

The Sphere

By

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WGAW registered

BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

"In the early morning of June 30, 1908 an explosion occurred in the skies above eastern Siberia that devastated forest in a 25 mile radius.

Scientists agree that the disaster was caused by a huge meteorite that exploded in the air without leaving an impact crater.

FADE IN:

EXT. SIBERIAN TAIGA - DAY

SUPER: "Tunguska Region. June 30, 1908, 7:00 AM."

The rising sun dispels morning mist. A swarm of birds glides across densely wooded, rolling hills.

DIRT ROAD IN THE WOODS

An OLD MAN carrying a backpack approaches a cottage.

COTTAGE

Before he can knock, a YOUNG MAN (20s) opens the door.

INT. COTTAGE - DAY

The Old Man and Young Man walk silently through a hallway into a humble

LIVING ROOM

where a YOUNG WOMAN lights candles on a wooden altar.

She rises and turns, her face showing tense expectation as she walks to the Young Man and takes his arm.

All three walk in front of the altar and the Old Man takes an ancient-looking box from his backpack, opens it, and pulls out a small object wrapped in cloth.

He places the object in the center of the altar, removes the cloth, uncovering a baseball-sized, marble-like sphere.

Suddenly a monstrous creature appears by his side: AZAZEL - a tall, humanoid figure with reptilian features. Sharp, gray scales protrude from its skull, neck and shoulder. His dark eyes fixate on the Old Man.

AZAZEL

You have failed as the Guardian.
Surrender the sphere.

The Old Man points the sphere at Azazel. As if invoking a spell, he chants.

OLD MAN

In the name of he who did not bow,
I accuse you.

Azazel reaches for the sphere but a white light appears around the Old Man, repelling him. The Young Man and Young Woman step beside the Old Man as the light engulfs them, too.

More demons similar to Azazel appear. They try to reach the three, but cannot penetrate the light.

The three humans place their hands on the sphere. The Young Woman prays fervently in an unknown language. The Young Man joins into the chants.

OLD MAN / YOUNG MAN

I accuse you, demon. I accuse you.

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

The cottage lies in silence. Trees sway in a gentle breeze.

In the sky erupts a glaring, white light, brighter than the sun, followed by a MASSIVE EXPLOSION.

Trees are bent like grass as a strong wind falls from above.

Silence.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. THE DAWSON RESIDENCE - DAY

Present day. A well maintained three-story brick building in a middle class neighborhood.

INT. DAWSON RESIDENCE ATTIC - DAY

Sparse light falls on a shelf of science books and journals, a framed photo of an attractive woman in her 20s, graduation dress, tense smile, stands among the books.

An empty desk with a stack of magazines and a computer screen are illuminated by light coming from the adjacent laboratory table full of electronic measuring devices.

In front of a PC sits JANET DAWURSKA (early 30s) bent over an electronic gadget and holding a soldering iron. A magnifying visor accentuates her intelligent features. This is the woman from the photo.

A time-worn plush bear in a suit lies on the table, the name "Misiek" stitched on it.

JANET

This should work.

On a sofa sits MARY (13) - slim, pale, solemn.

MARY

Do you really think you will find
Mom and Dad that way?

Janet puts the soldering iron aside, turns dials on an oscilloscope, and presses the record button on her MP3 player.

JANET

Yes. Come here. Try it again.

Mary walks over, reaches for the device. Her hand passes through it.

The oscilloscope displays a signal as a speaker HISSES.

Mary repeats the move three times and each pass of her hand generates another HISS.

JANET

That's better.

With the same tense smile as in the photo she ends the recording.

MARY

Can't you just pray?

JANET

I don't think God will help us.

MARY

Why not?

JANET

He had his chance.

Mary looks confused and helpless. She stares into a dark corner of the room.

Mary reaches for Misiek, but her hand passes through it. Janet takes Misiek and embraces it. They look at each other.

MARY

It feels good.

Janet reaches for Mary. Their hands approach but pass through each other and a sad smile passes over Janet's lips.

EXT. DAWSON RESIDENCE - DAY

A Honda Civic pulls into the driveway and RON (late 20s) exits, takes a stack of papers from the passenger seat, and walks to the front door. His swift walk contradicts his chubby appearance. A bright jovial face adds dynamic to his features.

He rings and waits. BUZZ... the door opens.

INT. DAWSON RESIDENCE - JANET'S LAB - DAY

Janet checks the data displays on the monitor hearing footsteps approaching outside.

The door opens and Ron enters. He puts his papers on the adjacent desk and turns to Janet.

RON
How's it going?

JANET
One step at a time.

He sits down at his desk and takes one of the papers.

RON
I did some more research on Morosov.
Must be in the upper crust of
Russia's nouveaux riches.

JANET
That explains our generous expense
account.

RON
Listen... after the end of
communism Morosov became an angel
investor in several oil and energy
companies. Made a fortune or two,
cashed in, diversified into real
estate, technology. Offices in
London and Tokyo. Still I couldn't
find a picture of him.

(beat)
I wonder why he's interested in
psychic research. It doesn't fit
his profile.

JANET
Apparently he knows what he's
talking about. And he pays for
everything. No risk involved.

Ron takes another sheet - a copy of an ancient drawing
showing a sphere that glows from the inside.

RON
What about the other lead?

JANET
Your magic ball?

RON
The sphere, yes.

He drops the drawing on her desk. She hardly looks at it.

RON
Instantaneous space travel,
unlimited clean energy. Here...
access to cosmic event records.

Janet takes the drawing.

JANET
Made by the hands of God when he
created humans? Atlantis? Mu? Holy
Grail?

RON
That's the fun part.

JANET
So you can write another fairy tale
for your science fiction magazine.

RON
People like it. And I always break
the facts.

JANET
I only believe what I can see.

Ron points at the gadget on her desk.

RON
You're trying to contact ghosts.
Your fellow scientists call it
delusion.

JANET
I know what I'm doing.

Mary playfully passes her hand through the gadget on Janet's
desk, each pass creating a HISS.

RON
If it hadn't been for me, your
paper would never have seen the
light of day--

HISS.

JANET
I'm not looking for recognition.

RON
--not to mention Morosov reading it.

HISS. HISS. HISS.

Ron gets up, takes the device.

RON
Can I use this thing to talk to the
demons of your past? I have a few
questions.

JANET
Shut up.

MARY
You do act funny sometimes.

JANET
(to Mary)
Shut up.

RON
You repeat yourself.

She takes the device back, suppressing a smile.

JANET
All you have is the address of a
shaman on an island. Not a shred of
proof that the thing exists.

She replays the recording - HISSES followed by her solitary
voice.

EXT. SIBERIAN COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

A Land Rover races up a snow-covered mountain track.

INT. LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Driver NIKOLAI SKULACHOV (late 30s) has a warm, weathered
face filled with grave concern; his intense, piercing eyes
are fixed on the path ahead.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

VADIM MOROSOV (40s) sits on a bench by a cabin window. Dark eyes in a tense face impatiently scan the mountains below. Beside him sits muscular henchman ANDREY (20s) henchman.

On the opposite seat sits CONRAD MOROSOV (early 30s), tall, slender, tanned skin, expensive haircut.

In the co-pilot's seat sits DUNKHA, a tense woman in her thirties, dressed in a monk-like robe, her eyes are also focused on the landscape below.

EXT. PLATEAU - NIGHT

The helicopter lands. Doors open. All but the pilot exit.

Vadim walks straight up a small slope, Andrey behind him, followed by Dunkha and Conrad.

The group reaches a barely visible cave entrance. Dunkha takes the lead and walks into the cave.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

A beam of light cuts through the darkness, searching the walls of a tunnel which opens into a small grotto.

Dunkha walks into a dark corner, the beam following her as she points at a pile of rocks.

DUNKHA

Here.

Andrey moves the rocks aside, removes a stone plate. Behind it in a hollow lies a small, wooden box.

Andrey steps back. Vadim takes the box and opens it, finding the sphere from the Tunguska explosion, wrapped in cloth.

Out of the dark behind him comes a guttural voice:

SEMYAZA (O.S.)

Forty days to meet the bride, then
three to be Guardian of the sphere.

Vadim turns to face SEMYAZA, a tall demonic figure with a muscular, yet inhuman body, black, leathery skin and broad shoulders. His eyes measure Vadim without respect.

Conrad and Dunkha watch him with suspicion. Andrey makes a few steps backwards.

Vadim offers the box to Semyaza who takes the sphere. Upon his touch it emits an orange glow which spreads across his body.

EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

A barren, rock-littered desert under a black sky. A giant moon, looking like a huge copy of the sphere, looms above.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PATH - NIGHT

The Land Rover reaches the end of the path. Nikolai jumps out and runs up a steep slope.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

Semyaza's eyes are closed, his face filled with ecstasy. He bathes in the light of the sphere as if absorbing forces that flow from it.

He opens his eyes, his face full of delight, and places the sphere back into the box.

SEMYAZA

(to Vadim)

Prepare for the bride. I have arranged her coming.

Dunkha is stunned.

Semyaza notices her surprise but quickly turns his probing eyes back on Vadim. A moment later he vanishes from sight.

DUNKHA

He arranged her coming? What does that mean?

Vadim closes the box and heads for the tunnel.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

Nikolai enters the cave, his flashlight searching through the darkness as he advances through a narrow tunnel. Voices are heard in the distance.

As Nikolai enters the grotto the butt of a gun hits him in the stomach and he drops to the ground. Above him towers Andrey as Vadim approaches from behind.

VADIM

This time you come too late, cousin.

NIKOLAI

You don't know what you're doing.

VADIM

Yes, I do. We could have ruled together but your naive idea of a divine mission has blinded you for the power that now lies in my hands alone.

Nikolai gets up, jumps at Vadim and grabs the box, but Andrey hits him on the head and Nikolai slumps to the ground.

INT. DAWSON RESIDENCE - ATTIC - DAY

Janet enters, walks to her table, looks around.

JANET

Mary?

She waits a moment, takes Misiek from the table and leaves.

INT. JANET'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Shelves filled with books, some in Russian and Polish. In the center of the room a sofa, a table, leather chairs.

An aquarium stands by a window. Exotic fish glide in silence.

Janet, holding Misiek, stares at a happy picture of Mary and her by the tank. She sits down on a recliner.

Her eyes close. She looks as if she fights sleep. Her hair briefly moves as if struck by a gentle breeze.

The faint SOUND OF A WIND CHIME is heard.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

Damp walls in dim light. Water trickles from above.

Janet walks through ankle-deep mud, holding Misiek tightly.

The tunnel stretches endlessly. A faint voice is heard in the distance.

JANET

Mary?

Janet walks on. The voice sounds again, clearer than before.

MARY (O.S.)

Janet! Help me.

Janet runs down the tunnel, calling Mary's name, but something grabs her ankle. She stumbles, falls, turns around and lands on her back, protecting Misiek from the dirt.

Janet gets up. The voice comes from below.

MARY

Janet!

On the floor Mary's face sticks out of the mud.

JANET

Mary! Oh my God!

MARY

Help me.

Mary's hand reaches for her. Janet grabs it and pulls, raising Mary slightly from the mud. She pulls harder, but Mary is stuck.

GROANING all around. Pain-stricken faces morph from the walls.

Janet kneels down beside Mary.

JANET

What happened to you?

MARY

You have to find the sphere.

JANET

What?

MARY

Ron's sphere. The dark man talks about it. He says it's the key. He wants the key.

The GROANING increases. Faces now cover the entire tunnel.

JANET

What dark man?

MARY

I think he's not a man. I only hear his voice. I don't know...

Mary's face slowly retreats into the mud even as Janet pulls at her hand again.

Janet loses her grip, falls backwards, but keeps Misiek dry.

Mary swallows water and mud, coughs, her hand still stretched out.

MARY

Give me Misiek.

Janet hands Mary the plush bear. Mary takes it just before the mud swallows her.

The faces fade. From the darkness of the tunnel, Semyaza watches Janet.

INT. JANET'S APARTMENT - DAY

A WIND CHIME sounds.

Janet's eyes tear open. Deeply worried she gathers her thoughts and looks at her hands. Misiek is gone.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Janet affixes a duffle bag to the luggage rack of a Yamaha V9, puts on the helmet, and roars away.

EXT. BUSY STREET - DAY

Gargoyles stare from a high building onto a busy street. Out of the shadow morphs a demonic face, similar to Azazel. It watches the street.

Down below, Janet turns her motorcycle onto a side street.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

A construction site on the right, a flat bed truck with construction machinery parked on the left.

As Janet passes the truck a tall van appears from behind it, obstructing her lane. She pulls the brakes, tires SCREECH - it's not going to work.

She leaps off the bike to the right, hits the back of a parked car, and bounces into the construction site.

CRASH!

White light. Shouts. Sirens.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE:

EXT. KRAKOW SUBURBS - DAY

Afternoon sun, grey facades of a poor, residential neighborhood. Few cars, few people. A street sign: "ul. Nowowieska."

EXT. KRAKOW SHOPPING STREET - DAY

TEENAGE JANET (17) and JULIA (mid 40s) carry shopping bags. They stop at a shop window.

JANET

Mom, I need to buy a book. I'll be right back.

Janet puts her bags down and heads into the shop.

HANNA (50s), a stocky woman, recognizes Julia and stops.

HANNA

Julia, nice to see you. It's been some time since we met.

JULIA

Hello, Hanna.

HANNA

How are the children?

Julia looks at the busy street. Her eyes widen.

A GIRL dressed like Janet walks into it, ignoring traffic.

A truck approaches at high speed.

JULIA

Janet!

Julia runs after the girl.

The truck BLOWS THE HORN. Tires SCREECH.

Julia jumps, pushes the Girl out of the truck's path.

A DULL THUMP as the truck hits Julia.

Janet comes running out of the shop.

JANET

Mamusia!

INT. KRAKOW CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Empty pews in silent darkness. Pillars adorned with religious images stand frozen in time. Light falls through faceted windows with images of saints and biblical scenes. It barely outshines a handful of devotional candles.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

Religious icons adorn the walls.

Janet pleads with a PRIEST. A group of people, Hanna among them, stands behind her, worried, embarrassed by her effrontery.

Janet grabs the Priest's arm.

JANET

Please, Father! You knew her. You cannot believe she killed herself.

PRIEST

People saw her jump into the street.

JANET

But if you pray for her and God
does not want her in heaven, what
has the church to lose?

PRIEST

My daughter, the laws of God are
strict. We have received our life
from God and we must not end it by
our own hands. Because of that the
Church cannot give your mother a
Christian burial. I am sorry.

Janet stares the Priest in the face, desperate, tears in her
eyes. For a moment she stands frozen. Then her face
registers shock, then anger, finally contempt.

She takes a step back, shouts a silent scream.

A woman pulls her back, tries to appease her, but Janet is
inconsolable, shouts at the Priest.

She hits him on the chest. Then, her rage exhausted, she
wipes the tears from her eyes and runs away.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Rain drizzles on neglected tombs and failing grave lights.
Withered flowers totter in the breeze.

A small group of mourners stand at a coffin by an open grave.
A man prays silently. Some mourners join in.

Others stare at a pain-stricken Janet. By her side stands
MAREK (22), a tall and slender man. He holds her arm.

Uniformed cemetery workers lower the coffin and begin to
shovel soil into the grave.

Mourners leave one by one, some embrace Janet, shake Marek's
hand. Soon the two stand alone.

JANET

Is this it? First Mary, then Papa
and now Mama. Is this the end?

Marek stares at the coffin which is almost covered by soil.

JANET

Mama said God has a plan. Do you believe that?

MAREK

I don't know.

JANET

I want to be dead, too.

They stand in silence.

MAREK

I'll go to America soon. My immigrant application has been approved. I want you to come too.

She clinches his arm.

JANET

It'll take time. Don't leave me now.

MAREK

We'll apply and you can stay with Uncle Lolek until you're ready. It shouldn't take long this time.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE.

INT. US HOSPITAL - JANET'S ROOM - NIGHT

Janet lies unconscious in bed. The heart rate monitor displays a regular beat and gives a rhythmic, ELECTRONIC PULSE.

Suddenly Janet wakes, sits up, eyes wide open.

JANET

Mamusia!

KATE (late 20s), slim with glasses, wearing blue jeans and a turtleneck, and Ron sit on chairs by the wall.

Ron jumps up from his chair, rushes to Janet's bed.

RON

Janet, wake up. You had a bad dream.

Janet looks disoriented, worried. Kate comes and takes her hand.

KATE

Thank God you're awake. We were so worried.

Janet gropes around.

KATE

Janet? Do you hear me?

Janet feels for her eyes.

JANET

I can't see anything.

INT. HOSPITAL EXAM ROOM - DAY

A few days later. The x-ray image of a human skull hangs on a backlit panel. DR. JENKINS (40s), glasses, retreating hairline, studies it as he speaks.

JENKINS

I suspect a contusion affecting the visual cortex. Minor swellings often don't display on x-ray images.

Janet, Kate and Ron sit on chairs by the doctor's desk.

RON

What else can we do?

JENKINS

I'll send you for a CAT scan. Apart from that all we can do now is wait.

JANET

How long will it last?

JENKINS

Temporary blindness can occur after head injuries. It's uncommon, but it happens.

JANET

How long?

JENKINS

Normally a few minutes, hours.

JANET

This is my third day.

INT. DAWSON RESIDENCE KITCHEN - DAY

Janet searches inside a fridge, taking a bottle of vodka before turning around, not sure where to go.

Ron stands nearby.

RON

You feel like celebrating?

JANET

Why?

RON

You're holding a bottle of vodka.

She turns back, her left hand missing the fridge by inches.

JANET

This is so disturbing. I'll go crazy if it lasts any longer.

Ron takes the bottle, puts it on the fridge. He takes her by the arm and guides her to a chair.

RON

Calm down. You have no reason to worry. Here...

She sits down. Ron pulls up another chair for himself.

RON

But we may have to postpone the trip.

JANET

No. We have to go.

RON

What?

JANET

I have to find the sphere.

Ron looks absolutely flabbergasted.

INT. B-747 BUSINESS CLASS CABIN - DAY

Janet's hands feel around an in-flight dinner tray.

JANET

I'm not hungry. Tell me more. Did you ever talk to the guy?

RON

The shaman? No. He lives on an island in Lake Baikal. He may not even have a phone.

JANET

And you think the sphere is a legend?

RON

Normally a large part of these stories are. But I keep an open mind.

JANET

Cute.

RON

In any case, the shaman doesn't have it. He has a piece of cloth that was wrapped around it and that is said to have supernatural powers.

JANET

Like what?

RON

In recent years photos appeared of it. They showed the cloth, but also images of recent events, like 9/11.

JANET

Really?

RON

I know it's kind of thin, but it's something we can check out.

JANET

When can we meet the guy?

A beat.

RON

I still don't understand your sudden interest.

JANET

It's complicated.

Ron waits for more, but that's it.

RON

I'll work on it after we touch base with Morosov.

EXT. HEATHROW AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

The B-747 lands at Heathrow.

INT. BUSINESS LOUNGE RECEPTION DESK - DAY

Janet wears sunglasses. Ron presents their tickets at the reception. They link arms, enter the lounge.

INT. BUSINESS LOUNGE - DAY

Janet and Ron have drinks and snacks in a remote corner. Ron gets ready to leave.

RON

You're sure you'll be okay?

JANET

Enjoy your shopping. I need to think anyway.

RON

I won't be long.

JANET

I'll be here.

He leaves. Janet searches her handbag, pulls out an MP3 player. A notebook, a pen and a lipstick drop to the floor.

Her hands feel around. They find the notebook, but miss the other items.

A hand takes pen and lipstick.

The hand belongs to Conrad Morosov, dressed in Armani head-to-toe.

CONRAD
You dropped this.

Surprised by the voice, Janet touches her glasses, but leaves them on. Conrad puts the pen and lipstick on the table.

CONRAD
May I sit with you? The lounge is getting crowded.

JANET
(hesitant)
Please.

He sits. Janet fingers the MP3.

CONRAD
Why are you wearing sunglasses?

Janet touches her glasses, hesitates, takes them off.

INT. LOUNGE BAR

Conrad holds on to a scotch, Janet has a martini.

CONRAD
Why then didn't you postpone the trip? The project hardly sounds time-critical?

JANET
It's not that.

Conrad reaches for a bowl of peanuts, almost touches her cheek. Janet registers his classy scent.

JANET
What about you? Where are you going?

CONRAD

Irkutsk.

JANET

Irkutsk!

CONRAD

What a small world.

Janet turns in his direction and he looks her into the eyes, concerned.

CONRAD

My family is from Irkutsk. I work in London.

JANET

New Year visit?

CONRAD

Something like that.

(beat)

I hope you'll have the opportunity to see Siberia. It's beautiful this time of the year. Lake Baikal is frozen now. You can drive across.

JANET

We might do that. Ron has a contact there.

CONRAD

How come?

JANET

He's science journalist, researches all kind of stories.

CONRAD

And what kind of story is this?

Janet backpedals.

JANET

You'd have to ask Ron.

RON (O.S.)

Someone mentioned my name?

JANET

That must be him.

Conrad turns around, gets up and offers his hand to Ron who stands beside him, carrying shopping bags. Conrad offers his hand.

CONRAD

Conrad Sidorov. Nice to meet you.

RON

Ron Courtney. How are you?

CONRAD

Fine. So you are Janet's colleague
I heard much about.

RON

You're just saying that.

CONRAD

No, we were just talking about your
trip to Lake Baikal.

Ron looks surprised.

JANET

It must be time to leave.

Conrad looks at his watch.

RON

Right, I'll get our bags.

He takes off.

CONRAD

I need to make a short call.

JANET

I'll see you at the gate then.

Ron returns with the bags. Janet links arms with him. They head for the exit.

INT. HEATHROW DEPARTURE HALL - DAY

Janet and Ron push a trolley together toward the gate.

RON
I can't believe you told a stranger
about this.

JANET
We were just chatting. I didn't
tell him anything.

RON
Do you like the guy?

JANET
Nonsense.

INT. BUSINESS LOUNGE

Conrad sits at the bar and dials his cell phone.

INT. VADIM MOROSOV'S OFFICE - DAY

A speaker phone rings. Vadim, sitting in an armchair at his desk, takes the handset.

INTERCUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION:

CONRAD
This is Konradin. I met them.

VADIM
Everything okay?

CONRAD
Did you know she's blind?

VADIM
What do you mean?

CONRAD
Blind. She can't see anything.

VADIM
How did that happen?

CONRAD
Some strange accident. It's
temporary, but still...

VADIM

It doesn't change anything. In
Irkutsk, let Sergeyin handle them.

Vadim ends the call. Dunkha furiously paces through his
lavishly equipped office.

DUNKHA

I am the Guardian Bride. That is
the deal. I won't accept this.

VADIM

If this is Semyaza's plan, there is
nothing we can do. Not now.

DUNKHA

Semyaza sees only his own power.
How did he find that bitch anyway?
She'll be your undoing.

VADIM

Watch your words. I am the Guardian.
Even Semyaza can't control the
sphere without me.

DUNKHA

What makes you think you will
control anything? Semyaza hates
humankind. With me as your bride,
Azazel will be your ally.

VADIM

Ally for what? And I won't have a
war of demons on my hands.

DUNKHA

A war of demons is your only hope.

His eyes shift out the window.

EXT. VADIM'S ESTATE - DAY

The estate's main building is a four story mansion,
surrounded by a wide space, a helicopter pad and smaller
buildings. Rocky ground behind the mansion turns becomes a
steep slope ending at a cleft.

A few hundred yards away a waterfall roars.

EXT. AIRSPACE ABOVE SIBERIA - NIGHT

A passenger jet is tossed by heavy winds and rain.

INT. BUSINESS CLASS CABIN - NIGHT

Janet sleeps in a window seat, Ron by the aisle. Her head moves restlessly. She wakes, her eyes searching the darkness.

Conrad watches her from across the aisle, a strange longing and sadness in his eyes.

INT. IRKUTSK AIRPORT LUGGAGE CLAIM AREA - NIGHT

Janet, Ron and Conrad arrive at the luggage belts.

CONRAD

I have to rush. Do you know where you are going?

RON

Yes, someone will pick us up.

Conrad takes out his card, takes Janet's hand.

CONRAD

It was a pleasure meeting you. Give me a call while you are here and I'll show you around.

He puts the card into her hand. It reads: "Konradin Sidorov."

CONRAD

Give me a call when you can.

JANET

I will.

Conrad takes off.

RON

All he had was carry-on luggage?

INT. IRKUTSK AIRPORT ARRIVAL HALL - NIGHT

A small crowd, including MIKOLA SERGEYIN (50s), greets passengers. He holds a sign with the names of Janet and Ron.

Conrad walks by. Sergeyin gives him a respectful nod.

Conrad returns it in passing... almost unnoticeably.

Janet and Ron walk through the gate and Sergeyin approaches them.

SERGEYIN

Dr. Dawurska, welcome to Russia. I
am Mikola Sergeyin. Many greetings
from Mr. Morosov.

He offers his hand but is surprised when Janet doesn't
notice. Ron takes it instead.

SERGEYIN

Welcome, Mr. Courtney. I have
reserved rooms for you in a nice
little hotel just outside town.

EXT. ZVEZDA HOTEL - NIGHT

Sergeyin holds the taxi's door open. Ron exits, then Janet.

The hotel is a three-story building with a wooden facade
surrounded by trees. There are few other buildings in the
proximity.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

A CLERK hands Ron two room keys and moves their luggage onto
a trolley as Sergeyin gives Ron two cell phones.

SERGEYIN

I got these for you. Yours won't
work with the Russian system.

RON

Very thoughtful. Thank you.

The two shake hands. Sergeyin waits for Janet to extend her
hand. She doesn't.

SERGEYIN

I'll call you tomorrow.

The Clerk pulls the trolley toward the lift. Janet and Ron
follow, arms linked.

IN THE ELEVATOR

JANET

How does he look? I don't like the
guy.

IN THE LOBBY

The lift door closes. Sergeyin dials his cell phone.

INT. JANET'S HOTEL ROOM - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janet crashes on a queen-sized bed. Ron takes a folder from
a desk. It contains a brochure with tourist information.

RON

They have trips to Olkhon Island.

JANET

Where the shaman lives?

RON

Yes.

JANET

How soon can we see him?

RON

Wait a moment. Morosov pays for our
trip. We should spend this month on
the project, as planned.

A beat.

He drops the folder on the desk and stares at Janet.

JANET

What?

RON

For years you pay little to no
attention to my work, call it
science fiction. Now suddenly
you're bent on finding this shaman
and my magic ball.

JANET

It's a difficult story.

RON
I'm sure it is.

Janet tries to order her thoughts.

RON
I won't jeopardize the purpose of
our coming here and take you on a
trip across Siberia. Not in your
condition.

Ron waits. Janet chews on her lip.

JANET
It's about Mary.

RON
Mary?

JANET
My sister.

RON
The one who died? Fifteen years ago?

JANET
Seventeen. I dreamt of her.

RON
So?

JANET
She spoke about the sphere and that
I need to find it. To help her.

RON
Help her how?

JANET
You won't understand.

RON
Too bad.

Ron waits.

JANET
I can see Mary.

RON

What?

JANET

I can see her, talk to her. Ever since she died. Now she's gone, but then I had this dream.

RON

You're talking to a ghost?

JANET

I knew you wouldn't understand, but I must find out what happened to my family. The church says my mother committed suicide. I know she didn't. And nobody would believe me that I talk to Mary. Even my friends thought I'm crazy.

RON

And the sphere?

JANET

When I dreamt of her, Mary was like in hell. She asked about the sphere, your sphere.

Ron is stunned speechless.

JANET

It's the only thing that can help her. And it may be the key to the past. Mary called it the key.

Ron wanders around the room, stares out a window.

RON

My best friend, the scientist, turns out to be a psychic.

JANET

Life is full of surprises.

A beat.

RON

I think we better sleep. Sergeyin may want to meet tomorrow.

He walks to the door, stops at his luggage.

JANET
Promise me, you'll think about it.

RON
I'll think about it.

He opens the bath room door.

RON
Wow, whirlpool.

INT. JANET'S HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM

Janet lies in the foam-filled bathtub. She rubs her eyes, blinks, glides deeper into the tub and closes her eyes.

INT. RON'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Ron lies on the bed, dressed. He looks at his watch which still shows London time.

He gets up, takes a folder from a desk, finds the travel brochure.

INT. JANET'S HOTEL ROOM - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight rests on Janet's suitcase which lies open on the bed. Some items, including her lipstick, lie on the floor nearby.

Imprints in the carpet betray an unseen presence on its way to the bath.

BATHROOM

Janet looks like she's asleep. Foam spreads across the floor. Stirrings, like footprints, appear in it.

Janet opens her eyes.

JANET
Is anybody here? Ron?

The stirrings stop briefly, then continue toward the tub.

Janet sits up, hesitates to rise completely.

A strand of her hair moves as if touched by invisible hands. She pulls her head back.

JANET

Who is this? Ron? This isn't funny.

Fingermarks dig into her cheeks. She tries to scream, but no sound escapes her lips.

From the splashing water and flying foam a DEMON like Azazel materializes, his claws around Janet's neck. Her hands grip his wrists, pulling at them.

Crouched over her, he pushes her into the water.

Janet only sees sparks, faint flashes amidst darkness.

BEDROOM

The telephone rings.

BATHROOM

Janet's feet kick water.

She dives, pulling the Demon with her. She emerges at the other end of the tub, the demon still clutching her throat. He rises, pulls her up, pushes her against the wall.

Janet's heart beats like THUNDER - loud, slowing, dying. Her face begins to turn red.

A KNOCK at the room door.

NIKOLAI (O.S.)

Janet Dawurska?

The Demon turns to the door. Janet lands a kick, but he holds on to her, slams her against the wall.

BEDROOM

The door bursts open. Nikolai enters, followed by the ELENA (early 30s), a slender woman with dark hair and Eurasian features.

Nikolai rushes to the bath, kicks the door in.

BATHROOM

Nikolai jumps at the Demon, pulls at his claws.

The Demon disappears. Nikolai stumbles backwards.

Janet, covered with foam, leans against the wall. Elena covers her with a towel and wipes her face dry.

Ron, holding several travel brochures, appears in the door.

RON

What's happening here?

Nikolai hesitates, then steps to the door and extends his hand, a bit stilted.

NIKOLAI

I'm Nikolai, Nikolai Skulachov.

Ron stares at him, then at the hand.

INT. JANET'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janet sits at a table, fully dressed.

On the bed lies her open suitcase. Nikolai closes it then takes her cell phone from the floor and puts it in his pocket.

NIKOLAI

We have to leave. This place isn't safe.

RON

We don't even know you. Where do you want to go?

Nikolai grabs the suitcase with one hand, Janet with the other and pulls her toward the door.

NIKOLAI

I know a place.

JANET

Not so fast.

He doesn't slow down, drags her out the door. Ron goes after them.

RON

Wait. I'll get my stuff.

Elena grabs his arm. Ron pulls loose, heads for the door. She jumps in front of him, closes the door and blocks it.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nikolai drags Janet to a hall with two elevators and presses the call button.

JANET

What are you doing? Wait for Ron!

NIKOLAI

There is no time.

The lift arrives. As the door opens, Nikolai tries to pull Janet inside but she resists, pulls free and backs away from him until she hits the wall.

JANET

You can't expect me to just go with you. Who are you?

NIKOLAI

I'm a friend. If you want to find your sister, you come now.

JANET

What?

He uses her surprise to drag her into the lift. The door closes.

A signal indicates that lift number two is ascending.

EXT. HOTEL MAIN ENTRANCE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

A black Mercedes. Conrad in the driver seat.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Nikolai drags Janet from the lift to the back exit.

EXT. HOTEL BACK EXIT - NIGHT

Nikolai throws the suitcase into the back of a Land Rover parked in the driveway, pushes Janet on the passenger seat, gets in and drives off.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

Andrey and MIKHAIL (late 20s), a heavy-set man in a cheap suit, exit the lift and head for Janet's room.

INT. JANET'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Elena still blocks the door.

RON

Who do you think you are?

Ron reaches for her arm but she lands a mild elbow strike.

ELENA

Sorry. I'm Elena Skulachova,
Nikolai's sister.

A KNOCK at the door. Elena glances at the broken lock, steps aside. Another KNOCK. The door opens, revealing Andrey and Mikhail.

Andrey enters, Mikhail guards the door. Andrey searches the room, ignoring Ron. He points at the bathroom door. Mikhail looks inside, shakes his head.

Andrey turns to Ron, pulls an automatic gun.

The door SMASHES into Mikhail.

Elena jumps at Andrey, lands a kick to his groin, takes the gun, clubs his face with it twice. He drops to the floor.

MIKHAIL

Skulachova!

Mikhail reaches into his jacket. She points Andrey's gun at him. Mikhail drops his gun.

Elena motions him to enter, then hits him in the face with the gun. Mikhail slumps to the floor.

ELENA
(to Ron)
Get your stuff.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Outside, trees and few houses fly by.

JANET
Where are you taking me?

Nikolai is quiet, checks the rearview mirror.

JANET
Hello?

Nikolai keeps going, heads into countryside.

JANET
Stop the car.

He keeps going, eyes the mirror.

JANET
I said stop!

Her hands search for the ignition keys, hit the gear shift instead. The engine disengages. Nikolai hits the brakes.

The car scrapes along a fence and comes to a stop.

Nikolai grabs her hand but she pulls loose. Her fingers scratch his cheek. Thin trails of blood appear.

He touches his cheek, looks at the blood.

NIKOLAI
I'm sorry. I know how strange this
must appear to you.

JANET
You have no idea.

NIKOLAI
I am Nikolai. Vadim Morosov is my
cousin.

JANET

Is this where I say 'nice to meet you?'

He smiles briefly.

NIKOLAI

I am actually doing you a favor. Vadim didn't invite you for research.

JANET

Why did he then?

NIKOLAI

He stole something from me and needs you to use it.

She takes a deep breath, waits for more.

NIKOLAI

I'll explain on the way. For the moment just see it this way: You don't really have a choice.

He starts the engine.

EXT. ROAD BEHIND HOTEL - NIGHT

Elena and Ron walk down a snowy road. She carries one of his bags. Ron pulls a suitcase, breathes heavily.

They arrive at a Land Rover, load the luggage, get in.

INT. ELENA'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Elena starts the engine.

RON

Where are we going?

ELENA

My place.

INT. ZVEZDA HOTEL - JANET'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mikhail and Andrey come to as Conrad enters the room.

CONRAD

What happened here?

MIKHAIL

The woman wasn't here. Only the
American and Skulachova.

Conrad looks around the room. Under the bed lies Janet's
lipstick. He picks it up, wraps it into a handkerchief and
puts it in his pocket.

CONRAD

They may be going to the lake.

EXT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

The car speeds through empty streets of a small town as snow
begins to fall.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Nikolai turns the wipers on.

JANET

So why did Vadim steal this sphere?

NIKOLAI

It has certain powers that he wants
to use.

JANET

So it's true? Mysterious powers,
access to cosmic event records, all
these things.

NIKOLAI

These powers have always caused
disaster. Humans can't control them.
That's why the sphere must be
hidden from mankind.

JANET

And what happened now?

NIKOLAI

Vadim has sold his soul to get it
and I must take it back.

He flips a switch. A GPS device comes on, showing a few roads that lead to a dark area labeled "Lake Baikal." A compass points to southeast.

JANET

He sold his soul?

NIKOLAI

He's the leader of a cult that worships the demon Semyaza. And he works with Dunkha, a priestess of Azazel, another demon. Together they planned to install themselves as guardians of the sphere and access its powers.

JANET

Guardians?

The GPS flickers. Nikolai knocks on it. No change.

NIKOLAI

A man and a woman, groom and bride.
But for some reason the plan
changed. Now you are the bride.

Janet is stunned, swallows hard.

INT. CONRAD'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

Andrey drives, Mikhail sits in the back, Conrad on the passenger seat, holding a laptop. The display shows a map of the area and a moving, blinking dot which is moving toward the lake.

CONRAD

Like I thought.

The image on the monitor distorts, then returns to normal.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

The GPS display flickers again. Nikolai knocks on it. The flicker increases.

JANET

How do you know all this?

NIKOLAI

Vadim and I were friends. He offered me money for the sphere but I refused. Later I found out about the demons.

JANET

And where do I come in?

NIKOLAI

I'm still working on that.

The flickering GPS shows that they reached the lake.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE BAIKAL - NIGHT

The Land Rover drives along the shore of the frozen lake, down a slope onto the ice and into the storm.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Snowflakes reflect brightly in the headlights. Nikolai switches to low beams.

The flicker of the GPS increases. Nikolai knocks on it. The display goes black and the compass moves to westh.

INT. CONRAD'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

The lake appears in front of them.

The laptop shows the blinking dot as it moves onto the lake, then the display turns black. Conrad hits the laptop.

CONRAD

What is this?

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

The compass spins erratically as thick, whirling snow surrounds them like a white wall.

Suddenly the car is hit. It slides sideways.

JANET

What was that?

Another hit sends the car skidding.

NIKOLAI

Probably your visitor from the hotel.

As if driven by an invisible hand the car speeds up, races into the white void. Nikolai hits the brakes. No effect.

A blow smashes Janet's window. Icy winds drive a hail of glass into the car.

One of Azazel's demons has a firm grip on the car while similar shapes emerge from the snow.

Janet sees a faint shadow outside her window. A cold blue gloom amidst utter darkness morphs into the grimace of the demon.

The demon grabs her coat, pulls her through the broken window, away into the snow. Janet kicks, SCREAMS angrily as Nikolai jumps out on the ice and follows her.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A narrow path leads up to a clearing. Light from a log cabin flickers through the falling snow.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

At the wall of a dimly lit room stands an eight-foot engraved image of Azazel. On an altar below lies the skull of a goat, a horned cross painted with blood on its forehead.

To its left stands a chalice with red wine, to the right lies a large dagger. In front of the skull is a bowl filled with ember - and a cell phone identical to those that Sergeyin gave Ron.

Black candles on both sides of the alter form a half-circle. Within it kneels Dunkha, entranced, chanting in a foreign language. Her hands hit the floor rhythmically, her eyes staring into the distance.

EXT. LAKE BAIKAL - NIGHT

Janet stands encircled by demons.

Azazel steps out of the group, grabs her by the throat and violently jerks her back and forth once.

The SOUND OF A WIND CHIME is heard as Janet's body falls backwards, drops and slides a few yards across the ice, then lies still with eyes open.

Azazel still clutches her spirit, a mirror image of her body, and swings her into the air with a triumphant howl.

Janet's eyes widen in horror as she sees her body lying on the ice. Azazel's howl fills the night.

Semyaza and a group of his demons, taller than Azazels, less massive, no less threatening, morph out of the whirling snow.

Semyaza charges Azazel. They wrestle and Azazel lets go of Janet. She falls to the floor.

SEMYAZA

How dare you touch the Guardian
Bride?

Nikolai, surrounded by whirling, snow finds Janet's dead body on the ice.

INT. LOG CABIN - NIGHT

Amidst focused energetic chants Dunkha falls out of trance. She stares into the distance, dazed, angry, shocked.

EXT. LAKE BAIKAL - NIGHT

A bluish glow fills the night. Angry screams are heard through the raging storm. Semyaza and Azazel confront each other.

AZAZEL

You always had a weakness for the
human flesh.

SEMYAZA

What is it to you?

AZAZEL

You broke the deal. The bride was
mine to select.

SEMYAZA

It is for me to lead now. You had
your chance and failed.

AZAZEL

Don't you see she will be our
undoing?

Semyaza steps out of his group of demons and grabs Janet.

SEMYAZA

(to Azazel)

You could not take her and now she
is mine.

He throws Janet toward her body. The SOUND OF A WIND CHIME
is heard as her spirit and body merge.

SEMYAZA

You will not touch her again.

Nikolai still holds Janet's body, which slowly returns to
life. She pulls free and backs away from the scene.

ANGRY DEMON HOWLS fill the night as darkness returns to her
eyes.

Nikolai goes after her, takes her arm, but she SHRIEKS as
soon as she feels his touch and hits wherever her hands find
him.

Finally he gets hold of her hands and pulls her closer.
Janet begins to cry.

JANET

I have seen these beasts before. In
the church that wouldn't bury my
mother. Why? Why are they after us?

Nikolai is stunned.

JANET

I hate this God who abandons his
people. The devils sit on the
throne and those who love Him never
see his face.

He embraces her, shielding her from the cold. She calms down.

JANET

I don't care what your sphere does,
but I also have a stake here. A lot
of shit happened to my family and
now my sister disappeared and all I
know is that the sphere plays a
role. I must find it and do
whatever it takes to help Mary.

INT. CONRAD'S MERCEDES - DAY

The car is parked at the shore, surrounded by fog.

Conrad hits the laptop. The image returns. It shows the
blinking dot at rest close to the other shore of the lake.

EXT./INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - DAY

Nikolai helps Janet into the back seat. As he walks to the
driver side he feels her cell phone in his pocket.

He takes it out, turns it. The label on the back is in
Russian.

NIKOLAI

Is this your phone? A black
Motorola.

JANET

Must be the one Sergeyin gave us.

NIKOLAI

I should have known.

He throws the phone in a wide arc across the ice.

EXT. SIBERIAN COUNTRYSIDE - ELENA'S HOUSE - DAY

Morning sun falls on snow-covered fields. Elena's Land Rover
approaches an inconspicuous two-story building.

The car pulls into the driveway. Elena gets out, opens the
garage, and drives the car inside.

INT. ELENA'S LAND ROVER - DAY

Ron wakes up.

RON
Where are we?

ELENA
My place.

She get out, takes bags from the back seat.

RON
I knew that.

INT. ELENA'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

Ron walks around a large office with simple furniture, yet well equipped with computers, fax, HDTV.

RON
What kind of business do you run?

ELENA
Mostly manufacturing of electronic parts for export. We lost the rest when we broke up with Morosov.

She checks the fax, answering machine, boots a computer.

RON
What about Morosov?

ELENA
It's complicated.

RON
I have a right to ask. Don't you think?

Elena uses the mouse, types on the keyboard.

ELENA
I said it's complicated.

RON
Maybe Sergeyin can explain. I have his number.

He takes his phone, searches his pockets. Elena looks up.

ELENA
That's not a good idea.

She gets up and grabs his phone. He holds on to it. They stare at each other.

ELENA

What do you want to know?

INT. CONRAD'S MERCEDES - DAY

Conrad watches the laptop display. Andrey drives. Outside, the fog clears.

CONRAD

They must be right here. Stop.

EXT. LAKE BAIKAL - DAY

The Mercedes stops amidst the snow covered plain. All three get out and look around.

Conrad examines a narrow grove in the snow and finds Janet's cell phone.

CONRAD

Let's go to the Eagle's Nest.

EXT. NIKOLAI'S HOUSE - DAY

The car drives through a small village in a mountainous area. It pulls up beside a rural, single story home.

Nikolai exits, helps Janet out, takes a bag and they walk into the house.

INT. NIKOLAI'S KITCHEN - DAY

A space heater, simple furniture, food cooks on a stove.

Janet sits at the kitchen table. Nikolai stands beside her, holding an ancient book with golden imprints on the cover.

NIKOLAI

What happened to your eyes?

JANET

About time you asked.

NIKOLAI

It didn't seem appropriate.

JANET
How sensitive.

NIKOLAI
Not my focus usually.

A beat.

JANET
A motorcycle accident. A few weeks ago. They say it's temporary.

He looks puzzled.

NIKOLAI
This is a book about the sphere, the last existing copy. Here...

He puts the book into her hands.

JANET
I don't read much these days.

Nikolai sits down on a chair beside her.

NIKOLAI
I'll explain the most important pages.

The wind slams a door somewhere in the distance. A dog barks. Nikolai looks around the kitchen.

IN THE DOOR

stands SETSEG (70s) dressed in traditional Mongolian clothes. She walks around the table, scrutinizing Janet closely.

Nikolai looks at her, unsure whether to say something as Setseg walks around the table without taking her eyes off Janet. She smiles.

SETSEG
(to Nikolai; in Mongolian, with subtitles)
She is girl from western fields.

The voice surprises Janet.

JANET

Who is this? I didn't know someone else is here.

NIKOLAI

Don't worry. It's Munkhtsetseg, my grandmother. She lives with me.

Setseg walks over to Janet, takes her hand and looks into her eyes.

JANET

What is she doing?

(NOTE: IN THIS SCENE SETSEG SPEAKS MONGOLIAN AND IS SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH.)

SETSEG

She stands at the gate. A bird can it push open.

JANET

What does she say?

Setseg gets up, pulling Janet with her toward the next room.

NIKOLAI

Wait --

SETSEG

No time. The cold reaches for her. We must enter spirit world.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A table in the center, a sofa at the wall with some folded blankets, some chairs.

Setseg pushes Janet on a chair, points at the table.

Nikolai moves it to the wall, freeing the center of the room. With a wink from Setseg, he takes the blankets and spreads them on the floor.

JANET

What's happening?

Setseg takes Janet's arm and sits her on the blankets.

(NOTE: FROM NOW ON SETSEG SPEAKS SIMPLE, BROKEN ENGLISH.)

SETSEG
Sit, no worry.

She points at the floor behind Janet. Hesitantly Nikolai sits down behind Janet's back.

SETSEG
Take off shirt.

NIKOLAI
(to Janet)
Don't worry.

As Nikolai tries to take off Janet's pullover, she pulls away and stands up but doesn't know where to go.

JANET
What are you doing?

SETSEG
No worry.

Setseg looks very concerned. She takes Janet's hand.

JANET
I want an explanation. What's going on?

SETSEG
I know sister, mother. Far, far away. You want see, you go spirit world.

JANET
I don't understand.

SETSEG
Cold coming for you. No time. You come. See mother.

Janet hesitates, but Setseg embraces her and guides her back to the blankets. Janet sits down. Nikolai takes off her pullover. She only wears a T-shirt below.

SETSEG
Is shaman work. No worry. I often do. Very good.

Setseg claps her hands, makes a hitting gesture to Nikolai. He begins to slap Janet's back, while Setseg firmly holds Janet's hands, smiling into her face.

Faint specks of light appear before Janet's eyes. Then she sees Setseg's face who now chants in an unknown language.

Nikolai joins in, slaps harder.

Tears well up in Janet's eyes but Setseg tightly holds her hands, smiling.

The sound of a WIND CHIME is heard.

EXT. SPIRIT WORLD MOUNTAINS - DAY

Snow-capped mountains in the distance. Janet sits on a wooden bench on a small plateau overlooking a wide valley with lush vegetation. Close by are blossoming trees. Birds are singing.

Janet takes in the beautiful scenery. Setseg stands close by, watching her with admiration. She waves to her and Janet stands up.

INT. ELENA'S HOUSE - OFFICE - DAY

A book lies on a table, opened to a page with an etching that shows a big city being destroyed by disaster.

Spread on the table are Ron's printouts - texts in English and Russian, etchings of scenes with demons, angels, ancient sites.

Ron holds a printout that shows the same image as in the book. He looks perplexed.

RON

You mean it's genuine?

ELENA

Of course.

RON

Supernatural powers, unlimited energy, instantaneous space travel... This could be a challenge.

ELENA

What do you mean?

RON

For the first time, I'd have to prove that a story is true.

ELENA

You can't write about this. The sphere must be forgotten.

RON

Why? People have a right to know.

ELENA

Bullshit. You don't know what you're talking about.

Elena points at the drawing.

ELENA

Atlantis. The Mayans. Entire civilizations vanished because they weren't ready for it. Hitler marched on Russia to find the sphere. The world could have ended back then.

RON

Maybe times have changed. All these powers could also be used for good.

ELENA

I don't think humans have a say in this.

She grabs the book and searches for a drawing: an image showing a huge gate with a sphere in front of it on a pedestal.

ELENA

The sphere is as old as mankind. It was created when humans first received a spirit. It represents the cosmos and accesses the powers of creation. Humans were to own it on their day of maturity.

She turns pages to a drawing that shows a man and a woman talking to a tall humanoid holding the sphere.

ELENA

Until then angels were the highest beings and Lucifer was their leader. Once humans appeared, angels should have served them but Lucifer refused and tricked them into a deal to give up their spiritual mastership in return for physical dominion.

RON

What kind of deal?

ELENA

Nobody knows, but he and his demons have worked to corrupt mankind ever since. Lucifer controlled the sphere for millions of years. It took a war in the spirit world to take it back. Since then it has been the mission of guardians to hide it.

Ron wants to interrupt, but Elena ignores him.

ELENA

For generations that was the mission of our family. Morosov stole it and in seven days he wants to install himself as the guardian with the help of your friend.

RON

What's Janet's role in all this?

ELENA

Morosov worked with another woman. I don't know how your friend came into this.

Elena takes a deep breath.

ELENA

You can't write about this.

Ron struggles to digest the information. He takes some papers, stares at them, at the book, then at her.

RON

Do you know about a shaman on Olkhon Island?

ELENA

The cloth? Useless. After all these years the connection is broken.

INT. VADIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Vadim and Dunkha face each other, angry, as Conrad stands by the door, deeply troubled.

DUNKHA

Semyaza knows well that if anything happens to his bitch he needs me as the bride. And so do you.

VADIM

Don't be too sure. Right now I am the only one who keeps you from his wrath.

DUNKHA

And what happens once your bitch ascends the throne?

He just stares at her.

DUNKHA

But I will help you now.

VADIM

How come?

DUNKHA

Azazel can't win. I hope Semyaza finds a semblance of goodwill in his heart once he has what he wants.

She turns and stretches her hand out to Conrad. He hands her Janet's lipstick.

DUNKHA

(to Vadim)

Get ready. We don't have much time.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Janet stands with Setseg and gazes at the valley, squinting in the bright light.

JANET

I've never seen anything so beautiful. Where are we?

SETSEG

You die now, you come here.

From the back, a faint female voice is heard.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Jania.

Janet turns around and wanders in the direction of the voice.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Jania.

SETSEG

(concerned)

You not go.

JANET

Someone called my name.

Setseg tries to stop her, but Janet strides into a small

GROVE OF ORANGE TREES

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Jania.

Janet walks faster and reaches a

COURTYARD

bordered by a knee-high wall. A stairway leads downwards.

Janet looks back. Instead of the trees there are towers connected by high stone walls.

The voice calls again and Janet walks to the stairs.

EXT. CITY - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Below, a city stretches until the horizon: tall, clean buildings, wide spaces, skywalks, bridges. No people.

The stairway leads to a building with a huge gate. Halfway down the stairs stands a ROBED WOMAN, her face obstructed by a hood. She slowly descends the stairs.

Janet follows her to the building. The Robed Woman pushes the gate. It opens easily and they enter.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

The building is reminiscent of a library hall, but instead of shelves high walls adorned with plates form long alleys. Stairs lead up the walls and skywalks span across the gaps.

Janet follows the woman into an alley.

They arrive at a wide, circular space. All around them, walls and alleys extend in a radial pattern.

The Robed Woman stops and turns. Her face is tense yet attractive as she touches a plate.

Instantly, the image of a park appears in the central space.

EXT. PARK - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Green lawns, bushes, trees, a pond. Children are laughing. Near the pond a GIRL (5) plays with a BOY (14).

BOY

Come on, Jania. Throw the ball.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD

Janet looks closely at the boy.

JANET

Marek?

She walks into the image, but the Robed Woman touches another plate. The scene changes instantly and now 12-year-old Janet chases a giggling 9-year old Mary, throwing a ball at her.

JANET

I got you.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Janet watches the scene, touched and mystified. She walks over to Mary and bends down.

JANET

Mary?

Mary doesn't notice her. Janet reaches for her as the Robed Woman touches another plate. The scene changes instantly.

EXT. SHOPPING STREET - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Janet stands on the sidewalk of a shopping street.

17-year-old Janet and Julia walk along a store front. Julia appears depressed and tired. They stop at a window. Janet puts her bags down.

JANET

I'll be back in a moment.

Julia appears absent-minded as Janet walks into the shop.

Julia turns to the street and walks toward it. As she reaches the curb she turns around, looking sad.

A truck approaches at high speed.

Julia turns and jumps in front of the truck.

She hits the hood with a DULL THUMP. Tires SCREECH, people SCREAM and Janet comes running from the shop.

JANET

Mamusia!

The street scene disappears.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Present day Janet, shaken by the experience, stands alone in the empty circle.

JANET
 (to herself)
 This cannot be.

She turns around. Nikolai, dressed in a dark robe, stands between her and the Robed Woman near the border of the circle.

NIKOLAI
 I'm sorry.

JANET
 This cannot be. I know she didn't
 kill herself.

He steps to her and takes her arm.

NIKOLAI
 Please calm down.

JANET
 That wasn't her. She didn't look
 like that. It's not true.

Janet tries to pull away, but he tightens his grip.

NIKOLAI
 These records don't lie. Let's go.

JANET
 Go where?

NIKOLAI
 Home. To your body.

She resists, gets a close look at his face and looks repulsed.

JANET
 You are not Nikolai.

Janet kicks his leg. His face changes into that of Vadim.

VADIM
 You are strong and you learn
 quickly.

Janet looks at the Robed Woman whose face turns into Dunkha's.

VADIM

Don't fight. Once you understand,
you will see there is no other way
for you.

JANET

I do understand. You are a liar and
I have nothing to do with you.

Janet tries to pull away, but Vadim holds her arm tightly.
Dunkha approaches.

Suddenly the real Nikolai leaps between Vadim and Dunkha. He
pushes Dunkha back, grabs Vadim and pulls him away from
Janet. Vadim loses grip of her.

Janet stumbles backwards, falls and disappears. Vadim can
hardly control his anger.

VADIM

How did you find out about her?

NIKOLAI

I am still the guardian. You cannot
hide everything.

VADIM

One way or another, in a few days
all will be mine.

NIKOLAI

Do you really believe that demons
will serve you? You've gone mad.

Dark shapes move behind the shelves and in the alleys.

VADIM

The sphere belongs to man. Semyaza
can't have it without me and
finally I will be strong enough to
take it all.

NIKOLAI

It is not about strength.

VADIM

But of what? Love? What about Lidya?
Did you not love her enough?

NIKOLAI

She was a good woman until you confused her and she became weak.

VADIM

A good woman. That sounds like 'nice try.' Without a man's love a woman is weak. You should not have trusted her.

The remark hits a sensitive spot in Nikolai.

NIKOLAI

And God?

VADIM

God is irrelevant. And you're running out of time. Even with a bride, you'll never get the sphere before I ascend the throne.

NIKOLAI

With her I don't need a bride. I'm sure you know that.

Vadim is stunned. Dunkha's eyes widen in anger.

Howling wildly, several of Semyaza's DEMONS jump from the alleys at Nikolai, but he disappears before they reach him.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Janet lies on the blankets, still kicking and fighting. Her hand accidentally hits Nikolai, who sits close by in deep meditation. She SHRIEKS.

Nikolai awakens and gently takes her hand.

NIKOLAI

Janet, it's me, Nikolai.

JANET

Who were those people?

NIKOLAI

Vadim and Dunkha. What you saw isn't true. It was a fake recording.

Janet calms down.

JANET

Who was the third one?

NIKOLAI

That was me.

A faint smile appears on her face.

JANET

He will come again. I can feel it.

NIKOLAI

They lose you when you move around. But Vadim must still have something that belongs to you. Otherwise he couldn't have found you.

JANET

I don't know.

(beat)

What now? What's your plan?

NIKOLAI

After taking you away from him... I'm out of plans.

JANET

What? We can't just wait for Vadim to come and get me. I came to find the sphere and that's what I'll do.

(beat)

Where is that old woman, by the way?

NIKOLAI

She'll be back.

JANET

It's your sphere. What do you do to find it? You found me. Whatever didn't work, we'll try it again. Talk.

NIKOLAI

The sphere has a spiritual component, just like your spirit, but it never leaves the sphere. If we find that in the spirit world we can find it here.

JANET

You tried that, of course.

NIKOLAI

I got nowhere. Vadim hides it well
and Semyaza gets stronger as the
ritual approaches.

JANET

I feel safer with Azazel. He
doesn't want to marry me, just kill.

Her face lights up.

JANET

Where was the sphere hidden?

NIKOLAI

A cave in the mountains. A two-
hour drive from here.

JANET

Then we'll go there. There must be
something left.

Janet stretches out her hand out. Nikolai helps her up.

JANET

You drive.

INT. VADIM'S MAIN BUILDING - ALTAR ROOM

Behind an altar stands a tall stone statue of a demon with
wings resembling a peacock's splayed tail feathers. Straight
rows of candles extend from each side of the altar until the
walls.

On the altar sit two black candles. Between them lies
Janet's lipstick.

Dunkha kneels before the altar, eyes closed, chanting.

EXT. ELENA'S HOME - RON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ron takes some shirts from his suitcase and puts them into a
backpack. Elena watches him from the door.

ELENA

The cloth will lead you nowhere.
It's not connected to the sphere
anymore.

RON

Then what's your problem with
meeting the guy?

Elena looks defiant. Ron keeps filling the backpack.

RON

I see. You want me to know as
little as possible, so I can't
write about this.

ELENA

What if?

RON

You just don't get it. I write
about UFO sightings, ghosts, alien
civilizations. You'd be surprised
how many people want to believe,
even after I separate facts from
fiction.

He zips the bag shut and drops it on a chair.

RON

What I know by now... priceless.
People will cling to every word.
And trust me... some will come and
look for the sphere. I'm sure you
heard of the Tunguska meteorite and
the related rumors. Priceless.

The remark has an effect. Elena's brows furrow.

ELENA

You seem determined.

Their eyes meet. Elena shrugs the shoulders and turns to
leave.

ELENA

Tomorrow morning. I'll drive.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Janet and Nikolai, dressed for the cold, drive through mountainous area. The broken window is covered by plastic.

NIKOLAI
Setseg mentioned something.

JANET
Where did she go, by the way?

NIKOLAI
She gets around. But she said you are the one.

The evasion annoys her.

JANET
Which one?

NIKOLAI
There's an old prophesy, that in the time of reckoning a lonely girl will come from the western fields and take the sphere to a place where only goodness dwells. There it will remain until the end of times has passed.

JANET
Cryptic.

NIKOLAI
If that's you, you'll have to go alone.

JANET
Go where?

NIKOLAI
You'll know in time.

A beat.

JANET	NIKOLAI
But I'm not a girl anymore.	In that prophesy, girl means virgin.

A beat.

NIKOLAI
Is that so?

Janet, at a loss for words, moves nervously in her seat.

NIKOLAI
It would explain all the mischief
that happened to you and your
family.

JANET
How?

NIKOLAI
It's a mission that you're born for.
If evil will finds out it will try
to stop you, but good will protect
you.

(beat)
Like a war with bullets flying
everywhere and you in the middle.

Janet falls silent.

The Land Rover reaches the end of the road.

NIKOLAI
That's as far as the road leads.
The cave is a mile up the mountain.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Janet and Nikolai get out of the car. Nikolai takes a
backpack and a flashlight from the back seat.

Janet gropes her way around the car. He takes her hand and
they get on their way up the slope.

INT. VADIM'S MAIN BUILDING - ALTAR ROOM

Dunkha sits in front of the altar, moving in rhythm with her
chants.

Her eyes open, they seem to follow events in the distance.

MONTAGE - DUNKHA'S VISION

-- Morning dawns. The snow-covered surface of Lake Baikal flies by.

-- The shore approaches and passes below.

-- Mountains arise, shrouded in morning mist.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - DAY

Janet and Nikolai arrive at the cave entrance.

JANET

Amazing how tiring a small walk can be when you can't see.

NIKOLAI

Well, we made it. Here is the cave.

JANET

Let's go. I need to get out of this body.

He smiles, takes her hand and leads her into the cave.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE

Beams of light cut through the dark as they find the displaced rubble, the empty cavern.

Indistinct specks of light appear in front of her eyes. They cluster around the cavern, casting a dim light on the rocks.

Janet bends down. Her hands touch the plate, reach into the cavern and take a piece of rubble.

Around her appears a dark, translucent wall like the slopes of a funnel that extends downwards. DESPARATE SCREAMS echo through the cave.

The wall becomes denser. Pain-stricken human faces and demonic grimaces appear in it.

A demon jumps at her from the wall, but passes through her. Janet jerks backwards. As she drops the stone the wall

disappears and Janet sees the specks of light clustered around the cavern again.

JANET

Can you get me to that hall where
Vadim took me before, but the real
thing?

NIKOLAI

You'll be surprised what it looks
like.

JANET

I hope so. I didn't like what I saw.

Setseg comes walking from the tunnel.

INT. VADIM'S ESTATE ALTAR ROOM - DAY

Dunkha chants in ecstasy, holding Janet's lipstick.

She stops, her eyes fixed on infinity. She gets up.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - DAY

Nikolai sits behind Janet, Setseg in front of her, holding Janet's hands.

JANET

Where did she suddenly come from?

NIKOLAI

It's complicated.

Setseg claps her hands together.

JANET

Nikolai, don't sing. Okay?

LATER

Janet's spirit, a mirror image of her body, stands beside Setseg. They watch Nikolai as he moves her body into a lying position and places the backpack under her head.

He sits down again, goes into meditation.

The sound of a WIND CHIME is heard. A mirror image of Nikolai splits from his body and stands up.

NIKOLAI

Let's go.

He takes Janet by the arm. The three disappear.

EXT. CITY - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Janet, Nikolai and Setseg stand on a meadow on a hill. Behind them is a grove of blossoming trees.

In front of them lies a city of tall, massive, yet dilapidated buildings. Skywalks meander in crooked paths. Fragile, age-old bridges reach into the distance.

Few people wander among the buildings.

JANET

Wow. This is different.

Setseg takes the lead, striding toward a tall building at the base of the hill.

Nikolai pushes the gate. It opens slowly, screeching.

INT. HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Janet, Nikolai and Setseg enter the hall and stand on a wide, circular platform. Clefts of shelves fan out in all directions, no end in sight. The heights are obscured by darkness.

In the center of the platform, behind a huge desk, sits a LIBRARIAN, an ageless woman with thick glasses, her mien as intimidating as the tone of her voice.

LIBRARIAN

What is your request?

They stop and Setseg turns to Janet.

SETSEG

You want go where?

JANET

I want to see the priest that refused to bury my mother.

SETSEG

We try.
 (to Nikolai)
Mother is where?

Nikolai walks into one of the clefts. The Librarian pays no further attention.

INT. ALLEY IN HALL OF RECORDS - SPIRIT WORLD

Janet, Nikolai and Setseg walk between endless shelves of ancient books, dilapidated and moldy.

Side alleys appear on either side, winding in twisted paths, belying the symmetrical architecture.

Nikolai turns into an alley, takes a book and opens it as a vision replaces a portion of the shelf.

EXT. KRAKOW SHOPPING STREET - VISION - DAY

The street of Julia's accident.

Hanna talks with Julia who stares at the street. Her eyes widen.

A girl dressed like 17-year-old Janet walks into it, seemingly unaware of traffic.

A truck approaches at high speed.

Julia shouts, runs after the girl, jumps, pushes her out of the truck's path. Tires SCREECH.

The girl turns around; her face is that of a demon.

Julia's eyes widen in horror.

The truck hits her with a DULL THUMP.

17-year-old Janet comes running from the shop.

Present day Janet is shocked and relieved, but Setseg grabs her arm. Together they walk into the vision.

SETSEG
Church is where?

JANET

This way.

She points down the road and they run in that direction.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - VISION

Janet takes the lead through a hallway lined with statues of saints.

As they walk past them, the statues' faces morph into demonic grimaces which stare after them.

They arrive at the

SANCTUARY

just as 17-year-old Janet pleads with the Priest.

PRIEST

We received our life from God and
we must not end it by our own hands.
Because of that, the Church cannot
give your mother a Christian burial.
I am sorry.

17-year-old Janet takes his arm. Her features freeze in shock.

The priest's face distorts into a grimace resembling Azazel.

Janet jumps to the front, grabs the priest's arm and SHOUTS.

JANET

Leave this place of God, Satan.

The environment distorts. A strong wind blows.

EXT. ANCIENT CITY - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Under a sullen sky, human figures lumber in stale half-light among time-worn buildings.

Janet and Nikolai stand with their back toward a huge gate, walled up with masonry worn by winds of millennia.

From the other side of a street, the demon from the church, now dressed in a hooded robe, watches them.

He turns and walks down a cobblestone road. Janet and Nikolai go after him.

To their left lies a square that looks like a market place full of tables. As they approach, the tables turn out to be boulders. On some of them lie people engaged in sexual acts. Others are covered with blood, mutilated animals, human remains.

The demon extends his lead. He turns a corner. Janet and Nikolai rush to catch up, but when they arrive at the corner the demon is gone.

In front of them the city unfolds in a circular pattern, extending downward into a deep funnel.

Across the street an empty square borders at a knee-high wall. They walk to the wall and look into the funnel.

EXT. SQUARE - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

The bottom of the funnel is cast in a bluish glow. Three people hang on crosses in the center of a square.

NIKOLAI

The gates of hell. Did you know we'd end up here?

JANET

I had a hunch. I figured if Akasha is a cosmic database it must be possible to move between records using keys, hyperlinks, like moving hand over hand along a network, just not with hands, but with the mind.

NIKOLAI

Err... right. Database records.

JANET

It's all dog food, really.

NIKOLAI

And what's your next association?

All kind of insects are crawling from cracks in the ground.

JANET

Cockroaches.

NIKOLAI

What?

JANET

At home we had cockroaches. They hide from the light, but they came out when we prayed. My mother said they came to be killed.

Nikolai looks terminally mystified.

JANET

Tell me about the sphere. How did you become the Guardian?

He takes a deep breath before he answers.

NIKOLAI

Years ago my father selected a bride for me and conducted the Ritual of Ascension, a ceremony that transfers guardianship from one generation to the next.

Janet's brow furrows but she lets him talk.

NIKOLAI

Guardians never touch the sphere, except during the ritual, but only for a few seconds.

(beat)

The moment when I touched the sphere seemed to contain eternity. In an instant I embraced the universe. I sensed every being, every atom in the cosmos. Time did not exist.

The sky grows dark. Janet shivers as she looks around.

A shadow ascends from the depth of the funnel.

NIKOLAI

Then a gate appeared before me and beyond it a land of incredible beauty. I felt that I and every human being were to pass through the gate and enter that land. But by the gate stood a bright angel. He said I could pass if I surrendered the sphere.

A beat.

NIKOLAI

I knew I could not do that, but my desire to enter that beautiful land was so strong that I never touched the sphere again.

The buildings around them are bathed in a bluish light. From the edge of the square, Azazel watches them. Janet points at him.

JANET

The cockroaches come from their holes.

A strong wind pins Nikolai against a building. All buildings around the square retreat into the distance.

More demons appear on the wall. Azazel, his eyes fixed on Janet, walks toward her.

AZAZEL

Girl from the western fields. I always was astounded at what you would do. I could not but admire your perseverance, the depth of your longing that even survived the death of your faith, your courage... some might call it love.

He stands beside her. Their eyes meet.

AZAZEL

You know, killing His chosen ones has its complications. They have a way of haunting us. Remember the Nazarene. For forty-three days he was all over the place and he has been a nuisance ever since.

Azazel's lips almost touch her face. Janet pulls her head back without shirking from his look.

AZAZEL

Not that I would compare you two.

A beat.

AZAZEL

But that you would enter Hell at your own volition even I did not expect. Very well, now you can stay.

JANET

What are you going to do?

AZAZEL

Kill you, of course. This place will be your grave.

He points at the funnel. Janet swallows hard.

JANET

You cannot do that.

AZAZEL

Why not?

JANET

I mean you no harm.

Azazel issues an insane laugh.

AZAZEL

She means no harm!

(beat)

So you come as a friend?

He takes a step back, looks up and down at her.

AZAZEL

You met the wrong demon. It is Semyaza who has chosen you for his bride. If it had been for me, I had finished you on the lake and thrown you far beyond the reach of nether gloom.

(beat)

But then, neither do Semyaza's playthings see the light once they fall out of his grace.

JANET

I will leave with the sphere and you will not hold me.

AZAZEL

Blasphemy! Now that you entered my realm, your journey has come to an end.

(screaming)

Bow and I let you choose your place in Hell.

Azazel, eyes fixed on her, takes a few casual steps backwards. Janet withstands his hateful stare.

Suddenly a gale hits Janet, almost blowing her over the wall.

The wall and the ground under her feet turn to rubble that is sucked into the funnel which turns into a bottomless pit.

With only her toes she stands on the edge of the abyss, leaning forward against the storm.

AZAZEL

Bow while you can!

Tears appear in her eyes. Her lips begin to move.

As the storm grows stronger a light rises from the abyss and ascends to the level of the square. It comes to rest between Janet and Azazel.

With great effort, Janet moves one foot forward, then the other.

Her features relax, she becomes peaceful. She kneels down, bows to the light, which only she can see.

Nikolai is terrified. Across the distance he sees Janet bow before Azazel, who delights in the moment of her surrender.

NIKOLAI

No, Janet!

Janet rises and kneels again, her eyes fixed on the featureless, head-high figure in front of her.

NIKOLAI

Janet, no! You will become his own.

Azazel grins triumphantly as Janet bows before him, but then his grin freezes.

AZAZEL

To whom do you bow?

Janet stands up. Bright light illuminates her face. She bows again.

AZAZEL

Stop, whore of a servant. I command you. I forbid you to bow.

Janet kneels down again, enveloped by a glow that brightens with every of her bows.

Azazel is at the brink of madness. He screams in disgust and fury.

AZAZEL

Go to the Watchtower of the East,
the Vigils against the Light. There
you will find what you search.

The storm calms. Azazel speaks directly into her face.

AZAZEL

But I will be there to feast on
your heart and celebrate the end of
all hope.

Azazel disappears. The storm ceases abruptly. Janet falls forward to the ground.

The abyss closes. The square's pavement lies in shambles.

Nikolai runs to Janet and helps her up.

JANET

Watchtower of the East? Vigils
against the Light? Do you have any
idea?

The scenery distorts. A strong wind blows.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

Janet and Nikolai stand on a path leading down to a creek in
a barren valley.

NIKOLAI

You were asking...?

Across the divide on a jagged mountain peak stands a castle.
Its center is a massive, four-story building. Light flickers
in the upper floor windows as a cold wind blows across.

EXT. LAKE BAIKAL - DAY

Elena's Land Rover drives on the ice, approaches the shore.
It drives onto the beach and onto a narrow road.

LATER

The car stops at a wooden hut, decorated with Shamanic icons.

EXT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Elena and Ron stand at the door. Elena knocks.

ELENA

Let me speak. Some people here
don't like foreigners.

The SHAMAN (50s) opens. He wears jeans, a woolen shirt. His
face shows suspicion, turns hostile when he notices Ron.

SHAMAN

(to Elena)

What do you want?

Elena pulls a book from her bag. It's the same as Nikolai's
with golden engravings on the cover.

The Shaman's eyes widen. He waves them in.

EXT. CASTLE - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

Janet and Nikolai arrive at the castle's gate. The central building stands across the courtyard. There are no guards.

They rush across the yard and enter the building.

INT. CASTLE LOBBY - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

Across the hall is a closed gate. VOICES sound from inside.

There are smaller doors in the side walls. They rush to enter one on the left.

From a door on the right a DEMON OF SEMYAZA watches them.

INT. CANDLE-LIT ALTAR ROOM - NIGHT

Dunkha kneels in front of Semyaza's altar, chanting.

On the altar lies Janet's lipstick.

INT. STAIRCASE - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

Nikolai takes the lead up the stairs.

INT. CASTLE SECOND FLOOR - SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

A hallway leads onto a balcony around a large hall that reaches from the floor below up to the second floor ceiling.

The parapet allows a view on the

FIRST FLOOR

At the back wall stands a pedestal with the sphere on top, guarded by two of Semyaza's demons.

BALCONY

Nikolai grabs Janet's arm, points at the sphere.

NIKOLAI

There!

Nikolai pulls her back into the hallway and down the stairs.

STAIRWAY

A DEMON OF AZAZEL morphs out of the brickwork, jumps at Janet and grabs her. More of his kind emerge from the walls.

Nikolai gets hold of Janet's arm just as the Demon jumps back into the wall, dragging both of them with him.

The Demon morphs halfway back into the wall but then is thrown backwards as a DEMON OF SEMYAZA emerges from the wall, charging Azazel's Demon who lets go of Janet and fights.

Janet and Nikolai hit the floor and flee into the

CASTLE LOBBY

They run across the hall, into the courtyard and head for the gate.

AT THE GATE

Nikolai holds Janet back, stops and turns around. He points at the castle.

It transforms into Vadim's estate.

NIKOLAI

Let's go.

JANET

What is this?

NIKOLAI

What we saw is the spiritual form of this place. I knew Vadim had a secret site, but not where it was.

He pulls her out the gate.

EXT. ESTATE ACCESS ROAD - NIGHT

Janet and Nikolai hurry down the road. He scans the environment.

JANET

What are you looking for?

NIKOLAI

I need to know where we are so I
can find this place on a map.

They reach a bend and pass by a road sign. A village lies in
the valley below. At its outskirts a manufacturing plant
with a chimney stands out.

NIKOLAI

I know this place. It's a one hour
drive from the cave. Now we can go.

He takes her arm. She holds him back.

JANET

Go where?

NIKOLAI

Back to the cave. Get our bodies.

JANET

Wait a moment.

(beat)

I think only you should go.

NIKOLAI

What?

JANET

Think about it. I'm still blind. In
my body I won't be of much help.

He thinks about it.

NIKOLAI

Right. Your body would be useless.

JANET

You're the first man to say that.

Nikolai doesn't get it.

JANET

Never mind. Just go.

NIKOLAI

Wait by the bend near the estate so
I'll find you. And be careful.

He disappears.

A bright flash of light illuminates the sky near the estate.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A flash brightens the room. The Shaman and Elena watch Ron who points a large digital camera at a table.

On the table lies the piece of cloth that wrapped the sphere in the Tunguska scene.

Ron's eyes are fixed on the image viewer, which shows Janet standing on a snowy road.

RON
This is Janet.

SHAMAN
Who Janet?

Elena explains in Russian.

CLICK. Another flash brightens the room.

EXT. ESTATE ACCESS ROAD - NIGHT

A bright flash in the sky.

Janet looks up, sees few clouds, the moon, stars.

Another flash brightens the sky behind the hill as Janet walks up the road toward the estate.

INT. CAVE OF THE SPHERE - NIGHT

Nikolai's and Janet's bodies lie on the ground. A mirror image of Nikolai appears.

A WIND CHIME SOUNDS as the image merges with Nikolai's body.

He sits up and looks at Janet, who lies completely still. His fingers touch her cheek.

NIKOLAI
I wish you all the best, girl from
the western fields.

He gets up and rushes into the exit tunnel.

EXT. VADIM'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Janet stands by the gate. A flash casts a bright light on the compound as she walks to the main building.

INT. VADIM'S MAIN BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

Guards run to the gate across the hall and open it.

At the far end stands the pedestal with the sphere which in irregular intervals sends out bright flashes.

Janet enters the door she used before with Nikolai.

INT. SECOND FLOOR BALCONY - NIGHT

Janet reaches the end of the hallway and looks around. The balcony is empty. She sneaks to the parapet, peeks into the

HALL

where five of Semyaza's demons stand by the sphere, mystified by the flashes.

BALCONY

From a dark corner, three of Azazel's demons watch Janet.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ron holds the camera. The image viewer shows Janet at the parapet. He fires off another picture and the camera flashes.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

A flash bursts from the sphere. The demons duck.

The gate to the lobby is open. Vadim's guards stand outside.

JANET

(to herself)

He'll never make it into here.

Her eyes scan the balcony. The adjacent wall has a door.

She walks over, reaches for the handle. Her hand passes through it. She tries again. She presses her hand against the door. It passes through.

A moment of hesitation. Janet steps through the door onto an

OUTER BALCONY

and walks to the parapet, scans the outer wall. It goes straight down.

Janet jumps.

INT. NIKOLAI'S LAND ROVER - NIGHT

Nikolai reaches the bend by the village, parks the car. Setseg sits in the passenger seat.

EXT. ESTATE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Nikolai gets out. Without looking back, he rushes uphill.

Nikolai arrives at the gate and looks around. Setseg waves from the other side. He follows her to the main building.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ron takes another picture. The Shaman and Elena peek over his shoulder.

The image viewer shows a still picture of Janet at the outer wall. Her face shines brightly.

SHAMAN

Who she?

Flash. The viewer shows Janet standing at the corner of the building.

SHAMAN

Who she? You with her?

Flash. The Shaman taps Ron on the shoulder.

SHAMAN

She your woman? Tell me. You with her?

RON

What do you mean?

SHAMAN

You with her? You sex with her?

ELENA

He wants to know whether you two
are married... or something.

RON

We're not married. She's my friend.

They stare at him blankly.

RON

No. I'm not sleeping with her.

The Shaman is visibly delighted.

SHAMAN

Friend. Good. No sex. Good.

(pointing at image viewer)

She is girl from western fields.

She take sphere to palace mountain.

Ron grows increasingly mystified.

SHAMAN

She go alone. But forty child of
men will stand by side. I forty.

He points at Ron.

SHAMAN

You one.

(pointing at Elena)

You two. Who else?

ELENA

(unsure)

Nikolai?

SHAMAN

Nikolai! Good man. He know evil
well.

He points at Ron and Elena, counting with his fingers.

SHAMAN

One, two, three. Forty. Forty-
three. You understand?

RON

Not a word.

The Shaman takes his cell phone.

SHAMAN

No need understand. You see.

Flash.

The Shaman's jaw drops.

The viewer shows Janet holding hands with the young woman from the cottage in Tunguska.

EXT. VADIM'S MAIN BUILDING - OUTER WALL - NIGHT

Janet and Setseg embrace. Setseg quickly lets go and points to the front entrance. Janet pulls her toward the back, points at the balcony.

JANET

There is a door on the balcony, but we have to get up there.

AROUND THE CORNER

The building's back wall stretches along the steep slope that leads into a cleft.

At the far end of the wall a hand covered with grey scales drops a long ladder. CLANK.

SIDE WALL

Nikolai hears the noise and walks to the corner.

At the other end of the wall lies the ladder.

NIKOLAI

(to Janet)

Come.

AROUND THE CORNER

They check the ladder.

SETSEG

This very strange.

NIKOLAI

We have no choice.

He puts the ladder against the wall and climbs up. Janet follows.

EXT. OUTER BALCONY - NIGHT

Nikolai peeks over the parapet onto the empty balcony. He pulls himself up.

Armed guards appear in the door from the hall and shoot immediately. Several bullets hit the wall but two hit Nikolai in chest and shoulder.

He falls through Janet, hits the ground. His body rolls down the slope and disappears in the cleft.

JANET

No!

Guards appear at the parapet. They look down.

The ladder is empty.

PARAPET

Semyaza's demons appear beside the guards. They look down at the ladder where Janet holds on, still in shock. They go for her.

Janet jumps down and vanishes.

INT. VADIM'S MAIN BUILDING - ALTAR ROOM - NIGHT

In front of the altar kneels Dunkha, chanting fiercely. Her clothes are soaked with sweat. Her fingers clench Janet's lipstick.

Suddenly, she stops. With a triumphant look in her eyes she gets up and leaves.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

Janet's body lies on the ground. She moves, jerks. Her eyes open. She cries.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - NIGHT

An Mi-8T helicopter cruises across the mountains, descending into a valley.

INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Vadim, Dunkha and two guards sit inside the chopper.

INT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

Janet sits up, dries her tears. She gets up, gropes around, finds the tunnel.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CAVE - NIGHT

Janet exits the cave, breathes the cold air.

Vadim's guards grab her and drag her to the helicopter.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE

Ron takes another photo of the cloth. The flash is weak.

The image viewer remains black. He presses the release button again. No flash.

RON
Battery is dead.

SHAMAN
No worry. I have better.

He dials his cell phone.

INT. VADIM'S ESTATE - TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Concrete walls are covered with demonic icons, symbols and words in an unknown language.

Janet sits on a chair, her face dirty, exhausted, defiant. Above her head a chain dangles in a noose fixed to the ceiling.

Vadim stands in front of her. Dunkha, standing nearby, looks on with contempt.

Conrad and two guards stand at the heavy steel door. Conrad looks deeply worried.

VADIM

Don't you understand? Semyaza
already chose you as the Guardian
Bride. I do you a favor when I ask
your cooperation.

He moves close to her face.

VADIM

If you refuse, I will wear you down
and demons will walk your body to
the altar.

Janet spits at him. Vadim slaps her face so hard that she
falls to the floor.

He signals GUARD #1, who comes and ties her hands with the
chain, closes it with a lock. GUARD #2 pulls up the other
end, forcing her to stand. Vadim takes the key from Guard #1.

VADIM

These walls hold both your spirit
and body. You will attend the
ritual one way or another.

Janet's legs give out but her fall is stopped by the chain.
She scrambles to get up.

VADIM

And don't fall asleep. You need
every minute to ponder your
decision.

After a sign from Vadim, Guard #2 throws a bucket of water
at her.

INT. VADIM'S OFFICE - DAY

Conrad stands at Vadim's desk, deeply worried and upset,
engaged in an emotional discussion.

CONRAD

You're killing her. For what? How
can you believe that you will rule
over demons?

VADIM

It is in the order of things. Even now, Semyaza needs me to reach for the sphere.

CONRAD

Why is she the bride? Why not Dunkha?

VADIM

A necessary compromise. To undo that fateful deal which brought us into bondage, made us the slaves of slaves. What does a single life matter?

CONRAD

What about God?

VADIM

God? Where was he when the mouths of wrath fed on his people, mocking and killing those that clung to him? And when we lost everything the church stood in judgment over us, washing the hands of those that ruined us.

CONRAD

You and I were not even alive then.

VADIM

I've tasted enough bitterness myself. And all this, little brother, it comes from what I paid. The heaven you taste, God has no part in it.

He walks back to his desk and looks out the window.

VADIM

Leave her alone. She has no future. She is Semyaza's. Forget her or dig your own grave.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

Janet struggles to stand.

Before her eyes appears the indistinct image of a tunnel. It sharpens as she travels into it.

INT. TUNNEL - SPIRIT WORLD - DAY

Walls consisting of soil, crawling with roaches and worms, drift by.

After a few yards, a massive, wrought-iron grating blocks the way. Beyond it lies a large cave, its walls riddled with holes.

On a boulder before one of the caves sits Julia, clothed in rags. Mary lies beside her.

Julia rises, signals Mary to stay and walks to grating. She looks old and tired. The image fades.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

Janet stands alone in the chamber as Semyaza appears.

He circles around her, his eyes examining every inch of her body.

Janet's eyes, blind again, search the darkness around her.

SEMYAZA

I see your strength, you know? I have always admired the vigor of the daughters of man.

Janet, shocked by the voice, sees a bluish shadow form in the darkness and transform into Semyaza.

Her face remains pale and expressionless.

SEMYAZA

You are the magnificent crown of cosmic creation. Each a drop from the radiant sea of eternity into the barren desert of futility and despair. A song of celebration to the senses of both angel and man.

His right finger moves up her leg and hip, along her ribs, upwards to her lips.

SEMYAZA

I have given all for you. I
descended from Heaven just to
embrace you, feel you, your bodies,
your breasts, your lips on mine.

His fingers play in her face.

SEMYAZA

I never understood how you could
surrender your mastership, even to
the Lord of Angels. Did you not
know that once you give up the
crown of the spirit, you lose
everything with it?

His eyes move down her body, back up to her eyes.

SEMYAZA

But you are so much stronger than
she who made that deal. How misery
adds to the quality of man... that
is another mystery.

Her lips begin to move.

SEMYAZA

Here only I will hear your prayers.

He stands eye-to-eye with her.

SEMYAZA

Don't mind the Guardian. Become the
bride and it will be me whose hand
you take. From me you will receive
your reward.

His bluish glow extends towards her.

In Janet's eyes the glow covers the chamber. Her lips
continue to move. Her hands clutch the chain.

JANET

Glory be to the Father...

SEMYAZA

I am your father.

JANET
 ...and the Son...

The glow now completely embraces her.

SEMYAZA
 Just let go. Embrace the glory that
 descended from Heaven.

Waves of light ripple up her body. She breathes hard, falls into the chain, backs away from him with all her strength, but the chain pulls her back into his arms.

He holds her, a superior smile on his lips but she spits into his face. He hurls her away and she swings like a pendulum. Her feet hit the floor. She struggles, stands up again.

JANET
 Forgive our sins, save us from the
 fires of Hell and lead all souls to
 Heaven...

SEMYAZA
 Whore of a servant! Do you think he
 cares for you? Hears your prayers?
 You gave your crown away and will
 never rise above an angel. Your
 creation will be his undoing. No
 memory of you will remain once we
 rule the world alone.

JANET
 ...glory be to the Father...

SEMYAZA
 Have you seen your folks? Their
 current abode will seem like Heaven
 compared to the place that you
 prepare for them.

Janet's lips continue to move as Semyaza's furious scream echoes through the halls.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Flashes from a stroboscope illuminate the room. A camera on a tripod is aimed at the cloth on the table. YURIJ (20s) connects cables to a monitor.

SHAMAN

Yurij has disco in North. Also makes movies, DVDs. Good money from tourists.

Ron stands by as the monitor comes on. It shows only the flickering cloth.

RON

Nothing.

SHAMAN

No worry. Entered first circle of darkness. She be back... if can find river of light.

He turns to a PC. Ron's digital camera is connected to it. Using the mouse he clicks through some pictures that Ron made earlier. A photo of Janet comes up.

SHAMAN

(to himself)

She virgin? Incredible.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - DAY

A beam of water from a hose hits Janet, who hangs from the chain, unconscious. She awakens. Her lips quiver.

A guard, holding the hose, a cigarette between his lips, smiles viciously.

LATER

Janet stands alone. Tears roll down her cheeks. Her lips move.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

The strobes flash. Ron stares at the monitor which shows only the cloth.

Drums pound outside.

ELENA

I feel something happened to
Nikolai.

SHAMAN

Not good if. Need forty-three.

RON

(staring at monitor)
Something is happening here.

Brighter flashes, sparks seem to come from the cloth.

Shaman goes to the front door, shouts in Russian. The
drumming stops.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

The guard again shoots water from a hose at the half-
conscious Janet.

Suddenly he drops the hose and slumps to the ground. Behind
him stands Conrad, holding a steel pipe.

JANET

Who is here?

CONRAD

It's me... Conrad.

JANET

Conrad? From the plane?

CONRAD

You'll hate me if I explain. But
I'll get you out of here.

He searches the guard.

CONRAD

No keys.

He walks to the wall and beats the hook with the steel pipe
until it breaks. The chain comes loose and Janet drops to
the floor.

Conrad helps her up and pulls her to the door. The chain
rattles on the floor and Janet picks it up.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Janet and Conrad rush through the corridor into a hall.

Conrad turns right to a metal door, opens it and they step into a yard.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Conrad pulls Janet across the yard, but she stalls.

JANET

Wait. Where are you going?

CONRAD

There's a bridge. I have a car on the other side. Come. Quick!

JANET

No.

CONRAD

Once the guard wakes up they will look for you.

JANET

We have to go back.

CONRAD

Are you out of your mind?

JANET

Maybe, but I need the sphere.

DUNKHA (O.S.)

Don't we all?

Conrad is shocked as Dunkha comes walking from the backyard.

CONRAD

I can explain...

DUNKHA

No need to explain. You do the right thing. She should leave.

Dunkha takes the chain and pulls Janet forward.

They reach a stone bridge leading over the cleft. Dunkha pulls Janet onto the bridge as a torrent rushes through the darkness below.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Janet's hands find the balustrade. She holds on to it.

CONRAD

What are you doing?

Conrad comes to help Janet but Dunkha lands a kick to his groin, another one into his face. He drops to the ground.

Janet lands an inexact elbow strike to Dunkha's ribs. Dunkha grabs the chain, pulls her close, bumps her head against the stone.

Janet is dazed for a moment. Then the shadow of Dunkha appears before her eyes.

JANET

Who are you?

DUNKHA

I am Dunkha, the Guardian Bride.

JANET

So am I, I heard.

Dunkha pulls at the chain, hits Janet in the face and pushes her over the railing. Janet holds on from the other side.

Dunkha ties the chain around the stone, keeping Janet in place, and kicks her in the face.

Janet sees enough to evade some of the kicks while she tries to pull herself back onto the bridge.

One of Dunkha's kicks breaks the handrail. A large piece, the chain still wrapped around it, breaks off and drops into the torrent, taking Janet with it.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

On the monitor appear still pictures of Janet in quick succession:

Janet under water, still tied to the stone...

Janet pulling at the chain...

SHAMAN

Good. She come back.

RON

But she's in trouble.

The Shaman walks to the window and shouts something in Russian. Drums begin to sound.

EXT. TORRENT - NIGHT

The rock lies on the riverbed, the tottering chain wrapped around it. Janet pulls at her shackles.

Her eyesight returns completely, but all she sees are her hands in the chain.

The chain comes off the rock and Janet is swept away.

Her head emerges from the water, she takes a deep breath, tries to stand, but the chain weighs her down and the torrent pulls her away.

Her head hits a rock and the chain gets caught in the root of a tree, jolts, hangs tight.

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

Vadim and some guards arrive at the bridge just as Conrad regains consciousness. Dunkha stands on the bridge.

DUNKHA

Meet the Guardian Bride.

VADIM

What happened?

DUNKHA

She's gone. Azazel will be very cooperative, now that I got him back into the game.

VADIM

That was your plan all along!

DUNKHA

Does it matter now?

EXT. MAIN BUILDING BACKYARD - NIGHT

Semyaza's and Azazel's hordes confront each other in a very bad mood.

Semyaza raises his fist against Azazel, but he doesn't strike. His ANGRY SCREAM echoes through the night.

INT. UNDERWATER - NIGHT

The chain, caught in the root and pulled tight, lies motionless.

EXT. WATERFALL - NIGHT

Janet hangs in the waterfall, unconscious, bruised at her temple. Her arms stretch upwards, her wrists still in the chain.

She gasps. Her eyes open slowly to mist whirling in the deep.

Rushing water tears at her arms, stiff fingers clasp the chain. She pulls herself up, but the current is stronger.

She wraps her legs around a rock jutting out beside her. Pulling at the chain, she comes to sit on the rock, shivering. She stands up. The chain slackens.

She twists her hands, grimaces in pain. She SCREAMS as one hand comes free.

Janet grabs the chain and climbs up.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The strobes are firing.

Ron's eyes are fixed on the monitor where a quick succession of still images shows the walls of the cleft, then the estate from a distance.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

Janet reaches the top, climbs out of the cleft and walks toward to the estate.

Morning dawns as bright flashes light the sky.

EXT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Searchlights cast the square in an eerie light.

The Shaman stands among a group of forty, dressed for the cold, on a small square. Three large drums are positioned at the square's borders. Drummers beat them in a slow rhythm.

Most people carry smaller drums, beating them in the same rhythm.

The Shaman, speaking Russian, positions people on the square, while pointing repeatedly at the sky across the lake.

INT. ESTATE MAIN HALL - DAY

In the front stand two altars. On one, the image of Azazel and a large, golden sculptured skull of a goat, a dagger, a chalice with blood and a bowl with burning coal.

The other altar has an image of Semyaza and before it the sculpture of a demon with wings made from the feathers of a peacock.

Between the altars is the pedestal with the sphere.

Two huge drums stand at the side walls. In the middle of the hall a black carpet, seamed by Semyaza's demons on one and Azazel's on the other, leads to the pedestal.

At the door stand Vadim's guards, eyes fixed on the sphere.

INT. VADIM'S ROOM - DAY

Servants hold a ceremonial gown for Vadim as he gets dressed for the ceremony.

EXT. MAIN BUILDING BACKYARD - DAY

Janet looks around. There are no guards. She approaches the backdoor, rattles the knob. It is locked.

As she slowly walks toward the front, a sliding sound comes from the backdoor. Janet walks back, finding the door ajar.

INT. MAIN BUILDING BASEMENT - DAY

Janet enters, looks around. The basement is empty.

Movement on a stairway. Setseg stands on the stairs, waves to her.

Janet follows her upstairs.

INT. MAIN BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Janet and Setseg stand in a side door looking into the hall. Vadim and Dunkha, both wearing ceremonial gowns, enter the main hall, followed by the guards.

Setseg pulls her up the stairs to the balcony.

INT. BALCONY - DAY

In the hall below, Vadim and Dunkha approach the altar on the black carpet seamed by demons.

Janet and Setseg duck behind the parapet and reach the front of the hall, just above the sphere.

Vadim and Dunkha walk along the center aisle and approach the sphere.

Setseg grabs Janet's arm and points at the sphere.

SETSEG
Sphere. You go take.

JANET
What?

The drums are hit. Setseg pulls Janet above the parapet, pointing at the sphere.

SETSEG
Sphere. You go take.

The drums sound again. Janet looks at the hall full of demons.

Several demons notice them and jump up to the balcony as Janet jumps down.

She comes to stand just in front of

THE SPHERE

and faces Vadim and Dunkha. Behind them, hordes of demons seethe with fury. At the hall entrance, guards pull their weapons.

From behind her comes an angry scream. Janet turns around to face Semyaza and Azazel. Both reach for her.

The drums sound again.

Janet turns to the sphere, takes it firmly with both hands. Instantly, white light emanates from it, penetrating her body. A strong wind erupts from the sphere, blowing in all directions.

In the brightening light, Vadim and Dunkha struggle to stand. Behind her, Semyaza and Azazel push against the wind, trying to grab her.

INT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ron is alone in the room. Strobes are firing.

The monitor shows the barren, rock littered desert and the huge, marble moon in a black sky.

Yurij enters and grabs Ron's arm. Ignoring Ron's protests he pulls him out the door.

EXT. SHAMAN HOUSE - NIGHT

The drum rhythm beats faster. Members of the crowd enter trance while chanting.

Yurij pulls Ron to one of the large drums, where Elena stands, praying.

INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Janet has both hands on the sphere. The winds drive Vadim and Dunkha away from her, but Semyaza and Azazel withstand the storm.

Semyaza grabs Vadim and pulls him toward Janet, but Vadim's body explodes into dust which is driven away.

Dunkha ducks to the ground and pushes herself forward, but she turns to dust and the wind blows it away.

Janet lifts the sphere from the pedestal. Her body turns into bright light.

EXT. ALIEN DESERT LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

The giant moon looms in a black sky as Janet stands in the middle of the desert, holding the sphere.

In the distance, the moon almost touches the horizon. Below it lies a hill with a building on top.

FAINT ETHEREAL sounds fill the air. Janet walkw toward the hill.

EXT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The drums boom. In addition to the search lights, a bright glow covers the scene, ETHEREAL SOUNDS fill the air.

The Shaman chants and dances in ecstasy.

The chanting crowd rhythmically points across the lake. Balls of light emerge from people's hands and travel into the sky across the lake.

EXT. HILL - DAY

Janet reaches the hill, a huge rock riddled with holes.

The bright moon now covers a large portion of the sky, creating the appearance of daylight.

Balls of white light fall from the sky.

As Janet starts to ascend the hill there is movement in one of the holes. A demon appears, reaches for Janet.

More demons emerge from other holes. One of them grabs Janet's ankle. She stumbles, but turns and lands on her back, holding the sphere above her.

One of the fireballs hits the demon. He screams in pain and lets go of her. Janet gets up and staggers uphill.

Janet reaches the top. The building turns out to be a large rock altar.

Janet turns around. The desert now teems with demons that advance up the hill.

The fireballs turn into a fiery rain which burns deep scars into the demons bodies. They scream and convulse in pain. Some turn to dust which merges with the ground.

Some demons reach the top and grab Janet. She clutches the sphere, struggles, but can't free herself.

The fiery rain now envelops the entire hill, burning all the demons. Their screams fill the air.

Janet herself is enveloped in a bright light that pulsates whenever a fireball hits her.

She jumps on the altar, looks at the marble moon which is now within her reach.

The fiery rain retreats to the foot of the hill, surrounding it like a wall of fire. From within it desperate screams of demons are heard.

Something moves in the shiny surface of the moon. It is a reflection of Semyaza.

Janet looks at the other end of the altar. There stands Semyaza with an evil yet nervous smirk on his face.

SEMYAZA

Well done. You have accomplished what came to do. You found the sphere. Now free your folks.

He moves toward her. Janet points the sphere at him.

JANET

Stay where you are.

He stops and nervously eyes the sphere.

SEMYAZA

What is your plan? You came as far as you can go. What else do you have to gain? Where could you go?

Janet looks around her.

SEMYAZA

The prayers of mortals cannot touch me, but what about your folks?

He points to the foot of the hill.

Julia and Mary stand there, covered in rags. The fiery rain advances toward them.

Janet looks at them, tears in her eyes.

SEMYAZA

This is your moment of glory. Give
me the sphere.

Sparks hit Mary and burn her skin. She screams. Julia tries to shield her with her body and is also hit by fire.

She looks again at the moon, at the sphere, at Julia and Mary.

JANET

You are a liar. My family cannot be
hurt by prayers of good people.

Semyaza looks frightened and leaps at her. She turns around, backs into him, clutching the sphere before her chest. Semyaza grabs her, throws her on the rock.

SEMYAZA

Eternity will be a curse for you,
eating your heart and tormenting
those you love.

Janet hits the sphere against his chest. Sparks fly, Semyaza screams in pain.

JANET

Only goodness is eternal.

She gets up, runs to the other end. Semyaza comes after her, but she whirls around and smashes the sphere in his face.

She raises the sphere above her head.

Semyaza leaps at her, reaches her just in the moment when she touches the moon.

Semyaza passes through her.

Glaring white light erupts from her body.

EXT. VADIM'S ESTATE - DAY

The sun rises behind the mountains. In the sky above the complex erupts a glaring white light, brighter than the sun.

Buildings fold like paper, trees are bent like grass.

EXT. HILL - DAY

Janet stands on the altar, holding the sphere above her. The landscape disappears. Stars and galaxies whirl around her.

In front of her appears a coarse, spherical wire frame, the same size as the sphere.

She brings the two together. They merge in her hands.

EXT. GATE - DAY

A huge, open stone portal appears in front of Janet then disappears, giving way to a mountainous landscape.

EXT. HIGH PLATEAU - DAY

Blue sky. The view extends to a wide plateau with lush forests covering the slopes of surrounding mountains.

Close by, halfway up a mountain, stands a large building, obscured by mist.

Janet stands on a large boulder on a hilltop. Her hands hold the sphere. She looks around. There is nobody else.

Down the hill extends a wide plane with trees and bushes. She starts to walk toward the building on the mountain.

MONTAGE - JANET ON WAY TO THE PALACE

-- Janet stands amidst trees and bushes. She turns back and looks at the hill where she came from.

-- Janet crosses a creek and walks up a hill. She turns back. The hill where she came from can hardly be seen, but in front of her the palace lies in the same distance as before.

-- Janet approaches one of the fields. She sits down to rest on piece of rock. The distance to the palace is unchanged.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Janet is exhausted. She stares at the palace which is still shrouded in mist.

SETSEG (O.S.)

Always same. You never reach.

Janet whirls around. Setseg stands in a group of trees. She runs to Setseg and they embrace.

SETSEG

You do well.

JANET

Where are we? What happened?

SETSEG

Here no speak past, no speak future.
Only now.

Janet is mystified. Around them fields are scattered between trees and meadows. In the distance some people work in the fields. Setseg points at them.

SETSEG

Those can live without law.

JANET

What do you mean?

NIKOLAI (O.S.)

The people are called 'those who
can live without law.'

Janet whirls around. Nikolai stands close behind her.

NIKOLAI

It's a way of saying that they
don't need laws to live in peace.
It's in the prophecy.

JANET

I saw you fall...

NIKOLAI

Shhh... Don't speak about the past.
Not here.

A beat.

NIKOLAI

I was hoping to come to this place
and put the sphere to rest. But it
couldn't be. Nobody can come here
except the girl.

He looks at her. Tears well up in her eyes. She points at
the palace.

JANET

Don't we have to go there?

SETSEG

Cannot go. No need. Mountain here.

Setseg points at the ground. Then she takes Janet's hand and
they walk to a group of apple trees.

A man is harvesting apples, collecting them in large baskets.

Setseg points to a basket full of red apples.

SETSEG

Take apple.

Janet takes an apple.

SETSEG

Put sphere.

Janet hesitates, then puts the sphere in the basket.

Setseg takes her hand, looks her into the eyes, smiling
brightly.

SETSEG

Eat apple.

Janet takes a bite.

SETSEG

Family fine, no worry.

Janet stares at her, lost in thought. She turns back to look
again at the sphere which turns black. Within it the face of
Julia appears, looking just like she appeared to Janet in
the torture chamber.

Mary comes running from the back and takes Julia's hand. Both look tired, but as Janet watches them their faces grow young.

A happy voice sounds behind Janet.

MARY

Janet!

Janet turns around seeing Julia and Mary. Mary holds Misiek in her hand. She runs to her and they embrace. Julia slowly walks over and also embraces Janet.

JULIA

It is good to see you. I was so worried.

JANET

I have so much to tell you.

JULIA

Not now.

Janet has tears in her eyes. Julia looks at Nikolai.

JULIA

You found a good man. He reminds me of your father.

JANET

Mom, you don't understand--

Julia puts her finger on Janet's mouth.

JULIA

I understand.

Janet looks at Nikolai. Setseg picks up a splinter of rock.

JULIA

You will be fine. Believe me.

SETSEG

You have long life, but some time you be back. Then talk. Now no time.

She stretches out her hand which holds the rock splinter. Janet takes it.

A bright flash of light.

EXT. RUINS OF VADIM'S ESTATE - DAY

Janet wakes in a field of rubble. Her hands hold the old, worn Misiek and the rock splinter.

Near the cleft stands, Setseg waves to her.

Janet wants to embrace her, but Setseg points into the cleft.

SETSEG

You go, look.

Janet walks to the cleft and bends over. A shred of cloth hangs in the branches of a bush.

She climbs down, finds a cavity hidden sheltered by bushes. A body lies in it.

Janet turns the body. It is Nikolai, badly bruised, his shoulder bloody, bullet holes in his pullover.

JANET

Nikolai!

Nikolai moves.

LATER

Nikolai leans against the rocks. He pulls his cell phone from his pants and hands it to Janet.

NIKOLAI

Press number one.

EXT. SHAMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ron and Elena sit with the Shaman and others at a table, chatting, laughing. The Shaman offers Ron a bottle. Ron takes a sip and starts coughing.

ELENA

A local brand. Eighty proof.

Elena's cell phone rings. She answers.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

EXT. CLEFT - DAY

JANET
Hello, this is Janet.

ELENA
Hello. How is Nikolai? Is he okay?

JANET
He will be.

ELENA
So what happened?

JANET
There's a lot to explain.

ELENA
We should meet some time.

JANET
I'd like that. Is Ron there?

Janet, cell phone in hand, looks up the slope where Setseg stands, smiling.

JANET
(to Nikolai)
She looks almost too young to be
your grandmother.

NIKOLAI
Actually, she is my great
grandmother. She was the first
Guardian Bride in our family. She
passed over when I was ten.

Janet's jaw drops.

RON
Hello, Janet.

No answer.

RON
Janet... ?

Janet's eyes are wider than her mouth.

Up the slope stands the young woman from the Tunguska scene. Her long, black hair flies in the wind as she arranges a large, colorful scarf around her shoulders.

Then her image fades into the blue of the sky.

NIKOLAI

Janet... ?

JANET

(into phone)

I'll... have to call you back.

She ends the call, looks at Nikolai.

END INTERCUT.

She stares at him for some time.

JANET

(deadpan)

You look good.

NIKOLAI

Love is blind they say.

JANET

Are you getting sensitive?

NIKOLAI

I think I'll focus on that.

EXT. ESTATE GROUNDS - DAY

The estate lies in ruins.

A car drives onto the grounds. People get out. Others come walking through the gate.

People flock the grounds and two birds glide in the sky.

FADE OUT.