

KILLING ON CARNIVAL ROW

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EXT. SEWER TUNNEL -- NIGHT

An archway at the end of an alley. Broken and bent long ago, crusted with moss. A trickle of water cuts through.

A SCREAM from within. Laboured BREATHING, the rapid SPLISH SPLASH of footfalls.

AISLING COBWEB, beautiful and intense, bursts from the tunnel into the narrow alley.

Her body, petite, young, and frail, tense with fear. From her back sprout a pair of large moth-like wings, fragile, intricate, frayed at the edges.

Aisling Cobweb is a faerie. And she's running for her life.

She catches her tattered skirt on metal grating and stumbles face first. She turns, panicked.

In the darkness, distant at first, an eerie WAIL. Her eyes widen.

Aisling, flexes her wings, and takes to

THE AIR

with frantic agility. She flies, weaving between narrow alleys, dodging gas lanterns and sagging clothes-lines.

Her papery wings carry her swerving around tight corners.

She slams into the side of a steep inclined

ROOF

where she scrambles for a foothold on the slate shingles.

A black clawed hand grabs her ankle.

She kicks free and makes it to the pinnacle of the roof.

She leaps, flaps her wings, and climbs again into

THE NIGHT SKY

Above the rooftops.

Ahead of her, through the thick billowing fog, she sees the obscure shape of a tower bridge. She heads for the nearest

TOWER

and alights at the top between two gargoyles. Wincing, she stretches her wings. She hugs her knees and shivers.

She cautiously looks out over the city, gas lights diffused through the thick night fog. She looks down towards the river. No sign of her pursuer.

No sound except the river LAPPING against the moorings of the bridge far below and nearby doves COOING softly.

In a fluttering whirlwind, the doves suddenly scatter.

Aisling looks around. She dares not breath.

Suddenly, A DARK SHAPE swoops in and snatches her from her perch. Aisling's piercing screams echo in the night as the struggling pair melts into the murky fog.

Rasping HISSES, the CRACKING of bones, and a ravenous wet SUCKING noise. Her screams dwindle to a hoarsed MOAN.

Like a rag doll, Aisling falls through the fog, limp, her wings raggedly shorn from her body. She lands in

THE RIVER

with a sickening SLAP.

Her violated corpse floats face down, drifting with the current, trailing a sparkling rainbow viscus of faerie blood.

Somewhere in the distance, a FOGHORN sounds.

TO BLACK

EXT. THE BURGUE (AERIAL VIEW) -- MORNING

An urban hodgepodge of crumbling rooftops, grimy belfries, and smoke-stained spires. Chimneys and smokestacks pump towers of soot into a stone gray sky.

CARD OVER: "City of the Burgue"

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.)

The Burgue: city of soot and sorcery,
city of humans and monsters, of faerie
whores and drug peddling dwarves.

(NOTE: Labels and borders show various zones of the city as each area is introduced.)

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the East, you have Argyle Heights,
the academic district. In the North,
The Docklands, center of industry
and shipping, where the Selkies, the
seal folk, work the barges.

(MORE)

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the West, Carnival Row, the faerie quarter, home of the sordid faerie brothels. In the South, Finistere Crossing, the human zone. That's where I live. All the underground train lines lead to the center of town, Oberon Square...

(NOTE: Lines snake out from the center of "the map," and become underground railways.)

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...where the human controlled government sits and spins its web like a big goddamned spider.

The "web" becomes a map painted on the wall of

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN STATION -- CONTINUOUS

INSPECTOR RYCROFT PHILOSTRATE leans against the wall next to the map. He has a hard face, but kind eyes. He wears a long coat and black bowler hat, and smokes a pipe.

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.)

And that's The Burgue for you, A to Zed, a melting pot just a few degrees from boiling over.

He reads a letter as he waits for the train.

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sometimes, I can make myself forget about the whole mess.

He holds it up to an oil lamp bolted to the wall to read the beautifully calligraphed handwriting.

A soft smile crosses his face.

EXT. TRAIN -- MOMENTS LATER

Barreling through a tunnel, pistons pumping, wheels spinning, pipes spewing plumes of steam.

It comes into the gaslit subterranean station and stops right in front of Philostrate. The passenger doors slide open. He steps off into the car.

INT. PASSENGER CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate sits, crammed shoulder to shoulder with similarly dressed COMMUTERS in the dim car. He wipes the sweat from his brow with a handkerchief.

The darkness of the tunnel outside is interrupted by regular strobes of track-lights.

A bit of the graffiti on the windows catches Philostrate's eye. The words "The Screaming Banshee" next to the crude drawing of a ghost, mouth agape.

The strobing track-lights illuminate the haunting picture in brief flashes. Philostrate stares into the hollow eyes of the drawing as the train SCREAMS to a stop.

EXT. OBERON SQUARE -- LATER

Philostrate ascends the stairs of the underground station, out into a plaza of crumbling marble sculptures.

He walks past TOURISTS feeding a thick flock of pigeons. The black dome of Parliament looms in the distance.

An OLD FAERIE with withered wings pushes a cart piled high with trinkets. Laughing SCHOOLBOYS sneak up behind her and throw pigeon food at the her. She totters to her knees.

The boys scatter as Philostrate gives them a reproachful look. Philostrate moves to help the woman up.

PHILOSTRATE

You alright?

As she climbs to her feet, the contents of her bag spill. Stacks of a rough home-made pamphlet printed on hard pulp grain paper. A banner reads: "The Screaming Banshee"

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Dissident literature. You know what this is, don't you? This is an anti-human rag.

Philostrate scrutinizes one of the pamphlets then turns his hard eyes on the old woman.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Do you have any more?

Without looking up, she hands the rest over.

Philostrate stuffs the papers into a nearby dustbin and tosses a lit match in after them. A small bonfire erupts.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Just doing my job.

EXT. CENTRAL OPS -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate walks past a plaque: "The Burgue Metropolitan Constabulary: Central Operations."

EXT. PARLIAMENT STEPS -- LATER

A powerful, well-dressed middle aged woman, DAME WHITLEY BONIFACE, stands at a podium before a clutter of microphones and wires. Camera flashes shine in her fierce eyes.

DAME

Today, more than one third of this city is Faerie, Selkie, or Puck...

Her oratory echoes over the gathering throng of demonstrators - FAERIES, some HUMANS, and OTHER CREATURES.

DAME (CONT'D)

Why does this same third represent only 10% of the city's wealth?

A MURMUR from the crowd, signs raised in approval.

DAME (CONT'D)

Why does this element endure such civil injustice? Here's the reason... How much representation have you in Parliament?

The crowd ROARS and WHISTLES.

DAME (CONT'D)

We must reform the suffrage laws of our city. But do not count on the generosity of man. Don't count on my influence as the Mayor's wife...

INT. PHILOSTRATE'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate looks over papers at his desk. The Dame's distant voice drifts across the Square and through the open window.

DAME (O.S.)

The right to vote is not ours to give. It is a right of birth. Stand and claim what is yours!

A loud electric BUZZ startles Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE

Bollocks. I just got here.

He flips a switch on a small metal box bolted to the desk.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Philostrate.

MAGISTRATE FLUTE's voice flows from a brass horn mounted on the ceiling above Philostrate's head.

FLUTE (O.S.)

Morning Philo. Sorry but this one's been on my desk ever since it came through on the wire earlier. No one will touch it. All my men are out refereeing the Mayor's wife's rally.

PHILOSTRATE

(flips the switch)

What's the plot?

FLUTE (O.S.)

Homicide. Faerie. Body washed up in the Docklands. Selkie girl dragged it ashore. Pretty cut and dry.

PHILOSTRATE

Alright.

FLUTE (O.S.)

I have a carriage waiting.

Philostrate looks out the window. Waiting in the cobblestone street below is a black windowless carriage drawn by a regal GRIFFIN in chitinous black armour.

SERGEANT BOTTOM, a stout constable waits.

FLUTE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Sergeant Bottom will back you.

PHILOSTRATE

(to himself)

Bloody hell.

EXT. CARRIAGE -- MOMENTS LATER

The COACH DRIVER feeds the Griffin from a burlap feed sack. Bottom paces. Philostrate walks up.

BOTTOM

'Bout time, Inspector.

Philostrate climbs in. Bottom waddles after him.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Hope you're planning on doing all the talking. I can't understand a word of that sodding selkie-speak. Always singin' like bloody canaries, they are. Why can't they just talk?

He heaves himself

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE

and settles his bulk into the seat across from Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE

It's just their language, Sergeant.

BOTTOM

Right -

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

The Coach Driver whips the reins. The animal breaks into a trot pulling the carriage down the narrow foggy street.

INT. CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Bottom sits wedged uncomfortably. Fatty jowls hang over his tight collar, rippling as he speaks.

BOTTOM

All I'm saying - If you live among humans, you bloody well learn to speak the language.

PHILOSTRATE

Oh? And you speak selkie, do you?

BOTTOM

Do you?

Philostrate looks out the window into the cold, bleak morning.

PHILOSTRATE

No...

EXT. THE DOCKLANDS BEACH -- MORNING

Aisling Cobweb's corpse lies on the shore. Her dress shredded. Her mouth frozen in a ghastly scream. Two CONSTABLES slide the body into a black bag.

Philostrate looks over the fog-choked harbour, watching creatures move about the deck of a distant ship.

PHILOSTRATE

Where's the girl who found the body?

BOTTOM

Name's Moira. She's in her skin, in the water over there.

A slick, supple seal-esque creature emerges from the tide. It climbs up onto a rock in the distance. Stretching, contorting, opening its mouth impossibly wide.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

This bit still gives me the creeps.

A human face pushes through the open mouth. A whole head emerges. Curly red hair. A hand. An arm. A shoulder.

The girl underneath pulls off the dark sealskin as if she's sliding out of a tight leather skirt.

MOIRA stands on the rock in her "human" form, completely nude. Slim fair-skinned body flecked in a blizzard of light pink freckles. Her ears pointed like a faerie's.

Philostrate politely turns away. Bottom stares slack-jawed with a mix of morbid fascination and disgust.

EXT. BOULDER ON THE BEACH -- MOMENTS LATER

Moira dresses herself from a heap of clothes strewn on the rock. Philostrate and Bottom approach.

PHILOSTRATE

Good morning Miss Moira. I'm
Inspector Philostrate.

She meets him with sharp eyes, bright as emeralds. Inhuman.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

You found the body, did you?

Moira nods. She picks up the shed sealskin, singing softly as she pets it. The soft pelt purrs back. Bottom grimaces.

BOTTOM

A separate creature, is it?

Another curt, silent nod.

PHILOSTRATE

Let's not waste the lady's time.
(to Moira)

You can feel free to talk. I'm not
fluent in selkie-speak, but I can
muddle through.

Finally, she speaks. Her language, a song, a dozen voices in one, flowing eerie harmonies.

MOIRA

*Corpse caught in backwards currents/
moth caught in the cobweb of creation/
clipped wings plucked from silken
firmaments/ sticky strands clinging/
sinister spider spinning/ poor poor
singless wingless pixie*

BOTTOM

You want me to write this bilge down?

(Philostrate nods)

Oh fine.

He takes out a notepad.

PHILOSTRATE

What do you know about what did this?

MOIRA

*Breezes whisper through silent
streets/ tales of some unseelie beast/
sublime song soundless to men's ears/
becomes the swelling music of faeries
fears*

Bottom transcribes furiously, shaking his head in frustration.

PHILOSTRATE

Thank you for your time, miss.

EXT. THE DOCKLANDS BEACH -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate and Bottom walk back to the carriage.

BOTTOM

Waste of time. It's all gibberish.

PHILOSTRATE

You see, that's why you have to come to work in the uniform and I get to wear whatever I want.

BOTTOM

Alright then, "professor," what did you get out of all that nonsense?

PHILOSTRATE

There's something new in town, something the faeries are afraid of.

They board the carriage.

INT. PHILOSTRATE'S OFFICE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Philostrate leafs through sepia tintypes of Aisling's corpse. Bottom sits at the typewriter, filling out a report.

BOTTOM

The coroner can't even examine the body 'til tomorrow morning.

PHILOSTRATE

You just finish typing that report.

BOTTOM

Bloody hell. She's a faerie and she's dead. Who cares?

Philostrate ignores him. Bottom rolls a new paper into the typewriter.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

(as he types)

Name: Aisling Cobweb... Age: 17

Philostrate examines a photo of Aisling's bare back. Two ragged wounds where her wings should be.

PHILOSTRATE

(to himself)

Clipped wings...

Philostrate turns the page and inspects a detailed close-up of Aisling's neck, a strange puncture wound on the jugular.

BOTTOM

Species: Faerie... Sex: Female...

Bottom stops typing. He looks up at Philostrate.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Have you ever met a male faerie?

PHILOSTRATE

Pardon?

BOTTOM

Cause I've never seen a male faerie.

PHILOSTRATE

Don't be absurd, Sergeant.

BOTTOM

How do they reproduce? They must.
The Faerie Quarter gets more crowded
by the day. I have a theory...

PHILOSTRATE

Oh, good Lord.

BOTTOM

They keep the males locked in the
cellars - only bringing 'em out for
making babies? Sex slaves, you know?

PHILOSTRATE

That has to be the dumbest thing
you've ever said.

BOTTOM

(resumes typing)

Inspector. You don't get out much.
The Quarter's streets stink of rutting
faeries and black magics.

Philostrate comes to the last photo. Aisling's face, contorted with terror. He dwells on it.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

No wonder there's so many murders.
Seedy places like that breed psychos
by the bushel. Someone should really
go up to Carnival Row and cart the
lot of 'em off to the clink.

EXT. THE FAERIE QUARTER, CARNIVAL ROW -- NIGHT

Clotted with life. Svelte FAERIES fly over the streets.

LE CHAMBRE DE MADAME MAB

stands tightly wedged in a row of buildings packed together
like sardines. A web of warped wooden beams embedded in old
yellowed plaster hold the crooked thing up.

Lithe winged silhouettes flutter behind closed curtains.
From inside, girlish giggles, cries of passion, sensual music.

Philostrate stands in the street in front of the house. He
draws his long black coat tightly around himself, tips the
brim of his bowler, walks up to the front door and into

THE LOBBY

where blood-red velvet tapestries line the walls. Faeries
loungue seductively on chez lounges. All eyes on Philostrate.

He climbs the stairs, treading lightly into the second story
hall. Sounds of passion drift from every room he passes.

He comes to a door marked "Tourmaline La Roux." He listens.
Silence. He slowly pushes the door open.

INT. TOURMALINE'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate stands in the open doorway and looks over the
small room. A bed, a modest dresser, a nightstand.

Scattered across the wall and floors, paintings and canvases
of all sizes. Mostly watercolors.

TOURMALINE LA ROUX sits on a short stool at an easel,
painting, back to the door. She wears only an old flowing
cotton apron soiled with colorful paint stains.

Her golden curls cascade down her delicate porcelain-white
shoulders, vibrant wings absentmindedly flexing as she works.

PHILOSTRATE

Don't move.

TOURMALINE

(doesn't turn)

You going to arrest me?

PHILOSTRATE

I just might.

Tourmaline turns and smiles at the sight of Philostrate. She daintily runs to him, but stops short of embracing.

TOURMALINE

Oh, I shouldn't... I mean, I'd hate to get paint all over your -

Philostrate suddenly pulls her to him and kisses her passionately. They part. He smiles.

PHILOSTRATE

I have plenty of suits.

TOURMALINE

Still, all things considered -

She pulls the drawstring in back of her apron. It falls to her ankles. She presses up against Philostrate.

TOURMALINE (CONT'D)

I like it better this way.

They kiss deeply as she awkwardly fumbles with the his shirt. She reaches up and turns the valve on an oil lamp. Darkness.

INT. TOURMALINE'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Silver moonlight. Philostrate falls on the bed. Tourmaline climbs on top of him, wings fluttering excitedly.

TOURMALINE

I missed you so much.

She holds him tight and rocks, sliding up and down, pushing and pulling, tenderly rubbing against him.

He gingerly nibbles at the lobe of her pointed ear.

Tourmaline shudders and stretches her wings, covering the bed. She gasps as her wings shiver and flush with color.

INT. TOURMALINE'S ROOM -- MORNING

Sunlight streams over Tourmaline's naked body, asleep on top of the covers. She opens her eyes.

Philostrate stands by the window, putting on his pants, his bare back to Tourmaline. She quietly reaches over to her nightstand, taking a sketchpad and charcoal pencil.

She sketches an oblivious Philostrate as he fixes on the canvas on her easel -

An unfinished art nouveau poster of a faerie dancer. Bubble letters announce - Guinevere Cartier. Her pale body and swirling watercolour wings fade into rough pencil lines.

TOURMALINE

I hope it's the brush strokes and not the tits you're admiring.

PHILOSTRATE

This poster - one of your old ones?

TOURMALINE

Guinevere Cartier - I'm just touching it up a bit for the Orpheum.

PHILOSTRATE

And what have you got, there?

Tourmaline holds her pad to her chest in mock modesty.

TOURMALINE

Just a still life, darling. A bowl of fruit and a pitcher of water.

Philostrate grins and puts on his tie.

Tourmaline tosses the pad aside.

She grabs his tie and pulls him to her, kissing him. Philostrate indulges for a moment but finally pulls away.

PHILOSTRATE

I've got to go...

She ties the sheets around her and gets out of bed. She moves behind Philostrate, lacing her arms around his waist.

TOURMALINE

What could possibly be more important?

PHILOSTRATE

Now, we agreed. We don't...

TOURMALINE

...talk about work. Yes yes.

PHILOSTRATE

You don't want to know the things I know. And I don't want to know -

TOURMALINE

I love you.

Philostrate simply smiles. He sits to put on his shoes.

PHILOSTRATE

I need to talk to someone familiar with faerie biology. Any ideas?

TOURMALINE

I thought I taught you everything you needed to know.

PHILOSTRATE

I was thinking of something a little more academic.

TOURMALINE

Have you tried the Scholar's District? Argyle Heights. Maybe someone in the Natural History annex...

PHILOSTRATE

Right. There's an idea...

Philostrate puts on his coat and stands up to leave.

Tourmaline stands, opens her sheet, and wraps it around the both of them, holding him tight in a linen cocoon. She gently kisses his neck, flexing her wings beguilingly.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

TOURMALINE

Giving my boyfriend a proper send-off.

PHILOSTRATE

I'm already late.

TOURMALINE

I can be quick.

PHILOSTRATE

I can't... I'll see you tonight.

He smiles and kisses her, then breaks away and goes to the door. He stops and turns around.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Tourmaline... Be careful...

She smiles. He leaves.

Tourmaline sits at her easel and gets back to work on the half-finished Guinever Cartier poster.

DAME (V.O.)

I've invited Guinevere Cartier to perform for the Faeries' Rights Lobby.

INT. MAYOR'S DINING HALL -- SAME

A long, lavishly set breakfast table. Dame Whitley sits at one end. At the other, sits her husband, MAYOR MONTAGUE BONIFACE III - eyes like flint looking over the morning paper.

MAYOR

That pix singer? Not here.

DAME

Don't be so bourgeois.

MAYOR

This fetish of yours was far more interesting when we weren't married.

DAME

They are a richly artistic people.

MAYOR

Far as I can tell, their art consists mainly of spreading their legs.

DAME

In their homeland, the courtesans of Tirnanog were considered artists.

MAYOR

Well, here they're considered sluts. Welcome to the Burgue.

DAME

I'm saying maybe you have little reason to be so haughty about the art of love-making.

The Mayor slams the newspaper on the table and looks up.

DAME (CONT'D)

She's not a slut. She's a singer and a dancer.

MAYOR

Well, that is a rare distinction.

DAME

She's already been invited.

The Mayor smirks. He gives her a patronizing nod.

MAYOR

Women. You must have your hobbies, mustn't you?

DAME

They're our poets, painters,
musicians, and yes our sluts, as you
so drolly put it.

MAYOR

Your little dilettante committee can
have your pixie show, dear.

He drops his napkin on his plate and rises to leave.

DAME

Did you see the article? A faerie
was murdered last night.

MAYOR

What else is new?

DAME

This one stands out. This one'll
give you trouble... dear...

EXT. FAERIE QUARTER, CARNIVAL ROW -- LATER

Philostrate approaches the entrance to The Carnival Row
Underground Station. An uneasy CROWD OF FAERIES has gathered.

Philostrate pushes his way through. He moves past a wall of
uniformed CONSTABLES.

INT. CARNIVAL ROW UNDERGROUND STATION -- MOMENTS LATER

More CONSTABLES crowd the foyer. Bottom spots Philostrate.

BOTTOM

There you are.

(calling)

Magistrate! The Inspector's here.

MAGISTRATE FLUTE, an elderly man in a long coat, strides
into view with a confident authority to his demeanor. He
spots Philostrate, and waves him over.

Philostrate approaches Flute. Bottom follows.

FLUTE

Another homicide. Faerie. Blood
drained. Wings lopped off.

PHILOSTRATE

Same guy?

FLUTE

We think so.

PHILOSTRATE

Why all the officers?

FLUTE

Crowd control, Inspector. Let's just say the locals are spooked.

They round the corner and enter

THE MAIN VESTIBULE

a bank of ticket kiosks with steel cage fronts line the wall.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

It's clear this time our man wanted to make an impression.

A withered corpse hangs from the cage. Arms spread-eagle, wrists impaled on the cage's spikes, crucifixion-style, head lolled over to one side, exposing gaping neck wounds.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

They found her right as the stations opened. She's "Marguerite Mignon."

Philostrate paces in front of the hanging corpse. He spots a crumpled wet flyer on the ground. He picks it up.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

Considering the precision of the work, we figured she was already dead by the time he strung her up.

ON THE FLYER

in Philostrate's hands. Watercolour faeries in carnival masques, dancing. A signature reveals it to be Tourmaline's work. Dried faerie blood splattered across the image.

Philostrate looks back up to Marguerite's corpse. Her face contorted with pain.

PHILOSTRATE

Or too weak to fight back...

Philostrate, unsettled, crumples the flyer and pockets it.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Can we get her down?

FLUTE

We just thought you should see -

PHILOSTRATE

I've seen.

FLUTE

Sergeant?

Bottom turns to a pair of CONSTABLES milling about.

BOTTOM

Alright mates, let's get the pix
down and bagged.

FLUTE

You seen the headlines this morning?

PHILOSTRATE

Not yet.

FLUTE

They're calling him "Unseelie Jack."
Two murders and already the papers
have us chasing a serial killer.

PHILOSTRATE

They could be right.

The Constables finally manage to pry Marguerite down. The
corpse falls, knocking one of the Constables off his ladder.

Bottom laughs inappropriately at the sight of the Constable
wrestling with the limp corpse.

FLUTE

Sergeant!

BOTTOM

(stifling laughter)
Sorry, sir.

HARUSPEX (O.S.)

Quiet. All of you.

A silence falls over the vestibule. All eyes turn toward
the entrance where a hunched figure, the HARUSPEX, stands
silhouetted by shafts of morning sunlight.

She hobbles into the room, an old crone, frazzled gray hair,
bandaged eyes behind black spectacles. A dark cloak flows
behind her. She leans on a crooked walking stick.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

You pollute the aether with your
banal thoughts.

She approaches slowly and deliberately, the hollow echo of
her wooden cane on the stone tiles stabs at the silence.

PHILOSTRATE

(whispers to Flute)
The Haruspex?

Flute gives a curt, wordless nod.

HARUSPEX

Dependence on soothsayers, Magistrate,
will atrophy your inspectors.

She throws Philostrate a wry grin. He's met only by his own twin reflections in her black eyeglasses.

She kneels with great difficulty next to the body.

She wraps her spindly fingers around its face, the veins on her bony hands pulsate, taut as wires.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

Oh yes. This one has things to tell.
She has secrets in her little head.

FLUTE

Would you be adverse to coming down
to Ops to conduct your reading?

HARUSPEX

This is bound to be interesting.

FLUTE

(to Philostrate)
You need a ride?

PHILOSTRATE

No thanks. I'm heading up to Argyle
Heights to follow up on a tip.

INT. ROYAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (LOBBY) -- LATER

Suspended from a skylight hangs the fossilized skeleton of a gigantic winged dragon mid-swoop, an imposing centerpiece.

Below, a throng of uniformed SCHOOL CHILDREN point and gawk at the bones, as their CHAPERONES struggle to organize them.

Philostrate enters via a set of revolving doors. He crosses the gleaming marble floor emblazoned with the museum's seal, and goes to a large oak reception desk under the dragon.

PHILOSTRATE

Inspector Philostrate to see a
Professor Leopold Alcandre. I wired
ahead.

The Receptionist looks past Philostrate and nods.

ALCANDRE (O.S.)

Ah Inspector...

Philostrate turns. PROFESSOR LEOPOLD ALCANDRE, an eccentric live wire of an old man, waddles up.

He wears oversized spectacles with extra lenses of various magnifications. He exudes a sort of constant enthusiasm, stumbling over words and occasionally chuckling to himself.

He juggles a large leather instrument bag as he awkwardly reaches to shake Philostrate's hand.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Forgive me. I just got your message. I've hardly had a chance to drop by my office. Shall we?

And he's gone, before Philostrate can even get a word in. Under the dragon's skeleton, Alcandre calls after Philostrate.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Impressive, isn't she, Inspector? *Draconis ferox*. Hard to believe they once ruled the skies.

Philostrate pauses a moment to look into the gaping jaws of the fossilized beast.

INT. ROYAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (BASEMENT) -- LATER

A long narrow dark passage. Alcandre opens a door at the end and enters. Philostrate stands behind him.

ALCANDRE

Of course, faerie physiology is one of my areas of expertise. But only one.

He turns a knob. With a GENTLE HISS, a bank of gaslights along the wall flares to life, illuminating the corridor.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

I dabble in so many fields.

PHILOSTRATE

I just have a few questions.

Alcandre reaches the door to his office and fumbles with his large key ring. He finds the proper key, disengages the lock and pushes the door open with a rusty creak.

INT. ALCANDRE'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

A large musty room with high ceilings, cluttered bookshelves, detailed charts and cross-sections of faerie anatomy.

Alcandre tosses his keys on a table and squints into the hazy shadows of the office. Philostrate enters behind.

ALCANDRE

Rupert... Where are you, Rupert?

Philostrate notices light pink flower petals on a shelf near his head. He picks up the petals and curiously sniffs them.

Suddenly, something not entirely unlike a cat jumps down on the shelf next to Philostrate's head and hisses.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

There you are, Rupert.

Alcandre takes the creature in his arms.

Small leaves, pink blossoms, and other foliage sprout sporadically from it's green skin. It's tail, a leafy vine, whips casually back and forth as Alcandre strokes its head.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Rupert's a wee pet project of mine.

Ha! How do you like that? "Pet

project." One of my many

extracurricular dabblings, Inspector.

Ever heard of theurgic amalgamology?

Philostrate shakes his head, still trying to wrap his thoughts around the puzzling cat/plant creature in Alcandre's arms.

PHILOSTRATE

I imagine you get this a lot -

ALCANDRE

Layman's terms?

PHILOSTRATE

Afraid so.

ALCANDRE

The manipulation of biology through advanced technology and ancient magics? Commonly called "twining?"

PHILOSTRATE

Oh, twining, yes. Very controversial.

ALCANDRE

Every new science is. Rupert, here, is a cat twined with -

Alcandre plucks a red fruit from Rupert's skin. The cat MEWS harshly, leaps from his arms and darts into the shadows. Alcandre turns the red fruit over in his fingers and grins.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

- a cherry tree.

He pops it in his mouth and chews thoughtfully.

PHILOSTRATE

Professor, I need to know if you can think of anything that feeds on faerie blood.

ALCANDRE

This wouldn't have anything to do with Unseelie Jack, now would it?

Philostrate nods.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

How exciting! I've never been asked to consult on Constabulary business.

PHILOSTRATE

Any ideas?

ALCANDRE

Well, faerie blood is notoriously toxic. They do have a few natural predators in their native Tirmanog. But I'm talking about flesh-eaters, not blood-suckers.

PHILOSTRATE

No chance of a breed of vampire -

ALCANDRE

Faerie blood would burn a hole in a vampire's gut faster than holy water.

PHILOSTRATE

Would there be any reason to siphon a faerie's blood?

ALCANDRE

Well, there are old wives' tales. Mostly hogwash. The Selkies say faerie blood can be a potent aphrodisiac. Some Eastern legends say it's a cure for werewolfism. And there are some Elvish gypsies who still believe it could be somehow treated or diluted into a psychotropic drug that promotes visions. Hogwash.

PHILOSTRATE

So, if I'm getting this right, the only living thing that could stand a stomach full of faerie blood is -

ALCANDRE

Another faerie, Inspector.

INT. CENTRAL OPS (BRIEFING ROOM) -- AFTERNOON

Magistrate Flute stands at a podium towards the front, addressing a room full of officers including Philostrate, Bottom, and various Constables.

FLUTE

Alright chaps, I spoke with the Mayor this afternoon. He wants to make a definitive statement about who runs this city. And it's not Unseelie Jack. Our directives are: 1) to maintain control of the nonhuman element of the city, 2) to establish a visible presence in the Quarter, and 3) to apprehend the killer known as Unseelie Jack. Here's how I want this to go down...

BEGIN MONTAGE

-- Bottom and a few other OFFICERS in riot gear stroll down a deserted street in the Faerie Quarter at night.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Sergeant Bottom will lead a patrol of armoured constables, making sweeps of the main drag. We'll also have the Special Loupgarou Units making the rounds. There's no full moon -

-- A black police carriage pulls into an alley. A team of BURLY CONSTABLES open the heavy barred back door. Out step a row of emaciated YOUNG MEN in rags, shackled to one another.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

- we'll have to induce metamorphosis.

-- The Burly Constables shove syringes into IV tubes in the Young Men's wrists. The Young Men wail. Eyes turn yellow. Whiskers sprout. Lips curl back from lengthening sharp teeth.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The wolves will keep mostly to the sewers and tube stations.

-- In a sewer tunnel, the Burly Constables restrain the Young Men/Werewolves at the end of control leashes. The ravenous wolves bark and hiss, as they patrol.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Drakes will provide the bird's eye surveillance.

-- In the sky, a giant mechanical dragonfly hovers. WHIRRING motors and the THROBBING BUZZ of beating translucent wings.

-- The PILOT sits in a cramped, open-air cockpit in the abdomen of the insect. Behind him sits a GUNNER, scrutinizing the rooftops through the long scope of a Gatling gun.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And finally, my plain clothes officers
will be our unseen hand -

-- On a dark street corner outside Madame Mab's stands a figure in a long trenchcoat, collar turned up.

FLUTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

- reaching into those dark corners
were no one else can reach.

-- The figure turns, looking around, revealing himself to be Philostrate. He crosses the street towards Madame Mab's.

END MONTAGE

INT. LE CHAMBRE DE MADAME MAB (LOBBY) -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate moves down the hall to Tourmaline's room. Her door closed and locked. He hears MUFFLED MOANS of ecstasy.

Philostrate backs away from the door.

The MOANS become girlish SQUEALS of delight, shuddering as if in a vain attempt to be held back.

Philostrate grits his teeth, tries not to listen.

The tittering SQUEALS become relentless SCREAMS of pleasure. The rhythmic POUNDING of the headboard against the wall.

Philostrate slams his fist into the wall. The door across the hall opens. A DAINTY FAERIE peers out into the hallway.

DAINTY

Aw, if your girl's busy, squire, I
can fill in. I guess you'd be the
one doin' the fillin' in, though.

She smiles, giggling at her pun. Philostrate glares at her.

DAINTY (CONT'D)

No? Fine then. You just keep your
trousers on and behave yourself until
she's finished, alright?

She shuts her door.

From Tourmaline's room emerges a swarthy man, BARABBAS, braided beard, tangled dreads. He fastens his trousers.

Barabbas winks at Philostrate and pushes past.

INT. TOURMALINE'S ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Tourmaline pulls on a delicate slip as Philostrate steps into the doorway. She turns and smiles.

TOURMALINE

Oh, Philo. I didn't expect to see you so early, love.

PHILOSTRATE

Well I was in the neighborhood, what with the hunt for the serial killer.

TOURMALINE

Yes. Ugly business - all that.

She goes to him and wraps her arms tightly around him. He dismissively pats her on the back and pulls away.

PHILOSTRATE

Speaking of ugly business... I don't suppose that surly chap was just digging for pirate's gold in here.

TOURMALINE

I know... I'm so sorry, love. I never intended for you to cross paths. He was just a client. Completely harmless. Safe as houses.

PHILOSTRATE

He looked rather like a wanted poster waiting to happen.

TOURMALINE

He's one of my regulars. All bark and no bite, I swear.

PHILOSTRATE

Come now, a good half of that bark was yours.

TOURMALINE

Philo stop.

PHILOSTRATE

Is he always that much fun?

TOURMALINE

We've talked about this. It's all acting, love. Smoke and mirrors.

She reassuringly kisses Philostrate on the neck and whispers.

TOURMALINE (CONT'D)

You get the real thing.

Philostrate pushes her away, a little too hard.

TOURMALINE (CONT'D)

Would you have me starve?

PHILOSTRATE

Right, one has got to make a living.
May as well have your giggles while
your at it.

TOURMALINE

You could take me from this place.

PHILOSTRATE

Is this about money? The minute
money comes up -

TOURMALINE

The clock strikes midnight and I
turn back into a whore. But I'm not
talking about money. I'm talking
about you. You're a shameful coward!
We could be together if you weren't
so worried about what all your mates
would say if they saw you with a
pixie.

Philostrate clenches his jaw and takes a deep breath.

PHILOSTRATE

It's midnight.

He pulls out a wad of bills, and tosses them at her feet.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Take a sodding bow.

He storms out and slams the door.

EXT. FAERIE QUARTER, CARNIVAL ROW -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate walks down the cobblestone sidewalk, hands stuffed
in his pockets, head down. He passes

AN ALLEY

where he hears CHUCKLING.

He turns and sees Barabbas behind some crates facing the
wall, pissing. He sees Philostrate and smirks.

BARABBAS

Was she good for ya, guv?

Philostrate just glares.

BARABBAS (CONT'D)

Wild little thing. Like stickin' your meat in a pail of greasy ferrets. Money well spent, don't you think? They're not people, you know? Just animals, mate. I suppose that makes me something of a pervert. No matter. I just like the way they scream.

Barabbas finishes and pulls his trousers up.

BARABBAS (CONT'D)

You got something to say to me, mate?

PHILOSTRATE

I've read sleeping with faerie sluts can be bad for one's health.

BARABBAS

You're a priest, aren't you?

PHILOSTRATE

Not really, no.

Philostrate walks calmly up to Barabbas and clocks him in the jaw. Barabbas reels back. He wipes blood from his lip.

BARABBAS

Bloody hell...

He makes like he's going to punch Philostrate back, but Philostrate is too quick.

In the blink of an eye, Philostrate twists Barabbas's arm and shoves him on the ground. Philostrate stands on the man's back with one foot.

PHILOSTRATE

Don't you ever go back there, do you hear me? Never!

BARABBAS

Sod off! I go where I want!

Philostrate grabs the Barabbas's long braids, pulls his head back, and slams his face into the cobblestones with a loud wet CRUNCH.

PHILOSTRATE

Now. I want to hear it.

Barabbas weakly spits blood and tooth fragments.

BARABBAS

I won't, you loon. Leave me alone...

PHILOSTRATE

Get out of here.

Barabbas stumbles to his feet. He scrambles off down the alley. Philostrate's angry eyes soften to slight remorse.

EXT. FINISTERE CROSSING -- LATER

Philostrate weaves between carriages as he crosses the busy intersection in the human area of town. He enters a tall, chateau-style apartment building.

INT. PHILOSTRATE'S FLAT -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate doesn't turn on the lights as he enters. He moves through ghostly pools of gaslight from the city outside.

In the kitchen, he grabs a dusty bottle of wine from a rack. He pops the cork and takes a gulp.

He hears a melodious WARBLING. He goes to a wrought-iron birdcage next to the window where a large song-moth works its elegant black and purple wings and twitters peacefully.

Philostrate fills the creature's water dish with a bit of wine from the bottle. The song-moth eagerly laps it up.

In the den, Philostrate pulls a wide black disk from a paper sleeve. He gently puts the disk on a spinning turntable and sets the stylus in the groove.

He sits in the dark, perched on the edge of his chair, as a lush faerie opera - La Crimioara - crackles from a brass horn.

He listens intensely as a lonely mezzo-soprano trickles through the weeping violins.

He looks down at the wine bottle in his hand. He fiddles with the label and slowly peels it off. He crumples the wine label in his hand and tosses it in the corner.

As the music crescendos, he stands and goes to the kitchen. He opens the window. He slides the latch and opens the tiny door of the birdcage. The song-moth hops to the threshold.

Philostrate watches as the song-moth flutters into the night while the sounds of a somber aria in a lilting ancient faerie tongue fill the flat.

INT. CENTRAL OPS (HALLWAY) -- MORNING

The usually tidy Philostrate ambles past bustling constables and officers. He wears the same rumpled clothes from the previous night. His deep eyes grim and listless.

A shrill POLICE KLAXON sounds. A YOUNG CONSTABLE runs past.

PHILOSTRATE
Constable! What is it?

YOUNG CONSTABLE
Another murder, sir. At number 16
Carnival Row. Madame Mab's.

The Constable continues away, leaving Philostrate paralyzed.

INT. LE CHAMBRE DE MADAME MAB -- LATER

Philostrate floats down the

SECOND STORY HALLWAY

in horrified disbelief. He weaves between CONSTABLES taking statements from sobbing FAERIE MADAMES.

His eyes fix on Tourmaline's open door, where sporadic flashes of light from a camera throw long ominous shadows across the dark hallway. He moves slowly towards the door.

He hears voices from inside.

PHOEBOTROPIST (O.S.)
...Species: Faerie. Wings sawed off
at the meta-scapula. Completely
drained of blood via two puncture
wounds in the neck...

He stops just outside the doorway and closes his eyes.

Finally he opens them and steps into

TOURMALINE'S ROOM

where he sees Sergeant Bottom and Magistrate Flute talking in the corner. The PHOEBOTROPIST moves skittishly, taking pictures of something on the floor obscured by the bed.

FLUTE
Ah, Inspector. Jack's getting a
little more courageous. Not just
street faeries anymore.

Dimly aware, he makes his way around the bed. He follows a trail of wet faerie blood smeared across the hardwood floor.

FLUTE (CONT'D)
We're taking this one to the morgue.
The Haruspex can read her there. I
think we're making the locals nervous.

A breeze from the window ripples the gauze drapes covering the body. Philostrate stops in his tracks. Scraps of paper, sketches and paintings dance at his feet.

BOTTOM

Don't think that gets you off the hook with the paperwork, mate. I'm not doing all this bilge on my own.

The drapes fall, revealing... Tourmaline. Pale skin still faintly glittering with a hollow shadow of life. Philostrate averts his eyes.

The wind tosses a wad of bills over his boots. Philostrate shuts his mouth tight and swallows hard.

Flute scrutinizes Philostrate, concerned.

FLUTE

Inspector? What are you thinking?

A flash from the Phoebotropist's camera.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

Are you alright?

PHILOSTRATE

Yes. Yes, I'm quite alright.

Philostrate slowly backs away from the body.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Let me know what you find.

BOTTOM

Whoa! Where you going? I told you, you are not leaving the boring bits to me, Inspector. I won't have it.

Philostrate ignores Bottom and goes out into the hall followed closely by Flute.

FLUTE

Inspector...

Philostrate keeps walking.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

What's going on with you?

EXT. THE FIDDLIN' COCKATRICE -- NIGHT

Philostrate approaches a door. A mechanical EYE on the wall begins to CRACKLE with electricity. The Eye opens. WHISTLES and TICKS of internal mechanics.

EYE

No humans allowed.

PHILOSTRATE

Stop puddlin' about and let me in.

EYE

Right off, inspector.

The door swings open, and Philostrate walks in.

INT. THE FIDDLIN' COCKATRICE -- CONTINUOUS

Hazy gaslight. A bar. Shelves of dusty bottles. Low tables with oriental pillows instead of chairs. On each table, a bulbous assembly of glass globes atop a gas burner.

The few patrons watch Philostrate suspiciously. An ELF twirls a cane. A DWARF shifts in his seat. The BARTENDER whispers to the big boss man -

- KASMIR, a rakshasa (an Eastern vampire).. He has the face of a tiger, blue skin, narrow yellow eyes. He strokes his fu manchu of braided whiskers as he puffs a pipe.

He draws up his silken oriental robe and gracefully strolls over to Philostrate, trying to remain discreet.

KASMIR

You make my clientele nervous.

PHILOSTRATE

You're a vampire, aren't you Kasmir?

KASMIR

I'm a rakshasa. Not exactly the -

PHILOSTRATE

You suck blood.

KASMIR

That's right...

PHILOSTRATE

Where were you last night?

KASMIR

What are you getting at?

PHILOSTRATE

Tourmaline's dead. Jack got her. She was completely dry of blood. So I'm asking - Where were you last night?

KASMIR

My friend. I'm a rare breed of vampire, yes, but faerie blood is still poisonous to me. But you know that. I don't think this is why you're here. Can I get you anything? A stiff bottle of Mabsynthe perhaps?

PHILOSTRATE

I'm off that rubbish.

KASMIR

Now, now. It's not all rubbish. Memories of things lost made real again. Unbroken dreams. I think I know why you came here. Even if you don't.

Kasmir turns and checks the faded labels on the bell jars and bottles, squinting his yellow cat-eyes in concentration.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

Liqueur of Barbary Lamb, Will o' Whisps Cocktail...ah, here we are.

He selects the proper bottle and sets it in front of Philostrate who stares at the iridescent green syrup inside.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

Keep your guilders. Compliments of the management.

Philostrate takes the bottle to a table. He sits on a pillow and uncorks it. He pours the green treacle into the glass globe assembly and screws the lid on.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

Catch this Unseelie Jack, won't you? Business just hasn't been the same in any of my establishments.

Philostrate ignores him, screws a rubber hose to the globe, and lights the burner. A bright flash. The Mabsynthe ignites. Green flames lick the oily surface of the liquid.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

This is usually where people come to forget their fears.

The globe fills with a thick green vapor. Philostrate takes the pipe at the end of the hose and inhales. He holds it in, shuts his eyes, and exhales.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- PHILOSTRATE'S HALLUCINATIONS

A barrage of quick visions, all in an eerie green glow.

-- A black egg cracks open. A writhing grub slides out.

-- Faerie wings pinned to a giant board. A young wingless faerie stands nude, her back to us. Blood trickles down her spine. She points to the board where a pair of wings flutter.

-- The grub swells and hardens into a cocoon. It glows with the faint outline of a human skeleton, inside.

-- Kasmir grins with glistening fangs and wild yellow eyes. His face dissolves to the Haruspex's face, old skin cracked and wrinkled, the blackness of her glasses.

-- The cocoon opens to a huddled toddler faerie. Her crinkled wings begin to dry as she ages, maturing into a shapely form with curls of blonde hair. She becomes Tourmaline.

-- A vortex of newspapers caught in a breeze swirl and combine themselves into a mysterious figure in a long coat.

-- The huddled Tourmaline's wings turn black, then her whole body. She breaks up into ash on the wind.

BACK TO SCENE

OUTSIDE THE FIDDLIN' COCKATRICE

Philostrate stumbles. He shuts the door behind him, clumsily dropping the empty bottle. It shatters on the sidewalk.

EXT. FAERIE QUARTER STREET -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Philostrate walks alone. His hollow FOOTFALLS sound through the deserted Faerie Quarter. Suddenly, he becomes dizzy. He braces himself against a wall and vomits into a gutter.

A SCREAM issues from an alley. Philostrate listens. Another MUFFLED SCREAM. Philostrate runs down the alley towards

THE CLOSE

at the end. Philostrate stops. In the center, a DARK FIGURE capers over a squirming young faerie, VIGNETTE.

PHILOSTRATE

Hey!

The Dark Figure looks up, its face in shadows. It hisses and backs away. Philostrate runs to check on the faerie.

Younger than Tourmaline. Short dark hair, matted with sweat. Her wings severed. Glittering blood trickles from her neck. Her eyes, weak and pained.

VIGNETTE

(desperate whisper)

Help me...I can't feel my wings...

Philostrate turns to glimpse a long billowing cloak slithering from shadow to shadow as if one with its wearer.

Philostrate pulls a flintlock revolver from inside his coat. He fires into the darkness. The shape slinks quickly into the night.

The wingless faerie, shivering on the ground, looks to Philostrate. Her brittle voice cracks.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

I don't feel so good.

Philostrate wraps his coat around her and carries her out of the alley.

TO BLACK:

BEGIN NEWSREEL

- TRUMPET FANFARE. A title card that reads: KINETISCOPE NEWS PRESENTS "NEWS OF THE BURGUE"

- An OMINOUS ORGAN kicks in. A headline spins into view: "'UNSEELIE JACK' ON THE LOOSE!"

- In grainy sepia, FAERIES pull their shutters tight.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A city paralyzed by terror as a murderer stalks the night.

- Outside Le Chambre de Madame Mab, two constables cart a body bag out to a waiting carriage.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The body count rises in the Faerie Quarter.

- Magistrate Flute at a press conference wipes sweat off his brow. Flashes of cameras. He waves his hand emphatically.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Magistrate Flute of the Metropolitan Constabulary promises he will not rest until Jack is brought to justice. But will it be enough to catch the most elusive killer in the history of the city?

- In Oberon Square, a large demonstration outside Parliament. FAERIE PROTESTERS fill the Square.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

These pixies don't think so. Tensions are high. The question on everyone's lips is, "Where will 'Unseelie Jack' strike next?"

- Outside the central tower of Parliament. A shadow stands in the window overlooking the protesters in the square below. The grainy sepia picture resolves itself to realistic clarity.

END NEWSREEL

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Spacious, dark, immaculate, glossy wood paneling. The Mayor turns from the tall window behind his wide wooden desk. Magistrate Flute sits across from him.

MAYOR

My wife the self-described "activist," is not happy. And when she's unhappy-

FLUTE

We're working round the clock.

MAYOR

And yet you have nothing to show for it, Magistrate. Not one suspect has been taken into custody.

FLUTE

We have no leads.

MAYOR

Finding killers in this city isn't the hardest of things, Magistrate.

FLUTE

But finding one, sir- If we arrested everyone in the Quarter, the clink would be full to the brim and Unseelie Jack could very well not be among the lot. We can't trade fear of the killer for fear of the police. They need to know they're safe.

MAYOR

Feeling safe is more important than actually being safe. Security is an illusion, Magistrate. How many faeries disappear any given night? How many bodies are floating face down in the harbor? The only reason this time is any different is because the papers have given him a name. I want someone in custody within the next twenty four hours. Do what you must. If I have to bring in my Imperial Guardsmen to oversee this...

Flute looks up, shaken by mention of the Guardsmen.

FLUTE

In 24 hours, we'll have your man.

INT. MORGUE -- LATER

Flute pushes open a set of doors followed by the Haruspex.

The MORTICIAN stands by a row of steel cabinets, an open cabinet and sliding examining tray before him. Tourmaline's corpse lies on the tray, a sheet pulled up to her shoulders.

FLUTE

Is everything ready?

MORTICIAN

She's clean for the reading, sir.
No one's touched her since the murder.

The Haruspex places her hand on Tourmaline's forehead. The veins in the Haruspex's hand turn black as they swell under her pery skin. She takes a deep breath.

HARUSPEX

A great pain clings to this corpse...

THE HARUSPEX'S VISION

Tourmaline's room. The image rippling and distorted as if a reflection on the surface of a pond. Tourmaline sobs and yells at someone, their face obscured.

A wad of money lands at Tourmaline's feet. She falls to her knees, devastated.

BACK TO SCENE

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

A wad of money on the floor of her room should yield fingerprints.

Suddenly, Sergeant Bottom bursts into the Morgue, frantic.

BOTTOM

Magistrate, I was just speaking with eyewitnesses from Madame Mab's -

The Magistrate cuts him off with a gesture.

THE HARUSPEX'S VISION

The image pulsates and throbs. A shadow falls over Tourmaline still crying. She looks up and screams. She scrambles back towards the window, wings fluttering desperately.

She tries to take flight out the open window. A hand tears the delicate wings from her body. The hand drags Tourmaline squirming across the floor leaving a slick wet trail of blood.

The hand grabs Tourmaline's head and pushes it back exposing her slender tense neck. Her jugular vein throbs.

BACK TO SCENE

HARUSPEX

Feeds on her blood, it does. All of it. It sucks her dry.

FLUTE

We must have description. What can you tell us about anyone that may have been in the room?

THE HARUSPEX'S VISION

The action rewinds in waves and swells...

Back to the quarrel. Back to Tourmaline sobbing on the floor. A figure stands over her, his face obscured. The figure turns. Time freezes.

The rippling image gradually calms. The face becomes clear.

BACK TO SCENE

HARUSPEX

Inspector Philostrate. He's the source of her pain.

FLUTE

Impossible. The Inspector must have accidentally contaminated the body at the investigation.

BOTTOM

Sir. I just spoke with the pix from across the hall. Philostrate was there right before the murder. Angry.

FLUTE

Get him down here right now.

BOTTOM

He didn't come in this morning.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- PHILOSTRATE CLEANS VIGNETTE

-- Philostrate turns on a faucet, filling the cast iron tub.

-- Philostrate lowers Vignette's unconscious body in.

-- He leans her over and tenderly squeezes a sponge over her back washing off caked blood and grime. Fresh blood still trickles from the ragged tears where her wings once were.

-- Silken faerie blood spreads in the steaming water.

-- Philostrate gingerly tilts Vignette's head to the side and gently sponges the deep holes in her neck.

-- Philostrate opens a bottle of alcohol, soaks some cotton, then gently dabs the wounds in Vignette's back and neck.

-- He tears bandages. He wraps a short one around Vignette's neck. He wraps one over the gashes in her back, around her the front of her torso, covering her breasts.

END MONTAGE

INT. PHILOSTRATE'S FLAT -- MORNING

Philostrate stands by the window, looking down at the street. He turns to his bed.

Vignette lies there, asleep, soft, clean. A distant, recorded voice sings the aria from La Crimioara.

She begins to stir, squinting at the unfamiliar room.

PHILOSTRATE

Good morning.

VIGNETTE

Where am I? Who are you? You...

(she remembers)

You saved me from... What happened?

PHILOSTRATE

Unseelie Jack.

Vignette looks under the sheets,

VIGNETTE

I'm naked.

PHILOSTRATE

So it would seem.

VIGNETTE

What did you do to me?

PHILOSTRATE

Cleaned you up, dressed your wounds.

VIGNETTE

I see. And you couldn't just take me to a hospital...

PHILOSTRATE

One of those squalid faerie hospitals? You'd be better off left to Jack.

VIGNETTE

Where are my clothes?

PHILOSTRATE

I threw them out.

Vignette gives him an annoyed look.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

They were soaked in blood. If you're so attached, I can fish them out -

VIGNETTE

What the sod am I supposed to wear?

PHILOSTRATE

I wasn't expecting you awake so soon.

VIGNETTE

Yes, well I'm just a little powder keg of surprises, aren't I?

She throws the sheets off. She stands up, stumbling, still a little dizzy from the blood loss.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Your closet?

PHILOSTRATE

To your left.

She takes a crisp white button up shirt, far too big for her. She pulls it on.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

(dry, exaggerating)

You lost about ten gallons of blood, back there. Can I get you an antibiotic? Maybe a glass of water?

VIGNETTE

Not bloody likely.

She takes a pair of black suit pants and pulls them on. She looks down at the legs. Too long. She reaches down.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

I make a point not to stay put too long, especially when I don't know where I am.

Philostrate turns to see what she is doing. She grabs the trouser leg at the ankle and tears it.

PHILOSTRATE

Oh right, you can just go ahead and tear those up.

Vignette pauses and looks up from tearing the first leg. She looks back down and resumes tearing the second leg.

VIGNETTE

Now that I'm earthbound, we can't have me tripping over my trouser legs the rest of my life, can we?

She goes to Philostrate's front door.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Thank you for all you've done, but -

Her pointed ear twitches. She hears something. The stealthful COCK OF A GUN. She looks through the peephole.

On the other side of the door, several ARMOURED CONSTABLES. The front Armoured Constable holds up his hand and counts down silently with his fingers.

Vignette turns to Philostrate.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

(confused)

The police...

Philostrate looks out the window.

The street below, crowded with a waiting convoy of sleek black police carriages.

The sudden DEAFENING THUD of a battering ram against Philostrate's front door.

Startled, Philostrate and Vignette both snap around.

A second THUD.

On the third IMPACT, the door splinters to pieces. The Armoured Constables pour into and fan out. Their flintlock rifles and muskets poised.

Sergeant Bottom steps in behind them and surveys the scene. Other than the police, the room is empty.

SQUAD COMMANDER

He's not here, sir.

Bottom pokes his rifle in a dustbin and pulls something out on the end of his bayonet. A wad of bloody clothes.

BOTTOM

Not looking good for you, Inspector.

ARMOURED CONSTABLE (O.S.)

Sir, look at this.

Bottom goes into

THE BATHROOM

where he sees Philostrate's cast iron tub full of water, dark and murky, a film of faerie blood on the surface.

BOTTOM

You think you know a bloke, then you find a tub of pix blood in his loo.

The Squad Leader comes in.

SQUAD COMMANDER

We've searched the whole flat. No sign of him.

BOTTOM

Alright mates, if he gets here and sees a convoy of police coaches, he's not ever comin' back. We're going to have to play this covert. We need to nab this guy before he even knows he's guilty. There is a killer on the loose and the bad news is he knows all our tricks. So let's make ourselves invisible.

Everyone leaves. Bottom hangs behind, staring at the faerie blood in the tub, mesmerized by the swirling colors dancing on the surface. He reaches down and dips his gloved hand

UNDER WATER

where Philostrate and Vignette lie, desperately holding their breath. They look up at Bottom's distorted image as his hand breaks the surface, reaching towards them.

His hand comes mere centimeters away from Vignette's stomach. She sucks in. A bubble escapes from her mouth, while on

THE SURFACE

above, Bottom slowly pulls his hand out. The colorful viscous clings to his fingers.

UNDER WATER

the bubble slowly drifts up towards

THE SURFACE

as Bottom curiously examines the syrupy blood/water solution thickening on his glove. He makes a sour face. He turns to wipe his hand on a towel.

The bubble breaks the surface and pops, unseen.

He leaves the bathroom.

UNDER WATER

Philostrate and Vignette listen. The muffled sound of a DOOR SLAM. Silence. Seconds later

ON THE SURFACE

they both burst through, gasping for air.

VIGNETTE

What in the name of Saint Tit?!?

Philostrate gets out of the tub and rushes to the window. He opens it. Vignette looks after him incredulously.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Why are the police are after you?

Philostrate paces, searching his mind for a way out.

PHILOSTRATE

I don't know. Tax evasion.

VIGNETTE

Right.

He opens a drawer and withdraws a pistol. He loads it.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

What? You're going to shoot your way out.

PHILOSTRATE

If need be...

Vignette hurries to the window and looks out.

VIGNETTE

There's a fire escape about five meters over. If you'll follow me -

PHILOSTRATE

No. You want no part of this. You're going to walk out of here and go home. Forget you ever met me.

Philostrate holsters the gun. Vignette grabs his wrist.

VIGNETTE

You saved my life. I don't like having unpaid debts, especially with grotty humans. So follow me, savvy?

She climbs out the window. Philostrate follows.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- LATER

Philostrate and Vignette walk a rusty train bridge over the river. Philostrate leads. Vignette follows silently.

She watches Philostrate. His long coat billows in the wind.
She glimpses his gun holster.

VIGNETTE

You're a constable... Standard issue
revolver.

PHILOSTRATE

Detective Inspector actually...
Rycroft Philostrate.

VIGNETTE

My name's Vignette. Why are they
after one of their own?

PHILOSTRATE

I suspect they think I'm Jack.

VIGNETTE

Why would they think that?

PHILOSTRATE

Wrong place, wrong time.

VIGNETTE

Twaddle. I can just go tell them -

PHILOSTRATE

They won't believe you. You're -

VIGNETTE

I'm what? A common street faerie?

PHILOSTRATE

That's what they'll see.

Silence. Vignette wonders aloud.

VIGNETTE

Why did you - What do you care if
there's one less street faerie?

PHILOSTRATE

A faerie's scream sounds just like a
human's, right?

VIGNETTE

Fair enough. Where are you going?

PHILOSTRATE

Madame Mab's.

VIGNETTE

You'll be caught in an instant. I
know a better way.

PHILOSTRATE

You really don't owe me a thing.
And anyway I don't need your charity.

VIGNETTE

I know nooks and shortcuts in the Quarter that they don't put on your maps. Which is why if you follow me, the police won't find you. So I think you do need my charity.

INT. TOURMALINE'S ROOM -- LATER

A hand grabs the window sill. Philostrate climbs up and into the room followed by Vignette, close behind.

VIGNETTE

I suppose no more daintily fluttering in...

She stands and dusts herself off.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

This is the last crime scene? Don't you think the police would have already taken anything important?

No response from Philostrate. He goes to the bed. Vignette notices the easel and sketches on the floor around.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Was she some sort of painter?

Philostrate runs his hand along the unmade sheets. He frowns.

Vignette starts to rifle through the drawings.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Hey, some of these aren't bad.

Philostrate takes the pillow in his hands. He cradles it gingerly, his jaw clenched.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

I think I've seen these. This one looks like a poster at the Orpheum.

Vignette comes to the sketch of Philostrate putting on his shirt in the morning.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Hey, this looks kind of like - Wait. You and she were...

PHILOSTRATE

I was a client. That's all. Let's get out of here.

VIGNETTE

Hold on...

PHILOSTRATE

There's nothing here! Let's go!

Vignette watches Philostrate go back to the window.

VIGNETTE

We'd better stick to the roofs.

EXT. FAERIE QUARTER ROOFS -- DAY

Philostrate and Vignette scale the side of a steep roof. Using the shingles as footholds.

VIGNETTE

So did you love her?

Philostrate ignores her.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Not going to tell me, eh?

Philostrate walks a set of planks to the adjacent roof.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

This aloof thing you've got is really quite boring.

Philostrate quickly turns.

PHILOSTRATE

You are insufferable!

VIGNETTE

I'm insufferable?!?

PHILOSTRATE

Yes! These incessant questions! Babble babble babble!

VIGNETTE

Oh, and you're so mysterious and tortured. How do the girls keep their knickers on around you?

PHILOSTRATE

Child!

VIGNETTE

Tragedian!

PHILOSTRATE

Why are you even still here?

VIGNETTE

I felt sorry for you.

PHILOSTRATE

I'm fine without your pity, thanks.

VIGNETTE

What's that?

PHILOSTRATE

What's pity?

VIGNETTE

No... That noise...

PHILOSTRATE

What -

He hears it, a FAINT BUZZ.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Drakes...

Suddenly, a giant mechanical dragonfly (a Drake), hovers over the roof, wings beating furiously. The PILOT in the abdomen/cockpit glares at Philostrate. The GUNNER on top swings a turret-mounted Gatling gun around.

The pilot speaks into a brass horn. His amplified voice booms over the raucous sounds of the vehicle.

PILOT

Rycroft Philostrate. You are instructed to surrender to the Metropolitan Constabulary.

PHILOSTRATE

(to Vignette)

Run.

He grabs her hand. They make a run for it.

The Gatling gun explodes to life, shattering slate shingles at their feet. They make it to the edge of the roof, and leap over the alley to the next roof. The Drake pursues.

The gun punches fist-sized holes in the chimney next to them.

They clamor over the rooftops, slipping on shingles, weaving between chimneys, jumping narrow alleys. But the drake stays on their tail, spitting a steady stream of deadly shells.

They come to another ledge, too wide to jump, and slide to a stop. Pebbles fall to the alley below.

The Drake comes up behind. It doesn't fire. Out of bullets. The Gunner starts to load another magazine.

Vignette looks down. She steps forward and breaths deep.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

VIGNETTE

Follow my lead.

PHILOSTRATE

You do remember you can't fly?

She jumps. Halfway down, she grabs a clothesline. She shimmyes over and drops to an awning. She slides down the awning and lands on a pile of crates.

The Gunner finishes loading the Gatling gun. Just as he takes aim on Philostrate's back, he jumps.

Philostrate copies all of Vignette's maneuvers to end up in

THE ALLEY

where he hits the ground running. Vignette, already at the end, motions Philostrate to follow her around a corner into

A CREVICE BETWEEN BUILDINGS

out of the Drake's view.

Philostrate huddles between the wall and Vignette, awkwardly close. They wait for the Drake to pass by. Both of them painfully self-conscious of this moment of forced proximity.

She looks up. Their eyes meet. She gently brushes the hair off his forehead, then quickly withdraws her hand and lowers her eyes. Slowly, she lets her head fall against his chest.

After a few moments, the Drake finally leaves.

Philostrate and Vignette climb out of the crevice.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I need to talk to someone who knows what goes on in the Quarter.

VIGNETTE

You know that you're not with the police anymore?

PHILOSTRATE

Good. That should make it easier.

VIGNETTE

I may know someone.

They both run down the alley, Vignette leading the way.

BOTTOM (V.O.)

The bloke's got a tub full of pix
blood in his flat and now he's runnin'
around with wingless faeries...

INT. METROPOLITAN CONSTABULARY (BRIEFING ROOM) -- AFTERNOON

Flute talks to Bottom over a large table with a map of the
city sprawled across it. The room buzzes with activity.

FLUTE

Philostrate always seemed so above
board.

BOTTOM

This is the only lead we've got to
work with.

FLUTE

Maybe.

BOTTOM

Sir, I'd like Philo to be innocent.
I truly would. But if he's got
nothing to hide, why's he runnin'?

FLUTE

Have the other Drakes spotted him?

BOTTOM

No, sir. But he hasn't left the
Quarter. We've got it blocked off.

EXT. OLD FAERIE CEMETERY -- SAME

Philostrate and Vignette negotiate a winding path through a
cramped maze of crooked headstones.

They come to a modest stone sepulchre with a leaning
foundation, half sunken into the soft earth.

Vignette unlocks the heavy iron door with her own key. She
pushes it open with a LOUD GRIND from rusty hinges.

INT. SEPULCHRE -- CONTINUOUS

The strange old bones of faeries scattered amidst dust and
cobwebs. Vignette slides the lid of a sarcophagus open and
steps inside.

VIGNETTE

Come on.

The floor of the sarcophagus has been replaced by a set of
stone stairs leading further down.

PHILOSTRATE

What is this place?

VIGNETTE

The Old Faerie Cemetery?

PHILOSTRATE

No, I mean -

VIGNETTE

Ever heard of *The Screaming Banshee*?

PHILOSTRATE

The anti-human paper? The police have a whole branch looking for the print office.

Vignette reaches the bottom and comes to a door.

VIGNETTE

Well, A - it's pro-faerie, and B -

She opens the door.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

- Here it is.

Spread out before them,

THE SCREAMING BANSHEE PRINTING OFFICE

a subterranean vault. Candles cast flickering shadows on giant corkscrew printing presses. Sounds of DRIPPING WATER. A disembodied voice, QUILL, calls out to them.

QUILL (O.S.)

Vignette, I don't like guests.

VIGNETTE

It's okay. I'll vouch for him.

PHILOSTRATE

Who are you?

A figure silhouetted by the candlelight deftly hops up onto one of the presses. He poses with a rebellious mystique.

QUILL

Who am I? Who am I?

He hops down. A youngish man, a Puck. Goat horns poke from tousled hair. His long coat flares revealing two agile goat legs in place of human ones.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Quilliam G.

(MORE)

QUILL (CONT'D)

Moses, dissident journalist at large.
But you can call me Quill, Inspector.

He eyes Philostrate. His voice crackles with energy.

QUILL (CONT'D)

It's only because of Vignette that
I'm allowing this. She's my best.

PHILOSTRATE

Your best what?

VIGNETTE

(to Philostrate)

Writer.

(to Quill)

I'm not your best. You're just hoping
I'll forget you owe me thirty
guilders.

QUILL

It's not for profit that we write,
but for the glorious revelation of
truth to the -

VIGNETTE

Speak for yourself.

PHILOSTRATE

(to Vignette)

You're a writer?

QUILL

A pistol, she is. Positively
incendiary. Words like acid.

PHILOSTRATE

I've noticed.

VIGNETTE

Listen, while you two chat, I've got
business to take care of.

PHILOSTRATE

Where are you going?

VIGNETTE

I'll be right back.

Vignette heads back upstairs as Quill turns to arrange letters
on one of the presses.

QUILL

Did I hear correctly just now that
we have something to talk about?

PHILOSTRATE

Perhaps we'll start with Unseelie Jack.

QUILL

I came up with the name- Unseelie Jack. Human rags, they read me. Ripping me all the time, they are.

He thumbs through a stack of recent issues of Quill's *Screaming Banshee*. He reads.

PHILOSTRATE

All humans aren't as bad as you say. The Mayor's wife for instance -

QUILL

She's not savvy to the streets. It's all a hobby to her. We're all pretty music and art. Do you see anything pretty down here? Her brand of parlour activism is sickening.

The front pages all sport grainy black and white photos of the three murders -

- Aisling Cobweb on a pebbled beach.
- Marguerite strung up in the station.
- And finally Tourmaline.

PHILOSTRATE

Where did you get these photos?

QUILL

I know a loose girl in the police darkroom.

PHILOSTRATE

No... There's no evidence markers. This is before the police arrive.

QUILL

Before they call the police, they call me. I'm their voice. They find a body and I'm their first call. I snap my pics, and I'm gone before the murder bell tolls. I don't like being a vulture, but I do like being a newshawk. So, that's how it goes...

PHILOSTRATE

What do you know about the murders?

QUILL

That they've been going on for years. Mysterious disappearances. Rumors of monsters. Now, the human media's got their paws on it. Everyone's got a reason to buy the papers. Here, it's a fact of life. It's like a serialized potboiler to your people. Everyone wants to know how it will end. Fetch me a "Zed" will you? The letter bin to your right.

Philostrate turns. He looks in a crate full of letter engravings. He pulls out a "Z" and brings it to Quill.

PHILOSTRATE

And how will it end?

Philostrate holds the letter in place. Quill hammers it.

QUILL

Same way all stories on Carnival Row end. Death and misery.

Quill spins a lever, lowering the gigantic press.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Blood is the currency of these streets. Literally. I'm sure Vignette can tell you about that.

PHILOSTRATE

Why? Where exactly did she go?

QUILL

(realizing his slip)
Nowhere. I don't know.

PHILOSTRATE

You do know. Quill. Answer me.

Philostrate grabs him by the collar and spins him about-face.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Quill. Where is Vignette?

QUILL

It's one of those things that sounds worse than it is.

PHILOSTRATE

Where?

EXT. CABARET MU GONG -- LATER

Tucked in the maze of cobbled back alleys, Philostrate comes to a rickety Oriental pagoda sitting on stilts above a stagnant, narrow canal. Red neon sizzles and flickers.

INT. CABARET MU GONG -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate moves through the dancing maze of blacklight faerie wings and glowing tattoos.

FIRE-EATERS, BELLYDANCERS, and level upon level of lissome elvish, selkie, and faerie YOUTH writhing to the hot weird jazz of fiddles and sitars and glistening with sweat.

INT. BACK HALLWAY OF CABARET -- CONTINUOUS

Vignette lies in one of the cots that line the dim corridor. A dizzy look on her face, eyes rolling back. A hand pulls a needle from the taut blood vessels of her inner elbow.

A dispassionate ROUMANIAN VAMP consults the syringe full of blood. He puts the syringe in his leather sack and shoves a wad of cash notes into Vignette's fist before leaving.

Philostrate barges into the back hallway. He pulls Vignette up and shakes her by the shoulders.

PHILOSTRATE

Hey! Wake up. What is this?

VIGNETTE

I don't need any more rescuing, I just need a little cash. Kasmir. He pays so well for our blood.

He steadies her lolling head and brings her eyes to meet his.

PHILOSTRATE

Stay with me. I thought vampires couldn't drink faerie blood.

VIGNETTE

No. Not drink. What do you think they make Mabsynthe from?

He lays her back on the cot and storms down the hall.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Where are you going!?

INT. KASMIR'S CHAMBERS -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate pushes through a set of bead curtains into the all shining lacquer, jade, and bronze office. Kasmir stands.

Two KOMODOS are upon Philostrate. Kasmir's bodyguards, Asian dragon-men, broad reptilian blokes with iron scales. Constant threads of sulphurous smog seep from their jaws.

KASMIR

Men, let go of him. Can I help you with something, Inspector?

PHILOSTRATE

You control the Mabsynthe trade in this city. A killer's leaching faeries and it happens that your Mabsynthe is brewed from faerie blood. That sound dodgy to you?

KASMIR

Friends shouldn't talk to each other like this.

PHILOSTRATE

This whole building is a vampire! It's a damned drug factory, swilling faerie blood by the lorry-load.

KASMIR

It's simply a club where a lot of young pixies come for some amusement.

Philostrate charges Kasmir and grabs his collar.

PHILOSTRATE

If I find that you had anything to do with Unseelie Jack - well - there's a ball of hot lead just aching to give your brain a kiss.

KASMIR

In that case, my friend, having partaken of the fruit of this "drug factory," with such rhapsody... you should remember to save the last bullet for yourself.

The two Komodos pull Philostrate off of Kasmir.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

I could have killed you.
(to Komodos)
Beat him senseless and lob him in the creek.

The Komodos drag Philostrate out to.

THE VERANDA

where he catches a passing glimpse of Vignette watching him from behind oriental lattice. Their eyes meet.

Philostrate holds his gaze as one Komodo steadies him while the other plants a heavy iron fist across his chin.

BLACKNESS

EXT. ARGYLE HEIGHTS (STREET) -- NIGHT

Foggy and quiet. Cleaner than the Quarter. The human part of town. Gothic houses hewn from marble and limestone.

An armoured couch emerges from the swirling fog drawn by a robust coal-black unicorn. The streetlights shimmer. The unicorn SNORTS a silver plume of vapor into the night air.

INT. MAYOR'S COACH -- CONTINUOUS

Mayor Boniface scratches his neatly trimmed goatee pensively.

MAYOR

Faeries. Disease-carrying vermin, the lot of them. The only reason I tolerate this infestation is because even vermin are part of the ecosystem of a city. It's true.

(a venomous chuckle)

That and they sure do know how to please a man.

(looks down)

No no no. Keep at it, pet...

(closes his eyes)

I'm not finished with you.

A moment of cool ecstasy. He rolls his eyes and exhales.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

That's it. That a girl. Be a dear for me and swallow the goods, will you? This upholstery's worth more than your annual salary.

A callous, detached grin as the Mayor finishes.

A young faerie girl, ROAN BLUEBELLE, sits up, her skin a slight turquoise tint sprinkled with light violet freckles.

The Mayor's smile slowly turns to a disgusted scowl. He slaps his hand on the side of the coach.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Driver! Stop the couch...

The coach stops.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Get out.

ROAN

But... Sir, this is Argyle Heights.
I can't fly clear across the city?
What about Unseelie Jack...

MAYOR

Close your eyes.

ROAN

Sir?

MAYOR

I said close your rutting eyes.

She does.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Open your mouth.

Her lips crack open.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Wider.

She opens it wide. He pulls a gold-finished musket from his overcoat and shoves the barrel in her open mouth. He cocks the hammer. She opens her eyes, shocked and terrified.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Let me tell you something. I could pull this trigger right now and split that soft skull of yours. And you know what? You'd cease to exist. No police investigation. No obituary. No body washing up in the harbour.

Roan trembles as the Mayor leans in.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

(whispers)

I can erase you from history. So you see, there are better things to be afraid of than "Unseelie Jack." Do we understand each other?

Roan slowly nods her head. The Mayor finally pulls the musket out of her mouth. He straightens his overcoat.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Now. Kindly get out.

EXT. ARGYLE HEIGHTS (STREET) -- CONTINUOUS

The coach takes off down the empty streets, leaving Roan on the curb in front of

THE ROYAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

where she plops herself down on the wide stone steps under the majestic marble columns. Her lip trembles. She buries her face in her hands and shudders.

She looks up and wipes her eyes. She climbs to her feet and shakes her head.

ROAN
(quiet, to herself)
I'm not going back to the Quarter.
Not tonight.

She flaps her bright blue translucent wings, fluttering up the tall regal columns to

THE ROOF OF THE MUSEUM

where she lands daintily on the ledge. She looks over the city towards the Faerie Quarter, an indistinct blur in the fog across the distant river.

ROAN (CONT'D)
I'm staying here tonight.

She clenches her fists and grits her teeth. She shouts at the top of her lungs.

ROAN (CONT'D)
I'll sleep with the humans tonight!
You like that?!? This vermin's not
goin' back to her hole in the wall!

Her voice cracks and decays to a whisper.

ROAN (CONT'D)
I'm gonna dirty up your pretty
upholstery tonight, you prat.

She goes and huddles up next to the skylight. She closes her eyes and tries to go to sleep.

A breeze picks up. It HISSES at Roan. She opens her eyes.

On the ledge of the roof stands a cloaked Dark Figure silhouetted by the silver full moon. The long tattered black cloak whips in the breeze.

Roan gasps. She scrambles back onto the skylight.

The Dark Figure makes no move towards her.

Roan hears something. TINK... TINK... She looks down. A web of cracks shoots across the skylight at her feet. She stands perfectly still. She looks back to the ledge.

The Dark Figure still doesn't budge from its perch.

Roan makes a decision. She flaps her wings.

Too late. The disturbance shatters the glass at her feet before her wings can get enough lift.

She tumbles down into

THE LOBBY OF THE MUSEUM

past the giant fossilized skeleton of the dragon hanging from the ceiling.

She lands with a BONE-CRUNCHING THUD on the polished marble floor. Shards of glass bounce around her. Her wings shredded nearly to ribbons, useless.

A horrid WET COUGH. Blood trickles from her mouth. She tries to sit up but winces.

She hears a CREAK and GROANING of steel. She looks up.

The steel cables holding the dragon above her SNAP.

The whole skeleton crashes to the ground.

As the dust clears, Roan sees she's trapped under the cavernous rib cage. Shafts of moonlight stream down on her, the only light in the lobby.

The FLAPPING of a cloak as a shadow quickly passes over her.

She looks up. Nothing but the broken skylight and the silver disc of the moon beyond. She hears a RASPY HISS echo in the lobby around her.

She gets a vague impression of the Dark Figure circling her, slowly, deliberately, through the shadows. Slithering between the ancient stone monoliths and fossils. Coming closer.

ROAN (CONT'D)

Please... Please, don't do this...

The Dark Figure's voice seems to come from everywhere as the sound bounces from wall to wall of the large dark room.

DARK FIGURE

Tore your pretty wings, did you?

Roan peeks between the dragon's ribs into the darkness. She sees the outline of someone standing the shadows.

DARK FIGURE (CONT'D)

Tisk. Such pretty wings. A shame.

Roan's eyes adjust to the darkness as she stares intently at the motionless humanoid outline in front of her.

It resolves itself into nothing more than a stone sarcophagus on a pedestal, an exhibit.

Suddenly a clawed hand grabs her torn wings from behind and pulls her back against the rib cage. RIP. Her wings are gone. She opens her mouth, too stunned to make a sound.

The hand grabs her hair and yanks her head back, exposing her neck.

DARK FIGURE (CONT'D)

Now. Sing for me.

Roan's PIERCING SCREAM tears through the silence of the lobby.

EXT. CANALSIDE -- MORNING

The mire of water and refuse laps Philostrate's battered and bruised body. Slowly, he comes to. He pulls himself up. He shakes off the pain and climbs the bank to the street.

INT. SCREAMING BANSHEE PRINTING OFFICE -- SAME

Vignette sits at a small desk punching the keys of an antiquated typographer. Quill works the press.

QUILL

How's it coming?

VIGNETTE

Fine.

The news wire sputters on. Quill goes to inspect the the strip of paper spewing from the device.

QUILL

You seem a bit preoccupied. What happened to your human friend?

VIGNETTE

I don't know. Who cares. He started asking the wrong people the wrong questions.

QUILL

I see.

VIGNETTE

He's so bloody self-righteous. And a little stupid and reckless. He's like the knight in shining armour that forgets to put on the armour.

QUILL

But you don't care.

VIGNETTE

Not a bit. Let him get himself
killed.

Realizing what she's said, she stops typing. Quill hides a
wry, knowing grin.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Okay... Okay... You know something.
Do you know where he is?

Quill holds up the strip of paper from the wire.

QUILL

I have an idea.

EXT. ROYAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY -- MORNING

A large crowd of HUMAN SPECTATORS gathered at the entrance.
All high class - the ladies with their broad hats and parasols
and the gentlemen with their waistcoats and top hats.

Magistrate Flute and Sergeant Bottom push through the crowd.

FLUTE

The Mayor's livid.

BOTTOM

Right, the first murder this side of
town. How long before Jack start's
pickin' off people instead of pixies?

FLUTE

Let's try not to blurt things like
that out, Sergeant.

They enter the building. Beyond the police blockade,

THE MUSEUM LOBBY

buzzes with OFFICERS and MUSEUM EMPLOYEES.

BOTTOM

The Haruspex's already here. Don't
see why. We know who did this.

Roan's body rests in the center of the fallen dragon skeleton.

Philostrate stands near the body, trying to remain
inconspicuous while he surveys the scene for any clues.

His eyes dart from the puncture wounds on Roan's neck to the
thin splatter of blood arcing from the tears in her back
across the marble floor.

He notices Bottom and Flute approaching.

He turns as they approach and tips his hat over his eyes. He takes a few steps back and casually leans against the opposite side of a sarcophagus, close enough to eavesdrop.

FLUTE

You know the law, Sergeant. A Haruspex's vision is as admissible as eye witness testimony. If she can give us something else... Anything else... Well then, I'd be more than happy to drop this manhunt.

The Haruspex hobbles to the body. Philostrate watches from his hiding place as the old woman drops to one knee. She rests her gnarled hand on Roan's face.

Several feet down the exhibition aisle from Philostrate, Professor Leopold Alcandre looks up and recognizes him. He calls after Philostrate.

ALCANDRE

Inspector.

Philostrate doesn't notice. He watches the Haruspex go into a trance. Alcandre comes up behind Philostrate.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Inspector... "Philostrate" is it?

Alcandre goes on, oblivious to Philostrate's "wanted" status. Philostrate can't hide his discomfort.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Have you seen the body, Inspector? It's incredible. Those neck wounds. They're rather like snake bites wouldn't you say?

PHILOSTRATE

Yes. Yes. Rather.

He looks after Flute and Bottom, but they haven't noticed his presence. The Haruspex holds their attention for now.

BOTTOM

What was she doing in this part of the city?

Meanwhile, Alcandre chatters excitedly to Philostrate.

ALCANDRE

Almost like a Gorgon or perhaps a Basilisk...

Philostrate looks around, searching for a way out.

The Haruspex shakes her head distracted.

HARUSPEX

No. Not right. Something here.
Right now. Someone's mind tremblin'.
Cloudin' the aether.

FLUTE

What do you mean?

HARUSPEX

Someone doesn't belong...

Philostrate interrupts Alcandre.

PHILOSTRATE

Professor, I really must go...

He quickly turns his back and heads for the exit.

Head down, the Haruspex lifts her crooked finger, making small circles in the air with her long fingernail. She slowly swings her arm back and forth, searching the lobby.

Almost to the exit, Philostrate's pace quickens. Alcandre calls after him.

ALCANDRE

Wait! One more thing! Inspector
Philostrate!

The lobby goes silent. All the Officers turn at the sound of the name.

The Haruspex's swiveling finger stops, pointing right at Philostrate.

HARUSPEX

Him...

Philostrate breaks into a sprint out the door.

BOTTOM

Don't just stand there, you ponces!
Get the bugger!

EXT. ROYAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate rockets down the steps, violently shoving his way through the crowd of Human Spectators.

A wave of Officers and Constables not far behind, WHISTLES blowing wildly.

Philostrate runs

DOWN THE STREET

as fast as he can with what seems like the whole Metropolitan Constabulary in hot pursuit. He weaves between affluent HUMAN COUPLES out for morning strolls. He comes to

THE ENTRANCE

of an underground train station. He looks down and jumps an entire flight of stairs, tumbling hard on the landing.

He climbs over the handrail and drops into

THE UNDERGROUND STATION

where he slips into the crowd of baffled COMMUTERS just as his pursuers enter the station lead by Sergeant Bottom.

Bottom stops and looks around, but can't make Philostrate out in the sea of bowler hats and black suits.

BOTTOM

Spread out. Find him.

Philostrate reaches one of the platforms. He jumps the turnstile. He turns and makes eye contact with Bottom.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Stop!

Bottom awkwardly maneuvers through the crowd.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Get out of my way, you rut-weasels...

A train pulls up.

Bottom reaches the platform.

The train doors slide open.

Philostrate runs onto the train.

Bottom struggles to squeeze past the turnstiles.

The train doors slide shut just as Bottom stumbles up.

Bottom glares helplessly at Philostrate through the window.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Oh bugger all...

With a HISS OF STEAM, the train takes off into the tunnels.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate lets out a sigh of relief.

INT. UNDERGROUND TRAIN CONTROL ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Magistrate Flute stands over the CONTROLLER in front of a panel with various knobs and cranks and a large window overlooking the whole underground station.

Sergeant Bottom bursts in, sweating and breathing heavily.

BOTTOM

Primrose Tube to the Quarter...

Flute nods to the Controller.

FLUTE

Stop the train.

The Controller grabs a mahogany handle and spins the metal crank as fast as he can. He shouts into a brass horn.

CONTROLLER

All stop!

INT. TRAIN (ENGINE ROOM) -- SAME

The soot-stained CONDUCTOR pulls his goggles back over his greasy hair. He grabs a long knee-high lever and pulls back.

EXT. TRAIN -- SAME

The wheels lock, sparks fly as the train SCREECHES to a halt.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate's eyes open wide with dread as he feels the car lurch forward and come to rest.

The lights flicker and go dark.

EXT. TRAIN -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate pries the sliding door open and hops out into the dark empty tube.

He hears a chorus of BOOTS ON GRAVEL. He turns.

A line of Constables run alongside the train, brandishing brilliant phosphorous torches.

Philostrate bolts into the darkness.

The line of Constables run after him, firing their muskets and SHOUTING for him to stop.

The bullets ricochet off the stone walls.

Philostrate rounds a corner into a

MAINTENANCE ALCOVE

Obviously expecting it to be an escape. Instead, he finds himself trapped at a dead end.

The Constables round the corner behind him, torches flaring.

Philostrate squints, he lifts his hand trying to shade his eyes. He can't see them for the glare but he does hear the sound of a dozen MUSKETS COCKING. He prepares for the worst.

Suddenly, a voice.

FLUTE

Hold your fire, men.

Magistrate Flute steps forward and addresses Philostrate.

PHILOSTRATE

Magistrate, you know I didn't do any of this. You have to know that.

FLUTE

You always said the truth is in the facts.

PHILOSTRATE

Magistrate...

FLUTE

I'm bound by the facts, Philo.
(to Constables)
Shackle him...

Philostrate steps back.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

If you don't come in peacefully,
they'll have to shoot you.

Philostrate backs against the wall. His boots CLANG on a metal grate.

The Constable with the irons steps forward.

Two girlish hands reach up between the grating, unnoticed. The fingers wrap tightly around the bars.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

You really have no other choice.

The hands pull the grate open. Philostrate falls into the dark opening.

Flute hurries to the open grate.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

Damn. Where does this drain lead?

INT. DRAIN PIPE -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate spirals down, coasting on a slick film of water and algae, rapidly gaining velocity.

INT. SEWER TUNNEL -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate slides out the end of the drain pipe and lands on the wet concrete floor.

Vignette climbs out of the drain pipe.

VIGNETTE

Are you completely nutters?!?

PHILOSTRATE

I was looking for clues...

VIGNETTE

Did you really think you could just march up to a crime scene? The whole place crawling with constables... And last night? What was that? Kasmir is the crime boss of the Purple Triad. This bloke keeps mirrors in his torture chamber just so his enemies can see themselves die. You're acting like a man with a deathwish.

PHILOSTRATE

I will not hide while there is a killer out there having a jubilee. I have everything under control.

VIGNETTE

You could have died!

The last words hang in the air. Vignette's eyes betray her concern for Philostrate. Philostrate starts away.

PHILOSTRATE

I don't care.

VIGNETTE

You don't mean that.

PHILOSTRATE

I AM dead! I had a life. And I had her. I had Tourmaline. Jack's taken both. He doesn't get to do that.

VIGNETTE

Why? You didn't love her.

Philostrate spins around. He runs to Vignette and slams her against the wall. Furious. Vignette braces herself.

PHILOSTRATE

You have no sodding idea!

Vignette boldly stares him down.

VIGNETTE

I think I have an idea.

Philostrate collapses on the brink of a breakdown.

PHILOSTRATE

I didn't. If I did, she would be alive right now, but I didn't.

He sucks it up and nods with resolve.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I did not love her, but I owe her.

Vignette kneels down to face him.

VIGNETTE

I'm not used to hiding underground either. I had wings, you understand. Jack took something from me too. So you've got my help whether you need it or not.

INT. SEWERS -- LATER

Philostrate and Vignette climb a metal ladder.

VIGNETTE

They've stepped up the Drake sweeps in the area. I know a place where we can wait it out.

Vignette reaches a small hatch at the top of the ladder. She stops and turns down to Philostrate.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

This is a favorite little retreat of mine. But it's a sensitive place so just remember to keep quiet. Savvy?

Philostrate nods.

Vignette pushes open the hatch.

They climb the ladder into

THE NARROW CRAWLSPACE

crisscrossed with giant ancient timbers and thin shafts of light from pinprick holes and cracks in the yellowed plaster.

The sporadic sounds of APPLAUSE. A silence. Then the first chords of the faerie opera La Crimioara. Philostrate pauses at the sound. He tries to peek through the holes.

Vignette whispers after him.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Philo... Come on...

INT. THE ORPHEUM PLAYHOUSE (PROP ATTIC) -- CONTINUOUS

Wide and sprawling but cramped with all manner of stage props and set pieces: backdrops, vibrant costumes, opulent furniture, various weapons, stage masques, etc.

A trap door cracks open. Vignette pokes her head out. She climbs out and looks around. Philostrate follows.

Philostrate enters. He looks around, bewildered by the motley assortment of props. It finally occurs to him.

PHILOSTRATE

The Orpheum.

Vignette smiles and nods. She can't hide her enthusiasm.

VIGNETTE

This is my little cloister. We'll be safe here.

Philostrate fixes on an old art nouveau poster of Guinevere Cartier for the Orpheum Playhouse. A version of the one that Tourmaline was touching up back in her room.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Find anything interesting.

PHILOSTRATE

Tourmaline painted this.

VIGNETTE

(without looking up)

Guinevere Cartier. The faeries' sweetheart. Everyone in the Quarter either wants to have her or be her. I know I did... when I first came over.

She rifles through the costumes.

PHILOSTRATE

When you came over?

VIGNETTE

Across the sea. From Tirnanog. I
lived in Hy-Brasil, the flower city.

She looks over the costume rack and gazes into the distance.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Flowers everywhere. Growing up the
walls of buildings right into folks'
houses. So much colour.

PHILOSTRATE

Why'd you leave?

She takes a deep contemplative breath and turns with an air
of finality back to the piles of costumes.

VIGNETTE

It's a big world out there. There
was still quite a bit I'd never seen.

She selects an emerald green frock and sets it over an
Oriental screen. She goes behind the screen to change.

Philostrate looks away, past the wallpaper of theatre posters.

PHILOSTRATE

That's a nice enough answer, but you
and I know the real reason. The
only reason any came over. The
Scourge of the homeland. The faerie
plague.

VIGNETTE

Please, I appreciate your sympathy.
Don't talk about things you don't
understand.

PHILOSTRATE

I understand a little. I lived there.
Hy-Brasil. The city of flowers.

VIGNETTE

What?

PHILOSTRATE

My mother and father were officers
with the Burguish Imperial Navy
stationed in Tirnanog. I lived in
the Human Concession.

VIGNETTE

You are not serious.

She absent-mindedly finishes unbuttoning her shirt and lets
it slide to the floor as she listens.

PHILOSTRATE

I am. I was only a boy when the Scourge broke out. The International Human forces were the first to withdraw. My parents didn't make it. An old faerie opera singer found me and took it upon herself to see that I made it out of the country. We were caught in a flood of refugees looking for a way out.

VIGNETTE

An opera singer? Is that why you -

PHILOSTRATE

Yes.

Vignette steps into her clean costume trousers, her brow furrowed as she listens. She can hardly believe her ears.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I must have been a terrible drain on her resources. At any time, she could have done better to abandon me. Just as my people had abandoned hers. Just as I abandoned...

Philostrate stops himself. A long pause. Vignette looks over the screen to make sure Philostrate is okay.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

But she didn't. Finally, there was a boat - a cramped Selkie Trawler, slick with fish guts. It carried about a hundred of us across the North seas to a smugglers' port just outside of the Burgue, where we were met by the coast police. The Burgue had enough of the faerie refugees. They'd let no one off. Except me. The human.

Vignette watches Philostrate from over the screen. She bends to grab a clean shirt from the floor, but suddenly GASPS.. She grabs her back, agonized.

She shoots up quick, knocking the screen over. The screen SLAMS against the floor planks with a flourish of dust.

Philostrate turns and finally sees her standing there in nothing but the emerald-green pants and the old bandage across her chest and back. She winces, doubled over in pain.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

VIGNETTE

I was just changing and - Oh bloody hell, my back!

Philostrate rushes over. He turns her around to get a good look at her back. Dark bloodstains show through the bandage.

PHILOSTRATE

We have to change your bandages.

A LITTLE LATER

Vignette sits on a short stool in front of Philostrate. Philostrate cuts the bandage and slowly unwraps it. He drops the soiled bandage to the floor.

He reaches up and gingerly traces the tear-shaped gashes on her back. They sparkle with crystallized faerie blood, eerily beautiful. Her back muscles twitch slightly.

VIGNETTE

Sometimes it feels like they're still there. Like if I just concentrate hard enough... But it's not real. I just want to feel something...

She looks up into his eyes. Slowly, she reaches up and unbuttons the bottom of Philostrate's shirt. She slides her hand across his stomach. Philostrate closes his eyes.

Vignette gently kisses his abs. She moves up. With swelling excitement, she feverishly unbuttons the rest of his shirt with her teeth. She kisses and nips at his chest.

Face to face, she stops. She sees something like fear in Philostrate's eyes. She starts to pull back.

Philostrate grabs her and holds her close, pressing her bare chest to his own. The skin to skin contact galvanizes them. Their lips and tongues meet in a tangled deep kiss.

Vignette hops up and wraps her legs around him.

Philostrate spins her around and pins her against the wall. Their bodies heaving, their hands roaming wildly.

Philostrate kisses her neck. Vignette throws her head back, gasping. Philostrate notices an old poster on the wall just over her shoulder. He recognizes the signature: "Tourmaline."

He pushes himself away, staggering back.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

What... What is it?

PHILOSTRATE

I can't. I'm sorry.

For the first time, Vignette seems awkwardly self-conscious.

VIGNETTE

Oh... Of course. It's alright.

She sheepishly covers her breasts and turns away. She notices the poster on the wall.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

(whispering)

How callous of me...

Philostrate sees a trickle of fresh blood sliding down her naked back. He grabs a white cloak from a costume rack.

PHILOSTRATE

Here. Put your arms up.

She does. Philostrate wraps the new bandage around her.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I think we opened that gash a little.

VIGNETTE

I suppose I'm going to have to be more careful from now on.

PHILOSTRATE

It'll heal. It'll take some time and there will be a fair amount of scarring. But it'll heal.

He finishes wrapping the bandage. Vignette gives him a soft sympathetic smile.

INT. PARLIAMENT ANTECHAMBER -- AFTERNOON

Armed GUARDS pull a set of tall doors open. In the doorway, silhouetted against the gray daylight, stands a figure draped in flowing fabric - GUINEVERE CARTIER.

Dame Whitley steps forward to greet her.

DAME

Miss Cartier. Such an honour...

GUINEVERE

The honour is mine.

INT. PARLIAMENT HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Guinevere's silken gown at once modest and seductive clings and billows like liquid as she walks. A translucent veil marked by silver moons and stars covers her face.

Her wings, the same shade of brilliant purple and pink as the silk fabric, flex gracefully.

Dame Whitley keeps stride next to her.

DAME

I apologize that you must suffer my husband's paranoid security before I may escort you to the ballroom.

GUINEVERE

Not at all.

DAME

The entire Faeries's Rights Lobby is here as well as many of the undecided moderates in Parliament. I can't tell you what a benefit this outreach will be for your people.

Behind them, an ASSISTANT wheels a player-harpsichord, polished and lacquered to a mirror shine.

PHILOSTRATE (V.O.)

Where are we? We are nowhere.

INT. ORPHEUM PLAYHOUSE (PROP ATTIC) -- SAME

Philostrate thinks out loud.

PHILOSTRATE

The only individual I've met who has use for faerie blood is Kasmir. Tell me about the Purple Triad.

Vignette responds from behind the screen as she finishes changing.

VIGNETTE

Kasmir's narcotics ring? They've got their fingers in everything. It's really the whole underworld. But Kasmir isn't who you're looking for. He pays for blood. It's all voluntary.

PHILOSTRATE

Yeah, but why pay for what you can take for free?

VIGNETTE

Not the Triad's style. Besides, Quill would know. He keeps up with all the underworld goings-on.

PHILOSTRATE

Quill would know, wouldn't he?

VIGNETTE

Come on, now. You don't honestly think Quill has anything to do with Unseelie Jack?

PHILOSTRATE

I can't rule anything out.

VIGNETTE

Then what about the State?

PHILOSTRATE

Are you saying Jack could be - what? The Mayor's insane cousin?

VIGNETTE

Or at least on the Mayor's payroll. It's well known what he thinks of the Quarter.

PHILOSTRATE

The Mayor is a Roc's arse and a bigot, but a genocidal despot?

(sighs)

Yeah, we are nowhere. I can't go on fighting this war on two fronts. Running after Unseelie Jack and running from the police. There's a big picture here that I just can't see from where I stand.

VIGNETTE

Hey. Take a look at this.

She steps from behind the screen wearing a garish green frock coat and vest, a ruffled silk cravat, and a scarlet bandanna.

PHILOSTRATE

Why is it always the strange ones I get stuck with?

VIGNETTE

I don't know. Love is blind?

PHILOSTRATE

Wait...

VIGNETTE

Oh. You know what? I didn't mean "love" like -

PHILOSTRATE

No, hold on. You just gave me an idea.

INT. PARLIAMENT SECURITY CHECKPOINT -- MOMENTS LATER

Guinevere stands at a kiosk before a crew of Guardsmen - A COMMODORE with a clipboard and a LEFTENANT inspecting an unrolled spool of music for the automatic harpsichord.

Dame Whitley stands to the side, arms crossed impatiently.

COMMODORE

Lift your veil, please.

Guinevere complies. Her dark almond eyes betraying no ill will. The Commodore reaches to touch the starburst of jewels fixed to her pale forehead. She flinches back for a moment.

DAME

Come on, now. Leave her alone.
It's jewelry, not poison.

GUINEVERE

It is my religion. I may not remove it. I apologize.

DAME

See, there you are.

The Commodore makes a note in his clipboard. The Leftenant opens the lid of the harpsichord to go over the insides.

COMMODORE

Alright, Miss Cartier, If you would kindly just disrobe...

DAME

What?

COMMODORE

Standard security protocol.

DAME

You are not strip-searching her!

Unnoticed, the Leftenant covertly attaches a device - a pair of glass canisters - to the inside of the harpsichord.

GUARD

All due respect, Dame, but she could be hiding anything under that gown.

DAME

She is a guest. Now you end this ridiculous posturing or I will have you mopping griffin shit in the stables for the rest of your days.

The Commodore turns to Leftenant. The Leftenant nods. The Commodore turns back to Guinevere.

GUARD

I'd say that does it. Have a lovely performance.

The Lieutenant closes the harpsichord with the device inside.

EXT. MIDSOMER MARKET -- MOMENTS LATER

A street lined with canvas tents. Display cases with beaded jewelry, bushels of bright tropical fruits, exotic sea creatures on beds of ice, roasted beasts hang from meat hooks.

The thick crowd of shoppers (FAERIES, PUCKS, DWARVES, SELKIES, and many OTHERS) pulsates and flows down the street, haggling prices, dropping coins into scales, etc.

Vignette weaves through the crowd. Philostrate follows wearing a gentlemen's cloak, his face hidden in the shadow of a broad slouch hat.

PHILOSTRATE

You sure Quill can help us with the plan?

VIGNETTE

Oh yes. He lives for these sorts of suicidal ideas.

She leads Philostrate around a corner into

AN ADJACENT ALLEY

Philostrate notices the way Vignette's bandanna covers the tips of her pointed ears.

PHILOSTRATE

You know something?

VIGNETTE

What?

PHILOSTRATE

You could almost pass for a human.

VIGNETTE

I'm sorry. What?

PHILOSTRATE

With your ears covered like that and no... no wings. If you wanted, you could move to the human side of town.

VIGNETTE

(gravely offended)

What the bilge makes you think I would want that?

PHILOSTRATE

Now wait. That didn't come out right -

VIGNETTE

Let me tell you something, you arrogant part. Those wings were part of me. How'd you feel if someone lopped off your legs?

She storms away, enraged.

PHILOSTRATE

Stop. Wait. Vignette.

He grabs her shoulder and spins her around.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Look, faeries get an awful sour shuffle in this city. There's no reason why you can't live with the privileges afforded to humans.

VIGNETTE

This is my bloody life you're talking about! This is my world! I'm not a rutting human. And if you have a problem with all...

(gesturing around her)

...all this. This whole "sour shuffle..." Then you have a problem with me. Because it's part of me. And I won't pretend otherwise.

Vignette glares at Philostrate. Hurt. Her eyes shimmering with angry tears.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Come on. Let's get out of here.

INT. PARLIAMENT BALLROOM -- SAME

STATE OFFICIALS in tuxedos and formal gowns finish taking their seats as the lights dim.

The Mayor and Dame Whitley sit in the front row.

Onstage, the Assistant winds the harpsichord with a starter. Guinevere steps into the amber glow of the footlights.

A sleek, gleaming brass microphone descends on wire and stops in front of Guinevere's mouth. She lifts her veil.

The Dame leans to the Mayor.

DAME

You behave yourself.

The Mayor smirks.

The harpsichord begins to play itself. The spool of music feeds into the instrument. The twittering metallic MUSIC - a familiar tune - the aria from La Crimioara.

Guinevere sings the prelude in a smokey soulful voice.

We follow the path of the scroll of sheet music as it unwinds itself into the harpsichord's inner workings. Sprockets and pins ride the punch holes in the paper.

The motion translates to tiny hammers that bounce on the metal strings that produce the sound. A copper trigger wire clamped to a single string runs to the planted device.

Guinevere delicately holds the gleaming microphone. She sings softly, with her lips pressed to the mic.

A HARSH CHORD. Inside the instrument, the strings vibrate, but the trigger remains undisturbed. The tempo quickens.

In the audience, the Mayor looks at his watch. He stands up and moves towards the exit. The Dame shoots him a cross look but remains in her seat.

Guinevere spreads her glorious wings in - an explosion of colour. She dances, flitting about the stage like something between a ballet dancer and a fluttering moth.

The black and white keys undulate. Inside, the hammers pound the strings in a wave of motion. The last hammer lands squarely on the trigger.

The planted device bursts to life. Glass cylinders SQUEAL, their liquid contents boiling as they mix. Rubber hoses spew a vile green gas into the harpsichord.

Noxious clouds spill from the sides of the harpsichord. Guinevere stops dancing.

The audience murmurs nervously. The Dame stands:

As the gas overtakes Guinevere, she drops to her knees. She gags and fitfully grabs the air with fingers twisted by pain. Her once colourful wings blacken and wilt.

The Dame turns and tries to outrun the spreading gas. The cloud engulfs the bewildered audience behind her.

The Dame reaches the back of the Ballroom where Guards in gas masks block the exits.

She turns to see dim human shapes convulsing in the unnatural haze, dropping one by one. The cloud swallows her while in

THE LOBBY

just outside, the Mayor watches through sealed glass. He lights a cigar and blows a casual plume of smoke against the window as his wife grabs her chest, coughing and falls.

The only sound in the room issues from the player-harpsichord, still playing that light, jazzy tune.

INT. SCREAMING BANSHEE PRINTING OFFICE -- LATER

Quill greets Philostrate and Vignette at the door.

QUILL

You must have heard already. I'm just getting the news myself. I just checked the wire. I can't believe -

He stops, noticing their costumes.

QUILL (CONT'D)

What in the name of Saint Tit are you wearing?

PHILOSTRATE

What happened?

QUILL

The Mayor's wife was assassinated. Why? What was it the two of you wanted?

PHILOSTRATE

To talk to you about an idea I have.

VIGNETTE

Who killed the Dame?

QUILL

Well, now, this is where it starts looking bad. They're saying it was Guinevere Cartier.

EXT. PARLIAMENT STEPS -- NIGHT

Flute comes bounding down the stairs to meet Bottom:

FLUTE

They're saying it was a suicide germ-bomb. That it was faerie retaliation for the city-state's sluggishness to end the Unseelie murders.

BOTTOM

An insurgency faction in the Quarter? What did the Mayor say?

FLUTE

He's shut in with his advisors. His release says the ballroom samples test proof-positive for Scourge.

BOTTOM

Pix plague. Using their own worst nightmare against us. That's bloody frightening, Magistrate.

They pass the Parliament gates and head out into the wide plaza of Oberon Square. They talk in hushed tones.

FLUTE

Except it wasn't Scourge. Not a naturally occurring strain. Our lab had a look at some sample spores from the ballroom. Highly virulent, but not contagious. Like it was made to be self-contained.

BOTTOM

You think the pixies cooked it up in one of their drug labs?

FLUTE

Sergeant, we have to find Philo. Fast. The Mayor's cutting the police out of the loop and I don't know why. He's handing the reigns to his personal secret service.

BOTTOM

The Inspector won't be caught by a drag-net. He knows every -

They stop. Flute thinks.

FLUTE

I know. Sergeant, I want you and a skeleton team in the Quarter tonight. We've tried being the fire. Let's be the fox. Find him.

Flute walks away. Bottom calls after him.

BOTTOM

And what of you, sir?

FLUTE

I'm going to the city archives to do some searching of my own.

INT. SCREAMING BANSHEE PRINTING OFFICE -- SAME

QUILL

That's a truly mad idea, mate. The Haruspex?

Philostrate puts on a pair of headphones.

PHILOSTRATE

The only person who can look into my mind and prove me innocent.

QUILL

She works for the police.

He plugs the headphones in to a telegraph key.

PHILOSTRATE

You sure this thing can't be traced?

QUILL

Nothing here can.

PHILOSTRATE

She doesn't work directly under the Constabulary. They contact her through the Seer's Guild. There's a special police authorization code.

QUILL

What if you set off a red flag? Lead the police right to us.

PHILOSTRATE

Then we're ruttet proper. But I don't think they've covered that.

Philostrate taps out the transmission on the telegraph key.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Rendezvous point, requested agent, authorization code.

EXT. UNDER A RAILROAD VIADUCT -- LATER

A CLATTERING train passes overhead, throwing strobes of light on the indigent shanty-town below.

PAUPERS and TRAMPS wander aimlessly amidst the rusted iron pylons. MATCHSTICK FAERIES, brittle-winged young girls, selling matches. URCHIN SELKIES strung out on Mabsynthe.

Philostrate, cloaked in the rags of a beggar, warms his hands at a bonfire. Vignette, similarly disguised, sits behind him in the charred frame of a long-ago wrecked train engine.

VIGNETTE

How long do you usually have to wait?

PHILOSTRATE

You'll be rid of me soon enough.

VIGNETTE

I'm not cross with you.

PHILOSTRATE

Right.

VIGNETTE

My entire life I've taken care of myself just fine, thank you. I'm a survivor. And one night you had to come along and save my bloody life.

PHILOSTRATE

I apologize?

VIGNETTE

Bugger that. Just listen to me, you ponce. Ever since then...

(quieter)

I find myself thinking about you. And hoping you get out of this mess alive. And wanting you to be happy.

THROUGH A SPYGLASS:

Philostrate turns to Vignette. From

THE WINDOW OF AN ADJACENT WAREHOUSE

Bottom squints through a spyglass, watching. He takes his eye away and passes the spyglass to a CONSTABLE next to him.

CONSTABLE

You sure it's him?

BOTTOM

Whoever it is used the Inspector's ID code to summon the Haruspex. So we'll see.

The Constable takes a peak while

BELOW

Vignette looks away, not letting her eyes meet Philostrate's.

VIGNETTE

I used to like being alone. Now I don't. I don't at all.

(MORE)

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

It occurs to me, you'll never see me
as more than "another faerie..."
Not your fault. You just - You don't
know any better.

PHILOSTRATE

Vignette, listen -

She becomes distracted and nods over Philostrate's shoulder.

Philostrate turns to see the Haruspex hobbling towards them.
The Haruspex stops. She plants her cane and lifts her chin.

HARUSPEX

Are you going to shoot me, Inspector?

THROUGH A SPYGLASS:

Philostrate steps towards the Haruspex with a pistol drawn.
Bottom turns from

THE WINDOW

and quickly pockets the spyglass as

BELOW

Philostrate coaxes the Haruspex with his weapon.

PHILOSTRATE

There's a coach parked under the
bridge.

The Haruspex totters slowly towards the shabby coach. Hitched
to the front, a GREEN ROC (a tall flightless bird) shakes
its shaggy plumage. Quill sits in the driver's seat.

QUILL

(whispering)

Let's pick it up, Philo.

The Haruspex lifts herself into the coach. Vignette climbs
in behind her.

Just as Philostrate puts his foot on the step to enter the
coach, Sergeant Bottom bursts from the warehouse.

BOTTOM

Hey!

Philostrate jumps into the coach and slams the door.

Quill whips the reins. The Roc breaks into a lightning
sprint. The coach barrels away.

INT. COACH -- CONTINUOUS

Philostrate keeps his gun pointed across to the Haruspex.
Vignette eyes Philostrate. His eyes meet hers.

QUILL (O.S.)

We've got company!

Philostrate and Vignette look out

THE BACK WINDOW

where they see a black police carriage drawn by an armoured
Griffin pursuing them at high speeds.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Quill whips reigns intensely.

QUILL (CONT'D)

No fear, mates! Hold onto your
pantaloons.

He steers the coach sharply into a

NARROW ALLEY

barely wide enough. The coach kicks up sparks, grinding
against the tight alley walls.

The police carriage follows, scraping the bricks.

Quill pulls sharply on the reigns, rounding a turn on one
wheel.

He drives the coach straight into the crowded

MIDSOMER MARKET

with the police carriage in hot pursuit.

The crowd parts, leaping out of the careening coach's path.

The police carriage matches Quill's every move.

INSIDE THE COACH

Philostrate turns from the back window and yells to Quill.

PHILOSTRATE

We'll never lose them, like this!

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

QUILL

We're all square, mate!

The coach speeds towards a

SIDE STREET

Where an OLD MERCHANT pushes a buggy.

Quill's coach rockets past

The Old Merchant guides his cart out in front of the pursuing police carriage.

The police carriage tries to stop. Too fast. The armoured Griffin falls.

The police carriage topples on it's side as it slides into Kashmir's cart. Bottles of wines and spirits fall out of the cart and shatter on the street.

Quill's coach speeds safely away. Unchallenged.

INT. CITY ARCHIVES -- LATER

A PIPED-IN WALTZ hisses through the dank sub-basement from a warped speaker.

Towering shelves seemingly without end. Contents relentlessly unorganized. Stacks of papers bursting from twine. Bible-thick water-stained files.

Flute sits on the bottom rung of a ladder as he sifts through stacks of wilted records. His eyes dart quickly over the faded type, searching.

The waltz stops short. A SHRILL TONE suddenly blares from the speaker. Flute looks up.

A dispassionate ANNOUNCER's voice cuts in.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The following is an alert from the Crisis Bulletin Service. Stay tuned for a special address from the Mayor for more information.

The SHRILL TONE resumes.

FLUTE

Oh, God no.

INT. THE MARZIPAN INN -- SAME

A dusty haze hangs in the stagnant air. Dimly lit, flaking wallpaper, crooked landscape paintings over the sheetless beds, mottled off-white stains on the bare mattress.

The Haruspex sits, tied to a wooden chair in the center of the room. A slight self-satisfied smile on her face.

Vignette stands leaning against the wall, her arms crossed.
Quill sits on the dresser by the window. Philostrate paces.

PHILOSTRATE

I suppose you know why you're here.

HARUSPEX

I can only assume you want me to
read you. To prove your innocence.
The curious irony is that in your
efforts to do so, you've become guilty
of kidnapping.

She laughs. A dry, grinding chuckle.

PHILOSTRATE

Did you know we were coming?

The Haruspex's smile grows wider.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

(to Quill)

How are we out there?

Quill glances out the window.

QUILL

We're square, mate. Not a bobby in
sight.

HARUSPEX

Not for long, it would seem.

PHILOSTRATE

What are you talking about?

HARUSPEX

Turn on the Vox-Box.

Philostrate nods. Quill turns a knob on a dusty contraption
next to him. The word "Voxagraph" carved on it's surface.

The brass horn on the device emits a SHRILL TONE. Then softly
crackling silence. The Mayor speaks across the aether.

MAYOR (V.O.)

My friends. By now, you must all
know the unspeakable tragedy which
has rent our fair city. Members of
Parliament and my own wife cut down
in a craven act of violence.

Quill moves to open window. A distant THROBBING sound carries
through the streets on the night wind.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In response to this and possible future threats from a growing anarchist junta in the Faerie Quarter, as I speak, my personal security forces are on the move...

The sound becomes clearer. FOOTSTEPS. MARCHING.

BEGIN MONTAGE

-- Row after row of black boots on rain-slick cobblestone.

-- Wolfish muzzles sniff the ground.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... With orders to detain every faerie, puck, dwarf, vampire, selkie, and others classified as non-human.

-- Lead by the harnessed werewolves, the regiments of IMPERIAL GUARDSMEN in their fine uniforms flow into the narrow alleys and avenues of the quarter.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If you fit these criteria, I encourage you not to resist.

-- A troop of Guardsmen kick in a flimsy wooden door and rush into a small kitchen surprising a FAERIE MOTHER and her TWO DAUGHTERS at the modest dinner table.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This detention is for your own protection - from the few in your midst who have today made themselves enemies of order and peace -

-- On the sidewalk, a pair of werewolves have a terrified SELKIE FIDDLER on the ground. The wolves tug hungrily on his clothes as two Guardsman aim their weapons and shout.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Also from the murderer at large, Unseelie Jack -

-- In Le Chambre de Madame Mab, Guardsmen lead FAERIE PROSTITUTES through the halls in shackles. More Guardsmen tear through their mattresses with bayonets.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And finally from angry humans who would seize this as an opportunity for vengeful retribution.

-- In the streets, The Guardsmen hustle CREATURES OF ALL RACES shackled together into iron prison carriages.

BACK TO SCENE

Philostrate stands at the window. The night explodes with sounds of MARCHING, SCREAMS, and GUNSHOTS. A wolf HOWLS.

MAYOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Effective immediately, the Quarter is closed and all residents are to be relocated to state containment at Bleakness Keep until further notice.

Quill quickly turns off the Voxagraph.

QUILL

An anarchist junta in the Quarter. I am the anarchist junta in the Quarter. And I was home that night.

VIGNETTE

The Guardsman are coming. Get her to read you and let's get out of here.

HARUSPEX

Absurd.

They all slowly turn.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

I don't need to read the Inspector to know he's innocent...

QUILL

What?

HARUSPEX

I know who Unseelie Jack is.

QUILL

Who is it?

Philostrate stealthily reaches for his gun.

HARUSPEX

You've all been quite entertaining.

VIGNETTE

Wait... There's something familiar about you...

QUILL

If you know who the killer is, why wouldn't you tell the police?

A PISTOL COCKS. Quill turns. Philostrate has taken aim.

PHILOSTRATE

Because she's Unseelie Jack.

The Haruspex's ancient wrinkled visage slowly stretches into a villainous grin. She slowly nods.

QUILL

What?

VIGNETTE

You knew?

PHILOSTRATE

I suspected. I just had to get her in front of me.

HARUSPEX

Bravo, Inspector. You set me up. How very sharp. There's just one problem.

PHILOSTRATE

What's that?

HARUSPEX

I knew you would.

With blinding speed, the Haruspex snaps her restraints and leaps to her feet.

She whips around, her long black cloak a swirling vortex.

In the blink of an eye, she lunges. With one hand, she effortlessly throws Quill

OUT THE WINDOW

plummeting three stories. He hits

THE ROOF

of a canvas tent in the market below.

He rolls down and lands in

THE STREET

knocked unconscious. While in

THE ROOM

the Haruspex grabs Vignette by the neck and moves behind her.

Philostrate aims his pistol.

PHILOSTRATE

Let her go.

HARUSPEX

Not this time, Inspector. She and I have business to attend to.

PHILOSTRATE

I don't think so.

HARUSPEX

I'll slice her pretty neck wide open.

The Haruspex's nails dig into the soft skin under Vignette's jaw, drawing a single drop of blood. The Haruspex sniffs the air. She licks the blood with a purple forked tongue.

Vignette winces, trembling with terror.

The Haruspex licks her lips.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

Mmmm, sweet.

The Haruspex inches towards the door with Vignette.

Philostrate keeps his pistol trained on her.

VIGNETTE

Philo, I -

PHILOSTRATE

Vignette, don't you dare say your goodbyes...

HARUSPEX

Such confidence, Inspector.

PHILOSTRATE

(to Haruspex)

Last chance.

HARUSPEX

No thank you, Inspector. We have other plans for this one.

The Haruspex darts out the door, knocking it off its hinges.

Vignette's terrified SCREAM shrinks down the hallway.

Philostrate runs into

THE HALLWAY

just in time to see the end of the Haruspex's cloak whipping around a corner. Impossibly fast.

He rounds the corner. A long hall lined with numbered doors and flickering gas lamps and garnished with rusted suits of armour and chinked shields - ornaments of a faded era.

A horrid CACKLING echoes through the long dark halls.

Philostrate sneaks down the hall with his pistol poised. He listens as he passes every door.

He hears SCREAMING. He turns and kicks the door in, quickly taking aim.

IN THE ROOM

a YOUNG COUPLE startled out of their lovemaking desperately cover themselves. Philostrate pulls back into

THE HALLWAY

A voice from behind.

BOTTOM

Philostrate! Don't move! I have a rifle aimed at your head!

Philostrate stops.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Do not turn around! Get on your knees and put your pistol on the ground to your left! Very slowly!

Philostrate doesn't move.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Do it!

He slowly gets on his knees and lays his pistol on the ground.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

Put your hands behind your head.

He does. Bottom comes up behind him. He presses the barrel of the long rifle to the back of Philostrate's neck. He reaches for his shackles with his other hand.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

You're in a bilge-load of trouble.

PHILOSTRATE

Sergeant, listen to me. You're making a terrible mistake. The Haruspex's the killer. She's in one of these rooms. If you'll just search -

BOTTOM

Shut your gob. Do I look daft to you?

Suddenly, a door at the end of the hall splinters to pieces. The Haruspex leaps out. She hovers above the ground with Vignette kicking and screaming under one arm.

The Haruspex speeds down the hall towards them, cackling.

She stretches out one of her arms and lets her claws drag along the wall, gouging the plaster, shattering the gas lamps.

As the lamps break a mantle of darkness follows her.

Philostrate grabs his pistol.

Bottom manages to hit the deck at the last minute. The Haruspex soars over his head.

Philostrate whirls to fire, but she's too quick. She breaks through the window at the other end of the hall.

Philostrate hurries to the broken window and looks

OUTSIDE

as the Haruspex deftly vaults from roof to roof.

Bottom hobbles down the hallway after Philostrate.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

That was the Haruspex?

PHILOSTRATE

I don't know what it is.

BOTTOM

That old crone always gave me the shivers.

Bottom aims his rifle through the broken window.

PHILOSTRATE

Sergeant, she has a hostage...

BOTTOM

Relax, Inspector. I can hit the ticks of a griffin's rump with this.

Bottom squints.

BOTTOM (CONT'D)

There you are...

Philostrate notices a funny smell. He surveys the hallway. He hears a steady HISS from the gouged walls.

He moves closer and sees

A RUPTURED PIPE

spewing rippling gas into the hall. He glances at

BOTTOM'S RIFLE

just in time to see him pull the hammer back with his thumb.

Bottom's finger tightens around the trigger.

PHILOSTRATE

Sergeant, no!

BOTTOM

Take this, you spooky old bitch...

He pulls the trigger.

The hammer sparks.

Philostrate pulls a metal shield from one of the ornamental suits of armour and hits the floor.

EXT. THE FAERIE QUARTER -- SAME

Quiet and still until

THE MARZIPAN INN

explodes in a brilliant fireball. Splinters of blazing planks and shards of glass rain down on the street as a tower of flames and billowing black smoke rises into the night sky.

FLUTE (V.O.)

Philostrate is dead.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE -- LATER

Flute stands before the Mayor's desk.

MAYOR

What?

FLUTE

He died in the explosion of the Marzipan Inn.

MAYOR

Well. That's that. Case closed.
This calls for a little celebration.

He strolls to a cabinet and withdraws a bottle and glasses.

FLUTE

Sir. I don't believe Unseelie Jack is dead.

The Mayor stops. He forces a chuckle as he pours two drinks.

MAYOR

Now Magistrate...

Flute drops some papers on the Mayor's desk. The Mayor turns.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

What's all this, then?

FLUTE

A budget for the Mayor's Defense Consulate. With provisions for an "eggs for vouchers" program. "Donate biological material to the census and walk away with bread vouchers. Emphasis on faeries and vampires."

The Mayor, still smiling, but with controlled fury in his eyes. Flute becomes even more bold.

FLUTE (CONT'D)

Harvesting samples from faeries and vampires? Do you know what Unseelie Jack is?

MAYOR

A test tube genocide?

FLUTE

Maybe that was the idea. But what if it became impractical. You can't set an army of monsters on the city. But you can use one to steer your agenda. Scare the faeries. Make them angry enough. They become a plausible threat and then...

MAYOR

You've had your nose in one too many penny dreadfuls.

FLUTE

It's been a good week for you, sir, hasn't it? Carnival Row is empty. Your wife has been silenced.

MAYOR

That seems to happen to those who get in my way, doesn't it, Magistrate?

The Mayor drinks his glass in one gulp and turns. He crumples the records and tosses them in a dustbin.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Dismissed.

Flute doesn't move. The Mayor glances over his spectacles, glaring at Flute.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Dismissed, Magistrate.

Flute takes a deep breath.

FLUTE

Yes, sir.

He leaves and shuts the door.

EXT. FAERIE QUARTER -- SAME

The entire block where once stood the Marzipan Inn, now a smoldering pile of rubble. CONSTABLES and MEDICS probe the ruins, searching for survivors and bodies.

Quill climbs amidst the debris, calling out in a whisper, trying to avoid the attention of the authorities.

QUILL

Vignette... Philostrate...

He lifts sections of scorched plaster and timbers. Nothing.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Hello.

He hears a PAINED MOAN from a nearby pile of charred bricks. Quill digs, desperately tossing the bricks. He finds a scored and blackened knight's shield and heaves it aside.

He uncovers a semi-conscious Philostrate caked in soot, peppered with small shards of brick and glass.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Oh bloody hell, are you alive?

He MOANS weakly.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Close enough.

Quill throws him over his shoulder and hurries away.

INT. SCREAMING BANSHEE PRINTING OFFICE -- LATER

Philostrate lays on a table, cleaned and bandaged. He opens his eyes and sits up.

PHILOSTRATE

Vignette!

QUILL
I couldn't find her.

Philostrate touches his temple.

PHILOSTRATE
How long have I been out?

QUILL
A while.

Philostrate gets out of bed, stumbling, still a little groggy.

PHILOSTRATE
The Haruspex took Vignette.

QUILL
Where are you going?

Philostrate grabs his coat and struggles to put it on.

QUILL (CONT'D)
You're in no bloody condition to -

PHILOSTRATE
Stop me.

QUILL
Wait...

PHILOSTRATE
We have no time for these sodding
games! Did you hear a word I said?
The Haruspex has her right now!

QUILL
And what if she's dead.

Philostrate stops.

PHILOSTRATE
What if she's not. How long do you
think she has?

QUILL
You'll never find her in time.

PHILOSTRATE
I have to try! I can't just -

QUILL
Listen! I'm saying there's a way.
But I -

PHILOSTRATE
Show me.

INT. CABARET MU GONG (BACK HALLWAY) -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate lays on a cot. Quill and Kasmir stand over him. Kasmir is flanked by his two Komodo bodymen. One holds a leather case.

KASMIR

The visions you have when you're on Mabsynthe. They're caused by the faerie blood.

QUILL

I imagine that's how the Haruspex gets her powers.

KASMIR

Whenever I brew a new batch, I usually include samples from several different donors. That's why the visions are all jumbled.

Kasmir snaps his fingers. The Komodo withdraws a full syringe.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

Here she is. Vignette.

He flips the syringe and squeezes the air bubbles out.

KASMIR (CONT'D)

But, if one was to take a solution from the blood of a single donor... One would enter the present mind of that donor. See what she sees. Feel what she feels. It is... a unique experience.

QUILL

But Philo, you have to understand. If she's dead...

KASMIR

You'll die a very ugly, painful death.

PHILOSTRATE

Lets just get this over with.

Kasmir kneels.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

Aren't you going to need to find a vein?

KASMIR

Well, that's the other thing, really.

(MORE)

KASMIR (CONT'D)

The solution must be injected directly into the subject's brain. Hold him down.

The two Komodos and Quill grab Philostrate's wrists and ankles.

Kasmir holds Philostrate's head down with one palm and with his other hand, he slowly pushes the needle through Philostrate's temple. Philostrate grits his teeth and shakes.

Kasmir squeezes the contents of the syringe into Philostrate's brain.

Instantly, Philostrate tenses. He goes into convulsions. He arches his back and SCREAMS. His eyes completely white.

BEGIN MONTAGE -- PHILOSTRATE'S VISION

(The images come in erratic bursts. Speeding up and slowing down alternately. In Vignette's POV.)

- Rushing through a long dark tunnel.
- Into a grimy subterranean vault.
- Cluttered with tall glass chambers. Ghastly beasts, tangles of tentacles and claws suspended in murky preservatives.
- Chains hanging from the ceiling.
- A wall plastered with severed faerie wings.
- Part of a sign on the wall: "Dalrymple Street"
- Iron shackles snap around Vignette's wrists. A meat hook catches the chain.
- The Haruspex turns a crank. A chain winds around the spindle as she hoists Vignette into the air.
- Vignette's feet dangle above the blood-smeared tile floor.
- The Haruspex's face.

HARUSPEX

(distorted)

Now comes the fun bit, poppet.

- The Haruspex's wicked claws shred Vignette's clothes off.
- The Haruspex turns the nozzle of a hose and sprays down Vignette's hanging naked body with a hard stream of water.

BACK TO SCENE

Philostrate twists and contorts. He turns away from the imaginary stream of water. He shuts his eyes tight.

QUILL

He can't take this.

KASMIR

He has to. It must run its course.

Philostrate's contortions end. His body still, but tense. His white eyes open, fixated on something unseen.

PHILOSTRATE

What are you?

VIGNETTE (V.O.)

What are you?

PHILOSTRATE'S VISION

- The Haruspex stands before the wall of faerie wings, her back to Vignette.

HARUSPEX

I am not a prophet.

- She takes off her sunglasses and unwraps her blindfold.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

I don't merely see the future.

- She drops her cloak and spreads an enormous pair of twisted, hideously majestic wings. Tiny veins pulsate through the frayed leathery membrane.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)

I am the future.

BACK TO SCENE

Philostrate recoils in disgust. He goes into a brief seizure. Quill and Kasmir hold him steady. He stiffens and regains some control.

PHILOSTRATE

You're... You're a faerie...

VIGNETTE (V.O.)

You're... You're a faerie...

PHILOSTRATE'S VISION

- The Haruspex slowly turns. Two dark empty eye sockets. She cackles. Two slithering black vipers emerge from her hollow eye sockets, snapping at the air.

HARUSPEX

Not exactly...

- A silhouetted FIGURE leans on the handrail of a loft above.

FIGURE
She is many things.

- The Figure descends a spiral staircase.

FIGURE (CONT'D)
A faerie, yes. Some selkie. Some gorgon. And just a dash of vampire.

- The Figure steps into the light. Professor Leopold Alcandre.

BACK TO SCENE

Philostrate gasps with recognition.

PHILOSTRATE
You...

He goes into one final seizure. His whole body falls limp on the cot. He opens his bloodshot eyes.

QUILL
Who? Who did you see?

PHILOSTRATE
Professor Alcandre.

Philostrate winces and sits up quickly. He holds his stomach, nauseated. He wipes the sweat from his brow and thinks.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)
He told me he was into twining.

QUILL
Wait. What? Twining?

PHILOSTRATE
Using magic and bio-technology to create hybrids.

Philostrate pushes himself off the examination table.

QUILL
You're saying the Haruspex is some kind of artificial creation?

PHILOSTRATE
It was a laboratory. There was a sign.

Philostrate shuts his eyes, concentrating.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)
"Dalrymple Street."

Quill shakes his head.

QUILL

Doesn't make any sense.

PHILOSTRATE

Isn't that in Argyle Heights?

QUILL

They gutted it years ago to build
the Museum Annex.

Quill paces.

QUILL (CONT'D)

Hold on. Does this Professor of
yours work for the museum?

Philostrate looks up, a revelation.

PHILOSTRATE

Quill. Would the Dalrymple Street
tube station still be under the annex?

INT. DALRYMPLE STREET STATION -- SAME

Flooded train tracks cut through. Glass chambers with
floating monstrosities preserved within. A web of chains
hangs from the dark ceiling.

Vignette dangles in midair, suspended from a meat hook in
front of the wall of trophy faerie wings.

Alcandre hums a tune as he pushes a surgical instrument cart
in front of Vignette.

ALCANDRE

You're lucky to be alive. That's
why you're here.

VIGNETTE

Who are you?

ALCANDRE

I am the Twiner. The Almighty
Alchemist of Chaos.

Alcandre pulls a sleek black glove out of a metal canister.
He slides the glove on. It snaps itself skin-tight to the
contours of his hand.

VIGNETTE

What are you going to do with that?

Alcandre speaks with the bedside manner of a friendly doctor.

ALCANDRE

This lets me reach inside you.

He holds her steady with his bare hand while he slowly reaches for her stomach with the black glove. The air CRACKLES with a mysterious ELECTRIC HUM.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

This is going to hurt quite a bit.

He touches her stomach. Her skin yields to his fingertips and ripples as if it were only water. He reaches inside.

Vignette chokes on a scream. Her face contorts with unbearable pain.

Alcandre reaches deeper.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

A faerie lays an egg. A grub hatches, eats, and becomes a cocoon. Under normal circumstances what emerges from the cocoon resembles a healthy human toddler with wings. But while in the cocoon, a faerie's biology becomes soft and pliable like clay.

Vignette spasms and convulses.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Ripe for the tender touch of a sculptor.

Alcandre slides his hand out slowly. Her skin closes itself behind the glove. No blood or cuts. Vignette shudders.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

But before cocoons...

Alcandre looks down at the handful of tiny pearl-white faerie eggs in the palm of his hand.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

...there are eggs.

He gently spoons the eggs into a beaker.

VIGNETTE

(trembling)

You... You sick rutter...

ALCANDRE

Such a strong-willed girl.

Alcandre reaches inside her stomach.

Vignette explodes into body-wrenching seizures.

Alcandre bites his lip with concentration as he probes Vignette's innards.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Just relax those muscles, dear.
They're jelly in my hands. You're
only making it difficult for yourself.

He reaches deeper.

Vignette writhes and gags.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

You are quite the remarkable specimen.
To survive an attack from the
Haruspex.

He withdraws his hand clutching another small handful of
eggs. He spoons them into a container.

Vignette hangs in midair, shivering.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Most faeries who lose their wings
commit suicide within the first day.

He reaches back inside.

Vignette's eyes roll back as she shakes.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Yet here you are. Even now, still
clinging to consciousness when others
would have surely passed out.

He pulls another handful of eggs out and examines them with
his fingertip. Vignette falls limp, still shaking.

Vignette looks up, her eyes filled with hate. A trickle of
bile at the corner of her mouth. She wheezes heavily.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Those eyes. So determined.

Alcandre gestures to the monsters preserved in the glass
chambers all around.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

So many of my experiments never live
more than a few days. But you're a
survivor. Your children will be
survivors too. The Haruspex was
just a prototype. My employer only
needed one. He doesn't know what
I'm really making. The Haruspex was
the first of a perfect race that
will eat and replace your kind. A
race that will call me God. Smile,
you get to play mother to the newest
most dominant species on the planet.

Suddenly, a GUNSHOT.

Alcandre's eyes widen.

He pulls his hand out of Vignette's abdomen and touches his chest.

A spreading bloodstain darkens his shirt.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)
(looking down curiously)
How strange...

His eyes roll back. He collapses.

Behind him, Philostrate climbs up from the flooded train tracks followed by Quill. He holsters his smoking revolver.

They hurriedly untie Vignette.

QUILL
Bloody hell. What was he doing?

Vignette falls into Philostrate's arms, limp. Eyes closed.

PHILOSTRATE
Vignette. Are you okay?

No response. He shakes her.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)
Vignette!

She weakly opens her eyes. Philostrate sighs with relief. She hugs him with all her strength.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)
It's okay.

She lets go. Quill wraps a cloak around her. She lowers her eyes to Alcandre's body, disgusted.

VIGNETTE
Give me your gun.

PHILOSTRATE
He's dead.

VIGNETTE
I know! I said give me your sodding gun!

PHILOSTRATE
Listen. The Haruspex is still around. Did you see where she went?

Without tearing her hateful gaze from Alcandre's body, she shakes her head.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

(to Quill)

Keep an eye on her.

Quill nods.

Philostrate pulls out his revolver and stealthily stalks through the abandoned station.

Only the soft sounds of FLOWING WATER and the CRUNCHING of broken glass under Philostrate's boots.

He looks slowly back and forth.

He hears the GENTLE CLINKING of chains swaying overhead.

Philostrate looks up.

The Haruspex hangs bat-like from the ceiling. She twists her head to look down. Her eye-snakes poise to strike. She lets herself plummet, talons outstretched, cackling.

She lands on Philostrate, pinning him down. Her enormous wings beat the air as she slashes at him in a flurry of claws. Philostrate dodges as best he can.

Quill smacks the back of her skull with a steel tray.

In a single quick motion, she grabs Quill, throws him over her shoulder.

Philostrate rolls away, aims, and fires. The Haruspex SCREECHES and slinks around a corner. Silence.

QUILL

Did you hit her?

PHILOSTRATE

I think so.

Vignette limps to Philostrate. She touches the nicks and cuts that crisscross his face.

PHILOSTRATE (CONT'D)

I'm okay.

He motions for her to move behind him. He walks towards the shadows, his revolver raised. He turns a corner.

He trains his gun on a dark heap on the ground as he approaches. He kneels cautiously.

The Haruspex's wrinkled face stares blankly at him from amidst the heavy dark folds of her cloak. Her eye sockets empty.

VIGNETTE

Is she dead?

PHILOSTRATE

Something's wrong.

He slowly reaches out and touches her face. He prods the dark cloak. Nothing solid. He grabs her gray hair and picks the face up. Skin only - a hollow husk.

QUILL

Maybe she melted?

Philostrate looks around. Something suddenly occurs to him.

PHILOSTRATE

Where's Vignette?

INT. FLOODED TUBE TUNNEL -- SAME

Alcandre stumbles through the knee-deep water. The SPLASHING of his labored running echoes through the long dark tunnel.

He stops to catch his breath. He grabs his bleeding chest and laughs a little to himself.

He hears the slow SPLASHING of someone approaching. He turns and stares into the darkness, frightened.

Vignette limps into view. She stops and glares at Alcandre.

ALCANDRE

(chuckling)

I thought you were your Inspector friend. A crack shot - he hit me right in the heart. Well, one of them. It never hurts to have a spare.

Vignette slowly moves closer. Alcandre backs away.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Little one. It was just a job.

Vignette comes closer still. Alcandre scrambles back.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Your kind. You choke the streets and the very skies above our heads. You spread disease and immorality -

VIGNETTE

You violated nature and me.

ALCANDRE

I improved on nature. I wanted to make faeries better, stronger. My creations are works of art.

He backs against a brick wall, cornered.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

I'm just a scientist...

Alcandre's hand trembles as he reaches for the steel handle of a curved surgical blade clipped to his belt.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

Just wanted to study you. Just wanted to see what you're made of... inside!

He quickly whips out the curved scalpel and makes a wide swipe at Vignette. She gets back just in time with a fresh shallow cut on her cheek.

Vignette pulls back her cloak and lifts her hand. She wears the black surgical glove. Alcandre's eyes widen.

He lunges for her, flailing the scalpel. Alcandre has Vignette against the wall. She holds his wrist as he tries to bring the scalpel down.

ALCANDRE (CONT'D)

You don't know how to use that glove.

VIGNETTE

I'll muddle through.

She plunges her gloved hand through Alcandre's chest. Alcandre's muscles lock up as he squeals in agony.

Vignette slowly pulls her hand out. She holds Alcandre's heart in her fist.

Alcandre musters a weak smile as he slowly slides down the brick wall and falls face first into the water.

Vignette drops his heart. She rips off the black glove and tosses it to the side.

A hand touches her shoulder. Vignette jumps, startled. She looks up and sees Quill.

QUILL

Let's get out of here.

VIGNETTE

Where's Philo?

INT. DALRYMPLE STREET STATION (LOFTSPACE) -- MOMENTS LATER

Philostrate quickly looks through the makeshift lab - various vials and beakers, books, papers, etc. Vignette and Quill stand aside. Waiting for him.

VIGNETTE

What are you looking for..

PHILOSTRATE

I don't know.

VIGNETTE

What about the Haruspex?

QUILL

Gone. Shed her skin. I get the feeling wherever she is, she's a lot less pretty than usual.

VIGNETTE

But where is she?

Philostrate finds an envelope. Inside, he finds a set of tintypes. He looks over the images.

-- Failed experiments. Twisted faeries sprouting extra limbs.

-- Rows and rows of monstrous embryos growing in vitro.

-- And the last photo. The Mayor poses next to Professor Alcandre amidst all the entrapments of the secret lab.

PHILOSTRATE

This is it.

He tucks the envelope into his coat pocket.

QUILL

If they really were breeding an army of these things, why would the Mayor bother clearing the Faerie Quarter? The faeries are gone. There's no need for a horde prowling the night.

VIGNETTE

Not a horde. The professor was a madman who got carried away with his own agenda. He wanted to make a whole new race. But the Mayor only wanted one Haruspex from him.

PHILOSTRATE

There it is. All the faeries are locked up. When you've got the whole herd corralled, you don't need an army to slaughter them. You just need one.

QUILL

Oh godspit, Philo, you're right. The Haruspex. She's gone to feed. To finish the job.

PHILOSTRATE

We need to get to Bleakness Keep,
before -

QUILL

Allow me. You don't get to my level
of ill-repute without knowing the
ins and outs of prison.

EXT. BLEAKNESS KEEP PRISON -- NIGHT

A broken medieval citadel converted to a prison clings to
crags of rock high above the rumbling sea. A light drizzle.

Glum members of the PRESS stand outside the iron gate and
file routine reports on the faerie incarceration.

INT. THE CLINK -- SAME

A dank, sunken rotunda clotted with FAERIES and other non-
humans. A long gutter-toilet splits the room. Harsh light
from hissing arc lamps lazily crisscrosses the crowd.

ARMED GUARDS patrol on metal catwalks above.

In the crowd, a FAERIE MOTHER holds her YOUNG GIRL close.
The Young Girl whispers to her mom.

YOUNG GIRL

I have to go plink.

The Mother points to the gutter.

FAERIE MOTHER

That's the potty over there, hon.

YOUNG GIRL

I know. I can't go in front of
everybody.

FAERIE MOTHER

It's alright. I'll hold your hand.

The Mother leads her Young Girl to the gutter. The Young
Girl stands on the metal lattice. She nervously bunches the
hem of her skirt and starts to squat down.

She stops when she hears movement from the darkness below.
She squints past the metal grate.

YOUNG GIRL

I think there's someone down there,
mum.

The arc lamps above flicker and go out. The catwalks suddenly
empty. Scattered sounds of doors shutting and locking. The
restless murmur of the crowd dims to a whisper.

The silence is broken by the lilting humming of an old woman. The tune echoes from the dark under the Young Girl's feet.

The Young Girl strains to see past the shadows.

Suddenly, the Haruspex's eye-vipers strike from between the lattice.

The Young Girl screams and falls back.

Talons reach up, shredding the lattice. A ghastly form explodes from the twisted metal hole and takes flight.

Looming above is the Haruspex's true form. Gleaming black scales, spindly talons, dark wings. She grins with rows of shark-like teeth. Her eye-vipers giddily snap at the air.

HARUSPEX

I will eat for days.

She advances on the screaming crowd of Faeries, backing them helplessly against the wall.

She nears the Faerie Mother and her Young Girl.

The Mother holds her daughter close, shuts her eyes tight, and readies for the worst.

From out of nowhere, Philostrate jumps onto the Haruspex's back and puts a strangle-hold on her neck.

Quill and Vignette emerge from the hole in the gutter.

VIGNETTE

Philo, don't do anything stupid.

PHILOSTRATE

No problem. Get these people out of here!

The Haruspex tries to shake Philostrate off. She zigzags and slams him into the walls of the rotunda.

Her uneven flight forces him to use both arms to hold on. He can't reach his revolver.

She flies at the ceiling, beating him against the wire mesh.

EXT. BLEAKNESS KEEP PRISON -- CONTINUOUS

The Haruspex bursts from the roof in a shower of glass and metal. Philostrate clings as the monster whirls and bobs around the building, locked in a mortal aerial struggle.

The Press beyond the gate snap pictures.

PRESS #1
What the deuce is it?

PRESS #2
It's a monster! It's Jack!

The Haruspex quickly soars straight up.

The fight spirals higher. The ground grows distant.

As they climb, Philostrate watches the prison shrink in a mist of rain and swirls of low clouds.

He makes a grab for his gun as he holds on with one hand.

He buries the barrel under the Haruspex's chin.

The Haruspex cackles as the clouds overtake them. Philostrate shuts his eyes against the pelting rain and wild winds.

His clenched knuckles turn blue from the piercing cold.

He chokes and gags on the lack of oxygen.

HARUSPEX
The air is thin, Inspector? Go to
sleep. Go to sleep.

Lightning CRACKS the air around them. The wind SCREAMS and still they move higher.

Philostrate's eyes flutter. His grip loosens.

The Haruspex smiles.

HARUSPEX (CONT'D)
Goodnight. Inspector.

Philostrate musters one last burst of strength.

PHILOSTRATE
Goodnight.

He pulls the trigger. A POP and a flash of light.

Philostrate and the lifeless Haruspex fall, tumbling through the storm.

EXT. ROOF OF BLEAKNESS KEEP -- SAME

Vignette, Quill, and the crowd of Faeries search the night sky. Vignette spots Philostrate's falling body.

VIGNETTE
I think I see - He's falling! Someone -

But before she can finish her plea, a group of Faeries take to the air.

They catch Philostrate.

Cradling his limp body, they descend back to the roof.

Vignette runs to him. She grabs his shoulders and shakes him, barely holding back tears.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Philo. Wake up, Philo. Wake up!

Philostrate doesn't move. The crowd of faeries watch with baited breath. The Young Girl tugs on her mom's sleeve.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

You stupid prat, wake up! That was the daftest thing I've ever seen! Why'd you do that?!? Why'd you do that?!? Please wake up... Gods, I don't even know how to tell if -

She looks around.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

Does anyone know resuscitation for humans?!? Help me!

Quill puts a hand on Vignette's shoulder. Vignette violently shrugs the hand off.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

No! He's alive! I know it! Philo, wake up! Don't leave. Please.

Philostrate finally coughs. Relieved sighs and applause from the crowd.

PHILOSTRATE

Good morning, luv.

Vignette laughs, tears on her cheeks. She embraces him.

EXT. BLEAKNESS KEEP FRONT GATE -- SAME

The Press gathers around the grim Rorschach of blood and entrails, a violent inhuman silhouette that was once the Haruspex, burned onto the sidewalk. Cameras POP and FLASH.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE MAYOR'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Flute leads two marching UNIFORMED CONSTABLES. In his hand - Philostrate's envelope with the incriminating tintypes.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Flute bursts in. The Mayor looks up from his desk.

MAYOR

What is the meaning of this?

FLUTE

Mayor Boniface, you are hereby indicted by the authority of the Metropolitan Constabulary on two counts of Conspiracy - to assassinate a state official and to commit mass genocide.

MAYOR

(laughing)

You're arresting me?

FLUTE

You are relieved of your office.

The Mayor stands, his veil of self-control gradually slipping.

MAYOR

You sneak. You turncoat. You would betray your own people. I'm a bloody hero. This city used to be something before those creatures - They aren't even human! Have you seen their babies? They're born as fat squirming maggots. You would sell-out humanity for what? For maggots? The Quarter is gangrene and all I'm doing is chopping it off. So don't you sodding tell me that it hurts when I bring the knife down. You don't know what's good for this city.

FLUTE

Men, put him in irons.

MAYOR

Try it and they'll never find your bodies. You won't get me halfway down the hall before my Imperial Guardsmen -

FLUTE

The Guardsmen have been detained. It's over.

MAYOR

Like hell...

The Mayor quickly opens a rosewood box on his desk and whips out his gold-finished musket.

Startled, the two Uniformed Constables drop their shackles and reach for their own weapons.

The Mayor aims his musket at Flute, lifts the hammer, and...

...does not beat Flute to the draw. A GUNSHOT rings. A trace of smoke climbs from the barrel of Flute's gun.

The Mayor staggers back, clutching his chest with one hand. Dying, but not ready to go alone, he grits his teeth and re-aims at Flute.

By now, the two Uniformed Constables have drawn their weapons. Flute and his two men unload on the preternaturally determined Mayor until he falls to the floor.

INT. AXIS ZEPPELIN-PORT -- SAME

A crowded terminal under a vaulted canopy of wrought iron and glass. TRAVELERS hurry to and from their gates.

The headlines at a newsstand variously proclaim - "Mayor Dies in Police Standoff," "Unseelie Jack Conspiracy," "Faeries Freed," "Faeries' Voting Rights Bill Before Parliament."

A hand takes a copy and slides coins to the CLERK. Philostrate opens the paper and begins to read.

Flute ambles by, grabs a copy of his own, and leans on the counter as he pretends to read.

FLUTE

Thanks for the tip.

PHILOSTRATE

I didn't know who else to send it to. Someone who was in the position to stand up to the Mayor.

FLUTE

You think things are going to be different around here?

PHILOSTRATE

Someday. It's a step, isn't it?

FLUTE

You don't have to run, you know. You're exonerated now.

PHILOSTRATE

I need a change of scenery.

FLUTE

This city. It gets in your veins, doesn't it?

A nearby destination board CLATTERS as the numbers rotate.

PHILOSTRATE

That's me.

FLUTE

If you ever come back this way, you can have my job.

PHILOSTRATE

You're an honorable man, Magistrate. The city's not going to really change without men like you.

FLUTE

And men like you?

Philostrate grabs his luggage, puts on his hat, and smiles.

PHILOSTRATE

Me? I'm not all that great.

FLUTE

You've got company, do you?

Philostrate looks to the two tickets in his breast pocket.

PHILOSTRATE

Like you said, it gets in your veins.

INT. PASSENGERS CABIN -- LATER

Upper class HUMANS sit in the rows of wide posh seats. The dim cabin lights flicker. The steady DRONE of propeller engines beats the air outside.

The CONDUCTOR strolls down the aisle punching tickets.

Philostrate glances at an empty seat between him and the window. He looks down at the two tickets. He takes a quick swig from a stout glass.

A tap on the shoulder. He turns. Vignette, radiant, in a long gypsy skirt and pretty blouse, hair brushed behind her pointed ears. She sticks out as a faerie despite no wings.

PHILOSTRATE

How was the loo?

She scoots in and plops herself into the empty window seat.

The ENGINE DRONE swells. The flames in the cabin lamps tilt. The liquid in Philostrate's glass leans to one side.

Vignette quickly grabs Philostrate's hand.

VIGNETTE

Oh, sorry. I'm no good with heights.

PHILOSTRATE

You're a faerie -

VIGNETTE

Yeah. What are the odds?

She catches scornful glances from Humans. Suddenly aware of being the only faerie, she lets go of Philostrate's hand.

VIGNETTE (CONT'D)

I'll just dig into the armrest.

She turns to the window. Philostrate takes her hand in his own. She shoots him a bewildered look.

PHILOSTRATE

I'm afraid of heights too.

VIGNETTE

Where are we going?

PHILOSTRATE

It's a big world out there. There's still quite a bit we've never seen.

OUT THE WINDOW

to the sweeping aerial view - tangled streets in a pale haze of fog, dark spires, crooked roofs, dusky smokestacks.

EXT. ZEPPELIN -- CONTINUOUS

Vignette stares out the portal of the vast airship as it rises above the swirling clouds, held aloft by a canvas balloon, shining against the crisp blue sky.

FADE OUT.