

LAZARUS

WITCHES, DEMONS and a 2000 YEAR-OLD MAN...IT'S BIBLICAL

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FADE IN:

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

A full moon hangs over a tree-shrouded plantation mansion.

Light glows in a single upstairs window.

SUPER: "OUTSIDE BATON ROUGE, LA -- EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO"

A blood-curdling SCREAM -- female.

INT. MANSION - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sweat plasters hair to forehead.

CAMILLA BOUVAIS scrunches her eyelids shut.

MIDWIFE (O.S.)

You doin' fine, cher, just breathe.

Short, rapid breaths. Then--

A straining grunt. Her nose crinkles. She bites into her lower lip as she pushes.

CHARLES (O.S.)

I see her, Cam, I see our little girl!

A grandfather clock begins to CHIME.

A baby CRIES.

Camilla's head falls back in exhausted relief.

The bedside clock shows 12:00 a.m.

INT. HOSPITAL DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT

Another clock reads 12:00 a.m.

Another baby CRIES.

Another mother, NANCY GIBBS, smiles through her exhaustion.

The hands of a DOCTOR hold up a BABY GIRL.

DOCTOR (O.S.)
Congratulations, Nancy. Little
Erika here's the first I've
delivered at straight-up midnight
on Halloween. And she's perfect.

INT. MANSION - DEN - DAY

ARIEL BOUVAIS, 7 and gaunt, rests in a large chair and
watches television. Beads of sweat dot her face.

A trickle of blood runs down her upper lip from her nose.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

Nancy, smiling, stands on the front stoop and watches as--

YOUNG ERIKA, laughing and carefree, rides her bike up the
driveway.

INT. HOSPITAL - INFUSION ROOM - DAY

Amid sterile, colorless surroundings, Ariel reclines in an
uncomfortable-looking chair.

An IV runs from a bag into one of her tiny arms.

Beside her, Camilla grips Ariel's other hand.

ARIEL
I'm scared, Mommy.

Tears leak from Camilla's eyes.

CAMILLA
I know, sweetness, me too.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Erika plays with her Barbies.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Camilla and CHARLES sit, holding hands, worry etched upon their faces.

The PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGIST comes around to their side and parks himself on the edge of the desk.

PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGIST
Charles, Camilla, I'm afraid that
Ariel has relapsed. We'll need to--

Camilla wails.

INT. MANSION - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Camilla, her hair grown wild, sits at a table strewn with thick, dusty tomes. The titles, visible on a few of the spines, contain words like "GRIMOIRE" and "NECRONOMICON."

She flips through one.

Her eyes scan the pages.

She stops, looks closer at--

CAMILLA
The Scepter of Belinus, God of the
Sun and Rebirth.

Camilla's eyes scan the entry. Her lips curl into a smile. It grows into a grin. Then, it drops, replaced by serious concentration.

INT. MANSION - KITCHEN - DAY

Camilla paces with a phone to her ear.

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)
State Department of Records.

CAMILLA
Are birth records online? I can't
find--

EXT. SUBURBAN SIDEWALK - DAY

Young Erika walks home from the bus stop.
ACROSS THE STREET

From inside her Volvo, Camilla watches Erika.

INT. MANSION - CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Ancient swords and mystic emblems hang on the cinderblock walls. Candlelight dances about, casting eerie shadows.

The years of anger and worry have been rough on Camilla, but she's still beautiful in a sinister villainess kind of way.

She stands behind a stone table, looking down at--

Ariel, a little older, but bald and even more gaunt, near death -- eyes closed, her breathing shallow.

A golden scepter, capped with an ornate dragon's head rests lengthwise on Ariel's chest. The head is nearest her mouth.

Camilla bends down to kiss her daughter's forehead.

CAMILLA

Your pain is near its end,
sweetness. On your eighteenth
birthday, I'll bring you back to
me, and you'll be strong, so
strong--

Camilla's face is a mask of fierce determination as she raises a ceremonial dagger to her chest. She brings her free hand up to join the other around the handle. Staring down at her daughter, she raises the knife above her head.

The door flies open. Charles storms in.

CHARLES

My God, Camilla!

Charles rushes toward her.

Her eyes dart to Charles and back down at the closed eyes of her daughter -- a moment too long.

As the knife plunges downward --

Charles dives, tackling Camilla just in time. They tumble to the floor.

The knife clatters away.

CHARLES
You're insane!

They scramble to their feet.

Camilla stares into her husband's face. She's calm, too calm. Charles is anything but--

CHARLES
My God, Camilla, you've gone
crazy! Leukemia can't be cured
by--

Camilla grabs his head and pulls his head toward her as though for a kiss. But--

She closes her eyes and begins to mumble an incantation of unrecognizable words.

CHARLES
What are you--

Charles freezes. Eyes open. Stiff as a mannequin. His mouth stuck, forming a word that will never be uttered.

CAMILLA
Crazy? Crazy was allowing your
useless doctors to poke and poison
my daughter.

Camilla retrieves the knife and goes back to her daughter.

She kisses Ariel's lips.

CAMILLA
It is time, sweetness. I love you.

Straightening, Camilla again raises the knife.

She looks at her daughter's face one last time before--

The knife plunges downward.

The child gasps.

Ariel's body convulses. The scepter remains in place as though held on her chest by some invisible force.

Ariel's final breath, a gray vapor, travels from her mouth into the open mouth of the dragon's head.

The dragon's mouth closes.

Weeping, Camilla collapses on top of her daughter.

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

A lone candelabrum casts light upon a thug, DIEGO, rising from drawing a chalk pentagram on the floor. An ancient volume lies open at his feet.

DIEGO
(toward the shadows)
I'm done, Mr. Boria.

SUPER: "MANHATTAN - FOUR YEARS AGO"

From the shadows, a wheelchair rolls into view, carrying JACOB BORIA, a withered old man wearing pajamas topped by a smoking jacket, a la Vincent Price.

BORIA
Well done, Diego.

He smiles and shifts his attention across the room--

A WOMAN, dressed as befits a human sacrifice, struggles against Boria's THUGS.

BORIA
Bring the sacrifice.

LAZ (O.S.)
This has gone far enough.

All eyes dart toward--

LAZARUS WALKER, trench-coated as befits any mystic worthy of the name, steps from the shadows. He carries a wooden cane topped with a quarter-sized jewel encased in gold.

Behind him, a hole in the door reconstitutes itself.

MAGDALENA KARPOV, a bit younger than Laz and in a much tighter but equally dark outfit, shoots from the darkness, attacking the thugs like a dervish.

Her flying feet and fists have the thugs crumpled on the floor in a blink. What weapons they had litter the floor.

MAGDALENA
(to the woman)
Get out of here.

The former captive takes off.

Laz advances on Boria.

Diego pulls a pistol from his waistband.

From nowhere, Magdalena flings a throwing star.

It streaks across the room and--

Sinks into the back of Diego's hand.

The pistol hits the floor and so does Diego, clutching his bloody hand.

Laz scoops up the book.

The old man is apoplectic.

Laz sticks the book inside his coat, and it seems to disappear for there is no bulge where the book should be.

BORIA
Damn you, Walker!

Laz grabs a handful of Diego's shirt and yanks him up.

DIEGO

Pl-please, man, I-I he told me
what to do.

A wet spot spreads down the front of Diego's pants.

MAGDALENA

(walking up)
Just say no, kiddo.

Laz flings him away and turns back to--

Boria's eyes, unblinking, stare through Laz and Magdalena.

They spin in the direction of Boria's stare.

The mouths of the unconscious thugs are open wider than would seem possible. Slimy, fist-sized, inhuman heads pop from each mouth, trailing tentacled bodies. The CREATURES spring toward Laz and Magdalena.

MAGDALENA

Talk about indigestion.

Laz holds up his cane. The jewel begins to glow, engulfed in an electric blue light.

Bolts of mystic energy streak from Laz's cane, blasting the creatures into goo.

They keep coming.

LAZ

(blasting away)
Mags, Boria is calling them.

MAGDALENA

Got it.

Magdalena turns.

Boria thrusts a dagger into her stomach.

A look of astonishment on her face, Magdalena stumbles back into Laz.

He catches her with his free hand and eases her to the floor, while obliterating the nearest creature.

Grinning, Boria lets loose a gloating cackle.

Diego stares.

Fury floods Laz's face.

Ignoring the creatures, Laz turns on Boria and brings his hands together around the handle of his cane.

Boria's grin fades and his eyes go wide -- I just fucked myself. His mouth opens to scream.

The full force of Laz's power hits him in the face, sending him careening into the far wall, the hair and skin of his head vaporized. His wheelchair flips on its side.

Boria hits the floor - dead.

The creatures, hurtling toward Laz, combust.

Diego snaps out of his trance and runs for the door.

Ignoring him, Laz turns his attention back to Magdalena, blood spreading around her. He picks her up in his arms.

MAGDALENA

Laz--

LAZ

Shh, you're going to be okay. I can't keep losing...

He closes his eyes and lowers his head in concentration.

They seem to sink into his coat and disappear.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Amidst the chaos of admitting, NURSE HANNAH THOMPSON, holding a clipboard and pen, squats in front of a YOUNG BOY with his arm cradled in his lap.

NURSE THOMPSON
Where's your mother?

The boy doesn't answer, his attention taken by--

Laz and Magdalena materialize behind the nurse.

Blood drips from Magdalena's back.

NURSE THOMPSON
(looking at her board)
You puncture an eardrum, too?
Where's your mother?

LAZ
Hannah Thompson, we need
attention.

NURSE THOMPSON
(turning)
Yeah, so's every--
(spotting the blood)
Get a gurney out here, stat!

INT. PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Boria's head smolders. His henchmen are formless,
lifeless, blobs.

The pool of Magdalena's blood begins to ripple. A rivulet
breaks free and flows toward the pentagram.

Upon contact with the blood, a glow spreads throughout the
pentagram. Light shoots upward from each of the five
points. Without hitting anything, it refracts and dances
within the circle.

Gases swirl. They begin to take shape, solidifying into--

GORUM -- his leathery skinned body thick from the pressures
of hell. The horned demon exudes malevolence.

He looks around, bewildered.

Against the wall, Boria's smoking head appears to have been
the target of a flamethrower at close range.

GORUM
(smiling approval)
Such carnage.

He turns to Boria.

GORUM
Seems that I've missed all the
fun.

He begins to morph into the shape of a man.

The transformation complete, it is now a naked man who
strides to Boria's body.

GORUM
I suppose I'll need your clothes,
ol' boy. Wouldn't want to draw
undue attention on the street.

As Gorum reaches to loosen the singed jacket, a full-body
shudder overcomes him. A look of bewilderment and he fades
from sight.

INT. MANSION - CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Gorum materializes inside of an almost identical pentagram
as Camilla looks on.

EXT. HIGHWAY 61 - NIGHT

A lone car travels the open stretch of road.

It passes a road sign that reads: "BATON ROUGE 12 MILES."

FARTHER DOWN THE ROAD

Gorum waits in the middle of the oncoming lane, showing no
concern for the approaching headlights.

The car skids and swerves.

Gorum, grinning, watches it pass.

The car jumps the shoulder of the highway and hurtles headlong into an oak tree.

The front of the car crunches in the middle as it tries to hug the tree.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Despite the cushion of the airbags, Nancy and ERIKA'S FATHER are both bleeding and unconscious.

Held in place by her seatbelt, FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD ERIKA slumps in the backseat. She's out and bleeding from her forehead.

With the SNAPPING of metal, Erika's door flies away.

Gorum sticks his head inside.

GORUM

So cute. Such a pity that you're
not to be harmed.

He reaches in and rips the seatbelt away.

Gorum pulls Erika, a rag doll, from the car.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Gorum carries Erika a safe distance from the wreckage and lays her down in a patch of weeds.

Turning back, he stares at the car. His eyes glow red.

Inside the car --

Movement. Nancy begins to come to, shaking her head.

Gorum smiles. His eyes glow brighter.

The car explodes.

As the flames rage, Gorum looks down at--

Erika. She groans, struggling back toward consciousness.

GORUM

Reminds me of home.

(kneels beside her)

I can't resist just a taste.

He leans over and licks the blood from her face.

GORUM

I won't always be so well-behaved.

He vanishes.

Erika's eyes flutter, trying to open.

They do. Wide.

She sits up and sees--

The inferno that had been her parents' car--

She screams.

For just an instant, the flames seem to buckle as though hit with a sudden gust of wind.

EXT. VENICE BEACH - DAY

Taking advantage of the sun, men and women of all shapes and sizes roam the boardwalk.

SUPER: "OCTOBER 30, THIS YEAR"

Behind a card table, Laz sits, twisted at an angle, sneaking a nip from a flask.

On the front of the table hangs a sign that reads --
"FORTUNES TOLD - \$20."

Just as he returns the flask to his pocket--

PAMELA WINSTON, a middle-aged woman, walks past, studying him.

A few steps beyond his table, she stops and comes back.

PAMELA

Hello.

She smiles, but Laz does not.

LAZ

Have a seat, Pamela.

PAMELA

(sitting)

Why do you have cards and a
crystal ball?

LAZ

There are many routes to any given
destination. Which do you prefer?

She studies the table, while opening her pocketbook.

PAMELA

(handing him a twenty)

The crystal ball?

LAZ

And what would you like to know
about your future?

PAMELA

I know it's silly, but. . . will I
ever find love?

LAZ

Place your hands, palms up, on
each side of the crystal.

She does so.

Laz runs his hands over and around the ball, making a good
show of it.

Then he rests his hands on top of hers.

Within the ball, a cloudy mist begins to swirl.

Laz closes his eyes.

FLASHFORWARD

EXT. MCDONALD'S - DAY

Pamela, in the same clothes, exits, carrying a bag of food, and walks toward the street.

With hardly a glance in either direction, she starts across. Reaching into the bag, she pulls out a French fry. But the bag slips from her fingers and hits the pavement.

She bends to retrieve it.

All in a blink, an engine ROARS--

Pamela looks up--

An SUV's grill.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. VENICE BEACH - DAY

Laz opens his eyes.

Smiling, hopeful, Pamela looks at him.

LAZ

To have any hope of finding true love, Pamela Winston, you must refrain from visiting McDonald's today.

PAMELA

So I won't get fat?

LAZ

Something like that.

PAMELA

Thank you so much.

Laz nods as Pamela stands.

Pamela turns away, but she stops and comes back.

PAMELA

How did you know my...

But Laz's attention has already been taken by--

Magdalena, dressed for the beach, looks from Laz to Pamela and answers for him.

MAGDALENA

My dear, he is the greatest mystic of our time. Names are no problem for him. Loyalty, however...

Magdalena turns back to Laz, whose eyes have not left her.

LAZ

How did you find me?

Pamela, ignored, walks away.

MAGDALENA

I don't see your cane and what's with the full names and portentous tone?

LAZ

How did you find me?

MAGDALENA

Your powers, oh great walker of the earth, are needed.

EXT. A BOARDWALK CAFÉ - DAY

In the midst of tourists and Venice Beach's usual allotment of strange denizens, Laz and Magdalena sit at a table, sipping their coffee as they talk.

MAGDALENA

When I got out of the hospital and couldn't find you anywhere, I performed every spell I could think of or dream up to track you down. Of course, I didn't find you, you bastard, but I did find a storm brewing, some really bad mojo that seems to be focused around a young girl in southern Louisiana.

LAZ

Go pester Anne Rice.

MAGDALENA

Laz, I'm serious.

LAZ

So am I. Whatever it is, it's not
the end of the world, trust me on
that.

MAGDALENA

What are you doing here pretending
to be some dime store fortune
teller?

Laz puts his hands flat on the table and stands.

LAZ

Stay away from me.

He turns on his heel and walks away.

Magdalena watches him go and mutters to herself--

MAGDALENA

Good going, Mags.

As he retreats, Laz pulls his flask from his pocket.

INT. LAZ'S APARTMENT - DAY

The cheap studio is bare. Nothing hangs on the walls. No
carpets or rugs on the wooden floor.

A single strait-backed chair sits in the middle, a lamp in
the corner, and a bed in another. Everything is drab
except the dahlias growing in the window box.

The door opens. Laz enters.

He eases the door closed and then pounds it once with a
clenched fist.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The between-class bedlam -- students shoulder-to-shoulder push their way through the crowd, some yelling, some laughing, opening lockers, banging them shut.

ERIKA, head down, passes a GROUP OF GIRLS.

TIFFANY

You got a costume for the party tomorrow night, Sara?

SARA

Not yet. That the new girl?

A few lockers down from the girls, Erika opens hers.

TIFFANY

Yeah. I heard she's, like, a major freak.

Erika's hand stalls on a book, which she then removes. She shows no other sign of having heard the insult.

SARA

She better keep away from my man.

Sara begins brushing her long hair.

TIFFANY

No, girl, I mean "freak" like bad shit.

SARA

Tiff, it'll be some bad shit she touch Jason.

Erika closes her locker and walks away.

TIFFANY

I heard she's had, like, three or four foster families in, like, a year and they all died.

Sara's locker door slams shut, catching her hair. She shrieks.

Erika continues down the hall and doesn't seem to notice the commotion.

Further along, BRAD steps out in front of her.

BRAD
Hey, Erika, ready for the trig
test?

She stops, surprised that anyone is speaking to her.

ERIKA
Hope so.

Behind them, Tiffany and a couple others pound and pull on the locker door, trying to free Sara's hair.

BRAD
I heard that Halloween's your
birthday, right?

ERIKA
Yeah.

BRAD
That's cool. Anyway, me, Clint,
Joey, and Tara, maybe some others,
are gonna party out at the reserve
tonight. You wanna come?

ERIKA
I don't know any of them.

BRAD
They're cool. You'll like them.

She smiles.

BRAD
You'll come?

ERIKA
I don't know, Brad.

BRAD
C'mon, it'll be fun.

She looks around, unsure.

Brad bats his eyes at her and grins.

ERIKA

Okay.

BRAD

Sweet.

Brightened, Erika heads on to class.

Brad watches her for a moment before going on his way.

Sara's friends give up on the locker.

TIFFANY

I have scissors.

SARA

No!

EXT. DIVE BAR - VENICE - NIGHT

Laz walks up the sidewalk and goes inside.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

On the bed, Magdalena sits cross-legged, the back of each hand resting on a knee, her eyes closed in meditation.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

In a clearing, the usual sounds of the night. Then--

Dead leaves CRUNCH, louder and louder. A beam of light breaks through the trees.

Brad steps out, followed by Erika, CLINT, JOEY, and TARA. Everyone has a beer. Joey carries a large canvas bag.

JOEY

Yo, Erika, you never been snipe hunting before?

ERIKA
Never even heard of it.

CLINT
That's why you get the best job.

TARA
Yeah, chasing them out is a bitch.

BRAD
When we flush them out, they'll be
flying low.

TARA
I broke a nail last time, running
through the damn woods.

CLINT
They're not too fast either.

BRAD
You just hold the bag open like
this...
(taking her hands)
...and jump in front of them and
they'll fly right in.

JOEY
No sweat, right?

ERIKA
Yeah.

Behind Erika, Tara stifles a laugh as Clint mimes crying.

BRAD
(pointing)
Okay, we'll circle around and
they'll come from that direction.

The group starts away.

ERIKA
I have to catch them by myself?

The others continue on, but Brad stops.

BRAD

Yeah, it'll take all of us to
flush them out.

With a few glances back, they reenter the woods, leaving
Erika holding the bag.

She looks around at the tall, imposing trees.

A SCREAM pierces the night.

Erika, startled, peers into the trees -- nothing.

A cacophony of leaves CRUNCHING, teens SCREAMING, bodies
being POUNDED.

ERIKA

This a joke?

CLINT (O.S.)

Oh, God!

Tara SCREAMS.

ERIKA

Guys? This isn't funny.

Something RATTLES the top of the trees.

More SCREAMS, continuous.

An object bursts from the treetops.

It lands at Erika's feet.

Scared. She looks down--

A bloody arm. The torn sleeve reveals it to be Brad's.

Her scream drowns out the ongoing screams from the woods.

Everything goes silent.

A single set of footsteps CRUNCH the leaves -- nearer and
nearer.

A shadowy figure with blazing eyes steps from the trees.

It's Gorum.

Fear paralyzes Erika.

The trees sway and shake as though buffeted by strong winds, but there is no other evidence of even a breeze.

Gorum carries - something, something round. He hides it behind his back.

GORUM

Oh, yes, my little cherub, what a symphony that was.

She can't run.

As he nears, she drops to her knees and holds up her hands, in a feeble attempt to ward him off.

He grins at her fear.

Gorum starts to turn away, but stops.

GORUM

Tsk, tsk, it nearly slipped my mind. A token by which to remember me.

He brings his hand from behind his back and holds--

Brad's head.

Erika screams.

Smirking, Gorum drops the head. It THUDS and rolls against Erika's knees.

GORUM

Until we meet again, my dear.

The GROAN of straining wood. A thunderous CRACK.

Gorum looks up--

A tree topples toward him.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

A squeal of laughter from a corner booth where a middle-aged couple snuggle. One man shoots pool alone. A few others are scattered about.

At the bar, Laz downs a shot of whiskey.

The BARTENDER wipes glasses. The television, high in the corner, blares the news.

Laz motions for another shot.

BARTENDER

(pouring)

One of these days your liver's
gonna hire one of them personal
injury lawyers.

Laz gives him a half-hearted smile.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

(on TV)

We have breaking news of a grisly
beginning to Halloween, a multiple
slaying in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The mention of Louisiana catches Laz's attention.

He looks up.

EXT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

Magdalena leans against the wall, waiting.

Laz exits.

MAGDALENA

See the news?

LAZ

No.

He keeps walking. She catches up to him.

MAGDALENA

We on it?

He glances at her and keeps walking.

LAZ

What did I tell you?

MAGDALENA

Come on, it'll be like old times.
We'll kick some evil ass and then
head down to New Orleans and close
down Bourbon Street.

LAZ

Bourbon Street doesn't close.

MAGDALENA

Exactly.

This time, no glance, he just keeps walking.

INT. LAZ'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door opens as Laz enters followed by Magdalena.

MAGDALENA

What are you afraid of? I'm going
whether you come with me or not.

Laz goes to the closet and pulls out his cane

MAGDALENA

That's what I'm talking about.

EXT. LINCOLN BOULEVARD - DAY

Magdalena weaves her convertible in and out of traffic as
she and Laz zip along. A light stops them.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - DAY

Magdalena taps the steering wheel, showing her impatience.

MAGDALENA

Why do we have to fly? We could already be there with that hoodoo that you do.

LAZ

You're the one who wants to go.

MAGDALENA

You need to do something besides pickling your liver. Why do you drink anyway? You never get drunk.

LAZ

Bourbon keeps me grounded.

The light turns green. Magdalena steps on the gas.

MAGDALENA

Yeah, you're so flighty.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - DAY

Laz and Magdalena drive past.

Pamela exits, wearing the same outfit as before and carrying a bag of food. She walks toward the street.