

Demonology

FBC PILOT

By: Gregory Widen

SENT TO FBC 1/3/00

Draft Dated:
December 21, 1999

SPELLING TELEVISION
5700 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 575
Los Angeles, CA 90036

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TEASER

From black, FADE UP ON:

A STAIRCASE

In a ghetto apartment building somewhere in your city. The air is full of the sound of meals being cooked, children crying, fuzzy Spanish radio stations.

COMING UP THE STAIRS

Are two men and a woman. Dark clothes. Sunglasses. A strange, liquid motion to their step. As if they didn't have enough muscles or tension in their bodies. Call this: *The Meat Puppet Walk*.

On the top landing is a single door. Our three knock. A peep hole opens. Darkens with something looking through it.

Our three take off their sunglasses. Oh. We wish they hadn't done that. Because they don't have proper eyes. Just blank whites. This, however, is apparently the ticket in, because the door swings open, revealing

TWO FIGURES

Of similar appearance and ocular styling. Our five face one another. The two on the inside begin speaking in unison. Some horrendous, guttural language you've never heard.

Our three that just entered nod with understanding --Then abruptly pull silenced pistols from their waistbands and SHOOT the other two.

The two previously speaking Meat Puppets SLAM to the ground. Our three reach up --and pull their own eyes out. Or so it seems. We see that the fleshy whites were, well, we don't want to know exactly what they were...but it's normal eyes underneath.

They've also regained suddenly routine human motion. The two shot Meat Puppets are struggling and hissing. They're SHOT AGAIN, which lessens the movement. One of the pretend Meat Puppets crouches and grabs one of their spines. The woman barks at him.

WOMAN

Later.

COMING IN NOW FROM THE HALL

Are four more in black with pump shotguns but minus the Meat Puppet Shenanigans. One of them, mid-40's, has a clerical collar we peek around his neck. BISHOP HESS.

Hess just nods and the whole team takes SWAT-like positions around an inner door. He gives a hand signal and his team BASHES the door clean off its hinges.

BEYOND THE DOORWAY

Is darkness. Flashlights erupt in the Team's hands, crazily lighting a room empty but for a chair at its center.

And sitting in the chair, a seven year old GIRL. Head lowered. Labored breathing. As they approach, she raises her head into their flashlights.

And we know this is no ordinary little girl.

TEAM MEMBER

Looks like a class two possession.

She's certainly something. Dark circles under her eyes. Saliva running out of her mouth.

HESS

Check her retina.

Team members quickly STRAP her to the chair to immobilize her. The little girl begins SCREAMING and BARKING. Another team member shines a light into her eyes.

TEAM MEMBER #2

She's not septic yet. There's no formal attachment...

Hess nods. This is fortunate news. Hess crouches before the frothing girl, looks at the underside of her forearm. There's a series of tattoo-like markings. Bar-code. Hess examines them closely, with understanding.

From a case he draws vials of oils he administers to a cloth. This cloth he places on the hissing girl's forehead.

HESS

Demon. I address you by name. Kyrak. And by addressing you by name, I command thee, according to the ancient councils, to leave this vessel.

This is followed by a complex series of Latin phrases. Deep changes pass through the little girl as he does this. Shudders and coughs. She seems to become a different person in front of us.

Then silence.

The team relaxes. Mission accomplished. The little girl is breathing easily now. Sniffling. Her head lowered. Hess undoes the restraints, pats her head, stands, turns--

And sees through the doorway, back into the outer room, the two shot Meat Puppets --standing. Staring at them. By Hess' expression, this is unexpected.

Even more surprising is when the Meat Puppets begin JUMPING up and down, SCREECHING like monkeys, their twisted, borrowed voices becoming harsher and harsher.

Hess turns back to the little girl with the bowed head. The cute, cured little girl...

--Who at that instant JERKS her head up --and it's worse than anything we saw earlier on her. Deep possession worse.

Her bonds undone, she spins and BITES THE HEAD OFF one of the team members and DRIVES the chair through the body of another.

As the Meat Puppets continue their crazed, monkey-jumping, the little girl begins BASHING her body at inhuman speed back and forth against the walls, SCATTERING the team members into terrified, retreating heaps.

As they fumble in panic for an escape route, as the whole room descends into panicked chaos, the little girl FLINGS herself with a CRASH through the skylight

And disappears...

ACT I

INT. SPOOKY HALLWAY

Darkly throbbing and fearful. A door opens, spilling sickly light. Through it enter two attractive government types; man and woman, in conservative suits, earnest expressions, and drawn guns.

The male government type rubs his hand along the wall, drawing from it a sticky-like protoplasm.

ATTRACTIVE MALE GOVERNMENT TYPE
Ectoplasmic residue.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE GOVERNMENT TYPE
Just like that morgue disappearance in
Kansas City last week.

ATTRACTIVE MALE GOVERNMENT TYPE
What did the caretaker of this building
say it was once used as?

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE GOVERNMENT TYPE
...A county morgue.

AT THAT INSTANT

An enormous multi-tentacled DEMON emerges from the end of the hall, SHRIEKING toward them. The Attractive Female Government Type aims her gun.

ATTRACTIVE MALE GOVERNMENT TYPE
--Wait!

Instead he turns to the approaching demon and begin shouting at it IN LATIN. The demon pauses, all strange --even silly-- looking fur and waving arms. The Attractive Male Government Type continues shouting in Latin till a voice is heard from off camera--

VOICE
CUT!!

Everybody, demon included, stops and lets their arms drop in frustration.

GO WIDE

And see we're on a sound stage.

DEMON CREATURE

...Was I waving the arms too much?

In a perfectly normal actory voice.

DIRECTOR

I don't know. The whole thing sucks.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE GOVERNMENT TYPE

Great.

ATTRACTIVE MALE GOVERNMENT TYPE

Is it lunch yet?

DIRECTOR

Where's Nightingale?

(shouts)

Nightingale!

IN A FAR CORNER OF THE SOUND STAGE

Stands a young man having a cup of craft service coffee, trying to stay out of the way. He can hear the AD walkie-talkies around him burble with *Christopher Nightingale on Set, please.*

Christopher Nightingale dumps his coffee and walks over to the director and his super spooky hallway/demon ensemble.

DIRECTOR

Okay. You're the consultant. This sucks. Why?

CHRISTOPHER

...Well, demons don't actually manifest in physical form. They remote-view through corpse Meat Puppets or possessions. Just a standing corpse low on muscle tension would be more realistic. Also, demons only respond to Latin in a state of possession. In all other interactions, the agreed language of neutrality is second-level Aramaic.

(beat)

Nice hallway, though.

All delivered without irony or craziness. Just like a homicide cop advisor on NYPD Blue. Whatever the reaction we expect to this mumble-jumble from the actors and director, what we get is thoughtful nods.

The director turns to a lingering staff of writers.

DIRECTOR

What do you think?

WRITER

Yeah. Sure. The demon wasn't exactly working out the way...we imagined it.

CHRISTOPHER

(exiting)

I'll write something up.

DEMON CREATURE

It was the arms, wasn't it?

INT. TV SHOW PRODUCTION OFFICE

Posters everywhere of the TV show featuring our dynamic attractive government duo.

IN AN OFFICE THAT OVERLOOKS THE SOUND STAGE

Christopher finishes writing something in Aramaic onto a slip of paper and hands it to a writer looming over his desk.

WRITER

(exiting)

Thanks, man. My agent, children, and millions of Americans on Sunday night thank you.

Left alone, Christopher spins his chair around and looks down on the sound stage. The director is rehearsing a revamp of the scene. In place of the Troma demon is just an eyeless corpse in a suit, standing perfectly still. It's clearly, instantly creepier than what they had before.

And of course it reminds us uncomfortably of the Meat Puppets we saw in the OPENING TEASER.

As Christopher watches the scene play out

CUT TO:

A MEMORY

Crazy. Fragmentary. Flashes of light. Death. Shrieking priests. Cackling Meat Puppets. Christopher, sobbing....

CUT BACK TO:

CHRISTOPHER

Back in his production office chair. He shuts his eyes, makes the memory go away. Steadies his breathing.

A PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Appears in his doorway.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Hey. Christopher. I'm doing the office employment forms. The INS page requires a passport to prove citizenship.

CHRISTOPHER

Sure. No problem.

Christopher unlocks a drawer in his desk. Inside he roots through an envelope --that we see contains several phony passports with his picture but different names. Christopher selects one and tosses it to the assistant.

ACROSS THE HALL

Christopher can see in another office a woman sitting alone, watching a TV news bulletin. He stands and leans in the doorway. The TV image is of a flashy, ex-athlete type emerging from a courthouse, pumping his fist in victory.

TV ANNOUNCER

Once again, the jury in the Caroline Wallace murder case has, in a surprise development, found her husband, local millionaire businessman Wallace Sutton, innocent of the murder...

CHRISTOPHER

No kidding.

He steps into the office. We see now that the woman watching the TV is in tears. Christopher touches her shoulder with sympathy.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm sorry, Sherri.

SHERRI

Son of a bitch kills my sister and just walks away from it. Why? Because he's rich? Is that the world we live in?

One look at said SOB and we know this is a loathsome human being.

CHRISTOPHER

She's in a better place, Sherri.

SHERRI

Do you believe that, Chris? That there's
a better place out there? After this?

She looks into his eyes. She needs to hear it. And you can see the battle behind Christopher's expression. The struggle to...lie.

CHRISTOPHER

Yes, Sherri. I do.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOUND STAGE

Where they shoot the spooky government investigator series. It's late and the space is dark and closed now. Christopher comes down the stairs from the production offices above, and cuts across the open floor space, cluttered with ghostly set pieces and props.

There's a small sound.

Christopher freezes.

It could be a mouse. Or just wood settling. It could be a million things. Some of them from nightmares.

Christopher turns slowly. As he does,

VOICE

Christopher.

Completely on instinct, Christopher THROWS his body backwards, HITS something behind him which he FLIPS to the floor and PINS. One hand grasps its throat as the other seeks to take a fistful of its spine.

Then, in the faint light, he, and we, see that the figure is Hess.

HESS

You've gotten slow.

Christopher JERKS Hess' arm up and examines its underside, the way Hess did with the little girl. There's no tattoo like symbol.

After a moment, Christopher releases Hess and stands.

CHRISTOPHER

What are you doing here?

Hess rises and rubs his throat. Looks at the sets around them.

HESS

Hmm. Those inscriptions. I remember them. From the ice palace possession, isn't it?

CHRISTOPHER

How did you find me?

HESS

Please. This show plays in the Vatican too, Christopher. Aramaic speaking demons? Meat Puppets? Shrieking blood from the vases of Chu-Mi? Forgive me if I trouble believing some coven of martini-sipping, lapsed-Catholic, reform-Jew Studio City atheist screenwriters dreamed that up on their laptops all by thier little selves.

(beat)

What do you tell them, Christopher? I'm curious. What do you tell them when they ask where all this comes from?

CHRISTOPHER

The 6th book of Milton.

HESS

There is no 6th book of Milton.

CHRISTOPHER

This is Hollywood, Hess.

HESS

Oh.

Beat.

CHRISTOPHER

You look different.

HESS

It's been twelve years.

CHRISTOPHER

Beaten, then.

HESS

Bowed, maybe.

CHRISTOPHER

What is it? A reunion I missed? Chance to sit around the campfire and reminisce about how I killed everyone I cared about?

HESS

Except me.

CHRISTOPHER

I never cared about you.

Hess just smiles.

HESS

That was our fault. How could you understand your own hubris? We took you as an orphan infant when your parents died. It was our selfishness. Because you had the look. Better than anyone before or since. Raising you alone on an island, with only us --and this gruesome business-- how could you ever have come to understand yourself? That was our failure, Christopher. You were deceived by a demon stalker, you unwittingly destroyed your team, because you didn't know who you were yet. You hadn't grown up. And the first lesson we learn in this work, that I knew but forgot, the lesson that the Central Committee downstairs never forgets, is that there is no evil more perfect and pure in this universe, than a child's.

(beat)

When you ran away after, I didn't come for you, Christopher. I wanted you to grow up. Build defenses. But now, especially now, it is time for you to return.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not going back to that life.

HESS

Things are happening in the alleys we walk, Christopher. Things beyond the treaties. Beyond anything we've seen.

CHRISTOPHER

I have a life.

HESS

This?

CHRISTOPHER

I understand it.

HESS

Do you? How safe do you think it really is? I found you. If the rules are breaking down, how long do you think it'll be before they find you too?

CHRISTOPHER

Especially with you standing here like a lighthouse.

HESS

(creepy smile)
Especially.

CHRISTOPHER

Still a son of a bitch, aren't you?

HESS

I have a son of a bitch job, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

And it comes so easy to you.

HESS

Like you.

(beat)

We both know you were born to this work. It's what gives your life sense. Does this TV show? Does a life surrounded by people who can never truly know you? We're your family, Christopher.

(beat)

I'm not asking you to give everything up unconditionally. Just meet with us once more. Hear us out. That's all. Then, if you wish, we'll never contact you again.

(beat)

Just hear us out, Christopher.

CUT TO:

EXT. A DESOLATE DESERT MINE ENTRANCE - DAY

Obscured by howling, gritty blasts of wind. Christopher and Hess stand at its threshold. Hess leads the way inside. Christopher pauses, unsure.

CHRISTOPHER

I told myself this was all behind me.

HESS

It can't be behind any of us,
Christopher. Not now.

And as Christopher nods, as together they enter the mine and
are swallowed by its shrieking darkness,

CUT TO BACK

ACT II

INT. OLD DESERT MINE

Hess leads Christopher deep into the tunneled rock.

CHRISTOPHER
Old mine?

HESS
...And this.

They come around a corner. In an area that's been hollowed out, they find a mass pit that's been exhumed. Piled around it are several bodies. Some have been shot. Some looked fused and burned.

The sight gives Christopher a moment's pause he blinks away.

CHRISTOPHER
Meat Puppets?

HESS
Not only that. A Meat Puppet factory.
We've never found one in time to break it
up before.

CHRISTOPHER
That's because they only use two or three
at each dead drop. There must be...

HESS
Sixteen here. Yes. Unusual.

CHRISTOPHER
Unheard of. It makes no sense.
(beat)
...At least when any of this mattered to
me.

HESS
It's still unheard of.

CHRISTOPHER
This is what you brought me here to see?

HESS
Not exactly.

Christopher takes notice of the riddle of holes in one of the destroyed Meat Puppets.

CHRISTOPHER

Hmm. Improved projectile distribution...

HESS

Yes. We picked that up from the Bengalis.

CHRISTOPHER

You've stopped contracting with the Ming-San monastery?

HESS

They couldn't keep up with our specs. And their price schedule went up last year.

CHRISTOPHER

Always do. Especially with the monks...

At that moment, from around a rock, appear several individuals, some we recognize from the original attack on the room that held the little girl.

HESS

Christopher, this is our new Interfaith Team.

Without being too Star Wars alien-bar-ish about it, it's clear by their dress this group includes Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists. The whole panoply of organized religious thought.

WOMAN MEMBER

We've heard a lot about you, Christopher.

KATRINA. A Buddhist nun.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm sorry.

KATRINA

For?

CHRISTOPHER

Everything you must have heard about.

CUT TO:

IN ONE CORNER OF THE MINE

Christopher, Hess and his team are sitting in a circle on the rocks, mid-discussion.

KATRINA

It's obvious what happened in that room with the little girl is beyond anything we've encountered with the other side before.

HESS

789 years in fact. The Council of Antioch codified the parameters of possession.

MALE STRIKE TEAM MEMBER

So someone's breaking the rules.

BERGER. A rabbi.

CHRISTOPHER

Hell?

HESS

Hell usually sticks to its bargains. They don't want the balloon to go up anymore than we do.

ANOTHER MALE MEMBER

But this isn't the first recent abnormality. The church built upside-down in Sochi. The tiny town in Arizona that disappeared. How long can we ignore the possibly that a pattern is emerging?

HASIM. A Muslim cleric.

HESS

The Central Committee of hell aren't fools. Without an agreed construct here they can't ever achieve victory, combating directly the dictates only brings mutual assured destruction. Heaven goes down, they go down with it. Only the void remains. That's always been the understanding.

CHRISTOPHER

Anyone put this to The Host?

HESS

They won't respond directly to a question that's faith-based. Not even this one.

CHRISTOPHER

But you think it's all connected to that little girl.

HESS

It has to be.

CHRISTOPHER

And you want me to help find her? Subdue her?

(rises)

...Those days are over for me.

(to the others)

Best of luck.

As Christopher heads for the mine's exit--

HESS

--Before you go, there is one more thing I'd like you to see, Christopher.

As Christopher pauses,

CUT TO:

A STEEL DOOR

Bolted to the cavern wall. Hess PULLS IT OPEN --there's only blackness beyond-- and gestures for Christopher to enter.

HESS

There's been...other complications.

Christopher enters the darkness. As he moves through it, he can hear HISSING. There's a glow at the end of this room. As he comes closer, he, and we, realize it's coming from a thick, clear, GLASS TANK.

About the size and dimensions of a casket. It's filled with a yellowish, phosphorescent liquid. Floating in that liquid is

A THING

Picture: A person with all their skin removed. A person with maybe some unexpected body parts in unexpected places. Weakened and wet and crumpled there, hissing furiously through the glass.

HESS

Meet Modoc.

CHRISTOPHER

A demon?

HESS

According to the marks. Yes.

CHRISTOPHER
In physical form? That's impossible.

HESS
Yes.

CHRISTOPHER
It's against all the physics of hell.

HESS
Absolutely.

CHRISTOPHER
Demons remote view through Meat Puppets
or live possessions. There no "there"
there.

HESS
Of course.
(beat)
And yet here one is.

CHRISTOPHER
How did you get it?

HESS
It was here when we took out the Meat
Puppet factory. It was already weak and
vulnerable. We just encased it in
standard Robesom Metabolic Stabilizer.
(beat)
It's entire structure reads as unstable.
Even on a cellular level. Best theory we
have is that it was on its way from
metamorphosing from one thing to another
and we caught it mid-change. But you can
ask it yourself if you like.

CHRISTOPHER
My Aramaic's a little rusty.

HESS
Oh, it's fine with English.
(off Christopher's look)
I know I know. Impossible.

Hess then turns and leaves Christopher alone with...Modoc.

Christopher just stares at it a beat. Maybe it stares back.
It's hard to tell. It certainly hisses.

CHRISTOPHER
So. "Modoc".

And a strangled voice, something almost telepathic and beyond awful, vibrates its way through the glass.

MODOC

There is a field where you will lie. Full of skulls and your parents' entrails. Where your soul will rot nailed to the wall of your stupidity. Where the ice castles of hell rise into infinity and you are alone, with your screams, for all eternity.

Christopher yawns.

CHRISTOPHER

Modoc. I've never seen that name on the encounter lists. It's not chiseled on the stone of The Great Fall. You're clearly not one of the original horde. And there's no record of you doing a rotation up here. I know the names, believe me. And that "There's a field.." baloney? C'mon, nobody's used that since the trespass at Chalcedon. Even Meat Puppets are hipper than that.

(beat)

So who are you?

MODOC

Christopher. A nothing who betrayed his friends. Christopher, a fool who's life is null, who's soul is null, who's future is only...

Christopher rolls his eyes. There's a pump shotgun on the ground. He picks it up and theatrically CHAMBERS a shell.

BEYOND THE STEEL DOOR

Hess and the interfaith team can hear the round lock. The others look at Hess questioningly. Hess gives them a "relax" gesture and smiles to himself.

HESS

That's my Christopher...

BACK IN THE CAVERN

Christopher has the shotgun casually aimed at Modoc's "head".

MODOC

You think I'm scared of you? You think you can do anything to me?

CHRISTOPHER

I don't have to. If I blow that case away and stake you to the ground, the Central Committee will do the rest. You're a baby bird that's been handled by humans. The other birds will come and peck your eyes out.

MODOC

You think I care of annihilation? Of absorption into the godhead? You *think I care?*

Christopher sits down and ponders a moment the swirling hideousness in front of him.

CHRISTOPHER

You're an unrecorded nobody in Hell. And yet here you are, doing what no demon we've encountered has done before: Projected yourself into a kind of existence.

(rises)

Have to say, makes a soulless null like myself wonder...

BEYOND THE STEEL DOOR

Christopher joins the others.

CHRISTOPHER

You want my assistance in tracking the little girl. In understanding this.

HESS

Yes.

CHRISTOPHER

I won't be able to do it alone.

HESS

You know our resources.

CHRISTOPHER

But this is a ...special kind of help I'm going to need.

HESS

What?

CUT TO:

WALLACE SUTTON

Our playboy millionaire recently acquitted for the murder of his wife. He's on a golf course with his posse, hooting it up. Wallace takes a swing. Slice! Into the trees! Teasing from his buddies.

Wallace, annoyed, tromps into the trees to find his ball.

DURING THE BRIEF INSTANT HE'S NOT VISIBLE

To his golf mates, members of the interfaith team TACKLE and INJECT him with a hypo.

As Wallace's eyes close with the drugs,

CUT TO:

WALLACE'S EYES

Opening slowly.

HIS POV

The top of a rock cavern. Wallace reaches to rub his eyes -- and bumps a glass covering. Confused, he pushes at the top and sides of where he's lying. He's in a glass box.

WALLACE SUTTON

...What the...?

The glass is clear on all sides of him, revealing only cavern walls. All but one side, where the view is a sloshing, greenish liquid. Like the side of an aquarium.

WALLACE SUTTON

Hey! Where am I? What is this!? HEY!

And as he looks, something seems to be moving within the green liquid beyond the glass. Just a vague shape. Coming closer. Now pressing against the glass separating them...

THE FACE OF MODOC

Wallace begins to shriek in horror. Tries to force himself in his glass box as far as possible from the green wall. As he does he looks through the opposite side of the glass and sees now Christopher calmly walking toward him across the cave floor.

WALLACE SUTTON

Hey! Help me! Help me!

Without expression, Christopher walks up and stands above the glass box. We see clearly now that it's two boxes, Wallace's and Modoc's, joined by a single glass wall.

WALLACE SUTTON

What the hell is this? Let me out! Let me out or I'll sue your ass! I'll sue it!

There's a single air hole in Wallace box. Christopher places into it the muzzle of a high-pressure weapon, points it at the wall separating the two boxes

And FIRES.

The glass partition separating them SHATTERS. Immediately the hideous green fluid...and everything else...from Modoc's side FLOODS into Wallace's chamber, his SCREAMS disappearing underneath the ROILING LIQUID.

The result of the contact is a hot, furious, involuntary reaction of...essences.

CUT TO:

CHRISTOPHER

As the reaction continues, standing now at the rear of the cavern with Hess and the others.

HESS

I hope you know what you're doing.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't.

Abruptly the reactions CEASE. The liquid calms. You can't see anything in it. Just sloshing green.

Hess and his team approach it warily with their weapons. Christopher, without fanfare, takes one of the weapons and SHOOTs one corner of the joined boxes.

The glass SHATTERS. The liquid SPEWS across the floor, revealing...Wallace Sutton, seemingly, face down in the gook. Christopher bends down and with the butt of the weapon rolls Wallace over.

It certainly looks like Wallace. But don't look too closely. Because this really isn't Wallace at all.

Lumps travel uncontrollably across his back. Depressions appear and disappear, as if Wallace is having trouble holding his shape.

CHRISTOPHER

Leave us for a minute.

Hess looks at Christopher questioningly, then nods to his team. They all withdraw out of the cavern. Leaving Christopher alone, there on the sopping floor with...what?

Wallace opens his eyes --eyes that keep changing colors-- and chokes a word that has some of the inflection of Wallace but is all Modoc.

MODOC

Why?

Christopher paces Modoc, still lying there, shivering and weak-looking, on the slimy floor.

CHRISTOPHER

Hess' tests showed you were in an unstable state. Half-way --to what, I don't know-- I figured a forced encounter with Wallace would either destroy you ...or stabilize you.

MODOC

...Why...do this...

CHRISTOPHER

Because there's no way you arranged this little magic trick. Not a nobody like you. Which means you fell into it somehow.

Using the rifle as a prod, Christopher looks at the underside of Wallace's arm. There's a tattoo sequence there now.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course. You have the mark of anathema. Hell's death row. What did you screw up, Modoc? What did you screw up so *badly*?

MODOC

You know nothing of me.

CHRISTOPHER

Really. I know you're a screw-up who escaped Demon Stir. I know, despite all the out of date machoisms from Lucifer's little red book, that means you have a will to live. We both know hell's somebodies are going to come sooner or later looking for those Meat Puppets.

(MORE)

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

If I stake you to ground and just walk away, they'll spend days carving you into melon balls for Hell's Christmas party. So maybe, that means you want to make a deal.

Christopher crouches down before Modoc.

CHRISTOPHER

See, you're not remote-viewing right now. You're actually in Wallace. That means no Hell kill-switch. That makes you quicker, more independent, probably smarter. Know what else that makes you? That makes you an excellent partner.

Wallace/Modoc nods slowly --then ATTACKS Christopher. There on the slimy floor. The two GRAPPLE furiously.

Christopher KICKS Modoc savagely. The demon flies against the cavern wall and crawls UP IT, across the roof and BACK DOWN. It faces Christopher.

MODOC

I'll destroy you. Finish you like I should have done the first time...

Christopher grabs a weapon off the floor and FIRES IT at Modoc. Instead of bullets, several thin TASER lines stab themselves into him. Charged with thousands of volts of electricity, it DRIVES Modoc to the floor in spasms of stunned electrocution.

Christopher uses the moment to LEAP onto Modoc from behind. One hand getting a firm grasp on Modoc's spine, the other jerks his head back so Christopher's mouth is beside his ear.

CHRISTOPHER

All I have to do now is recite your family tree and you're annihilated. So what do you want, Modoc? What's your formal commitment? Right now. Right this instant. Partners? Or destruction?

And you can see Modoc struggle with it...

MODOC

...Partners.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROOM

Like a police debriefing room. Table, couple of chairs, two-way mirror. Wallace/Modoc, in a change of clothes, looking a little more stable but with the odd ripple still roiling under his skin, sits on one side, Christopher on the other.

Modoc is clearly unfamiliar with the sensations of being in Wallace's body. He touches his own hands, brushes the surface of the table.

There's a collection of groceries piled between them.

CHRISTOPHER

You're not a Meat Puppet or a remote-viewer, Modoc. You gotta keep Wallace ticking. That means you have to eat.

Modoc picks up the items. Examines them with distaste. Then opens a pack of twinkies and chews them without expression.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay. From the beginning. How did you get up here in that form?

MODOC

I willed it.

CHRISTOPHER

What did you find to get you up here?

MODOC

I'm smart. I'm clever.

CHRISTOPHER

Sure, Modoc. But what did you find?

MODOC

A line of projection.

CHRISTOPHER

Who's?

MODOC

I don't know.

CHRISTOPHER

The Central Committee's?

MODOC

I wouldn't know. I was on their death row, remember?

Modoc opens another pack of twinkies and wolfs them down.

CHRISTOPHER

Why were you on death row? What did you do?

MODOC

What I *didn't*, Christopher Nightingale.

CHRISTOPHER

What *didn't* you do?

Modoc is silent. He eats another twinkie.

BEHIND THE TWO-WAY MIRROR

Hess and his team watches. Hess turns to Berger.

HESS

Get him more twinkies.

KATRINA

Can Christopher really trust Modoc?
Unchained? Just sitting there?

HESS

Modoc said he'd be a partner. He's bound by that. All demons are by their promises. It's the legacy of the literal-mindedness of hell. Try getting an angel to keep its word, or Heaven a commitment. You can get out of anything with faith as a shield. But hell's a black and white place. You are, or you are not.

BACK IN THE ROOM

CHRISTOPHER

So you found a line of projection, a worm hole that brought you here into a form, probably based on a Meat Puppet's genetics, right?

MODOC

I just left. I found myself in the form. Then there was you.

CUT TO:

CHRISTOPHER

Now with Hess and the others on the opposite side of the mirror.

Modoc has been left alone in the room, munching through a stack of twinkies and a six-pack of beer. Hasim and Berger watch on in amazement.

HASIM

He's going to give Wallace a heart attack.

Christopher and Hess are thinking through what Modoc said.

HESS

So someone was trying to produce a real-time demon, and Modoc stumbled onto it. The little girl, her actions were way beyond mere possession.

CHRISTOPHER

Because she's a real-time demon projection too?

HESS

They must be connected.

Hess and Christopher watch the demon eat and drink.

HESS

We'll have to destroy him eventually, of course. When you have what you need.

CHRISTOPHER

I made a deal to be partners.

HESS

Well, that's thing about humans, isn't it?

(beat)

...We don't have to keep our promises.

END ACT II

ACT III

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Christopher lies in his bed. He wakes slowly. Then STARTS, as if clawed by the last winkings of a dream. He turns. Glances at the clock. Maybe it was a dream. All of it.

Christopher rolls on his back and looks up.

Modoc is pressed to the ceiling, staring down at him.

MODOC

So.

CHRISTOPHER

So.

MODOC

We live here.

CHRISTOPHER

I live here.

MODOC

My cell in the fourth detention ring was larger than this.

CHRISTOPHER

You were an unsubstantiated essence imprisoned in a sealed sub-existence sheet of lateral thought. You didn't have a cell.

Christopher climbs out of bed. Modoc drops the floor behind him and follows.

MODOC

How does a mediocre human like you know all this?

CHRISTOPHER

If you're unlucky in this life, you're born with it. If you're really unlucky, you meet people as a child who hone it in you.

MODOC

That must be why the fourth directorate wanted you killed.

Christopher pauses and looks at Modoc.

MODOC

--I assume.

Christopher enters his kitchen. --The entire floor is littered with twinkie wrappers and empty bottles of beer.

MODOC

You said to feed Wallace.

CHRISTOPHER

Maybe take the time to breathe for him once or twice, too.

Christopher decides to ignore the mess and concentrates on making a bowl of cereal. Modoc pops up and perches on the counter.

MODOC

He did it, you know. Wallace. He killed his wife.

CHRISTOPHER

Gee. Really?

(beat)

Is he still in there? With you?

MODOC

A little. I sort of stand on his neck. It's an...interesting experience. His evil, the free-will nature of it, I find...invigorating.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

CHRISTOPHER

Aw, damn it. The landlord. Disappear.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Christopher opens it a crack.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, Bob.

LANDLORD

Just came by to fix the tub faucet.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh. Right. Look, Bob, it isn't such a good time.

LANDLORD

What? You have a girl over? Finally?
C'mon, this the only day I can do it. I
won't freak if the bed's not made.

Bob the landlord basically pushes his way in. Christopher
shrugs. Bob immediately notices the beer and twinkies.

LANDLORD

Oh.

CHRISTOPHER

Been working...a lot.

Modoc is nowhere to be seen. That's because he's flattened
himself against the ceiling above them.

LANDLORD

That TV thing.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah. Y'know.

Bob the landlord shrugs and heads off toward the bathroom
with his wrench. Modoc DROPS down beside Christopher.

MODOC

I can fill his lungs with hot lead if you
like. I think I can.

CHRISTOPHER

NO.

LANDLORD

(from bathroom)
...What?

CHRISTOPHER

Nothing.

Christopher sighs, throws Modoc a long coat and a pair of
sunglasses and hustles him out the apartment door.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING COURTYARD - DAY

You know the type. Apartments clustered around a central
pool. As Christopher leads Modoc down the stairs and toward
the street, they pass some children playing a board game at a
table.

Modoc stops and stares at them. It's a creepy image. Guy in a
long coat and sunglasses.

KID
You wanna play, mister?

MODOC
No. This is only a sad diversion from the coming emptiness of eternity that awaits all of you.

KID
MOM!

Christopher drags him away.

CHRISTOPHER
Let's try not to get arrested as child molesters on our first day together, okay?

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STREET - DAY

Christopher and Modoc walk to his car.

MODOC
Where are we going?

CHRISTOPHER
To try to find the little girl.

Modoc pops up and perches on the hood of the car.

CHRISTOPHER
We'll actually be riding inside the car today.

MODOC
Oh.

EXT. STOREFRONT - DAY

"Axel's Toy Emporium!"

A brightly decorated toy warehouse. Christopher and Modoc enter.

INT. TOY WAREHOUSE

At first it seems like any other toy store. Racks of packaged dolls, video games and action figures.

Modoc pauses to look at one. *"Meat Puppet! With new articulated mouth!"*. Another: *"Second level possessed teenager! Includes new rolling eyes! Curses Heaven in three languages!"*

The whole place is full of this kind of stuff.

It doesn't faze Christopher, who heads straight for a back door, draws a mammoth pistol and THROWS it open.

BEHIND THE DOOR

Is a stock room. Lounging about on shipping boxes are a half-dozen skater-looking guys with dyed-blond hair. We'll call them DOGS' BODIES.

DOGS' BODY #1
Whoa. Why the gun, Pilgrim?

CHRISTOPHER
Just everybody relax.

DOGS' BODY #2
We're relaxed fine. What about you, man?

Modoc comes in behind Christopher.

DOGS' BODY #2
Hey. Dig the Meat Puppet.

DOGS' BODY #1
That ain't no Meat Puppet.

DOGS' BODY #3
He ain't a toxic possession, right?

MODOC
Silence. Or face the Eternal Sadness of the Empty Plain.

Beat.

DOGS' BODY #2
Aw, Man! It's a demon!

DOGS' BODY #3
...Sorta lame one. "Empty Plain?"

DOGS' BODY #1
(clearly the boss here)
...No. This is no ordinary demon. He doesn't carry a mark. What side are you, Pilgrim?

CHRISTOPHER
Doesn't matter. We just want some information.

DOGS' BODY #1

Information and favors are what we're about, Pilgrim. Heaven needs someone to get coffee, Hell someone to deliver a summons, Interfaith teams want a stake-out...well, we aim to please. --In-between running the store, of course.

DOGS' BODY #2

We dig the store!

CHRISTOPHER

Hell's working a possession. Little girl. A very weird little girl. I want to know where the safe house is.

DOGS' BODY #2

Aw, Dude! C'mon!

DOGS' BODY #3

Like we're gonna tell you!

DOGS' BODY #2

We look like Meat Puppets or something?

Modoc steps forward threateningly.

MODOC

Speak. Or face the wrath of the bottomless pit of--

Christopher gives a "calm-down" sign to Modoc, who falls silent.

CHRISTOPHER

We'll trade. Information for...a new toy: "Modoc, the real-time demon".

MODOC

What?

DOGS' BODY #1

Interesting.

CHRISTOPHER

You haven't had a new line out for a while. How are you going to recruit kids without a new toy?

DOGS' BODY #1

(studying Modoc)

.. Hmm. You'll give us the specs?

CHRISTOPHER

Sure.

DOGS' BODY #1

Rights clearances?

CHRISTOPHER

He's one-of-a-kind.

DOGS' BODY #1

...Deal.

(beat)

Last I heard, Hell's insertion teams were using the old 7-11 on Main.

EXT. TOY STORE - DAY

Christopher and Modoc walk back to their car.

MODOC

I did not crawl my way off Hell's death row to become...a toy.

CHRISTOPHER

You didn't see the Christopher Nightingale action figure?

MODOC

He kills demons?

CHRISTOPHER

(self-hating)

No, just friends.

INT. A CLOSED 7-11 - DAY

Darkness. Then the plywood coverings hammered over the doors and windows EXPLODE inward, bringing in a TORRENT of figures: Christopher, Modoc, Hess' team.

THE ROOM IS EMPTY

But for three slaughtered Meat Puppets lying strewn; burned and fused, on the floor. No little girl.

HESS

We missed them.

BERGER

They just dump the Meat Puppet bodies?

Modoc shoulders aside Berger and Hasim and crouches at the fused corpses.

MODOC

These demons didn't leave the Puppets.
They were destroyed in them.

HASIM

Destroyed? By who?

CHRISTOPHER

Fused destructions aren't the M.O. of the
Angelic Host.

HESS

Who did it, then?

CHRISTOPHER

...The little girl.

KATRINA

It's a demon possessing her. Are you
saying a demon killed the other demons?
That makes no sense.

But it's beginning to to Hess.

HESS

A double-cross...

BERGER

But why this girl?

Modoc looks closely at a burn pattern on one of the Meat
Puppets.

MODOC

They have her mark. It's the mark of
an...influencer. She will have great
influence in life.

EXT. CLOSED 7-11 - DAY

Christopher stands outside the shuttered building with Hess.

CHRISTOPHER

I need to talk to hell's ambassador.

HESS

Nobody talks to their ambassadors. Not
without a diplomatic pass from the
angelic host. Even then...

(beat)

Besides, they've changed the code on
their embassy locations anyway.

CHRISTOPHER
 (looking back now at Modoc)
 He'll know how to find it.

EXT. GRIFFITH PARK - DAY

On a promontory overlooking the city, Christopher and Modoc stand, gazing at the streets below.

MODOC
 Heaven and hell's embassies can be found
 by the way reality bends around them like
 drains.

CHRISTOPHER
 How would you know this if you'd never
 done a field rotation before?

MODOC
 --There it is.

He's pointing a distant block of the city. Christopher squints to understand as we

CUT TO:

MODOC'S POV

Just briefly. You can see how, for him, physical reality bends downward like a melting candle to that spot.

INT. COUNTY HALL OF RECORDS - COUNTER

Modoc sits waiting on the bench behind as a clerk brings Christopher a set of blueprints.

CLERK
 This is the plot map you requested for
 that address.

Christopher examines it a beat, then hands it back.

CHRISTOPHER
 Thank you.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Students with laptops. The hiss of espresso machines. Christopher parks Modoc at a corner table.

CHRISTOPHER
 You can't go into an embassy with me. So
 wait here till I get back.
 (MORE)

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

(hands him magazine)

You can read about the exciting life changes Julia Roberts is going through.

MODOC

Is she a demon?

VOICE

Chris?

Christopher turns. It's the girl working behind the counter. KATHERINE. Pretty. Nice smile she's flashing for Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey. Katherine.

KATHERINE

Haven't seen you in for a few days.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh.

(beat, flat)

I've had a really strange weekend.

KATHERINE

Family in town?

CHRISTOPHER

And y'know, here I am, baby-sitting Uncle Modoc.

(beat)

Look, I have to go to a meeting. Can you keep an eye on him? He's...not from this country.

KATHERINE

Sure.

Christopher brings a stack of muffins he puts on Modoc's table.

CHRISTOPHER

They look different, but they're the same as twinkies.

(heads out)

Stay put.

EXT. STRIP JOINT - SUNDOWN

Christopher pauses on the sidewalk, steadies himself, and

ENTERS

What is your basic strip joint. There's stairs to a second floor. Christopher climbs them warily, comes to a door onto which someone has spray-painted something graffitti-style: a character in Aramaic.

Christopher opens the door.

BEYOND IT

Is a room empty of anything but a large, bronze wall hanging. It's about six feet long; of a very complicated design full of tiny figures and scenes. Horrible scenes that remind us of a Bosch painting. Dominating all this is a sculpted face half emerging from the bronze in a twisted scream.

Christopher stands before it.

CHRISTOPHER

I am here, in the diplomatic space of Lucifer, to speak to the ambassador of the Central Committee.

It's just a bronze wall hanging.

But as Christopher watches, from the mouth of the sculpted, emerging head of bronze, a hideous liquid begins to flow. Thick and lumpy, running down the wall hanging and pooling onto the floor.

As it does, two darkly-clad Meat Puppets appear in the doorway behind Christopher. It's at this moment that the lips of the bronze, puking head MOVE. Just enough to say, in a woman's voice:

BRONZE

Kill him.

The Meat Puppets move in. Christopher holds his hand up abruptly in a "Stop" motion.

CHRISTOPHER

A church once stood on this site generations ago. It's altar is where I stand. Killing me is impossible under the convention. Shall I read it to you?

The Meat Puppets go nuts. They begin leaping up and down in Christopher's face like crazed apes, SCREAMING. They tear up chunks of floor and walls and SMASH them at his feet. But they don't touch him.

Finally they stop, each of them putting his putrid face within inches of each of Christopher's cheeks. Christopher ignores them and concentrates on the ambassador.

AMBASSADOR

Speak.

CHRISTOPHER

I want to know why Hell is breaking the rules. Why it is throwing everything into confusion.

AMBASSADOR

Hell doesn't break its agreements. We leave that to The Host and humans.

CHRISTOPHER

You deny the abnormalities in the possession of the little girl?

AMBASSADOR

These our provocations by the Interfaith team or Heaven. These are not our doing.

Christopher pauses, tries to measure the Ambassador. Though it's hard to measure a hunk of bronze.

CHRISTOPHER

We know you're running a possession of the little girl with the demon Kyrak. We also know that possession is, now, being conducted outside the conventions.

The Ambassador is silent.

CHRISTOPHER

When was the last time you contacted Kyrak?

AMBASSADOR

We have control of our operatives, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

When was the last time you contacted him?

That pause again.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay, let's say it's all under control. Fine.

(MORE)

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)

But let's pretend for minute, just for laughs, that something's gone wrong with Kyrak. If something's happened, then you --this office-- will be blamed for the failure by the Central Committee. You've shoveled a lot of coal in Hell to make it up to ambassador I bet, gone to the right damnation parties, kissed the right demon ass. Be a shame to see it all thrown away, annihilated, by one tiny, silly miscalculation with an operative.

A long beat. Then;

AMBASSADOR

...What are you proposing?

CHRISTOPHER

Kyrak murdered his demon partners at your safe house. He's taken the girl somewhere else. But it has to be somewhere off The Host's radar. Some secret, eyes-only safe house even you don't think he knows about. Tell me where that place is, let me check it out, and maybe you get through this without the motion detectors going off in hell.

AMBASSADOR

You would have me give up an operation of ours to the Interfaith team?

CHRISTOPHER

I think you've already lost your operation, Ambassador. I just want to find out who to.

There's a pause, then the Meat Puppets back away. When they do, we see now that one wall of the room is covered in writing. It's an address. Written over and over: 3838 Townsend Ave. Christopher nods and begins to leave.

AMBASSADOR

It's good to see you again, Christopher.

One of the Meat Puppets tosses Christopher his wallet, which he'd obviously lifted at some point.

AMBASSADOR

...And to know where you live.

EXT. 3838 TOWNSEND AVENUE - NIGHT

Christopher pulls up to ...a vacant lot. Double checks the address on a slip of paper. Yup. Just a stretch of dirt. Nothing.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - NIGHT

Christopher comes in through the doors. The first thing he notices is the entire patronage of the place in a tight circle around something, cheering it on.

CROWD

Go! Go! Go!

Christopher rubs his eyes. The last thing he wants to see is what's at the center of that circle. Easing his way up front, he looks over a person's shoulder onto

MODOC

Lying on the floor and reaching up with one hand to an enormous coffee dispenser. Pulling the release toggle, he's letting a full gallon of coffee stream down straight into his mouth, swallowing all of it.

CHRISTOPHER

Aw, man...

The dispenser DRAINS to CHEERS from the customers. Modoc rises.

KATHERINE

Your uncle's...interesting.

MODOC

I can do another. I like coffee.

CHRISTOPHER

No. I think that's enough for tonight.

(to Katherine)

What do I owe you for a vat of Summatra blend?

KATHRINE

Oh, I don't know. It brought in a lot customers to watch. Maybe we should make it a regular Friday thing.

CHRISTOPHER

Thanks.

Christopher smiles at her, takes Modoc's arm and leads him for the door.

CHRISTOPHER
Let's go, Java King.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Christopher stirs in his sleep. Opens his eyes. Modoc isn't pressed to the ceiling above him. In fact the apartment is totally silent.

CHRISTOPHER
Modoc?

Christopher sighs and gets out of bed. Looks through the apartment. Modoc's nowhere to be seen.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - ROOF - NIGHT

Christopher crunches across the roof to where Modoc sits perched on the edge of the building like some forgotten gargoyle. Christopher sits down near him. It's a nice night.

CHRISTOPHER
Can't sleep?

MODOC
Yes.

CHRISTOPHER
Three gallons of coffee will do that.
Just for the future.

Crickets. The odd passing car. It's late.

MODOC
I hate it here.

CHRISTOPHER
And the rents they charge...

MODOC
This world. This human world. Not one thing. Not the other. No *commitment*. Just questions. And demands. You are the most yakky creatures in the universe. Wallace. He whines constantly in here.

CHRISTOPHER
Well, you're standing on his neck.
Metaphorically.

MODOC

No. I'm actually standing on it. It's difficult to see in this light spectrum.

CHRISTOPHER

Ah. Still find his free-will evil "invigorating"?

MODOC

Free will. We invented free will. None of you would even be here without us.

CHRISTOPHER

That's an interesting interpretation.

MODOC

You think heaven cares about you? That Heaven has a plan? We're the only ones that follow the rules. The ones that give your universe structure. Without us your life would be nothing but angel whimsey. Cherish your precious free will, Christopher. It's Hell's gift to you.

Modoc falls silently into himself a moment.

CHRISTOPHER

What happened to you, Modoc? In Hell?

MODOC

...There's a class system in Hell. The ones who fought the rebellion against Michael and God, and those of us who came into being after. It's amazing the difference over having been there and stood for that quarter second the war lasted, and not being there. It's the difference between being a boss...and the nobody that sweeps the floor.

(beat)

But I'm not stupid. I had talent. It took eons, but they gave me a chance. An operation I created and ran here.

CHRISTOPHER

What operation?

MODOC

Destroying you.

Christopher's belly chills.

MODOC

The destruction of the first Interfaith team. You were so easy. So sure of yourself. So convinced the great Christopher Nightingale could cure that woman of her possession. Even though it was a class four. Even though it had gone septic. You brought me right into your headquarters. Right into the middle of your friends. Your best friends, right?

In a blind rage Christopher suddenly GRABS Modoc, and with one hand on his spine, PUSHES him to edge of the building roof.

MODOC

But I missed you. We killed all your friends, but you got away. So the Central Committee judged the mission --my mission-- a failure and put me on death row.

(beat)

You want to destroy me here? Now? Go ahead. The only thing I ever wanted was to be accepted by my kind, and you took that away from me. You made me a nothing. A nobody. Lower than a Meat Puppet. A freak. Go ahead. You're doing me a favor. Go ahead.

The moment rests knife-edge which way it'll go ...then Christopher pulls Modoc back from the edge, throws him down onto the roof and stands over him, trying to control his breathing.

MODOC

Trying to find an answer to the moment?

CHRISTOPHER

You son of a bitch.

MODOC

I'm a demon, Christopher, remember? It's what I do. I eat twinkies and do party tricks but don't ever forget, partners or no, that screwing with souls, screwing with your soul, was my reason for existence.

Christopher calms. Leans against the wall's edge. Rubs his eyes.

CHRISTOPHER

Why couldn't I have been born somebody else? A life of college, girlfriends, trips to the beach; a job in some quiet company somewhere, kids...why did it have to be *this*?

MODOC

Feeling a little like a freak, maybe?

Christopher stares at Modoc a beat, unclear of his emotions. When he looks up, at that moment he sees, standing in front of him,

TWO MEAT PUPPETS

We're familiar with the type. The blank fleshiness for eyes. The lack of muscle tension.

CHRISTOPHER

(to Meat Puppets)

Who sends you?

And in a flash the Meat Puppets ATTACK them. The four go down in a scraping BRAWL, one on one.

MODOC

And his Meat Puppet seem to concentrating on getting at fist down the other's mouth.

CHRISTOPHER

Is STRUGGLING fiercely with his Meat Puppet, rolling and SMASHING across the roof. For a spineless, slow-witted hunk of flesh, it does surprisingly good; SLAMMING Christopher against a wall, CRAWLING effortlessly up a standpipe Christopher has to PULL IT DOWN from.

FLIPPING the Meat Puppet over, Christopher grasps its spine and begins reciting an Aramaic family tree as

MODOC

FORCES his fist down the other Meat Puppet's throat and PULLS out something...well, though fleshy, clearly not human --that obviously is critical to the animation of said Meat Puppet, because it collapses and BURSTS into FLAME as

CHRISTOPHER

Finishes reciting his Aramaic list --holding the other's spine ...and nothing happens. You can see the confusion in his face.

CHRISTOPHER
...I don't understand.

The Meat Puppet abruptly ROLLS Christopher over and tries to TEAR his EYES OUT. As Christopher struggles with it, he notices the tattoo-like symbol on its forearm.

CHRISTOPHER
--What?

MEAT PUPPET
DIE.

The Meat Puppet redoubles its effort. Christopher frantically tries to keep it from getting its fingers through his eyes, finally PUSHING violently with his feet against the Puppet's chest.

The angle's just right and the Meat Puppet is LAUNCHED off him --and over the edge of the roof.

Christopher pulls himself to his knees, panting. Modoc, leaving his smoldering Meat Puppet behind, walks over to him.

CHRISTOPHER
It...
(catching breath)
...It wasn't animated by a demon. The recitation didn't work...

MODOC
Well it didn't animate itself.

CHRISTOPHER
...It carried a mark of a...
(beat)
...Angel.

MODOC
Angels don't use Meat Puppets. It's not allowed.

CHRISTOPHER
You're sounding like Hess.

MODOC
Did you pierce its heart?

Christopher stands and shuffles to the edge. Down below, the Meat Puppet can be seen impaled --through the chest-- on an iron gate it landed on.

CHRISTOPHER

...Yeah.

MODOC

Then it's an angel no more...

CHRISTOPHER

...What's happening?

END ACT III

ACT IV

EXT. CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

There's the expected crush of police and medical vehicles now on the street. Bleary neighbors in bathrobes. A tarp thrown over our impaled friend.

Christopher and Modoc stand amongst the crowd at the edge of the police tape. Nobody's obviously connected them to the goings on.

STANDING AT THE OTHER EDGE OF THE POLICE TAPE

Are a man and woman, both model-perfect, big smiles, dressed in exaggerated Fitzgerald era Hamptons tennis outfits. Sweaters wrapped around their necks, white shoes...

CHRISTOPHER
(to Modoc)
Stay here.

Christopher walks over to them.

CHRISTOPHER
Tragedy.

MAN
Yes. It is. Isn't it, Winnie?

WOMAN
Yes, Bobber's. A real tragedy.

Constant, bright smiles. Not a hair out of place.

CHRISTOPHER
It's a Meat Puppet animated by an angel.

MAN
Really!

WOMAN
Extraordinary!

MAN
Not, well, the way it's done, is it,
Winnie?

WOMAN
Not at all, Bobber's.

Christopher rolls his eyes.

CHRISTOPHER
Why was an angel in a Meat Puppet?

MAN
Well...

WOMAN
To even address that...

MAN
Would be attempting to quantify...

WOMAN
...The essences of faith.

MAN
And we can't do that!

WOMAN
And we can't do that!

Big, frustrating, toothy smiles.

CHRISTOPHER
(muttered)
I hate angels...

Christopher watches Bobber's and Winnie watch the coroner techs examine the skewered body.

CHRISTOPHER
You're here to track the angel that animated that Meat Puppet, aren't you?

MAN
Hmm.

WOMAN
That would make sense, Bobber's.

MAN
Perfectly logical, Winnie.

WOMAN
Not that we're saying anything.

MAN
Not that we're saying anything.

CHRISTOPHER
God forbid.

Both angels frown like Beaver Cleaver's parents at "God".

CHRISTOPHER

Sorry.

WOMAN

Nobody's perfect.

MAN

Except us!

WOMAN

Ontologically speaking.

MAN

Ontologically speaking.

CHRISTOPHER

Why would a demon and an angel be working together in Meat Puppets to kill me? Is this particular angel not phoning home? Does he happen to know a certain little girl and a demon named Kyrak?

Both angels just smile patiently. You want to smack them.

CHRISTOPHER

Does your arrogance ever get tiring to you?

MAN

Not really.

WOMAN

Cause we're the good guys!

Christopher glances at the dead Meat Puppet.

CHRISTOPHER

You should talk to someone about this whole kill-an-angel-by-piercing-its-heart thing. Reeks a little of vampires.

WOMAN

Oh, but vampires don't exist, Christopher.

MAN

You know that.

WOMAN

Where would we put them?

Christopher shakes his head and turns to leave.

MAN

--Christopher...

He hesitates.

WOMAN

You know, I hear, sometimes, that some of hell's most secret safe houses operate as harmonics. Their physical manifestation can be a base nine version of the main address. Is that the general idea, Bobber's?

MAN

Sounds good to me, Winnie.

WOMAN

Not that we're saying anything!

MAN

Not that we're saying anything!

INT. INTERFAITH TEAM OPERATION ROOM

A basement somewhere. The group sits around a poorly lit table. Modoc perches impossibly off the edge of a lintel, lurking over them like The Raven.

KATRINA

Does he have to do that?

MODOC

Never more, Katrina. Never more...

CHRISTOPHER

You get used to it.

(beat)

Sort of.

HESS

...So the angels basically confirmed that they were tracking one of their own.

CHRISTOPHER

In their special, annoying way. Yes.

BERGER

"Not that we're saying anything!" You'd think once in a while they'd remember we're on the same team.

HESS

Because we're not. Heaven has it's agenda just like hell. Sometimes it's ours, sometimes it isn't. That's our place in things. We learned that long ago.

CHRISTOPHER

I got the feeling they want us in on this one. Unofficially. They basically worked out the harmonic of hell's safe house for me.

HASIM

So what are we really talking about? A rogue angel and a rogue demon? Working together to hijack the possession of the child?

HESS

...Let's find out.

CUT TO:

THE INTERFAITH TEAM

Locking and loading. Exotic weapon after exotic weapon being clacked together and stuffed into canvas bags.

There's a sound on the stairs. Everyone stops. It's an old rabbi. It's clear now this is the basement of a synagogue.

RABBI

Uh, is everything okay?

HESS

Sure, Rabbi. We'll be leaving soon.

The rabbi nods and walks back up the stairs where another anxious rabbi waits.

RABBI #2

Who are these people?

RABBI

They have clearance from the rabbinical council. That's all I know...

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A nondescript warehouse building sits on the corner, the street quiet around it.

AN ARMED FIGURE

Darts across the street and takes up a position near the door. Christopher. Then another. Hasim.

MODOC.

On his own; climbs, fly-like, up the side of the building as

KATRINA

In full Meat Puppet regalia, walks straight up to the door and bangs on it. It opens a crack as

MODOC

Arrives at a skylight, peering inside as

THE DOOR OF THE BUILDING

Is opened a crack by a Meat Puppet. He stares at Katrina a beat, then opens the door more as

MODOC

CRASHES through the skylight, startling the Meat Puppet team inside as

CHRISTOPHER AND HASIM

BASH open the door wide and RUSH in as

MODOC

Begins SHOVING his fist down Meat Puppet throats --pulling out their controlling organs as

CHRISTOPHER AND HASIM

With the others following close behind, begin RAKING Meat Puppets with phosphorous GUNFIRE as

THE MEAT PUPPETS

Modoc ripped their controlling organs from, BURST into flame as

HESS

Strides through the chaos to where the little girl crouches HISSING in a corner.

LITTLE GIRL

Die.

The little girl LEAPS for Hess --as he pulls from his coat what looks like an old-fashioned flash unit --that ERUPTS with a BLINDING FLASH.

The little girl pauses, stunned, then collapses and SEIZES like an epileptic. Hess moves forward immediately with Berger and INJECTS her.

HESS

The risk of using a harmonic as a safe house is that you can be knocked out of phase too easily with eighth-of-a-second bursts.

(reaches for exorcism bag)

But we don't have much time...

CHRISTOPHER AND THE OTHERS

Descend on the downed Meat Puppets and begin grabbing their spines and reciting Aramaic family trees as

HESS

Assisted by Berger, begins anointing the little girl with oils and incantations as

ONE OF CHRISTOPHER'S MEAT PUPPETS

As he finishes the Aramaic tree, FREEZES and COLLAPSES into fused dust.

HESS' EXORCISM

Is now reaching its climax with gunfire and BURNING Meat Puppets in the background as

HASIM

Struggles with the last Meat Puppet, hand on its spine, finishing the last of the Aramaic speech. --Nothing happens.

HASIM

I've got an angel!

At that, Christopher steps up with a large air gun he FIRES. From it LAUNCHES a long spear that IMPALES the Meat Puppet through the back. It SEIZES, rolls away and CRUMBLES as

HESS' EXORCISM

Reaches its final crescendo of incantation. The girl's body STIFFENS suddenly as something EJECTS out of her mouth onto the floor. It's protoplasmic-like, gooey awfulness but for an articulated mouth.

HESS

Kyrak?

The little girl's body has relaxed. She begins weeping, a child once more. Berger takes her up into his arms.

PROTOPLASMIC BLOB (KYRAK)
Annihilation...annihilation...

Liquid. Hissing. Strangled. Dying.

HESS
 Soon. I promise.

Christopher walks up. The Meat Puppets are a scree of destruction behind him.

HESS
 Why, Kyrak? Why this rogue union of angels and demons? Why?

KYRAK
...Stalemate...we were never built for stalemate...betrayal by the Central Committee...

CHRISTOPHER
 The little girl?

KYRAK
A long term possession...she influence...be powerful one day...

At that moment Kyrak must sense Modoc standing nearby.

KYRAK
You! Traitor! Nothing! Dung sweeper! Traitor! Nothing! Modoc! No tribe! Dung sweeper for humans! Nothing!

HESS
 --You'd destroy everything, Kyrak, to end the stalemate? Embrace the null?

And Kyrak just begins to laugh. Crazy laugh. Shrieking laugh. Then the goo that is his essence discolors, collapses, and goes silent. Still. Dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE BUILDING - DAY

As the others bag and take away the Meat Puppet remains, Christopher stands on the sidewalk with Hess.

HESS

This is only the beginning of the conspiracy. It must run into places...we cannot imagine.

CHRISTOPHER

Is that a long term employment offer?

HESS

Yes, Christopher. It is.

(beat)

Pay sucks. But we have great Christmas parties.

Christopher is staring across the street to where Modoc sits perched silently on a mailbox.

CHRISTOPHER

I'll ask my partner.

ACROSS THE STREET

Christopher walks up and stands beside Modoc. A silence rests between them a beat.

CHRISTOPHER

You did good in there. If that's not an insult to a demon.

MODOC

Demon? Kyrak was right. I'm a nothing now. No tribe. No friends. No purpose. A freak.

CHRISTOPHER

Join the club.

Christopher opens a pack of twinkies, takes one for himself and holds out the other for Modoc. He accepts it.

MODOC

I don't think I like this club.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, that's the beauty of it. It doesn't like you either.

MODOC

I tried to kill you once, Christopher. I killed your friends.

A beat of pain passes through Christopher, then calms.

CHRISTOPHER

No. I was the one who killed my friends.
If it wasn't you ...it would have been
someone else.

MODOC

This strikes me as a strange partnership,
Christopher Nightingale.

CHRISTOPHER

We live in a strange universe, Modoc.

And as they both chew, Hess watches them from across the
street, nodding with satisfaction, as we

FADE OUT