

THE SAFE ZONE  
"Blood Runs Deep"

By

Lee Cordner

Season One, Episode Two

(C) 2016

leecordner@live.co.uk

FADE IN:

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - DAY

Barren. A newspaper dated "November 10, 2018" floats across the road, right into the windshield of a -

- SPEEDING **WHITE VAN** with a smashed rear window. It rips off a parked car's side mirror and veers around a corner.

**HIGGINS**, driving his SEDAN, pursues the van, SIREN FLASHING.

The van sends a trashcan flying as it weaves onto the path. It turns into a narrow alleyway.

The sedan SCREECHES to a halt. Reverses & enters the alley.

EXT. MIDTOWN EAST - NARROW ALLEY - DAY

The van pushes a dumpster forward. The sedan closes on it... and bumps it. The back doors fly open -

- inside; "STRANGLER" panics and pulls out a pistol. Shoots at the sedan.

Bullets CRACK the windshield. Higgins ducks, returns fire.

A bullet hits "Strangler" in the shoulder. He goes down. The DRIVER exits the van and makes a run for it.

Higgins steps out of the sedan, gun primed. He shoots -

- Driver scales a fence, a bullet tears through his side and he falls to the ground. He writhes in pain.

Strangler reaches for the gun. Higgins drags him out of the van, pins him to a wall and sticks the gun to his head.

STRANGLER

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA... WAIT! WAIT! I didn't have a choice!

HIGGINS

TALK!

STRANGLER

OK! Alright... just... please don't shoot me... please...

Higgins tears Strangler's mask off, revealing - a **TEENAGE BOY**, 17, scared out of his wits.

Higgins shoves Strangler against the wall. Aims his gun...

HIGGINS  
I said "talk", so start talking...  
or I'll put a round in your skull,  
and get it out of HIM.

Higgins motions to the Driver.

STRANGLER  
I didn't have a choice-

Higgins pistol whips Strangler.

HIGGINS  
(growling)  
You already told me that! Now tell  
me something I don't know! FIVE!

STRANGLER  
Wait...

HIGGINS  
Four... three...  
(CLICKS back hammer)  
...two...

STRANGLER  
ALRIGHT! Alright... look, man... I,  
I didn't wanna do this I swear, but  
he said I had to or he'd... he said  
he'd kill my sister if I didn't.

HIGGINS  
I hate riddles, give me a name.

STRANGLER  
I don't know his name.

Higgins takes aim at Strangler's head.

STRANGLER  
He didn't say who he was! Just that  
just that he wanted you dead...

HIGGINS  
Why?

STRANGLER  
I don't know... he never said why,  
he just said, I had to kill you or  
he'd kill her.

Higgins weighs his thoughts.

STRANGLER

That's all I know, man. I swear...  
that's all I know. Please...

HIGGINS

You know more. He has your sister,  
right? Your sweet baby sis. Where  
is he?

STRANGLER

If I tell you, will you let me go?

HIGGINS

If you don't tell me I'll kill you.

CUT TO BLACK:

RUN TITLE SEQUENCE

FADE IN:

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - DAY

Decimated and hellish. Burnt out vehicles. Charred CORPSES  
and SKELETONS. Firebombed buildings barely standing.

SUPER: "EPISODE TWO: BLOOD RUNS DEEP"

**WALKER, RIDLEY and TAYLOR** walk the road.

WALKER

(discreetly)  
Three o'clock.

TAYLOR

(discreetly)  
I see them.

Walker leads them around a corner.

Two THUGS in the ALLEYWAY, one wields a BARBED BASEBALL BAT  
and the other holds a HOOKED PIPE WRENCH.

ZOMBIES struggle on PIKES in the ground. A mound of ROTTING  
CORPSES, DECAYED ZOMBIES reach out from within the pile.

Walker, Ridley and Taylor maneuver the trap zone.

WALKER

Do everything they say. Do not make  
any sudden movements... and if they  
ask you to hand over your weapons,  
do so without question. Understand?

Ridley and Taylor nod "OK" as they approach -

- a MAKESHIFT JUNK-FORTRESS. CARS/TRUCKS make up the walls.  
2 SCRAP TOWERS stand tall, ARMED SENTRIES on both towers.

SENTRY#1  
That's close enough!

Walker raises his hands.

WALKER  
(to Taylor/Ridley)  
Hands.

They raise their hands.

WALKER  
(to Sentry#1)  
My name is Alex Walker. I'm here to  
talk to Eli. I have a deal to-

The gates open. TWENTY RAGTAG MILITIA exit, envelop the trio  
and take aim with ASSAULT RIFLES.

Ridley grows anxious. Taylor coldly surveys the situation.

**MITCHELL**, mid 30s, stony, chiseled and hardened, assault  
rifle in hand, approaches Walker.

MITCHELL  
You got some kinda nerve showing  
your face 'round here, "General".

WALKER  
I just wanna talk to Eli.

MITCHELL  
What you WANT and what you GET are  
two different things.

Mitchell sticks the barrel of the assault rifle in Walker's  
face. Taylor reaches for her gun.

MITCHELL  
(to Taylor)  
I wouldn't do that if I were you...

WALKER  
(to Taylor)  
Stand down, Captain.

Taylor stands down.

WALKER

We don't have to make this anymore than it is, John.

MITCHELL

And what would that be? Hm?

WALKER

You know I wouldn't come here if I had another choice.

Mitchell reads Walker's face. Walker stares him in the eye.

Mitchell signals one of his men.

MITCHELL

Relieve them of their weapons.

A man takes Ridley's gun and knife. Taylor reluctantly hands over her gun and knife. Walker gives up his weapons.

Mitchell chuckles... steps forward.

MITCHELL

I might be a lot of things, but I'm not an idiot.

Mitchell reaches out "give it to me". Walker reaches around back and pulls out another KNIFE. Hands it to Mitchell.

MITCHELL

I don't forget, Alex.

EXT. THE COMPOUND - DAY

A small TRAILER with satellite dishes on top sits near the back, heavily guarded. GENERATORS next to it.

Mitchell leads Walker, Ridley and Taylor forward. The gates close. Militia fan out around the area.

Mitchell stops the trio.

MITCHELL

Wait here.

Mitchell heads inside the trailer.

TAYLOR

What's his problem with you?

Ridley studies the satellite dishes... then the generators. Two VICIOUS DOGS stand guard, chained to the fence.

WALKER  
It's not important.

Taylor tries to get a read on him.

Mitchell emerges from the trailer.

MITCHELL  
He'll see you, but only you. You're  
lapdogs can wait out here.

Walker approaches the trailer. Mitchell stops him.

MITCHELL  
(whispering)  
You try anything, it'll be the LAST  
thing you do.

WALKER  
After I'm done with Eli, me and you  
are gonna settle things.

MITCHELL  
I'm looking forward to it, "sir".

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Military grade hardware all over. COMPUTERS at the front of  
the cab, dashboard, seats and such stripped out -

- **ELI**, 35-38, receding hairline and hunched posture,  
third-degree burns on his arm, black veins, operates the  
computer.

NOTE: We never see Eli's face.

Walker enters the trailer.

ELI  
Close the door.

Walker closes the door.

ELI  
So... what do you want? I doubt you  
came all the way into the dead zone  
for nothing.

WALKER  
I need Valkyrie.

Eli CHUCKLES.

ELI

And I need a first-class ticket out of hell but do you see me packing for the Caribbean? No, you do not.

Eli taps away on the keyboard.

ELI

There's a file on the counter. I'm sure the contents will be of some interest to you.

Walker picks up the file, opens and reads it.

WALKER

What does this have to do with-

ELI

Consider it a deal. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. Valkyrie for the contents of that file.

WALKER

I'm not here to make a deal, Eli.

ELI

You get me what I want, I give you what you need. It's a win-win.

WALKER

Why do you want it?

ELI

Why do you need Valkyrie?

Walker gets the point.

ELI

Do we have an arrangement?

EXT. THE COMPOUND - DAY

Walker exits the trailer and approaches Ridley & Taylor -

- Mitchell blindsides him with a wicked right hook. Walker crashes to the ground.

Taylor and Ridley step forward.

WALKER

(to Taylor/Ridley)  
Stand down!

Taylor and Ridley step back.

WALKER

This is between me and him.

MITCHELL

You're damn right it is.

Mitchell hands a Guard his assault rifle, sidearm and knife. He CRACKS his knuckles.

Walker hands the file to another Guard & confronts Mitchell.

Mitchell swings a left hook. Walker blocks, knees Mitchell in the gut. Mitchell keels over.

Walker drives down his elbow into his back. Mitchell jerks forward, GROWLS and LAUGHS. He unleashes a flurry of fists.

Walker blocks, ducks - takes a right hook to the jaw - takes a wicked uppercut to the chin - staggers back.

Mitchell kicks Walker into a car. Drives his fist at him -

- Walker moves. Mitchell's fist SMASHES the window. Walker tackles Mitchell into the car. They struggle.

Mitchell grabs Walker in a head-lock, bounces his head off the car and throws him to the ground.

Onlookers grow rowdy. Taylor and Ridley look on.

Walker defiantly pushes up. Mitchell kicks him in the ribs.

INT. CELLAR - DAY

Turned into a makeshift PRISON. Cells on either side filled with CIVILIANS, BISON and SPECTER soldiers.

SPECTER SNIPER/**ALEX "LEXA" ANDERSON**, 28-30, battle hardened and athletic, with a ponytail, anxiously paces in her cell.

The main door SQUEAKS open. Captives go to the bars of their cells and watch as -

- two LARGE MEN drag a BEATEN, BROKEN and BLOODIED **CARSON** to an empty cell. They throw him inside and walk away.

LEXA

(to the men)

Hey!

The men leave the room.

**BISON#1/ANDY**, tests his cell's bar integrity. The bars don't give. He angrily SLAMS his hands into them.

ANDY

We gotta get the hell outta here...  
I'm not dying in a damn basement.

Andy kicks the bars.

NICK (O.S.)

It's better than the alternative.

ANDY

Oh yeah, and what's that?

**NICK**, 30-35, chiseled with a strong jaw, scruffy beard and fractured eye socket, steps to the bars of his cell.

NICK

Getting torn apart by the undead. I consider THAT worse than THIS.

ANDY

No offense, buddy, but you can take your whole *look at the bright side* bullshit and shove it up your ass.

Andy RATTLES the cell door.

NICK

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

Andy persists.

ANDY

(loudly)

OPEN THIS GODDAMN DOOR, GODDAMMIT!

LEXA

You're not helping, sergeant!

Andy YELLS and kicks the door in frustration. He RATTLES the bars again. Everyone grows anxious.

ANDY

GODDAMN ASSHOLES!

CAPTIVE#1

You're gonna piss 'em off!

ANDY

LET ME OUTTA HERE! LET ME OUT!

FEMALE CAPTIVE#1  
He's gonna get us all killed...

An argument breaks out. Andy YELLS at the top of his lungs.

Nick sits down and shakes his head.

NICK  
Idiot...

The main door SQUEAKS open. Silence falls -

- methodical footsteps approach. Captives move away from the bars and recede deeper into their cells.

Andy remains at his cell door.

ANDY  
About Goddamn time... open the door  
and let us go, asshole.

**HADES** steps from the shadows, REVOLVER in hand. He loads a single round and snaps the barrel shut.

Captives fearfully cower. Hades passes Lexa's cell.

HADES  
There's an old saying; wise men  
know their limits, great men have  
no limits.  
(beat)  
But even great men have limits when  
it comes to patience. And mine just  
ran out.

Hades shoots Andy in the head. Captives CRY out in horror.  
Lexa GASPS. Nick closes his eyes.

LEXA  
You son of a bitch...  
(beat)  
...why? You didn't have to do that.

HADES  
No, I didn't, but he was giving me  
a headache.

Hades takes out the bullet casing and pockets it.

HADES  
Anyone else feel like screaming?

No one says anything. Hades nods "OK".

HADES

Good.

Hades walks away. Lexa opens her mouth to talk.

NICK

(whispering)

Don't.

Lexa looks over at Nick. The door SLAMS. Hades is gone...

LEXA

Why is he doing this?

NICK

Because he CAN.

INT. THE ACADEMY - SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

STUDENTS line up. **SASHA** and **GREG** enter the room. A gunshot POPS - **PORTER** shoots a pistol down range.

CHAINED ZOMBIES stand in the range. A bullet hits a zombie in the chest.

PORTER

Heart-shot. No kill.

(shoots)

Arm-shot. No kill.

(shoots again)

Leg-shot. Slows 'em down. No kill.

(faces students)

In the field of battle, you have a split-second to react. If you miss, it's your ass. Always aim high, for the head. Hit 'em between the eyes. Precision is key.

Porter blind-shoots down range -

- a bullet tears through the zombie's head. It falls like a sack of spuds.

GREG

(discreetly, to Sasha)

Feel like I'm in kindergarten.

Sasha smirks.

PORTER

Something on your mind, Shaw? Wanna share with the rest of us?

GREG

Just saying we know how to drop the dead, sir.

PORTER

Show me.

Porter hands Greg the gun. Greg takes position at booth 6 & aims down range. He pulls the trigger -

- a bullet rips through a zombie's eye. It falls, DEAD.

Greg hands the gun to Porter.

GREG

If that's all, sir.

PORTER

Back in line, cadet.

Greg returns to line. Sasha nudges him. He sighs "phew"...

PORTER

(to all)

Your gun is your best friend but in close-quarter combat situations you will not always have time to draw your firearm. In this case...

(pulls out combat knife)

...use your knife. Walker, Hill and Allen, over the wall.

Sasha, **EMMA HILL**, 17, slender/determined and **JACK ALLEN**, 17, large/rotund, climb over the wall.

PORTER

Danger close.

Porter nods to a RECRUIT. Recruit flips a switch -

- chains drop from 3 ZOMBIES. The zombies advance on Sasha, Hill and Allen.

Sasha and Hill pull their knives. Allen struggles with his as a zombie closes on him.

Sasha stabs a zombie in-between the eyes. Hill slashes her zombie's throat, stabs it up through the neck.

Allen fumbles his knife. The third zombie grabs him. Allen falls to the floor. Zombie SNAPS its jaws around his arm.

Sasha stabs the zombie in the head, pulls it off Allen. He checks his arm - no bite.

PORTER

Out in the Red Zone, the dead have teeth. Fortunately for you, Allen, we removed 'em.

Sasha and Hill help Allen to his feet.

ALLEN

(to Sasha)

Thanks.

She nods "sure". She looks over to Porter. Porter nods to her "good job".

EXT. THE ACADEMY - COURTYARD - DAY

Sasha, Greg, Hill and Allen sit at a bench with their lunch. Allen stares at his uneaten food.

HILL

You not eating that?

ALLEN

Lost my appetite.

SASHA

You're not the first person to mess up. Ask Greg about his first day... what was it you did? Uh... oh yeah, he shot the instructor.

Embarrassed, Greg scratches his head.

SASHA

In the knee, but... still, he shot the instructor.

GREG

I misfired. It happens.

Sasha laughs.

GREG

But she's got a point, Jack. Don't let it get to you.

ALLEN

It's not just that... I coulda died in there. If that thing had teeth - look at me, I'm not a soldier.

Hill shakes her head "unbelievable".

HILL

You're such a drama queen.

ALLEN

What does that mean?

HILL

You know exactly what it means. "Oh look at me, I'm so fat, I'm not cut out for this life", blah-blah-blah. None of us are cut out for it, but we don't exactly have many options, do we? It's either this or city w-

OWEN, in an grime/dirt covered overall, sits at the bench & plants his lunch tray down.

OWEN

You will not believe the SHIT I've had to deal with.

They all scrunch up their faces in disgust.

ALLEN

OK, now I'm definitely not eating.

OWEN

Hey, if you think the smell's bad, try shoveling it for three hours... I was up to my damn waist IN waste. I smell like I just crawled outta Satan's ass...

Sasha grimaces.

OWEN

Anyway, what's up with you?

INT. APARTMENT - LOUNGE - DAY

Higgins loads a gun. Flips the safety on and holsters it. He shrugs on his coat.

STRANGLER (O.S.)

Is Eddy OK?

Higgins looks to - Strangler, handcuffed to an exposed pipe.

HIGGINS

He'll be fine.

Strangler nods "thanks".

HIGGINS  
Why did you drag him into this?

STRANGLER  
He wanted to help.

HIGGINS  
With what exactly? The getaway? You really didn't think this through...  
(beat)  
...we're smack dab in the middle of carnivore country in a city that might as well be a big ol' lunchbox and you, what... thought you'd kill me then make a getaway from a crime scene no one will ever know about?

STRANGLER  
Something like that.

HIGGINS  
Shitty plan.

Higgins grabs his keys.

HIGGINS  
Two beats one, kid. Next time, make sure you got the numbers.

Higgins opens the front door.

STRANGLER  
That's your advice, huh? Numbers... two on one beats one on one.

HIGGINS  
Exactly.

STRANGLER  
That what you're gonna do? Take him on with a partner?

HIGGINS  
I don't play well with others.

EXT. THE COMPOUND - DAY

Walker towels his bloodied lip. Mitchell nurses his busted arm, clenches a weak fist.

Taylor and Ridley keeps an eye on things.

Walker wiggles his jaw, grips his chin. Ditches the towel.

MITCHELL  
Why did you do it?

WALKER  
I was following orders.

Mitchell stands up. Walker acknowledges him.

MITCHELL  
All that blood, it's on your hands.  
Nothing's gonna change that, and I  
ain't gonna forget it. If you think  
THIS changed anything, you're-

WALKER  
I know what I did, John.  
(beat)  
I have to live with it.

MITCHELL  
That's just it, you get to live and  
they don't. I trusted you, Alex. We  
trusted you, all those people, they  
trusted YOU and YOU got all of them  
killed because you were "following  
orders" like a good little soldier.

Walker shamefully looks away.

MITCHELL  
One of these days, it's all gonna  
catch up with you...  
(disgusted)  
...and when that day comes, you're  
gonna wish you were dead.

EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - DAY

Walker, Taylor and Ridley leave the area.

TAYLOR  
Did you get what we came for?

WALKER  
Not exactly.

Walker hands Taylor the file. She checks it. Sighs "whoa".

WALKER  
Contact Hub, I want any units still  
available at base within the hour.

Taylor closes the file.

TAYLOR  
That could be a problem, sir. There  
are none.

WALKER  
What about the Blackjacks?

TAYLOR  
In the field.

WALKER  
Then recall them.

TAYLOR  
I can't do that, sir.  
(beat)  
Our network was hit with an EMP...  
all of our systems went down.

Stressed, Walker stops and weighs his thoughts.

WALKER  
(through gritted teeth)  
Goddammit...  
(sighs)  
Do we have anyone?

TAYLOR  
I could gather a few patrol units,  
maybe some recruits, we could try-

RIDLEY  
What about Delta squad?

Taylor snaps her gaze on Ridley.

TAYLOR  
That is out of the question.

INT. OUTPOST - FOYER - NIGHT

Large and spacious. Computers, military grade hardware and  
lab equipment all over the place.

**JONES** monitors several "SCIENTISTS" and "TECH WORKERS" as  
they work at their stations.

**LESTER**, mid 30s, pudgy with glasses, synthesizes chemicals.  
He pours a vial of green liquid into a large beaker.

Two men push a CAGE of ZOMBIES through the room. One of them  
opens a side door, the other pushes the cage through.

Lester composes himself. He grabs a vial of purple liquid.

HADES (O.S.)

Jones!

Hades walks down the stairs.

JONES

Sir?

HADES

I need you to find Jewel, get her down to the interrogation room and tell her to bring her "tools". Got some heavy duty work for her.

JONES

Got it.

Jones heads out the front door. Hades consults Lester.

HADES

How's that coming?

LESTER

Slowly. We're still missing one of the key components... I just don't know what that component is.

HADES

(intimidating)

If you can't get the job done-

LESTER

No, no, I can. I can do it-

Hades grabs Lester by the throat and pulls him close.

HADES

Do not interrupt me. OK?

LESTER

(choking)

I'm sorry...

HADES

Now, can you do it? Yes, or no...

LESTER

(gasping)

Yes.

Hades releases Lester.

HADES

Then get to it or I'll find someone  
who can. Do you understand me?

LESTER

I... I do, I understand.

Scientists and Tech Workers look at them. Hades notices.

HADES

Get back to work.

INT. OUTPOST - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Another part of the cellar, dank walls, a workbench hosts a  
variety of bloodstained knives and torture devices.

Lexa, strapped into a "dentist" chair, eyes taped wide open,  
gagged, trembles in fear. A door OPENS and CLOSES.

**JEWEL**, mid 30s, a mentally broken sociopath with tattoos and  
piercings, sets a "doctor's bag" on a nearby cart.

JEWEL

Boss didn't say you were pretty.

Jewel gently caresses Lexa's cheek. Lexa tries to pull away.

JEWEL

Nice bone structure. Beautiful eyes  
and... hm... I didn't expect that.

Jewel reveals a small "LION'S CREST" tattoo with the words  
"MICHAEL" underneath, on the back of Lexa's neck.

JEWEL

Michael. Who's he?

LEXA

(gagged)  
Get away from me.

JEWEL

Sorry, didn't catch that.

Jewel opens the doctor's bag, pulls out pliers... a set of  
thin finger-sized wooden stakes...

JEWEL

(pulling contents from bag)  
Now, I know this all seems a little  
overwhelming. Trapped in a basement  
(MORE)

JEWEL (cont'd)  
with a woman you don't know, and I perfectly understand where you're coming from, I do. I mean, I'd be pissing my pants too, if I were in your predicament. It's only natural to feel... intimidated.

Jewel returns to Lexa.

JEWEL  
But you don't have to worry, 'cause I'll take good care of you. And I'm a woman of my word. Trust me.

Jewel pulls up a knife. Lexa's eyes tremble. Jewel cuts away Lexa's sleeve.

JEWEL  
(slicing the sleeve)  
Just between us girls, I don't want you thinking I enjoy this, because I don't. Before hell descended over me I was an artist. Yeah, one of my professors, he said I was like, the modern day "Picasso".

Jewel tears Lexa's sleeve away, bins it. Goes to the cart. She grabs a blood-filled IV bag.

JEWEL  
And maybe he was right. I mean, I'm the only person from the old world who successfully transitioned into the new one without a hitch. It was as if I was made for this world.

Jewel attaches a tube to the IV bag, hangs it on an IV stand and gently grabs Lexa's wrist.

JEWEL  
Have you ever seen Picasso's work? It's amazing, so many colors, a lot of displacement. But that is what makes it so great. You never really appreciate something until you see it with your own eyes.

Lexa shakes her head "no, no, please, no". Jewel digs the IV needle into Lexa's wrist.

Jewel activates the IV line. Blood flows down the tube into Lexa's arm. Lexa WINCES. A tear falls from her eye.

Jewel returns to the cart and studies her instruments.

JEWEL

And when I saw his work, I thought maybe, I could make art that people really appreciate.

Jewel grabs the pliers and slightly laughs.

JEWEL

It's just a shame it took the end of the world before I found people, like Hades, who appreciate art when they see it.

Lexa grabs hold of the bed sheets.

JEWEL

Now...

(stops IV)

...I don't want you to feel as if you're obligated to tell me what I want to know, because you're not... you don't have to say a peep. It's all optional, but because I'm fair, I'll give you that chance to speak your mind. So...

Jewel removes Lexa's gag. Lexa GASPS for air.

JEWEL

I'm gonna ask you a simple question and if you don't wanna answer, it's completely fine. I have no problem with it whatsoever.

Jewel clamps Lexa's index finger with the pliers.

JEWEL

Question number one; how many units patrol the wall?

Lexa grits her teeth and tenses up.

JEWEL

No? OK.

Jewel pulls the pliers - Lexa's fingernail peels away from the tip. Lexa GROWLS in pain. The fingernail separates.

Lexa's other hand grabs the bedsheets. Pain shoots through her face. Jewel holds up the fingernail, smiles.

Jewel drops the nail in a pan.

JEWEL

You see, Lexa, mind if I call you "Lexa", or do you prefer "Alex"?

(no answer)

I'll stick to Lexa, then. So as I was saying, Lexa, art, it's not a skill that you just get, it's a... oh what's the word... do you ever get that? Where you can't find what it is you wanna say? I remember, in school, my English teacher, Mister, Jackson... Jefferson...

(beat)

Jacobs. Yeah, Mr. Jacobs. He used to grill me when I turned in essays he assigned. Said I didn't use the correct words to describe certain things I was trying to convey. He said I had a "lack of vocabulary".

Jewel picks up a Swiss army knife, pulls the corkscrew out and returns to Lexa.

JEWEL

You see, English, it's an art form too. All the writers back then were inspirational. They knew how things functioned, how to tell stories and write amazing novels. Characters... oh wow. I remember back when I was a kid, a long long time ago, I read this book about a boy who went to a magic school and while he was there he fought beasts and monsters, only to discover that... through it all, he was chosen to save magic from an evil so vindictive that it not only killed his parents, and his mentor, and the man who saved his life, but also, tried to kill him when he was just an infant boy. It was horrific yet... so beautiful.

Lexa prepares herself. Jewel toys with the knife.

JEWEL

Some stories are created, but some come from the heart, the soul. And that is what makes it art.

(beat)

Don't you agree?

Jewel holds the corkscrew over Lexa's left eye.

JEWEL

How about we time travel a little,  
rewind a tiny bit, get back to the  
part where I ask you a question and  
again, you don't have to answer.

(beat)

Question number one; how many units  
patrol the wall?

Jewel bobs her head from side to side "one, two, three".

JEWEL

OK.

Jewel drives the corkscrew into Lexa's eye. Lexa SCREAMS out  
in agony. Jewel twists the corkscrew -

- Lexa arches slightly off the chair. Jewel pulls Lexa's eye  
out - it detaches from the optic nerve. Blood spews out.

Lexa CRIES as blood fills her eye socket.

Jewel inspects the eyeball. Drops it into the pan and walks  
over to the cart. She sets the knife down.

JEWEL

Mature! That's the word. The skill  
takes time to MATURE before it you  
can really start to see your work  
take its real form. You work at it  
over and over and over and over and  
over again until it just CLICKS.

Jewel grabs two finger-sized wooden stakes. Returns to Lexa.

JEWEL

Anyway, moving this along. There I  
was, end of the world at my door,  
chaos all over the neighborhood,  
fire raining down from the skies  
and the dead, oh the dead, they  
were eating, chewing, biting and  
tearing people apart. The screams,  
oh... it was harrowing, hearing all  
those people cry for help but none  
came. Seeing them as they got torn  
apart piece by piece until there  
was nothing left. I... oh it was a  
very, very emotional moment because  
that's when I saw something that no  
one else did. I saw beauty.

Jewel grabs Lexa's "nail-less" finger. Sets the sharp end of  
a stake to the tip.

JEWEL

In the mangled corpses of people I  
called friends, where others would  
see death and misery, I saw ART.

Jewel drives the stake into Lexa's finger. Lexa GROWLS...

JEWEL

It opened my eyes to a world which  
I could, finally... after so long,  
be who I was born to be.

The stake pierces through Lexa's finger-knuckle.

JEWEL

(realizing)

Oh, I'm sorry... I am so sorry, I  
forgot to ask you a question. Let's  
take this back a bit, so sorry... I  
get ahead of myself sometimes. It's  
a habit...

(beat)

Question number one...

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Lexa's SCREAMS echo through the room. Some captives cover  
their ears. Specter and Bison soldiers look on.

SPECTER SOLDIER#1

They're killing her in there...

NICK

(sickened)

No, it's worse than that.

(beat)

Killing her would be merciful.

Carson, barely conscious, sits against the wall half slumped  
against the bars.

NICK

(to Carson)

You should've told them... because  
you didn't, she's gonna suffer and  
what they did to you... it'll look  
like child's play.

CARSON

(weakly)

They... did enough...

INT. SEDAN - NIGHT

The DOCKS overlooking **QUEENS, NEW YORK**, outside the window. Higgins smokes a cigarette and stakes out -

- a DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE on the pier.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... Higgins checks his watch: "9:45pm". He deactivates the alarm, focuses on the warehouse.

LEANNA (O.S.)  
You're due your shot.

LEANNA sits in the passenger seat.

LEANNA  
Harry.

HIGGINS  
I know.

Higgins takes a drag, tosses the cigarette out the window and leans over to the glove compartment -

- Leanna's gone. Higgins pulls out a box of **Z-X-54**, closes the glove compartment and opens the box.

He bites the cap off the syringe, holds it over his thigh & prepares to inject it. The driver's window SMASHES -

- Higgins goes for his gun. A shotgun butts him in the face.

CUT TO BLACK:

Someone DRAGS a body across BROKEN GLASS. Beat. A steel door OPENS & SLAMS shut. A young girl SOBS/WINCES. Ropes CREAK.

HIGGINS P.O.V:

Blurry. Chains hang from the ceiling. Blackness. Blurry once more... a BLURRY GIRL sits tied to a chair.

CUT TO:

INT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Higgins, wearing a bloody lip, slowly stirs.

HIGGINS  
(mumbling)  
What the...

He drowsily looks around... CHAINS hang and CLINK... a girl, **BECKY**, 11, gagged & tied to a chair directly ahead of him.

He tries to stand up - can't move. Notices heavy duty duct tape around his wrists/torso and the arm of the chair.

Becky MUMBLES incoherently.

HIGGINS  
I'm a little tied up here... don't  
think I'm gonna be much help...

BECKY  
(muffled)  
No shit...

HIGGINS  
Language.

She GRUNTS.

Higgins wriggles his wrist, pulls his arm back. No luck...

HIGGINS  
This ain't gonna work...  
(to Becky)  
...where is he?

Becky shrugs "I don't know".

HIGGINS  
That's helpful.

Higgins adjusts his posture. The chair doesn't budge. He "jumps". The chair doesn't budge.

HIGGINS  
(sighs)  
Dammit...  
(to Becky)  
...I don't suppose you got an idea?

She shakes her head "no". Higgins nods, then shakes his head and looks around.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP - Higgins' watch reads: "9:55pm".

HIGGINS  
Shit...

BECKY  
(muffled)  
Language.

INT. OUTPOST - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lexa jolts upward and unleashing a horrific SCREAM -

- Jewel inspects a dismembered BIG TOE. She drops it in the pan with the eyeball, three fingernails and two teeth.

Lexa hyperventilates - blood pours from her toe-stub.

JEWEL

I always wanted to join the army... before college, I met a recruitment officer at an open day and he, you know what an "open day" is, right? Oh, of course you do. But yeah, he seemed nice, made some good points about why joining the military was a good career choice. You know, the typical schlock; *be all you can be*, and so on. So I thought about it...

Jewel grabs a curved knife from the cart.

JEWEL

Honestly, if I'd known then that my art would transition so well into a new world I might have taken him up on the offer. I would've been great in the military, don't you think?

Jewel rips Lexa's pants, exposing the knee.

JEWEL

I really enjoy talking to you. You are such a good listener, I feel as if I could say anything to you, and you'd understand me. I can't begin to tell you how refreshing it is to have someone who gets exactly where I'm coming from, Lexa. Thank you... I mean it, really.

Jewel sets the knife to the side of Lexa's knee.

JEWEL

But I have to ask again, and if you want to answer this time I'll be OK with it. So...

(beat, smiles)

How many units patrol the wall?

Lexa's eye trembles. A tear rolls from it. She inhales...

Jewel nods "fair enough" and cuts into Lexa's knee -

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

- Lexa's SCREAM pierces the air. Carson closes his eyes...

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 Jesus Christ...  
 (beat)  
 ...we gotta do something.

NICK  
 It's too late for that.

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 (to Carson)  
 What do they want?!

Carson ignores him.

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 Hey! What do they want?!

NICK  
 Information on the Safe Zone.

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 Like what?

NICK  
 Patrols, defenses, where the wall's  
 the weakest, entry points...

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 Why?

NICK  
 Hell if I know...

Lexa SCREAMS again. Specter Soldier#1 RATTLES the bars. Nick furrows his brows "what is he doing".

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 HEY! HEY, OPEN THE DOOR! YOU WANT  
 INFORMATION?! I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU!  
 I'LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU WANNA KNOW!

NICK  
 The hell are you doing?

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
 I'm not gonna let her suffer...  
 (loudly)  
 ...I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING! COME  
 ON! I'LL TELL Y-

The door OPENS/CLOSES. Hades approaches, revolver in hand.

HADES

How many times do I have to-

SPECTER SOLDIER#1

I'll tell you what you wanna know,  
just stop torturing HER.

Hades' lip curls.

HADES

I'm listening.

SPECTER SOLDIER#1

Patrols run along the southern wall in shifts. Three men per unit with a rotation every twelve minutes. At night, walls are juiced, spotlights and sentries at guard towers A and B, Garment District overlook. Wall is weakest on the western port, one guard tower and guard house on the pier, five men, well organized and armed with one fifty cal. sniper equipped with a thermal scope, two M-four carbine rifles, shotguns and handguns within reach. Two patrols, one sniper.

HADES

Patrol routes, times, shifts, entry points?

SPECTER SOLDIER#1

Pier and street level. Rotation at zero hundred hours, a five minute window between twenty-three fifty five and two minutes past the hour. Sniper remains posted. The easiest access is a... sewer grate, heavily fortified with a turret.

HADES

Turret manual or sentry?

SPECTER SOLDIER#1

Sentry... with 5.56 armor-piercing rounds. Motion sensor detection...

Hades ingests all of this.

Nick shakes his head...

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
Pier two is also a possibility, but  
it's heavily guarded by landmines  
and walled off by an electric fence  
that runs off an external generator  
housed in an old packing plant on  
the docks. Also guarded.

HADES  
How many?

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
Two.

HADES  
And how did you know what I wanted  
to know?

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
(RE: Nick)  
He told me.

Hades looks at Nick, smirks.

HADES  
Did he now...  
(beat)  
Tell me, what's your name? I like  
to know who I'm talking to...

SPECTER SOLDIER#1  
Brogan.

Hades shoots "Brogan" in the head.

HADES  
Thank you, "Brogan".

Hades pockets the empty bullet casing.

HADES  
(to Nick)  
As for you...

Hades gently pulls the cage door open. Nick stands up.

HADES  
How long did it take?

NICK  
After he heard the bitch screaming,  
he cracked like an egg. Just had to  
tell him what we wanted to know and  
that was that.

Nick casually exits his cell.

CARSON  
You bastard...

Carson grabs the bars as he stands.

NICK  
What was that?

CARSON  
You heard me.

Nick confronts Carson at the cell.

NICK  
Look, it's nothing personal. I was  
just following orders, same as you.  
You'll thank me one d-

Carson spits in Nick's face. Nick takes a step back & smirks  
as he wipes the saliva away.

CARSON  
When I get outta here I'm gonna rip  
your Goddamn spine out...

NICK  
Oh you're getting OUT, but I really  
don't think you're gonna like where  
you're going.

INT. OUTPOST - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Jewel heats up a pair of tongs.

JEWEL  
You should've seen the looks I got,  
Lexa. They all just stared at me as  
if I was a... freak. I was hurt and  
I'd never felt like that before. It  
struck me real deep, right here.

Jewel presses a hand to her "heart".

JEWEL  
So I was all alone, in the cold and  
the dark, at the end of everything,  
and then came the rapture. He saved  
me, held me in his arms and told me  
everything would be alright, and do  
you know why that is?

The tongs REDDEN. Jewel picks them up and goes to -

- Lexa, barely conscious, knee-cap removed, muscles visible through the deep torn, ragged flesh.

JEWEL

Because Hades is a hero, and he is truly, a work of art. So beautiful. So benevolent. So-

LEXA

(weakly)

Just... kill me...

JEWEL

Kill you? Now why would I do that? Silly goose... you're my new best friend, I'd never do anything to hurt you. And I would never, ever, cross my heart, ever, kill you.

Jewel gently brushes Lexa's hair away with her hand.

JEWEL

(RE: IV bag)

Hell, we're practically family...

(beat)

...our blood runs deep. It connects us, like sisters. We're gonna do so much together, Lexa. You don't even know how much *so much* is.

Jewel gently strokes Lexa's chin, then her lips.

JEWEL

So beautiful...

Jewel leans in to kiss Lexa... their lips almost touch -

- HISS, Lexa SCREAMS and lurches upward. Their lips connect. Jewel closes her eyes.

The tongs SIZZLE Lexa's stomach like frying bacon.

Lexa falls back. Jewel licks her own lips, savors the taste and returns the tongs to the cart.

The door opens. Hades steps inside, notices Lexa. He walks to her - Jewel steps in front of him.

JEWEL

We're still getting acquainted. I'm only at first base.

HADES

We don't need her anymore. We have everything we need.

JEWEL

But I wanna keep her.

Hades pushes her aside and pulls out his revolver.

JEWEL

Please... she's a good listener...  
and a very, very good kisser.

Hades looks Lexa over. Some form of sympathy falls over him.

Lexa looks to him, eye watering. She reaches out...

LEXA

(crying)  
P...p...please...

Hades loads one bullet, snaps the chamber shut.

LEXA

...p...please...k...kill me...

Jewel steps in front of Hades and pleads with him.

JEWEL

(hysterically)  
She's delusional, she doesn't know what she's saying. She doesn't want to die, not really. Don't hurt her!

HADES

(disgusted, to Jewel)  
You're damaged...

JEWEL

What are you saying?

HADES

(through gritted teeth)  
Look at her!

He forces Jewel to look at Lexa.

JEWEL

Isn't she beautiful? So beautiful.  
Like a piece of art.

Hades shamefully hangs his head, guilt takes over him. His eyes find Lexa. She looks at his revolver "please".

HADES  
 (to Jewel)  
 Get out.

JEWEL  
 No, I won't leave her.

Hades viciously backhands Jewel. She collapses to the floor, hand to her cheek.

HADES  
 GET OUT!

Jewel bursts into tears and hurriedly leaves. She stops at the door, looks back -

- Hades CLICKS back the revolver's hammer and remorsefully stares into Lexa's eye. The door SLAMS shut. Jewel's gone.

Hades points the gun at Lexa's head. She closes her eye... a tear cascades down her face.

HADES  
 Why didn't you answer the question,  
 you stupid...

Hades lowers the gun and turns away. Emotions overthrow him. He runs a hand over his head, contemplating.

HADES  
 ...Goddammit.

His gun hand shakes. His breathing quickens.

LEXA  
 Pl...please...PLEASE...I...I...

Hades catches a glimpse of himself in a bloodstained knife's shiny blade...

REFLECTION: Stares back at him. His face contorts in anger.

Hades turns to Lexa and shoots her in the head. Blood sprays across the wall. She falls dead, eye wide open.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

A gunshot POPS...

Carson slides against the wall to the floor. His eyes close.

Specter and Bison Soldiers hang their heads.

INT. OUTPOST - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Hades looks at Lexa. He respectfully closes her eye. Steps back and looks at his gun.

He takes the bullet casing out and pulls out the rest of his bullet casings -

- 7 more. He sets Lexa's casing with them & stares at them.

He reaches into his other pocket and pulls - a **GOLDEN BULLET** - factory new. His eyes angrily scrunch.

BULLET: Side of the casing engraved with the name "**WALKER**".

EXT. MIDTOWN WEST - THE WALL - NIGHT

Taylor smokes a cigarette & stands outside the communication tent. She weighs her thoughts.

Walker emerges from the tent with weighty eyes. He sighs...

WALKER

You got another one o' those?

She hands him the cigarette pack, looks away & takes a drag.

Walker lights a cigarette, takes a seat on a military crate and tiredly GROANS. He notices her.

WALKER

What's on your mind, Taylor?

TAYLOR

What are we doing? Delta squad. Are we really that desperate?

WALKER

I know it's not the best option but it's our only play.

She reluctantly accepts this.

WALKER

If we had anyone else...

TAYLOR

John Mitchell.

(beat)

I found his file.

Walker's eyes find the ground.

WALKER  
 (quietly)  
 Yeah... so you know?

TAYLOR  
 I know you were his captain... and  
 that you led the Hounds.  
 (beat)  
 Is it true?

WALKER  
 It is.

TAYLOR  
 How could you do that?

Walker tiredly sighs...

WALKER  
 You weren't there. I had to make a  
 call. I had to choose...  
 (beat)  
 ...it was them, or everyone... so I  
 did what I had to do.

TAYLOR  
 All those people-

WALKER  
 You don't think I know?! I have to  
 live with that choice every single  
 day. I wake up, and it's the first  
 thing on my mind! I can't even look  
 at my kids, my wife, without seeing  
 all of those...

Walker looks away...

WALKER  
 ...faces... all of those people...  
 all the blood, all those screams...  
 (beat)  
 ...I was backed into a corner, and  
 the only way out, was to make that  
 choice. I had to decide... them or  
 us... so I chose them.  
 (looks at her)  
 If that makes me a monster to you,  
 so be it. Because if I hadn't made  
 that call, all of this, everything  
 we have... it wouldn't exist.

She ingests this.

An old SCHOOL BUS with barred windows pulls into the yard & parks. A **SOLDIER, AARON, 30s**, with a rifle, steps off.

Walker crushes the cigarette with his boot and puts his game face on. Taylor remains rooted.

Walker meets Aaron.

WALKER  
Lieutenant.

AARON  
Sir.

Aaron hands over some documents. Walker signs them.

WALKER  
Did you have any problems?

AARON  
Miguel wasn't too happy about being dragged away from his bunk-mate but other than that, no.

WALKER  
Bunk-mate?

AARON  
You don't wanna know, sir.

WALKER  
Then say no more.

Walker signs the last document and hands them to Aaron.

Taylor finishes her cigarette and meets Walker as Aaron gets on the bus.

AARON (O.S.)  
Asses off the bus!

TAYLOR  
(to Walker)  
You're not a monster.

Walker appreciates this.

TAYLOR  
But them...  
(beat)  
...can we really trust them?

Aaron steps off the bus...

WALKER

Only one way to find out.

One by one, a shackled/cuffed **DELTA SQUAD** exits the bus:

**MIGUEL**, mid 30s, broad, Latin descent, sleeve tattoos with a **GOLDEN GRILL** and scar down his lip.

**ALDRICH**, mid 30s, buff and brutish. **ROCK**, late 30s, severely twisted with a Mohawk-flattop and -

- **FENIX**, early 40s, bulky, horrifically scarred down half of his face & a visible autopsy scar under his grimy tank top.

ROCK

No homecoming parade? I'm insulted.

Fenix confronts Walker, looks him up/down.

FENIX

I gotta say, feels good to breathe free air again, sir.

(to Taylor)

I don't believe we've been properly introduced. Darius Fenix. Pleasure.

He extends his hand. Taylor ignores the gesture.

FENIX

I don't bite.

AARON

Fenix, get in line.

Fenix smirks & steps in line with the rest of Delta Squad.

WALKER

I want you all to listen to me real carefully. You're not here because you're free, you're here because I need a unit. If I had anyone else I'd leave you to rot in the dark...

(beat)

...just so we understand each other I want to make something clear: You even think about trying anything, I will put you six feet under. Do you understand me?

ROCK

So that's all we are to you? A last resort. You're digging real deep in the toy chest.

MIGUEL

We're not your toys, "General". We ain't here to cut your toenails for ya. So let us make something clear.

Miguel steps forward.

MIGUEL

You need US, we don't need YOU. So if you want us to play ball, you'd best start being a team player. And you can start...

(extends hands)

...by taking our damn leashes off.

Walker and Miguel stare one another down.

WALKER

(eyes on Miguel)

Lieutenant, the keys.

Aaron hands Walker the keys.

WALKER

(to Miguel)

If that's what it takes, I'm game.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A clock on the wall reads: "8:45pm". Eggs and bacon fry in a pan on the oven.

**FRAN** grabs four plates, four forks and four knives. Exits -

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

- and sets the dining table. She returns to the kitchen. A beat. Sets down two wine glasses and two ordinary glasses.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fran scoops eggs and bacon onto a tray. She opens the fridge and grabs butter.

The FRONT DOOR closes. Fran whisks butter and milk in a jug.

SASHA (O.S.)

Hi mom.

Sasha sets her bag on the counter.

FRAN  
Hey, sweetie.

SASHA  
Mom...

FRAN  
What, I can't call my own daughter  
"sweetie" anymore?

SASHA  
I'm seventeen.

Sasha opens the fridge and browses.

FRAN  
And you're still my little pumpkin.

Sasha laughs. Fran chuckles.

FRAN  
Can you do me a favor and tell your  
brother dinner's almost ready?

Sasha pulls a can of soda from the fridge & closes the door.  
She CRACKS it open... slightly FIZZY.

SASHA  
Yeah, sure.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

Sasha stands at the bottom of the stairs.

SASHA  
DREW! DINNER'S ALMOST READY!

No answer.

SASHA  
DREW?!

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT

Sasha KNOCKS on a door plastered in KEEP OUT signs.

SASHA  
Mom said dinner's almost ready!  
(no answer)  
If you don't want it, I'll have it.

She pulls down the handle and enters...

INT. HOUSE - DREW'S ROOM - NIGHT

Typical TEENAGE BOY'S room. Stuff everywhere. Dark as hell, curtains drawn. Sasha steps inside.

SASHA

Get your butt outta b-

She switches on a bedside lamp - Drew's not there.

FRAN (O.S.)

Is he coming down?!

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Fran pours milk/butter from the jug into the pan. It SIZZLES and POPS. She adds eggs.

Sasha enters the room.

FRAN

He's not sick again, is he?

SASHA

He's not there.

FRAN

What? It's almost nine o'clock...

Sasha heads out.

FRAN

Sasha?

EXT. HARLEM - QUADRANT 1 - NIGHT

Sasha knocks on someone's front door. A beat. Knocks again.

IAN (O.S.)

(inside house)

Hold on, I'm coming...

The door opens - IAN, late 30s, tall/slender, greets her.

SASHA

Is Alice home?

IAN

Yes, why-

Sasha barges inside.

IAN  
Excuse me!

INT. IAN'S HOUSE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Well-kept and clean with a fireplace. CARA, late 30s, enjoys the fire. ALICE, 11, studies at a table.

Sasha enters the room. Cara notices. Ian steps in.

IAN  
You can't just barge in like that-

SASHA  
Alice, have you seen Drew?

IAN  
I am talking to you. You can't just walk in uninvited. I did not give-

ALICE  
Dad, it's OK. She's Drew's sister.

IAN  
I don't care if she's the Mayor's daughter, she can't just walk into my house like she owns the p-

SASHA  
Have you see him or not?

ALICE  
No, not since Monday. Why, is he...

SASHA  
Do you know where he goes when he skips class?

INT. OUTPOST - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Lexa's body remains on the chair. Hades stands at her side.

The door OPENS - Nick and another GUARD drag Carson inside. They toss him to the floor.

HADES  
(to Nick & Guard)  
Leave.

They leave. The door LOCKS from the outside.

Hades keeps his back to Carson.

Carson weakly pulls himself up on the cart. KNIVES, PLIERS and TORTURE DEVICES within his reach.

HADES

I wouldn't hold it against you...

Carson grabs a bloodstained knife.

HADES

...but if you kill me, you'll never learn the truth.

Carson lunges. Hades side-steps - the knife stabs thin air - Hades grabs him in a rear-neck choke.

HADES

Look at this! Look at her. Do you have any idea how much pain she was in?! LOOK AT HER!

CARSON

You... you did this... not me...

HADES

If you had told me what I wanted to know, she would still be alive.

Carson tries to look away. Hades forces him to look.

HADES

She begged me to end it. SHE BEGGED ME! She died, not even knowing what it was she died FOR...

(angrily)

...she didn't even know why she was really here. Do you?

CARSON

To save... lives...

HADES

Is that what HE told you?

Carson squints "what?".

HADES

Your General. Alex Walker. Is that what HE told you?

CARSON

How do you know-

Hades increases his grip around Carson's throat.

HADES

You don't even know him. Not really  
- no, no, no - you have no idea who  
you're dealing with.

(beat)

I thought I did... but I was wrong.

Carson turns purple, GURGLES for air.

HADES

Ssh... ssh... I was wrong. So were  
you, so was she. You can't trust a  
man with two faces... never know  
which side you're gonna get. Ssh...

(coldly)

I never wanted this... and I'm not  
a bad guy... but if push a good man  
into a corner he will do bad things  
in order to survive. Ssh...

Carson kicks out, grabs at Hades' wrist.

HADES

He's gonna pay, for all of it. For  
every drop of blood, for every life  
lost - for HER, for YOU. He WILL...  
pay, I promise you.

Carson GASPS and turns red.

HADES

I promise.

Hades SNAPS Carson's neck and releases him. Carson's body  
hits the floor, DEAD.

Hades looks at his SHAKY hands. Enters a trance-like state.

HADES

I promise...

INT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Higgins wanes. Bloodshot eyes, blackened veins in his neck.  
Becky panic-YELLS. Higgins stirs... looks over to her -

- his irises take on a PALE BLUE tone, the white parts take  
on a YELLOW/ORANGE tone.

HIGGINS

(weakly)

Don't worry, I ain't going nowhere.

Higgins slips in/out of consciousness.

The main door OPENS/CLOSES. Fast footsteps pummel the hard floor and grow closer -

Becky motions with her eyes and MUMBLES incoherently.

HIGGINS

Don't hurt... don't hurt her... you  
son of a...

- STRANGLER removes Becky's gag. She GASPS for air and takes a few hurried breaths.

STRANGLER

You're gonna be fine, Becky...

Strangler frees Becky. She stands upright, rubs her wrists. He checks on her.

STRANGLER

Did he hurt you?

BECKY

No... no, he just... what's going  
on? Why did he-

STRANGLER

That doesn't matter now, you're OK.  
We need to go...

HIGGINS

Yeah... tell me about it...  
(beat)  
...get me out of... this chair...

Strangler drapes an arm around Becky's shoulder and escorts her past Higgins.

HIGGINS

Hey... where are you-

STRANGLER

I'm sorry.

Strangler leaves with Becky.

Higgins SCOFFS... the main door SLAMS shut.

HIGGINS

...great... guess I'm dying alone.

He weakly LAUGHS...

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
I don't think so.

Footsteps patter the hard floor and echo. Higgins tries to triangulate the "shadow man", can't get a read on him.

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
Do you know what I find pointless?  
You. What you do, especially now...  
it's worth nothing. So why?

HIGGINS  
Because... it's all I have...

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
Yet you treat it as if it doesn't  
matter. You don't care, not really.

Footsteps methodically pace.

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
But I understand you. We're not so  
different, you and I. Might seem it  
at first, but deep down, we're the  
same. You're here because this is  
all you got left...  
(behind Higgins)  
...and I'm here because I ain't got  
nothing left to lose.

"Shadow Man" jabs a syringe of **Z-X-54** into Higgins' neck & injects ALL of the serum. Higgins GROWLS in agony.

"Shadow Man" drops the empty syringe on the floor.

Higgins writhes. His veins lose the blackness. His irises & the white parts return to normal. His breathing quickens...

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
You're gonna do something for me...  
and for yourself...  
(beat)  
...you're gonna back off and let me  
finish what I started. Or the next  
time we cross paths, I won't be so  
forgiving. Am I clear?

HIGGINS  
Who are you?

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)  
I'm just a man with nothing left...

"Shadow Man" slightly slashes the duct-tape around Higgins' left wrist. Higgins notices...

GRUFF VOICE (O.S.)

(moving away)

On the table by the door there's an address. It's where my trail ends.

HIGGINS

Wait...

The main door SLAMS shut.

Higgins grits his teeth. He wiggles his left wrist. The duct tape SNAPS. He frees his hand, peels his right hand free.

He reaches inside his coat, pulls out a butterfly knife and cuts the duct tape around his body. Then his legs...

Higgins approaches the door - stops near a table -

- on the table: his gun, badge and a FOLDED NOTE. He takes the note and reads it. His eyes say it all.

INT. OUTPOST - HADES' OFFICE - NIGHT

A large, spacious study with a balcony. A bottle of bourbon sits on the desk next to an empty glass.

Hades sits in the chair and stares at a worn photograph...

He runs his finger down the photo -

- Hades' finger brushes down the "face" of **ROSIE**, 7, cute as a button, still in pigtails.

A rogue tear rolls down Hades' cheek...

NICK (O.S.)

Sir...?

Hades' face turns stony.

HADES

What?

NICK

Lester asked for you.

HADES

I'll be right down.

Nick nods "OK" and leaves.

Hades fits the photo in his jacket's inside pocket, stands & walks over to the door. He stops -

- slowly turns and faces a tall mirror - WALKER stares back at him, dead bodies all around him.

Hades scowls... and punches the mirror, SMASH. Glass webs & reflects several distorted Hades'.

INT. OUTPOST - FOYER - NIGHT

Guards, Scientists and Tech Workers gather. Nick walks down the stairs. Lester notices him, composes himself...

Hades slowly walks downstairs.

HADES  
This better be good.

Lester produces a vial of dark green liquid.

LESTER  
The serum's complete.

HADES  
It works?

LESTER  
I haven't tested it but I'm certain it will.

HADES  
You haven't tested it... but you're certain it'll work...  
(beat)  
...forgive me if I don't take your word on that, doc.

Hades gives a nod to a GUARD "now". Guard exits the manor.

HADES  
You'd better hope you're right...

Lester grows anxious.

Guard brings in a ZOMBIE in a dog restraining pole. Zombie GROWLS/GROANS & reaches for people.

HADES  
(motions to Zombie)  
Doc...

Lester cautiously approaches the zombie.

LESTER  
Someone grab its arms...

Two Guards grab the zombie's arms. It SNAPS its jaws...

Lester dips a syringe into the vial, draws the serum out and caps the vial. He moves closer to the zombie.

Zombie voraciously GROWLS like a rabid animal.

Lester jams the syringe into zombie's neck and pumps liquid into it. The syringe empties...

A guard loses his grip - zombie gets an arm free and grabs Lester - pulls him close -

- and bites a chunk out of his cheek. Lester CRIES out...

No one helps. Lester pushes away from the zombie, grabs at his face and panics. Zombie chews on his severed flesh.

LESTER  
OH... OH GOD... NO... no...

Hades squints and expresses "come on".

Zombie LURCHES. Its free hand reaches out. It CHOKES... its legs buckle. It drops to the floor.

Guards release the zombie & step back. The zombie manically convulses and spews from the mouth. It GASPS... and bloats.

Hades coldly smirks.

Zombie's chest ERUPTS like a volcano. Flesh, blood and guts spray all over the place. Zombie lays motionless, DEAD.

NICK  
Holy... shit...

Hades claps Lester on the shoulder.

HADES  
I shoulda taken your word for it...  
(RE: Lester's face)  
...and don't worry about the beauty spot, we'll clean it right up.  
(beat)  
Now... reverse it.

LESTER  
What?!

Everyone looks on. Nick tilts his head slightly "what?".

HADES  
Reverse the effects.

LESTER  
You said this was about killing the virus, not recreating it.

HADES  
Yeah, I said that... and now I want it reversed.

LESTER  
No... forget it... I'm not doing-

Hades loads one bullet into his revolver, snaps the chamber shut and CLICKS back the hammer.

HADES  
Yes or no?

Lester bravely looks Hades in the eyes.

LESTER  
No.

Hades nods "OK". He shoots - a **SCIENTIST** in the head. Lester flinches/GASPS. Scientist falls DEAD.

HADES  
Do you wanna know the worst thing that can happen to someone in this world, Lester?  
(beat)  
It's knowing they're gonna turn and that they can't do anything to stop it. So here's an idea...  
(beat)  
...either you reverse the serum, or you turn, and you turn...  
(smirks)  
...where your cubs lay their heads.

Lester's face falls...

EXT. EAST HARLEM - NIGHT

Sasha arrives at the DECREPIT HOUSE. She KNOCKS on the front door. A beat. She KNOCKS again.

SASHA  
Hello?!

She peers through the letterbox. Can't see anything.

EXT. DECREPIT HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

A rusty swing-set, slide and kids' toys all over. Overgrown.

Sasha climbs over the fence and drops down. She heads to the back door, tries to open it, LOCKED.

SASHA  
Shit...

EXT. EAST HARLEM - NIGHT

Higgins' sedan pulls up to the curb. He steps out and heads up to the front door of the decrepit house -

- a window SMASHES. He draws his gun, heads around the back.

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sasha notices all the empty ammo crates and weapon racks...

SASHA  
What the hell...

THUD. She looks at the ceiling.

SASHA  
...hello?!

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Sasha cautiously moves along the landing toward a door with a chair under the handle -

- the door THUMPS. Sasha pulls her combat knife. Closes in.

She moves the chair and grips the handle.

INT. DECREPIT HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

The door opens - Sasha carefully peers inside -

SASHA  
(shaky)  
Drew?

- the door hits something O.S. She budes it. **ZOMBIE JESSICA** ambushes her and drags her inside.

They fall to the floor, Jessica on top.

SASHA  
OH SHIT... SHIT!

Sasha holds off Jessica with one hand and tries to stab her with the knife - Jessica SNAPS at her wrist.

SASHA  
G-AAARGHHHH!

A gunshot POPS - a bullet tears through Jessica's head. She collapses on top of Sasha -

- Higgins stands in the doorway, gun in hand. He lowers it.

Sasha pushes Jessica off and pulls herself up on the sink. She checks her wrist, no bite.

HIGGINS  
Oh Christ...

Sasha looks over at him - Higgins stares at -

- **DREW'S** ravaged body, torn apart, guts everywhere, face chewed to hell. Higgins turns away.

Sasha unleashes a gut-wrenching SCREAM, drops to her knees and covers her mouth in abject horror.

Higgins emotionally pinches the space between his eyes.

SASHA  
Oh no, no, no... no... no... oh, oh  
no... n-n... no...

Higgins goes over to Sasha... he reaches out...

SASHA  
(screaming)  
DON'T TOUCH ME!!!!

He consoles her.

SASHA  
I SAID DON'T!!!! GET AWAY! GET AW-  
A-AHHHAAAHAHAHA...

She emotionally slaps at him. He takes it, kneels down. She loses the will to slap. He comforts her.

Sasha BAWLS... Higgins' face cycles emotions: RAGE/SADNESS.

CUT TO BLACK.