

The Demon Hunter

By

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EXT. GOTHIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Slow move towards a stone church in the city. No movement in the dark alleys except a mouse. A cat is stalking it, slowly moving behind it. The shadow of the cat looks like a large specter along the stone wall of the church. The arches of the church tower above, like a massive monument that belittles anything in its presence.

The stone is eerie, not sacred.

The church steps are cold stone. A thin woman exits. She looks like an 80's heroin addict. Everything about her is unkempt.

A young distraught priest looks out the window. He is not judging, but stricken, almost guilty. The window has iron bars. He looks down.

INT. GOTHIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Inside, we see he is looking at a baby wrapped in a dirty blanket and left on a leather chair.

INT. GOTHIC CHURCH SANCTUARY - NIGHT

The priest kneels in front of the altar. He looks very small there.

After what looks like a prayer, he takes a crucifix from around his neck, lays it on the baby's blanket.

The baby is handed to an old nun. The priest turns his back and walks past the confession.

He exits the church's large doors, looking back through as the door shuts the sanctuary into darkness.

Time lapse footage of the church altar. Dust collects.

Time lapse of the rafters. Cobwebs form.

Multiple shots of the church aging before our eyes. Like a museum turning into a haunted house.

TITLE - "THE DEMON HUNTER"

A mouse creeps along the wall, the only movement amongst the dead sanctuary.

A shot of a large crooked crucifix cross fades to...

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - MORNING

The gold crucifix hangs on a gun holster on the edge of a desk. Sunlight peaks in through the blinds. Officer ADAM PETERS, 30-something and in good shape, puts the crucifix on, then the holster. He tops it off with a badge, gives a little flex, a proud look and runs his hands through his hair.

EXT. UPTOWN STREETS - GHETTO

A police car patrols around. Some people watch it pass, but pay it little mind. Every other building is abandoned. It's so quiet, there isn't even any graffiti. Some boys play basketball.

PETERS is in his uniform blues driving up and down the empty streets looking at nothing. A picture of a four year -old girl is taped to the dash. He knows it is only a matter of time before his radio will speak up with some action. His gun is in his hand already as he flips the safety back and forth.

The radio crackles to life.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
(through the radio)
Unit 24. Copy.

Peters flips the safety again, inspects it and places it carefully on the seat. As he picks up the radio receiver...

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
Unit 24. Copy? Peters, you awake?

PETERS
Awake and bored. Tell me you got something better than a domestic.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)
Got a BOLO. What's your six?

PETERS

I'm on the corner of twenty-sixth
and nowhere.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

Is nowhere on the south-side,
smart-ass?

PETERS

That would be an affirmative.

RADIO VOICE (V.O.)

Good. I'm texting you a photo. Ask
around.

PETERS

(disappointed)

Ten-four.

(to his gun, mocking)

"Join the force" they
said. "Police work is exciting"
they said.

He looks up the deserted street. His phone buzzes.

EXT. UPTOWN STREETS - GHETTO

Peters approaches some teens loitering at a corner. He
holds up his phone to show a picture. Everyone shakes their
heads.

Peters shows his phone to an old woman pushing a cart, but
barely pays attention to her response.

A suspicious guy on the corner waves the cop over.

TIPSTER

I hear you lookin' for the
invisible man.

PETERS

That's a lame street name. We call
him Marcus. You know him?

Peters holds up the picture on his phone.

TIPSTER

Yeah, that's him.

PETERS

You seen him around?

TIPSTER
If anyone asks, I never saw him.

PETERS
Right. Just like if I check your
pockets I'll find something you
never had, either?

The man is uncomfortable.

TIPSTER
Again. I never saw him. But
there's a church over on second ave
that smells like donuts.

PETERS
(mocking)
Is that so? Don't go
nowhere. I'll be back later to ask
where I can get some coffee.

Peters gives him a sly wink and walks away. The man
suddenly looks annoyed and nervous and starts to back off.

TIPSTER
(walking away quickly)
Fuckin' pig.

The man flips off the cop to his back. Peters looks both
ways and crosses the street.

EXT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH

The front door is clearly barred, and bolted. The weeds
have grown thick along the side. There is an empty lot next
door.

Peters pulls in to the lot and draws his gun as he gets out.

He holds his gun downward as he moves carefully along the
side. The windows are boarded.

He finds a side entrance that is wide open. He peeks in,
gun aimed.

INT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH

There are two unsavory men exchanging money.

PETERS
POLICE! PUT YOUR HANDS WHERE I CAN
SEE THEM!

PERP 1
Shit!

Perp 1 ducks into a corner behind the confessional.

Perp 2 stuffs a wad of cash into his pocket and fumbles for a gun. As he darts down the aisle, he starts shooting toward Peters.

Peters takes cover behind the door outside. He drops the radio as he grabs his gun with both hands.

PETERS
(to himself)
Now this is what I call police
work.

After three shots he turns the corner and looks down the aisle, then pursues the perp leading with his weapon. His radio is left behind on the ground.

Perp 1 watches unnoticed from behind the confession. He is sweating, looks up and sees an ominous stone angel, its face is chipped off. Peters is sprinting down the long aisle, dodging broken pews.

Perp 2 is agile. He bounds over the last pew and ducks into a corridor. Fires two shots backward without looking.

Peters has to take cover momentarily, but the shots are way off. He fires twice at the corridor.

A few cautious lunges, and he turns the corner. It is a tiny staircase to the balcony.

At the top, he sees the perp at the end of the seats, forcing a boarded window open. As Peters takes aim, the perp leaps through a crack.

PETERS
FREEZE!

Peters runs over to investigate. The perp has leapt from the second story and is now running around the corner of the next building over. He is fast. Peters must contemplate.

PETERS
Aw, fuck it!

He looks down into the sanctuary and his eyes meet Perp 1, who doesn't look so agile. He tries to get up from the corner but trips over a large overturned cross at the altar.

He falls into a cowering position at the foot of a tomb, almost as if begging.

Peters looms over him.

PETERS (cont'd)
Nice to meet you Marcus.

MARCUS
(hysterical)
Don't let him kill me! I don't
want to die!

Marcus is talking to no one in particular, maybe even to the tomb.

PETERS
I'm not gonna kill you... if you
come quiet.

Peters cuffs him roughly. Looks up at the angel over the tomb.

PETERS
(taunt)
You see that? That's my guardian
angel.

Marcus spits on it. Peters twists his arm a little.

PETERS
(annoyed)
I thought you were gonna come
quiet.

Marcus submits with a twinge of pain. Peters pushes him towards the door.

EXT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH

Peters is putting Marcus into the backseat of the squad car. It is as if we are watching it from a far away point of view.

INT. POLICE STATION

Peters is escorting Marcus through the doors of the building. A few guards come and take him toward the holding cell.

Other police officers are peering up, like prairie dogs.

CAPTAIN ORWELL is a gruff man, not smiling, brow looks like it is stuck in a furrowed shape. He claps in praise, and looks less mad than usual.

ORWELL

Not bad, Peters. You were supposed to ask around about Marcus, but I suppose arresting him will work too.

PETERS

(cocky)

Well, I prefer to put the bad guys behind bars. Call me an over-achiever.

Some other officers chuckle.

ORWELL

Don't let it go to your head.

Peters shrugs like "who me?"

ORWELL (cont'd)

And next time, call for backup. Don't forget you have a radio.

Orwell is finished and heads toward his office.

PETERS

(still cocky)

Yes sir, I'll remember. Just don't forget me when you get to filling that detective opening.

There is tension in the room over this remark. Orwell ignores it, but remarks over his shoulder.

ORWELL

I want a full report...

Orwell indicates to the desk. Peters puts his hat down on it as Orwell goes back to looking more mad. Everyone responds by getting back to business as usual.

Across from Peters' desk, JASON TENNER, another young officer slides his monitor over to get a clear view of Peters.

TENNER
Lucky bastard.

PETERS
Lucky?

TENNER
I know you didn't find the
invisible man 'cause you're good.

PETERS
Eh, you're jealous.

Peters types a password on his keyboard.

TENNER
That's three big arrests this
month... You must be charmed.

PETERS
(smirking)
Tell that to my ex.

Tenner laughs.

TENNER
You comin' out tonight?

PETERS
Can't. Have to pick up my
daughter. It's my weekend.

Peter starts typing slowly.

TENNER
Oh, that's right. I may have
pointed this out before but, if
Keesha cheated on you, how did you
lose out on custody?

PETERS
I'm a cop, not a lawyer.

Tenner laughs again, light-heartedly.

TENNER
Lawyers... who needs em?

PETERS

I do. Got a new custody hearing in three weeks.

TENNER

Oh yeah? Tired of paying child support?

PETERS

I'm tired of worrying about how my daughter is gonna be raised.

Peters starts typing again. There is a pause while Jason thinks, then he pipes up again.

TENNER

Hmm. How old is she now, anyway?

PETERS

Twenty-six, going on twelve.

TENNER

Pfft. No, I mean Elsa.

PETERS

She just turned four last month. I'm still waiting for a gift, by the way.

TENNER

Keep waiting. Maybe I'll get her some bourbon when she's eighteen.

PETERS

Fuck you.

TENNER

Hey man, I do not envy you. I am not ready to be a father.

PETERS

Me neither.

TENNER

But then if Keesha was my girl, I'd have had a hard time keeping it in my pants too.

Captain Orwell pokes his head out of his office and shouts before Peters can come up with a comeback.

ORWELL
 (shouting across the room)
 Peters!

He signals with his fingers to come to his office. Peters nods.

TENNER
 (harassing)
 Uh, oh. I bet Marcus told him you didn't read him his rights...

PETERS
 (sarcastic)
 Yeah. 'Cause drug dealers are honest about that shit.

INT. ORWELL'S OFFICE

Peters cautiously enters the office, looking like a cross between an army recruit and a child in the principal's office.

ORWELL
 Close the door.

The door closes, and is a bit louder than Peters expected.

ORWELL (cont'd)
 Have a seat.

Peters obeys, looking more comfortable, but still uncertain.

ORWELL (cont'd)
 Looks like you shook up ol' Marcus pretty good.

PETERS
 (defensive)
 Well, he wasn't exactly cooperating-

Orwell stops him with his hand.

ORWELL
 You did fine. He's going to testify against Zanich.

PETERS
 Zanich? Is it enough for an arrest?

ORWELL
Close. I've got drug enforcement
working on it now.

PETERS
(intensifying)
Cap. Put me on it. I see these
dealers everyday-

ORWELL
Relax, officer. I've got something
else lined up for you. Or perhaps
I should start calling you
Detective Peters.

Peters is astonished.

PETERS
Detective? About time. Do I get a
new office too?

ORWELL
You get one month probationary
status. Don't make me regret it.

PETERS
I won't sir. I mean, you won't.

ORWELL
Now get out of my office before I
change my mind.

Peters is on his way out, cockier than ever. Orwell shouts
as the door opens.

ORWELL (cont'd)
And get me that report!

INT. BAR

Peters, Tenner and three other officers sit around a table,
beers raised high.

TENNER
To Detective Adam
Peters. Cocksucker.

OFFICERS
Here, here! Speech! (etc.)

They all drink like frat boys. Then Peters puts his drink
back up.

PETERS

To Officer Jay Tenner, who's buyin'
the next round.

OFFICERS

Here, HERE!

Tenner rolls his eyes. The laughter continues. Peters
pulls out his vibrating phone.

PETERS

Oh, shit. I have to go. Gotta get
my daughter.

The officers heckle him, teasing him for leaving so early.

Peters throws some money on the table. Tenner pretends to
count it.

TENNER

Cheap bastard!

Peters flips him off as he leaves.

EXT. ROW HOME - LATE EVENING

KEESHA, a young, mixed-race, striking woman is standing
behind a screen door, looking disapproving. Peters pulls up
in a beat-up Honda behind a slightly newer Acura. When he
gets out, Keesha disappears inside.

ELSA, an adorable 4-year old is scribbling on a book on the
porch.

Peters has to move a garbage can out of the way to get by
the gate. He cautiously steps up to the porch to see Elsa.

PETERS

Hey, Ellie. Watcha doin'?

Elsa says nothing and keeps drawing, oblivious. Keesha
steps out, looking like she is ready for a date, at a strip
club. They do not look at each other.

KEESHA

You're late. Don't they teach you
cops how to tell time?

PETERS

Yeah. And then we teach the
scumbags to only break laws between
nine and five.

Peters tries to grab a crayon that has rolled towards him. Elsa grabs it first. She is talking nonsense to herself. Almost a song.

KEESHA

You know she had nightmares for a week after she stayed with you last time.

They start talking over one another. Elsa keeps drawing, talking to herself.

PETERS

She doesn't have nightmares at my place. What are you doing to her?

KEESHA

ME? What the hell are you doing?

PETERS

(snarky)

I'm being a good role model...

KEESHA

Oh, right! You? A role model?!

PETERS

I keep her safe. You bring around your skunky asshole boyfriend.

KEESHA

You're so full of shit. What the hell do you know?

PETERS

What's his name? Darren? I bet he's here now.

KEESHA

Yeah. Here. 'Cause you're too busy "savin' the world."

PETERS

(shouting into the house)

Hey, asshole!

KEESHA

Shut up! What the hell is wrong with you?

PETERS

He's a drug dealer!

KEESHA
Are you out of your MIND?!

PETERS
ME?!

Elsa has gotten irritated by the escalating arguing and lets out a shriek. Peters tries to help her off the porch.

KEESHA
Now look what you've done!

PETERS
Come on, Ellie. Daddy's gonna take you somewhere quieter.

He starts putting her crayons and book into a bag. He hoists Elsa onto one shoulder.

KEESHA
Oh, there you go. Play the hero.

PETERS
Yeah, that's right.
(to Elsa)
Who keeps you safe, baby? Who keeps the bad guys away?

ELSA
(rehearsed)
Daddy does.

Elsa glares over his shoulder at Keesha; partly sad, partly mad. Peters doesn't look back.

KEESHA
Monday morning at eight!

PETERS
Yeah, sure. You better be awake! I gotta get to work on time so I can pay your alimony!

Peters loads Elsa into the car and drives away.

INT. SLUM HOME - NIGHT

A shadow moves around the small, dark apartment. Three candles in a triangle, placed carefully on the table, rhythmically.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Elsa is staring into the TV screen, sitting on a beat-up recliner.

Peters carries a small glass of milk and half empty package of cookies and sets them on the cluttered coffee table in front of Elsa.

INT. SLUM HOME - NIGHT

A match is struck, the candles are lit. A knife is placed in the center. It has a distinct ornamental handle.

The shadow moves around in the candle light. A calm dance, moving with the flames. The blade of the knife slices through the flames, licked, almost sensually.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters dunks a cookie in the milk. Elsa does the same. They munch in unison, both watching the TV screen.

Peters looks at the clock.

PETERS

Woah. We better get you into bed.

Elsa looks up from the TV. Maybe disappointed, maybe worried. She says nothing.

He picks her up and carries her into the bedroom.

INT. SLUM HOME - NIGHT

The shadow moves behind a closed door. Hidden.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters tucks in Elsa. She makes no noise, and her eyes stay open.

PETERS

Sleep well, precious.

INT. SLUM HOME - NIGHT

Another shadow enters, moves toward the bed and lies down. The light from the candles at the foot of the bed resembles an altar. The shadow moves in, wielding the knife like a painter, prepared to paint his masterpiece.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Adam is finishing himself off in front of his computer screen. His silhouette grabs a tissue, lit by the screen.

He lets out a rugged sigh. The digital clock reads 1:58.

In the bedroom, Elsa is lying in the dark; eyes open. She is looking at the ceiling, like she is watching a movie.

EXT. ROW HOME - MORNING

Peters is dressed in a cheap brown suit. He looks like he walked out of his grandfather's closet. He bangs on the door again, looks at his watch, then at Elsa.

Elsa is sitting back down on the porch and is pulling out her coloring book. She knows what to do.

PETERS
 (muttering)
 Come on, come on!
 (shouting)
 KEESHA!

Keesha slowly opens the interior door and Peters reacts like it is a starting pistol.

KEESHA
 I'm here, I'm here. Call off the
 SWAT team.

He darts for his car and angrily shouts over his shoulder.

PETERS
 Eight o'clock!

Keesha gives a sleepy glance to Elsa and goes back inside. The door closes.

EXT. SLUM HOME - MORNING

A uniformed officer is securing a police line at the door to the apartment. His girth makes the doorway look tiny. Peters hurriedly walks toward it.

FAT OFFICER
(slightly patronizing)
Nice of you to show up, Detective.

PETERS
Yeah, yeah. Traffic, and all that B.S. What do we got?

FAT OFFICER
Messy one. You better just take a look.

INT. SLUM HOME - MORNING

Peters takes a step in the bedroom doorway and stops cold. After a moment he shakes it off and mutters to himself.

PETERS
(under his breath)
This is the job you wanted.

The camera pans down just enough to see the arms of a woman tied to the headboard. Three slightly melted candles are burnt out at the foot of the bed. Peters turns back a moment, covers his mouth.

FAT OFFICER
You need a moment? Bathroom is over there.

PETERS
I'm fine. Why don't you get us some coffee?

The officer is unimpressed with Peters posturing.

FAT OFFICER
Sure thing... Detective.

INT. SLUM HOME BEDROOM - MORNING

A forensic photographer snaps shots and pushes around the small room.

He steps out to make way for the medical examiner. DR. JANESEA SMITH is mid-forties, nurse-turned-cynic who is unfazed by her work. She eyes up the corpse almost as much as she eyes the novice detective looking hesitantly around the room.

JANESEA
(prompting)
Detective...

PETERS
Peters. You're Dr. Smith, right?

JANESEA
Janessa, please. First case, huh?

PETERS
Is it that obvious?

JANESEA
You look green. It's just a dead body.

PETERS
I can handle a little blood. I'm just, uh, not sure what to do with my hands.

JANESEA
Writing something down helps.

Janessa pulls out a tape recorder. Peters pulls out a pad, and fumbles for a pen. He looks to the candles instead while she examines the body. The candles are only burnt a little.

JANESEA (cont'd)
(into the recorder)
Female victim. Early twenties. Multiple lacerations to the abdomen and neck. Appears to be a drug user from the needle marks on her left arm.

PETERS
Any burns?

She ignores him.

JANESSA
Tied at the wrists. No bruising
from the ropes.

PETERS
Tied before or after?

She ignores him again. Uses a thermal probe on the corpse.

JANESSA
Body temperature indicates time of
death was likely between one and
two A.M.

Peters inspects the candles, the table. It is very neat.

PETERS
Do you think she was... you know.

Janessa finally looks at him. But has a blank expression.

JANESSA
Tattoo on the neck. Looks recent.

She indicates to Peters and offers him a latex glove. He gently tilts the head to the left. There is a roman numeral tattooed on the back side of her neck. The knife wound stops just after it. "DCLXVI".

PETERS
Roman numerals.

JANESSA
You're the detective.

PETERS
(suppressed embarrassment)
I'm a little rusty. Whats the "D"
for?

Janessa suppresses a snicker.

JANESSA
Five hundred. Are you religious?

PETERS
No, Catholic.

She almost smirks.

JANESSA
It's six six six. You know what
the candles are?

She looks back to her bag.

PETERS

Looks like someone was having a seance. Candles are in a triangle, though, not a pentagram. And usually something goes in the middle.

JANESSA

Oh, good. I was worried I was going to have to solve the whole case for you.

Peters throws her a look, but she musters a sly smirk.

PETERS

I grew up with five different foster families. I've seen some weird shit.

She nods to feign agreement.

PETERS (cont'd)

Can you send me the autopsy report?

She gives him a look like, "what else would I do with it?"

EXT. SLUM HOME - MORNING

Peters walks up from behind the fat officer, hands in his pockets.

PETERS

You the one who found her?

FAT OFFICER

Yup. Landlord has a rule against candles. He saw them in the window and called nine-one-one last night rather than knock on the door himself. No one else heard or saw anything.

PETERS

Anyone else go inside?

FAT OFFICER

Not that I know of.

PETERS
(condescending)
Not that you know of?

FAT OFFICER
(patronizing)
No.

The fat officer drinks a sip of coffee.

Captain Orwell steps out of an unmarked Buick behind him.

PETERS
How's that coffee?

FAT OFFICER
Delicious.
(beat)
You got something to say?

Orwell walks over. Senses the tension.

ORWELL
Detective Peters!

PETERS
Morning, Captain.

ORWELL
Officer Gray.

FAT OFFICER
Sir.

He excuses himself.

ORWELL
Hope you like on the job training.

PETERS
I prefer to get my hands dirty.

ORWELL
Good. Keep the press away until
you have someone to lock up. The
faster you find him, the easier
that will be. You catch me?

PETERS
Loud and clear.

ORWELL

(looks Peters in the eye)
A little advice: try not to piss
people off.

PETERS

You know me. I'm far too charming
for that.

Orwell is unimpressed. Takes a step closer.

ORWELL

Just get a conviction. No more
screwing around. It's not just
your reputation riding on this.

The Captain releases his glare and leaves him.

PETERS

Yes sir. Good talk, Cap.

Peters phone vibrates. He looks at it: "Blocked Call"

PETERS (cont'd)

Hello?

HUNTER (V.O.)

Hello Detective Peters.
Congratulations on your promotion.

Peters is seen from a hill nearby. As if watched from
afar. Then close up again.

PETERS

Who is this?

HUNTER (V.O.)

Sorry about the mess. But then,
our line of work tends to be a bit
messy.

PETERS

And what line of work would that
be?

HUNTER (V.O.)

Ridding the world of the waste.

PETERS

Waste? What waste?

Peters is looking around now. Paying attention. He moves
away from the others.

HUNTER (V.O.)
 The scum. The villains. The unjust. Viktoria, the poor girl being carried on the stretcher, had invited some such unsavory companions.

The body bag is being loaded into the medical examiner's vehicle behind him.

PETERS
 Companions? Like who? You?

HUNTER (V.O.)
 Let's just say they're not of this world.

By the ambulance, Janessa is watching Peters over her shoulder, from a distance. He is standing alone.

PETERS
 (mocking)
 What? Like aliens?

HUNTER (V.O.)
 (laughing)
 Aliens, Adam? Really?
 (serious)
 Do you believe in angels and demons?

PETERS
 Are you trying to tell me some demons came and sliced her up and down and then slit her throat?

HUNTER (V.O.)
 No. That was me.

Peters is waving frantically to an officer. Moving back towards the crime scene.

PETERS
 I'm sorry, I didn't catch your name.
 (whispering to the officer, covering his phone)
 Trace my line.

HUNTER (V.O.)
 You may call me the Demon Hunter.

PETERS

Well. Mr. Hunter. Why don't you come down to the station and tell me all about yourself.

HUNTER (V.O.)

I'm afraid I don't have that luxury.

(beat)

There is more evil coming.

PETERS

Is that a threat?

HUNTER (V.O.)

A warning. Normally I keep to myself, however, I've got my eye on some particularly rare prey. Hunting it may require some... assistance. After all, Detective, we are in a similar line of work...

PETERS

You expect me to help you?

HUNTER (V.O.)

Something tells me you'd make an excellent demon hunter.

PETERS

Oh? And how does one hunt demons?

HUNTER (V.O.)

That depends on the demon...

PETERS

Walk me through this one.

HUNTER (V.O.)

And give you time to trace the phone call? Perhaps next time. I'm not certain you have what I need. I don't even know if I can trust you yet.

PETERS

Trust me? You just admitted to murder...

The line goes dead. Peters is looking at the officer, who shrugs.

PETERS (cont'd)
Hello? Hello? Dammit!

Peters looks at the phone. Tries to call the number back, but it fails.

OFFICER
Sir, who was that?

PETERS
I have no fuckin' idea.

INT. AUTOPSY

Detective Peters is trying to look as confident as he can while entering the morgue. A body is covered with a blanket on the table lit by the only bright light in the room.

Janessa is behind the door at a desk, lit partially by a dim light. She wears glasses and takes notes.

PETERS
Cozy place.

She looks up to inspect the intruder. She is not surprised.

JANESSA
I thought you could handle bodies.

PETERS
I was referring to the mood lighting.

Janessa is not amused. She asks with her look, "what are you doing here?"

PETERS (cont'd)
I couldn't wait for the report. I'm impatient.

JANESSA
You're new. It'll wear off.

She gets up and carefully pulls back the cover of the body as she points out some things.

JANESSA
The victim was drugged with atracurium.

Peters yanks his notebook clumsily out of his pocket at the name of the drug.

JANESSA (cont'd)

A-T-R-A-

PETERS

I got it...

JANESSA

It's a paralytic. She would have been completely immobile with the dose she had.

She catches him fumbling for a pen, and hands him one from her pocket while looking down her nose.

PETERS

So, no struggle.

JANESSA

Right. That's why there's no bruising on the wrists. The knife is what killed her, though slowly. She probably bled out in about twenty minutes.

PETERS

Any sign of... rape?

JANESSA

None. The body was clean. Just the tattoo and a needle mark where the drug was administered.

PETERS

So she let the attacker drug her?

JANESSA

Or she drugged herself.

PETERS

She a user?

JANESSA

Maybe recreational. Her name is Viktoria Struna. Twenty something from Slovenia. No family, at least not in the country.

Peters is inspecting the wounds.

JANESSA (cont'd)

The blade was sharp, and heated. The edge of the wound cauterized, but he also sliced some arteries. Very careful work.

PETERS
He ran the blade through the candle
flame?

JANESSA
That would do it.

PETERS
Like a ritual.

The words practically echo in the darkness.

JANESSA
That's not all. There is salt in
the wounds too.

PETERS
Why salt?

JANESSA
Well, it would sting like hell...

PETERS
Even with the drugs?

JANESSA
Mm, hm. My grandmother was
superstitious. She always told me
that salt keeps evil spirits away.

Janessa measures him for a reaction.

JANESSA (cont'd)
If he claims to be chasing demons,
he's playing the part.

PETERS
How'd you know about that?

JANESSA
Word gets around. Especially when
a murderer calls the
detective. You know that's not
normal, right?

PETERS
(sarcastic)
Really? And here I thought I was
just that good...

JANESSA
I hope you are. Something tells me
this guy has some bad plans...

Peters stares a moment, thinking. Then leaves.

INT. DINER

Peters is thoughtful, almost hypnotized at a small corner table in a classic looking diner. A half-empty cup of coffee sits in front of him with four opened sugar packets.

FATHER GAINES, an aged priest with a dog collar and experience behind his eyes startles Peters as he sits down with a laboring effort.

GAINES

You always had a sweet tooth.

PETERS

(joking)

I had a rough childhood.

GAINES

Look at you now. Detective? I always knew you'd go places.

PETERS

I bet you say that to all the foster kids.

They chuckle about his past, lightly. Gaines gets serious. He knows he wasn't called just to catch up.

GAINES

It's been too long. How have you been, Adam?

PETERS

Well... I'm a detective...

GAINES

Married? Kids?

PETERS

Uh, divorced. Got a beautiful daughter though, Elsa.

Gaines eyes sink a little at the word "divorced". He forces a smile.

GAINES

So, you need a marriage counselor?

PETERS

No, no. That isn't going to happen. I have a question about a case I'm hoping you can help me with.

GAINES

(puzzled)

Okay. Crime solving isn't really my area of expertise, but I'll give it my best.

PETERS

Well...

(beat)

...have you ever done an exorcism?

The old priest hesitates at the weight of the question, it almost betrays him before he denies it.

GAINES

No. No. I haven't. Why do you ask?

PETERS

In this case there's links to rituals and religious things.

Gaines sits up with curiosity.

GAINES

What kind of things?

PETERS

I don't know. Might just be a bunch of crap. This guy claims to be hunting demons, so I figure I should ask someone, just to cover my bases. Any idea what he might be talking about?

GAINES

Demons? Huh... do you believe in demons?

PETERS

Doesn't much matter what I believe...

GAINES

It matters a great deal.

Gaines looks him down. A fatherly look, to a child. Peters wasn't expecting this.

PETERS
I don't know what I believe.

GAINES
You still wear that cross from your
mother?

PETERS
Every day.

GAINES
Good. Do you pray?

Peters is embarrassed by the question.

PETERS
(uncomfortable)
Pray? No. If God is up there,
he's not listening to me.

Gaines can see the bitterness on his face.

GAINES
Maybe he's waiting for you to seek
him?

PETERS
Father, you don't need to preach to
me. I've heard it all before. I
grew up without parents, without a
home. My ex took my house and my
daughter. I see more bad shit in a
day than you can imagine. If God
wants to find me, he'll have to
come get me.

Father Gaines is speechless at this little outburst. The
silence is awkward.

PETERS (cont'd)
(withdrawing)
Look. It's important that I do
well on this case. Just let me
know if you think of anything that
might help me catch him.

Gaines nods, discouraged, as Peters throws some money on the
table, stands and puts his coat on.

GAINES
Adam...

PETERS

Don't take it personal,
Father. I'm just used to taking
care of myself.

He pauses for a moment, trying not to look disrespectful.

GAINES

I know. I'll ask around and see
what I can find out.

Peters barely nods.

PETERS

Thanks. Take care, Father.

GAINES

You too. Be careful, Adam.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters is hunched over an old religious book. The page header says "Exorcism" but he doesn't seem to be finding what he is looking for.

Peters flips through a few more pages, another book, then slams it shut in disgust.

He hangs his crucifix on the corner of his desk, next to the holster, then rolls over into bed.

EXT. STREET ALLEY - NIGHT

A shadow moves along the brick wall, past a dark but open window. A car drives by flashing the window with light for a moment, enough to show a shadow inside, behind the curtains.

INT. BEDROOM BY THE ALLEY - NIGHT

A silhouette stands in front of the open window. It seems to be facing out. The wind blows the curtains. The sound of a match striking is heard, and a slight glow comes to the shadow. It is a woman, caught between dazed and terrified. It might be the heroin addict woman who left the church, older now...

VOICE (O.S.)

I'm afraid your time has come.

The woman moves eerily, obediently to the bed. There are three candles lit on a table at the foot.

The silhouette of the bed is eclipsed by another shadow.

Suddenly the figure on the bed bolts up.

WOMAN

NOOOOO!

The shadow forcefully grabs her and pins her back down. The candles are blown out with the force of her collapse back to the bed. She struggles violently, but in vain.

SHADOW VOICE

This will be different.

WOMAN

Noooo! Not again!!

SHADOW VOICE

Hinc tu egredior... (From here, you leave...)

WOMAN

No!! Leave me alone!

SHADOW VOICE

...ad vinculis tenebrarum. (...in chains of darkness.)

She struggles, back and forth. As she looks to one side of the bed she sees the shadow. As she appeals to the other, nothing is there, but she seems to be begging to something.

WOMAN

Pleeeeeease....

The shadow has her restrained now. And replaces the candles.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Father... please... not again...

She weeps herself into submission to her fate. Then as her eyes close, the shadow moves closer, casting his shadow over her.

The shadow pauses... whispers something, not a known language.

She suddenly lurks forward from the darkness into the candlelight, eyes wide and shrieking. The shadow does not react, but instead plunges a knife into her neck. She spasms a few times, then falls back, lifeless. As the shadow moves away, there is a lifeless corpse in the moonlight.

The shadow moves in front, covering her in darkness.

EXT. STREET ALLEY - NIGHT

The shadow moves past the window. Another car headlight flashes the window where there is still a shadow inside, standing behind the curtain as before.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters awakens in a sweat, the light is still on by his desk. He looks at the clock: 2:24 A.M.

INT. POLICE STATION

Peters is already at his desk, unshaven, staring at a forensics report. Tenner walks in, clean shaven, in uniform. They look like opposites.

TENNER

I thought detectives got their own offices?

PETERS

They get offices when they aren't probationary anymore.

TENNER

Ah, a test run. How's your case going?

PETERS

I got some ghost stories and no fuckin' fingerprints...

He flips the forensic report closed.

TENNER

None? Well, no matter. I hear you got the killer on speed dial.

Peters is not amused by the joke.

PETERS
 (offended)
 What's that supposed to mean?

TENNER
 (back-pedaling)
 Hey now, Adam, same team! You
 okay?

PETERS
 Sorry, man. I didn't sleep much
 last night.

TENNER
 Don't worry, man. You'll get him.

Peters continues working without looking up, staring into
 one page, then another, expressionless.

TENNER (cont'd)
 Hey, if you need a break, we could
 use a hand hauling boxes of
 evidence from Zanich's house.

PETERS
 Zanich under arrest?

Peters looks up.

TENNER
 Not yet. But some of his books are
 considered material in Marcus'
 case. I think the D.A. is trying
 to shake him up a little.

Captain Orwell walks in the front door.

ORWELL
 Peters? You better be done with
 that report. Got another victim.

Peters and Tenner exchange serious looks.

INT. BEDROOM BY THE ALLEY - MORNING

Peters stands at the end of the bed, looking past the
 knocked over candles toward a covered body. He looks
 spooked. The sheet is stained with lines of red.

The world seems to be moving outside of him, while he is
 stationary. A photographer moves around behind him.

He moves toward the side of the bed and stands there.

He sees a flash in his mind: the same scene as the murder... but there is no shadow. There is a priest. The woman faces him.

WOMAN (V.O.)

No... Father...

Peters carefully pulls up the blood-soaked blanket to see a large red hole where the neck should be. He looks closely at the back and sees part of a number: DCLXV. Before he can see the rest, his thought is interrupted...

JANESSA (O.S.)

I see you found the numerals.

Peters is startled a little and drops the blanket down.

PETERS

Uh, yeah. Looks like the same M.O.

JANESSA

A little bit bloodier though.

PETERS

Yeah, uh. Time of death?

JANESSA

About two thirty.

Peters is almost trance-like. Janessa is cleaning up her things and not paying close attention.

Peters is standing by the bed again. Another flash, the priest is holding a bible and holy water.

JANESSA (cont'd)

You alright?

PETERS

Huh? Yeah. I just need some coffee.

Peters pushes his way out of the room.

EXT. FRONT DOOR OF APARTMENT BUILDING

Peters is holding a notepad and interviewing a woman in a wheelchair. She uses both hands to hold a writhing boy, maybe five years old.

WOMAN

Yeah, I heard some screaming last night. At maybe, about two in the morning. I thought someone had a horror movie turned up loud. It woke up my son.

She tries to corral the boy, but he is fidgeting relentlessly. He glares at Peters, and smiles playfully.

Peters isn't really paying attention as she blathers.

WOMAN

There's always noise over there. I've complained about the neighbors before, but this was different...(etc.)

Peters' phone rings. The man keeps talking as Peters answers the "Blocked Caller".

PETERS

Peters.

HUNTER (V.O.)

Sometimes when prey is cornered, it can lash out violently.

Peters starts looking around. Down the alley there is a small cemetery. An ornamental cross on the gate has been bent downward.

PETERS

Prey? Is that how you refer to your victims? Are people just "game" to you?

HUNTER (V.O.)

(unremorseful)

Adam. I've explained already, I'm not after humans. I hunt demons. It is unfortunate that somebody has to lose their mortal shell, but if it is any consolation, this woman was never a saint.

As the Hunter speaks, Peters watches the mother struggling to hold on to her boy. He is fighting to release her grip. When he finally escapes he runs past Peters and through the gate.

PETERS

So what does the make you? Judge,
jury and executioner?

The boy back-steps and looks through the gate at Peters, as if to say "chase me!"

HUNTER (V.O.)

She sealed her own fate. Heroin,
prostitution, theft... hardly a
model citizen. And an easy vessel
for the demonic.

Peters looks back at the handicapped mother who motions helplessly with her arms as the boy teases, starting to run away, but hesitating.

PETERS

An easy kill for you, right?

HUNTER (V.O.)

(annoyed)

Do you think this is easy?

The boy runs.

PETERS

Cut the crap. What are you after?

Peters realizes the woman can not give chase, and so he must.

HUNTER (V.O.)

The same as you. A peaceful
world. A world without war. A
world without crime and
punishment. A world of complete
freedom.

The boy is not moving fast, and stops after turning the first corner to make sure he is followed.

PETERS

Bullshit. You get off on luring
and killing doped-up bimbos...
What's the matter? Some druggie
ex-girlfriend break your heart?

HUNTER (V.O.)

You should be one to talk about
vengeful exes. By the way, how is
Keesha?

The boy giggles as he turns the next corner. Peters stops, tired of the game.

PETERS

Fuck you! Are you stalking me?!

HUNTER (V.O.)

I'm sorry, Adam. That was uncalled for. I had to do my homework on you. I'm afraid you don't have the time to joke around anymore. The demons know that I have spoken with you, and whether you like it or not, you are involved in this. You are a threat to them, and they will come for you and anyone you care about. If you are not ready to hunt, then you had best go into hiding.

Peters walks around the corner to follow the boy, but he is not there.

PETERS

If that's a threat, here's one for you: you better run, because I hunt murderers.

HUNTER (V.O.)

That's the right attitude, but you will need to learn some new hunting skills. This is not the same as chasing drug-dealers with a pistol. Demons don't leave footprints or fingerprints. There is much I must teach you.

Peters looks around the next corner, certain the boy has led him in a circle.

PETERS

(sarcastic)

Maybe I can start by reading your manifesto.

HUNTER (V.O.)

I urge you to take this seriously, especially considering your relationship to the victim this time.

PETERS
What relationship?

The phone hangs up. Peters presses redial...

PHONE VOICE
I'm sorry, the number you have
dialed is not a valid-

Peters curses to himself, then realizes he has wandered into the cemetery. As he turns to look back at the crime scene, the little boy jumps out from behind a tombstone, startling Peters.

BOY
HEY!

The boy glares.

PETERS
What do you want, kid?

BOY
I caught you!

The boy's serious look changes to laughter as he runs off.

EXT. DOWNTOWN APARTMENT - DAYTIME

Tenner is pushing a hand-cart with office paper boxes marked "2013" towards a police van as Peters pulls up in his Honda. Peters stuffs a sandwich wrapper in a bag and gets out, trying to look important.

PETERS
They send a whole van just for a
few boxes?

TENNER
Fifty boxes.

Tenner lifts another box into the van.

PETERS
Did you at least get to taser
someone?

TENNER
(teasing)
Uh, yeah, bend over and hand me
that box...

A black Cadillac pulls up in front of the police van.

PETERS

No way. I'm a detective now.

TENNER

Oh? You too important to lock up
public enemy number one?

GEORGES ZANICH is a stocky but well-built man wearing a black suit. He walks up with a middle-aged woman dressed professionally. She carries a briefcase.

PETERS

Speak of the devil...

ZANICH

Good afternoon officers. You had better put those boxes back the way you found them - and I hope you didn't soil my cashmere rugs.

TENNER

We are executing a legal warrant.

Tenner pulls out a folded paper and offers it.

PETERS

You know, I think the cashmere rugs are part of the warrant too.

The woman reaches swiftly into her briefcase and extracts a folded piece of paper, hands it to Tenner. Peters intercepts it.

LAWYER

Cease and desist, signed by judge Suarez.

Peters looks it over, flips to the back...

PETERS

Hmm. It doesn't say how much you bribed him on here...

Tenner takes the paper and gives him a look.

ZANICH

What a ridiculous notion to suggest...

PETERS

Detective Peters.

ZANICH
...Detective Peters.

There is a tense moment as Zanich and Peters lock eyes.

ZANICH (cont'd)
Well. Watch the rugs. They're
worth more than you both
make. Strike that. Just leave the
boxes by the door.

Zanich and the lawyer make their way through the doors.

TENNER
What the hell was that?

PETERS
It makes my skin crawl to watch
scum like him pretend the law is on
his side.

TENNER
His time will come.

PETERS
Not soon enough.

Peters grits his teeth and opens a lid flipping through a
few pages on top.

Tenner slams the cover back on the box, then looks around to
make sure no one saw.

TENNER
What the hell are you doing?!

PETERS
If they don't play by the rules,
why should we?

TENNER
(incredulous)
Because I was the one assigned with
serving the warrant. If anything
is missing, it's my neck.

Peters stuffs his hands in his pockets, and shakes it
off. He knows it was wrong. Tenner picks up a box and
carries it toward the door.

TENNER (cont'd)
You okay?

He paces a moment and inhales.

PETERS

No.

(beat)

No. I am not okay. Two dead bodies. No leads. And the asshole is threatening my family.

TENNER

Threatening?

PETERS

He knows who Keesha and Elsa are...

TENNER

Holy shit. You tell her?

Peters shakes his head.

PETERS

Why? You think she'd listen?

TENNER

I don't know. Better safe than sorry, right?

Peters ponders that for a moment. Tenner picks up another box from the van.

PETERS

(thinking to himself)

Maybe I can just find someone to watch Elsa for awhile.

Tenner sets a box down by the curb, he heard the statement.

TENNER

(shocked)

-and what about Keesha?!

Peters shrugs.

TENNER (cont'd)

You're sick man.

PETERS

Calm the fuck down. She won't listen to me anyway.

As Tenner comes out from the van with another box, shaking his head, Peters is already getting into his car.

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - DAYTIME

Peters stands impatiently at the front door. After a few moments, some steps are heard and the door creeps open. Keesha sees Peters and rolls her eyes and closes the door immediately.

PETERS

Keesha! I'm not here to
fight. It's important.

INT. KEESHA'S KITCHEN - DAYTIME

Elsa is in the next room, staring at the TV. A few coloring pages and crayons are scattered around her.

Peters picks a crayon drawing off the fridge. It looks like a person though the face is covered in red and black scribbles.

Keesha is digging around in a cupboard.

PETERS

(quietly)
How's Elsa?

Keesha rolls her eyes and sits at the table with a cup of coffee.

PETERS (cont'd)

She's my daughter too.

KEESHA

(relenting)
She's fine... so what is so damn
important.

Adam sits at the table and talks quietly.

PETERS

You might be in danger.

Keesha practically drops her mug on the table as a side-effect of rolling her eyes so hard.

PETERS (cont'd)

No. Listen, this is serious. I'm
working on a case. The guy is a
complete lunatic.

KEESHA

So?

PETERS

He threatened me, and he knows about you and Elsa.

KEESHA

That's it?

Peters gives a look that says "this is a big deal."

KEESHA (cont'd)

(sarcastic)

Oh, thank you... and you're such the hero for warning me...

PETERS

No. It's not like that. I'd just rather be safe than sorry... for Elsa's sake.

KEESHA

(insulted)

Oh, for Elsa's sake? Then what the hell should I do?

PETERS

I don't know. Just get out of town for a little. I'll have the guy locked up soon.

KEESHA

Just "get out of town"? Are you serious? And go where? With what money?

Keesha continues, talking over Peters.

PETERS

Yes... anywhere... I don't know.

KEESHA

(mocking)

Oh, I'll just ask my boss for some time off to run from some maniac, that my ex-husband made up...

PETERS

I'm not making it up.

KEESHA

Then what, Adam? What are you doing? Is this just some ploy so you can get custody?!

PETERS

What? No!

KEESHA

IF you think you can come in here and play some stupid game and take my daughter away from me-

PETERS

Hey, she's my daughter too! You know what? Forget it. Forget I said anything.

Keesha takes the victory with a "look" but is silenced by his retreat. Peters walks over to Elsa and sits on an ottoman beside her.

PETERS

Hey, princess. Did you draw this?

Elsa looks away from the TV for a moment, then at the pictures.

ELSA

It's a angel.

PETERS

It's very pretty.

She seems to mindlessly hand a picture to him, then looks back to the TV.

PETERS (cont'd)

For me? Thank you.

Peters can feel Keesha staring at him from behind. He sees her looming over him. He uncomfortably looks at his watch.

PETERS (cont'd)

Daddy has to go princess. He's gotta go catch some bad guys.

He gives Elsa a kiss on the forehead, but she doesn't look away from the screen. Keesha loosens her glare only slightly. He heads for the door and folds the picture before putting it in his jacket pocket.

PETERS (cont'd)
(to Keesha)
Just watch out for yourself. And
lock the doors.

He leaves and carefully pulls the door shut.

KEESHA
Don't worry. I will.

INT. AUTOPSY - DAY

Peters nearly busts down the door this time. He is
impatient and agitated.

Janessa has just finished moving a body into a storage
space.

JANESSA
You're late. I was worried you
stood me up.

PETERS
Didn't know we had a date. So who
was she?

JANESSA
I don't have a name yet. The
fingers were too damaged for
printing. I'm running the DNA now.

Janessa picks up a file by the computer and starts pulling
out photos.

PETERS
What happened to her fingers?

JANESSA
They were scratched raw. She must
have put up a serious fight.

She shows him an image of the scratched fingers.

PETERS
Same cause of death?

JANESSA
You really were out of it? Did you
ever get that coffee?

PETERS

I'm gonna need something stronger than coffee if I don't get a real lead soon.

JANESSA

(sensing the stress)

Well, to compare it to the other murder: no drugs this time. A deep stab to the neck was the fatal blow. She would have bled out almost instantly.

PETERS

What about all the other cuts?

JANESSA

Some before death, some after. Just surface wounds though. Similar pattern, but more hurried.

PETERS

(concerned)

Doc, how many serial killers have you seen?

Janessa hesitates at the word "serial".

JANESSA

Too many.
(beat)
Did he call you again?

PETERS

He's playing with me. But I can't figure him out.

JANESSA

Some killers fixate on the law; they obsess over it. As a police officer, you represent justice, and he probably thinks he is creating his own twisted form of justice. So in his mind, he feels equal to you. But don't let him get inside your head. He's just a narcissist with a God-complex.

PETERS

You a shrink too?

JANESSA

I've worked with a lot of
detectives. All you should be
worrying about is catching the son
of a bitch.

The computer screen blinks to life and catches Janessa's
attention.

JANESSA (cont'd)

Looks like we might have a clue.

She walks over to the screen and sits down.

PETERS

DNA match?

JANESSA

Partial... oh my god... I...

PETERS

What? Who?

Janessa shows the first look of real emotion on her face as
she shows the screen to Peters. The partial match: "Adam
Peters".

INT. CHURCH - EVENING

Peters is nearly jogging past the pews of the empty
sanctuary. Father Gaines steps out of the confessional
booth as an old woman steps out of the corresponding stall.

PETERS

(shouting)

You liar!

The old woman is startled by the shout and looks as white as
death. As Peters moves up the aisle, she realizes he is
pointing to the priest and quickly steps out of his path.

Gaines immediately puts his hands up to calm the aggravated
detective.

PETERS (cont'd)

(loudly)

You lied to me.

GAINES

(shushing)

Adam. Please. What are you
talking about?

PETERS
(loud whisper)
You said my mother died in
child-birth!

The old priest does not refute the claim, and puts his hands down in surrender.

GAINES
Let's go into my office.

INT. FATHER GAINES OFFICE - NIGHT

Father Gaines sits in a small leather chair behind an old wood desk. He stares at a picture of the dead woman as though he is staring into the past. He holds a scotch in a glass across from Peters, holding the same.

GAINES
Her name was Gretta. I don't remember her last name. She had stayed the winter at one of the shelters on the south-side. She was homeless, addicted to heroin. She got pregnant with you and just left you on the church steps. I can't imagine that you would have lasted long under her care, and I think she knew that too. But, of course, we try not to tell foster children they're abandoned...

PETERS
Right. Something tells me my father didn't die in a car crash...

GAINES
No. I don't even know who he was.

Gaines does not look at Peters... he continues to stare away.

Peters pulls the cross out from his unbuttoned shirt.

PETERS
Who really gave me this?

Gaines almost goes white when he sees the cross. He stares for a moment, then fumbles a word.

GAINES

Uh, your crucifix? Um, probably one of the nuns...

Peters ponders, but accepts the answer.

PETERS

They told me it was my mother's. I punched a kid who tried to take it from me once.

Gaines suppresses a thought.

PETERS

You ever have one of those days, where you're not even sure which way is up?

Gaines nods, places his scotch on the desk. Peters swirls his glass.

PETERS (cont'd)

I think becoming a cop was the only easy choice I ever made. There's bad guys... so I lock 'em up. I'm the good guy, right? I always thought this thing was like my Guardian Angel or something... like my mom was watching over me.

He almost laughs at the naivité of it. He flips it in his hands.

PETERS (cont'd)

(angry)

I mean, if God is so good, if he has a plan, then what the hell is going on? Why is everything so fucked up for me? Er... pardon my...

Gaines senses the frustration in his voice. He excuses the language with a gesture.

GAINES

That's a good question, Adam. It takes a lot to persevere in the face of so much suffering... to grow up the way you did. And police work is not easy. May I ask, how do you know what is right and wrong? I mean, why do you try so hard to do good the way you do?

PETERS

That's what I mean... why? Why do I keep doing it?!

GAINES

I can't answer that... but, it gives me hope knowing that you are out there doing good. What else would you do?

Peters doesn't seem so thrilled about it now. A moment passes as Father Gaines empties his glass.

GAINES (cont'd)

How's your case going?

Peters shakes his head and takes a drink of scotch.

GAINES (cont'd)

I looked up someone whom I think can help answer some of your questions about demons. He's a bit of an expert.

Gaines offers him a slip of paper with a name and an address.

PETERS

Demonologist? That's a job?

GAINES

I can't say it's very lucrative.

He stuffs the note in his pocket, and takes another drink. There is an awkward silence. Both men are deep in thought, unwilling to push the other.

PETERS

Who was I named after?

GAINES

Huh?

PETERS

You said you didn't know my mother's last name... so why Peters?

GAINES

(thoughtful)

Hm. Well, there was a Reverend Peters who oversaw a lot of the work at the foster center. The

(MORE)

GAINES (cont'd)
kids loved him. He died about a
year after you arrived.

Peters is lost in thought, staring at the crucifix in his
hand. He remembers the hunter's statement...

PETERS
Which church did she drop me at?

GAINES
Uh... I think it was St. James.

PETERS
On second ave and uh, nineteenth?

GAINES
Yes, I think so. Why?

PETERS
Who else knew about my mother?

GAINES
Um, I suppose the staff of the
shelter and the church... I don't
know.

PETERS
The murderer knew... he knew I was
related to the victim...

Peters gets up suddenly and puts on his coat.

GAINES
Where are you going?

PETERS
I've a got few questions I need to
answer.

Peters pauses for a moment and looks back at Father Gaines
from the door.

PETERS (cont'd)
I know you were just looking out
for me.

Gaines smiles, but still looks concerned.

EXT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH - NIGHT

Peters pulls up to the abandoned church. He takes a few slow steps up to the large arches. He looks curiously down at the steps, as if to find something there.

After a moment, he makes his way around the side to the open door. We see him moving with a flashlight from afar, as if being watched.

INT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH - NIGHT

As he moves inside, he shines his light on the overturned cross. Then moves around the altar. There are names chiseled in the stone behind the altar... names of former ministers and benefactors.

He fixates on one in particular. A Reverend Peters, 1945 - 1983. He blows a little dust off the stone, it blasts him in the face and he steps back into an angel statue. He shines his light on it and the disfigured face is horrifying, startling him until he nearly trips over some fallen timber.

There is an echo of his movements, in the distance. He shines his light around to look for someone.

There is no one. And complete silence.

His phone rings. A blocked number.

HUNTER (V.O.)

Hello, Detective. Night hunting requires a little more finesse. However your tracking skills seem to be well-tuned.

PETERS

So, I'm onto your scent.

Peters is slowly, moving about the church, looking around for someone.

HUNTER (V.O.)

Not my scent... theirs.

PETERS

You stick to demon hunting. I'm hunting my mother's murderer.

HUNTER (V.O.)

That must have been a terrible way to meet her. I didn't want to be

(MORE)

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
the one to have to tell you. It
must have been quite a shock. But
to warn you, when you hunt demons,
you cannot have the luxury of
family. It gets very lonely.

A wide shot of Peters shining his light in the middle of the
empty sanctuary.

PETERS
How did you know she was my mother?

HUNTER (V.O.)
Demons know many things. Secrets
that are hidden to most are not
hidden to them. They like to use
that information to taunt you. I
had been tracking this demon for
some time, and since I have no
family, it wanted me to know that
it would go after yours
instead. It was the last thing it
said before I dispatched it.

PETERS
And how do I know you're not
taunting me?

HUNTER (V.O.)
Adam. I am not hunting you. I
need you. But I suppose you are
right, I must earn your trust.

PETERS
And what makes you think you can?

Peters pushes open a large door. It opens up to the lobby,
only light from a street lamp pours in through a dusty
window.

HUNTER (V.O.)
I can give you something you
need. I can give you Zanich.

PETERS
Excuse me?

He investigates the fronts doors, they are secured with a
rotten two-by-four that has not moved in years. He heads
back into the church toward a loosely boarded window.

HUNTER (V.O.)

You need a murderer to lock up. I need to be free of this investigation. You will find Zanich's DNA at my next killing. Use it to put him away for good.

PETERS

Are you trying to bribe me with planted evidence?

HUNTER (V.O.)

We both know that Zanich is guilty of worse. Isn't it time for justice? Isn't that what you want?

Peters is now looking through the hole in the boarded window of the church, shining his light at the neighboring building. He catches a glimpse of something at the corner. Eyes? Or night-vision binoculars? The phone clicks and he looks down at the screen to see the call ended. When he looks back up, the something moves.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - NIGHT

Peters lurks along the edge of the building, his light is now off. As he approaches the corner, he slows.

He peaks around the corner into a dark alley. Nothing. He moves slowly around and then shines his light into the darkness at one side. A shadow darts around the far corner of the alley.

Peters takes two steps into the alley, as quietly and quickly as possible.

Suddenly he is grasped from behind, in a choke hold. Peters is rendered submissive.

HUNTER

(angry)

You are not prepared to hunt this game. I suggest you take my advice and ready yourself. If you do not, then you and everyone you care about will be collateral damage in a struggle you are not even capable of comprehending. Stop wasting my time.

The Hunter releases Peters, who crumbles to the ground gasping for breath, sweating fear. He makes a desperate attempt at fighting back. The Hunter lands a powerful blow to Peters' head. The shadow vanishes.

Even if he had been able to give chase, he would not have known which way to go. He fumbles for his light, shines it in all directions. Not even the dark illuminates.

Peters grabs his phone, dials. He is out of breathe, crouched down.

KEESHA (V.O.)
(muffled through the phone)
What the hell, Adam? It's one A.M.

PETERS
(scared)
Keesha. Please listen. Just get out of town for a few days. I'll get you a hotel...

KEESHA (V.O.)
Adam, this is ridiculous... I can't even...

The line goes dead. Peters is shaken. He throws down his phone in a fit.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Peters walks in with his collar popped up, coffee in hand and doesn't look anyone in the eyes. He makes a straight line for his desk and places his coffee down, almost toppling it over.

As soon as he can sit down a newspaper is dropped over his shoulder on the desk in front of him.

Orwell looms over him. Peters looks at the paper.

ORWELL
What the hell is this?

Peters reads the headline: Serial Rampage.

PETERS
It looks like a headline.

ORWELL
No shit. How'd they get this?

PETERS

I don't know... I didn't tell them anything!

ORWELL

Tell them to keep it quiet. You better get on this. The next headline I want to see is: "Killer Caught".

Orwell uses his hands to emphasize and storms off.

The room gets back to work as Orwell moves past them, but then looks back at Peters.

He skims the article, then slams it in the trash.

Jason Tenner approaches holding keys and wearing his jacket.

TENNER

What's the matter, didn't like your horoscope?

PETERS

(snaps)

What the hell is your problem?!

TENNER

Hey, man, just a joke...

He notices Peters has a bruise on his neck, partially hidden by his hairline. and collar.

TENNER (cont'd)

What happened to you? Rough night?

Peters is getting back to his computer screen.

PETERS

It's nothing.

TENNER

That's some impressive nothing.

PETERS

I said it's nothing.

He looks up with a brief glare that says "drop it".

TENNER

Alright, alright.

Tenner makes a cautious exit towards the door, handling his keys. Peters looks up.

PETERS
 Hey Jay? You're going on rounds,
 right?

TENNER
 Uh, yeah...

PETERS
 Can you drive by Keesha's a couple
 times? Check in?

Tenner isn't sure if this is a favor for a friend or an order.

TENNER
 (begrudged)
 Uh, yeah. Sure.

Peters resumes his work. Tenner waits a moment for a "thanks" but never gets it.

EXT. CITY STREET - MIDDAY

Peters is walking down a busy street. He glances at a slip of paper in his hand. Then he looks up at a building.

There is a door shoved between an old bookstore and a pawn shop. Peters tries to open it carefully, but then finds he must give it a good solid yank before it opens. He walks up a narrow stairwell.

INT. OLD APARTMENT BUILDING

Peters knocks on the door. No sound. He knocks again.

Someone enters from below. It is WES DARREN, a scruffy old man with a jolly smile. He is covered in curly gray hair and is unshaven, although it appears that is as clean as he can get.

DARREN
 Hello? Can I help you?

PETERS
 Yeah, I'm looking for Mr. Darren?

DARREN
 Who's asking? I'm just kidding,
 that's me.

Peters doesn't get the joke, but Wes seems tickled by it.

PETERS

I'm Detective Peters. Father Gaines said you might be able to answer some questions for me.

DARREN

(fascinated)

What kind of questions?

INT. OLD BOOKSTORE - DAY

The bookstore looks like it was stocked in 1965 and never sold a single book. Peters sits uncomfortably at a small table that is littered with a few open books. Darren is rooting around behind a nearby shelf.

DARREN

He called himself a demon hunter?

PETERS

Yeah. I didn't think demons could die. Aren't they immortal or something?

Darren pokes his head around, a book in hand. Despite it, he talks with both hands.

DARREN

Well, they won't die of old age. And since they don't live in the flesh, they can't die in the sense that we do. But that doesn't mean they can't cease to exist...

PETERS

So how does that happen? An exorcism?

DARREN

Well, an exorcism is just a rite that removes a spirit from the body it possesses, kind of like an eviction.

PETERS

So where does the demon go? His parent's place?

Wes ignores the joke.

DARREN

It wanders around, like in a
desert, until it finds a new host.

PETERS

So what if the host dies?

DARREN

The demon finds a new one.

PETERS

So, that's it? It just keeps...
body hopping... what? ...forever?

We sits down with two books, opens one and points to some
definitions.

DARREN

In general, yes. Now, some
scholars believe that when demons
are exorcised, they must return to
hell, for a time. Or that God may
banish them to the "abyss". Now
what "abyss" means is open to
interpretation. It might just be
hell, or it might be an oblivion...
where nothing exists!

He waves his hands dramatically

PETERS

So why doesn't God just do that?

DARREN

On the day of judgment, he will.

Peters face shows how stupid he thinks that answer is, but
Wes doesn't catch it.

DARREN

(playfully)

But don't ask me when that is...

PETERS

Yeah, sure. Is there a way a human
could banish them? ...maybe with a
seance?

DARREN

Oh, no! A seance is used to summon
spirits... but no mortal could kill
a demon, not without God's help
anyway.

PETERS

You really believe this stuff,
don't you?

DARREN

(concerned)

You don't? I thought you were
Catholic...

Peters gives an uncertain look and puts his hands up.

DARREN (cont'd)

Well that won't do at all. You
must "put on the whole armor of
God, that you may be able to stand
against the schemes of the
devil. For we do not wrestle
against flesh and blood, but
against the rulers, against the
authorities, against the cosmic
powers over this present darkness,
against the spiritual forces of
evil..."

PETERS

I'm alright. Thanks. It's just
some self-righteous lying
psycho. I'll stick to my guns and
hand-cuffs.

DARREN

I hope you're right. But in my
experience, where demons are
involved, things are rarely what
they seem.

PETERS

How's that?

DARREN

Demons are first and foremost
deceivers, liars!

PETERS

Sounds like a criminal to me.

DARREN

I can't urge you enough to be
cautious.

PETERS

I will. Thanks for the info.

Peters stands and extends his hand. Wes grabs the books, places them in Peters' extended hand and makes one last plea looking into the detectives eyes.

DARREN

I hope this has been helpful. I'll be praying for you. And you should be praying too.

Peters tries to accept that remark respectfully, but says nothing while nodding. He turns for the door, trying to escape. Wes grabs him by the shoulder as he steps partway through the doorway.

DARREN (cont'd)

Do you know the "Hail Mary"?

PETERS

I said it a thousand times.

DARREN

Say it a thousand more.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters takes off his crucifix and looks at it a moment before hanging it off the desk in it's usual place.

The cross fades into the same jewelry now in the hands of Reverend Peters.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The priest is holding the cross across a book of prayer, from which he is reading in Latin. The camera pulls out from the cross to reveal him standing beside a bed.

REVEREND PETERS

Ángele Dei, qui custos es mei, me,
tibi commíssum pietáte supérna,
illúmina, custódi, rege et gubérna.
Amen.

In the bed is a silhouette of a woman. She seems to be restrained in the bed, but is motionless. As he finishes the prayer, he crosses himself.

The silhouette of a bed fades to another bed. The camera pans vertically until it is directly over the bed, then rotates to orient the head upside down. It is the Reverend in bed, eyes wide, as if he is watching an image on the

ceiling. He clutches the cross to his chest, and begins to breathe more heavily as the camera zooms toward him.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters gasps for air and lunges up from his bed to a sitting position. He grasps his chest as if it had been crushed under a rock. He is soaked in sweat.

As his breathing calms, he looks at the clock: 2:29 A.M.

He sits back and rubs his face, certain that sleep will not come again. He pulls the sheet off his legs and gets up.

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

Peters is walking along the street, avoiding the sidewalk. The weight on his heart and mind is all focused in his face.

He stops next to a church, the stained glass window is illuminated. He stares at it through an iron fence. After a moment, he turns around, and walks away.

EXT. OLD WOOD RESIDENCE - DAY

Police line has already been strung around the broken deck railing.

Peters pulls his car up behind an ambulance. He gets out with a sour look on his face. He sees a press van parked across the street. He waits for a car to pass, then makes his way toward it. Before he gets to the driver's window, he is gesturing for them to leave. The view is from far away.

The driver seems to resist, but pulls away. Peters' sour face turns toward the house. He steps under the police tape.

INT. OLD WOOD RESIDENCE - DAY

Peters takes a careful step into the living room. He stares blankly at the body on the couch, like it isn't there.

Janessa approaches from behind him.

JANESSA
Did you see the numbers?

PETERS
Huh? More numbers?

JANESSA
It's different this time. They're
written backwards, with a pen.

PETERS
Huh...

JANESSA
And he left you a present...

Peters is alarmed at the word. He moves over to the body,
cautiously. The body is holding the knife in his left hand.

PETERS
Holy shit.

Peters puts on some gloves and carefully pulls the knife,
placing it in an evidence bag.

He hands it to a passing forensic.

PETERS (cont'd)
Get that to the lab! I wanna know
who held it.

Peters suddenly remembers his conversation with the
Hunter. He goes over to inspect the body. He recognizes
the face. There is a flash of the tipster who told him to
go to the church on second ave.

PETERS (cont'd)
I know this guy. He's a dealer.

JANESSA
Any reason he'd kill himself?

PETERS
Himself? You think he did this to
himself?

JANESSA
The angle of the incisions would
suggest it. Or at least it was
made to look that way.

Peters is thoughtful. He looks over at the candles on the end table. They have burned down to puddles of wax. Janessa can see he is in his own world now. She leaves with a concerned look on her face.

As she exits a stretcher is brought and a few forensic techs cover the body and lift it. As it is taken out of the room, Peters notices a slip of paper under the sofa.

Peters looks around to see the room now empty. He stoops and picks it up. It has "Detective" written on it.

A long shot through the window, Peters looks out.

He looks under the couch to find a pouch of money with a note: "Better take this. Zanich would have."

Peters looks around again, crumples the note and stuffs the money in his coat pocket. After a long glance through the window he hurriedly escapes the room.

INT. POLICE STATION - AFTERNOON

Peters is at his desk, furiously shifting papers and occasionally typing. Another officer hands him a few pages in an envelope.

OFFICER

Rush results from forensics...

Peters grabs the folder out of his hand and flips through pages. He knows what he is looking for. His reaction is muted. After an instant of thought he gets up.

INT. ORWELL'S OFFICE

Three rapid knocks on the door and Peters opens it without waiting for a response. Orwell's face shows his annoyance at the lack of protocol.

PETERS

Captain. You better see this.

Peters sees the look and suddenly hesitates.

Orwell demands the paper from him with his look alone. He flips through a few pages carefully.

ORWELL

Zanich?

PETERS
 Yes sir. Found his DNA in the
 knife handle.

ORWELL
 Well, what the hell are you doing
 in here?

PETERS
 Sir?

ORWELL
 (irritated)
 Pick him up!

Peters takes this as an order, turning for the door. His
 cockiness is no longer present.

PETERS
 Yes sir.

ORWELL
 Peters. Take backup.

Peters hesitates a moment.

ORWELL (cont'd)
 And do it somewhere public.

Peters looks back at the Captain's serious face. Orwell
 tosses him some handcuffs.

EXT. FINE DINING ESTABLISHMENT - EVENING

Peters stands at the entrance to the restaurant, waiting
 just outside the canopy. Officer Tenner stands confidently
 over his shoulder.

Georges Zanich makes his way toward the exit of the
 restaurant, he is followed by someone who appears to be a
 well-dressed bodyguard with a small entourage.

Zanich makes direct eye contact with the officers and walks
 directly toward them. Peters holds out the handcuffs.

ZANICH
 I didn't know the police were
 moonlighting as valets.

As Peters steps toward Zanich, the bodyguard tries to step
 in, but Tenner blocks his path. He backs down.

PETERS

Georges Zanich, you are under arrest for the murder of Jesse Vincent.

ZANICH

Who?

PETERS

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney...

Zanich looks irritated.

ZANICH

(to the bodyguard)

Call my lawyer.

PETERS

If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed to you. But I doubt that'll be a problem for you. Do you understand these rights?

ZANICH

Do you understand what you are doing?

PETERS

I'm locking up a criminal.

ZANICH

Are you? I think you're making a fool of yourself.

Peters seems affected by this remark as he puts Zanich's head into the backseat of the squad car.

INT. POLICE STATION HOLDING CELLS

As Tenner and Peters march Zanich past some the holding cells, they pass Marcus's cell. As soon as Marcus sees Zanich he seems to cower back into the corner. Zanich throws him a sideways glance but says nothing. Marcus crumbles. Peters glances into the cell, but pays no mind.

There is some agitation from other cell-mates as they push Zanich into his own private holding cell. Tenner bangs on some of the bars.

TENNER

Pipe down, ladies! You've all seen
an arrest before!

There is some more agitation but it dies down. Peters takes one last look at Zanich. He is practically smiling back at Peters, confident.

Peters walks back past Marcus' cell. The camera looks long down the corridor, and can see Zanich smirking. As he goes out of focus we see a hand come into focus grasping the bars from inside Marcus' cell.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The shot of Marcus' hand fades to the same shot of a hand on a tall, empty beer glass.

The bartender delivers another full glass alongside a shot.

Peters throws the shot back like it is medication.

Tenner plops down at the stool beside him.

TENNER

Hey, man. Smile more. You just bagged the city's public enemy number one. Why're you sulking like you just got dumped by the prom queen?

Peters manages a smirk after a swig of beer.

PETERS

He ain't convicted yet.

TENNER

Leave that crap to the lawyers. You've done your job. You should be celebrating!

PETERS

(loosening)

Yeah, yeah. Fine. I'd hate to rain on your party parade.

TENNER

That's the spirit! Speakin' of...
(to the bartender)
Round of blue label for me and my boy.

Peters chuckles at the thought of more whiskey. As he looks around the bar to see who else is there he sees Keesha enter alone. She is decked-out and flashy.

Tenner holds up the shot to Peters, who is staring past him.

TENNER

I don't know who walked in, but I
hope it's twins...

Tenner turns to look. As he does, Peters is already staggering towards her.

TENNER

Adam, wait...

Peters is clearly intoxicated, and makes his way toward her. She makes eye contact then walks away, attempting to ignore him.

Adam approaches her rudely from behind as she sits at another table.

PETERS

(quietly)

Hey. I told you to get out of
town.

KEESHA

Adam. Now is not the time. Go
back to your friends.

PETERS

(getting aggressive)

Where's Elsa? Huh?

Peters edges in and invades her space. She tries to ignore him.

PETERS (cont'd)

Huh?! Where?

KEESHA

What the hell is wrong with you?!

Keesha uses her elbow to push Peters away. Tenner steps up.

TENNER

Hey man. C'mere. Just let her be.

Peters gives Tenner a violent shove into another table. He moves swiftly, but slightly off target, back to Keesha.

PETERS

Goddammit. You better listen to me...

As Peters makes an aggressive stagger towards her, Tenner grabs him from behind. He gives him a shove toward the door and positions himself next to Keesha.

TENNER

Adam. You better call it a night.

PETERS

You stay out of this.

TENNER

(into Adam's ear)

This is me watching out for her and Elsa... You better leave for your own good too.

Peters takes the insult poorly and tries to shove Tenner out of the way again.

PETERS

(slurring slightly)

I said stay out of it!

It sinks in how out of line he is. His shame is only eclipsed by his pride. Keesha won't even look at him. Tenner has to referee.

TENNER

Hey man. Just go sleep it off.

Before Tenner can say anything else to calm him, Peters brashly turns and heads for the door. A few other bar patrons move to let him pass.

Keesha rolls her eyes again, and turns back to her table. Tenner shakes his head and turns to her.

TENNER (cont'd)

Hey, you alright? Let me buy you a drink.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Peters is sulking down the sidewalk. A passerby ignores him. As he passes a convenience store, he sees a homeless man sitting next to it. The man holds a sign that says "Seek and ye shall find".

He wanders further. Some cars and sirens can be heard in the background noise of the city.

His phone rings: blocked number.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Got time for a hunting lesson?

Peters is suddenly as alert as he can be. His eyes dart around. He is not ready.

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
I feel freer. Lighter. Don't you? The lawyers have their killer, so now we can focus on the real villains in the world.

PETERS
We? I did not agree to this.

HUNTER (V.O.)
You didn't have to. And you're welcome for the bonus.

Peters reaches to the wad of cash in his pocket.

PETERS
Go fuck yourself!

HUNTER (V.O.)
Hey, we locked up a drug kingpin. I'd say we make an excellent team.

PETERS
Let's get something straight: your a murderer and a liar and I'm the cop that's going to lock you up for good.

Peters looks at the homeless bum and discreetly puts the cash in the tin the man is holding. He walks away, scanning with his eyes.

HUNTER (V.O.)
Well, I have to appreciate your relentless nature. It is the sign of a great hunter.

The bum looks up after seeing what is in his tin, but Peters is further down the sidewalk.

PETERS

The only thing I'm hunting is you.

HUNTER (V.O.)

So be it. If that is what motivates you, then it will have to do. Lesson one: never underestimate your prey.

The phone clicks dead. Peters looks around, then down an alley across the street. He sees a familiar glimmer of something. Naturally, he heads that way, though his steps are a bit sluggish still.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

As soon as he steps into the darkness of the alley, his phone rings again. Peters is aware enough to put his bluetooth headpiece in.

HUNTER (V.O.)

Lesson two: use bait. If you know what your prey is after, give it to him.

Peters sees a shadow at the end of the alley turn the corner. He picks up his pace.

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)

After all, we all want something. Money. Power. Fame. It isn't enough just to survive.

As Peters rounds the corner he catches the figure peering back at him from another building. It enters the doorway. Peters takes off after and follows through the door.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Peters enters, gun drawn.

HUNTER (V.O.)

Any prey worth hunting is smart. It knows a trap by the taste of the bait. Lesson three: diversion.

Something falls to the ground near Peters' feet. He looks down to see some wet footprints. He follows them quickly along the corridor where it splits, and some metal stairs ascend. The footprints stop beyond the steps.

A light down the corridor goes off. A light up the stairs turns on. Peters goes up.

When he arrives at the top, his gun is now pointed down one path, dark at the ends.

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Fear can be a powerful weapon.

Peters swings the gun behind him.

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
But not as effective as ambition.

At the end of the path there is a door to closet. A shadow moves past.

Peters makes a run for the door. As soon as he passes through it, the light goes out. The door slams shut.

Peters fumbles for a light, then scans the walls with his cell phone.

The room has pictures and newspaper clippings covering the walls. Symbols, seemingly drawn in blood obscure everything.

Peters is stunned, realizes the door is hidden now. He begins ripping articles off, looking for the door handle, but he is disoriented and doesn't know which wall it was on. As he frantically rips the pictures and pages off the wall it reveals scratches. He pauses and looks up.

HUNTER (V.O.) (cont'd)
Lesson four: entrapment. Once you
have lured your prey, take away all
the escape routes.

The phone call clicks to an end. The voice comes from over his shoulder. Peters drops his phone.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Lesson five...

Peters makes a fast move and spins, firing his weapon three, then two more times. With each muzzle flash the shadow moves.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Despair.

Peters backs toward the corner, gun pointed at nothing, his figure disappearing into darkness. From behind, the shadow grabs him, placing him in a choke-hold. Its face cannot be seen.

HUNTER

Once trapped, your prey has to decide whether to cling desperately to its pathetic existence, or to submit to its inevitable fate.

Peters has no choice but to submit.

HUNTER (cont'd)

You are not ready.

Peters struggles.

HUNTER (cont'd)

This war is real. You do not have time to waste with doubt.

Peters is released. The door slams and the light returns. Peters slumps into the corner, his shirt and jacket are twisted. His crucifix is twisted upside-down on his shoulder. He vomits on the floor.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Peters walks in looking tired. Before he makes it to his desk a young officer taps him on the shoulder.

OFFICER

Captain wants a word with you.

Peters obeys silently, and changes his direction.

INT. ORWELL'S OFFICE

Peters knocks a few times and waits for a response.

ORWELL

Peters. Get in here.

PETERS

Sir?

There is a woman, JANE FRANKLIN, in a suit sitting across from Orwell at the desk. She is very professional looking.

ORWELL

Detective Peters, this is Jane Franklin from the District Attorney's office. She'll be prosecuting Zanich's case. Our new detective here is the one who brought him in.

Peters and Jane shake hands superficially.

FRANKLIN

I had a few questions about these other murders. It seems likely that the same knife was used at all three, but other than that we don't have much to connect them. If we can pin all three on Zanich, he'll go away for life.

Peters looks at Orwell, uncertain.

ORWELL

Peters, if you have any insight, now's the time.

PETERS

Well... I suppose... I think both the others were users... maybe they're part of the same drug circles.

Jane looks at Orwell.

FRANKLIN

Why would Zanich kill a couple users?

PETERS

Maybe to setup a pattern? Make it look like a serial string, then kill the guy he really wants dead...

Orwell is unimpressed.

ORWELL

That's a wild theory...

PETERS

(defensive)
Zanich is a smart man.

FRANKLIN

(trying to help)
Vincent was pretty close to him. It would be hard not to link the two... if it wasn't for the DNA, though, we'd still be looking for other leads...

ORWELL
You better have more than that.

PETERS
(a light bulb)
What about Marcus?

ORWELL
Marcus has been in jail for weeks.

PETERS
But Vincent gave me the tip that
led to Marcus. Maybe he said too
much?

FRANKLIN
That could be a motive.

ORWELL
Still doesn't explain the other two
murders.

PETERS
(energized)
Let me talk to Marcus. I can get
something out of him.

ORWELL
Ms. Franklin?

FRANKLIN
Have at it.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Marcus is sitting across the table from the large mirror window. He stares through it. Peters takes his time sitting down between them.

Three photos slide across the table, the first of Victoria's corpse, then Gretta's, then Jesse Vincent.

Marcus leans in to look at the third, then the others. He sits back, unimpressed.

PETERS
Friends of yours?

Marcus shakes his head, unphased.

PETERS (cont'd)
We picked up your boy Zanich on
murder charges. He's gonna go away
for a long time.

Marcus huffs an uncertain laugh.

PETERS (cont'd)
I don't know what you think is
funny. We've got you on possession
with intent, resisting arrest. The
way I see it, we can just lock you
up with him.

Peters reads the anger and fear on Marcus' face.

PETERS (cont'd)
Or, you tell us what you
know. See, you're just a little
fish. The nice thing about that
is, no one gives a shit about
you. We lock you up... fine. We
throw you back... just a matter of
time before you fuck up again.

MARCUS
I don't know nothing.

PETERS
Nothing, huh? Your buddy Vincent
here knew where you were. He sold
you out. You tellin' me he knew
more than you?

Marcus looks away.

PETERS (cont'd)
How about Vicky? She a buyer?

MARCUS
Don't know her.

PETERS
How about Gretta? I bet she had
you on speed dial.

MARCUS
Nope.

PETERS
You're not even looking... Look at
them!

Peters slams the table with his hand. He grabs the photo of Gretta and holds it up.

MARCUS
(irritated)
I said I don't know nothing.

PETERS
We got Zanich in a bind too. You think he won't hesitate to sell you out. He'll probably claim you ran the whole operation.

MARCUS
I don't know no Zanich.

PETERS
You don't? You don't know anything, do you?

MARCUS
Nope. I don't know nothing.

Peters is annoyed that this is getting nowhere. Especially since he knows it can't. He moves in close and nearly whispers.

PETERS
How about the hunter? Do you know him?

Marcus becomes agitated. His eyes start darting around.

MARCUS
No. Not the hunter. I'm finished.

PETERS
(forcefully)
No, you're not. Tell me! Who is the hunter?!

Marcus pushes his chair back and retreats toward the corner.

MARCUS
No, no, NO! I can't talk about the hunter. Put me back! I can't.

Peters rises with authority and moves into Marcus, grabbing him by the collar.

PETERS
You can. You can tell me where to find him. Where is he?!

Peters is gripping Marcus tightly, almost choking him. Orwell busts through the door to the room.

ORWELL

Peters!

Peters doesn't back down.

PETERS

Tell me!

Orwell and another officer have to intervene and rip Peters off Marcus. Peters throws his hands up and backs off, Orwell is pulling him. As he does, Marcus goes from scared sheep to snarling wolf.

MARCUS

(muttering)

Look at your father's grave...
meat-sack.

Peters doesn't like his tone and snaps.

PETERS

What did you say?!

Orwell has to hold him back, but Marcus returns to his cowering pose.

MARCUS

Nothing... I said nothing!

ORWELL

C'mon hotshot. Let's go!

INT. ORWELL'S OFFICE

Orwell is pacing behind his desk, Peters is slumped in the leather chair. Jane Franklin is standing along the window, trying to avoid the crossfire.

ORWELL

What the hell was that? Bad cop,
stupid cop?

PETERS

I was just trying to rattle
him. He knows something!

ORWELL

And who the hell is this hunter?

PETERS

I got a call after the first murder. Some asshole claiming he's chasing demons. He confessed to the murder.

ORWELL

Zanich confessed?

PETERS

It wasn't Zanich.

ORWELL

(incredulous)

Then who was it?!

PETERS

I don't know, probably one of his goons. He's just messing with our heads.

ORWELL

And why is this the first I'm hearing about it?

PETERS

I put it in my report.

ORWELL

I don't read those!

Orwell thinks. Then looks for a moment at Jane.

ORWELL (cont'd)

So, after the murder, someone calls you, pretends to be hunting ghosts...

PETERS

Demons.

Orwell ignores that.

ORWELL

Why?

PETERS

There were candles at each scene, and six-six-six tattooed on their necks. Maybe he's trying to make it look like something occult?

Orwell looks to Jane again.

FRANKLIN
(speculating)
The devil made me do it?

Peters shrugs. Orwell looks to Jane, again.

FRANKLIN
He might be saving an insanity plea
for a backup plan...

ORWELL
(to Peters)
He call you again?

PETERS
Yeah. A, uh, couple times. No
number. Couldn't trace it.

FRANKLIN
We need to find that caller.

ORWELL
(to Peters)
Find him.

PETERS
What do you think I'm trying to
do?!

ORWELL
Can it! Now get out of my office
and don't come back without him!

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Peters pulls up to Keesha's house in a silver Buick and casually walks toward the front door. He seems to slow up as he approaches the door. A 2009 Mustang is in the driveway.

He knocks in a polite manner, with an ounce of hesitation.

He waits patiently, pacing a little.

The door opens and Peters is surprised to see Jason Tenner standing like a guardian.

PETERS
Jason? What are you doing here?

TENNER

I know you're here to pick up Elsa,
but Keesha asked me to talk to you.

PETERS

What are you talking about?

Tenner steps outside and closes the door.

TENNER

After you blew up last night, she
doesn't feel safe around you
anymore.

PETERS

Hey, I know I was out of line, but
this isn't any of your business...

TENNER

Just let her have Elsa this
weekend. I'm sure she'll get over
it...

PETERS

What do you mean... How do you
know...

(putting it together)

...are you and her... did you?

Tenner's look admits to the relationship.

TENNER

Sorry, man. It just kinda
happened...

PETERS

You son of a bitch! Keesha! Let
me get my daughter!

Peters tries to push his way past Tenner and grab the
door. There is a little shoving match until Peters throws a
punch, right to the Tenner's jaw.

Tenner has to parry, but takes the brunt of it. Peters
forces the door open.

INT. KEESHA'S LIVING ROOM

Peters starts looking around the first room of the
house. No one is there.

PETERS
Elsa?! Keesha!

Tenner shouts from the front door.

TENNER
They're not here!

Peters moves like a juggernaut towards the door.

PETERS
Where are they?!

TENNER
They're out for a bit. She just
didn't want to be here when you
came.

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Peters blasts through the door, grabs him by the collar and gives him one last authoritative shake. Tenner doesn't want trouble.

PETERS
You stay the hell out of my life,
got it?! The next time I come
here, you better not be!

Peters storms off, slamming his car door shut. Tenner tends to his jaw.

INT. POLICE STATION HOLDING CELLS - NIGHT

Marcus is laying in the dark in his cell. He is looking straight up at the ceiling, as if watching something. Perspiration forms on his forehead.

He seems to be mouthing or mumbling something to himself.

Suddenly he sits upright, breathing heavily. Then as if in a trance, he grabs a spring from his cot and starts scraping the wall.

He continues to half whisper something to himself as he makes a repeated scraping motion.

MARCUS
(weary)
Time's up...

He pauses a moment, then continues his mindless scraping.

INT. SMALL CHEAP APARTMENT - PETERS' PLACE - NIGHT

Peters is sitting in bed, as if he is ready to go somewhere.

He holds his gun in his hand and flips the safety back and forth. He is practically sweating anger.

He holds the drawing that Elsa gave him.

Peters sets the picture on the table and sits, flipping the safety faster.

Peters takes a swig of something from a glass. Then holsters his gun, puts on his jacket and walks away.

His crucifix is still on the desk.

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Peters' Buick pulls up quietly to park across from Keesha's house. The headlights are off. The driveway has the usual Acura, no Mustang is seen around.

He looks at the house, one light upstairs is on. A shadow moves around, probably getting ready for bed. Then the light flips off. Silence.

Peters looks suspicious, but eased. He starts to drift.

INT. CHAPEL - FUNERAL - DAYTIME

The chapel is covered in flowers and filled with people. An open casket sits in front of the altar.

The funeral is over and people are talking here and there. An old woman steps up to the casket to pay her respects.

A young boy, barely two years-old, stares at the casket sitting in the first pew. A younger Father Gaines stands beside it and notices him. He walks over to the unattended child.

YOUNG GAINES

I bet you are wondering what you are doing here.

The child seems oblivious. He sits down next to him and stares at the casket, pensive.

YOUNG GAINES

I suppose we are all wondering that
from time to time.

The child plays with his own shirt, but looks back to the
casket as someone wanders away

YOUNG GAINES (cont'd)

And though we may never know the
reasons...

The child hops off the bench. Gaines guides him up the
step, toward the casket.

YOUNG GAINES (cont'd)

...we know that everything that
happens has a purpose.

The boy is too short to see over the edge. Gaines ignores
him and looks in at the face of Reverend Peters. He speaks
to him.

YOUNG GAINES (cont'd)

...even from the ashes of loss, the
Lord strengthens us for a reason.

Gaines crosses himself, then notices someone beside him. He
turns to greet them. The child is reaching up to the
casket, and loses his balance. The casket shifts slightly
and the lid topples. At the moment it slams shut...

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Peters jolts awake inside the car. His instinct is to look
at the house. It is peaceful still. However, another
upstairs window has a faint glow, not enough to be a light,
but enough to be... candlelight.

Peters swiftly exits the car and runs tip-toe across the
street. His gun is readied as he makes his way to the
porch. The door is locked tight.

He carefully leaps the banister and makes his way around
back.

The back door is locked, but a window next to it is
open. Peters climbs up a trashcan to make his way through.

INT. KEESHA'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

The house is silent and dark. Nothing is out of place except...

A lit candle sitting on the first step. Peters leaps over it and up the stairs, blowing it out with the movement.

At the top, there are four doors. He busts through the door on the left. The master bedroom, one candle at the foot of the bed. Peters scrambles along the wall for the light switch.

A lamp next to the bed flips on to reveal Keesha's face bloodied and motionless.

Peters face is fear-stricken and sick. He snaps his head around and nearly knocks the door off the hinges.

Two steps is all it takes to make it down the hall to a door with some crayon drawings taped on it. He swings the door open.

The camera looks out from where a bed should be, past a candle to see Peters' silhouette stopped cold in the doorway. He sinks to his knees and drops his weapon. The candle, now closer, illuminates his twisted, defeated face.

EXT. KEESHA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Peters sits quietly on the porch bench. Janessa sits carefully next to him. She looks at him but says nothing, then looks out into the street.

PETERS

Elsa should have been with me.

JANESSA

You can't blame yourself.

PETERS

Why not? I locked up the wrong guy.

Before Janessa can try to offer a rebuttal, Captain Orwell steps up to the banister.

ORWELL

Adam. I'm sorry.

Orwell pauses. He isn't good at this.

ORWELL (cont'd)
Why don't you go home and clean
yourself up.

PETERS
No sir. I need to be here.

ORWELL
That wasn't a suggestion. This
isn't your case anymore. Go home.

PETERS
Sir! It was my daughter!

ORWELL
All the more reason to take you
off.

PETERS
No! You can't take me off the
case! He's still out there!

ORWELL
I know that, Peters! So now I have
to consider why I've got Zanich
sitting in holding!

PETERS
He's gotta have someone on the
outside! I can get him!

ORWELL
Tenner tells me you had a fight
with your ex. The neighbors say
they hear you fight whenever you're
here... and, I gotta ask what
exactly were you doing here anyhow?

PETERS
(in Orwell's face)
What the hell are you getting at?!

ORWELL
Nothing! Nothing. But you know I
have to suspend you.

Peters relents. He knows it looks bad.

ORWELL (cont'd)
Just stay away, or I'll demote you
back to dispatch.

Peters looks at Janessa's pleading look, then plops back on the bench, seething. If Janessa wasn't there, he might have knocked out Orwell.

JANESSA

Adam.

Orwell can tell he was a bit harsh. He calms.

ORWELL

Peters. Just take some time off.

Peters look says that he can't. He gets up and walks away, clearly restless.

EXT. CEMETERY - FUNERAL SERVICE - BEFORE SUNSET

An aerial shot of a funeral gathering from directly above. There are two caskets, one is small. There are about fifty people gathered, all wearing black. Father Gaines stands at the head, holding a bible. The majority of the crowd stands to one side. Peters stands a bit off to himself, to the other side.

The camera descends slowly to tearful faces, all looking at Father Gaines who reads from the book.

Peters stares off past the casket.

Almost everyone else has left and Peters stands alone and moves to the small casket of his daughter. Janessa places a hand on his shoulder. He doesn't move. She leaves him with a sullen look.

Peters takes off his crucifix and holds it, looking to it, almost begging it for answers.

The sun is setting. Father Gaines approaches.

GAINES

This must be unbearable...

PETERS

Did I do something wrong in a former life? Am I being punished?

GAINES

No. No. Even the saintliest men find pain. Nothing about this is fair. Days like these I wish I knew why God allowed such suffering in this world...

PETERS

I should hate God. I should throw
this cross in the trash and never
look back...

GAINES

But...?

PETERS

...but then no matter how bad it
gets, how alone I feel, I can't let
go. I'm standing at the graves of
the only people I ever loved and I
can't let go!

(beat)

I can't let go of the hope that
something out there is watching out
for me... I must be out of my
mind...

Peters' eyes are welling up. He is losing hope that there
is anything left in the world for him.

GAINES

You have faced more hardship in
your life than anyone I know,
Adam. And yet you have more
courage and strength than ever can
be expected from a man.

PETERS

And what for?

GAINES

I don't know-

PETERS

Well, then what am I here for? Why
am I being put through all
this? Why does it have to be me?

Gaines is silent at the outburst. He can see the struggle.

GAINES

Perhaps, because you are the only
one who could handle it.

PETERS

Handle it? I've got nothing
left! He won! Whoever... whatever
this guy is...

GAINES
...is still out there.

Peters clings to this purpose, but is equally tormented by the fact.

Gaines doesn't have an answer. So after a moment, he offers some advice... the best he can come up with.

GAINES
Some people only find it easy to praise God when things are good. Others forget to pray until things go bad. But even if the world is crashing around you, God will follow you to the end of your journey if you ask him to.

PETERS
I don't even know where to go...

Peters isn't just talking about God.

GAINES
None of us do. Just keep moving.

Gaines waits a moment. Then turns to leave.

GAINES
Take care, Adam. I know you'll find your way. You always have.

A wide shot shows an empty cemetery.

As Father Gaines walks away, Adam is left alone.

The sun has set.

Peters' phone rings: blocked caller.

HUNTER (V.O.)
That was a beautiful eulogy.

PETERS
(seething)
You son of a bitch!

HUNTER (O.S.)
I'm very sorry, Adam. It was them or you... this demon is crafty. He managed to possess them right under our noses.

PETERS

My daughter was not possessed!

HUNTER (V.O.)

I warned you to take this seriously. This is not cops and robbers. This is war. Someone has to die.

PETERS

No! You listen to me, you sick fuck! When I get through with you, you'll beg me for death. You'll wish you could rot in prison getting raped next to Zanich!

HUNTER (V.O.)

Oh? Hadn't you heard? Zanich was released. It seems he had an alibi. Oops.

PETERS

You fuckin' piece of shit! I will find you. I will hunt you down, and I will tear you to pieces!

HUNTER (V.O.)

I'm afraid our time together is over. I had hoped you could help me hunt, but if you insist on fighting me, I have nothing to gain from you. Goodbye, Adam.

The call ends, but Peters shouts into the phone anyway.

PETERS

Mother fucker! I swear to God I will destroy you!

He lets out a fearsome shriek that echoes across the cemetery, into the darkness. Only the darkness hears him.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Peters walks through the front door of the station and makes a turn past the only on-duty officer towards the holding cells.

OFFICER

Hey. Captain said you're not supposed to be here.

PETERS

I'm not here.

Peters walks right by, then goes through another door. The officer gives chase.

INT. POLICE STATION HOLDING CELLS - NIGHT

Peters stops dead at security checkpoint. He looks on a screen at the cell where Marcus had been. There is something covering the wall. The officer catches up.

OFFICER

Sir, you can't go in there.

PETERS

Where's Marcus?

OFFICER

What?

PETERS

Marcus?! In cell one. Where is he?

OFFICER

Oh, uh. In the morgue?

PETERS

What?

OFFICER

Uh, yeah. He committed suicide this morning.

He thinks a moment, wide-eyed.

PETERS

What's with the wall?

OFFICER

He scratched it up. Wrote some roman numbers on it.

Peters' eyes go wider.

PETERS

What numbers?!

Peters is interrogating the officer heavily now.

OFFICER
I, I don't know.

PETERS
(fed up)
No wonder you're on night watch.

Peters heads toward the cells, tries to buzz in. The door won't open.

OFFICER
The door can't be opened 'til morning. It's a time lock.

PETERS
You are useless. Did you even see the numbers?

OFFICER
Um, no. But there should be a picture of them in the file.

Peters pushes past the officer and heads back to the station lobby.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Peters pulls a photo up on his computer screen.

Moments later he is pulling a page from the printer. he examines it.

The number looks like "DCLXVI" but the lines are long and drawn over multiple times. The X and V look practically alike.

PETERS
(to himself)
Son of a bitch. How did you get in there?

Peters is back at the computer, watching video of his interrogation with Marcus. He plays back the phrase he muttered at the end.

MARCUS
Look at your father's grave...

He plays the segment a few times to make it out.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Look at your father's grave...

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - EARLY MORNING

Peters is sitting in the pew, near the back. He seems to be staring at something.

The door opens behind him and echoes through the sanctuary. Father Gaines is surprised to see Adam there.

GAINES
Good morning, Adam. What can I do for you?

Peters looks up at him.

PETERS
Was Reverend Peters my father?

Gaines looks surprised at first, but then his face betrays him. He sits down in the pew next to Peters.

GAINES
I suppose you realized it's not normal to name abandoned children after priests.

PETERS
What happened?

GAINES
When your mother first came in to the shelter, she was nearly out of control, shouting things, very violent. We see a lot of drug users, but this was something else.

Peters looks interested.

GAINES
The Reverend decided to perform an exorcism on her. I didn't witness it, but I was told it was successful. After that, we could all see he took special interest in her, but she left after about a week. We thought nothing of it until nine months later when she dropped you off in the Reverend's office. He named you and gave you up for adoption.

PETERS

(bitter)

I can see why you'd keep your mouth shut.

GAINES

(defensive)

It would have been a huge scandal. We were afraid that it would shut down the shelter.

PETERS

How did he die?

GAINES

That was a mystery too. He seemed afflicted with something after you arrived. He was found dead in his bed about a year later.

PETERS

I need to know where he was buried.

GAINES

Why? What do you hope to find there?

PETERS

I don't know. I'm following a lead. Something someone said.

Gaines is concerned. He has seen this look before.

GAINES

Is it your demon hunter?

PETERS

I don't know.

GAINES

If it is, be careful.

Peters looks at him to say, "I know" but words are not necessary.

GAINES

He's buried in the same cemetery as your daughter.

Peters is already making his way to the door.

GAINES (cont'd)

Adam. The crucifix... it was your
father's. Hold on to it.

Peters turns to hear and acknowledge what he had already
assumed.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

Peters is looking over the grave of his ex and daughter. He
places the picture of the angel at his daughters gravestone.

Peters walks around, reading the names on the stones,
looking for one in particular.

Eventually he stops by a larger stone, with a tall cross at
the top. The marker reads: Rev. Thomas Adam Peters
1945-1983.

There is a scripture engraved below. Peters stoops to read
it. On it is written: Psalm 91 - If you say, "The Lord is
my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, no
harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your
tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard
you in all your ways...

Grass and weeds have grown thick around the bottom, so
Peters must move them with his hand. The words at the
bottom are heavily weathered. There is also something
scratched beneath it: DCXLVI.

PETERS

What the?

He pulls out piece of paper that printed the wall
scratchings from the cell. He compares the numbers.

He writes "646?" then thinks. Then he extends the lines on
the "V" in the picture to make "DCLXXI" and writes
"671". He counts on his fingers.

PETERS (cont'd)

Son of a bitch!

He turns and takes off fast.

INT. AUTOPSY - DAY

Peters busts through the door. Janessa has a body on the table and a mask on her face.

PETERS
What was the number on Elsa?!

JANESSA
What?

PETERS
The numbers... on Keesha and
Elsa? What were they?!

JANESSA
Six-sixty-nine and
six-seventy. Why?

PETERS
Oh my God... he's counting them!

JANESSA
What? I thought you knew?

PETERS
I only saw the first number. So
Gretta was six-sixty-seven and
Vincent-

JANESSA
Six-sixty-eight. So?

PETERS
My fathers grave is six-forty-six.

Janessa doesn't get it.

PETERS (cont'd)
He's been dead for thirty
years! How long has he been
counting?

Janessa is perturbed by where this might be going.

JANESSA
What are you trying to say?

PETERS
Marcus wrote six-seventy-one on the
wall.

JANESSA
 Marcus committed suicide.

PETERS
 But why?!

Peters is frantic. Janessa can see his fear. He drops into a chair, sorting the information in his head.

PETERS (cont'd)
 He knew who my mother was. He knew who my father was. No man could possibly have done all this. He's been toying with me this whole time, like a cat playing with its food.
 (beat)
 I must be next.

Janessa sits next to him.

JANESSA
 Adam, you're frightening me... Are you alright? Do you want to talk to someone?

PETERS
 (desperate)
 No. No! I need to end this.

Peters takes off out the door without looking back.

JANESSA
 Adam, WAIT!

Janessa tries to reach for him with a worried look, but he does not notice.

EXT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH - DAYTIME

Peters parks his beat-up Honda across the street from the Gothic church.

He runs across without his jacket, gun in hand.

When he arrives at the front doors, he gives the handle a violent shake, then remembering the two-by-four, he puts the heel of his boot, blasting the doors open wide. Wood splinters in all directions.

PETERS

Where are you?! Show yourself!

There is no response. Dust settles. Some sunlight pours in through a hole in the ceiling.

Peters makes his way to the middle of the sanctuary.

PETERS (cont'd)

No more hiding in the shadows! No more stalking in the night! I know you can hear me!

Silence for a moment. Then some movement behind him. Peters snaps around, bracing for an impact.

PETERS (cont'd)

(belligerent, terrified shouting)

If you want me, come get me!

The light shining through the ceiling disappears. A wind howls. The dust is blown up into a whirlwind around the sanctuary. Some loose boards topple over. The dust settles down into a quiet, but the room stays dark.

HUNTER (O.S.)

Adam Peters. Right on time.

Peters spins around. The voice comes from all directions.

PETERS

(desperate)

Show yourself!

HUNTER (O.S.)

Oh, Adam. I warned you to prepare yourself. You're in a bit over your head.

PETERS

(falling apart)

Why me? Why did you do this to me?

HUNTER (O.S.)

And now you know despair. This was inevitable, of course. Things were set into motion far outside your control.

Peters has sunk to his knees in terror. He is nearly crumpled.

PETERS
(quietly)
What are you?

HUNTER (O.S.)
What shall I tell you?

Peters is staring into the ground.

HUNTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I am the murderer of your father,
your mother, your ex-wife, and your
daughter! I invaded their minds
and destroyed them from within. I
am their dark thoughts. I am their
hatred!

PETERS
So you're hunting me now? Why not
just kill me? You had two
chances... Why didn't you kill me?

Cutaway shot to the smashed face of an angel.

HUNTER (O.S.)
Do you know that your daughter
despised you? She was so terrified
of you that she drew angels. And
when the fear did not subside, she
scratched out their faces.

A tear rolls down Adam's face. He recognizes his complete failure as a father.

PETERS
(lost)
What are you waiting for? You've
caught me...

HUNTER (O.S.)
Yes, I suppose I did catch
you. But to answer your
question... I am not hunting
you. No, no. You are not meant to
die, not yet. You have a purpose
to serve.

Peters looks up slightly.

PETERS
What purpose could I possibly have?

HUNTER (O.S.)
You are the bait.

Peters closes his eyes in acceptance of his fate. His face contorts at the crushing understanding of knowing he was used, and knowing he failed.

PETERS
Dear God...

Peters is shaking with fear and self-loathing. But he cannot let go of hope.

HUNTER
(eager)
Yes...

Peters takes his shaking hand and reaches into his shirt for the crucifix, turning it over in his hand.

HUNTER (cont'd)
(taunting)
Yes. Call out like your father did...

PETERS
God help me...

HUNTER
(becoming maniacal)
Beg for mercy!

The shadows around Adam are growing. Only a small light illuminates him. The wind picks up again.

He closes his eyes, holding the cross out as a shield...

PETERS
Hail Mary, full of grace...

The room goes silent and black, except for the light reflecting off the cross in Peters' hands. His clenched eyes release a stream of tears.

PETERS (CONT'D)
...the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women...

The room shakes... A flash of light reveals glimpses of a fight. The room spins, too fast for the eyes.

PETERS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 ...and blessed is the fruit of thy
 womb, Jesus.

A blood-thirsty shriek. The clang of metal and flesh. More
 flashes of light.

PETERS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Holy Mary, Mother of God...

Peters is sweating, crying as he recites. The battle wages
 directly behind him.

PETERS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 ...pray for us sinners, now...

A beam falls behind him. Another powerful shriek, death is
 in its echo. Three large thumps are heard, like nails in a
 massive coffin.

Peters breathes heavily, bearing the pain of the fight.

PETERS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 ...pray for us sinners, now...

The hunter approaches Peters from behind in the sudden
 silence.

PETERS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 ...and at the hour of our death.

The Hunter breathes on the neck of Peters. It is not human.

PETERS (CONT'D)
 Amen.

Peters crumbles after this word. The Hunter is gone without
 noise.

The camera swoops upward looking down to reveal an angelic
 figure nailed to the overturned cross behind Peters. No
 wings are present, but blood abounds, and something like
 feathers, dust swirls around the figure.

Peters is hunched and weeping. The figure disintegrates
 behind him as a wind howls through the church.

Peters is left alone to shiver in the silent darkness.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

INT. ABANDONED GOTHIC CHURCH

Moonlight pours through a hole in the ceiling. The altar is carefully centered in the light and has an ornate, wooden, hand-carved cross set upright.

A figure in a plain, hooded robe kneels at the altar, praying.

He crosses himself then holds something in his hand up, focusing his prayer.

It is the crucifix.

Adam Peters stands respectfully to the altar. He removes the hood from his head to reveal his shaven head.

He fills a small bag with a canteen of water and a bible. He hangs the bag over his shoulder, and tucks the crucifix in his shirt.

His silhouetted form exits the large wooden doors into a darkened street.

PETERS (V.O.)

Because you have made the Lord, who
is my refuge, the Most High, your
dwelling place...

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The silhouette walks away from the church.

PETERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

No evil shall befall you, nor shall
any plague come near your
dwelling...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

A young child lays in the bed. Peters holds his hand over the child's head and prays. The child's mother sits on a chair opposite him, clenching her hands and rocking.

PETERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

For He shall give His angels charge
over you, to keep you in all your
ways...

The child's eyes open.

The mother embraces Peters. He pulls back his hood and leaves, a look of contentment but no smile.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

The robed figure of Peters turns down an shadowed alley in pursuit of a drunken man.

The drunken man is frail, anaemic. He lashes out violently, but Peters calmly grabs the forehead of the man. A cross gesture from his other hand before the man collapses to the ground.

PETERS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In their hands they shall bear you
up, lest you dash your foot against
a stone...

Peters exits the alley, alone, a serious look on his face.

PETERS (V.O.) (CONT'D) (cont'd)

You shall tread upon the lion and
the cobra. The lion and the
serpent you shall trample
underfoot.

The frail man exits the alley.

FADE TO BLACK

TITLE - "THE DEMON HUNTER"