

Episode #101

FANG

"Hello Cousin"

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FANG

"Hello Cousin"

TEASER

FADE IN:

Superimpose titles:

Pine Log Bay Forrest, 2010

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

DARK. DESERTED. RAINFALL.

A lone set of HEADLIGHTS appear down the road. A 2009 Toyota Highlander comes into view.

INT. HIGHLANDER - NIGHT - TRAVELING

Two young, close knit families occupy the vehicle. They act silly. Sing along to pop music on the radio.

JEFFERY COOPER, 23, Caucasian, clean-cut and handsome and wife, SUSAN, also 23, Caucasian, elegant and brainy, sit in the front seat.

DILO REYES, 26, Filipino, charming with a life-is-good kind of look in his eyes rides in the backseat. Beside him, is his wife, BROOKE, 24, African American, pretty and smart-faced.

THROUGH THE FRONT WINDSHIELD - Headlights pierce darkness, mist and thick rain.

DILO

I can't believe Sebastian caught that huge bass. He's quite the little fisherman.

SUSAN

(touches his arm)

Well, he does have the best fisherman DAD roll-model around.

JEFFREY

That boy learned most of what he knows about FISHIN' from books. He's got a real knack for book learnin' isn't that right Sabie?

Focus in on three 9-year-old children in the hatchback section of the Highlander.

The kids have been close friends since the 1st grade.

ARIANA MORALES, is Cuban, silly, and quick-witted. Ariana is a TOMBOY. She spends more time with the Coopers than her own family.

SEBASTIAN COOPER, is Caucasian, kind, and serious.

DANILO RAYES, is mixed race, charismatic and lukewarm.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, DAD. I love books.

ARIANA

Mr. Jeffrey are we still gonna cook the fish we caught?

JEFFREY

We sure are. I'll even show ya kids how to clean and debone the fish.

DANILO

DEBUNE. That sounds yucky.

JEFFREY

(laughing)

Not DEBUNE. DEBONE. First you scrape off all the scales, and then
(in a spooky voice)
You pull out all the little bones.

In unison, all three kids utter the words *gross* and *yuck*. The adults laugh.

The rain grows heavier. The road harder to see.

SUSAN

Maybe we should pull over and wait it out.

Jeffrey turns the windshield wipers up to high.

JEFFREY

It's fine - I'll just drive slow.

Suddenly, a LOUD THUMP hits the roof of the Highlander. Susan JUMPS out of her seat.

SUSAN

WHAT WAS THAT?

JEFFREY

Don't know
(a beat)
Maybe a tree branch.

A moment later, a second POWERFUL BANG hits the hood. The vehicle spins out of control. Jeffrey SLAMS on the brakes. HYDROPLANES OFF THE ROAD. CRASHES HEAD ON INTO A LARGE OAK TREE.

Jeffrey is shocked...

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

IS EVERYONE OKAY. IS ANYONE HURT.

Jeffrey looks to his right. Susan's head is against the dashboard. BLOOD drips from her forehead. Reaches for her arm.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Susan -- are you okay.

Stunned, Susan touches her bleeding forehead. *OUCH.*

SUSAN

I'm - I'm okay.

DINO

We're okay back here. Kids, are you okay?

They answer in unison *I'm okay. I'm Fine.*

Jeffrey takes a deep breath. Turns off the car. Opens the door.

SUSAN

(worried)

Maybe you shouldn't.

JEFFREY

I need to assess the damage.

Jeffrey steps out into the rain. Walks to the front of the Highlander. It's completely SMASHED. The axle BENT in half. Walks around to the passenger side of the vehicle. Signals for Susan to roll the window down. She complies.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

The axle bent in half - we're gonna need a tow.

Jeffrey glances at the roof of the Highlander. Notices a PAW-LIKE INDENTATION and SCRATCHES in the paint. *WEIRD.*

Susan sees the look on his face.

SUSAN
Is everything okay, honey?

JEFFREY
(thrown off)
Yeah, it's fine. Just call for the
tow, okay.

POV shot of Ariana as she peers out of the Highlanders rear window. She watches as FOUR BLACK PANTHERS emerge from the trees.

FRIGHTENED Ariana screams...

ARIANA
Ms. Cooper, there's four-

Before the word PANTHERS can escape her mouth, one of them LEAPS INTO THE AIR AND TACKLES JEFFREY TO THE GROUND.

Susan SCREAMS. In an instant, Jeffrey is ripped apart. Left for DEAD.

THE THREE OTHER PANTHERS STORM THE CAR. DOORS TEAR OPEN. CLAWS RIP THROUGH FLESH. FANGS PLUNGE INTO BONE.

SCREAMS turn to WHIMPERS and then to DEAD SILENCE.

Susan, Dino, and Brooke are SLAUGHTERED within seconds.

The kids cower together in the back of the car. SCREAMING. CRYING. HORRIFIED.

Suddenly, a WHITE LIGHT fills the sky.

A petite woman, late 20's, stands in the center of the road. We do not see her face.

Focus in on her eyes leering at the hysterical children in the back of the Highlander. She wears a Cimaruta around her neck. Holds a Nanta Bag in her hand. *Cimaruta - an old charm rooted in the lore of the Old Religion of Italy. Nanta bag - a magical pouch intended to keep one linked to the forces of nature.*

She speaks loudly...

WOMAN
(in Italian)
"O'Great Nanta, bless and empower
this pouch and all within it,
making it a bridge to Power.
(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I am linked to Tee and thou art
linked to Nature. We are One from
Thee. We are the Triangle manifest.
In the names of Diana and Dianus,
so be it done."

The panthers recoil away in FEAR and - one by one - DISAPPEAR
into the woodlands.

Woman approaches the back of the car. Reaches for the
latch...

...close up of three young, petrified faces as the hatchback
opens. The children look up at this MYSTERIOUS woman with
tearful eyes. She smiles warmly. Places the Nanta Bag on
Ariana's lap. Addled, Ariana looks down at the strange
artifact. Camera moves in tight on Ariana's big brown eyes.

A TITLE CARD slams into frame.

'FANG'

End of Teaser

ACT 1

FADE IN:

Superimpose titles:

Pine Log Bay, 2019

INT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/HALLWAY - MORNING

Tight on Ari's (previously known as Ariana) big brown eyes, looking into their locker.

Ari, is 17, Cuban, female born, but gender neutral in identity and appearance. They wear skateboarder style clothing, spiked up blue hair and gauged earlobes.

A school bell RINGS. Ari slams the locker closed. Dashes off towards class through an almost empty hallway.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/OUTSIDE CHEMISTRY CLASS - MORNING.

Two WHITE DOVES land on the window seal. Through the window they WATCH...

...Sebastian, 17, Caucasian, lanky and unconventionally attractive. He sits alone at a two person table. Shoulder length brown hair is tucked behind his ears. He sports a black t-shirt, dark blue jeans and Doc Martens.

INT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/CHEMISTRY CLASS - MORNING.

A typical looking chemistry class. Beakers. Test tubes. A large Periodic Table on the wall.

On Sebastian, as he glances at the classroom door. Ari, is LATE again.

MS. Jackson, mid-40's, the-sexy-but-nerdy-type lectures at the front of the room to TIRED teenagers - it's early on a Monday morning.

MS. JACKSON (O.S)

This morning I need you to finish up Friday's experiment.

Sebastian senses something from the window WATCHING him. *EERIE*. He turns. Looks out the window at the WHITE DOVES.

PUSH in on Sebastian's face. The DOVES are unexpectedly familiar. They return his stare like they *know him*. CREEPY.

He looks away quickly.

Ari enters the room. Attempts to glide UNNOTICED past Ms. Jackson.

MS. JACKSON (CONT'D)
Stop right there Ms. Morales.

Ari freezes. Slowly turns to face Ms. Jackson.

ASH
It's Mx.

MS. JACKSON
What?

Students laugh at Ari's expense. One student even mumbles FREAK under their breath.

Ari is unfazed by the ridicule. They've been teased most of their life, for the exception of Sebastian, who accepts them unconditionally.

MS. JACKSON (CONT'D)
(rolls eyes)
Okay, fine, Mx. Morales. Now, if you don't mind explaining why you're late for the third time this month?

ARI
I can't Ms. Jackson.

MS. JACKSON
Can't what?

ARI
Explain why I'm late.

MS. JACKSON
(aggravated)
Fine. But consider this a final warning. If you're late one more time, I'll have no choice but to issue ANOTHER detention.

ARI
(in a robotic voice)
I understand Ms. Jackson.

MS. JACKSON

(irked)

Now - JOIN your lab partner and finish up last week's experiment.

Ari turns. Walks to the table where Sebastian sits. Takes a seat. Locks eyes with DANILO, who sits off to the left.

Danilo, is 17, mixed race, preppy and athletic. He's taunted Ari and Sebastian for the past 8 years. Danilo mouths the word WEIRDO at Ari, who SHOOTS him the middle finger. Ari turns away. Glances at Sebastian, who returns the gesture with curious eyes.

ARI

DON'T ASK.

MS. JACKSON (O.S.)

Okay, so now you should be ready to pour the mixture from the beaker into the test tube.

Sebastian performs the lab experiment. Spills part of the mixture on the table. Ms. Jackson walks by. Hands him a paper towel.

MS. JACKSON (CONT'D)

If you spill the mixture, please wipe it up quickly.

Sebastian sops up the liquid.

SEBASTIAN

Are you still coming by tonight to study?

ARI

If my dad doesn't force me to go to another church activity.

SEBASTIAN

Thank god grandfather doesn't do church activities.

Sebastian rubs his eyes. Squints to minimize the glare from the lights above.

ARI

Are your eyes still bothering you?

SEBASTIAN

Nothing seems to help. I even tried sunglasses.

ARI
 That's weird.
 (a beat)
 You need to get them checked out
 like *right away*.

SEBASTIAN
 I'll talk with grandfather about
 seeing an eye doctor tonight.

Curious about the WHITE DOVES, Sebastian glances over to the window.

The DOVES peer back with VIGILANT eyes. WIGGED OUT, Sebastian turns away.

The DOVES fly off.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY PARK - DAY.

A section of the park is secured off with yellow crime scene tape. Two uniform police officers monitor the area. Hold back a small group of onlookers.

Focus in on the two WHITE DOVES perched up high on a tree. They WATCH as...

...a trim, handsome, black man, DETECTIVE TYRONE WILLIAMS, 33, approaches the scene. Tyrone, was recently promoted to detective after working the BEAT for 12 years. He's wet behind the ears. Eager to CRACK his first major case.

Detective FRANK SANTOS, Cuban, 62, and burly, is a veteran officer close to retirement. He stands next to a girls mutilated body.

TYRONE
 What do we have?

FRANK
 NUMBER three. Early 20's. Same markings as the other two.

TYRONE
 Has forensics been by yet?

FRANK
 They're on the way now.

TYRONE
 Any witnesses?

Frank shakes head NO.

FRANK

Looks like the incident happened around midnight. She was meeting her boyfriend at Breakwater Bar.

TYRONE

Did we pick him up?

FRANK

He's at the station now. Says he was hanging out with friends until just after 3 AM.

TYRONE

Who found her?

FRANK

Two joggers. They gave statements.

Tyrone leans down to take a closer look at the body.

DRIED BLOOD. GASHES. BITES. Girls neck is ripped open. Her abdomen disemboweled.

Tyrone WINCES in horror.

TYRONE

(to Frank)

What kind of MONSTER would do this?

Focus in on WHITE DOVES as they fly away.

EXT: Cooper Mansion - Evening. Establishing.

A turn of the Century, three story Mansion sits in the center of a large memorable yard. This Mansion has been in the Cooper family since 1898. A partially rusted iron gate surrounds the house. Two Gothic style statues sit to the right and left of the front door.

A light shines through the downstairs kitchen window.

INT: COOPER MANSION/KITCHEN - EVENING.

Sebastian and Ari sit at a large, wooden antique table. The table is located in the center of an old, yet functional kitchen. They sip sodas. Complete homework assignments.

ARI

Danilo's such a JERK.

SEBASTIAN

He's messed up because of what happened.

MR. COOPER, 83, enters the kitchen. He looks ten year younger than his actual age. Pours a cup of tea.

ARI

Mr. Cooper, don't you think someone just needs to knock his block off.

Mr. Cooper sips tea and looks at Ari.

MR. COOPER

Who's block?

ARI

Danilo. He's such a jerk. Always picking on people.

MR. COOPER

Danilo's been through a lot. Maybe you should give him a break.

ARI

(shrugs shoulders)
Point taken.

MR. COOPER

It's getting late kiddos. You should probably finish up with the studies soon.

ARI

Yeah, I need to get home anyway.

Ari slams their chemistry book closed. Tosses it into an orange backpack covered in transgender affirming stickers: "Love is tender and knows no gender" and "Black Trans Women's Lives Matter."

ARI (CONT'D)

See ya in the AM.

Ari throws on the backpack. Grabs skateboard. Dashes out the back door.

SEBASTIAN

Text me when you get home.

ARI

Will do, dork (o.s)

SEBASTIAN
 (grins awkwardly)
 Okay, DORK.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT. ESTABLISHING.

Focus in on a sign that reads: "Pine Log Bay Police Department." A group of police cars line the front of a quaint, one story building located in the center of town.

INT. PINE LOG BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT/OFFICE - NIGHT.

The office is small. Two desks sit on opposite ends of the room. Detective Frank Santos' side of the room is cluttered and disorganized. Detective Tyrone Williams side is neat and tidy.

Tyrone sits at his desk. Studies gruesome crime scene photos of the DEAD GIRLS. Frank enters. Sits down on a swivel chair.

FRANK
 His alibi checks out. He was at
 Breakwater until 3 am.

Tyrone nods in response.

TYRONE
 These scratches and bites were made
 by an animal not a human.

Frank looks over at the gruesome crime scene photos.

FRANK
 What makes you that?

Tyrone sits back in his chair. Rolls up his sleeve. Reveals a medium sized forearm scar.

TYRONE
 I got this while camping one
 summer. MOUNTAIN LION.
 (a beat)
 These gashes, bites...
 (points to picture)
 Have similar qualities.

FRANK
 (inspects Tyrone's arm)
 They do. But a MOUNTAIN LION, in
 Pine Log Bay. Really?

TYRONE

There's been a history of ANIMAL attacks in Pine Log Bay for decades.

FRANK

True, but not this close to town. Most attacks take place in the forest.

TYRONE

It's just a theory for now. The DNA tests should tell us more.

FRANK

DNA tests?

TYRONE

I asked the lab is test the saliva around the wounds.

FRANK

Smart move.

(looks at clock on wall)

It's late. There's nothing more we can do here tonight. Maybe you should go home and spend time with that girlfriend of yours.

TYRONE

Soon. I'm gonna tag and file these photos first.

Frank stands up. Pulls on jacket. Walks towards office door.

FRANK

Sounds good Detective. See you in the morning.

TYRONE

Night Frank.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO - NIGHT. ESTABLISHING

On the edge of town sits a small, well-maintained Zoo. We see a sign that reads: "Pine Log Bay Zoo."

INT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO/ZOOKEEPERS DEN - NIGHT.

MARIANA PEREZ, 28, Cuban, attractive, enters the zookeepers den.

Old Girl, an elderly black Panther, sits in a medium sized cage. Licks an injured paw. Old Girl's been living at the zoo for a LONG TIME.

MARIANA
 (in Spanish)
 Hey old girl. How are you tonight?

Mariana picks up the clipboard.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
 Looks like that paw is finally healing.

Mariana's cell phone rings. She answers.

MARIANA (CONT'D)
 Evening stranger. How are you?

INT. PINE LOG BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT/OFFICE - NIGHT.

TYRONE
 There's been another victim. A 22-year-old girl this time.

INTERCUT WITH
 MARIANA AND
 TYRONE:

MARIANA
 That's horrible, babe -- where are you now?

TYRONE
 The station.

MARIANA
 I'm headed home soon. Will I see you there?

TYRONE
 Soon. I'm just finishing up here.

MARIANA
 Sounds good babe.

TYRONE
 Hey Mariana. Be CAREFUL out there.

MARIANA
 (smiles)
 I will. Love you.

TYRONE

Love you too.

Tyrone hangs up cell phone. Continues to examine HORRIFYING crime scene photos.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A calm, middle class suburban street. Manicured lawns. Empty trash and recycling bins rest on the corner of sidewalks. Sedans and SUV's line driveways.

Off in the distance, two WHITE DOVES fly overhead. They land on the roof of a nearby house and WATCH as...

...Ari skates contently down the sidewalk. Ari approaches an intersection. Checks for cars. The coast is clear. They push forward on their skateboard, but an ODD SOUNDING GROWL distracts them. Stumbles forward. Grabs skateboard. Tries again.

A second later, another POWERFUL GROWL beckons from behind.

SACRED, Ari turns around. A large black panther stands approximately 10 feet away. The panther's eyes are BRIGHT GREEN. They GLARE directly at Ari.

ARI

(mumbling)

What the hell?

The Panther GAPES. Starts to creep forward.

ARI (CONT'D)

Oh shit!

Terrified, Ari jumps onto the skateboard. Kicks off from the sidewalk with all their might.

FRANTICALLY, Ari RIDES down the center of the street. They careen down to gain speed. The panther trails a few feet behind.

GROWL. HISS.

Out of NOWHERE a car appears. A HORN BLARES. HEADLIGHTS FLASH.

Ari swerves to avoid a head-on collision. TUMBLES forward onto someone's front yard. Skateboard flings into the air. Lands on the street. Rolls away. The car HONKS. Speeds off.

ARI (CONT'D)
 (to driver)
 ASSHOLE.

Frightened and winded, Ari takes a deep breath. Blood drips from their knee. They look around. The panther is GONE.

ARI (CONT'D)
 Mother...EFFER.

On two WHITE DOVES as they fly off into the night sky.

EXT. QUAIN T LOOKING HOUSE ON CORNER OF STREET (BACKYARD) - NIGHT.

ALICE DRUSUS, 38, an alluring, strong ITALIAN WITCH, with LONG DARK hair, stands in her backyard.

Alice comes from a long lineage of witches who practice STREGONERIA - a form of witchcraft with southern European roots.

Alice looks up at the night sky. Two WHITE DOVES fly into view. She smiles as they land on top of a large, brass bird cage.

Alice walks over to the DOVES. Gently pets them with the back of her left hand.

ALICE
 How are my FAMILIARS tonight?

The DOVES nudge into her hand.

On Alice as flashes of light appear before her. Through the DOVES EYES, she sees Sebastian in chemistry class, Detective Williams inspecting a girls mutilated body, Ari being chased by a black panther.

She blinks her eyes back into focus. Withdraws her hand from the DOVES. Watches as the DOVES climb in their cage. Burrow into their nighttime resting place.

On Alice.

ALICE (CONT'D)
 Sleep well my LOVES.

INT. COOPERS MANSION/HALLWAY - NIGHT.

Sebastian walks down a narrow hallway towards a dimly lit bedroom.

Old family photos, antique paintings and unusual artifacts line the walls. He approaches a half opened door. Knocks.

MR. COOPER
Come in Dear Boy.

Sebastian enters. Cooper sits in a chair. Reads the "Pine Log Bay Gazette."

Focus in on today's headline: "Third Victim Found Mutilated in Park, Law Enforcement Suspects Mountain Lion."

SEBASTIAN
I wanted to say goodnight
grandfather.

MR. COOPER
Good of you. Did you lock down the
house?

SEBASTIAN
Of course.

Sebastian starts to exit the room.

MR. COOPER
Dear Boy. Is Ari going through with
it?

Sebastian stops. Looks back at Mr. Cooper.

SEBASTIAN
They want people to call them Ari.
Use gender neutral pronouns.
(a beat)
Their parents aren't on board with
the whole *transition* thing.

MR. COOPER
That's a shame. Ash is a good kid.
Such a change shouldn't matter.

SEBASTIAN
No it shouldn't.
(a beat)
You know grandfather, for an 83-
year-old guy, you're pretty open
minded.

MR. COOPER
I learned a long time ago not to
judge a book by its cover.

SEBASTIAN

Ari appreciates that about you.

(a beat)

Grandfather - did you mean what you said about Danilo. He can be a real jerk sometimes.

MR. COOPER

Dear Boy, sometimes we have to rise above other people's shortcomings. Be the bigger person. Try not to worry about Danilo, he'll come around.

(a beat)

Now get some rest.

Sebastian's cell phone rings. It's ARI.

SEBASTIAN

Okay grandfather. Goodnight.

MR. COOPER

Goodnight Dear Boy.

Sebastian hurries out of grandfathers room...

INT. COOPERS MANSION/HALLWAY - NIGHT.

...answers his cell.

SEBASTIAN

I thought you were going to text when you got home.

INT. ARI'S FAMILY HOME/ARI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Ari sits on the corner of their bed visibly shaken by their encounter with the panther.

INTERCUT WITH
SEBASTIAN AND
ARI:

ARI

(mumbling and frantic)

You won't believe what just happened. I was riding down the street and this... this black, I don't know, PANTHER chased after me. I road as fast as I could and then a car jolted out, and I went flying onto someone's yard.

INT. COOPER MANSION/SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Sebastian enters his bedroom.

SEBASTIAN

Ari slow down. A panther?

ARI

Yeah, a panther. It was black and really big. It growled loudly.

SEBASTIAN

Are you sure it wasn't a big dog or maybe a dear?

ARI

NO, it was a PANTHER. It had bright GREEN eyes. Huge FANGS.

(a beat)

It chased me down the street. I was seconds away from becoming it's late night meal.

SEBASTIAN

Okay, okay, I hear ya. Settle down. We can talk more about this in the morning.

Focus in on Ari's face. Distressed. Worried.

ARI

Okay, sure. Let's talk in the morning.

Camera pushes past Ari to a Nanta Bag sitting on a dusty bookshelf.

FADE OUT:

END ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

EXT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING.

A typical spring morning in Central Florida. The air is humid. The sun shines BRIGHTLY. Sebastian's eyes are still sensitive. He SQUINTS. Uses his forearm as a shield. Glances at the time on his cell phone. Ari's late AGAIN.

Sebastian considers heading to class, but is distracted by a starkly attractive, new girl, who enters his view. STAR, is 17, Caucasian, petite and has long black hair. She walks down the path towards the school's main entrance. She walks by Sebastian. Their eyes meet with a Romeo and Juliet kind of INTENSITY.

Sebastian's eyes no longer burn. A warm sensation runs through his body. She's familiar, but they've also never met before.

Ari swoops up on their skateboard. Notices Sebastian looking at Star. Doesn't think much of it.

ARI

WUT UP.

Star enters building. Sebastian turns to face Ari. His eyes again troubled by the light.

SEBASTIAN

Class starts in 3 minutes.

ARI

I know, I know. I was almost gobbled to death by a lion last night.

SEBASTIAN

I thought it was a panther?

ARI

Lion, panther, either way it was a huge cat and I was it's prey.

(a beat)

You should've seen this thing. It must have weighed 500 pounds, with EMERALD GREEN eyes.

SEBASTIAN

Sounds horrifying.

ARI

I've never been more scared in all
my life.

Sebastian looks at the time on his cell.

SEBASTIAN

We are now officially late.

ARI

DAMMIT.

(a beat)

At least I have a good excuse this
time. I came this close...

(holds up forefinger and
thumb to indicate an inch)

to becoming MEOW MIX.

Sebastian laughs under his breath. They enter the building.
Head to class.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY PARK - DAY.

Tyrone approaches the park where the mutilated body was
found. The yellow crime scene tape is gone. He puts on a pair
of rubber gloves. Explores the ground for clues.

He inspected this area yesterday, but wants to MAKE SURE no
clues were missed. He combs through scattered bushes and
fallen tree branches. Finds nothing.

He scouts the perimeter. Notices a cluster of UNUSUAL looking
paw-prints embedded in semi-dry mud.

TYRONE

(to self)

What do we have here?

Tyrone leans down to take a closer look. The paw-prints have
four teardrop-shaped toes. One of the toes is physically
smaller than the others. He snaps pictures of the prints with
his cellphone camera.

MATCH CUT:

EXT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO/PANTHER PUBLIC OBSERVATION AREA - DAY.

Focus in on Peter, 38, strange looking, slender. He stands
outside Old Girl's glass cage. Inside, she growls. Paces back
and forth.

PETER

It's been a long time ADELE.

Old Girls agitation grows. Peter moves closer to the glass.
Old Girl FEARFULLY retreats into a corner. SNARL. HISS.

MATCH CUT:

INT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO/ZOOKEEPERS DEN - DAY.

Mariana stands outside a small closet taking inventory. Holds a clipboard. She hears Old Girl GROWL, but doesn't think much of it.

A moment passes...

The GROWLS and HISSES intensify. She grows concerned. Puts down the clipboard. Exits the den...

EXT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO/PANTHER PUBLIC OBSERVATION AREA - DAY.

...and enters the observation area. It's EMPTY except for Peter. Old Girl is DISTURBED. Crouches in the corner of her cage. Snarls at Peter in a panic like state.

TROUBLED, Mariana approaches Peter.

MARIANA

Sir?

Peter's focus is on Old Girl. He does not respond.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

(loud, but polite)

Sir, I have to ask you to leave --
you're disturbing the animal.

Peter does not respond.

MARIANA (CONT'D)

(louder, less polite)

Mister, do you hear me?

Peter turns. Looks at Mariana. Snarls in a cat-like manner.

PETER

YES, I HEAR YOU.

Startled, Mariana steps back.

MARIANA

(firmly)

I don't know who you are, or what you're doing here, but you NEED to leave NOW.

Peter looks at Old Girl.

PETER

Soon Adele.

UNAFFECTED, Peter leaves the observation area.

UNNERVED, Mariana glances at Old Girl. She remains HUDDLED and FRIGHTENED.

INT. PINE LOG BAY POLICE STATION/OFFICE - DAY

Tyrone stares at gruesome crime scene photos of the dead girls. TORN FLESH. SMEARED BLOOD. GUTS EXPOSED.

He turns to his computer. Types "Cat attacks in Pine Log Bay" into the google search. A list of articles about animal ATTACKS in Pine Log Bay pop up. He scrolls down. Taps the 1984 Pine Log Bay Gazette story, "PINE LOG BAY PARK KILLINGS COULD BE CAT RELATED."

"Pine Log Bay Police Detectives are baffled by the horrific killings of Pine Log Bay residents Sofia Lopez, 23, and Stacey Green, 26. The victims were mauled to death at Pine Log Bay Park just after midnight on Saturday. Police speculate the girls were attacked by a mountain lion while walking through the park. Pine Log Bay Zoo curator, Albert Yates agree "these wounds clearly resemble the markings of a mountain lion. It's very likely these girls were attacked by this kind of animal."

Tyrone jots down "Albert Yates" on a notepad. Plugs "Albert Yates" into google. Scrolls through articles. Taps on a 1986 Pine Log Bay Gazette article: "ZOO CURATOR BREAKS DOWN AND LEAVES JOB AFTER 15 YEARS."

"Albert Yates, Pine Log Bay Zoo's longest and most dedicated curator left his job, without notice, earlier this week after experiencing a mental breakdown. According to sources, Yates mental health declined after his girlfriend, Adele Gallier, disappeared two years ago. Yates, worked at the Pine Log Bay Zoo from 1971 to 1986. His most notable success while at the zoo was a 2-year-long research study on the habits of black panthers in captivity.

Frank enters office.

FRANK
Any updates?

TYRONE
Yes. I discovered something at the
park earlier today.

Frank sits down on swivel chair.

FRANK
Hit me.

TYRONE
(holds up pictures)
I ran across these paw prints in
the mud a few feet from where the
body was discovered. I searched the
area yesterday, but there weren't
any such prints. The ANIMAL must
have returned to the crime scene
late last night.

FRANK
Wow. So you really think these
girls were killed by a mountain
lion.

TYRONE
I do.

FRANK
Well, if that's the case, why
haven't there been any reported
sightings?

TYRONE
Not sure. Maybe he only comes out
late at night.

FRANK
Okay, so if your right, what do you
plan to do about it?

Tight on Tyrone's face.

TYRONE
Catch the damn thing.

INT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/MEETING ROOM - DAY

A dozen or so students sit in circle formation. Ari and
Sebastian are among them.

On the whiteboard in black marker are the words: "Gay Straight Student Alliance."

Christopher, 18, thin, blonde and effeminate, leads the meeting.

CHRISTOPHER

The prom committee agreed to let us add songs to the playlist.

ARI

And the flags?

On Sasha Green, 17, an African American, trans girl, smart and attractive. She grabs her notebook. Flips some pages.

SASHA

They arrived over the weekend. We now have the more inclusive Rainbow Flag, with the brown and black colors in it and the trans flag.

ARI

AWESOME-SAUCE. And they agreed to let us hang them at the event, right?

CHRISTOPHER

We're still working on that end of things. We're meeting with the prom committee again this Friday to discuss it.

(a beat)

If you want to attend that meeting be here at 2:45 PM. We need as much support we can get.

ARI

Sebastian and I will be there.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, we don't want a repeat of last year.

In unison, group members verbally agree. *You got that right. For sure.*

ARI

What happened to Charlie was NOT OKAY. We CAN NOT tolerate that kind of bullshit any longer.

In unison, group members snap fingers in agreement.

SEBASTIAN

What about the Prom King, Queen, or
Everything else In-between
categories?

CHRISTOPHER

They won't budge on that one. The
categories will remain Prom King
AND Prom Queen.

(glances at Sasha)

But, we all know who the real *Prom
Queen* is around here, don't we,
SASHA.

Group members respond with *YEAH GIRL* or *YOU GOT THAT RIGHT,
SISTA*.

SASHA

(smiles shyly)

The songs and flags are already
ruffling their STRAIGHT tail
feathers.

Christopher looks up at a clock on the wall.

CHRISTOPHER

So we're just about done with
today's meeting. If you want to
join us Friday be here at 2:45.

(a beat)

Until then, be STRONG, be SAFE and
be YOURSELF.

Group members snap fingers in agreement. Stand. Exit room.
Scatter in different directions down the hallway.

INT PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/HALLWAY - DAY

Sebastian and Ari stroll down an empty hall.

SEBASTIAN

What time are you coming by,
grandfather wants to order pizza?

ARI

Around 5:30 PM if all goes well at
home.

They near the school's front door. Five JOCKS enter. They are
sweaty. Hyped up from football practice.

ARI (CONT'D)

Crap. Not these ass-wipes again.

The jocks approach Ari and Sebastian. Make a DEAD STOP. Block them from passing.

DANILO
(laughing)
So where are you GIRLS coming from
this today, another GSA MEETING?

ARI
What's it to you, DANILO?

RANDY
I hear they want to turn PROM into
a real GAY BAR - with pride flags
and queer music.

SEBASTIAN
Listen, we don't want any trouble.

Sebastian looks at Danilo, who smiles back with disdain.

DANILO
(steps aside)
No problem, Coop.

SEBASTIAN
(hesitantly)
Thanks.

Sebastian and ARI walk through the jocks WALL OF TESTOSTERONE when...

Randy grabs Sebastian's hoodie. Pushes him against a group of lockers.

ARI
(to Randy)
LEAVE HIM ALONE ASSHOLE.

RANDY
Cooper's a big boy, he can fend for
himself.

Sebastian pushes Randy off.

SEBASTIAN
Randy, I'm not in the mood for this
today.

Randy leans in. Places his forearm firmly across Sebastian's chest.

RANDY
 (mimicking)
 Did you hear that boys, Coopers NOT
 IN THE MOOD FOR THIS TODAY.

Sebastian looks into Randy's eyes. Frustration and anger overcome him.

SEBASTIAN
 GET OFF ME.

SEBASTIAN GRABS RANDY BY THE THROAT. THROWS HIM ACROSS THE HALLWAY WITH INHUMAN STRENGTH.

Randy lands on the ground. *HARD*.

Sebastian leaps into the air. Lands onto of Randy. Grabs him by the throat. Randy tries to break free. He's over-powered.

Focus in on Sebastian's eyes as they turn from brown to EMERALD GREEN.

Ari grabs Sebastian's arm. Tries to pull him off.

ARI
 SEBASTIAN, STOP, YOU'RE KILLIN'
 HIM.

A second passes...

Sebastian releases Randy's throat. Falls back. Randy, crawls away. Chokes. Holds his throat.

RANDY
 Your nuts Cooper, totally NUTS.

The jocks help Randy to his feet.

ARI
 (to Randy)
 You started it.

Sebastian looks at Randy.

SEBASTIAN
 I'm sorry... I don't-

RANDY
 -whatever Cooper.

Danilo grabs Randy by the arm.

DANILO
 He's not worth it.

The jocks scamper away.

Shocked, Ari helps Sebastian to his feet.

ARI
What was that?

SEBASTIAN
I don't know, I just, I lost control.

ARI
I've never seen anything like it. You tossed him clear across the floor like it was nothin.

SEBASTIAN
I don't-

ARI
-forget it for now. Let's just get out of here before those idiots come back.

SEBASTIAN
Okay.

On Sebastian and Ari as they quickly exit the building.

INT. COOPER MANSION/SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - EVENING.

An atypical teenage boys bedroom. Posters of old school monster movies hang on the walls: "Night of the Living Dead," "Dracula," "The Blob." There is a large bookshelf lined with books, vintage toys and a few family photos of Sebastian with his parents and grandfather. There is also a fair amount of electronics, a flat screen TV and computer equipment.

Sebastian and Ari sit at a small desk. Hover in front of a laptop computer.

In the background, an old WEREWOLF movie streams on the flat screen.

ARI
Photophobia - can be caused by an CORNEAL ABRASION, an INFECTED CORNEA, ALLERGIES, ACANTHAMOEBA, which is a parasite, YUCK, or PREECLAMPSIA - oh forget that one - you'd have to be PREGNANT.

SEBASTIAN

I read all of that yesterday.

Sebastian stands up. Walks over to the bedroom window. Looks out into the darkness.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

The glare issue is one thing, but what about the rage, or...

A moment of silence.

ARI

Or what?

SEBASTIAN

Nothing.

ARI

It doesn't sound like NOTHING.

SEBASTIAN

(unsettled)

On Monday morning - you know the day you were late to Jackson's class.

ARI

I'd prefer to NOT remember that day, but yeah.

SEBASTIAN

Two WHITE DOVES were perched on the ledge of the classrooms window. When I looked at them, they
(a beat)
TALKED to me.

ARI

(confused)

Talked to you, like, that whole hearing VOICES thing.

SEBASTIAN

No not like that. I didn't hear their voices. They spoke to me with their eyes. Like they were trying to warn me about something.

ARI

(leery)

WEIRD.

(a beat)

SEBASTIAN

You think?

ARI

Just about as weird as me being
chased down by a panther.

Ari senses Sebastian's distress. Changes subject...

ARI (CONT'D)

So we're going this year, right?

SEBASTIAN

To the beach concert?

ARI

Yeah. It's going to be great. Lots
of weirdo's.

Sebastian rolls eyes.

SEBASTIAN

I hate weirdos.

ARI

It'll be fun. Plus, you love
WEIRDOS -- we're WEIRDOS. YOU know
how much I want to see Immortal
Beasts, I--

SEBASTIAN

--just love the lead singer, I
know.

(reluctantly)

I guess we can go. It might
ACTUALLY help get my mind off
things.

Ari leaps up in excitement.

ARI

AWESOME-SAUCE. We should dress up.
Lots of people will be in costume.

SEBASTIAN

No way, I am not dressing up.

Ari ignores Sebastian's comment. Walks over to the closet.

ARI

Do you still have that vampire
costume?

SEBASTIAN

The one with the green teeth?

ARI

That's the one.

Ari rummages through the closet. Opens a dresser drawer. Sebastian walks over to Ari. Pushes drawer closed.

SEBASTIAN

Grandfather asked me put all those things in the attic years ago.

Determined to find the costume, Ari exits the bedroom.

ARI

The attic (O.S)

Sebastian rolls eyes. Follows after Ari.

INT. PINE LOG BAY POLICE STATION/OFFICE - NIGHT.

Tyrone sits at his desk. Sorts through case files. A police officer enters.

POLICE OFFICER

Detective, Mariana's here.

TYRONE

Thanks, you can bring her back.

The Officer exits. Returns with Mariana. She enters. Walks over to Tyrone's desk.

TYRONE (CONT'D)

(relieved)

Man am I glad to see you.

He stands up. Kisses her quickly on the lips.

MARIANA

Wow, looks like you've really settled in around here.

TYRONE

I suppose.

MARIANA

So what do you want to show me?

Tyrone motions for Mariana to sit down on Frank's swivel chair. Hands her a picture.

TYRONE

What do you see when you look at that picture?

Is this a trick question?

MARIANA

Paw prints.

TYRONE

Yeah, but what kind of paw prints?

MARIANA

A mountain lion. No wait, a panther.

TYRONE

I took that picture at the crime scene yesterday - 10 feet from where the body was discovered.

MARIANA

And?

TYRONE

I don't think a person killed those girls, I think a cat did it -- a big cat.

MARIANA

Really?

Tyrone picks up a crime scene photo. Shows it to Mariana.

TYRONE

Look at those bites and gashes. Do you think a human could do that?

MARIANA

(cringes at site of crime scene photo)

Those wounds do look cat-like.

(a beat)

So you really think a large CAT KILLED THOSE WOMEN?

TYRONE

That's exactly what I think. Forensics is testing saliva from the victims wounds now. We'll know more tomorrow.

MARIANA

So how can I help?

TYRONE

You're the best cat lady I know.
You have experience with these kind
of animals. I was thinking-

MARIANA

-we could track it. Catch it.

TYRONE

Is that possible?

MARIANA

Of course it's possible. I'll talk
with EMMANUEL about it.

TYRONE

That would be great. The sooner we
catch this thing the better.

(a beat)

By the way, do you know Albert
Yates?

MARIANA

The guy who curated the zoo back in
the 80's?

TYRONE

Yeah.

MARIANA

Not personally.

TYRONE

Do you know where he is now?

MARIANA

No, but I might know someone who
does, why?

TYRONE

He was questioned about a similar
killing in 1984 - two women were
mauled to death in the park like
our victims. Then his girlfriend,
Adele, disappeared. He had a break
down after that and left the zoo. I
think he knew something more about
those KILLINGS.

MARIANA

Wait, did you say Adele?

TYRONE

Yeah, Adele Gallier.

MARIANA

This is going to sound weird, but the other day a guy was in the observation area looking at Old Girl. He freaked her out so I asked him to leave. Before he did, he called her ADELE.

TYRONE

Really? Did you recognize the guy?

MARIANA

No, never saw him before.

TYRONE

Was Old Girl around when Yates worked at the zoo?

MARIANA

I can't imagine she was. Panthers in captivity typically live between 12 to 20 years. She's old, but not that old.

TYRONE

Didn't Yates conduct a study about panthers living in zoo's or something?

MARIANA

Yeah, The Captive Panther Study.

TYRONE

Do you think something in the study could explain what's happening now.

MARIANA

Maybe, but the results are sealed.

TYRONE

HUH.

(a beat)

Why would they be sealed?

MARIANA

I don't know. I tried to get a copy of them years ago, but the zoo told me they were sealed.

TYRONE

Why would the zoo seal a study about panthers?

MARIANA

You got me, but if we track down
Yates maybe he can tell us.

TYRONE

Perhaps. Let's just hope we get to
the bottom of this soon.

(a beat)

We need to catch this CAT before
someone else dies.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT 111

ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. PINE LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/LUNCH ROOM - DAY.

Sebastian and Ari sit alone at a lunch table. Ari picks at their food with a plastic fork. Sebastian eats a sandwich prepared at home.

ARI
They call this meat?
(a beat)
So have you thought of a costume yet? I think we should dress up like Vampire Hunters.

Sebastian looks at Ash with amused eyes.

SEBASTIAN
Vampire hunters. Really.

From across the room, Sebastian notices Danilo talking to friends. He's LOUD. POMPOUS.

Danilo waves tauntingly at Sebastian. Sebastian averts his eyes away.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)
I think you're right. He's a jerk.

ARI
Who?

SEBASTIAN
Danilo.

ARI
Just ignore him. He loves getting under your skin.

SEBASTIAN
I try, but sometimes I can't help myself. We were all such good friends once.

ARI
Like grandfather said, he's got issues.

Sebastian watches as Star enters the lunch room.

SEBASTIAN
Who's that?

ARI
(Ari looks at Star)
Star. She moved here from
Jacksonville last week.

Star smiles at Sebastian. He looks away shyly.

SEBASTIAN
Do you know her?

ARI
Not really. She's in my math class.
Said she moved here with her mother
and twin brother.

Several people from Danilo's gang approach Star. She's receptive.

ARI (CONT'D)
Figures Danilo's crew is trying to
snatch her up already.
(a beat)
Am I sensing a CRUSH here?

SEBASTIAN
Nah, just curious about her.

ARI
(grins)
Oh, okay.
(a beat)
So how are you feelin' these days?

SEBASTIAN
So so, the light's still an issue.

ARI
And the WHITE DOVES?

SEBASTIAN
(grins awkwardly)
No more WHITE DOVES.

The bell sounds. Ari jumps up. Slings on backpack.

ARI
Gotta run, see ya in English?

SEBASTIAN
See you in English.

Ari darts out of the lunchroom. Sebastian watches Star exit the lunchroom.

INT. PING LOG BAY HIGH SCHOOL/BOYS LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The locker room empty. School bell rings. Sebastian pulls on his t-shirt. Grabs backpack.

DANILO

Where do you think you're goin'?

Danilo creeps up behind him.

SEBASTIAN

(turns to face Danilo)

Nothing like sneaking up on a guy.

DANILO

(mocking)

That stunt you pulled with Randy the other day was pretty impressive.

SEBASTIAN

I didn't-

DANILO

(shakes head)

-why do you always make up excuses for yourself?

SEBASTIAN

What do you mean?

DANILO

You beat the hell out of the guy, own it. Move on.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah, but I didn't...

(a beat)

Look, I know you're angry about what happened to our parents, but you can't hold onto that forever.

DANILO

Really. Your father's drunk driving killed my parents. I have every right to be ANGRY.

SEBASTIAN

I get it. I do. And I'm sorry.

DANILO

Are you? Your grandfather didn't seem to care when they let my DRUG ADDICT OF AN AUNT adopt me. I wanted to live with the two of you after the accident, not her.

SEBASTIAN

Grandfather didn't have a choice. The decision wasn't his to make.

DANILO

If you keep telling yourself that there will never be peace between us.

Danilo turns to leave the locker-room. Stops. Looks back at Sebastian.

DANILO (CONT'D)

You better watch your back. Randy's still pissed over what happened.

SEBASTIAN

If you hate me so much why warn me about Randy.

DANILO

Despite what you think about me, I believe in fighting fair.

Danilo exits locker-room. Sebastian shakes head in defeat.

INT. COOPERS MANSION/KITCHEN - MORNING.

Sebastian sits at the kitchen table. Eats a bowl of cereal. There is a tap at the back door. Ari enters.

ARI

Morning.

SEBASTIAN

Hey.

Ari helps them-self to a bowl of cereal. Sits down next to Sebastian.

ARI

He wants to go to the zoo, AGAIN?

SEBASTIAN

That's what he said and you know what the old man wants, the old man gets.

ARI
 (apprehensively)
 Yeah, but after my panther
 encounter I'm not sure I can
 stomach it.

SEBASTIAN
 I understand.
 (a beat)
 But remember -- the panthers at the
 zoo are in cages.

ARI
 (rationalizing)
 That's true. Plus, I do like
 hanging out with the old geezer.

Mr. Cooper enters the kitchen.

MR. COOPER
 (smiles)
 OLD GEEZER?

On Ari, who looks embarrassed. Changes subject.

ARI
 Mr. C, you won't believe what
 happened to me the other night. A
 huge panther chased after me down
 the street.

MR. COOPER
 Are you sure it was a panther?

ARI
 It was definitely a panther. It had
 huge fangs. Bright green eyes. I
 thought about calling animal
 control, but-

MR. COOPER
 -animal control won't do anything
 about a WILD PANTHER. I have a
 Curator friend at the zoo who works
 with the CATS, who can probably
 help.

ARI
 Wow, Mr. C, that would be great.
 Mr. Cooper

MR. COOPER
 We'll talk to him about it at the
 zoo later today.

Mr. Cooper throws on a Fedora hat.

MR. COOPER (CONT'D)
Let's get moving kiddos. Best to
avoid the long lines.

Mr. Cooper exits the back door.

SEBASTIAN
Looks like going to the zoo will
end up being for the best after
all.

ARI
I'm so relieved. I can't imagine
what would happen if that PANTHER
tries to attack someone else.

Sebastian and Ari slurp up their cereal. Place the bowls in
the sink. Scamper out the door after Mr. Cooper.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO - DAY.

Mr. Cooper walks down a crowded path. Sebastian and Ari
follow closely behind. They pass a sign that reads "Exotic
Cats." A moment later, they pass another sign that reads:
"Panther Observation Area."

Ari notices the sign. Halts in FEAR. Sebastian gently tugs
them forward.

SEBASTIAN
It'll be fine. After we visit OLD
GIRL we can talk to grandfathers
curator friend.

Reluctantly, Ari follows Sebastian into the Observation
Area...

INT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO/PANTHER OBSERVATION AREA - DAY.

...which is empty. Old Girl, sits in the corner of her glass
enclosure. She notices Mr. Cooper. Stands up. Walks over to
meet him by the glass.

ARI
(whispering)
At least that cat is old. The one
that chased me was much younger.
(a beat)
Man, grandfather really has a thing
for this one?

SEBASTIAN

He does. She's the main reason we
come here so often.

The panther lays down in front of Mr. Cooper. Rolls over like
a house cat who wants their tummy petted.

ARI

It's like they know each-other or
something.

SEBASTIAN

He's been coming here for years
just to see her. I guess in a way
they do.

AYO, 43, African, tall and distinguished, enters the
observation area. He wears a wide-sleeved Boubou. Stands a
few feet away from Mr. Cooper.

MR. COOPER

(looks at Ayo)

You shouldn't have come. We have it
under control.

AYO

(chuckles)

Under control. The Treaty's been
broken.

MR. COOPER

Yes, but not by one of ours. This
Cat's ROGUE.

AYO

Is he?

MR. COOPER

Yes he is.

AYO

He may be taunting us with thrill
kills right now, but we both know
why he's really here.

MR. COOPER

I can protect my grandson. Been
doing it for close to a decade.

(a beat)

Where were you, Dekka, 8 years ago?

AYO

The loss of your son and daughter-in-law was tragic, but the Treaty is stronger now. All tribes are on board.

(a beat)

If the Council gets news of this there could be much larger problems than just a TRANSFERENCE to worry about.

MR. COOPER

I know what this could mean for the tribes.

A moment passes...

Ayo lunges at Mr. Cooper. Pushes him to the ground.

SEBASTIAN
GRANDFATHER

ARI
MR. COOPER.

In protection mode, Sebastian charges Ayo. He misses. Stumbles forward.

Ayo chuckles. For him - a skilled fighter - this is nothing more than a game.

Anger GROWS. Fists CLENCH. Sebastian steadies himself, reaches for Ayo's. Is THROWN back.

AYO

Is that all you've got, DEAR BOY.

Sebastian steps back. Gazes into Ayo's black eyes.

Grandfather is the only person who calls him DEAR BOY.

Who is this guy?

SEBASTIAN
Do I know you?

AYO
No, but you will soon.

Suddenly, Ayo flees the observation area. Instinctively, Sebastian races after him.

ARI (O.S)
(worried)
Sebastian DON'T.

EXT. PINE LOG BAY ZOO - MORNING.

Ayo tears through the zoo. Zigzags through crowds at lightening speed. Sebastian, trails behind. They near an eight foot high fence. Without hesitation, Ayo LEAPS over the it with the precision and agility of a DOG. He dashes off into woodlands.

Sebastian follows him over the fence, but scales it like a cat. He lands on all four's.

On Sebastian. Winded. Deep breaths. Ayo is GONE.

BAFFLED, Sebastian inspects his hands and feet. They look normal.

SEBASTIAN

How in the hell?

His mind harks back to Ari and Grandfather. Concerned, he runs off to find them.

INT. PINE LOG BAY HOSPITAL - DAY

Mr. Cooper sits on a hospital bed. A doctor examines him. Ari and Sebastian stand a few feet away.

MR. COOPER

Doc, I'm fine.

DOCTOR

Mr. Cooper, we need to make sure. I am going to order an X-ray of that shoulder. It looks bruised.

SEBASTIAN

Doctor, do what you think is best.

MR. COOPER

Doc, don't listen to my grandson. He worries far too much.

DOCTOR

I agree with him, Mr. Cooper. Anyone who takes a fall like that needs to be fully examined.

Sebastian moves closer to the hospital bed.

SEBASTIAN

Grandfather, please let the doctor do his job. He wants to make sure everything is okay.

Mr. Cooper senses Sebastian's concern. Concedes.

MR. COOPER
Doc, do what you think's best.

DOCTOR
Great. I'll have tech do an X-ray.

Doctor exits the room.

On Ari and Sebastian at grandfather's bedside.

SEBASTIAN
Grandfather, what happened back
their? Did you know that man?

MR. COOPER
I'll explain everything to you once
we get back to the Mansion.

SEBASTIAN
He jumped over an 8 foot high fence
like it was nothing, and I-

MR. COOPER
-Dear Boy, we'll talk about this at
home.

The X-ray technician enters.

X-RAY TECHNICIAN
Are you ready for that X-ray Mr.
Cooper?

MR. COOPER
As ready as I'll ever be.

INT. PINE LOG BAY HOSPITAL/EMERGENCY ROOM HALLWAY- DAY

Tyrone walks quickly down the busy emergency room. He reaches
exam room #4. Enters...

INT. PINE LOG BAY HOSPITAL/EXAM ROOM #4 - DAY

...to see Mr. Cooper perched up on the hospital bed. His arm
in a sling. Sebastian and Ari sit on the other side of the
room.

TYRONE
(flashes badge)
Mr. Cooper, I'm Detective Williams.
(MORE)

TYRONE (CONT'D)

I understand there was an incident
at the zoo earlier today?

Ari and Sebastian leap up. Rush to Mr. Coopers bedside.

ARI

Yeah, Detective, Mr. Cooper was
attacked by a man wearing African
clothing.

MR. COOPER

It was nothing Detective.

SEBASTIAN

Nothing grandfather, the guy could
have hurt you.

TYRONE

Do you know this person, Mr.
Cooper?

MR. COOPER

No Detective. I've never seen him
before.

SEBASTIAN

But Grandfather, he-

MR. COOPER

-Detective, my grandson worries far
too much. I do not know the man.

TYRONE

I see.

(a beat)

Do you want to file an incident
report?

MR. COOPER

I don't think that's necessary.

SEBASTIAN

But grand-

MR. COOPER

-things are fine Detective.

TYRONE

(befuddled)

Okay, Mr. Cooper, but if you change
your mind give me a call.

Tyrone hands Mr. Cooper a business card.

MR. COOPER

I certainly will Detective.

(a beat)

Detective why'd you come down here instead of a uniformed officer? Doesn't this kind of incident fall outside of your job description.

TYRONE

I was at the hospital when the call came in. The department's small, we help out where we can.

MR. COOPER

Oh, I see.

(a beat)

Detective, are you the one investigating the killings of those girls in the park?

TYRONE

I am. Why?

MR. COOPER

Do you know who's behind them?

TYRONE

Not yet.

(inquisitively)

Do you know something?

MR. COOPER

No Detective. I'm just a curious old man.

TYRONE

I see.

(a beat)

Well, if you change your mind about filing that report you can reach me at station.

Tyrone begins to exit the room.

ARI

Detective, you might be interested in hearing about something that happened to me the other night.

Tyrone stops. Looks at Ari.

TYRONE

Shoot.

ARI
I was almost-

MR. COOPER
-attacked by a large dog. It chased
Ari down the street. Scared the
living daylights out of them.

ARI
But Mr. Cooper it wasn't-

Mr. Cooper squeezes Ari's arm to shut them up. Ari complies.

TYRONE
(suspicious)
Well, if anything more comes up,
Ari, don't hesitate to call.

MR. COOPER
(smiles)
We sure will Detective.

Tyrone exits the room. His curiosity PEAKED by Mr. Cooper's
interest in the killings and Ari's report of being chased.

ARI'S FAMILY HOUSE/STAIRWELL - NIGHT.

Ari creeps up a carpeted staircase. Tries not to be heard.
Their parents bedroom door opens.

LUIS MORALES, 36, Cuban, stern-faced, appears.

LUIS
(in Spanish)
Ariana.

ARI
(in English)
It's Ari dad.

LUIS
(in Spanish)
It's after 10:00 pm. You've been
gone all day. No call. No text.

ARI
I went to the zoo with Mr. Cooper
and Sebastian.

LUIS
FIGURES.
(a beat)
(MORE)

LUIS (CONT'D)

I don't think it's healthy for you to spend so much time with them.

ARI

You didn't seem to mind when I was a kid. You more or less pawned me off on the Coopers.

LUIS

I would hardly say PAWN? I just-

ARI

-Sebastian is my best friend. Mr. Cooper is super cool. I'm NOT gonna stop spending time with them.

LUIS

Look Ariana, I spoke to Father Alvarez. He thinks it would help if the two of you talked.

ARI

I'm not meeting with Father Alvarez.

LUIS

What's gotten into you. You used to love going to church.

ARI

Yeah, when I was like 6. I refuse to be part of an institution that condemns people for being who they are.

LUIS

Ariana, you're only 17. I remember when you wanted to be a clown. Dressed up and walked around like that for weeks. Now you want to be, what, A BOY.

ARI

Dad, I was 8 during the clown phase. It's not about being a BOY. It's about being ME.

Frustrated, Ari thuds into their bedroom. SLAMS door.

LUIS (O.S)

Ariana, this discussion isn't over. You're meeting with Father Alvarez whether you like it or not.

ARI
 (mumbles to self)
 Over my TRANS body.

INT. COOPERS MANSION/MR. COOPERS BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Mr. Cooper sits on his bed. A sling is draped over his left shoulder. Sebastian enters.

SEBASTIAN
 The dishes are put away. The house
 closed down.

MR. COOPER
 Good job Dear Boy.

SEBASTIAN
 I'm just glad they released you
 with a clean bill of health
 (a beat)
 other than the shoulder, I mean.

MR. COOPER
 I've endured far worse.
 (a beat)
 There's much we need to discuss.
 SIT.

Sebastian pulls up a chair.

MR. COOPER (CONT'D)
 The man at the zoo is Ayo. We've
 know each other for many years.
 He's here to help manage a problem.

SEBASTIAN
 A Problem?

MR. COOPER
 33 years ago a Treaty was created
 to honor a certain code. That code
 was recently broken.

SEBASTIAN
 Broken by who?

MR. COOPER
 Your cousin, Peter. The one who
 killed those girls.

SEBASTIAN
 (uneasy)
 You mean the girls in the park.

MR. COOPER

Yes, the ones in the park.

SEBASTIAN

Grandfather, if you know who's responsible for killing those girls we need to tell Detective-

MR. COOPER

-NO. The police can NEVER know about any of this. EVER.

(a beat)

Listen to me Dear Boy. Over the next few weeks things are going to change.

SEBASTIAN

Change how?

MR. COOPER

Your body. Your mind. Are you familiar with the concept of Therianthropy.

SEBASTIAN

(confused)

You mean like a WEREWOLF?

MR. COOPER

Kind of, but in your case it's more complicated than that.

SEBASTIAN

(worried)

Complicated how?

MR. COOPER

We come from a long lineage of WERE-PANTHERS.

SEBASTIAN

WERE WHAT?

MR. COOPER

PANTHERS. Dear Boy, you are the rarest of the bunch. Royalty of the Werecat world. A decedent of the Egyptian feline Goddess Bastet. Guardian to the underworld.

SEBASTIAN

Grandfather, your kind of blowing my mind right now.

MR. COOPER

I know it's a lot to take in, but
it will make sense in time.

SEBASTIAN

Is this why my eyes are so
sensitive to light. Why I was able
to-

MR. COOPER

-Able to what?

SEBASTIAN

A few days ago, Danilo and his
friends cornered Ari and me at
school. Randy pushed me against the
lockers. I literally picked him up
and threw him across the floor. The
kid weighs over 250 pounds. I don't
know what got into me. I couldn't
control it.

MR. COOPER

Those things are all part of the
change. Your eyesight is becoming
sharper. Your muscles stronger.

(a beat)

But you must learn to control it.

SEBASTIAN

Control it. How can I control what
I don't even understand?

MR. COOPER

Give it time. For now, just focus
on being a human boy for a little
while longer. We'll talk more about
this soon. For now, we both need to
get some rest.

SEBASTIAN

(hesitantly)

Okay, if you say so grandfather.

Sebastian walks towards the bedroom door.

MR. COOPER

Sebastian.

Sebastian stops. Turns.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah.

MR. COOPER
You cannot tell anyone about this.

SEBASTIAN
Not even Ari?

MR. COOPER
Not even Ari.

INT. STAR'S FAMILY HOME/LIVING ROOM - EVENING.

Star enters the house. Her twin brother, AERO, 17, fun-loving, on the spectrum, sits at the dining room table. Completes schoolwork.

AERO
Hey Star!

STAR
Hello brother. How's school going?

AERO
Good. You should try homeschooling too.

Star stands behind Aero. Places hands on his shoulders.

STAR
(smiles)
I'm going stick to attending high school in person for now. Where's mother?

AERO
In the backyard.

Star walks through the kitchen and into the backyard. Alice stands next to a round tree stump, which serves as an ALTER.

STAR
Evening mother.

ALICE
Hello honey. How was your day?

STAR
Uneventful.

Star walks over to mother.

STAR (CONT'D)
Did the birds see anything more today?

ALICE
No new images.
(a beat)
What about you. Did you see him?

STAR
Yes, during lunch.
(a beat)
He's different than what I
expected.

ALICE
Different how?

STAR
I don't know, just different. It's
just a feeling I get.

ALICE
It's good to tap into feelings, but
the commission MUST always comes
first.

STAR
I know mother.

ALICE
And the other two?

STAR
I have a class with both of them.

ALICE
Good. Time is of the essence now.

STAR
Is it?

ALICE
Yes. The Mythos of the Summerland
is almost upon us.

Focus in on the Cimaruta around Alice's neck.

INT. COOPERS MANSION/SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Sebastian is fast asleep. Tenses up. Shakes in bed. Beads of
sweat collect on forehead. He enters a dream.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DREAM SEQUENCE - DAY.

Sebastian runs down the beach. SOMETHING sinister pursues him. He reaches the pier. Stops. Turns to face WHATEVER chases him. It's Peter.

Close up of Sebastian's face. BRIGHT sun. Squints. He can hardly see. Drops to the ground. Covers eyes with forearm.

ARI (V.O.)
SABIE, RUN. YOU NEED RUN.

SEBASTIAN
Ari, Ari. Is that you?

There's a LOUD GROWL. Looks up. EMERALD GREEN EYES stare down at him. FANG-LIKE TEETH. SHARP CLAWS. Peter leans down. Whispers into Sebastian's ear.

PETER
I've been waiting a long time to
meet you -- COUSIN.

INT. COOPERS MANSION/SEBASTIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Close up of Sebastian's face. Eyes JOLT open. They slowly turn from dark brown to BRIGHT EMERALD GREEN.

FADE OUT:

THE END