

Harbor Season 2  
Episode 4: Skeletons and Secrets

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**SCENE 1: COLD OPEN, LEAH'S CONDO BACKYARD - MID AFTERNOON**

Digging. Shovel in dirt, Leah grunting with effort. Tinny radio playing Danse Macabre to set the mood.

LEAH:

You little bastard maggots won't get my garlic this time... Out smartin' you is (heaves the shovel) easy, ah... Oh Lord, please let me get at least a few bulbs next year...

TEENY:

(Distant)

Leah! Ya got a visitor!

A pair of footsteps 'round the corner, followed by another-

TEENY: (cont'd)

Now you don't gotta skulk around the cul de sac...

SEDUM:

(As Nuller)

Yes, thank you very much, Ms. Teeny.

NARRATOR:

Teeny came a-tottering around the back of the condo's edge, pulling Mr. Nuller by the elbow. Leah rolled a handful of garlic cloves in her apron pocket.

LEAH:

Sight for sore eyes, aren't you both!

SEDUM:

I do think I can manage from here.

TEENY:

(Grumbling)

Someone's gotta keep a bead on you...

(To Leah, lower)

You holler if you need anything, alright honey?

LEAH:

I will.

TEENY:

I got eyes out, Nuller. You watch for 'em.

SEDUM:  
Indeed planning on watching, yes  
ma'am.

Teeny starts off.

TEENY:  
I been thinkin' about gettin' a dog!  
A big dog. And a gun. But I gotta  
find a guy who can forge some papers...  
So watch it!

LEAH:  
Ooh, exciting! See you downtown  
tonight!

TEENY:  
See you, Leah!

SEDUM:  
(Low)  
... Should I be worried about doing an,  
ah, exchange here... ?

LEAH:  
No, it's just us ladies lookin' out  
for each other.

SEDUM:  
Ah. Feminine camaraderie.

LEAH:  
(Smiling)  
It's quite literally a saving grace  
sometimes. Did you know men can be  
horrifying? Anyway! Do you have my  
mushies?

SEDUM:  
(Rustling out a  
plastic bag)  
Of course.

LEAH:  
(Smiling)  
Oh thank God, Sedum, you're an angel.

SEDUM:  
I didn't forget last year and I won't  
forget this year either. Happy  
Halloween.

LEAH:  
Thank you, right back at ya.

NARRATOR:  
Neatly folded bills exchanged hands,  
along with the seasonal treat.

SEDUM:  
Thank you... Might I ask, are you  
planning on imbibing tonight? What  
with the children working?

LEAH:  
What, the kids? My adult offspring?

SEDUM:  
Yes, those.

LEAH:  
Me fretting up a storm ain't gonna  
give 'em any more support than if I  
were high off my ass. But... It is a  
weeknight. So no trips. You  
comforted?

SEDUM:  
(Somewhat relieved)  
Reasonably so.

LEAH:  
And besides, I'm "on" tonight.  
Harbor's ghost stories need to be  
told.

SEDUM:  
Oh, do they?- Anyway, ah... how have  
you been? Tell me, are you well after  
the OSL experience, now it's been a  
few months?

LEAH:  
That... You know, they say if you truly  
love somethin', to let it go...

SEDUM:  
Yes, specifically to Baltimore.

LEAH:  
It's a very old saying... I think... No  
more disc-jockeys for me.

SEDUM:  
I empathize. Everyone remembers their  
first Radio Host-

SAM:  
(Distant, muffled,  
breathing heavily  
from biking)  
-Mooom?

SEDUM:  
Ah- (He shifts back to Nuller)

SAM:  
(He opens the back  
door)  
Mom-! OH, uh... hi?

LEAH:  
Hey sweets! What'cha doin' home so  
early?

SAM:  
I came back to... get... ready... Why are,  
uh... Why are you talking to mom, Mr.  
Nuller? Hi by the way.

SEDUM:  
Hello... Ah, neighborly duties.

SAM:  
Sure.

LEAH:  
Going out with friends tonight? For  
the festival?

SAM:  
Yeah! Yeah... my... gas station buds.

LEAH:  
They are like family at this point,  
I'm guessing. Not that I've ever met  
them.

SAM:  
Ah, yeah, they're just so busy..

LEAH:  
So what're ya going as?

SAM:  
 Uh... (Under his breath) I gotta... wear  
 my suit so... (Louder) FBI man?

LEAH:  
 (Genial, just  
 feeding her son  
 bullshit)  
 Wow. Never thought you'd be one to  
 pretend like you were a part of an  
 operation like that.

SAM:  
 UGH, don't get me STARTED- Do you  
 know what the FBI's done, where they  
 come from?! It's awful history!

LEAH:  
 The costume is really gonna go over  
 well with your conscience.

SAM:  
 (Stops before he  
 goes too far)  
 AH-... Yes. Well- Not FBI man, maybe...  
 Uh... Wedding bartender.

LEAH:  
 Spooky!

SAM:  
 Mhm... So, I'm gonna...

SEDUM:  
 Please don't let us keep you.

The door closes.

SEDUM: (cont'd)  
 It astounds me how neither of them  
 have figured it out yet...

LEAH:  
 (Bright smile)  
 My children are dumbasses.

### TITLE SEQUENCE

### SCENE 2: LEAH'S CONDO, BACKYARD, LATE AFTERNOON

Sam is walking through the fallen leaves.

SAM:

I think this is far enough out... No one comes back here, not this far behind the condos. (Inhales, exhales, prepares to sing)  
Hovan, Hovan, Gorry o Go, Gorry o'-

A small rush of electricity, of wind. J is there.

J:

(Smiling, tender)  
Who calls so loud?

SAM:

Wow, fast.

J:

For you.

NARRATOR:

J wrapped his vaguely ethereal body behind Sam, affectionately inspecting his charge.

J:

Dearheart... You seem nervous. What troubles you?

SAM:

... Tonight's gonna be big. A lot of people are on edge and... I wanted to make sure we were ok. From yesterday.

J:

(Very touched)  
Ohh, Strange Son. Of course. Of course! Disagreements happen and emotions are ever present. I don't fault you for that, never. It's nature!

SAM:

(Smiling, assured)  
Thank you. That's good to hear. Ok. Uhm, I have to head out-

J:

Already? You're so dutiful.

SAM:

It helps when you get paid. But-

J:  
But...?

SAM:  
... If I need you, at all tonight, can I... ?

J:  
Yes. Call me. Or fall asleep! You know how. We don't want a repeat of June!

SAM:  
Exactly. Thank you, I'm sorry for the-

J:  
Hush, now. You'll do wonderfully tonight, Samson... You don't need me to tell you that.

SAM:  
It doesn't hurt.

J:  
That is true. I'll have to keep a distance, but... I will be listening where I can to your wonders.

SAM:  
Ok. I'm gonna help!

J:  
Go, protect your home, little guardian.

SAM:  
I will.

**SCENE 3: EXT. MAIN STREET, EVENING/DUSK, FESTIVAL PREP**

The band is warming up. Last-minute prep is getting sorted. Al jogs up to Valen.

AL:  
(Lowering her voice)  
Tell me ya'll did somethin' with the tranq guns, Valen, cause I wouldn't usually care but if we got weirdos runnin' 'round with those it'll be a problem.



VALEN:  
 (Straight faced,  
 bemused)  
 What're you talking about, Al? It's  
 like you're insinuating I'd be a part  
 of sabotage. Ridiculous.

AL:  
 Heh, ok, honestly though.

VALEN:  
 (Low)  
 Told you, Roose wouldn't stand for  
 it.

AL:  
 What'd she do...?

VALEN:  
 She has her ways...

**SCENE 4: INT. POLICE STATION, THE NIGHT BEFORE**

-Flashback-. Clattering, Roose grunting, shuffling in the  
 armory. Quick footsteps outside.

ROOSE:  
 Made of scrap steel... how cheap.  
 Disgraceful. Can't even melt these  
 weapons down-

RYAN:  
 (Muffled thru the  
 door)  
 Not scared of mice, tiny fuckers-

The door opens quick-

ROOSE:  
 Ungh, oh, shit-

RYAN:  
 Get outta the armory, you little-  
 (Gasps)

Roose is clicking and growling, rising up to her full  
 intimidating presence.

RYAN: (cont'd)  
 (Terrified)  
 T-T-This is private property, and  
 you-you are under arrest by Deputy  
 Ryan- Ry... What- what a-are you-... ?!

ROOSE:  
 MOTHS! FEAST!

An eruption of moths, flapping and fluttering at the Cop. He spasms, shrieking.

RYAN:  
 Oh GOD, my clothes!!! MY CLOTHES!!!

ROOSE:  
 (Over the din)  
 What did you see here, Deputy?!

RYAN:  
 (Trying to bat away  
 the moths)  
 Oh, augh, ah-

ROOSE:  
 TELL ME WHAT YOU SAW.

RYAN:  
 I don't, I saw, you-you-!

ROOSE:  
 DON'T MAKE ME TAKE YOUR EYES.

RYAN:  
 (Sobbing)  
 Nothing!! I saw nothin'!! Please,  
 please-

ROOSE:  
 Good. Nothing... And now you get to  
 keep seeing.

Roose is booking it out of the room, huffing and puffing, the guns clattering in a bag with her.

COP 2:  
 (Distant)  
 Ryan, I heard- WOAHH- Where're your  
 clothes-?!

ROOSE:  
 Seamless... ! HA! Hehueh, "seamless"...

**SCENE 5: EXT. MAIN STREET, EVENING/DUSK, FESTIVAL PREP**

Back to the present. Glenda strides towards them.

AL:  
I wish I knew her secrets.

VALEN:  
No, you don't.

GLEENDA:  
We back on track yet? Or we headin'  
for a shutdown?

VALEN:  
'Bit late for that, Mayor, parking's  
already full round the block.

GLEENDA:  
This is the safety of a lotta people  
we're talking about.

AL:  
There's been no luck findin' any. But  
it could be a good thing- Even tranq  
guns bring up nerves. (Al's phone  
rings) Uh, hang on...

GLEENDA:  
Soothes nerves in others.

BECKER (PHONE):  
Al?

AL:  
Yep?

BECKER (PHONE):  
We're switching to plan B. Officers  
will be carrying handguns tonight.

GLEENDA:  
Becker say handguns? Not my first  
choice, but better than nothin'.

BECKER (PHONE):  
Copy that?

AL:  
(Caught off guard)  
Yeah. I copy. I'll let Valen know...

BECKER (PHONE):  
10-4, get back asap.

AL:  
Yep.

A screeching of feedback from the stage.

GLEENDA:  
(Raising her voice  
to call out)  
Agh, Chenelle, we're fixin' that  
right now; show me what's going on-  
Countin' on you, ladies.

VALEN:  
Rodger dodger, mayor.

Glenda walks away.

VALEN: (cont'd)  
We were expecting something like this  
to happen.

AL:  
What's the lesser evil? Incapacitated  
or Dead?

VALEN:  
She got to a lot of the revolvers  
too. Jammed, not that they'd know at  
first glance.

AL:  
Hah, they were missing russian  
roulette from the game lineup.

VALEN:  
We're trying. Listen, I'll be keeping  
the lieutenant busy. If they're  
distracted with how little I know  
about say, World War 2, do you think  
the other 10 boys will have much  
direction? Eh?

AL:  
Damn, you're good- they'll never  
resist that. Alright, then I'll keep...  
him occupied.

VALEN:  
Don't destroy yourself.

AL:  
Take your own advice.

Al starts away.

**SCENE 6: INT. BATHROOM, MAIN STREET SHOPS, DUSK**

Muffled crowd noises, music drifting through the cracks in the wall. Water running, Sam is splashing his face. The faucet turns off. Water drips from the tip of his nose.

NARRATOR:  
Water swirled down the sink dappled in smooth river stones. Slate Cafe and Creamery's bathroom an oddly clean nest amidst the impending weight of the crowd pressing on Main Street. Sam's heart throbbed. Droplets slid from the tip of his nose in a steady beat.

SAM:  
(To himself, very soft, almost mouthing)  
I can help. I will help..

The bathroom door squeaks open.

CRUX:  
Are you ready?

SAM:  
Yeah, I'm ready, yeah.

Sam moves away, toward Crux and stops.

SAM: (cont'd)  
Are you?

CRUX:  
More than you, you're drenched.

SAM:  
Cools me down. It's... a lot to... ingest right now. I'll be good, though.

CRUX:  
There's a drink waiting for you at the bar.

SAM:  
Oh, thanks. You didn't have to.-

NARRATOR:  
Crux didn't move from in front of the door. Instead he pulled a white cloth from his pocket... and looked back up, expression inscrutable, a plain black mask adorning his face.

CRUX:  
You called Valen out yesterday.

NARRATOR:  
Sam's chest swelled as Crux pressed the handkerchief to his cheek, dabbing away the wetness.

CRUX:  
It was good of you.

SAM:  
I-I just don't think we're getting the whole story.

CRUX:  
Of course not. The DoCA is full of skeletons... by extension, Harbor too.

SAM:  
(Mispronouncing  
their last name)  
Like Enfys O'Cuinn?

CRUX:  
(Correcting his  
pronunciation)  
O'Cuinn. So, thats what you've been reading up on.

SAM:  
Yeah. They seemed... enigmatic.

CRUX:  
(Slight laugh)  
They were a piece of work. Never seen a person so up their own ass one moment, perfectly relaxed the next. It was jarring. Especially at the end there...

SAM:  
Al liked them.

CRUX:  
Because Enfys liked her. Different  
story when things weren't as  
reciprocal.

SAM:  
Skeletons and secrets?

CRUX:  
Now you're getting it. Like the Gun  
factory, and the various missing  
people, and the beacon that is Harbor  
for us cast offs, like Director  
Deco... -

SAM:  
I've read that name. Wasn't he  
Research Director?

CRUX:  
Mhm, Franklin Deco. He hates the  
DoCA, you know.

SAM:  
I didn't think we did anything that  
groundbreaking to warrant hate...

CRUX:  
I think that was part of his  
quitting- got tired of playing by the  
rules... Do you think you can get  
somewhere with all that digging? Four  
months in?

NARRATOR:  
The soft handkerchief brushed slower.

SAM:  
I do. I want to. Do you?

CRUX:  
I think I already know what's going  
on... I'm on the right path.

SAM:  
(Intuitive)  
You feel like you know...

CRUX:  
... Knowing and feeling are two  
entirely different states, Samson. I  
know the difference.

NARRATOR:  
D amp fabric skimmed over his lips.

SAM:  
(A husky challenge)  
And you've got them both on lock-  
down... Crux?

CRUX:  
(Tempted... )  
... Always. (Bringing himself back)  
Your lips are chapped.

He opens the door and departs.

CRUX: (cont'd)  
Come out when you're ready.

The door shuts. Sam turns back around, turns back on the water full blast, and starts re-splashing his face, making nervous/sexually frustrated noises.

**SCENE 7: EXT. MAIN STREET, EVENING/DUSK**

The night is in full SWING. Children laughing and running. People clinking together bottles. Halloweeny music playing. Suddenly, a SCREAM (Joan).

A pair of footsteps come running on pavement.

BECKER:  
Faster, Al!

They cross over onto grass.

AL:  
We've been hearing screamin' all  
night. Excuse us-

YOUNG WOMAN:  
Somethin' happening??

BECKER:  
Everything is fine, official  
business- (To Al) I am specifically  
tuned into the sound of a woman's  
distress, I know that sound from  
anywhere.

AL:  
That's ominous.



BECKER:  
Yes, it is. Anything could be  
happening.

AL:  
Ok, let's try *stopping* it, then-

JOAN:  
(Screaming, Distant)  
THAT IS NOT SPOOKY DECOR!!!

AL:  
They're in the maze.

NARRATOR:  
A wall of leaves towered over Al and  
Becker, deep emerald and burgundy  
foliage speckled with twisting gas  
lamps...

AL:  
(A proud smile)  
Well that got big.

BECKER:  
Where's the back door?-

AL:  
They didn't make one, it was last  
minute- We're gettin' lost.

She darts into the doorway. The world outside becomes  
suddenly muffled. There's rushed conversation close by, but  
inaudible. Becker brings up the rear.

BECKER:  
Where are they?-

AL:  
This way.

They duck and rush through, the conversation getting louder.

JOAN:  
So this is a sick joke?!

SEDUM:  
(Nuller)  
Of course not- I, I sincerely don't  
know how it got there!

HAROLD:  
If it wasn't real, I'd be impressed.

JOAN:  
But it is real. It's horribly,  
rottingly real. Where's your manager?

SEDUM:  
(Nuller)  
Ah, I, ah, am contracted in, as it  
turns out...

HAROLD:  
Weren't you at that toy shop fire... ?

Al skids to a stop.

NARRATOR:  
Backed into a dead-end, three Humans  
stood- Or rather 2 Humans and one  
look-alike. Sedum as Nuller gave a  
pained smile up to Al, which slid  
away as soon as Becker appeared. An  
older Human couple, Joan and Harold,  
spun around. Above all of them,  
wedged in the leaves and fronds, a  
dismembered rabbit. Delicate innards  
draped like lacy party streamers over  
the branches.

BECKER:  
(Catching his breath  
and also trying to  
process how to  
approach this)  
We... are here to help. What seems to  
be the problem?

HAROLD:  
There's a pagan offering stuck up  
there. It's not appealing.

JOAN:  
It's disgusting!

SEDUM:  
(Nuller)  
It is coming right down, rest  
assured.

AL:  
I'll help you.

She crosses towards them.

BECKER:  
When did you find this?

JOAN:  
Just now! You're with the police?-  
You need to look into this, this is  
sick.

Their conversation dissolves behind Al and Sedum's.

SEDUM:  
(Nuller, low to Al)  
The growth took it up too rapidly-  
it's supposed to stay in the roots.

AL:  
(Low)  
Last-minute hedge ritual, isn't it.

SEDUM:  
(Nuller, low,  
dissatisfied)  
Yes, don't worry, it had already died  
before I found it.

AL:  
(Low, slightly  
queasy)  
Uh, well... it worked but, you know,  
looking at it... is pretty bad.

SEDUM:  
(Nuller, low)  
Hm? Oh, yes, nasty, but Mother Earth  
values efficacy over pleasantness,  
unfortunately.

The harsh buzz of Becker's radio as he's calling out.

BECKER:  
Officer needed at hedge maze  
entrance, complaint form needed. (The  
radio buzzes out) They'll meet you  
out front. We'll get you taken care  
of.

The two walk off.

JOAN:  
Thank you.

HAROLD:  
 How do we find our way out again...  
 (Gasp) Joan... Joan we could-

JOAN:  
 Put that lighter away, Harold, for  
 the last time...

A moment. This is the first time Sedum and Becker have been  
 around each other for a while.

BECKER:  
 (A twitch in his  
 demeanor)  
 You really have gone feral.

AL:  
 We'll get this cleaned up and go back  
 to patrols.

BECKER:  
 What, do you eat it? After it's been  
 rotting a while? (Half a laugh,  
 snide) We could've been feeding you  
 what you actually wanted if you were  
 honest.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller dropping.  
 He's tense, feeling  
 vulnerable)  
 I... do not eat like this... It's an old  
 tradition of plant enrichment-

BECKER:  
 It's revolting and barbaric.

SEDUM:  
 Plants eat like we do, just not as  
 prettily...

BECKER:  
 Put your face back on, you're going  
 to cause nightmares.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller)  
 Ah... yes...

AL:  
(Yanking a part  
down)  
I'll meet you out front, Director.  
This is (Splorch of viscera) ahg...  
gross. You don't need to be here.-

BECKER:  
(Ignoring her)  
Heard you know something about the  
Gore Field, Null.

SEDUM:  
(Nuller, correcting  
him)  
The Field of Meat?

BECKER:  
Alright, so that is the full name...  
(Thinking) Hm. Tell you what...

NARRATOR:  
Sedum tugged at the black plastic  
band around his Human-again wrist.  
Becker's hand slid to his waistband,  
where the recorder sat hooked. Al  
glanced over her shoulder in time to  
see the red light flick off. She  
turned back to the paint of flesh,  
weighing the options for Sedum and  
herself.

BECKER:  
You divulge what you know about the  
Field, I forget who let this god  
awful slaughter slip by. Sound fair?

SEDUM:  
(Nuller, incredibly  
wary)  
... Why are you interested?

BECKER:  
It's a pile of viscera in the  
mountains that lasts for at least 15  
years. And it obviously has something  
to do with the bad luck tricks. I'm  
curious. Aren't you?

AL:  
-The bad luck's just a thing for  
newcomers, ask around.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller, warning  
 bells going off)  
 How did you make that stretch?

BECKER:  
 I'm not an idiot. There's little to  
 no information for an anomaly that  
 everyone knows but no one's  
 interested in and a grin-and-bear-it  
 attitude for misfortune - Patterns,  
 Null, patterns, keep up ... So, we got  
 a deal?

Rustling of leaves.

AL:  
 Ah- can't reach, just gonna, uh,  
 climb up a little-

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller, Deflecting)  
 There's not much to know. It is, it  
 exists.

BECKER:  
 No shit. What's the location?

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller, getting  
 nervous)  
 Ah, off the top of my head, I am  
 unsure-

BECKER:  
 Trying lying again, better this time?

SEDUM:  
 It never seems to be the best idea to  
 feed your obsessions, Brick, speaking  
 from previous experience.-

BECKER:  
 -You know animal dismemberment  
 indicates sadism, right? People get  
 put on watch lists for behavior like  
 that. Institutionalized.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller, the  
 desperation rising,  
 he's in a literal  
 corner)

It's nature, not sadism- I had found  
 the rabbit already passed and the  
 hedge was consuming it- Messy but,  
 but that's it-

A YANK from the leaves- something hits Becker in the face  
 with a wet SPLAT. Sedum gasps.

BECKER:  
 Ack!- What- (Lets loose a little  
 scream of horror)

NARRATOR:  
 The flickering gas lamps illuminated  
 a dark wetness coating Becker's  
 fingers, and a splotch of muted  
 colors on his neck, splashing up his  
 chin. Putrid innards perfumed him.

Becker is freaking out- it's one of his nightmares, being  
 subjected to the literal rot of the world.

AL:  
 I'M SO SORRY!

NARRATOR:  
 Al clung to the thick wall of leaves,  
 one bandaged hand hanging at her  
 side, smeared with gore. A horrified  
 look on her face.

AL:  
 Shit- sorry, shit- It was stuck!

She rushes over.

BECKER:  
 Goddammit, Al! You stupid fu-  
 (Stopping himself) It's fine, it's-  
 (Gagging at the mess) Jesus Christ-

AL:  
 -There's a bathroom at the park  
 office. I'm so sorry, Director-

BECKER:  
 (Breathing heavily,  
 snapping)  
 Get away. Fuck. Agh. (Laser focus  
 back to Sedum) We're not finished  
 here, Null.

Becker starts off.

SEDUM:  
 (Low, rushed)  
 Why did, you didn't have to- T-thank  
 you-

AL:  
 Stay low and outta his way tonight.  
 There's guns out, real ones, we don't  
 know which ones work and which ones  
 don't.

SEDUM:  
 Alright- But you-

BECKER:  
 (Distant)  
 AL! HERE!

AL:  
 (A spark of her is  
 returning)  
 -I love you!

SEDUM:  
 I love you too! Be...

She runs off.

SEDUM: (cont'd)  
 Careful...

**SCENE 8: EXT. MAIN STREET, NIGHT, FESTIVAL**

LAUNKE:  
 ... And then, then, we got ice cream,  
 but it was too cold for Launke's  
 teeth, so Launke helped Launke turn  
 it into milk broth-

SAM:  
 (Placating the  
 child)  
 Wooow. That's really kind of you.



CRUX:  
 (Vaguely disturbed,  
 low)  
 Don't encourage him, Sam...

LAUNKE:  
 We like helping with soups.

SAM:  
 So Launke, speaking of ah... your...  
 other Launke-

LAUNKE:  
 Yes, Launke.

SAM:  
 Right, he's at home with your parents  
 tonight?

LAUNKE:  
 No, silly! Launke is... oh, right  
 there!

Sam and Crux turn about and jump in surprise. The Cryptid  
 Launke gurgles.

SAM:  
 OH, Launke how long have-  
 (Remembering) HA HA, what a cool  
 costume!!

LAUNKE:  
 (Giggling)  
 There's no outfit-!

CRUX:  
 (Playing along)  
 -SO IMPRESSIVE! Look at the detail!

NARRATOR:  
 Cryptid Launke cocked his head, the  
 same mass of brown fur, roughly child  
 sized, as had always been. Human  
 Launke skipped through Sam and Crux  
 to grab hands with his counter-part.

YOUNG WOMAN:  
 Hah! Good mask, kid. Stick it to the  
 man.

NARRATOR:  
 A stranger ruffled the furred head as  
 she passed.

Cryptid Launke purrs/growls.

LAUNKE:  
 (Sing-songing)  
 Hands to ourselves! Hands at our  
 sides! Hands don't touch-!

CRUX:  
 (Placating as the  
 person walks away)  
 Adorable! (Turning whip-serious) How  
 did you both get *in here*, Launke?

Cryptid Launke gurgles in confusion.

LAUNKE:  
 Up through the sewers like always!

CRUX:  
 That explains no bracelets.

SAM:  
 Where are your parents??

LAUNKE:  
 (Lost in the  
 goodness of the  
 sewers)  
 The steam is good for our skin...

CRUX:  
 You must go back down right now, if  
 the Humans catch you, the police will  
 do bad things to Launke.

LAUNKE:  
 (Innocently,  
 giggling)  
*If they catch us!*

TEENY:  
 (Distant)  
 Look! They're bringin' out the  
 drones!

Bosswuin flaps overhead, passing fast.

SAM:  
 Oh geeze...

BOSSWUIN:  
 AHahaha!! I'll lick your dad!!!

Parts of the crowd giggle, others react in surprise.

BOSSWUIN: (cont'd)  
(Distant)  
Seriously, who's down...?

COP 2:  
(Distant)  
Mother of God...

RYAN:  
(Distant)  
They can fly too?! God, God, what're  
we doing, it's infested here-

COP 2:  
(Distant)  
Nut up, come on. We need the squad.

Cops rush past.

SAM:  
Evening, fellas.

RYAN:  
Out of the way, DoCA-

NARRATOR:  
The young officer's eyes fell on  
Crux, who'd conveniently stepped in  
front of Launke, hand drumming over  
his mask in faux-curiosity. A black  
bracelet in view.

CRUX:  
Any way we can help, officer?

RYAN:  
(Horrorified,  
disgusted)  
Wh- you, you, you monsters are  
everywhere.

CRUX:  
And permitted to be.

COP 2:  
Keep moving, Ryan!

NARRATOR:  
The officer's mouth arched up in a  
grimace, staring at Crux. He stumbled  
forward, behind his partner.

They move on.

SAM:  
Fucker...

LAUNKE:  
No bad words!

SAM:  
Sorry, sorry.

CRUX:  
(A little laugh)  
I admit it. I am a bit proud...

SAM:  
Of?

CRUX:  
No one can keep the weirdos down for long. Maybe even a little pride in you, too, Launke... you little... agitators...

Launke GASPS and grabs a hold of him in an enormous hug from both sides. Crux actually makes a "mouth" noise, rather than telepathically, out of surprise.

LAUNKE:  
You mean it?? Aaah, we can't wait to disappoint you next!!

SAM:  
Crux is a little busy for uh... this level of attachment. Come here.

Sam pries Launke off of him, both Launkes squeaking out saddened sighs.

CRUX:  
(Frazzled at the sudden touch)  
Cheers, Sam. Ah-, Valen's coming, Launke, go run along. Stay out of the cops way.

LAUNKE:  
They won't catch us, Daddy-!

Launke runs away, into the crowd as Valen approaches.

CRUX:  
PLEASE don't call me that!-

VALEN:  
Eh... So you've noticed the "breach".

SAM:  
They're harmless.

CRUX:  
Of course they are. It's not like  
Jank comes 'round things like this.

VALEN:  
(Sighs)  
I know, we're fine just like always...  
'police are getting bored... it'd be  
funny, except for, you know, the  
firearms on violent men prone to  
flying off the handle.

SAM:  
Yeah... Spotted any... (Lower) Pyre-esque  
folks...?

VALEN:  
Oh, you mean the scape-goat? Hah!  
Nope! We should be keeping an eye on  
trigger-happy humans, like I said,  
but, here we are, looking for a ghost  
we haven't seen in months. Good  
times.

CRUX:  
We'd be trying harder to keep the  
cop's attention but... they don't seem  
to like existing near me...

VALEN:  
Have they been harassing you?

CRUX:  
Nothing I can't handle. What do we do  
if the Pyre shows up?

VALEN:  
I told you: Bring 'em to me. Don't  
hand them over.

CRUX:  
Ah, sorry, it's just... a lot's  
happening... I'll remember.

VALEN:  
Good.

SAM:

(Lower)

What if they get violent again?

VALEN:

(Lower)

Keep a lid on til Roose an' I show up. Get humans away from the scene and distract. Right? Right. (Inhales, moving on) Right! Keep up the... warnings for Cryptid folk... for staying safe. Top priority.

SAM:

Are you doing ok, Valen?

VALEN:

I'm not a main concern tonight. (Catches sight) Ah-hah, here they come- Stay frosty, lads. (Demeanor changing as she heads out) Lieutenant Jones! What D'ya say to a quick scan of O'Tooley's, eh? Come on, now! Bet you're thirsty...

CRUX:

... Sam, would you mind if we took a break? Somewhere quiet?

SAM:

Is it all a little much?

CRUX:

(Making excuses)

No, it's fine- my legs are... getting tired.

SAM:

(Knowing that it's a lie)

Yeah, I hear you. Come on, right in here.

NARRATOR:

Sam weaved through the crowd, in between two of Mainstreet's shops. The alley was cool, dark, slightly damp, a sliver of a cave away from the rush of life.

A couple is making out.

CRUX:  
 What do you think, does that look  
 like public indecency to you...?-

YOUNG WOMAN:  
 Mmmf- ugh-!

YOUNG MAN:  
 O-ah-oh, Shit! Sorry!

They run away.

NARRATOR:  
 Crux slid down the brick wall, to the  
 left of a standing puddle. His head  
 rested back, eyes closed. Sam felt a  
 small smile creep over his face. He  
 leaned against the opposite wall.

Sam sits down as well.

SAM:  
 (Small chuckle)  
 You're so mean.

CRUX:  
 Rutting in an alley- that's sex  
 offender status if you get caught.

SAM:  
 Gnadsy.

CRUX:  
 Though closely related, exhibitionism  
 is not bravery.

SAM:  
 (Playfully  
 sarcastic)  
 They are American heroes.

CRUX:  
 Something was certainly standing at  
 attention...

SAM:  
 Bah... pinnacle of romance at 20.

CRUX:  
 (Heavy sarcasm)  
 Stupidity is such a good look on  
 everyone.

SAM:  
... What was it like when you were  
20?

CRUX:  
... Rough. Exciting only because it was  
new. Bland. Idiotic. I'm sure the  
same for you.

SAM:  
You have way too high of hopes for  
excitement and me five years ago.  
(Testing the waters) How long ago was  
that for you...?

NARRATOR:  
Crux opened his eyes and raised a  
brow. Sam mirrored him.

CRUX:  
How long ago do you think it was?

SAM:  
I am not getting roped into insulting  
you somehow.

CRUX:  
Tell me how much of an old man I am,  
go on.

SAM:  
I don't assume- I've been surprised  
too often. So...?

CRUX:  
(Soft laugh)  
... I already know you know, Sam.

SAM:  
... You can tell that easy?

CRUX:  
There's no expectation in you, nor  
real curiosity. There are lies,  
though.

SAM:  
(Not expecting that)  
Well... Shoot. I'm uh,-



CRUX:

-Needless to say, it's been a while. And bootlegging isn't a lucrative job anymore. (Sam's reaction changes, Crux is tickled) Ooh, didn't know that, did you... ? So I still do have secrets.

SAM:

(Impressed)

You were a bootlegger? A rum-runner??

CRUX:

Don't get too excited- I was bad enough to end up... well, you can hear.

Footsteps are growing louder- someone is coming up fast on their position from behind.

SAM:

Telepathy doesn't strike me like a losing hand.

CRUX:

(Smiling)

Depends on what you pay for it.

A person is practically on top of them, panting hard, excited.

NARRATOR:

A person stopped two strides away from them, a large person, obscured in the dark, from behind the buildings. A wide-brimmed hat, dripping clinking beads over the face, and a heavy, long cloak, wrapped the figure. They seemed to not notice the two men on the ground, hidden in the shadows. Their chest heaved, hands flexing their scaled claws in excitement- Their claws.

THE PYRE:

It's... beautiful...

The Pyre starts giggling in excitement, quiet and only for them.

SAM:

Hey-

They gasp, surprised.

NARRATOR:

The figure stumbled back, head snapping to their right, alighting on Sam. Beneath the hat, veins of orange glowed. A wreath of flame burst around the collar.

THE PYRE:

A-ah!

NARRATOR:

They furiously swatted out the fire, stumbling back.

SAM:

(Recognizing)

H-hey!-

She turns and runs, fast. Sams tumbles to his feet, as does Crux.

SAM: (cont'd)

I think- I think- that was the same as the Pyre! Same thing! But big!!

CRUX:

My God, is there more than one?

Sam takes off running.

SAM:

I think so!

**SCENE 9: EXT. PARK BATHROOM, NIGHT, FESTIVAL**

Paper towels are being ripped out of the dispenser from inside the bathroom. Becker is breathing heavily.

AL:

(Calling in)

Is it all... good? In there? You all done?

Tossing it all in the trash, Becker walks out.

BECKER:

(Snapping)

10 minutes! 10 minutes to get it-it out of my pores. My pores, Al.

NARRATOR:

Becker's hands shook as he readjusted his tie, hair ruffled out of place, but manicured eyebrows still deliciously pristine. Al rocked on her heels, her own hands freshly washed and bare without her wrappings, sullied by thoughtlessness.

BECKER:

You got that... *shit* in my mouth.

AL:

I'm very sorry.

BECKER:

If I get necrosis, or-or a parasite- It's out of your paycheck.

AL:

Totally understand, that's very fair and legal.

BECKER:

(Accusatory)

You said you were terrible at sports.

AL:

Catching. I'm bad at catching.

BECKER:

(Equivalent of a twitching eye)

Apparently your talents lie elsewhere.

AL:

I'm sorry.

BECKER:

Fuck it! (Correcting himself) Screw. It. Anything come in over my radio?

AL:

All quiet, uh, here you go.

BECKER:

(Viciously focused, snatching the radio)

Good. We're going back to the Maze.

AL:  
Shouldn't we get back to the patrol?

BECKER:  
(A determined growl)  
We're going back.

He starts out, Al ducks in front of him.

AL:  
Is that our main goal tonight,  
Director?

BECKER:  
Are you reminding me of our goals,  
Al? Is that to keep civilians safe?  
Hm? But while leaking dangerous  
information about the Pyre, yeah,  
that makes sense, don't worry I get  
it-

AL:  
It was a mistake, I'm sorry-

BECKER:  
Or is it defending Humans but without  
adequate equipment? That'd be too  
scary. Better to let it all magically  
disappear, right?

AL:  
Ok, that wasn't on my watch.

BECKER:  
No, of course not! I bet our goal is  
to expand our knowledge of the  
Aberration population- No, SCRATCH  
that, that's not right for some  
reason! No, it's standing around and  
being inept, isn't it! Is that what  
you want?

AL:  
I just want tonight to go smoothly.

BECKER:  
But it's so SMOOTH already! So  
fucking smooth- (A few people walk  
past) Howdy folks. Having a good  
night?

They murmur as they pass.

AL:  
Considering what we were prepared  
for... ?

RYAN:  
(Buzzes in,  
perfectly timed)  
Becker, come in.

BECKER:  
What?

RYAN:  
This is C squad. Sir, there's,  
there's probably uhhhhh a breach in  
the festival- there's a few  
unnaturals drifting around-

BECKER:  
Then take care of them!

RYAN:  
We would but we can't find the Ground  
Crew Director- and we don't know- do  
we shoot the legs? (Off radio) Is  
that it...? The legs?

BECKER:  
You don't shoot, you take them into  
custody- (fuck me... ) Shoot at  
aggression and violence- not before.

RYAN:  
Oh, yeah, ok. Well... they're fast. And  
we, uh, can't find 'em now?

BECKER:  
Then patrol! Just... patrol.

RYAN:  
There's minors abusing substances, we  
can smell it, and it feels pretty  
important.-

BECKER:  
Control back to DoAA team, I repeat,  
POLICE stay in Human territory, focus  
on Humans, only HUMANS. DON'T SHOOT..  
the Aberrations. If you can help it.  
Don't shoot Humans either.

RYAN:  
10-4.

Becker is trying to control himself, but this is a huge ego blow. He's attempting to get his feet under him.

BECKER:

Why... are you standing in our way, Al?  
Why? Honestly. Why.

AL:

I ain't standing in your way.

BECKER:

Then where are the tranq guns?

A couple of "ahs!" in the background, someone is moving fast through the crowd.

AL:

I wasn't there, I was asleep at home-

BECKER:

Not good enough!- You know where they are-

AL:

-I don't! I don't-... know...

NARRATOR:

Over Becker's shoulder, a figure stumbled out of the crowd, black beaded fringe on their hat swaying wildly- lines of glowing orange over where their face lay in shadow, large size launching them a head above the milling crowd. They glanced around, obviously pursued- and their luminescent green eyes landed on Al, the beads obscuring as soon as they locked together.

BECKER:

I don't believe you! You are a liar- and a sneak, and a pathetic excuse of a Ranger, and you obstruct progress! It eats me alive, you're so close to being competent!- What're you looking at?-

AL:

-YOU'RE RIGHT!

NARRATOR:

He stopped mid-twist. The Large Pyre slid back into the crowd.

(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)  
Words from June swam in Al's head,  
words that haunted her for months.

AL FLASHBACK:  
"The Pyre's got a family."

NARRATOR:  
It sank in. Why the Pyre had been so  
small, so scared and babbling- they  
had been a child. And a child... had to  
come from somewhere.

BECKER:  
I'm... right?

AL:  
I have been sabotaging us. I've been  
obstructing progress. I didn't think  
of it like that before. But you  
saying it, it... it's true.

BECKER:  
Don't patronize me.

AL:  
I'm not.

BECKER:  
What, just like that? Now you get  
it?? ... Why?

AL:  
The way you said it. It made sense...  
Finally.

BECKER:  
(Very wary)  
What are you trying to do?

AL:  
Trying? I've been trying, (forcing  
away her exasperation) you've seen me  
trying for months now. I'm trying to  
be better, to make us get along,  
Becker. You can't deny that I've been  
trying.

BECKER:  
But why tonight?

NARRATOR:  
Al watched his knuckles relax on the  
wad of paper towels in his grip.

NARRATOR AND AL:  
(Echoing thought)  
Manipulation.

AL:  
Because... (Sighs, rather like Sam when he lies) I'm lost. I'm scared and... I didn't have a good enough father figure growing up... And just being around you, outside of the office, how you... take charge... I can't not see it.

NARRATOR:  
Becker blinked.

AL:  
I had an awful dad and then... Sedum. I didn't have the diligence, structure, and I never learned what respect was, and now I...

NARRATOR:  
His head tilted, intrigued. Al's stomach roiled. She pushed through.

AL:  
I can't accept a good role model in my life! Or good things. I'm hostile and hard and it's cause... I was broken. And never glued back together. That's why.

NARRATOR:  
A sweat broke out under her arms.

BECKER:  
(A small scoff)  
You're not serious.

AL:  
Goddammit, can't-can't you take me at my word? Just once?

NARRATOR:  
He took a step closer, wary. Valen's advice from the previous day repeated like a balm on her mind.



AL:  
 (She's weaving  
 honesty and lies)  
 You think I like being like this? You  
 think I enjoy feeling shitty and out  
 of control? I don't know what I'm  
 doing..

BECKER:  
 (Quieter)  
 ... Did I... actually get through to you...  
 ?

NARRATOR:  
 His face was a sheet of caution. She  
 knew behind it, images of the  
 daughter who refused to talk to him,  
 the wife who walked away, must have  
 burrowed in. She counted on it.

BECKER:  
 ... Al?

AL:  
 You did. Yeah.

BECKER:  
 (A sort of half  
 laugh, half sigh.  
 He's processing)  
 ... Really. (A thought) Give me your  
 phone.

AL:  
 (Catastrophically  
 uncomfortable)  
 Uh...

BECKER:  
 Sam will pick up for you, he won't  
 for me- give me your phone.

Al slips the phone out of her pocket and slaps it down in  
 his hand. He presses a few buttons and it starts ringing.

AL:  
 What're you gonna say?

BECKER:  
 Quiet.

The phone picks up.

SAM, PHONE:

(Panting)

Al! I'm so glad you called, we've-

BECKER:

Sam, it's me.

SAM, PHONE:

(Spluttering)

Mr. Becker?! Ah, wh-what can I do for you...??

BECKER:

We're next to the Little Monk park office. Get here and pick up Al.

SAM:

What happened?

BECKER:

Keep patrolling. Keep the festival safe, call me with anything necessary. The police have been reassigned. But for God's sake, son, pick up when I call.

SAM:

Ok-

BECKER:

I'll be in touch. Watch her.

Becker snaps the phone closed.

AL:

Why'd you do that?

BECKER:

(He's kind of short-circuiting)

I have to think. I... have to think this over. Stay with your team. I... I have to think.

NARRATOR:

Becker started to walk past... and stopped next to her. Al deadened her face, shoving away the revulsion that twitched her mouth.

BECKER:

It took guts to admit that you're wrong. Took guts, kiddo.

NARRATOR:  
 Something shined in his eyes-  
 something bright; a tremble... of  
 satisfaction.

**SCENE 10: EXT. PARK BATHROOM, NIGHT, FESTIVAL**

Sam and Crux come running up.

SAM:  
 (Running over)  
 Hey, is everything ok?

AL:  
 (A moment as she  
 tries to find words)  
 ... Yeaaaaah! No! I just... made a whole  
 big mess...

SAM:  
 What? Where's Becker?

AL:  
 Uh, gone- Thats not important, I saw...  
 I saw the Pyre that wasn't the Pyre.

SAM:  
 (Surprised,  
 overjoyed)  
 AH!

AL:  
 (Surprised)  
 Eeh!

CRUX:  
 We did too! A tall one.

AL:  
 (Realizing)  
 Oh! Oh God... I knew it felt weird that  
 day- none of it felt malicious, it  
 all felt... frightened. They felt  
 young. I think we have the parent  
 here.

SAM:  
 That could track.

CRUX:  
They didn't feel angry or vengeful.  
Excited was the extent. Well, then  
fear, obviously.

AL:  
We could have a chance to repair  
something here. If we catch up with  
them, we could talk. I threw their  
baby...

CRUX:  
Wait. What do we tell Valen? Becker?

SAM:  
We don't.

AL:  
Not even her...?

SAM:  
She's withholding information. You  
have to feel it too.

AL:  
... She has been cagey since summer.  
Yeah.

SAM:  
And we have this opportunity. We  
can't waste it.

AL:  
Time to find some real answers?

CRUX:  
Rebel, rebels...

SAM:  
Speak for yourself, rum-runner. (Crux  
snorts softly) Only thing is that the  
Pyre person didn't want to talk.

CRUX:  
No, not at first.

AL:  
We find 'em, corner 'em, and convince  
'em from there. Once we have info,  
then we bring in the Directors.

CRUX:  
Not all of them.

AL:  
I mean the real ones.

CRUX:  
Or... We trail them and try to find a quiet way to talk. If we don't have to corner, if we can do this subtly, maybe we won't run headlong into an explosion.

SAM:  
You're right. Let's play it smart this time. We can't sacrifice your arms again.

AL:  
What if they slip by during the subtlety?

CRUX:  
Then we compromise. But first, we try, yes?

AL:  
Alright- they went into the crowd 'bout 5 minutes ago. Let's have a twenty foot space between all us, move in a line through, have eyes everywhere. You two got your phones?

CRUX:  
Yes.

AL:  
I'm starting a group call right now. (Beeping on her phone) We stay in contact privately and instantaneously. Are we ready?

Two phones start ringing, Crux and Sam pick up one after the other.

SAM:  
Ready.

CRUX:  
Let's do this.

**SCENE 11: EXT. CROWD, FESTIVAL, NIGHT**

The crowd is around Al. She walks steady, softly.

AL:  
West?

SAM:  
(Over the phone)  
Nothing here.

CRUX:  
(Phone)  
Nor East.

AL:  
Rodger Dodger. Pardon me- coming  
through.

A group of drunks cavorts.

NARRATOR:  
Pressing in from all sides. A needle  
in a haystack. How does one sort  
through and find it? What's the  
trick? Burn the haystack.

AL:  
(Grounding)  
Stay steady...

MIA:  
(A ghost of a  
whisper, is it  
real?)  
Find her, Al... Find her for me...

AL:  
(To herself)  
I'm focusing, Mia... Not now...

NARRATOR:  
Eyes up.

AL:  
Where are you...

**SCENE 12: EXT. CROWD, FESTIVAL, NIGHT**

Another part of the crowd. We're next to Crux.

NARRATOR:  
It was getting late- and the throng  
of people felt it.  
(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)

Hunger- Lust- Fright- Joy-  
Drunkenness- The crowd inhabiting  
conflicting, restrained, heightened  
emotions- All colliding in Crux's  
throat.

CRUX:

(Focusing himself)

Remember... being seen. Not wanting to  
be seen. But wanting to see... Remember  
them... They felt different...

The noise becomes softened, the beating of Crux's heart and  
feet shuffling...

CRUX: (cont'd)

Come out...

Softer, softer... until- A twinkle of beads, echoing. The  
Pyre's voice, breathing out, in and out. Musical trills,  
evoking the feeling of excitement, of rebellion, of  
wariness.

CRUX: (cont'd)

You're close...

The sound comes back as Crux "reawakens". The twinkle,  
barely heard. A stumble in the crowd as The Pyre is spooked  
by a child.

CRUX: (cont'd)

Quick movement headed center-west,  
watch for it. It's her.

AL:

(Phone)

You know they're a she?

CRUX:

It's right there, in her chest- ah,  
we'll ask later! Don't spook them.  
I'll lose their heartbeat.

SAM:

(Phone)

Copy.

**SCENE 13: EXT. CROWD, FESTIVAL, NIGHT**

A jumble of spooky music, clapping hands, as Sam weaves  
through.

SAM:  
 (To himself)  
 I'm enough by myself... I can help...

AL:  
 (Phone)  
 How's it lookin'?

CRUX:  
 (Phone)  
 They're drifting north, toward the park. They're just... looking around.

NARRATOR:  
 Sam squinted through a smear on his glasses, streaking the orange and purple lights. A black hat in the crowd twenty feet ahead-

SAM:  
 Ah...! (Sighs, recognizing) Witches...

NARRATOR:  
 The pointed hats bobbed in a group, drifting away.

SAM:  
 We're not gonna hurt you... (Inhales)

NARRATOR:  
 The flat top, the dark velvet-

Sam starts moving a bit faster.

SAM:  
 Yes...

NARRATOR:  
 Closer, his feet pulling him closer, magnetized by curiosity. Beaded fringe rippled above the crowd, as they stood tall, staring around. A clawed hand came up, underneath the hat... as though touching the fingertips to the mouth.

SAM:  
 They're gawking.

NARRATOR:  
 They spun on their heels, taking it all in... A green eye landed on him.



SAM:  
 (Soft)  
 ... Hi.

NARRATOR:  
 They stumbled, dove down, and darted  
 through-

CRUX:  
 (Phone)  
 Dammit! They're running!

Sam starts after them.

SAM:  
 Shit...

AL:  
 (Phone)  
 Route them center!

SAM:  
 They're fast-

CRUX:  
 (Phone)  
 Where are they?

Glenda and Valen's conversation is rising as Sam gets  
 closer.

GLEENDA:  
 I've seen four without bracelets.

VALEN:  
 Then where are your officers?

GLEENDA:  
 On their way. From the bar.

VALEN:  
 Eeoh. Bit of a bad look.

GLEENDA:  
 I'm aware.

VALEN:  
 There really is nothing to worry  
 about.

GLEENDA  
 I was this close to being killed on  
 Sunday-

VALEN:  
Then you should go home and recover,  
Glenda.

Sam stumbles out in front of them.

SAM:  
Ah... Hi ladies!

VALEN:  
Oh, Hi. What're you doing?

CRUX:  
(Phone)  
Fifteen feet, I'm closing in! Augh,  
they are not subtle!

GLENDA:  
Sammy, where's your sister, I need a  
word- (Raising her voice) Lieutenant  
Jones, over here-!

AL:  
(Phone)  
In front of you, Sam! Fuck the  
subtle!

NARRATOR:  
A black hat rising above the crowd  
behind The Mayor and Director, both  
staring at him.

SAM:  
I'm really sorry for this!!

NARRATOR:  
Sam crashed between the two, bursting  
through and scraping his legs on the  
pavement, twenty feet behind the hat.

Valen and Glenda react, Sam grunts through and dashes  
forward, people darting out of the way, squeaking out "hey!"  
"Watch it!".

SAM:  
Sorry!

RYAN:  
(Distant)  
Assault on the Mayor! Get BACK HERE!

AL:  
 (Phone)  
 I'm right behind you, Sam!

CRUX:  
 (Phone)  
 They're in Little Monk!

AL:  
 (Behind Sam)  
 Out the way!

Another little scream as he bursts through the crowd, stumbling onto the grass. We hear two more people sprawl out- Al and Crux are there. Al's coughing wretchedly.

NARRATOR:  
 The crowd parted, spilling them out onto the lawn of the park- They caught one another, searching wildly- THERE. The figure catching their breath under the canopy of the nearest oak. They tripped over themselves and darted into the maze.

RYAN:  
 (Distant)  
 Suspect went north, north east-

The crowd is squeaking and a few people yell. A giggle comes from the tree above.

NARRATOR:  
 The three glanced up, finding Bosswain lounging in the nearest branch above them.

BOSSWAIN:  
 Good show, excellent form tonight, Samson.

SAM:  
 I... may have pushed the Mayor.

AL:  
 That's not what we needed-

COP 2:  
 (Distant)  
 MOVE, MOVE!!

BOSSWUIN:  
 (Sing-songy)  
 I'd get to running, if I were you!

CRUX:  
 We'll deal with it later!

They take off, into the maze as Bosswuin cackles.

**SCENE 14: EXT/INT HEDGE MAZE, NIGHT**

It's fast, and the rustling of leaves as they twist around the hedges. They all skid to a stop.

AL:  
 Which way...

CRUX:  
 Hush... (Listening) Left.

They scramble back into action. The Pyre's breath is almost audible. She's panting.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller, distant and  
 somehow higher above  
 them)  
 No running please, enjoy the  
 meditative experience.

SAM:  
 (Calling)  
 Sedum! Where?!

There's a flapping, quick and short. The leaves rustle as he lands above them.

SEDUM:  
 (Nuller)  
 Where's where?

SAM:  
 The runner!

SEDUM:  
 To the right, then the loop-

They're off.

SAM:  
 Thanks!

SEDUM:  
It applies to all you, as well-!

JOAN:  
How do we get out of here?!?!

HAROLD:  
We always have a way out if you  
want...!

JOAN:  
No immolation, Harold!

A burst of flame and crackling just a few rows away.

SEDUM:  
Ah, AH! No FIRE in the maze!

AL:  
Not again...

HAROLD:  
If they can, why can't I?!

They duck and twist- and skid to a halt. There's the  
crackling of fire.

NARRATOR:  
An oval tear in the hedge wall,  
branches tossed aside, the edges  
burning softly. The forest dark  
beyond.

SAM:  
You see them?

CRUX:  
No... but I can track them.

RYAN:  
(Distant)  
Where's the suspect?!

CRUX:  
We have to go now.

AL:  
Are we playing it safe?

CRUX:  
We're going to lose them.

NARRATOR:

Al stared between the two, the impending pressure of the attention they'd drawn bearing down on them.

AL:

Fuck it!

NARRATOR:

Al leapt through the hole. Crux scrambled behind. Sam glanced back... then dove in.

All of them diving through, and running into the night.

**SCENE 15: EXT FOREST, NIGHT**

Quiet. Three pairs of footsteps RUN past. Then off into the quiet.

**SCENE 16: EXT FOREST, NIGHT**

Quiet of the forest... They come up, fast.

SAM:

I can't see anything.-

Gurgling howls in the night.

AL:

There's thunderheads movin' in.

CRUX:

Stay close to me. Both of you-

NARRATOR:

Crux reached out in the dark, grabbing both of their hands in his.

CRUX:

It's getting faint, but I can *still*-

A cry... like a baby.

CRUX: (cont'd)

Ah-

More start to arise, weird, unnatural sounds of infants in the woods, from all around.

CRUX: (cont'd)  
Stay close. We can't stop again.

SAM:  
What's out here?

AL:  
Not worth findin' out.

CRUX:  
Keep up!

NARRATOR:  
He yanked them forward, let them go,  
and took the lead.

Their footsteps continue on as the crying fades away.

**SCENE 17: EXT FOREST/THE BREATHING TRAILERS, NIGHT**

They're all tired, worn, but still jogging. All are panting, Al is intermingling hacks, Crux wheezes. One stumbles to a stop- it's Crux.

SAM:  
Please- don't tell me we're off  
course-

CRUX:  
No. No. We're close. It's muffled-  
but...

A metal GROANING, CREAKING, still distant.

AL:  
Drop!

They all fall to the forest floor.

AL: (cont'd)  
... Quiet.

There's nothing.

CRUX:  
Follow me.

He shuffles through the leaves.

NARRATOR:  
The forest floor, littered with the  
musty remains of summer, soaked into  
their fronts as they crawled.

(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)

Each heartbeat pounding in each chest, assuring them that even their own breath was too loud...  
A soft, warm light radiated over a ridge. After an hour of dark and near misses from trees, it almost hurt to look.

As they travel, a breathing creaking metal purr grows louder. It's still distant, but there.

SAM:

(Under his breath,  
reacting to the  
effort, then seeing  
it come into view)  
Fuck- fuck, ah... Ah... AH.

AL:

(Slightly aghast)  
Be quiet right now.

CRUX:

What is that?

NARRATOR:

A homestead of sorts sat below them, at the bottom of a moss covered ravine. A jumble of motorhomes, or what had once been motorhomes. Now welded, gutted, affixed together... With crude junk appendages sprouting out of the sides, where the wheel wells had been, some extending down from over the windows.

An aching groooooan of metal. Like a sigh.

SAM:

Is it... alive?

CRUX:

I don't know.

From below, a door opens, HARD, SMACKING the outside. The Trailers make a grunt. Someone steps down, onto the moss.

AL:

(Hissing)  
Back-back-back-!

They quietly, softly duck, until someone catches a rock that slides a bit, rattling out an echo.



KILN is a teenager, and she sounds like it. She is growing into her voice, but she is fierce and confident, willful and sensory. There's much in the world that she must experience for herself.

KILN:  
(Distant)  
I know you're out there! I'm not  
afraid of you!

CRUX:  
(Low)  
Well, that's not true.

AL:  
(Low)  
Would you stop-

KILN:  
(Distant, warning  
danger)  
But *you* should be afraid of *me*.

A shotgun cocks. They all let the threat sink in. This is all still low.

AL:  
We give ourselves up.

SAM:  
I don't know about tha-

AL:  
We chased 'em back to their house. I  
tossed their baby- We should offer  
peace.

SAM:  
The baby exploded last time- we don't  
know what this one will do!

She SHOOTs, a bullet whizzing by a tree close to them. All of them react, it's loud and it's like a smack to the face.

CRUX:  
Fucking hell!!

KILN:  
I see you!!! Come down!! (A moment)  
If you don't, Bo is out there. And  
they'll find you. They'll find you  
even if you *run*.

**END**

## CREDITS

M. Kate McCulloch as Leah  
Catherine McGuire as Teeny  
Marcus Cannello as Sedum  
Kiarra Osakue as The Narrator  
Z Reklaw as Samson  
Joseph Rothorn as J  
Faraday Roke as Al  
Samantha Weiler as Valen  
Jacque Reiman as Roose  
AJ Carter as Deputy Ryan  
Aud Andrews as Cop 2 (AKA Burt)  
Gretchen Ho as Glenda  
Cory Moosman as Becker  
John Peacock as Crux  
Megan Brown as Joan  
Breanne Nicole Wilson as Young Woman  
Chef Goldblum as Harold  
Joseph Rothorn as Lanke  
Rock Fowl as Bosswuin  
Avi Mercury as Young Man  
Carla Brown as The Pyre  
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