

Althea / Demetri Side

8.

She yanks open the door. There's a sudden bright flash followed by loud braying. Startled, she stumbles back.

DEMETRI

What?

HANNAH

What is that sound?

DEMETRI

I don't hear anything. C'mon, Hannah. Don't do this.

HANNAH

I can't --

DEMETRI

It's two in the fucking morning! Be reasonable for once in your life.

HANNAH

If only I could get through to you!

She runs out. Demetri throws a running shoe across the room. Flops back in bed.

SCENE 2

Start

Hannah lies in bed, asleep. She wears a bandage over both eyes. The nightstand holds a pill bottle and bottled water. Althea, wearing health care scrubs, sits next to her, reading a magazine. Front door opens. Demetri enters. Sets a pizza box on the table. Althea joins him.

ALTHEA

She's resting.

DEMETRI

You're a miracle worker.

ALTHEA

No way was she listening to "You need to rest your eyes. Doctor's orders." She insisted I take the bandages off. I gave her a Risperdal and she finally dozed off.

DEMETRI

I would have gone insane if you weren't here. The doctors gave me nothing. She might bounce back, she might not? What am I supposed to do with that?

ALTHEA

I know it's been rough on you, too. Give her time. She'll come around.

DEMETRI

God, I hope so. It's like I'm stuck in this huge hole and can't climb out. I'm not cut off for this shit.

She touches his arm. Door buzzes. They pull apart.

ALTHEA

You want me to get that?

DEMETRI

Would you? It's probably the detective. Get this. I get a call yesterday saying he needs to interview her so I should bring her downtown. Like I'm doing that. So he says he's coming here today, like it or not, since I have no say in her care.

ALTHEA

You should get a temporary power of attorney so you'll have decision making power while she's incapacitated.

DEMETRI

Maybe you can help me with that?

ALTHEA

Sure.

Althea opens the door. Sgt. Burns show his badge.

SGT. BURNS

Hannah Rhodes?

ALTHEA

No. Over there. She's asleep. Do you have to do this now?

SGT. BURNS

Can you wake her up? I need to question her about the incident in the park.

Stop

SGT Burns / Hannah / Demetri Side

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HANNAH

I'll never forget it. I've never heard anything like it before tonight. Maybe kind of like -- You know the sound donkeys make when they don't want to move? Sort of like that. It totally freaked me out. I veered off to go around them, but the ground was wet. I slipped and fell on my knees. When I got up, that's when it happened.

Start

SGT. BURNS

They came at you?

HANNAH

Not exactly. The taller one pointed at me. There was a huge flash, like a Roman candle went off in my face. That's all I remember.

SGT. BURNS

You think he fired something at you?

HANNAH

I don't know how else to describe it.

DEMETRI

I can't believe they didn't tell you anything in the E.R.

HANNAH

Tell me what?

DEMETRI

That you were struck by lightning.

HANNAH

What! No. I was attacked.

DEMETRI

By what? Aliens?

HANNAH

You think this is funny?

DEMETRI

No, it just struck me --

SGT. BURNS

Listen. We haven't ruled anything out yet, except maybe an alien invasion. The problem is the hospital's report is inconclusive. It states "Miss Rhodes did not present with any visible burns or heart arrhythmia consistent with a lightning strike except for the flash burns to both eyes."

Hannah slumps, turns away.

SGT. BURNS

Let's go back to the two men. Starting with their age, race...

HANNAH

It was too dark.

SGT. BURNS

You said they were under a post light.

HANNAH

Can we be done now?

SGT. BURNS

You said the taller guy pointed at you.

HANNAH

If I was struck by lightning, wouldn't they have been hit, too?

SGT. BURNS

We checked the cameras at the entrance. Other than the two of you, no one else was caught on video during that time period. No lightning strikes either. We posted signs for anyone with information to come forward, but no one has.

HANNAH

What happens now?

SGT. BURNS

As soon as I file a report, you'll be notified.

Hannah throws her arms up in despair. Demetri shows Sgt. Burns out. He opens the pizza box.

Stop

DEMETRI

I knew it. Stone cold. You want me to heat up a slice for you?

HANNAH

I have no idea what you're talking about.

AARON

If only I had the words to convince you..

HANNAH

Why do you care so much? If your job is just ferrying souls to hell and you've been doing it forever, I get that you hate it. Who wouldn't. Wait a second... Unless you're hoping God will see that you talked some poor blind girl out of committing suicide and... he changes his mind. He gives you a get out of jail free card. That's it! You're trying to change your future by making me live through mine.

AARON

If that's what you believe, then go ahead! What are you waiting for!

Hannah is stunned by his anger. She raises the pills to her lips. Aaron impulsively slaps them out of her hand. He is as shocked as she is.

Start

HANNAH

I thought you were only a voice in my head!

AARON

Is it possible? Have I crossed the barrier between life and death, earth and hell, flesh and spirit? It must be so!

HANNAH

Answer me? Are you here or not?

AARON

Indeed I am! Perhaps God has given me another chance to convince you?

HANNAH

What do you mean?

AARON

I am not sure. But do you feel it? The air? It is filled with such promise! You are still alive, Hannah, and I am as alive as I have been since my fall from grace. You still possess the power to live fully and experience joy-- and I am here to aid you!

HANNAH

No. I don't feel anything.

AARON

Ah. Let me think. Ah! I have it! Not all doors are closed to you, Hannah. Your other senses are still functioning. Let's start there.

HANNAH

No! Fuck my other senses. I'm a visual artist! If I can't see, my life is not worth living. How many times do I have to tell you that! I'll never get over being blind. I have no intention of adapting to my so called disability, of learning braille or getting a seeing eye dog. I don't care if my hearing will get more acute or if I can smell as well as a fox hound. I don't care about anything that won't help me create with my own two hands and not with some bullshit computer program. I'm a painter. An artist. At least I was. I'm nothing now. For the last time, go away!

AARON

Hannah, you may no longer be a visual artist, but let me show you something.

HANNAH

You can't show me anything. I'm blind!

Hannah waves her hands in front of her face to ward him off. She accidentally hits Demetri. He murmurs, and rolls over but doesn't wake up.

AARON

He cannot hear or see me. Only you.

HANNAH

I figured that out, asshole.

AARON

I will return later when you are not so angry.

HANNAH

~~Don't bother. There's only one thing I want from you. An explanation. You seem to know what happened to me. There's only one way. You were there when I was struck by lightning, weren't you.~~

Stop

SCENE 5

Rumbling of thunder. Black swirling smoke. Roaring wind, a goat braying. Prince storms out of the smoke followed by Aaron.

PRINCE

You have violated the realm of the living! How dare you go against my orders! Your quest can never succeed and yet you stupidly persist. You were already the lowest of the lowly. I am confounded with what to do with you now.

AARON

It was not my intent to violate the realm of the living. I believe it is a sign from above.

PRINCE

Don't be absurd! From this moment forward you will cease all interference in her world. Do you understand me?

AARON

Aren't you the least bit curious about what I've learned?

PRINCE

I've learned your foolishness has no bounds! There are no possibilities for us in that world. You are delusional to think you have been given a reprieve from above. It was merely a rift in the fabric of time. I tell you, there can be no good outcome from this!

AARON

Not long ago, I begged you to smite me. End my existence and you refused. And now, for the first time in memory, I want to endure, for I have found a purpose, an expectation of a better way to live! I have made a connection with a human being, and to something far greater than you in all your grandiosity cannot conceive of. For I have found a light in the darkness and a glimmer of hope for a future in which I truly matter.

PRINCE

Mere oratory. A future as what? A guardian angel? Tell me, Aaron. Have you already selected your wings and white robe?

AARON

Your scorn is mere bluster to me now.

Start

PRINCE

What have I here? A demon with aspirations! I would pity you if I had any feeling for you. Your bravado is wasted on me.

Prince sweeps his arms past Aaron like he's gunning him down with an imaginary machine gun. Lightning strikes. Rolling thunder.

PRINCE

From this day forward you are dead to me! I banish you for all eternity from my sight! My decision is final. From this moment forward you will escort the most vile of the vile to hell rather than the more poor souls of those who have died by their own hand. You shall never cross the barrier again. And never defy me again! Understood?

AARON

As soon as I say good-bye to her --

Prince roars. Thunder and lightning increases.

PRINCE

Be gone! Or I will do far more than blind her.

Aaron exits hastily. The smoke clears. Prince approaches the bed in which Hannah and Demetri sleep. He leans over Demetri.

PRINCE

Your fears are justified. You must act swiftly to regain control of her or you will lose her to another. She is still yours to command, but do not tarry. Exert your superior position before it is too late.

Prince exits. Demetri's eyes open wide. He sits up. Looks down at Hannah.

SCENE 6

Hannah and Aaron stand in front of a new, wildly imaginative abstract painting set on an easel.

AARON

Are you satisfied?

Stop

Demetri/Hannah Side

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HANNAH

I suppose I'll wind up doing all of the things I said I would never do. What about you?
What will you do without me?

AARON

Remember this day.

Start

Aaron begins to sketch. Demetri enters. Aaron steps back.

DEMETRI

Hannah! I have great news!

HANNAH

You're home early --

DEMETRI

I couldn't wait to tell you! Your new painting, I took it to the gallery this morning. It created a firestorm. I wish you could have been there.

Aaron listens intently.

HANNAH

What'd you say to them? "Ladies and gentlemen, can you believe a blind woman painted this work of art?"

DEMETRI

It's an art gallery, not a three ring circus. But of course, everyone wanted to know how you did it. And get this. A TV producer walked in and he said wants you to come on their morning show..What do you think of that?

HANNAH

Are you asking me or did you say, "Of course, she'll be thrilled!" I bet you already posted it. The trolls will have a field day with this one. I don't want to be known as the Helen Keller of painters!

DEMETRI

Why do you care ?

HANNAH

You think I should be grateful? I despise the thought of being defined as a blind painter. Why don't you get that?

DEMETRI

You can't turn down free publicity. Besides, I'll be right there with you every step of the way. Even if you're only the flavor of the month, you have to capitalize on your celebrity while you're hot.

HANNAH

Now that you've explained it, I feel so much better.

DEMETRI

I'm being honest. That's what you want, total honesty, right? As your business manager, I'm advising you to do this interview, but as your boyfriend, I want you to do what makes you happy! I'm so proud of you, Hannah. You've proven you're really tough. After the accident, I was ready to give up but not you. Not you.

HANNAH

You'll never know how close I came to -- never mind. Before I commit to the interview I want to review our finances.

DEMETRI

Why? One has nothing to do with the other.

HANNAH

You promised you run all the details past me. I have a right to know what paintings you've sold, what's in storage, what we've got in the bank, how long it will last. But you never tell me. I have a right to know!

DEMETRI

I can't exactly show you a spreadsheet.

HANNAH

All I want is an accounting, an explanation of where we're at.

DEMETRI

Anything else, madam banker?

HANNAH

Am I being unreasonable?

