

DRACULA 2000

March 15, 2000

**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

TREMBLING HANDS twist ROPE into a CLUMSY NOOSE. Sling it over a GNARLED BRANCH.

SUNSET frames a DISMAL FIGURE, gripping the branch and hoisting himself up. He slips his head through the noose, opens his fingers and... LETS GO.

ROPE JERKS TAUT-- hanging him from this solitary tree. Head cocks at an obscene angle. Legs stab empty air.

SILVER COINS rupture from his money pouch, tumble earthward, glinting the last rays of the setting sun.

Rope frays... and SNAPS.

Body SLAPS to the ground, noose still cinched tight around the neck.

NIGHT FALLS... and the body slowly STIRS. Struggles upright. And begins to WALK...

IN ONE CONTINUOUS TRACKING SHOT

we FOLLOW the SANDLED FEET across a barren moonscape that becomes...

AN ANCIENT BATTLEFIELD-- littered with corpses, rivulets of blood, cries of the dying...

FIGURE PAUSES over a MORTALLY WOUNDED FOOTSOLDIER steeped in blood. Crouches down, a vulture hunch, silhouetted against fire and smoke. He FEEDS, then moves on.

KEEP FOLLOWING this shadowed predator as he passes through a drift of smoke that clears into a...

COBBLED STREET centuries later. BODIES lie flung in wretched heaps, oxcarts strain under dozens more-- we're now in PLAGUE-STRICKEN EUROPE...

The Predator, cloaked in simple woolen robe, pauses once again to feed on the fruits of human misery. Never the dead, only the dying. He disappears into the septic haze of burning corpses, only to re-emerge in...

BRASOV, TRANSYLVANIA (1459), amid a forest of human impalement. Now clad in chainmail and armor, the Predator strides through local TOWNSFOLK, herded to the outskirts of town and heaved onto wooden pikes...

Then on through a fog-shrouded RED LIGHT DISTRICT where he walks with a FAINTED WOMAN in his arms. Two tiny ribbons of BLOOD course down the woman's arm and drip off her painted fingernails.

Predator nods to a pair of strolling PASSERSBY, then drops the woman like a feedsack.. He moves on...

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Through the devastations of fire and famine...

The forgotten chaff of battle...

On through the scattered remains of a SHIPWRECK lining a moonlit shore. The severed bow of the freighter DEMETER cleaves the beach, the ship's pilot still lashed to the wheel, throat torn to ribbons. Cryptic blood-scrawled SYMBOLS cover the inner hull.

AND FINALLY TO:

EXT - VICTORIAN LONDON - PRE-DAWN

FOG crawls through serpentine channels of gaslight and cobblestone, swirling up around the DARKLY CLOAKED PREDATOR.

Seen through the obscuring VAPORS he's alternately human and lupine. Or is it just a trick of the eye?

VAN HELSING'S VOICE

4 November, 1892.

He walks as a man, yet casts no reflection. He surrounds himself in death, yet cannot be touched by it. The essence of his blood can strangely enhance the mind and the body... and drive the righteous to unspeakable acts of perversion.

DR ABRAHAM VAN HELSING

steps from a Hansom cab, alone. Carriage rattles off.

Predator lurks in shadow; watching.

VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)

He calls himself Dracula. It's as good a name as any.

Van Helsing turns and walks slowly onto

AN ADJOINING STREET

The CLACK of the professor's CANE echoes off dark, dripping walls that seem to close in with every footstep.

VAN HELSING'S VOICE

What manner of profound arrogance compels me to think I can destroy a creature who defies the very will of God?

GUST OF WIND shrieks through the byway, dispersing the mist. Van Helsing WHIRLS to find--

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CONTINUED:

DRACULA standing motionless in the intersection.

The professor turns and presses on. His quickening FOOTSTEPS match his rising HEARTBEAT. He angles into A NARROW ALLEY.

Dracula FOLLOWS. Casually. Like he's got all the time in the world. He turns into

THE NARROW ALLEY

and finds it EMPTY to the next intersection. Van Helsing is ALREADY GONE.

Dracula continues forward, wary. He takes measure of his surroundings, the locked casements, the breathless air.

Midway, A SHORT FOOTBRIDGE spans the alley, connecting two buildings at the second floor. It too is empty.

He stops when he reaches the underpass. Listens. Far off COCKNEY SHOUTING can be heard. Some drunken bloke beating on his slattern wife.

From a hidden recess, VAN HELSING steps DIRECTLY INTO DRACULA'S PATH, ten feet ahead, unarmed but for his spindly walking stick.

Dracula regards him with a curious smile.

Just as quickly, the smile evaporates.

Dracula reaches out a SINGLE FINGER and TOUCHES THE AIR in front of him.

Fingernail CLICKS on GLASS.

With one sharp jab, the IMAGE SHATTERS. The alley-- and Van Helsing before him-- SPLINTER INTO A MILLION GLINTING FRAGMENTS-- replaced by an IRON-GRIDDED WALL.

Without realizing, the creature that casts no reflection has walked right up to a LARGE MIRROR that reflected only what's BEHIND HIM.

Dracula SPINS AROUND, LUNGES for the real Van Helsing as--
A SECOND GRIDDED WALL

SLAMS DOWN FROM ABOVE, trapping him in an INSTANT IRON CAGE.

Standing outside the cage, Van Helsing FLICKS HIS CANE, DOUBLING ITS LENGTH. Winds back and SLASHES the sharpened tip across Dracula's throat.

Dracula lets out an INHUMAN HOWL.

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CONTINUED:

ALLEY DOORS BURST OPEN--

HIRED MISCREANTS surround the cage with long sharpened STAKES plunged partway through the grid.

Dracula's eyes flick from the monks to Van Helsing... to the encroaching light of DAWN. A HISS seethes from curled lips.

He LEAPS for Van Helsing as a TWELVE-FOOT STAKE catches him mid-air, LANCING through his chest.

Dracula SWIPES VAINLY at Van Helsing as he's driven backward, impaled on the wooden shaft.

A SECOND STAKE runs him through from behind. A THIRD catches him from the side.

STAKES FROM ALL DIRECTIONS now plunge through the gridded cage bars, piercing his writhing body and immobilizing him in the center.

THE LAST STAKE

IMPALES Dracula with such force that the BLOODY TIP ERUPTS FROM HIS CHEST and drives clear into VAN HELSING'S SHOULDER.

Van Helsing jerks free and stumbles backward, clutching the wound.

Suspended off the ground and splayed like a collector's insect, Dracula locks eyes with Van Helsing.

Pure, unimaginable HATE burns in those eyes.

CUT TO A COFFIN LID as it POUNDS DOWN over those same burning eyes. We won't soon forget that look.

EXT - LONDON - DAY

THE CHAIN-BOUND COFFIN is borne through the streets of London on the stooped shoulders of the monks.

VAN HELSING'S VOICE

His heart has been ruptured beyond repair. His neck severed by my own hand. And still he lives.

PASSERSBY stop to stare, mercifully unaware of the coffin's contents.

The grim procession wends its way up to an ANCIENT STONE CHAPEL dating back to Charlemagne. This is CARFAX ABBEY.

THE DOORWAY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

is a threshold to antiquity. Candlesoot and dust are all that mark the passage of seven centuries.

Pallbearers descend a darkened stairway into the ABSOLUTE BLACKNESS WITHIN.

VAN HELSING'S VOICE

If true evil cannot die, is there a chance perhaps, that it can be forever contained?

STAY WITHIN THAT BLACKNESS

and listen to the sound of LUNGS FIGHTING FOR AIR.

FLASH OF A YOUNG WOMAN IN A SEALED COFFIN--

BEDSHEETS ARE FLUNG BACK

to reveal the woman GASPING FOR BREATH. Eyes wild. Limbs thrashing.

A BUZZER sounds repeatedly.

INT - MOONLIT BEDROOM - NIGHT

The woman TEARS AWAY her bedding down to the bare mattress. Even rips away the tiny SILVER CRUCIFIX from around her own neck.

Like it's choking her. Meet MARY VAN HELSING.

BUZZING continues.

INT - ENTRANCE HALL - NIGHT

Still recovering from the night terror, she opens the door to...

SIMON SHEPPARD, late twenties, rumpled linen suit draped in green and gold Mardi Gras beads. SOUNDS OF ALL-NIGHT REVELRY surround him.

SIMON

It's me again, Mary. I apologize for the lateness of the hour, but your father was quite adamant that I not return to London until I--

Mary SLAMS the door in his face.

Seconds pass. Fury gives way to guilt. Sighing deeply she opens the door again.

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SIMON
(not missing a beat)
...speak with you, as his own repeated attempts have proven fruitless.

MARY
My father and I don't have contact anymore. And he knows it. After a week of harassing me, you should too.

She shuts the door again, walking for the stairs.

BUZZING instantly renews.

EXT - FRONT DOOR - SAME

The door re-opens.

MARY
Look, I'm sorry. I know you came a long way. It's not your fault. My father and I just...

SIMON
He's sick. I believe he may be dying. You're his only heir. He needs you to come home and assume your place in the family business.

MARY
(interrupting)
My father may be sick, Mr. Sheppard... but hardly dying.
(shutting door)
Goodbye.

She locks it this time. Standing in the semi-darkness, she starts to shiver. Closes her eyes again and we're suddenly plunged back into

CUT TO:

BLACKNESS

PULL BACK through that ancient doorway of CARFAX ABBEY...

and out into THE VAULTED ATRIUM LOBBY of a MODERN LONDON HIGHRISE.

Fused into the surrounding architecture like a museum exhibit, the tiny chapel is now the centerpiece of CARFAX ANTIQUITIES LTD (think Getty) flaunting a lucrative trade in ancient art.

RECEDE FURTHER, past the sleek marble SECURITY DESK and up to

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIMON SHEPPARD

as he shambles into the lobby.

Impeccably-dressed guard MARCUS PITTMAN greets him as he enters.

MARCUS

Thought you were due back tomorrow.

Simon regards the tomb-like stillness.

SIMON

What, and miss all the excitement?
Not a chance, Marcus.

He tosses Marcus some Mardi Gras necklaces.

MARCUS

Don't I have to flash my ass for
these?

SIMON

I'll make an exception in your case.

MARCUS

(grins)
Welcome back, Mr Sheppard.

THROUGH THE DANGLING BEADS, he watches Simon step onto
the elevator. Doors SWISH CLOSED.

Grin vanishes. His eyes flick to--

TRICK HODGE, ANOTHER SECURITY GUARD

standing flush against the abbey facade. Off Marcus'
nod, Trick swings around to reveal--

A PNEUMATIC CORING DRILL

already ground halfway through a steel DOOR-LOCKING MECHANISM.

UP FRONT

A huge, slightly-limping SLEDGE and slimmer POE enter hauling
duffel bags.

Marcus steps up to the entrance, checks his watch with a
scowl.

ONE MORE INTRUDER

scurries inside: EDDIE.

Marcus locks the reinforced glass doors behind him.

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CONTINUED: (2)

MARCUS
Cutting it close, Eddie.

EDDIE
Thin to win, man.

SLEDGE
(glaring at Eddie)
What the fuck is he doing here?!

MARCUS
Eddie's an invaluable part of the team,
Sledge.
(turns)
Trick, how's the door?

Drill rips through the last of the locking mechanism,
with a decisive SHHH-KUNK.

TRICK
Popped the cherry.

CUT TO:

EXT - CARFAX LTD - EVENING

The lofting glass and marble high-rise graces the London
skyline.

FOLLOW an exterior ELEVATOR, glistening like a cut
diamond, up to the top floor.

INT - TOP FLOOR - SAME

Elevator doors HISS OPEN; Simon steps off.

CUT TO:

INSIDE ABBEY - SAME

Steel reinforced door IMPLODES with the punch of a portable
COMPRESSION RAM.

Marcus and Co. enter the tiny narthex, shimmering dust
and metal shavings. They descend a flight of worn
granite stairs to

A MASSIVE SERVO-CONTROLLED VAULT DOOR

that seals off the abbey interior like a giant safe. So
much for that facade of preserved antiquity.

This place is a high-tech fortress.

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MARCUS
(punches in access code)
Go on one.

Sledge pops a steel blue-colored CONTACT LENS into a brown eye. Blinks. Looks into an IRIS SCANNER and voila--

--screen flashes APPROVED.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Eddie...

Eddie slips on a latex finger glove. Crooks it at Sledge.

EDDIE
C'mere, Sledgie.

MARCUS
Careful with the imprint!

EDDIE
Alright alright, take a pill.

SLEDGE CLAMPS DOWN on his wrist. Holds it fast.

SLEDGE
(ice)
You're on borrowed time, Eddie.
Know that.

He lets that sink in for a beat, then guides Eddie's finger down to a FINGERPRINT SCANNER.

--APPROVED.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Poe...

Poe holds up a mini-DVD to a VOICEPRINT ANALYZER.
Presses play.

VOICE
This is Matthew Van Helsing.

--APPROVED.

SERVO CLICK. DEADBOLT RATCHETS BACK... and the DOOR HINGES OPEN on its own. Beyond, pure pitch blackness.

TRICK
Marcus did his homework.

MARCUS
Marcus goes for extra credit.
(stands)
Lights on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Five MINI MAGS snap on. They descend into a maze of dark, winding CATACOMBS, dripping slime that hasn't evaporated in centuries.

CUT TO:

TOP FLOOR

Simon enters the PENTHOUSE SUITE...

INT - OFFICE SUITE

...and runs SMACK into SOLINA PORTERSMITH, a sweetly prim executive secretary. He recovers her dropped purse.

SOLINA
(surprised)
You're back.

SIMON
Indeed.
(beat)
Oh--

He hands her a little plastic SNOWGLOBE OF NEW ORLEANS.

Solina flips the snowglobe and lets the blizzard settle over famed Jackson Square

SOLINA
It snows in New Orleans?

SIMON
It does for you. Listen, Solina--

She looks up with the largest brown eyes this side of paradise.

SIMON (cont'd)
You have any plans for this evening?

SOLINA
Me? Oh no... but...
(blushing)
My mum, she's been a bit down of late
and... well-- I wouldn't feel right...

SIMON
Perhaps another time then.

SOLINA
Yes... Yes another time would be very
nice.

She gently sets the snowglobe down alongside SEVERAL DOZEN OTHERS from distant lands that line her desk.

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CONTINUED:

Simon turns to the inner office door.

INT - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE - EVENING *

Lavish quarters are replete with art, artifacts and *
weapons from Classical Greek to Renaissance Europe. *

A MEDIEVAL SPARRING DUMMY stands beside a table spread *
with pieces of some arcane DEVICE. *

But the one detail worth noting is the FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH *
of the YOUNG WOMAN WITH HAUNTED EYES-- MARY. *

It sits dead center on the sprawling desktop. *

MATTHEW VAN HELSING looks up from a half-open shipping crate *
as Simon enters. Note the family resemblance. He's got his *
great-grandfather Abraham's steel blue eyes... *

...and a hemophiliac's pallor. *

VAN HELSING *

Come in. *

Simon closes the door behind him. *

SIMON *

Hello, Matthew. *

VAN HELSING *

(reading his eyes) *

She's not coming back is she? *

SIMON *

Not now. Not yet anyway. I'm sorry. *

Simon sees a flash of sudden, crushing despair. *

VAN HELSING *

Then I'm afraid the responsibility for *
all this falls onto you. Eventually. *

Simon stiffens, then gestures to the crate. *

SIMON *

Is that what I think it is? *

Van Helsing removes a Dionysian TERRACOTTA BUST. *

VAN HELSING *

My family lost track of this over *
fifty years ago. A French auction *
house put it on the block last week as *
an early Rodin study. *

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CONTINUED:

SIMON

Another case of the gullible preying
on the gullible.

Van Helsing takes a metal paperweight and casually HAMMERS
the bust. Plaster shatters from the face, revealing part of
a HUMAN SKULL underneath.

Well, almost human. A single FANG pokes from the skull's
upper jaw.

CUT TO:

INT - CATACOMBS - SAME

FLASHLIGHT BEAMS rake across scores of leering HUMAN
SKULLS that line the catacomb walls.

Poe leans in for a closer look at the skulls.

POE

Whoa there.

These aren't your ordinary remains of dead capuchin monks.
They're all VAMPIRE SKULLS with elongated CANINE FANGS.

Each has been MARKED with name, date and country of origin.

POE

(reading)

Panos, Crete, 1887... Kei Jin,
Yangtze Delta, 1906... Taenzer,
Silesia, 1933...

MARCUS

Eyes on the prize, man. C'mon.

They press further into the serpentine warrens.

CUT TO:

INT - ELEVATOR

Solina descends to lobby level. Doors swish open.

INT - LOBBY - EVENING

She steps out into the empty lobby. Notes the vacant
security desk. The breached abbey doors. And the
complete absence of guards.

Strange.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She pads up to the abbey entrance. Pushes through the broken door... and into the sucking DARKNESS.

FROM WITHIN

comes the faint WHIRR of a power drill. MUFFLED VOICES.

Solina takes a step forward and STUMBLES on the stairs. Catches herself.

INT - CATACOMBS - SAME

Solina's foot CRUSHES DOWN onto a skull. She recoils in disgust. Picks her way nervously ahead.

ROUNDING THE NEXT TURN

She suddenly ROCKS BACK with a blade denting her throat.

SOLINA
SonofaBITCH!

MARCUS
You're late.

Solina shakes off the last traces of her former sweetness like a wet cat.

SOLINA
Yeah, well tell it to Don Fucking Juan upstairs.

MARCUS
He came on to you?

Solina curls back into his arms.

SOLINA
Fraid he's gonna come down here for spoonful of phdding?

MARCUS
That little puffer? Hurt me.

He kisses her hard across the lips. Then shoves her onward.

MARCUS
Get a move on.

CUT TO:

INT - VAN HELSING'S OFFICE

Simon stands at the bookshelf, gazing at the PHOTOGRAPH of MARY.

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CONTINUED:

SIMON

This may be indelicate but what happened between the two of you?

VAN HELSING

Her mother died suddenly... an accident. She blames me.

Van Helsing reaches out, steadies himself against the wall. TREMORS wrack his body.

SIMON (cont'd)

Matthew?

Van Helsing looks up, eyes inflamed.

VAN HELSING

Excuse me.

He crosses to his personal bathroom.

INT - LAVATORY

Van Helsing sinks down onto the closed lid of the marble commode. Reaches for a hidden side compartment in the cabinet.

And removes a small WOODEN BOX.

CUT TO:

INT - CATACOMBS - SAME

Intruders reach a rough-hewn DOOR held closed by a simple wooden CROSS. Lifting the cross, the door FALLS OPEN to the touch.

Marcus shines his light over the threshold. Smiles.

MARCUS

Whattaya know. Once in a while a myth turns out to be true.

They enter the INNERMOST CHAMBER.

It's empty, save for a massive chain-bound COFFIN, forged of tarnished silver and etched in arcane symbols.

Marcus sweeps aside a rotting garland of wild rose, exposing a MASSIVE TITANIUM LOCK.

Trick sprays it down with LIQUID NITROGEN.

TRICK

Good to go.

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CONTINUED:

Marcus winds back with a crowbar and SHATTERS THE FROZEN LOCK in one stroke.

Then pulls the latch pins.

Together they grab hold of the heavy metal lid... and exchange breathless glances.

On Marcus' nod, they LIFT THE LID to REVEAL--

DRACULA'S BODY

The corpse lies encased in a twisted COCOON of HAIR and FINGERNAILS. Face caged in iron, arms crossed in a century old STRAITJACKET, legs shackled together at knees and ankle.

MARCUS

Immortal life. In the flesh.

POE

Looks pretty damn dead to me.

MARCUS

You wanna tell me how the hair and nails got that long?

SLEDGE

I hear they keep on growing after you die.

MARCUS

Not like that.

Solina takes the knife and starts hacking away at the knotted tangles of hair and fingernail adhering to the coffin like a root system.

STICKY BLACK GLOBS cling to scarce patches of exposed skin. They WRITHE sluggishly when Marcus touches them.

He suddenly RECOILS HIS HAND, shaking it furiously.

MARCUS

SHIT!

One of those black globs is now attached to his finger.

TRICK

What are they?!

Marcus SLAMS his hand against the wall. BLOOD FLARES OUT from the impact point.

MARCUS

Goddamn leeches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He wipes off his hand, studies the TINY BITE WOUND on his fingertip. Tiny SPIDER VEINS darken around the puncture point.

POE
(disgusted)
Leeches?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A LEECH

as A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE punctures the slimy skin. Draws a stream of rust colored fluid into the syringe. Leech shrivels like a ruptured blister.

WIDER - THE LAVATORY

Van Helsing injects himself with the extracted blood.

He stashes the hypodermic and surgical hose back in the wooden box. Flushes the leech remains.

CUT TO:

INT - VAN HELSING'S OFFICE

Simon stands at the table with ornate pieces of the Victorian contraption, eyes shut. His hands work swiftly, piecing together the device.

A CLOCK TICKS over his shoulder as he finishes building....

A LEVERED SPIKE GUN. Simon pulls the lever-- a silver BOLT chambers-- he spins, eyes still shut, firing into--

THE SPARRING DUMMY which rocks backward violently.

VAN HELSING
How long?

Van Helsing stands in the bathroom door. Some color has returned to his pallid complexion.

SIMON
Twenty-two seconds. Getting better.

VAN HELSING
One day it may not be just for sport.

CUT TO:

INT - BURIAL VAULT

Solina hacks through the last gnarled clot of hair and fingernails encasing Dracula's body.

SOLINA

Clear.

SLEDGE

All right... Lift.

Poe and Sledge hoist the corpse by the arms and ankles.

MARCUS (cont'd)

STOP!

They FREEZE as Marcus runs a finger under the corpse.

MARCUS (cont'd)

It's pressure-rigged.

POE

SHIT!

SLEDGE

We just gotta find something of equal weight, right? How hard can that be?

Marcus runs his finger full-circuit around the body. Draws it back slowly.

MARCUS

Very. It's body-specific.

EDDIE

Meaning what?

POE

Meaning we gotta find us another body.

EDDIE

Where the HELL we gonna find another--

SWACK--! Marcus takes Eddie out with the crowbar. Just like that. Eddie crumples in a heap.

Marcus coolly turns to Sledge.

MARCUS

I told you he was an invaluable part of the team.

(to Trick)

Grab his legs.

Trick watches the blood seep from Eddie's ear... then helps Marcus hoist him up onto the lip of the coffin.

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CONTINUED:

MARCUS (cont'd)

OK now...
(to Poe and Sledge)
When we slide him down, you slide up.
Real slow and easy-like. Got it?

Poe and Sledge nod, sweating.

MARCUS (cont'd)

Here we go.

Tilting Eddie's body in from the left, they ease it into the space vacated by Dracula's corpse being slid up and out the other side.

Once the exchange is complete, Sledge and Poe lower Dracula onto the floor and let out deep, tension-purging breaths.

Marcus kneels down beside Dracula.

MARCUS

Bag him.

Trick unzips a vinyl BODY BAG. They begin loading Dracula's corpse into it.

EDDIE SUDDENLY JACKKNIFES UPRIGHT IN THE COFFIN, spitting blood.

EDDIE

(screaming and flailing)
YOU MOTHERFUCKERRRRRRS!!

PRESSURE PLATE

pops with him, triggering a sequential ALARM RESPONSE.

SUNLAMPS BLAST ON with a BLINDING GLARE as

FOUR METAL SHAFTS !

PLUNGE DOWNWARD from the ceiling, SPEARING Eddie back into the coffin with a clipped grunt.

Trick backpeddles through the innermost door--

--right into an IMPALING PLATFORM that LEVERS DOWN behind him, sealing off their escape. A dozen WOODEN SPIKES perforate his body.

LEECHES INCINERATE in the UV LIGHT making little popping noises like spit on a griddle.

POE

We're fucked! We're royally FUCKED!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Marcus grabs him by the elbow, swings him around.

MARCUS
Who they gonna call? Security?
(pinches his jaw)
Be cool.

CUT TO:

INT - VAN HELSING'S OFFICE

An insistant BEEPING jolts Van Helsing's attention as he emerges from the restroom.

He rips into his desk, pulls a REVOLVER. Tosses it to Simon.

From a GOTHIC ARMOR CHEST he removes an arcane spring-mounted SPIKE GUN.

VAN HELSING
God help you Simon for what you're about to know.

He slots a SILVER BOLT as they angle for the door.

CUT TO:

INT - BURIAL VAULT

Poe gapes at his impaled comrade filling the doorway.

WHAT HE'S NOT WATCHING

is how the DRIPPING BLOOD winds in tiny rivulets up to DRACULA'S BODY, where it pools under his torso.

POE
Whole place is booby trapped.

Marcus is already rooting through a black nylon bag.

MARCUS
No shit. Poe, grab Trick's gear and take cover.

He pulls two wads of C-4 and stuffs them into the crumbling mortar. Solina attaches the wire leads.

Ducking down behind the coffin, Sledge touches wires to a 9-volt battery while Marcus quietly mouths the word:

BOOM

and FIVE FEET OF STONE WALL pulverize into dust.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The resulting HOLE opens out into a LARGER TUNNEL, fast with RUNNING WATER.

MARCUS

Roman sewers.

(grins)

Who knew?

Solina pulls an ANCIENT MAP from her coat pocket.

SOLINA

Two lefts then a right and we should reach the main sluice to the Thames.

Sledge scoops up Dracula's body. Humps it up through the hole. Solina follows...

INT - CATACOMBS

Simon and Van Helsing dash headlong through winding channels of piled skulls.

They round the last corner. Find themselves blocked by the backside of the impaling rig, Trick still hanging from it.

Van Helsing reaches for a hand winch. Starts cranking up the platform.

Simon rolls under and into

THE BURIAL VAULT

where he catches Poe crawling through the blast hole.

Latching onto his ankle, Simon JERKS him back into the vault. The two go at it, tough and dirty.

Poe gains the advantage. Hammers Simon to the ground and scrambles for his gun.

Last ditch, Simon grabs a VAMPIRE SKULL-- it SNAPS OFF at the JAWBONE.

Poe swings up with the gun as Simon DRIVES the jawbone FANG FIRST into his cheek.

Poe HOWLS, clutching his face.

VAN HELSING

beelines straight for the blast hole. Climbs through and into

THE SEWER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

where he levels his weapon at the fleeing figures. But he never gets a shot off.

MARCUS lunges from the shadows, PISTOL WHIPS Van Helsing across the neck.

Legs buckle, but the old man doesn't go down. Instead he DRIVES FOR MARCUS' THROAT.

Marcus squeezes off TWO SHOTS. Van Helsing DOUBLES OVER as Marcus grabs him by the collar and HOISTS HIM UPRIGHT, Glock plugged to his ear.

MARCUS
C'mon, Sir.

SIMON

SWINGS the rest of the vampire skull across Poe's throat. Blood splashes in an arc. Simon scoops up his gun and goes after Van Helsing.

Once through the hole, he's frozen by the sight of

MARCUS

retreating down the sewer with Van Helsing as a body shield.

MARCUS
Hey, Simon. Still sucking up to the boss?

SIMON
What are you doing, Marcus?!

MARCUS
Taking early retirement.

Mortally wounded, Van Helsing wrenches in Marcus's grip.

VAN HELSING
(gaspng)
Shoot him!

MARCUS
That's right, Simon, shoot me.

Simon sights down his barrel. But can't squeeze the trigger.

VAN HELSING
SHOOT HIM! YOU CAN'T LET THEM LEAVE
THIS PLACE!!

Simon can't get a clean shot on Marcus. So he holds his fire...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

...as Marcus and Van Helsing retreat further into the sewer.

Sledge joins them at the far end of the tunnel. Levels a MACHINE PISTOL and lays down a blistering BARRAGE of COVERFIRE that sends Simon DIVING back through the blast hole.

Hostage in tow, the abductors reach

THE MOUTH OF THE SEWER

where a SPEEDBOAT awaits, anchored at the quay of the Thames.

THREE NEW ACCOMPLICES

are there to greet them-- a bod-mod goth named NIGHTSHADE, his girlfriend ANIA and the boat pilot CHARLIE JEFFERS.

ANIA

Where's the rest?

SLEDGE

Dead.

Marcus hauls Van Helsing down the slanted stone embankment.

CHARLIE

That's the goddamn boss!

MARCUS

Insurance, Charlie. Go.

SIMON

rushes up to the sewer opening. Stands panting as

BEAUTY SHOT - LONDON AND THE THAMES - NIGHT

the tiny speedboat surges upriver, venting giant roostertails of water.

On a ROUSING ZYDECO DOWNBEAT we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - NEW ORLEANS - SUNSET

Tawdry mistress of American cities.

BOOM DOWN TO:

THE BLACK ANGEL OF DEATH (A NEW ORLEANS ICON)

looming over a TEEMING STREET CORNER, wings outstretched, arms spread in supplication.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY WESTERMAN cops a quick feel as she passes...

LUCY
Nice butt.

...and drops a quarter in the can beside his pedestal.

ANGEL TILTS FORWARD, clasping his hands in prayerful
gratitude.

LUCY (cont'd)
Don't mention it.

She and best friend Mary Van Helsing thread their way through
the swirling arena of BUSKERS, STREET VENDORS and TOURISTS.

Mary hugs her shoulders, eyes darting in the pedestrian crush.

LUCY
Sorry. Guess it's not the best route
for a devout claustrophobic.

Crowd thins. Mary can finally breathe again. Her gait loosens.
Until she notices--

A GAUNT MAN (DRACULA)

watching her from the shadows. Something in his timeless
appearance keeps her glancing back at him.

Mary watches the Gaunt Man cross the sidewalk and step out
INTO ONCOMING TRAFFIC

where a CITY BUS bears down on him without braking.

MARY
My God.
She BOLTS after the man.

MARY (cont'd)
HEY-- HEYYYYY!!

THE BUS

BLASTS HEADLONG INTO HIM. But instead of a gutwrenching impact,
the figure simply

SCATTERS

like dust motes in a sunbeam.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Truck HOWLS PAST, inches from Mary's face, leaving NOTHING in its wake.

The apparition is gone.

Lucy rushes up to Mary, who stands shivering at the curb.

LUCY
Jeezus! You almost got yourself--

Mary suddenly WINCES. Pins her eyes closed and rubs her temples.

LUCY (cont'd)
What. is. it?!

MARY
I... I don't...

EXTREME CLOSE ON MARY

her eyes SNAP OPEN as we FLASH CUT TO:

A CAGED FACE

shrouded in darkness. Skin like parchment. Eyes hooded.

It jostles to the steady GROWL of AIRPLANE ENGINES...

EXT - ABOVE THE ATLANTIC - DAY

A DC-4 shudders at full throttle against the noonday sun. CARFAX LOGO emblazoned on the tail.

INT - CARFAX PLANE, CARGO HOLD - DAY

Marcus grips a thermos-sized CANNISTER with a small vacuum pump. A hollow NEEDLE caps the attached plastic tube.

He crouches over the immobilized corpse of Dracula. Probes it for a siphon point.

Solina, Sledge, Nightshade and Ania crowd around in restless anticipation.

MARCUS
OK, quick recap.
(lifts needle)
We draw enough for one dose each. Then we deep six the remains, ditch the plane over Dominca and party all the way to Miami. Everybody clear?

Nods of assent. Except Ania.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANIA

Um...

SOLINA

(patronizing)

Yesss?

ANIA

Do you think we can use a blood bank or something when we need to feed?

MARCUS

Up to you, Ania. Vampires are at the top of the food chain. The world's our blood bank. Six billion strong.

He stabs the needle into the chest. Servo motor HUMS...

Tense moments pass before blood finally starts snaking its way up the plastic tube.

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE

29 April, 1912

How long I can maintain this solemn vigil, God alone knows.

CUT TO:

INT - CARFAX ANTIQUITIES, VAN HELSING'S OFFICE - DAY

The YELLOWED JOURNAL lies open on Van Helsing's desk.

RACK TO: A GOTHIC ARMOR CHEST

from which Simon has removed a staggering array of MEDIEVAL WEAPONS. They embody an insane DaVinci genius that both baffles and beguiles.

But one thing's apparent. These weapons were not designed to kill things that die easily.

Onto his arm, he fastens a metal-and-leather FOREARM RIG. Attaches a small BOW MECHANISM. Screws it down.

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)

If I can discover who and what Dracula really is, then perhaps I can find the way to destroy him...

Simon cocks the bow perpendicular to his wrist. Slots a BARBED SILVER SPIKE.

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)

...before I, too, succumb to the darkness that is my lot...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He aims at the MEDIVAL SPARRING DUMMY next to the panoramic window.

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)
...and those that I hold dear finally learn the truth of my deception.

He SHOOTS-- the bolt rips through the dummy's throat, tearing its head off-- then SHATTERS THE WINDOW behind.

CUT TO:

INT - CARFAX ANTIQUITIES, VAN HELSING'S OFFICE - DAY *

A YELLOWED JOURNAL lies open on Van Helsing's desk. *

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE
Filtered injections of the creature's blood have effectively halted my own aging process but each dose deepens my addiction. I court my own damnation in the desperate hope that I may yet understand the unholy creature I keep locked within these walls. *

RACK TO: A GOTHIC ARMOR CHEST *

from which Simon removes a staggering array of MEDIEVAL WEAPONS. They embody an insane DaVinci genius that both baffles and beguiles. *

But one thing is apparent. These weapons were not designed to kill things that die easily. *

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)
If I can discover who and what he is, then perhaps I can find the way to destroy him... *

He expertly DISASSEMBLES the weapons into randomized pieces and stashes them in a large DUFFEL BAG. *

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)
...before I, too, succumb to the darkness that is my lot... *

Simon hoists the bag over his shoulder. *

ABRAHAM VAN HELSING'S VOICE (cont'd)
...and those that I hold dear finally learn the truth of my deception. *

He scoops up the journal as he leaves. *

CUT TO: *

INT - CARFAX PLANE - COCKPIT

Solina throws back the cockpit curtain and sashays up to the lone pilot, Charlie Jeffers.

Something's changed in her eyes. Something feral.

*

(CONTINUED)

TOTAL P.18

CONTINUED:

SOLINA
 (brandishing a blood-filled
 syringe)
 Coffee, tea or perpetual life?

Marcus steals up behind her. Hauls her into the co-pilot's seat. They begin wolfishly making out.

Charlie glares back.

JEFFERS
 Taking the boss wasn't part of the deal, Solina.

Solina unstraddles Marcus, sidles up to Jeffers.

SOLINA
 You won't regret a thing. Trust me.

JEFFERS
 Tell me that when I'm doin' 25-to-life for kidnapping.

SOLINA
 (holds out a red-filled syringe)
 "Life" is about to have a brand new meaning for you, luv.

Marcus hops off the chair, leans over Jeffers.

MARCUS
 We close to the drop zone yet?

JEFFERS
 Well lemme see...
 (gazes out window)
 Water water everywhere...

MARCUS
 Close enough.

Marcus spins around and exits into

THE MAIN CABIN

where he joins VAN HELSING, who sits cuffed to the bulkhead. BLOODY GUNSHOT WOUNDS gape from his chest.

MARCUS
 Kinda look like shit there, chief.
 (eyeballs his wounds)
 Then again, by all rights you oughta be dead by now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The old man's eyes are hollow with need as he watches his abductors take turns dosing themselves with extracted blood.

MARCUS (cont'd)
So... let's see who's already been dipping into the secret sauce.

VAN HELSING
Marcus... you can't... Please...

Marcus rips back one of Van Helsing's sleeves. BLACKENED VEINS run the entire length of his inner arm and beyond.

MARCUS
Jonesin' pretty bad, huh?
(crouches down eye to eye)
Y'know, it took me two full years to put you together, man. Ripping your optometrist for eye scans. Lifting prints. Voice recordings. And endless goddamn surveillance.
(beat)
Hey, don't look so surprised, it's what you pay me for. You bought the very best, remember?

Solina crouches down alongside Marcus.

SOLINA
Oh, but then you go and recruit your daughter to take over. And what happens next? Access codes, biometrics-- they all get changed. Maybe it's goodbye Marcus and Solina. And all that planning goes straight down the old shitter.
(that sweet Solina smile)
Gave us a real scare with that one, you did.

VAN HELSING
You'll be damned.

SOLINA
We'll be gods.

MARCUS
It's nothing personal. Your gig's over but I'm more than happy to hand out the golden parachute.

Van Helsing struggles weakly against his restraints. Marcus flashes a reassuring smile.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Tell you what. You can even have your withered friend back.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARCUS (cont'd)
(beat)
All the way down.

VAN HELSING
(hoarse whisper)
Why are you doing this?

MARCUS
Hmmm. Now why would anybody wanna be a
rich immortal motherfucker like you?
(shrugs)
Let's ask.

He goes around the cabin like a cheery camp counselor.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Sledge?

Sledge, ex-NFL, massive, scowls.

SLEDGE
Blown-out knees. Kidneys shot to
hell. No paycheck.

ANIA
(chimes in)
Plucked my first gray hair two weeks
ago.

NIGHTSHADE
I'm lookin' at a nice little nestegg--
hundred year CD at five percent,
compounded quarterly. And bein'
healthy enough to spend it all.

MARCUS
Me, I'm just not into dyin'.

Solina shrugs.

SOLINA
Who the hell needs a reason?

CUT TO:

INT - VIRGIN MEGASTORE - NIGHT

Four pulsating floors of ear candy.

Sporting the Virgin colors, Mary moves down the aisles,
slotting CD's.

Lucy jaunts up alongside her.

LUCY
So, I noticed your new friend Simon
dropped by again last night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY
He's not my friend.

LUCY
He's cute. And consider who he works for.

MARY
Don't start.

LUCY
Hey, I know there's beaucoup bad blood between you and your dad, but I still don't know why you can't be nicer to the old guy. At least till he corks off and drops the whole Carfax fortune on your doorstep.

Mary pulls up short. Because standing at the far end of AN INTERSECTING AISLE is

THE GAUNT MAN.

Arms enfolded in a Victorian straitjacket, he silently watches her, eyes shrouded in blackness.

Mary's breath catches. She shakes it off. It's all in her head.

LUCY (cont'd)
Hey, I know you don't want his money. That's a given. But don't forget you have a dear friend who aspires to more than a life in retail.

MARY
(distracted)
You'll do fine.

LUCY
Right. No monetary prospects. No boyfriend prospects. I'm about to pack it in for the Ursuline Nunnery.

They continue on. Lucy follows.

LUCY (cont'd)
I swear, money's like a cat. Always goes for the ones most allergic to it.

UPON REACHING THE NEXT AISLE

The GAUNT MAN is waiting in the same position. But CLOSER. Rotting straitjacket sleeves drape from ragged fingertips.

A faint cry slips Mary's throat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LUCY (cont'd)
Mary?

Once again, she shakes it off. Keeps walking.

MARY
(sweating)
Nothing. It's nothing.

NEXT AISLE

He's there YET AGAIN. STILL CLOSER. STILL MOTIONLESS.
Staring back at her through those black seething pits.

Mary tenses-- walks faster. Lucy hustles to keep up.

THE NEXT AISLE

is EMPTY. Mercifully empty. Mary starts to breathe again.
They continue on, past row upon row of EMPTY AISLES.

LUCY
Talk to me. What is it?

Mary stops, slots the last CD and turns to Lucy.

MARY
I thought I saw someone. But I
didn't. OK?

LUCY
OK.
(surrenders)
OK OK OK.

Lucy walks off.

As she WIPES FRAME--

THE GAUNT MAN

is standing there. Inches from Mary's face.

Mary CRIES OUT, tripping over her heels. Hits the floor
and keeps scrabbling backwards.

LUCY comes running.

She plunges STRAIGHT THROUGH the apparition. As before,
it DISPERSSES...

...but not before it ENVELOPS LUCY'S BODY like a
shimmering membrane.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And then it's gone.

LUCY
(crouching over Mary)
Mary? Mary?! Jesus--

Mary just stares up at her, hyperventilating.

CUT TO:

INT - CARFAX PLANE, CARGO HOLD - DAY

CLOSE ON A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE

withdrawing from skin. BLACKNESS crawls the length of the artery, branching into ever-smaller, darkening SPIDER VEINS.

WIDE

Nightshade, resident Goth, sets the syringe aside and approaches the bound and shackled corpse of Dracula.

Overcome by curiosity, he pulls the metal restraining pin on the head cage and creaks it open.

NIGHTSHADE

Hello.

A FACE, dimly seen. Terrifying, even in repose.

He snaps it back closed.

WHAT HE FAILS TO NOTICE-~~r~~ is that one of those straitjacketed arms is no longer tied down. And that a single, ragged FINGERNAIL juts from the frayed sleeve...

Nightshade crosses back to his stool, sits down. Feels the rush in his veins.

CUT TO:

INT - VIRGIN MEGASTORE, RESTROOM - NIGHT

Mary splashes cold water in her face while Lucy looks on.

LUCY
I'm your best friend, remember?

Mary blinks back the sting of water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY (cont'd)
 I may steal your clothes and belittle
 you with cheap shots, but it's all
 because I love you and care about you
 and, hell, I want to BE you-- minus the
 psycho stuff of course...
 (steps up alongside her)
 You need help, Mary. Look at yourself.

Mary stares up at her reflection. Hollow, reddened eyes.
 Sunken cheeks. And ghostly pale.

MARY
 (softly)
 Leave me alone, OK? Just... just
 leave me alone.

LUCY
 Mary...

MARY
 Give me a minute. Please.

Lucy nods helplessly.

LUCY
 I'll be right outside if you need me.

MARY
 Thanks.

Lucy exits. Mary glances back at the mirror and FLASHES ON--
 THE CARGO HOLD

in excruciating brightness. As if seeing light for the
 first time in a very long while.

A HAZY-WHITE FIGURE sits on a stool. Nightshade.

WE'RE SUDDENLY RUSHING UP TO THE FIGURE with impossible
 speed.

TALONED FINGERS LASH OUT--

MARY BLINKS and they're gone. Just her own dismal
 reflection and the surrounding restroom.

Head swimming, she angles unsteadily for the toilet stalls...

CUT TO:

INT - TRANSPORT PLANE, CARGO HOLD - DAY

SLEDGE pulls back the steel hatch door and steps into the
 cargo bay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SLEDGE

Marcus says it's time for the big
heave-ho.

He lumbers up to Dracula, who as before, lies bound in
medieval ligature.

SLEDGE (cont'd)

Dead or undead, it's a long walk back
to Transylvania, amIright?

Something strikes Sledge a little odd. Hard to say what
exactly. He dips down for a closer look. Creaks open
the face plate.

And now he knows.

NIGHTSHADE'S MANGLED FACE gapes back at him through the cage.
Throat slashed to ribbons.

Which means--

SLEDGE

(swivelling around)

Oh God...

--DRACULA is now sitting where Nightshade was. He RISES
UP in Nightshade's TOO-COOL COAT with a twisted, blood-
soaked leer.

Nightshade's blood has only partially-restored him.
Still half-dessicated by a century of starvation, he's
more monster than human.

Sledge levels his gun.

SLEDGE

Get away. Get back...

Dracula grins, fangs dripping blood and sinew.

Sledge FIRES till he CLICKS EMPTY.

MARCUS AND THE OTHERS come running.

They burst in to find Sledge screaming and writhing in
Dracula's clutch.

Jostling for a clean shot, Marcus gets too close.
Creature ATTACKS.

Chaos. Bodies slashed and flung into bulkheads.
Mindless panic. A full-scale bloodbath at the hands of
one demonic assailant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Snapping up Nightshade's discarded assault rifle, Marcus aims HIGH. Blows a hole not in Dracula, but the FUSELAGE.

A dime-sized SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT, lances the startled vampire's cheek. Sears into his skin. He twists away.

Marcus now STRAFES the aluminum hull with a dozen more rounds. SUNLIGHT pierces the dusty interior like cage bars, scorching every bit of skin it touches. Dracula thrashes in mounting agony as he's driven backward into the shrinking darkness.

Wind SHRIEKS through the interior, whipping up loose paper and cloth as Dracula turns back to Marcus, his skin SIZZLING in a dozen places.

Marcus backs up against the cargo hatch. Dropping the rifle, he twists around and hits the HATCH RELEASE LEVER.

As Dracula LUNGES, Marcus THROWS OPEN THE HATCH DOOR, blasting him with an instant INFERNO OF SUNLIGHT.

Gripping the doorhandle, Marcus watches Dracula stumble backward from the OPENING.

An emotion even stronger than fear grips the ageless predator. Utter disbelief.

He's half a mile up with nothing but blazing sky in every direction.

THE CARGO HOLD

is now a deafening vortex of GALE FORCE WINDS.

But that's nothing compared to the fury of the demon who now bears down on Marcus, Solina and Sledge as they backpeddle through the bulkhead door.

Last one through, Sledge pitches his sizable bulk into closing the reinforced steel door.

Dracula's one hand juts out, holds it open.

We MOVE SLOWLY UP THAT ARM not to Dracula, but to--

MARY,

her eyes white with terror as...

INT - VIRGIN MEGASTORE, RESTROOM - NIGHT

...she grips the stall door, swaying nauseously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE RESTROOM PITCHES AND YAWS VIOLENTLY, WIND SHEARS THROUGH PAPER PRODUCTS.

Mary lets go and COLLAPSES against the tiled wall.

MORE VISION FLASHES

RIP through her brain. ABSTRACT GLIMPSES of SLAUGHTER. Blood. Hysteria.

SCREAMING FACES, none of them familiar. Except to us: SLEDGE, ANIA, MARCUS, SOLINA...

THE UNSEEN MARAUDER methodically TEARS through the plane, killing one hapless victim after another...

INT - RESTROOM

Mary blinks back the sensory barrage.

Finally, a deadly calm. The shrieking in her head FADES AWAY... and sanity trickles back.

She rises shakily. Takes a few steps forward and stops.

We slowly CIRCLE BACK AROUND MARY until we're BEHIND HER, looking down the throat of

THE PLANE

where VAN HELSING sits bound against the forward bulkhead. He lifts his head in tortured recognition as

MARY

reaches out to him.

REVERSE ANGLE

Only it's not her hand that reaches. It's DRACULA'S TALONED CLAW, dangling that long frayed sleeve.

MARY

RETRACTS HER HAND in a spasm of horror. Feels the TOUCH of somebody DIRECTLY BEHIND HER and SPINS BACK INTO

THE RESTROOM

and straight into LUCY'S CLUTCH. Lucy holds Mary fast as she WRITHES and SCREAMS and finally BREAKS FREE.

MARY
GET AWAY FROM ME!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY
It's all right... it's all right...

Mary backs away, utterly mindblown.

LUCY (cont'd)
...nobody here but you and me... swear
to god...

Mary shakes uncontrollably. Grips her head.

MARY
I'm going crazy.

LUCY
No, you haven't slept is all. We
gotta get you home.

MARY
I saw him... my father... He was on
a plane... tied up and bleeding...

LUCY
We were just talking about him,
remember? It messed with your head.

MARY
I was standing over him...
(breaking down)
...but it wasn't me... it wasn't me...

Lucy enfolds Mary in a protective embrace and gently
guides her from the restroom.

LUCY ;
C'mon.

CUT TO:

INT - CARFAX PLANE - DAY

Van Helsing squints up at a LOOMING PRESENCE.

We hear for the first time DRACULA'S VOICE, deep and
reverberant.

DRACULA
The exalted Abraham Van Helsing...
(beat)
Tell me-- was it worth the agony--
yours... and mine?

VAN HELSING
I spared an entire century from your
bloodlust.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRACULA
 Bloodlust?
 (smiles)
 Men have always lusted after blood.
 Name me a war that was otherwise.

Van Helsing remains silent.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 I bestowed LIFE with the taking of
 blood. Life that you fed on like a
 parasite.
 (beat)
 How does it feel, my friend, to become
 what you beheld?

VAN HELSING
 (choking)
 I'm nothing like you.

DRACULA
 (smiling)
 You never understood. Never grasped
 your one true purpose in all of this
 did you? You took my blood and you
 created a child through it. Can you
 not see? That makes her mine.

VAN HELSING
 You can't have Mary.

DRACULA
 I can.
 (takes Van Helsing's face in his
 hands)
 I dreamt her into being, Abraham. You
 let yourself be a vessel for that dream.

He KISSES Van Helsing's cheek... then slowly straightens.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 I will have Mary. And then I will
 have the kingdom that's owed me. But
 first..

CLOSE ON DRACULA'S EYES

vortexing with blood.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 ...I will have back every drop of
 blood you stole from me.

Dracula yanks Van Helsing upright, SNAPPING the cuffs
 that chained him to the bulkhead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FANGS sharpen into serpent's teeth. Van Helsing RECOILS as...
 ...the vampire PLUNGES his teeth into his neck. Van
 Helsing RASPS, color drains from his face.

CUT TO:

EXT - CARFAX PLANE - DAY

THUNDERHEADS swallow the plane, plunging it into
 preternatural DARKNESS.

Off a VIOLENT SLASH OF LIGHTNING--

CUT TO:

INT - COCKPIT

FUEL WARNING LIGHT blinks on the control panel.

MORE LIGHTNING stitches the interior as we PULL BACK to
 find pilot Charlie Jeffers LASHED to the yoke, dead.

Over the labored rise and fall of SOMEONE BREATHING, we
 MOVE SLOWLY INTO

THE MAIN CABIN

where MORE BODIES lie flung in twisted heaps. MOVE ON
 INTO--

THE CARGO BAY

where scattered DEBRIS surrounds NIGHTSHADE'S mangled
 CORPSE.

TWO FINGERS DIPPED IN BLOOD

RISE INTO FRAME and begin painting CRYPTIC SYMBOLS across
 the rear bulkhead in broad sweeping strokes.

No sound but BREATHING and the steady mindless THRUM of
 PROPELLERS as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mary lies under a CEILING FAN that grinds the sweltering
 air like a propeller.

MOVE IN ON HER CLOSED EYES, darting in R.E.M. frenzy.

THOSE SAME DRIPPING FINGERS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ENTER FRAME and continue WRITING IN BLOOD ACROSS MARY'S BODY. She twists and writhes with each new stroke, each touch of blood to skin.

FOLLOW THE BLOOD LINES

as they travel the contours of her body...

MARY'S EYES

dart open. Crane around to--

DRACULA

who stands at the foot of her bed. He licks the blood off his fingertips.

DRACULA

Soon.

MARY RECOILS with an inhaled scream.

SUDDENLY IT'S LUCY, NOT DRACULA

stumbling backward, sloshing a glass of water.

LUCY

Whoa, girl--

Mary frantically checks herself for blood. Realizes she's still wearing the oversized Saints T-shirt she went to sleep in.

Lucy sets the water down, on her bedstand.

LUCY (cont'd)

It's been almost fourteen hours. I was just checking to see if you needed coffee or a mortician.

Mary slowly blinks her way back to reality.

MARY

Coffee... Then a mortician.

Her gaze comes to rest on

THE PORTABLE TV

flickering on "MUTE" across the room. No sound, just NEWS FOOTAGE of a PLANE CRASH SITE. And the supered heading:

ASSUMPTION PARISH, LOUISIANA

Mary's breath catches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY (cont'd)
Oh god... I know that plane...

MOVE IN ON THE TV SCREEN until the wreckage becomes a mosaic of GIANT SWIRLING PIXELS that DISSOLVE TO:

EXT - BAYOU LAFOURCHE - LATE AFTERNOON

We're at the crash site.

The tail section angles up from the IMPACT CRATER like a spent arrow. Part of the FUSELAGE lies half-submerged beside it. Smaller chunks scatter across several acres of swampland.

Local POLICE, RESCUE VEHICLES and JOSTLING TV CREWS cluster along the few patches of dry land.

A RENTAL 4X4

pulls up to the water's edge. Simon hops out as several REPORTERS are herded back behind a yellow tape.

A local cop, PERRIS GAUTREUX, ambles over with casual southern authority.

PERRIS
Hep ya?

SIMON
Who's in charge here?

PERRIS
That would be me.
(offers hand)
Perris Gautreaux, Assumption Parish
Police.

SIMON
Simon Sheppard. My company owns this
plane.

Simon hands over his card. Perris glances from the Carfax logo on the card, to the Carfax logo on the tail wreckage.

PERRIS (cont'd)
Got here awful quick.
(sizes him up)
Well now, maybe you can help us out with
what looks to be a very ungainly situation.

SIMON
I can try.

He ushers Simon down to a small skiff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERRIS (CONT'D)

We get the occasional drug smuggler down here. Skips off a dirt airstrip into the swamp. Leaves behind a key or two of Mexican harry. But this... this is somethin' else.

A WOMAN

stands at the water's edge, staring out at the wreckage.

PERRIS (cont'd)

Excuse me, Ma'am but you gotta back off behind that yellow tape over there.

She turns around. It's Mary.

SIMON

(masking his surprise)
She's... with me.

Mary's eyes narrow... but she does nothing to contradict him.

PERRIS

Fair enough.

He wades out and unties the skiff.

SIMON

(hushed)
Your father, he--

MARY

--was on that plane. I know.

SIMON

(uncomprehending)
How--?

She looks away. Perris calls out from the boat.

PERRIS

Let's go.

SIMON

You don't want to go out there, Mary.

MARY

You're probably right.

She proceeds to climb aboard the boat.

EXT - MAIN FUSELAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

They reach the flooded opening, a gaping maw of shredded aluminum where the tail section used to be. It leads into a cylindrical cavern of murky halflight.

A LOCAL COP emerges, white as a sheet.

COP

Makes no sense. No goddamn sense 'tall...

Simon lets him pass, then steps gingerly into the wreckage. Followed by Perris and Mary.

Mary hesitates before entering. Girds herself against the tomblime darkness, and steps forward.

INSIDE THE FUSELAGE

Stressing metal MOANS under their feet as they pick their way over a chaos of debris.

He pans a PENLIGHT across the curved interior.

BLOOD GRAFFITI

runs across every square inch of bulwark. Like the unintelligible ravings of a mass murderer.

Just like the bloody scrawl aboard the shipwrecked DEMETER.

Just like the dream-symbols that covered Mary's body. She draws a shallow breath.

As Perris scratches his balls in wonder.

PERRIS

I have a passing familiarity with voodoo cults and such, but this-- what kinda writing you suppose that is?

SIMON

Aramaic.

PERRIS

Ara-what?

SIMON

Aramaic. The original tongue of Christ.

PERRIS

You know what it says?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIMON
(points the light and reads)
"The Black Halo."

Perris notes Mary's sudden queasiness.

PERRIS
That mean anything to you?

Mary shakes her head no.

Simon shines his light on another passage. Struggles with the translation.

SIMON
"I am..."

MARY
(finishing)
"I am become the last plague."

She and Simon exchange glances. Mary makes nothing more of it.

Simon's penlight beam finally settles onto Dracula's discarded HEAD CAGE, partially-submerged in the water.

SIMON
Have all the bodies been removed?

PERRIS
All but one. This last fella was a bit of a puzzlement.

They approach ;

THE FORWARD SECTION

sheered off at a 70-degree angle like a snapped breadstick.

A PARAMEDIC hops from the cockpit. Sees Perris.

PARAMEDIC #1
I'm goin' back for the jaws.

He slogs on back to shore as Simon steps into the cockpit and finds himself face to face with

CHARLIE JEFFERS.

There's a good reason why this body has yet to be removed. A THICK METAL PIPE has been pretzeled around his torso, fixing him to his chair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SIMON

Ah Charlie-- how'd you get mixed up in all this?

Perris and Mary step up behind him.

PERRIS

Friend of yours?

SIMON

Charlie Jeffers. He was the company pilot.

Head slumped forward, Charlie's hands have been cut free of the yoke and dangle limp at his side. Ligature marks gouge the wrists.

PERRIS

Imagine what it would take to wrap him up in three-inch steel like that...

Simon lifts the chin, exposing a THROAT SLASHED EAR-TO-EAR. It makes a slight gargling sound.

PERRIS leans in for a closer look.

COP

(in the distance)

PERRIS! PER-RIS...!

PERRIS

(stiffens)

What now?

He stalks up to the opening, leans outside.

PERRIS

(shouting back)

Hell is it, T. Paul?

COP

(faintly heard)

Reporters. They gettin' antsy.

ON MARY

CHARLIE'S ARM SUDDENLY LANCES OUT and CLAMPS DOWN ON HER THROAT. Mary thrashes soundlessly, eyes stitched with mortal terror.

CHARLIE'S FACE wrenches up to feed, fangs GNASHING AND GROWING.

Simon's caught off guard and off balance. He fumbles with a catch under his arm, flicks it and--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

THREE BARBED TINES EJECT from his sleeve. He rams them straight through Charlie's neck.

Already deprived of vocal cords, Charlie's screams are little more than SPASTIC HISSES.

With the neck held immobile a 270-degree SPRING-LOADED BLADE slices clean through, neatly severing the head.

Mary wrenches free.

Simon shudders with revulsion at what he's just done.

Charlie's head starts to ROLL OFF-- Mary whips her hand up and REPOSITIONS it back onto the shoulders the SPLIT SECOND before--

PERRIS
Just gimme a minute!

--Perris swivels back around, fuming.

PERRIS (cont'd)
Turning into a goddamn circus out there.

Mary rests her hand atop Charlie's head, holding it steady as Perris dabs his sweaty pate.

Simon stands rigid beside her.

PERRIS
Best be goin'.

Perris turns and heads back outside.

Once he's out of sight, Simon gives a nervewracked sigh.

MARY
Somehow you don't strike me as the type my father would've picked for the job.

SIMON
He didn't have a lot of choice.

EXT - SWAMP - LATE AFTERNOON

Perris, Simon and Mary climb back into the skiff.

SIMON
The other bodies. Where are they?

PERRIS
They were moved to Napoleonville, about eight miles up the bye.

Simon and Mary glance out across the swamp to

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SETTING SUN

just dipping to the horizon. A horizon broken only by marsh grass, cattails and the occasional cypress tree.

ON SHORE

Simon helps Mary out of the boat.

PERRIS

Y'all don't go far. I'll be needing to take a statement.

He shambles off to the press pen.

Simon checks the sun again. It's now halfway below the horizon and sinking fast.

SIMON

We need to get to those other bodies.

Simon ushers her along the water's edge, shortcutting to the narrow spit of land where the vehicles are parked.

LAST OF THE SUN slips from sight... DARKNESS crawls across the landscape...

...and SOMETHING begins to track them from just beneath the water's surface.

Mary suddenly senses it. Right there in the brackish murk beyond her feet. She stops dead in her tracks.

SIMON

What is it? !

MARY

I don't know.

THE WATER

reveals nothing. Not even a bubble.

MARY (cont'd)

Alligator probably.

SIMON

C'mon.

He takes her arm, swivels her back around, and straight into--

--A CAMERA ZOOM LENS.

They've been ambushed by a TV REMOTE UNIT-- CAMERA, SOUND and the requisite aggressive blonde field reporter, VALERIE BLETH.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VALERIE

Excuse me, I'm Valerie Bleth with the "Action Team" out of Baton Rouge? You were inside the wreck. What did you see?

SIMON

No comment.

Simon shoves them aside with Mary in tow.

VALERIE

Any idea what caused the crash?!

Simon and Mary press on, ignoring her entreaties.

VALERIE (cont'd)

(beat)

Is it true the pilot was incapacitated?

(beat)

Do you work for Carfax?

(beat)

Eat me.

She spins back to the cameraman

VALERIE (cont'd)

Alright, while we're out here let's at least grab a beauty shot.

Camera and sound frame up on Valerie with the whole of the plane wreck as backdrop.

She glosses up her lips and flicks on the hi-beams.

VALERIE

I'm here at Bayou LaFourche just 60 miles east of New Orleans where you can see a vintage DC-4 has just...

Newsies keeps rolling, absolutely unaware of

THE SLIME-COVERED FIGURE

that LEVERS UP behind them. Water and murk SLUICE DOWN off the face and shoulders of

DRACULA

like a crawling shadow.

MOVE IN ON THE NEWSIES as they spin around to see what just made that odd squidging/sucking sound.

SEEN THROUGH THE VIEWFINDER--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FLASH OF RED EYES. GLINT OF FANGS. BLUR OF MOTION--
 PICTURE SUDDENLY PINWHEELS TO THE GROUND, CLOCKS ONTO ITS SIDE.
 ON VALERIE

She stands frozen. Breathless...

Even as this befouled creature straightens up over his first two broken victims and turns toward her. He grips her by the shoulders and pulls her into him.

VALERIE

(weakly)

I don't want to die.

DRACULA

Then you never will.

Arms flop to her sides, utterly unresisting, as his ragged fingers peel open her shirt...

...and his mouth tastes open flesh.

CUT TO:

THE FULL MOON

Low over Bayou LaForche.

EXT - HIGHWAY 308 - NIGHT

SIMON'S 4x4 traces the eastern bank of the bayou as the moon reflects motionless, off its still waters.

INT - 4X4

Mary studies Simon as he drives.

MARY

So you're a vampire hunter as well as goodwill ambassador.

SIMON

Actually I'm an archivist. Among other things, I restore and catalogue ancient weapons. Unfortunately, I'm not in the habit of using them.

MARY

Great. So my life's in the hands of a librarian.

A SIGN glints past in the headlights:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NAPOLEONVILLE 2 MI

CUT TO:

EXT - NAPOLEONVILLE - NIGHT

A CIVIL WAR ERA TOWN HALL dominates the quaintly southern Main Street.

Two LOCAL COPS, LAFONT and VERDIN, sit watch outside.

INT - TOWN HALL - SAME

Usual home to barbeques and bingo-- the folksy interior has been transformed into a makeshift morgue.

SIX BODY BAGS lie waiting for transport to the New Orleans M.E.

OUTSIDE

Lafont cores an apple. A thought hatches.

LAFONT

Why you think they didn't take the bodies on to N'awlins?

VERDIN

Everybody got their hands full with Mardis Gras craziness would be my guess.

Verdin suddenly perks to--

MUFFLED LAUGHTER coming from inside. The kind of demented cackling that comes from winning a lottery. Or losing your mind.

VERDIN (cont'd)

Hell is that?

Cops pull their guns, unlock the double doors and edge inside.

INT - TOWN HALL - SAME

Pindrop silence. They exchange uneasy glances.

LaFont's gaze slowly lowers to

THE ROW OF BODY BAGS...

...as several BEGIN TO STIR.

CUT TO:

EXT - SWAMP - NIGHT

Dracula stands at the swamp's edge, limned in moonlight. Having gorged yet again, he seems swollen, almost bloated.

Still streaked with mud, he places a hand on each shoulder and effortlessly RIPS away the remnants of his straightjacket and rotting undergarments.

He waits, naked and white in the soft lunar glow. But not for long.

Comes the piercing WHINE of MOSQUITOS. Black seething masses of them. They hover in choking clouds, eclipsing the moon.

Dracula simply opens his arms and lets them blanket his body like a cloak of teeming black felt.

CUT TO:

EXT - NAPOLEONVILLE TOWN HALL - NIGHT

4x4 hops the curb.

SIMON

Stay here.

Simon jumps out, takes the front steps three at a time.

Shoves through the front door and disappears inside.

INT - TOWN HALL

Dusty shafts of moonlight streak the darkened interior, highlighting

THE BODIES OF LAFONT AND VERDIN

gored and dropped in ragged heaps.

THREE OF THE BODY BAGS NOW LIE EMPTY, shredded like molted skin. No sign of their occupants...

...just that infernal LAUGHTER. Coming from the vaulted rafters overhead.

SKITTERING SOUNDS run the length of the ceiling. Again, that twisted CACKLE emanating from somewhere in the darkness.

It's joined by another.

And another.

Simon scans the lofting interior.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chorus of MANIC LAUGHTER.

Then SILENCE. Which is even worse than the laughter.

BEHIND SIMON

A VERTICAL BANNER slowly UNFURLS from the ceiling. It reads: "FAIS DO-DO, FRIDAY NIGHT, 8PM"

Without turning around, Simon twists a small ratchet under his wrist. Sweat beads his forehead as the device engages with a decisive CLICK.

Another BANNER UNFURLS, proclaiming: "NAPOLEONVILLE BIGGEST LITTLE EMPIRE IN AMERICA"

Still, Simon doesn't turn. Just listens. Even as TWO BLURRED FIGURES slide down the banners like firemen's poles. They drop to the floor.

We recognize them both from the plane-- NIGHTSHADE and SLEDGE-- reanimated with grotesque slavering grins.

Sweat streaks Simon's temples. Breath races.

With a SHRIEKING LAUGH, Nightshade LEAPS for Simon.

...and gets SHOT right out of the air. He lands in a crumpled heap at Simon's feet, gagging with a SILVER SPIKE through his throat.

SLEDGE LUNGES as ANOTHER SPIKE WHISTLES right into his chest. He TOPPLES BACKWARD.

Nightshade thrashes up to his feet again only to get HAMMERED BACKWARD with the punch of another SPIKE, straight through his heart.

NIGHTSHADE

(dying rasp)

What the fuck?

GO CLOSE ON SIMON

as he steps forward, a small wristmounted CROSSBOW set perpendicular to his knuckles.

He gives the bow a sharp whack, clocking it back in line with his arm. Tension releases from the bowstring, snapping the bow straight, as the whole apparatus RETRACTS into his sleeve with a decisive CLICK.

Nightshade dies with his answer.

Simon looks from the three shredded body bags to the two dead vampires.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He's clearly starting to settle into the role of vampire hunter. His eyes now have that glint of new steel.

SIMON

Who else is up there?

Only silence now from the rafters.

Simon crosses over to the remaining four body bags, just now TWITCHING TO LIFE.

Unsheathing a 16-inch TANTO BLADE, he raises it over the first bag.

Which provokes an instant response from the rafters.

SOLINA'S VOICE

Touch that bag and I'll rip your pig fucking spleen out!

SIMON

Solina?

SOLINA'S VOICE

Reminds me, Simon. Been meaning to tell you-- I fucking HATE snowglobes.

SIMON

Sorry to hear that.

Swinging for all he's worth, Simon SLICES down across the first bag, coolly beheading its unseen occupant.

SOLINA'S VOICE

You're dead.

SIMON

I guess that's a relative term, right?

He turns his blade to the next bag. Draws back his sword. From the rafters comes a cold taunt.

SOLINA'S VOICE

Be my guest.

Simon hesitates at the sudden change in demeanor. He reaches out with his free hand and SLOWLY UNZIPS the bag.

VAN HELSING lies inside.

It's a devastating sight. Simon's friend and mentor, reduced to an aged, withering husk.

All but drained of blood, he struggles to speak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VAN HELSING
Mary... where's Mary?

SIMON
She's with me.

VAN HELSING
I need...

He grabs Simon's collar. Hoists himself partway out of the bag.

VAN HELSING (cont'd)
I need to see her...

His voice fails. Eyes keep pleading.

THE LAST BODY BAG

SUDDENLY SHREDS with the force of MARCUS SURGING UPRIGHT!

Simon SWINGS AROUND with the blade-- but MISSES Marcus. The proto-vampire LASHES OUT, knocks Simon backwards. Blade and spikes go flying.

He straddles Simon, pinning him by the arm and throat.

His FANGS LENGTHEN in greedy anticipation.

Simon brandishes a LARGE SILVER CRUCIFIX. Jerks it up to Marcus' face.

The vampire just grins.

MARCUS
Too bad, sport. I'm an atheist.

SIMON
That's all right...

SNICK-- from the base of the crucifix pops a SIX-INCH STILETTO. He STABS it into Marcus' eye.

SIMON (CONT'D)
God loves you anyway.

Marcus HOWLS and pinwheels backward in agony.

SOLINA

LEAPS from the rafters. Hits the floor at a banshee-shrieking RUN and CHARGES straight for Simon.

SIX .32 SLUGS POUND STRAIGHT INTO HER CHEST.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Solina's feet go right out from under her as she SLAMS flat onto her back.

SWING OVER TO SEE MARY

standing over LaFont's body, double-fisting his service revolver.

MARCUS

levels his one good eye on Simon, radiating hate.

MARCUS

I owe you.

Then turns and VAULTS THROUGH THE HIGHEST WINDOW and is gone.

Simon jumps to his feet and BOLTS after him.

Leaving Mary alone with her father. She approaches unsteadily, barely recognizing the man she's grown to hate.

ON VAN HELSING

The physical DECAY is ACCELERATING EXPONENTIALLY now. He's aged another twenty years in the last twenty seconds.

He struggles to speak.

VAN HELSING

Mary... I'm sorry... his blood, my blood, both... in you.

She kneels down alongside him.

MARY

I know. I've always known.

He grabs her hand.

VAN HELSING

He'll come for you Mary. He is not who he seems. Do not... believe him.

His eyes sink into darkening pits. Skin stretches over bone.

MARY

What am I supposed to do? All these years... you never told me... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

VAN HELSING

Remember who you are...

Breath comes in a dry death rattle. But no voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MARY
 (breaking down)
 I'm not who you want me to be. You
 can't leave me with this!

She clutches his hand, desperate to keep him there.

MARY
 This is not my fight!

THE HAND welters into brittle fibers and CRUMBLES under its own weight.

All that remains is that silver SIGNET RING bearing the Van Helsing crest.

Mary clutches it tight in her fist.

SOLINA

suddenly sits upright behind Mary, UNHEARD, like death.

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSIDE NAPOLEONVILLE TOWN HALL - NIGHT

Simon uploads his wrist-bow on the run. Scans every treetop, every darkened furrow. No sign of Marcus.

He pulls up short when he sees--

POLICE CARS

converging on the town hall.

SIMON

No--

INT - TOWN HALL - SAME

Mary reacts to the sirens, turns to see

SOLINA inches from her face. Fanged smile.

SOLINA
 You have promises to keep, Mary....
 Miles to go before you sleep.

They both REACT to the sound of APPROACHING COPS in the outer hall.

SOLINA (cont'd)
 RUN. He'll be waiting for you...

THE ENTIRE NAPOLEONVILLE PD (COUNT SIX)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

pours in through the main doors, armed with every stick of firepower in its possession.

SOLINA

ALONE, surrounded by bodies, greets them with a savage smile.

SOLINA
My lucky night.

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSIDE A NAPOLEONVILLE DINER - NIGHT

Mary hustles up to a BUS just pulling out of the lot.

Doors SLIDE OPEN and she hops aboard.

Bus RUMBLES OFF in a cloud of soot.

CUT TO:

EXT - FRONT OF TOWN HALL - NIGHT

From the cover of darkness, Simon cranes around looking for Mary. No sign of her.

Keeping low, he steals up alongside his car. Slides behind the wheel, slips it into gear and takes off.

CUT TO:

EXT - LOUISIANA HIGHWAY - NIGHT

THE TRANSIT BUS cruises along a narrow causeway.

INT - BUS

The DRIVER squints into the unbroken darkness. Behind him, TWENTY HEADS bob to the rhythm of the road.

Nineteen of them are bedecked in beads and ready to hit Mardi Gras like there's no tomorrow. And then there's--

MARY

who sits in the back, lost in her own dark thoughts.

AHEAD

PATCHES OF FOG whip past, intermittently blotting out the road.

DRIVER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

takes a casual sip of coffee. Offs his hi-beams.

SOMETHING DARKLY WINGED flaps inside the fog. Dead ahead. Something that's suddenly very

HUMANLIKE.

DRIVER braces for impact as

DRACULA

BLASTS THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD in a shower of glass, Nightshade's very cool silk coat BILLOWING like wings.

OUTSIDE

the bus CAREENS WILDLY across the causeway.

INSIDE

Landing on all fours, Dracula TEARS DOWN THE AISLE TOWARD MARY as the BUS FLIPS SIDEWAYS, heaving one set of screaming passengers atop another.

OUTSIDE

Bus SIDE-SKIDS across the pavement in a SHOWER OF SPARKS.

INSIDE

Dracula FLINGS BODIES OUT OF HIS WAY, bearing down on Mary with single-minded brute force.

Clawing up to the fractured window above her, Mary PUNCHES...

OUTSIDE

...and climbs out as the bus comes to a SHUDDERING STOP.

She LEAPS OFF THE BACK, hitting the pavement in a BLINDING GLARE OF FAST-APPROACHING HEADLIGHTS.

BRAKES SCREECH. FRONT BUMPER TAGS HER. PASSENGER DOOR FLIES OPEN.

IT'S SIMON.

SIMON

Get in!

INT - SIMON'S 4X4

Simon HITS THE GAS, they vault forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THROUGH THE FRONT WINDSHIELD

Dracula DROPS DOWN right into their path. Simon FLOORS IT--
THE 4X4

BLASTS STRAIGHT THROUGH DRACULA, scattering him like
smoke. Roars off full throttle into the night.

CUT TO:

INT - SIMON'S 4X4 - NIGHT

Simon checks the rearview mirror. Nothing.

SIMON
Why'd you run?

Mary leans back, catching her breath.

SIMON (cont'd)
I didn't ask for this either. But
like it or not, we're the only ones
who can stop him.

MARY
And what if we succeed? What happens
next? Who gets to cut my head off?
You?
(off his look)
Don't look so surprised. We both know
what the endgame is. I'm infected
with his blood.

Simon looks her in the eyes. Says nothing.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A WOMAN'S MOUTH

Full, sumptuous lips part to allow a THUMB AND FOREFINGER
inside.

WIDEN SLOWLY as Solina grips her back molar-- TWISTING
AND PULLING--

AGENT DAVE (O.S.)
You're kind of a miracle on wheels if
my reports here are correct. Surviving
a plane wreck. Waking corpses. Taking
all those bullet hits.

Tooth POPS FREE with a sickening snap, bloody roots and
all. Note the big SILVER FILLING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLINA
Silver. Gah.

She flicks it away in disgust.

SOLINA
Don't three miracles make you a saint,
Agent Dave?

INT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Solina's seated at a stark formica table, wrists cuffed,
facing a basset-faced AGENT DAVE.

AGENT DAVE
Not in this state. Now if you could
just recount, in your own words, the
sequence of events that led you here.

Eyes rimmed red, she fidgets with junkie jitters. It
doesn't help that a jumbo fix is within arm's reach--

SOLINA
Sure. Where do you wanna start?

AGENT DAVE
Let's start with the theft back in
London.

CLOSE ON AGENT DAVE'S NECK

Watch the jugular throb.

SOLINA
(looks up) ?
Theft of what?

AGENT DAVE
Why don't you just tell me.

SOLINA
(blase')
You must mean Dracula.

AGENT DAVE
Dracula isn't real.

SOLINA
Then we "really" didn't steal
anything, did we?

PULL BACK through the TWO WAY MIRROR TO:

INT - OBSERVATION BOOTH

Perris Gautreaux stands watching with slickdown special FBI AGENT WATKIN REESE and a handful of AUDIO/VIDEO TECHS.

All are rapt on Solina.

AGENT DAVE

Then what, exactly, were you after?

SOLINA

Eternal life.

AGENT DAVE

Eternal life?

SOLINA

Same thing they promise in Sunday school, but you don't have to change addresses to get in on it.

(leans closer)

You should give it a whirl. You'd know what I mean.

AGENT DAVE

I'll take a rain check.

SOLINA

Better get in line. Seats are going fast.

CUT TO:

EXT - NEW ORLEANS, NEAR RIVER WALK - NIGHT

Dracula STEPS INTO FRAME. Checks out the sign gracing a nearby building.

TILT DOWN FROM "VIRGIN"... to "MEGASTORE."

DRACULA

Tempting.

He turns and walks up to the river's edge.

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSKIRTS OF NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

Simon's 4x4 crosses the Crescent City Bridge. Barrels headlong for the city.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY'S VOICE

3 December, 1931

This I know to be true: The vampire is a creature bound by his own laws of mortality. And yet his power is not unlimited. He will surely die if his heart be cleaved or his head removed.

INT - SIMON'S 4X4 - NIGHT

Mary reads from her father's journal.

MARY (cont'd)

Not so the one called Dracula. He is, it seems, simply beyond the reach of death. No lasting wound can mar his body, nor fire and disease consume him. In this, he mocks the very will of God. And for this, he suffers but one affliction. He is repelled by all things sacred. The cross, the holy water, the very silver by which our Lord was betrayed.

Could not the means of destroying him lie hidden in this one seeming flaw? I must believe in the possibility or I fear I shall go mad.

She lowers the journal. Looks to Simon.

MARY (cont'd)

He never found the answer.

CUT TO:

INT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Solina continues to toy with Agent Dave.

SOLINA

Why are you so afraid of the dark, Agent Dave?

AGENT DAVE

Who says I am?

SOLINA

I can smell it in your pores.

(leaning in)

Don't you know all the best things happen in the dark? We dream in the dark. We kill in the dark. We fuck in the dark.

(closer)

You like to fuck, don't you, Agent Dave?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGENT DAVE
(retreating to his notes)
Getting back to this idea of a "Last
Great Plague..."

SOLINA
I think you do. Like a ferret.

AGENT DAVE
...a plague that will "consume the
world..."

SOLINA
I want to eat you.

AGENT DAVE
...Just how is it supposed to come
about?

SOLINA
Suck you. Make you scream.

AGENT DAVE
Solina? Solina? We're getting off
track here.

SOLINA
I can see the outline of your cock
through your pants. Don't pretend
we're not interested.

Perris nudges Reese.

PERRIS
She's playing him.

REESE
He's a pro. He can take care of
himself.

AGENT DAVE
Talk to me. When was this "Great
Plague" supposed to happen?

SOLINA
When?

Her eyes track--

A BIG FAT MOSQUITO

as it settles down onto Agent Dave's neck to feed. TINY
BLACKENING CAPILLARIES flare out from the puncture point.

SOLINA (cont'd)
Oh, right about now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dave SLAPS HIS NECK.

CUT TO:

EXT - RIVERFRONT - NIGHT

Dracula stands before the sprawling Mississippi and the DOWNTOWN SKYLINE beyond.

He sways in place, eyes closed, arms spread wide--

--just like when summoning the mosquitoes.

Comes the skitter of tiny FEET. Followed by a chorus of wicked little SQUEALS.

CUT TO:

INT - SIMON'S 4X4 - NIGHT

Mary feels a sudden surge of queasiness.

MARY

You have any water?

SIMON

In the glove box.

She leans forward, pops open the GLOVE COMPARTMENT.

RATS

teem inside, POURING FORTH from the opening and UP HER ARMS...

She GAGS, flails backward, only to realize--

ON SECOND GLANCE

--the rats aren't really in the car. She's seeing somewhere else, SEEING THROUGH DRACULA'S EYES as

INTERCUT - RIVERFRONT

HORDES OF RATS scurry out from their hidden warrens.

They claw their way up Dracula's legs and torso, fan out across his FACE and ARMS.

ON MARY

Her face twists in revulsion and pain.

SIMON

What is it?! What are you seeing?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

Rats. They're coming from everywhere.
Thousands... Like they're being called...

ON DRACULA

Just as quickly as they came, the RATS SCATTER, leaving behind a latticework of tiny BITE WOUNDS on his face and hands.

ON MARY

She blinks back to her senses. For an instant, TRACES OF BITE WOUNDS stipple her face, then DISAPPEAR.

Her eyes focus back to Simon, who seems stricken by a new and deeper dread.

SIMON

Plague vectors.

(dawning)

The rats. He's using them as plague vectors. Carriers.

MARY

How do you know?

SIMON

I remember a document your father found that told about a ship landing in Santoresta, Sicily in 1321. All the crewmen were dying, afflicted with some strange disease that caused them to feed on each other until they barely resembled humans. They were missing limbs, skin, even organs-- some were down to just bone and bloody entrail-- and still they lashed out at anything that resembled human flesh.

FLASH ON: TWISTED BODIES, gored and limbless, with mindlessly gnashing, serrated jaws.

SIMON (cont'd)

Quarantine was pointless. Because it wasn't the men who delivered the disease to Santoresta.

(beat)

It was the rats that came with them.

MARY

What happened to the town?

SIMON

Pope Innocent XIV had it burned to the ground, wiped it from history.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SIMON (cont'd)

(beat)

Those were the days when you could stop a plague by torching just a single town.

EXT - NEW ORLEANS, GARDEN DISTRICT - NIGHT

They skid to a HARD STOP. Ahead, a solid MASS of REVELERS gather for one of a dozen Mardi Gras parades.

MARY

(darkening)

Mardi Gras... What better time and place to start a plague?

They climb out of the car. Simon slides the spike gun under his coat.

SIMON (cont'd)

We need to take the fight to him.

(scanning the crowd)

You can see through his eyes. Can you see where he is now?

She shakes her head.

MARY

He only lets me see what he wants me to see.

CUT TO:

EXT - MARY AND LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Just off from the main tourist trample. A three-story brick walkup, trimmed in wrought iron and faded antebellum charm.

DRACULA

emerges from a PASSING SHADOW. Stops at the door. Knocks eloquently.

Lucy answers the door in her work uniform. Dracula notes her distinctive nametag:

VIRGIN

LUCY

DRACULA

Pity. Half the pleasure is finding out.

LUCY

Excuse me?

He looks straight into her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRACULA
I've come for Mary.

LUCY
She's not here right now.

DRACULA
She will be. Soon.

His voice pours out like liquid Ecstasy.

LUCY
(offers her hand, palm down)
I'm her roommate, Lucy.

Dracula takes her hand, flips it over and casually inspects the veins under her wrist.

FLASH TO DRACULA'S POV OF LUCY-- as she PASSES STRAIGHT THROUGH HIM at the Virgin Megastore.

ON DRACULA

he tastes her essence.

DRACULA
Have we met before?

LUCY
(tingling)
I... I-- uh-- I don't know.

He lets the hand drop. Turns away.

LUCY (cont'd)
You're welcome to come in and wait...
(loses herself in his eyes)
I can make you a cup of coffee.

DRACULA
I don't drink... coffee.

He crosses the threshold.

INT - MARY AND LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lucy starts up the stairs.

LUCY
I'll be right down. Make yourself comfortable.

Steps CREAK LOUDLY under her weight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LUCY (cont'd)
 (calling out)
 I never did catch your name.

Dracula follows DIRECTLY BEHIND HER, his feet SOUNDLESS on those same stairs.

DRACULA
 I have many.

Lucy gasps, SPINS AROUND-- Standing two stairs above him, her eyes are PERFECTLY LEVEL with his. Inches apart.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 But none of them really matter.

Lucy stands frozen. Unblinking. Chest rises and falls with her quickening breath.

LUCY
 I... I... I...

DRACULA
 Yes?

LUCY
 I was named after the "Peanuts" character.

CUT TO:

EXT - THE HEART OF MARDI GRAS - NIGHT

A FLOTILLA OF DEMONS AND HARLEQUINS

cuts a channel up State Street. Beads and trinkets RAIN DOWN from above.

And every third person looks like Dracula.

Mary and Simon press on.

MARY
 I'm not seeing anything.

SIMON
 Try.

MARY
 I'm not a bloodhound, Simon. It doesn't work that way.

CUT TO:

INT - LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lucy falls back against the headboard of her bed with a toe-curling MOAN. Dracula takes her in his arms... and ROLLS HER UP ONTO THE WALL.

His lips and tongue play over her pale skin as she ARCHES UP beneath him, moaning softly.

Their lovemaking takes them STRAIGHT UP THE WALL, dislodging A FRAMED PHOTO COLLAGE OF MARY AND LUCY.

It smashes to the floor as Dracula rolls Lucy--
ONTO THE CEILING

--where they continue mating, inverted like bats.

Lucy reaches a SCREAMING ORGASM as DRACULA closes his eyes and whispers softly:

DRACULA

Mary...

THEN CLAMPS DOWN ON LUCY'S THROAT.

We PLUMMET into the BLOOD VORTEX of DRACULA'S EYE.

CUT TO:

EXT - MARDI GRAS - NIGHT

Mary suddenly SPASMS VIOLENTLY. Simon grabs her by the arms.

SIMON

What is it?

MARY

Lucy...

(panic)

He's with her. Oh god, Simon-- HE'S
WITH HER.

She wrenches away. Runs.

CUT TO:

INT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Solina's eyes roll back in symbiotic rapture. As if she's felt each and every orgasmic thrust.

SOLINA

He's coming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And so is she.

FROM THE OBSERVATION BOOTH

Watkin Reese draws a deep breath.

REESE

That's enough. She's a whack job.
(leans up to mike)
Come on back, David.

HIS POV - AGENT DAVE

Dave touches his earphone. Nods. Gets up and leaves the interrogation room, walking out with a slight hard-on hunch.

Solina pushes off from the table, gets up and slowly approaches the two-way glass. Pretends to preen in the mirror.

REVERSE ANGLE

SOLINA'S NOT REFLECTED IN THE GLASS. Only the empty room.

SEEN FROM INSIDE THE BOOTH

Solina keeps vamping for her unseen audience. Wrists cuffed, she still manages to tease her shirt up over her breasts.

VIDEO TECH

What's she doing now?

Now she's shimmying out of her pants. Like a peepshow. And our boys have unlimited quarters.

VIDEO TECH (cont'd)

Ohmigawd...

She runs her cuffed hands over her breasts, down her belly and beyond...

Reese is clearly entranced. He steps up for a closer gawk.

PERRIS

I don't like this...

REESE

What's not to like?

Solina's hands slowly caress back up her body until the fingers reach her parted lips.

Six men draw quivering breaths...

...as Solina smiles seductively...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

...and PLUNGES BOTH FISTS THROUGH THE MIRROR. She grabs Reese by the neck and YANKS HIM BACK THROUGH THE SHATTERING GLASS.

Her FANGS CLAMP DOWN ON HIS NECK as she rips into him like a starving jackal.

CUT TO:

EXT - OUTSIDE MARY AND LUCY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mary and Simon reach the apartment. Angle for the door.

Simon holds her back when he sees:

A SILHOUETTED MALE

cross the third-floor bedroom window.

Simon uploads his spike gun.

SIMON

Stay behind me.

He lays Van Helsing's SILVER CRUCIFIX in Mary's open palm. Takes her thumb and EJECTS the hidden STILETTO BLADE.

MARY

Let me guess. Just point and pray.

Simon nods, steals up to--

THE FRONT DOOR

which falls open at his touch. He slips inside...

INT - APARTMENT

...and PADS SOFTLY up the creaking stairway.

MARY follows him through the open doorway. Stops at the base of the stairs.

Glances back over her shoulder. Nothing there.

She advances to the second floor landing as Simon rounds onto the third. She feels a chill on the back of her neck.

Swivels around as

A VOICE drifts out from the living room. HER FATHER'S VOICE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAN HELSING (O.S.)

This is your father, Mary... I don't expect that word to have much meaning to you. I barely know the meaning myself anymore...

Mary edges slowly into

THE LIVING ROOM

where the ANSWERING MACHINE plays back its recorded message.

VAN HELSING (cont'd)

I don't expect we'll ever speak again, but I simply wanted to let you know that I... that I...

Fatal pause-- followed by that TERMINATING BEEP.

Mary stares down at the machine, fighting a riptide of emotion.

VOICE

Sounds like a nice man. Pity I never got the chance to meet him.

Mary JERKS AROUND TO SEE--

LUCY

standing right behind her. Clad in a sexy white negligee, skin pink as a newborn, she has transformed into something nearly inconceivable--

A RAVISHING BEAUTY.

CUT TO:

THIRD FLOOR BEDROOM

Simon nudges open the bedroom door with the tip of his spike gun.

DOOR SWINGS WIDE TO REVEAL

an empty room. Rumpled bed. Shattered picture. Flecks of blood. Nothing more.

THE WINDOW

hangs open, breeze billowing the curtains.

Simon takes a cautious step forward--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AS MARCUS PITTMAN HINGES DOWN FROM THE CEILING, upside down. Hanging by his feet, he BACKHANDS Simon across the room. Spike gun goes flying.

Marcus casually WALKS DOWN THE WALL until he's standing directly behind his concussion-dazed adversary.

Jerking Simon's head backward with a vicious spinal crack, he leans in, low and seething.

MARCUS

What? You want to hurt me again?

Marcus' gouged eye gapes like a second mouth.

MARCUS (cont'd)

YOU RUINED MY FUCKING EYE, YOU
FUCKING FUCK!!

Simon's hand flails for his short sword. Misses by inches.

Marcus' lips curl back over SLAVERING FANGS.

Simon hyperextends... still can't reach the blade.

Instead, he digs his heels in and DRIVES MARCUS BACKWARDS INTO THE WALL-MOUNTED SCONCE LIGHT.

The BULB SHATTERS as the lamp base STABS INTO THE BACK OF HIS NECK. Marcus lets out a BELLOWING HOWL.

But it's nothing like the sound he makes when Simon reaches out and FLICKS THE LIGHT SWITCH.

SPARKS SHOOT from Marcus' mouth. His SCREAMS could wake the dead. As if they needed waking.

A FLOOR BELOW

Lights FLICKER and SHORT OUT. Lucy glances up at the ceiling, revealing TWO TINY PUNCTURE HOLES under her jaw.

Then lowers her gaze onto Mary.

LUCY

God, I was always so jealous of you.

Terror stitches Mary's face.

LUCY (cont'd)

That face. That body. And that bloody fucking Shakespeare-In-Love accent-- I mean, c'mon, how was I ever supposed to compete with that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Mary pulls the CRUCIFIX.

MARY

I don't want to hurt you, Lucy.

LUCY

I don't want to hurt you either.
We're friends, remember? Best
friends...

UPSTAIRS

Marcus lurches out from the wall, beyond insane.

Simon backs away, gripping his tanto blade.

MARCUS

(twitching and steaming)
Said Simple Simon to the Pieman--
"Lemme taste your wares..."

He leaps for Simon. Simon SWINGS-- hacks into his
shoulder-- and ROLLS to the side.

Marcus craters the wall, rebounds back onto his feet.

Shakes it off and LUNGES AGAIN. Simon slips his grasp,
backpeddles into

THE BATHROOM

where he SLAMS THE DOOR in Marcus' face. Knowing it's
going to splinter in the very next instant, Simon flattens
against the wall, winds back with the sword--

--and waits.

MARCUS' HAND

PLUNGES not through the door, but THROUGH THE WALL--
CLAMPING DOWN ON SIMON'S THROAT in a shower of plaster.

DOWNSTAIRS

Lucy teases up to Mary. Runs a coy finger across her chest.

LUCY

Best friends confide in each other,
don't they? So why didn't you tell me
about Him? The way he looks into your
eyes. The way he makes you feel when
he's inside you. God, I feel like--
like he's made me into the woman I
always dreamed of being.

(euphoric)

I feel so hungry... for LIFE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She presses her lips to Mary's. Kisses her. Deeply, hungrily.

Mary fumbles with the CRUCIFIX BLADE. Finds the catch and EJECTS THE BLADE.

UPSTAIRS BATHROOM

Still choking in Marcus' grasp, Simon desperately SAWS his blade across that unrelenting arm.

Marcus finally JERKS IT BACK through the hole with a muffled curse.

Simon slumps to the tiled floor, gasping and bloody. Cocks his head to the hole.

SIMON
(taunting)
So what's it like being Dracula's
bitch, Marcus?

OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM

Marcus goes into full mental meltdown. He steps back and RHINO-CHARGES THE BATHROOM DOOR--

MARCUS
AAAAAAAHHHHHHH!

INSIDE

Crawling dizzily upright, Simon winds back and DRIVES HIS SWORD HORIZONTALLY INTO THE DOORJAMB.

MARCUS BURSTS THROUGH THE SPLINTERING DOOR, meets the blade neck-high and NEARLY BEHEADS HIMSELF with the force of his own inertia.

Head dangling by thin strands of vein and sinew, Marcus topples backward into

THE BATHTUB

where he lands with a satisfying THA-BUMP-bump-bump.

DOWNSTAIRS

Mary pushes away from the oversexed Lucy, blade clenched in her fist.

MARY
Lucy no.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

LUCY

Don't tell me you haven't thought about it. When the nights get so sweltering hot and the zydeco just fills the air. Don't tell me you haven't fantasized how it would feel.

(pulls her closer)

The coolness of my body against yours.

Lucy LICKS the sweat off Mary's cheek. Teeth glisten sharp and white.

LUCY (cont'd)

My tongue against your--

MARY

I don't want this.

Lucy presses her down onto the floor.

LUCY

Of course you do.

Mary's blade GLINTS in the cold spill of moonlight. Lifts...

As Lucy crawls astride Mary, eyes ablaze.

LUCY (cont'd)

It's better than chocolate.

FLASH OF TEETH--

Mary BLOCKS Lucy's lunge with her FOREARM as

SOMETHING DARK

BLURS across her field of vision, RIPS Lucy up and FLINGS her across the room.

In the next heartbeat,

DRACULA

is LOOMING OVER HER.

MARY

No--

She scrambles backward. BOLTS for the stairs. Glances back... she's not being followed.

EXT - APARTMENT - NIGHT

She bursts outside SPRINTING flat out as--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dracula EXPLODES from the 2nd floor window. LANDS ON A CAR CLEAR ACROSS THE STREET. Roof craters, windows shatter.

Mary pivots in the opposite direction. Flees.

Dracula's right there, blocking her way.

Without breaking stride, she pivots again and bolts headlong into--

LAFAYETTE CEMETERY

--an above-ground CITY OF THE DEAD. She dashes blindly through the endless maze of crumbling stone.

Obscured by passing crypts, SOMETHING paces her step for step. Alternating glimpses suggest both human and wolf.

EXT - APARTMENT

Simon limps out into the street, shouldering the spike gun. Sweeps a full 360.

SIMON
(calling out)
Mary! MARY!

EXT - CEMETERY

Mary slows to a panting walk. MIST curls around her feet, obscuring the very earth she treads on.

TREE SHADOWS finger across granite angels. Ravens call in the distance.

And now the MIST BEGINS TO CHANGE. It SWIRLS and EDDIES into a single twisting COLUMN, through which TWO BURNING EYES can be seen.

Mary bites down on a scream, runs on.

She lurches and stumbles through the narrow channels between crypts, losing herself in the immensity of this graveyard.

Exhaustion finally overcomes terror-- her steps grow leaden, breath comes in ragged gasps.

In the distance, something HOWLS.

She collapses against a stunted tree, can't go on. Her gazes settles on--

THE FAMILY CRYPT DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM HER.

The stone COVER has come loose from it's moorings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEARBY

Dracula steps from a curl of mist. He closes his eyes, as if trying to sense Mary's whereabouts. Then starts walking...

...ACROSS THE TOPS OF THE CRYPTS.

ON MARY

She stares at the crypt opening. Considers the unthinkable.

CLOSE ON A WEATHERED STONE CROSS

Dracula sheers it off with a SAVAGE KICK.

GROUND LEVEL

He lands softly. Rounds the corner into the channel where Mary was just standing...

She's gone.

He starts slowly forward.

INSIDE CRYPT

Only the dimmest light filters in from outside. Just enough to see that Mary has wedged herself between TWO WOODEN CASKETS. The last place on earth you'd ever find a claustrophobe.

OUTSIDE

Dracula moves closer, eyes scanning back and forth...

INSIDE CRYPT

Mary tries to squelch her rapidfire breathing.

Her eyes travel down to her FOOT, which still juts slightly outside the crypt opening. Bracing herself against the caskets, she slides herself further into the crypt--

--until ONE HAND PUNCHES THROUGH THE ROTTING WOOD OF A CASKET.

We don't see what it plunges into. Just hear the SQUISH.

She holds DEATHLY STILL as--

--DRACULA'S LEGS pass in front of the opening.

Mary's eyes track with his softly RECEDING FOOTSTEPS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stifling her gag reflex and averting her eyes, she slowly removes her hand from the casket.

Gingerly raises herself up as--

--DRACULA RIPS A GAPING HOLE IN THE CRYPT WALL. Peers inside.

DRACULA
You shouldn't hide in death.

He takes her hand and hoists her out of the crypt.

Then lets go. She recoils.

DRACULA
I'm not the evil you think I am.

He RIPS the cover off ANOTHER TOMB-- exposing a PUTREFYING WOMAN.

DRACULA
Look around.

He RIPS OPEN ANOTHER. Glimpse of shredded clothing. Gaping face.

DRACULA (cont'd)
All this corrupted flesh...

AND STILL ANOTHER. Death did not come sweetly to this one. WORMS gambol inside the screaming mouth.

DRACULA (cont'd)
How many do you think actually found their precious salvation?

He PLUCKS OFF THE HEAD, regards it like Yorick.

DRACULA (cont'd)
(to head)
You perhaps? I think not.
(tosses it aside)
Tell me, Mary. Where can they go but to the ravening worms... or me?

Mary turns away. Dracula steps closer.

DRACULA
So much you don't know. So much I still need to show you.

He places his lips against her ear.

DRACULA (cont'd)
It was my last sunset on this earth that made me what I am.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DRACULA (cont'd)
Not the darkness, Mary, no-- not the
darkness-- but the fading of the
light.

EXTREME CLOSE ON DRACULA'S LIPS. They lift to unsheath
his LENGTHENING FANGS...

DRACULA (cont'd)
Let me take you there.

MARY
Never.

She PLUNGES THE CROSS-BLADE STRAIGHT INTO HIS NECK.

Dracula YANKS it out and furiously casts it aside. His
rage disappears in the next blink.

Instead, he runs his hand across his own neck, marvelling
at his bloodshed.

He turns his bloody palm and puts it to Mary's lips.

DRACULA (cont'd)
Everything I am is yours. Don't you
understand?

Mary jerks her face to one side, causing him to smear a
BLOODY STREAK across her cheek instead.

He grabs her by the shoulders.

DRACULA
I CAN MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND!

Mary glares back, defiant.

Dracula folds his arms, letting HIS FINGERNAILS BRANCH
OUT behind his back. They adhere to his coat like bone
to skin as they form long delicate SPINES.

SIMON

stumbles into view. Rushes toward them.

He suddenly SCISSORS HIS ARMS UPWARD, spreading his coat
into BATLIKE WINGS that stretch taut and membranous
between the extended finger spines.

Simon FIRES A SILVER BOLT, MISSES--

--as Dracula LEAPS OUT, SCOOPS UP MARY and disappears into the
SWIRLING HAZE.

Simon vaults up onto one of the crypt tops, turning in ever-
slower, more hopeless circles, searching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They've vanished.

CUT TO:

EXT - THE FRENCH QUARTER, MARDIS GRAS - NIGHT

THRONGS OF COSTUMED REVELERS churn through the cramped streets like a living river.

Simon shoulders his way into the garish flow of humanity-- SUCCUBI, NYMPHS, GAYS, STRAIGHTS, HARLEQUINS, FREAKS, BLOOD DOLLS, LESTATS and VOODOO QUEENS-- all writhing in a music-driven orgy of taunting and arousal.

Simon's spike gun is just another eclectic party prop to this crowd.

CUT TO:

A GIANT NEON CROSS

set high above the roiling throngs. It's huge DIGITAL SIGNBOARD pulses scriptural salvation to the sodomite masses below.

This is your basic "Jesus Saves" beacon, ramped up for the information age. SLOGANS AND IMAGES flash in endless permutations of that age-old message.

A 12-foot resin CHRIST FIGURE hangs in perpetual sufferance from the cross.

Tasteless to some. Inspiring to others.

Repellent to one.

WIDEN TO INCLUDE

EXT - CROWNED ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Bathed in the eerie neon glow, Dracula turns from the cross to the shimmering New Orleans skyline.

Taking Mary in hand, he leads her past a VICTORIAN GREENHOUSE to the roof's edge. Gazes down at his teeming flock below.

DRACULA

I swore I would take the world back
from him. Deny his children the light
as I was denied. And it shall be...

LOOK DOWN ON THE CROWD

From here they are no more than a scourge of insects.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRACULA (cont'd)
The last plague.

Mary studies him with a mixture of fear and fascination. He could take her-- or fling her off the building-- on a whim. And yet he does neither.

She finally utters the question she's feared her entire life.

MARY
Who are you really?

At first he doesn't answer. Instead, he seems to be staring backward into the pit of his own soul.

CUT TO:

EXT - STREET LEVEL - NIGHT

Simon's buffeted back and forth in the shifting tide of revelers. His search could not be more hopeless. Until--

--he catches a glimpse of SOLINA, feeding on a willing BLOOD DOLL.

RED MARDI GRAS BEADS

break off and pelt the ground in a SPATTER of BLOOD.

Solina looks up, mouth streaked in blood. Flicks her tongue lustily at Simon then RECEDES into the crowd past--

VALERIE BLETH

the erstwhile newscaster-cum-vampire. She too gives Simon a fetching smile and melts backward past

LUCY

who does likewise.

Crowd closes in around them and they're gone.

PLACARD-WIELDING STREET PREACHERS clash violently with DRUNKEN, TAUNTING PARTIERS who curse and flash their nipple rings with equal giddy abandon.

PLOWING THROUGH THE MAYHEM, Simon takes off in pursuit of the three vamps. Carves a channel straight up to

A LARGE WOODEN DOOR-

that opens into

A SHELTERED 18TH-CENTURY COURTYARD

Shouldering his spike gun, he spins into the courtyard, primed for an ambush.

Instead, he catches sight of--

THE FAR DOOR

creaking closed. FOOTSTEPS and GIGGLES recede into the darkened interior.

Simon follows.

CUT TO:

EXT - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Dracula closes his eyes.

DRACULA

I once loved more than any man could love. And I suffered for that love, more than you can possibly imagine.

His eyes SNAP OPEN. Glowing RED...

He takes Mary in his arms. Pulls her close.

DRACULA (cont'd)

Tell me, Mary. Why should I be denied relief from that suffering? Or revenge?

Their eyes meet.

Terror and longing surge through her in equal measure.

BEHIND THEM

the lofting neon cross PULSES out a one-word message.

"REPENT."

CUT TO:

INT - OLD BUILDING - NIGHT

Simon moves down a darkened corridor, nerves coiled. Two hundred years of overlapped paint crack and blossom from neglect.

AHEAD-- a taunt of giggling. Nothing seen.

Hugging the wall, Simon WHIPS INTO--

THE LAIR

Centuries old, it currently serves as THE WAR ROOM for a Christian missionary brigade (think Watchtower) set smack in the center of Sin City.

From the surrounding glut of RELIGIOUS ICONS, POSTERS and BIBLE TRACTS, it clearly stands as a last rampart against the raging perversity outside.

Only this rampart's been hideously breached.

RANDOM ACTS OF DEFAACEMENT abound. Jeering slogans, beheaded statuary, ritual perversions-- obscenities of such demented genius they could only belong in the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

THE THREE CONCUBINES OF DRACULA,

Lucy, Solina and Valerie, now emerge from the shadows.

They almost float up to Simon, each more impossibly alluring than ever.

Simon levels his spike gun at Solina.

SIMON

No closer.

SOLINA

Go on. Take my head.

(fixes her eyes on him)

But first, why not take my body? What have you got to lose?

Simon's finger cramps down on the trigger.

LUCY

Mary is His already.

VALERIE

Everything you fought for is lost.

LUCY

The plague's begun.

SOLINA

There's nothing left to lose.

VALERIE

Only...

LUCY

...to gain.

Their siren-like voices have an entrancing effect on Simon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLINA
I know what you've always wanted,
Simon. Well I'm ready now.
(opens herself to him)
Sooo ready...

Lucy curls up at his feet.

LUCY
Come with us, Simon.

VALERIE
Now...

Simon backs away slowly.

SOLINA
Now... before...

LUCY
...it's too...

VALERIE
...late.

MUSCLED ARMS LASH OUT-- grab hold of Simon from behind.
They jerk him up to a TWISTED FRIGHTMASK formerly known as--

MARCUS.

His head's been RAGGEDLY RE-ATTACHED with DUCT TAPE and
STAPLES. But a few critical connections have gone missing.

He suppresses a nasty twitch as he glares out with his one
good eye.

MARCUS
(hoarse croak)
You want me outta your life? Well you
left a few strings attached.

On that he BODYSLAMS SIMON CLEAR THROUGH THE WALL AND
INTO THE NEXT ROOM.

CUT TO:

EXT - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Mary STRUGGLES in Dracula's grip.

DRACULA
You know who I am. You've always
known.
(whispers)
Because I'm inside you, Mary.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRACULA (cont'd)
I've been inside you from the moment
you were born.

His lips slide down her cheek, to the pulsing softness of her neck.

Teeth SINK INTO FLESH. Mary's head arches BACK...

Imperceptibly at first, they both begin to LEVITATE, the roof falling away beneath their feet, their surroundings shrinking into darkness.

EXT - DESOLATE VISTA - NIGHT

We're now in a dark, moonlit landscape. Devoid of time or historical setting, it's a place that seems more fitting of Purgatory than earth.

We approach an IMPOSSIBLY ORNATE BED, strangely shielded from the blistering WINDS that rage around it.

MOVING CLOSER, we push through the gauzy veil to find DRACULA AND MARY entwined in a lover's embrace.

A slow SEEP OF BLOOD radiates outward from the lovers, saturating the bed and travelling up the canopy until everything is suffused in the same hue of deep, fiery CRIMSON...

Around them, the WIND kicks up to a HOWLING FURY. RAIN and LIGHTNING slash the Heavens, drowning out the cries and moans of the lovers...

CLOSER...

Dracula drags a fingernail across his own chest, opens a BLEEDING GASH. He takes Mary's head in his hands and whispers softly:

DRACULA
Blood of my blood...

He shoves her mouth down onto his gushing wound.

DRACULA (cont'd)
Flesh of my flesh.

Mary JOLTS, her eyes flooding with instant VISIONS:

FLASH TO: Dracula standing next to a BEARDED MAN in a shimmering garden. We never clearly see the man's face. ELEVEN OTHERS linger nearby as Dracula kisses the man's cheek.

FLASH TO: Sunset silhouetting a CRUCIFIXION. The shadow of the CROSS covers Dracula like a suffocating shroud. He cries out...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLASH TO: A NOOSE cinching around Dracula's neck. It jerks tight. SILVER COINS spring from his hand and tumble through the last rays of the setting sun.

Mary lifts up her face, blood streaming from parted lips.

MARY

Judas...

She edges away.

MARY (cont'd)

The cross... the silver... all the things you came to despise...

DRACULA

They're all he left me.

Mary pushes through the draping canopy behind her.

WIDE

Ribboned in windblown bands of gossamer, she now stands alone in an EMPTY EXPANSE broken only by

A SINGLE GNARLED TREE.

JUDAS HANGS by a rope strung from its thickest branch.

No sound but the CREAKING of WOOD as the body sways back and forth.

Mary makes her way toward the hanging tree, stepping over the DECAYING LIMBS of carelessly-buried corpses that jut up like tangled roots.

This is the original POTTER'S FIELD-- death place of Judas Iscariot. And here he hangs, head wrenched to the side, tongue lolling blue and swollen between cracked lips. Around him, flies BUZZ between intermittant fits of gorging.

Mary gazes up at this derelict soul. Just like another Mary did in another time and place not so far away.

Her eyes lower to the SILVER COINS littering the ground around the tree. She picks one up, turns it over in her palm. The imprint of Ceasar glints across the surface as--

JUDAS' HAND

CLAMPS DOWN on her arm. Mary SCREAMS, flails against an unrelenting grip.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JUDAS/DRACULA
 (eyes snap open)
 Free me, Mary.

Still strung by his neck, he clings to her wrist. Rope STRETCHES, branch GROANS above him as Mary struggles to free herself.

Noose digs deeper into Judas' neck with every pull. And still he doesn't let go.

Which only fuels Mary's hysteria. She lashes out like a snared animal, clawing, tearing, flinging herself backwards.

THE ROPE whipsaws across the branch, frays... and SNAPS.

Judas hits the ground, landing on all fours.

Mary backpeddles, trips on the jutting forearm of a half-buried corpse. Goes down hard.

Judas crawls toward her, rope dragging from his lacerated neck. Eyes still white with death.

JUDAS/DRACULA
 I need you...

MARY
 No...

He grabs hold of her ankle. She KICKS him in the FACE.

MARY
 Get away from me!

He clamps down onto her thigh. Hauls himself further forward...

JUDAS/DRACULA
 You're my Mary...

Clamps onto her stomach.

JUDAS/DRACULA (cont'd)
 My soul...

Clamps onto her neck...

JUDAS/DRACULA (cont'd)
 My blood...

Pinned underneath him, Mary can only watch this twisted monster lower himself onto her.

JUDAS/DRACULA (cont'd)
 Mine forever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A DOZEN ROTTING ARMS

claw up from the ground, grip Mary's body and PULL HER DOWN INTO THE BLOOD-SODDEN EARTH.

LAST THING SHE SEES

is Dracula's malign face as the earth CLOSES UP AROUND HER. THEN BLACKNESS.

MARY'S EYES SNAP OPEN with a suffocating GASP.

HER HAND

slaps against the DAMP ASPHALT of--

THE ROOFTOP.

Reality floods back with a sickening lurch. She sits up, torn and ravished as

THE MOON

crawls from retreating clouds, washing her in pale blue.

Mary looks out across the rooftop to where Dracula now stands-- under the neon cross, facing up at the CHRIST FIGURE before him.

She can't see his face. Can't tell if this is some form of communion or an obscenity she can't yet imagine.

She rises up and pads slowly toward him, his VOICE coming gradually into range.

It is not the voice of a demon. It is the voice of a man who has endured an eternity of suffering.

DRACULA

(to the cross)

You knew all this would come to pass.

(beat)

But then, it was written in my destiny that I would betray you, wasn't it? You told me so. Admit it-- you needed me. YOU COULD NOT HAVE BECOME WHAT YOU ARE WITHOUT ME.

(beat)

Oh, but you weren't the one left abandoned, were you? Even as you hung there pleading to your beloved Father...

Two thousand years of accumulated rage finally find voice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRACULA (cont'd)
 You want me to repent? Seek forgiveness?
 Absolution? For what?
 (beat)
 I TRIED TO DIE FOR YOU AND YOU
 WOULDN'T HAVE IT!!

He paces like a caged animal.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 Have you counted the souls I've led to
 damnation because of you?
 (beat)
 All the times you could have stopped
 me. But you looked away. Why? Why?!
 Was it really worth the price of all
 those innocent souls, just to watch my
 agony go on and on?
 (beat)
 If I am damned, then so are your
 children. All of them. Heaven is about
 to become a very very lonely place.

CLOSE ON THE FACE OF CHRIST. It looks down, silent and
 serene.

DRACULA
 Goodbye old friend. The first two
 thousand years were yours. The rest
 are mine.

Dracula turns back to Mary, regards her with a
 sympathetic smile.

DRACULA (cont'd)
 You must be starving.

He gently guides her up to

THE GREENHOUSE

where MARCUS AND THE THREE CONCUBINES stand waiting.

Off an unspoken command, they PART TO REVEAL--

SIMON'S BATTERED BODY

lashed to an upright post.

DRACULA
 It only seems fitting that he be your
 first.

Mary steps back in revulsion. A revulsion that quickly
 succumbs to NEED.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DRACULA (cont'd)

You can't fight it, Mary. I'm afraid
blood has always been the currency of
our realm.

Simon doesn't stir. Only his PULSING JUGULAR gives any
hint of life.

EXTREME CLOSE ON MARY

Blood ruptures into her iris. Pupil NARROWS down to a
feral slit.

Gums RECEDE over lengthening canines.

BEHIND HER

DIGITAL SIGNBOARD flashes the STATIONS OF THE CROSS...
VIRGIN MARY... FACE OF CHRIST, WEeping...

...as Mary bends down over Simon. Lowers her mouth to
his neck.

GO EXTREMELY CLOSE

to see her BITE CLEAR THROUGH HER OWN LIP.

Blood GUSHES from the puncture wound as she presses her
mouth to his jugular.

Rivulets of blood trickle down Simon's neck while Mary
PRETENDS TO FEED.

CONCUBINES

lick their own lips in vicarious rapture...

...as Dracula watches impassively. Does he know?

Mary straightens up, dripping blood. Smiles lustily back
at Dracula.

MARY

Now I want his head.

Dracula studies her with laser eyes.

MARY (cont'd)

Think of what he's done. The heads
he's taken.

Marcus rubs his mangled neck in glaring acknowledgement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARY

(beat)
They were your children... Our
children.

She crosses over to where

SIMON'S WEAPONS

lie piled in a corner of the greenhouse.

Dracula watches, inscrutable, as she retrieves Simon's
TANTO BLADE and returns, sword gripped loosely at her side.

Dracula never takes his eyes off her, even as she HOLDS
OUT THE SWORD... takes his hand in hers... and sensually
wraps his fingers around the hilt.

Dracula's other hand SUDDENLY CLAMPS DOWN ON MARY'S.

DRACULA

No.

(nods)
He's yours. You do it.

They regard one another as players in a high-stakes poker
game. But who's bluffing who?

Mary slowly leans forward and...

KISSES HIM

on the cheek. Leaves behind a bloody imprint.

Drawing away, she turns back to Simon.

Simon stirs. Moans weakly as the concubines lift him off
the post and lower him to the ground in a KNEELING HUNCH.

NEW ANGLE

It's only now that Solina can see that there IS NO BITE
WOUND ON SIMON'S NECK.

She turns to Dracula...

...as Mary winds back and SWINGS OVER SIMON--

--BEHEADING SOLINA, LUCY AND VALERIE IN ONE FURIOUS SLASH--

--before completing the arc by DRIVING THE BLADE STRAIGHT
INTO DRACULA'S CHEST.

BETRAYAL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

hits Dracula full force.

He staggers backward off the sword shaft, clutching his chest.

Mary slips past him and out of the greenhouse.

Dracula blinks thickly. Draws a breath. And follows her.

Leaving Simon deliriously alone with

MARCUS

who snatches up one of Simon's BEHEADING WEAPONS, regards it with a sneer.

MARCUS

Lemme guess. The pointy end goes this way.

SWOOSH-- Simon barely ducks the first swing. Crabs backward, TOPPLING PLANTERS into Marcus's path.

Scrambling to his feet, Simon steps onto the head of a GARDEN HOE, levering it up into his open fist.

He blocks and parries Marcus' repeated thrusts, each closer than the last.

OUTSIDE THE GREENHOUSE

Dracula bears down on Mary, burning with rage.

DRACULA

Try to deceive me with petty little parlor tricks...

Mary trips, goes down. Scrambles to her feet.

DRACULA (cont'd)

Who do you think you are? God's little whore? Look around. You think he's here to save you?! You think he even CARES?!

INSIDE GREENHOUSE

Marcus backs Simon up against the far wall of the greenhouse. No where left to run.

MARCUS

(hisses)

Who's the bitch now?

He lowers his shoulders and CHARGES FULL TILT INTO SIMON--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

--BLASTING HIM STRAIGHT THROUGH THE GREENHOUSE GLASS and the structural supports.

GREENHOUSE IMPLODES in a cascade of crystal shards.

SIMON

lands in a shower of glass, MARCUS' HANDS WRAPPED TIGHT AROUND HIS THROAT.

TILT UP SLIGHTLY

to see that Marcus' neck is unfortunately crooked between the blades of a pair of large HEDGE CLIPPERS, gripped in Simon's hands.

Marcus gives a final, one-upped grimace--

--as Simon SNAPS HIS HEAD OFF with a satisfying SNICK.

Simon rolls to his feet and gives the head an impressive PENALTY KICK that sends it rocketing off the rooftop.

He looks to

MARY

who brandishes her tanto blade as she backpeddles away from Dracula.

Dracula opens his arms with a savage grin.

DRACULA

You still don't understand, Mary. I'm not like the others. Stab me through the heart, sever my neck. It doesn't matter. I can't die.

MARY

Everybody can die...
(hoists the sword over
her head)
Even you...

DIGITAL SCREEN FLASHES A NEW IMAGE-- GIOTTO'S "LAST SUPPER." Jesus holding the chalice aloft to his 12 apostles.

PUNCH IN ON JUDAS-- moneybag clutched in one hand, his head encircled by A BLACK HALO.

SIMON

freezes, in sudden recognition.

SIMON

The Black Halo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

AS MARY FLINGS THE SWORD WITH ALL HER MIGHT--

--not at Dracula--

--but at the giant NEON CROSS directly above and behind him.

SWORD STRIKES DEAD CENTER, shattering the plastic enclosure, severing the tubes and causing the CROSS TO ERUPT in a FURY of GLASS and SPARKS.

DIGITAL SCREEN BLOWS NEXT-- hurling chunks of the front panel out like daggers.

FEED WIRES ARC AND SPIT from around the ruptured cross, surrounding the Christ figure in a fiery corona OF RADIATING SPARKS.

All of which silhouettes the FIGURE OF DRACULA as he approaches Mary with blazing meltdown eyes.

Mary backs up to the roof's edge. Dracula advances on her.

DRACULA

Go back to your god. See if he'll still have you.

He grabs hold of her, starts to FLING HER OFF THE ROOF.

Simon lunges for a length of ELECTRICAL WIRE flapping from the shattered cross like a tentacle. He jerks it free and LASHES OUT AT DRACULA.

FOLLOW THE ELECTRICAL WIRE

as it WHIPS AROUND DRACULA'S NECK, coiling several times.

SIMON

HANG HIM! FINISH WHAT HE STARTED!

Mary THROWS HERSELF BACKWARD and YANKS DRACULA WITH HER.

They both PLUMMET several yards before the wire CATCHES and--
WIDE

--RIPS THE WHOLE CROSS APPARATUS FROM ITS MOORINGS, TOPPLING IT OFF THE ROOF WITH A SHRIEK OF TWISTING METAL.

THE CROSS

HURTLES DOWNWARD behind Mary and Dracula, STREAKING COMET TRAILS OF SPARK AND FIRE.

THE ANCHOR CABLE AT THE BASE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

finally loses its slack and SNAPS TAUT, stopping the freefalling cross and with it--

THE WIRE STILL COILED AROUND DRACULA'S NECK.

Neck SNAPS with a HORRIBLE CRUNCH of tearing gristle.

Dracula and Mary hang suspended by the noose around Dracula's neck.

One look in the vampire's eyes is enough to see that HE IS DYING.

THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN

ribbons the sky in purple and orange.

SPARKS

continue showering down from above, like a billion falling stars.

ON DRACULA

His weakening grip is all that keeps Mary from falling.

With his last breath, he struggles to speak-- a hoarse, inhuman whisper.

DRACULA (cont'd)
(choking)
Always...

Mary slips through his hands...

DRACULA (cont'd)
...and...

They're now only connected by their curled fingertips...

DRACULA (cont'd)
...forever.

THEIR TWO HANDS PART--

--and Mary FALLS...

THE FIRST DIRECT RAYS OF THE SUN SLIDE DOWN OVER DRACULA. Almost instantly, his body begins to SIZZLE and BURN.

TIME EXTENSION--

Mary CONTINUES TO FLAIL DOWNWARD the ground RUSHING up to meet her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

Only her feet land softly. Nimbly. Like a cat.

From the shadows, she straightens and looks upward at
DRACULA

whose body is now FULLY AFLAME.

ON THE ROOFTOP ABOVE HIM

Simon limps into view. Gazes down at Mary. A distance
of only six stories separates them.

It might as well be a universe.

Mary acknowledges him with a stoic smile, then retreats
into the shrinking darkness.

ON SIMON

He closes his eyes, letting the sun's rays wash him clean.

ON DRACULA

His charred body spins slowly in the breeze as we SLOWLY
MATCH-DISSOLVE TO:

JUDAS

hanging from his gnarled tree.

BACK TO DRACULA

As if an endless circle has finally closed, Dracula's
face relaxes into a look of transcendent PEACE.

CUT TO:

A COFFIN LID

POUNDS DOWN over that same face.

RISE UP to a ROW OF VAMPIRE SKULLS, lining a long acrylic
enclosure. Each tagged and bar-coded:

PITTMAN, MARCUS USA 00
PORTERSMITH, SOLINA UK 00
BLETH, VALERIE USA 00
CROCKETT, SLEDGE USA 00
HARASIMIYAK, ANIA USA 00
WESTERMAN, LUCY USA 00

...and about 40 more to round out the current body count.

KEEP RISING to a full overhead view of

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE NEW INTERNMENT VAULT,

brilliant white, like a clean room.

Simon stands before the seamless alloy coffin. Turns and walks out as we--

KEEP RISING... STRAIGHT THROUGH THE CEILING and up to--

EXT - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

--where MARY stands against the RISING MOON like a sentinal. Beyond, the SKYLINE OF MANHATTAN.

She turns INTO FRAME, eyes flash ice blue-- rimmed in blood red.

And that's where we leave her, alone on the edge of a rooftop...

...alone on the brink of eternity.

FADE OUT