

SHADOWS

written by

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INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

The court is magnificent. Beautiful. Unnaturally beautiful. Disturbingly beautiful.

The walls are a beautifully crafted silver and gold marble wood, with gemstone leaves that flutter gently in the wind. The floor is covered in sparkling sand that never sticks to your feet, even after you step in the shallow streams that run all over. It's hard to tell if the ceiling is indeed a ceiling, or just open sky, with stars visible even in the brilliant blue of midday.

JULIA, 29, marvels at everything. She's been through a lot lately, and it shows, but somehow just being here is rejuvenating her.

She jumps when she first notices the members of the court:

FANDEN, the Elfking. He sits on a throne grown out of a still-living golden tree, and wears a crown made out of its branches. Like all of the elves, he is as disturbingly beautiful as the Court itself, and completely ageless - though he looks to be somewhere between 15 and 50 years old. He's smiling the sort of smile that if you didn't know him, you'd think he's a smug asshole, but really that's just his face.

KAIA, the Elfking's daughter. She sits on a branch of Fanden's throne, and wears a burka-like dress and headcovering that flows like silk, but seems to have been carved out of stone. She's bored.

OIVA, a gorgeous, perfectly androgynous elf that I'll refer to with the masculine just so there's consistency. Unlike the other members of the court, Oiva has no seat; he floats in the air, legs hanging beneath him. It doesn't look comfortable, but he doesn't mind it. His face is completely expressionless.

Along with these three, there are at least three dozen more elves along the walls, hidden in corners, sitting in the branches that support the ceiling, and generally just hanging out. Not all of them are paying attention - this is their home, and they're living their lives.

Julia, her clothes already cleaner than they were, stumbles into a bow. Or should she curtsy? No, she's not wearing a skirt. She bows.

Fanden smiles, raises a cup of wine and bobs his head.

JULIA

Uh, oh, noble, um... Elves. Thank you for- my deepest thanks for accepting me into your home. Court! Into your court.

Kaia smirks. Fanden laughs - a friendly laugh.

FANDEN

Relax, child. You couldn't possibly understand our etiquette, so there's no expectation for you to follow it.

KAIA

Indeed. Think of yourself like a court jester.

Fanden gives her a look, but says nothing.

JULIA

Um. Okay. Um.

She coughs, takes a second to gather herself.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I don't want to waste your time, so I'll cut right to the chase.

OIVA

You can't.

Julia stumbles over her tongue.

JULIA

Um?

OIVA

You can't waste our time.

FANDEN

We're immortal. We have nothing but time.

JULIA

But you... I mean, didn't I interrupt you? You have things to do, and I don't want to keep you.

KAIA

It is the nature of men to interrupt us. If we didn't allow you to interrupt, you would die before your audience was granted.

OIVA

And you cannot "keep us." Humans are an endless source of new information. We would gladly keep court past your natural lifespan. There is nothing we have to do that can't wait a hundred years.

Julia chokes.

FANDEN

So please, take your time. Don't cut right to anything. Tell us about your earliest memories.

JULIA

You might have a hundred years to spare, but I don't. But... okay. I can start a little further back.

FANDEN

Please.

She takes a breath.

JULIA

I was... okay, don't laugh or anything, I know you're all, like, archmages. But I was kind of a prodigy.

INT. YUSEF'S TOWER - DAY

Rugs and curtains make thick stone floors and walls somewhat cozy. Bookshelves line one wall - mostly massive tomes, but there are a decent number of smaller books, and even a couple pop fiction titles.

YUSEF towers over a YOUNG JULIA, here only 12. Yusef is the very picture of a crotchety old archmage - flowing robes, pointy hat, beard that's halfway to the floor. He has to be at least 70.

JULIA (V.O.)

Enough of a prodigy that I was chosen by Yusef as his only apprentice.

INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

JULIA
Um. Yusef was this big-deal
archmage illusionist.

FANDEN
We know of Yusef.

JULIA
Really?

KAIA
We know more about your archmages
than you do, dear, I assure you.

FANDEN
But we would still like to hear
your perspective, please. What was
he like as a master?

JULIA
Uh, I was just glossing over this
part. This is just the prologue.

Fanden sighs. He's disappointed.

FANDEN
By all means.

INT. YUSEF'S TOWER - DAY

Yusef demonstrates the proper way to grip a mage's staff.

JULIA (V.O.)
Yusef was a genius at magic, but he
wasn't always a great teacher.

Julia tries, but he has to correct her. He's harsh about it,
but smiles when she gets it right. She extends the staff, and
nothing happens.

JULIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Fortunately, I had enough talent to
make up for that.

Before Yusef can correct her again, she flips the staff to
hold it in a completely different position, and it flares
with light.

INT. JULIA'S STUDY - NIGHT

Young Julia is hunched over a massive old book, with two others stacked on the desk next to her.

JULIA (V.O.)

He didn't always know what to do with me or how to teach me, so a big part of my training was him giving me some ridiculous goal - like turning invisible even if someone was watching you - and then letting me figure out how to do it, or if it was impossible or whatever, on my own.

INT. YUSEF'S TOWER - DAY

Julia, now 20, consults with Yusef.

JULIA (V.O.)

One of my last tasks was trying to figure out how to break the limits imposed by the Treaty - or rather, how to do that and not get killed by Chernobog.

INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

JULIA

Do you guys call him Chernobog?

OIVA

Yes. But we call them the Accords, not the Treaty.

KAIA

And we consider Chernobog to be one of the Accords.

JULIA

But that doesn't make sense. He's not, like, an agreement, he's a monster.

Fanden giggles with delight.

FANDEN

Fascinating! That's how you think of it? And you think it has genitalia?

JULIA

What?

FANDEN

You called it a "he."

JULIA

Well... I mean...

FANDEN

No, no, please, sorry. Continue with your story.

JULIA

Okay. So.

INT. YUSEF'S TOWER - DAY

Julia yells at Yusef, and he yells back.

JULIA (V.O.)

It wasn't going well. I'd already decided this was one of the impossible ones, but I hadn't proven it per se, so he wanted me to continue with my studies.

The argument intensifies. Yusef throws a book at Julia.

JULIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was in a really stubborn mood about it until Chernobog himself showed up.

The wall EXPLODES, and where daylight should be, there's only a twisting darkness.

A hand reaches out of the darkness and CRUSHES Yusef into powder.

A mouth of gnashing teeth extends to Julia, but she dives behind a table and casts a spell, making herself disappear.

The mouth smashes through the table, but she's not there anymore.

JULIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I barely made it out alive.

EXT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Julia lies on the bed, reading from an ancient tome.

She bolts out of bed like she just noticed something.

She grabs the book, throws it in a duffel bag, casts a spell, and disappears.

Shadows pour into the room.

JULIA (V.O.)

I didn't know how I pissed Chernobog off - best guess was my studies on how to hide from him - but once he was on my scent, I couldn't hide. I could only run.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Julia walks down the street with her duffel bag.

JULIA (V.O.)

I figured out that if I just kept moving, it would take him a while to catch up. He'd always find me eventually, but I could stay ahead of him. So I kept studying what Yusef had wanted me to study all along - some way to get him off my scent for good.

INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

Kaia rolls her eyes.

KAIA

Enough. This is ridiculous. Chernobog obviously didn't attack her just because she was studying the Accords, and even if he had, she wouldn't be alive to tell the story.

FANDEN

Now, Kaia. This is her story, we'll let her tell it.

He gives Julia a discerning look.

FANDEN (CONT'D)

Though I certainly hope there's an explanation for these wild stories.

JULIA

There is. I promise you that. Just
be patient.

Fanden laughs. Kaia chuckles. Even Oiva smiles.

Julia laughs too, though more just so she doesn't stand out
than because she thinks it was particularly funny.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Okay. So. For like eight years -
which I know doesn't seem like a
long time to you, but for humans,
it's a long time - everything
stayed the same. There was a
routine to it.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The apartment has barely been lived in. It has a bed and a
sad little bookshelf that is absolutely packed, otherwise
it's empty. There aren't even any blinds on the window for if
she wanted to cover up her view of a brick wall.

SUPER: SHADOWS

The door has three locks. They snap open, one at a time.

The door opens, and Julia walks in, exhausted. She closes the
door, locks in behind her, and collapses on the bed.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julia stirs. Gets up. Walks into the bathroom.

She walks out, hair wet, wrapped in a towel, brushing her
teeth.

She walks to the bookshelf, dances on the books with her
fingers before selecting one and hefting it onto the bed.

She walks into the kitchen area, walks out dressed and with a
sandwich. She sits on the bed and starts reading.

She takes notes on the margins, and occasionally in a
notebook she pulls from her pocket.

She looks at a clock. Puts the book away.

She walks into the kitchen, walks out with a brown paper
lunchbag, and leaves the apartment.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Julia walks down the street with her lunchbag.

She sees a group of shady guys notice her and start walking over to her. She rolls her eyes, and walks past a lightpole, and like a Bugs Bunny cartoon, she doesn't appear on the other side of it.

The guys look around, confused. They decide they can't have seen what they thought they saw, and leave.

Another lightpole later, Julia appears and keeps on her way.

EXT. DONUT SHOPPE - NIGHT

Julia arrives at a rather run-down donut joint. A sign on the window proclaims 24 HOURS in flickering neon. She walks in.

INT. DONUT SHOPPE - NIGHT

Julia, now wearing a Donut Shoppe apron, lounges behind the register, reading from her notebook.

She highlights something.

JULIA
(realizing)
That's it. That's the key. That's
the motherfucking-

SARA, 19, enters the shop. She's long ago given up at taming her thick curls, and has settled for keeping them in something like a bun.

She walks to the counter. Julia barely lowers her notebook.

SARA
Can I just get a dozen glazed?

Julia nods. Puts her notebook down. Moves to the donuts.

SARA (CONT'D)
Busy night?

JULIA
Crazy.

Julia puts the donuts in a box.

SARA
Are you the only one here?

JULIA
Are you gonna rob me?

SARA
Just curious. Must get bored.

JULIA
I'm not really a people person.

SARA
Oh.

Julia hands Sara the donuts. Sara hands her a credit card.

Julia notices something. She's immediately alert. She scans the windows.

Sara looks nervous. She looks around too.

SARA (CONT'D)
Everything okay?

JULIA
Shh.

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Yeah. Yeah.

She swipes Sara's card.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Are you a member of our rewards club?

EXT. DONUT SHOPPE - SUNRISE

Julia emerges. Slinks down the street.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

The door opens, and Julia walks in, exhausted. She closes the door, locks in behind her, and collapses on the bed.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

A KNOCK at the door.

Julia's eyes shoot open. She's scared.

Another KNOCK. Julia calms down. It's just the door.
 She gets up. Shuffles to the door. Looks through the peephole.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Sara stands outside the door. She scratches her neck.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - DAY

SARA (O.S.)
 Hello?

JULIA
 (whispering)
 Shit.

Another KNOCK.

Julia looks at her closet, at the duffel bag on the floor.

She looks at her books.

Looks back at the door.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Fuck.

She takes a breath.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Yeah?

SARA (O.S.)
 Can I come in?

JULIA
 No.

SARA (O.S.)
 Please? It's kind of time-sensitive.

JULIA
 Did you follow me home?

SARA (O.S.)
 No, Julia, I didn't.

Julia's eyes widen. FUCK.

JULIA
Alright, bitch-

SARA (O.S.)
Chernobog is after me. I need your
help.

Julia freezes.

Panic mode.

She grabs her duffel bag, runs in circles around the apartment stuffing everything in it - it's clearly magical, able to hold far more than it should be able to.

SARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(getting desperate)
Julia?

Julia shoves all the books into her bag, one shelf at a time.

Once everything but the bed is in her bag, she reaches into the bag and pulls out a wooden baseball bat carved with runes and arcane diagrams.

She slings the bag over her shoulder and undoes the door locks.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Sara hears the door unlocking. Relaxes.

The door is THROWN open, knocking her back. Julia emerges, bat extended in one hand, runes glowing.

JULIA
If I ever see you again, I'll kill
you.

SARA
But I need your help!

JULIA
Yeah, and I need you to not lead
the fucking devil to my house!

SARA
I can help you! I-

They both freeze. The sunlight coming from the windows fades.
Shit.

Julia looks at Sara. Sara is terrified. Decision time.

JULIA

Oh, hell.

She runs to Sara, scoops her to her feet, and all but drags her down the stairs.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY?

It wasn't just the windows; a cloudless sky is somehow as dark as twilight, and getting darker.

Julia leads Sara out the building and down the street.

SARA

Where are we going?

JULIA

I got the apartment here because it was so close to...

She runs to a brick wall. Taps her bat on the wall. It rings like a bell.

JULIA (CONT'D)

This.

She takes a deep breath, prepares herself for something really unpleasant.

JULIA (CONT'D)

You eat all those donuts?

SARA

What?

JULIA

Nevermind.

She shoves Sara up against the wall. Something... happens to her. It's like the wall is absorbing her. It doesn't look comfortable, but we can't hear her scream as she's completely enveloped and disappears.

Julia looks up at the sun, now only as bright as the moon. Nobody else around seems to notice.

She hugs the wall. We hear her scream.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Sara crouches on the floor, puking her guts out.

Suddenly, Julia's there too. She collapses on the ground, weeping and coughing up bloody vomit. It's super gross.

Finally, Sara's done. She wipes her mouth. Her eyes are bloodshot.

SARA

What... the hell...

Julia's not finished yet, though. She chokes on something, then vomits up something that looks like a massive hairball.

JULIA

Ohhh...

Sara dry heaves at the sight of it, but Julia feels so much better now. She collapses back to lean against the wall.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Every day of my life... I will hate you for that.

SARA

You hate me? What even was that?

JULIA

You know what a ley line is?

Sara nods.

JULIA (CONT'D)

It's like that, but completely different.

SARA

Oh.

Beat. Julia climbs to her feet, helps Sara up.

SARA (CONT'D)

Are we... safe?

Julia shakes her head. Pauses. Nods.

JULIA

Yes.

SARA

We are?

JULIA
Yeah. For now. He can't... I don't
think he can see them.

SARA
"Them" being...

JULIA
The not-ley lines.

SARA
Right.

JULIA
Oh, god. I'd forgotten the smell.

SARA
Can we...?

JULIA
Let's.

They leave.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

It's an old brick schoolhouse or something in the middle of
some run-down rural town. Looks like it's maybe in Virginia
or North Carolina, that general area.

They stumble down the road until they reach some greasy
diner. They go in.

INT. DINER - DAY

There's three old men and a WAITRESS, with a combined age of
about a thousand. They all look at Julia and Sara as the pair
falls into a booth.

The waitress makes her way over.

WAITRESS
Can I get you something to drink?

JULIA
Two coffees. With honey, if you
have it.
(to Sara)
Trust me.

Sara nods. The waitress leaves.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Alright, look. I'm not an asshole, so I didn't leave you behind. But this stops here. After we eat, if you go south, I go north. You go west, I go east.

SARA

But-

JULIA

No buts.

The waitress appears with their coffees and a small thing of honey.

WAITRESS

What y'all hungry for?

JULIA

Nothing. This is fine.

The waitress is already walking away. Julia pours a healthy portion of honey into her coffee, then hands it to Sara, who does likewise.

Julia eagerly drinks the coffee.

SARA

But if I hadn't come to you, I'd already be dead. He was on me.

JULIA

Yeah. I know.

SARA

So if you leave me now, I'm still dead, it just takes a little while longer.

Julia stares at her, thinking.

JULIA

Probably.

SARA

So, thanks a lot, I guess.

Sara sips the coffee. Her eyes widen. She finishes the whole thing in one swallow.

JULIA

Look, if I helped everyone I came across-

SARA

Don't, okay? I get it. But you can at least tell me what you do. How you hide.

Julia sighs.

JULIA

It's not... I don't really know. It's instinctual. For one thing, I keep moving. Longest I've stayed anywhere was two months, and that was too long.

SARA

Okay. And how far do you move when you move?

JULIA

I try to at least go a full state away. I've done Canada. I did Mexico for a little while, but my Spanish is shit.

SARA

Mine's pretty good.

JULIA

Then I'd do that occasionally. Maybe further south. A lot of cheap transportation down there, easier to get around without leaving a record.

SARA

But Chernobog doesn't, like... he's not a private eye.

Julia shrugs.

JULIA

I don't know what to tell you. But the less records I leave, the longer it takes him to find me.

SARA

Okay. Okay.

JULIA

And... that's it. Pretty much.

SARA

That's it. So I'm just living the rest of my life on the run.

JULIA
You wanted to know what I do.
That's what I do.

Sara accepts that.

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)
How did you find me? And like...
why?

SARA
You're a legend. You escaped
Chernobog. You've kept away from
him for like ten years. I knew if
anyone could help me, you could.

JULIA
But how-

SARA
I am a private eye. Sort of. With
the Gift. Obviously.

JULIA
So, what, you looked at my ATM
receipts or something? I've been
pretty off the grid.

SARA
Library records. Once I figured out
you were stealing books and what
kinds of books you were stealing,
I'd keep an eye out. Eventually I
got lucky.

JULIA
Holy shit.

SARA
I mean, that's not like, the only
thing I did. But that was how I
finally did find you.

JULIA
I wonder if that's how he's been
finding me.

SARA
But really. What's up with the
books? What are you looking for?

Julia looks around. Leans in.

JULIA
I think I can hide from him.

SARA
What? Really?

JULIA
That's how I pissed him off in the first place - which, hey, what did you do? Nevermind. Yeah. I just need...

Beat.

SARA
What?

Julia thinks.

JULIA
Actually. I could use your help.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

The room looks it contained a war between mold and bugs - and, judging by all the dead bugs around, mold won.

Julia explains excitedly to Sara

JULIA
So then I figured, "Wait a second, he was made to enforce the Treaty between men and elves, right? That means he must have elven magic as a part of him."

SARA
Oh. Oh! That would explain... *ohhh*.

JULIA
Yeah! And then everything just snapped into place.

SARA
So what did you do then?

JULIA
I got you a dozen glazed donuts.

SARA
What? That was... you literally just figured this out.

JULIA

Last night, yeah. But this would fix everything, right? We just need to get our hands on some elven magic.

SARA

So how exactly can I help you?

JULIA

You're a private eye. Go... private some elves or something. I don't know.

Sara groans. She was this close to being a genius.

SARA

Seriously? That's your plan? There can't be more than three elves still in the realms of men.

JULIA

Yeah, and they're gonna be a bitch to find.

SARA

Well, everyone other than Lumi.

JULIA

Lumi?

SARA

She's not an option.

JULIA

Lumi's an elf? Why the hell isn't she an option?

SARA

Uh, because she's like Al Capone and Bonnie Parker and, like, a jaguar all rolled into one.

JULIA

Why the fuck have I never heard of her?

SARA

How should I know?

JULIA

So if she's not an option, what other elves do you know about that we can reach?

Beat. Sara sighs.

INT. LUMI'S COURT - NIGHT

If you didn't know what she was copying, Lumi's court would be the pinnacle of beauty and elegance. As it is, though, it's a pale imitation of the Elven Court, with live oak trees stretching up to a crystal chandelier over a marble floor.

LUMI sits on a silk cushion on a marble throne. Her dark skin helps to highlight her impossibly bright golden hair.

She sips white wine from a crystal chalice. She decides she's done, so she drops the chalice to the floor - not only does it not break, it doesn't even spill. And it lands on its side. Magic, man.

KAUKO, a half-elf who appears as though he were around the age of 14, retrieves the cup and kneels in front of Lumi.

He speaks in the Elven language - an odd mixture of sibilants, guttural coughs, and clicks.

LUMI

Oh, goodness, no, stop. I thought you were half human, not half garbage disposal.

KAUKO

If my pronunciation displeases you, my lady-

LUMI

It does. Just go away. Go.

She talks to no one in particular as he leaves.

LUMI (CONT'D)

Oh, this would never be allowed at the Elven Court, I tell you. Half human is too human. Maybe if he found an elf willing to fuck him, his children would be able to speak OUR FUCKING LANGUAGE.

That last bit is aimed at him. This reminds her he exists, so she talks to him again.

LUMI (CONT'D)

Wait. You.

Kauko turns back.

KAUKO

Kauko.

LUMI

Kauko. I'm sorry.

She says something to him in Elven, and when she speaks it, it's beautiful, musical.

Kauko takes a deep breath, starts to respond-

LUMI (CONT'D)

Nope, that's enough of that. We'll stick with human toadies for now.

And just like that, two human TOADIES are kneeling at her side.

Kauko bows his head, leaves again.

TOADIE

My lady, there are more petitioners.

LUMI

Fine. Send them in.

The toadie leaves.

He returns with Julia and Sara in tow.

They both marvel at the beauty of the room.

LUMI (CONT'D)

And you are?

Julia startles.

JULIA

Yes ma'am! I'm Julia, and this is Sara.

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)

And... we need a favor.

Everyone in the room laughs.

SARA

Maybe we should go.

Lumi's still laughing.

LUMI

No, no. I want to hear it.

Sara looks at Julia. Julia swallows.

JULIA

We need Elven magic.

Lumi's too astonished to laugh. Not that that stops anyone else.

LUMI

What in the human realm could you possibly need Elven magic for?

Julia starts to talk, but Sara quickly interrupts.

SARA

We're researchers studying Elven myths. We're trying to determine how the Elves were able to do so many things that are impossible for humans.

Julia gives Sara a look.

LUMI

And I suppose there's no way that this would come back to harm my people.

JULIA

Not at all, your... majesty.

LUMI

Lumi is acceptable.

JULIA

Lumi. We're only seeking to understand how Elven archmages came to be so much more powerful than human archmages.

LUMI

I can answer that for you right now: It's not their magic, it's their millennia of experience. If that's all...

She gestures, and her toadies move to lead them out.

JULIA

But Lumi-

Sara grabs Julia's hand, shakes her head.

LUMI
No, let her speak. What?

JULIA
This isn't... I know she made it
sound like we're trying to figure
out your weaknesses.

LUMI
That's exactly what it sounded
like.

JULIA
But that's not it at all. We're
something of... Um...

She looks at Sara. She blushes. Sara gives her a confused
look.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Can I be frank?

LUMI
If it helps you.

JULIA
We have something of an Elf...
fetish.

Lumi's entire face lights up. She bursts into laughter, along
with everyone else. Even Sara laughs a little.

LUMI
Oh my. That is... I'm glad I let
you stay, because that was a very
amusing lie. Now leave before I
decide you're dangerous to my
people and have both of you skinned
alive. Shoo.

That kills the mood pretty quick. The toadie escorts Julia
and Sara out.

Kauko follows them.

EXT. LUMI'S COURT - NIGHT

Lumi's court is held in an old church in the middle of a
city. From the outside, there's little to indicate it's
anything else.

Julia and Sara are escorted out by the toadie, who tries to slam the door in their face, but is stopped by Kauko leaving.

The toadie glares at Kauko, then slams the door even though Julia and Sara have already left.

Kauko hurries to catch up.

KAUKO
Hey! Wait!

They stop.

KAUKO (CONT'D)
Why are you really looking for Elven magic?

Julia and Sara look at each other.

JULIA
Personal reasons.

KAUKO
Perfect. Same reason as me.

SARA
Look, kid, not to be rude-

KAUKO
Don't call me kid, kid.

Sara laughs.

SARA
What should I call you, then?

KAUKO
Kauko.

SARA
Okay, Kauko. Not to be rude, but-

JULIA
Wait. Sara.

Sara groans.

JULIA (CONT'D)
(to Kauko)
You're an elf, aren't you?

Holy shit, he is. Sara looks at Kauko in a new light.

KAUKO
Too much for the realms of men, not
enough for the realms of elves.

SARA
Half-elf?

KAUKO
To you.

SARA
So how old are you?

KAUKO
Old enough. Look, I was raised by
an elf, and she didn't think I was
worthy of any elven magic. Nobody's
going to give anything to you.
You're going to have to take it.

Sara looks at Julia. Julia sighs.

JULIA
And how do you recommend we do
that?

Kauko smiles.

KAUKO
That's the right question.

EXT. KAUKO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kauko must be loaded or something, because his house is in
the city and it's huge. Old, too; had to have been built at
least a hundred years ago, though it's had a lot of work done
since then.

KAUKO (O.S.)
I've been working on this plan
since I was a kid.

INT. KAUKO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

This house has definitely had work done - the interior is a
shining example of modernity. And holy shit is it spacious.

Kauko has a huge map sprawled out over the kitchen table.
Julia and Sara examine it, though Sara tries not to look too
interested.

SARA

And how long ago was that?

KAUKO

There aren't any elves left in the realms of men anymore besides Lumi-

JULIA

None? As in, zero?

KAUKO

As in, one. Lumi.

JULIA

But I've met several-

KAUKO

Halves. Yeah. Some of them put up a pretty convincing front, but no, all the real elves are gone. Lumi's their... ambassador, so to speak.

JULIA

Yeah, she's a friendly one.

KAUKO

She's not as bad as you think. At least, she didn't used to be. Shit job took its toll.

He points at the map.

KAUKO (CONT'D)

Which is why we're not looking for an elf. We're looking for elven architecture.

Realization dawns on Sara.

SARA

Shhhhit. No.

KAUKO

Shit yes. The Tower.

Julia's eyes widen, and she looks at the map with new clarity.

SARA

That's, like... it'd be harder to-

JULIA

There's no other way?

KAUKO
I've been working on this my entire
life. There's no other way.

JULIA
Then that's that.

SARA
Julia, come on. This is the
definition of insane.

JULIA
Then leave.

Julia stares at Sara. Sara stares back. She knows she can't.

SARA
This is ridiculous.

JULIA
So how do we do it?

KAUKO
We need a lucksmith. And I know the
perfect one.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

HARRY, 28, walks out into the middle of busy traffic,
completely carefree.

Just as he does, a nearby powerline snaps, and drops across
the road, stopping all the traffic around him.

He gets to the other side of the street unmolested, and steps
to BEANIE, a child no older than 10.

HARRY
There we go, Beanie! A perfect
success!

BEANIE
Does that count as a success?

HARRY
Why wouldn't it?

BEANIE
Well...

Beanie looks at the chaos caused by the power line and the
stopped traffic.

Harry follows his gaze.

HARRY
That? To be expected. That's the
basis of my entire theory!

BEANIE
Yes, sir.

HARRY
Shall we leave? All this honking is
giving me a headache.

BEANIE
Yes, sir.

They walk away.

Nearby...

INT./EXT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

Julia, Sara, and Kauko are stuck in the mess of traffic
caused by Harry.

Kauko leans his head out the window and shouts.

KAUKO
Let's go already!

Beat.

KAUKO (CONT'D)
Yeah? Same to you, asshole!

Beat.

KAUKO (CONT'D)
Oh, that's it.

Kauko climbs out of the car.

JULIA
Wait, Kauko-

But he's already gone. Sara rolls her eyes.

SARA
This is who we're working with.

JULIA
If you've got a better idea, I'm
all ears.

Sara groans.

SARA

Look, it's not that... Just because I don't know what it is, doesn't mean there's not a better way.

JULIA

And as soon as you figure it out, we'll try that. I don't know about you, but there's not a lot I'm not willing to try in order to escape certain death.

Sara groans louder.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Good grief, chill out. How long has... you-know-who been a problem for you?

SARA

What? Like... a couple weeks?

JULIA

Yeah, I've been doing this for eight years. I know how to make life on the move work, but that doesn't mean I'm not sick of it.

SARA

I'm not-

Sara bites her tongue.

SARA (CONT'D)

Fine. We'll do it your way. For now.

Kauko reappears in the window.

KAUKO

Guess who I found!

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Harry shakes hands with Julia and Sara. Kauko and Beanie sit at a nearby table.

HARRY

Hey. Harry.

JULIA
Julia.

SARA
Sara.

The BARISTA sets a cup of coffee on the counter.

BARISTA
Jeff?

Harry grabs the coffee, takes a sip. Mmm, perfect.

Julia and Sara give him a look, but don't say anything.

They sit with Kauko and Beanie.

KAUKO
Look, I understand what you're saying, but I think it's really Harry's decision-

HARRY
Sure. Yeah. Let's do it.

BEANIE
Sir, wait a minute.

Julia and Sara exchange glances.

JULIA
...You don't need to know what we're doing first?

Harry shrugs.

HARRY
You don't get far in my line of work without trusting what luck brings you. What's the worst that could happen?

JULIA
Uh... I don't...

BEANIE
Sir, maybe you should-

HARRY
Yeah. Don't worry about it.

JULIA
Oh...kay then. Shouldn't we explain-

HARRY

No, look, you don't get it. Just bring me along wherever you're going and whatever. I'm sure I brought everything we'll need.

BEANIE

They're robbing the Tower of Babel, sir.

Harry chokes on his coffee. Beanie looks pleased.

HARRY

Hey, look, Kauko, nice seeing you again, but-

KAUKO

What? What about all that "trusting luck" crap?

Harry laughs.

HARRY

Yeah, uh, that was before I knew we were robbing the Elves. You know who holds a grudge better than the Elves? Fuckin' nobody.

BEANIE

Thanks anyway, guys.

HARRY

Take it easy.

KAUKO

You didn't ask what we're taking.

HARRY

Because it doesn't matter. You could be stealing a pencil and I still don't want a part of it.

KAUKO

We're not stealing a pencil.

BEANIE

We couldn't have guessed.

KAUKO

We're stealing magic. Elven magic.

That gives Harry and Beanie pause.

HARRY

Beanie. How long has it been since
a human had access to Elven magic?

BEANIE

At least a hundred years.

SARA

Baal Shem of London. Died in the
late 18th century.

HARRY

It's not like it matters. We
couldn't...

Beat.

He sits down; Beanie too.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I'll listen to your plan before I
dismiss it out of hand.

Kauko smiles. Pulls out one of his diagrams.

EXT. THE TOWER OF BABEL - DAY

An innocuous, if elegant, skyscraper in the middle of the
city, the Tower of Babel fits right in with the surrounding
skyline.

KAUKO (O.S.)

The Tower has three legs - one
here, one in Russia, and one that I
think is below the sea? Right?

SARA (O.S.)

Somewhere in the Pacific.

BEANIE (O.S.)

Twenty-nine degrees south, one
hundred sixty-eight degrees west.

JULIA (O.S.)

Oh, gross. I remember that phase of
my apprenticeship.

BEANIE (O.S.)

When you have to memorize useless
facts?

JULIA (O.S.)
When you've finished memorizing
them and think you're really smart,
so you can't stop showing off.

KAUKO (O.S.)
Guys? Can we?

Everyone mutters apologies.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL OFFICE SPACE - DAY

A perfectly normal office building. We see the rooms as Kauko describes them.

KAUKO (O.S.)
The Tower is a normal office
building. It's got a reception
desk, tiny food court, bathrooms,
whatever.

SARA (O.S.)
Yes, tell us more about the
bathrooms.

KAUKO (O.S.)
I will, don't worry.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

The top floor of the Tower isn't office space anymore - it's a high-tech security checkpoint that blocks off an elevator.

KAUKO (O.S.)
At the top is a highly-guarded
elevator to the next... tier, I
guess, of the Tower. That's the
part that connects to the other two
legs of the Tower, and the part
that gets you to the realms of the
Elves. This is the first obstacle.

JULIA (O.S.)
But this is just mundane security?
Metal detectors and shit?

KAUKO
Yeah. But.

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" - DAY

It just looks like a normal elevator. Maybe a little roomy.

KAUKO (O.S.)

The "elevator" they're guarding isn't an elevator at all. It technically can work as an elevator down, but that's just for appearances.

The elevator explodes out into a wireframe diagram, revealing all manner of mystical runes and markings hiding inside the walls, floor, and ceiling.

KAUKO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's actually the magical checkpoint, setting off all manner of chaos if anyone enters that doesn't know the proper wards.

A stick figure enters the elevator. Some of the runes glow, and the stick figure POOFS into nothing.

KAUKO (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That's obstacle two.

INT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

A glass walkway through time and space. Walking a hundred yards down the Bridge somehow takes you from the city skyline to the upper atmosphere, and you can look out a window the whole time. Past that, you start going "down" again, this time into a crystal city built in a golden forest - the realms of the elves.

KAUKO (O.S.)

The bridge is the goal. It was built with both human and elven magic working together. If we can pry a little bit of elven magic out of the floorboards, we've got what we need. Then it's just about getting out.

JULIA (O.S.)

But we have to pry the magic out of the floorboards.

KAUKO (O.S.)

Yeah. Without getting caught or triggering any alarms, because we have to get out again. So that's the third obstacle.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Everyone walks down the street.

HARRY

So what's the plan? How do we get around the obstacles?

KAUKO

Mm-mm. No. Not until you agree to help us.

Harry sighs.

HARRY

Fine.

Beanie stops.

BEANIE

Master! We need to know how much danger we'll be in first!

Everyone else stops with him.

KAUKO

You won't be in any danger, little man. We don't need you. It's Harry you need to worry about.

Beanie is actually pretty okay with this.

BEANIE

...Oh. Okay.

They continue walking.

HARRY

Are you going to tell me what I'll be doing, or not?

KAUKO

You're getting us past the first obstacle. You're going to luck the crap out of us and get those machines to let us through.

JULIA

Wait, what? That's not...
Lucksmithing will get you a green
light or shorter lines at the
airport or something, but it's not
going to get us through that
security checkpoint, is it?

SARA

Not without an overwhelming amount
of bad luck to balance it out.
That's a non-starter.

Harry laughs.

HARRY

No, that's why you got me. I can do
it, no problem.

SARA

That's easy to say, Harry.

HARRY

You want to know why I'm the best?
Because I'm the only one who knows
magic isn't a freaking science.
Everyone's all "Oh, lucksmithing
works exactly like this," but I'm
just like, "Why don't we make it
work a different way?"

Julia presses her fingers to her temples.

JULIA

Oh my god. You're one of those
crackpots. You're like, a perpetual
motion machine-level crackpot.

KAUKO

Guys. I've seen Harry do stuff that
should be impossible. I watched him
crash a plane into a brick wall and
come out okay.

HARRY

I was thrown clear of the accident
into a garbage truck that was
carrying a few dozen mattresses.

Julia and Sara look at each other. Sigh.

Harry stops. Everyone else stops too.

HARRY (CONT'D)
 It would sure be lucky if some
 incredible circumstances proved I
 could handle this right now,
 wouldn't it?

He holds out his hands expectantly.

A very pregnant beat.

Nothing happens.

HARRY (CONT'D)
 Whatever, I can handle it.

They continue walking.

KAUKO
 He really can.

JULIA
 I hear you, Kauko, but the fact is
 we only just met you, and-

A LITTLE GIRL runs up to Harry holding out a small piece of
 paper.

LITTLE GIRL
 Excuse me sir! I think you dropped
 this!

HARRY
 Oh, thank you.

He takes it, and she leaves. He shows it to everyone, reeeal
 big smile.

HARRY (CONT'D)
 Look at that! It's the lottery
 ticket I bought last week! I was
 wondering where I'd put it.

He pulls out a quarter and scratches off the ticket.

He groans. A lot.

Sara smirks.

SARA
 Let me guess. You won.

Harry doesn't respond; he just crumples up the ticket and
 throws it behind him.

A GRUMPY COP sees him and yells.

GRUMPY COP
Hey! Litterbug!

They don't stop walking.

BEANIE
Sir, I think he's trying to-

The cop picks up the ticket, then runs up and grabs Harry.

GRUMPY COP
Drop something?

HARRY
Oh, yes I did. Thank you, officer.

The officer grumbles at him, but leaves.

As soon as the cop's out of sight, Harry tosses the ticket again. This time, Beanie catches it.

He goes to throw it away, but looks at it as he does.

BEANIE
Um, sir?

HARRY
Yeah?

BEANIE
There are two more tickets stuck to the back of this one.

HARRY
Are there?

He takes the tickets from Beanie.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Look at that! One for both of you.

He hands one ticket to Sara, one to Julia, then walks away.

HARRY (CONT'D)
Kauko's got my number when you're ready to trust me.

Julia and Sara exchange glances. Scratch off their tickets.

JULIA
Holy shit.

SARA
Son of a bitch.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Sara and Julia lie on their beds. Julia flips through one of her books.

SARA
You really think this is gonna work?

JULIA
I think we've got enough of a shot that it's worth going for it.

SARA
Not just the... the heist. The spell. Chernobog.

Julia closes the book.

JULIA
I do.

SARA
I've been wanting this for so long, I'm convinced something's going to take it from me at the last second.

Julia laughs.

JULIA
How do you think I feel? You've been running from him for weeks. I've been running from him for years.

Sara slaps her forehead.

SARA
Right. Sorry. I keep forgetting. Not forgetting. Just... sorry.

JULIA
Whatever.

Beat. Chewing sounds.

INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

Julia eats greedily from a massive table of food that's been placed in front of her. She has a plate, but she's long since abandoned that in favor of simply grabbing whatever she wants from the table and shoving it in her mouth.

The elves watch her eat, just as interested now as they were when she was talking. None of them are eating.

Julia gathers enough self-awareness to notice everyone still staring at her. She pauses.

JULIA
(mouth still half full)
...Are you gonna eat?

FANDEN
No. We'll wait.

Julia swallows the bite in her mouth.

JULIA
It's just... it's a little awkward
for you all to stare at me eating.

FANDEN
It doesn't bother us. Does it?

The other elves shake their heads. Fanden gestures to the food.

FANDEN (CONT'D)
Please.

A short beat, and Julia continues eating - with a little more self-control this time.

And of course, as soon as her mouth is full again, Oiva starts talking to her.

OIVA
I confess a bit of curiosity on my
part concerning something the
lucksmith said. What did he mean
when he talked about magic as a
science?

Julia starts to respond, thinks better of it, and finishes chewing her bite.

JULIA
It's, uh... science is able to be
replicated. And, like, studied.

KAIA
Do humans not replicate and study
magic?

JULIA

We do. But it's kind of... magic doesn't always replicate exactly the same. Like, if I was taught that it's easier to become invisible if I'm holding my breath, then for me, it really is easier to become invisible if I'm holding my breath. So some people think magic has rules, others think magic only has rules because we think it does.

OIVA

Fascinating.

JULIA

Is that not... what do elves think about that?

OIVA

Oh, I'm afraid our view is far too nuanced to get into now. Perhaps after you're finished with your story, I could spend a few months going over the basics.

JULIA

A few... you're okay with that?

KAIA

I thought we'd gone over this already. We're immortal.

JULIA

Yeah, but. That doesn't mean you're willing to just spend time teaching me random crap.

FANDEN

Child, we would gladly spend the rest of your life teaching you "random crap."

That gets her attention.

JULIA

What? Really?

FANDEN

Really.

JULIA

Why? Like... why?

OIVA
 We're immortal. That gives us
 plenty of time. But it also means
 that we-

FANDEN
 -know each other-

KAIA
 -quite well.

FANDEN
 When you've spent an eternity with
 everyone you know, there gets to be
 very little that you don't know
 about them.

OIVA
 Not to say that we get bored of
 each other, but...

KAIA
 Humans are such a novel experience.

FANDEN
 All elves are unique individuals,
 of course, but we already know each
 other. We don't - we can't possibly
 - get to know every human.

OIVA
 Which makes all of you interesting.

Julia takes all of this in. Her food is completely forgotten.

JULIA
 So you're saying I could just spend
 the rest of my life here studying
 magic with you.

FANDEN
 It would be our privilege.

Julia laughs. She almost cries.

JULIA
 I... I don't know what to say.

FANDEN
 Don't say anything. Finish eating,
 then continue with your story.
 There will be plenty of time for
 this later.

JULIA
Holy shit. I don't think I'm hungry
anymore.

A short beat. She grabs more food.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Okay. So the day-of comes.

INT. THE TOWER ENTRANCE - DAY

Julia, Sara, Kauko and Harry enter the building. They walk to the receptionist's desk, all casual.

HARRY
Hey there. What floor is Consumer
Solutions?

RECEPTIONIST
That'll be the eighth floor.

HARRY
Thanks so much.
(to everyone else)
Eighth floor.

KAUKO
We know, we're standing right here.

Harry shrugs. They get in an elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR

Kauko hits the button for the top floor. The doors close.
The casual facade drops. The mood is tense.

KAUKO
Okay, okay, okay. Don't freak out.

JULIA
(kinda freaking out)
I'm not freaking out.

Sara takes deep breaths.

Only Harry seems somewhat relaxed.

KAUKO
Someone give me a boost.

Harry lifts Kauko up to the ceiling. He flips open a ceiling hatch and crawls out of the elevator.

He pokes his head back in.

KAUKO (CONT'D)
You guys know what you're doing?

JULIA
(voice cracking)
Yeah.

KAUKO
You're gonna come back for me,
right?

SARA
Just go, we're almost there.

He disappears.

Beat.

The elevator dings.

Game faces back on.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

The elevator opens. Everyone steps out.

A SECURITY GUARD looks up.

SECURITY GUARD
Good afternoon, folks. Right over
here.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - DAY

Kauko climbs into a vent.

INT. VENTS - DAY

Kauko shimmies through the ceiling, over everyone else.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
(through the vents)
If you'll just hand me your passes,
I can... oh, that's weird.

HARRY (O.S.)
Is there a problem?

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
Not... no, just give me a second.

SARA (O.S.)
We're kind of in a hurry.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)
Just hold on.

Kauko reaches the "Elevator."

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" SHAFT - DAY

The inside may look like a normal elevator, but it sits in a hollow sphere surrounded by all manner of magical wards and runes. Kauko takes a deep breath. Crawls onto the "elevator."

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

The lights switch to red. An alarm sounds.

The security guard looks up.

SECURITY GUARD
What the hell-

A magical rod drops from the ceiling. Shoots a blast of energy at Harry, who's suddenly... not there anymore.

Poof.

SARA
SHIT.

The security guard pulls out a gun and a magic wand, points both at Julia and Sara.

SECURITY GUARD
Don't move!

The rod shoots another blast of energy, this time at Sara. She dodges it, and the security guard opens fire at her, gun spitting bullets, wand spitting flames.

Julia runs around behind him and shoves him into the path of the rod's next blast. Rather than disintegrating him, it just knocks him unconscious.

Sara pulls out a rod of her own and points it at the ceiling rod. It shuts down.

The alarm still blares.

JULIA
FUCK.

SARA
SHIT.

JULIA
What do we do now?

SARA
We need to get out of here!

JULIA
Kauko!

Kauko's voice comes from the "elevator."

KAUKO (O.S.)
It's ready! Come on!

JULIA
No! We have to leave!

She looks at the elevator they came in on. It's on its way back up.

SARA
We're not going that way. Come on!

She grabs Julia, and they run into the "elevator."

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" - DAY

Kauko is in there and waiting. He pulls them in. The doors close behind them.

KAUKO
What the fuck happened?

JULIA
How should we know? We thought it was you?

KAUKO
It was me! As soon as I touched the elevator, it just... where's Harry?

Sara shakes her head.

KAUKO (CONT'D)

Fuck! Is there any way to stop now?

SARA

No. We have to keep moving.

JULIA

Even once we get the magic, how do we get out?

SARA

We worry about that when we get it.

KAUKO

You don't think we should worry about that now?

The lights go out.

Beat.

JULIA

So... Kauko...

KAUKO

I don't know what to tell you.

The lights come back on, but it's... different. Somehow.

The doors open, and they're on...

INT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

No alarms here. No red lights. They're between worlds now.

They step out of the "elevator." Kauko puts a stick in the door so it won't close.

JULIA

Where is everybody?

Sara freezes.

SARA

Oh fuck. Oh fuck.

JULIA

What?

SARA

We've got about three seconds to get this done.

KAUKO
Before what?

SARA
We're in neutral space. Neutral
space is governed by the Treaty.
And the Treaty is enforced by-

JULIA
Chernobog.

All the lights fade. It's deeper, more ominous than before.

He's coming.

They run to one of the support pillars.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Is this it?

KAUKO
I don't know! Yes!

SARA
You don't know, or yes?

KAUKO
YES DO IT

Liquid darkness drips in from the walls.

Sara's hands glow with power. She shoves one hand straight
into the wall, which cracks and ripples and just generally
doesn't like it.

She wraps her fist around something. Pulls out a tiny crystal
tree.

All three stare at it in awe.

All at once, the darkness is no longer dripping, it's
streaming. They're all standing ankle-deep in Chernobog.

JULIA
What the fuck is this?

SARA
The spell won't work here! We need
to get back to the elevator!

KAUKO
What spell?!

SARA

GO!

Running through Chernobog is surprisingly easy. They make it to the elevator just as a massive face-like thing starts forming out of the darkness.

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" - DAY

Kauko snags his stick. The doors shut.

They're... safe?

JULIA

What the fuck was that?

SARA

Chernobog.

JULIA

Why was he... like that? Normally he's different.

KAUKO

Normally? Who the hell are you?

SARA

Alright, look. On the other side of this elevator, we're gonna have a lot of company. How quickly can you cast the spell?

JULIA

It should be really simple. Ten seconds, tops. If it works.

Sara hands Julia the crystal tree.

SARA

Cast it on me as soon as the doors open.

Julia nods.

KAUKO

What is even happening right now?

The doors open.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

A dozen guards in mage robes face the door, wands and staves at the ready.

The door opens... and nobody's there.

They hesitate.

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" - CONTINUOUS

Sara stands in front of the door, hands extended, straining to hold a magical barrier in front of the door.

Julia holds the tree in front of her, muttering under her breath.

She stops.

SARA
(gritted teeth)
Did it work?

JULIA
I... I think so.

SARA
So I can let loose and Chernobog
won't notice me?

JULIA
If it worked?

Sara takes a deep breath. Lets her spell drop.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

All of a sudden, the guards can see them.

SARA
Here goes three hundred years of
planning.

She waves a hand, and all of the guards are immediately POOFED into dust.

KAUKO
Holy shit.

JULIA
Sara, what?!

Sara cringes, waits... and nothing happens.

SARA
It worked.

She laughs. Shoots a fireball at the wall.

EXT. THE TOWER OF BABEL - DAY

A massive fireball big enough to be seen from miles away shoots out of the Tower.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

Sara breaks into jubilant laughter.

SARA
It worked! I can break the limits
of magic all I want!

Julia's still a little flabbergasted at Sara just murdering those guys, but is overjoyed that she's finally free.

JULIA
Holy shit. I'm free. It's done.

Sara snatches the tree from her hands.

SARA
And I couldn't have done it without
you.

JULIA
Wait. What are you doing? I haven't
cast it on myself, yet.

Sara's voice sounds... different.

SARA
You don't need to. We're good.

She crushes the tree. It disintegrates into nothing.

KAUKO
Alright, if somebody doesn't tell
me what's going on right now, I'll-

Sara's face fades into Yusef's face. Julia's paralyzed.

JULIA
Master.

YUSEF

I wasn't expecting miracles, but eight years? Almost nine? Are you kidding?

JULIA

Master Yusef. What... I don't...

YUSEF

It's almost enough to make me feel bad for the whole "Chernobog" thing. I thought you'd just been slacking, I didn't realize it would take this much effort. If I'd known...

He shrugs.

YUSEF (CONT'D)

Well, it still probably would've taken longer, so I guess I saved myself a few years.

JULIA

You mean... you didn't...

Realization hits her like a train.

JULIA (CONT'D)

It was you. Chernobog was never after me. It was always you.

YUSEF

Like I always say: it's just about finding the right motivation.

KAUKO

Look, I don't know what's-

Sara shoots a bolt of energy at Kauko, who barely dodges it.

Julia screams, furious.

JULIA

You... fucking...

She screams again and charges at Yusef, but he casually waves his hand and she goes flying into the wall.

YUSEF

Look, it's been fun, but I've got work to do.

A flash of light, and he's gone.

Beat. Kauko helps Julia to her feet.

JULIA
So, good, I understand everything
now.

KAUKO
Maybe you can explain it to me,
then.

JULIA
Yeah, sure. Sara's actually an evil
old man who was my master who I
thought had been killed by
Chernobog, and then tricked me into
thinking I was being hunted by
Chernobog so that I'd come up with
a way for her to hide from him,
letting her break the Treaty's
boundaries on magic with impunity.

Julia shrugs.

Kauko tries to process everything she just said.

KAUKO
But if that's... then... fuck.
Fuck!

The building shakes. Julia goes to the window.

EXT. THE TOWER OF BABEL - DAY

Yusef, arms extended, is emanated waves of energy at the
Tower. He's going to level it.

INT. THE TOWER OF BABEL TOP FLOOR - DAY

JULIA
And now we're gonna die.

KAUKO
What?!

He runs to the window.

KAUKO (CONT'D)
Shit!

He grabs Julia by the shoulders.

KAUKO (CONT'D)

Julia. Listen. This is important.

Julia laughs and cries simultaneously. Screams.

JULIA

No! NO! This is NOT HOW THIS ENDS.

The entire building lists to one side. It's about to fall.

Julia grabs Kauko and throws him in the "elevator."

She enters, closes the door.

INT. THE "ELEVATOR" - DAY

The elevator is listing, too.

Kauko is nervous. Julia's just pissed.

The doors open.

INT. THE BRIDGE - DAY

Chernobog still covers the floor.

Julia storms over to the pillar Sara pulled the magic out of before. She tries to shove her hand in like Sara had, but can't.

She doesn't notice the whole bridge is collapsing.

Or the massive mouth forming behind her.

JULIA

Fuck! How did she do this?!

KAUKO

Julia! For fuck's sake!

Kauko tackles her out of the way of Chernobog. Drags her down the bridge.

Chernobog's mouth chases them.

JULIA

I'm not scared of him anymore!

KAUKO

I am!

The floor of the bridge is falling out from beneath them; they're barely able to keep going. Even Chernobog is being pulled out into the void.

KAUKO (CONT'D)

Look, we've got bigger problems than Sara now!

JULIA

What are you talking about?

KAUKO

You just violated the biggest fucking peace agreement in history! What do you think the Elves are going to do about this?! This is an act of war!

That thought had really never occurred to Julia.

Fuck.

JULIA

...Fuck! But I wasn't... Fuck!

KAUKO

Yeah! Fuck!

They're in sight of the elevator on the far side of the bridge, but they're not going to make it. The floor is collapsing too quickly.

The floor directly beneath them falls, Kauko shoves Julia to safety, at the expense of his own footing. He falls into the void.

Julia doesn't look back. She can't. She books it to the end of the bridge.

She leaps into the "elevator" as it starts to fall itself. She screams.

CUT TO:

BLACK

JULIA (O.S.)

And that was when you found me.

FADE TO:

INT. THE ELVEN COURTS - EVENING

Julia stands in front of the court, her story told; the telling has reminded her of her goal, and she stands strong.

JULIA

So that's why I'm here - to beg your mercy, and let you know this is not an act of the kingdoms of men, but a solitary mistake for which I bear all the blame. There is no need to go to war over this, and I'm sure-

Kaia can't take it anymore. She bursts out laughing.

Julia is stunned.

Now that Kaia's laughing, Fanden can't stop himself either.

Soon, the entire court, Oiva excepted, is laughing their heads off.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I... I don't...

She can't get a word in edgewise. What the fuck is going on?

Fanden tries to get a hold of himself.

FANDEN

Oh... oh my goodness. I'm sorry, I'm sure you're...

He takes another beat to control himself.

FANDEN (CONT'D)

You must be so confused...

The thought of what she must be thinking makes him lose it all over again.

JULIA

Okay, seriously, what the fuck?!

OIVA

I think, Julia!

He's not talking to Julia, he's trying to get everyone to shut up. And they do quiet down a bit.

OIVA (CONT'D)

I think what my friends find so funny is that this was not a violation of the Accords.

JULIA

It's not?

Fanden shakes his head through his giggles.

OIVA

This was a deliberate exception to the limits on magic. Sara... no, Yusef bound himself to the realms of man, voluntarily giving up his capabilities of ever setting foot in our courts. There is no need for the limits to apply to him; he is no threat to us.

JULIA

You mean...

KAIA

I myself am bound to the Court, as a part of my role as High Sorceress. Otherwise, I would not be able to access the Deep Mysteries. I know your memories are short, but could the humans truly have forgotten this?

JULIA

I... I don't... So this was all pointless.

KAIA

If your only goal was to prevent a war, then... yes.

JULIA

But... so there's nothing to be done about Yusef.

Fanden shrugs.

FANDEN

Nothing we care to do.

JULIA

But I was hoping you would help me stop him.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

He's the only one who can break the treaty, so nobody else can hold a candle to him! People are going to die!

Fanden sighs. He feels sorry for Julia.

FANDEN

I'm sorry, child, truly, I am. But even if we wanted to help - and I'll repeat, we have no reason to interfere in human politics - we just wouldn't. Elven lives are just worth more than human lives. So some of you are going to die sooner than you otherwise would - it's sad, but it's not a tragedy. Every elf that dies is a loss that echoes throughout eternity.

Julia is floored.

JULIA

So it's like that. We're just... unimportant to you.

KAIA

Don't take this the wrong way, girl. Suppose elves lived and died over the span of an hour. Would you really be so sad to see one die after half that time?

JULIA

But... No, but... yes! No!

She sees their point, but they're just wrong, damn it!

JULIA (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Fanden gestures to Oiva. Oiva descends to Julia, takes her gently by the arm.

OIVA

Why don't you get some sleep? You'll feel better about all of this after you rest.

JULIA

I can't sleep! People are dying, and-

OIVA
 And there's nothing you can do
 about it. Accept it and rest.

Julia is not happy, but she lets herself be led away.

INT. ELVEN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Oiva leads Julia into a delicately ornate room - lavishly decorated, but with gentle silks and tapestries, rather than the precious stones and metals of the courtroom.

In the middle of the room is a large circular bed, surrounded by a curtain. The curtain parts as they enter the room.

OIVA
 You can rest here. Perhaps the
 point does not need repeating, but
 there is no time limit. Sleep as
 long as you desire.

JULIA
 ...Thank you.

She stifles a yawn; just being in here is restful.

Oiva hesitates by the door; Julia notices.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Is there anything else?

OIVA
 Kauko... is dead?

JULIA
 What, you care about half-elves but
 not humans? They aren't immortal
 either, you know.

Oiva shakes his head.

OIVA
 You misunderstand us. We have no
 desire for any harm to come to
 humans.

JULIA
 I know. Whatever. Yes, Kauko's
 dead. I think he'd be surprised you
 cared, though.

OIVA
 I hope not. Kauko... was my son.

JULIA

What? But if... how could you
abandon him like that?

OIVA

You must understand, a mortal
creature can never entirely fit in
with the elves. I had thought his
life would be more complete among
others who could understand him.

JULIA

You were wrong.

She thinks.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Or at least, his life wasn't
complete among humans, either.

Oiva nods, sad.

OIVA

His death was inevitable. But that
does not mean I do not mourn his
passing, or my mistakes. I will
live with my regrets for the rest
of my life.

JULIA

Oh, shit. I hadn't thought about
that.

OIVA

About what?

JULIA

Living with your regrets for the
rest of your life. You guys have
perfect memories, too, don't you?

Oiva smiles a sad smile, nods.

OIVA

It is a gift and a curse. There are
days we envy you. I suspect I shall
for centuries to come.

He turns to leave.

JULIA

Wait.

He does.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I'm... I'm sorry for your loss. I didn't know him very long or very well, but Kauko was an okay guy. Not saying you couldn't have done better, but you could've done worse, too. Probably.

Oiva actually laughs.

OIVA

Yes. That's very comforting. Thank you.

Julia laughs.

JULIA

You know what I mean. I'm just saying-

OIVA

I know what you're saying. And I appreciate the sentiment, but it's unnecessary. This is not the first mistake I've made in my life.

Julia nods.

Beat.

JULIA

Goodnight, I guess.

OIVA

Goodnight.

He leaves.

INT. THE ELVEN COURT - DAY

Julia eats from a massive feast, the same as before.

JULIA

...So while I appreciate the offer, I think I have to go back home to try to stop him.

FANDEN

That may prove difficult. From what we understand, he has destroyed the second Tower, and is currently assaulting the third, though your wizards are trying to defend it.

JULIA

What? Why?

FANDEN

One can only guess. Perhaps he is afraid of our retaliation, the same as you were.

JULIA

Do they stand a chance against him?

OIVA

They are putting up a valiant effort. And he is not immortal. But they are likely to lose the Tower.

JULIA

Which would mean I can't go home.

FANDEN

There are other passageways, but it will take time. Something we have plenty of, but you...

JULIA

What about the other elves back on Earth? Lumi?

KAIA

They have time as well. We are patient.

Julia chews slowly, thinking.

She slams a fist on the table.

JULIA

No. I can't... I have to go. This is my fault to begin with.

OIVA

Don't be so quick to assume all of the blame. You were tricked.

JULIA

Yeah, but I cast the spell once, I can cast it again. Make it a fair fight. I just need some Elven magic, and I can level the playing field.

KAIA

And you assume we will generously grant you this magic?

JULIA
Yes! You have to!

KAIA
Why?

Beat.

JULIA
...Because! You're good people! You don't want humans to die!

FANDEN
I think you overestimate our generosity.

JULIA
Oh COME ON. I just can't catch a break with you guys! Just once, I'd like...

Beat. She realizes something.

JULIA (CONT'D)
He's destroying the Elven magic.

FANDEN
What?

She shoots to her feet.

JULIA
That's why he's destroying the Tower! So that nobody else can access Elven magic, to hide from Chernobog like him!

The elves look worried.

FANDEN
But that would mean-

JULIA
That Lumi is his next target. An elf! Now you have to help us!

The elves all exchange glances.

Beat.

Julia gets angry.

JULIA (CONT'D)

No. After all that talk about elves being immortal and every death echoing through eternity, you can't just leave her to die!

KAIA

It's not that simple.

FANDEN

Suppose we sent two warriors to rescue her, and they fail. We have lost three lives, rather than only one.

JULIA

So send three! Send a thousand!

FANDEN

His power is beyond a level we are capable of attaining in the realms of men. There will be casualties.

OIVA

His power is not beyond your reach, however.

His words sink in.

JULIA

You're going to give me your magic.

FANDEN

We're going to give you all of the magic.

EXT. THE ELVEN TOWER - DAY

The Elven Tower is a massive tree, the trunk as wide as a building, stretching up to the sky. The "elevator" doors are set into a rather large knot.

Fanden, Kaia, Oiva and Julia stand nearby.

OIVA

You should be warned. You only used our magic before, you didn't own it. Once you do own it...

KAIA

Elven elements are different than human elements. They won't... fit... properly.

JULIA

I can take it. Give it to me.

FANDEN

Are you certain? We can give you only a small amount - something easier to manage. It will still be enough to cast your spell.

JULIA

No, I want all of it. Every bit of magic you give me is magic he doesn't have access to, something he won't know how to fight.

KAIA

And something you won't know how to use. Think carefully.

JULIA

Just give it to me, damn it!

Oiva touches her forehead.

CUT TO:

BLACK

JULIA (O.S.)

What the FUC-

EXT. THE ELVEN TOWER - DAY

Julia's head is exploding. Everything around her is shaking. Or mayb

e she's shaking. She looks blurrRRRRrrrrry, then everything else looks yrrulb, then you can like, c thru her, and then for a scneod everything is just EYES.

Things are NOT RIGHT.

JULIA

What is HAppENING?!

The elves' voices are perfectly, painfully clear. They pierce through the chaos and confusion.

OIVA

You're breathing for the first time.

FANDEN
Hyperventilating, more like.

JULIA
HOLYSHIT STOP TALKING

FANDEN
It will pass.

JULIA
Fucking WHEN?

FANDEN
In ordinary circumstances, we'd
recommend a few years of
meditation.

JULIA
YEARS?!

OIVA
Calm yourself, child.

Julia takes a few breaths. It helps, but not enough.

OIVA (CONT'D)
Listen to my voice.

JULIA
I can't fucking not listen!

OIVA
Forget everything else. Listen to
me. Listen.

She focuses on Oiva's voice, and everything calms down.

OIVA (CONT'D)
You can handle this. You are okay.

A long beat. Okay.

This is okay.

JULIA
For now. But... yeah. For now.

FANDEN
There isn't much time. The Tower is
going to fall.

JULIA
I can do it. I can take it.

Nobody believes her, including her. But what are they gonna do about it?

KAIA

Just because we don't value your life doesn't mean we want to throw it away.

JULIA

You know what? Fuck you in particular. You're kind of a dick.

Kaia is taken aback. Fanden laughs.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Let's do this. Can we do this?

OIVA

First.

He hands her a quiver of sorts, filled with magic rods and staves.

Julia looks at it. Sees something.

She reaches in and pulls out...

JULIA

A gun?

It's a fucking beautiful gun, too. Big revolver, ivory handles, inlaid with gold.

FANDEN

If it works, it works.

She shrugs. Slides the gun in the back of her pants, throughs the quiver over her shoulder.

She steps to the elevator. Oiva gestures, and the doors glow, then open.

JULIA

So this is what it's like to be invited, huh?

FANDEN

Savor it. It will be your last time using it ever again.

Julia had kind of forgotten about that. She's binding herself to the realms of man, she'll never be able to come back.

JULIA

Oh. Yeah.

She shakes Fanden's hand. It's pretty awkward.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Bye forever, I guess. And thanks.

FANDEN

Goodbye forever, I guess.

She sticks out a hand to Oiva, but he hugs her instead. She hugs him back.

Oiva opens his mouth to speak, but changes his mind. They nod to each other.

Julia looks at Kaia. Flips her the bird. Kaia rolls her eyes.

JULIA

Fuck it.

She steps into the elevator.

The doors close.

EXT. THE RUSSIAN TOWER - NIGHT

This tower is no skyscraper; it's old, ancient maybe, designed to look like it was carved out of a single, massive block of stone.

It's in the middle of fucking nowhere, just tundra all around.

Oh, and also like a shit ton of wizards.

They're throwing fireballs and lightning bolts at Yusef, who now stands at least twelve feet high and is wreathed in green flames.

Yusef doesn't even waste time fighting back; he just keeps throwing blasts of energy at the tower. Chunk after chunk explodes, disintegrates, or just generally is made to not be there anymore.

Finally, it's taken all that it can handle. The tower implodes, the very top falling down on its own.

As it falls, Julia falls out of it.

JULIA

SHIT

She throws up her hands, and is suddenly anchored in place. Falling chunks of tower pass right through her like she's a ghost.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Okay. Now I know how to do that.

Yusef sees her. He's surprised, but not too surprised to chuck a fireball at her.

Julia yelps, and suddenly falls again, out of the path of the fireball.

She hits the ground in a roll and is immediately running away.

Yusef hovers across the ground after her, casually batting some of the defending wizards aside.

Julia's head starts breaking again. Colors are wrong, sounds are wrong, things are-

Now her feet start glowing, and even though she's running the same speed, her steps are taking her farther and farther.

Elven magic is fucking weird, man.

Yusef stops just hovering and starts flying, picking up speed. But with each step, Julia is farther away, until eventually she's just gone.

EXT. BEIJING - NIGHT

Julia finally slows down, and she's in the middle of a crowded Chinese street. Nobody seemed to notice her arrival, which is good, I guess? She scurries out of the street and into an alley.

EXT. BEIJING ALLEY - NIGHT

She catches her breath, shakes her head, tries to get a hold of herself.

JULIA

I'm starting to think I made a big fucking mistake.

Down the alley, two tough-looking alley guys are doing tough-looking alley guy things. They aren't too happy about Julia showing up.

She stares at them with the eyes popping out of her forehead, and they decide they'd rather hang out in a different alley.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Oh, gross!

Julia tries to shove the eyes back into her forehead, but they all pop out and roll on the ground instead.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Fuck!

She takes deep breaths. Calms down a little.

JULIA (CONT'D)
But no, this is fine. And then when I do my thing I'll be able to do all of this but like a hundred times more powerful, and then nothing will go wrong ever again.

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)
FUCK. Okay. We'll just keep that in the back pocket, then. Now how do I get out of-

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Julia's in the woods now.

JULIA
-here?

She's getting less and less confused, and more and more despondent. Like seriously, what if she just can't handle this?

JULIA (CONT'D)
Um. Okay. Okay. Don't... don't freak out.

She's freaking out.

She collapses against a tree and cries a little bit.

JULIA (CONT'D)
No. No no no no no.

She stops getting sad and starts getting mad.

Short, angry breaths.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Fucking. I can do this. I can
 fucking do this. And if I have
 to... no, if I get to do this with
 extra eyes falling out of my head,
 all's the better!

She gets to her feet.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Now how do I get out of-

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 -here?

EXT. THE CITY - MORNING

She did it! She's back home - or would be, if she had a home.
 She nods.

JULIA
 Okay. Time for some intentional
 magic.

She does her weird walking thing and winds up at:

EXT. LUMI'S COURT - MORNING

There are guards posted outside - two big, BURLY DUDES with
 tattoos that are moving around their skin.

They're not terribly enthused about Julia's sudden arrival.

As soon as she appears, one of them draws a magical rod, the
 other a Glock.

BURLY DUDE
 Who the fuck are you?

Julia doesn't flinch. Truth be told, she's kind of afraid
 that if she flinches, she'll cast another spell.

JULIA
 I'm a friend. I'm here to save
 Lumi.

BURLY DUDE
 Save her from what, asshat?

JULIA

Um... do you guys know about Yusef?
That news has gotten around, right?
I'm legitimately asking.

BURLY DUDE

You been under a rock? Why do you
think we're out here?

JULIA

I have no idea. Maybe because
you're morons who think you could
slow him down for a second or two.

They look at each other.

BURLY DUDE

I think maybe you oughta get your
ass out of here before-

Julia takes one step, and is standing behind them.

JULIA

I really don't have time for this.

She does her ghost thing and walks through the front door.

INT. LUMI'S COURT - MORNING

Inside, it's clear that Lumi knows she's in deep shit. Or if she doesn't know, she's at least a good guesser. All of her cronies are armed, with barricades scattered around the room.

Lumi herself is wearing Elven battle armor - it's clearly made with materials not available on Earth, but it's also not over-the-top ornate like most other Elven things - this stuff was clearly made for a purpose, function over form.

Nobody's, like, in go-mode, but it's clear that if shit started, they'd be ready for it.

Speaking of which, Julia showing up certainly makes them feel like shit's about to start.

No sooner is she there than someone throws an icicle the size of a javelin at her. It passes right through her.

She throws her hands up.

JULIA

Don't shoot! I come in peace!

Lumi has a pair of magic wands pointed at her - one crackles with electricity, the other glows green light.

LUMI

You. I see you got your hands on our magic.

JULIA

And I have no idea what I'm doing with it.

LUMI

Let me teach you.

And suddenly she's behind Lumi. She blasts her with electricity, and Lumi shrieks in pain. She collapses to the floor, but doesn't stop at the floor - she flows right through it.

Lumi dives into the floor after her.

Beat.

They both crash in through the ceiling, wrestling with each other.

JULIA

Stop it! I'm trying to-

They never hit the ground, instead wrestling as they float through the room.

Lumi gets Julia with the green glowy wand, and her eyes roll back in her head. She starts spouting gibberish, like she's speaking in tongues or something.

She takes a deep breath, and suddenly she and Lumi are hurled against opposite walls of the room.

Immediately, Julia is surrounded by Lumi's cronies.

But then, she's standing behind the cronies. Each of them, individually. There's like a dozen of her.

JULIAS

I'm here to help you!

Lumi gets to her feet. She stalks over to the Julias, examining them.

LUMI

Why?

JULIAS

Yusef is destroying all the Elven magic left on Earth. He's going to come for you. Fanden sent me here to get you back to the Court.

Lumi grabs one of the Julias by the throat. The others collapse, then fade.

LUMI

Keep talking.

JULIA

(struggling to breathe)
He told me to tell you to use the Charmed Path! He says it's okay!

LUMI

Why? Why not take the Bridge?

JULIA

Because Yusef destroyed the last one about five minutes ago!

Lumi's eyes widen.

She drops Julia. Julia collapses to the ground.

LUMI

If that's true...

JULIA

I saw it happen. I was coming out as he did it.

LUMI

So why did they send you?

JULIA

I'm expendable. They didn't want to risk-

LUMI

I know that. Why you?

Julia gets her feet back under her.

JULIA

Look, I think you're kind of a raging asshole. And like, dangerous to mankind. But saving you was the only way to get them to give me the power I needed to stop Yusef.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

And maybe they've got a point about your life being worth more because it's infinite and shit.

Lumi snorts.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I mean, Kauko thought you were okay.

LUMI

Does he?

JULIA

He did.

Lumi understands. She's saddened by the news.

LUMI

Oh.

JULIA

Yeah.

Beat.

LUMI

So how exactly can you protect me?
What can you do that I can't?

JULIA

For starters, I have this bag full of wands and staves and shit.

She holds up the quiver. Lumi reacts as if she was showing her a rocket launcher and an M60.

LUMI

Holy shit. You could take down a dragon with all that firepower.

JULIA

Dragons are real?!

Lumi is just so done.

LUMI

Oh my god. I am so sick of humans.

JULIA

Yeah okay but dragons are real?!

LUMI

No! God! It's an expression!

Julia's disappointed.

JULIA

Oh.

LUMI

We killed all the dragons like a million years ago.

JULIA

WHAT

INT./EXT. ARMORED SUV - DAY

Lumi and Julia ride in the back along with four of Lumi's cronies.

LUMI

...Fortunately, I always have a backup plan.

JULIA

Which in this case is...

LUMI

So imagine the human realms are Earth, and the elves live on the moon.

JULIA

Okay.

LUMI

The Tower was a space elevator that can take you back and forth easily. Yusef broke that. But that's not the only way to get there. Way back in the day, we used to take rockets to the moon, and I happen to have an unused rocket waiting for me.

JULIA

Does it use Elven magic? Could Yusef know about it?

LUMI

Nope, this was one of yours. 100% Earth, Wind, Water and Fire.

JULIA

Nice. Okay. So how far away is it?

LUMI

About an hour without traffic.

She aims that at her DRIVER. The driver shakes his head.

DRIVER

We're looking at at least two hours right now, and it's getting worse. Everyone knows Yusef is coming and everyone's trying to get out.

Lumi groans.

JULIA

Wait. Where are we?

She looks out the window. Points down a clear side street.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Go that way!

LUMI

You have no idea where-

JULIA

This isn't about that. Go that way.

The driver looks back at Lumi, who shrugs. He turns.

EXT. HARRY'S MANSION - DAY

Harry's mansion is like a fucking palace. You know those crazy elegant beach houses some people have that look they're for royalty? Yeah, he has one of those, in the middle of the city.

The SUV drives up.

JULIA

This is it. Pull over.

Julia hops out of the car.

LUMI

What is this place?

JULIA

This dead lucksmith's house. His apprentice might have some juju he can lend us.

Lumi just waves a hand and closes the door.

Julia runs up the steps. Pounds on the door.

Beat.

She pounds again.

Beat.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Fuggit.

She pulls one of the tougher-looking rods out of her quiver, points it at the door-

And the door swings open, revealing...

JULIA (CONT'D)

Harry?

She lowers the rod.

HARRY

Hey! Julia! I figured you'd died!

JULIA

I watched you die!

HARRY

What? No.

JULIA

Uh, yeah. You got blasted by that thing in the ceiling and poof.

HARRY

Oh, that. No, that was just a stun rod. It interacted strangely with my amulet of luck, though, and through a strange and unlikely series of coincidences the magics twisted to teleport me back home.

JULIA

Yeah. Okay. Fine. Look, I need your luck amulet.

HARRY

What? Why?

JULIA

I'm trying to get an elf to a rocket ship.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

Look, this was all going to be way easier when you were dead and I could just force Beanie to give it.

She remembers the rod in her hand. She points it at Harry.

JULIA (CONT'D)

So I guess I'm robbing you now.

HARRY

If you could successfully rob me, how useful could be luck amulet be?

Julia puts the rod away, exasperated.

JULIA

Fuck, man, I don't know!

HARRY

Tell you what. That bag of shit looks pretty sweet, and I can always make a new amulet.

JULIA

I would, but I kind of need it.

HARRY

All of it?

She shrugs.

JULIA

Flip you for it? My bag versus your amulet?

Harry laughs.

HARRY

I'm a lucksmith. And you want to gamble with me.

JULIA

Right? How could this go against you?

Harry's suspicious, but he trusts his luck. He pulls out a coin.

HARRY

Fine. But we use my coin.

JULIA

Fine. Flip it. Heads I win, tails you lose.

HARRY

Fine.

He flips the coin; it lands on its edge, standing upright.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Hah. Would you look at that.

Julia stomps on it. Looks.

JULIA

Tails, you lose.

HARRY

Fuck! This is supposed to be, like,
the easiest thing for a lucksmith-

Julia rips the amulet off of his neck, runs back to the car.

JULIA

Yeah thanks man!

HARRY

How did you beat me?!

Beat. She doesn't stop.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He turns around. Goes back inside, shaking his head, doubting everything that led him to this point.

Julia hops back in the car, throws the amulet around the driver's neck.

They drive away.

Beat.

Harry slams the front door open, stomps outside.

HARRY (CONT'D)

MOTHERFUCKER!

INT./EXT. ARMORED SUV - DAY

Every light they hit is green, every lane they want to change to is open; smooth sailing.

The driver marvels at the amulet.

DRIVER

This is some sweet swag.

JULIA

Yeah, well, I'm gonna need it back.

The driver is disappointed. Shifty. He's clearly thinking about stealing it. Julia notices, but she has bigger things to worry about.

JULIA (CONT'D)

So Lumi. I can, like, anchor myself to this world so I can bypass the limits, yeah?

LUMI

Yeah?

JULIA

But suppose, hypothetically speaking, I'd just been given all of the Elven magics, like, not even an hour ago, and still didn't know how to control them.

LUMI

All of them?

JULIA

Pretty sure.

LUMI

I'd say you're a fucking lunatic, and so is whoever gave them to you.

JULIA

Careful, don't let the Elfking hear you say that.

LUMI

Fanden gave them to you?

JULIA

Well, Oiva, but Fanden was-

LUMI

Oh, shit.

JULIA

Yeah.

LUMI

You're surprisingly sane right now.
I lost my marbles for a couple
decades when I got my first human
magic.

Julia looks out the window, sees cars running around on
animal legs.

JULIA

I wouldn't say I'm "sane," per se.

LUMI

To answer your question, fucking do
it.

JULIA

Yeah, but what if-

LUMI

You weren't alive before the
Accords set the limits. You don't
know what he's capable of. It's not
a question of "What if I snap my
brain in two," it's a question of,
"Do I want him to kill me just by
looking at me particularly hard?"

JULIA

I would say I do not want that.

LUMI

Well then.

JULIA

Shit.

Beat.

LUMI

Like, fucking now.

JULIA

Fucking now, now?

Lumi points at a gigantic explosion a couple miles off to
their right.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Fucking now now.

She closes her eyes. Meditates.

PIERCING SHRIEKS AND EYES AND IS THAT A FUCKING GOAT WHAT IS

JULIA (CONT'D)
FUCK! No! I can't do it!

LUMI
Don't be a bitch.

She puts her thumb on Julia's forehead. Julia SCREAMS. The world EXPLODES with LIGHTS and COLORS and yes, that is a FUCKING ORANGE GOAT that's ABOVE and WITHIN, WATCHING, SEEING, WAITI-

Then suddenly everything's fine.

JULIA
Was that it?

LUMI
That was it.

JULIA
So I can... and no Chernobog?

LUMI
I don't think it can even see you anymore.

JULIA
Well. Okay then.

An eye falls out of her forehead.

LUMI
Oh gross.

EXT. A DOOR IN THE WOODS - DAY

There's just a door standing on the edge of the woods. It's solid oak, covered with gold and silver runs, as well as an awful lot of something that looks like dried blood.

The SUV pulls up and parks. Everyone hops out.

JULIA
Are we close?

LUMI
We're here.

Julia looks around.

JULIA
I was expecting something less...
just the woods.

LUMI
It's that door?

JULIA
What door?

LUMI
Oh, shit. Yeah. You're bound here.

She points at the door.

LUMI (CONT'D)
There's a door right over there.
Right at the treeline.

JULIA
Oh. So I really can't... like, I
can't go back?

LUMI
No.

JULIA
(disappointed)
Cool. Yeah.

LUMI
Look, so I'm going to need a couple
minutes to get it started, but-

CRASH!

A thirty-foot tall Yusef stomps over a hill and into sight.

His voice shakes the trees.

YUSEF
What have we here? Hiding, are we?

LUMI
Fuck.

JULIA
Back off, Yusef! She's fucking
leaving! You don't have to kill
her!

YUSEF
And where is she going? I destroyed
the only paths out.

JULIA
She's taking that...

Oh, right.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Look, you and I can't see it, but I swear there's a door somewhere over there that'll take her back to the Elven Court!

Yusef just stares at her.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Ffffuck.

Yusef hurls an icicle spear at Lumi. Julia shoves her aside, but gets speared right in the chest. The impact throws her back and the icicle lodges into a tree, suspending her.

Julia coughs blood.

JULIA (CONT'D)

That was...

Her head drops.

Lumi looks at what just happened. She's terrified.

She shouts to her cronies.

LUMI

Don't just stand there!

Her cronies open fire, but Yusef holds up a hand and catches everything the throw at him.

He breathes fire from his mouth, that swallows the cronies, and they all die screaming.

JULIA

That seemed like an unpleasant way to go.

Yusef spins around. Julia's standing behind him, near the edge of the woods.

Yusef looks back. She's still dead, suspended to the tree.

JULIA (CONT'D)

It's really fascinating the illusions you can pull off with some of this Elven stuff. You should really try it.

Yusef hurls a fireball at her. She explodes, her charred body falling to the ground.

Then, another Julia walks out from behind a tree.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Don't worry, I'm sure you'll find
 the real me soon enough.

Lumi hesitates, not knowing what to do. A tiny Julia crawls out of her hair to sit on her shoulder.

TINY JULIA
 I've got this. You get started.

Yusef throws another fireball at the current Julia. She dies, and then another Julia shows up, deeper in the woods.

She laughs, and runs into the woods. Yusef screams and charges after her.

EXT. THE WOODS - DAY

Yusef, now only ten feet tall, runs through the woods, chasing Julias. They run in front of him and then disappear, laugh from all around him, jump from tree to tree, and just generally act kind of like some sort of horror monster.

Yusef throws all sorts of magic at them, but even when he kills one, another takes its place.

Nearby, on Julia hides behind a tree, watching. Who fucking knows for sure, but we get the impression this is maybe the real one.

She opens her mouth to speak, but the voices come from all around Yusef.

JULIA
 This must be, like, super
 frustrating for you. You went to
 all that effort to get me to make
 you a god, and now I'm the one
 who's going to stop you.

Yusef yells, and spears another Julia to a tree.

Julia laughs.

JULIA (CONT'D)
 Oh fuck! You got me! That was the
 real me!

She makes fake dying noises.

YUSEF
Enough of this!

He charges a massive fireball, slams it into the ground.

A huge explosion knocks over all the trees in a thirty-yard radius. There are at least a dozen dead Julias.

Beat.

The Julia that was hiding behind a tree is ducked down, having narrowly avoided getting incinerated. She's kind of surprised she's alive.

Her laughter echoes around Yusef.

JULIA
Wow. You actually almost got me,
that time.

Yusef screams.

Julias run circles around him, appearing and disappearing, taunting him.

He hesitates. Catches his breath. Collects himself.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Come on, now, Yusef! Sara? Yura?
What should I call you?

YUSEF
Call me...

He stands up straight. Closes his eyes.

YUSEF (CONT'D)
I'll find you.

JULIA
That's a funny name.

YUSEF
You're very witty. I always-

He throws out a hand. The hiding Julia is lifted into the air by dark energy.

All of the other Julias drop to the ground, dead.

YUSEF (CONT'D)
Hated that about you.

He clenches his hand. A sickening CRACK.

Julia drops to the ground, dead.

Yusef waits. Looks around.

Smiles.

Floats back towards Lumi.

EXT. A DOOR IN THE WOODS - DAY

Lumi rapidly performs various gestures at the door. Its runes glow in rhythmic patterns.

LUMI

Come on, come on, come on, come on.

She glances into the woods. Sees Yusef through the trees, coming her way.

She turns back, moving faster, almost frantic.

LUMI (CONT'D)

Work, you damn door!

She looks back towards the woods. Doesn't see Yusef.

Looks back to the door. It swings open; the Elven Court can be seen on the other side.

She's lifted up into the air by the same dark energy that lifted Julia.

LUMI (CONT'D)

No! Put me down! I'm leaving, fucker!

Yusef is standing behind her, squeezing her with his magic.

YUSEF

I've never killed an elf before. I wonder what it's like.

BANG

Beat.

BANGBANGBANGBANG

Yusef gasps. Five bloody holes are through his chest.

Behind him, the first Julia, the one still speared to the tree, holds the gun given to her by the elves.

She coughs blood. She doesn't look good at all.

Yusef looks at her.

YUSEF (CONT'D)
The whole time...

BANG

Right between the eyes.

He falls down, dead.

Lumi falls out of the air, quickly runs to Julia.

LUMI
Holy shit. Are you okay?

Julia somehow finds the strength for a laconic stare.

LUMI (CONT'D)
Stupid question.

Julia's head falls again. Quick, wheezy breaths. She's not long for the world.

LUMI (CONT'D)
Look, I gotta... The door will only stay open so long, and...

She looks at the door.

LUMI (CONT'D)
Fuck.

CUT TO:

BLACK

A long beat of silence, then:

LUMI (O.S.)
How the fuck should I know? It would work on an elf!

FANDEN (O.S.)
Calm down. Look, she's moving.

INT. LUMI'S COURT - DAY

Lumi's court has been repaired and remodeled, but as of now, it's pretty much empty.

Julia lies on a sofa, with Lumi standing nearby, talking to an image of Fanden in a mirror.

Julia stirs awake. Looks at her chest. She's got a big gaping hole in the middle, bandaged all the way through. Seriously, if you had a small enough hand, you could probably fit your fist through. It's pretty gross, and clearly unnatural.

Julia tries to speak, but an eyeball falls out of her mouth.

JULIA

Oh, fuck.

Lumi looks at her.

LUMI

Don't even get me started. What the fuck is it with you and eyeballs?

JULIA

I thought it was an elf thing! Why is there a hole in my chest?

LUMI

Because that guy threw an icicle through it, remember?

JULIA

Yeah, but why is there a hole in my chest?

FANDEN

Elven healing methods sometimes seem unorthodox to humans. It'll probably fill eventually.

Julia sits up, expecting pain, but she actually feels pretty okay. She looks at her chest again. Sticks a finger into it.

JULIA

Probably. Eventually.

FANDEN

Indeed.

Lumi coughs.

Beat.

She coughs louder. Julia doesn't look up.

JULIA

Do you need a cough drop?

LUMI

You're fucking welcome for saving
your worthless life.

JULIA

And you're welcome for saving
yours. So by my accounting, you
saved me like sixty years tops, and
I saved you like an eternity. So
that roughly adds up to you owing
me infinity.

Lumi scoffs, groans. Fanden laughs.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Elven lives are just worth more
than human lives, you know.

FANDEN

She's not wrong.

Lumi storms off, swearing under her breath.

Julia walks over to the mirror.

JULIA

'Sup.

FANDEN

You've done us a great service,
Julia. And don't think we're
unaware of the sacrifices you had
to make in order to do it.

JULIA

You mean dying?

FANDEN

That, and anchoring yourself to
your world. Oiva and I discussed
how interested you were in staying
at the Court, but that's clearly
impossible now.

Julia nods, a little sad again.

FANDEN (CONT'D)

So with that in mind, as well as
Lumi's quite reasonable desire to
return home for a time, we decided
it was time to choose a new
Ambassador to the human realms. We
did what we could to accelerate the
process, as well.

He nods behind her.

Julia turns around and sees Oiva.

JULIA
Wait, what? You're replacing Lumi?

OIVA
Indeed. And then some.

JULIA
What does that mean? That sounds
kind of ominous.

FANDEN
In addition to his duties as our
representative to the human realms,
we've decided it would be helpful
for his understanding of humanity
to take on a human apprentice.

Julia tries not to get too excited, but she's getting pretty
excited.

JULIA
Seriously? Like, really?

OIVA
Like, really.

Julia laughs and hugs Oiva.

JULIA
So I can like, ask you anything and
you'll explain how it works?

OIVA
There are limits to even my
knowledge.

JULIA
So like, what's up with all the
eyes?

OIVA
What eyes?

Julia coughs up an eyeball.

OIVA (CONT'D)
Oh, gross.

FADE TO BLACK