

SHaCKLeS

created by
Angelo Shrine

"Shackles" is an Original Virtual Series
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PART ONE

Release

- 1x01..... **The Poisoned**
- 1x02..... **The Epoch Book**
- 1x03..... **Repossession**
- 1x04..... **Dreams or Dots**

TEASER

BLACK.

CLARISSA (O.S.)
(hissing)
The only problem, David... is that
you desecrated him.

DAVID (O.S.)
I... I'm sorry.

FADE IN:

INT. ANTIQUE ROOM - NIGHT

The Poisoned DAVID ELROY has just handed over the EPOCH BOOK to the Poisoned CLARISSA CARUS!

Clarissa cocks her head oddly at him, her tongue sticking out, looking so much like a serpent. Her eyes flash BLACK, revealing her ugly truth.

CLARISSA
And that's just something I can't
forgive.

Clarissa smiles sweetly, then quickly holds up her GUN!

DAVID
What? No....

CLARISSA
Say hi to death. Again.

BANG! She fires the gun at his head!

DARK BLOOD splatters everywhere! And the Poisoned man quickly falls to the floor in a heap.

Clarissa raises up her hand... and licks the dark blood off her skin, her tongue darting in and out.

She begins walking away from the bloody mess behind her.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
And that takes care of that....

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Clarissa enters the kitchen and opens the cupboard below the sink. She pulls out a SCRUB BRUSH and a rusty BUCKET.

Calm as ever, she turns the faucet on as hot as it'll go, and starts filling the bucket with the water, adding a few cap-fulls of "Poison-Be-Gone," an off-market brand of bleach.

Clarissa looks out the window above the sink.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Clarissa stares out at us, still looking expressionless.

TILT DOWN, and the black LIMOUSINE fills the frame. It's parked next to the apartment, waiting with its engine on.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

MATILDA TRUANT sits calmly in the back, taking a long drag from her cigarette. She's all alone in the limo.

MATILDA

What's taking so long?

Matilda finishes her cigarette, then lowers the side window. She HUFFS in annoyance, then pulls out another cigarette.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - ANTIQUE ROOM - NIGHT

PAN AROUND slowly, examining all of the elegant artwork and antiques. Eventually, we come to an old RECORD PLAYER.

Clarissa puts a record on, and a soft, soothing JAZZ SCORE begins playing quietly: "Fine and Mellow" by Billie Holiday.

Clarissa begins dancing around the room. She sways her hips, all the while avoiding stepping on the PUDDLE OF BLOOD.

CLARISSA

Hear that? Billie Holiday. Listen to her, and everything just goes right again.

Clarissa CHUCKLES, talking to David Elroy's corpse, still sprawled out on the floor. His eyes remain open, though they're back to their normal blue color, and no longer black.

CUT TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

The jazz music continues in the background.

MATILDA

Come on. Where are you?...

HUFFING, Matilda hikes up her dress, then opens the door.

She sticks her legs outside, then scoots close to the edge. She braces her hands on either side of the door, having a bit of trouble doing this all on her own.

Finally, she exits, stepping down onto the concrete below.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - ANTIQUE ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE: the expensive-looking rug on the ground, where David's corpse had fallen. All of a sudden, the rug is lifted up and rolled over his body, as we hear Clarissa's soft GRUNTING.

Clarissa is on her hands and knees, rolling up the old rug over David's body. Then, she uses all her strength to pull the rug across the hardwood floor toward the front door.

A loud KNOCKING causes her to stop dead in her tracks.

MATILDA (O.S.)

Clarissa? Are you okay?

(KNOCKS again)

Clarissa?

Clarissa freezes in her position, her hands on the old rug.

CLARISSA

Uh, just a minute. I told you to stay in the car.

MATILDA (O.S.)

What?

CLARISSA

Just a minute!

Her eyes dart around the room, looking for a hiding place. And there it is: a rusty SUIT OF ARMOR.

Clarissa quickly pulls the rug toward the new location, grimacing under its weight. She slides the rug over the dark blood, smearing it all over the floor.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Dammit!

Clarissa finally reaches the suit of armor. She pulls the rug behind it and hides it from view.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
 (out of breath)
 Coming!

She runs to the door, but the bloody floor catches her eyes.

MATILDA (O.S.)
 (angry now)
 Hey! Open this door now! Clarissa?
Clarissa!

CLARISSA
 I'm just... getting my last things!
 Be right there!

Clarissa takes the bucket of soapy water and SPILLS it on the floor, cascading the water everywhere. She bends down and SCRUBS up the blood, as fast as she can.

Finally, she stands. No more blood, no more body, no more evidence of her evil deed. She rushes to open the door.

Matilda glares at her, looking absolutely irritated. She steps into the apartment, looking around curiously.

MATILDA
 What the hell were you doing?

CLARISSA
 Just cleaning up some. Why?

MATILDA
 "Cleaning"? Now?

CLARISSA
 Sorry, it was a mess.

MATILDA
 Well get your things, and let's go.

CLARISSA
 Actually, about that... I think I'm going to stay here tonight.

Matilda's curiosity instantly turns to hurt.

MATILDA
 But you drove away, left all of them behind, because of what you saw down in that basement --

CLARISSA

(interrupting)

And I thought I needed to be with someone tonight. With you. But now, I.... I have to be alone, Matilda.

MATILDA

I understand.

(hearing the jazz song)

Oh, I love this music. It really... brings me back.

Matilda walks across the hardwood floor to the record player.

As she walks, Clarissa notices something on one of the side tables. Something she forgot to hide: THE EPOCH BOOK! Her eyes go wide, as Matilda is only a few feet from it.

MATILDA (CONT'D)

Strange how music can --

She stops, as Clarissa quickly grabs the older woman's hands... and begins to dance with her.

MATILDA (CONT'D)

Oh?

CLARISSA

Thank you. For being there for me.

MATILDA

Of course. Nobody said this would be easy. Not on any of us.

Clarissa continues to sway with her, back and forth, always keeping Matilda's back to the Book.

CLARISSA

But he was my husband. And for me not to be there at the end... I just feel so responsible.

MATILDA

Hey....

Matilda kisses her softly on the cheek.

MATILDA (CONT'D)

This isn't your fault. Heck, it's not even Epoch's. He just... died. As everything dies. There's nothing you could have done. You hear?

Clarissa is oddly silent. Then, she speaks up.

CLARISSA
There is... something.

MATILDA
Oh?

CLARISSA
The last person he healed. A young girl. Samantha Brockwash.

CUT TO:

INT. BROCKWASH HOME - SAME

Young SAMANTHA BROCKWASH (10) is watching TV, completely engulfed in the cartoons on-screen.

In the background, her parents SCREAM and YELL. But Samantha continues watching the television, as she happily paints her long fingernails a beautiful PURPLE color.

Her parents' SCREAMING gets louder....

CUT TO:

INT. ANTIQUE ROOM - SAME

Clarissa and Matilda continue dancing.

CLARISSA
By that time, you must understand, Milgate was literally at death's door. He shouldn't have been healing anymore, and he knew that.

MATILDA
Clarissa....

CLARISSA
It was healing her that put him over the edge. By doing that, he gave up the last of his time. The time he needed to meet with our son....

MATILDA
I don't understand.

Clarissa finally pulls away from the older woman. The music comes to its end, as the record begins playing WHITE NOISE.

CLARISSA

I knew what would happen if Milgate were to be... interrupted... on his way to meet with our son. And so I had to do it. To make sure Jonathan never received his father's gift.

(beautiful beat)

I'm the one who injured that last girl.

Matilda stares up at Clarissa in a new light. She brings her hand to her mouth, then quickly rushes out of the apartment.

Clarissa, for the first time, looks extremely emotional and regretful for what she did.

Then, she looks over to the Epoch Book on the table... and her tongue quickly darts out... and her eyes go BLACK....

CUT TO:

INT. BROCKWASH HOME - NIGHT

Once again, Samantha is watching the TV. Only now, her fingernails are no longer purple. They're BRIGHT RED.

Her hands are covered in BLOOD! And it's oddly SILENT....

WIDER. On the floor between Samantha and the television are the bloody, clawed-up bodies of her PARENTS.

Samantha GIGGLES at something on the TV. As she laughs, we:

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

GO TO MAIN TITLES.

STARRING

Michael Clarke Duncan

Noah Wyle

Macy Gray

Omar Gooding

Raven Symone

John Heard

Tracy Middendorf

Donnie Keshawarz

and

Nichelle Nichols

GUEST STARRING

Vanessa Morley **SAMANTHA BROCKWASH**

Bill Bolender **DAVID ELROY**

with Kelly Rowan **CLARISSA CARUS**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Angelo Shrine

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

C.D. Howard

1x03

"Repossession"

written by

Angelo Shrine

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAYS LATER

MATILDA
 (distinctly)
 The repossession of the Epoch Book
 is critical.

To help enunciate her point, Matilda SLAMS HER HAND down!

WIDER: The Team sits around the conference table, with Matilda standing up, bracing herself against the tabletop. DUNCAN TRUANT, BRETT TRUANT, the ARABIAN, DETECTIVE RUNTZER, and Clarissa are present, all eyes on Matilda.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
 David Elroy.

As she says his name, the Arabian clicks a button, and the slide projector behind Matilda flashes David Elroy's photo.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
 He was Milgate Epoch's first heal.
 And so became our first Poisoned.
 (beat)
 In 1984, Elroy was a surgeon at a prestigious teaching hospital in Chicago. While on vacation here, he was in a car accident. He was a patient at St. Fjord Hospital for all but a day, when all of a sudden his wounds mysteriously healed.
 (beat)
 Elroy left his family and moved to L.A. in 1991. He was briefly jailed for a breaking and entering, then he moved into that house on Euclid. Alone. A hermit. That is, until Epoch's death.

Runtzer GRUNTS, then chimes in.

RUNTZER
 So the fact that he cut up these people in his basement?...

CLARISSA
 His mind was Poisoned along with his body.

(MORE)

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
 Deep down inside, he knew that it was his job to cut people open. But that intuition got melted down, and convoluted, into getting revenge with the man who Poisoned him in the first place. Milgate.

Duncan leans forward in his chair.

DUNCAN
 So what happens to the bodies in the basement? The Cable Guy? Epoch?

MATILDA
 (creepily)
 Disposal.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID ELROY'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

It's a silent flashback, as we get QUICK CUTS of the Arabian going to work cleaning up the scene.

He wraps up the various body parts in plastic garbage bags. He scrubs at the concrete floor, cleaning up the blood. He rearranges the furniture, hiding the struggle.

Finally, the Arabian picks up Epoch's decapitated head by its long, stringy hair, and stares into the man's gray eyes.

RETURN TO:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Matilda continues.

MATILDA
 Save for one thing, there won't be a shred of evidence remaining to lead authorities to any kind of conclusion about David Elroy. We can't have anyone asking questions. I'm afraid the world isn't ready to have them answered.

Brett looks around at the faces of his teammates, his eyes revealing that he has something to say. Finally:

BRETT
 So what's the "one thing"?

Matilda grimaces.

MATILDA
Epoch's head.

CUT TO:

INT. YELLOW ROOM - NIGHT

It's another silent flashback, but this time, we get QUICK CUTS of Matilda.

She's staring intently at the head of Milgate Epoch, as it soaks in a jar in a yellowish liquid -- apparently some kind of chloroform to protect the skin.

RETURN TO:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

On the mention of his head, everyone winces in disgust.

DUNCAN
His head? You can't be serious.

RUNTZER
Disgusting.

BRETT
(truly curious)
What are you thinking?

Matilda starts to speak, but Clarissa interrupts.

CLARISSA
If I may?

Matilda nods. Clarissa smiles, addressing her teammates.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
The goal of this Team is to take out The Poisoned. But first, we need to know what it is that makes them tick. And what better way... than to go right to the source.

BRETT
Epoch's brain?

MATILDA
If the Epoch gift is something physical, passed on through the generations, then it likely resides in the brain.

The Arabian sits up in his chair.

ARABIAN
What if it's spiritual?

RUNTZER
(bubbly)
Then we're outta luck.

MATILDA
And who knows, maybe these studies
could also give us --

CLARISSA
(quietly)
A cure....

The silence in the room is suddenly broken, as the Team hears the familiar sounds of CLICK-CLACKING high heels.

Matilda quickly motions to the Arabian, who nods, and turns off the slide projector.

KYLEE WILLARD enters from the long hallway. She stands a bit uneasily, not expecting to be the center of attention.

KYLEE
Sorry to interrupt. But Detective Truant, you and Detective Runtzer have a call from your office.

RUNTZER
What is it?

KYLEE
Apparently, the body of a...
(reading)
David Elroy... was found, ditched
in the middle of the desert.

Brett and Runtzer exchange an excited glance. Matilda slowly sits down in her chair, taking in the information.

MATILDA
Murdered....

KYLEE
Yes.
(reading her)
You... knew him? Mrs. Truant?

Matilda's silent, so the Arabian speaks for her.

ARABIAN
That'll be all, Mrs. Willard.

KYLEE
(eyeing Brett)
Miss Willard, but, okay.

Kylee exits. Duncan looks at the others, trying to catch up.

DUNCAN
I don't get it. He was our target.
Somebody else was after Elroy?

MATILDA
And they got to him first.

CLARISSA
Nonsense. He was one of those six
Renegades. Brett and Runtzer saw
them down in his basement. It was
likely one of them who killed him.

RUNTZER
No way to know for sure till we
check it out for ourselves.
(to Brett)
Coming, kid?

Brett doesn't need to be told twice. He and Runtzer begin walking out. Brett takes special care to avoid all eye contact with his father.

MATILDA
Keep us updated. The second you
know anything....

The detectives nod, and exit.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
Now onto another matter.

The Arabian projects a new slide onto the wall. A picture of a sweet-looking young girl, dark-haired, about 10 years old.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
Samantha Brockwash.

DUNCAN
Who?

CLARISSA
(a little too quickly)
Remember her from the Book?
(MORE)

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
 She's number eighty-eight. I saw
 Pumpkin skimming over it.

DUNCAN
 Right.

MATILDA
 Other than Elroy, she's the only
 one we know for sure to be
 Poisoned.

Upon hearing those words, Duncan's entire demeanor changes.
 He looks up at the young girl, a hint of sadness in his eyes.

DUNCAN
 So young....

MATILDA
 And so deadly.

The Arabian CLICKS to another slide. It's a horrific image,
 depicting the bodies of Samantha's dead parents, still in
 front of the couch. They've been clawed to death.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
 This is -- was -- Samantha's
 parents, Chris and Dori. They were
 murdered two days ago.

The Arabian CLICKS to another slide, revealing another angle
 of the bloody bodies.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
 No sign of Samantha since the
 murders. And up until now, the Long
 Beach Police Department believed
 she'd been kidnapped by the killer.
 (beat)
 But with this new knowledge that
 Samantha is, in fact, one of The
 Poisoned, we have inside knowledge
 they do not.

She looks up at the picture on the wall, the bright light
 from the projector reflecting in her pupils.

MATILDA (CONT'D)
 She murdered her own parents....

Off her cryptic recitation, we

FADE TO:

EXT. SHOPPING MALL - FLASHBACK

The mall is full of dozens of eager SHOPPERS.

One such shopper catches our attention. Ten years old, sweet-looking, dark hair in pigtails. It's Samantha Brockwash.

FEBRUARY 28, 2005

Samantha has a big smile on her face as she licks her giant-sized candy sucker. She runs ahead to her parents.

SAMANTHA

Mom! Dad! It's still playing! Can we go see it?

Samantha's pointing to the mall's Cineplex, where 2 of the 6 screens are playing "Racing Stripes."

ANGLE UP: where we see the smiling faces of CHRIS and DORI BROCKWASH, who are, of course, very much alive.

CHRIS

What's she asking about?

DORI

It's that racing movie. She's been wanting to see it.

CHRIS

We really need to be getting back.

SAMANTHA

Come on! Please?

Samantha pleads with her eyes, and Chris finally succumbs to his daughter's wishes.

CHRIS

(grumbling)

It's the matinee, after all.

SAMANTHA

Yes! Thank you!

DORI

But you have to finish that candy before you go in.

SAMANTHA

Oh, I don't even like it.

Samantha throws the sucker at the nearest garbage can -- it misses -- then she quickly runs ahead. Smiling and holding hands, Chris and Dori follow her into the Cineplex.

ANGLE ON: the colorful candy sucker on the ground, which broke in half upon her missed throw to the garbage can.

An old, wrinkly hand slowly reaches down and retrieves both parts of the sucker. It's MILGATE EPOCH (90s)!

His hair is white and stringy, his skin so wrinkled it looks like it's about to fall off, and his lips gray and sunken-in.

EPOCH
(withered voice)
Oh, to be young again.

Epoch smiles as he watches the girl run away, enjoying her spirit. He throws the candy into the garbage, then slowly makes his way through the mass of shoppers.

ANGLE: Behind the soda machine.

Watching him from afar, keeping her distance so as not to be noticed, is Clarissa Carus. She SIGHS loudly, not at all enjoying the pitiful sight before her.

CLARISSA
Milgate....

Soon, Epoch is swallowed up by the younger shoppers around him, and he escapes from view.

FADE TO:

EXT. L.A. STREETS - DAY

Present day now, as dozens of cars speed down the road. One such car, an old Ford Taurus, catches our attention.

INT. GILLIAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driving alone in the Taurus, GILLIAN TRUANT is GIGGLING as she talks on the phone.

GILLIAN
No, I'm serious! I'm just running errands and it's making me feel all refreshed. Energized.
(beat)
Did you just laugh? You did, didn't you? Go on. Laugh again. I dare you. I'll give you a quarter.

On the other end, we hear the reply by JACQUE'S VOICE.

JACQUE (O.S.)
A quarter? Oh my! Whatever will I
buy with that?

GILLIAN
I don't know, maybe you can save
up. Buy me something pretty.

JACQUE (O.S.)
What, like a scarf?

Gillian's mouth shoots open in pretend shock, as she switches
the phone to her other ear. Her fingernails are bright red.

GILLIAN
A scarf? You've got to be kidding!

JACQUE (O.S.)
What? Girls like scarves.

GILLIAN
Well, that may be true, but I don't
like scarves.
(quick beat)
And what are you talking about
these other "girls" for?

JACQUE (O.S.)
Uh-oh. I think I'm caught.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, she sees Runtzer's fancy car speeding in
the opposite direction, with Brett in the passenger seat.

GILLIAN
Hey! I think that was my.... That
was Brett.

JACQUE (O.S.)
What, on the road?

GILLIAN
Yeah, he just went by the other
way. They were speeding, too.

JACQUE (O.S.)
Maybe he's in a high-speed chase.

GILLIAN
Maybe.
(deep in thought)
(MORE)

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
 Hey, there's actually something I
 have to talk to him about.

JACQUE (O.S.)
 It can wait. You're not going to
 turn around. Right?
 (knowledgable beat)
 You're already turning around,
 aren't you?

Gillian does a U-turn in the road, as cars HONK loudly!

GILLIAN
 Sorry. Sorry!
 (to Jacque)
 You know me too well.

JACQUE (O.S.)
 And I can't wait to get to know you
 more. Hey, I have another call.
 Talk to you later?

GILLIAN
 Sure.

Gillian hangs up and throws the phone in the passenger seat.
 She steps down on the gas pedal, speeding ahead.

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
 (squinting ahead)
 Where are you going in such a hurry
 anyways?

CUT TO:

EXT. VAST DESERT - DAY

The desert sand reflects brightly from the sun above. All we
 see for miles and miles is emptiness.

TILT DOWN to reveal the dead, bloody body of David Elroy,
 lying on Clarissa's rug. For reasons entirely unknown, he's
 now NAKED, no longer wearing the black Renegade get-up.

A crow CAWS loudly, then lands on David's head. The crow
 sticks its beak down onto Elroy's face, and begins feasting
 on his open eyeball....

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Duncan stares at himself in the hanging mirror, adjusting his collar around his thick neck.

PUMPKIN (O.S.)
Bet you're glad to be out of those
prison jumpsuits.

Duncan turns and spots PUMPKIN TRUANT making her way down the staircase. She has a cup of coffee in her hands.

DUNCAN
You have no idea.

PUMPKIN
Coming or going?

DUNCAN
Going. She's making me go back to
Long Beach. There's a girl there.

PUMPKIN
Poisoned?

DUNCAN
Yeah. Just 10 years old.

PUMPKIN
Oh, Duncan.

DUNCAN
She killed her parents two days
ago. No one's seen her since.

PUMPKIN
What are you going to do.... I
mean, if you find her....

DUNCAN
I'll answer that with a question.
When's the last time you saw your
wine cellar?

Pumpkin takes a sip of coffee and nods, understanding.

CUT TO:

EXT. VAST DESERT - DAY

Runtzer and Brett step out of the car. They see the dead body, and Brett immediately turns his head. There's a whole murder of crows now, pecking all over his decaying body.

RUNTZER

Hey! Go on! Scat, you varmints!

The crows CAW angrily, but quickly fly away.

RUNTZER (CONT'D)

Damn rats.

(noticing Brett)

You okay?

Brett CLEARS HIS THROAT, then steps closer to the mangled dead body in the sand.

BRETT

I'm fine.

RUNTZER

Will it ever end? That's what you're thinking. The bodies last night, and now this.

BRETT

I said I'm fine. Let's get this done, huh?

As the Detectives look over the body, they're suddenly spooked from behind as Gillian's Taurus speeds onto the scene and SLAMS on its brakes.

RUNTZER

What the --

BRETT

Oh, God.

Gillian quickly jumps out of her car, smiling and waving. Runtzer's car is parked in between Gillian and the body, so at first, she doesn't see the grim sight.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Gillian? What in the world?

GILLIAN

Hey, guys! We just passed each other on the road. You didn't see me though, but I just had to follow you because I have to tell you --

She stops dead in her tracks. Her mouth shoots open as the dead body enters her eyeline for the first time.

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
Oh my God....

RUNTZER
Get her out of here! Now!

BRETT
You shouldn't have come here. Hey!

Brett shakes her shoulders, and she finally looks at him.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Are you okay, Gillian?

GILLIAN
I'm fine. I've seen dead things before. You do remember my major, right?

BRETT
Of course.

GILLIAN
I'm just startled. I never....
(curious)
What happened to him?

BRETT
That's what we're here to find out. Listen, what did you want to ask?

GILLIAN
It's -- It's so pointless now.

BRETT
Go on.

GILLIAN
I was with Kylee yesterday. And she mentioned your name. And this -- this really isn't the time.

Brett shakes his head, hiding his annoyance.

BRETT
I really think you should go.

GILLIAN
I think you're right. But, hey, where are your gloves?
(MORE)

GILLIAN (CONT'D)
 Where are your -- And his -- He
 should be wearing gloves.

They both turn to Runtzer, who's examining the body with his bare hands. Brett EXHALES loudly.

BRETT
 Gillian. You really should go.

Off the odd family reunion:

CUT TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

Silence in the back of the limo, as Duncan sits across from Matilda. We see the Arabian through the partition, driving slowly through the streets.

DUNCAN
 What about Clarissa?

Matilda eyes her son oddly, staring at him, reading him.

MATILDA
 She's still not feeling up to it.
 The sight of Epoch's desecrated
 body scarred her, more deeply than
 even I predicted.

DUNCAN
 They used to be married. Of course
 she's hurt. His head.... I mean, my
 God. I'm scarred.

MATILDA
 Surely you saw terrible things in
 prison.

Now it's Duncan's turn to eye her. He ignores the question.

DUNCAN
 So what, Brett and Runtz are
 meeting us there? After the desert?
 (silence)
 Did you hear me?

MATILDA
 I heard you. And yet I'm wondering
 why you asked.

DUNCAN

Clarissa's gone, they're gone, and I'm guessing you'll be in here the whole time. So that leaves, who, me and him?

(motions to the Arabian)

To question a 10 year-old girl?

MATILDA

No. It leaves you.

DUNCAN

I'm not an investigator. For God's sakes, I'm just a --

MATILDA

The past doesn't matter anymore. You need to understand that. You work for me now. And when we find Samantha Brockwash, you'll do... to her... whatever I tell you.

Off her chilling words, Duncan slowly leans back in his seat.

CUT TO:

INT. VAST DESERT - DAY

Gillian's Taurus is gone, leaving tire marks in the sand.

We're back with the body now, as Runtzer and Brett are bent down, investigating every inch of it.

RUNTZER

Look here. Could be a fingerprint.

BRETT

Or it could be a smudge.

RUNTZER

What's your problem?

BRETT

My problem is that Gillian's right. We're not equipped to handle this sort of thing.

RUNTZER

Hogwash. If there's evidence here, we'll find it. If not, we won't.

Kneeling beside each other, they examine the body closer.

BRETT

Who would do such a thing?

RUNTZER

The Poisoned, that's who. My guess? This guy was going to flip on his buddies, the Renegades. And when they found out... BAM! Right in the head.

BRETT

(scolding)

Runtz, come on. Some courtesy, please.

RUNTZER

Courtesy? This guy dug up a dead body, and then went and killed his cable guy.

BRETT

Because he's Poisoned. You were at the same briefing I was. He was a family man. A surgeon.

Runtzer stands, not wanting to face the truth.

RUNTZER

Not anymore.

CLOSE ON: the corpse's mouth, where something is sticking out of his lips. Brett eyes it oddly.

BRETT

Now what's that?

Curious, Brett grabs the protrusion and pulls it out. To his surprise, it's a HAND-WRITTEN NOTE!

RUNTZER

What the hell?

BRETT

It's a note!

RUNTZER

From the killer, no doubt.

Brett slowly unravels the note, which is covered in saliva and blood. But he's finally able to read it.

1121 CURTAIN AVE

BRETT
 "1121 Curtain Avenue." That's south
 of the mall, isn't it?

RUNTZER
 A rundown area of town, for sure.

BRETT
 What do you make of it?

RUNTZER
 A trap, maybe? A warning? Don't
 know.

BRETT
 It's no trap. It's a clue. For us.

RUNTZER
 You can't know that, kid.

Brett stands, nodding in agreement. With the sun at his back,
 and the wind blowing his coat, he looks more confident now
 than we've seen him in the past.

BRETT
 We're checking it out. Now.

Brett puts the note in his pocket, then walks to the car,
 leaving Runtzer behind. Runtzer, who smiles proudly.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - ANTIQUE ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON: the pages of the Epoch Book, which go by in a whirl
 as Clarissa's hands quickly skim through them.

WIDER. Clarissa is flipping through the pages excitedly, a
 huge smile on her face. As she skims through the thick Book,
 her eyes slowly change to the familiar DARK BLACK color.

She comes to the middle of the Book, and she starts turning
 the pages more slowly.

~~-62...~~ ~~-63...~~ ~~-65...~~ ~~-66...~~

Page #64 is missing.

CLARISSA
 Sixty-four.... Thanks, David. A man
 of your word. But where oh where
 did you hide it?

She continues to flip through the old, tattered pages. As she reaches the end, Clarissa's mouth shoots open in shock. Her eyes immediately return to their normal color.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
Oh my God in heaven....

We don't see what she sees, but we're able to see the page number that's gotten her so riled up.

-87-

The second-to-last page in the Book. Clarissa flips once more, to the final page, and we're reminded of:

-88-

SaMaNTHa BRoCKWaSH
FouND iN aLLEy
MaRCuS STREeT, LoNG BeACH

But then she turns back again to #87, completely shocked.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
Well, eighty-seven. Look who else
has a secret....

She quickly TEARS OUT the page.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

AERIAL VIEW: a touching moment, as Pumpkin lies next to Brett on the king-sized bed. They're staring upward as they talk, staring at their reflections in the ceiling mirror.

As they lay side-by-side, we're finally seeing their close relationship for the first time.

BRETT

I yelled at him the other night.
Pretty bad, too.

PUMPKIN

Well, it's your right to.

BRETT

I know, but I just... it didn't
feel right. And it still doesn't.

PUMPKIN

What was his reaction?

BRETT

That's the weird part, Mom. I -- I
almost expected him to punch me.
Hit me in the face. Make me bleed.
And I think part of me maybe even
wanted him to, I don't know.

PUMPKIN

You haven't seen him in a long,
long time, Brett. Maybe that was
your way of initiating some kind of
physical contact?

BRETT

(smiling)

Because hugs are definitely out of
the question.

She CHUCKLES. Then, the mood gets serious again.

PUMPKIN

I want to tell Gillian so bad.
About her father. About everything.

(sad beat)

(MORE)

PUMPKIN (CONT'D)
 We used to be so close, and now, I
 can't even tell her that I'm even
 seeing a psychiatrist!

Tears come to Pumpkin's eyes, as Brett rubs her shoulder.

BRETT
 It's okay. It's for the best --

PUMPKIN
 (suddenly)
 I kissed your father.

BRETT
 What? You're joking.

Brett sits up in bed, and looks her right in the eyes.

PUMPKIN
 I kissed him.

BRETT
 You mean, he kissed you?

Pumpkin shakes her head no. Brett starts fuming.

PUMPKIN
 Brett... there's a lot of things
 you don't know about your father.

Brett doesn't even know how to respond to that one. But
 luckily, he doesn't have to. His cell phone RINGS.

BRETT
 (answers the phone)
 Runtz, what is it?

RUNTZER (O.S.)
 I've got the back-up. You ready?

Brett glares at his mother.

BRETT
 Absolutely.

With that, he jumps off the bed, and exits the room.

AERIAL VIEW: Pumpkin remains lying on her back on the bed,
 staring up at the ceiling. A tear falls down her cheek.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRUANT MANSION - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Runtzer smiles as Brett approaches his car.

BRETT
What's up? Where is everyone?

RUNTZER
By "back-up," I didn't mean people.

Runtzer pops open his trunk. Inside, there's a dozen or so GUNS, as well as FLARES and two BULLET-PROOF JACKETS.

BRETT
Taking a cue from Grandma, huh?

RUNTZER
(slamming the trunk)
She may be old, but she's got one hell of a brain on her.

CUT TO:

EXT. LONG BEACH - DAY

The ocean rests peacefully on the edge of the screen, as the familiar limousine pulls up to a modern-looking cul de sac.

INT. LIMOUSINE - CONTINUOUS

Matilda reaches over and opens the side door. Duncan looks out at the ocean and the empty beach.

DUNCAN
What?

MATILDA
Get out.

DUNCAN
Here?

MATILDA
This is our destination. You can remain in here, with me, or you can start looking for Samantha.

Duncan doesn't need to be told twice. He quickly exits. And as he does, a slight smile comes to Matilda's wrinkled face.

CUT TO:

EXT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

The Arabian sits in the driver's seat, staring ahead.

Duncan steps away from the car. In front of him, the beautiful ocean. At his back, the quiet cul de sac.

DUNCAN

Okay, Samantha. Come out, come out,
wherever you are....

FADE TO:

INT. MILGATE EPOCH'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

The bedroom is just as we remember it: tiny, absent of clutter, and with no personal belongings at all.

The dozens of GREEN PLANTS still surround every square inch of space, CRINKLING as they live and grow.

Epoch lies on his back on top of the covers of his dirty brown bed. He's awake, but he's not currently doing anything. Just... staring.

BRRRING! The telephone on the night stand rings loudly.

EPOCH

Oh, bother....

Epoch stretches his arm, finally able to reach the old receiver. He slowly brings it up to his ear.

EPOCH (CONT'D)

Hello?

A long silence follows.

EPOCH (CONT'D)

Hello? Who's there?

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Dad?

On that one word, Epoch nearly drops the phone! But he quickly recovers, and holds it tight to his ear.

EPOCH

Jonathan? Is that really you?

JONATHAN (O.S.)

Hi.

EPOCH

Where are.... Are you here? In Long Beach?

JONATHAN (O.S.)

I thought about it. Oh, Dad, I thought long and hard. And I realize now what I should have realized so many years ago.

(beat)

I'll take it.

Epoch's eyes light up with pure delight and admiration.

EPOCH

Where are you, my boy?

JONATHAN (O.S.)

I'm at a diner. The Beachfront.

EPOCH

I know it well.

JONATHAN (O.S.)

You'll have to meet me soon. My bus leaves right at 3. I can't be late, Dad. This place brings back bad.... I just can't be here.

EPOCH

I'll meet you now. And Jonathan? I love you.

JONATHAN (O.S.)

I.... I'll see you soon, okay?

The line goes dead. Still on cloud nine, Epoch is suddenly filled with a renewed vigor. He quickly gets out of bed.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARCUS STREET - LATER

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. Epoch slowly walks down the sidewalk, relying on his trusty walker like it's another appendage.

EPOCH

Come on, old man. You can do this.

The walker gets stuck on a grate built into the sidewalk. But he pulls it out, using every bit of strength he has.

EPOCH (CONT'D)

Do it. Do it for Jonathan. Do it
for everyone....

He continues on his way.

ANGLE: we see The Beachfront Restaurant a block ahead from a
new point of view.

QUICK PAN AROUND to reveal that this P.O.V. belongs to
Clarissa, who's standing in an alleyway. Clarissa looks back
and forth, from the Beachfront, to Epoch a block away.

CLARISSA

Jonathan, damn you. Damn you!

We see it in her eyes. There's no way in hell she's going to
let her son take the gift from Epoch.

As Epoch gets closer, her mind begins to race. She looks to
the left, to the right, looking everywhere for help.

Then, she sees it. Her answer. 10 years old, with dark hair
in pigtails. Samantha Brockwash.

Samantha walks in between Dori and Chris, having obviously
just seen the movie. Dori stops walking, as some jewelry in a
store window catches her eye.

DORI

Oh, look, hon. It's that necklace!

CHRIS

What necklace?

DORI

The one that Santa was supposed to
bring me, but forgot.

SAMANTHA

Mom, maybe you were on the bad
list.

DORI

Well now, what would have put me on
that?

SAMANTHA

You have to be good all year, not
just one month.

Dori CHUCKLES. She opens the door to the store.

DORI
Come on, Chris. I want you to know
the design, the color, the size....

SAMANTHA
Do we have to?

CHRIS
(pretend-whining)
She's right, Ma. Do we have to?

DORI
Hey, sweetie. I let you watch your
movie, now Mommy's going to go look
at her necklace.

SAMANTHA
I hate stores.

CHRIS
You can stay out here, Sam. Just
don't run far, okay?

SAMANTHA
Fine.

Chris and Dori enter the jewelry store.

Clarissa, who'd been watching the whole ordeal, suddenly gets
a twinkle in her eye. She looks back to Epoch, who's managed
to make his way halfway down the block.

She's running out of time!

CLARISSA
Hey! Hey, sweetie. Uh, Sam!

Samantha looks up at the strange woman, but ignores her.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
Hey, come here, it's okay. Come on.

SAMANTHA
I'm not supposed to talk to
strangers.

CLARISSA
You don't have to talk. Just... I
wanted to know if you've seen that
new racing movie yet, cause I
really want to take my little girls
to see it.

Samantha suddenly lights up. She walks toward the friendly-looking blonde woman in the alleyway.

SAMANTHA

Yeah! I just saw it! It's sooooo
funny. Like that one part, when --

Samantha doesn't have time to finish! Clarissa grabs the girl tightly, one hand over her mouth, the other around her waist, and pulls her into the alleyway!

The last thing we see is Samantha's eyes, which bulge out to double their size.

FADE TO:

INT. CLARISSA'S CAR - PRESENT DAY

Clarissa drives down the road, staring ahead with a blank expression on her face as she remembers what she did.

CLARISSA

It's in the past, it's in the past,
it's in the past....

Finally, she pulls her car to a stop.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Clarissa steps out of the car, and we see that she's wearing a black Renegade outfit. In fact, it's the same one David Elroy was killed in!

Clarissa looks out at the large warehouse. There's an address written on the side: 1121 Curtain Avenue.

CLARISSA

Enough of this.

Clarissa's eyes go BLACK, just as she puts on the Renegade hood, which covers her entire face and hides her hair.

She rushes toward the warehouse.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Clarissa steps inside, the door SQUEAKING, and she quickly comes face to face with:

THE OTHER 5 RENEGADES!

Clarissa walks up to them, and they're none the wiser. Obviously, she's just infiltrated their group.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUANT MANSION - FOYER - DAY

Pumpkin walks to the door, after hearing the loud KNOCKING.

PUMPKIN
Coming! Coming. I'm coming.

She opens the door, shocked to find herself staring into the angry face of her daughter.

PUMPKIN (CONT'D)
Gillian?!

GILLIAN
Well, hello again, Mom.

PUMPKIN
Come in, come in!

Pumpkin quickly pulls her daughter in, after a peek outside to make sure Duncan's not around.

PUMPKIN (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

GILLIAN
What am I doing here? I'm visiting my mother. My God, why are you acting so weird lately?

PUMPKIN
Nothing. Nothing. It's nothing.

GILLIAN
It can't be nothing.

PUMPKIN
Just, it's about the money. Taxes. You know, adult things.

GILLIAN
Mom, I'm 21. You can't use that excuse on me anymore.

PUMPKIN
I know, I know.

Gillian notices that Pumpkin's eyes are red and puffy.

GILLIAN
Have you been crying?

PUMPKIN
What? No. It's allergies.

GILLIAN
You've been crying, and now you're lying. Great. Great relationship we have, you and I.

PUMPKIN
Listen. I just....

She takes a long moment, then realizes her daughter's right.

PUMPKIN (CONT'D)
Would you like to join me? We can... talk... on the way.

GILLIAN
Join you where?

PUMPKIN
To the wine cellar.

Gillian nods oddly, and then follows her mother through the foyer.

CUT TO:

INT. BROCKWASH HOME - DAY

Duncan slowly pushes open the front door of the Brockwash home, then enters without hesitation. The house is filthy, looking as though it's been trashed by some punks.

DUNCAN
Hello? Anybody here? Samantha?

Duncan rolls his eyes, obviously feeling uncomfortable.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Hello? Anyone?

Duncan enters into the living room. The white couch is streaked with BLOOD and wrapped in a plastic covering. Police tape encircles the entire room, warding out civilians.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
My name's Duncan. I'm here to --
Well, I guess I'm here to help you.
Samantha?

Duncan looks around the room. No one.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Great.

ANGLE: Behind the couch, where a tiny hand sticks out, with five long, purple-painted fingernails. The hand, covered in dried blood, taps nervously on the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

The Arabian lowers the partition, then makes eye contact with Matilda in the backseat.

ARABIAN

Should I go in, Mrs. Truant? See if
he needs a hand?

Matilda's completely silent. In fact, her only response is to push the button on her side, and the partition quickly raises back up again.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The five Renegades turn suspiciously to Clarissa, who's just joined them. They're all pretty much the same physically, except for the fact that Renegade #1 is huge.

RENEGADE #1
Where were you?

RENEGADE #2
We've been waiting.

Clarissa doesn't speak. Obviously, her voice would give her away. Renegade #3 breaks the silence, and to our surprise -- it's a female voice!

RENEGADE #3
Did you at least bring back the Book? We can't afford to have it slip into the wrong hands.

RENEGADE #4
Answer us, Elroy!

Renegade #5 takes a slow step back.

RENEGADE #5
Hey. Something's wrong....

And finally, Clarissa makes her move! She pulls out a gun, and shoots Renegade #5 in the chest! BANG!

CLARISSA
Sorry, Anthony.

The fifth Renegade (Anthony), falls back against the wall and slouches down to the ground. The others all SCREAM, and quickly put their hands up!

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
First things first. I'm one of you.
So there's no need to get... angry.

Clarissa points the gun at each of the standing Renegades, from one, to the next, to the next, holding her ground.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

David Elroy worked for me. And under my orders, he removed a page from the Epoch Book. My page. And I don't know where he put it. And that's just too bad. Cause I'll do whatever it takes --

(motions to the dead

Renegade #5)

Anything -- to get that page back.

RENEGADE #3

If he removed a page, he did it on his own.

RENEGADE #2

She's right. We don't know anything about it.

CLARISSA

Well, that's just too bad.

Clarissa COCKS THE HAMMER of the gun, and points it right at the head of the female Renegade.

RENEGADE #2

WAIT!

Renegade #2 steps in front of the woman Renegade, protecting her. A chivalrous move, in the rarest of circumstances.

CLARISSA

Something you'd like to say?

RENEGADE #2

I have it. I have it. He gave it to me last night.

RENEGADE #3

(honestly shocked)

What?

RENEGADE #2

I'm sorry I didn't tell you. But I was just doing as I was told.

CLARISSA

Fantastic. Now hand me the damn page.

Renegade #2, the chivalrous one, reaches into his back pocket and removes the page. With a shaky hand, he gives it to Clarissa, who quickly snatches it away.

Even through the black mask, we can see Clarissa smiling.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
Thank you. You have no idea --

Her words are cut off by the sounds of the door SQUEAKING OPEN. And then, out of nowhere, there are SCREAMS and YELLS, followed by BULLETS FLYING!

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
No! Not yet --

Runtzer and Brett rush heroically into the warehouse!

They're wearing protective vests and carrying a gun in each hand, with several more guns packed away in their holsters.

RUNTZER
Fire, kid!

BRETT
I am!

Runtzer and Brett let loose, firing BULLET after BULLET! The Renegades don't even know what hit them!

Clarissa quickly puts Page #64 in her pocket, and rushes toward the back of the warehouse.

With one final look behind her -- Runtzer and Brett versus the remaining four Renegades -- she sneaks under an alcove and escapes out of the warehouse.

CUT TO:

INT. BROCKWASH HOME - DAY

Duncan walks down the hallway, searching in all the bedrooms, bathrooms, and closets. Not finding anything.

DUNCAN
(mumbling)
Waste of time....

He's just about to the door, when he hears a SOFT WHIMPER. Curious, Duncan quickly turns back around. Silence.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Hello? Samantha, is that you?

He takes several steps back into the living room, listening intently, but not hearing anything.

Then, he finally sees something out of the corner of his eye. A potted plant next to the couch wiggles slightly.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
(hesitantly)
Samantha....

Duncan searches for a weapon -- anything he can use. Finally, he finds the TV remote. Good enough.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
I'm here to help you. Do you
understand? I'm here for you,
sweetie.

On the word "sweetie," Poisoned Samantha jumps out from behind the couch!

Duncan jumps back in shock!

The cute little girl now looks absolutely monstrous, with black eyes, flaring teeth, and dried blood all over her body.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Whoa there! Hey! Hey, hey, hey!

Samantha's not the same old Samantha anymore. She lunges at him! Jumping nearly five feet in the air!

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Samantha! Stop! It's okay!

He takes another fearful step back, as the girl who weighs a fifth of his size goes in for another lunge attack!

Arms out in front of her, she makes contact with him, CLAWING his face roughly!

Five streaks of blood instantly appear on his neck where her nails scratched him.

DUNCAN (CONT'D)
Hey!

SAMANTHA
(deep voice)
Get... away!

Samantha jumps at him again, claws out, ready to attack!

FADE TO:

EXT. MARCUS STREET - FLASHBACK

Back to the alley again where, disturbingly, Clarissa has her hands wrapped around the little girl's neck.

CLARISSA

I'm sorry. So sorry....

Samantha CHOKES loudly as she tries to breathe, but Clarissa's too strong for her frail little body.

As tears fall down Clarissa's face, Samantha's eyes close.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

No.... No....

Clarissa holds her fingers on Samantha's throat, and smiles when she feels her pulse.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Still alive. Good. Oh, darling, I'm so sorry....

Clarissa carefully lays the girl's body on a pile of trash, then stands up and walks to the alley's entrance.

To her shock, Epoch is only several yards from the front door of the restaurant. So she does what she has to --

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Aaaahhhhhh! Help me! Help!

It does the trick. Epoch turns in the direction of the alley. He looks back and forth, from the restaurant, to the alley, then back again.

EPOCH

What?

Epoch changes directions, and begins walking toward the alley. Away from the restaurant.

ANGLE: Clarissa, who slowly backs up into the darkness, escaping from view.

CLARISSA

I'm sorry....

FADE TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

BULLETS STILL FLYING everywhere!

BANG BANG BANG! It's a war zone!

The Renegades have now pulled out their own weapons, and they're hiding behind various objects in the warehouse, using them as shields.

Renegade #1, the biggest of them all, quickly backs up and ESCAPES out the exit Clarissa had used.

BRETT
The big guy got away!

RUNTZER
That's okay! Get the others!

BANG BANG BANG! More bullets flying in every direction!

RUNTZER (CONT'D)
Aaahhhh!

Runtzer falls back as one of the bullets grazes his shoulder!

BRETT
You okay?

RUNTZER
Fine! Oh, God. I'm fine!

Runtzer gets right back up, and fires faster than ever at the remaining three Renegades. Revenge is in his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. BROCKWASH HOME - DAY

CLAWS!

Samantha lunges at Duncan again, slicing through his shirt.

DUNCAN
Hey! Stop! Samantha!

Duncan swings the TV remote at her, missing her by a mile.

SAMANTHA
I want... my parents!

DUNCAN
You killed them! You hear me?
They're not coming back!

Samantha momentarily stops clawing at him. Briefly, the cold black eyes disappear, revealing timid, brown eyes.

SAMANTHA

What?

DUNCAN

(catching his breath)

You murdered them, Samantha.
They're dead.

Samantha BREATHES heavily, looking down at her feet. Then, her attention turns to the bloody rug in front of the couch.

SAMANTHA

I... did that?

Duncan finally relaxes, taking in deep breaths.

DUNCAN

Please. Will you come with me? We
can help you. We really can.

SAMANTHA

I loved them....

Duncan puts a comforting hand on her chin, holding her sweet little head up.

DUNCAN

Hey. I know you did. And they loved
you too, sweetie.

All of a sudden, evil overcomes Samantha again. Her eyes turn BLACK, and she HISSES loudly.

SAMANTHA

Get away!

Samantha pulls back her hand, ready to claw his neck, when:

BANG!

A single bullet rings out.

Duncan steps back in fear, as Samantha's frail little body falls to the ground. Dead.

DUNCAN

What the --

Duncan turns to the front door, where the Arabian stands heroically, holding the gun out in front of him.

ARABIAN

Check her pulse.

DUNCAN
Thank you! I --

ARABIAN
Check. Her. Pulse.

Duncan quickly reaches down to the girl's bloody neck. He waits for a second, then nods to the Arabian.

DUNCAN
(quickly)
Dead. She's dead.

With that, the Arabian exits. Duncan eyes him strangely, then turns back to the tiny girl sprawled out on the carpet.

Duncan stares into her open eyes. He watches, curiously, as the dark color leaves her eyes again.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROCKWASH HOME - LATER

SLOW-MOTION hero shot of Duncan walking toward the limo, carrying the deceased body of the 10 year-old girl. Duncan's eyes well up, but still, he walks with dignity.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

BULLETS are still flying everywhere, as Brett and Runtzer aim at the remaining three Renegades: the chivalrous #2, the female #3, and the quiet #4.

BANG! A hit! Renegade #4 goes down!

RENEGADE #4

Ahhh!

RENEGADE #2

Pull back, pull back!

BRETT

No! There's only two ways out of this! Drop your guns... or die.

The Renegades exchange a look, and momentarily stop shooting.

Runtzer takes the distraction to FIRE one more shot! It hits the fallen Renegade #4 again in the leg! Dark blood spurts everywhere, but he's alive.

Only Renegades #2 and #3 remain -- the man and woman.

RUNTZER

Surrender now! And you might survive this!

The Renegades exchange an emotional look, obviously considering the offer. They look at Renegade #5, shot dead by Clarissa, and Renegade #4, injured by Runtzer.

RENEGADE #2

(quietly)

We have to.

RENEGADE #3

If you think so....

The two Renegades drop their guns, then quickly stand with their hands behind their backs.

Brett shoots a look of pure surprise to his partner.

BRETT

Holy God, never thought that would work.

RUNTZER
 Never underestimate the power of
 threats, kid.

Runtzer winks, then he and Brett approach the Renegades.

AERIAL VIEW: a war zone for sure, with dozens of holes shot into the sides of the warehouse, one dead Renegade, and dark blood all over the cement ground.

FADE TO:

EXT. MARCUS STREET - FLASHBACK

Epoch is bent down on the ground, cradling the fragile, fallen body of Samantha Brockwash in his arms.

EPOCH
 Oh, you poor little thing.

In the distance, we hear several BACKGROUND SOUNDS all at once: Chris YELLING in anger, Dori SCREAMING for her daughter, and finally, the worst sound of all, the sound of a BUS LEAVING.

Epoch turns back around, and sees the bus drive down the road in SLOW MOTION.

EPOCH (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 Jonathan....

But then, he turns back to the frail little girl in his arms.

EPOCH (CONT'D)
 It'll be all right, sweetie. It'll
 be fine.

He opens up her mouth, then he slowly lowers his head down, touching her lips with his.

Epoch EXHALES, and a strange yellow/gray mist escapes from his lungs and enters into her body.

Seconds pass, and Epoch finally pulls away. He stares at her, confidently, and waits.

Samantha COUGHS loudly -- alive!

EPOCH (CONT'D)
 Are you all right, sweetie?

She eyes the old man oddly, wondering where she is.

SAMANTHA

Santa?

Epoch laughs, a low-pitched GUFFAW that echoes in the alley.

EPOCH

If that's what you want to call me.
Tell me, what's your name?

SAMANTHA

Samantha Brockwash.

EPOCH

What happened to you? Why are you
alone?

SAMANTHA

(suddenly realizes)
Mom! Dad!

Samantha jumps up off the garbage pile and runs away.

Epoch remains on his knees, his walker at his side. Then, ever-so-slowly, he stands to his feet.

EPOCH

Oh....

Several WRINKLES mysteriously appear on his forehead. And from the look on his face, Epoch knows what's about to come.

FADE TO:

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Silence in the limo. Duncan holds the body of Samantha Brockwash in his lap, gently caressing her forehead, brushing the loose strands of hair out of her eyes.

Matilda watches with slight hesitation, and with, perhaps quite possibly, a look of pride on her withered face.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

It's nighttime now. Runtzer and Brett stand next to Runtzer's car, guns raised at their sides. Renegades #2 and #3 sit on their knees, hands behind their heads, leaning against the exterior wall of the warehouse.

The dead body of Renegade #5 lies sprawled out, while the injured Renegade #4 holds his leg tightly.

Finally, a large WHITE VAN appears. The van parks next to Runtzer's car, and the driver steps out. It's Kylee Willard!

RUNTZER

Kylee. Thanks for bringing the van.

Kylee takes one look around -- the injured man, the dead man, the two masked people -- and lowers her eyebrows.

KYLEE

Okay, no more secrets. I've got to know what's going on.

BRETT

(gun in hand)

That's kind of a long story.

KYLEE

I've got time.

Brett smiles, obviously feeling uncomfortable around her in the aftermath of what Gillian told her.

Kylee, in turn, reaches into the back of the van and pulls out several pairs of dark, rusty SHACKLES....

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - LATER

The last of the Renegades is thrust into the back of the van, along with the dead body, then Runtzer SLAMS the door shut.

Only Runtzer, Brett, and Kylee remain. Kylee notices the bullet wound on Runtzer's shoulder.

KYLEE

You were shot.

RUNTZER

Ahh, it's nothing. Just a little war wound.

She turns to Brett.

BRETT

My ears are ringing like crazy.

KYLEE

Yeah, guns are loud, huh?

(to Runtzer)

Wait, wait, wait, he's not the one that shot you, right?

Runtzer CHUCKLES, as Brett looks down, slightly embarrassed.
The moment is broken as Runtzer looks into his own car.

RUNTZER
Hey, kid. Look. Is that what I
think it is?

Brett looks into the passenger seat, and his eyes light up
upon seeing THE EPOCH BOOK!

BRETT
Holy Crap.

KYLEE
Looks like a Bible.

RUNTZER
Oh, it's better than that.

Runtzer quickly opens the door and pulls out the Epoch Book.
He opens the crisp pages, flipping through it, examining the
handwriting and old descriptions.

RUNTZER (CONT'D)
This is it! Woo-hoo! The Epoch
Book!

Runtzer does a little Texas hoedown dance, holding the Book
above his head. Brett LAUGHS too, much more at ease now.

BRETT
Wow. But who put it there?

RUNTZER
Who cares? It's ours!

WIDE SHOT: from a far-away point of view, we see Runtzer grab
Brett and dance him around in a tight circle as Kylee laughs.

QUICK PAN AROUND to Clarissa, still dressed in the dark
outfit. She stares at the scene with a bit of trepidation.

Clarissa puts on the hood... then escapes into the night.

FADE TO:

INT. MILGATE EPOCH'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Epoch is sitting on the bed with his trusty journal on his
lap. He skips past page #87, coming to the first blank page.
With a wobbly hand, he writes:

-88-

SaMaNTHa BRoCKWaSH
FOuND iN aLLeY
MaRCuS STReeT, LoNg BeACH

Once he's finished, he slowly closes the Book, then stands.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILGATE EPOCH'S APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - DEAD OF NIGHT

The door opens, and Epoch slowly makes his way onto the rooftop. All kinds of plants adorn the roof -- hundreds of them, if not a thousand. All of the plants are GREEN and thriving -- save for one -- a dead gray DANDELION.

EPOCH

Oh, you poor thing.

Epoch bends down to the flower, and slowly EXHALES over its leaves. The yellow/gray mist emits from deep within his lungs, covering the entire plant.

And before our eyes, the gray plant becomes alive again. Its YELLOW flower extends proudly out into the moonlight.

EPOCH (CONT'D)

There, there.

Epoch smiles, then he raises his hand, in which he's holding a plastic sack containing the Epoch Book.

Epoch pulls the yellow Dandelion out of its pot, being careful to not harm the roots.

He kisses his journal one last time, then puts it at the bottom of the pot. He replaces the plant, making sure that it hides the Book entirely.

EPOCH (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Hopefully you remember....

With that, he turns around, and exits the rooftop.

CUT TO:

INT. MILGATE EPOCH'S BEDROOM - LATER

We hear the sounds of a SHOWER from the bathroom. Then, the SQUEAK of the faucet as it's turned off.

Seconds pass, then we hear the CLICKING of the metal walker. TILT UP the walker, seeing Epoch's naked, decrepit body.

EPOCH
It's all over....

He slowly makes his way to his bed and falls on top of his dirty tan-colored sheets. When he lets go, the walker CRASHES to the ground loudly. But he doesn't care.

With a shaking arm, Epoch grabs a pen from the night stand and begins WRITING on a piece of paper. He looks up to the ceiling as he writes, his eyes expressing deep pain.

DuNCaN TRuaNT kNoWS

He drops the pen.

EPOCH (CONT'D)
(shakily)
I'm sorry! Just... sorry....

Epoch is no longer breathing. His eyes, yellowed and crusted-over, remain forever open.

CLOSE ON: Epoch's eyes, as we slowly TILT UP and away.

Then, we TILT BACK DOWN. And to our shock, there's someone at his side. It's CLARISSA!

Clarissa is holding Epoch's hand against her head, as she cries without tears, and wails without sound.

It's a touching scene, ending with Clarissa leaning over and kissing her ex-love on the lips.

CLARISSA
I'll never... love anyone again.
Milgate... I'm so sor--

A HIGH-PITCHED "SCREEEEEE" sound causes Clarissa to stop in the middle of her sentence. All of a sudden, her eyes go back in her head, and her mouth shoots open in fright.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)
Aaahhhh!

Clarissa backs away from the bed -- she YELLS IN PAIN!

All around the room, the plants begin to quickly turn BROWN as they shrivel and die!

Clarissa leans forward in agony, holding her stomach tightly, looking as though she's feeling unimaginable pain.

From the look on her face, and the loud DRY HEAVING, it appears as though she's BOILING from the inside out.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Ooohhhh!

She writhes wildly in the air -- her arms flinging all around her, her head convulsing as though she's having a seizure!

And then, Clarissa suddenly stops. No more shaking, no more pain. Just calm.

A strange SILENCE fills the room.

Clarissa stares up at camera, her face covered in sweat. Her eyes turn a disturbing shade of BLACK... and she SMILES.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW

CUT AWAY TO:

SHaCKLeS