

**AFTERLIFE**

"Murder, Part I"

by  
Jon Nyqvist

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION 1

Vague, distorted surroundings.

Everything is out of focus as HAUNTING music plays over the soundtrack.

The music is all we hear, as the world seems strangely distant.

We are in the P.O.V of someone completely absorbed in their own world.

A HAND rises into frame -- the only thing we can see in focus. As the hand slowly turns, we realize something is terribly wrong with it.

Black strands of living DARKNESS sprawl all across the hand. It's terrifying, yet mesmerizing at the same time.

VOICE (V.O.)  
(whisper)  
Murderer...

SLAM!

The world around us SNAPS into focus, as a black glove is quickly pulled over the afflicted hand.

NEW ANGLE:

AURORA lays propped up in a small cot, having just been snapped out of her own little world by the sound of JONATHAN entering the small room.

JONATHAN  
Bedtime's over. We've got a problem.

Aurora wearily gets up, following Jonathan into:

2 INT. THE REAVER - BELOW DECK - NIGHT 2

Looking much like the bowels of an ordinary ship.

Aurora and Jonathan move through a long hallway, heading above deck.

AURORA  
What is it?

Jonathan just leads on, his grim silence telling her all she needs to know.

3

EXT. THE REAVER - NIGHT

3

CLOSE ON:

A HATCH, as it opens.

Jonathan and Aurora climb out onto the outer deck of the airship.

We track them as they both step up to the front of the ship, taking in what lies ahead.

Hard RAIN pelts the deck relentlessly.

PULLING BACK we gradually get a better view of the surroundings in the limited light of sporadic flashes of thunder.

A dark forest of DEAD TREES lies beneath them, approaching way too fast.

The gas level keeping the airship flying has reached it's minimum, causing them to loose altitude, fast.

JONATHAN

I'm no expert, but judging from the alarming rate the ground is coming up, I'd say we're about to have a very rough landing.

Aurora takes in the grim situation, peering up at the damaged gas balloon above.

AURORA

You're not wrong. But it's not the impact I'm worried about.

JONATHAN

What are you talking about?

AURORA

One spark and this entire ship goes up in a ball of flames.

JONATHAN

(sighs)  
Wonderful.

KATE comes stumbling out of the hatch, instantly getting soaked by the rain. She makes her way to Jonathan and Aurora.

KATE

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

AURORA  
Crashing, burning, death. Pretty  
much in that order.

Kate throws a panicked look to Jonathan, who simply nods helplessly. She clutches Jonathan's arm, almost as if by reflex.

KATE  
What can we do?

Aurora does her best not to roll her eyes as she turns away.

She leans over the railing as she speaks, looking down at the fast approaching trees below.

AURORA  
We could skip the burning up part  
by jumping. That way out corpses  
will look slightly prettier.

Kate tosses her an angry look.

KATE  
Go ahead. I was getting tired of  
sharing quarters with a murderer.

CLOSE ON:

Aurora's gloved hand, clutching the side of the railing, her fingers DIGGING into the wood.

KATE (cont'd)  
That's right. I know all about who  
you are...  
(spits it out)  
... Raven. Do you have any idea  
how many lives you've destroyed?  
How many lay dead in your wake?

Without warning, Aurora snaps around, rushing towards Kate.

A silvery FLASH as she draws her dagger, pressing it against Kate's throat.

Before Jonathan has even had time to react, Aurora brutally shoves Kate up against a mast behind them.

ON Aurora and Kate, their faces inches apart. Kate gasps in pain as Aurora's dagger draws some blood.

AURORA  
(deadly)  
I'm not sure. But I'm pretty  
certain one more won't make a  
difference.

She is about to let her dagger dig deeper, when she is blindsided by Jonathan. He lays her down with a hard jab to the face.

Kate falls to her knees, coughing and clutching her small wound. Jonathan kneels beside her, checking her throat.

Luckily, it seems to be just a small nick, no real damage done.

JONATHAN

You okay?

Kate nods, shivering from the adrenaline. And the cold.

Jonathan turns his attention to Aurora, who is recovering from the punch, slowly standing back up. She looks completely dazed.

Taking advantage of her momentary daze, Jonathan roughly grabs her, pinning her against the railing in a hard grip.

He keeps her leaning precariously over the railing, ready to toss her off the ship if need be.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Give me one good reason not to  
throw you off this ship right now!

Aurora seems to regain some of her senses, taking in her surroundings with a seemingly genuine look of surprise.

AURORA

(dazed)

What...?

Her eyes widen as she realizes where she is. Jonathan presses her further over the edge.

A tense beat as their eyes meet -- Jonathan's full of anger, while Aurora's eyes show genuine fear and confusion.

The moment stretches out for an eternity it seems, until Jonathan finally pulls her back onto deck.

KATE

What are you doing? She tried to  
kill me!

JONATHAN

I'll deal with it later. We've got  
bigger problems right now.

He takes another look over the edge of the railing.

Mere minutes away from crashing.

(CONTINUED)

JONATHAN (cont'd)  
Kate, get the others. Bring them up here.

KATE  
But-

JONATHAN  
(serious)  
Please Kate, we don't have much time!

Kate nods, heading below deck.

WE STAY with Jonathan, as his mind races to find a solution.

Aurora, still looking slightly out of it, approaches him from behind. Jonathan speaks without looking back.

JONATHAN (cont'd)  
If we get through this, you'll explain to me exactly what the hell just happened.

AURORA  
I don't owe you anything.

JONATHAN  
Wrong. The only reason you're not a wet stain on the ground down there right now, is because I gave you one last chance. One chance to prove to me that there's a person in there somewhere.

Aurora regards him for a beat, then turns away, heading to the other side of the deck.

As she walks:

AURORA  
(to herself)  
Too late...

DISSOLVE TO:

Kate leads Marius, who is supporting Vergil, onto the rainy deck. Vergil looks to be in pretty rough shape, due to his bad case of poisoning.

Jonathan meets up with the three of them.

Aurora can be seen in the background, obscured by shadows -- a true outsider.

(CONTINUED)

MARIUS

Kate tells me we have a problem.

JONATHAN

Yeah we do: Gravity. We're about two minutes away from crashing.

VERGIL

(in pain)

We should head below deck. Shield ourselves from the impact.

JONATHAN

Sure, unless the gas catches a spark, in which case I'd hate to be around.

MARIUS

What are you saying?

ON JONATHAN, as he looks everyone in the eye before speaking.

JONATHAN

We jump.

Suddenly, Aurora passes them by, heading for the railing. Kate gives her a deadly look that washes right off the female assassin.

AURORA

Knew you'd see things my way eventually.

Jonathan just throws her a grim look.

CUT TO:

Twisted, dead trees spread out below as we find THE REAVER gliding towards us at breakneck speed.

The tallest trees already scrape the bottom of the ship's hull as it continues it's descent.

PANNING UPWARDS, we find five figures standing on the doomed airship's upper deck railing, ready to jump.

A flash of thunder momentarily illuminates their nervous faces. The ship's hull is starting to take damage now, as more and more trees are caught in it's path.

It's now or never.

ON JONATHAN, as he gives the others one last look.

(CONTINUED)

JONATHAN

Now!!

All five LEAP in unison, crashing into the twisted branches of the trees below.

ON KATE, painfully hitting branch after branch, never getting a hold to stop her fall, until her dress gets caught, luckily halting her descent.

MEANWHILE, we find Marius and Vergil, doing their own painful tumble down to earth. Marius manages to somehow shield Vergil from the worst of it, taking a few nasty blows in his stead.

OVER TO JONATHAN, also in the midst of falling through the rotten branches. Desperately trying to find something to grab onto, he finally manages to latch onto a sizeable tree branch.

The dead wood is heavily strained by his sudden weight, emitting a groan of protest, bending to it's breaking point.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Oh shi-!

SNAP!

The branch breaks, sending Jonathan into a free fall the last 25 feet, hitting the ground painfully, getting the wind thoroughly knocked out of him.

The Reaver finally hits the ground further along. As the hull hits the rocky earth, a SPARK is generated.

CUT TO:

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - NIGHT

Not far away.

Complete darkness.

Suddenly, a HUGE BALL OF FLAME in the distance illuminates everything around us: DOZENS of dark CREATURES react violently as they are momentarily lit by the explosion.

The closest creature bares it's razor sharp teeth as the ball of fire is reflected in it's oily black skin.

As the light begins to die out, the creature releases a creepy HISS, and we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

7 EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - NIGHT

7

We pan across the haunting sight of dead trees and thorny undergrowth.

Not a sound is heard -- No animals, nothing except the sound of falling rain.

JONATHAN stumbles into frame, seeking support against one of the gnarly trees. He's looks pretty banged up from the fall, but seems to be otherwise intact.

He catches his breath for a beat, until:

KATE (O.S.)  
(shout)  
Help! Somebody please help me!

Jonathan presses on, towards her call for help.

TRACKING SHOT of Jonathan, desperately pushing through the forest as Kate's shouts become clearer.

JONATHAN  
(shout)  
Kate!

KATE (O.S.)  
Up here!

Jonathan turns his attention upwards, seeing Kate, dangling from a tree by the back of her dress. She's at least 60 feet up, so falling down would be bad.

Jonathan can't resist.

JONATHAN  
(smirks)  
How's it hanging?

Kate throws him an angry look.

KATE  
(frowns)  
This is hardly the time Jonathan. I think my dress is tearing.

JONATHAN  
Right.

He scans the surroundings.

(CONTINUED)

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Hang on.

(beat)

Seriously, that was completely unintentional.

KATE

(sighs)

Just get me down from here.

Jonathan hurries to the nearest tree, starting to climb up. Every branch cracks disturbingly as he carefully ascends the dead tree, until finally reaching the branch with Kate dangling from it.

The moment he tries to crawl out to her, the branch bends dangerously, further tearing Kate's dress.

KATE (cont'd)

Careful!

Jonathan reaches out, his hand mere inches from Kate when the branch finally gives out, half of it BREAKING OFF.

Kate SCREAMS as she is about to fall to her death. But Jonathan manages to reach out and catch the back of her dress while hooking his feet around the remainder of the stunted tree branch.

Their bodies painfully SLAM against the trunk of the tree, but Jonathan keeps his feet securely around the branch.

They dangle precariously for a beat, as Kate tries to recover from her near death experience.

JONATHAN

(strained)

Hands getting tired now...

Kate snaps out of it, managing grab onto a lower branch by herself.

KATE

(breathless)

Thank you.

JONATHAN

(still upside down)

You're welcome. Let's find the others.

Off Kate and Jonathan, making their descent, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

8

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

8

We find Jonathan leading Kate through the eerie forest.

ON KATE, as she nervously scans the total darkness around them. She reacts curiously as one of the nearby shadows appears to MOVE unnaturally.

KATE

Did you just see...?

Jonathan leads on, seemingly unaware of the increasing level of strange shadows around them.

JONATHAN

Yeah. But I'm trying to suppress an overwhelming sense of *deja vu*.

Kate eyes him curiously as they move on.

A GROAN stops them cold. Jonathan raises his hand, silencing Kate's inevitable question.

ANOTHER GROAN, this time more distinctly human.

Jonathan and Kate hurry towards the source. As they pass behind an assortment of large rocks, they come across two splayed out BODIES -- Vergil and Marius, both looking lifeless as they lay bruised and bloodied on the ground.

Kate instantly rushes to Marius, gently cradling his head. He doesn't look to be alive.

KATE

(panicking)

Oh god! No!

Jonathan decides to keep his distance, sadly watching as Kate cradles her surrogate father until:

MARIUS

(muffled)

What's all the fuss about?

Kate leans back, seeing a now conscious Marius. She lets out a relieved sob.

KATE

I thought you were-

MARIUS

(scoffs)

Dead? Takes a bit more than a fall to put this stubborn old fool in the ground!

(CONTINUED)

Kate hugs him intensely, utterly relieved.

On JONATHAN, as he moves over to Vergil, who is also regaining his senses.

VERGIL

(dazed)

D-did we crash yet?

Jonathan helps him up against one of the rocks.

JONATHAN

You could say that.

VERGIL

Good.

(beat)

Did everyone make it?

Jonathan takes in the question, realizing:

JONATHAN

Has anyone seen Aurora?

KATE

Who?

JONATHAN

Raven. Has anyone seen her?

KATE

No. And as far as I'm concerned, I hope she's skewered on a tree somewhere.

VERGIL

She jumped right after me and Marius. She should have landed right over there.

He indicates a small clearing not far from their position.

JONATHAN

I'm gonna check it out. You guys wait here.

He moves off, melting into the darkness. Kate watches him leave with an annoyed expression, before going back to tending to Vergil and Marius.

CUT TO:

9

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - CLEARING - NIGHT

9

A FLASH of THUNDER lights up the small clearing, just as Jonathan enters frame, scanning the surroundings for any sign of life.

ANOTHER flash of lightning reveals a STAIN on the rocks beside Jonathan. He leans down, touching the unknown substance.

CLOSE ON:

Jonathan's fingers, RED with BLOOD.

He runs the crimson blood between his fingers, furrowing his brow.

He stands, taking another look around.

JONATHAN  
(shout)  
Aurora!

No answer, only the endless patter of rain.

Jonathan looks down to the blood on his hand, as it's slowly washed away by the rain.

DARK VOICE (O.S.)  
(whisper)  
Blood...

ON JONATHAN, as he realizes what lies in the shadows all around.

Shapes of pure DARKNESS.

He takes off in a sprint, heading back to the others as fast as he can.

10

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - NIGHT (MOMENTS LATER)

10

Marius is back on his feet, once again supporting the weakened Vergil.

Kate peers in to the dark, rewarded with the sight of Jonathan, as he sprints towards them in the distance.

He seems to be shouting something, but because of the rain and thunder, she can't make out what.

KATE  
I can't hear you!

Jonathan finally gets close enough to be heard.

(CONTINUED)

JONATHAN  
(screaming)  
Run for you freaking lives!!

ON KATE'S FACE as she sees something O.S.

Her eyes widen with FEAR.

KATE'S P.O.V:

Jonathan rushing towards us, but more importantly, the LEGION of hellish CREATURES currently pursuing him. The same creatures we've seen in Jonathan and Aurora's dreams. Only this time they're painfully real.

END P.O.V SHOT.

Without further delay, Kate pulls Marius and Vergil with her, as they make a desperate run from the fast approaching creatures.

ON JONATHAN, dashing mere feet in front of the hungry army of dark flesh and sharp talons. He reaches the small rock formation, leaping nimbly from boulder to boulder, gaining some height on the creatures.

One of the creatures leaps right in his footsteps, relentlessly gaining on him.

Jonathan reaches the highest rock, facing a vertical 18 foot drop to the ground.

Without missing a beat, he JUMPS off the rock, instantly followed by the creature.

SLOW MOTION SHOT:

Jonathan and the creature sail through the air.

The devilish creature is about to sink it's talons into his back, when Jonathan nimbly shifts his body mid-air, delivering a shattering KICK to the face of the ugly creature.

END SLOW MOTION SHOT.

Jonathan lands with a perfect roll, as the now severely unbalanced creature hits the ground in a painful tumble.

Jonathan continues his escape, the acrobatics affording him slightly more distance between him and the creatures.

WE LEAVE JONATHAN, panning across the dark forest at blinding speed, until we catch up with Kate and the others.

(CONTINUED)

The fact that Marius has to half carry Vergil is slowing them down considerably, but they still have the advantage of a head start.

Kate desperately scans the surroundings as they run, trying to find a viable destination. Panic is setting in, until her face literally LIGHTS UP.

KATE  
(excited)  
There!

WE PAN UPWARDS, getting a good look at what lies ahead: A RAGING FIRE, born out of the Reaver's explosion.

Despite the rain, many fires still burn strong among the dead trees.

CUT TO:

11 EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - NIGHT 11

Kate, Marius and Vergil reach the main crash site. The Reaver is completely demolished, fires raging throughout the ruined hull.

The intense light of the fire is in sharp contrast to the surrounding darkness.

MARIUS  
Gather the debris! Keep this fire  
alive!

Kate joins him, as they begin their battle to keep the fire burning. She pauses for a beat, looking back into the darkness from where they came.

No sign of Jonathan.

KATE  
(to herself)  
Where are you...?

OFF her concerned expression, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

12 INT. UNKNOWN

12

BLACK, nothing but a wavy sea of black.

We slowly begin to PAN SIDEWAYS, realizing that the "black" is in fact black SHEETS.

A slender BARE FOOT slips into frame.

We keep panning sideways, the foot giving way to a long, smooth leg, and just as we're about to get to R-Rated areas, we're disappointed by a silky black dress.

We finally arrive on our sleeping beauty's face -- AURORA.

A WIDER ANGLE reveals that she lies sleeping on a large bed with black sheets, inexplicably wearing a black dress. She sports a few cuts and bruises from the earlier fall.

The rest of the room is drowned in darkness.

Aurora STIRS, slowly blinking awake.

Her eyes register surprise as she takes in the surroundings. She SNAPS upright, instantly taking in the new and strange situation.

Her eyes finally drift down to herself, and the dress.

AURORA  
(to herself)  
Well, this can't be good...

She is completely surprised by:

VOICE (O.S.)  
You don't like it?

The voice is cold as ice, but alluring at the same time. A rare sort of magnetism to it.

Aurora wastes no time assuming a defensive position, ready to fend off any attacker. She peers into the surrounding darkness, trying to locate her mystery guest.

AURORA  
I like to save the whole kidnapping thing for the third date. Call me old fashioned.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Your fear is intoxicating, yet you hide it so well.

(CONTINUED)

Aurora is getting uneasy by the sheer presence of this dark entity.

AURORA

Who are you?

VOICE (O.S.)

I am the sting of a blade, the flash of a bullet, the burn of poison. I am calculative yet passionate. I take the lives of innocent and guilty alike. I am your deity and your craft.

(beat)

I am... Murder.

Suddenly, Aurora is GRABBED from behind. A stunningly handsome MAN with razor sharp features has her in an instant stranglehold.

His face is covered with shifting darkness, like a LIVING TATTOO. His eyes are opaque, eternally shedding BLACK TEARS.

This is the LORD OF MURDER.

He whispers into Aurora's ear as she vainly struggles against his unbreakable hold.

MURDER

(whisper)

And I'm here to welcome you home.

OFF AURORA, struggling to free herself:

CUT TO:

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - NIGHT 13

The fire still burns, creating a safe haven in the seemingly endless darkness. Marius and Kate busily feed the flames with wooden debris, as Vergil sits propped up nearby, trying to warm himself.

From the look on his face, the poison has nearly gotten the best of him though.

Kate pauses to check him over, leaning down next to him.

KATE

How are you holding up?

VERGIL

(weakly)

I feel... numb, and burning at the same time.

(CONTINUED)

Kate tries her best to hide her sadness.

KATE  
We just need to get you warm.  
You'll be fine.

Vergil shuts his eyes for a beat, then forcing himself awake again.

VERGIL  
Did Jonathan come back yet?

KATE  
(smiles)  
I'm sure he'll be here any minute.

Vergil returns the smile.

VERGIL  
(fading)  
Good...

He falls asleep, only his ragged breaths telling us that he's still alive.

Kate stands, throwing a worried look to the darkness.

Without warning, a dark shape comes flying out of the dark, almost knocking her over.

Kate jumps back with a frightened scream, as the dark shape, now revealed as Jonathan falls at her feet.

His breathing is beyond rapid, as the chase has drained every last bit of strength he has.

Beyond the barrier of the fire light, angry HISSES and whispers can be heard, cursing the light.

Kate rushes to Jonathan.

KATE  
Are you alright?

JONATHAN  
(gasping for air)  
It's all relative. What the hell  
are those things?

KATE  
No one really knows. They shy away  
from light, so we should be alright  
as long as the fire is kept  
burning.

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

ON JONATHAN, watching the obscure shapes move around in the distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

14 EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - LATER 14

The rain has stopped.

Everyone seems to have settled down for the moment, taking a break around the bonfire they've built.

Kate tends to both Marius and Vergil, as we find Jonathan sitting across the other side of the fire, absently watching some dried blood still left on his hand, presumably Aurora's.

He barely reacts to:

DIANA (O.S.)  
She's not dead, you know.

Diana sits down beside Jonathan, her eyes seemingly mesmerized by the dancing flames of the fire.

JONATHAN  
You don't mind if I doubt that statement, do you?

DIANA  
You can still save her.

Jonathan shakes his head, letting out a deep sigh.

JONATHAN  
Even if I knew where to go. Even if, by some miracle, I don't get eaten by bloodthirsty creatures from hell on my way there, what makes you think I even want to rescue her? She's a cold blooded killer!

DIANA  
That's strange.

JONATHAN  
What?

DIANA  
You don't strike me as the kind of man who breaks a promise.

JONATHAN  
(confused)  
What the hell are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

DIANA

You promised her one last chance.

Annoyed, Jonathan tosses another piece of wood into the fire.

JONATHAN

I'm getting a damn guilt trip from  
my imaginary shrink!

(beat)

Why the hell do you care so much  
about her?

Diana leans in closer, conspiratorially.

DIANA

I don't. But you do.

Before Jonathan can reply, he is interrupted by:

KATE (O.S.)

Who are you talking to?

Jonathan turns to see Kate standing beside him, looking at him with a curious expression.

When he looks back to Diana, she's no longer there.

JONATHAN

Huh? I was talking?

KATE

Uh, yeah.

JONATHAN

Guess I got hit harder than I  
thought.

Kate just shakes her head, moving back to the others.

OFF JONATHAN, falling back into his deep thoughts:

CUT TO:

We pass through desolate halls of a huge interior.

The walls are filled paintings and murals of terrible acts of violence. Upon closer inspection, it almost seems as if the paintings come to life, showing an act of murder over and over again.

Each painting is different, and they are countless in number.

TWO FIGURES enter the frame, slowly negotiating the seemingly endless hallway.

(CONTINUED)

As we move CLOSER, we find that it's Aurora, being forcefully led forward by Murder, still keeping her in a seemingly effortless grip. He shrugs off each attempt she makes to free herself as if he barely even notices it.

After a beat, Aurora gives up the struggling, realizing it's not going to work this time.

She glances at the creepy paintings.

MURDER  
(re: paintings)  
Do you like them?

AURORA  
I'm not really into art.

MURDER  
Don't be modest.

Aurora gives him a questioning look.

MURDER (cont'd)  
See for yourself.

He stops, turning her to face the wall, and more importantly, the painting hanging there.

Aurora's eyes WIDEN, as she sees:

INSERT: The painting, showing YOUNG AURORA putting several slugs into VAN BECKETT with her silenced pistol.

AURORA  
What the hell...?

MURDER  
Like all children, every one of them is different. Some are ugly, some are beautiful, but only a precious few are truly special.

Aurora lifts an eyebrow.

AURORA  
Children?

MURDER  
Exactly. Every act of murder gives birth to another child of darkness. They are my eyes and ears, but more importantly...

He brutally SHOVES Aurora backwards, but before she hits the ground, she is CAUGHT by an unseen figure.

NEW ANGLE:

As Aurora turns to see who caught her - one of the dark CREATURES.

She FREEZES instantly, as the formidable creature presses it's razor sharp talons against her soft skin.

MURDER (cont'd)

They are also my limbs. An extension of my will one might say.

AURORA

What's all this have to do with me?

Murder steps closer, breathing in her scent. She turns away defiantly.

MURDER

You used to be one of my favorite pawns. So full of rage. You painted so many pictures for me, each more impressive than the last. But when the time came for you to paint your masterpiece, you hesitated. You have no idea how much that hurt me, Aurora.

He roughly grabs her left hand, holding it in front of her face. The strands of living darkness pulsate vigorously, now reaching down to her elbow.

MURDER (cont'd)

I made you strong. I gave you a purpose, and you spit it back in my face!

Murder grabs Aurora from the creature's grasp, violently pushing her up against the wall, choking the life out of her.

A TEAR runs down her cheek, matching the eerie BLACK tears running down Murder's face. The cold fury in his face is a chilling sight.

AURORA

(choking)

Please...

MURDER

I am the last being in the verse you should be asking for mercy. I made a mistake. I opened the door for you. Then you turn out to be this... pathetic creature. It's time for me to correct that mistake.

(CONTINUED)

A BLACK DAGGER materializes into his free hand.

He rears back, then brings the knife down towards the helpless Aurora.

VOICE (O.S.)

Wait.

Murder stops the dagger an inch from Aurora's chest.

A PALE HAND reaches out from behind him, taking a hold of his shoulder.

VOICE (O.S.) (cont'd)

Maybe she's not lost to us.

We only see the hand, everything else is covered in shadows.

VOICE (O.S.) (cont'd)

That is likely. Never the less, a lot of effort has been made to create her. It would be foolish not to test her.

Murder considers the words for a beat, still keeping his grip on the now slightly BLUE Aurora. He leans in menacingly.

MURDER

Very well.

He leans in further, giving Aurora a CHILLING kiss. A dark MIST passes from his breath into Aurora's mouth.

He then releases her, letting her fall to the floor.

She COUGHS violently.

AURORA

(dazed)

What the hell did you do to me?

Murder leans down, with a chilling smile on his face.

MURDER

A taste of true darkness. Enjoy.

Aurora gives him a confused look, until she is hit by a

VISION: COUNTLESS acts of unspeakable violence and murder flashes before our eyes. The worst acts of evil our world can provide.

15 CONTINUED: (4)

15

END VISION

Aurora reels from the vision, letting out a SCREAM of pure anguish.

CUT TO:

16 EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - NIGHT 16

We find the four companions gathered by the fire.

Jonathan is standing, seemingly preparing to leave.

Kate stands, looking almost desperate.

KATE

You're going to do what?!?

Jonathan straps on a belt carrying a sword.

JONATHAN

I'm not asking any of you to join me. All you have to do is keep the fire burning until I get back.

KATE

You don't even know if she's still alive!

JONATHAN

I can't explain it, just trust me on this.

MARIUS

It does seem extremely reckless, even for you.

JONATHAN

Look, I realize you think she's not worth saving. Even I'm not completely sure, I just know that I have to try.

Vergil appears to have stirred, having heard the exchange.

VERGIL

Jonathan is right.

Everyone turns to Vergil, surprised at his statement.

VERGIL (cont'd)

(weak)

There are larger things at stake here. This is not just about us anymore.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VERGIL (cont'd)  
Something terrible is going to happen, and we can't afford to lose anyone, especially not her.

KATE  
What are you talking about?

VERGIL  
(fading)  
My part is played. I'm sorry I never got the chance to explain everything in greater detail.

He reaches out with his hand, Jonathan takes it.

Vergil is nearly gone.

VERGIL (cont'd)  
(whisper)  
Follow her Jonathan, and you will find your purpose...

One last breath escapes Vergil's lips. He is dead. Jonathan gently places Vergil's hand down next to the body. Kate is crying, comforted by Marius.

Jonathan rises, new determination in his eyes.

He grabs a makeshift torch, igniting it on the bonfire.

JONATHAN  
Keep the fire alive.

Without any hesitation, he dashes into the darkness.

OVERHEAD SHOT of Jonathan, distinctly marked by the bright torch he is carrying, as he runs into the SEA of CREATURES in the darkness. A sea that PARTS to the light of the torch, giving him passage.

The effect is merely momentary, as the legion of creatures soon recover from the assault on their sensitive senses, and take up the pursuit once again.

ON JONATHAN, as he presses on, despite insurmountable odds.

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

17 EXT. DARK LANDS - WASTELAND - NIGHT

17

The dead trees give way to a barren wasteland filled with strange rock formations.

JONATHAN steps out of the tree line, taking in the dark wasteland spreading out in front of him. The excited whispers of his pursuers can be heard not far behind.

He waves his torch around, trying to get an idea of where to go next.

DIANA (O.S.)

North.

Jonathan whips around, finding Diana casually leaning against one of the larger rocks.

JONATHAN

What?

DIANA

Go north. That's where you'll find her.

JONATHAN

Does it look like I brought my compass?

DIANA

(sighs)

That way.

She points straight out into the wasteland.

JONATHAN

Could you be a bit more specific?

DIANA

You'll know it when you see it.

Jonathan makes a frustrated strangling motion towards Diana, not happy with the vague-ness.

DIANA (cont'd)

I suggest you get a move on.

Before Jonathan can reply, a CREATURE leaps at him THROUGH Diana, as if she wasn't there at all.

Jonathan manages to stumble into a backwards roll, getting a foot under the charging creature, and launching it towards a boulder behind them.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

The creature crashes against the rock with a painful thud, as Jonathan completes his backwards roll, and dashes off once again, closely followed by a DOZEN pissed off creatures.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. DARK LANDS - WASTELAND - HILL - NIGHT

18

A breathless Jonathan reaches a small hill overlooking a vast valley with a prominent structure in the center.

A looming shape of a pitch black FORTRESS sits in the middle of the valley. A black TOWER sticks up from within the walls of the fortress.

KILLER'S SANCTUARY in all it's creepiness.

Jonathan presses on, towards the fortress.

CUT TO:

EXT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - NIGHT

We find ourselves outside a huge, pitch black structure.

What once was an elegant castle, is now corrupted by darkness to it's very core, twisting it into something purely evil. Black VINES cover the entire exterior, giving it a slightly organic feel.

The courtyard in front of the looming castle is empty, save for the ominous shadows.

Until a flickering LIGHT shines it's way into frame, as JONATHAN comes leaping into the courtyard from the surrounding wall.

He only has two seconds to take in the formidable structure in front of him before the eerie sounds of his unnatural pursuers catch up with him.

Dark creatures are already scaling the wall behind him, mere seconds away.

Jonathan checks the torch, which looks nearly died out. He rushes towards the castle, spotting a WINDOW thirty feet up the side of the castle.

He quickly starts to climb the dark vines that cover the walls of the structure. He turns briefly to check his pursuers, getting a nasty surprise as the nearest creature LEAPS up next to him from below.

The hissing creature SWIPES at Jonathan with its talons, drawing some blood from his forearm, forcing him to DROP his torch.

(CONTINUED)

ON THE TORCH, as it lands at the base of the wall, igniting the VINES! The fire starts spreading up the vines quickly, stopping the other creatures cold in their tracks.

ABOVE:

Jonathan has his hands full with the remaining creature, as it makes another attempt to behead him.

He lets go of the vines at the last second, falling back, but keeping his feet hooked in a good hold, leaving him hanging upside down.

The fire licks his hair, nearly about to engulf him.

With a huge amount of effort, Jonathan releases his feet, grabbing onto the vines with his hands yet again. His feet are caught by the flames, igniting his legs!

The creature, looming above, hesitantly regards the nearing flames, but is compelled by an unseen force to advance on Jonathan.

ON JONATHAN, as he waits for the creature to charge him, despite the increasing heat from the flames rapidly burning through his leather clothing.

The creature finally makes it's move, leaping towards Jonathan with it's talons flashing in the firelight. Jonathan is ready for it however, managing to bring up his burning legs and wrap them around the neck of the surprised creature.

The flames SIZZLE against the oily skin of the hellish creature, which now lets out a pure SCREAM OF PAIN.

Jonathan presses his advantage, using his legs to violently TWIST the creature's neck. A sickening CRACK is heard, and the creature goes limp, falling into the flames below.

Jonathan urgently turns his attention to the window above.

CUT TO:

A one window bedroom, furnished surprisingly elegantly in an evil sort of way.

The MOON has cleared the heavy black clouds outside, shedding it's pale light in through the window.

Jonathan LEAPS into the room through the window, his legs still ON FIRE. He quickly grabs the black sheets off the bed, smothering the flames.

(CONTINUED)

Once the fire is out, he sinks down against the bed, exhausted.

VOICE (O.S.)

Nice entrance.

Jonathan leaps to his feet, drawing his sword. He peers into the shadows, trying to see the other person.

JONATHAN

Thanks. Though it almost burned down the only tree in the forest, if you know what I mean.

VOICE

Now that would have been a waste.

Our mystery person steps out of the shadows.

It's AURORA, looking stunning in her figure-hugging black dress. She seems oddly relaxed.

Jonathan lowers his sword, relieved.

JONATHAN

Nice dress.

Aurora looks down, offering a small smile. She slowly approaches him with predatory eyes.

AURORA

I'm glad you think so.

JONATHAN

I think we better leave before the terror brigade finds us.

She's real close now, definitely inside his personal space.

AURORA

Don't worry. They won't bother us in here.

She runs her hands up the length of his arm, seductively. Jonathan takes in this new behavior with a frown.

JONATHAN

What's up with you?

Aurora leans in closer, letting him breathe in her scent. Jonathan eyes her suspiciously, but is clearly affected.

AURORA

(seductive)

What? You came to rescue me, right? Don't you want your reward?

JONATHAN

Are you sure you're...?

He drifts off, as Aurora deftly slips off her dress.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

(coughs)

... okay?

AURORA

(seductive)

You've wanted this since the day we met.

She leans in, an inch from his lips.

AURORA (cont'd)

Just like I have.

That's it, no amount of self control could stop him. Jonathan closes the distance, locking lips in a KISS beyond passionate.

As the passion builds to new heights, we PAN DOWN to the floor, as Jonathan's sword clatters against it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - BEDROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Jonathan and Aurora lay in the bed, post coital and sweaty.

Jonathan sits up, starting to gather his clothes.

JONATHAN

We should be getting out of here.

Aurora begins to slip back into her dress.

AURORA

Yeah, I'm not much for pillow talk either.

JONATHAN

You never told me what happened to you after the crash.

Aurora thinks for a beat.

AURORA

It's mostly a blur. I remember waking up here. There was this guy, real creepy with weird tattoos all over his face. I don't remember much after that.

JONATHAN

He just let you go?

AURORA

I'm not sure. He was talking about some test.

JONATHAN

Well I'm not sticking around to find out. I'm afraid I pretty much torched the way out so we'll have to find another one.

Aurora nods, now finished getting dressed.

AURORA

I think I saw a door at the end of the hall outside. Might as well give it a shot.

Jonathan lifts his sword from the floor, sliding it back into his belt.

JONATHAN

Let's go.

CUT TO:

21

EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - NIGHT 21

Kate and Marius sit huddled together in front of the fire.

Vergil's body lays nearby, covered by his own cloak.

KATE

What do we do if he doesn't come back?

Marius strokes her face comfortingly.

MARIUS

He will. I know it.

KATE

How can you be so sure?

MARIUS

Some things you just have to take on faith.

Kate lets her eyes drift to the flames.

KATE

I wish I had that.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

As if on cue, the RAIN pick up again, harder than before. The water hisses against the flames of the bonfire.

Marius rushes to his feet, grabbing more fuel for the fire. The rain is really pouring down, starting to put out the fire.

Excited whispers can be heard from the darkness.

KATE (cont'd)  
(terrified)  
Oh, no...

She joins Marius in his desperate attempt to keep the fire going.

Off their seemingly hopeless struggle, we:

CUT TO:

22 INT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - NIGHT

22

We pick up Jonathan and Aurora as they quietly pad down a long, dark hallway.

The disturbing paintings line the walls here as well. Jonathan gives the paintings a disturbed glance.

JONATHAN  
Love the decor. Despair, with just  
a hint of insanity.

AURORA  
Save the art class until we're out  
of here. This place gives me the  
creeps.

JONATHAN  
(smirks)  
I didn't think you were capable of  
getting the creeps.

Aurora stops, facing him.

AURORA  
I guess today's just full of  
surprises.

JONATHAN  
So far I'm not complaining.

Aurora smiles, continuing down the hall.

Jonathan follows her, but we STAY BEHIND, focusing on the long shadows of the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

A CREATURE melts in and out of the shadows, unseen.

CUT TO:

23 INT. KILLER'S SANTURAY - SECOND HALLWAY - NIGHT

23

Jonathan and Aurora continue their search for an exit down another long dark hallway.

Deathly silence fills the air.

JONATHAN

Is it just me, or does this seem a little too easy?

Aurora turns to him with an incredulous look on her face.

AURORA

No, it seems just easy enough. You wanna jump up and down, screaming "Come get me!" for a while? Maybe then we won't have to put up with all this ease!

JONATHAN

I'm just saying-

AURORA

Well, don't. I think the exit is over h-

Suddenly, the floor literally breaks apart, plunging both our heroes into a dark abyss.

CUT TO:

24 INT. THE PIT

24

ON AURORA, as she comes falling down from above, landing in a pool of BLACK water. She barely has time to gather her senses before Jonathan crashes down next to her, soaking her yet again.

They stand waist deep in the black water.

Aurora gives Jonathan a cold look.

AURORA

You do realize this is your fault, right?

JONATHAN

How is it my fault? You were the one who triggered the trap!

(CONTINUED)

AURORA

Which would never have happened if you hadn't jinxed us with all that "this is too easy" crap!

JONATHAN

Just look for a way out.

They take in the surroundings.

Noting but a pitch black chamber with stone walls to all sides and waist deep water all around.

No visible exits.

Aurora's expression changes suddenly, more alert.

AURORA

Something just brushed up against my leg.

JONATHAN

(horrified)

Oh, please don't say that.

They scan the dark water with a new level of urgency. Jonathan suddenly JUMPS a mile, letting out a small scream.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

There's something in the water!

AURORA

Stop freaking out and stab it!

With a huge SPLASH, Jonathan is suddenly PULLED down under the surface, disappearing in an instant.

Aurora tries to feel around under the surface, looking for him. No luck.

A long, silent beat.

AURORA (cont'd)

Jonathan...?

SPLASH!

One of the dark CREATURES suddenly surfaces, it's terrifying face coming up just a few inches from Aurora.

She LEAPS back in complete surprise, but then relaxes when she realizes the creature isn't moving, just lying dead in the water.

A second later, JONATHAN resurfaces, gasping for air, still clutching his sword.

(CONTINUED)

AURORA (cont'd)

You okay?

JONATHAN

Apart from the fact that I just swallowed more than a few mouthfuls of demon sewage? Peachy.

AURORA

You didn't happen to see any more of those things down there, did you?

JONATHAN

No, but I think I felt some kind of lever. Hold on.

He DIVES back under, leaving Aurora with a sceptic expression on her face.

Jonathan comes back up.

AURORA

Well?

JONATHAN

Dunno. Nothing happened.

AURORA

Wait. Do you feel that?

A low rumbling emits from the surroundings, followed by a sound that can only be described as a HUGE TOILET FLUSHING.

JONATHAN

That can't be g-

The floor gives way, SUCKING Aurora and Jonathan out, along with all the water.

CUT TO:

Jonathan and Aurora fall onto a grated floor from above, getting showered by the countless gallons of water that follows.

The water escapes through the grates, leaving the couple sitting soaked to the bone in the middle of the chamber.

Aurora doesn't look especially happy.

JONATHAN

That was... fun.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

If looks could kill, he'd be sent right past the next three Afterlives by the look he receives from Aurora at that moment.

CUT TO:

26

26

27

INT. KILLER'S SANTURAY - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

27

A huge hall, leading up to the MAIN DOORS of the castle. The hall is lined with dark, twisted statues. Deadly looking weaponry line the walls, on display.

Two stealthy figures enter the hall - Aurora & Jonathan.

Aurora reaches up for one of the serrated swords on display, feeling it's balance. She smiles, satisfied with the scary looking weapon.

Jonathan's attention has been caught by a nearby inconspicuous looking door.

He is about to open it when:

AURORA

Where are you going?

JONATHAN

I'm just gonna check this one.

AURORA

I wouldn't do that. I think I saw a bunch of those creatures go in there earlier.

JONATHAN

I thought you didn't remember much?

AURORA

Pitch black creatures from hell tend to stick with you.

Jonathan tosses one last glance at the mysterious door, before joining Aurora.

JONATHAN

So what, we go out the front door?

AURORA

Why not?

With devilish smile, she heads off, towards the huge doors blocking their way to freedom.

(CONTINUED)

JONATHAN  
(to himself)  
That's my line.

He catches up with Aurora just as she reaches the huge gate.  
She walks up to the lever controlling the gate.

AURORA  
See? Easy.

She pulls the lever, the gate opening with a monumental  
GROAN, to REVEAL:

MURDER, standing in the courtyard, flanked by a dozen  
creatures.

He greets them with that chilling smile.

JONATHAN  
(wearily)  
Easy...

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

28

EXT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - COURTYARD - NIGHT

28

Aurora and Jonathan stand faced off with Murder and his minions in the castle courtyard.

JONATHAN

(to Aurora)

You were right. This guy is creepy.

MURDER

I suppose this means you decided to decline my offer?

AURORA

I guess so.

MURDER

Disappointing. Expected, but disappointing.

JONATHAN

No hard feelings, then?

Murder turns his attention to Jonathan, seemingly noticing him for the first time.

MURDER

This must be him. I can see why you chose him. His performance earlier was quite impressive.

AURORA

I'm getting really tired of this conversation.

MURDER

Time to let our actions speak for themselves, then.

Without so much as a nod, the twelve creatures flanking Murder begin their advance.

Aurora and Jonathan face them, shoulder to shoulder, clutching their swords tightly.

JONATHAN

(dripping sarcasm)

I'm so glad we took the front door. No way they'd ever see that coming.

AURORA

Just don't trip on your sword.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

They split up, charging towards the first two creatures.

CUT TO:

29 EXT. DARK LANDS - DEAD FOREST - REAVER CRASH SITE - NIGHT 29

Kate and Marius' struggle to keep the fire burning continues. The fire now half of what it used to be, and dying fast.

Panic is starting to shine through in their movements.

KATE

This isn't working!

She heads over to fetch another piece of wood, but due to the less potent fire, she accidentally strays too far from the light.

She pays for her mistake instantly, as a flash of a creature's talons swipes across her shoulder. She SCREAMS, falling back towards the fire.

MARIUS

Kate!

He rushes to her side, pulling a burning branch out of the fire. He swipes it threateningly towards the offending creature, forcing it back.

Marius then kneels beside Kate, checking the wound.

Five relatively deep gashes are drawn across her shoulder, bleeding pretty badly. He tears off a sleeve, pressing it against the wound.

KATE

(in pain)

We're not going to make it are we?

Marius does his best to keep a brave face.

MARIUS

We can't give up now. The rain looks to be stopping soon.

Kate nods, accepting the comfort of his words.

Marius turns his face to the creatures stalking in the dark, now closer than ever.

His brave facade falls.

CUT TO:

30

EXT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - COURTYARD - NIGHT

30

Back in the thick of the fight.

Three of the creatures lay motionless on the ground, courtesy of Jonathan and Aurora.

ON JONATHAN, as he leaps up towards one of the creatures, grabbing onto its neck. Without losing his momentum, he swings around the creature, TWISTING its head in the process, while lashing out with his sword against another one at the same time.

Both creatures fall dead to the ground simultaneously.

OVER TO AURORA, who is busy planting her serrated blade between the eyes of one of the creatures.

Without missing a beat, she pulls out the sword and proceeds to run through the next creature with a frighteningly effective combo of swings.

She finishes up with a devastating roundhouse kick, sending the already dead creature spinning into the mud.

BACK ON JONATHAN, as he sees one of the creatures sneaking up behind an otherwise engaged Aurora. Without delay, he launches his blade into a throw.

The blade soars through the air, hitting the beast square in the back.

Aurora acknowledges the deed with a thankful nod, before pulling Jonathan's sword out of the corpse. And as the final two creatures charge her from two sides, she stabs out with both swords at the same time, skewering both creatures simultaneously.

They stand victorious amongst twelve dead creatures.

JONATHAN

Big bark, no bite.

(beat)

Where's creepy tattoo guy?

AURORA

Who cares? Let's get the hell out of here!

Jonathan nods, not disagreeing with that one.

They take off, away from the ominous castle grounds.

As they disappear into the dark, MURDER steps out of the shadows, watching them leave with a SMILE.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

Suddenly, every single one of the "dead" creatures stand back up, completely healed.

OFF MURDER, his smile WIDENING, we:

CUT TO:

31 EXT. DARK LANDS - BLACK POND - NIGHT

31

A silvery black pond in the middle of a desolate wasteland. The rain has stopped, the moon is back, shedding some light on the surroundings.

The looming shape of Killer's Sanctuary looms in the distance.

We find Aurora and Jonathan, nearing the small pond.

JONATHAN

We're almost there.

Jonathan passes by the pond, but Aurora stays beside it, looking into the water.

Jonathan turns around, beckoning her to hurry up.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

Come on!

ON AURORA, as she stares at the pond with a small smile on her face.

NEW ANGLE: Showing her REFLECTION in the water. Only it's not Aurora that's reflected, but RACHEL.

WE HOLD on the reflection of the insidious redhead.

A devilish smile crosses her face.

RACHEL

I'm right behind you.

CUT TO:

32 INT. KILLER'S SANCTUARY - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

32

We find ourselves back in the main hall of the castle, approaching the mysterious door that Jonathan almost entered.

We PASS THROUGH it, into:

33 A DARK ROOM.

33

A huddled figure sits in the corner of the room.

(CONTINUED)

Matted hair falls aside, revealing the face of the REAL AURORA.

She is shaking, completely catatonic from the unimaginable visions that are playing endlessly in front of her eyes.

Off that disturbing image, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF SHOW**