



FRESH BLOOD SELECT

FRAUD IS DEAD

By

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INT. PARLOR - NIGHT

The curtains are drawn. The room is dim.

MAGGIE FOX (31) and her sister KATE (27) sit on opposite sides of a bare table.

SUPER: New York 1870

The older sister is more substance. The younger more style.

Both are disarming. Flashing eyes over twitching mouths.

Their modest attire and stuffy surroundings offer an illusion of tameness.

But lions raised in captivity are still lions...

Maggie pulls a hairpin from her dark tresses. She holds it in front of her face, concentrates--

With a SNAP of her fingers the pin becomes a matchstick.

She strikes it with her thumbnail.

Lets it burn.

Kate's attention is focused on the front of her own dress.

She arches her back--trying to emphasise the figure hidden inside her conservative garment.

The flame reaches Maggie's fingertips.

She drops the match on the tabletop and crushes the burnt wood with the heel of her palm.

Maggie brushes the coarse ashes into her other hand...

...leans forward, brings the cupped hand to her lips, inhales deeply--

Kate turns her face away as Maggie blows hard into her palm.

Nothing.

Maggie opens her hand. No ashes. Just the hairpin.

Maggie flicks the pin at Kate.

It bounces off her sister's chest and lands on the floor.

Kate tugs a pin out of her own hair to return fire but--

DING DING DING

--a BELL mounted to the wall, with a pull cord connecting it to the next room, puts an end to their games.

Both women place their hands flat on the table. Palms down. Their wrists positioned with care.

The room's only door swings open.

Enter eldest sister LEAH FOX (54), the ringmaster of this spooky circus.

She bears little resemblance to her much younger siblings.

Leah is dull and dangerous. The way a frying pan seems innocuous right up until the moment it hits you.

A frail woman follows Leah in.

This is MRS. ASHFORD (20's). The bags under her eyes are so dark they make her widow's weeds look grey by comparison.

She clutches a short, ornamental sword.

Leah and the young widow take the two remaining seats, on either side of Maggie and Kate.

Mrs. Ashford lays the unsheathed sword on the table in front of her with reverence.

MRS. ASHFORD

I need to reach my husband. Vice
Admiral Peter Ashford.

Maggie and Kate stay motionless. Disengaged.

LEAH

This is only your first visit. As
gifted as my sisters are, typically
several sittings are required
before a connection with a specific
spirit can be established.

MRS. ASHFORD

That's why I brought his cutlass.

She grabs it by the blade and rotates it so the hilt points at Leah across from her.

MRS. ASHFORD (CONT'D)

It's engraved with his name and
rank. You see?

LEAH

Still, it's very doubtful that we'll reach him this evening. Next time--

MRS. ASHFORD

But I--what I just gave you--that was everything!

Maggie shifts in her seat, but she and Kate remain in position. Eyes down. Mouths shut.

LEAH

The size of the donation we request is proportional to the demands on my sisters' time. But if you'd prefer to consult with one of their many imitators...

MRS. ASHFORD

No! Please! You're the only ones I trust. I need to know if he's on the other side.

An awkward silence falls over the room. Maggie gets her first good look at the widow--

A greasy sheen at the roots of her hair. Stains on her wrinkled dress.

Maggie nods at the sword.

MAGGIE

(gently)

The war ended five years ago.

MRS. ASHFORD

Oh no he survived the war! Not a scratch on him. So he didn't qualify for a pension.

The widow rubs a spot behind her ear compulsively--

MRS. ASHFORD (CONT'D)

He joined an expedition to the Arctic, seeking a faster route through the Northwest Passage. It's been a year with no word. His party is presumed lost. Trapped in the drifting ice...

--when her hand returns to the table the nail of her index finger is stained red.

Maggie leans back in her chair until she can see the angry patch of skin the woman is gouging her way through.

LEAH

Mrs. Ashford--

MRS. ASHFORD

I can't sleep. I close my eyes and it's too bright. Blinding. And I think--what if he was the last one to die? No one left to pray over him or close his eyes. How can he cross over without a proper burial?

She appeals directly to Maggie:

MRS. ASHFORD (CONT'D)

I just need to know he's at peace. Waiting for me. I beg you.

Maggie looks to Kate for agreement.

Kate looks to Leah for permission.

Leah shifts the weight of her gaze between them. First on Kate, who buckles under the pressure.

Then Maggie, who hardens.

MAGGIE

Let's begin.

Mrs. Ashford places her hands flat on the table. After a last warning glance at Maggie, Leah does the same.

Maggie and Kate shut their eyes. Concentrating...until...

KNOCK KNOCK

Mrs. Ashford GASPS.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Eyes still closed, a smile in her voice:

MAGGIE

The spirits are anxious to speak with you.

MRS. ASHFORD

Peter?

MAGGIE
Is the spirit of Peter Ashford
present? Rap three times.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Mrs. Ashford's eyes stream with bittersweet tears.

The sword begins to JITTER. The whole table trembles beneath their hands...

Then lifts.

The widow looks at the floor. All four table legs hover six inches above it.

MRS. ASHFORD
Peter, is it really you?

The table SLAMS back down.

Kate's head drops onto her chest. She convulses for several seconds, then--

Her hands remain on the table but the rest of her goes limp, slouched in her chair. Unconscious.

A long moment of silence...broken by a deep MOAN.

It seems to come from the sword.

MRS. ASHFORD
Peter?

RASPY MALE VOICE
Dearest...

MRS. ASHFORD
I found you.

Something in the woman's tone--

MRS. ASHFORD (CONT'D)
Show me the way. Guide me.

--makes Maggie open her eyes.

The woman's hands are on the sword.

MAGGIE
No!

Kate's eyes fly open.

She and Maggie both try to reach for the weapon--the table jolts but their hands don't move.

Mrs. Ashford plunges the blade into her own torso.

INT. FOYER - LATER

Maggie and Kate watch from the upper landing of the home's grand staircase.

Below, Leah confers with a man in rumpled clothes.

She presses money into his hand.

They both step aside to allow another man to roll Mrs. Ashford out the front door.

Not on a stretcher. In a wheelchair.

With a blanket wrapped around her head and shoulders. Just an infirm woman bundled up against the cold...

Until the wheels go over the threshold.

The chair lurches. The blanket shifts.

Mrs. Ashford's head falls backwards.

With her face upside down, her dead eyes stare directly up at the sisters.

Kate winces. Maggie retreats into the nearby

BEDROOM

where she unbuttons her cuffs and rolls back her sleeves.

Here lies the secret to their table-lifting trick--and their inability to thwart the widow's suicide.

Maggie has flat steel bars strapped to the underside of her forearms. Each bar ends in a small hook beneath her wrists.

The hooks are positioned to catch the edge of the table and painted black to hide among the frills of her dark dress.

Maggie undoes the leather straps that hold the devices in place as Kate enters.

KATE

Do you think those policemen will want to talk to us?

MAGGIE
Policemen wear uniforms now,
remember?

Maggie throws down her table-lifters in disgust.

She drops to her knees to reach under the bed. Then drags out and opens a large trunk.

KATE
What are you doing?

Maggie crosses to a wardrobe. She grabs armfuls of clothes and tosses them at the trunk.

KATE (CONT'D)
You can't leave!

Kate intercepts one of the flying items.

KATE (CONT'D)
You definitely can't take the shawl
you borrowed with you.

MAGGIE
I'm packing for both us, you
wool-brained goose.

Kate glances back at the doorway and lowers her voice.

KATE
You know we can't.

MAGGIE
(full-volume)
Why not? She's old enough to be our
mother, but that's her only real
claim to authority over us.

KATE
If it wasn't for her, we'd still be
back in Hydesville with pig shit on
our heels and a baby on each--

She chokes on the words as a hand grips the back of her neck. Maggie looks up to see Leah behind Kate.

MAGGIE
Better shit on our heels than blood
on our hands.

Leah's grip on Kate's neck becomes a shoulder-squeeze.

LEAH

You see now why I advised against contact tonight?

MAGGIE

You only wanted to wring more money out of her. You would have had us perform eventually.

LEAH

So it was inevitable then. And incurable. Making this tantrum even more pointless than usual.

Maggie pulls Kate away from Leah. She tugs back Kate's sleeve to expose the hook at her wrist.

MAGGIE

(to Kate)

Tell me you still feel good about what we're doing.

KATE

I feel like...we're very good at it...

LEAH

How bad can it be? Most of it evolved from pranks you played as children. "The spirits" used to tell Momma and Poppa--rest their souls--to put more syrup on your porridge.

MAGGIE

That was a long time ago. Before you spun it into all this.

Leah's face darkens.

LEAH

And if I hadn't? There are worse things to happen to strange little girls in backwater towns. I kept you from getting mixed in with the kindling.

Maggie waves at the lavish furnishings around them.

MAGGIE

Well we've certainly paid you back over the years.

LEAH

And under my careful management,
all those pennies put you through
school. Put this roof over your
head. You never wanted for
anything. You've asked, and I've
given.

MAGGIE

We're done asking.

LEAH

(to Kate)

Where would you go? What would you
do?

MAGGIE

She needs us, Katy. This is a
chance to chart our own course for
once in our lives.

Kate looks from one sister to the other. Bites her lip...

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We can do this. It's time.

Kate tosses her shawl into the trunk.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

A hundred faces. None of them kind.

Every seat is occupied.

Members of the city's upper crust fill the front rows.

The lower classes occupy the rear gallery and the aisles,
where purchasers of "standing tickets" line the walls.

Among them, a cluster of newspapermen already scribbling.

All settle as the THEATER MANAGER appears on stage.

With the puffed-out chest and rhythm of a carnival barker:

THEATER MANAGER

Ladies and gentlemen! Appearing for the first time in public since their confession made headlines across the globe--here to present proof in the flesh--the famous--the fraudulent--the Fox Sisters!

No applause. Nothing.

He withdraws to the wings. Leaving the stage empty until...

Maggie and Kate enter.

Slow. Cautious.

Kate lingers upstage near the curtain.

Alone, Maggie advances to the stage's apron. Silent in her stocking feet.

When she's front and center, she grabs her skirt and raises the hem to mid-calf.

There's a flutter of GASPS and CREAKS as audience members lean forward in their seats. Then stillness again.

Now a DOCTOR in a white coat CLOMPS out from the wings.

He positions himself beside Maggie.

Looks her up and down.

His spectacles reflect the gaslights at the stage's edge. Two blazing circles above the hard line of his mouth.

He signals Maggie to raise her dress higher. She obeys--revealing her legs to just below the knee.

The crowd inhales the last of the air from the room...

The Doctor waves a hand for Maggie to begin.

She doesn't move. But--

KNOCK. KNOCK KNOCK. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

The spectators grow more and more restless with each KNOCK.

The Doctor kneels--his face now inches from Maggie's legs.

This fresh humiliation draws the color to her cheeks but she continues. KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Close inspection of Maggie's feet reveals the joint of her big toe rising and--

KNOCK

--slamming down against the wooden platform.

Maggie repeats the action with her other foot.

The big toe joint rolls up and over unnaturally, until it's almost on top of the one next to it.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

The Doctor grimaces and stands to deliver his verdict:

DOCTOR

The rappings are the result of near-perfect control of the muscles which govern the tendons in the foot.

A CHORUS of disbelief mingled with DISGUST from the crowd.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Presumably developed in childhood, before the muscles stiffened, and practiced rigorously ever since.

It wasn't a question but Maggie nods anyway.

A TRUE BELIEVER in the second row gets to his feet.

TRUE BELIEVER

This proves nothing! And personally, I resent the implication that I can't differentiate between miracles of the spirit world and creaky toes!

TITTERS from the audience.

DOCTOR

The human ear is deceptive, sir. Tap two coins together above the head of a blindfolded man and he'll struggle to discern exactly where the noise originates.

A HECKLER in sooty trousers, standing in the aisle:

HECKLER

Don't ask her for a demonstration,
anyone. You'll never see those
coins again!

More than a few LAUGHS now. One of the heckler's pals grabs
his crotch and yells to Maggie:

HECKLER #2

I've got a job that pays two bits!
Won't even need the blindfold!

HOOTS and WHISTLES.

Maggie throws her hem back down.

Upstage, Kate bristles. She thrusts her clenched fists into
the pockets of her own voluminous skirt.

TRUE BELIEVER

Some of the greatest minds in our
country have vouched for these
phenomena.

MAGGIE

The educated mind makes more
assumptions than the uneducated
one. That just makes it easier to
fool.

BOOS and JEERS.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

It's only natural to thirst for the
marvelous. But very rarely is it
wise to drink.

NEWSPAPERMAN

Why reveal everything now? After
all these years?

Maggie looks back to share a guilty look with Kate.

MAGGIE

We've come to realize that a lack
of good intentions may be just as
harmful as an abundance of bad
ones.

More BOOS.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

My sister and I helped create the Spiritualist movement. It's evolved over the years to take on many different forms. But all require little more than devilish ingenuity and dim light. I can only assure you--there are no spirits.

HECKLER

Nobody wants assurances from the monkeys! Where's the organ grinder?

This gets him his biggest LAUGH yet.

MAGGIE

We've had no contact with our sister Leah since our decision to speak the truth. But her silence now is its own confession.

TRUE BELIEVER

You are a liar, madam!

MAGGIE

Yes. I am. That's what I'm trying to tell you.

TRUE BELIEVER

And you're lying now!

MAGGIE

No, I'm--

TRUE BELIEVER

Your shameful tricks pale in comparison to events I've witnessed with my own eyes! Spirit lights! The materialization of--

A woman in the audience SCREAMS in terror.

Followed by more SCREAMS and GASPS from the crowd.

All eyes are on Kate. Maggie turns.

Kate still faces the audience...oblivious to the luminous disembodied face hovering above her right shoulder.

Even more horrible than the face is its VOICE.

Genderless. Ageless. Unearthly.

SPIRIT VOICE

The dead do not return. Nor any
that go down into Hell.

Maggie rolls her eyes.

Kate sashays forward to join Maggie front and center.

The glowing face bobs along behind her.

SCREAMS from the audience mingle with cries of "WITCH!",
"DEMON", and from one squinting OLD MAN:

OLD MAN

Agnes?

MAGGIE

(to Kate)

Very subtle.

Kate's lips stay frozen in a smile. The collar of her dress
hides the vibration in her throat as she throws her voice so
her response comes from the ghostly face:

KATE

What? That seemed like my cue.

MAGGIE

(to audience)

Don't be alarmed. It's just a wire
mask. Covered in gauze and coated
with phosphorous paint.

The face dips down to the floor and soars back up--this time
in front of Kate.

A HUSH falls over the crowd as they realize the mask is
mounted to a thin, telescopic rod.

So thin that even now, as Kate waves it back and forth, it's
almost invisible.

KATE

Most are content with just a voice.
But for those who demand more...

Kate collapses the rod until it's no longer than a pencil.

She traces the contours of the gauze face with her fingers.

KATE (CONT'D)

We use the same mask every time.
People see who they need to see.

The embarrassment and confusion in the room become RAGE.

A tidal wave of hateful energy.

Heckler #2 came prepared. He withdraws a wilted cabbage from his jacket pocket and hurls it at Kate.

It strikes the mask, bursting on impact.

Chaos erupts. Another man in the aisle rushes forward.

The Theater Manager reappears just in time to stop him from mounting the stage.

Everyone's out of their seats. The JEERS and CATCALLS are deafening.

INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

The sisters wait in the cramped dressing room.

The only furniture--a small fainting couch--is littered with old props. So they stand.

And they listen.

Muffled THREATS and YELLING drift through the door.

They both jump as it CRASHES open.

The Theater Manager enters with a handful of crumpled bills. Maggie takes the money from him and begins to count it.

Selecting a petticoat from a jumble of costumes on the floor to mop the sweat from his brow:

THEATER MANAGER

I wouldn't try going back to your hotel tonight, girlies. They're still pretty riled up out there.

KATE

Where are we supposed to sleep?

He graciously waves his arm at their packed surroundings.

KATE

There isn't even a bed. Or a toilet.

He roots through the costume pile again...hands her a Roman centurion's helmet.

Maggie frowns down at their profit.

MAGGIE

This is less than we agreed.

He counts the deductions off on his fingers:

THEATER MANAGER

My cut. The good doctor's fee.
Property damage.

MAGGIE

But this isn't enough.

THEATER MANAGER

Nearest workhouse is Blackwell's
Island. I'd get down there bright
and early if I were you. Get a head
start on all the other "mediums"
you just put outta business.

KATE

Workhouse?! We're the Fox Sisters.

She returns the helmet with an indignant shove.

KATE (CONT'D)

New York paid good money to see us
come clean, and there are plenty
more states in the Union.

THEATER MANAGER

Your lives are your own to risk I
suppose...

KATE

That's being a little overly
dramatic, don't you think? Even for
a man in your line of work.

THEATER MANAGER

Are you familiar with the
expression, "A lie travels halfway
around the world while the truth is
still putting on its shoes"?

KATE

What's your point?

THEATER MANAGER

Well in your case, the truth's going barefoot and running like its ass is on fire. People living in mud huts on the banks of the Mississippi are gonna know what happened here tonight before the ink's dry on tomorrow's paper.

KATE

So?

THEATER MANAGER

So, if you thought this crowd was ugly--

He waggles his fingers over the helmet's opening.

THEATER MANAGER (CONT'D)

--wait until they come in already knowing where you really pull the rabbits from.

Kate looks to her sister for backup...

MAGGIE

He's right.

The Theater Manager raises the helmet up like a religious offering, then bows low and sets it at Kate's feet.

THEATER MANAGER

It's a marvelous new age we're living in, eh girls? God bless the transcontinental telegraph.

He chuckles and leaves.

Kate kicks the helmet so--

BAM

--it hits the door closing behind him.

KATE

As if we're just going to slink off and join the unwashed. We've entertained heads of state, captains of industry. They sought our advice. And they took it!

MAGGIE

Only because they thought it was coming from dead presidents.

KATE

It was still good advice! Anyway, it doesn't change the fact that we know some of this country's most influential citizens.

MAGGIE

And we just made total fools of all of them.

Kate throws her hands up.

KATE

So what if it's fake? There are people making a good living doing our same tricks--half as well and for twice the price. The only difference is they call themselves "illusionists".

MAGGIE

The difference is they're men.

Maggie tallies the bills again.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

There's enough here to get us abroad at least.

KATE

But hardly anyone knows us abroad.

MAGGIE

That's the idea.

KATE

Your last idea got cabbage in my hair.

MAGGIE

We have to leave. It's not safe for us here.

KATE

Who's fault is that?

MAGGIE

You could always go back to Leah.

KATE

After this?! She'd sooner kill me
and you damn well know it.

(her own words sink in)

You said we were only doing this
for the money!

Maggie shrugs, picks at some lint on her dress.

MAGGIE

It was also the right thing to do.

KATE

It was spitting in Leah's face. I
crossed this bridge with you and
the first thing you did was set
fire to it behind us!

Kate stomps over to the couch and sweeps off all the props.

Some of them break on impact with the floor. The rest she
stomps on in the process of sitting down.

She closes her eyes and massages her temples.

KATE

I'm getting something...a
vision...Could it be...the future?

MAGGIE

Should be easy enough to tell. Are
we standing in line for gruel?

KATE

I think...yes...I'm definitely
seeing something...

MAGGIE

The inside of your eyelids?

KATE

It's getting clearer and clearer
with every word you speak.
It's...it's...

Her eyes fly open.

KATE (CONT'D)

A solo act.

Maggie LAUGHS.

Kate crosses her arms. Digs her heels in.

The laughter dies in Maggie's throat.

EXT. RMS OCEANIC - NIGHT

The huge steamship glides east across the Atlantic.

INT. SHIP'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Near the doorway that leads to the dining room, members of staff huddle over a newspaper.

A sketched portrait of Maggie and Kate graces the front page beneath the headline:

"Swindle Sisters to Set Sail?"

They compare Maggie's likeness to that of a woman in the

SECOND CLASS DINING ROOM

It's crammed full of respectable, middle-class travelers.

And, at a table set for ten--

Maggie. Alone.

The other passengers stare at her openly and WHISPER between SLURPS of their soup course.

Maggie keeps her eyes down.

Focused on the still-empty space between her own utensils.

At last a hand enters her vision and drops a bowl of soup in front of her. Most of the reddish broth slops over the side and blooms on the white tablecloth beneath it.

The waiter is gone in a blur. But his abruptness catches the attention of his supervisor--

The HEAD WAITER rushes to Maggie's side, drawing even more stares to her table.

He snaps up a napkin from one of the unused place settings.

MAGGIE

It's alright. Really.

He flutters around her, dabbing at the spill, and shoots a warning look at the door to the kitchen.

The staff huddle now includes the suspect waiter. They peer out at Maggie. Their faces inscrutable.

A long gray noodle bobs to the surface of Maggie's bowl.

She takes up her soup spoon and attempts to fish it out--it slithers back into the murky broth.

She gets the spoon underneath something more substantial ...lifts it up...

The tapered "noodle" hangs over the side, dangling from a ragged clump of fur.

And two hind legs.

She drops the spoon--and the severed rat rump--back into the bowl with a CLATTER.

The Head Waiter looks to the kitchen again in horror. The plotters have all disappeared.

He returns his attention to Maggie.

He's not the only one. The big round table is a spotlight.

Maggie gets up, but fights the urge to hurry. She walks out of the room with her shoulders back.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Maggie withdraws a key from her skirt pocket.

She unlocks the door to her

CABIN

and locks it again behind her.

It takes a moment for her eyes to adjust from the well-lit hallway to the dark room.

Directly across from the door is a circle of lighter darkness where moonlight enters the room's single porthole.

Underneath it is her trunk. An unlit gas lamp on the lid.

To her left--a wash stand with pitcher and bowl, alongside a small writing table and chair.

To her right, a curtain on a ceiling rail is drawn across to conceal the sleeping berths.

Maggie crosses to the trunk and gropes the surface for the matchbox--

A match is struck. But not by her.

Behind the curtain.

She yanks the fabric aside.

Kate is on the upper bunk, lighting a small opium pipe.

Maggie grabs the pipe out of her sister's hand and throws it across the room.

KATE

You didn't have to do that.

Maggie takes the box of matches from Kate. Lights the lamp.

MAGGIE

Of all the things to spend money on!

KATE

It's medicinal. Traveling's always been hard on my nerves. Even before I was an object of national scorn.

Maggie undresses for bed.

KATE (CONT'D)

How was dinner? Did it seem like anyone recognized you?

Maggie's buttons suddenly require her full attention.

KATE (CONT'D)

I hate this room. We might as well be back on the farm. Stacked up like firewood.

Her dress removed, Maggie goes to unhook her under corset.

One of the tapered whalebones that give it its rigid shape has worn through the fabric casing near her waist.

She picks at the tip of exposed bone with her fingernail... then removes the corset with a sigh.

MAGGIE

At least we have our own beds.

Stripped to her chemise, she crawls into the lower bunk.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We just have to make it across the Atlantic. Another week and we'll be in a new country with cheese older than our transgressions.

KATE

Do you remember our last trip abroad?

MAGGIE

Do you?

KATE

I remember we traveled First Class. And I remember the sitting we did for Baronet Something-or-Other. The one who was so thrilled to speak with Ben Franklin.

Maggie waits for the familiar punch line.

In a baritone, flawless British accent:

KATE (CONT'D)

My word...Mr. Franklin is surprisingly lacking in good grammar!

Maggie reaches for the lamp and puts out the light.

SCRATCH SCRATCH

The sound is faint. Muffled by the walls.

KATE

Do you hear that?

MAGGIE

I'm asleep.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

KATE

That. What is that?

Maggie stares into the darkness.

MAGGIE

Rats.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Maggie wakes to the sound of Kate COUGHING.

The room is hazy with smoke.

Maggie rolls out of bed onto the floor.

She lands on her belly, her face inches from a pair of bare feet beneath the hem of a nightgown.

Maggie grabs the ankle closest to her--

MAGGIE

Katy!

--and jerks her hand back in pain.

The feet are scalding hot to the touch.

Maggie looks up, straining to see the figure standing motionless above her through the smoke...

There's a burst of hacking COUGHS and then--

--Kate falls out of bed. Maggie is SLAMMED into the floor as Kate lands on top of her.

KATE

Maggie? Mag--

Kate's cries devolve into retches. She rolls off her sister.

Maggie gets onto her hands and knees. Gropes for Kate's arm.

Together they crawl toward the door. It won't open.

Maggie has to unlock the door. She pushes Kate through.

As she crosses the threshold into the corridor she sucks in a lungful of clean air and screams:

MAGGIE

Fire! Fiiirre!

INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

Kate and Maggie huddle outside their closed cabin door.

Passengers in varying states of undress litter the hall.

Most stare unabashedly at the sisters, including the occupant of the cabin next door.

Their neighbor, an overly-groomed bachelor, wears a garish monogrammed robe open over matching pajamas.

Kate smiles coyly at him and shivers in her thin nightgown.

He belts the robe.

The door to the sisters' cabin opens. A smirking ship's officer steps out into the hall, followed by CAPTAIN PIKE.

He's weathered. Sturdy. Everything about him elicits polite distance. Like a good fence.

Maggie knows what's coming. Preemptively:

MAGGIE

The room was filled with smoke. You can still smell it.

CAPTAIN PIKE

Yes. You can.

He holds out Kate's opium pipe.

CAPTAIN PIKE

I'd encourage you ladies to utilize the second class smoking room for future enjoyment of tobacco products.

Kate snatches the pipe back.

CAPTAIN PIKE

(to everyone)

There's no fire. You can all return to your beds.

GROANS and MUTTERS from the other passengers.

Further down the corridor, a man sporting a life vest over his long johns is loudly admonished by his WIFE.

WIFE

Told ya, didn't I? Damn fool!

He sheepishly returns to their cabin.

The Captain and the smirking officer turn to leave.

KATE

We heard rats in the walls earlier.

CAPTAIN PIKE

That's the thing about rats--the
clever ones find their way into the
most civilized places.

Kate gears up for a reprisal. Maggie pulls her back into the

CABIN

before they can make any more of a scene.

Inside, Maggie leans against the door. Kate sits on the
bottom bunk with the pipe in her hand.

KATE

There's no way this made all that
smoke.

MAGGIE

I know.

KATE

(half-joking)

Maybe the spirits are angry with
us.

MAGGIE

Spirits aren't real.

KATE

Ours weren't...

MAGGIE

We have enough enemies still among
the living to worry about.

KATE

You think someone did this to us on
purpose? How could they?

(off Maggie's look)

I mean, I know how they could want
to do it. But how did they manage
it?

MAGGIE

How would we do it?

KATE

Fake a fire? That's a nasty trick.
Even for us.

MAGGIE

But if we had to--it's possible?

Kate considers...

KATE
I know how I'd do it.

FLASH TO

KATE'S VISUALIZATION OF HER "PLAN"

Kate is alone in the sisters' cabin.

She has their wash basin turned over in her lap.

KATE (V.O.)
I'd need a drill.

A hand-powered drill appears beside her.

She turns the crank to bore a hole in the basin's center.

In Kate's imagination, the drill makes the same--

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

--attributed to the rats earlier.

KATE (V.O.)
Something to burn...

Maggie enters with a wicker wastebasket and a metal pail.

While Kate drills, Maggie breaks the wicker into pieces.

The broken wicker goes into the pail. Maggie sets it alight.

KATE (V.O.)
Oh, and some rubber tubing. The
kind doctors use.

Kate finishes with the drill. She opens their trunk and
TADA--a nice long coil of medical tubing.

Kate inserts one end of it into the hole in the basin.

She places the turned-over basin on top of the pail,
smothering the fire.

Smoke is channeled up through the rubber tube.

KATE (V.O.)
The thing is--whoever I wanted to
smoke out would have to be close.
The closer the better.

In Kate's mind, she and Maggie open the door of their cabin and poke their heads into the

CORRIDOR

to check the coast is clear.

They run the tubing along the floor, flush with the wall, and stick the end under the door of the next cabin down.

Maggie and Kate return to their own

CABIN

with the tube running under their closed door.

Maggie kneels beside it.

Kate presses her ear to the shared wall. Waiting for...

COUGHING from next door.

Kate signals Maggie, who reels the tube back inside their own cabin.

BACK TO REALITY

KATE

So?

MAGGIE

Pretty good.

KATE

"Good"? I figured it out!

MAGGIE

That would explain a lot.

KATE

It explains everything. Honestly, people are so busy hating us for all the things we did when they ought to be thanking us for all the things we never even tried.

Maggie's face is dark.

KATE

What? What are you thinking?

MAGGIE

Did you recognize anyone out in the corridor just now?

Kate shakes her head.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Neither did I.

KATE
Not many people could pull off a
trick like that.

MAGGIE
Not many people are devious enough
to think up a trick like that in
the first place.

Kate makes a snotty face in response to the dig.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
We're trapped on this ship for the
next week. Everyone knows who we
are. We need to turn the tables.

KATE
I thought our table-manipulating
days were behind us.

Maggie shoos Kate off her bed with an annoyed wave.

As Kate clambers up into her own bunk, Maggie looks at her
sister's perfect, unmarked feet...

...then at the burn blisters forming on her own hand.

EXT. UPPER DECK - DAY

Maggie and Kate linger near the entrance to the bridge,
where a trio of HELMSMEN are at the ship's controls.

Just past the threshold, between where the sisters stand and
where the men work, is a door marked "Chart Room".

MAGGIE
Keep them occupied as long as you
can. I need enough time to find the
passenger manifest and check it for
any names I recognize.

KATE
Why can't I do that while you
distract them?

MAGGIE

How are you going to recognize anything? You never remember anyone's name. Not even Baronet Something-Or-Other.

Before Kate can protest, Maggie nudges her forward onto the

BRIDGE

where she embraces the role with gusto.

KATE

So this is where all the men in uniform are hiding!

HELMSMAN #1

You can't be in here.

She sashays around him--

KATE

Ooh, that's a big instrument.

--to the large compass mounted on the console.

All three men turn to stop her.

Maggie seizes her opportunity.

She sneaks into the

CHART ROOM

where she realizes there's another connecting door.

The Chart Room is sandwiched between the Bridge and...? The door to the mystery room isn't labelled.

Maggie tiptoes to a desk in the center of the Chart Room.

She silently picks through books and ledgers while

ON THE BRIDGE

Kate is all smiles and evasive maneuvers.

HELMSMAN #2

You need to leave. Now.

KATE

Do you know who I am?

They all nod. Judging by the matching grim expressions on their faces they know exactly who she is.

KATE (CONT'D)

But do you know what I can do?

She toys with a strand of her hair.

HELMSMAN #1

(exasperated)

What?

KATE

I'm a woman. I can turn your whole world upside down.

She waves a hand over the ship's compass.

The sailors' jaws drop as the needle spins from NE to SW.

BACK IN THE CHART ROOM

Maggie has the passenger log open. She finds her own name and Kate's. Runs her finger down the page...

Frowns...

Sudden YELLING from the bridge startles her.

Maggie abandons the log and creeps back to the door she came in. Now there's SILENCE.

Maggie holds her breath. Listens hard...

A hand grabs her shoulder.

Maggie SCREAMS.

She whirls around to see--

The Captain. The door to the mystery room open behind him.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

A red-faced Maggie speeds through the labyrinth of hallways. Kate struggles to keep up.

KATE

How was I supposed to know they'd get so upset?

MAGGIE

They're sailors in the middle of the Atlantic. How else would they react to their compass going haywire?

KATE

All you said was "distract them". You didn't say how.

She dangles her wrist out in front of her to shake a metal bangle free of her sleeve.

KATE (CONT'D)

And I'd already gone to the trouble of magnetizing my bracelet.

Maggie stops without warning. She doubles back to the

SECOND CLASS DINING ROOM

KATE

What? Are we eating?

Maggie scans the passengers enjoying lunch from the doorway...then carries on down the hall.

KATE

Who are you looking for? Did you recognize any names?

MAGGIE

No.

KATE

Great. So we're on the Captain's naughty list again for nothing.

MAGGIE

Not exactly.

KATE

Where are we going? This isn't the way back to our cabin.

Maggie comes to a stop again outside the

SECOND CLASS LOUNGE

where clusters of travellers socialize at small tables. Including a group of men playing poker.

She moves herself and Kate back from the doorway.

MAGGIE

I need your powers of distraction
again.

KATE

But--

MAGGIE

I'll be more specific this time.

INT. LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Kate enters alone. She beelines for a bookshelf.

Keeping her back to the room, she pretends to peruse the
meager library available to passengers.

Most of the books are worn and at least one is...sticky?

KATE

Ugh. Second Class.

Kate risks a glance over her shoulder. No one has noticed
her. Yet.

She selects the thickest book and carries it toward a table
of ladies playing whist in the corner.

One player spots Kate and WHISPERS to the others.

Kate smiles warmly as she approaches. Until she gets to
their table--

Her eyes suddenly bulge.

She raises a shaky finger to point at something behind them.

In a terrified whisper:

KATE

Lincoln's ghost...

The ladies all turn to follow Kate's finger.

Nothing there but a potted plant.

They turn back to Kate.

She clutches the book to her chest with one hand and salutes
in the direction of the plant with the other.

Mission accomplished, Kate spins on her heels.

She leaves them shaking their heads and returns to the

CORRIDOR

where Maggie waits.

Kate opens the book. Tucked inside are the items she swiped from the whist players:

Their score-keeping pencil and one playing card.

KATE

None of them even fainted. People
are so much harder to shock these
days. I blame the World's Fair.

Maggie uses the pencil to scrawl something on the card.

GROANS and MILD CURSES drift out from the men in the lounge as their current poker hand comes to an end.

The sisters peek inside.

The BACHELOR--last seen in a hideous robe outside the cabin next door to their own--shuffles the cards.

Kate wrinkles her nose.

KATE

I know it's probably my
imagination, but I feel like I can
smell his cologne from here.

Maggie hands her the pencil back. The card has vanished.

MAGGIE

Wait here.

She leaves Kate in the hall, enters the

LOUNGE

and walks straight up to the poker table.

Maggie takes a position just behind the Bachelor.

MAGGIE

Good afternoon, gentlemen.

A few of them SNICKER.

The Bachelor turns around long enough to sneer at Maggie, then returns to shuffling the cards.

MAGGIE

I believe you and I met briefly in the corridor last night, but we weren't properly introduced.

In a clipped English accent:

BACHELOR

No point. I already knew who you were.

MAGGIE

And your name?

He ignores her. Goes to deal--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Have it your way.

--she grabs the deck of cards out of his hands.

BACHELOR

What the devil do you think you're doing?!

Maggie TSK TSKS.

MAGGIE

Never tell the audience what's going to happen next.

She clutches the cards to her chest. Rolls her eyes back in her head.

MAGGIE

Spirits. The name of the man who booked the cabin adjoining mine.

Maggie throws all the cards up--

--and plucks a single card out of the air.

The rest flutter down onto the men, the table, the floor.

Maggie holds out the card she selected. Flips it over.

The men's annoyance becomes awe.

The Bachelor cranes his neck to see. His eyes go wide.

There's a name scrawled across the card's face.

Then he reads the name and sneers again.

BACHELOR

"Arthur Henshaw"? All this bother
and that's not even my bloody name.

MAGGIE

I know. You were wearing a
monogrammed robe the last time I
saw you. So, unless you're a
clothing thief with the world's
worst taste in pajamas, your
initials are "WJ".

A few of the men CHUCKLE, at his expense this time.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

The spirits can be so literal
sometimes. They gave the name of
the man listed on the passenger
manifest. But as you just
said--that's not your name.

The mood around the table grows serious.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Travelling under a false identity?
Not the sort of man I'd trust to
shuffle the deck.

BACHELOR

You've got some nerve accusing me
of questionable behavior.

The other men eye him with suspicion.

BACHELOR (CONT'D)

Henshaw or whoever he was--I never
got his name--he was shouting to
one of the porters about wanting to
change cabins. I overheard and
agreed to swap with him.

Straightening the gambling money in front of him:

BACHELOR (CONT'D)

Provided he compensate me for the
inconvenience.

He surveys the mess of cards.

BACHELOR (CONT'D)

I should have asked for more.

MAGGIE

He paid you to switch rooms? Why?

The Bachelor turns so he can look square at Maggie.

BACHELOR

My understanding was there was something about the view he didn't like.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The poker players' LAUGHTER follows Maggie out.

KATE

Well? Is he the one behind the fire hoax?

MAGGIE

I don't know. I don't think so. No one in our line of work would be so startled by a little sleight of hand. And he had an explanation for the name being different.

KATE

What explanation?

MAGGIE

Nothing. It doesn't matter.

Kate throws down the book she borrowed with an exaggerated SIGH. There's a gold crucifix on the cover.

KATE

What now?

Maggie stoops to pick up the book.

MAGGIE

Go back to the room.

KATE

Where are you going?

MAGGIE

Just do as you're told!

Maggie takes a deep breath. Holds up the Bible.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Please, sister. Have a little faith
in me.

INT. CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

The midday sermon is in progress when Maggie enters, led by the ship's CHAPLAIN.

He paces stiffly back and forth, one hand raised up to the ceiling with the elbow at a perfect right angle. A paper doll come to life.

CHAPLAIN

The Lord instructs us: "Strive for peace with everyone. See to it that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled."

There's an open spot at the end of a pew near the back. Maggie goes to sit down--

A man already in the pew recognizes her and slides over. Toward her. No more room.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."

Maggie stands awkwardly at the rear of the room.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Even if he sins against you seven times in the day, saying 'I repent', you must forgive him seven times.

The Chaplain looks up from his sermon. He spots Maggie.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

But what if your brother is unrepentant? The good book tells us "Fret not...for the evildoers shall be cut off."

His focus lingers on her.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Peter 5:8--"The devil prowls around
like a roaring lion, looking for
someone to devour."

The many heads of the congregation turn to follow his
gaze...until Maggie bears the full weight of their scrutiny.

Finally the Chaplain raises both hands and lowers his head.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

God be with you.

Parishioners make the sign of the cross and file out.

One man missing a leg--but with two perfectly good
eyes--jams his crutch down on Maggie's foot on his way past.

She curses under her breath.

When everyone but Maggie has left:

CHAPLAIN

Miss Fox!

His smile is permanent. Glued on.

MAGGIE

I'm glad you know my name. It's
been so long since I've had to
offer it to anyone, I sometimes
think I'll forget what it is.

CHAPLAIN

Not to worry. There are plenty of
us around with better memories.

Maggie affixes her own fake smile.

CHAPLAIN

What brings a person such as
yourself to our floating house of
worship?

MAGGIE

Curiosity.

CHAPLAIN

Come to witness a real religion at
work?

They both fake-laugh at his not-joke.

She holds up the Bible she brought with her.

MAGGIE

My parents were Methodist, God rest their souls.

CHAPLAIN

"Rest" being the operative word. Much more peaceful than rearranging furniture.

MAGGIE

I wondered about the former Spiritualists filling your pews on this voyage...

CHAPLAIN

It's true many are returning to the flock. But most have the good sense not to admit having left it in the first place.

MAGGIE

Isn't confession typically encouraged in "real" religions?

CHAPLAIN

Yes. But then honesty comes easily to so few of us...don't you find?

MAGGIE

That's why my curiosity brings me to you. Who better to give me an honest answer?

CHAPLAIN

I'll certainly try.

MAGGIE

Has anyone expressed hostility toward Spiritualism in general...or my sister and I in particular?

(off his look)

Beyond the expected.

CHAPLAIN

Perhaps it's better not to dwell on the mountain of animosity still to be overcome. It can only discourage you from your journey. The road to redemption is a long one--paved with much more than veracity.

MAGGIE

Is that so?

He gets close to her. Too close.

Looks her dead in the eye.

His smile doesn't soften his words. It sharpens them.

CHAPLAIN

Hebrews 12:4--"In your struggle
against sin you have not yet
resisted to the point of shedding
your blood."

Maggie's courage wavers...

The Chaplain bursts out LAUGHING.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Now I'm the one who must
confess--I'm guilty of indulging in
a little dramatic flourish from
time to time.

MAGGIE

That's another thing we have in
common then.

CHAPLAIN

Was there something else?

She nods to a carving of the crucified Jesus that hangs on
the wall behind him.

MAGGIE

Speaking for the dead, of course.

A corner of his smile comes unstuck.

CHAPLAIN

I don't preach for profit.

Maggie spies a collection plate on the lectern. More metal
than paper inside.

MAGGIE

I can see that. Allow me.

She moves past him, sets her Bible down, withdraws a coin
purse from her skirt pocket--

--drops a penny in.

CHAPLAIN

Very generous of you, Miss Fox.
Especially considering how tenuous
your own circumstances must be at
present.

Maggie SNAPS the purse closed.

CHAPLAIN

Are you...quite alright?

MAGGIE

My personal finances are none of
your concern.

CHAPLAIN

I meant...it's just that...I can
see your breath.

Maggie exhales. He's right. Her breath fogs the air.

His doesn't.

She looks down at her hands...covered in gooseflesh.

The ambient temp surrounding Maggie is suddenly freezing
while the Chaplain, six feet away, is unaffected.

All her bravado gone, Maggie hurries out of the chapel.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Maggie turns a corner. And another.

And another.

She pauses to get her bearings. Picks up the pace. Rounds a
few more corners. The distance between them gets shorter.

And the doors....

There are frames. But no doors inside them.

Then the frames disappear. Only endless, blank wall.

Maggie goes back the way she came. Stops at a T-junction
with no signs. No distinguishing features.

She whips around more corners.

At last she reaches a corridor so long and straight it must
go somewhere...

Maggie proceeds down this new hallway.

SSSHHH SHHHH SSSHHH

She stops. The sound stops with her.

Maggie starts walking again--

SSSHHH SHHH SSSHHH

It's the fabric of her skirt brushing against the wall on either side of her as the corridor narrows.

And still no doors.

She turns around to go back. About fifty feet behind her--

A hooded man.

Perfectly still. Looking right at her.

Dressed head-to-toe in heavy canvas lined with fur. Face obscured by a scarf and snow goggles.

An ice axe dangles from one of his gloved hands.

Water drips from the spiked end and puddles beside his snow-caked boots.

He raises the axe...

Maggie's breath catches in her throat.

The figure bursts into a full-speed charge.

Maggie flees in terror. Running as

the corridor narrows

and narrows

until

choke point.

Less than a foot wide, Maggie turns sideways to get through --gets stuck instead.

He's almost to her.

She shuts her eyes. Grits her teeth. Uses all her strength to force herself through, wincing as her breasts are crushed against her.

She makes it to the other side, where the hallway widens again. The narrow gap now keeps her attacker at bay.

He's wedged in on his side.

The arm with the axe juts through, trying to reach her.

Maggie runs hard away from him until she comes to another T-junction. She turns without looking and slams into--

The Chaplain.

CHAPLAIN

There you are!

He has the Bible she left behind.

CHAPLAIN (CONT'D)

Really, Miss Fox. You must try to keep a tighter grip on your salvation.

She ignores the book and stumbles around him.

CHAPLAIN

Miss Fox?

Maggie keeps moving. Putting more distance between herself and whoever--whatever that was.

As she flees, she reaches back to touch her own shoulder.

Her fingertips find a thin slit in the fabric of her dress.

They come back bloody.

MAGGIE

Katy...

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Kate stares into the mirror above the washstand. She frowns at her bloodshot eyes. Then frowns at her frown lines.

KNOCK KNOCK

KATE

Yes?

She crosses to the door. Opens it a crack. No one there. But as soon as she closes it again--

KNOCK KNOCK

She opens it fast. Peers out. The corridor is empty.

Now, with the door still open:

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Kate turns her head.

The sound is coming from behind the mirror. Through the wall they share with the Bachelor's cabin.

KATE
(shouting)
Very amusing, Mr...Whoever.

The KNOCKING stops.

Kate moves toward the wall until her lips are only inches from the wood partition.

KATE (CONT'D)
You should've built up to that
smoke trick. Rapping on the wall
seems a lot less impressive by
comparison.

SILENCE from next door.

KATE (CONT'D)
I hope you lost all your money at
that card game. You must have if
you've got nothing better to do now
than--

KNOCKKNOCKKNOCKKNOCKKNOCKKNOCKKNOCK

Kate staggers back.

She yells over the noise:

KATE
I'll...I'll make a complaint. I
happen to be very well-acquainted
with the captain of this vessel...

The sound changes.

Not KNOCKS anymore.

BLOWS. Struck by something other than a fist.

BANG.

The wall shakes.

BANG.

BANG.

BANG.

Kate runs out of her room into the

CORRIDOR

where she sees a MAID exiting another cabin.

KATE

Thank God. Hello? I need help.
There's something wrong in my cabin
and--don't you hear that?

The Maid responds with a curt nod. The BANGING continues.

KATE

Well?!

MAID

Don't tell me. Blackbeard's ghost.

KATE

What? No! This isn't--I'm not doing
this.

The woman is already walking in the other direction.

Kate goes after her. But when she pursues her around a corner, there's suddenly no sign of the Maid...

CLICK

The sound of a latch up ahead. A sliver of darkness that grows wider.

Kate marches to the slowly opening door.

With the light from the hallway, she can just make out the Maid standing inside, facing the wall.

The pale 'X' of apron straps that crisscross her back...

And the sallow heels of the Maid's bare feet...

Kate steps across the threshold into the

DARK ROOM

Her footsteps are muffled. She looks down and finds packed earth. A dirt floor.

The door slams shut behind Kate. Sealing her in pitch blackness until--a fire roars to life on her left.

Kate's eyes widen with recognition. The low ceiling. The sparse furniture...

She's in a farmhouse.

The Maid faces the hearth. Stirring something in a pot hung over the fire.

An elderly couple sit on either side of a rough table.

KATE

Momma? Poppa? How...?

Her mother and father are motionless, heads bowed in prayer, eyes shut.

The Maid turns her head. Her profile is unmistakable.

KATE (CONT'D)

Leah...

Leah turns her attention back to the pot.

Kate sits at the head of the table so she can prod her mother's shoulder.

KATE (CONT'D)

Momma?

Both her parents remain frozen.

Kate leans in closer to her mother's face. The skin has a waxy sheen to it.

A black mole on her mother's chin grows larger before her eyes. The dark spot widens out--then forward.

The mole juts out further and further from the skin. Followed by a cluster of tiny legs.

It's the shiny black head of a fat, white grub.

Kate YELPS in disgust as it wriggles free of her mother's face and lands on the table.

No one else moves.

Not her mother, with the hole in her chin. Not her father.
Not--

Kate looks to the fire. Leah is gone.

There's darkness again as a bag is pulled over Kate's head
from behind.

She struggles inside the coarse fabric.

Not a bag. A heavy burlap dress.

Kate is forced into it. The sleeves crossed in front of her.
The ends are clasped between her parent's praying hands.

Pulled tight.

KATE (CONT'D)

No! Let go! Nooo!

Her father's face softens. His nose slumps to one side.

Then drops off.

Something orange and stringy dangles from the cavity.

Kate SCREAMS.

Her mother's face caves in on itself. Splitting down the
middle. Thick orange innards and white seeds spill out.

Kate wrenches her body back and forth.

Gnarled vines sprout from her parents' rotting fingertips.

They wind around the sleeves of Kate's dress.

She draws her legs up in front of her and kicks at the table
for leverage until--

Kate falls backwards through the floor.

What was packed dirt is now muddy water.

She splutters up for air.

The rest of the room is unchanged. Her parents remain seated
at the table above her.

All somehow resting on the surface of this dark lake.

Leah stands over her submerged sister. Her toes level with
Kate's wild eyes.

Kate struggles to tread water in the baggy dress.

Leah places the sole of her foot on Kate's head.

Presses her under.

Kate fights hard but the heavy burlap draws her deeper. The firelight on the surface grows dim as she sinks.

She battles with the dress. Finally wrangles it up and over her head.

Kate surfaces again--this time facing the door.

She paddles frantically to it. Reaches up for the knob and gets it open.

Through it she can see the ship's corridor...

Kate digs her fingernails into the floor on the other side of the threshold.

With the last of her strength, she drags herself up and onto the dry land of the hallway.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Maggie races back to her cabin.

She hears Kate before she sees her.

Her sister is on all fours in the hallway.

Several onlookers gawk from the open doors of their own rooms as she crawls past.

Maggie rushes to her sister's aid.

Kate's dress and hair are soaked. Her teeth chatter from cold or terror or both.

INT. CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

Kate shivers on the bottom bunk. Maggie reaches back to press a handkerchief against the cut on her own shoulder.

KATE

What's happening to us?

MAGGIE

I don't know.

KATE

What do we do?!

MAGGIE

I don't know!

KATE

Momma and Poppa...it was too horrible! Oh god, Maggie. We told the whole world spirits don't exist but they do and they're punishing us! We have to take it all back! It's the only way to save us!

MAGGIE

Would you shut your mouth?! I can't hear myself think!

Kate bursts into tears.

Maggie kneels down in front of her little sister.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Listen to yourself. Say we did recant--who would believe us now?

KATE

But we have proof. Look at us.

MAGGIE

We never told anyone why we confessed when we did. We never breathed a word about that woman's suicide or the part we played in it. Now I'm supposed to tell everyone her husband that died in the Arctic chased me down with an axe?! That you almost drowned inside our old farmhouse inside this ship?!

KATE

I wasn't on this ship! I stepped through that door into...I don't know. But I crawled back out. I crawled back out.

MAGGIE

All these years lying through our teeth, "speaking" for dead relatives--why punish us now that we've stopped?

KATE

Some things can't ever be made
right.

MAGGIE

Telling that widow what she wanted
to hear was meant to be a kindness.
I never thought she would...

KATE

At least we weren't lying when we
told her he made it to the other
side.

Kate's eyes widen.

KATE (CONT'D)

But I...it was Leah who attacked
me. How can that be when she's...I
mean she's not...

FLASH TO

INT. LEAH'S HOME IN NEW YORK - NIGHT

Leah's in her nightgown. A lamp in one hand. The other
trembles as it reaches for the doorknob to...

THE PARLOR

From inside:

A wet THWACK...THWACK...THWACK. The sound all butcher shops
have in common.

Leah pushes the door open. The sound stops.

The dark room appears empty until she steps forward. The
light from her lamp washes over...

A tent.

Where the table and chairs should be--a canvas field tent is
pitched in the center of the room. Flaps closed.

Leah takes another step inside.

Suddenly the flaps open. A man emerges.

He wears the blood-stained leather apron of a military
sawbones.

The saw in question clenched in one thick rubber glove.

He greets Leah with a deep bow...

The back of his head is mush. The product of an errant musket ball.

He uses the saw to hold open one of the tent flaps.

NEXT.

Leah backs away.

She doesn't see the two soldiers in Union colors behind her. They hold a cloth stretcher vertically between them.

As she backs up against it, they lift the lower end. Sweeping her off her feet.

They carry Leah, SCREAMING, into the tent.

BACK TO

INT. MAGGIE AND KATE'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Where Kate waits for an answer to her question about Leah.

MAGGIE

I don't know.

BANG BANG BANG

Kate SCREAMS.

Maggie moves to the door.

KATE

No! Don't open it!

MAGGIE

Doors don't stop ghosts.

KATE

(hissing)

Are we back to being experts on the spirit world already?

Maggie reaches for the knob...

KATE

Please, Maggie, don't. That's how it started before.

BANG BANG BANG

Maggie jumps.

From outside their door:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Open up! Captain's orders!

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - LATER

Maggie and Kate sit huddled together before the Captain.

CAPTAIN PIKE
Disturbing your fellow passengers.
Running through corridors.
"Drowning" in broom closets. I
can't fathom what you hoped to
achieve with these performances but
they end now.

Maggie rotates in her seat so he can see the back of her
shoulder where dried blood frames the slash in the fabric.

MAGGIE
Does this look like a performance?!

CAPTAIN PIKE
I don't pretend to know the depths
to which a woman starved of
attention will sink.

MAGGIE
We paid for safe passage. You have
an obligation to protect us from--

CAPTAIN PIKE
From what? Exactly? Point me to the
source of the danger, madam. Name
your tormentors. But for brevity's
sake, please limit yourself to
those composed of flesh and blood.
They're easier to shackle that way.

Faced with his blatant contempt, Kate withers.

And Maggie finally realizes...

MAGGIE
Everyone.

CAPTAIN PIKE
Excuse me?

MAGGIE

It's everyone. Everyone hates us.

KATE

Maggie?

MAGGIE

Half of them always did. The ones who suspected we were frauds from the very beginning. Then we confessed and turned the other half against us too. Every single person we've met since then has hated us. Without exception.

KATE

You're scaring me, Maggie.

MAGGIE

Hundreds of thousands of people... all those voices...cursing our names. Wishing Hell on us until...

Maggie looks at Kate with a mix of fear and guilt.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

...until Hell obliged them.

CAPTAIN PIKE

I've heard enough. You two will be escorted back to your cabin, where you'll remain until we dock in Liverpool.

MAGGIE

We won't be safe there--

CAPTAIN PIKE

This is a modern ocean liner Miss Fox, but I'm afraid Hell-proof rooms aren't a feature. Not even in First Class.

The Captain opens the door and beckons for burly Second Officer HARLAN to enter.

CAPTAIN PIKE

Mr. Harlan will take the first watch.

KATE

Please! You have to help us!

Harlan hauls the women up by their arms.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Harlan uses more force than necessary to drive the women back to their cabin.

The hallways are crowded with guests dressed for dinner.

The stares of their fellow passengers bore into the sisters as they pass.

As Harlan drags them, Maggie's bombarded by a

SERIES OF IMAGES

In her mind's eye:

The crucifix on the chapel wall multiplies into

a row of telegraph poles that stretch as far as the eye can see between barren grassland and a murky sky

A BUZZING sound grows in volume as

a swarm of flies converges on a patch of soiled ground at the base of a telegraph pole

where thick maroon sludge bubbles up

A long gray rat tail floats on the surface--then wriggles to life and submerges

The red becomes an inky black that dribbles and separates into the smudgy typeface of a newspaper

Maggie and Kate's picture on the front page curls and chars, consumed by fire

The flames are rounded

Trapped in two precise circles--over the eyes of The Doctor, back on the stage in New York

The glass spheres blaze with light

Not a reflection--not spectacles

The round lenses are embedded in his skin, lit from behind like furnace windows

He sweeps his arm out toward the crowd

The same full house as before
 All still
 All the same as the Doctor
Burning circles where their eyes should be
 Scorching orange light that--

BACK TO REALITY

--becomes the setting sun streaming through their porthole
 as Maggie and Kate are thrust into their

CABIN

So bright that when the door slams shut behind them, it
 takes a moment to realize...

Harlan is on this side of it.

Maggie positions herself between Harlan and Kate.

MAGGIE

I'm sure the Captain doesn't expect
 you to keep a literal watch on us.
 Wouldn't taking up a post out in
 the hall be more appropriate?

HARLAN

A lecture on propriety from the Fox
 sisters. As I live and breathe.

MAGGIE

My dress is torn and my sister's is
 damp. We need to change.

HARLAN

Right you are.

He doesn't budge.

MAGGIE

Get out. Now.

HARLAN

There was me thinking you'd be glad
 of a little company. Shut up in
 here. Nothing to pass the time.

He moves forward, backing them further into the room.

There are MUFFLED VOICES out in the corridor.

Maggie looks past him at the door. He follows her gaze.

HARLAN

Now, now. We don't want to upset
all those nice folks on their way
to dinner. Give 'em indigestion.
Over what?

He takes another step closer.

HARLAN (CONT'D)

A ship's officer forced to subdue a
pair of hysterical passengers.

Closer.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Harlan halts his advance.

He doesn't take his eyes off the sisters--just angles his
head to shout back at the door:

HARLAN (CONT'D)

What?

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Identify yourself.

KNOCK KNOCK

Harlan backs up to the door.

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Identify yourself or clear off!

Maggie steps sideways, so the light streaming in the
porthole behind her strikes Harlan full in the face.

He squints and puts a hand up to shield his eyes.

Maggie signals Kate with a look.

KNOCK KNOCK

Followed by a MALE VOICE from outside the room:

MALE VOICE

Open up! Captain's orders!

HARLAN
I'm in the middle of his bloody
orders right now!

He opens the door. Sticks his head out.

No one there.

HARLAN (CONT'D)
What the hell?

MAGGIE
Now!

She and Kate rush him.

They shove him out into the

CORRIDOR

and SLAM the door closed.

The lock CLICKS.

Harlan pounds the door with his fists.

A couple on their way to dinner turn to look at him.

He touches the brim of his hat to call their attention to his uniform.

They continue on their way.

Lowering his voice:

HARLAN
Crafty mares. Don't forget who runs
this paddock...

Back inside the

CABIN

Maggie and Kate hear JANGLING--

KATE
Does he have a skeleton key?

Even as she asks the question--

CLICK

Maggie angles herself against the door.

MAGGIE

The trunk!

Kate darts across the room and drags their trunk away from the wall beneath the porthole.

The lamp topples off and breaks.

Kate gets on her knees behind the trunk and pushes with everything she's got.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Hurry up!

KATE

It's heavy!

MAGGIE

So is he!

Harlan THUDS against the door.

Kate finally gets the trunk close enough that Maggie has to move out of its way.

Harlan gets the door open a few inches. Sticks his grubby fingers around the edge--

Maggie and Kate ram the trunk up against the door

--almost taking those fingers off.

Almost.

Maggie and Kate sit on the trunk for good measure.

Harlan shoulders it one last time. Gives up.

HARLAN (O.S.)

You want to make this uncivilized?
I was gonna have the kitchen staff
bring some dinner--but you can
starve, you hear me? Skirts or no
skirts.

KATE

I wasn't even hungry until he said
that.

Maggie goes to put her hand over Kate's--Kate recoils.

MAGGIE

Just a few more days. We'll get off
this ship and--

KATE

And what?

There's an edge in her voice. Fear and exhaustion turned to manic despair.

She gets up from the trunk and crosses to the porthole.

The shattered glass lamp shade CRUNCHES under her shoes.

Kate examines the horizon. The last of the light outside soon to be swallowed by the sea.

MAGGIE

People have to run out of ill will eventually. Or at least...find someone new to wish it on.

KATE

What are we supposed to do until then?

Maggie leans back to press her ear to the door.

No sound of Harlan or the other guests.

She scoots off the trunk and quietly shifts one side of it back an inch. Enough so she can get to the latch on the front of the lid.

She opens the trunk and starts to root through it.

Kate turns around. The trunk lid blocks her view of Maggie's hands...

Just as Kate's silhouette, framed in the dying light, blocks Maggie's view of the porthole...

Where something is very wrong with the ring of steel rivets. They glow furnace red. Lose shape.

Behind Kate's back, the first stream of melted steel oozes down the wall.

KATE (CONT'D)

What are you looking for?

MAGGIE

Something we can use to defend ourselves.

KATE

Against Hell?!

MAGGIE

They'll come for us again. Either we keep fighting them off or...

KATE

Fight them off?! We're locked in a room. We should never have set foot on this ship in the first place. Why did we tell the truth? Nobody wants to hear it. That was the worst good thing we could ever do!

Something CLUNKS as Maggie's fingers dig in the trunk. She pulls out a blouse wrapped around...

MAGGIE

You brought your table-lifters?

KATE

Why wouldn't I? They're mine. And I might need them where I'm going.

MAGGIE

Where you're going?

KATE

As soon as our feet touch dry land, you point your toes one way and mine are going the other.

Maggie busies herself inside the trunk again.

KATE (CONT'D)

I'll be sure to send you a copy of the playbill for my first show. Only, how will I know which gutter to address it to?

Maggie looks up as the room goes dim.

CRRRAAACK

KATE (CONT'D)

Just keep your eyes open. With any luck I'll tour the town you're a blight on someday and--

MAGGIE

Sshh!

KATE
Don't you dare shush me! I have
every right to--

MAGGIE
Listen!

CRRRAAACK

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
It sounds like glass.

KATE
The lamp cover broke. I'm standing
on the pieces.

MAGGIE
It went dark so fast...

Maggie gets to her feet. Moves toward Kate until she can see
the window.

The sun hasn't set.

Something outside blocks the light.

Leah's face.

Her forehead is pressed against the porthole.

CRAAAACK

The glass shatters inwards.

Maggie tries to pull Kate away but Leah's arm snakes inside.

Leah grabs Kate's hair and yanks her back toward the jagged
edge of the broken window.

Maggie pulls Kate by the arms. The more she does, the more
Kate's head is forced back at an unnatural angle.

KATE
Ahh! Let go! AHH!

BANG BANG BANG

HARLAN (O.S.)
What the hell's going on in there?

Pins come loose as Kate writhes. Her hair unfurls enough to
loosen Leah's hold.

Maggie gets her own hold on Kate's hair.

But as she attempts to tear it out of Leah's reach--Leah's reach extends.

A joint POPS. Leah's shoulder dislocates.

It's pressed up against her own cheek.

Her face and arm fill the hole simultaneously.

Both gouged by glass shards as Leah strains forward. Her hand still tangled in Kate's hair.

KATE
MAGGIE! MAGGIE!

The door rattles in its frame as Harlan SLAMS against it from outside--

Maggie has both her hands wrapped around the hair at the base of Kate's head.

She looks to the door.

MAGGIE
Help! We need help!

But Harlan's progress is hindered by the trunk.

MAGGIE
(to Kate)
Put your hands where mine are! Keep pulling!

Kate obeys even as she protests:

KATE
No--don't let go!

Maggie lets go.

She runs to the door.

Kate is dragged backward.

She drops to her knees. Uses her own body weight to resist Leah's pull. Yanking down on her own hair to keep it attached to her scalp.

Maggie heaves the trunk out of the way of the door. Harlan rushes in. He goes to restrain Maggie--then spots Leah.

Impossibly clinging to the ship's hull.

MAGGIE

Do you have a knife?!

Harlan is dumbstruck.

Maggie rushes back to Kate's side.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

A knife! Anything!

Maggie punches Leah in the face.

Her sister snaps her jaws in delight, trying to bite Maggie.

Harlan lurches out of his stupor. He digs out a pocket knife and opens it.

Maggie snatches it from him. She stabs at Leah's hand a few times to no effect.

So she hacks at Kate's hair instead.

Harlan wrestles with Leah's arm. She ignores him until-- Maggie saws through enough hair to pull Kate free.

Leah gropes for Kate--SCREECHES when she's unsuccessful.

Harlan grabs Leah's wrist. Tries to force her arm back outside the window.

She suddenly pulls as he pushes--throwing him off balance.

She yanks his arm out the window.

He SHOUTS as the glass at the porthole's edge cuts through the fabric of his uniform and scores the flesh beneath.

She pulls hard--

BASH

--his head connects with the wall.

Kate tugs Maggie toward the door.

KATE

Come on!

But Maggie goes back to help Harlan.

She wraps him in a bear hug from behind. He gets one of his feet up on the wall for leverage.

Together they pull his arm back inside.

Unfortunately Leah comes in with it.

She keeps her iron grip on Harlan's wrist.

Leah's bones SNAP as her body constricts to worm through the narrow opening--then POP CLICK GRIND back into place.

Her head and shoulders are inside. Her other arm seizes Harlan's neck.

KATE

Maggie!

Overcome with pain and panic, Harlan sinks to his knees.

Leah wriggles in above him. Forcing Maggie to back away.

Leah hangs on to his windpipe for purchase as her hips CRUSH CRACK WRIGGLE through the porthole.

KATE (CONT'D)

Maggie! Above you!

Maggie looks up.

The ceiling is semi-translucent. A sheet of ice.

It GROANS under the weight of a blurry figure treading above them. Webs of cracks form around each footfall...

Maggie spares one last glance at Harlan.

His eyes are still open but--

The ceiling GROOAANNS again. Ready to give.

Maggie darts around the edge of the room back to Kate. Together they run out into the

CORRIDOR

and Maggie closes the door behind them just as--

CRASH

--something lands inside their cabin.

They tear down the hall.

KATE

HELP! HELP, ANYONE!

A door bursts open as they pass--stopping them in their tracks. It's the man who wore the life vest. The one who was scolded by his wife the night of the "fire".

KATE
Oh thank God! Please help us! We're
in terrible--

SLAM

KATE (CONT'D)
--danger...

Kate raises a fist to bang on the closed door--

KATE (CONT'D)
Son of a Baptist!

--but Maggie hears another DOOR OPEN, back in the direction of their own cabin.

She grabs Kate's arm and hauls her away.

They run. Dashing around every corner they come to until:

KATE
Where are we?

MAGGIE
No idea.

At the end of this unknown hallway--a door marked "CREW".

Maggie tries the door.

It opens into a

STAIRWAY

Maggie and Kate enter the stairwell to find another doorway just ahead of them.

From the other side--CLANGING POTS AND PANS.

MAGGIE
Must be a service entrance to the
Second Class Kitchen.

Kate moves to go inside. Maggie stops her.

KATE
What?

MAGGIE
There's people in there.

KATE
Yes!

Kate moves to enter the kitchen again.

AGAIN Maggie stops her.

MAGGIE
Look what happened to that ship's
officer. I don't want anyone else
to die because of us. That's what
started all this.
(off Kate's look)
Certain choices I made didn't help.
Although in fairness no one forced
you to go along with anything--

KATE
You forced me to choose between you
and Leah! I chose wrong and all
I've got to show for it is her
vengeful ghost. You try to control
me exactly like she did--you just
aren't any good at it.

Kate shoves Maggie aside. Maggie tugs at Kate's skirt.

MAGGIE
Wait, no, I...you're right. I don't
know what I'm doing. Just please
don't make me do it alone. I don't
want to. And I can't. Alright? I
can't.

KATE
...Well we have to go somewhere.
And like it or not we're trapped in
a floating bean tin packed to the
lid with other people.

Maggie looks at the staircase leading up--

To the First Class deck.

And the staircase leading down--

To the bowels of the ship.

MAGGIE
We go down.

They follow the staircase down past Ship's Provisions...
and down again to...

STEERAGE

where the stairs end at the

ENTRYWAY TO THE MAIN CARGO HOLD

A pair of unlit lanterns hang from hooks on either side of the gaping black doorway.

Maggie takes one down, holds it close to her ear and shakes it gently. NOTHING.

She repeats the process with the second lantern. A faint SLOSH from inside.

MAGGIE

Christ in heaven, doesn't anybody
ever fill these things?

There's a dispenser with matches mounted to the wall.

Maggie lights the usable lantern. Then stuffs a fistful of matches into her dress pocket.

MAGGIE

(off Kate's look)
Just in case.

KATE

How long are we going to be down
here?

MAGGIE

We need time to figure out how to
stop these things.

KATE

If we can stop them...

Maggie reaches over and tugs one of Kate's earlobes. A gesture that's aggressively affectionate.

Like sisterhood itself.

Side by side, they enter the

CARGO HOLD

The room is massive.

A literal maze of crates, cases, trunks and barrels stacked twenty feet high.

The ship's engines make a steady WHOOMP WHOOMP WHOOMP.

The crates are arranged in makeshift aisles. Maggie leads Kate into the widest one. Straight ahead.

KATE

It's cold...

MAGGIE

(unsure)

We're below the waterline. That's all...

She thrusts the lantern out in front of her. But it's dim...

By the time they see the shrouded figure in front of them it's too late to get away--

Kate SCREAMS.

The faceless figure doesn't react.

MAGGIE

Sshh! Listen...

TICK TICK TICK

Maggie pulls the sheet off...a grandfather clock.

The sisters share a moment of relief before--

--frost blooms on the glass over the clock's face.

From behind the giant timepiece, out steps

The man with the axe.

Maggie pushes Kate out of the way.

MAGGIE

Go!

Kate swerves around him. Disappearing into the darkness.

Maggie throws up her arm in self-defense as he brings the axe down--there's a metallic CLANG and a SPARK as it hits the steel bar strapped there.

Maggie wears one of Kate's table lifters. Now visible through her tattered sleeve.

Not exactly the "weapon" she hoped to find among their possessions. But beggars can't be choosers.

Maggie pivots away as the axe comes down again.

She tries to follow Kate but--

SLAM

--a stack of crates moves. Propelled by an unseen force.

Blocking her path. Forcing her in another direction.

The Axe Man gives chase.

Another pile of crates moves.

And another.

SLAM SLAM

The maze shifts as she runs through it.

The Axe Man never far behind until--

she's caught.

Maggie spins around to face her attacker. She swings the lamp at him--

He knocks it from her hand. It lands on its side at her feet. The flame wavers DIM BRIGHT DIM BRIGHT.

He pins her up against the wall of crates and wraps his free hand around her throat.

Rears back with the axe and--

CRASH

--sinks it into the wooden crate beside her head.

No quick death for this "medium".

He tightens his grip on her neck. Lifts her up off the floor. Her shoe heels RAP against the crate behind her.

Maggie beats her fists against his chest.

She claws at his scarf--revealing the bluish skin of his lower face.

He grins and leans in. A lover with a kiss. His lips part...

A jet black eel slithers out of his throat and drops at Maggie's feet.

She sees herself reflected in his snow goggles. Tears streaming down her crimson face. Her clothes in tatters...

Maggie reaches down--RIPS open the front of her dress.

Exposing her corset.

Her fingers find the slender point of whalebone that's worn through its casing.

Maggie withdraws the corset stay.

The tapered bone is nearly a foot long. Rigid.

She stabs up at him with it. Jabs it through the bottom of his throat...

He smiles so she can see the ivory point inside his mouth.

This is it. He won't let go.

Maggie's body goes limp.

Her eyes lose focus. With her last whisper of breath:

MAGGIE
Forgive me.

Suddenly--A BLAST OF HEAT.

Searing brightness and a HISS. Oxygen rushing to a fuse.

Maggie drops to the floor. Inhales a ragged lungful of air.

HE'S GONE.

No ashes. No trace. Like flash paper.

Leaving just the whalebone. Streaked with red.

Maggie realizes the hand she used to stab him is bleeding. Pricked by the corset stay.

She gets to her feet.

The lamp flame burns low--the oil almost gone. A pale circle of light in this cavernous room.

Where somewhere...her sister is just as lost as she is.

SWITCH TO KATE'S POV

Without a lantern, Kate's progress is slow. She feels her way through the maze of crates.

Anticipating what could be lurking around every corner.

Kate comes out into a wider area, fairly straight. She's wandered back into the main aisle.

She looks left, then right...heads right.

From far away:

MAGGIE'S VOICE

Kate?

It's hard to tell in a room this size--and the DRONE of the ship's engines doesn't make it any easier--but it seems like the sound is coming from ahead of her.

KATE

I'm here! Over here!

From not so far away:

MAGGIE'S VOICE

Sssh!

Kate's head whips around.

That definitely came from behind her.

KATE

Maggie?

MAGGIE'S VOICE - FAR AWAY

Kate! Where are you? Call out to me again and I'll find you!

And from the opposite direction:

MAGGIE'S VOICE - WHISPER

Quiet. This way.

KATE

But--

MAGGIE'S VOICE - WHISPER

That's not me. It's trying to trick you.

Kate stays where she is.

She strains her eyes in the direction of the whisper.

There...in the aisle a distance behind Kate...a silhouette.
Blacker than the black around it.

A stain on the darkness.

It approaches Kate slowly.

MAGGIE'S VOICE - WHISPER (CONT'D)
Hurry. This way.

KATE
How do I know you're you?

MAGGIE'S VOICE - WHISPER
Because I am, yarn-for-brains.

Kate moves toward the silhouette.

KATE
What happened to the lantern?

TAP TAP TAP TAP

The sound of Kate's own footsteps.

Kate stops. SILENCE.

KATE (CONT'D)
Did you take your shoes off?

Her sister's silhouette comes closer.

KATE (CONT'D)
I can't hear your footsteps...

Closer.

Growing taller.

Too tall.

Gliding above the floor. Bare feet hanging beneath the hem
of a filthy nightgown--toenails grazing the wood planks.

Wrong sister.

Kate spins around and runs from Leah's ghost.

She crashes through the darkness. Turning at the first
opportunity. Away from the main aisle. Into the warren of
narrow offshoots.

Still a distance away:

THE REAL MAGGIE'S VOICE

Kate!

KATE

Maggie!

Kate reaches a T-junction and goes left.

She races down this new aisle. Arms out, groping for another place to turn when--

A CLATTER OF HOOVES

--something on all fours charges past her. SQUEALING.

Kate stumbles back against a stack of barrels.

Not hard enough to knock them off balance--but they topple over anyway

WHAM WHAM

nearly crushing her.

Kate runs again. Down a long straightaway until

dead end.

The towering stacks of crates on either side meet the hull. Leaving only a narrow gap between wood and steel.

But if she can squeeze through it...

Kate angles her body around the edge of crate wall.

She gets one leg into the crevice--

SNAPCRUNCH

Kate HOWLS and falls back into the aisle--her foot caught in the metal jaws of an animal trap.

SWITCH TO MAGGIE'S POV

Maggie alters her course to follow Kate's SCREAMS.

MAGGIE

Katy! I can hear you! I'm close!

And she is. So close.

Just a colossal wall of crates and boxes between them.

Maggie races along it. Desperately seeking a way through.

SWITCH TO KATE'S POV

Leah's silhouette looms closer.

Now Kate does hear FOOTSTEPS--running this way--but from somewhere up above--

Maggie climbed over the wall.

She appears on top of the cargo tower. Her lantern in one hand. The other holds her bundled-up skirt.

She CRASHES down onto Leah.

The lantern goes out as Maggie lands.

IN THE PITCH BLACK

KATE

Maggie?! Maggie...

A horrible GASPING.

SHUFFLING.

Something crawls across the floor toward Kate.

She throws her arms up in self-defense--

KATE

No! Please!

A match is struck.

Kate is nose to nose with...

Maggie.

Her sister struggles to speak. The wind still knocked out of her from the fall.

Kate pulls her into a hug without thinking--extinguishing the match.

A dull sound of METAL ON WOOD as Maggie bumps Kate's injured foot in the darkness.

Kate cries out in pain.

ANOTHER MATCH

Maggie sees the trap on Kate's foot. She leans down with the match to inspect it--

KATE

Wait!

Kate scans the darkness beyond the light's reach.

KATE (CONT'D)

Where is she?

Maggie extends the arm holding the match so Kate can see--

--crumpled on the floor back where Maggie landed--

Leah's nightgown.

Empty.

KATE

Is she...?

MAGGIE

I don't know.

The match burns low enough to singe Maggie's fingers.

She shakes it out.

Kate HYPERVENTILATES in the darkness.

MAGGIE

It's ok. I've got more.

ANOTHER MATCH

She withdraws the rest from her pocket. Passes them to Kate.

Kate immediately goes to strike one--Maggie stops her.

MAGGIE

Wait until this one burns out. We only have so many.

She raises Kate's skirt.

The device on her foot is similar in design to a bear trap.

Only scaled down to catch rats.

Maggie presses down on the spring lever to pry open the jagged bands of steel.

Kate MOANS as the broken bones in her foot grind together.

But she's free.

The trap is attached to a short length of chain--used to slide it into tight spaces.

Maggie uses it now to shove the re-opened jaws a safe distance away from where they sit.

Her match goes out.

ANOTHER MATCH

This time struck by Kate.

Maggie examines her sister's foot. Blood oozes through the tears in the shoe leather.

MAGGIE

Can you walk on it?

Kate shakes her head.

Then suddenly jerks backwards.

MAGGIE

I wasn't even touching you--

KATE

It moved!

Kate holds the dying match out with a shaky hand.

Toward the nightgown.

Maggie turns to look...

The fabric twitches.

The match goes out.

ANOTHER MATCH

Both sisters stare in horror at the empty nightgown.

It twitches again.

The sleeve moving as...

...a rat scurries out.

Maggie and Kate exhale. Maggie turns back to Kate's foot.

The match dies. Kate strikes

ANOTHER MATCH

just in time to see the nightgown snake across the floor toward them. Before Kate can warn her--

--it crawls up Maggie's back.

The hollow neckline is level with Maggie's shoulders.

The sleeves cross themselves over her chest.

By the time Maggie realizes what's happening--

--the nightgown isn't empty anymore.

Leah's head crowns through the opening.

She sinks her teeth into the cartilage of Maggie's ear.

Maggie SHRIEKS. The pain is everything.

Kate drops the last few matches. Grabs the re-set trap by the chain--

KATE

Maggie!

--and swings--

Maggie wrenches her head out of the way--severing a portion of her ear.

Kate smashes Leah in the side of the face with the trap.

The jaws SNAP closed around Leah's head.

The match goes out.

Kate is too afraid to grope around for another.

She cowers, her back to the wall, frozen.

A hand finds hers--

--Kate SCREAMS.

MAGGIE

It's me.

KATE

I've heard that before.

But she can make out Maggie's face. The darkness isn't so dark anymore...

Even the blood from Maggie's bitten ear is visible.

There's no sign of Leah or the trap.

KATE (CONT'D)
I dropped the matches.

MAGGIE
It's ok. I can see one next to you.

Kate looks down and she can see it too.

No point striking it though...

Sickly light bathes the narrow aisle.

It grows brighter. Maggie and Kate's eyes are in deep shadow. Their faces lit from above.

Maggie looks up.

MAGGIE
Is that...?

There, high above the crates that pen them in--

The moon.

Gleaming a perverse shade of bluish-green.

Like a theater prop generously coated in phosphorous paint.

The WHOOMP WHOOMP of the engines gets faster as hell bleeds into reality.

WHOOMPWHOOMPWHOOMP

Higher-pitched.

Morphing into...

CRICKETS.

Kate LAUGHS bitterly.

MAGGIE
What's happening?

KATE
Can't you smell it?

MAGGIE
What?

KATE
Pig shit. We're home.

A shadow falls over them...

Leah squats on her haunches, perched on the crate wall.

The trap is still locked around one side of her head. As they watch, she grabs the chain and pulls the device off.

Without opening it.

Puncture wounds become gouges.

Her skin bunches and shreds as she frees herself.

It's a mercy that her ruined face is in shadow.

Leah tosses the trap down at her sisters--WHAM.

But then she's still. A gargoyle in a dirty nightgown.

KATE

What is she waiting for?

MAGGIE

Them.

Kate drags her eyes away from Leah to follow Maggie's gaze.

There are people in the aisle.

Only a few yards away. Just standing there. Each holds an unlit candle.

Men, women, children.

Their faces all identical--and wrong.

The candles flicker to life, illuminating the faces above them. The townsfolk wear wire masks wrapped in gauze.

Something is different about the crates now too.

They seem...fuzzy.

Maggie puts a hand out to the wall of cargo at her side.

Not wooden crates anymore.

Massive bales of straw.

MAGGIE

Oh my god.

KATE
 We wound up being heretics instead
 of witches. Real or fake--turns out
 the punishment is the same.

On cue, the masked townsfolk come to life. They shuffle
 toward the sisters.

Maggie winces as Kate squeezes her injured hand...fresh
 blood oozes from the wound...

FLASH BACK TO

CHAPLAIN
 "...you have not yet resisted to
 the point of shedding your blood."

FLASH BACK TO

As she's throttled by the Axe Man:

MAGGIE
 Forgive me.

Followed by a BLAST OF HEAT.

BACK TO PRESENT

MAGGIE
 We've bled. All that's left is to
 repent.

KATE
 What?

MAGGIE
 We confessed but we never asked
 forgiveness--for any of it.

KATE
 So?

MAGGIE
 So ask now! Beg!

KATE
 Oh, right. Sorry! I'm sorry!

The mob keeps coming.

MAGGIE
 I think you have to mean it.

KATE

Oh...

MAGGIE

KATE!

KATE

But I don't! They'll know if I'm lying, right? You're the one who felt bad. I never did. We got to see the world. The world got to see us.

The mob keeps advancing. A slow crush of vengeance.

Kate looks up to speak directly to Leah:

KATE

But we shouldn't have left you! Not the way we did. Whatever your motives--you did take care of us. Hell, if we'd convinced you to go along with our confession, you'd have secured us a better venue to do it in at least.

(off Maggie's look)

And gotten us a better percentage of the ticket sales.

Leah doesn't react. The townsfolk are almost on them now.

Close enough to see the eyeholes in their masks are empty.

KATE

I'm sorry, Leah. Truly. Everyone we fooled can go rot. But you were my sister!

MAGGIE

Our sister!

KATE

Forgive us!

The mob descends.

Maggie draws Kate to her protectively.

Heads together, eyes closed, tense...

A **FLASH** so bright it sears through their eyelids.

A **BLAST OF HEAT** so intense it kills their SCREAMS.

INT. SECOND CLASS DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Passengers linger over drinks and desserts.

The Head Waiter presides over the calm until...

From the swinging doors that lead to the kitchen--a sudden exodus of staff.

Cooks and pot scrubbers in filthy aprons spill out into the dining room. Retreating from--

The Fox sisters.

They too enter the dining room via the kitchen.

A HUSH falls over the crowded room.

Even the Head Waiter is frozen in place.

Maggie carries Kate piggyback style.

She brings her sister to the nearest table and lowers her gently into an open chair.

The rest of the table's occupants flee their seats.

Kate maneuvers her injured foot up onto a vacant chair, flashing a fair amount of calf in the process.

But the real shock value belongs to Maggie herself.

Between her torn dress, the strange metal appliance strapped to her bare arm, the blood dripping from her ravaged ear--

No one can decide what to be offended by first.

She sinks into the chair on Kate's other side.

There's a lit candle in the table's centerpiece.

Maggie picks up an unused dessert spoon. She holds it by the handle so the bowl rests in the flame.

Kate selects an abandoned glass and sniffs the amber-colored liquid inside--then downs it in one.

Suddenly mindful of her audience, Kate attempts to tuck a strand of butchered hair behind her ear.

Still holding the spoon in the flame, Maggie uses her free hand to withdraw one of her own hairpins.

She hands it to Kate.

Who gratefully accepts.

KATE
I'm starving.

She tries to hail a server standing a few tables away.

KATE
Excuse me?

He can only stare...

The Head Waiter finally thaws and beelines for the women. His eyebrows are arched so severely they could snap.

Just as he arrives at their table--

Maggie brings the heated spoon up and presses it against the ragged edge of her bitten ear.

The wound SIZZLES as she cauterizes it.

The other passengers are shocked out of their silence into GASPS and NAUSEOUS GROANS.

Kate raises another orphaned whiskey glass in salute.

KATE
You won't see that at the world's fair.

Swallowing back his own revulsion:

HEAD WAITER
Perhaps I could direct you ladies to the ship's physician?

KATE
Perhaps you could direct the ship's physician to us. And we could have something to eat in the meantime.

HEAD WAITER
You can't expect--

KATE
(ignoring him, to Maggie)
What do you want?

MAGGIE
Anything but the soup.

KATE
(to Head Waiter)
Just bring the menu.

The Head Waiter flounders a few moments--then retreats out of the dining room. At speed.

KATE
Do you think they've found that officer yet? The guard. What's-his-name.

MAGGIE
Probably. If there was enough left of him to find.

People around them are talking again. Whispering.

All eyes fixed on the two of them.

Maggie is past caring.

Kate almost welcomes the familiar sensation of controlling a room. She adjusts the neckline of her dress.

The Head Waiter returns with a quartet of ship's officers.

He points them in the sisters' direction. Not that they're hard to spot.

Kate sighs at the group of men approaching.

Her hand finds Maggie's.

KATE
Do you think they'll believe us?

Maggie surprises them both with a SNORT of laughter.

She squeezes Kate's hand.

In this room full of gawking strangers...

A hundred faces. None of them kind.

Two sisters adrift.

Anchored only to each other.

EXT. PARISIAN THEATER - DAY

Kate and Maggie examine the marquee before entering.

Kate walks with a slight limp and still manages to make her cane look like a fashion choice.

INT. PARISIAN THEATER - CONTINUOUS

The theater is old. Glamorous.

And empty save for the well-heeled THEATER OWNER approaching them from the box office.

THEATER OWNER

Nous sommes fermes.

MAGGIE

Vous etes...le proprietaire?

He smiles at her broken French. Not unkindly.

THEATER OWNER

I am the owner, yes. But as I say,
we are closed, mesdames.

KATE

We've come to audition.

THEATER OWNER

Ah, pardon. Such lovely ladies. A
little mature perhaps...but I must
disappoint. To my knowledge, none
of our performers are seeking
assistants at this time.

Maggie and Kate smile at him.

KATE

Oh we're not assistants.

MAGGIE

We're the Fox Sisters.

FADE OUT.

THE END