. Amelia turns to look. A block away a dark, horse-drawn carriage pulls onto the avenue and heads in their direction.

AMELIA (CONT.)

Jack, they're coming. They're
here. Hang on.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

The carriage is not like any of this world. Fire streams from its wheels as they flash on the cobblestones. Mist and smoke swirl around it as if it is only half real. The carriage is pulled by a powerful, black horse with eyes of fire.

It stops and the CARRIAGE DRIVER climbs down. He is a huge, powerful black man with flaming eyes and a face like stone.

AMELIA (CONT.)

Help. He's almost dead.

CARRIAGE DRIVER

Mother is waiting. Get in.

Amelia climbs in. The driver lifts Carson's as though he were a child and places him on the floor of the carriage.

CARRIAGE DRIVER (CONT.)

His ear is about to fall off.

Hold onto it.

With a look of horror, Amelia reaches, holds the bloody ear against Carson's head, turns her face away...and gags.

The driver mounts to his seat, cracks a whip, and they clatter away into the mist.

FADE OUT:

END OF SHOW