

FADE IN:

EXT. SCULPTURE GARDEN OF OLD BAYOU PLANTATION - NIGHT

Storm clouds gather overhead. A battered, bloody JOHN DOE in a bathrobe crawls through mud and rain to a life-size marble crucifix sculpture facing a gnarly oak tree.

He reaches up, touches Jesus's feet. A club smashes his head.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM LOBBY OF RURAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

NURSE NORMA O'NEIL, 20's, a pale, flinty redhead, watches weather report of a freak hurricane outside New Orleans.

She rubs a crucifix charm on her necklace, slyly kisses it.

EMT workers PETE, 20's, eager beaver, and MEL 30's, blasé, sit behind Norma, groan in unison.

DOCTOR SAMANTHA "SAM" BURKE, 30's, haughty, commanding, paces across the room.

NORMA

I best check on supplies.

SAM

Where the fuck is Jake?

NORMA

Doctor Sam. Language please.

Pete and Mel snort. Norma blushes, glares, holds her head high, exits into hallway. Laughter roars behind her.

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - NIGHT

Norma closes door, sets a plastic-covered pillow on floor, kneels, closes her eyes, clutches her crucifix.

NORMA

Dear Lord, please spare us from the wrath of this terrible storm. Ease the winds, still the rains and bless us all with your protection, Amen.

As she prays, objects float in the room. She opens her eyes and they gently settle, unnoticed by her. She stands, exits.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT

DOCTOR JAKE MADSEN, late 40's, charismatic, enters the lobby, soaked and muddy, hangs up his coat nonchalantly.

Norma enters lobby, runs to him. Sam follows on Norma's heels.

NORMA

Jacob, are you okay?

SAM

Yeah Jake, are you okay with being two hours late on my last fucking night in this podunk bandage factory? Now I get to drive an hour in this shitstorm back to Nawlins!

Norma glares at Sam, opens her mouth to speak. Sam cuts her off with a raised hand, stomps to the closet, puts on coat.

Jake ignores Sam completely, turns to Norma, smiles warmly.

JAKE

I'm fine Norma. My truck skidded off the road. Had to winch it out.

IDA LAVEAU, 40's, a bony Creole enters the lobby, turns up the TV volume. Announcer reeks of rehearsed concern.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

--Hurricane Isaac is now a category four storm, expected to make landfall in 2 to 4 hours. Evacuation windows are quickly closing for New Orleans and the surrounding parishes, so--

TV mutes.

Sam holds remote, smiles.

IDA

Hey Amazonia! We watchin' that!

SAM

Just wanted to say bye, y'all. It's been great and--

JAKE

--And it's going to keep being great because you're staying.

SAM

No way!

JAKE

Sam, you can't leave me here with Doc Thumbs for backup. Besides, If my Safari blew off the road, what chance do you have in that Mini-Coop?

Sam shucks her coat angrily, throws it at the closet.

SAM

You are such a shit.

NORMA

Samantha! Please--

Sam storms up to Norma, gets in her face.

SAM

--Shut the fuck up Missy!

Ida grabs Sam, waltzes her around the lobby.

IDA

C'mon darlin'! Let's have a farewell hurricane ball!

Sam lightens up slightly, takes out her phone.

SAM

Okay, okay. Let me text home.

Sam texts: Sorry, working the storm shift. Stay safe. XO.

EXT. CREEPY NEW ORLEANS CEMETERY - NIGHT

Rain splatters mausoleums. Across the street, candles flicker in windows of an elegant townhouse in the French Quarter.

INT. FRENCH QUARTER TOWNHOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phone lights up on the bedside table with Sam's text.

Man and woman screw on the bed, oblivious to the phone.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT

Pete sits at reception desk. Phone rings. He answers.

PETE

Uh-huh. Hey Mel, we got a 911.

Mel grabs coat. Walks up to counter.

MEL

Location?

PETE

No address, just GPS.

Pete pulls up the location on his phone.

Norma comes over, looks at the map.

NORMA

I used to live just the other side of there. I'll go.

MEL

Okay. You and Pete. I'll take the next call with the other wagon.

Mel points to a second ambulance parked outside.

Norma nods, puts on a long, black slicker.

EXT. BUMPY DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Ambulance plows up a lonely dirt road with lights flashing.

INT. FRONT SEAT OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Norma stares out window at trees draped with Spanish moss.

PETE

Creepy trees, huh?

NORMA

Always thought they looked magical.  
Fairies and sprites playin' in the  
branches. Slidin' down the moss.

PETE

So where's your family from?

Norma hesitates, then points at a hill.

NORMA

Other side of that ridge. Not much  
of a family though, just me an' Mama.

Headlights shine on a gate in the road.

EXT. PLANTATION ENTRANCE GATE - NIGHT

Gate is marked with aggressive no trespassing signs and a  
stone archway engraved with the words: GARDEN OF REVELATIONS.

Pete gets out, battles storm, opens gate, climbs back in.

INT. FRONT SEAT OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Pete drives slower, gawking at the approaching mansion and  
surrounding sculpture garden.

Norma shudders, clutches her crucifix like a talisman.

EXT. DECAYED ANTEBELLUM MANSION - NIGHT

Ambulance stops in front of a decaying antebellum plantation  
mansion covered with vines and Spanish moss.

Pete gets out, pulls gurney out of the back, checks GPS map.

Norma gets out, walks toward the mansion in a daze.

EXT. MANSION - DAY - FLASHBACK

Norma is a little girl, her hand held by a very TALL MAN,  
his head unseen. He guides her up the path to the mansion.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Pete sees Norma walking in the wrong direction.

PETE

Hey, where ya goin'? It's over here!

Norma shakes her head, follows Pete.

EXT. SCULPTURE GARDEN - NIGHT

Norma shines her flashlight on the statues surrounding them related to Revelations: the Whore of Babylon, the seven seals and seven trumpets, the Beast, Christ and the AntiChrist.

EXT. SCULPTURE GARDEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

Norma holds the Tall Man's hand. He points at the sculptures.

They pause beneath the old oak tree, stare up at the lowest, largest branch.

EXT. SCULPTURE GARDEN - NIGHT - PRESENT TIME

Norma points at the upside down body of John Doe hung by his feet from the big branch. His tattered bathrobe covers his face. Pete feels his neck for a pulse, shakes his head.

PETE

Where are the cops? They called us!

Norma looks up the road, at the mansion, shrugs.

A lightning bolt strikes the roof of a nearby mausoleum/crypt.

The copper roof glows from the lightning strike.

The man's legs twitch.

NORMA

Pete! He's alive!

Pete looks at the height of the branch and the rope tied to his feet. He leans the gurney against the tree trunk and hands Norma his utility knife.

PETE

Climb and cut the rope. I'll catch.

Norma looks at Pete like he's crazy. Pete nods, holds the gurney steady. Norma rubs her hands together and climbs it like a ladder, high enough to reach the rope and cut it.

NORMA

Get ready!

Norma cuts the rope. Doe falls, knocks Pete into the mud.

Norma climbs down, pulls the bathrobe away from Doe's face, screams. His nose has been cut off.

Pete and Norma load Doe onto the gurney.

Norma uses an Ambu-bag to aid his breathing.

A state trooper patrol car enters the mansion driveway.

KYLE, late 20's, down-home hunky, spots Norma's flashlight, rushes over. LEON, 30's, a cocky Creole, follows.

When Kyle sees Norma, his face lights up.

KYLE  
Norma O'Neil? I ain't seen you since  
high school!

Norma smiles tightly. Pete glares at the smitten cop.

PETE  
Uh, we got a situation here, trooper.

Pete gestures at the crazy statuary around them, the cut rope hanging from the branch, Doe's mutilated face.

KYLE  
Holy Chi-cago!

Leon covers his mouth, close to puking.

LEON  
Why'd you cut him down? This is an  
active crime scene!

NORMA  
Cause he's alive! Clear the way!

Norma and Pete haul the gurney through the mud.

KYLE  
Here, let me help.

Kyle tries to take Norma's side of the gurney, but she swats him away. Leon glances warily at the statues, then follows.

Doe is loaded in the back of the ambulance.

Pete gets behind the driver seat.

Norma hooks up Doe to an IV and monitors his vital signs.

Kyle looks at Norma, tries to catch her eye.

KYLE  
I better come too, so I can interview  
him when he's up to it.

Leon looks at Kyle gazing at Norma, pushes him aside and hops in the back.

LEON  
I've got more interview experience.  
You need to call CSI and see if you  
can ID this guy.

Winds blow harder. Kyle gets smacked with a clump of moss.

Leon slams the door shut and the ambulance pulls away.

Kyle looks at Norma and Leon through ambulance rear window, kicks the mud in frustration, gives Leon the finger.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Norma hands Leon the Ambu-bag, shows him how to pump it.

After cleaning blood from Doe's face, she sees African tribal scars on his cheeks and forehead. She strokes the scar ridges softly, squints at his eyes like they seem familiar.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Kyle pulls out his radio.

KYLE

Send out CSI and notify Sheriff Mudge.

Kyle walks up a blood-smearred staircase to the mansion entrance with flashlight and gun drawn. The staircase is lined with hexagonal basalt stone columns, marked with strange linear carvings and Norse runes.

INT. FRONT SEAT OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Pete roars down the dirt road. The rain turns red.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Kyle nears the big white columns of the front porch. The trail of blood leads to the front door.

He bangs on the door. No answer. He tries the handle. It is unlocked and Kyle enters.

INT. BACK OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Norma corrects Leon's Ambu-bag technique.

NORMA

Who called in the 911?

LEON

Anonymous.

Doe flatlines. Norma tries CPR, but can't get a pulse. She tears open Doe's's undershirt and preps the defibrillator. Norma and Leon are shocked by something they see on his chest.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Kyle looks around. Sheets cover the furniture. Cobwebs hang from opulent engraved ceilings. Gun still drawn, he follows the trail of thick smearred blood, like the body was dragged or crawled across the floor.

INT. BACK OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Norma and Leon gape at the man's chest. Four holes ooze blood, obscuring a crude, freshly inked tattoo.

Norma wipes away the blood, reads three tattooed words.

NORMA

Do. Not. Resuscitate.

INT. MANSION ART STUDIO- NIGHT

Kyle enters an art studio where religious paintings and sculptures are in various states of progress.

The trail leads to a large workbench. A pair of pliers and a tattoo gun sit in a red puddle on the bench.

INT. BACK OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Leon freezes in shock, stops pumping the Ambu-bag.

NORMA

Keep pumping!

Leon looks at tattoo, then Norma. He pumps feebly.

LEON

Maybe we shouldn't.

Norma flushes with anger. Some objects fall off the shelves.

NORMA

Does this look like he's dying of natural causes? Are you a cop or not? He's your only witness!

Leon nods, pumps the bag again. Norma shocks Doe's chest.

The lights in the back of the ambulance cut out.

INT. FRONT SEAT OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Pete holds the radio transmitter, barreling down dirt road. HEAR loud, CRASHES from the blacked-out back.

PETE

Prep for incoming! Code 99.

IDA (V.O.)

Roger that, CPR in progress.

PETE

Code Brown too.

SAM (V.O.)

He shit himself?

PETE

No, but I'm close.

Pete looks over his shoulder into the darkness.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM LOBBY - NIGHT

Sam and Ida huddle by the radio, hear noises, panicked shouts.

IDA  
Pete, what's happening?

PETE (V.O.)  
There's some seriously fucked-up  
shit goin'--

The radio cuts out.

IDA  
Pete? You there?

Static. Sam and Ida stare at each other.

SAM  
Prep the trauma room.

Ida scurries off. Sam presses intercom.

SAM  
Jake! We got incoming!

INT. TRAUMA ROOM - NIGHT

NURSE MARTHA, grumpy, late 40's and Ida prep the room.

INT. SCRUB ROOM - NIGHT

Sam puts on scrubs, washes hands in basin.

Jake strips off muddy clothes only yards from her.

Sam checks him out. Jake acts like he doesn't notice.

SAM  
You really are a shit you know.

JAKE  
Hey, I wasn't going to face this  
storm without you in the trenches.  
Sorry if I ruined your farewell  
speech. Or your homecoming party.

Sam splashes him with water.

SAM  
Don't go there. At work I work, at  
home--

JAKE  
--Oh my, how you play.

SAM  
Okay, okay.

SAM

But if this storm dies down or passes  
us, I'm outta here.

JAKE

It's not going to pass.

SAM

You're a weatherman too?

JAKE

You weren't driving in it.

SAM

It really blew you off the road?

Jake nods, puts on scrubs, goes to sink. Sam exits.

INT. FRONT SEAT OF JAKE'S CAR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Jake drives down a deserted road. His head nods, eyes close.

He veers onto the gravel shoulder and his head jerks up.

He sees the Tall Man standing in the road, wearing only a  
leather loincloth, grinning crazily.

Jake swerves off the road, barely misses a tree.

INT. SCRUB ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT TIME

Martha tugs at Jake's sleeve, motions him aside.

MARTHA

You're not allowed to work tonight.

Jake stares at her, pissed.

JAKE

Because?

MARTHA

Because you haven't submitted a urine  
sample as mandated.

Jake raises one finger as if to say "wait a sec," grabs a  
coffee cup, turns his back, pisses into it, turns around,  
hands her the cup, smiles.

JAKE

Here you go.

MARTHA

Damn it! I'm just doing my job!

Martha opens door leading into trauma room.

MARTHA

Sam!