

THE INVISIBLE WAR

Written

by

Jesse Battle

(Ghostwriter Suzanne Gillis)

Based in part on a true story

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JESSE BATTLE  
NEW YORK, NY

FADE IN:

EXT. 125TH STREET, HARLEM, NEW YORK CITY - DAY

The inner city comes to life in front of several Harlem tenement apartment buildings. We hear the song: "Silent Lucidity" sung by Queensryche.

SONG LYRICS

*Hush now don't you cry,  
Wipe away the teardrop from your  
eye,  
You're lying safe in bed,  
It was all a bad dream,  
Spinning in your head,  
Your mind tricked you to feel the  
pain,  
Of someone close to you leaving the  
game of life--*

The SONG CONTINUES as BLACK TEENAGERS, ages 13-16, gather on the street, smoking weed and cigarettes, chatting and exchanging drugs. It is early spring and the few trees in the city have new buds on them.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - DAY

The SONG CONTINUES as JESSE RHODES, 30s, a good-looking African American, dressed in only his underwear, sips from a coffee cup as he stares out the window at the teenagers below.

Jesse eyes his watch, and moves quickly through his dirty, bare-bones studio apartment. He puts down his coffee cup, pulls on his jeans.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY, STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Jesse locks his apartment door and pockets his keys. Sounds of BABIES CRYING and COUPLES FIGHTING echo throughout the building as Jesse hurries down the stairs.

He passing by unkempt walls, peeling paint and cracked ceilings.

EXT. 125TH STREET - CONTINUOUS

The SONG CONTINUES as Jesse exits the building. He passes by a church with a large neon cross outside and a sign which reads: JESUS SAVES.

The TEENAGERS from earlier see Jesse approaching.

TEEN ONE

Watup, JB? Late for work again?

Jesse turns the corner and continues walking. He approaches an ELDERLY MAN, 80s, dressed in dirty clothes as he rummages through a trash can.

Jesse catches his glare as the Elderly Man's eyes fill with rage and wild anger. The Elderly Man raises his fist to Jesse and MUMBLES in a strange, almost DEMONIC voice.

OLD MAN

She'll kill you. She'll kill you  
all. Or die trying.

Jesse passes him, a confused look on his face. He glances back one more time before entering the subway at 125th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue.

The SONG ENDS.

INT. TRAIN D, SUBWAY PLATFORM - DAY

Jesse waits for the train amidst a CROWD OF PEOPLE. SOME give him dirty looks; others ignore him. ONE MAN gives Jesse a strange look and spits on the ground.

JESSE (V.O.)

That was the beginning, when things  
started getting beyond my control.  
I knew something had been brewing  
for a long time, but I kept telling  
myself it would pass; that I was  
just imagining it.

The train approaches and stops. Jesse and others get on it.

INT. D TRAIN, MANHATTAN SUBWAY - DAY

Jesse sits, reading a book entitled Dreams and Visions. A visible PREGNANT BLACK WOMAN, 30s, stands in front of him.

JESSE (V.O.)

There were signs all around me.  
People I never knew or saw before,  
who kept trying to get my attention  
in the worst ways humanly possible.

The Woman's hand moves over her crotch, up to her protruding stomach, fingers roving to the tip of her lips.

Her other hand lifts her skirt as roaches crawl out from under it. Jesse immediately gets up and walks away.

The woman LAUGHS. She swings on the subway bar, staring at him. Everyone watches as the woman sits down next to a hooded DARK FIGURE, his head bowed downward as if asleep.

JESSE (V.O.)

But what was it they wanted? And why me? I couldn't tell anymore, only that it was getting worse. Much worse. And I had to find a way to stop it.

The train stops. Jesse quickly gets off.

EXT. 47TH STREET, ROCKEFELLER CENTER, MANHATTAN - DAY

Jesse emerges from the subway station. He heads down the crowded street as PEOPLE rush by on all sides.

EXT. PARK AVENUE - DAY

Jesse approaches the Waldorf Astoria Hotel on Park Avenue. He ducks down an alley, heading toward a nondescript EMPLOYEE ENTRANCE.

JESSE (V.O.)

Even my dreams were getting worse. For months, they left me with more questions than answers. Why me, I kept asking myself. What is it they were trying to tell me?

Jesse sees what looks like a HOMELESS MAN, 40s, standing by the employee entrance. The Homeless Man faces the wall as he appears to be urinating.

Jesse takes out his employee pass key and swipes the door as it unlocks. The MAN reaches out and grabs Jesse's wrist as Jesse reaches for the door handle.

Jesse eyes widen when he sees the evil face and bloodshot eyes of the man beside him, who GROWLS in a demonic VOICE.

HOMELESS MAN

She'll have your soul. We all will.

Jesse yanks his wrist free and dashes into the building.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jesse peers out the small window of the employee door at a now empty alleyway. A shadow passes in front of the door as Jesse jumps back.

ANGELA DIAS, 29, an petite and attractive Latino woman, enters the building. She puts her key pass in her purse and seeing Jesse standing directly beside her by the door.

JESSE

Did you see him? Is he out there?

The door locks with a click as Jesse peers back out the tiny window.

ANGELA

Who?

JESSE

The man who was taking a-- who looked homeless.

ANGELA

There's nobody out there now.

Jesse continues to look out the window as Angela walks over to the employee security desk. She shows her ID and signs in as BOB PETERS, 30s, in his security uniform, eyes her.

BOB

Hey, Ang. How's it going?

ANGELA

Stop calling me Ang, Bob. It's Angela or nothing.

BOB

But I thought we were friends?

ANGELA

(walks off)

I have friends, Bob.

BOB

I can see someone hasn't had their coffee yet.

Angela heads into the Woman's Employee Changing Room as the door closes. Bob sees Jesse still by the employee entrance.

BOB (CONT'D)

Jesus, Jesse, what is with you?  
Let's go already! For I'd like to  
get home sometime before Christmas.

Jesse flashes his Security Employee ID, signs in, and enters the Men's Employee Changing Room.

INT. MEN'S CHANGING ROOM - DAY

Jesse changes into his Hotel Security Uniform. Other MALE EMPLOYEES also putting on their uniforms, including several HOTEL COOKS, JANITORS, FRONT LOBBY WORKERS and other STAFF.

JESSE (V.O.)

It seemed the only place I had any  
peace these days was work. For some  
reason I felt safe there, as if I  
wasn't alone.

Some MEN joke and laugh as they exit the changing room. Now alone, Jesse closes his locker. He turns and heads for the door, as he spots an INDISTINCT SHADOW lurking in the corner.

He hears someone WHISTLING 'London Bridge is Falling Down' and freezes at the door. He turns and looks in the corner as the shadow vanishes. The Whistling stops as Jesse takes this in, feeling again uneasy. He looks around the empty changing room and exits.

INT. HOTEL SECURITY BOOTH - DAY

A uniformed Jesse sits at the security desk check-in booth as HOTEL EMPLOYEES sign in. Jesse checks their ID badges as they head for the changing rooms. Two HISPANIC WOMEN, 50s, one short and one tall, exit the women's changing room and, sign out. They are both dressed their street clothes as the taller notices Jesse's worried look.

TALL HISPANIC WOMAN

What's with the face? Still not  
sleeping right?

JESSE

Maybe.

SHORT HISPANIC WOMAN

You're always tired. Why don't you  
sell some drawings and get rid of  
this boring job?

TALL HISPANIC WOMAN  
 Maybe he likes his job.

SHORT HISPANIC WOMAN  
 What? Sitting at a desk all day,  
 thinking about his problems? Who  
 needs that all day? I'd rather be  
 cleaning rooms any day.

TALL HISPANIC WOMAN  
 You're crazy! Maybe he likes his  
 job.

They walk for the exit together.

SHORT HISPANIC WOMAN  
 Maybe he does. I never said he was  
 good at cleaning anything, did I? I  
 guess that's why he's an artist.

The ladies LAUGH as they exit the hotel. TWO MALE EMPLOYEES  
 enter, show Jesse their ID's and sign in. Jesse eyes wander.

JESSE (V.O.)  
 I needed to get some answers and  
 soon. I no longer could deny what  
 was happening to me. Somehow,  
 everything felt different now. I  
 had to find out what was behind it  
 all, and these dreams. Or at the  
 very least, how to stop them.

Jesse opens his book bag and removes his book, Dreams and Visions. He flips through it again and reads.

INT. HOTEL EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA - DAY

Jesse eats his lunch as he sits alone at a table. He  
 continues to read Dreams and Visions as a YOUNG MALE JANITOR,  
 late-20s, wearing a hood over his head, fills his tray up at  
 the counter with food.

He has a strange look in his eyes and seems out of place as  
 he turns walks over to Jesse's table. He eyes what Jesse's  
 reading and suddenly bumps into him, spills his pea soup and  
 drinks all over Jesse's book and clothes.

Jesse jumps up, visibly upset by this. He looks at the  
 Janitor who fakes concern.

JANITOR  
 Damn! Did I do that?  
 (demonic voice)  
 Ruin your book?

Jesse picks up his ruined book as their eyes meet. The Janitor's eyes are full of evilness as Janitor LAUGHS and walks away. He dumps his tray by the door as Angela looks up from her table, noticing what's going on.

She watches as Jesse sits back at his table, wiping off his clothes and uniform with his napkin. Jesse sits down as THOMAS GREEN, 40s, another Hotel Security guard in his uniform, sits down across from him. Jesse eyes his soaked book and wipes it off, but it's too late. It's ruined.

THOMAS  
 What was that all about?

Jesse eyes the Janitor as he exits the cafeteria.

JESSE  
 When did that guy start working here? Have you even seen him before?

THOMAS  
 Who?

JESSE  
 The janitor who just spilled his lunch all over me.

THOMAS  
 Did you see his ID?

JESSE  
 No.

Jesse looks at the door, as more EMPLOYEES enter.

JESSE (CONT'D)  
 (to himself)  
 Great. It's happening even here now.

THOMAS  
 What is?

JESSE  
 Nothing.



Jesse grabs his tray and book bag and heads for the exit. He drops his tray on the conveyor belt, tosses his ruined book into the trash can and exits. Angela sees Jesse exit before returning to the conversation at her own lunch table.

EXT. WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Jesse, now in his street clothes, exits out of the Hotel Employee Entrance and heads down the alleyway.

EXT. SPRING STREET, SOHO - NIGHT

Jesse exits the Number 6 Train subway station on Spring Street. He walks beside other NEW YORKERS going about their daily business.

INT. SOHO ART STUDIO - NIGHT

The small studio is full of old furniture, paintings, drawings, and other art equipment.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

All right, stop playing games with me. I know you're hungry.

MORGAN KING, 60s, a good-looking African American man with salt-n-pepper hair, stands by an open window, holding out a can of open cat food, to a stubborn black alley cat named JAKE. Jake sniffs at the food but won't enter the apartment. Instead he sits on the fire escape.

MORGAN

Fine. Stay out there all day. You can eat rats with the rest of them for all I care.

Jake MEOWS and jumps into the apartment finally. Morgan puts the can on the floor as Jake eats it. The door to the apartment clicks open as Jesse enters.

JESSE

You still torturing that poor cat? I told you before, you can't tame alley cats. They like their freedom.

Jesse locks the studio door as Morgan puts water down next to Jake's can.

MORGAN

You got that right. He's got me buying him store bought cat food now, and not the cheap kind either. And even that I gotta fight with him about.

Jesse gets out some artist's pencils out of his bag. Morgan goes into the small kitchen and makes some tea.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

What's your excuse? It's been days since you were here. You still having those nightmares, or what?

Jesse sets up his easel and uncovers his latest work, an elaborate drawing of a beautiful exotic black woman, who has a sensual gaze and alluring look, as well as a demonic gleam in her eyes.

JESSE

I guess it shows, huh? I was hoping it'd pass by now, but no such luck.

MORGAN

Maybe you should get some counseling. Or take some pills. Three months of that crap, would keep any man nuts.

Morgan fixes some food on the tiny stove.

JESSE

I'm not ready for that yet. Nor drugs either.

MORGAN

Then try a woman. God knows you'd been along long enough. A man your age, it ain't normal. And I sure as hell know, you don't need no help in that department, if you'd just make yourself a little more personable. Try talking to them once in awhile. That's all you gotta do.

Jesse fixes the drawing specifically along the woman's face.

JESSE

You can forget that talk. I had enough of that nonsense to last me a life-time.

Morgan dumps his food and into a dish. He sits on the sofa and eats. Jake hops up next to him and cleans himself.

MORGAN

So you had a few go bad? You wanna know how many I had to date before I finally found Grace?

JESSE

Did I ask?

MORGAN

Hell, I'd be in a grave right now, if it wasn't for that angel coming into my life when she did. That's all you need. A good woman beside you at night, and you'll sleep like a baby. I'd stake my life, that's your problem right there. Not all this crazy mumbo jumbo.

Jesse looks at Morgan, annoyed. Jake hops off the couch and jumps back out the window and down the fire escape.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

There he goes again. The call of the wild. Looking for a little tail himself, I'd say. And then some.

JESSE

(continues drawing)

How is she doing these days? Grace that is?

MORGAN

Not good. Tests are coming back positive still. Four months, and she's wearing herself out. I told her, she doesn't need to work. I got enough coming with the gallery. But you know how stubborn women are.

A timer on Morgan's watch beeps. He jumps up from the sofa and puts his dish in the sink.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Damn. Nearly forgot her prescriptions. I'll told her I'd pick them up and run them up before dinner. Here I am, playing with that damn cat and talking.

Morgan grabs his coat and keys off keys counter.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Lock up before you head out.

JESSE

Sure. I might even take a nap here.  
You don't mind, do you? If I use  
the couch?

MORGAN

Knock yourself out. God knows, you  
look as if you could use it.

Morgan eyes the woman Jesse's drawing, slightly curious, and quickly exits the apartment. Jesse looks back at the drawing, unsure of it and steps away from it.

He puts his drawing pencil down and wipes his face. He looks exhausted as he walks over to the sofa. Jesse lies down and sighs. He crosses his arms and closes his eyes.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - NIGHT

The midnight hour. The air is thick with fog. A dark church looms above Jesse. He turns toward an old abandoned church which is surrounded by large rusted iron gates.

Dead tree branches hang above the entrance and cast shadows on the large wooden doors. The old CHURCH BELLS CLANG in the rotted church tower as the wind blows at them. A black crow crosses sky as thick clouds block out the full moon.

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Jesse stands in the aisle facing the altar, frozen. The high ceilings arch above walls adorned with large, broken stained-glass windows. White candles glow on a large wooden altar flanked by Broken statues of angels and saints.

A cold wind rushes through a broken window and blows the lit candles OUT. In the darkness, Jesse approaches the altar. A Bible on a podium lays open. Jesse reaches for it. The wind causes the pages to turn rapidly. The bible suddenly slams shut.

Jesse finds himself back by the entrance door. Suddenly, the floor underneath him undulates. Frantic, Jesse looks for an exit. He lunges toward the door. The floor opens up, revealing a bottomless pit with a blazing fire. Wooden pews fall into the pit.

Jesse grabs onto the door handle. He holds onto for dear life as the floor plunges into the abyss.

Jesse fights to open the door but a HOODED FIGURE blocks his escape. The Hooded Figure holds a hangman's noose in his left hand. The Figure reaches toward Jesse with his free hand, but the walls and door give away. Jesse SCREAMS as he falls into the pit.

The Hooded Figure watches. He tosses the hangman's noose into the burning pit after Jesse.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOHO ART STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

A panicked Jesse bolts upright on the sofa. Drenched in sweat, he gasps. He gets up and paces the floor. A loud THUD is heard as Jesse spins around and sees Jake the cat as he jumps back inside apartment through the open window.

Jake lands on the floor staring at Jesse. Jake walks goes over to the can of cat food on the floor and eats. Jesse sits back down on the sofa and rubs his face. His hands trembling.

INT. LOCAL ART GALLERY SOHO - NIGHT

PEOPLE gather at a small art gallery in Soho.

INT. ART GALLERY - CONTINUOUS

Morgan's art hangs on the walls. PEOPLE talk to Morgan and his wife, GRACE KING, 50s. She is petite and is mixed raced, wears a nice dress and has a slight bohemian look about her.

GRACE

He's bragging again. Nobody from the Time's is coming here. They usually cover the Guggenheim, or Whitney, not us down here.

MORGAN

Then you mean that ad I put in there, isn't going to help? Or was it the New Yorker, I forgot!

She hits him on the arm, playfully.

GRACE

You are such a liar, Morgan. But that's why I love you so much. You make me laugh.

She kisses him as the GUESTS laugh. In the corner, we see Jesse standing alone, with a glass of water in his hands. He sips his water and looks at the paintings by Morgan as someone stands behind him.

ANGELA (V.O.)

Well, fancy meeting you here.

Jesse turns around and sees Angela behind him.

JESSE

Angela? What brings you here?

She stand beside him, holding a glass of white wine. She sips it.

ANGELA

I'm an art lover. The question is, what are you doing here. You don't exactly strike me as the more bohemian Soho type.

JESSE

I'm not. My teacher is though. Morgan King. I studied under him for a few years ago at NYU. Now he lets me use his studio some nights.

ANGELA

So you're an artist too? I didn't know that. What kind of stuff do you paint?

JESSE

I don't. I draw. Sketches mostly, black and whites.

ANGELA

That's very interesting. I'd like to see them sometimes. Do you have any particular subjects you like to draw?

Jesse suddenly sees something in the corner of the joining room, which looks unusual. It's a light that shines on a very different looking painting.

The painting seems to be of a prophetic image, that looks very out of place and very unlike the rest of the artwork.

Angela sees him staring at something and looks in the other room.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What is it? Someone you know.

JESSE

Not. It's that painting. I don't remember every seeing that before. It doesn't look like--

ANGELA

Look like what?

JESSE

One of- his.

Jesse moves closer and heads into the other room. He sees the picture on the wall as the light shines even brighter onto the majestic prophet like image of a male angelic creature.

Jesse is drawn to it as the rest of the room grows darker and empty. Angela enters the room behind Jesse, confused by his actions as OTHERS leave the room and join the crowd in the other gallery. Jesse moves closer to the painting as it almost seems to bacon him along with his incredible image.

Jesse suddenly reaches out to touch it as is disappears and is immediately replaced with one of Morgan's paintings.

ANGELA

Is something wrong?

Jesse backs off, confused by this.

JESSE

Did you see it? The image of a-- a prophet?

She looks at Jesse concerned, and then looks back at the picture on the wall, which is clearly of Morgan's wife, Grace.

ANGELA

That looks like the woman he's talking to out there. It's his wife, isn't it? She seems to be in a lot of his paintings. I guess he must like to use her for his painting subject.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Or maybe he just really loves her.  
What do you think?

She looks at him as Jesse seems flustered. He wipes his face and looks tired.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

What is it? Is something bothering you.

JESSE

You could say that. I guess I should be going.

He looks back at the painting again and then at Morgan and Grace, in the other room. Jesse eyes his watch.

ANGELA

Me too. I have an early class in the morning. Bible study.

JESSE

What?

She heads for the door.

ANGELA

It looks like some other people are leaving too. See you around, huh?

Angela puts her empty wine glass down on the table and heads for the other room. She says good-bye to Morgan and Grace on her way out. Jesse watches as the crowd dies out in the gallery.

Jesse moves to leave as suddenly the light grows brighter again in the room. Jesse turns around and sees the same prophetic image and painting again on the wall as it glows.

Jesse moves towards it as the wall suddenly opens up and sucks Jesse into another room.

The door closes as Jesse seems almost suspended in air. A male angelic creature, looks down at him from above from what appears like the Heavens.

ANGELIC VOICE

Do not be afraid. You have been chosen by God. To be his Last Chosen Prophet.

JESSE

Who are you? What do you want from me?



## ANGELIC VOICE

You have a gift. A discerning spirit. You shall use it to benefit Him. And to warn his people. Use it well, Jesse Rhodes. Do not let the others distract you.

Suddenly Jesse is back in the other room, where the painting of Grace is again directly in front of him. Jesse looks white as snow as Morgan approaches him, followed by Grace.

## MORGAN

Jesse? What are doing back here all alone? And who was that girl I saw you talking too?

Grace notices his face as he stares at the painting and then the wall. Jesse touches the corner and the wall, confused by all of this.

## MORGAN (CONT'D)

Jesse?

## GRACE

What is it? Jesse? Aren't you feeling well?

Jesse is freaked out.

## JESSE

I gotta go.

Jesse rushes past them and enters the other larger room, which is completely empty now. Jesse exits the front door as Morgan looks back at Grace, confused by this.

## GRACE

What was that all about?

## MORGAN

I have no idea.

## INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

Jesse sits at a table inside the New York Public Library. He looks through a stack of books with pictures of Angelic Creatures, Prophets and other Godly creatures. He reads as he hears someone WHISTLING 'London Bridge is Falling Down' softly in the background.

Jesse looks around, annoyed by this and sees the gorgeous, dark-skinned Trinidad beauty SIMONE BLEU, early-30s, sitting at the same table down from him.

She looks up at him and stops WHISTLING as Jesse eyes her over and suddenly looks away. He looks up and stares back at her, realizing that she resemble the woman in drawing he is currently working on in Morgan's studio. Simone eyes what Jesse is reading with particular interest, as she reads from her own book, which is on witchcraft and the occult.

SIMONE

Heavy reading for a Saturday.

Jesse notices Simone piercing hazel eyes which have an almost hypnotic sensual allure to them. He looks closer and sees something else, an evil quality and quickly looks away.

JESSE

Maybe so. I hadn't noticed.

Jesse returns to his book and turns a page. He tries to concentrate and to not let Simone distracted him. Simone gets up and moves closer to Jesse. She sits beside him as her leg brushes up against his. He feels a tingle in his thigh and moves his chair away as she sits beside him.

SIMONE

You look tired. As if you can hardly keep your eyes open. Is something troubling you? I get the feeling you're here, looking for answers.

Jesse looks up at her, confused by this.

JESSE

Well if I was, I'd hardly be discussing them in a library. Especially to someone I don't even--

OTHERS in the library SHUSH them. Simone smiles.

SIMONE

We're all looking for answers. We think we'll find them in books, but real truth we won't. They lies in us and our choices. Maybe you'd like to read what I'm reading? It might help.

She slides her books towards him. Jesse reads the title: Spirit, Blood and Drums.

JESSE

The Occult? I don't think so. That's not exactly something I- have any interest in knowing about.

SIMONE

Why is that? You're not curious about learning how to ease men's suffering? And how to take control of things that don't make sense? Including dreams about things that keep you up at night?

Jesse looks at her more confused.

JESSE

Who said anything about dreams?

SIMONE

I did. I might even have the solution to that for you let me. Why don't you come with me so we can--

Again, someone SHUSHES them. Simone gives the WOMAN a 'look' which instantly threatens them as the look away.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

--talk privately. Maybe even get a cup of coffee together.

She rises, making sure to hover as close to him as possible. Jesse sees her moves and tries to avoid falling prey to this obvious attempt at seduction.

JESSE

Maybe some other time. I have to get back to work soon.

She looks back at Jesse, holding her books and purse.

SIMONE

On such a beautiful day? I'm sure your boss won't mind if you're a little late. I'll be waiting outside.

Simone walks as the MEN watch her. They seem unable to take their eyes off her as heads for the exit. Jesse suddenly rises, leaving his book on the table behind him. He grabs his book bag and follows after her.

EXT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Jesse exits the library. He spots Simone standing on the steps, still holding her occult books.

JESSE

Did you check those books out?

SIMONE

They're mine. I only come here for reading. I like the people I meet.

Simone walks down the steps as Jesse hesitates. He looks around and against his best instincts, finds himself slowly following her.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

They walk along the street together. Jesse notices MEN they pass staring at Simone.

SIMONE

(to Jesse)

What's your name?

JESSE

Jesse Rhodes. Yours?

SIMONE

Simone Bleu.

They stop at the corner, waiting for the light.

JESSE

Like I said, I don't have much time. I'm not sure I can--

SIMONE

It's just up ahead.

The light changes. Simone takes Jesse's arm and walks across the street with him.

INT. MANHATTAN DINER - MOMENTS LATER

Simone and Jesse sit at a small table. Simone sips at a cup of coffee as Jesse eats a sandwich. He eyes his watch as he eats.

SIMONE

Do you live alone,?

JESSE

Yes. Why do you ask?

SIMONE

Just curious. What kind of work do you do?

JESSE

I work as a security guard. You?

SIMONE

I'm in-between jobs. I have a roommate and well, like to keep my options open.

JESSE

What options are those? Picking men up at the local library?

She looks at him, slightly insulted.

SIMONE

That's not every nice. I guess you think this is a pick-up, don't you? Well it's not. I just like helping people, is all? What's wrong with that?

JESSE

And I look so helpless, is that it? Like some kind of stray puppy dog?

SIMONE

Not exactly. In fact, you look very strong to me. Do you work out?

She looks at his arms and hands.

JESSE

Not lately. I used to be interested in Karate, till I--

SIMONE

Started asking questions?

JESSE

I guess. But who has all the answers, right? It doesn't mean we don't still ask the questions, does it? Or try and get it right?

SIMONE

My grandmother knows. I'm sure she could figure out what's bothering your that keeping you up at night.

(MORE)

SIMONE (CONT'D)

And also give you the real answers  
your looking for. With your dreams  
that is.

JESSE

Is that right? And how is she going  
to do that, exactly? Magic?

SIMONE

I told you. The occult. It's all  
right here in these books of mine.

She slips him one of her books.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Maybe you'd like to take them home  
and look them over when you get a  
chance. And tell me what you think?

Jesse eyes the covers, which includes subjects about Black  
Magic, Voodoo and Obeah.

JESSE

Like I said, that stuff's not for  
me. I'd father find my own answers.

SIMONE

How? By reading about Angels and so  
called Prophets? Maybe I had you  
pegged wrong. You seemed much to  
smart to fall into all that holier  
than thou crap. From what I saw,  
you looked very intelligent.

JESSE

Intelligence is subjective, isn't  
it? Thanks for lunch. It was nice  
talking to you, but I have to head  
out now. Maybe we'll run into each  
other again some other time.

Jesse puts some money on the table and walks to the door.

SIMONE

Do you mind if I walk with you?

Simone follows him to the door. Jesse looks back at her, not  
knowing what to say. She opens the door as he exits.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jesse looks around and then back at Simone.

JESSE

It's kinda far. Maybe--

SIMONE

I don't mind. I like walking on days like this. Especially when I enjoy the company so much.

She takes his arm. With her other hand she slips her occult book, Spirit, Blood and Drums, into Jesse's open book bag. They cross the street together and head uptown.

INT. SOHO ART STUDIO - NIGHT

Jesse and Morgan are busy working on their paintings and drawings. Jesse works on his latest drawing which is a black and white sketch of an ELABORATE CHESS GAME.

MORGAN

You've been quiet tonight. What you thinking about?

JESSE

Too much. As always.

MORGAN

What was it that happened at the gallery the other night? You seemed spooked by something.

JESSE

I don't want to talk about it.

MORGAN

That's my boy. Never likes to open up about nothing. As tight as a drum about to bust.

Morgan fills his paint tray near Jesse's canvas and notices the drawing.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

That's seems darker than usual. What's it about?

The drawing features Jesse sitting in front of a chess game and at a table. He is seated alone. In the foreground there to the right is large DARK FIGURE with his back to the viewer. The black figure wears a black cloak and hood.

JESSE

I'm not sure. I keep seeing it in my dreams so I thought if I drew it, it'd make some kind of sense.

Jesse stands back from the drawing and thinks about it.

MORGAN

It looks as if you're playing chess with yourself.

JESSE

Yeah. Only I don't play chess.

MORGAN

Could symbolize something. Maybe your life. But who's this guy? The one with his back to us, watching you?

JESSE

You noticed that, right? He's not at the game, or playing, but just sort of stands there.

The Dark Figure seems takes up most of the right side of the canvas.

MORGAN

Maybe he's waiting to see what your next move it?

JESSE

You think so?

MORGAN

Whoever it is, he's got you in checkmate.

JESSE

What?

Jesse looks at the drawing again as Morgan walks back to his. He continues painting.

MORGAN

Maybe it's time you consider seeing a shrink.

JESSE

Will you stop saying that. I can handle my own problem, trust me. If you laid off my ass, maybe I could even get some sleep.



MORGAN

Yeah, right. Like I believe that's going to happen.

Jake the cat jumps in through the window. He has another rat in his mouth.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

What the hell do you want? Food again?

He drops a dead rat on the floor and steps back to show it.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Jesus! That's disgusting!

JESSE

That's what you get for letting in the rift-raft, rats.

Morgan goes to the garbage can as Jake jumps back out the window. Morgan grabs the rat and tosses him into the trash can and yells out the window.

MORGAN

And don't be bringing any more of your friends around! You little shit!

Jesse reaches for his pencils in his bag and sees the occult book inside. He takes it out, upset about this. He looks it over and puts it back into his bag, annoyed.

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Stacks of book are scattered about the apartment. The occult book lies on his coffee table, along with other books. Jesse lies on his futon on the floor and reads a books about God's Prophets. Jesse continues reading and yawns.

He looks at the clock beside him which read 3:00 AM and puts the book down. Jesse sighs and turns off the light beside him. He closes his eyes and falls to sleep.

WIPE TO:

INT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - TIME UNKNOWN

Jesse dangles below a dark sky, his arms stretched outward as if suspended by invisible wires. His feet bound together as if tied to an invisible cross.

Jesse looks past his feet to unending darkness below. Blackness fills the world around him; there is a complete absence of sound.

JESSE

Where am I? What is this place?

Jesse's face freezes in terror. Three ghostly DEMONS gliding toward him. Their features are terrifying and violent, their eyes filled with hate.

They surround Jesse, as their razor-like teeth appear as they open mouths. Jesse is paralyzed with fear as they begin to attack his flesh. Jesse SCREAMS as a GODLIKE VOICE calls out.

ANGELIC VOICE (O.S.)

But first, you must believe.  
Believe in Him and yourself.

Jesse struggles to free himself from the invisible wires that bind him suddenly break. He falls towards an endless sky as--

ANGELIC VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

We are here, for your soul.

Jesse continues to fall as he suddenly stops. He turns around and sees the Demons chasing after him. He suddenly rises and heads back towards them. He takes out a sword and defeats them all with one slash.

The demons fall into the pit below, screaming in agony and pain. The Angelic Figure descends and grabs onto Jesse. He lifts Jesse up towards the opening and back into the Abandoned Church.

CUT TO:

INT. JESSE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jesse wakes up in his bed. Jesse remembers the vision the dream and bolts up in bed. He looks at the clock beside him on the floor which reads 3:15 AM. He looks at his arms and flesh and feels himself. There is no bleeding or teeth marks.