

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Dead of Winter"

written by  
George R.R. Martin

Directed by  
Gus Trikonis

WITT/THOMAS PRODUCTIONS  
956 North Seward Street  
Hollywood, CA 90038  
(213) 465-7415  
(213) 583-1630

FIRST DRAFT  
October 10, 1988

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Dead of Winter"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. MANHATTAN STREETS (STOCK) . ESTABLISHING 1

Winter has Manhattan in its grasp. Dirty snow is piled up along the sidewalks, icicles hang from the bare branches of trees, cabs send up waves of slush as they move down the streets. The imagery should be cold and stark, not festive.

CUT TO:

2 INT. CANDLEWORKS CHAMBER. DAY 2

A metal brazier heats a vat of hot wax in a cozy underground chamber. SARAH, the candlemaker of the world below, lifts an ornate candle carefully and moves it to a wall rack to harden. The rack is full of similar candles. FATHER, VINCENT, and various tunnel children watch. Father holds a finished candle, admiring it.

FATHER

Lovely. Sarah, I do think these are the finest candles you've ever made for us.

SARAH

You say that every year.

VINCENT.

Every year it is true.

Sarah takes down a candle and studies it with satisfaction.

SARAH

I love making the winterfest candles. They're special.

ERIC

(eagerly)

Do we get to take them up now?

SARAH

Well, the first batch is ready for delivery. Father?

The kids look to Father. When he NODS, they surround Sarah, clamoring for candles. She begins to distribute finished candles to the children.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

~

ERIC  
Bet I finish first!

KIPPER  
No you won't.

ERIC  
Will so.

KIPPER  
Won't.

FATHER  
(sternly)  
This is not a race. You've been  
given a very important  
responsibility.

The children nod gravely.

FATHER.  
Good. Well, you all have your  
lists. Go on now, and...

Kipper bolts for the door to get a head start on the  
others. Eric notices.

~

ERIC  
Hey! No fair!

Then Eric is off as well, triggering a general stampede.

FATHER  
(shouts after them)  
... be careful up there!

As the footsteps of running children echo down the tunnels,  
receding, Father smiles fondly.

SARAH  
I wish they wouldn't run like  
that. They could fall...

VINCENT  
Sometimes we need to fall...  
so we can learn how to get up.

SARAH  
(nods, smiles)  
Mouse was the worst. Do you  
remember the year he broke half  
the candles with that dreadful  
catapult of his?

(CONTINUED)

FATHER

(chuckles)

Our poor helpers thought someone was flinging missiles at them.

(to Vincent)

It wasn't so long ago that you and Devin were the boys racing to make their deliveries.

VINCENT .

(takes down a candle)

I think I still remember how...

We move in TIGHT on Vincent's hand as he holds the ornate candle and turns it tenderly between his fingers.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

3 EXT. CATHY'S TERRACE - NIGHT

3

The same candle, now in Catherine's hand.

CATHY

Vincent, it's beautiful...

The terrace windows are rimed with frost, and there's traces of old snow along the parapets. Both are warmly dressed against the winter chill.

CATHY

When I was a little girl, I was scared of the dark. My mother gave me a candle to light at my bedside when I went to sleep... just a birthday candle, a tiny little thing, but somehow it made it all right. I've loved candles ever since.

VINCENT

This is no ordinary candle, Catherine. This is for winter fest...

CATHY

Kipper was going on about that last week...

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

VINCENT

It's a special time for us...  
 we have other celebrations, all  
 the holidays and traditions we  
 share with your world... but  
 winterfest is our own... a day  
 to remember our past, dream of  
 our future.

(touches her candle)

Each winter we send these candles  
 to our helpers in the world  
 above... without their light, our  
 world would be dark, our lives  
 cold without their warmth. The  
 candles are our way of saying that  
 they are a part of us...

(beat, tenderly)

Everyone... the whole community  
 ... is agreed. This year's winterfest will be  
 incomplete ... unless you are there.

Catherine is deeply touched. For a moment she searches for the words to express how much she values this sign of acceptance from the world below, but no words are adequate. She smiles and looks down at the candle, obviously treasuring it and what it represents. Then she sets it aside and puts her arms around Vincent and her head against his chest, wordless and happy.

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS (MOS) - DAY

as the tunnel children deliver the special candles to  
 helpers all around the city.

- 4 a) BENNY the bicycle messenger has stopped on a busy street 4  
 corner. Eric hands him a candle, then whispers in his ear.  
 Benny grins broadly, lifts Eric onto the bike behind him. The  
 boy holds tight as they take off. The basket on Benny's bike  
 is full of candles.
- 5 b) DR. PETER ALCOTT emerges through a set of swinging 5  
 doors in surgeon's garb, and is momentarily startled to see  
 Kipper waiting for him. But when the boy offers him a candle,  
 Alcott smiles broadly.
- 6 c) Benny whizzes through traffic, Eric riding happily 6  
 behind him. The basket is only half-full now.

- 7 d) LOU THE-BARBER is sitting in his own barber chair 7  
reading the paper when the door bangs open and a breathless  
underground girl gives him a candle.
- 8 e) SEBASTIEN, an elderly (60-70) magician in tattered top hat 8  
and faded tails, performs on a snowy street corner to a  
sparse crowd. Kipper dashes up, searches for the candle,  
can't find it. Sebastien pulls the candle out of the boy's  
ear, eliciting a huge grin.
- 9 f) Benny wheels up beside a cab stopped at a light, and Eric 9  
taps on the window. The driver is a street-smart young  
woman. She rolls down the glass, takes the candle,  
exchanging high-fives with Benny.
- 10 g) Kipper rushes inside a butcher shop. Through the 10  
glass, we see him giving a candle to the butcher. He exits still  
clutching several candles.
- 11 h) Eric solemnly shakes hands with Benny on the 11  
sidewalk, then turns and saunters down into a subway.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 INT. FATHER'S CHAMBER - NIGHT 12

Vincent enters and finds Eric and Father playing chess. He  
moves behind Eric and watches as Eric makes a move. Father  
studies the board.

FATHER

You might want to reconsider that  
move, Eric. You've left your knight  
undefended.

Eric just shakes his head. Father shrugs, reaches out,  
captures the knight with a bishop and removes the piece  
from the board, as Kipper bursts in, breathless. .

KIPPER

I'm finished! I'm-  
(sees Eric, reacts)  
What are you doing here?

ERIC

Playing chess.  
(moves piece)  
Check. And mate in three.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

As Father stares at the board in dismay, Eric calmly exits the chamber, pausing to talk to Kipper.

ERIC

Always start with Benny first.

KIPPER

(runs after him)  
Not fair! You cheated!

They exit, running!

13 ANGLE ON FATHER

13

Father begins putting the chessmen away, fitting each one carefully into its niche inside a hinged BLACK LACQUER BOX.

FATHER

I'm looking forward to winterfest... There are a few helpers I can still beat.

VINCENT

Don't think of yourself as a bad player .. just a very good teacher.

Father continues to put away the chess set.

FATHER

Is the Great Hall in order?

VINCENT

One of the tables needed some repairs. Cullen and I carried it up to his workshop.

FATHER

Good, good.

(beat, muses)

A third of a century.. it's hard' for me to believe, Vincent. You were only a babe in arms that first year...

(CONTINUED)

VINCENT.

My oldest memory is of a winterfest. I must have been three or four... I remember being in a cold dark room where my footsteps echoed around me. I was frightened, and Devin held my hand. Then the candles were lit... the darkness pushed back... when I glimpsed the tapestries for the first time, they took my breath away...

Father has finished fitting the chessmen into their niches. He folds up the board, but DOES NOT CLOSE THE BOX before he takes off his glasses and leans back.

FATHER

(reflective)

It was John who hung those tapestries...

VINCENT

Paracelsus?

FATHER

(nods)

He was the one who found the Great Hall... for a time he talked of making it his chamber... even then, his dreams were... large.

VINCENT

He was exiled before the first winterfest...

FATHER

Yes... afterwards, we... needed a way to heal ourselves...

(beat, melancholy)

We barely filled one table then. The children set the places. The wound was so raw... he had been part of us for so long.

VINCENT

What happened, Father?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

FATHER

A mistake was made... there was a place for each of us... and an empty chair... where John always sat.

(beat)

I took it away. Pascal's father removed the place setting. Not a word was said. We just... went on.

For a moment, Father sits, staring off down the years, to that chair that still stands empty in his memories. Then he returns to the present.

FATHER

Well, that's history now, dead and gone. So, tell me, did you talk to Mouse?

We begin to MOVE IN on the box with the chess set as Father reaches over to it.

VINCENT

He's promised that this year Arthur will remain at home....

We are TIGHT on the chess set as Father's hand CLOSES the hinged lid. A stylized ROSE, worked in bright SILVER, is inlaid into the top of the black lacquer box. HOLD on the image as we

DISSOLVE TO:

14 INT. TAMARA'S LAIR. NIGHT

14

Flickering reddish torchlight illuminates a dank chamber deep within the earth. The walls are covered with patches of nitre, and dozens of MASKS. Masks carved from wood or stone, cast in plaster, sewn together from leather. Animal faces and grotesque tribal fetishes mingle with lifelike human faces, their mouths open as if to scream. Everywhere empty eyes gape down from the rock walls. The chamber is malign, disturbing.

15 ANGLE ON TAMARA

15

as she shapes the features of a clay bust on a table in front of her. Her long fingers are skilled, but somehow cruel; she twists the clay as if she were trying to hurt it. She's tall, powerfully-built, with masses of long black hair falling down across bare shoulders. Her face is painted in bizarre patterns, her skin pale from years beneath the earth. There's something wild-eyed and fierce about her. As she works, she addresses a figure in the shadows that we do not see.

TAMARA

Bring me the face. Without the face, I cannot do it.

16 REVERSE ANGLE

16

on the figure in the shadows. He wears a black cloak, a hood, gloves. We cannot see his features, but when he replies, he speaks with Vincent's voice.

MAN IN SHADOWS

(Vincent's voice)

Whatever you require, Tamara, that you shall have.

17 RESUME ON TAMARA

17

She seems vastly amused.

TAMARA

You talk so sweet... that voice will get you anything.

(beat)

Bring me the face, and I will make it yours. The man who wears it now won't be needing it, will he?

MAN IN SHADOWS

(Vincent's voice)

No. I don't imagine he will.

TAMARA

Will you kill them all?

MAN IN SHADOWS

(Vincent's voice)

They are my friends, my family. Their world is my world. Why should I mean them harm, Tamara?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

He pauses for a beat, then answers his own question, but now he speaks in Father's voice, and then in the voices of other members of the underground community.

MAN IN SHADOWS

(Father's voice)

Because they disgraced me, took away everything that mattered, work and home and all I loved?

(in Pascal's voice)

Because they stole my systems, my notes, the journals of my research and explorations?

(in Mouse's voice)

Because they chased me from their light, hounded me even from my sad refuge in the darkness?

TAMARA

(laughs, amused)

You have the voice but not the words. The mouse boy doesn't talk so good.

18 ANGLE ON THE CLOAKED FIGURE

18

as he steps forward, so the light from the chamber's torches falls across his face, and see for the first time that it is PARACELSUS, the alchemist. His mask of beaten gold covers one side of his face.

PARACELSUS

(in Mouse's voice)

Okay good. Okay fine.

(beat, his own voice)

There. Is that better?

19 RESUME

19

Tamara NODS, clearly a little in awe of his verbal mimicry, but she is still not convinced.

TAMARA

Better... but even with the voices, even with the face...

(shakes her head)

If they find you out, this time they will kill you. It was all so long ago. What has their world to do with you?

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

PARACELSUS

Their world is mine by rights.  
I made them. I taught them. But they  
have lessons yet to learn.

TAMARA

Lessons? What kind of lessons?

PARACELSUS

Poetry lessons...

(begins to recite)

... that the world, which seems/ To  
lie before us like a land of dreams,/ /  
So various, so beautiful, so new,/ /  
Hath really neither joy, nor love,  
nor light,/ / Nor certitude, nor peace,  
nor help for pain;/-And we are here  
as on a darkling plain/ Swept with  
confused alarms of struggle and  
flight,/ / Where ignorant armies clash  
by night.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

20 INT. FATHER'S CHAMBER. NIGHT

20

The council is meeting to plan the winterfest. Present around the table are Father, Vincent, MARY, PASCAL, and a big bear of a man named WILLIAM with a magnificent beard.

FATHER

We'll need volunteers to guide the helpers down...

PASCAL

I've already put out the word on the pipes.

FATHER

Excellent. William, how are we doing with the food?

WILLIAM

Ought to be plenty, but it'd help if we had an exact count of who's coming and who's not.

MARY

Has anyone heard from Narcissa?

PASCAL

She doesn't answer our calls. She must be down below the level of the pipes again.

VINCENT

Lana left a candle in her chamber. If she returns in time, she will find it there. But Narcissa's nature is a solitary one. I was still a boy the last time she came to winterfest...

MARY

It makes me worry. We see so little of her...

FATHER

It is her choice to live apart from us...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

MARY

But think of her age! What if something happened to her? Her eyes are worse every year...

VINCENT

Narcissa sees things that are hidden from you and me. And wherever she might wander, she always finds her way home.

FATHER

Usually with some outrageous tale of where she's been.

(brisk, moving on)

Now, is there anything else?

WILLIAM

(grumpy)

Mouse and that raccoon...

FATHER

We've already taken care of that, I'm sure there'll be no problem...

DISSOLVE TO:

21 INT. THE WELL - NIGHT

21

A huge black shaft sinks deep into the bowels of the earth, its stone walls covered with slime and pale phosphorescent patches of nitre. The only sound is the steady DRIP of water somewhere far below. A solitary figure, bent and frail, slowly climbs the steps that spiral around the interior of the well. One hand feels the wall carefully as she ascends. NARCISSA carries a small, covered basket, but no light, making her way through the darkness by the faint glow of the nitre. .

She is smiling, talking to herself low under her breath, seemingly at ease even in this venomous dark, when suddenly she hears the sound of FOOTSTEPS echoing faintly down the well, and REACTS with alarm. She stops where she is, craning her head up.

22 NARCISSA'S POV 22

Her vision is badly impaired by her cataracts as she stares up the well. Everything is blurred and out-of-focus; all we can see is the flickering light of the torch as someone DESCENDS, the steps toward her. The echoing footsteps GROW LOUDER, the torch burns larger, nearer.

Finally, dimly, Narcissa can make out the figure of a tall, cloaked man coming toward her.

23 BACK TO THE SCENE 23

Narcissa shrinks back against the wall, alarmed.  
You into some strange people this far down.

NARCISSA  
Who... who is there?

24 ANGLE UP THE WELL 24

The cloaked figure comes to a stop several steps above Narcissa. He carries a burning torch in one hand, a white canvas sack in the other. He descends one more step. Light shimmers off the beaten gold of his mask, but when Paracelsus speaks, he uses Vincent's voice.

PARACELSUS  
(in Vincent's voice)  
Vincent. . .

The familiar voice puts Narcissa at ease. She smiles, climbs another step, her hand groping in front of her.

NARCISSA  
Vincent... so far from home,  
child...

PARACELSUS  
(in Vincent's voice)  
I'm sorry if I frightened you,  
Narcissa. I did not think to meet  
anyone in such a dark place.

Narcissa continues to ascend as she replies.

NARCISSA  
I know all the dark places...  
the black gulfs, the shadows, the  
hidden doors... the dark is my  
friend, child... I am not afraid...

25 ANGLE ON NARCISSA

25

Her groping hand reaches up and touches the sack paracelsus carries. Her smile vanishes; she looks concerned, confused. Her fingers fumble against the sack, and we see that the white canvas is spotted with BLOOD from whatever is carried within.

NARCISSA  
 (feeling bag)  
 Vincent... what do you...  
 (snatches back her hand  
 in sudden fear)  
 ... blood... what is it?

26 ANGLE UPON PARACELSUS

26

as he descends a step, his look implacable. The charade is over now and he speaks with his own voice.

PARACELSUS  
 Only a face... and a candle, to  
 light my way in the dark.

27 RESUME SCENE

27

Narcissa's hand touches Paracelsus and she pulls it back as if burned.

NARCISSA  
 (afraid)  
 No... you are not Vincent. You  
 are the evil one.

PARACELSUS  
 Down here there is no good and  
 evil. Only strong and weak.

Narcissa stumbles away from him, down the steps. In her haste and fear she almost falls.

PARACELSUS  
 Have a care... the steps are  
 slick. Let me light your way.

He pokes his torch at her, setting her ragged clothing AFIRE. Narcissa SCREAMS, drops her basket, tries to beat at the flames with her hands, but they spread too fast. She goes stumbling down the stairs as the fire envelopes her. Paracelsus comes after, and when the old woman goes to her knees, he puts a booted heel on her back and KICKS her out over the edge.

28 CLOSE ON PARACELSUS

28

as he watches her fall, down and down, into the mist--  
shrouded depths of the great well. His face is almost  
expressionless. The sounds of Narcissa's SCREAMS dwindle  
slowly, until we hear a distant SPLASH far below.

PARACELSUS

There are no friends in the darkness,  
old woman. In the dark, all men are  
enemies.

DISSOLVE TO:

29 INT. DA'S OFFICE. DAY

29

JOE MAXWELL stands by the coffee machine, wearing a heavy  
winter coat with a fur collar over his suit. He warms his  
hands over the pot briefly, then pours himself a cup.  
Everyone in the coffee behind him wears coats, heavy  
sweaters, earmuffs, ski masks, etc. The windows are obscured  
by frost. In b.g., two plumbers in overalls are dismantling  
one of the radiators. Cathy comes sailing up behind Joe as he  
tastes the coffee.

CATHY

Joe, I got a problem...

From the brusque way Joe holds up his hand, it's clear  
people have been bitching at him all day.

JOE

I don't want to hear it, Radcliffe!  
The city says we'll have heat  
tomorrow, Wednesday for sure.  
There's nothing I can do  
about it. I'm a lawyer, not a  
plumber.

CATHY

It's not about the heat. I  
need to take Thursday off.

JOE

No way.

Coffee in hand, Maxwell starts back to his office. Cathy  
follows, pleading her case, and we TRACK with them.

CATHY

I wouldn't ask if it wasn't  
important.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

JOE

I can't spare you. Half the office  
is out with flu already.

CATHY

It's only one day. I'll work late on  
Wednesday. I'll come in early on  
Friday.

They enter Joe's office as the conversation continues. As he  
replies, Joe retreats behind his desk and begins to flip  
pages on his calendar.

JOE

You'll work late on Wednesday,  
come in early on Friday, and  
you'll be here...

(flips calendar, reacts)

Thursday! Thursday is the  
McCarthy deposition...

CATHY

Rita can cover for me.

JOE

Escobar? She barely knows where we  
keep the paper clips!

CATHY

She'll do fine.

JOE

(grumpy, but giving in)  
If McCarthy gets screwed up,  
Moreno will have my butt for  
breakfast.

CATHY

Thanks, Joe. I owe you one.  
(beat, teasing)  
Now, about the heat...

OFF Maxwell's long suffering look, we

DISSOLVE TO:

30 INT. TAMARA'S LAIR. NIGHT

30

Paracelsus studies the grotesque lifemasks that decorate Tamara's walls. Some of the faces are barely human; others should suggest the faces of some of our tunnel denizens, twisted cruelly in the dark funhouse of Tamara's mind. In b.g., Tamara is grinding the materials she needs for his mask with a stone mortar and pestal.

Paracelsus passes masks that resemble the faces of Mouse, Winslow, and Pascal, and pauses before one that suggests Father, its features twisted grotesquely, as if in great pain. He reaches up to finger it thoughtfully.

PARACELSUS

Alas, dear Jacob. I knew him well,  
Tamara. A fellow of infinite  
jest, of most excellent fancy.

This sardonic soliloquy is interrupted as a man enters the chamber. VULCAN is squat and broad, with a huge black beard, a massive chest, and thick, muscular arms, but he moves slowly and awkwardly on two short, twisted legs. An ironsmith's hammer is thrust through his belt.

VULCAN

It's done.

PARACELSUS

Just as I described it?

Vulcan NODS. In b.g., Tamara sets aside her mortar and pestal, wipes the sweat off her brow.

TAMARA

(to Paracelsus)

We can begin.

Paracelsus seats himself in a stone chair close to Tamara. As she washes the grime off her hands and dries them on a rag, Paracelsus gestures to Vulcan.

PARACELSUS

Bring it here. Show me.

31 ANGLE ON VULCAN

He comes forward on his stunted legs, kneels, and offers for inspection a BLACK LACQUER BOX with a SILVER ROSE inlaid on the top, identical in every respect to the box in which Father keeps his chessmen.

(CONTINUED)

-

31

31 CONTINUED:

31

PARACELSUS

Yes... excellent...

(beat, musing)

It was thirty-five years ago I gave Jacob his chessmen... a token of my affection... of our friendship... yes, this will do... and the rest?

32 CLOSE ON THE BOX

32

as Vulcan flips open the lid. Inside this box are no chess pieces snug in their niches, but rather the makings of a crude but very powerful EXPLOSIVE DEVICE.

33 RESUME PARACELSUS

33

Seated in the chair, he examines the bomb carefully, eyes studying every aspect of it. Vulcan looks more and more nervous, frightened of the consequences should his work displease the alchemist.

PARACELSUS

And the arming device?

VULCAN

On the lid. Press the rose. The next time the box is opened...

PARACELSUS

Checkmate.

(beat)

You may go.

Vulcan lays the box at the alchemist's feet, and exits the chamber. Tamara steps up behind Paracelsus.

TAMARA

I must remove the mask.

PARACELSUS

Of course.

Very carefully, she reaches around, and removes the beaten gold mask. Beneath, the skin is scarred and twisted, hideously burned, awful to look upon. Tamara runs her fingers across it lightly.

TAMARA

Pretty...

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

PARACELSUS  
Get on with it.

As she does, we

DISSOLVE TO:

34 INT. DRAINAGE TUNNEL. MORNING

34

as Catherine makes her way in slowly from Central Park. There's water in the tunnel from melting snow. She carries her candle. As she gets further down the tunnel, she HEARS the soft, sweet sound of a SAXOPHONE coming out of the junction. A smile touches her face.

35 INT. JUNCTION - DAY

35

CLARENCE, the black street musician established in "Siege," is playing his horn to three other helpers as they wait for their guide in the junction. Benny and Lou are there in their party finest; Sebastian the magician still wears his faded tux and top hat.

Catherine ENTERS from the tunnel, exchanges SMILES with Benny. She and the others listen as Clarence finishes; when he puts aside his horn, all applaud. Clarence grins broadly. Finally Sebastien turns to Cathy.

SEBASTIEN

The infamous Catherine Chandler, I presume? Your fame precedes you, dear lady.

(kisses her hand)

I must say, you are even lovelier than I was told. Permit me to make the introductions...

CATHY

I know Clarence... and Benny, of course...

SEBASTIEN

The whole city knows our ten-speed Hermes, swift-tired messenger of the gods...

Benny gives Cathy a look as Sebastien goes on.

(CONTINUED)

3S CONTINUED:

35

SEBASTIEN

The stalwart who smells of witch  
hazel and looks so uncomfortable in  
his Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes is  
Louis...

LOU

(to Cathy)

Lou. Please to meetcha, Miz  
Chandler.

SEBASTIEN

Lou is an artist. The  
Rachmaninoff of the razor, Chopin  
with a comb ..

LOU

I cut hair.

SEBASTIEN

And I, of course, am Sebastien.  
I'm sure Vincent has mentioned me  
a thousand times...

CATHY

(amused)

Not that I can recall...

Sebastien takes that smoothy in stride, produces a bouquet of  
tattered silk flowers from his sleeve, presents it to  
Catherine.

SEBASTIEN

A grievous omission. I am the  
prince of helpers, the Houdini of  
Harlem, the Blackstone of  
Broadway...

CLARENCE

The mouth of Manhattan...

BENNY

The only trick Sebastien don't  
know is how to shut up.

SEBASTIEN

(to Benny, joking)

A little more respect, boy, or  
I may take it in my head to saw you  
in half. Think of the trouble you'd  
have reaching the pedals...

(CONTINUED)

3S CONTINUED: (2)

35

CATHY

I thought there would be more of  
us. . .

BENNY

We're just the one group. A guide  
will take us down to where we meet up  
with the others...

CATHY

Sounds like this is all old hat to  
you, Benny.

BENNY

My mother was a helper before me. I  
was still riding a trike the first  
time I went down...

The sliding door behind them begins to OPEN. All eyes move to the secret entrance as Vincent steps forward, and holds open the grate. He gestures the helpers through, looking at Cathy across the junction. As Sebastien moves to the gate, peers through, and scowls, Cathy and Vincent remain lost in each other's eyes.

SEBASTIEN

Nothing lurking in there, I hope?  
(flings a flash-paper  
FIREBALL, lighting the  
tunnel briefly)  
All clear. Let us proceed.

Sebastien steps through daintily; the others follow, Catherine last of all. Vincent gently helps her across the threshold; they exchange smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

36

INT. CHAMBER OF THE WINDS (MATTE) - DAY

36

The great stone stairway in the Chamber of the Winds is crowded as we have never seen it, as a long line of people make their way downward. Vincent and Cathy and their little group of helpers are in their midst, surrounded by a mixed group of subterraneans and helpers. A few of the travellers carry lanterns and flickering torches, and there is a winterfest candle (NOTE: the candles are NOT lit) in every hand. The wind howls through the chamber, whipping at clothing and hair, but the spirits are high, there is loud talk, joking, children running up and down the stairs, etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

37 INT. OUTSIDE TALL DOORS

37

Vincent leads Catherine through the crowd of tunnel dwellers who have gathered together at the foot of the stairs, in front of a set of towering WOODEN DOORS, twice the height of a man. A massive wooden beam holds the doors shut against the force of the wind.

Vincent looks at Father, who stands beneath the doors, leaning heavily on his cane. Father NODS. Vincent moves to the doors, and lifts the heavy wooden beam, setting it aside. He pushes, and the doors CREAK open slowly, revealing an echoing expanse of DARKNESS. When the doors are open, it creates a kind of wind-tunnel effect, and the velocity of the wind seems to INCREASE sharply, as it goes howling down the tunnel. No one moves until Vincent turns back to Catherine.

38 ANGLE ON VINCENT AND CATHY

38

Cathy SHIVERS as the wind shrieks around her.

VINCENT

Will you trust me to lead you  
through the dark?

CATHY

There is no darkness, Vincent...  
when you're with me.

Side by side, they walk through the doors into the room beyond, their figures vanishing into blackness. Father follows, after a beat. The rest of the tunnel dwellers crowd after him.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

39 CLOSE ON FATHER

39

He sits at the head of a table, a winterfest candle burning in front of him. Otherwise the scene is COMPLETELY DARK. Father's face, eerily lit by the flame of the single candle, seems to float in a vast sea of darkness as he begins to speak.

FATHER

The world above us is cold and gray, summer a distant memory. Our world too has known its winters. So each year we begin this feast in darkness, as our world began in darkness.

We PULL BACK VERY SLOWLY from Father to take in the table in front of him. Dimly we see the shadowy forms of Vincent, seated on his right, and Mary, on his left. As one, they TOUCH their winterfest candles in the flame of Father's, until the wicks catch. Now three candles are lit. Vincent and Mary carry on the story, their speeches CONTINUOUS, familiar words of an oral tradition.

VINCENT

Long before the city above us raised its towers to the sky, men sought shelter in these caverns.

MARY

In those days, these tunnels were dark places, and those who dwelt here dwelt in fear and isolation.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

VINCENT

This was a land of lost hope and twisted dreams, a land of despair where the sound of footsteps coming down a tunnel was a sound of terror, and men reached for knives and rocks and worse at the sound of another's man voice.

FATHER

But at last a few people learned to put aside their fear.

MARY

We began to trust each other, to help each other.

VINCENT

And all of us grew stronger, those who took the help and those who gave it.

FATHER

We are all part of one another. One family, one community. Sometimes we forget that. And so each year we meet here. To thank those who have helped us, and to remember... even the greatest darkness is nothing, so long as we share the light.

Vincent turns from Father to Catherine, seated beside him, and LIGHTS HER CANDLE from his own. Simultaneously, on the opposite side of the table, Mary lights Pascal's candle from hers. We TRACK BACK ALONG the length of the table. Catherine gives her flame to Mouse, Mouse to Jamie, Jamie to the person beside her. Across the table, in unison, Pascal is lighting Sarah's candle, and then Sarah William's. On and on it goes, two long parallel streams of light, as candle is lit from candle all along the length of what we now see is a LONG WOODEN TABLE (seating 20-30) covered with fine glass, glittering silver, etc. With each new candle, the hall grows brighter. After he has passed on his light, Vincent leans across the table to light one of the splendid candelabras. Others bring their flames to the tables to the right and left of Father's, or touch off the torches in their wall sconces, the candles snug in small niches. We continue to PULL BACK and finally

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

40 INT. GREAT HALL. TWO HOURS LATER

40

Now BRILLIANTLY LIT by a myriad of candles, torches, lanterns, and BUSTLING with activity. The chamber is cavernous and high-ceilinged, hewn long ago out of solid stone. The great double doors through which the tunnel dwellers entered stand at the far end of the hall, but there a half-dozen other arched entryways along the walls, leading off to side tunnels rather than the chamber of the winds. An upper gallery circles the hall, supported by a series of pillars. Above, the walls are covered by a series of magnificent old TAPESTRIES, their colors faded now, perhaps fraying a bit at the edges, but still obviously things of beauty and great antiquity, depicting a variety of medieval scenes (castles, dragons, hunting, etc). The entire tunnel community has assembled at three long tables that run down the center of the hall, helpers seated side by side with subterraneans.

A sumptuous FEAST has been served. Most of the guests have finished eating; a few are still busy with their food. We HEAR the clatter of silverware, the sounds of LAUGHTER, the buzz of conversation. Some of the guests are moving about to visit with other friends. A FIDDLER from below and BANJO PLAYER helper begin a spritely duet.

41 ANGLE PAST MOUSE ON JAMIE

41

Mouse is all insatiable curiosity, trying to listen to a dozen conversations at once, while Jamie pokes at food in a desultory manner. Finally Mouse notices, frowns.

MOUSE

No smile. Something's wrong?

JAMIE

It's nothing...

MOUSE

More than nothing. Almost something.

(points at plate)

Hardly ate.

Jamie pushes away her food, slumps back in her chair.

JAMIE

I just... keep thinking of Winslow. This is the first time that he hasn't been here. It doesn't feel right...

(tearful)

I miss him, Mouse. He ought to be here...

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

Mouse thinks about that, and for a long beat he looks solemn too. Then he looks around, up and down the room, listens to all the sounds of fellowship, and finally he turns back to Jamie.

MOUSE

Not missing. Look. Listen.  
Everybody laughing, talking,  
making noise. Eating.  
(beat, simply)  
Winslow's here. Must be, right?

Jamie blinks back her tears, considers this. Finally a slow tremulous smile breaks across her face. She gives him a little hug, and Mouse GRINS hugely.

CUT TO:

42 KIPPER AND ERIC

42

lying on the floor in a back corner of the Great Hall, playing a game of checkers. Eric executes a triple jump, removing Kipper's last pieces from the board.

KIPPER

This is a stupid game. I'm going  
to get some cake.

Kipper jumps up and runs off. Eric shrugs, and returns the checkers and board to a low shelf carved from the stone wall. The shelf also holds a set of a darts, a Go board, and the familiar black lacquer box.

As Eric leaves, we HOLD on the shelf. After a long beat, an ominous SHADOW falls across the games. A HAND ENTERS FRAME, picks up Father's chess set, lays the substitute in its place. Nothing about the hand or sleeve should tell us who it belongs to. We begin to MOVE IN on the box.

A long finger delicately touches the silver rose inlaid in the lid, then presses down on it. The inlay DEPRESSES slightly, with a small, sharp CLICK, then pops back into place when the finger lifts off it. As the shadow moves stealthily away, we HOLD for a long beat on the box.

CUT TO:

43 VINCENT AND CATHERINE

43

as they stroll along the upper gallery. Vincent is showing Catherine the tapestries.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

CATHY

Vincent, they're wonderful...  
but where did they come from?  
Who was the artist?

VINCENT

Those are mysteries we've never  
solved, Catherine. Perhaps they're  
enchanted...

(beat, fondly)

I used to imagine they were magic  
windows... that if I looked at  
them long enough and hard enough,  
they might open for me, so I could  
pass through to a different world.  
But when I reached out...

He reaches out now, his hand gently touching the tapestry  
and the wall behind it.

VINCENT

(continuous, sadly)

... it was only cloth.

From the look on Catherine's face, we know she understands  
his yearnings.

CATHY

Someday I'd love to show you the  
tapestries in the Cloisters. My  
father took me there...

They wander off further down toward the next tapestry.

44 RESUME GREAT HALL

44

TRACKING with Father and Mary as they cross the hall  
together, talking. She's worried, he reassuring.

MARY

I know she seldom comes to  
winterfest, but it's been so long  
with no word...

FATHER

I'm sure she's fine. Narcissa is  
indestructible... but if it  
will help you rest easier, we'll  
put together some sort of search  
first thing tomorrow.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

They reach the corner where the games have been placed. Father looks over the shelf, picks up the chess set.

FATHER

You really ought to let me teach  
you chess... wonderful game,  
sharpens the mind...

CUT TO:

45 WINE CASKS

45

Two large oak casks set up under the galleries. William is drawing wine from a spigot. Nearby, Sebastien is sipping the vintage, while holding forth to Jamie, Lou the barber, and a few others.

JAMIE

If you really are the greatest  
magician in the world, how come  
you do your tricks on subways?

LOU

(laughs)  
The little lady's gotcha there.

SEBASTIEN

Those are only token appearances.

When that provokes wincing all around, Sebastien clears his throat, and continues with a shrug.

SEBASTIEN

I love the subways. And the  
streets... what Broadway stage can  
compare to a New York street? I see  
it all... the men rushing off to  
work, the children at their play, the  
girls in their summer dresses...  
everyone needs a little magic...  
(smiling, he produces  
a wand, sprinkles Jamie  
with stardust)  
... and Sebastien is there to give it  
to them.

As Jamie laughs, Mouse appears in b.g., moving furtively across the room with a plate of food. The camera follows, leaving the group by the wine casks and TRACKING WITH MOUSE. He ducks into a small CURTAINED ALCOVE to kneel by ARTHUR, his pet raccoon.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

MOUSE

Quiet, Arthur. Father's out there, might hear. Then he'll get weird.

Mouse gives Arthur the plate of scraps.

CUT TO:

46 RESUME WINE CASKS

46

The fiddler plays some hot cajun music in b.g. as William continues to draw wine for the guests.

SARAH

It must be frightening sometimes, doctor... knowing that you have the power of life and death in your hands.

DR. ALCOTT

You get used to it. If you don't, you get out of medicine. Otherwise the stress will eat you alive.

LOU

Gimme my racket any day. I screw up, some guy walks out with crooked sideburns... but at least he walks out.

DR. ALCOTT

I'm sure your work has its own rewards, Lou.

LOU

(shrugs)

It's a thrill a minute. You want sometime, you can watch me sweep out the hair...

47 TRACKING WITH PASCAL

47

as he moves across the room toward an exit. He passes Sebastien, delighting a circle of tunnel children with a few simple card tricks. Mary and few other adults are watching too.

MARY

Pascal, are you leaving so early?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

PASCAL  
 (a bit sheepish)  
 I have to go check the pipes.

Catherine and Vincent come down the gallery stair in b.g.

SEBASTIEN  
 My dear boy, check them for what? I'm  
 here, you're here, we're all here. If  
 there's any pipe-banging going on  
 now..

CATHY  
 (dryly)  
 .. it's probably someone at the DA's  
 office trying to get a little heat.

PASCAL  
 (awkward shrug)  
 I don't like to be away too  
 long... you never can tell...

VINCENT  
 Surely you can spare a few hours,  
 Pascal.

PASCAL  
 Well... maybe I'll come back later. I  
 just want to check the pipe chamber,  
 make sure everything is... is...

CATHY  
 Still there?

Pascal NODS gratefully, then hurries away, exiting into one of  
 the side tunnels. Cathy looks amused.

VINCENT  
 You're smiling...

CATHY  
 Our worlds are so different...  
 I see so many people who work only  
 for their paychecks, but Pascal  
 and his pipes...

VINCENT  
 For Pascal, that tapping is the  
 sweetest music in the world.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

They walk off, CROSSING with young Eric, who is leading Kipper eagerly in the other direction.

ERIC  
He is so! I saw him! I'll  
show you.

The boys duck into the curtained alcove, where Eric triumphantly indicates the raccoon. Kipper WHISTLES.

KIPPER  
Boy, if Father finds out, Mouse  
Is going to get it good.  
(beat)  
You think anybody fed him?

ERIC  
Let's go get some food.

The two boys scurry off.

CUT TO:

48 INT. UPPER TUNNELS - LATER

48

Pascal is making his way along one of the upper tunnels, close to his pipe chamber. PIPES large and small run along the ceiling and walls, but there is no tapping, only SILENCE. Yet suddenly Pascal stops, frowns as if puzzled. Still we hear nothing. He moves to the wall, slides out his rods, BANGS on one pipe, waits, listens. Nothing. Still dissatisfied, he begins to clamber over the pipes, trying to reach the highest one, the old pipe that runs along the ceiling. He climbs from pipe to pipe like a child on a jungle gym. Finally, hanging upside down, he takes his STETHOSCOPE out of his pocket and presses it to the ceiling pipe. For the first time we HEAR a sound; very faint and far-away, a barely audible metallic SCRATCHING. Pascal concentrates harder as we

CUT TO:

49 RESUME GREAT HALL

49

The remains of the feast have been cleared away. In b.g., a group of musicians are setting up to perform, while others shift the tables to the side of the chamber to make room for dancing, games, what have you. Father, the chess set tucked under his arm, is having an animated conversation with Dr. Alcott. Mouse listens.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

FATHER

Those journals you gave me have been fascinating, Peter. Some of the results they've been getting with laser surgery...

DR. ALCOTT

(chuckles)

Makes you wish you had a laser down here, doesn't it?

MOUSE

(helpfully)

Build you one!

Father looks aghast, but before he can dissuade Mouse from his project, Sebastien INTERRUPTS.

SEBASTIEN

Ah, chess... the game of kings! Not to mention rooks and pawns! Come on, set them up, set them up, time for your annual humiliation.

Unnoticed, Mouse wanders away from the group.

FATHER

Never again. Last year you took my king.

SEBASTIEN

Isn't that the whole idea?

FATHER

You're supposed to capture the pieces, Sebastien, not make them disappear.

(to Dr. Alcott)

Peter, would you like a game?

Peter Alcott smiles but seems disinclined.

DR. ALCOTT

Jacob, have you ever considered talking to a psychologist about this streak of masochism?

50 ANGLE ON MOUSE

50

as he wanders across the floor, muttering to himself, Father and his group behind him in b.g.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

MOUSE  
 (to himself)  
 Need a ruby. Big ruby.

Mouse wanders off with a feverish gleam in his eye.

51 ANGLE ON DANCE FLOOR

51

The musicians are playing a lovely WALTZ. In b.g., a few dancers whirl across the floor. Catherine and Vincent are listening to the music, rapt. Father, the innocent-seeming chess set still under his arm, detaches himself from Dr. Harrington and drifts over.

FATHER  
 It's going rather well, wouldn't you say? Catherine, do you like the music?

CATHY  
 Very much. I've always loved the waltz...

FATHER  
 In its day, you know, the waltz was considered, oh, quite scandalous. Wicked, even...

CATHY  
 (smiling)  
 Imagine that.  
 (to Vincent)  
 Vincent, can I ask you something very... personal?

VINCENT  
 You know you can ask me anything, Catherine...

CATHY  
 Do you dance?

Vincent looks at her for a long beat, SMILES, and is about to reply when suddenly Pascal come rushing back into the Great Hall and INTERRUPTS.

PASCAL  
 Vincent, you have to come.  
 There's a sound on the pipes...  
 (realizes he's interrupted)  
 Oh, sorry. I didn't mean...

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

VINCENT

What kind of a sound?

PASCAL

I'm not sure. It's so weak.  
Normally it would be lost in the  
traffic, but with the system so  
quiet...

FATHER

Pascal, are you sure it's a message?  
It could be anything... a loose  
fitting, a steam rattle...

VINCENT

... or Narcissa. We must be sure.  
(to Cathy)  
My apologies. I'll return as soon as  
I can.

Catherine smiles and watches wistfully as Pascal and  
Vincent rush out together. Father turns to Catherine.

FATHER

The origins of the waltz are very  
interesting, you know...

As he begins to explain them to her, we

CUT TO:

52 INT. UPPER TUNNELS. LATER

S2

Pascal dangles from the pipes, listening through his  
stethoscope, moving it from place to place as he talks.

PASCAL

I was so sure... maybe I'm just  
hearing things...  
(shakes his head)  
Wait a second, there it is  
again...

Again we hear the metallic scratching sound, faint, far  
off. Vincent's head turns slowly as he listens.

VINCENT

I hear it.  
(beat)  
Let me listen.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

Pascal takes out the earpieces, passes them down to Vincent. He puts them on, listens, then REACTS with obvious, immediate alarm, ripping off the stethoscope.

VINCENT

Pascal, where does this pipe originate?

PASCAL

I... I'm not sure...

(drops to floor)

But I think we're about to find out.

They run down the tunnel together.

CUT TO:

53 RESUME GREAT HALL - ON FATHER 53

as he accepts a goblet of wine from William, and walks off by himself. He's wandering along the wall, enjoying the wine. and all the happy faces. But as he passes the curtained alcove, he HEARS a noise from within. Father pauses, frowns, peers inside the curtain.

S4 FATHER'S POV 54

as Arthur the raccoon looks up at him innocently.

55 RESUME CURTAINED ALCOVE 55

as Father REACTS to his discovery.

FATHER

Arthur!

He glances over his shoulder, to make sure no one is watching. When he sees that he is in the clear, a mischievous look comes over Father's face.

FATHER

I wondered where Mouse was hiding you this year.

He bends down, scratches the raccoon's ear, smiles.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

FATHER

He hasn't even remembered to feed you, has he? Well, if you'll keep it our little secret, perhaps we can get you a bit of William's spice cake, eh?

We STAY ON ARTHUR as Father rises and sneaks out of the alcove, and PAN SLOWLY past the raccoon, under the table, to find a half-dozen DIRTY PLATES where Arthur has stashed them out of sight.

56 RESUME DANCE FLOOR

56

Catherine and Mouse are in the middle of the floor. AS other dancers whirl around them, Cathy is trying to teach Mouse how to waltz. It's not working all that well; Mouse is anything but light on his feet.

CATHY

No, easier, easier... don't try to stomp the music to death... float with it, let yourself become part of it...

MOUSE

Okay good, okay fine.

But it's not, as Mouse makes a disasterous misstep, nearly tripping them both. He is chagrined and angry at himself, but Cathy takes it in stride.

MOUSE

Stupid stupid stupid.

CATHY

It's all right, Mouse. You should have seen me at my first dance lesson.

MOUSE

Really?  
(she nods)  
Mouse did good?

CATHY

Better than good.

MOUSE

Better than better?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

CATHY

Don't push it. Want to try again?

He NODS eagerly, Catherine takes him in her arms again, and they begin to move.

MOUSE

Catherine... up above... where do they keep the rubies?

57 ANGLE ON FATHER

57

as he sits down with Sebastien to play a game of chess.

FATHER

I ought to have my head examined for letting you talk me into this.

Father UNFOLDS the chess board and positions it between them.

SEBASTIEN

Examine it all you want, Jacob, it won't help your game one bit...

Father HARRUMPHS and reaches out to open the black box, his attention fixed on the magician.

FATHER

I warn you, I'm going to be watching you every moment...

But just as Father's fingers touch the latch, the dance music STOPS and a SUDDEN HUSH falls over the Great Hall. Father TURNS to see what's wrong.

58 ANGLE PAST FATHER

58

as the winterfest guests slowly move aside. In b.g. we hear a few HUSHED WHISPERS and we PUSH THROUGH the crowd to Vincent as he enters through one of the side tunnels (NOTE: not through the tall wooden doors, which remain closed). He is carrying Narcissa in her arms; she lies unconscious, horribly burned, very badly hurt. Pascal walks a few steps behind him. A SHOCKED SILENCE prevails as Vincent makes his way across the room.

Father is the first to snap out of it. He rises and rushes forward.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

FATHER

Lay her on one of the tables.  
Clear a space... Kipper, fetch  
me my bag. Quickly now!

As Kipper runs off, Mouse sweeps a tabletop clear of party debris, and Vincent gently lays down Narcissa. Father begins to examine her.

FATHER

Where did you find her?

VINCENT

Down in the shattered rooms, below  
the stone circle... she must have  
crawled there...

FATHER

Pulse is weak... she's  
dehydrated... my god, these  
burns... we have to get her up  
to the hospital chamber,  
quickly...

Suddenly, to everyone's shock and dismay, Narcissa begins to struggle hysterically against Father. She knocks him away, sits up, and SCREAMS.

59 CLOSE ON NARCISSA

59

as her strange half-blind eyes sweep the chamber, she shouts out a warning to no one and everyone.

NARCISSA

The evil one... is here!

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

60 INT. HOSPITAL CHAMBER. LATER

60

Vincent and Cathy watch with concern as Father treats Narcissa, who now lies, still and unmoving, on a bed in the hospital chamber. Mary is assisting Father while Dr. Alcott, in b.g., prepares a hypodermic.

FATHER

We have to get some fluid into her... Mary, bring me an IV...

Narcissa MOANS, and stirs feebly.

;- NARCISSA

(very weakly)

Vincent...

Vincent moves forward, takes Narcissa's hand, clasps it.

VINCENT

I'm here, Narcissa.

She seems to draw strength from his very presence.

NARCISSA

Vincent... beware...

(struggling)

the silver rose..

VINCENT

(leaning close)

The silver rose... what do you mean?

NARCISSA

The poison rose...

The old woman suddenly GASPS. All the tension goes out of her, her eyes close, and she settles back into sleep.

61 CLOSE ON DR. ALCOTT 61

The hypo still in his hand from the injection he just gave Narcissa.

DR. ALCOTT  
There... that's better...

62 RESUME 62

as Vincent angrily grabs the doctor by his wrist.

VINCENT  
What did you give her?

DR. ALCOTT  
(innocently)  
Something for the pain... to help her sleep...

FATHER  
Vincent, honestly, what's gotten into you? Peter, I need a hand here...

Vincent releases Dr. Alcott, and turns to look at Cathy. OFF their worried faces we

DISSOLVE TO:

63 INT. GREAT BALL. LATER THAT EVENING 63

Puddles of wax surround the candles now. There is no music, no laughter. The mood is somber.

SARAH  
Narcissa never went above. How could this happen?

JAMIE  
The evil one, she said.

64 ANGLE PAST MOUSE 64

sitting, legs folded under him, beside the table where Father abandoned his chess game. The black lacquer BOX is close at hand.

MOUSE  
Sounds bad.

65 RESUME  
SCENE:.

65

INTERCUTTING with shots of Mouse as he idly drums his fingers on the top of the box, listening to the others.

BENNY

The evil one... who's that  
supposed to be?

people shift uncomfortably; Benny doesn't get it.

JAMIE:

We all know who she meant...

SARAH

(frightened)  
Paracelsus...

MOUSE

Worse than bad.

Mouse toys with the latch on the box, just fiddling.

JAMIE

She said he was here.

MOUSE:

Worse than worse.

He SLAPS his hand on top of the chess set for emphasis.

SEBASTIEN

Ah, but did she mean here?  
(flashes a silver--  
dollar, palms it)  
Or here?

He reaches over, pulls the coin from behind Jamie's ear.  
Jamie is not amused, and SWIPES his hand away roughly.

JAMIE

Cut it out, Sebastien...

CLARENCE

I know what the man's saying. Did  
she mean here in New York, here in  
the tunnels, or here in this room?

SARAH

well, she can't have meant he was  
here at the winterfest.

(weakly)

Can she?

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

The guests look at each other nervously.

BENNY

Hey, this is crazy. The old lady was delirious...

LOU

Yeah. Just some kind of nightmare, if you ask me. Like one of your fever dreams...

Many of the helpers, from the sunlit pragmatical world topside, MUTTER in agreement, until VINCENT'S VOICE, sudden and unexpected, quiets them all.

VINCENT (O.S.)

Perhaps she dreamt that she was burned and broken and left to die... but if so, we share her nightmare...

66 ANGLE ON VINCENT

66

He stands one of the arched entryways to a side tunnel. Cathy is with him, Father and Dr. Alcott just behind. The guests regard them anxiously.

SARAH

Narcissa... is she...?

FATHER

She's... resting comfortably. Mary is sitting with her, we'll have to take shifts... until she's stabilized...

VINCENT

Her spirit is strong... she will not die...

DR. ALCOTT

What they're trying to say is that we think she's going to make it.

There is general RELIEF all around the hall. Father, exhausted by the strain, sits heavily in his chair.

67 BACK TO THE SCENE

67

Jamie won't forget, won't give it up.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

/

JAMIE

What about Paracelsus? Did she say anything else?

DR. ALCOTT

Nothing intelligible... she was delirious... something about a poisoned rose...

FATHER

(to Jamie)

Narcissa lives in a world of demons and spells and malign forces. For her, they exist, but...

SEBASTIEN

Ah, but Jacob, there are more things under heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy...

LOU

Like what, hoodoo and hocus-pocus?

VINCENT

Narcissa has abilities we do not understand... as inexplicable as my bond with Catherine... and as real.

PASCAL

She saw Winslow's death...

DR. ALCOTT

Even a broken clock is right twice a day.

CATHY

Maybe... but what if this is one of those times? Can you afford to take the chance?

FATHER

If there is evil among us, where is it hiding? I see nothing but friends... people I've known and trusted for years... colleagues, helpers...

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

SEBASTIEN

A good illusion makes you think you see something that's not really there... perhaps one of these friendly faces is but a passing mirage, a chimera...

Sebastien begins to move around the room, lightly touching the faces of those he passes.

SEBASTIEN

What if he's lurking behind this... or this...  
(touches Cathy)  
Or even here, lovely as it is...  
he could be anywhere.

As Sebastien approaches William, the big man angrily grabs his wrist, and holds him

WILLIAM

What the hell kind of game you trying to play, scaring everybody?

JAMIE

(to William)  
Let him go! What are you afraid of?  
Maybe you're the one...

WILLIAM

Paracelsus is supposed to be some kind of magic man, right? Well, the only magician I see is right here. .

William SHOVES Sebastien away roughly, and the elderly magician stumbles back a few steps. Everyone starts TALKING AT ONCE, some in support of William, others for Sebastien, until Father's voice cuts through the din.

FATHER

Stop it. Have you all gone mad?

(Quiet falls)

Winterfest is a time of brotherhood... of joy and trust. If we forget that... if we allow this day of all days to be tainted by fear... then Paracelsus will truly have won!

Everyone looks abashed. Sebastien manages a smile.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

SEBASTIEN

Right you are. William, dear boy, my  
apologies...

He offers his hand. William hesitates, then takes it.

WILLIAM

I'm the one who ought to  
apologize...

(awkwardly, to all)

Look, there's more wine, and a  
cake or two that's hardly been  
touched. Maybe we can just...

FATHER

An excellent idea!

Some of the tension seems to dissolve. The fiddler begins to  
play again, a slow sad tune. The guests begin breaking  
up into small clusters of conversation, etc. The mood is  
much more subdued than it was earlier; these people are  
shaken, trying to carry on gamely and reaffirm their  
fellowship despite everything, and it shows. But Vincent  
still seems TROUBLED.

68 ANGLE ON CATHY AND VINCENT

68

as they draw a little apart from the others, and talk quietly  
in a corner of the Great Ball. Vincent looks out over the  
guest, his concern plain on his face.

CATHY

(very quietly)

You think he's here, don't you?

VINCENT

My mind says it cannot be... but  
some small voice deep inside me  
whispers yes...

CATHY

I feel it too...

VINCENT

It makes no sense... how could he  
hope to bring off such a  
masquerade? There are no  
strangers at winterfest...

CATHY

(thoughtful)

What about the helpers?

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

VINCENT

The helpers are part of us...  
friends...

CATHY

Sometimes we drift away from  
friends, lose track of them for a  
little while... and when we see them  
again, if they seem changed, we  
don't think twice about it.

Vincent weighs Catherine's words. They make sense; it would be  
much easier for an enemy to pass as a helper than as one of  
the tunnel dwellers.

VINCENT

Most of those who were helpers  
thirty years ago are gone now.  
Paracelsus could not know the  
others...

CATHY

Surely there must be a few...  
those who were helpers from the  
very beginning, who knew  
Paracelsus when he was part of  
your world...

Vincent thinks about the question, and finally gives a  
small, reluctant NOD.

VINCENT

Only three...  
(beat, VO)  
Peter...

INTERCUT a brief shot of Dr. Alcott in animated  
conversation with Father.

VINCENT

(continuous, VO)  
... Lou...

The barber is joking with William by the wine casks.

VINCENT

(continuous, VO)  
... and Sebastien.

The magician is seated beside Mouse, running through a few  
simple card tricks.

CATHY

There must be some way to know  
for sure...

69 ANGLE ON FATHER

69

as Kipper and Eric interrupt his conversation.

ERIC

Father, can we borrow your chess set?

FATHER

Yes, of course... Kipper, watch out for this one...

KIPPER

He's going to spot me a rook...

Catherine approaches Dr. Alcott as the boys run off.

CATHY

Peter, did you ever tell Father about the first time we met?

DR. HARRINGTON

Of course not, Cathy...  
(grins)

After all, I have your reputation to protect...

(to Father)

Would you believe, she was stark naked at the time...

70 MOUSE AND SEBASTIEN

70

The lacquer box is visible in b.g. as Mouse studies three cards that Sebastien has spread in front of him.

SEBASTIEN

Nothing could be simpler, boy. Just find the red queen.

MOUSE

This one.

Sebastien turns over the card Mouse is pointing to, and uncovers the ace of spades.

SEBASTIEN

Pity about that...

As Sebastien is about to reshuffle, Vincent flips over the other two cards. They're both the aces of spades as well. Sebastien smiles and shrugs sheepishly. In b.g., Kipper and Eric grab the black box, sit down to play. Vincent SEES THEM and REACTS.

71 ANGLE ON THE BOX 71  
 as Eric begins to open the lid, VINCENT'S HAND ENTERS FRAME to hold it shut.

VINCENT  
 No.

72 RESUME 72  
 Eric looks and grimaces.

ERIC  
 Father said we could...

Catherine appears. Vincent shows her the box.

CATHY  
 The silver rose...

Off their long, meaningful look, we DISSOLVE TO:

73 LOU. A SHORT TIME LATER 73  
 Lou is standing with William by the wine casks as Cathy approaches with the box. Vincent is with her.

CATHY  
 Lou... I thought you might want to have a game of chess...

Lou looks at Cathy, at the box, smiles, shrugs.

LOU  
 Try Father, he's your chess player. Me, I wouldn't know a castle from a horse. Now if you want to get up a game of five card stud...

CATHY  
 Father's out of my league. I'll teach you the moves...

She presses the box toward him. Lou backs away.

LOU  
 Nah, I'll pass.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

INTERCUT between their eyes; hers suspicious, his narrowed and cold. They hold the look for a long beat, then Catherine walks several paces away. But as Lou starts to go back to his conversation, she TURNS.

CATHY

Lou!..

And she THROWS the black box at Lou.

74 CLOSE ON LOU

74

The terror is plain on his face as he WHIRLS AWAY from the bomb, throws up his arms to protect himself.

The box STRIKES HIM and OPENS, scattering chess pieces all over the floor.

75 PULL BACK

75

to reveal that Lou alone is crouched in a defensive posture, caught in the act of diving for cover. All eyes are on the barber. A HUSH falls over the Great Hall. Mouse comes forward to stand beside Vincent, the second black box in his hands.

MOUSE

Yours?

He flips open the lid suddenly: Lou can't help but FLINCH.

MOUSE

Disarmed it.

VINCENT

We found Father's set in the tunnel outside... where you hid it.

Lou RISES from his crouch, and makes a sudden DART for the nearest exit, but William grabs him. They grapple: then, with a CLICK, a footlong razor-sharp BLADE springs out of the barber's sleeve. He SLASHES William across the stomach. The big man SCREAMS and goes to his knees.

Vincent LEAPS OVER William, ROARING, striking out at Lou as he backpedals, and RAKING him across the face.

76 ON LOU

76

as Vincent's claws TEAR AWAY half the mask, revealing the twisted, burn-scarred features of Paracelsus beneath. He reels backwards: He SLASHES OUT as people come at him from all sides, SEIZES Eric when the boy comes too close.

LOU  
(Paracelsus' voice)  
One step closer and the child  
dies.

He holds his blade across Eric's throat, backing away slowly. Vincent GROWLS in angry frustration. With his free hand, Paracelsus rips off the torn mask and casts it contemptuously aside.

PARACELSUS  
The hour of unmasking is at hand,  
it would seem...

Father has been tending to William's wound. He rises..

FATHER  
John...

PARACELSUS  
Paracelsus... John is dead...  
killed by you, Jacob...

Paracelsus is backing away toward the tall double doors while the tunnel dwellers move toward him. Hands grasp chairs, candelabras, anything that can pass for a weapon.

CATHY  
Let the boy go!

PARACELSUS  
So your dear Vincent can rend me  
limb from limb? I think not.  
Regretfully, it would seem I need a  
hostage...

FATHER  
Then take me...

Father moves forward slowly, leaning heavily on his cane. Vincent GRASPS him by the arm and tries to stop him.

VINCENT.  
Father, no...

But Father gently removes Vincent's hand.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

FATHER

I must...

(to Paracelsus)

I'm the one you want, John, not  
the boy. We both know that.

Various voices CRY OUT in concern. Father moves very close to Paracelsus. INTERCUT between their faces. The alchemist hesitates, then SHOVES Eric away. The boy, SOBBING with relief, runs to Catherine, who comforts him.

FATHER

What happened to you, John? You  
were a good man once... my  
friend.

PARACELSUS

Spare me the homilies, Jacob. These  
poor deluded fools may not know  
what happened, but you and I, we  
remember... don't we?

77 CLOSE ON FATHER

77

as Paracelsus SHOVES the point of his blade right up under Father's chin, forcing his head back.

FATHER

We remember... differently...  
John...

78 CLOSE ON PARACELSUS

78

He stares into Father's eyes, his arm TREMBLING, the blade poised at Father's throat. Vincent, Catherine, and the others are too far away to help; Father's life hangs in the balance for what seems an eternity.

79 ANGLE PAST SEBASTIEN

79

as the old street magician suddenly raises an arm, and FLINGS one of his flash paper FIREBALLS at Paracelsus.

The alchemist staggers back, blinded for a second, and Vincent takes advantage of the distraction to pull Father safely out of harm's way. Then he turns back to face Paracelsus... and the alchemist THROWS OPEN the great wooden doors. The WIND comes howling into the Great Hall with awful, almost supernatural force. Father is buffeted backwards, falls. Vincent wraps Catherine in the shelter of his cloak. Nearby candles are BLOWN OUT.

80 LONG SHOT. THE GREAT HALL

80

All up and down the length of the Great Hall, the wind ROARS. The candles and torches are EXTINGUISHED by the terrible force of the wind, and darkness seems to sweep into the hall like a living thing.

DISSOLVE TO:

81 INT. HOSPITAL CHAMBER. LATER

81

Father, assisted by Dr. Alcott, has bandaged William's stomach wound. Catherine, Mary, Sebastien, and others look on anxiously. All look up when the search party that has been hunting for Paracelsus returns, headed by Vincent. Pascal, Jamie, Mouse, and others follow.

CATHY

Did you find him?

VINCENT

There's no sign... he's melted away like a shadow...

FATHER

A shadow that will fall over our world again... unless we find him, and stop him...

VINCENT

You took a great risk, Father. Paracelsus might have killed you... yet he let the moment pass...

FATHER

Believe me, I was as surprised as anyone... not that I'm complaining, mind you... perhaps he feared for his own life...

(trails off, thoughtful)

VINCENT

There's something else...

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

FATHER

In his eyes... I saw such anger there... such hatred... but... just for an instant, mind you... I thought I saw a bit of... of sadness as well... as if John was remembering... well...

(brisk)

Probably I just imagined it. At any rate, Catherine was the real hero... how could you possibly have known it was Lou? .

CATHY

I ruled out Peter when he told that embarrassing story of his... there was no way Paracelsus could know that Peter delivered me.

VINCENT

And Sebastien had been after Father all day to play chess.

CATHY

The last place Paracelsus wanted to be when that box was opened was across the chessboard... that left Lou.

FATHER

However you did it, we are deeply grateful, dear Catherine...

Everyone NODS. Then a quiet falls. Tunnel dwellers and helpers look at each other awkwardly, shuffle their feet. There's no more to say; no one feels very festive any more.

SEBASTIEN

The rest is silence...

PASCAL

Well... I better get back to the pipes.

MARY

I need to check on Narcissa...

BENNY

We'll need a guide back up...

Everyone begins to STIR, get to their feet, excuse themselves, start toward the door... but Vincent's voice stops the exodus.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

VINCENT

Is this how we want winterfest  
to end? Each of us slinking away to  
nurse our wounds, each alone... have  
we forgotten what this day means?

His words strike home. Sheepish looks are exchanged.  
Vincent extends a hand to Mouse, who stands beside him,  
eyes downcast. Mouse raises his eyes, smiles.

MOUSE

Okay good! Okay fine!

He reaches up, GRABS Vincent's hand hard, then gives his other  
hand to Jamie. She smiles, and her free hand reaches for  
Sebastien, beside her.

82 PAN AROUND THE CHAMBER

82

as one by one, tunnel dwellers and helpers link hands, joining  
together once again... from hand to hand to hand, until Mary  
takes Father's hand, and the circle is complete, except for  
Catherine.

83 ANGLE ON FATHER

83

as he smiles and reaches out a hand.

FATHER

Catherine... you're a part of us  
now...a helper... come, complete  
the circle...

Deeply moved, Catherine takes Father's hand, then LOOKS OVER  
to Vincent. We MOVE IN TIGHT as their hands come together,  
completing the circle, and binding the community together  
again for another year.

DISSOLVE TO:

84 INT. GREAT BALL - NIGHT

84

The candles are out, the torches extinguished. The Great Hall  
is wrapped in darkness again for another year. Vincent and  
Catherine stand alone in the center of the chamber. They've  
brought a lantern, which Vincent has set on the floor. Its  
light CASTS THEIR SHADOWS behind them on the wall, taller than  
life.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

CATHY  
 (softly)  
 Can you hear it, Vincent?

VINCENT  
 (puzzled)  
 Only the quiet... and the wind  
 outside, crying to come in...

CATHY  
 Listen! You can hear it if you  
 try... music...

The silence is profound. But Vincent looks into her eyes, and listens, and SMILES.

VINCENT  
 Yes... I hear it...  
 (beat)  
 Catherine... the question you  
 asked me earlier...

CATHY  
 I remember...

VINCENT  
 (very gently)  
 Yes...

Wordless, Catherine smiles and lifts her hands to his, and Vincent takes her in his arms. Together, they MOVE OFF out of frame.

85 LONG SHOT. GREAT BALL

85

We ANGLE DOWN from above. Catherine and Vincent, in each other's arms, are tiny figures at the far end of huge chamber. Behind them, etched in the lantern light, their SHADOWS dance against the wall, vast and silent and graceful, waltzing to a private music that only they can hear.

FADE OUT:

THE END