

PROJECT TITLE:

FOR LOVE

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DATE:

1/20/18

REVISED NETWORK DRAFT

SANDER/MOSES PRODUCTIONS

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ACT ONE

BLACKNESS - THEN A THUNDEROUS DRUM BEAT FILLS THE AIR -
AND THE CAMERA RACES OUT OF THE EYE SOCKET OF A **SKULL** -
REVEALING -----

1 **EXT. TREME NEIGHBORHOOD, NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT**

1

ANOTHER NIGHT - ANOTHER PARTY!!!

REVELERS dance to the **DRUMMERS** - BEATING on PLASTIC BUCKETS -
There's a **STREET VENDOR** covered with hundreds of **GLOW-STICKS** -
And a **HISPANIC TOUR GUIDE** - Holding up the **SKULL** to get the
attention of his **TOUR GROUP** - Whipping them into a frenzy -

TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)

Welcome to the most magical city in
the world!

(Whoop, whoop!!)

How many believe that magic is real?

(most hands go up)

...For those who don't, know this -
Every story you'll hear tonight is
true. So have those cameras ready -
Because you never know what might
make you believers...

On cue - THE SKULL **LEVITATES** STRAIGHT UP OUT OF HIS HANDS -
And **VANISHES** into the night - "Ooooooh!" Goes his Tour Group -
The CAMERA MOVES UP to a BALCONY - Where we find our Lead -

HOPE CASTILLE (early 30's) - She's an investigative journalist
at the Times-Picayune - And much like New Orleans, Hope is both
resilient and beautiful - She is also determined - Loyal - Warm -
And she can see beauty in unlikely places - But right now -
The "Skull Trick" is bugging her...

HOPE

I swear I'm gonna figure out how
he's making that thing float.

Hope's fiancé walks up from behind - Wrapping his protective
arms around Hope - She warms to his embrace -

CHARLIE LAPREE (mid 30's) - Also a journalist - Hardworking
and delightful - There's always a smile behind his eyes.
Charlie loves Hope with all his heart -

CHARLIE

It's on a string.

HOPE

Attached to what? There's nothing
up there.

CHARLIE

A drone?

HOPE

We'd hear it. Unless he's got access to some serious military hardware - Tour Guide by night, lead designer for DARPA's Silent Owl program by day?

CHARLIE

Or maybe it's real. When I was a kid in Mumbai, I saw a yogi climb a--

Hope, ever the skeptic, interrupts as a solution comes to her -

HOPE

It's a balloon. The skull - It's filled with helium. Or it's attached to a bunch of balloons - Like that movie, with the old house.

CHARLIE

That could work. And speaking of 'old houses', I got us a plan...

He hands Hope a paint scraper - And they head back inside -

2 **INT. HOPE AND CHARLIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

2

The interior is DIY chaos - They're renovating the house - Moving boxes are piled high - Hope notices -

HOPE

...You wrote on the cabinets.

Sure enough, Charlie has drawn a FLOW CHART on the cabinetry - Organizing every stage of their "Renovation Calendar" -

CHARLIE

We're redoing everything anyway. Okay, the wedding is ten weeks away - If you really want the reception here, that means we need the electric work--

HOPE

How long did this take you?

CHARLIE

Couple of hours - While you were working on your editorial.

HOPE

The first thing on your list is "Scrape the Cabinets."

CHARLIE

Yeah, I figured two nights for that--

HOPE

Charlie. Love of my life. Smartest man I've ever met - What happens to your list once we scrape it off?

Ah...

CHARLIE

In my defense, I didn't think of that.

CLICK - Hope takes a photo of the Cabinets with her phone -
(An iPhone 3G) - She throws Charlie a cheeky smile -

HOPE

It's 2013 and they're called smart
phones - You should get on board.

CHARLIE

But you already have a new phone -
It's one of the many reasons I'm
marrying you...

He moves in - And they kiss playfully - But they're interrupted -
Charlie's PHONE RINGS - A Motorola RazR -

CHARLIE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Go for Charlie...

HOPE

Nobody says that.

She keeps kissing him teasingly as he tries to take his call -

CHARLIE (ON PHONE)

When?... Where?... I'll be there
in twenty.

Charlie hangs up - WRITES something in his NOTEBOOK -
Turns apologetically to Hope -

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

It's a lead on a story.

HOPE

You're leaving me with this mess?

CHARLIE

I've been trying to get this interview
for weeks.

HOPE

You sure you don't want to hang around?
Maybe these cabinets aren't the only
things that'll get stripped down tonight.

She's cute when she tries to be sexy -

CHARLIE

I'll be an hour. Two, tops.

HOPE

I love you.

He smiles - And they go into their "thing" -

CHARLIE

Oh, really? You love me, you say.
Then tell me, Miss Castille...
What would you do for love?

She walks close - And whispers in his ear...

HOPE

Anything... Everything...

Its very sexy... And very true - They kiss - Passionately...
And Charlie leaves...

3 **INT. HOPE AND CHARLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT** 3

MONTAGE - PASSAGE OF TIME - As Hope works on the cabinets -
Stripping away years of paint - Revealing the beauty beneath...

At one point - She glances out of the window, looking for Charlie -
But instead, she sees the Tour Guide returning...

4 **EXT. TREME NEIGHBORHOOD, NEW ORLEANS - MOMENTS LATER** 4

The Tour Guide is taking his skull out of a bag -
When Hope approaches, trying to be nonchalant...

HOPE

Cool skull. Is it real?

The Tour Guide is already "on to her" - He hands her the skull -

TOUR GUIDE

You're the girl from the balcony.

HOPE

I'll be straight, it's driving me buggy.
I gotta know how you're doing it.

TOUR GUIDE

Y'all already know. Deep inside...

And the damn **SKULL RISES** straight up out of Hope's hands -
And **VANISHES** into the night -

HOPE

Oh, come on! How are you--

But by the time she looks down - The Tour Guide is gone...

HOPE (CONT'D)

Okay... Nice misdirect...
(she shouts into the street)
...You're good! Give you that.

She turns back to her house - Just as - A POLICE CAR ARRIVES...
TWO OFFICERS KNOCK on her door...

HOPE (CONT'D)

Can I help you?

They turn - Covering their emotions with professional stoicism...

OFFICER

We're looking for Hope Castille.

HOPE

That's me.

OFFICER

Do you have identification?

She does -

HOPE

What's going on?

OFFICER

Miss Castille, we're gonna need you
to accompany--

HOPE

I'm not going anywhere until you
tell me what's going on.

OFFICER

There's been an accident.

And at that moment, Hope's heart breaks forever...

5 **INT. POLICE CRUISER (MOVING) - NIGHT**

5

A MONTAGE as Hope is driven to the scene of the accident -
Various CAMERA ANGLES cover her traumatic upheaval of emotions -
Fear - Anguish - Anger -

Over which we hear the PLAYBACK of Charlie's voice -
Favorite PHONE MESSAGES that Hope has saved over the years...

CHARLIE (messages)

"First saved message..."

Hi, this message is for Hope CassTilly.
I think I'm saying that right. This
is Charles Lapree - Charlie. You met
my sister, Nessa, at a coffee shop
this morning On Saint Roch - And she
had the wonderfully ridiculous notion
that I should call you. So... Taadaa.

"Next saved message..."

Charlie again - Okay - Two things -
Can we forget that "Taadaa" bit. That
was not good. And you should probably
have my number - 504-555-1213.

"Next saved message..."

Hi, this is Charlie - Everyone's telling
me I shouldn't call right away.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (messages) (CONT'D)

But, I'm sorry - That was the best
date I've been on... Screw it - Ever.
So, I don't care, I'm calling...

"Next saved message..."

Hey... It's me... I love you - Sorry,
now I've said it, I just can't stop.
I love you.

"Next saved message..."

I can't believe you said yes. I don't
deserve you. Nobody does... But I
promise you this, I will love you
forever and I'll spend every moment
making you happy and keeping you safe...
I love you, Hope."

"You have no more saved messages..."

6 **EXT. SEVENTH STREET WHARF - CONTINUOUS**

6

The site of the car crash - TAPE and FLARES block the street -
The police shield Hope from Charlie's unrecognizable body -
A vehicle arrives - A rusting Chevy Pick Up -

NESSA LAPREE (early 30's) - This is Charlie's Sister -
A Curator for the Louisiana State Museums -
The Police try to stop Nessa from passing -

NESSA

That's my brother. In the car.
(yelling through her tears)
Charlie!

Hope and Nessa cling to one another... And weep...

And the CAMERA FLOATS AWAY...

7 **EXT. NEW ORLEANS - CONTINUOUS - PASSAGE OF TIME SEQUENCE**

7

Days pass by in a blur ... Nights... Seasons... Rain storms...
Buildings are painted... A GLASS SKYSCRAPER goes up...
Life races by... Then... The CAMERA MOVES INTO -

8 **EXT. ST LOUIS CEMETERY NO. 3 - DAY**

8

A classic New Orleans above-ground cemetery - WE SETTLE -
CLOSE ON A MEMORIAL "CHARLES LAPREE 1978-2013 - ALWAYS LOVED"

Chyron **"FIVE YEARS LATER..."**

Hope steps in and lays a LOTUS LILY at the headstone...

HOPE

I realized that I never found out if
you had a favorite flower - Probably
something weird knowing you - But
you once told me that your Mom liked
Lotus Lilies, so... Taadaa.

She inches closer... Nervous as to what she is about to say...

HOPE (CONT'D)

I have to tell you something, Charlie...
I never thought that I would say this
to you... But then again I never thought
that this hole in my chest would ever
begin to close... Here's the thing...
I've met someone. It's why I haven't
been coming by so much... His name is
Gabriel. You'd like him. He's a good
guy. And he loves me... You will
always be my first thought in the
morning...but for the first time in a
very long time...I'm happy.

She turns to leave - And we meet -

GABRIEL DUMAINE (late 30's) - Hope's new love - Charming -
Worldly - Handsome - He is respectful of Hope's lost love,
while eager to start enjoying a life together...

GABRIEL

If I shouldn't be here, just say so.

HOPE

No... It's nice.

He takes her in his arms comfotingly...

HOPE (CONT'D)

How did you know where I was?

GABRIEL

I know what today is - The anniversary
of... Anyway, I called to see how you
were and Nessa picked up. Listen -
Whatever you need from me today -
Space, hugs, rum...

HOPE

The hug seems to be working...

A moment passes...

GABRIEL

And I wanted to say something...
I've never known loss - So I cannot
imagine how painful these past years
must have been for you. But I do
know this. I love you - The whole
patchwork that makes you who you are -
Every path you've walked that's led
you to me. And I know that Charlie
will forever be a part of you. So I
love him too.

Gabriel glances at the tomb, paying sincere homage to Charlie...
Hope appreciates his evolved emotional perspective on her past -
This is not a child she's dating, this is a man...

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Plus I knew you'd need this...

He hands her an umbrella - Just as it starts to rain...
Hope is touched by his constant kindness...

9 **EXT. RAMPART STREET, BORDER OF THE FRENCH QUARTER - LATER** 9

Hope and Gabriel walk in the rain -

HOPE

And I have to wear all white?

GABRIEL

That's why they call it the White
Linen Festival. I can't believe
you've never been.

HOPE

I'm more of a Mardi Gras Gal, with a
little Satchmo SummerFest sprinkled in.

GABRIEL

Now you're talking about the classics.
But this'll be fun - The Galleries
stay open late--

HOPE

I can't wait.

They kiss... In the rain... Fuck yeah, they're sexy...

Just then, an imposing, black SUV pulls up alongside of them -
The rear window hums down - And we meet Gabriel's older sister -

CHARLOTTE DUMAINE (early 40's) - Level headed and business-
minded, there's a coolness that hides a churning sea of hurt -
Gabriel can immediately see the worry on Charlotte's face...

GABRIEL

Charlotte, you look paler than usual.
Am I polling that poorly after last
night's debate?

Charlotte isn't amused - Then again, she rarely is -

CHARLOTTE

It's mother.

Now Gabriel shares his sister's concern - He turns to Hope -

GABRIEL

I'm sorry, I have to go.

HOPE

Of course. You want me to come
with you--

GABRIEL

Thank you, no. It's probably nothing...

He kisses her quickly - Starts to leave - Then stops -

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

...Wait - That wasn't right...

And he kisses her... Beautifully... With love... And heat...

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

...And for the record - You're always
with me.

Hope's smile lasts until she notices Charlotte watching them...

HOPE

You should go...

Gabriel hurries around the vehicle - Giving Hope and Charlotte
an uncomfortable moment together...

HOPE (CONT'D)

So, I guess I'll be seeing you at
the White Linen Festival.

Charlotte looks at her condescendingly -

CHARLOTTE

Are we certain that color looks good
on you?

Hope holds her tongue... She watches the SUV pull away - But
as she does, she FEELS something - Creeping up on her - She
turns quickly - But she is alone in the street...

NESSA (PRELAP)

Why would anyone be following you?

10 **INT. "THE 1850 HOUSE" MUSEUM, FRENCH QUARTER - DAY**

10

The 1850 House is a reconstruction of an 18th Century home -
Hope and Nessa are "borrowing" boxes from the storage room -

HOPE

How about any one of the exposés
I'm working on? "Corruption in
the...Fill-in-the-blank."

NESSA

Okay - How long you been thinking
that someone's been watching you?

HOPE

Few months.

NESSA

Like the few months you've been dating Gabriel?

HOPE

He's not like that - He wouldn't have me followed.

NESSA

What about his family? I'm not judging - If I was one of the most influential and hallowed families in the city, I'd wanna know who was dating my brother.

HOPE

So you think it's Charlotte?

NESSA

Oh, it's totally Charlotte. She's running his Mayoral Campaign - It's part of her job to keep track of what pies he's got his fingers stuck in.

HOPE

Excuse me?

NESSA

You know what I mean...
(changing subjects)
...How many moving boxes do you need?
At some point the museum will notice they're missing.

HOPE

This is good. Wouldn't want you to lose your job.

As they head out - A POV watches them for a moment...

11 **EXT. HOPE AND CHARLIE'S HOUSE - LATER**

11

Hope and Nessa unload boxes from Nessa's car - A beautifully restored Red Chevy Pick Up.

Hope unlocks the front door of the house but doesn't enter - She is flooded by memories - Noticed immediately by Nessa -

NESSA

When were you last here?

HOPE

Christmas. That termite thing.

NESSA

You sure you want to do this?

Before Hope can answer - A charming Hawaiian gentleman arrives - This is **MR AKAU** - Hope's realtor -

MR AKAU

Miss Castille, I trust I'm not late.

HOPE

Mr Akau, no - We just got here--

MR AKAU

Why don't you show me the house and
we can talk numbers.

Hope is rooted to the spot - Unable to cross the threshold...
Because inside, the house has been frozen in time...
Nessa sees the emotional distress her friend is in...

NESSA

If you're not ready, there's no need
to put this place on the market.

HOPE

I'm not sure I'll ever be ready...
But if I want things to keep moving
with Gabriel, I have to let go of...

Hope catches Nessa's eye and can't say the name "Charlie"...

NESSA

Hope... Charlie's not in this house.
He's in our hearts. Our memories.
When I say, "Rock, paper, snickers"
and you smile...
(she does)
...There's Charlie.

HOPE

I know... It's just... This place...
It's everything we were going to be.

Nessa gets it...

NESSA

Why don't I show the guy around?
You don't need to be here. Go to
work. Go buy a white linen dress.
Go find your next smile.

HOPE

Thank you... For letting me love
again.

Nessa, a master at hiding her loneliness, smiles reassuringly...

NESSA

One of us should have someone special
to watch us grow old...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON - The oldest woman you have ever seen - This is -
MARIE JOJO DUMAINE (late 90's) - Hooked up to life-support -
REVEAL -

12 INT. BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE, GARDEN DISTRICT - DAY 12

A private hospice has been set up in the GRAND BEDROOM of a magnificently restored Victorian palace... The attending **DOCTOR** turns solemnly to Gabriel and Charlotte - There's no need for words...

GABRIEL (PRELAP)

Are we talking months? Weeks?

13 EXT. DUMAINE ESTATE, GARDEN DISTRICT - CONTINUOUS 13

In the perfectly manicured gardens, Gabriel and Charlotte listen to the Doctor...

DOCTOR

Days, I'm afraid. She's slipping.

GABRIEL

And there's nothing that can be done?

DOCTOR

I can keep her comfortable...but...
You should be prepared.

They absorb this grave news with refined dignity...

CHARLOTTE

Well, thank you. For everything.
These past two years - With mother's
condition - You've made them bearable.

DOCTOR

Marie Jojo's unconquerable spirit will
be forever missed by--

They're interrupted by the obnoxious SQUEEL of low-profile tires -
As a BMW M5 thunders up the sweeping driveway - And we meet -

CHRISTOF DUMAINE (Mid 30's) - The younger brother - Confident -
Spoiled - He saunters past his siblings - Tossing Gabriel his
car keys, with a wink -

CHRISTOF

Pull it round back.

GABRIEL

I'm not your butler.

CHRISTOF

Then quit dressing like one.

CHARLOTTE

Christof, you remember Doctor Gerrard.

CHRISTOF

(satirically colloquial)
Still keeping Mother snug as a bug?

GABRIEL

Christof... Mother's dying.

The world waits for this to filter in... Then... Very slowly - Christof is consumed by a huge fucking grin!

CHRISTOF

Well - Halle-freakin'lujah, it's about time! Let's get that Cristal on ice, boys and girls!! Charlotte, you can come too.

Christof heads inside - Leaving his siblings to cover for him...

GABRIEL

He...processes emotions differently.

The Doctor leaves - Charlotte and Gabriel head back to the house -

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

We're getting a second opinion.
This can't happen now.

CHARLOTTE

We have kept her on life-support for two years - Enough is enough--

GABRIEL

A few more weeks. We could turn this election around - Wouldn't you want mother to see that?

CHARLOTTE

Gabriel. We have to accept what is coming. The Doctor is right - Preparations have to be made.

Gabriel knows she's right...

14 **INT. ENTRANCE HALL, DUMAINE ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER**

14

Charlotte catches up with Christof - Cornering him -

CHARLOTTE

Look at me. Have you been using?

Christof smiles wickedly...

CHRISTOF

Cross my heart.

He leaves...

15 **INT. BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER**

15

Christof sits beside his dying mother... He takes her hand...

CHRISTOF

I can't wait for them to pull the
plug on you.

He kisses her gently on the forehead - Look closely, there's
the hint of a weirdly sinister smile on Marie Jojo's face...

16 **EXT/INT. 1000 POYDRAS, CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT - DAY** 16

DUMAINE TOWER - The building we saw go up during the 5 YEAR
TIME MONTAGE - A contemporary glass skyscraper that lauds over
NOLA - The very modern face of New Orleans and the Dumaine
Family - Charlotte's SUV arrives and she heads inside with
purpose - Nodding a curt "Good Morning" to a SECURITY GUARD -

SECURITY GUARD

(on his com)

Ms Dumaine is en route.

17 **INT. PENTHOUSE OFFICES, 1000 POYDRAS - MOMENTS LATER** 17

Charlotte steps out of the ELEVATOR into the Family Offices -
Occupying the entire Penthouse - She's immediately swamped -

ASSISTANT

Mr Ellington needs to talk to you
about today's polling statistics--

But Charlotte is focused on other matters -

CHARLOTTE

Did we close the deal on the Magazine
Street property?

A troubled **ACCOUNTANT** hands her a Real Estate Agreement -

ACCOUNTANT

Yes, but you offered far above market
value--

CHARLOTTE

And has the lady from Family Services
arrived yet?

ASSISTANT

She's in your office--

Charlotte leaves her Assistants in her wake -

FEMALE VOICE (PRELAP)

Yes, Miss Dumaine, you are in the
Foster Care Register...

18 **INT. CHARLOTTE'S OFFICE, 1000 POYDRAS - MOMENTS LATER** 18

Charlotte is in the middle of a tense conversation with the
lady from the Family Services Department - **MRS MINAMI** (mid 50's) -
A very smart Japanese woman -

MRS MINAMI (CONT'D)

...But that doesn't mean you can simply summon me to your offices and demand to take home a child that very same day.

CHARLOTTE

How much money has my family donated to your cause?

MRS MINAMI

This is not a question of charity--

CHARLOTTE

My mother is dying.

MRS MINAMI

I understand--

CHARLOTTE

I don't believe you do. Every generation of Dumaines has adopted a child. And it is my mother's dying wish that she meet the child that will become part of our family--

MRS MINAMI

Miss Dumaine, while I am deeply sympathetic to your impending loss, that is not how the Department of Family Services works--

Charlotte interrupts - Crossing to the window -

CHARLOTTE

You see that plot of land down there?
On the corner of Magazine and St. Joseph.

With slight apprehension, Mrs Minami edges to the window...

MRS MINAMI

Yes.

CHARLOTTE

The Dumaine Foundation bought that property one hour ago - We intend to build a state-of-the-art facility for children in need. It will cost millions. Care for thousands. And it will need someone to oversee the entire project - Who would, of course, be handsomely compensated for her efforts... But only if you can arrange an adoption by this time tomorrow.

Charlotte offers Mrs Minami a CONTRACT - Mrs Minami accepts the papers, trying not to lick her lips...

19

INT. TIMES-PICAYUNE OFFICES, CANAL STREET - DAY

19

A BANK OF TELEVISIONS plays various NEWS FEEDS -
 A LOCAL BROADCAST replays last night's MAYORAL DEBATE -
 Gabriel - And his **RIVAL** - An older Southern Gentleman -

GABRIEL (ON TV)

...It's been thirteen years since the storm - Thousands of buildings are still ripe for redevelopment - To reignite growth, but this current administration has been a parade of incompetence--

RIVAL (ON TV)

While my good Christian values prevent me from being baited into slinging mud with my opponent - The question on the table is 'experience' or lack thereof...

WE REVEAL the grey offices of the NOLA Times-Picayune -
 In 2002 it was the smartest workplace in the City -

Hope heads to the **EDITOR'S** desk - A woman in total control -

Hope drops a PRINT OUT of her latest exposé on her desk -
 The **EDITOR** glances at Hope's copy - Notices the Headline -
 "STREET ART OR URBAN BLIGHT?" -

EDITOR

You emailed this to me last night.

HOPE

I'm never fulfilled until I see it hit your desk.

EDITOR

Did you know that nineteen Nola restaurants were nominated for the James Beard award this year?

HOPE

Are we just throwing out random facts?
 The Emperor Penguin can stay underwater--

EDITOR

Readers don't want to be reminded that their City's actually a swamp. Throw in a "Top Ten" once in a while - People love lists.

ON HOPE - "Fluff writing" is not her thing...

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)

...Hope - Are you there? Can you hear me?

HOPE (ON PHONE)

Who is this?

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)

Ha!! I can't believe I'm talking to you... Hope... It's me... It's Charlie.

Hope's world stops... Every sound fades away... Silence... Except her breath... Then she hangs up the phone... Sounds of the world return... The clattering street car -

Then Hope's PHONE RINGS AGAIN - NO CALLER ID once more... She answers the call - Anger rising -

HOPE (ON PHONE)

This isn't funny. Don't call back.

She goes to disconnect the call again - But -

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)

(quick fire)

No, no - Wait - Your favorite cake is 'carrot' - Which is weird seeing as how you're terrified of rabbits - You have a scar on your right elbow - You say you got it rock climbing but you actually fell off a StairMaster at the gym - Favorite Christmas Movie - The Santa Clause - I can keep going--

HOPE (ON PHONE)

Don't--

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)

You celebrate your birthday on May ninth even though you were born on the tenth. Because...your mom was killed on your birthday--

HOPE (ON PHONE)

Stop it - You don't even sound like Charlie--

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)

I don't think I have much time. Come to 622 Villere in the Marigny. I'll prove it. Please - You told me you'd do anything for love.

That gives Hope pause -

HOPE (ON PHONE)

What?

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)
Everything... Please, Tilly.

In that moment, Hope's anger is replaced by mystification -

HOPE (ON PHONE)
 Why did you just call me Tilly?

VOICE (THROUGH PHONE)
 Because I have never stopped loving
 you.

The line goes dead.

Hope's mind is swirling - Joy - Terror - Hopefulness -
 Could Charlie actually be alive? Suddenly - She jumps up -
 Shouts to the Streetcar Driver -

HOPE
 Stop! Please!

She wrenches the doors - Leaps out while it's still moving -
 Just then - HER PHONE RINGS - It's Gabriel calling back -
 She hits the "Ignore" button - And runs - Tears streaming -

25 **EXT. FRENCHMAN STREET, MARIGNY - NIGHT** 25

Hope tears through the drunk crowds partying at the Jazz Clubs -
 Determined - Blind to the world around her - She races through
 speeding traffic across Elysian Fields Avenue - And hurries to -

26 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - NIGHT** 26

Hope runs up to the eerie location that Charlie gave her -
 Unkept - The place is dark - Quiet - Locked - No one's home -
 She sees an open window on the ground floor - Before entering -
 She hesitates - Can this be real? She has to know -

27 **INT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - CONTINUOUS** 27

Hope clambers inside -

HOPE
 Charlie!

Part of her cannot believe she is doing this - Does she really
 expect him to answer her? The house is silent - EXCEPT FOR
 THE SOUND OF A DOOR - BANGING IN THE WIND...

So she follows the sound upstairs - But as she steps onto the
 landing - THE BANGING STOPS... And there's just ONE DOOR...
 Stranger still - IT'S LOCKED. She kicks down the door in her
 desperation to find Charlie -

28 **INT. BEDROOM, DESERTED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

28

Hope enters - It's just nasty in here - Bare floor - Stains -
The walls are painted with symbols - Not creepy pagan stuff -
It's modern - Geometric - Almost scientific -

And there in the middle of the room - A dead body - Not Charlie -
A **DEAD JUNKIE**... Holding a phone...

Hope moves to him - Feels for signs of life - Finds nothing -
Opens her phone - DIALS 911 - But before she hits CALL -

Hope hesitates - Then - She covers her hands with her scarf -
And... Cautiously... Hesitantly... She takes the Junkie's
PHONE from his cold hands - A cheap, burner phone - She finds
the LAST NUMBER THAT HE DIALED... **HITS RE-DIAL**...

A silent moment... Then - **HOPE'S OWN PHONE BEGINS TO RING**...
Hope's mind swirls with questions...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

29 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - NIGHT**

29

Paramedics load the Junkie's body into a waiting Ambulance -
As Hope continues giving her statement to a POLICE OFFICER -
Who is currently looking through the Dead Junkie's BACKPACK -

POLICE OFFICER

I'm sorry you had to see this,
Miss Castille - You okay?

HOPE

Comes with the job.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm sure. So, you never met the
deceased before?

HOPE

No. He called for the first time
this evening.

POLICE OFFICER

And why did he contact you?

HOPE

He...told me he had a lead on a
missing person.

She's a good liar - The Police Officer finds the Junkie's I.D. -
A EUROPEAN PASSPORT -

POLICE OFFICER

Passport says Norway... "Friedrich
Johansen". That name mean anything?

HOPE

No.

POLICE OFFICER

He didn't give you a name when he
called?

HOPE

No. No name.

POLICE OFFICER

Any idea why he chose to call you in
particular?

HOPE

None.

This is the question that worries Hope...

HOPE (PRELAP)

Then you explain it...

30

EXT. ALGIERS FERRY, MISSISSIPPI - NIGHT

30

Hope and Nessa head home - And have this rapid-fire exchange -

NESSA

A telemarketer--

HOPE

He knew my favorite kind of cake.
Movie--

NESSA

Okay - A telemarketer with access to
your Google searches - You know I
get like a dozen pop-ups everyday
for dating sites--

HOPE

It was more than that. It was as if...
He knew me. He called me "Tilly".

NESSA

What does that even mean?

HOPE

On our first date, Charlie thought
my last name was Cas-Tilly - I became
Tilly. But no one knew that. You
didn't even know.

NESSA

Okay. Step back. Deep breath.
It can't have been Charlie, because
Charlie is dead.

HOPE

I know that, but how did a Norwegian
student - Who was sixteen when Charlie
died - Never been to America before -
No possible connection - How did he
know things that only Charlie knew.

NESSA

Someone must have told him.

HOPE

Yes... But what if that someone was--

Nessa's pissed - But swallowing it -

NESSA

No. No... I know you lost the love
of your life... But my big brother
died five years ago. So please...
For our friendship... Do not say
what you are about to say.

HOPE

I never want to do anything to hurt you, Nessa... But what if Charlie is alive?

NESSA

He's not. He's dead. I saw the car. Read the examiner's report. Scattered his ashes--

HOPE

Maybe he...I don't know...he--

NESSA

Faked his own death? To get away from all the awful things in his life? Of which he had? Oh - None--

HOPE

We don't know that--

NESSA

Why are you doing this, Hope? You were finally moving on - How can you turn back like this--

HOPE

Nessa, something really weird happened tonight. Something I can't explain. I need to find out what that phone call was... And you're the only one I can do it with.

Nessa looks into her friend's eyes - And she knows that Hope believes everything she's saying - As crazy as it sounds...

NESSA

Nothing is bringing Charlie back... But if I help you, it is so you can close the book on Charlie's death for good. Agreed?

HOPE

Thank you.

The FERRY begins to pull into the dock -

NESSA

And for the record - If he's alive and we find him - He's gonna wish he was dead.

They can agree on that... PRELAP - A DOORBELL CHIMES -

31 **EXT. FRONT DOOR, DUMAINE ESTATE - MORNING**

31

Charlotte, Gabriel and Christof open the door to Mrs Minami -
And **ALICE** (12 years old) - Quiet - Polite - Wounded...

Charlotte smiles welcomingly -

CHARLOTTE

Good morning! And you must be Alice!
We have heard so much about you! I'm
Charlotte and these are my brothers
Gabriel and Christof and we can't wait
to show you to your new room! Does
that sound okay?

Alice nods, sheepishly...

32 **INT. GRAND STAIRCASE, DUMAINE EATATE - MOMENTS LATER**

32

Charlotte leads Alice and the others up the sweeping stairs -
Adorned with generations of FAMILY PORTRAITS...

CHARLOTTE

Alice, the Dumaine Family can trace
its lineage all the way back to the
Seventeenth Century - When a young
French Trader, Jean Pierre Dumaine,
fell in love with his slave, Marie
Jojo. They had three beautiful
children--

CHRISTOF

Well, two were beautiful. One was -
What was the word Marie Jojo used?
Oh, yeah - Matronly.

Charlotte shoots her brother a fierce glare -

CHARLOTTE

Never-the-less, Marie Jojo's children
could bare no children of their own,
so they each adopted a child from
the community - That practice became
an honored tradition that you'll
become part of today.

Sensing that this is overwhelming to Alice, Gabriel smiles warmly...

GABRIEL

This must seem pretty intense to
you, but I promise - You'll feel
like part of our family before you
know it.

Alice struggles to find a smile...

33 **INT. TEENAGE GIRL'S BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER**

33

Charlotte opens the door on this Teen Wonderland...
Guitar - Flat Screen - Sephora Make Up - Craft supplies -
Alice's face begins to light up...

MRS MINAMI

Oh, my...

CHARLOTTE

We just want Alex to be happy here.

MRS MINAMI

Alice.

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

Alice rushes to try everything out -

34 **EXT. DUMAINE ESTATE, GARDEN DISTRICT - MOMENTS LATER** 34

Charlotte, Gabriel and Christof escort Mrs Minami to her car...

MRS MINAMI

You do, of course, realize that while all the 'toys' are very generous, what Alice needs now is a home... Time, attention and structure.

CHARLOTTE

Of course. She's family now.

GABRIEL

And for that, we are eternally grateful. Aren't we, Christof?

CHRISTOF

Yes. *Eternally.*

There's something about the way he says it, that's ever-so-slightly unsettling... They watch Mrs Minami drive away...

And there is a secret quiet... Before -

CHRISTOF (CONT'D)

Let's get to it...

35 **INT. TEENAGE GIRL'S BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER** 35

Gabriel is helping Alice set up her new AppleTV - When there's a KNOCK ON THE DOOR - And Charlotte enters...

CHARLOTTE

So, Alice... There's one last member of the family to meet...

Her gentle smile belies a darker truth...

36 **INT. BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - MOMENTS LATER** 36

Charlotte, Gabriel and Christof lead Alice in... The very old woman is still hooked up to life support...

CHARLOTTE

Alice, this is our mother, Marie Jojo.

Alice... Nervous... Shuffles closer to the hospital bed...
Charlotte, Gabriel and Christof inch away just a bit...

ALICE

It's very nice to meet----

SUDDENLY - Marie Jojo sits bolt upright - GASPING -
Terrifying Alice - Who just fucking SCREAMS!!!!!!

And then it happens - **THE POSSESSION** - The exchanging of souls -
FULL ON MAGIC - Old Marie Jojo draws a sharp intake of breath -
SUCKING out the girl's soul - Then - Old Marie Jojo blows out
her own soul back into the girl, who gasps to life -
IN TWO BREATHS THE TWO SOULS HAVE SWAPPED BODIES -

The three siblings react - Christof is fiendishly delighted -
Charlotte is stoic - And Gabriel is disgusted and turns away -
Alice is now MARIE JOJO - The matriarch of this Family -
Looking back at her previous shell, this wrinkly old woman...
The Old Woman is panic-struck - Young Marie Jojo smiles -

MARIE JOJO

Damn, I got ugly.

Young Marie Jojo leans in and switches off the life support -
As Alice's soul flatlines in the Old Woman's body -

37 **INT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - DAY**

37

The front door opens - REVEALING - Hope and Nessa -
Hope has just picked the lock -

NESSA

How do you even know how to do that?

HOPE

Your brother wasn't all puppy dogs
and rainbows, he knew some stuff.

NESSA

Like a junkie from Norway? Because
that would explain the phone call.

38 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - SAME**

38

An **UNKNOWN POV** watches Hope and Nessa from across the street...

39 **INT. BEDROOM, DESERTED HOUSE - DAY**

39

Even in the hazy light of day, this place is creepy as hell...

NESSA

You came here on your own? At night?
What were you thinking?

HOPE

Not sure I was. It was as if every
logical cell in my being had been
switched off.

The flashlights on their phones illuminate the shadowy corners of the room... Hope illuminates the GEOMETRIC SYMBOLS...

HOPE (CONT'D)

Do you know what they are?

NESSA

Well... It's not Egyptian or Mayan.
It's too angular to be Anatolian.
I'd have to hit the Loyola Library.
They have everything on paleography -
That's the study of--

Hope interrupts - Giving us a glimpse into her skepticism -

HOPE

I know what paleography is. Our house
was filled with old books with weird
writing - My mom was a five-dollar
psychic, remember--

NESSA

Sure... But if I had to guess, I'd
say these are the demented scribblings
of a suicidal heroin addict. Just...
Graffiti...

That gives Hope an idea...

HOPE

I got a graffiti guy.

NESSA

Who has a graffiti guy?

They head out -

40 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - DAY**

40

The UNKNOWN POV watches Hope and Nessa leave the house...

Hope follows Nessa to her car... But as she does... She slows -
Sensing eyes upon her... She turns - But the street is empty...

NESSA

You alright?

HOPE

Yeah... I just thought...
It's nothing...

Hope shakes the cobwebs from her head... And they drive away...

And the figure steps out of the shadows..... It's **CHARLIE**...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

41 **EXT. NEWSSTAND, MAGAZINE STREET - DAY** 41

Hope buys a newspaper - And finds her article -
"STREET ART OR URBAN BLIGHT?"...

42 **EXT. BENEATH THE HUEY P LONG BRIDGE - DAY** 42

A Graffiti Artist is working on a beautiful, MASSIVE MURAL -
Depicting the many cultures of the city - This is **BENNY D** -
A hardcore artist...

Hope arrives and offers him the newspaper she purchased...

HOPE

Hi - I don't know if you remember me--

BENNY D

Hope Castille. Times-Picayune...
(indicating the newspaper)
...So am I art or blight?

HOPE

Definitely art. This is amazing...

She shows Benny D the PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE GEOMETRIC SYMBOLS...

HOPE (CONT'D)

I'm hoping you can help me - I'm
trying to figure out what these are.
Maybe you know the artist?

BENNY D

Looks like tagging. But no gang I've
seen before. Check the wharfs in the
Lower Ninth, it's thick down there.

At last, a sliver of light...

43 **INT. BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - CONTINUOUS** 43

Christof hurries to embrace his mother -

CHRISTOF

I have missed you so much, Mama.

MARIE JOJO

I know, baby...

Christof stays at his mother's side, enjoying every moment -
As Marie Jojo turns to Charlotte -

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

You look heavy.

CHARLOTTE

I don't believe so.

CHRISTOF

Maybe it's her new hair.

Gabriel tries to play peace-keeper as always -

GABRIEL

Mother, it's good to see you on your feet again--

MARIE JOJO

We'll get to you in a minute - We're discussing your sister's weight gain. Six pounds, I'd guess. And it's not water retention - It's the sort of gain that takes a sustained effort. One would need to put in the time...

Ah, now she's getting to the point - She turns to Gabriel...

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

What's the date?

Crap -

GABRIEL

We...thought it best--

MARIE JOJO

I asked a question.

CHRISTOF

It's the fifth of October, Mama...
Twenty-eighteen.

MARIE JOJO

Two years!

CHRISTOF

Oh, f'sure, I have missed this.

Trying to calm things, Charlotte picks up an antique mirror -

CHARLOTTE

(lying well)

Mother, it took us that long to find the perfect young lady for you to become - This might be your body for the next eighty years--

MARIE JOJO

Don't you lecture me, Child - I know how it works, I've done it before. This is my game - Or have you forgotten that I'm the one with the power?

CHRISTOF

And me, Mama.

MARIE JOJO

And you, darling. I'd never forget you.

Gabriel and Charlotte shoot each other a look - The whole "favorite-child-thing" can be really fucking annoying -

Marie Jojo snatches the mirror - Takes in her new reflection -

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

How old am I?

CHARLOTTE

Twelve. Just as you asked. Full bill of health. Genetics are perfect.

MARIE JOJO

What about--

CHARLOTTE

Her wisdom teeth have already been removed, so that will be your jawline.

MARIE JOJO

Well, I guess she'll have to do...

Marie Jojo falters - Sensing something that no one else can... She breathes in the air - It's whispering to her softly...

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

What aren't you three telling me? Each of you has a secret...

She looks at each of them in turn...

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

A secret of the heart... A secret of the mind... And a secret of the soul.

Her three children try not to look too fazed... Then -

CHRISTOF

Gabriel has a girlfriend.

Gabriel looks pissed at his brother...

MARIE JOJO

Well, I can't wait to meet her - You must be lost without my opinion. I'm teasing, don't look so worried...

Marie Jojo heads off - Her children hurry after her -

44 INT. GRAND STAIRCASE, DUMAINE EATATE - CONTINUOUS

44

Marie Jojo races down the sweeping stairs - Enjoying her youthful legs - The others try to keep up -

MARIE JOJO

How have the Family Businesses been running in my absence?

CHARLOTTE

Well, they certainly haven't been running themselves.

GABRIEL

Charlotte has been doing a fine job captaining the empire.

MARIE JOJO

I believe I will reserve judgment until I see the books - In fact, let's head there now. Do I still have my Mercedes?

CHARLOTTE

You can't drive.

MARIE JOJO

Don't be ridiculous, I've been driving for over a hundred years--

CHARLOTTE

You're twelve, mother. Out in public, you are my adopted daughter, Alice.

There's a moment between them as Charlotte tries to disguise just how much pleasure she is getting from this situation - But Marie Jojo knows her daughter...

MARIE JOJO

(sardonic)

Alice? So should I be holding your hand when I cross the street?

Marie Jojo stops by a painting - **THE ORIGINAL FAMILY PORTRAIT** - Painted over 200 YEARS AGO - Jean Pierre Dumaine - His wife - And their three children... A sadness washes over Marie Jojo...

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

And what of my husband? Has anyone heard from the great Jean Pierre?

Her children are hesitant to report -

GABRIEL

Nothing, I'm afraid.

MARIE JOJO

I give him immortality and this is how he repays me. Five years now - Almost to the day. And there's still no word?

CHARLOTTE

We are trying everything, but it's
as if...

MARIE JOJO

...As if he doesn't wish to be found.

Marie Jojo is obviously wounded by this...

CHRISTOF

If you ask me, Mama - It's his loss.

MARIE JOJO

Thank you, darling...
(changing gears)
...So - The company books?

CHARLOTTE (PRELAP)

As you can see, our Real Estate
portfolios are particularly healthy...

45 **INT. CONFERENCE ROOM, DUMAINE OFFICES - DAY**

45

Charlotte and Gabriel have COVERED THE TABLE IN SPREADSHEETS -
Trying to show a healthy picture of their Empire to Marie Jojo -

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

...With profits getting a substantial
boost from the new tax plan--

GABRIEL

Meaning we could easily increase our
charitable contributions--

MARIE JOJO

My sweet Gabriel.

CHARLOTTE

And all three restaurants are booked
weeks out--

MARIE JOJO

This all looks very rosy.

CHARLOTTE

It is. I have managed to increase
our Company's standings...without the
need for any of Christof's or your...
'Gifts'.

MARIE JOJO

Oh, is that what we're calling it?

CHARLOTTE

We don't like to use--

But Marie Jojo has seen something that isn't so rosy...

MARIE JOJO

What's this?

She picks up a chart... And realizes, to her slight amusement -

MARIE JOJO (CONT'D)

Gabriel, you're running for Mayor.

GABRIEL

Yes.

MARIE JOJO

Now, what would possess you to do that? You know you can have anything you want in this city.

GABRIEL

No. You can give me anything I want.

MARIE JOJO

Isn't that the same thing?

GABRIEL

It's really not.

Marie Jojo lets him have his moment of bravado...
Before smiling thinly at the pair of them -

MARIE JOJO

Well, I think it's adorable - You two should have a project now that I'm back to oversee the company - But look at these polling numbers--

CHARLOTTE

There are some very encouraging signs from a number of outlying analytics--

MARIE JOJO

I would hate for the family to suffer any kind of embarrassment - Why don't you let your brother help you there? Seeing as he is the only one of you three with... "Gifts".

Charlotte finds the courage to admit -

CHARLOTTE

I have not been permitting Christof to use in public.

This is a huge affront to Marie Jojo...

MARIE JOJO

May I ask why? And how?

CHARLOTTE

Christof finally understands that times are changing. Social media is everywhere. Every phone has a camera. If he were to be seen 'using', our secret would be out and the family ruined. There is no need to use magic...

And there it is - The Family's unspoken secret... MAGIC.

MARIE JOJO

Magic has kept this family alive and empowered for two centuries.

GABRIEL

And we are all grateful for that. But I will get my campaign back on course. There is no need to involve Christof.

There is a cordial standoff... But you just know Marie Jojo is plotting something...

MARIE JOJO

And what of our 'competition'?

CHARLOTTE

A new restaurant opened a few doors down from one of ours--

MARIE JOJO

Not that sort of competition. The other families with so-called 'gifts'.

Ah... On to darker matters, then...

GABRIEL

It's been quiet.

MARIE JOJO

Even the Wiccans? Those little witches can be a pain in the ass.

GABRIEL

They know their place.

Marie Jojo accepts this... And fails to notice that Charlotte has been conspicuously quiet...

46

EXT. WHARF DISTRICT, LOWER NINTH WARD - AFTERNOON

46

Centuries old brick warehouses - Many in need of repair - Most covered in Graffiti - Both art and blight...

Hope steps out of her CAR - And begins to explore - But as she does, she is watched by an **UNKNOWN POV**...

Hope peers in through a broken window of a derelict building... When suddenly -

VOICE (O.C.)

This is private property.

Hope turns to find a **SECURITY GUARD** right behind her -
There's nothing particularly remarkable about him -

HOPE

I didn't know--

SECURITY GUARD

You need to leave.

HOPE

Absolutely. But can I just ask you
one quick thing - Have you seen these
symbols anywhere?

Hope shows the Security Guard the PICTURES on her phone -
He glances at the images... And life takes a beat...

SECURITY GUARD

I don't know what those are.

His statement hangs in the air... As Hope realizes -

HOPE

That's...actually...not what I asked.

And a nasty intensity begins to brew...

SECURITY GUARD

You need to go.

HOPE

Have you seen these--

SECURITY GUARD

Now. There is nothing here for you.

Hope knows that now is not the time to push her issue -

HOPE

Okay... I'm leaving...

The Security Guard watches her leave the property...

But we HOLD ON HOPE - Oh, hell yeah - She's coming back...

47 **INT. GABRIEL'S OFFICE, 1000 POYDRAS - DAY**

47

Charlotte enters without knocking -

CHARLOTTE

So apparently, we need to arrange a
funeral for mother...

She has walked in on a meeting - Gabriel and an older gentleman -
A jeweler's glass to his eye -

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Mr Garivotti - To what do we owe the pleasure?

GABRIEL

Could I have a moment with my sister?

The older gentleman leaves... Charlotte takes the ring -

CHARLOTTE

This was Aunt Natalie's engagement ring. When are you thinking of asking Hope?

GABRIEL

Tomorrow. At the White Linen Festival. Don't tell Mother. I don't want to crawl for her approval.

CHARLOTTE

This is why you wanted to keep mother medicated for a little longer.

GABRIEL

Yes.

CHARLOTTE

How long have you known this girl?
Six months--

GABRIEL

I love her.

CHARLOTTE

Are you sure you want to do this again? Inviting her into this family, you are inviting her into danger.

Gabriel takes his sister's hands... And smiles warmly...

GABRIEL

How many lives has mother given us?

Charlotte is thrown by Gabriel's abrupt change of conversation...

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Since my birth, I have lived seven lifetimes... I have felt the joy of watching a city rise from a sawgrass swamp. Felt the pain of seeing friends grow old and die... But in all those centuries, I have never felt love, like I feel for Hope. She's the one.

Gabriel's sincerity moves her...

CHARLOTTE

Then congratulations. I'm sure she - Hope - will love the ring.

They hug...

CHARLOTTE (PRELAP)

Do you have anything on her I can use against her?

48 **EXT/INT. MORNING CALL CAFE, CITY PARK - DAY**

48

A place to meet if you didn't want to be seen - Charlotte is with **TOMMY HARRISON** (50's) - Her Private Investigator -

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Tommy - I am trying to dissuade my brother of this woman's affections - So please tell me you have something.

HARRISON

Nothing since the last time I briefed you. She's clean. No arrests. DWI's--

CHARLOTTE

Nobody can be that squeaky.

HARRISON

She's a journalist, so I guess she has some shady contacts - Like last night, she got messed up with some addict that O.D'ed.

Harrison tosses down some photographs of the Dead Junkie - AND THE SYMBOLS ON THE WALL...

And suddenly - Charlotte is very troubled...

49 **EXT. OLD WAREHOUSE, NINTH WARD - AFTERNOON**

49

Hope jimmys open a window and climbs inside...

50 **INT. OLD WAREHOUSE, NINTH WARD - SAME**

50

Hope discovers a treasure trove of OLD MARDI GRAS FLOATS... And begins to explore....

Some are ancient - Some newer - Some broken - Some rotting - There's dragons - And flowers - And demons - And clowns... It's quiet and beautiful... And scary as all hell... A thousand papier-mâché eyes seem to watch her...

Hope is drawn to one float in particular - A CITY SKYLINE... But there's something about it - It appears to be ALIVE... And as she edges closer, we realize - It's covered in DOVES - NESTING AND COOING... She takes her camera and snaps a picture -

And the SHUTTER SOUND causes the flock to ALIGHT as one - They FLUTTER around Hope - ENVELOPING her - It's quite lovely - Then Hope watches them FLY out of the holes in the ceiling -

And that's how she notices - **THE ENTIRE CEILING IS COVERED WITH THE GEOMETRIC SYMBOLS** - Thousands of them... It's kinda terrifying...

51 **EXT/INT. GABRIEL'S CAMPAIGN CENTER, NINTH WARD - EVENING**

51

A low-rent building, leased for the purpose of taking the shine off the Dumaine's wealth in the eyes of the voters - Charlotte enters to hear the tail end of a SKYPE INTERVIEW -

GABRIEL

...The regentrification process is critical, but the City still faces threats from every corner - Angry seas, self-serving politicians...

CHARLOTTE (PRELAP)

Add one more threat to your list...

52 **INT. PRIVATE OFFICE, CAMPAIGN CENTER - MOMENTS LATER**

52

Charlotte shows Gabriel the Geometric Symbols...

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

...This is Magislov. Russian Black Magic.

This is cause for alarm...

GABRIEL

You think one of the families is using? In the City? They wouldn't dare.

CHARLOTTE

Mother has been 'away' for two years. Who knows what the other families may dare? What if the other magic clans are becoming organized? This happened under our watch, Gabriel.

Now that is disconcerting...

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

That's not the only worrying thing - The reason I have these pictures... I had your girlfriend followed--

Gabriel is livid with her -

GABRIEL

What--

CHARLOTTE

When you told me that you intend to marry her, you left me no choice - But, think about what I'm saying - Your girlfriend - A journalist - Found these symbols. What if she keeps digging? Even if you're not worried about exposing the Family - Consider the danger to Hope.

ACT FOUR

55 **INT. OLD MARDI GRAS WAREHOUSE, NINTH WARD - MAGIC HOUR** 55

THE ACTION CONTINUES FROM ACT THREE... FLAMES SHOOT FROM THE DRAGON FLOAT as it bares down on Hope - At the last second -

The entire wall behind Hope SLIDES OPEN - IT'S A GIANT DOOR - Magic hour sunlight floods in -

And in that instant - EVERYTHING IN THE WAREHOUSE FALLS SILENT... Motionless - As if nothing ever happened...

Hope looks back towards the door - As her savior appears - Silhouetted against the setting sun... It's GABRIEL... He folds her into his protective arms...

HOPE (PRELAP)

It was insane - All the floats were moving...

56 **EXT. SAINT ROCH MARKET - NIGHT** 56

A bustling outdoor cafe - Hope recounts the story to Gabriel -

HOPE (CONT'D)

...Like someone flipped a switch -
And then that dragon - Who stores
floats loaded with fireworks?!
And then you--

GABRIEL

I just opened a door--

HOPE (CONT'D)

(realizing)
Why were you even there?

GABRIEL

I tried to call you, but you didn't
pick up - Nessa said you were by the
wharfs, so I drove through the area and
saw your car...

(turning the tables)
What were you doing there?

HOPE

I was...

Hope hesitates - Is she going to tell Gabriel the truth?
Or is she going to lie further?

HOPE (CONT'D)

...It was research for a story.
It's click-bait - I caved. Top ten
hidden treasures in the city.

Hope's world pauses for a moment as Gabriel considers this...

GABRIEL

Sometimes, you gotta do what the boss wants, right?

HOPE

Yeah.

GABRIEL

So... Do you want to eat? That's why I called you.

HOPE

Actually... I have a deadline.

GABRIEL

Will I see you before tomorrow night?

HOPE

Tomorrow?

GABRIEL

The White Linen Festival...
Are you sure you're okay?

Hope kisses him - Melting into his embrace...

HOPE

I am now. I'll see you tomorrow.

Hope watches Gabriel leave... Then she leaves in the opposite direction...

57 **EXT. TULANE UNIVERSITY - MORNING** 57

Hope hurries into the grand old college...

58 **INT. CITY ARCHIVES, TULANE UNIVERSITY - MORNING** 58

Hope approaches the ARCHIVIST at his desk -

HOPE

Hi, I'm trying to find out who owns a warehouse in the Lower Ninth - There's nothing online.

ARCHIVIST

Well, if it was registered before nineteen and seventy-two, it won't be online. Come with me...

59 **EXT. CORDS ROOM, CITY ARCHIVES - MOMENTS LATER** 59

Three hundred years of history, all perfectly filed...
Giant drawers open to reveal intricate filing systems...
The Archivist quickly finds what he's looking for -
He heaves out a BOX - Filled with OVERSTUFFED FILES...

ARCHIVIST
3465, North Saint Peters...
Here you go...

Of all the files - This is the only one that's EMPTY...

ARCHIVIST (CONT'D)
That's odd... There should be
something. Let me keep looking...

The Archivist shuffles away - And Hope opens the empty file -
And sees - A TELEPHONE NUMBER - Written on the inside cover -

Hope takes out her smartphone and GOOGLES the number...
It's a RUSSIAN VODKA BAR IN THE FRENCH QUARTER...

CHRISTOF (PRELAP)
You wanted to see me?

60 **EXT/INT. GABRIEL'S OFFICE, 1000 POYDRAS - DAY**

60

Gabriel has summoned his brother Christof to his office...

GABRIEL
So... It's nice to have mother back.

CHRISTOF
I'd call it...liberating.

Gabriel is not amused by his little brother...

GABRIEL
Remember - Everything that you have.
All the toys. It all goes away if
anyone figures out our secret. If
anyone sees you using--

CHRISTOF
That it? 'Cause that's kinda old
news--

GABRIEL
No, that's not all - I want you to
stay out of my business. The campaign
is off limits.

CHRISTOF
I believe Mama feels differently.

GABRIEL
I don't need or want your help.

Christof sizes his brother...

CHRISTOF
Tell me... How does it feel?

GABRIEL
How does what feel?

CHRISTOF
To be powerless.

Gabriel steps in - Unafraid of his brother's 'gifts'...

GABRIEL
Everything I have achieved has been on
my own merit - And that feels powerful.

Without warning - Hope enters - The boys put on their best
'game faces' -

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Hope... You remember my brother,
Christof.

HOPE
Of course.

They kiss politely on the cheek -

GABRIEL
I wasn't expecting to see you until
later.

HOPE
I know. And that's the thing - I am
so sorry, but I'm not going to be
able to make it--

CHRISTOF
Ouch. Should I be here for this? I
mean it's fun to watch you flame out--

HOPE
No, no. It's nothing. I have a
deadline. At the office.

GABRIEL
This festival is kind of a big deal--

HOPE
I know. And I'm sorry... I just
need to get this over with.

At least that part is true...

GABRIEL
Well, if you can't... I understand.

HOPE
Thank you.

They kiss goodbye - And Hope leaves...

CHRISTOF

If you want me to change her mind
for you--

GABRIEL

If you touch her, I will kill you.

CHRISTOF

Oh, that would be such an unfair
fight.

The brothers lock eyes...

61 **EXT. CANAL STREET - NIGHT**

61

Hope meets with Nessa...

NESSA

So where does Gabriel think you are?

HOPE

At the office. Finishing a story.

NESSA

Are you sure about these lies? I'm
no expert, but I'm pretty sure that's
not how you build a relationship.

HOPE

Since that phone call, it's all I can
think about - I have to know.

With her heart set, Hope leads the way into the bustle of
the French Quarter...

62 **INT. RUSSIAN BAR, FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT**

62

The slick, modern face of New Orleans - Not a tourist in sight -
This place would be more at home in a Manhattan Penthouse -
Hope and Nessa enter - Find a seat at the bar -

A **FEMALE BARTENDER** serves them -

BARTENDER

Cocktail list?

HOPE

Actually--

NESSA

Actually... I would love to see a
cocktail list...

(off Hope's look)

What? If you're gonna sabotage your
romance, I should start one of my own...

The Bartender returns with the cocktail list -

NESSA (CONT'D)

Tell me - What's your favorite thing
to make?

But Hope doesn't have time for Nessa's clumsy flirtations -

HOPE

Is there someone who can tell us
about these?

Hope shows a photograph of the Geometric Symbols to the Bartender -
Who glances at Nessa -

BARTENDER

Your girlfriend's a buzzkill.

NESSA

Not my girlfriend. Not certain we're
even friends at this point.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

What is your interest in such things?

Hope turns and sees - ELENA (40's) - Russian psychic -
And part-time waitress - Sitting in a corner booth...
Hope leaves Nessa to flirt with the Bartender...

Hope approaches Elena's Booth... Lace tablecloth... Tarot cards -
Hope's defenses are immediately on alert...

ELENA

Sit, please... Why are you here?

HOPE

I'm writing an article for the
Times-Picayune.

Elena sizes Hope up... Reading her...

ELENA

No... That's not it... You're
searching for something--

HOPE

Okay, you don't need to do that.

ELENA

I'm sorry?

HOPE

Don't try to "read me". I know how
it's done - My Mom preyed on people's
hopes.

ELENA

Your mother had the Gift?

HOPE

If the "Gift" means getting herself killed by one of her clients, then yes, she had the gift...

(suddenly furious at herself)

You know, this was dumb. I don't know why I'm here--

ELENA

It's Magislov... The writing... It's very old. Used in many different rituals...

(she indicates the photo)

This is Razhuzhenya... It means "Thinning". The ceremony weakens the membrane that separates our world from the spirits... Razhuzhenya allows a lost soul to make contact with the living. It uses a conduit between the worlds. A person at the very point of death.

There is a long silence, before Hope has an epiphany - She suddenly bursts into LAUGHTER...

HOPE

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I am. I don't mean to be rude.

ELENA

I take no offense--

HOPE

It's just, when you hear it out loud like that - I'm sorry - But, oh, my God, what am I doing here? This is crazy - You're right, Nessa - I should be with Gabriel, not chasing ghosts - Again, no offense--

ELENA

None taken--

HOPE

And I mean metaphorical "ghosts", of course, not "Boo". Ghosts from my past - I'm sorry. Everyone. Nessa, let's get out of here - This crap got my mother killed, now it's threatening to destroy my relationship with Gabriel...

Hope heads for the exit...

63 **EXT. RUSSIAN BAR, FRENCH QUARTER - MOMENTS LATER**

63

Nessa joins Hope outside -

NESSA

You okay?

HOPE

I'm great. I have been behaving so badly - This is all so far out of my belief system. I'm sorry - I need to get to the festival - I'm meant to be wearing white.

NESSA

He won't care.

Hope hugs Nessa - Then points back at the bar -

HOPE

And you should get that cocktail.

The friends share a smile - And Hope hurries away -

64

INT. RUSSIAN BAR, FRENCH QUARTER - MOMENTS LATER

64

Elena, **the Russian Psychic**, watches Hope and Nessa in the BAR MIRROR... Once she is certain they have left, she puts a bottle of vodka on a tray and heads down a back corridor -

Just then - A figure steps out of the shadows - We recognize him - It's the TOUR GUIDE from the Teaser - This is -

MATEO SILVA (40's) - **Latin** - Lustful - He follows Elena - To a BACK DOOR -

MATEO

Why did you tell her about your ritual?

Elena just smiles, unfazed -

ELENA

Because sometimes the truth is so unbelievable, there is no need to lie.

Elena turns to unlock the BACK DOOR - Accidentally dropping the bottle of vodka -

It falls - **But it stops just before it hits the ground** - Suspended in the air somehow - Then it starts to float up - And we see - MATEO IS CONTROLLING IT WITH HIS MIND...

MATEO

For those who don't believe there is no proof enough... And for those who do believe, no proof is needed.

Mateo levitates the vodka bottle back onto Elena's tray - She opens the BACK DOOR - And they enter -

65

INT. SPEAKEASY, RUSSIAN BAR - CONTINUOUS

65

Dark - Dangerous - The secret underbelly of the City - This is where Magic can exist freely and without apology -

There's no creatures or goblins - These are regular folks -
Every creed - Every color - Every culture - Every gender -
We follow Mateo and Elena through the **MAGICAL THRONG** -

An **INDIAN MAJI** plays therapist to someone on a couch -
Literally pulling the **BAD MEMORIES** out of their head -
We see **IMAGES** of "Arguing Parents" extracted like wafer-thin
celluloid pictures that disperse in the wind like sand...

A **PROSTITUTE** uses **FRENCH MAGI** to blow seductive smoke rings
around a **CUSTOMER** - The smoke coils around him like a
beguiling serpent - Enticing him closer...

A **BARFLY** uses **NORSE SEIDR** to blow on his beer and **FREEZE** it -
He doesn't notice the **RAT** stealing his wallet and taking it
to the **THEIF** that's using **NATIVE AMERICAN ANIMISM** to control
the animal...

A **TATTOO ARTIST** uses **MEXICAN BRUJERIA** to turn his **FINGERTIP**
WHITE HOT and **ETCH** a **BURNING BRAND** onto a **CUSTOMER's** back...
Elena stops to offer the Customer the Bottle of Vodka -

ELENA

For your pain.

We recognize the Customer immediately - It's the **SECURITY**
GUARD that Hope encountered at the warehouse...

Mateo arrives at a **BACK TABLE** - Already seated is **MRS MINAMI** -
The Family Services Lady...

MATEO

What's so important? I got a tour
at eight.

MRS MINAMI

We finally know the true face of our
common enemy.

She hands Mateo a plain envelope, which he opens -
Inside are the **ADOPTION PAPERS** FOR 12 year old **ALICE** -
(The girl who became Marie Jojo) - Including her picture...
This is very good news...

MRS MINAMI (CONT'D)

The Dumaine's reign over this City
will soon be over. We will finally
be out of their shadow.

MATEO

They have no idea how weak they have
become...

Mateo turns to Elena as she arrives -

MATEO (CONT'D)

...All we need is for your contact to tell us how to kill Marie Jojo.

ELENA

Kill the Queen and the hive will die.

MRS MINAMI

The city will be ours again -
Without the Dumaine's iron fist.

Mrs Minami takes back the photograph - **And it bursts into flames...**

66 **INT. GABRIEL'S OFFICE, DUMAINE ESTATE - NIGHT**

66

Gabriel is alone - Staring at HOPE'S ENGAGEMENT RING - Looking handsome in his crisp white linen suit, but there is a sadness to him... Charlotte enters - Also wearing white linen...

CHARLOTTE

You ready to go to the Festival?

But Gabriel's mind is elsewhere -

GABRIEL

You think Dad did the right thing?
Getting out of this family.

CHARLOTTE

We don't know that's what he did.

GABRIEL

I think he took a long hard look at his family and wanted no part of it. All those lives that have been sacrificed just so we can survive.

CHARLOTTE

What's going on?

GABRIEL

I've put Hope in danger.
By loving her.

Charlotte understands that more than anyone...

CHARLOTTE

Over the centuries, I've often thought that it would be easier if we fell in love with the people we hate most.

A sad irony... They head out... Gabriel LEAVES THE RING BEHIND...

67 **INT. SUITE, MONTELEONE HOTEL, FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT**

67

CLOSE ON - Gabriel's political **RIVAL** -

RIVAL

I must say, when I received this invitation, I was most curious.

REVEAL - Christof and the Rival are in an elegant hotel suite...
The two men sit across from one another...

CHRISTOF

Mr Mayor - My family has seen the writing on the wall and I think we can all agree on where this election is heading. However... I do have a somewhat "out of the box" solution...

Christof casually takes out a hypodermic syringe -
And fills it from a medicine bottle...

CHRISTOF (CONT'D)

Did you know that ten milligrams of Propofol will put a man to sleep for thirty minutes?

RIVAL

You keep that away from me...

But Christof just gives a cheeky grin -

CHRISTOF

Oh, it's not for you...

And Christof calmly injects himself in the neck -
He starts to fall unconscious - Lunging at the Rival -

RIVAL

What in God's name--

AND BEFORE THE DRUG TAKES HOLD - CHRISTOF POSSESSES THE RIVAL -
Blowing his own soul out of his mouth and into Rival's mouth -
It's over in a second - And Christof passes out on the couch...

The 'Rival' STRETCHES - Like he's trying out a new skin...
He looks down at 'Christof'...

RIVAL (CONT'D)

Damn, I'm fine - I would so do me...

Then he looks at his 'Rival' self in the mirror...

RIVAL (CONT'D)

You, on the other hand - You look like you haven't had any fun in years...

He steps out onto -

68 **EXT. BALCONY, MONTELEONE HOTEL, FRENCH QUARTER - CONTINUOUS**

68

The 'Rival' looks down at the drunken REVELERS below -

RIVAL

...So... Who wants to PARTY!!!!!!

This is met with a joyous yell!!!!

69 **EXT. FRENCH QUARTER, NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT**

69

Hope is hurrying through the CROWDED STREETS to get to Gabriel -
She tries him on her phone - But has to leave a message -

HOPE (ON PHONE)

It's me. I'm coming. Gabriel, I am
so sorry. I'll explain everything.
Please wait for me.

When there is a commotion - Cameras are flashing - Hysterical
ONLOOKERS with video phones - And at the center of the chaos -

The straight-laced 'Rival' going crazy on Bourbon Street -
Drunk - Strippers - He's lost it - Dancing - Screaming -

A POLICEMAN tries to contain him - And the 'Rival' lashes out -
PUNCHING the Policeman - Who goes down hard -

RIVAL

Remember - Vote for...
(he's forgotten his name)
...Whoever the hell I am!!!!

The 'Rival' takes off running - POLICE in hot pursuit -

70 **EXT/INT. MONTELEONE HOTEL, FRENCH QUARTER - CONTINUOUS**

70

The 'Rival' races in - Tears up the stairs - Police behind -
An upstairs Hallway - The 'Rival' races into a room -

71 **INT. SUITE, MONTELEONE HOTEL, FRENCH QUARTER - CONTINUOUS**

71

The 'Rival' locks the door - Christof is still just laying on
the couch, in a Propofol state of unconsciousness -

RIVAL

Pucker up, Buttercup...

The 'Rival' grasps Christof's face - Breathes out -
AND BLOWS CHRISTOF'S SOUL BACK INTO CHRISTOF'S BODY -
Christof wakes with a start -

CHRISTOF

And we are back live!

RIVAL

You keep that away from me!

The Rival is dazed - No recollection of being possessed -
Christof runs out onto the Balcony - Climbs over - Just as -
Police kick the door in - Burst in -

POLICEMAN

On the ground!!

The Rival just stands there - Mind blown -

72

EXT. FRENCH QUARTER - NIGHT

72

The Russian Woman, Elena, walks home alone... When suddenly -
Charlie walks up from behind -

CHARLIE

I need to speak to Hope.

ELENA

We had a deal, Mr Lapree -
And you have yet to deliver--

CHARLIE

I came back to this city to protect
Hope from the Dumaines. I need to
speak to her--

ELENA

Do you have any idea how difficult
that is to orchestrate?

CHARLIE

That sounds like a "you problem" -
I have information that you need--

ELENA

Watch your tone, Mr. Lapree. Remember -
This city may have a hundred different
forms of magic hiding in the shadows -
But I am the the only one who can
arrange a meeting between you and
your love.

CHARLIE

And I am the only one who can tell
you how to kill Marie Jojo Dumaine.
Make it happen.

Charlie watches her head off into the night...

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

73 **EXT. THE WHITE LINEN FESTIVAL, WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT** 73

The streets are teeming with elegantly dressed partiers - Everyone there is wearing perfect white linens - Except for Hope who runs from a taxi - Desperate to find Gabriel - But everyone looks the same... It's kinda beautiful...

74 **EXT. CAMPAIGN BOOTH, WHITE LINEN FESTIVAL - SAME** 74

Gabriel is shaking hands and thanking supporters - But you can see his heart's not in it - There's a rare sadness to him tonight...

GABRIEL

...I will never stop fighting. This City always deserves another chance. And who are we if we don't have...

(he trails off as he sees...)

...Hope?

(then he calls out to her)

Hope!

Hope turns - And sees him - The loving smile on his face melts away all her angst - He is so very happy that she came - She runs to him and they kiss -

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I thought you were busy.

CHRISTOF

Who's too busy for a party?

HOPE

I was. But now I'm not... It's all finished with... I'm all yours now.

GABRIEL

Well, I like the sound of that.

That's when she realizes the rest of the family is there -

CHARLOTTE

You made it after all. How wonderful... I'd like you to say hello to my new daughter.

GABRIEL

(whispering to Hope)

We've been keeping the adoption quiet until it came through.

CHARLOTTE

Hope... This is Alice.

Hope turns to Marie Jojo -

HOPE

Hi, Alice - That's such a pretty name--

MARIE JOJO

Aren't you supposed to be in white?

Awkward... Until Gabriel puts his arm around Hope defiantly...

GABRIEL

I think she looks perfect.

Marie Jojo smiles with maternal servility -

MARIE JOJO

Apparently, that's all that matters.

Marie Jojo watches Gabriel lead Hope into the festivities...
And the CAMERA MOVES AWAY - Leaving them to enjoy the romance
of the night...

75 **EXT. RIVERWALK, BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI - LATER**

75

Charlotte is meeting with Harrison, her P.I. -
He's showing her something on a PHONE SCREEN -

CLOSE ON RECORDED VIDEO FOOTAGE - Looking in through a window -
Hope and Nessa meeting with Elena, the Russian Woman...

CHARLOTTE

When was this?

HARRISON

Less than an hour ago.

Charlotte hands him another wedge of cash - And they part -
But as Charlotte turns - Marie Jojo is right there -

CHARLOTTE

I can handle this.

MARIE JOJO

And yet all evidence is to the
contrary.

CHARLOTTE

We have worked so hard for everything.
This can be settled without violence.

MARIE JOJO

Sweetheart, when rats come out of
the sewer, you don't invite them to
the table.

Charlotte is very worried... This could mean war -

76 **INT. BEDROOM, DESERTED HOUSE - NIGHT**

76

The house where the Junkie died - The symbols on the wall -
CLOSE ON ELENA - Being interrogated - By Marie Jojo -
Some force is making it difficult for Elena to breathe -
Like her body is being crushed by an invisible python -

Our only clue as to what's happening is the **SMALL METALLIC DOLL** that Marie Jojo is fingering intimidatingly in her hand -

MARIE JOJO

I thought we had an arrangement -
 You don't practice your filthy magic
 and... Well, that's it - I guess
 that's more of an understanding than
 an arrangement... However...
 (indicating the symbols)
 Who were you trying to contact?

ELENA

Ya nichego tebe ne skazhu--

Marie Jojo SQUEEZES the doll - Elena SCREAMS -

MARIE JOJO

Who were you trying to--

ELENA

War is coming...

MARIE JOJO

Ooh, a story. I love stories.

ELENA

You. Your magic. It will end.
 I have seen it.

Coming from a psychic, Marie Jojo takes this warning seriously...

MARIE JOJO

Perhaps... Just not tonight.

Elena looks frightened...

77 **EXT. DESERTED HOUSE, MARIGNY - MOMENTS LATER**

77

Marie Jojo walks out - Her three children are waiting for her -

MARIE JOJO

We have controlled the magic in this
 City for two Centuries. Your little
 'Kumbaya' experiment has allowed
 that control to waiver. That ends.

CHARLOTTE

Please, mother--

MARIE JOJO

Gabriel, I heard about your girlfriend's
 "Mardi Gars adventure". What are your
 thoughts?

Gabriel is torn - But he knows what must be done -

GABRIEL

Desperate times.

CHRISTOF

Atta'boy.

MARIE JOJO

Starting tonight. There is to be
only one magic in New Orleans...
Our magic. Voodoo.

Marie Jojo tosses the metallic doll into an oil-drum fire -
A silhouette of Elena in a window - As she is engulfed in flames -
Charlotte looks up at the burning building in horror -
Her mother's declaration of war could destroy everything...

78 **EXT. ROOFTOP, JAX BREWERY APARTMENTS - SAME** 78

From this beautiful riverside vantage point, Mrs Minami looks
out at the City Scape - And the FIRE erupting in the Marigny...
She knows her world of magic is approaching a tipping point...

79 **INT. CHARLOTTE'S BEDROOM, DUMAINE ESTATE - NIGHT** 79

Charlotte sits in front of her mirror, knowing that her short
reign as the matriarch of the family is over and she's deeply
worried by all the connotations of this... When without warning -

VOICE (O.C.)

You look like you could use a drink.

She turns - Right there - **Floating in mid-air** - A Martini...
REVEAL - MATEO - The Tour Guide - Sexier than we remember -
In fact, Charlotte melts a little when she sees him -

CHARLOTTE

You shouldn't be here.

MATEO

I had to see you.

CHARLOTTE

Mother is back.

MATEO

We know.

CHARLOTTE

She mustn't find out about us.
About you. Your family...

Mateo motions with his fingertips - Lifts Charlotte off her feet...
Draws her closer to him...

MATEO

Then we'll be even more careful...

And they kiss... The CAMERA PULLS AWAY... They're both floating...

80 **EXT. HOPE AND CHARLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

80

We find Hope standing in front of her old home - There's now a For Sale Sign hanging out front... She unlocks the door... And looks down at the thresh-hold..... And somehow..... She finds the courage to step inside...

81 **INT. HOPE AND CHARLIE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

81

Nothing has changed in five years... The renovations are still incomplete - Charlie's hand-written plan on the Cabinet - Counting down to their WEDDING... She looks around... Taking it all in... It's breaking her heart - But it's finally time to move on for good... And at last she finds the strength to say the words out loud... Words she hasn't been able to say for five years...

HOPE
Goodbye, Charlie--

BANG!!! A thunderous noise terrifies us - BANGING in a wind... Hope follows the sound - It's coming from the attic...

82 **INT. UNFINISHED ATTIC - CONTINUOUS**

82

Hope climbs up into this ominous space... The bulb's out, so she uses the light from her phone - Revealing - Old boxes - Charlie's personal stuff that she couldn't bare to part with... A window is open - Banging over and over... The wind is fluttering the pages of a book... She moves closer and realizes - IT'S CHARLIE'S NOTEBOOK -

Hope is moved by this - She picks up the notebook - Like it's a connection to the past - To Charlie himself - And she glances through the old entries... Hand-written notes...

Occasional words jump out at Hope - Wicca - Ku - Secret - Underground - But then - The tone of the notes change... Obsessive... The notes become sketches... Shapes... And then symbols we recognize - **It's the Russian Symbols...**

Hope's mind begins to race - Stitching together clues - Energized, she calls Nessa on her cell -

HOPE (ON PHONE)
Come on... Pick up...

She turns - **Right into Charlie** - Just standing there - Inches from her face - A huge scare for the audience -

This should be the greatest moment ever for Hope - Everything she's wanted - The love of her life is right in front of her... BUT SHE DOES ABSOLUTELY NOTHING... Because she can't see him - And we finally realize... **CHARLIE IS A SPIRIT...**

HOPE (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
...Nessa, it's me...

INTERCUT - NESSA - AT A JAZZ BAR ON FRENCHMAN STREET -
Sitting with the lady Bartender from the Russian Bar -

NESSA (ON PHONE)

Hey - How was the festival--

HOPE (ON PHONE)

Charlie knew about the Russian
Symbols.

NESSA (ON PHONE)

What?

HOPE (ON PHONE)

Five years ago - It was the story he
was working on when he died.

NESSA (ON PHONE)

I thought you agreed to drop this.

HOPE (ON PHONE)

I can't. We can't. Look, I don't
know what any of this means - But we
can't stop now - We have to keep
searching for answers. Maybe that
Junkie's death wasn't accidental...
Maybe Charlie's death--

NESSA (ON PHONE)

Don't do this.

HOPE (ON PHONE)

I'm sorry... I love you...
But I love your brother more.

Hope hangs up on her friend...

On Charlie - Knowing that Hope will fight for him...
He leans in - And blows the hair from her eyes -
She looks up - Feeling the breeze - And Charlie is gone...

Hope turns to the final entry in the notebook -

83

FLASHBACK - INT. HOPE & CHARLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT -

The OPENING SCENE - Charlie receives a call - And writes down
a note in his NOTEBOOK -

83

BACK TO PRESENT DAY - CLOSE ON - The note Charlie wrote in his
NOTEBOOK...

"9pm - 7th St Wharf - **DUMAINE**"

JUST THEN - HOPE'S PHONE RINGS... It's Gabriel calling...

ON HOPE - SMASH TO BLACK

TO BE CONTINUED...