

FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY NIGHT

A small, well-kept cemetery off a deserted road. An AUTUMN WIND BLOWS through the trees bordering the graveyard, scattering dead leaves over the graves.

A red Mini Cooper SCREECHES INTO VIEW, veers off the road and CRUNCHES to a stop amidst some bushes.

A spirited young woman, RAVEN, gets out of the driver's side and spreads her arms out so that the cape she's wearing billows out dramatically.

From the passenger's side emerges a petite, middle-aged woman. MISS DEVERE is well-dressed, attractive, and sophisticated.

MISS DEVERE

That was an entertaining ride,  
Raven.

RAVEN

Thanks, Miss Devere. I still can't  
believe you don't have a car.

MISS DEVERE

I manage to get about.

Raven reaches into the back seat and pulls out a gym bag.

RAVEN

Some people think you can just pick  
up a book, say an incantation and  
shit happens.

MISS DEVERE

It doesn't?

They walk onto the cemetery grounds.

RAVEN

You have to be born a witch. Or a  
warlock.

MISS DEVERE

It's in the DNA?

RAVEN

I guess. We're descended from gods  
or something. Pretty cool, huh?

MISS DEVERE

Really? A god advertising her services on Craigslist?

They stop at the grave of a recent burial, its cement marker gleaming dully in the moonlight.

RAVEN

Actually, I'm supposed to be working for this Wall Street guy--I was basically sold to him when I was born, if you can believe that! He's supposed to be my "patron." Ha! Slave is more like it.

MISS DEVERE

There are usually good reasons even for customs that may seem odious at first.

Raven stoops to read the inscription.

RAVEN

Well I think it stinks. Yeah, this is it: "Ashley Michaels. Beloved daughter." Nice name. Oh, she was only 19, like me.

Raven sets the gym bag down and pulls out five candles. While Raven proceeds with her preparations, Miss Devere will circle the grave, intently studying Raven's every move, every expression.

MISS DEVERE

Have you done this before, Raven?

RAVEN

Raising the dead? This will be my first human. But I have done some animals. Dogs, birds, rats. You know.

MISS DEVERE

Were they already dead?

Raven arranges the candles around the grave.

RAVEN

Well, no. I had to deaden'em some.

MISS DEVERE

Isn't that how serial killers get their start? Jack the Ripper got his start that way, I hear.

RAVEN

What? Hey, now! They were just little animals. And if I hadn't practiced on them, I wouldn't be able to help you, right?

MISS DEVERE

Touche.

Raven reaches into the bag again and pulls out a small brass urn.

RAVEN

This was the hardest ingredient to get. The ashes of a deceased female. If we were trying to raise a man, I would've had to use a man's ashes.

Raven carefully connects the five candles with a thin line of the ashes.

MISS DEVERE

You stole the remains of someone's loved one?

RAVEN

Hey, you can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs, right?

MISS DEVERE

I suppose a little theft and animal slaughter is small potatoes compared to raising the dead.

RAVEN

I should really be making a pentagram, but Mrs. Simkov--that's the lady here--wasn't very big, so I'm just making the outside of the pentagram.

MISS DEVERE

A pentagon.

RAVEN

No! Those guys are into death. I don't like the association.

MISS DEVERE

You are a sensitive girl.

RAVEN

Thanks. Say why do you want to raise this chick for, anyway?

MISS DEVERE

I have a feeling Ashley still has a valuable contribution to make to society if given the chance.

RAVEN

Wow, that's so cool, Miss Devere. But I can probably only hold her spirit for one or two questions.

MISS DEVERE

That should be long enough.

Raven tosses the empty urn away and it CLINKS off a neighboring headstone.

RAVEN

That gives me an idea: giving the dead a second chance! We could go into business together! How many people would pay big bucks to ask their loved one some questions?

She dances a jig on the grave in her unbridled enthusiasm, then stops in mid-jig.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Hey, I've got a slogan for our company: "We raise hell to raise your dead." Huh? What do you think?

MISS DEVERE

That's just lovely. But you might run into problems with the authorities.

RAVEN

Yeah, probably... Hey, we'll form a political party and change the laws! We'll call it the "Dead Party."

MISS DEVERE

I believe that party already exists, if not by that name.

RAVEN

Excellent!

Raven once more digs into the gym bag and pulls out a glass vial. She holds it up for Miss Devere to admire.

MISS DEVERE

Let me guess: holy water.

RAVEN

Yep. Plus the secret ingredient:  
urine!

MISS DEVERE

Yours?

RAVEN

Well, duh.

Raven uncorks the vial and sprinkles the water over the grave, making an "X" as she does so. Finished, she re-corks the vial and tosses it away.

MISS DEVERE

Tell me, Raven. Does the ethics of  
what you're doing ever bother you?

Raven pulls a lighter out of the gym bag and lights the candles.

RAVEN

Oh come on, Miss Devere. No one has  
ethics anymore. They just say they  
do, but they're lying. They're all  
hypocrites. And how come you're  
like all judgmental? It was your  
idea to do this.

MISS DEVERE

True. But I'm wondering if the ends  
justify the means.

RAVEN

Whatever. I'm a witch, not a  
philosopher.

She steps away from the grave, tosses the lighter into the gym bag, and admires her handiwork. The wind kicks up, billowing her cape.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Do you see that? The wind doesn't  
touch the candle flames at all. I  
wind-proofed them. I came up with  
the spell on my own.

Miss Devere stares at the unwavering flames and nods.

MISS DEVERE

I'm impressed. Did you also come up with your own invocation to raise the dead?

Raven takes off her cape and drapes it over the gym bag.

RAVEN

No, I don't go in for no mumbo-jumbo. I just think real hard about what I want to happen and it works like magic.

She chuckles at her joke and proceeds to take off her clothes and lay them atop the cloak. Like the flames, the wind doesn't even ruffle them.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

I have to get totally naked, now, so if you're gay, you might want to turn around. Not that I have anything against gays! It's just that strong thoughts--like you wanting to jump my bones--can interfere with the spell.

MISS DEVERE

I'll try to restrain myself.

Raven takes off her top, revealing the tattoo of a cat's face on a shoulder.

MISS DEVERE (CONT'D)

Not too many people have cat tattoos.

Raven continues disrobing.

RAVEN

That's Rosie. She was my special little girl.

MISS DEVERE

Did you deaden her, too?

RAVEN

Oh my god no! I love cats. She got run over by a drunk in a Tesla. She was as flat as a Mickey D pancake.

MISS DEVERE

Shocking. Did you raise her from the dead, too?

RAVEN

Oh, yeah. Last I saw of her she was at the Old Town Bridge, waiting to ambush the Tesla that killed her. Man, that's one angry cat-squirrel.

MISS DEVERE

How's that again?

RAVEN

Just before I rescued her spirit, this squirrel came running up to me, so without even thinking about it, I put her spirit into the squirrel's body. You should've seen that squirrel jumping around! What's wrong?

She gives Miss Devere a quizzical glance, because the other woman's jaw is hanging open. Miss Devere shuts her mouth.

MISS DEVERE

You're just one surprise after another.

RAVEN

You bet. Hey, I've come up with a name for our company: "Raven and Devere Deathworks, Incorporated." Pretty awesome name, huh? Or we could put your name first, if you want.

MISS DEVERE

What exactly would be my function in this "Deathworks" corporation?

RAVEN

You're a sassy, snazzy lady. You bring the customers in and I bring up the stiffs.

Raven positions herself at the head of the grave and throws her arms out.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

It's showtime.

MISS DEVERE

Aren't you going to slather some rancid fat or something on your body?

RAVEN

No way. I just like taking my clothes off.

She shuts her eyes and lines appear on her forehead as she concentrates. After a few beats she opens one eye.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

It might help if I knew how she died.

MISS DEVERE

Erotic asphyxiation.

(on Raven's blank look)

Her boyfriend strangled her while they were having sex. He's out on bail now.

RAVEN

Damn, that's some heavy shit.

She shuts her eyes again, concentrates, and her body starts vibrating as if she's touching a live electric wire. She moans as if she's in pain and her fists clench but she stays with it.

Miss Devere moves up next to her and stares down at the grave. Raven suddenly goes rigid and her eyes snap open.

At their feet, the ground trembles slightly and a white vapor starts rising from the ground.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

It's working...!

Miss Devere lays a gentle hand on Raven's shoulder. Raven shivers and a big smile appears on her face. Miss Devere drops her hand.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

What did you do to me? It feels great!

Without warning, Raven throws herself to the ground and holds her arms up beseechingly.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

Take me! Please take me!

MISS DEVERE

Be careful what you "witch" for.

Miss Devere waves a hand and Ashley Michaels' spirit starts seeping into Raven's body. Raven's body starts spasming and she yelps in alarm.

MISS DEVERE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Raven. I really like you, but you're a danger to humans and to yourself. But more importantly, you're a danger to our race. We don't need another Inquisition.

RAVEN

Help me, Miss Devere--this really hurts!

She wails pathetically.

MISS DEVERE

You're going to have to fight for your soul, Raven, because the soul that's moving in is hungry for life. Very hungry.

Raven's quivering body levitates several feet into the air then snaps to its feet. Raven gives Miss Devere a piteous look before the spirit that now possesses her takes control and sends her running to the Mini Cooper.

Raven jumps onto the hood of the car.

RAVEN

I need a man between my legs, now!  
Or a broom!

She flings her arms up and attempts to fly but instead plants herself on the road with a THUMP.

Instantly Raven's back on her feet and running down the middle of the road in all her glorious nakedness.

Miss Devere walks out of the cemetery, shaking her head.

MISS DEVERE

Witches can't fly.

She points to the sky and a LIGHTNING BOLT BLASTS down and disintegrates her.

FADE OUT:

THE END