

ACT ONE

INT. HALF MOON DINER - DAY

SABIMA, a dark-skinned woman in layers of long, thin robes stares down at the floor with a grimace. CRYSTAL, a younger woman with colorful hair in a grungy beanie, cardigan, bag, and gloves stands behind her and crosses her arms.

A pentagram of blood and gore on the linoleum of the kitchen diner around them. Fragments of bones, torn flesh and body parts, and a man's mangled head create points of the pentagram, with the bloody torso of the corpse in the center.

Crystal glares to a frightened WAITRESS who stands as far as possible from the scene.

CRYSTAL

You didn't tell us this was a
Satanic killing.

WAITRESS

I-I... I'm sorry, I've seen you two
here before... and...

CRYSTAL

I should just hex this place and
get out of here. You can't put an
empath like Sabima around demonic
spirits!

WAITRESS

No, please!

Sabima lifts a hand. Both the women focus on her.

SABIMA

She grabbed us in a panic. She's
fortunate we were in the area
instead of the Council.

An ethereal aura surrounds Sabima, shimmering light in pale blue colors. She waves a hand and casts the light around her in a wave that washes all along the kitchen.

The wave of light spreads through the air with no interruption, but stops when it reaches the pentagram. Within, a shadow wavers in and out of vision.

Sabima's brow furrows and her lips tighten. Her aura projects again and the same thing happens, but this time the shadow takes on distinct characteristics: red skin, hoofed feet, and thick horns. A DEMON's specter with a bored expression sits atop the limbless torso.

Then, the demon's large eyes catch Sabima as if seeing her for the first time, and a wicked, sharp-toothed grin spreads over its face.

SABIMA (CONT'D)

Crystal.

Sabima's eyes go wide and lock on the demon without blinking. Crystal steps closer and slips her glove off of her left hand, revealing a circular Brand with an intricate design made of smooth scar tissue-like skin. It glows and hums slightly as it matches the color and intensity of Sabima's aura.

Both the aura and the Brand glow brighter as the aura sweeps across the kitchen again. This time when it touches the pentagram, the demon's image solidifies.

WAITRESS

Is... that...

The Waitress SCREAMS, turning and scrambling as she bolts out of the diner.

CRYSTAL

What the hell's a demon doing *here*?

The demon stands upright and crosses his arms. He and Sabima do not break eye intense eye contact.

Crystal grunts in frustration and exertion. Her Brand flares with red light.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Stay back, demon, before I send you back to hell in pieces.

The demon looks from Sabima to Crystal. His grin becomes coy.

THE DEMON

Oh, you mortals and your temporary solutions to lasting problems. Like a single witch *bitch* can break a blood-contract with one of my kind.

SABIMA

Answer her question. Why are you here?

The demon gestures to the body. Crystal scoffs. Sabima holds up a hand to her, again, her intense stare on the demon deepening.

THE DEMON

Local business is, let's say...
cutthroat.

SABIMA

Enough to catch the attention of
Satan himself?

THE DEMON

Someone a little more sultry, but
don't tell Him I said so.

The demon winks.

CRYSTAL

Too bad there's no brains in that
pretty head, then. You're stuck,
aren't you?

The demon's face morphs into a scowl.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

That's what it is! You made a bad
deal and your contract made a run
for it!

THE DEMON

So witches get their powers from my
kind and think they're so clever,
eh?

Crystal's magic burns hot and bright along the veins in her arm. She steps forward, but Sabima catches her.

CRYSTAL

(to the demon)
Take that back!

The demon smirks.

THE DEMON

Listen to your betters.

SABIMA

No, you listen.

A pause as all eyes settle on a still-unblinking Sabima.

SABIMA (CONT'D)

Demons make deals, and so that's what I propose. Tell us who contracted you for murder, and I'll make sure the Council sends you back to your master without torturing you first.

THE DEMON

Because you two are the picture of charity. What do you and Grunge Band Hermione get out of this?

Crystal seethes.

SABIMA

We want to solve the case without the Council. It's both that simple and that complex.

Silence stretches between them. Sabima swallows over a lump in her throat.

The demon eventually shrugs.

THE DEMON

What the home. It's not every day a witch-powered empath comes along to solve your problems.

Crystal steps in front of Sabima and grips her shoulders. Sabima peers behind Crystal, maintaining eye-contact with the demon as Crystal's face hovers inches from hers.

CRYSTAL

Sabima, are you sure about this? A demon is rare because they don't leave loose ends. They're dangerous. Especially for people who are more... sensitive than others.

SABIMA

I know what I'm doing.

Crystal sighs, but gives in. She steps to the side and clutches her left arm.

CRYSTAL

(quietly)
That makes one of us...

THE DEMON

Is it a deal then?

SABIMA

We can hardly shake on it, but...

THE DEMON

Say no more. Demons are only as good as their word, anyway.

Crystal snorts.

SABIMA

Where can I find your partner?

THE DEMON

If I knew that, this wouldn't be necessary would it? But you're better equipped for a bounty hunt than me. How good is your empathetic link?

SABIMA

Very.

THE DEMON

Good for you. You'll find some of his junk in the office.

The demon swishes a lazy claw toward a door in the back.

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

If you're trying to make a name as some kinda vigilante duo, then you should at least be able to trace a spiritual connection.

CRYSTAL

You could be more helpful, you know.

THE DEMON

It wouldn't be a good deal for me if I had to do all the work, now would it?

SABIMA

That's enough.

Sabima clenches a fist and draws the light and color of her aura out of the room and back to her body. The demon fades out of sight, its cocky grin flashing as it does.

Crystal puts a worried hand to Sabima's shoulder. Sabima blinks rapidly, running a hand through her hair and breathing heavily.

She meets Crystal's gaze just as the diner door FLIES OPEN and the waitress with a group of men and women in elaborate purple getup storm in.

END OF ACT ONE?

ACT TWO

EXT. HALF MOON DINER - DAY

Sabima and Crystal stumble out of the diner with the men in purple crowding the door and shoving them out.

CRYSTAL
Okay! We're going!

They gather themselves and adjust their ruffled appearances. Sabima glares at the group in the doorway, but slowly turns her head as a TOWERING MAN approaches along the sidewalk.

Sabima grimaces.

SABIMA
Councilman Vespir.

RIREN VESPIR, a tall and muscles man with dark eyes and a perfectly tailored uniform heavy with medals, marches to a stop at the scene.

RIREN
Ah, if it isn't the Council's cast-offs. I believe we can handle this situation from here.

SABIMA
My partner and I were here first.
We-

Riren lifts a hand with authority.

RIREN
Nonsense. We haven't had a Satanic killing in Boston in years. The Council *is* the authority on matters of religion and magic in this city.

CRYSTAL
But we-

RIREN
Are out of your depth.

Riren sneers. Sabima stands, unmoved as a pillar.

RIREN (CONT'D)
Just get out of here while you still have your dignity. Or, what's left of it.

Riren brushes past Sabima and Crystal hurries out of his way as he approaches the diner and the members of the Council waiting for him. As he steps inside, the door SLAMS behind him.

Crystal sighs and deflates.

CRYSTAL
Well, so much for our big break.

SABIMA
Not necessarily.

Sabima holds out her arm. A bulky watch dangles from her wrist. Crystal's eyes go wide as she examines it.

CRYSTAL
Woah... What's that about?

Sabima smiles, proudly.

SABIMA
This will bring us to the real
culprit.

CRYSTAL
Where'd you get it?

FLASHBACK - INT. HALF MOON DINER

As the Council storms in and the demon fades away, Crystal spins to face them and covers her Brand.

CRYSTAL
What the - hey! You brought the
Council?

Sabima backs up with her robes clutched tight, draped over her head and clasped with her fist at her chest. She bumps the back door that the demon motioned to with her elbow and it opens.

Councilmen GRUMBLE and STRUGGLE to herd Crystal out of the kitchen.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)
Let go of me! I can walk, you know.

Sabima's hand strikes out behind her, grasping wildly with her fingers and with a burst of her aura from her hand.

A ripple of cool-colored energy drifts across a nearby desk surface and skitters over miscellaneous items.

It coils around the watch. Sabima's hand clamps down on it and slips the watch over her wrist just as a pair of purple, gloved hands snatch her other arm and yank her away.

BACK TO SCENE - EXT. HALF MOON DINER

Crystal's face drops, eyes still wide but this time with shock and fear.

CRYSTAL

Oh, no. You're not really going to go along with what that demon said are you?

SABIMA

What choice do we have?

Crystal gawks. Her body moves animatedly.

CRYSTAL

Uh, literally anything else! You out of everyone should know better than to trust in a spirit of mischief and evil!

Sabima's expression hardens, though her eyes betray some sadness. Crystal holds herself.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

I'm just saying... even just a verbal agreement with a demon can get you hurt.

SABIMA

I know.

CRYSTAL

Then let's just go home, okay?

Crystal touches Sabima's upper arm and squeezes reassuringly.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

This is Boston. It's full of other dangerous mysteries and evil plots for us to foil. Right?

Sabima sighs and gives Crystal a weak smile. She touches the watch on her wrist.

SABIMA

Thank you, Crystal. I think I need to pray for strength and guidance about this.

Crystal lets go and smirks.

CRYSTAL

Yeah, yeah, you and your pantheons.

SABIMA

Thanks for understanding.

CRYSTAL

I'll see you back at home?

Sabima nods. Crystal adjusts her bag over her shoulder and pulls Sabima into a hug that she graciously returns.

Crystal waves quickly with one hand and walks past Sabima, off in the opposite way Sabima stares.

Sabima takes a breath, then begins to walk forward.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - DAY

Sabima walks along sidewalks, past colonial style architecture and newer, modern buildings intermingled in the skyline and between the historic landmarks.

She weaves slowly through modern art installations along the streets, statues and colorful murals great and small. Her mind is clearly far away, her head bent low as she walks among crowded throngs of people. But a subtle sheen of color and light around her seems to turn every eye as it grazes her.

Sabima makes her way through graffiti-stained alleys with all manner of religious iconography on the corners and painted on the walls, or peering out of windows several stories up.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - DISTRICT OF TEMPLES - EVENING

As Sabima approaches the District of Temples, the sky is full of beautiful ochre colors. The District sprawls all around Sabima. Cathedrals and temples of all manner, shape, and size take up entire street corners and extend toward the coastline.

Sabima comes to a slow stop at the bottom of a set of elegant stone stairs. She looks up at a traditional Catholic church with tall towers and stained glass depicting Catholic symbols and saints. The lights from within are warm and welcoming.

But the top of the stairs are tightly packed with practitioners, the doors to the foyer wide open with more bodies.

The distinct purple uniforms of the Council cluster in dense groups among the regular worshippers. LAUGHTER and OVERLAPPING CHATTER drowns out SOFT ORGAN MUSIC from inside.

Sabima grimaces and continues her walk.

She passes more churches until she reaches a colorful Hindu temple overlooking the water. The streetlights around slowly start to power on.

INT. HINDU TEMPLE - EVENING

Sabima enters with reverence. The halls are dimly lit with incensed smoke trailing through the air. The distant sounds of SHUFFLING from caretakers and the few worshippers present seems loud in the otherwise quiet halls.

Sabima brings her linens from her head to rest around her shoulders and dangle around her legs and feet. Her gaze meanders the icons on the wall with a warm, familiar smile.

She approaches an altar and rests on a plump pillow. She fingers the watch around her wrist as she gazes upon the altar.

SABIMA

Lord Vishnu... I ask for your strength.

Sabima leans her head back and closes her eyes. The world drifts away.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CRYSTAL AND SABIMA'S LOFT - NIGHT

Crystal and Sabima's loft is a two story a-frame apartment. Each part of it is small and quaint, but comfortable and full with personal touches, witchcraft memorabilia, and religious items.

The thin and slightly crooked front door BURSTS violently open with a SLAM. The sound startles a BLACK CAT that had been asleep on the cushions of a sunken-in couch near the door. Sabima stands in the doorway.

The cat, RASPUTIN, vaults off the couch with his hackles straight up. He sprints to the kitchenette and ducks behind Crystal's legs.

Crystal stoops down to pet Rasputin on the head.

CRYSTAL
Oh, Rasputin it's just auntie
Sabima.

Sabima drops into a creaky wooden chair at the round dining room table. She hangs her head and slumps onto the tabletop.

Crystal places a plate of saucy spaghetti in front of her.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)
I made dinner. You look like you
need it.

Sabima extends her arm with the watch, decidedly ignoring the meal.

SABIMA
What I need more time. Time the
Council won't give us.

CRYSTAL
You're still thinking about them?

SABIMA
I agreed to bring free the demon
from his deal so we could have the
case.

CRYSTAL
You didn't shake, sign, or seal any
of it.

Crystal scoops up Rasputin and begins to walk up the narrow set of stairs that leads to the shared upstairs space. The lights of the city twinkle against skylights positioned at an angle over it.

SABIMA
Not officially...

Sabima springs from her chair.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
But the energy signature on this
clue is fading! If we don't--

CRYSTAL
We?

Crystal drops onto a bed on one end of the open bedroom space. The old bed frame CREAKS and her threadbare sheets and blankets bunch up around her.

SABIMA

Crystal, this isn't just about me.
How are we going to make a name for
ourselves outside of the Council if
we don't pick up any work?

Rasputin climbs off of Crystal's lap and curls up at the foot
of her bed.

SABIMA (CONT'D)

When we had this idea of becoming
magic problem solvers, we wanted to
prove that our gifts and talents
are more than what the Council
wants them to be. With my insight
and connection to spirits, and your
inborn power and extensive
knowledge, we're unstoppable.

Crystal narrows her eyes.

CRYSTAL

We also wanted to make sure that we
didn't give the wrong impression on
people. Like entrusting our powers
to the forces of evil.

Sabima deflates. She drops onto her own bed, a great pile of
plush pillows and gossamer sheets. She sighs.

SABIMA

You're right.

Silence spears the space between them. Crystal lets out a
slow breath.

CRYSTAL

And... I promised that I would
trust you to find the right
targets. If you really want to
follow the lead given to us by a
literal demon, then...

Sabima flashes a soft smile.

SABIMA

You'll help?

CRYSTAL

You'd probably wind up dead or
stuck in purgatory otherwise.
Besides, I think I know what you
have in mind. And I know how to
make it safe.

Sparks of fire ignite wicks of five candles at the points of a star stained into the wood floor. A crystal ball glistens in the center. Crystal slips her gloves off and places Sabima's watch beside the ball.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Get ready.

Sabima subtly kicks the corner of an old tome sticking out from under her pillows back underneath. She hurries to the center of the pentagram, this one inverted from the one in the diner.

Sabima sits cross-legged on the floor as Crystal pours a stream of salt around them, a smoldering stick of sage and incense in her other hand. As she finishes the salt ring she leaves the sage on a shell outside the ring.

Crystal sits on the other side of Sabima. Her Brand starts to glow faintly. She eyes Sabima seriously.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Once I start, do not break the circle.

SABIMA

I know.

CRYSTAL

And don't let go of my hand. I need to keep contact so we can bring you back.

SABIMA

I know.

CRYSTAL

Are you ready?

Sabima swallows, then nods. Her aura lights along her skin in a clear, white color.

Crystal breathes out and closes her eyes.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Forces of air, earth, fire, water,
and soul, lend me your strength.

Crystal holds out her hands. Sabima takes them. As they touch, Crystal's brand burns hot with the color of fire. The colors mingle with Sabima's aura in tandem as they glow within the crystal ball between them.

Their magic comes in waves as Crystal WHISPERS under her breath.

Sabima stares into the crystal ball, and her breath catches. A vision appears within. Then her aura flares and fills her eyes.

SABIMA'S VISION

The watch's face glows brightly, reflecting the colors of Sabima's aura and Crystal's magic. The colors change to deep red, and fade.

The watch clings to the wrist of a MAN, his hand clutched in the talon-like claws of the demon from the diner.

The scene swirls as the claw raises into the air, brandished over the prone body of the dead man in the diner. Bright red blood fills the scene in bright and terrible flashes, becoming shadows on the face of the watch's owner. His face pales and trembles.

The demon whirls to face the man, but its partner has already faded to shadow. Instead, the demon seems to look through the vision and directly into Sabima's eyes. The scene around it wavers and threatens to fall apart.

BACK TO SCENE

Crystal flinches as the magic in her Brand glows bright, fades, then brightens again. Crystal and Sabima squeeze each other's hands.

The salt around them glows. The sage's smoke diminishes to a thin line.

Sabima's jaw slacks as she GASPS deeply. She shuts her eyes and breathes evenly.

SABIMA'S VISION

The watch is gone, but the empty space on the owner's wrist is glaring as he holds his head in his hands. Blood shifts on his skin like a shadow.

BACK TO SCENE

Sabima's aura adopts more colors, each spinning along her form like a liquid rainbow. She takes a powerful breath.

SABIMA'S VISION

Sabima hovers within the space, its details hazy. As she pulls back, she passes through a wall and faces the numbers "333."

BACK TO SCENE

Sabima's eyes fly open and she breathes raggedly. Crystal's magic pulls back. Her hair is disheveled.

CRYSTAL
Did you get it?

SABIMA
I...

CRYSTAL
You better have something.

She lets go of Sabima's hands and blows out each candle one by one, bowing her head and WHISPERING thanks as she does. She covers the crystal ball with a white cloth from a pocket. Then she begins to sweep the salt into a pile with her hands.

Sabima stands and stretches.

SABIMA
I saw a man. He was... I think he cooked at the Diner.

CRYSTAL
Well, that's obvious.

SABIMA
What do you mean?

CRYSTAL
The demon said that business was cutthroat. Obviously, someone trying to move up.

Sabima snatches up the watch again.

SABIMA
We need to go back there.

CRYSTAL
Can't it wait until the morning?

Crystal rolls her shoulders, stiff.

SABIMA

The connection might be gone by
then.

Crystal dusts off her hands as she gathers all the salt in a
pile.

CRYSTAL

Well, I *do* want credit for my
help... and to see the look on
Councilman Vespier's face when we
dupe him!

Sabima grins.

SABIMA

I hoped you'd say that.

Rasputin takes a spot on Crystal's shoulder and Sabima helps
her to her feet.

They head out through the front door together.

END OF ACT TWO?

ACT THREE

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - NIGHT

Crystal takes Sabima's hand, when her Brand begins to glow bright. Sabima gradually blends into the night air.

CRYSTAL

Alright, as soon as I let go, you only have a few minutes to get in before you're visible again.

A beat of silence.

SABIMA

I'm nodding.

Crystal smirks and releases her hands.

CRYSTAL

See you on the other side.
Literally.

Crystal's Brand returns to normal and she slips her gloves on.

INT. HALF MOON HOTEL - NIGHT

The front lobby of a mid-grade hotel decorated in half moon symbols is dimly lit in the night. The front door swings cautiously open, then closes.

Shadows shift as an clear figure moves through them.

Hotel workers CHATTER as they approach, looking at the door. The invisible Sabima scrambles forward and slips around a corner, coming into vision again with a quick flash of soft light.

She presses her back against the nearest wall and waits for the sounds of FOOTSTEPS fades away.

Sabima clutches the watch to her chest and rubs her thumb over its face. Her aura flickers along her arm and around the watch. She walks quietly forward, her aura ebbing and thrumming as she does.

As Sabima nears the stairwell, the colors on her aura flutter excitedly. She climbs the stairs.

Sabima finds herself on the third floor, and the colors of her aura around the watch get fainter and fainter.

SABIMA
(whispering)
No, no, no...

She holds the watch tight and hurries forward.

Then the light disappears. Her aura doesn't connect with the watch anymore.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
God, Allah, and Zeus...

She sighs deeply and looks around the hall that stretches before her. Then her gaze falls on three cast iron numbers on a door. 330.

Sabima walks forward, slow at first, until she sees that the next door is 331. She speeds up, past 332 and stopping in front of a door with the number 333.

Sabima sags with relief. She lifts her hand to knock, and then pauses. A "Do Not Disturb" sign hangs from the doorknob.

Sabima's aura comes to life again. Soothing light spills from her and seeps through a crack under the door. After a moment, a SOFT GASP comes from the other side.

Sabima jumps a bit, as though startled. She shakes her head.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
It's okay, you're safe.

There is no response. The light from Sabima's aura adjusts its color from a soft teal to deep purple.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
You... Worked at the diner across
the street... Right?

The purple reaches Sabima and the color surrounds her. Tears fill in her eyes and her shoulders sag forward as though bearing a great weight.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
You don't have to hold all that
pain by yourself. I'm here.

She sniffles and wipes at tears.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
I... I see. You know that there's
only one way to make this right.
(MORE)

SABIMA (CONT'D)

And there's someone waiting for you to do it. If you come with me... We can put this behind us all.

Silence meets her, but the aura link doesn't fade. After a moment, the door opens slowly.

The man Sabima saw in her vision stands there. He wears a chef's uniform from the Diner. He gives her a weak smile. Sabima touches his hand and they look into each other's teary eyes.

INT. HALF MOON DINER - NIGHT

Heavy boots STOMP quickly across the floor. Two men in purple Council uniforms scramble across the dining area of the diner, their broad shoulders bumping against each other and colliding to knock each other over. Dishes CLANG against each other.

Rasputin darts and weaves between their ankles and leaps from tabletop to tabletop, a silk ribbon tied to his puffy tail sporting a JINGLING bell that scares him every time it rings. He skids on his feet and HISSES at the men. His tail twitches, JINGLES, and he jumps, springing under a corner booth.

Sabima and the sous chef look through the windows on the outside, and as soon as the Council investigators dive to the corner booth with their backs to the front door, Sabima leads the man inside.

One of the men loses his footing and slams against the ground just as Sabima brings the sous chef out of sight and into the kitchen...

... Where the sous chef sees the carnage still there. A few protective wards left by the Council glitter on the outside edges of the blood-spattered scene, but otherwise it is exactly as Sabima and Crystal left it.

And the demon inside becomes totally visible. When the sous chef sees it there, his face goes stark.

SOUS CHEF

I... I'm so sorry. You...

Suddenly, red light bursts from the sous chef's skin and in the pentagram around the demon. It all condenses into a beam that shoots from the demon to the sous chef, striking him in the chest.

Sabima pulls her hand out of the sous chef's, her aura flashing bright with pain as though she had been holding something hot.

The sous chef falls to his knees. His eyes stare ahead, but they're empty and unseeing. He collapses on the floor.

The demon stands, frozen, with claws spread.

THE DEMON

No... no, no...

Bright blue light traces intricate symbols under the hooped feet and surges around the demon. Crystal steps up, her Brand glowing the same color and her eyes intent on the demon.

CRYSTAL

Don't try anything, demon.

The Council investigators charge into the kitchen, Rasputin sprinting ahead of them and to Crystal's side. The bell is gone.

COUNCIL INVESTIGATOR 1

What's the meaning of this?

Sabima gawks at the body of the sous chef and at the demon, before finally looking to the investigators.

SABIMA

I...

RIREN

How has the Council produced two men so useless that when I step away for five minutes, our case goes to chaos?

The room holds perfectly still as Councilman Vespis saunters into the kitchen with a grimace on his face. He glares hard at Sabima and Crystal.

RIREN (CONT'D)

You're just lucky that the hammer of justice is swift, men. And it's time that it fell here.

Sabima stares in shock, and Crystal scowls. The demon's eyes close slowly.

END OF SHOW

ACT ONE

INT. HALF-MOON DINER - NIGHT

RIREN and his PAIR OF COUNCIL INVESTIGATORS tower over SABIMA and the corpse of the SOUS CHEF in a heap on the floor.

Sabima's hands tremble as her terrified stare passes between Riren and the DEMON awash in glowing blue runes, a magic spell maintained by CRYSTAL in the back of the room. RASPUTIN'S head pops out of her bag with twitching ears.

RIREN

Now, this is a surprise. I shouldn't be surprised that you two failures wandered into my hands.

CRYSTAL

Wait, what?

Riren glares hard at Crystal.

RIREN

(to the Investigators)
Bind her.

Crystal jerks backward. Rasputin leaps from her side. A bright rune opens up at her feet and in a flash it traps her skin with light. She freezes in place, Rasputin hovers midair.

Sabima GASPS in agonized terror.

SABIMA

Crystal, no!

Sabima twists and lurches forward to drag herself along the ground, but Riren takes two steps closer and snatches her arm. The watch around her wrists flails uselessly.

Riren hoists her up, her arm extended over her head as she struggles to keep herself on her feet. Riren looms inches from her face.

RIREN

I was surprised when you forsook the Council for some pathetic spirit, but this?

Riren gestures to the Demon, still motionless.

RIREN (CONT'D)

I don't understand it. Summoning a demon to kill innocents? And then providing sacrifices?

Riren throws Sabima down and she falls across the dead body.

THE DEMON

Stop!

The Demon leaps forward and drops down near the head of the dead man. His hooves fit awkwardly under himself, and his claws seem far too menacing when he tries to touch the man. His large, black eyes are filled with deep pain.

Riren draws a blade at his side the moment the Demon moves.

Sabima leaps to her feet and spreads her arms.

SABIMA

Don't hurt it!

The Investigators beside Riren clasp Sabima in a binding spell as they did to Crystal, rendering her motionless.

Riren extends the tip of his blade and points it at the base of Sabima's lifted chin.

RIREN

You want to protect this pet, too?
I'm going to make sure it suffers
as it confesses to your crimes.

THE DEMON

You've got it wrong.

Every eye turns to the Demon's soft, broken voice. Even Sabima, Crystal, and Rasputin's eyes twist in their sockets to try and look.

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

This empath was helping me, yes,
but not in the way you think.

RIREN

I am no fool, demon. I know your
kind's native tongue is lies.

The Demon finally rests a claw on the shoulder of the dead man before it.

Riren stands tense, and ready for a fight, but the Demon remains slumped and small.

THE DEMON

You want your criminal? He's right
here. And I am, too.

RIREN

I'll have no more of this. Council,
take this filth away.

The Demon suddenly springs to its hoofs and spins to face the Councilman.

THE DEMON

I did it! I killed both these men.
The witch and the empath were
looking for answers, not blame. I
will go with you, but you have to
let them go!

Then the Demon CRIES OUT in ANGUISH and SEARING PAIN. Its claws cradle its face and its legs give out, dropping it to the floor. Not soft and scared, this time, but heavily with no regard to grace or composure.

Riren and the Council Investigators stare in horror and awe as the Demon's head begins to change, the horns atop its crown that once were long and elegantly curved twist upward and turn in, pulling closer to its skull with the sickening CRUNCHING of bone.

Sweat and blood runs down the Demon's face, and its breaths come in ragged gasps.

Still frozen in place, Sabima's eyes go wide and her skin pales.

RIREN

By all that is pure... This demon
speaks the truth.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

INT. HALF-MOON DINER - NIGHT

Sabima and Crystal GASP as the Investigators' magic hold on them releases with a puff of glittery smoke. Rasputin lands softly on the ground and sits with his tail curled around his paws.

Riren lowers his blade, but does not put it away, eyes still trained on the PANTING Demon.

RIREN

I can't believe this is happening.
If I weren't seeing it with my own
eyes, I'd have any report of this
thrown out on heresy.

THE DEMON
What... the fuck...

SABIMA
You did it.

Riren and the Demon snap their attention to Sabima, who gawks with wide, shining eyes.

THE DEMON
Uh... Did what?

Sabima takes careful, slow steps toward the Demon.

SABIMA
You shifted the balance in your heart. Your soul is changing.

The Demon blinks up at Sabima. Riren scowls.

RIREN
And how do you know that, empath?

Crystal sweeps up to Sabima's side and loops her hands around her arm, clinging to her for strength and security.

SABIMA
The archives of the Council once contained a book that described this very situation.

Riren scoffs.

SABIMA (CONT'D)
It was an old book, Councilman. Written in a language so old that even the Council couldn't translate it.

RIREN
Don't presume to lecture me, girl. Whatever you believe you know, it changes nothing.

Riren stabs his sword toward the Demon, but Sabima does not flinch.

RIREN (CONT'D)
This demon has confessed to the heinous crime of murder. It is now under the jurisdiction of the Council and subject to the law.

The Council Investigators bring a glowing rune under the Demon, a similar binding spell that had previously held it in place.

But the magic falters, disappearing into the air in ripples of sparkles.

Riren's face drops. Then it warps with anger. He whirls on his men.

RIREN (CONT'D)

Are you so inept that you cannot even bind a demon?

SABIMA

Don't blame them.

Crystal tugs on Sabima's arm.

CRYSTAL

(through grit teeth)
What are you doing?

Riren eyes Sabima from under his brow. Sabima takes a deep breath.

SABIMA

Councilman, how long will you pretend to be oblivious? You gazed upon the same book as I. You know that even though you couldn't read the language, it filled you with an understanding of its subject matter.

For a moment, the tension between Sabima and Riren roils in the air.

Crystal glares hard at the demon, her left glove glowing slightly as her Brand flares bright.

CRYSTAL

Strange... Mortal magic isn't powerful enough to affect demons. Their spirits are on a different level. The magic that a witch can use on a demon is so specific that it doesn't work on anyone... or anything else.

THE DEMON

Hey, keep your magics off me. I'm still here. I haven't run off yet.

(MORE)

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

Can't you just haul me off to
whatever uptight, whips- and chain-
less Demon jail you Council creeps
have in store?

Sabima smirks.

SABIMA

Why don't you try to run back to
Hell?

The Council Investigators GASP and surge forward, but Riren lifts a hand and they halt in their tracks. His brow furrows as he fixes the demon in an intense stare.

The demon laughs, dryly.

THE DEMON

What, you're serious? You know
they're not gonna let me leave
again until all you mortals are
dead, right?

Sabima motions for the demon to go ahead.

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

Well... if you insist.

The demon stands up, eyes lingering on the body on the floor before turning away.

The demon spreads its claws before it, facing the pentagram of blood and bone. Red lights and an OMINOUS GROAN fill the room, coming from the border of the pentagram as the center smokes and bubbles, opening up into a maw of wilting, melted wax.

Crystal stands in front of Sabima, bracing against the waves of sulfurous heat and evil SCREAMS that billow from the portal. Her Brand glows white as the energies are repelled by a sheen of white.

Riren stands staunch as the Investigators cower at his side.

No one moves a muscle, aside from the demon who glances between them all.

It gives a shrug and steps forward. Again and again. Yet, it doesn't get any closer.

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

What even... What's the meaning of
this?

The portal snaps shut as the demon closes its claws into fists. It GRUNTS.

SABIMA

I thought demons were supposed to be clever. But you aren't truly a demon, now, are you?

END OF ACT THREE
ACT THREE

INT. CRYSTAL AND SABIMA'S LOFT - NIGHT

Sabima opens a heavy tome on her lap, sitting crossed-legged on the floor, and glances up.

Across from Sabima, Riren sits at the dining table that is almost comically too small for him. Crystal scowls at him over the lip of a steaming, clay mug in her hands.

The front door is open. The demon leans against the doorframe, still on the outside. It looks decidedly bored, yet still unhappy.

THE DEMON

Have I told you lately that mortals are ridiculous?

RIREN

But not stupid.

CRYSTAL

You're not invited in this place, demon. Stay in your lane.

The demon rolls its black eyes.

Sabima clears her throat.

SABIMA

For this to work, demon, you need to give me your name.

The demon replies with a GUTTURAL, INHUMAN GROWL.

SABIMA (CONT'D)

In english.

THE DEMON

How about latin?

Sabima pulls her lips in a thin line.

THE DEMON (CONT'D)

Ugh. Fine. Damon.

Crystal snorts.

CRYSTAL

Damon? As in you're a demon...
named Damon?

The demon's cheeks somehow deepen in their red shade.

DAMON

Look, that's just what *he* called
me! I didn't even realize until
later he was making a joke!

Riren stifles a laugh with a cough.

SABIMA

It's understandable. You trusted
him.

Damon's gaze drops to the ground.

DAMON

Yeah, and look where it got me...

SABIMA

Are you ready?

DAMON

I don't have much of a choice.

RIREN

Of course you do. I could kill you
where you stand.

DAMON

So die now or die later. I'll take
my chances. Bind me up. I like it
tight.

CRYSTAL

Gross.

Sabima sighs, then closes her eyes. Sabima's aura glows in a
series of swirling colors that spread from her in tendrils
that fade into the air.

SABIMA

I, mortal Sabima of the school of
the spirit and emotions, now call
upon the demon Damon to relinquish
the control of its essence to me.

DAMON

Yeah, yeah.

SABIMA

With these Words of Binding, this wandering spirit comes unto my being and my control. Damon is hereby bound and supplicated to my will until such a time as I release them with the intention of transformation both within and without my charge.

Damon is quiet.

CRYSTAL

(hissing)

Say it!

Damon sighs.

DAMON

I, *Damon*, submit -- Whoah!

The colors of Sabima's aura appear around Damon and consumes them. A link of pure light and somehow the embodiment of security forms between them, then pulls taut.

Sabima and Damon GASP. Damon's claw goes to their head.

DAMON (CONT'D)

I feel... Hey, look at this!

Damon puts one hoof through the threshold and pulls it back. They hop forward and then backward. A grin spreads over their face.

Riren stands ramrod straight.

RIREN

Very good. I believe I'll be taking back the Council's property.

Riren holds out his hand to Sabima. She closes the book and passes it over.

SABIMA

I have no more need of words on paper. Its knowledge is already stored within me.

RIREN

As is the fate of this... creature, it would seem.

Riren looks over his shoulder where Damon does a little dance that weaves in and out of the doorway. Rasputin sniffs at the hooves and puffs up with wide eyes as he does so.

SABIMA

I'll take that as the Council's official vote of confidence.

RIREN

Don't.

SABIMA

Oh?

Riren tucks the book under his arm and rubs his temple.

RIREN

This... experiment of yours... You have my blessing to continue it. But the rest of the Council won't be so understanding of why I'm entrusting this to you without my direct supervision.

SABIMA

When they see that we can make a demon into an angel... they'll change their mind.

RIREN

I wouldn't be so sure...

Sabima and Riren watch as Crystal stands with her arms crossed in front of Damon. Damon hovers a claw inches from her chest, a wide grin on their lips.

DAMON

Not touching, see!

SABIMA

Damon did a good deed of their own volition. They would have gained absolutely nothing from owning up to their actions. It would have been easier for me and Crystal to take the fall. But Damon was so moved by his love of his partner, and the guilt of their failure, that Damon sought *atonement*.

Crystal snatches Damon's claw out of the air, then releases it and winces. Damon's eyes widen in shock, then they lean back and LAUGH LOUDLY.

RIREN
Yeah, the real picture of purity.

SABIMA
Give them time.

RIREN
I'll do what I can. But Sabima...

Riren turns to her, standing between Sabima and the front door.

RIREN (CONT'D)
Do not mistake my good faith for loyalty. I took an oath for the Council. Whatever they ask of me, I am honor-bound to comply.

SABIMA
I understand. Thank you, Riren.

RIREN
For what?

SABIMA
A chance.

RIREN
Don't thank me yet. And it's still Councilman.

Sabima nods. Riren's expression is serious, but there is still the hint of a smile in his eyes. He wants this to work as desperately as Sabima does.

When Riren turns away, Damon is taking their first real, tentative steps inside the loft. Their eyes wander first along the ceiling and its skylights, then down the thin walls and the dusty shelves.

DAMON
You know it isn't this bad in Hell, right?

Riren clears his throat. Damon stands a little straighter, tense.

RIREN
With the binding of this demon secured, I must return to my duties.

Riren strolls to the doorway, taking the handle in his hand and pulling it half shut. He looks back to the room.

RIREN (CONT'D)

Perhaps your first sanctioned good deed could be to clean up that mess you made of the diner.

Riren closes the door.

END OF SHOW