

Harbor Season 2
Episode 3: Dead Seeds Grow

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SCENE 1: INT. LEAD DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, MORNING

Door opens and closes. Al moves into the room, setting down a bag. Both her and Becker are more relaxed than normal. It is the start of the day, after all.

AL:
Morning.

BECKER:
Good morning.

Soft shuffling around the space.

BECKER: (cont'd)
(while typing on the
computer)
You're a little late.

AL:
What?

BECKER:
It's 8:05.

AL:
Oh. Sorry, I'll leave earlier
tomorrow.

BECKER:
That'd be great.

AL:
... My hands are havin' a bad day. I'm
not gonna be good at typing much.

BECKER:
Hm? Oh, right. ... You look tired.

AL:
Yeah, I am a little bit.

BECKER:
Do anything fun yesterday?

AL:
(Noncommittal noise)
Kept it close to home.

BECKER:
Really. Hollow looked tired too. So
did William, Crux... haven't seen Sam
yet.

AL:
He's trying to bike to work now.

BECKER:
Oh, good for him.

AL:
Yeah.

A moment passes.

BECKER:
So, all of you look tired. After
yesterday...

AL:
We sure do.

BECKER:
Did you do something without me?

AL:
What?

BECKER:
Well I'm not stupid, I know that
Perdition thing was supposed to be
sometime soon and you all are
dragging your feet today and I'm just
curious if you did something without
me.

AL:
(Deflecting)
Becker, I need some coffee, you're
going too fast.

BECKER:
Did the office go to a party and
forget to invite me? That's all I'm
asking. Especially when it concerns
my work, I'm just curious.

AL:
Stuff comes up-

BECKER:
-Ranger Greer, tell me straight. Now.

AL:
Yeah. Yeah, we all went to a thing
and forgot to invite you. I'm sorry.

BECKER:
... (Sighs) I understand.

AL:
... Ok.

BECKER:
Mm. ... Al, you're a member of the DoAA
now.

AL:
(Small sigh)
Mhm?

BECKER:
You can still keep the nickname, but
Harbor Station is officially under
DoAA jurisdiction. And part of this
work is remembering where you come
from on your days off.

AL:
I don't follow.

BECKER:
It's like this, you're still a part
of this team even in your time off.
That's why we call it time off, it's
time off of the job, but the work,
the work is always on. You're still
representing us.

AL:
That's... not how that operates.

BECKER:
Yes it is- being a representative of
this institution means sometimes
doing things you don't like.
Sometimes inviting people you don't
like to go to secret events. Do you
see, it's bridging gaps and creating
community- As a matter of
professionalism. Do you understand?

AL:
No. What're you saying?

BECKER:

I'm disappointed, you know how important it is to get any research on Aberrations- and an Aberration cultural event- I wasted... all of the weekend trying to find it!

AL:

You did?

BECKER:

It was deeply careless of you to attend that without inviting me. It reflects badly on all of us as an office- What does it say about our respectability? That everyone goes, but the boss is too uptight- he can't be relied on for a "good time"? There's never been that opportunity, that many Aberrations in one place... it's the principle that matters, Al.

AL:

You ain't makin' a lick of goddamn sense.

BECKER:

Yet again, swearing isn't allowed in the workplace. I'm gonna have to write you up.

AL:

Are you fucking with me right now?

BECKER:

Am I fucking with you? Al, are you insinuating something sexual in all of this?

AL:

(Horried and
confused)

Nooooo. No, see, I don't like men, and I can't even fathom anything to do with gratification here.

BECKER:

Greer, I am catastrophically uncomfortable with this conversation about your sexual preferences. You need to get yourself under control.

AL:
Oh, wow, oh, ok, asshole-

BECKER:
Now you're referring to my anus, and I am going to have to write you up for sexual harassment. Are you happy now? Was it worth it?

AL:
SEXUAL-?! YOU'RE GENERALLY HARASSING ME!

BECKER:
We have protocol for sexual harassment. Go get your coffee and think about this.

Al is reduced to flabbergasted noises.

TITLE SEQUENCE

SCENE 2: EXT. HARBOR STREETS, MORNING

A bike is zipping along streets, Sam pedaling to work. A breeze rustles the leaves around him and bird tweet.

NARRATOR:
A rusty bike zipped along the neighborhood lanes at 8:05 am. Sam perched atop, pedaling in a sluggish frenzy, feeling the seconds tick beyond his usual arrival of 7:55. A plain tie fluttered its tail out of his pocket. Sweat ate through the white of his shirt.

SAM:
(He is rather sleep deprived)
I'm gonna... save the world... fuck you carbon emissions... You can't... get away with... (Yawns hard) Can't believe I slept through my alarm... And I'm late, again and... (Another yawn, descending into a groan of pain) Uhngh, I hurt... Jerk-hole honey-sock-man...

NARRATOR:

It was quiet in those streets-
children already bussed into school a
half hour before, workers slipping
alongside him few and far between.

He slows his bike down, coming to a stop.

SAM:

Stop light, stop right, first stop of
the day tonight...

NARRATOR:

The red glow at the four way
intersection taunted him... and soothed
his aching calves with stillness.

SAM:

Hey Stick, (Yawns again) sorry but...
Would you mind... changing to green,
Stick?

NARRATOR:

The stoplight remained. Even as he
stood alone. Sam's shoulders melted
with the ever growing weight of pain
from falling the night before.

The sounds are dampening.

SAM:

Green? Anytime? Any... lyme... Any...
slime... Kay, give me a buzz when
you're... ready...

NARRATOR:

Just for a second, only a moment, did
Sam's eyelids flutter closed.
Instantaneous relief washed over him,
submerging him.

SAM:

I'm here whenever-

J:

(Obscured)
Samson, there you are- Oh, you're out
and about-

SAM:

Oh my God, Jaaay...! I'm so sorry, I
slept through hanging out-

J:
-Careful of that car.

SAM:
Mmh?

J:
CAR, Sam.

A car speeds past, honking its horn as Sam jolts back into reality.

HAROLD:
Get outta the road!!

Sam stumbles off the bike for a second.

SAM:
AH, SORRY! (Catching his breath...) ...
J? (Silence aside from the birds) Did
I fall asleep that fast? ... Huh.

A BUZZ comes from Stick.

NARRATOR:
The light was green.

SAM:
Oh, oh, sorry Stick, yeah, thank
you...!

He starts pedaling again, shaking himself out of it. Stick
ZAP ZAPs.

SCENE 3: INT. DOCA MAIN OFFICE, MORNING

The doors into the office open and shut, Sam breathing heavily. William is typing on the computer, talking loudly.

WILLIAM:
... And the sheets are, hmmm somewhere
around here-

SAM:
-Hey, hi, howdy- ho, I'm late-

WILLIAM:
(Busy with other
things)
Not a problemo, good mornin', bud.

SAM:
Mornin'. Gotta put my lunch away but
tell me- (He crosses over into the
kitchen, raising his voice to William
over his shoulder) What's on the
docket today, Will-

There is a slight scuffle and a bit of awkward "Oh, ah-"s as
Sam almost runs into Crux.

SAM: (cont'd)
(quieting down)
Crux! Hi. Uh, ah... hi.

CRUX:
(Very tired)
Hello.

SAM:
(Slightly lower)
You got home ok...?

CRUX:
(Half a second of
tense air)
Yes. I'm getting my coffee.

SAM:
Oh. Mhm, I'm just... fridge. Lunch box.

Another moment.

CRUX:
... You can go ahead and do it anytime.

SAM:
I was- I am. Yep.

Sam wrenches open the fridge door and stows his food.

NARRATOR:
It was a hot morning. A boiling
morning. The crisp autumnal breath of
October had evaporated as soon as Sam
had entered the kitchen, in fact. An
odd "quirk" of the old house... Crux
gave him a wide berth and walked back
into the front office.

WILLIAM:
(From the other
room)
AGH, they're out in the shed! Great...

CRUX:
 (Drifting into the
 next room)
 You mean the "dumping ground"?

WILLIAM:
 We just need to follow protocol with
 everything back there except for this
 months, up here-

Sam follows Crux back into the main office.

CRUX:
 Yes, yes, I know. 'Ey, what do you
 think of organizing it?

WILLIAM:
 If you lead it, sure.

CRUX:
 Mmmfh, no...

WILLIAM:
 Right. So, Sam, we're pretty much
 callin' our Cryptid neighbors to... uh,
 let them know about Halloween's
 situation with the face covering ban
 and so forth. We all pitch in, we'll
 get through it in no time.

SAM:
 Gotcha.

CRUX:
 (Very out of place
 in the conversation,
 tense with Sam
 there.)
 As long as we all keep the
 professionalism clear. Solid..
 boundaries.

WILLIAM:
 That's the plan. We're nothing if not
 professional.

CRUX:
 I'll get started then.

Crux walks off.

WILLIAM:
 ... Anywho, uh, right, where'd he put
 that binder...? Ah-

SAM:
 Oh, dude, I got it.

NARRATOR:
 Sam darted behind William and the
 reception desk, to the towering wire
 shelf, laden with data and to-do's,
 and a bulging white binder.

WILLIAM:
 I can get it-

SAM:
 Hey, I wouldn't have lasted this long
 if you hadn't shown me the ropes. Let
 me be nice on occasion.

Sam brings down the binder with effort and sets it down with
 a thunk onto the desk.

WILLIAM:
 ... Well. Thanks. ... Wanna refill my
 coffee, too?

SAM:
 Yeah, how you take it-?

WILLIAM:
 (Disbelieving, then
 rolling with it)
 Uh, Tan like sand. oh, and sweet,
 please!

SAM:
 Ok. Oh, also, can I get a list of who
 to call for the Halloween... stuff?

WILLIAM:
 Um, the list of numbers should be out
 in the shed... Good luck.

William's phone rings, harsh and sharp.

WILLIAM: (cont'd)
 (He picks up)
 Yello? Ah- Mr.- Oh. Ok. Uhm, right.
 Should we... move in there?- ... Right.
 (MORE)

WILLIAM: (cont'd)
Ok. Uh, bye. (He hangs up) We have a
team meeting. In Becker's office.

CRUX:
(sighs)
Let's get this over with...

SCENE 4: INT. LEAD DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, MORNING

All of the DoCA is piling into Lead Director's Office. It is cramped, awkward and unpleasant.

VALEN:
Happy, glorious Monday.

BECKER:
Good team spirit, Hollow.-

ROOSE:
-Traitorous Gods in Hell, this torpor
reeks.

AL:
(In slight pain)
Agh, Roose- give me some room.

ROOSE:
The room has been expunged of giving,
Greer.

AL:
We sure we don't want to do this
somewhere larger?-

BECKER:
-Squeeze in guys, don't be shy!

They move in.

WILLIAM:
(Under his breath,
to Sam)
Scooch forward, I need room for my
cane, please.

SAM:
Of course- Oh-

NARRATOR:
Sam tripped, jerky steps landing him
almost as close to Crux as he'd been
the night before.

(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)
 Except somewhere around his chest
 instead of eye level.

CRUX:
 (Quiet, flushing)
 Sam-! Not now-

SAM:
 S-sorry! Sorry, I'll move-

NARRATOR:
 He searched for escape- only to be
 boxed in further by Al extracting
 herself out from under the twisting
 spire of Roose. She held her arms
 limp-wristed, familiar fingerless
 burn gloves encasing her hands.

Roose makes a disgusted noise, as Al shuffles forward.

AL:
 Hey bro.

SAM:
 Ah, uh, hi. Could I just- Uh... ok. Hi.

CRUX:
 (A bit on edge.
 Embarrassed)
 So very cozy...

NARRATOR:
 Blush stained Sam's ears. Crux
 averted his gaze to the floor.

BECKER:
 (Fairly excited.)
 Welcome to the week, team. It's a big
 one! Before we get into the nitty
 gritty of today, I need to tell all
 of... (Pointed "comradery") y'all just
 how much it means to have you show up
 for work day in and day out. How
 seriously every one of you takes
 this. (Thinking he's saying something
 deep) This place wouldn't operate
 without you. ... Alright! Halloween!
 William, you were calling the
 "locals" to keep them informed on the
 regulations?

WILLIAM:
Yes, sir, and getting Ground Crew's
help on it, too.-

BECKER:
(Very excited, he's
hiding a surprise)
Toss those calls in the trash. We
have an important Mayoral meeting
tomorrow with developments.

WILLIAM:
The day before Halloween?

BECKER:
I'll give you the details after we're
through.

WILLIAM:
Oh. And then you want me to call...
everyone? After?

BECKER:
Most of 'em live in caves- They can't
all have phones.

VALEN:
Something we've been steadily fixing
the past decade or so.-

BECKER:
Need everyone on their toes for the
next 3 days, this is no time for
slacking. Got it?

WILLIAM:
... I can sure try Director Becker.

BECKER:
Try... and do it. Heh. Speaking of that
meeting- it's 9 am sharp, and Ground
Crew, you're the belles of the ball.
We're meeting at Town Hall, in the
Mayor's office. And it's not a call,
so don't worry about your recording
equipment, alright?

SAM:
Uh, really?

VALEN:
(Enjoying how done
everyone is)
Go ahead, Sam. What's on your mind?

SAM:
Well... the mics are in case anything
happens- Accountability. That's what
you said, State Director.

BECKER:
Of course! And it's why I siphoned
more budget for this revamp- we
completely need them, being the
flagship rural station. We need every
precaution and every new bit of
equipment available. Just not
tomorrow. Ok?

VALEN:
(Tongue-in-cheek)
I think what he is trying to
insinuate is a need for
"confidentiality".

BECKER:
It's a waste of tape.

SAM:
They're digital.-

BECKER:
-We don't record these, do we?

ROOSE:
Not with machines.

BECKER:
Right. We have different priorities
with "one on one" meetings.

SAM:
(Automatic)
Oh, just when it's Humans.

VALEN:
(Soft chuckle, under
her breath)
Oh, there it is.

SAM:
(Recovering himself)
I don't know where that came from-

CRUX:
What, are you wrong?

SAM:
No-

BECKER:
(Deflecting, though
defensive)
You're forgetting Prosody is required
to be there, too. I appreciate your...
snappy candor, Sam, but don't erase
your co-worker from these situations
in the future. I'm sure he doesn't
appreciate it. Roose. Updates on that
well situation from last week?

ROOSE:
The worms are beefing it.

AL:
Well, pack it up, folks, we've solved
it.-

ROOSE:
That is the only FACT I can confirm.
HOWEVER... It is most likely a
bacterial infection from the well
itself. It is not parasitic, nor is
it ingested. It's leaching into their
membranes from the walls. A theory
ONLY. But once I obtain samples, it
will prove right. For now it remains...
gross as testes in there, as they
say... That is what they say, right?

AL:
Yeah, that's spot on.

ROOSE:
Excellent.

VALEN:
Disease from the groundwater, you
think?

ROOSE:
The colony resides in the upper
portions, away from potentially fetid
waters. Though it is difficult to
decipher the cause, what with the
skin peeling and general viscera.
(MORE)

ROOSE: (cont'd)
Otherwise I would sait the questions
you volley.

BECKER:
Interesting. Keep me posted.

ROOSE:
I am Shepherd of Cryptids, I will do
as I may!

BECKER:
(Ignoring her and
moving on)
As for todaaay... Stay on task and
answer calls as needed. Meeting
adjourned.

A general scuffling as people file out.

SAM:
Director Becker, I wanted to
apologize, uh, for... showing up late.

BECKER:
Oh I know you're biking in now- It's
fine. Actually while you're here,
Sam, I need you to research your tips
better in the future.

SAM:
Oooh, what happened? Did the, those
folks not pan out-

BECKER:
I think I discovered a new species,
actually. They feed by rambling about
nonsense for hours and hours and
hours... all while making you drink
gallons of sweet tea. It was sick.
Twisted.

SAM:
Are you sure they weren't just old
people?

BECKER:
No, they were monsters. Research
better next time, son! I know you can
do it! Go get to work! Hollow, need
you back here.

VALEN:
 (Out of the room)
 Righto...

NARRATOR:
 Al and Sam caught the other's
 attention, a shared grimace passing
 between them.

BECKER:
 You too, Al. Knock 'em dead, Sam.

NARRATOR:
 She caught her brother's eyebrow arch
 before Becker closed the door behind
 him.

The door shuts.

SCENE 5 - INT. LEAD DIRECTOR'S OFFICE OFFICE, LATE MORNING

A paper file slaps down on the table.

AL:
 "Gore Field".

VALEN:
 Why do you have a... nearly empty
 folder labelled that?

BECKER:
 I saw it mentioned, in your case
 file, Al. This one- (The paper
 rustles out) From when you were a
 kid- The "bloodied field". So. What's
 the story?

VALEN:
 I wasn't there.

BECKER:
 In fifteen years- Never went for
 samples? To inform the police?

VALEN:
 Never went looking when I got word of
 the smell.

BECKER:
 It keeps stinking? So it is
 aberrational in some way.

VALEN:

(Adjusting quickly)
 Maybe? Lots of weird things happen
 round these parts- You should see if
 you can get Sedum in for an
 interview. He'll know more than me.

NARRATOR:

Valen's expression was serenely
 blank. A poised and neutral mask, the
 one she used more and more often.
 Even when she lied. Al's brain
 twisted through the corridors to
 catch up to Valen's invisible reason.
 Even as her own protectiveness reared
 up within her.

BECKER:

(Switching course,
 negged by the
 mention)
 Al, how good's your memory?

AL:

... Pretty fuzzy, if I'm... being honest.

BECKER:

(Beginning to lose
 his patience)
 Surprising for such a seminal moment
 in your young life.-

AL:

(Blurting it out)
 That's when my dad left...? It's... kind
 of painful. Wish I could remember
 more, sorry.

BECKER:

(Affected)
 Oh. ... Oh. I see... He left?

AL:

Yeah, that summer. Kinda... blurred
 everything together. Weird, I know,
 but-

BECKER:

-I thought he died.

AL:

(Actually surprised)
 Why'd you think that?

BECKER:
 (Like he can't
 understand)
 I assumed. He had two kids and your
 mom. Why would he leave that?

AL:
 Well, technically Mama served him
 papers.

BECKER:
 (Muttering to
 himself)
 Knew she was strong, but to be the
 one to disrupt the family-

AL:
 Pardon? Who're you talkin' about-

BECKER:
 (Stumbling over his
 words)
 -Family's important and that's
 unfortunate.- Hollow, what have you
 heard around town, what's the mythos
 of that-that place? Hm?

VALEN:
 Oh? I'm talking now, I see.
 Scuttlebutt... mmmm, from those who
 know a person who knows a person, o'
 course- they say don't mess with it.
 It does nasty things.

BECKER:
 Like what?

VALEN:
 Terrible case of pink eye.

The folder slides back across the table. Becker starts
 writing.

BECKER:
 Yes, unsanitary... conditions... Eye
 infection. That... checks out... Thank
 you... I'll take gloves with me.

He flips the folder open and stows the paper inside.

AL:
 You ain't planning on hikin' around,
 are you?

BECKER:

What, do I need a permit?

AL:

There's... there's some shit out there, you know. You do know that, right? Somebody did tell you-

BECKER:

I know what I'm doing, I'll be fine.

VALEN:

All this for anything in particular, Becker?

BECKER:

Just research. I'll dip back into the files later...

NARRATOR:

Al's field journal leapt to the forefront of her mind. Filled with times, characteristics, theories, all about the Field, scrawled in her handwriting- a treasure trove that hadn't been digitized yet. At the bottom of her bag, burning a hole in the corner of the room.

AL:

-It wasn't ever a priority. Just so ya know. But... hey, ya got a start.

BECKER:

(Thinking)

A start. (Sighs) Ladies, I'm going to let you in on a thought that's been rattling around lately...

VALEN:

Hm?

BECKER:

The disorganization here is overwhelming, especially for only one competent Government Employee to handle. Straws're breaking this camel's back and I have to say... If things don't start showing up, getting answered... I'm going to have to bring in the Rangers. Ah, the real ones.

A moment.

VALEN:
It's not that pressing, Becker.
Nothing's happened in months.-

BECKER:
It was important enough to call me
out in the first place, it's
important enough for proper support
to figure out our Pyre. And to figure
that, I need some more mundane
questions solved, like where a never-
dying meat field is and what it does,
you see? I need the big picture-

His phone starts ringing.

BECKER: (cont'd)
Hmmm... (Hisses in a breath) Ohhhh,
HAR...

AL:
That funny?

BECKER:
(Putting on a face
of composure)
Human-Aberration-Resources, from
State- Y'all can... go "git". (Chuckles
forcibly, picking up the phone)
Helena! I was not expecting to hear
from you again so soon- Ahh ah ha,
right, right... Ah, but I did pick up
this time...

SCENE 6: ARCHIVES SHED/DOCA BACKYARD, DAY

Sam is grunting, slipping something back into a pile of
papers.

SAM:
Alright Enfys journal... Back you go...

NARRATOR:
The notebook slipped into the
makeshift archives... only for Sam's
fingers to trace the next volume. He
glanced at the closed door behind
him, sealing him into the Shed.

SAM:
Ooooo...kay.

He takes the book and flips it open.

SAM: (cont'd)
(to himself)
This should be the last... Before they...
went away...

NARRATOR:
He shoved the book into his
waistband, covering it with his
jacket.

SAM:
Hm, hm, hm, now phone book, swore I
saw you near the top-

He searches for a moment before slipping something out of
the mess.

SAM: (cont'd)
Ah-ha- you are mine.-

A cascade slips out.

SAM: (cont'd)
Ooo... Heck.

Sam kneels down with a slight groan, and begins picking the
papers and books up.

SAM: (cont'd)
This really does need a day, doesn't
it...

The door opens softly and the outside noises slip in.

CRUX:
Sam?

NARRATOR:
His shoulders froze and his blood
whirled fast and hot. But Sam didn't
jump. He didn't squeak. The dread of
embarrassment ate his stomach so
completely that he'd no energy to
give his usual involuntary greeting.
He checked over his shoulder and
found Crux at the now-open door.

SAM:
(Dry mouth)
Hey.

CRUX:
Making messes?

SAM:
Trying to clean, actually.

Crux moves forward two steps.

CRUX:
You have a book in your pants.

SAM:
Yep, ah, needed free hands... For
cleaning.

CRUX:
... Are you taking documents home?

SAM:
(Walking delicately)
I'm doing a bit of outside work.
Always more to learn.

A moment as Crux decides to move forward.

CRUX:
... I won't tell.

SAM:
Thanks.

CRUX:
... So you sent Becker on another goose
chase over the weekend?

SAM:
(A little laugh)
He just picked up what I dropped
down, I didn't send him anywhere.

CRUX:
It would have been worse with him
there... Didn't even know you knew
about those old fogeys.

SAM:
Hmeh... I... have my ways.

CRUX:

Well, uh... yes, I'm... impressed. That took more finesse than sending him into a bog.

SAM:

It helps when he trusts me for no good reason. Just trying to be useful.

CRUX:

... We should talk about last night.

SAM:

I'd like that.

CRUX:

Perdition. It's... I get out of hand. It all does. It's too much for me, I get overwhelmed- I came on too strong and entirely crudely last night. I'm sorry.

SAM:

(Rather relieved
that he isn't being
yelled at)

It's fine, it's honestly fine, I'm more sore than anything-

Crux kneels down.

CRUX:

I understand if you want distance-

SAM:

(Simply)

No. I don't.

NARRATOR:

Crux held his gaze firm.

CRUX:

No?

SAM:

No. I'm... not uncomfortable. At all. I mean, I'm a little... nervous but... That's nothing new.

...

CRUX:
 ... Well... There. We talked about it.-

SAM:
 -Uh-

CRUX:
 -See you inside.

Crux walks away promptly.

SAM:
 (Trying to find
 words)
 Um- uh... (Calling after) Ok. See you...
 (To himself) In what world is that
 considered talking... ?

SCENE 7: INT. AL'S TRAILER, EVENING

Al is sitting at her kitchen table, hissing in pain. It's late in the evening.

AL:
 Ha... haaa... Nngh-

NARRATOR:
 The tub of cooling salve trembled in Al's scarred hand. Droplets of blood smeared from miniscule rips in the new flesh as she smoothed the gel over her forearm. Her trailer was quiet. Stagnant.

AL:
 Hm, hm- Fuck. After all that... and it's all just ripped right back off..

NARRATOR:
 Her fingers slid over the spider-web of tissue.

AL:
 (Murmuring to
 herself)
 You were scared...

An echo of the Pyre's scream from June.

AL: (cont'd)
... I know you were... What "terrorist"
attacks a closed toy shop... Why be
quiet after that...? Who are you,
little dragon... ?

Manic "spooky" laughter erupts from outside. Stock-Halloween
SFX.

AL: (cont'd)
(She flinches at the
table)
Jeez- What-?!

She yanks back the curtains on her window-

NARRATOR:
Peering out, her neighbor's trailers
sat in dusk, in the paint of the
forest. Three children scuttled
around the stoop of a motorhome. A
garish decorative wraith tossed in
the wind from a flag pole above them,
plastic skull face flashing red
pupils.

The decor cackles again as the kids shriek. Al lets the
curtain drop back and sits back down.

AL:
(Sighs)
Show offs... Who am I kidding, I'm
jumpy as hell...

A RIP through- Mia's here.

NARRATOR:
The shocking cold of Mia's presence
leaned down over Al's shoulder,
inspecting her work.

MIA:
Hm. Looks like it hurts.

AL:
Doesn't feel great.

MIA:
I think you missed a spot.-

NARRATOR:
The ghost's hand passed over the
inside of her arm.

(MORE)

NARRATOR: (cont'd)
A shivering numbness left where the
fingers grazed.

AL:
Ah, mmngh (Panting heavily)

NARRATOR:
Mia sat herself across the table,
tilting her neck coquettishly.

MIA:
Little nicer than the burning?

AL:
You can be quiet.

MIA:
(Slight laugh)
Oh, now I know you like it.

AL:
I'm in pain right now. As in...
bleeding... more. I can do without,
thanks...

MIA:
But I can make you feel better.

AL:
I really don't need that-

MIA:
Oh stop making it weird.

NARRATOR:
She grasped both of Al's elbows and
slowly drug her hands down over the
torn skin.

Al reacts.

MIA:
Good girl.

AL:
Fuck off...

MIA:
Good butcher, then.

AL:
Mmeh...

MIA:
This is what happens when you run off
before I make it through...

AL:
(Having lost her
breath)
Just tried to... put out fires.

MIA:
Could've gone worse... Feel good yet?

AL:
My hands are- uh-

MIA:
-I'll get to them. How was your day?

AL:
I'm sure you saw, somehow.

MIA:
Make small talk with me.

AL:
... Folks're sticking their noses in
shit they shouldn't... We're gettin'
threatened with State action... other
than that... I'm being slowly driven
insane.

MIA:
So, the same.

AL:
You got it.

MIA:
You'd be bored otherwise. At least I
would.

AL:
You can't be bored, you make things
too interesting naturally.

MIA:
(A humming smile)
Hmm. Veil's getting thin.

AL:
I always wondered if Halloween really
was a portal.

MIA:
It's not the day. It's all of winter.
You haven't noticed by now?

AL:
Assumed you got lonely round the
holidays.

MIA:
Maybe it's because the world's more
lonely. She wants to be filled, so
she drags us back.

AL:
That would require you leaving in the
first place...

MIA:
You made your choice, I made mine.

AL:
Got some friends making their way
through this year?

NARRATOR:
Mia's spectral fingers froze against
Al's.

MIA:
What did you say?

AL:
(Realizing she hit a
sore spot)
I said friends, I... I didn't mean
Piper.-

MIA:
(Quiet)
Are you lying to me? You can't lie to
me about her. You wouldn't... would
you? Would you??

AL:
No.

NARRATOR:
The numbness ate at Al's knuckles as
pressure squeezed them.

MIA:
You sure about that?

AL:
 (Tired, gentle)
 You'd be the first to hear.

MIA:
 (She believes it)
 Choose your words better, Al.
 (Lighter) Anyway, dead people suck.
 At least the ones that stick around.
 (Soft exhale of a "laugh") It's still
 the best season. Even if time means
 less than nothing now..

AL:
 Thought about dressing up this year?

MIA:
 When you gave me the best costume?
 Why would I change that? If I even
 could.

NARRATOR:
 A deep ache hollowed Al's eyes as she
 stared at Mia. Icey palms slid back
 to the crooks of her elbows.

MIA:
 (Softly, warmly, but
 there's an edge)
 I didn't say stop. Keep talking.

AL:
 ... I think smoking is catching up to
 me. Bloody noses all the time-

The talk is fading out.

MIA:
 (faux-sympathetic)
 Aw. Eating your throat?

AL:
 And sinuses. I should quit.

MIA:
 Oh, you *should* quit. We need time
 longer than cancer takes.

SCENE 8 - EXT. DREAMSCAPE

The ocean beats softly against the rocks somewhere distant.
 Starlight falls.

J:
(Cont.)... Terrible creature, all in all. The foul laundry taste comes solely from a lack of personal hygiene.

SAM:
Ugh, really??

J:
I assure you! Jank is wretched. Off in his own world, no bathing, excessive juices-

SAM:
Augh, I can still taste it... How do you even clean goo like that?

J:
Don't wrack your brain, my son, he hasn't figured it out either!
(Laughs. Sam laughs along) Are you feeling any better in here? Good exchange rate, sacrificing some REM for musculature healing?

SAM:
Yeah, I'm gonna be a zombie tomorrow, but a... fast zombie. Dangerous. Mindless!

J:
Don't fall asleep in the road again.

SAM:
I won't!

J:
Good. You scare me sometimes. You're so fragile.

SAM:
I'm glad you're not staving off my nightmares this time. Just bodily harm. It's a good change of pace.

J:
I enjoy helping you any way I can. Befouled terrors or whatever else.

SAM:
 Heh... (Changing the subject back)
 Everyone got really upset when Glenda
 came in. You could tell, like, it
 wasn't only that guy thinking of
 doing something.

J:
 Yes... not unusual, unfortunately.

SAM:
 Even Crux was... Well, he kind of went
 off on her. I don't blame him, she
 was clearly doing some dominance
 "alpha" thing, but I've never seen
 him like that.

J:
 He has been very calm for many years
 now. I suppose every being has their
 breaking point...

SAM:
 (Feeding his
 curiosity)
 How many years?

J:
 For Prosody? Oh, a very long time.
 I'm surprised he hasn't divulged,
 what with your warm little feelings,
 I'd have thought you'd gotten quite
 close to him.

SAM:
 Seemed like that was happening last
 night. And then today... Complete 180.
 I swear to God, I can't read him,
 he's so... befuddling.

J:
 (Tongue-in-cheek)
 Hmm, well, he was human at one point.

SAM:
 And what's that supposed to mean?

J:
 Samson, I adore humans, I owe so much
 to humans, but you must admit, you
 never know what you want. And if you
 do... it's exactly what you can't have,
 for some ridiculous reason...

SAM:
 (Laughing)
 Ow, stop reading my cards!

J:
 (Smugly)
 Of course, strange son. I'm simply
 sure some of that remains in him,
 even if he's lived two lifetimes.

SAM:
 Wait, Two-...?

J:
 (Grinning)
 Oops! Did I say- ah, well, you were
 going to find out eventually... !

SAM:
 Two lifetimes... I mean, I thought I
 heard but... he's like... in his
 thirties... Oh my God, that's a lot to...
 What, so he was human, and then-
 something... (Laughing) Gah, I just
 wanna know-know who I'm dealing
 with...!

J:
 (Curious)
 Do you... ?

SAM:
 (Breathes out an
 excited breath...)
 You don't know how tempted I am.

J:
 You're mistaken, I can tell precisely
 how tempted you are and it is quite a
 lot.

SAM:
 Ahhhh... No, no, no, no!- It's not
 organic. This is- he's- I like him a
 lot!

J:
 That is apparent.

SAM:
 A person's past is a trust thing,
 and... No, no, I can't dive into his
 memories. It wouldn't feel right.

(MORE)

SAM: (cont'd)
It wouldn't. It'd be... bad. (He's going back into a bad place, those bad feelings) I can't do that to him..

J:
Hm! Very well. It's a happy surprise to even hear you consider it after our first excursion.

SAM:
I told you, it-it-it was my fault, all that, that night, those memories in June... It's... not good to dwell...

J:
(Disarming curiosity)
Have you been able to look your sister in the eye? Or the Bird? Or that State Director?

SAM:
(Taken aback)
We're all so busy, it's fine- It's in the past, anyway... Anyway! How'd you jump into my head so quick this morning? What was that about, huh??

J:
When you were almost hit by the vehicle?

SAM:
Yeah, that was fast.

J:
Well, yes. Our connection grows stronger. Like a muscle between us, it builds. I'm sure you've noticed it in other facets as well?

SAM:
I don't think so?

J:
You most definitely should- we have a mutually beneficial relationship, all of this is very expected. You're right about more things, aren't you?

SAM:
(Cheekily)
I'm right about most things.

J:
(Chuckling)
Things you spontaneously know.
Hunches that come seemingly from
nowhere and burst forth- Yes?

SAM:
No... No, that's- that's been-?? That
has been happening! (Awkward
laughing) I've been kind of rude with
it?

J:
But correct nonetheless! That is us.
That is this, Sam.

SAM:
You make me know things?

J:
I don't make you do anything. You
choose. Like how I supply you with
diverting information for your State
Director.

SAM:
Yeah, oh, the last one kept him way
outta the way for Perdition. It
worked great.

J:
Our connection is like that,
reciprocal partnership. Understanding
things is a residual effect of our
bond. Your intuition grows,
specifically in my area of expertise:
Judgement.

SAM:
That's pretty fucking cool.

J:
Yes it is.

SAM:
(Grinning)
Thank you! I, what else can I say...?
What do I give you?

J:
(Gently)
A friend.

SAM:
 (Very awkwardly)
 Aawwww... But really.

J:
 You give me hope that this place can
 be good, how I've always imagined it.

SAM:
 ... Sorry I don't give you superpowers.

J:
 Hush. You give me much more than you
 realize. Now, shall we devise our
 next wild goose chase for Becker?

SAM:
 What do you have in mind?

SCENE 9: INT. CITY HALL, MORNING

Low classical music plays in a cushy waiting room. Kevin is clicking a pen methodically.

AL:
 (Sighs)
 There's truly no coffee around-?

KEVIN:
 (Terse)
 No. There isn't.

SAM:
 (Trying to be
 friendly, but also
 tired)
 I bet there's a break room somewhere
 in City Hall.

KEVIN:
 NO. There isn't!

CRUX:
 Definitely believed that one...

NARRATOR:
 The mayor's receptionist turned
 fierce eyes on Crux- his ballpoint
 pen clicking furiously, his shoulders
 raised to his ears in defense of his
 grand oak desk.

KEVIN:
It's for the hard-working public
servants of democracy. NOT... ratty
Bolsheviks.

AL:
What, us?

SAM:
You're a little off there, Kevin.

AL:
I'd look good with one of those
Communist moustaches, don't you
think?

CRUX:
Undoubtedly. You have the bone
structure for it.

KEVIN:
(Aghast)
There are cameras here, you...
anarchist nitwits!

SAM:
(Concerned)
Kevin, please let me explain the
differences of literally any
political ideology-

The door opens.

VALEN:
We're ready for you.

The three get up and cross to the door.

VALEN: (cont'd)
Mr. Lanchestshire? Could you go grab
us some refreshments? Thanks.

KEVIN:
I-I-Yes! Yes ma'am!

The door creaks closed.

KEVIN: (cont'd)
(softly, resolute)
I won't spit in their cups... Democracy
is better than that...

SCENE 10: INT. MAYORAL OFFICE, MORNING

BECKER:
(Clapping his hands
together, excited)
Come on, come on, you three- Let's
dive in! There's a lot-

GLEENDA:
(Sounding almost
disgruntled)
Good morning, DoCA muscle. Director
Hollow, before we start... ?

VALEN:
Yes, mayor.

GLEENDA:
Do me a favor and keep an eye on our
be-masked guest today. We had
something of a disagreement over the
weekend.

CRUX:
That was a social event.

VALEN:
(Neutrally
reassuring)
Ground Crew stays professional while
on the clock, I promise.

BECKER:
We run a tighter ship now.

GLEENDA:
So much has changed in 48 hours.

AL:
Not that I don't love pleasantries,
but...-

SAM:
-Why're we here?

GLEENDA:
Tomorrow's festivities are different
this year, as you know. Our first
mass gathering since summer, it is
incredibly important that we keep a
lid on everything.

AL:

Yeah, no masks, police around, and a curfew.-

GLEENDA:

We axed the curfew. Come up with different solutions. And, in a surprisin' turn of events, ya'll are the core team leading the way.

SAM:

What way?

BECKER:

Forward! All of us have specialized knowledge- it'd be a disservice to not steer this big spooky boat ourselves. Your neighbors are counting on you.

VALEN:

The State Director has procured equipment for us. A strong choice, knowing how well the suits have gone over... -

BECKER:

'Excuse me, Glenda-

A rustling, then a heavy fabric and plastic flop on the desk.

GLEENDA:

We could've gotten you a coat rack, this'll wrinkle, I'm sure.-

SAM:

That's- That's a tactical vest.

CRUX:

And a holster-

BECKER:

It's been a long time coming, but you all are finally getting DoAA sanctioned outfitting. Bullet-proof vest, tactical shoes, and a 60,000 volt stun gun. Nothing but the best for my team. But bring your own pants. Please.

AL:
(Stunned)
This looks like cop shit.

GLENDA:
Fitting you should say that.

BECKER:
You aren't the only ones getting upgrades. Harbor PD will be inheriting old equipment from our State office-

GLENDA:
Incredibly generous of you, thank you again... Seeing the situation at Perdition opened my eyes.

BECKER:
Mayor, it is entirely my pleasure. And duty, now! See, team, HPD will in fact, be integrating underneath, well, us. Cousins! In a way. Or maybe... more like step-brothers.

SAM:
We're working with the police?

GLENDA:
Mr. Becker will be in charge of the police. For Halloween, that is.

CRUX:
They're idiots!

BECKER:
Oh very ignorant. But I'll be leading their Cryptid crash course after this- by the way, Valen, bring Roose and William up to speed while I'm away.

VALEN:
Oh I will.

CRUX:
(Quieter)
Those are serious tasers.

AL:
Very.

BECKER:

(Snorts)

Al, you had your hunting bow. I'm shocked no one has gotten the mean end of that over the years.-

VALEN:

(Diverting him)

-We've never worked in Human security. And it's not usual for us to be in close proximity with them- you're aware, Mayor? There's different physicalities.

GLEENDA:

You think we have a choice? Especially with Sunday and our honey'd party, I'm sure you heard.

BECKER:

It was... very lucky you all were there. Only way it could've been improved is if I'd been present. But that's in the past, (Under his breath) isn't it, Al..

GLEENDA:

And after the Pyre this summer. We're doing what's necessary. Don't misunderstand me, it's hard. But needed.

The door creaks open. Kevin stumbles in with a rattling coffee tray.

GLEENDA: (cont'd)

Ah, here's some refreshments- Come in, Kev-

KEVIN:

-My conscience is clear!!

GLEENDA:

Of course it is, honey. Over here, please. We have tea, coffee, milk, sugar, and, oh, cake too. Not so backwards now, is it, Brick?

BECKER:

(Smile)

Full Southern.

GLEENDA:
Help yourselves.

 KEVIN:
Please... try not to *choke*, dear
guests...

 GLEENDA:
Think the phone's a-ringin', darlin'.

 KEVIN:
Oh, I'm so *sorry*, yes ma'am, right
away-!

Kevin sprints out of the room.

 AL:
Can we get back to the we're-fuckin'-
cops-now part?

 BECKER:
 (Chewing)
We've always been law enforcement.

 AL:
No, we're a community service-

 BECKER:
 (A soft little
 sneer)
Is that what Sedum told you... It's
because you were incompetently run.

 SAM:
So, s-so, we're all going to be
armed, and the cops will be lead by
you, and no Cryptids can come in with
masks-

 BECKER:
-Except for Crux.-

 CRUX:
-Oh goody.-

 SAM:
-Is that all? Is that everything?

 GLEENDA:
There's also pat downs at the
entrances, and the tranquilizers on
hand, but I am forgetting something
more; Brick...? -

CRUX:
Tranquilizers?!

SAM:
What, stop and frisk??

GLEENDA:
Don't fret- Ya'll are too valuable to be sidetracked with all that- that's HPD's business. Ya'll know who to look for and that's what you'll be focusin' on.

SAM:
Oh my God, oh, wow, uh- We're, gonna b-be stalking Cryptids... -

BECKER:
This is a big step in responsibility. But we're going to be mitigating it- it's not all going to come down on our shoulders.-

AL:
-Would you spit it out.-

BECKER:
(A snap)
-Eat a cake, Al, your blood sugar is low- (Back to normal) We'll all be able to keep an eye on every non-Human and/or suspicious Human present- It's just observation.

GLEENDA:
(Playing it up)
Mr. Becker, what're you talkin' about? Micro-chips?? Drones??

BECKER:
Glenda, of course not! Anyone here ever been to a music festival?

NARRATOR:
The Ground Crew stared back with sick expressions.

BECKER:
You all need to get out more- You get a plastic bracelet at concerts. It's nothing special, nothing invasive, and great for organization.

GLEENDA:
 Won't it single out every Cryptid an'
 cause some fussin' through the
 crowds?

BECKER:
 Excellent point- hm- how about, yes,
 we could make it seasonal-based?
 Blend it into the festivities.

GLEENDA:
 Orange bracelets for Humans, Black
 for Cryptids. Cute!

BECKER:
 Easy-peasy.

GLEENDA:
 And I think we have exactly those
 tucked away into storage somewhere!

VALEN:
 Frighteningly convenient.

GLEENDA:
 It's nice when the stars align.

BECKER:
 You won't have to do much and get
 cool outfits! Sound good?

SAM:
 (UNcomfortable)
 ... HA.

BECKER:
 Great!-

VALEN:
 -Arming us with electric projectiles...
 seems possibly... dangerous? Without
 training. Opportunity for twitchy
 trigger fingers.

BECKER:
 They're quick learners.

SAM:
 I am not.

CRUX:
 I don't use weapons.

AL:
Send the tasers back. It'll
compromise trust with the folks we
know.

BECKER:
It's standard issue.

AL:
Untrained rubes with weapons aren't
going to make a public gathering less
tense. Keep in mind, I'm the rube
here.

BECKER:
With that attitude-

GLEENDA:
No, I agree. I do see that point. Nix
the tasers, Brick.

BECKER:
(Slight laugh)
I didn't realize this was a
negotiation?

SAM:
If this is about keeping a lid on
tomorrow, then it might be best if we
play it safe. And you couldn't... know
that we haven't had proper training.
Or felt deeply uncomfortable.

GLEENDA:
No need for increased risk at the
biggest event this year.

BECKER:
... Then we'll schedule a training day
for you in November. Anything else?

VALEN:
Yeah. Mayor?

GLEENDA:
Mm?

VALEN:
You mentioned singling out Cryptids
with the bracelets.

GLEENDA:
Everyone will get a bracelet.

VALEN:

My mistake. So I assume we're planning on searching every person who comes into the festival? So we can make it as equitable as the observation?

GLEENDA:

That ... was not the intention.

VALEN:

Why?

GLEENDA:

It would create traffic jams like none other- And is an awful lot to spring on the community last minute.

VALEN:

I agree. But how will the "suspicions" be kept in line if we don't? If we take every out-of-sorts-folk off to the side and leave the rest to mingle... to talk amongst themselves, it could be a red flag for anyone who wants to start conspiracies-

Glenda is pouring tea into a cup, stirring in sugar with little plops and the sparkle of the spoon.

GLEENDA:

I understand, Valen.

VALEN:

And Finnick's husk is smack dab in the middle of it all, making sure we don't forget about this summer.. Mitigation or removal, that's all I'm suggesting.

GLEENDA:

... I'll think on it.

VALEN:

'Appreciate that, Mayor.

BECKER:

Well, this has been productive.-

CRUX:

(Diving in quickly)
About those tranquilizers-?

AL:
Yeah, about that-

BECKER:
-I'm needed down at the Police
Station- they're waiting for the
expertise.-

CRUX:
(Getting a bit
upset)
What will happen if someone gets
taken down? What happens after?

BECKER:
(Ignoring him)
Your new equipment will be at the
office. Al, remember, you're with me.

SAM:
Crux is talking-!-

CRUX:
(Frantic)
Where will they go?? Where will they
be taken??

BECKER:
Hollow, do what you think is best
with your men. Looking forward to
tomorrow!

CRUX:
Becker...

Becker strides out. Not before Crux stands up suddenly with
a scrape of his chair.

CRUX: (cont'd)
Becker!!

Becker stops.

BECKER:
Did you want something, Crux?

CRUX:
What will you do with any - any
drugged people? What happens to them?

BECKER:

Oh! Well, if anyone gives us any reason to do that, then what does that say about them? (Little smile) I know you feel so much, Crux, but you can't be more concerned about criminals than protecting innocents. Remember your priorities. Goodbye.

Becker exits.

GLEENDA:

(Lower, she is thinking)

Glad we're all on the same page.

SCENE 11: EXT. CITY HALL PARKING LOT, LATE MORNING

The Ground Crew are out in the parking lot. All of them are talking low.

AL:

(Quiet, hissing)

Since when- when have we been this... militarized? Why, Valen?

VALEN:

We haven't, because we've never been on board with the state office. We've taken their money when they offered...

NARRATOR:

The Ground Crew clustered together on the far side of the crumbling parking lot, in the shade of Valen's lifted SUV. Al's arms itched like embers, and Sam squatted on the ground, running his hands through his hair. Crux leaned against the driver's door, a dark furrow between his brows. And Valen herself stood solid before them.

CRUX:

How long did you know about this?

VALEN:

I was told right before y'all came in. Knew he was working on something, I had my suspicions, I didn't know... I didn't know he'd do a coup on the cops with money.

SAM:
It can't be legal...

VALEN:
I honestly don't know.

AL:
I can't do tomorrow, I won't.

CRUX:
No. You don't back out.

AL:
All of this stinks. I can't be
complicit.-

CRUX:
We're the ones standing in the way of
a cluster fuck. A cluster fuck for
people like me! Cryptids less
inconspicuous than me. Hell, for
suspicious Humans, for anyone out of
place. This is enormously convenient
for anyone with a bias and power.

SAM:
We have an opportunity.

AL:
This is larger than Halloween.

SAM:
It's what's right in front of us.
Let's deal with this first.

AL:
Crux, I'm sorry you were the one
yelling at the end there. I'm sorry.

CRUX:
Don't apologize. Help.

A breath before Valen diverts the conversation back.

VALEN:
Roose won't let the tranquilizers
stick around, telling you that right
now.

SAM:
Does she need help?

VALEN:

No!

AL:

Don't get in her way, Sam.

SAM:

Ok. Ok...

Another moment. They're all full of thoughts.

SAM: (cont'd)

Valen... ?

VALEN:

Yeah?

SAM:

I'm sorry but... You were talking with them... like it was a compromise.

VALEN:

Yes...?

SAM:

I understand, kind of, but you're-you're their equal. And this is... really worrying.

VALEN:

(Patient)

What are you trying to say, Sam?

SAM:

Is there a reason you didn't stand up against this? Out and out?

VALEN:

I was tap-dancing as fast as I could in there- (Sighs) I didn't get the information sooner than you by much, remember that.

SAM:

We were all caught off guard, but we have to sit there and take it, you don't.

VALEN:

I don't think you understand the scope of my influence... There is a time and place for drawing lines in the sand. Not on the offset.

(MORE)

VALEN: (cont'd)
 Play their biases against them-
 Glenda can listen to me, I'll be
 there to challenge her gently at
 first, then more, and more, you see?

SAM:
 I know. It's negotiation.-

VALEN:
 It's manipulation, Sam. Do you all
 hear me? It takes patience and
 holding your tongue and not feeling
 good. Feeling like... a traitor for the
 sake of the long game. But in the
 end, you have something of theirs:
 Trust. And you can do so much with
 that. Remember.

SCENE 12: EXT. DREAMSCAPE

A schlormping through as Sam crosses into the J's world. The
 ocean backdrops everything, the stars fall.

J:
 Oh-! Hello! I thought I was gifting
 you a night's recovery?

SAM:
 I want to go back into the memories.

J:
 What now?

NARRATOR:
 Sam paced through the soft black
 grass before J. Electricity crackled
 around him.

SAM:
 Things are... getting out of hand.
 We're policing. We're not protecting,
 we're not helping, we're being told
 to... snitch! And stalk! We're the hand
 of punishment for one event four
 months ago. For an entire scope of
 creatures- people! People!

J:
 Sam, who's we? Your job?

SAM:

Yes! Yes this is all about tomorrow and what Becker and the Mayor want us to do.

J:

Oh. Dear. Interesting.

SAM:

And Valen. She's not telling us everything. She is holding shit back and we're in the dark. If I thought Al- (This triggers him to remember, he stumbles emotionally) Al... (He shakes himself loose) If I thought she was in danger, if we were over the summer, then I know we are now. I can feel it, J. You're there, in me, and I can. Feel. It.

J:

Samson, I don't doubt you are correct, but last night you couldn't even dwell on the idea of experiencing memories for long.

SAM:

I need to know what Valen isn't telling us. And, the Mayor. I need to know what the fuck is Glenda's deal. So let's go. I only have 6 hours.

J:

You're being rash.

SAM:

You were fine with it yesterday.

J:

You are crackling. Dearheart, it is my place to protect you from yourself at times. This is one of those times.

SAM:

Innocent people could get seriously hurt tomorrow.

J walks toward Sam.

J:

Think about yourself. You're draining your cup of every drop.

SAM:

I am thinking about myself- you've been feeding me what to do since summer, and now it's my turn, I need to lead, I need to take charge and not take credit for what you just give me. I can help here.

J:

But how can you attempt to help those around you if you keep falling into sabotaging yourself?

SAM:

I'm not- I'm a part of this and we can get the upper hand. It's just like with Becker, except it's from me now-

NARRATOR:

J's heavy, hoof-like fingers wrapped the whole of Sam's shoulders. He held his gaze with prismatic, bleedingly kind eyes.

J:

(Gently)

You're showing your youth.

Sam inhales softly. This hurts.

J: (cont'd)

I am far older than is imaginable by one Human locked upon your world. And I love you. You are precious to me. Heed my boundary, heed my words, Dearheart. This is not the time. You are too vulnerable, still. The deluge would scar you and I cannot bear to let that happen. I cannot watch you drown again.

Sam is quiet... then sniffs, dissolving. He's tired and stressed.

SAM:

I'm sorry...

NARRATOR:

He let his head fall forward, caught by the soft mane of fur at J's breast. The immeasurable creature encircled him in his arms.

SAM:
I'm just... a real selfish fuck-up, I think.

J:
Of course not.

SAM:
I'm sorry I disappoint you...

J:
You don't. What's needed is rest.

SAM:
Can I fix this?

J:
... Not alone. But with assistance?
Yes. One day we'll fix this.

SCENE 13 - INT. AL'S TRAILER, MORNING.

A harsh rattling buzzing of the alarm clock. Shuffling. The shuts off with a click.

AL:
(Under her breath)
Happy Halloween.

The outside spooky decor cackles, overtaking us.

END

CREDITS

Faraday Roke as Al
Cory Moosman as Becker
Kiarra Osakue as The Narrator
Z Reklaw as Samson
Joseph Rothorn as J
Chef Goldblum as Harold
Jonathon Hallowell as William
John Peacock as Crux
Samantha Weiler as Valen
Jacque Reiman as Roose
Erin M. Banta as Mia
Brendan Kane as Kevin
Gretchen Ho as Glenda

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weirdos, and local cryptids about us- each new ear is a
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