

ARCANUM

Episode #101

"Providence"

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COLD OPEN

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

We see all the glitz and glamour of the VEGAS STRIP. Crowds mill about, lights flash, buskers perform. The city is alive.

A crowd files through the front doors of a dazzling theater.

A sign out front reads "THE MAGICAL WORLD OF CARLO MANZINI!"

INT. THEATER - AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

A MAGIC SHOW is in full swing inside.

The magician, MANZINI, stands on stage, decked out in full theatrical garb. He clearly values showmanship over all else.

MANZINI

Up next, we have an oldie but a goodie... *with a twist*. Wendy, if you would, bring out the saw!

He makes a grand gesture to his glamorous assistant, WENDY. She strolls on stage with a BOX, a SAW, and a winning smile.

Manzini climbs into the box, Wendy closes it behind him, and begins cutting him in half at the waist.

She then begins cutting down the middle from the top. At this, the audience generates a lot of uncomfortable chatter.

DUNCAN (late 20s, nice black suit) sits in the third row. He seems more disinterested than everyone else, but his eyes miss nothing.

Now that Manzini is cut into FOUR PIECES, Wendy rotates them out toward the audience.

She strides around to the front and removes the TOP HALVES from each side, placing them on the ground.

She opens them, revealing a PROFILE of Manzini's face in each one.

LEFT MANZINI

At least she got my good side!

RIGHT MANZINI

What are you talking about, I'm the good side!

LEFT MANZINI

Oh who are we kidding, we're both  
dashinglly handsome.

A mixture of wonder and laughter echoes through the audience.

RIGHT MANZINI

Wendy, my dear! Put us back  
together, if you would.

Wendy covers the two and rotates them back into place before  
putting them together in the center of the stage.

The completed box begins rising on a platform.

Wendy gestures to the box, the door flies open, and Manzini  
steps out in all his cheesy glory.

The crowd absolutely eats it up. Duncan looks at his watch.

MANZINI

Thank you! Now before we leave you  
tonight, ladies and gentlemen, how  
would you like a little air show?

He glances at Wendy as she mutters a few words under her  
breath. He then slowly raises his arms.

She begins to LEVITATE, carried upward by a whirling cloud of  
GOLD DUST. It swirls around her, enclosing her in a gorgeous,  
shimmering display.

Then she shoots forward and begins FLYING around the theater,  
leaving a golden trail of dust in her wake.

The audience goes absolutely bonkers. For the first time,  
Duncan is interested in the performance.

After some impressive loops, Wendy returns to the stage,  
spinning like an ice skater until she comes to a stop.

Manzini and Wendy take a synchronized bow.

MANZINI (CONT'D)

Thank you for visiting the magical  
world of Carlo Manzini! May the  
magic in your hearts never die.

The crowd gives a standing ovation. Duncan can't help himself  
and politely applauds with the rest.

While Manzini continues to soak up the attention, Duncan slips away from the crowd and makes for the backstage area.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Duncan leans against Manzini's dressing room door. An EARPIECE crackles to life.

SEAMSTER (O.S.)  
All civilians are out of the  
theater, sir. Clearing backstage  
out now.

Duncan prepares to respond, but sees Manzini round the corner. Duncan straightens up and approaches.

DUNCAN  
The Great Carlo Manzini himself!  
That was a great show you put on.  
Are you still available for a  
couple questions with the Inquirer?

He flashes a PRESS BADGE. Manzini gives Duncan a magnanimous smile and reaches out to shake his hand.

MANZINI  
Of course, come in!

Duncan follows him into the dressing room.

INT. THEATER - MANZINI'S DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MANZINI  
It is always an enormous pleasure  
to introduce people to the world of  
magic. Your name was...?

Duncan pulls out an AUDIO RECORDER, clicks it on.

DUNCAN  
Dennis Kelly. So how do you make  
yourself stand out from the more  
established shows on the Strip?

MANZINI  
If you give the audience something  
they've never seen before, they'll  
keep coming back.

DUNCAN

Like that flying at the end? We're all wondering how you did it.

MANZINI

Well, you know what they say about a magician and his secrets...

We hear a KNOCK, and Wendy walks in. She looks PALE and WEAKENED, already changed out of her stage clothes.

WENDY

Carlo, could you- Oh, sorry.

MANZINI

Wendy! I thought you were resting.

DUNCAN

Oh, is something wrong?

WENDY

The show takes a lot out of me.

Duncan's suspicions shift.

DUNCAN

Mr. Manzini, you seem fine.

MANZINI

Ah, but the crowd gives *me* energy!

Duncan turns to Wendy, Manzini all but forgotten.

DUNCAN

What about the show was so draining?

WENDY

(guarded)

Well, it's a lot of work, lifting boxes and smiling.

DUNCAN

It wasn't the flying that did it?

WENDY

Just, the whole thing. But I really need to go. Head's killing me.

She turns toward the door.

DUNCAN  
 (a little too friendly)  
 Could you stay for some questions  
 too?

Wendy stops mid-step. Something's up.

WENDY  
 Who are the questions for?

DUNCAN  
 The Philadelphia Inquirer.

WENDY  
 People in Philly really love magic  
 shows that much?

DUNCAN  
 Well, this one almost seems real.

She stares at Duncan intently for a brief moment, and Duncan matches her gaze. GOLDEN DUST begins coalescing into existence around them.

WENDY  
 Carlo, I think one of the stage  
 hands was wondering where to put  
 the mirrors.

MANZINI  
 (doesn't get the hint)  
 But what about the interv-

WENDY  
 Go.

Manzini slinks out of the room, closing the door behind him.

DUNCAN  
 We knew it had to be one of you.  
 Turns out it wasn't your boss.

WENDY  
 Does that surprise you?

DUNCAN  
 Not after that interview.

Duncan pulls out a PISTOL. But before he can fire, Wendy unleashes an unearthly SCREAM, blasting him through the door.

INT. THEATER - BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

He lands in the hall amidst the now shocked stagehands.

Ignoring them, Duncan attempts to recover and fires from the ground. Tiny explosions of gold dust deflect the bullets.

Wendy makes a slashing motion with her arm, muttering something, and the pistol explodes in Duncan's hands.

He clutches his now bleeding right hand, grimaces, then staggers down the hall, pulling RACKS OF CLOTHES and collapsing TOWERS OF BOXES as he goes.

Wendy buffets aside debris with frustrated gesticulations, ignoring the fleeing civilians.

As Duncan continues to stumble away, Wendy shrieks once more, ringing in his head while everything explodes around him.

Suddenly, the hallway in front of him begins to SHRINK. The walls close in like a trash compactor; PROPS slowly crush together.

It seems at any moment that Duncan will be swallowed by the surrounding chaos until he manages to spot a side door and pull himself through.

INT. THEATER - STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Duncan closes the door behind him and leans against it, mind racing. He clutches his hand in pain.

His eyes shoot open as he comes up with a plan.

He leaps down the stairs in one smooth motion, staggering at the bottom and leaving a BLOODY HANDPRINT on the floor.

He pulls out a SMALL BLACK DISK and places it on the wall closest to the handprint, then scrambles to a branching hallway and hides around the corner, panting but alert.

The door bursts open, and Wendy walks calmly down the stairs. She grimly smiles at the handprint.

But as she reaches the bottom and steps over it, Duncan hits a button on the recorder and Wendy is pulled with tremendous, almost magnetic force toward the disk.

She gives a PAINED GASP, struggling to get free. Duncan walks toward her.

DUNCAN

That thing's inhibiting your magic.  
Doesn't last long, but it works.

WENDY

Please. I, I wasn't...

Duncan lets go of his right hand and pulls out a SILVER KNIFE.

Wendy tries to back away, but can't move from the spot.

DUNCAN

(He actually means it)  
It's nothing personal. But you're a  
witch.

He STABS Wendy in the chest. The wound starts GLOWING.

Gold dust GUSHES into the air, swirling toward the center of the room. It hangs there like the inside of a crystal ball, SHINING, as the walls start PULSING and the lights FADE.

Then, it's over. The dust BURSTS out, disappearing in a flash of light. The lights come up, her skin turns GREY, and she slumps against the wall. One final GASP escapes her lips.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

ACT ONE

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - MORNING

A crowd of employees file into a large meeting room, talking animatedly. Some hold coffee, all are dressed in work clothes in various degrees of dishevelment.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

KATHY (mid-30s, hard-working and pleasant), addresses the crowd. Her badge says MANAGING EDITOR.

KATHY

Morning everyone. Just a couple of quick announcements to brighten your day.

She pulls out a PLANNER, plenty of tab stickers visible.

KATHY (CONT'D)

One: turns out that good ole Senator Daniels has been having an affair for the past eight years.

She glances at HAWTHORNE (mid-30s) in the crowd.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Hawthorne, you up for some digging?

HAWTHORNE

Who's got the goods?

KATHY

Darius Meade down at Smith Hill should be a good place to start. I'll brief you in a minute.

Hawthorne pulls out her phone and furiously types away.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Next, we need the section designs for tomorrow in by 11:00 A.M. today. No excuses this time.

She lets that sink in. Someone coughs.

KATHY (CONT'D)

And finally, don't forget about the Halloween party this weekend! It's at the Providence Platinum.

The crowd relaxes, all smiles.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
 Alright. Let's get to work.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - CONTINUOUS

Kathy is first out the door, and we follow her as she makes her way through the office, coffee in one hand and smartphone in the other. Hawthorne catches up to her.

HAWTHORNE  
 Why would Speaker Meade have details on Daniels? They haven't worked together in years.

KATHY  
 Why don't you ask Mrs. Meade?

HAWTHORNE  
 Ah. Do you think he'll be particularly inclined to talk?

KATHY  
 Since he broke the story, I'm under the distinct impression he will be.

HAWTHORNE  
 I'll grab a coffee and drive on over. First crow to the corpse!

KATHY  
 That's the kind of integrity I like to see from my reporters.

Hawthorne splits off at a coffee machine.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - MAIN WORKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kathy enters a large room with rows of desks and cubicles.

She comes to a lazily disorganized desk occupied by DURAND (mid-30s). She's the kind of person who always chickens out of getting a tattoo.

KATHY  
 Durand?

The woman swivels in her chair.

DURAND  
 Yes?

KATHY

Just making sure you got the message at the meeting.

DURAND

Don't worry, I'll get it done.

KATHY

So I can count on 11:00?

DURAND

Definitely.

KATHY

And please don't rush them like last time.

Durand turns around and minimizes a browser window with more than 20 tabs open. Kathy makes as if to say something, but thinks better of it.

As she's walking away, her phone rings. She squints at it and groans, but reluctantly answers.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Hi, Jack. Don't tell me Olsen's article needs another round of rewrites.

She rounds a corner, already knowing the answer to the question.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Wow. That was verbatim what I told you not to say.

She cracks a smile at the answer, and opens the door to her office.

INT. KATHY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Closing it behind her, she turns on the light and sits down at her desk.

There are papers stacked into NEAT, LABELED PILE, several CABINETS lining the walls, and a DUAL MONITOR set-up.

KATHY

But yeah, I'm about to take a look at his handiwork myself. I'll talk to you later.

She ends the phone call and opens an email. She reads through the article, her face seeping into a grimace.

She stares at the screen just long enough to get uncomfortable, then makes a call on her CELL PHONE.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Yeah, it's trash. I'm sorry, but if he can't get it together, I want him out.

Kathy hangs up and taps the desk with cascading fingers.

In a look of realization she sighs and takes a BOTTLE OF PILLS from her desk. She pops two, closes her eyes.

Beat.

Another RINGING PHONE brings her out of it, this time from an AGING DESK PHONE. She gingerly picks it up.

KATHY (CONT'D)

What's up?

(listens)

Okay, don't worry. I'll just...

She looks around the room quickly, checks the time. She pinches the bridge of her nose in reluctant frustration.

KATHY (CONT'D)

You know what? Bring that to Jack directly. I promised myself I would take a break right now. Good luck.

She puts on her coat, grabs her purse, and leaves the room, her bottle of pills by her keyboard.

EXT. NORTHERN RHODE ISLAND MOTORWAY - MIDDAY

Kathy's car winds down a two-lane rural motorway, listening to some cheesy rock ballad like "Don't Wanna Miss A Thing" on the radio. What stress she had before seems mostly gone from her serene, focused gaze.

The music ends, and the DJ takes over with his spiel.

DJ (O.S.)

That was "Don't Wanna Miss A Thing" by Aerosmith on KROD 103.9. Up next we've got "Photograph" by Nickel-

Kathy scoffs.

KATHY

Son of a-

She switches to one of her presets.

HOST (O.S.)

And we're back with your local news  
at 87.3 RIP Radio. More news on the  
Daniels Affair: Mrs. Meade is about  
to make a statement-

Kathy glances at her phone, lying in the passenger's seat. A  
TIMER on the screen counts down.

"5:00", "4:59", "4:58"...

She approaches a bend in the highway.

She turns off the radio.

For an exploded moment, a TRUCK is visible from the front of  
the half-reflecting windshield.

As she turns her attention back to the road, CRASH.

CUT TO BLACK

A maelstrom of CRUNCHING METAL, SHATTERED GLASS, and AIRBAGS  
POPPING. It's violent and short, just a cacophony on the  
BLACK SCREEN.

EXT. NORTHERN RHODE ISLAND MOTORWAY - MOMENTS LATER

We slowly pan to see a CRUMPLED TRUCK. We continue to the  
mangled remains of KATHY'S CAR, barely visible on the bottom  
of the hulking pile. We finally land on a reveal of the EMPTY  
DRIVER'S SEAT.

Kathy lies nearly fetal on a close-fitting circle of PRISTINE  
GREEN GRASS, standing out against the GREY-BROWN carnage. She  
slowly comes to.

She gets unsteadily to her feet but seems otherwise unharmed.  
Eerily so. She looks at her hands, her clothes: everything  
looks fine. Barely even dirty.

Kathy walks over to the wreck languidly, as if in a dream.  
SKID MARKS and SMOKING DEBRIS trail all the way back to the  
road. She peers into the truck and covers her mouth in shock.

KATHY

Oh god.

One hand still over her mouth, she reaches into her pocket, only to realize that her phone isn't there. She looks around helplessly, but it isn't visible.

Then, as she trudges toward the road, she nearly steps on it. The screen is CRACKED, but functional. She dials THREE DIGITS, then places the phone to her ear.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
911, what's your emergency?

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIVATE JET - AFTERNOON

A SLEEK JET cruises through the sky.

DUNCAN (O.S.)  
We've got two teams handling the situation right now. Our janitors are spreading word that she died in an accident during teardown.

INT. PRIVATE JET - CONTINUOUS

Duncan sits at attention on an otherwise empty plane, nursing a FRESHLY BANDAGED HAND.

He speaks with the CHIEF LUMINARY (mid-50s, firm but fair... think Phil Coulson) on the DIGITAL DISPLAY in front of him.

CHIEF LUMINARY  
What about him?

DUNCAN  
We've got him. Story is he's taking a break to work through the trauma.

CHIEF LUMINARY  
And? Are people buying it?

DUNCAN  
So far. And seamsters are working on neutralizing all magic activity in the area; apparently there were power surges.

CHIEF LUMINARY  
Alright. Thanks again for handling this on such short notice, Roth.

DUNCAN

No thanks are necessary.

Duncan shifts in his seat.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Sir, that disruptor... she was way more powerful than I expected.

CHIEF LUMINARY

Most magic users don't evade termination for that long, so they don't usually know what they're capable of. She was an exception.

DUNCAN

But she deflected alloy bullets. Not to mention the fact that she could shrink spacetime.

CHIEF LUMINARY

Like I said, she was an exception.

DUNCAN

I still want to- I know that the mission got out of hand, and I take full responsibility for that. I promise that it-

CHIEF LUMINARY

-won't happen again, right? I'll hold you to that.

Beat.

CHIEF LUMINARY (CONT'D)

Subtlety is not your strong suit, I'll admit. But you're still a good prosecutor.

Duncan bows his head gratefully.

CHIEF LUMINARY (CONT'D)

And I have to say, for having less than a year in the field, I've seen much worse.

DUNCAN

Thank you, sir.

CHIEF LUMINARY

Get some rest. You've got a long flight.

EXT. SALEM WITCH MUSEUM - LATE AFTERNOON

A NONDESCRIPT CAR parks by Salem Common. Duncan steps out.  
He nears a ticket saleswoman, AVA, outside the main entrance.

AVA  
Hi there! Are you interested in  
taking a tour of the museum?

DUNCAN  
Do you have any for the 5:20 tour?

Ava's expression shifts. She pulls a ticket from the bottom  
of the stack and hands it to Duncan.

AVA  
Of course. We'll see you then!

Duncan rounds the building into an alleyway.

EXT. SALEM WITCH MUSEUM - ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

He approaches a DUMPSTER and steps behind it, placing his  
ticket on the wall against a series of MISSHAPEN BRICKS. On  
the last one, it clicks.

Then the wall PUSHES IN and SLIDES OPEN to reveal a small  
ELEVATOR. Duncan steps inside and goes down.

INT. AGENCY HEADQUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

He emerges into a brightly lit, ORANGE-RED BRICK CELLAR. It's  
lightly staffed, but there is MODERN EQUIPMENT laid out like  
an office.

He passes a desk and JUSTIN (mid-20s, glasses, too handsome  
to be a desk jockey) pops his head up.

JUSTIN  
Could it be? It is! Duncan! I was  
just starting to look for a  
replacement.

Justin stands up and Duncan smirks as the two hug.

DUNCAN  
It was only four days.

JUSTIN  
Four days of agony awaiting your  
safe return.

DUNCAN  
You really missed me that much?

JUSTIN  
Nah. Actually forgot you were gone.

Duncan scoffs as Justin claps him on the back.

He notices Duncan's bandaged hand.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)  
There a story behind that?

Duncan glances down and shakes his head.

DUNCAN  
Gun exploded.

JUSTIN  
Ah, as they are wont to do.

Justin snatches something off of his desk before walking down the hall with Duncan.

He hands Duncan a FOLDER.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Ain't no rest for the wicked, I'm afraid.

DUNCAN  
Already?

JUSTIN  
Not quite as far this time. And it's in the beautiful state of Rhode Island.

DUNCAN  
Lucky me.

JUSTIN  
You'll be going to the capital city of Providence, where we believe a disruptor currently resides.

Duncan flips through the folder.

DUNCAN  
And I wanted to catch up on sleep.

JUSTIN  
Hey, the apocalypse ain't gonna avert itself.

The pair approach a closet, and Justin puts a hand on Duncan's shoulder, bringing them both to a stop.

DUNCAN

At least let me get back to my desk.

JUSTIN

No can do.

He looks around to see anybody, doesn't. He escorts Duncan inside and closes the door.

INT. AGENCY HEADQUARTERS - CLOSET - EARLY EVENING

Duncan turns toward Justin.

DUNCAN

You're not about to make out with me, are you?

Justin's goofiness has disappeared.

JUSTIN

Why did they send you across the country for one mission?

Duncan shrugs.

DUNCAN

Watkins thought I could use a vacation?

Justin doesn't laugh.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

I don't know. Chief Luminary Clarke said we're stretched thin.

JUSTIN

Yeah, Watkins said the same thing. More goddamn secrets.

Duncan's clueless.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

Come on, man. When's the last time we've gotten any straight info? We still don't know what's happening down south.

DUNCAN  
 You're talking about Venezuela?  
 Yeah, it's frustrating. But chain  
 of command exists for a reason.

Justin leans closer to Duncan, his voice even more hushed.

JUSTIN  
 If it's that bad, why aren't they  
 talking to us? Letting us help?

Duncan takes a second to respond.

DUNCAN  
 I'm not sure. We've done it before.

Justin leans back, quiet.

JUSTIN  
 The Luminaries won't tell us  
 anything, but I hear rumors.  
 Rumblings of a revolution.

Duncan's caught off guard.

DUNCAN  
 We have people on the inside, I  
 thought they had it under control.

JUSTIN  
 Innocent people are *dying*. That  
 better not be what we call "under  
 control."

Beat.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)  
 Duncan, we're still the good guys,  
 right?

Duncan takes a long time to answer. When he does, it sounds  
 like he's trying to convince himself as much as Justin.

DUNCAN  
 We have to be.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kathy lies in bed, the room dark. She shifts uncomfortably,  
 but doesn't stay in one spot for longer than a couple of  
 seconds, trying and failing to relax.

She glances at her alarm clock: 10:04.

Her cell phone rings. She takes it groggily and sits up.

KATHY  
Hey, Hawthorne. Yeah, it's all  
taken care of. Car was totaled, but  
the guy's insurance will cover it.

Beat.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
He didn't make it.

Her voice suddenly grows hushed.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
And to be honest, I don't know how  
I did. I flew clear of the wreck,  
but even then I should've broken  
something. It doesn't make sense.

Beat.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
That's me. Miracle Girl. Anyway,  
see you at work tomorrow. Ciao.

Kathy ends the call, standing in a Ramones night shirt. She grimaces, pinching the bridge of her nose.

She ambles over to the bathroom and turns on the light.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Blinking in the sudden brightness, she yawns and fills an EMERALD GREEN MUG with water. Leaving it on the counter, she takes out an orange PILL BOTTLE.

She has more trouble with it than expected. Her hands start shaking, and she accidentally elbows the mug off the counter.

She grasps for it.

KATHY  
No!

The mug, and the spilling water, freeze in midair, as if suspended in time.

Kathy shouts and jumps away, her eyes locked onto the mug.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Kathy takes a few breaths, the surprise giving way to wonder, and she edges over to the mug.

She looks it over, reaches for it, then thinks better of it and grabs the mug from the bottom.

After a beat, the whole thing gains weight again, falling into her hand. Most of the water catches in the mug, but some of it splashes onto the ground.

A surprised smile dawns on her face, the fatigue vanished.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kathy turns on the lights in her dining room, closes the blinds, and sits at a glossy WOODEN DINING TABLE. It's old school, good quality, either an heirloom or estate sale buy.

She places the mug across from her, tries and fails to crack her knuckles dramatically.

KATHY

Okay, how does this work?

Kathy reaches out with her hand, straining like she's trying to use the Force, but nothing happens.

She tries to do a Professor X thing with her fingers on her head, straining with effort, but again nothing happens.

KATHY (CONT'D)

(exasperated, pointing)

Please just move.

The mug slides forward a couple of inches. Kathy grins.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Yer a wizard, Kathy.

She mutters variations of "move" a few more times, dragging the mug in different directions around the table. She can't suppress the smile on her face.

She eyes a chair, places it in the middle of the room.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Move.

Nothing.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
 Ahem. Move.

The chair remains resolutely immobile.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
 You're very uncooperative for an  
 inanimate object. Moooove.

Not so much as a twitch.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
 Listen you ungrateful excuse for a  
 butt stand, I'm a wizard or Jedi or  
 something now. When I tell you to  
 move, you MOVE.

If a piece of furniture could cackle, it would be doing so.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
 GOD DAMN IT. MOVE!

The chair flies backward into the wall, SHATTERING.

Kathy's face is somewhere between fury and horror.

Trying to keep her composure, she begins to pick up the  
 pieces.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOOTING RANGE - LATE EVENING

Duncan aims at a target downrange, about 30 feet away. He  
 sports PROTECTIVE GLASSES and EARMUFFS. The shooting range is  
 completely empty except for him.

He empties the magazine and pushes a button on his stall. A  
 track WHIRS as the target slowly returns to him.

Most shots hit the chest, a few in the head. Only two or  
 three missed. Not bad.

He tears down the paper and hangs up a new target just as  
 REBECCA (mid-20s, confident) enters. She spots Duncan and  
 approaches as he raises his pistol.

Duncan hears her MUFFLED footsteps and turns toward her.

DUNCAN  
You know sneaking up on someone  
holding a gun isn't very smart.

REBECCA  
Yeah, but it's you.

Duncan ignores the playful jab. He looks at her expectantly,  
but she leans against the stall looking at his target.

DUNCAN  
You want something.

REBECCA  
Just saying hi.

Duncan sighs and steels himself for the conversation.

DUNCAN  
Okay.

He takes off his earmuffs and places the gun on the counter  
before crossing his arms and turning toward her.

REBECCA  
How was the flight?

DUNCAN  
Five hours too long. It gets lonely  
up there, you know.

REBECCA  
Hey, at least there were no crying  
babies or fuckheads drooling on  
your shoulder. Consider yourself  
lucky.

Duncan forces a chuckle.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
Anyway, I'm glad you're back.

Silence falls between them.

Rebecca nods her head at the target.

REBECCA (CONT'D)  
You're getting better.

DUNCAN  
(disbelieving)  
Really.

REBECCA

I remember when you were a little R&D nerd holding a gun for the first time. And now you're doing solo missions across the country? It's impressive.

DUNCAN

Except for the fact that everybody in the goddamn city heard about it.

REBECCA

Oh, come on. Liam and I fucked up on plenty of missions.

Duncan immediately closes off at Liam's name.

DUNCAN

Believe me, I know.

He turns back to the counter and grabs his earmuffs, but Rebecca grabs his arm to stop him.

REBECCA

Hey, don't do that. I'm sorry, I shouldn't have mentioned him.

Duncan brushes her off.

DUNCAN

Don't worry about it.

Just as Rebecca opens her mouth to reply, the door opens behind them and WATKINS (early 40s, stern), the Salem Luminary, enters.

Both Duncan and Rebecca immediately straighten up a bit.

WATKINS

There you two are, I've been looking all over the damn place.

He looks at Rebecca.

WATKINS (CONT'D)

Rebecca, head on over to R&D. Williams has a new device he wants you to test before you head out.

REBECCA

Yes, sir.

She gives Duncan a short downcast look before leaving.

Watkins turns his attention to Duncan.

WATKINS

And Duncan, you need to get packed  
and ready. You're leaving tomorrow.

DUNCAN

Providence, sir?

WATKINS

Correct. We just got confirmation.

DUNCAN

Am I going alone?

WATKINS

No, you'll have a team of janitors  
and seamsters with you when you  
leave. Get it done.

Duncan nods and walks away.

INT. DUNCAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Duncan sits hunched over a desk, various MECHANICAL PARTS  
scattered about. A pile of SKETCHES also litter the desk.

His apartment is surprisingly immaculate, save for the HALF-  
PACKED SUITCASE sitting on the couch. A LAPTOP and NOTEBOOK  
also sit on the coffee table.

Wearing PROTECTIVE GLASSES, he pores over a small cylindrical  
DEVICE. He carefully solders something on the inside of it.

He sits back and stretches out, then compares the device to  
one of the sketches in front of him.

Satisfied, Duncan pulls open a drawer and places the cylinder  
inside, where it joins a pile of similar SMALL CONSTRUCTS.

He gets up and turns on the TV for background noise.

He goes back to lazily packing, making trips back and forth  
from the bedroom, clothes in his hand each time.

Before he gets very far, his phone RINGS. He picks it up to  
see a call from MELISSA.

He glances around the apartment, hesitating. He answers.

MELISSA (O.S.)

I'm just getting off work. Mind if  
I come over?

Duncan glances at the clock: 10:13 P.M.

DUNCAN  
Feel free.

MELISSA (O.S.)  
See you soon!

DUNCAN  
(can totally wait)  
Can't wait.

He hangs up and tosses the phone onto the couch.

He plops down in front of the laptop and looks at the screen.

INSERT: Providence website: "PROVIDENCE: A CITY THAT WORKS"

Duncan switches tabs to a Google Maps view of the city, two pins dropped in. Two circles, each one mile in diameter, are centered on each pin. A message from Justin is attached:

"Preliminary surveillance has potential activity narrowed down to these areas."

He zooms in and looks at important landmarks in the zones.

He hears a KNOCK at the door.

Duncan shuts the laptop and rushes over to his desk to stow all of the sketches and parts in another drawer.

Then he finally opens the door. MELISSA (mid-20s, bubbly) stands in the doorway wearing a waitress' outfit and a coy smile.

MELISSA  
I was already on the way when I called.

And with that, she leans in and grabs Duncan by the shirt, kissing him. Without breaking apart, Duncan pulls her inside and shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNCAN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

The two are in the middle of getting dressed.

MELISSA  
Hey, here's an idea...

Duncan turns expectantly.

MELISSA (CONT'D)  
So you said you're leaving for  
Brazil tomorrow, right?

DUNCAN  
Yeah, 7:00 A.M. flight.

MELISSA  
Why don't I just stay the night?

DUNCAN  
I don't think that's a good idea.

MELISSA  
Why not?

The two finish getting dressed while Duncan searches for an excuse.

DUNCAN  
I don't know, that's really early.

MELISSA  
I'm working a double tomorrow. I  
have to be up early too.

DUNCAN  
I'm sorry, Melissa, but...

Melissa sighs.

MELISSA  
Fine, whatever.

Duncan gets defensive.

DUNCAN  
Wait, it's clearly not. What's up?

MELISSA  
It's been four months and you still  
don't wanna spend the night  
together.

DUNCAN  
I'm busy with work.

MELISSA  
Duncan, please.

Duncan retreats back into the living room.

INT. DUNCAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

Duncan goes back to organizing his suitcase.

DUNCAN  
Let's not do this right now-

MELISSA  
But you can't just ignore it until  
you're feeling up to it-

DUNCAN  
Fine, what about you then?! You  
can't just force this on somebody!  
I told you when this started-

MELISSA  
You mean when we started dating.

DUNCAN  
Hooking up whenever one of us gets  
lonely is *not* dating, Melissa.

MELISSA  
You know damn well that it's more  
than just hooking up.

This resonates with Duncan. He lets out a long sigh.

DUNCAN  
You're right. I'm sorry. We'll talk  
soon, I promise. But doing this  
while we're angry won't end well.

Melissa grits her teeth. There's a long, tense silence  
between them.

MELISSA  
Bye, Duncan.

DUNCAN  
Night, Melissa.

She goes to the door and exits without another word.

Duncan closes the door behind her. Lingers.

Then he returns to his laptop, grabbing his notebook again.

## INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Kathy goes through her morning routine: brushing her teeth, showering, munching on an apple from the fridge. She's on her phone the whole time thanks to its waterproof case.

She puts on a coat, and as she is about to leave, she sees the mug from the night before on the table.

She watches it for a moment, then turns back to the door.

But as she raises her hand to the knob, she stops.

She turns around, hand outstretched toward the mug. It lifts off the counter and glides to her waiting grasp.

Pleased with herself, she turns and leaves.

## INT. AGENCY HEADQUARTERS - ARMORY - MORNING

Duncan strolls into the armory, carefully studying a CHECKLIST. He guides his hand down the paper, keeping track of each item before him. An OPEN BACKPACK hangs off his arm.

He stops at a wall covered with MUNDANE DEVICES: watches, dials, compasses, etc.

Looking back and forth between the wall and list, Duncan finds what he's looking for. He reaches up and snatches a SILVER COMPASS off the wall, stashing it in the backpack.

REBECCA

Heading out, huh?

Rebecca strolls in, holding a METAL SHIELD, about the size of a frisbee.

Duncan distractedly nods at her, then the shield in her hand.

DUNCAN

Is that the device Watkins wanted you to test?

Rebecca nods, grinning. She flips a SWITCH on the back of it and from the front sprouts a VIBRANT BLUE ENERGY FIELD, spreading out in a cone.

REBECCA

Supposed to absorb and nullify any active magic. The brainiacs finally gave us more defensive gear.

Duncan peers curiously at the item as Rebecca turns it off, strolls past him to another wall and mounts the shield on it.

He can't hide his interest. He walks over and examines it.

DUNCAN

For a negation field that big, its power source would have to be... how is it that small? Who came up with this?

Rebecca shrugs.

REBECCA

I think her name's Daly?

DUNCAN

Bailey.

REBECCA

Sure.

Duncan doesn't reply, still investigating the shield.

Then, he wordlessly goes back to his list.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Hey, so about yesterday... we're good, right?

Duncan strolls down the length of the room again, this time stopping at a row of DRAWERS. His eyes don't leave the list.

DUNCAN

Why wouldn't we be?

He rifles through one and pulls out a SMALL METAL DISK.

Rebecca considers answering. Decides against it.

REBECCA

Right. Why wouldn't we be?

Duncan finally puts the list down and makes for the exit.

DUNCAN

I have to head out.

REBECCA

Stay safe, alright?

DUNCAN

Don't I always?

Rebecca watches him leave, still in the spot where she put the shield back. She lets out a sigh.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - EARLY AFTERNOON

Kathy is in her element: organized chaos. She walks down a hall with her green mug of coffee in one hand, a tablet in the other. Hawthorne follows a step behind and beside Kathy.

KATHY

These details are... torrid.

HAWTHORNE

Meade described the whole thing play-by-play because, get this, he hid a GoPro in his bedroom.

KATHY

He does seem a bit too helpful.

HAWTHORNE

You want me to delay the piece?

KATHY

If someone is saying John "Family Values" Daniels is actually an adulterer, that's worth reporting, but strike a skeptical tone.

HAWTHORNE

Got it. Where are you going next?

KATHY

Gonna chat with a certain someone.

CUT TO:

INT. KATHY'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Kathy sits at her desk, still holding her green mug. With a few clicks, Kathy pulls up three PAGE DESIGNS and turns one of the monitors to show DURAND, sitting across from her.

KATHY

Carol, these look like an intern slapped them together in Microsoft Word.

DURAND

That's a bit low, isn't it?

KATHY

This isn't a high school literary magazine. We've been through this a hundred times.

DURAND

Charlie Reynolds liked them.

Kathy stares at her. She puts her mug down.

KATHY

Excuse me?

DURAND

I showed them to Charlie, and he was fine with them.

KATHY

You went over our heads.

DURAND

He always had an appreciation for more avant-garde-

KATHY

You went over our heads for a problem with the fucking *lifestyle* section?

The lights dim briefly, barely noticeable.

DURAND

Well, if the management is too stuck in their ways to respond to a dynamic world, it's my responsibility to inform the owner.

KATHY

Carol, sweetie, your *responsibility* is to sit down, close Safari, and design me the day's section.

The lights start to flicker.

KATHY (CONT'D)

If you have a complaint, you talk to me. You do NOT go to the goddamn owner of the paper!

The flickering gets faster, stronger.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Do you know what Charles is going to think now? That his newspaper is run by a bunch of fucking *amateurs*.

The flickering is erratic and stronger than ever. Durand notices, and so does Kathy. She glances about briefly, and a smirk flashes across her lips.

She looks back at Durand. The lights pulsate brighter and brighter, spilling over with power. Then, she lets loose. Her eyes glow a VIBRANT GREEN.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Not only did you disrespect me, you disrespected the paper. And your petty, pretentious, hyper-inflated ego may well have SHUT US **DOWN!**

On the last word, the lights flare and then, with a BANG, every single electric device in the room shuts off.

Kathy stands in the dark, panting. Durand quietly whimpers.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Crap.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. PROVIDENCE STREETS - LATE MORNING

Duncan arrives in the city of Providence, driving an SUV. Another one follows closely behind him.

He reaches up to his EARPIECE.

DUNCAN

Okay, we'll split up when we hit downtown. As soon as you pick up any magic traces, you contact me first. Got it?

The other agents in the van nod.

He hears a response in his earpiece from KINCAID, backup team leader.

KINCAID (O.S.)

Roger that.

The small convoy makes their way to a parking garage.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - CONTINUOUS

Kathy opens the door to her office.

She steps into the hall. The power is off here too, seemingly for the entire floor. There's shouting, muttering, people cursing. Kathy looks around for a familiar face.

There's SHUFFLING nearby.

HAWTHORNE

Kathy, is that you?

KATHY

Yeah.

HAWTHORNE

What happened? My phone's dead, my laptop won't turn on. Even my watch stopped working.

KATHY

I-I don't know. Looks like the emergency lights are off too.

HAWTHORNE

I'll see if I can get the power company on the line.

KATHY

Good idea. I'll run damage control.

Hawthorne walks away, fading into the darkness. Kathy stands there for a beat, clutching her head in mild pain. She tries turning on her phone, but nothing happens.

She makes her way down the hall, fumbling in the dark. She struggles more than she should, like she just ran a marathon.

She pauses, panting. Her face is pale.

KATHY (CONT'D)

What the hell is wrong with me?

She controls her breathing, then draws herself up to her full height. She makes her way to the door steadily, deliberately. But just as she reaches for the handle, she collapses like a limp puppet.

EXT. PROVIDENCE STREETS - EARLY AFTERNOON

Duncan strolls through downtown Providence, looking between Google Maps in one hand and a SILVER COMPASS in the other.

The DIALS slowly drift toward each other as he continues.

His phone BUZZES.

DUNCAN

Yeah?

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Any closer to finding our wicked witch or wizard of the east coast?

DUNCAN

I'm working on it.

He glances back down at the compass.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

I wish we had something more... *digital*. It'd be quicker.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Hey man, if it ain't broke...

DUNCAN  
Make it better.

Duncan's earpiece CRACKLES to life. He listens. Then puts the phone down and responds.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
I'm on the way.

He raises the phone back to his ear.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
Kincaid just found something.

JUSTIN (O.S.)  
Be sure to bring a bucket of water.  
Or a house.

Duncan jogs down the street.

INT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - HALLWAY - EARLY AFTERNOON

HAWTHORNE  
Kathy? Are you okay?

Kathy is still on the ground outside the door. Hawthorne leans over her, carrying a lighter. Kathy sits up.

KATHY  
Why am I- Ach. Never mind. What's going on? Is the power still out?

HAWTHORNE  
Yeah. We, um, couldn't ever get it back on. But what happened to you?

Kathy hesitates, clutching her knees to her chest.

KATHY  
Don't... worry about me. Just tell me what we're dealing with.

Hawthorne hesitates.

HAWTHORNE  
It's bad, Kathy. Jack's doing his best, but there's only so much we can do. All the electronics in the building are fried.

Kathy looks shocked but doesn't disbelieve it. She realizes that, at this point, anything is possible.

KATHY

Did we recover anything?

HAWTHORNE

No. When I say fried, I mean like "dropped in a lake" fried. It's too early to tell, but I don't think we're getting anything back.

Kathy can't even begin to respond to that. After a moment of silence, she stands up, unsteady on her feet.

HAWTHORNE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

KATHY

I'm gonna help. In any way I can.

HAWTHORNE

Uh, no. You're not. I just found you on the ground. Head home. Or to the doctor, for God's sake... You're not a superhero.

Kathy considers. She realizes her friend is right.

KATHY

I'll get my things.

Hawthorne pats her on the back and she trudges through the dark. The building is silent now, almost in mourning.

She reaches her office and heads inside.

INT. KATHY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The office is dark, and the computer is still off. Kathy sits down at her desk and holds herself. She begins to breathe heavily. She begins to shake.

KATHY

It's okay. It's not your fault.

Kathy strikes the table with a fist.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Damn it! Then whose fault was it?

Kathy wrenches open the drawer and rifles through it, snatching up her pill bottle.

She tries to open it.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Whatever is happening to me has to do with- state of mind. If I can-

Just as she opens the lid, the bottle flies from her hand. Pills SPILL onto the floor.

She clutches her face with shaking hands. Her breathing is quick, labored, almost a sob.

The shaking isn't limited to her hands anymore, not even her own body: everything around her starts to tremble.

At first, it seems uniform, like a small earthquake, but it starts to swell and dissipate in time with Kathy's breaths. It's a huge, overpowering sound in the office itself, but can't be heard outside of it.

It builds and builds, and in the middle of the cacophony, her door CRACKS OPEN.

DURAND peers into the room. Wide-eyed, she takes it in for a moment, then closes the door again without saying anything.

The sound builds. We fade to black, but we still hear Kathy's sobs timed with the growing roar.

Then with all else silent, a final, miserable gasp.

EXT. PROVIDENCE JOURNAL - MINUTES LATER

Duncan pulls up to the building to see KINCAID (mid-30s, unassuming) watching as a TV NEWS CREW shoots a package.

DUNCAN

Shit.

He pulls out his compass and looks down at it. The dials both point ahead and a GREEN GLOW emanates from the center.

He quickly parks and makes his way to Kincaid.

KINCAID

We've detected a fresh MT here, only a few hours old.

Duncan nods at the news crew.

DUNCAN

What do they know?

KINCAID

Not much.

The two watch as the REPORTER rattles on.

REPORTER

...Power outage occurred right here at the Providence Journal. We currently have no information as to the severity...

Duncan glances at the sign on the building.

DUNCAN

City paper, huh? Get me a list of employees and recent visitors.

KINCAID

Yes sir. And what about them?

He glances at the news crew.

DUNCAN

Do your thing.

Kincaid nods. Pulls out a SMALL PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE BUG.

Then marches over and STUMBLES into the CAMERA OPERATOR. The reporter stops mid-sentence.

CAMERA OPERATOR

Hey watch it!

REPORTER

God damn it.

Kincaid looks SHOCKED, bracing one hand on the camera and planting the bug on the underside.

KINCAID

(slurring words)

Oh shit, that's my bad. So sorry.

REPORTER

You just ruined a perfectly good take, jackass. Go be shit-faced somewhere else!

Kincaid lurches away, attempting to bow.

KINCAID

Uh-huh, you're right. So right. Sorry again.

The bug HISSES, then POPS, EXPLODING INWARD. All that remain are shards of plastic embedded in the camera.

CAMERA OPERATOR

What the shit? Hold on Jean, camera just died.

REPORTER

Fix it, we need to get this shot!

Duncan grabs his compass and phone again, raising the latter to his ear while flipping open the former.

He presses a button on the side of the compass. The dials WHIR and reset, aligning themselves in a new direction.

As the phone rings, he gets back into his SUV.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Yo.

DUNCAN

First source is the city's newspaper, we're working on getting a list of anyone who might have been there in the last 24 hours.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

What? That's not in either of the recorded source zones.

DUNCAN

It gets worse: news crew just tried to shoot a story about it. Kincaid killed it for now.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Duncan, if this snowballs-

DUNCAN

It won't.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Let's hope not. Where are you now?

DUNCAN

Heading to the second trace.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Alright, do me proud.

DUNCAN

Don't I always?

Duncan tosses the phone onto his passenger seat.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Kathy lies spread-eagled on her bed, looking dead. Her blank eyes stare into the ceiling.

A NEW PHONE, charging on the night stand, rings.

Kathy lets it go for a few seconds, not reacting, then lifts the phone from its charger and answers.

KATHY

Hey Hawthorne.

HAWTHORNE (O.S.)

Just checking to see if you're coming tonight.

Kathy scoffs.

HAWTHORNE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I know. But we already put down the deposit. Maybe it'll cheer us up.

KATHY

Where are we on the recovery?

Hawthorne sighs.

HAWTHORNE (O.S.)

I don't know anymore. It's too much of a mess. Of course, W-P-whatever has been on the scene.

KATHY

Oh God.

HAWTHORNE

Asking the stupidest questions. "Was it a terrorist attack? The NSA? Aliens?" Personally, I think Daniels got his hands on an EMP.

Kathy laughs, in spite of herself.

HAWTHORNE (CONT'D)

There we go. I knew there was some Kathy in there. Come to the party.

KATHY

Fine. I will. But only to see your stupid Davy Crockett outfit.

HAWTHORNE

Oh you will.

EXT. KATHY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Duncan is parked at the curb, examining his compass and glancing out the window.

Again, the dials point ahead and the center glows faintly.

Duncan takes a picture of the sign outside: "UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS APARTMENTS"

Duncan studies the complex. After a beat, he resets the compass and drives away, raising his hand to his earpiece.

EXT. JUNKYARD - EARLY EVENING

Duncan pulls up outside of a JUNKYARD, his compass almost aligned. Curious, he climbs out of the SUV.

INT. JUNKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

He strolls down the aisles of WRECKED CARS.

Finally, he arrives at the husk of Kathy's car, and his compass GLOWS BRIGHTLY.

He tries to take a look around and inside of it. Nothing.

He goes back to find NICK, an employee near the front who looks very ready to go home.

DUNCAN

Excuse me?

Nick jumps at the voice, clearly jolted out of a daydream.

NICK

Yeah, what do you need?

DUNCAN

I wanted to know if any of the parts on this Ford are good?

Nick lowers his head, sighs, and groans his way to a standing position. Duncan leads him down the aisle.

NICK

I don't know if I'll be able to help ya. We get so many damn cars they all just kinda blend together.

DUNCAN

I'm feeling optimistic.

The two stop in front of the wreck.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
This is the one.

Nick sucks his teeth.

NICK  
Oh, this hunk o' junk. I hope  
you're not looking to restore it.

Duncan laughs.

DUNCAN  
No, just looking for parts. Any  
idea what happened to it?

Nick shrugs.

NICK  
Just a bad wreck, as far as I know.  
Least that's what the woman who  
owned it told me.

DUNCAN  
Was she okay?

NICK  
Yeah, perfectly fine. Which was  
weird. Doesn't look like the kinda  
wreck you walk away from.

While Nick is talking, Duncan takes pictures of the front,  
focusing on the remains of the LICENSE PLATE.

DUNCAN  
How old was she?

NICK  
I'unno, definitely wasn't a  
teenager. 30s, maybe?

DUNCAN  
Huh. Anyway, any idea what I can  
take from this?

NICK  
Not a clue, this thing just got  
here yesterday. Haven't had a  
chance to really take a look yet.

Duncan sends the photos to Justin.

DUNCAN

Damn. Alright, thanks then.

He shakes Nick's hand with a warm smile.

NICK

Done already? There're more cars.

DUNCAN

No thanks, I saw all I needed. Have a good night.

NICK

Well, you too.

As soon as he turns around, the smile leaves Duncan's face.

EXT. JUNKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Duncan steps out and grabs his phone, walking back toward the SUV. He dials the phone and raises it to his ear.

While it rings, Duncan gets in the car and starts driving.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Hate to break it to you buddy, but that car's not really my style.

DUNCAN

Last MT was picked up on that car, got the partial plates for you. I also know the owner is a woman in her 30s.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

I'll find out who this mystery woman is then. And while I'm doing that, you are going to be busy.

DUNCAN

Doing what?

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Attending the Providence Journal's Halloween party. You were supposed to be one Andrea Walker's date, but sadly she can no longer make it.

DUNCAN

Sleeping it off?

JUSTIN (O.S.)  
 Yeah, yeah. She'll be fine  
 tomorrow. Sending the address now.

Duncan lowers the phone to check. A message from Justin  
 appears on screen.

DUNCAN  
 Got it.

JUSTIN (O.S.)  
 But Duncan, tonight is only a  
 tracking mission. Party's a little  
 too public for an elimination.

DUNCAN  
 You don't say. Anything else?

JUSTIN (O.S.)  
 Nope. Go fraternize with the enemy  
 of the people.

Duncan hangs up and reaches up to his earpiece.

DUNCAN  
 Anyone copy?

After a brief second, Kincaid's voice crackles to life.

KINCAID (O.S.)  
 Loud and clear, sir.

DUNCAN  
 We still don't know who the  
 disruptor is, but we know where  
 they're going to be.

Duncan quickly pulls over and grabs his phone.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)  
 Address incoming. I need everyone  
 to post up around the place and  
 tell me if anyone leaves early.

KINCAID (O.S.)  
 I'll get the teams ready.

INT. KATHY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Kathy emerges from her bedroom with a chic late 60's dress  
 and her hair down. She puts her hands on her hips and takes a  
 deep breath.

Then she sees the mug again. Without hesitation, she grabs it and shoves it into the cupboard.

She opens the front door and turns off the lights.

INT. HOTEL - BALLROOM - EVENING

A rowdy crowd is gathered for a party in a large hotel ballroom. Halloween decorations ineffectually hang from the walls and a few tables scattered in the center. Many are drinking heavily. It's obvious they're partying to forget.

A DJ in the corner is playing a strange mixture of Top 40s and crappy Halloween music, and the partygoers get down.

Kathy emerges from a group of magic-themed characters gathered around the open bar and makes her way to the spooky snack table, margarita highball glass in hand. A LARGE BOWL of GREEN PUNCH is the centerpiece of the table.

Kathy stands there alone, munches on a chip, and sips her drink, when she spots Durand talking with one or two people.

She hesitates, she takes a swig, winces, and marches over.

KATHY

Got a minute?

Durand flinches. A flash of fear, but she keeps calm.

DURAND

If - if you want.

Kathy nods. Durand doesn't meet her eyes. The two find an empty corner to talk.

KATHY

What I did was completely out of line, no matter how angry I was. I guess it pales in comparison to the current shitstorm, but...

Durand says nothing, curiosity mingling with her fear. Kathy doesn't notice.

KATHY (CONT'D)

But still. There's no excuse. I'm sorry.

Durand seems to be waiting for Kathy to say something else, and it wasn't that. Unsatisfied, she relents anyway.

DURAND  
I'll try to be more decisive.

KATHY  
That's all I ask.

Durand considers Kathy for a beat, then walks away. Kathy deflates a little. She gets a good view of the main door just as DUNCAN walks in rocking a black and white GLEN CHECK SUIT.

Not recognizing the newcomer, Kathy makes her way over to him just as he begins chatting with a small group of people, including HAWTHORNE dressed as a gender-flipped Davy Crockett. She puts on a thick Texas accent.

HAWTHORNE  
Kathy! My lil Gloria Steinem. I see y'all're back from the frontier. This is Ethan, Andrea's friend.

DUNCAN  
She was supposed to be here by now, but I guess she's late.

KATHY  
I wouldn't worry. She's a pre-gamer. So is Hawthorne.

HAWTHORNE  
(dropping the accent)  
That's why I took the bus. And I see you came prepared, too. Is that a Bond costume or did you think think this'd be a classy affair?

DUNCAN  
Bond. James Bond. I'll grab you a drink if you can guess which one.

HAWTHORNE  
Uh, Sean Connery?... Daniel Craig?... Ooh! Pierce Brosnan!

Duncan makes an obnoxious wrong-answer noise.

KATHY  
George Lazenby.

DUNCAN  
Oho. I'll be back shortly.

He gestures for her glass. Kathy downs it and hands it over.

As Duncan weaves his way through the crowds, Hawthorne turns to Kathy.

HAWTHORNE

Well you seem to be feeling better.

KATHY

Oh yeah. Between the wreck and the power outage, I'm just super-duper.

HAWTHORNE

Since when were you a Bond expert?

KATHY

My dad has them all on Blu-ray. We'd watch them around Christmas. Besides: tall, dark, and handsome guys in suits; what's not to like?

HAWTHORNE

I dunno. You've seen one, you've seen 'em all, right?

Before Kathy can reply, Duncan rejoins the group, TWO PLASTIC CUPS of GREEN PUNCH in hand. He passes one to Kathy.

KATHY

I see you went for the punch.

DUNCAN

Thick, dangerous, radioactive-looking. Seems perfect for the occasion. How are things going at the office?

HAWTHORNE

Just a little workplace drama. Today our entire office went back to the stone age. N-B-D.

Duncan sees an opportunity.

DUNCAN

What does that mean?

HAWTHORNE

It means we're back to pen, paper, and candlelight for the next few days. All our electronics broke.

Kathy stares into her drink.

DUNCAN

Any idea what caused it?

HAWTHORNE

I'm a journalist. All I know is that tech loves breaking on us, not how or why. Could've been an EMP for all we know.

DUNCAN

Heh. Petya or Mischa?

HAWTHORNE

Who?

KATHY

The Goldeneye satellites. Your Bond game is on point... and yet you came as George-freaking-Lazenby, the objectively worst Bond.

DUNCAN

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Hold on a sec-

HAWTHORNE

And again with the Bond references. I'm out. Let me know when you get back to something more enticing, like politics. Or religion.

Hawthorne leaves, joining a group of slipshod Ninja Turtles.

Kathy notices Duncan's BANDAGED HAND.

KATHY

What happened to your hand?

DUNCAN

I cut myself on some broken glass.

She winces.

KATHY

Did that happen at work?

DUNCAN

No, I teach history. Not a whole lot of work with my hands.

KATHY

You don't look like the kind of guy who likes grading papers all day.

DUNCAN

It's more active than you'd think.

KATHY  
Journalism... less so. When we're  
not putting out fires.

Duncan and Kathy share a smile.

DUNCAN  
Want to head into the hall? It's a  
little too loud in here.

KATHY  
Sure.

Kathy and Duncan wend their way to the nearest door.

INT. HOTEL - CROWDED HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The two emerge into a hallway. Antique TABLES and CHAIRS line the hall, and clumps of partygoers in various states of costuming crowd the area. Music blares from a nearby STEREO.

Duncan leans toward Kathy's ear, and the two have to practically shout at each other.

DUNCAN  
Journalists know how to party.

KATHY  
We're overworked and underpaid. You  
do the math. But this doesn't  
really solve our problem, does it?

Duncan nods at the crowd.

DUNCAN  
Should we keep looking?

KATHY  
Follow me.

DUNCAN  
Lead the way, Miss...

KATHY  
Foster. Stick with Kathy.

And with that, she leads Duncan through the crowd.

Duncan feels his phone BUZZ in his pocket. He pulls it out to see a message from Justin:

"WE'VE GOT A NAME: KATHERINE FOSTER."

Coupled with the message is Kathy's EMPLOYEE PICTURE.

Duncan's jaw clenches as he glances back up at Kathy. He shoots a response:

"On it."

Kathy turns back to Duncan, a smirk on her face.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
Now that you know my full name,  
it's only fair you return the  
favor.

Duncan forces a smile.

DUNCAN  
Summers. Stick with Ethan.

He slips the phone back into his pocket as Kathy leads him around the corner.

INT. HOTEL - EMPTY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

This hallway is completely empty, but similar in decor.

As Duncan and Kathy turn the corner, Duncan pats the place where his GUN, TRACKER, and NEUTRALIZER are stashed in his suit. He pulls out the tracker.

KATHY  
How are you liking Providence?

DUNCAN  
That obvious I'm from out of state?

KATHY  
You've got the stink of Boston  
about you.

Duncan's eyebrows raise. It's true.

KATHY (CONT'D)  
Not that that's a bad thing. My  
dad's from there.

DUNCAN  
I haven't been home in a while.

KATHY  
Me neither, actually.

As she ponders this, Duncan slips the tracker into her PURSE.

The conversation lulls for a beat as Kathy opens the door to a conference room.

Duncan pulls out his phone, pretending to get a text.

DUNCAN

Oh, shit.

Kathy stops in the doorway.

KATHY

What's wrong?

DUNCAN

Just got a message from Amanda.  
She's not coming.

Kathy cracks a quizzical look.

KATHY

You mean Andrea?

DUNCAN

(covering up)  
Yeah, Andrea. Says she got sick.

KATHY

Maybe she drank a bit too much.

DUNCAN

Not sure. I'll go check on her.

KATHY

Hold on a sec. Let me give you my  
number so you can keep me updated.

She starts to rifle through her purse.

DUNCAN

No, that's fine. Don't you have  
hers?

Before he can finish the question, Kathy feels something.

KATHY

Huh?

She pulls out the TRACKER and takes a look at it.

DUNCAN

What is that?

KATHY

Looks like a slug.



Her eyes go WIDE.

KATHY (CONT'D)

LET-

Duncan quickly covers her mouth.

KATHY (CONT'D)

(muffled)

GO!

And with that, a burst of energy EXPLODES from her, sending Duncan flying back into the BOOKCASE by the door.

The force also buckles in the conference room door and wall.

Duncan lies sprawled out among the SPLINTERED REMAINS of the bookcase.

Kathy stands in disbelief, shocked at what just happened.

Duncan manages to get to his knee and pulls out his gun.

Before he can take aim, Kathy yells, throwing out her hand.

KATHY (CONT'D)

NO!

The gun flies out of Duncan's hands and under the BASE CABINET. Duncan's gaze follows it before whipping his head back toward Kathy.

Kathy uses her powers from this point on.

She throws the LAMP at him, but Duncan blocks it with his uninjured arm.

As he dodges, she pelts the COFFEE POT directly into his stomach, doubling him over.

He glances up just in time to see a CHAIR hurtling toward his head, but he manages to roll out of the way.

She turns toward the TABLE, and it slowly starts to LEVITATE.

Footsteps POUND outside. MUFFLED voices follow.

Duncan shouts, surreptitiously reaching into his pocket.

DUNCAN

Kathy, you're going to hurt your friends! Stop!

Kathy glares at Duncan.

KATHY

No.

Before the table can fly toward him, Duncan hurls a SMALL METAL DISK toward Kathy, and it lodges itself into her arm.

She cries out in pain as the table CRASHES to the ground.

People POUND on the door from outside, but it's stuck.

JACK

Kathy?! Kathy!

Kathy glances at the door before turning back to Duncan. She tries to lift ANOTHER CHAIR but fails.

Her eyes go wide.

KATHY

Help.

She desperately claws at the disk in her arm. Her eyes faintly GLOW.

Duncan scrambles toward the base cabinet.

KATHY (CONT'D)

HELP!

The light in her eyes increases.

More POUNDING. The door SHAKES as someone tries to open it.

JACK

Tell us what's going on!

Duncan rifles through debris as he searches for his gun.

KATHY

HELP ME!

With each shout, her eyes grow brighter and brighter with the same GREEN ENERGY as before. She continues to try to pry the disk out.

Duncan finally finds his handgun and snatches it up.

The door RATTLES on its hinges.

He stands up and turns toward Kathy, aiming right at her. She can only match his gaze...

He hesitates.

Kathy RIPS OUT the disk in one last-ditch effort, just as she shouts a final plea.

KATHY (CONT'D)

STOP!

A wave of magical energy EXPLODES from within her body, and throws Duncan into the wall.

The force completely destroys the room. The door FLIES OFF its hinges. The walls SHATTER. The window DISINTEGRATES.

INT. HOTEL - CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Duncan lies on the ground, SERIOUSLY INJURED.

Through the RINGING in his ears, he hears chaos.

PARTYGOER

Oh my god!

DURAND

What happened?

PARTYGOER 2

Somebody call the police!

More and more voices are added to the mix, starting to blend together. But he hears one more that sticks out.

HAWTHORNE

Where's Kathy?!

He takes a look around and sees several bodies through the SMOKE and RUBBLE. People rush around the area in a frenzy.

He looks in front of him where the room used to be, but Kathy is gone. All he sees is a gaping, crumbling HOLE in the outside wall, like King Kong punched it from the inside.

CUT TO BLACK