

Title page



INT. SERIM GALLERY - TIMELESS

**ECU - BAYEUX TAPESTRY.** Threads shimmer. Total silence.

HOLD

**ECU - Kaelarys' EYES..**

HOLD

**CUT TO - TAPESTRY SEGMENTS:**

**- HALLEY'S COMET**

*SFX: low wind rising – a breath  
that builds into a distant whoosh,  
like atmosphere breaking.  
The stitched star blazes above.  
Mortals point skyward, terrified.*

HOLD, THE WIND FADES.

**- EDWARD'S FUNERAL**

*SFX: muffled sobbing, cloth rustle,  
one church bell toll.  
The draped body lies still.  
Mourners bend, faces lost in  
thread.*

HOLD, THE BELL'S RING DIES OUT IN REVERB.

**- BURNING HOMES**

*SFX: crackling fire, timbers  
snapping, distant screams of women  
and children.  
Soldiers drive them out; smoke  
threads through the embroidery.*

HOLD, SCREAMS TAPER TO EMBERS HISSING.

**PULL BACK - WIDE**

THE SOUNDS COLLAPSE INTO SILENCE AS THE FULL TAPESTRY FILLS  
THE FRAME.

Marble. Light. Perfect stillness.

Only Kaelarys stands before it. Arms crossed. Regal. A  
portrait of control.

(SILENCE. WE LET IT BREATHE. WE EXPERIENCE Kaelarys' SILENT  
CONTEMPLATION. 10 SECONDS TOO LONG..)

Then—**A HUMMED SONG.**

Low. Cheerful.

(HOLD — THE NOTE CURLS THROUGH THE STILLNESS, FRAGILE BUT PERSISTENT.)

Kaelarys blinks. Her eyes shift, as if awakened from deep thought.

She turns, slightly.

**ACROSS THE GALLERY: LYRA.**

A silhouette first, drifting. Wide shot — let her arrive slowly. Earth-toned layers. Bare feet. Tattoos like constellations. She hums as she moves, hand hovering above the tapestry, close but untouched.

CU ON HER HAND SUSPENDED OVER THREAD.

She stops before a panel of carnage.

**LYRA**

(soft, barely above breath)  
They were grieving.

HOLD. SILENCE AFTER. KAEALARYS ABSORBS IT WITHOUT MOVEMENT.

**KAELARYS**

(controlled, almost brittle)  
Grieving?

Lyra lifts her eyes. Warm. The opposite of Kaelarys' precision.

**LYRA**

Every stitch is mourning.

Kaelarys' eyes shift.

**KAELARYS**

Enlighten me. What do you see?

SLIGHT ACCELERATION — Lyra steps closer, but still soft.

**LYRA**

Look here.  
(her hand drifts above  
uneven threads)  
The pulls tighten in the battles.  
The embroiderers' hands were  
trembling. Not clumsy. Remembering.  
They stitched their own wounds into  
history.

**CUTAWAY - ECU THREADS. Pulled taut. Imperfect. Echoed across panels.**

SFX: Moans, swords clashing. Battle sounds.

HOLD: LET THE FABRIC ITSELF SPEAK.

Back to Kaelarys.

**KAELARYS**

Flaws, I thought.

**LYRA**

(softer still)

Saxon women, forced to embroider  
their defeat. To make beauty of  
their own undoing.

Kaelarys shifts, moves her arms behind her back. She looks at the tapestry, and then to Lyra. Kaelarys watches Lyra inspect the tapestry, as if studying her.

HOLD – SILENCE BETWEEN THEM, STRETCHED.

**KAELARYS**

(measured)

You were made for this – attuned to  
currents others overlook. The  
Architect gave you that resonance.

HOLD: LYRA, PATIENT.CONTEMPLATING.

She turns to Kaelarys.

**LYRA**

And you, Kaelarys? What was your  
frequency meant to be?

**ECU:** Kaelarys – looking inward. Eyes scanning.

**KAELARYS**

I protect what must not be lost. I  
ensure... what is created endures.  
Even when the creator is gone.

Kaelarys holds her gaze on Lyra.

(She is not just speaking of artifacts.)

Lyra studies her in silence.

A slow smile curves across Lyra's face.

She steps closer, a sudden move, clashing with the softness.

**LYRA**

(playful, with a  
mischievous glint)  
You look beautiful.

Kaelarys blinks, the compliment, and energy breaking the tension.

**KAELARYS**

(low, warning)  
Lyra...

**LYRA**

(insistent, whisper-light)  
Truly regal. Untouchable. Like  
marble.  
(beat, teasing)  
Very pretty marble.

Kaelarys exhales – and this time, it breaks.

Her lips twitch, then curve into a reluctant smirk.

**KAELARYS**

(dry, amused despite  
herself)  
Really? Marble?

Lyra beams, triumphant. She steps in closer, slipping her arms around Kaelarys in a sudden, unguarded sisterly side hug.

Kaelarys stiffens for a fraction of a beat – then releases, allowing herself to be held.

The smirk lingers, softening into something rarer: a true smile.

(HOLD – THE TWO OF THEM, PRESSED TOGETHER IN QUIET, BOTH GAZING AT THE TAPESTRY. STONE AND SONG, FINALLY TOUCHING.)

Lyra tilts her head against Kaelarys' shoulder, still smiling.

Kaelarys raises her arms, pressing her hands against Lyra's arm.

Lyra grins, emboldened.

**LYRA**

Dance with me. Kaelarys.

She steps back, takes Kaelarys' hands, trying to coax her into a slow spin.

Kaelarys resists, stiff, indulgent at best.

**KAELARYS**  
 (deadpan)  
 Lyra...

**LYRA**  
 (playful)  
 Just for a moment. Move with me.

Lyra twirls, fabrics sweeping, humming softly. She pulls on Kaelarys' arms — Kaelarys remains inert, letting herself be moved through the dance. Lyra leans back, arms spreading, eyes closing. Letting the gallery hold her. Trusting the space.

She leans too far.

Kaelarys catches her immediately-firm hand between her shoulder blades, the other steadyng her arm.

Lyra opens her eyes, laughs-delighted.

**LYRA**  
 (soft, joyful)  
 Protector. Preserver. Even of me.

Kaelarys' expression shifts; she cannot deny it.

**KAELARYS**  
 (quiet, certain)  
 That's what He wanted of me—

A beat. The conviction holds.

Her gaze drifts — not away, just inward.

Something subtle passes through her expression; the thought arrives, uninvited.

**KAELARYS**  
 (softer, to herself)  
 ... I think.

She exhales. The tension in her hands eases.

She steadies Lyra upright and lets go, a fraction too slow.

Lyra stays close, smiling — then eases back, drifting as though unbothered.

She turns, almost twirling, then half-laughs to herself.

**LYRA**  
 (teasing, light, like a  
 passing thought.)  
 I'm not even sure what He wants  
 from us anymore.  
 (MORE)

LYRA (CONT'D)  
(beat, playful)  
I mean, He never really gave us  
instructions.  
What if I'm meant to be YOUR  
protector, pretty marble statue.

Her soft laugh spills into a hum, dissolving into melody as  
she drifts away.

Kaelarys watches.

Her face tightens.

Lyra's hum fades into the distance, swallowed by the  
gallery's vastness.

Kaelarys turns back to the tapestry—but her eyes drift.

She glances toward Lyra dancing, humming.

(HOLD. Kaelarys' expression—concern, unsure.)

Her gaze lingers. Then slowly, she looks back to the  
tapestry.

**CUT TO: ECU - PANEL 26.**

**A DIVINE HAND REACHING FROM THE SKY.**

HOLD.

She glances toward Lyra across the gallery. Distant now.  
Still humming.

**FADE TO BLACK.**

END OF FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. PALAIS GARNIER - NIGHT

Paris. A palace of light.

Statues glint gold against the facade, columns bathed in  
amber glow.

Patrons ascend the marble steps — gowns sweeping, tuxedos  
gleaming.

A night to be seen.

INT. PALAIS GARNIER - GRAND STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS  
 White marble. Red carpet.

The staircase curves upward in two sweeping arcs,  
 built not just to climb - but to display.  
 Couples pause mid-ascent, turning like portraits.  
 Chandeliers blaze. Jewelry flashes.  
 The hush of wealth fills the air.

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS  
 Red velvet. Gold leaf.

A chandelier the size of a carriage hangs overhead,  
 glowing beneath Chagall's painted sky.  
 Five tiers of balconies curve around the stage -  
 a golden horseshoe, every box a frame.

The lights dim. Silence falls.

**ON STAGE:**

THE CURTAIN RISES. LA TRAVIATA, ACT III.

VIOLETTA lies in bed, pale, dying. The set is opulent but muted-wealth unable to stop death.

The soprano begins—"Addio del passato" (Farewell to the past).

Her voice: fragile, beautiful, breaking.

**HOLD ON THE PERFORMANCE. LET IT BREATHE. THE AUDIENCE IS TRANSMUTED.**

VIOLETTA  
 Addio del passato bei sogni  
 ridenti...  
 (Farewell, happy dreams of  
 the past...)

The strings swell beneath her. Grief made sound.

**PULL BACK-THROUGH THE RAPT FACES, UP THROUGH THE TIERS...**

**TO: SKYBOX - TOP TIER**

LUCIAN and REXUS.

Handsome. Tailored suits—but Rexus' tie is loosened, top button undone. Lucian's posture is too relaxed, one arm draped over the back of his chair.

They look like they wandered into a wedding reception and decided to stay.

Champagne glasses. Rexus has his feet propped on the railing.

They're watching the stage—but casually. Like you'd watch a rerun of a show you love.

The soprano's voice fills the space.

Rexus tilts his head slightly. Appreciative.

**REXUS**

(quiet, to Lucian)  
She's pretty good.

**LUCIAN**

(not looking away from the stage)  
Better than last season.

They settle back. Comfortable. The opera continues.

**In the neighboring box:**

CHARLOTTE, mid-20s, beautiful, polished. The kind of beauty trained to withstand scrutiny. Her dress is expensive but understated — nothing that could spark gossip.

MARSHALL, 50s, a large man, built to protect.

Charlotte smiles when Marshall glances her way — perfect, practiced, diplomatic, but the moment his eyes move back to the stage, it falters.

A softer, truer smile slips out. Curious. Almost mischievous.

That's when she meets Rexus' gaze.

Rexus grins.

**REXUS**

(to Lucian, low)  
That's the Trade Minister's  
daughter.

**LUCIAN**

(barely glancing over)  
You're not her type.

**REXUS**

I'm everyone's type.

He catches her eye. Holds it.

Charlotte smiles—quick, then looks away. But she looks back.

Marshall notices immediately. He clocks Rexus. His jaw tightens.

The opera continues. The soprano's voice tender, building.

Rexus raises his champagne glass toward Charlotte—subtle, just for her.

She bites back a smile. Glances at Marshall, then back.

**REXUS**

(to Lucian, still watching  
her)

She has Taresh's smile.

(Beat)

**LUCIAN**

(glances at him,  
recognizing the name)

Taresh...from Crete?

He pauses...second-guesses himself, then proceeds anyway.

**LUCIAN**

The earthquake.

Rexus pauses. His smile falters a bit, but he shakes it off quickly.

**REXUS**

Yeah. That same... I don't know.  
Mischief hiding behind manners.

Charlotte tilts her head slightly—curious about him.

Rexus locks eyes with her. She smiles and coyly looks away.

**REXUS**

(to Lucian, still looking  
at Charlotte)

Taresh used to do that too. This  
look like she was deciding whether  
I was worth the trouble.

**LUCIAN**

And?

**REXUS**

She decided I was.

(beat)

For a while, anyway.

Marshall leans toward Charlotte, whispers something. Warning.

Charlotte nods—polite, dismissive.

**REXUS**

(watching, amused)  
 Her people had these... advisors  
 too. Always hovering. Always  
 worried she'd make the wrong  
 choice.

**LUCIAN**

Did she?

**REXUS**

(grin widening)  
 Abso-fucking-lutely.

A little too loud.

Charlotte catches his overzealous profanity, laughs.

**CUT TO - MAIN STAGE**

Violetta clutches the letter, her voice breaking.

**VIOLETTA**

Presto gioia e dolore, addio per  
 sempre...  
 (Soon joy and sorrow alike will be  
 over.)

The aria lingers, unflinching.

**BACK TO THE SKYBOX:****REXUS**

Taresh had this laugh. You could  
 hear it across the whole plaza. Her  
 father hated it—said it wasn't  
 dignified for someone of her  
 position.  
 (beat)  
 She didn't care.

Marshall's hand moves to Charlotte's arm now. Gentle but  
 firm.

**REXUS**

(to Lucian, his eyes on  
 Marshall and Charlotte)  
 They tried to keep us apart.  
 Thought I was... what did they call  
 it? "Unsuitable for her station."

Lucian laughs at the irony. An immortal being "unsuitable"

**LUCIAN**

If they only knew.

**REXUS**

But that's what made it fun.

Marshall stands now—done with subtlety. He leans down, whispers urgently to Charlotte.

Charlotte resists for a moment—one more glance at Rexus.

**REXUS**

You know, I saw this coming. The advisor, the exit. Whole thing.

**LUCIAN**

And you did it anyway.

**REXUS**

That's the difference between us, Lucian. You see the Pattern and accept it. I see it and think... what if I push here? What if I—

**LUCIAN**

You see threads. I see the whole tapestry.

**REXUS**

Yeah. I can never follow it like you can. Sure, I see the probabilities. But not like you do.

Charlotte rises. Marshall's hand on her elbow, guiding.

**REXUS**

(watching her stand)

Like, with Taresh. I thought I could see enough. Her kingdom, her people—I knew what was coming. Almost immediately after meeting her.

Charlotte looks back one last time. Apologetic smile.

Rexus raises his glass. Playful wave.

She waves back—coy, a little regretful.

Then she's gone.

**REXUS**

(still watching the empty doorway)

I had twenty years to figure out how to save her.

(pause, the grin fading)

**LUCIAN**

Rexus, we chose to not intervene. We let the humans live their lives as they choose.

Rexus settles back in his seat. The playfulness drains.

**REXUS**

I wanted to stay with her. Follow  
her until that fucking quake sunk  
her entire world.

Lucian looks at him.

Rexus takes a sip of champagne.

Turns his attention to the stage.

**CUT TO - MAIN STAGE**

Violetta clutches the letter, her voice breakin.

**VIOLETTA**

Addio... del passato bei sogni  
ridenti...  
(Everything is at an end.)

Her body folds against the bed, silks collapsing like the life  
draining from her.

The strings swell—mournful, inevitable.

Violetta's voice trembles through her final phrases.

Applause swells—polite, reverent, the kind of sound that  
tries to smooth over death.

**IN THE SKYBOX**

Rexus doesn't clap. He just watches the curtain fall.

Lucian studies him—he doesn't speak.

The house lights rise halfway. Murmured conversation, the  
rustle of programs.

Patrons stretch, sip champagne, laugh too loudly.

The spell breaks.

A VOICE comes over the house speakers, smooth and ceremonial.

**ANNOUNCER (V.O.)**

Ladies and gentlemen—our next  
selection,  
from Manon Lescaut:  
**"Sola, perduta, abbandonata,"**

Polite applause. Then the lights fade again—slower this time

**ON STAGE:**

The curtain rises on emptiness.

A cracked wasteland glows under amber haze.

A single figure stands at its center-alone.

Wind machines whisper through the orchestra pit.

The soprano begins:

**SOPRANO**

SOLA, PERDUTA, ABBANDONATA IN LANDA  
DESOLATA...  
(ALONE, LOST, ABANDONED IN THIS  
DESOLATE LAND.)

Her voice climbs the walls, thin as breath, enormous as  
memory

**IN THE SKYBOX:**

Rexus exhales—barely audible.

His jaw tightens. He doesn't look away from the stage.

LONG BEAT. THE MUSIC FILLS THE SILENCE.

Rexus picks up his glass. Drains it.

Smiles.

**REXUS**

Let's get the fuck out of here,  
dude.

Lucian smiles back. Takes a final sip of his champagne.

**LUCIAN**

Let's do it.

He sets his half-full glass down.

Rexus grabs it. Chugs that too.

Lucian laughs.

They stand. Head for the exit.

**FADE OUT**

END OF FADE OUT

**INT. DINER - LATE NIGHT**

Neon hum. Color. Too much. Lights buzz, fry grease pops. A cracked vinyl booth cluttered with syrup bottles, half-empty mugs, a plate of pancakes going cold.

AELLA hunches over her plate. ZADIE lounges opposite, back to the window, sunglasses on even though it's past midnight.

**AELLA**

(poking her pancakes with  
her fork)

You know... they never give you  
enough butter.

Zadie sips his coffee like champagne.

**AELLA**

These things will be soup before  
she comes back.

She raises a hand for the WAITRESS—no dice.

Aella pause, in thought.

**AELLA**

(pondering)

Do you have enhanced hearing?

**ZADIE**

(flat)

No.

He whistles—sharp.

**ZADIE**

(snapping his fingers)

More butter please!

The waitress glances over, annoyed, vanishes toward the kitchen.

**AELLA**

Jesus, Z! Great. Now she's spitting  
in my butter.

**ZADIE**

(smirk)

Not gonna happen, Red. They only  
spit in items where the spittle can  
be obscured. Soup? Yup. Salad?  
Probably. Butter? Only a truly  
deranged server attempts a butter-  
spit. Too much surface area. No  
camouflage.

(Beat) She studies him like she's closing in.

**AELLA**

Do you have a pouch?

**ZADIE**

(grinning)  
Tragically, Aella. Entirely sans pouch.

**AELLA**

Fuck.

She shoves a bite in, unimpressed. He savors his coffee like it's a retort.

**ZADIE**

That's— mm —nineteen, by the way.

Aella narrows her eyes.

**AELLA**

Why the fuck are we even here, Z?  
What's your thing with these divey places?

**ZADIE**

(after a thoughtful beat)  
Diners, my dear, are the last honest places in America. Stuck in this perfect amber ... from when conversations mattered and coffee came with refills and hope.

Aella raises an eyebrow but doesn't interrupt.

**ZADIE**

You walk into one of these cathedrals at 2 a.m. and you're in a fucking Hopper painting crossed with noir-shadows, possibilities...

He nods toward their waitress.

**ZADIE**

... and a waitress with tired eyes who might accidentally change your life.

Aella lets a genuine smile slip, appreciative of his romanticizing, then looks back to her plate.

**AELLA**

You know what would change my life?  
More butter.  
(beat, inquisitive )

**AELLA**

Do you even have hair?

**ZADIE**

Nope. And that's 20 questions, my dear.

He sips his coffee smugly.

(beat)

**AELLA**

I don't know. A shaved anteater?

She pauses. Turns to Zadie. Focused.

**AELLA**

(grinning, sure of herself)  
Wait ... No. A T-Rex?

**ZADIE**

(raising his fist in  
victory)  
Another win for me.

A prolonged moment of silence.

**AELLA**

Well...

She shrugs, holding her hands out in expectation.

**ZADIE**

(as if surprised)  
Oh...I'm an olm.

**AELLA**

(sneering)  
What the fuck even is that, Z?

**ZADIE**

Proteus anguinus A sad blind  
bastard of a salamander that lives  
in caves and hasn't seen sunlight  
in like a million years. Only found  
in-

**AELLA**

(cutting him off. Wagging  
her fork at him)  
Uh, uh, Zadie. That doesn't count.

**ZADIE**

Oh....it counts.

He takes a slow sip of his coffee, pinky out.

**AELLA**

Motherfucker.

The waitress approaches.

Aella sits up straight, as if she's been caught doing  
something wrong.

The Waitress takes her time, drops a tiny dish with **one** butter pat. She side-eyes Zadie, deliberately imposing on their conversation ... testing them.

Aella glares at the lone butter, then at Zadie.

The Waitress smiles smugly and walks away without a word.

**AELLA**

(squinting after her)  
See? This is your fault. One? That thing's a fucking postage stamp.

She spreads the lone pat, aggressively.

**ZADIE**

One pat. No spit, though. Want me to tempt fate again?

Aella looks past Zadie, sees a lonely PATRON at the counter, face lit by his phone, slightly turned, oblivious. A small plate of butter pats sits beside his elbow. Unloved.

**AELLA**

(eyebrows up)  
Better idea.

Aella rises.

She hunches over, slowly cartoon-sneaking: knees high, arms bent like a Saturday-morning burglar. Zadie watches, amusement growing.

She yoinks the plate in one smooth swipe. She raises the plate in triumph and struts back, presenting the haul like treasure.

Aella slides back into the booth, her smile larger than life as she eyes her pancakes with newfound excitement.

**ZADIE**

(chuckling)  
You're an absolute menace, Aella.

**AELLA**

(smug)  
That's called initiative, my friend.

She slathers. Eats.

Lost in bliss, she does a little happy food-shimmy.

Zadie chuckles. Takes a sip of his coffee.

**AELLA**

(mouth full, points at  
Zadie with her fork.)  
Okay. You go.

**ZADIE**

Alright. Person, place or thing?

**AELLA**

(between a bite)  
Person.

Zadie straightens, mock-solemn.

**ZADIE**

Do you sing?

Aella freezes, shoots him a looks that kill glare. She balls up her napkin and pelts him with it.

**AELLA**

No. Asshole. I am not—nor will I  
ever be—Taylor Swift.

Zadie cracks up, delighted. Clearly not the first time he's led with Swift in 20 Questions.

**ZADIE**

Hey, a guy can hope. Me and my  
fellow Swifties live and breath  
Tay-Tay.

**AELLA**

(chuckles )  
T-Swizzle my ass.

They share an easy, unguarded laugh.

The Patron turns to the sound of their laugh. He glances down and finally notices the missing butter, looks around—too late.

**CUT TO:** neon buzzing; the low diner music carries us out.

**FADE OUT**

END OF FADE OUT

**FADE IN:**

**EXTREME CLOSE-UP - EVANDER'S FACE**

EVANDER (30s, deeply thoughtful eyes, the kind of face that suggests he's seen through society's illusions).

He takes a slow, practiced hit from a joint, holds it with the reverence of a wine connoisseur, then exhales thoughtfully.

**EVANDER**

You know what's fascinating about attachment? Not the Buddhist kind - fuck that noise for a minute - I'm talking about the primal shit. The way a person's sense of home becomes... indistinguishable from their sense of self.

He takes another hit, eyes distant but laser-focused.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

Think about it. Your home - whether that's a house, a neighborhood, a way of life, an ideology - it's not separate from you. It's the extended nervous system of your identity. Touch it, and you feel it. Threaten it, and every defense mechanism you've ever developed comes online.

His fingers gesture lazily, drawing invisible connections in the air.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

The suburbanite who calls the cops on kids skating in his parking space. The activist who doxxes people for using the wrong pronouns. The patriot who bombs abortion clinics. The liberal who tries to get people fired for old tweets. Different tribes, same fucking circuit firing.

He pauses, studying the joint like it contains cosmic wisdom.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

See, here's where it gets beautiful and terrifying at the same time. Each person deploys whatever weapons they've got access to. The physically strong resort to violence - it's efficient, direct, monkey-brain simple. The socially connected become bullies, use shame and ostracism like a medieval siege. The intellectually gifted will use their wits to outsmart.

He chuckles, a sound both amused and slightly disturbed.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

It's never about hatred, you see.  
 It's always about love. Love so  
 fierce, so territorial, so confused  
 with identity that it becomes  
 indistinguishable from violence.  
 They're not monsters - that would  
 be easier to understand. They're  
 people protecting extensions of  
 themselves with the same desperate  
 urgency they'd protect their own  
 children.

(He looks past camera,  
 almost tender.)

Another thoughtful drag.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

And the wildest part? They're not  
 wrong to feel righteous. From their  
 perspective, they are literally  
 protecting their extended self from  
 annihilation. When someone  
 threatens your home - your  
 physical, psychological,  
 ideological home - you're not  
 experiencing it as an attack on  
 some external thing. You're  
 experiencing it as death.

His voice drops to almost a whisper, but remains perfectly clear.

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

So they fight like their lives  
 depend on it. Because, in a very  
 real sense, they do. The version of  
 themselves that depends on that  
 particular configuration of home -  
 it really would die if they didn't  
 fight.

He closes his eyes for a moment, as if integrating some profound realization.

A beat of silence.

**MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)**

(confused, slightly stoned)  
 So... like... you're saying that  
 Jerry was the good guy? Tom was the  
 asshole?

PULL BACK TO REVEAL:

**WIDE SHOT - PLUSHIE PARADISE**

EVANDER, completely nude, sprawled luxuriously in what can only be described as a sea of plush toys - teddy bears, unicorns, cartoon characters, an entire ecosystem of soft, colorful comfort. A YOUNG WOMAN, also nude (20s, beautiful, uninhibited) has her head on his chest, her leg draped across his groin with casual intimacy.

Evander lowers the joint toward her. She takes a drag with practiced ease.

Nearby, another COUPLE lies among the plushies - the MAN strategically covering himself with what a large elephant plush toy, while his FEMALE PARTNER lies on her back, completely unselfconscious in her nudity.

The entire scene is surreal, philosophical - like if Alan Watts had been reborn as a hedonistic guru in a toy store.

**NAKED WOMAN NEXT TO ELEPHANT GUY**

No, dude, he's saying that the cat  
was protecting his home from the  
mouse.

The man next to her perks...his eyes searching his thoughts for clarity.

**WOMAN DRAPED ACROSS EVANDER**

So, which one was right, Van? Tom  
or Jerry?

Evander takes a hit from the joint. He holds it like a pro, exhales slowly.

(beat)

**EVANDER**

Exactly, my lovely.

Evander allows a small laugh, to himself.

**FADE OUT.**

END OF FADE OUT.

**INT. NIGHTCLUB - VIP BOOTH**

The club floor is chaos - bodies in strobe-light seizure, dark-techno bass rolling like thunder under the skin.

At the far wall, behind a velvet rope and a black-suited bouncer, a **VIP booth** rises like an island. Leather curves in a half-circle, a low table gleaming with bottles, glasses, ice buckets.

**VAL** reclines at the center – androgynous chic, tailored perfection, every angle catching the light differently with each strobe. To the left, masculine edge in the line of jaw and lean frame. To the right, feminine elegance in the curve of hand, cascade of hair. Eyes predatory, amused, restless.

Around them, an **entourage** – sycophants, lovers, courtiers in all but name. Laughter too loud, gestures too rehearsed, as though each is auditioning to stay in orbit.

But Val is detached. The glass dangles loosely in their fingers. They sip without tasting. Their gaze drifts over the crowd, scanning like a sovereign who's seen this procession a thousand nights.

Every smile looks recycled. Every dance step, choreographed. Every laugh, the same as last night's laugh.

**VAL**  
(in expression)  
(The masque repeats.  
Different masks, same  
faces.)

The entourage roars at some joke. Val doesn't. They smile faintly, but the eyes say it clearly: boredom.

The bass swells. The **INTRUDER** enters frame.

The **BOUNCER** straightens, then relaxes. He knows this man. Everyone does. Tall. Tailored. Smile polished like chrome. A **WOMAN** clings to his arm, radiant, lacquered in the sheen of money well-spent.

They exchange a clasp at the rope – old familiarity. The man leans in, voice low, a conspiratorial murmur. A folded pair of hundreds slip from hand to hand with practiced ease.

Not so subtle. Not to VAL's eyes.

VAL watches, glass halfway to their lips. A faint narrowing – irritation? amusement? Hard to tell.

The rope opens. The man steps through without hesitation, as though expected, as though this space were his second home.

He slides into the booth opposite Val, the woman tucked neatly against his side. Comfortable. Confident. Certain.

**INTRUDER**  
(pleasant, declarative)  
This is the best seat in the house.  
Thought I'd join you.

The entourage titter – some notice the new faces, some oblivious. The man lets the line hang, expecting his reputation to do the rest.

VAL's eyes linger. A squint, tiny, surgical. Then... the smile. Slow. Dangerous.

At last, something to do.

**INTRUDER**

(to Val, easy)

I make it a point to know everyone  
who matters in a room. You? You  
matter.

Val arches a brow, not flattered but entertained. They sip, eyes locked.

**VAL**

Mattering is not what I seek. I am  
merely looking for-

A pause. Too long.

Val breaks for a beat, let's their gaze drift around the space.

**VAL**

.. Experiences.

The INTRUDER smiles at that, appreciative – not many return his serve with precision. He leans in a little, raising his voice so it cuts through the music.

**INTRUDER**

I'd have remembered seeing you here  
before. You're not the sort to  
blend.

VAL lets the words hang, then laughs softly – not dismissive, but genuinely pleased. They tip their glass toward him.

**VAL**

How refreshing. Most men recite  
their triumphs. You lead with  
recognition.

**INTRUDER**

Recognition IS the triumph, my  
friend. The rest is just fucking  
chatter.

VAL nods slowly, savoring the line

**VAL**

(leaning forward)

Then consider yourself  
(beat)  
recognized.

The INTRUDER grins. Settling into the cushions a bit more confident.

**CUT TO:**

Music volume increases. The club, outside the booth. Push through the crowd. Camera captures the vibe. Hypnotic. Alive. Revelers dancing, as if in a trance. Lasers. Lights. Silhouettes against the backdrop of techno bliss.

Stay with the environment. A living organism in its own right.

**BACK AT THE BOOTH:**

The intruder is relaxed now. His companion, settled, yet stiff. An accessory. He whispers something to her. She laughs. Strokes his arm dutifully.

Val is sitting back, one leg crossed over the other. Like royalty on a throne.

**INTRUDER**

Tell me, Where would I have seen you? This booth ... I've been here many times. It's reserved for the best of the best. A-list celebs, NFL elites, spoiled rich trust fund kids. All little bitches, in my opinion. You seem like you can stand on your own two feet. I respect that. You're like me. We want something, we fucking take it.

Val lets his gaze move - slowly - to the INTRUDER.

A pause.

**VAL**

Do you know much about medieval conquest?

The Intruder tilts his head, curious.

**VAL**

The empires were masters at taking. They rode in with banners high, crowns heavy, blades dripping. And yes... they took.

(Val swirls their glass,  
gaze drifting across the  
booth)

**VAL**

But here's the truth no one likes to admit - they took because they had no power.

(beat, a faint smirk)

**VAL**

Always hungry, always reaching  
 (beat) The strong don't need to  
 seize. The world comes to them.  
 (beat) The weak... they compensate.  
 (Val sips, looks back at  
 the Intruder, smile faint,  
 unreadable.)

Intruder - Pausing. Thinking.

(HOLD)

Music volume increases. Circle the booth. We move back out to the dance floor. Float through the bodies again. Revisit the Dance-club organism. Let it seep, become our tone.

**BACK AT BOOTH**

**WIDE SHOT** - Val and the Intruder, locked. A tableau. Predator and predator, testing edges.

(HOLD)

**INTRUDER**

You make a good point. Perhaps I place too much effort where I don't need to.

He gestures at the woman beside him.

**INTRUDER**

Like this one. Presented herself to me like a gift.

The woman flinches, barely. Her smile stays fixed.

Val watches her. A glance that lingers too long. Then, slowly, their eyes drift back to the Intruder. The smile remains, but the warmth has bled out of it.

(BEAT - WE LET THE UNSPOKEN BREATHE. THE DARK TECHNO MUSIC IS OUR HEARTBEAT.)

Val doesn't answer. Doesn't need to. They lean back, crossing one leg over the other, eyes glinting under the pulse of lasers.

The bass drops - BOOM, BOOM, BOOM - as if synced to their heartbeat.

**CAMERA DRIFT:** The lens pulls slowly away from the booth, back into the writhing mass of dancers. Faces blur, lights smear, sweat and shadow mixing into one organism. The music consumes dialogue, reducing voices to shapes of sound.

**INTERCUT - STROBE SEQUENCE:**

- **VAL** — smile sharp as glass.
- **INTRUDER** — leaning back, king of the booth.
- **THE ENTOURAGE** — laughing too loud, faces blurred in neon.
- **THE CLUB** — reverent chaos

FLASH

- **VAL** — smile gone. Eyes like a scalpel.
- **INTRUDER** — grin falters, jaw tight, calculating.
- **THE WOMAN** — radiant for a half-second, then swallowed by shadow, smile brittle.
- **THE BAR** — Drinks being rapidly served

FLASH

- **VAL** — head tilted, bored, amused.
- **INTRUDER** — laughter, too wide, like a bluff.
- **THE DJ** — framed in silhouette, hands raised, summoning the drop.

FLASH

- **VAL** — motionless, but the eyes burn.
- **INTRUDER** — sweat at his temple, confidence slipping in half-beats.
- **THE CROWD** — bodies jerking like marionettes, hypnotic, faceless.

**THE MUSIC TONE OWNS THE DIALOG**

One final strobe holds —

**VAL** — leaning forward at last, smile erased. Predator revealed.

**THE DROP HITS.**

Bass detonates, the booth swallowed by light and sound.

**SMASH TO BLACK.**

END OF SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. SERIM GALLERY - TIMELESS

White.

Marble.

Silence.

The Bayeux Tapestry looms. Threads shimmer under timeless light. **Lyra** twirls, skirt sweeping like a brushstroke. She slows, breathless, eyes locked on the embroidery.

(HOLD. The echo of her spin fades.)

**LYRA**

Why do we keep these here, anyway?  
Why in Serim?

**KAELARYS**

(fond, almost rote)  
We always have. We capture  
creations at the pinnacle of their  
being... when they most fully embody  
their creator's vision.  
(Kaelarys' voice lingers  
against the silence.)

**LYRA**

The pinnacle?  
(beat, her tone light,  
thoughtful)  
But on Earth, this tapestry is  
faded. Patched, even reworked.  
Isn't that still art? Doesn't the  
decay add to it? The stains, the  
wear... aren't those part of the  
story?

BEAT

Lyra glances at the tapestry.

**LYRA**

(cont'd, a small sigh)  
If I were to make something, I  
think I'd want the whole journey to  
matter.

HOLD. CU: Kaelarys. A flicker of surprise. She didn't expect the response.

**KAELARYS**

Decay can reveal

(MORE)

KAELARYS (CONT'D)  
 (pauses, selecting the  
 right word)  
 history, yes...  
(beat)  
 But the vision—the spark that began  
 it—that is what we preserve. The  
 moment it became whole.

**LYRA**  
 (a bit disheartened)  
 When the creator has moved on?

Kaelarys stiffens.

HOLD. Silence stretches.

CU: her eyes flicker—something sharp, painful. An intrusive thought.

She forces a small smile, brushing it aside.

**KAELARYS**  
 ...Well. Yes. In a way. When the  
 vision is complete, it's left to  
 endure.  
(beat – her voice softer,  
but there's tension  
underneath.)

**LYRA**  
(playful, testing)  
 Do you ever wonder... if I painted  
 something? Would we display it  
 here?

HOLD. Kaelarys' smile falters. The silence answers first.

**KAELARYS**  
(quiet, but firm)  
 That's not what we do, Lyra.

HOLD. Lyra absorbs it. Her playfulness ebbs away. Sit with  
 Lyra internal shift

**LYRA**  
 The humans ... they fill their  
 world with works—paintings, poems,  
 cathedrals.

She turns slightly, catching her reflection on the marble floor. She examines it, swaying gently, as if seeing herself for the first time.

(HOLD)

HOLD a little longer. Let's take Lyra's journey with her.

**LYRA**

Funny, isn't it? Everything about  
me screams 'artist.'

She spins the charm at her neck, glances down at tattoos,  
fabrics, wild hair. She laughs softly—uncertain, not joyous.

**LYRA**

But none of it is mine. The style,  
the ink, the songs I hum... all  
borrowed. From them.

(beat – quieter, her voice  
catching)

It's like I'm only wearing the  
mask. Pretending to be what I can  
never really be.

HOLD. Kaelarys watches, face softening.

Kaelarys steps closer, slow, deliberate. She takes Lyra's  
hand and traces the **star tattoo** there.

**KAELARYS**

(softly, comforting)  
No, Lyra... don't you see?  
(Beat – her voice low,  
steady, intimate)  
You are not only a creator.  
(she meets her sister's  
eyes)  
You are the creation.

Lyra's lips part. She doesn't pull away. She lets Kaelarys  
hold her.

**KAELARYS**

(She glances up at the  
tapestry, then back to  
Lyra)  
Do you think these embroiderers  
spun the wool?  
(beat – a faint smile,  
tender)  
Do you think they harvested the  
madder root for red, the weld for  
gold?

She gestures softly to the tapestry.

**KAELARYS (CONT'D)**

Do you think they rode into battle?  
Swung the sword? Burned the  
villages?  
(beat – softer now, tracing  
the tattoo on Lyra's palm)  
No. They worked with what already  
was. Wool. Dye. Blood. Memory...  
(MORE)

KAELARYS (CONT'D)  
((her eyes lift to the  
embroidery))  
...and shaped something that endures.

HOLD. Silence. Then-Kaelarys' voice drops.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
Every stitch here—

She releases Lyra's hand, gestures to a panel.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
—is a window. A window to the soul  
of whoever pulled that thread.  
(beat)  
But it's more than that.

She steps closer to the tapestry, eyes scanning the embroidery.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
When we stand before art, we don't  
just see the maker.  
(she turns back to Lyra)  
We see ourselves.

HOLD. Lyra watches, listening.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
You saw grief in these stitches.  
Trembling hands. Saxon women  
mourning.  
(beat, softer)  
I see precision. Discipline. The  
refusal to let memory die.  
(she gestures between them)  
Two souls, looking at the same  
threads... and finding different  
truths.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
That's the gift of creation, Lyra.  
It doesn't just reveal the maker—  
(beat)  
—it also reveals the one who  
receives it.

HOLD. Her voice drops, almost reverent.

**KAELARYS** (CONT'D)  
Art is a conversation across time.  
Across worlds.

She looks back at the tapestry

**KAELARYS (CONT'D)**

The embroiderer speaks. The wool,  
the blood, the battle—they all  
speak.

(she meets Lyra's eyes)  
And when you look... you speak  
back.

HOLD.

**KAELARYS (CONT'D)**

What you see in art—what moves you,  
what haunts you—  
(quieter)

That is you, Lyra. Your soul,  
answering theirs.

She releases Lyra's hand, but the trace of her touch lingers.

**KAELARYS (CONT'D)**

That's why it matters. Not because  
it's new, but because it speaks.  
Because it connects.

Lyra looks back to the tapestry.

**LYRA**

(soft, almost to herself)  
And if I am art... then so are you.  
So are all of us.

HOLD. Kaelarys watches her. The words settle. Almost  
prayerful.

**FADE.**

END OF FADE.

**INT. PALAIS GARNIER- GRAND CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Marble underfoot. Velvet-lined walls. The echo of the aria  
still rolling. Lucian and Rexus walk side by side—figures cut  
from the same fabric as the building itself: poised,  
untouchable.

They pass gilded doors, portraits of patrons, ushers at  
perfect stillness. Every detail curated, immaculate.

Then—up ahead—a STAFF DOOR. Plain. Functional. A woman in  
blacks appears, moving briskly. She swipes a badge, slips  
inside without breaking stride. The door swings back on its  
hinge—about to shut.

Rexus glances at Lucian, then casually plants his foot against the frame, stopping it cold.

Lucian raises a brow.

**LUCIAN**

Really.

**REXUS**

(half-grin)

If we only walk the halls they give us, we'll never see what's worth stealing.

He eases the door open. The golden light of the corridor spills into shadowed concrete.

Lucian hesitates just a breath, then follows him through.

**INT. BACK-OFF-HOUSE - SERVICE CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

The shift is instant. Velvet and marble give way to raw plaster, exposed pipes, the hum of machinery. Fluorescents buzz overhead, casting everything in stark, unflattering light.

They move past stacked flight cases, wheeled risers, signage taped to the wall in Sharpie: "**ACT II - STAGE LEFT**", "**COSTUMES TO GREEN ROOM.**"

Rexus runs a hand across a battered trunk as they pass, grinning like a boy on a dare.

Lucian takes it all in-calm, absorbing.

They reach another door, half ajar. Rexus pulls it open wider —The two enter.

**INT. PROP WORKSHOP - NIGHT**

Fluorescents buzz awake. Long benches stretch across the space, cluttered with tools, brushes, and half-finished props. Racks brim with swords, rifles, mannequins in half-stitched gowns. The faint echo of the aria bleeds through the walls.

Rexus steps in first, eyes bright.

He strolls along one of the benches, running his hand over unfinished crowns, a drying pistol, the frame of a chandelier waiting for glass. He picks things up, sets them down again, like a kid in someone else's toy box.

**REXUS**

(natural, without looking  
back)

Nice to see you out of Serim for  
once.

Lucian stands a few paces back, still at the threshold.  
Watching.

Lucian steps further in, gaze drifting across the benches –  
half-painted props, sabers on a rack, a mask drying in resin.

**LUCIAN**

Yeah. I've been doing a lot of...  
thinking.

Lucian picks up a prop saber, turns it idly in his hand.

Rexus looks up from the workbench. His mouth starts to open –  
his words hanging there – then he stops himself. Closes it.  
He studies Lucian instead, fingers tapping lightly against a  
discarded crown.

A long beat.

Finally, Rexus exhales, voice softer than usual.

**REXUS**

(shrugging, as if finishing  
a story mid-thought)

Yeah. As I was saying, I wanted to  
stay with Taresh.

He moves on, absently toying with numerous props.

**REXUS (CONT'D)**

(casual, almost mocking  
himself)

She used to cry at sunsets.

Not sad. Just... overwhelmed. Said  
she only had thirty thousand left.

Maybe

(he smirks, dry)

I wanted what she had. That...

weight. Where things matter because  
they're slipping away.

Turns out infinity flattens  
everything.

Lucian watches from the threshold. He doesn't interrupt –  
just lets Rexus talk, lets him drain it out.

**REXUS**

I kept thinking... what if I just  
became like her? What if I stopped  
being... this?

**LUCIAN**

You wanted to be mortal.

Rexus glances over, holds his brother's eyes for a moment – then laughs once, without humor.

**REXUS**

(flat, like wrapping up a thought)  
(I don't even know if the Architect would allow that. Can we change what we are? Or did He make us... fixed?)

**LUCIAN**

(careful)

I don't know.

**REXUS**

( shrugs, turning away)  
Nope. Neither do I.

He paces down the bench, knocking aside a half-painted mask.

**REXUS (CONT'D)**

(voice harder now)

I saw it coming. The fault line.  
Twenty years out, I could see the stress building.(beat)  
You'd have seen it earlier. A thousand years, maybe. Seen the whole cascade.(beat)  
But even if I had seen it sooner... could I have stopped it? Or was she always going to die no matter what I did?

(he stops, quieter, tightening)

The Pattern doesn't care how much you love someone.

The weight of the silence lingers just long enough... then Rexus breaks it with his trademark, award winning smile.

He glances down. Notices the saber still in Lucian's hand, idly turning.

**REXUS**

(smirk tugging wider)  
Whatcha gonna do with that, First Light?

Lucian glances at the blade in his hand.

**LUCIAN**

Oh, this?

His smile grows as he lifts the saber, presenting it with a sudden flourish. The motion is effortless, elegant – and for the first time, we glimpse how truly skilled he is. His stance alone shows a history of precision.

Rexus tilts his head, grin curling.

**REXUS**

Careful there, Lucian. Wouldn't want you to hurt yours—

In a flash, Rexus snatches up a nearby matching saber, moving quicker than expected.

He strikes. Sharp, playful, but fast.

Lucian parries without effort – as if he knew it was coming before it began. The blades ring, the sound echoing across the workshop.

A spark between them. Playfulness ignited. Gods at play.

**MUSIC CUE: OK Go - Do What You Want**

A fast montage of gods playing at mortals' games:

- **Rexus** vaults a workbench, saber clashing wildly.
- **Lucian** meets him mid-air, blade steady, parry inevitable.
- **Rexus** ducks behind a mannequin in a sequined gown, dragging it like a shield.
- **Lucian** shakes his head, smiling as he bats the mannequin's arm aside.
- **Rexus** snatches a prop pistol, fires mock shots.
- **Lucian** laughs at the weapon change.
- **Rexus** dives, crowns scatter, jewels skitter across the floor.
- **Lucian** steps into the chaos, precise, elegant – swordplay more dance than duel.
- **Rexus** leaps up with a foam spear, jabbing in mock triumph.
- **Lucian** snatches it mid-air, twists, and sends Rexus spinning into a pile of masks.

They're laughing – genuine, unguarded. Two brothers, two gods, two boys at play.

The song cuts hard as—

**A STAGEHAND** bursts through the door, carrying a clipboard. He freezes, eyes wide.

**STAGEHAND**

What the fuck—?! You guys aren't supposed to be in here!

Lucian and Rexus both stop mid-motion, caught red-handed like schoolboys.

**CUT TO BLACK.**

END OF CUT TO BLACK.

**EXT. NEW YORK STREET - 2AM**

Zadie, still with his shades on, flicks his lighter, shielding the flame from the wind. Offers it to Aella. She leans in, lips curled around the cigarette, eyes on him. They start walking, strolling, cigarettes glowing. Neon buzz, puddles reflecting signs, a siren far off.

A woman ducks into an alley, squats without shame.

**ZADIE**

This is what I love about this place.

He gestures casually towards her.

**ZADIE**

(grinning)

Where else do you get that kind of authenticity?

Aella smirks, exhales smoke.

**AELLA**

Rome. Coliseum. But with more stench and fewer pants.

Zadie chuckles.

**AELLA**

(after a drag, more reflective)

You know... Rome stank of blood. The coliseum wasn't all marble and glory. It reeked. Sweat, piss, rot. And still — it was kinda magnificent.

(beat)

We cheered anyway.

**ZADIE**

(grinning)

Of course we did. What's the saying? Oh yeah ... When in Rome?

Aella chuckles, shakes her head.

They walk a few steps in silence. Smoke trailing.

Up ahead, a drunk twenty-something in a wrinkled polo stumbles out of a bodega – **CHIP**. He blocks half the sidewalk, arms flung wide, sloshing a can of hard seltzer.

**CHIP**

Do you know who I am? Huh? Do you even know?

(grinning)

Chip Duggan ... Crypto King, baby!  
I hit the jackpot today. Changing  
the world.

Zadie and Aella slow just enough to watch him wobble.

**CHIP**

My dad says I got more hustle than he ever did. And that man built his empire from scratch. Do you know what it's like to have greatness in your blood?

(beat, sways)

Course you don't. Look at you.

Aella and Zadie share a conspiratorial glance. If Chip even knew.

Chip thrusts his hand up for a high five, wobbling.

**CHIP**

Yo! Big night for me, guys. Huge.  
Made bank. unstoppable.

Zadie eyes the hand, smirks.

**ZADIE**

Mmm... yeah, no. How about elbows,  
Chip buddy? Let's bring back that timeless COVID greeting. Old school.

He offers an elbow. Chip squints, then lunges too slow. Their elbows don't connect.

**ZADIE**

(mock-serious)

Seamless execution. Wall Street precision, right there.

Chip cackles, unbothered.

**CHIP**

That's me, man. Precision. I don't miss. Not ever.

Aella takes a drag, completely unbothered. She looks down at Chip's khakis, soaked from the knee down.

**AELLA**

You sure about that, Chipster?

Chip glances down at the damp stain on his crotch, then shrugs like it doesn't matter.

**CHIP**

Whatever. Winners don't care.

He staggers down the block, still bragging to no one.

Aella exhales smoke, shaking her head.

The two continue on.

HOLD on their stroll. Let the city speak

**AELLA**

I'm fuckng bored. City of millions.  
All I get is pancakes and silence?  
Where's the chaos, where's the  
pulse?

**ZADIE**

Humans like their REM cycles, Ael.

**AELLA**

(suddenly, a spark of  
memory)

You know what I miss? The  
philosophers. Greeks under olive  
trees, tearing each other apart  
with questions.

(she exhales smoke)

Where the hell are those fuckers  
these days?

**ZADIE**

What about the wise words of Chip?

**AELLA**

If Chip's the pinnacle of human  
wisdom, the species is truly  
doomed.

**ZADIE**

Eh. Socrates probably slurred too.

SOUNDS: muffled bass.

**AELLA**

(whispers)

Hear that?

**ZADIE**

Probably a very committed bar in  
the final death throes of the  
night.

Aella grins, follows the sound to a back alley door. She pauses and then yanks the door open. Light spills out – warm, colorful.

Aella smiles big and steps inside.

**INT. PARTY - 2:23 A.M.**

BOOM – sound, light, movement. A pulse that doesn't belong to the city above.

AELLA steps in first, eyes wide, already grinning. Behind her, ZADIE strolls in with hands deep in his jacket, sunglasses still on, smirk locked.

They make their way down the steps.

**AELLA**

Holy shit.

**CAMERA SWEEP – THE ROOM:**

Packed wall to wall, maybe forty people, maybe more. Every color in motion – sequins, scarves, painted skin. A haze of incense and vape clouds. A surge of smiles and energy. It's overwhelming and magnetic, like stepping into a festival compressed into a basement.

A woman, gilded with floral garments, glides up to AELLA with a bracelet, presses it into her palm with a hug that lingers fractionally long.

**WOMAN**

Welcome. Take one. Stay as long as you like.

AELLA takes the bracelet, charmed. ZADIE is already being eye-balled – a topless reveler with costume wings sidles in, half-dance. She closes in on Zadie.

**ZADIE**

(leaning away, grinning)

While I appreciate the attention, miss, I'm strictly cutting random grinding with forest nymphs out of my diet. (beat) And carbs. Carbs are no bueno.

The reveler laughs, tosses a handful of petals in his face, sashays off.

**ZADIE**

(to himself, deadpan)  
Welcome to the fever dream.  
Population: us.

**AELLA**

Come on. This is amazing.

She lets herself be pulled into a **brief dance** by a stranger – a messy, spinning twirl, more joy than grace. She laughs joyfully.

Zadie watches, leaning against a post. The corners of his mouth twitch.

**ZADIE**

(calling out)  
Careful. This is how cult recruitment starts. First it's garlands, next thing you know you're chanting about the moon.

**AELLA**

(throws him a look,  
breathless)  
Not everything's a cult, Z.

A reveler pats Zadie on the back, pressing a drink into his hand. Zadie takes it without hesitation, sips, winces.

**ZADIE**

(holding it up like a specimen)  
Yep. Definitely moon juice.

The crowd surges, laughing, cheering at nothing in particular. Someone climbs a chair to wave a neon scarf. A man in a glitter vest spins with a child's kite overhead, like it belongs there.

AELLA is in it – not performing, just soaking it up, alive in the noise. She drifts through, brushing hands, swapping grins.

Zadie trails behind, slower, less open, but watching everything. Sunglasses hide his eyes but not his smirk.

The two push deeper into the room, swallowed by noise and light.

A woman draped in yellow scarves stops them both, pressing petals into their palms. She looks at them with too much intensity, as if they're honored guests.

**WOMAN**

You belong here.

Aella beams, closes her fist around the petals. Zadie rolls his eyes – but tucks them into his pocket.

**AELLA**

(tugging him onward)  
Come on, Zadie. Just... feel it.

**ZADIE**

I am feeling it. I feel a rash forming.

She spins again, laughing.

**WIDE SHOT – THE ROOM**

Bodies swirl, neon kites cut through incense, tambourines clatter, voices rise without reason. It's not sex, not worship, not a rave. It's something in-between – a celebration too big for the basement it's trapped in.

**CLOSE ON AELLA** – flushed, eyes alight.

**CLOSE ON ZADIE** – sunglasses reflecting the chaos, grin flickering wider.

Together, they vanish into the current.

HOLD ON THE PARTY. LET THE SCENE BREATH.

The music stops. A hush spreads, like a wave.

**A GONG.**

Low. Resonant. The sound hangs in the air.

The crowd cheers – then begins to part, bodies shifting, creating a circle in the middle of the floor.

A figure emerges. **MATTY**. Tall, floral jacket , face covered in paint, lit with an intensity that borders on feverish. Every eye follows him.

Beside him, a WOMAN draped in scarves moves with deliberate grace. She lowers herself to the floor at the center of the circle, kneeling, facing away from him. Her eyes close. A faint, calm smile flickers across her face.

The crowd falls silent.

Matty steps forward, deliberate. He clasps something in his hands, hidden, pressed to his chest. Reverent.

**CLOSE – AELLA**

Her breath catches. She can't look away.

**CLOSE — ZADIE**

A grimace. Brows drawn.

**ZADIE**

What the fuuuuuuuuck?

Matty raises his arms, slow, ritualistic, lifting the object above the woman's head. His head tilts downward, gaze heavy.

The crowd waits. Breathless.

Silence stretches.

Then —

Keyboard notes. Oddly out of place. Familiar.

**MATTY**

(soft, almost a chant)

Turn around...

Beat.

**MATTY**

(into the now visible  
microphone in his hands,  
breaking into melody)

Every now and then I get a little  
bit lonely—

The room ERUPTS. Cheers, laughter, applause. Petals thrown.

The woman sways to the music, complimenting Matty's passionate singing.

Matty belts into the microphone, whole body alive with song.

**CLOSE — AELLA**

She exhales, half-laugh, half-shock, shoulders trembling.

**CLOSE — ZADIE**

His grimace melts into disbelief. Then a crooked grin.

The crowd surges forward, swept into the chorus. Firecrackers pop. The space transforms back into chaos and joy, as if the silence never happened.

**CLOSE — ZADIE**

Head tilted, shades sliding just enough to reveal his eyes. He shoots Aella a look: flat, incredulous. Are you fucking kidding me?

**CLOSE - AELLA**

She stares back for half a beat, then cracks – laughter spilling out, shoulders shaking.

The crowd hits the chorus.

**MATTY & CROWD**

♪ ...Total eclipse of the heart! ♪

Aella gives in. She throws her head back and joins them, off-key but loud, laughing between lines, swept up in the absurdity.

Zadie chuckles, lights a cigarette. He doesn't sing, but sways. He smiles at Aella – some judgment, mostly affection.

**WIDE - THE ROOM**

Petals flying, tambourines rattling, voices ragged and joyous.

Aella in the middle, singing her heart out.

Zadie beside her, letting her have it.

FADE OUT.

END OF FADE OUT.

**INT - PLUSHIE PARADISE (CONTINUED)**

Evander's face – eyes soft with thought.

A YOUNG WOMAN -JENNIFER (20s, radiant, mischievous) lies across his chest, skin on skin amid a riot of plush toys. Her leg drapes over him lazily.

She studies him for a long moment, tracing idle circles on his ribs.

**JENNIFER**

You talk like a poet who has seen  
too much.

(sly smile)

You ever stop thinking and just...  
float?

Evander grins faintly, eyes half-lidded.

She giggles, then rummages into the mountain of plushies beside her. A small glittery purse emerges.

**JENNIFER (CONT'D)**

I have something for that.

She opens the purse, fishes out a tiny strip of LSD tabs, the edges catching neon light from somewhere unseen.

**JENNIFER**

(teasing)

When's the last time you saw God?

Evander chuckles, deep and slow. Her tone is a joke – his answer isn't.

**EVANDER**

Well... my dear...

(beat, eyes far away)

I suppose it's been quite a while.

Their eyes meet – hers curious, his remembering.

She laughs softly, tears off two tabs.

**JENNIFER**

Open up, sexy.

Evander obeys with amused grace.

She places a tab gently on his tongue – and then another on her own.

She sinks back onto his chest.

HOLD with them and the EDM music playing. The plush world seems to pulse with their breathing.

**JENNIFER**

What does the Divine look like to you?

Evander exhales through a smile, searching his memory – not metaphor, but memory.

**EVANDER**

Hmm...

(beat, quiet)

Very much like me, I suppose.

(then, softly amused)

As fathers and sons often do.

She chuckles, thinking it's a line.

**JENNIFER**

You close with your family?

Evander takes a slow breath, eyes unfocused – a thousand years of something flickering behind them.

**EVANDER**

Yes.

(beat)

I believe so.

We've spent... well... it seems like  
forever together.

Jennifer grins, charmed by what she thinks is stoner poetry.  
She presses a soft kiss to his chest.

**JENNIFER**

Tell me about them.

Evander's eyes drift upwards, towards the colored reflections  
of the party lights on the ceiling.

**EVANDER**

There are nine of us.

Three brothers, four sisters...

(beat, faint grin)

And one who prefers to be both.

Jennifer's eyebrows lift – impressed, amused.

**JENNIFER**

That's... a big family.

**EVANDER**

It's what I know.

(soft smile)

Ours just... takes longer to get  
through dinner.

She laughs, nestling back against him.

**JENNIFER**

Your mother?

Evander pauses.

**EVANDER**

Well... I don't remember having a  
mother at all.

(beat)

I hardly remember my father.

She frowns – exaggerated, sweetly drunk empathy. Her palm  
rubs slow circles on his chest.

**JENNIFER**

Boo, that's so sad.

I'm sure they had their reasons.

(earnest)

How are you with that?

Evander smiles faintly, as if the question itself is adorable  
in its smallness.

**EVANDER**

I don't give it much thought.  
 I have a good life.  
 Things to keep me occupied.

Another WOMAN, also nude, strolls lazily past the plushie pile. Her skin glows in the colored light. She catches Evander's gaze, smiles with a mischief that lingers a second too long, then drifts off toward a laughing group of revelers in the corner.

Evander watches her go.

**JENNIFER**

That's such a good attitude.  
 Like... when life gives you lemons,  
 right?

Evander chuckles – low, genuine, ancient.

**EVANDER**

Yes.  
 Something like that.

They lie there a moment, her head rising and falling with his breathing. The muffled laughter of others filters through the plush landscape – distant, harmless.

**JENNIFER**

You know, I used to think I'd have it all figured out by now.  
 (beat)  
 Like there was going to be a day where I'd wake up and just... know.  
 Who I was. What I wanted.  
 But every time I think I'm close, it just... shifts again.  
 Like the goalpost moves when I'm not looking.

Evander listens quietly, eyes half-closed.

**JENNIFER (CONT'D)**

My mom says that's what growing up is.  
 But I don't think she ever stopped pretending she knew either.

Evander smiles faintly – not unkind, just knowing.

**EVANDER**

Most people spend their lives convincing themselves the ground is solid.  
 They build names, routines, families – anything that feels still.  
 (MORE)

**EVANDER (CONT'D)**

(beat)

But the floor always moves,  
eventually.

Jennifer studies him, curious.

**JENNIFER**

You sound like you've been through  
it.  
Was there ever a time you didn't  
know who you were?

He considers. The pause is long, but not uncomfortable.

**EVANDER**

Once.  
Long ago.  
When I thought being alive meant  
having purpose.

Jennifer's gaze softens; she's moved but doesn't quite understand.

**JENNIFER**

And now?

**EVANDER**

Now I think purpose is just another  
way of saying afraid of the  
unknown.

She chuckles softly, half-confused, half-impressed.

**JENNIFER**

(playful)  
You're kind of impossible, you know  
that?  
Every answer just raises three more  
questions.

**EVANDER**

Then perhaps we're making progress.

She laughs, presses a lazy kiss to his collarbone, and sighs – a genuine, grounded sound.

A small silence settles – soft, magnetic. The background laughter swells for a moment, then fades again.

She traces a line down his chest, thoughtful.

**JENNIFER**

You really don't remember your  
father?

**EVANDER**

Bits. A voice. A presence. A weight.  
 He was... large. Not in size - in meaning.  
 Everything else just seemed smaller next to him.

She nods, quietly absorbing it.

HOLD on the silence. For the first time, Evander seems moved.

A laugh rings out nearby, breaking the silence - **the other woman** drifting closer now, curiosity and mischief in her eyes.

She approaches - **MANDY**, mid-twenties, confident stride. She settles onto the plushies, opposite Jennifer, completing the triangle.

**MANDY**

Hi. I'm Mandy.  
 (smiles, appraising)  
 You two look amazing.

Evander and Jennifer chuckle, exchanging a glance.

**EVANDER**

Well, Mandy... I'm Evander, and this perfect slice of life you see here is Jennifer.

**MANDY**

(sultry)  
 Hi, Jennifer.

Jennifer looks up from Evander's chest, eyes half-lidded, pupils dilated.

**JENNIFER**

(lustily)  
 Hi yourself.

The drugs are starting to hit. Time feels slower, warmer.

Mandy leans down, kisses Jennifer lightly. Jennifer leans in, closes her eyes, surrendering to the moment.

A smile spreads slowly across Evander's face.

Jennifer's kiss moves to Evander - slow, deliberate. They kiss deeply. Then she begins to descend, kissing down his chest. Mandy moves up, lips finding Evander's mouth as Jennifer continues lower, passionately kissing down his body until she moves OUT OF FRAME.

Evander leans back in ecstasy, eyes closed.

Mandy smiles against his lips. She begins her own kissing descent – neck, chest, lower – until she too disappears OUT OF FRAME.

We hold on Evander's face. Pleasure washes over him in waves. His breath catches.

He turns his head to the side.

His eyes land on a plushie rhinoceros perched beside him, seemingly staring at him through jeweled button eyes.

Evander laughs – a genuine, delighted sound. A beat.

He reaches out, gently covers the rhino's eyes with his hand.

**EVANDER**

(chuckling)

No peeking...

He closes his eyes, head falling back against the cushions as the drugs and pleasure take him over.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF FADE TO BLACK.

**INT. NIGHTCLUB - VIP BOOTH**

Bass thumps – a heartbeat under every breath. Neon spills across low glass tables littered with half-empty bottles and scattered limes. The crowd beyond is all blur and strobe, but here, in the booth, time slows.

The INTRUDER - ADRIAN and his companion, CADENCE, are sitting across from them. His arms stretched across the seat, his legs spread, one ankle resting on his knee ... taking up more space than necessary.

Val leans forward, voice steady, eyes warm.

**VAL**

(to the woman, gentle)

And you – what's your name?

**WOMAN**

Cadence.

Val's smile curves; they tip the glass slightly, eyes never leaving hers.

**VAL**

Pleased to meet you, Cadence.  
 (beat)  
 Is he taking good care of you  
 tonight?

Adrian catches it instantly.

A subtle shift – focus on her, not him.

He straightens, smooth grin sharpening.

**ADRIAN**

(laughs)  
 He has a name.  
 Adrian Vey.  
 You've probably heard it once or  
 twice – cars, social media, the  
 fights in Monaco.

He says it like a headline, confident, waiting for the  
 flicker of recognition.

**ADRIAN (CONT'D)**

I make it a point to take care of  
 more than one person a night.  
 But tonight? She gets the best of  
 me.

Val's smile stays; their eyes drift toward another companion.  
 A whisper. A soft laugh.

Adrian's line lands in the quiet and dies there.

He pushes forward, trying to reclaim the air.

**ADRIAN (CONT'D)**

Anyway – just flew in for the  
 Grammys.  
 Private jet, whole thing. You know  
 how it goes–

Val's head snaps back toward him. The smile thins.

**VAL**

Adrian.  
 You mistake this for an audition.

The booth stills. The bass drops into a low, heavy roll.

Move through the club organism again. Music. Bass. Dancing.  
 Lasers. We are ingested by this being. Floating between  
 bodies and revelry.

**BACK AT BOOTH**

(HOLD – The shift in tension is sharp. Jarring.)

Adrian blinks, then forces an easy grin.

**ADRIAN**

(confident, aggressive)  
 I don't audition. I arrive.  
 Rooms open, people listen.  
 (beat)  
 That's not a tryout — that's  
 presence.

Val considers him like a scientist might study fire.

**VAL**

Presence is not ownership.  
 To stride into another kingdom  
 uninvited, to sit upon its throne,  
 whisper to its guards as though  
 they were yours — what do you call  
 that?

**ADRIAN**

(smirk)  
 Confidence.  
 You should try it sometime.

Val takes a sip from their glass. Adrian turns to Candace speaking directly in her ear. She is fully focused on him.

**VAL**

You say you arrive, Adrian —

Adrian returns his focus to Val.

**VAL**

... But arrival is nothing.  
 Anyone can cross a threshold,  
 sit where they don't belong.

They tilt their head, studying him like a riddle.

**VAL**

The weight isn't in arrival.  
 It's in being received.  
 Otherwise. are you presence —  
 Or are you trespass.

Val's tone drops — softer, deadlier.

Another trip through the club. The vibe is dark. Ominous. Claustrophobic. Music dark, pounding.

**BACK AT BOOTH:**

**VAL**

(they lean in, eyes steady)  
 Yes, Adrian... I know of you.  
 You and your brother.

**VAL**

Your millions of disciples – boys,  
 mostly –  
 hungry for a father's voice.  
 Hungry in the same way you were.

Adrian's finger drumming against his glass. Stills.

**VAL**

(quiet, assured)  
 You grew up never quite good enough  
 for your father.  
 Always chasing the nod, the hand on  
 the shoulder that never came.  
 And now you (beat) **arrive** – loud,  
 certain – so the room will give you  
 what he wouldn't.

Their tone softens, but the weight doesn't ease.

**VAL**

You weren't cared for enough to  
 receive it.  
 So now you give it, dressed as  
 confidence.  
 But it still tastes like hunger.

A hush radiates from the booth – sound bending around the words.

Adrian shifts back in the booth's cushion, putting an inch more distance between them.

**VAL (CONT'D)**

Make no mistake: you didn't arrive,  
 Adrian.  
 You were tolerated.  
 (beat)  
 A guest indulged only while you  
 amuse.  
 (leans in)  
 Bore me, presume beyond your  
 station, and this kingdom will  
 remind you how short a fall power  
 really is.

Adrian's grin twitches, caught between laughter and something else. Uncertainty?

He checks Cadence's eyes – she's silent, unsure which way to lean.

HOLD. Dark Techno music is louder. Let the tension build.

Adrian exhales, gathers himself, then stands – smooth again, loud again.

**ADRIAN**

Hey, relax. All good vibes.  
 I've got another party waiting  
 anyway. Tyla, you know the hot  
 little singer from Johannesburg.  
 She's expecting me.

He squeezes Cadence's hand, flashes one last grin.

**ADRIAN (CONT'D)**

Pleasure. Nice empire you've got  
 here.

He slips through the rope. The crowd folds around him  
 instantly, hungry for the story he's already retelling. His  
 voice is swallowed by bass – distorted, mechanical,  
 relentless.

**ON VAL**

Unmoved. A small smile.

They raise their glass, a lone still point against the strobe  
 and the beat's dark pulse.

The music carries us.

**CUT TO BLACK**

END OF CUT TO BLACK

**INT. SERIM GALLERY - TIMELESS**

The hall glows in still light. The Bayeux Tapestry stretches across the marble wall. Lyra drifts through the gallery, buoyant, humming softly. Her fingers toy with a necklace charm as she twirls in her loose layers.

**LYRA**

(grinning, almost to  
 herself)

Maybe I'll paint something.  
 (she spins, skirts flaring)  
 Yes—something wild, something loud.  
 I think I could.  
 (beat, laughing lightly)  
 Why not? I mean... it could be fun.

**KAELARYS**

(arms folded, watching  
distantly)

Yes. I think that would be good for  
you, Lyra.

(she shifts her gaze to the  
tapestry)

**LYRA**

(glowing)

Maybe colors they've never thought  
to mix.

(she presses the necklace  
to her lips, eyes bright)

Something that doesn't look like  
memory, but like-breath.

(beat – almost childlike in  
her excitement)

I'd hang it here, with this  
tapestry. Why not?

**KAELARYS**

(her arms unfold, a small  
smile breaking through)

Yes... why not?

(she steps nearer, gaze  
moving between Lyra and  
the tapestry)

I can almost see it – your colors  
spilling, refusing old patterns.

(beat – softer now)

It would belong here.

**LYRA**

(soft gasp, delighted)

You think so? Truly?

(she brushes her hand over  
the tapestry's edge,  
careful not to touch)

Then maybe it wouldn't just be  
mine. Maybe it would be ours.

**KAELARYS**

(quiet, touched)

Ours... yes.

Lyra spins, hands sketching invisible brushstrokes in the air.

Kaelarys watches.

She lifts a hand, mirroring Lyra's gesture, stopping just short of the tapestry's threads.

Her hand moves, slow. Fingers hover just above the tapestry – tracing the outline of a figure without touching.

Her eyes track the weave as she walks along. Threads tight.  
Colors bleeding.

**SFX:** Lyra keeps talking, bright, her words spilling. The words are muddled, as if far away.

Lyra twirls once more, unbroken in her delight.

Kaelarys' gaze stays with the tapestry.

Kaelarys exhales. Her eyes keep tracing the weave – figures, banners, colors – until the rhythm falters.

The camera drifts with her gaze. Down the cloth. Past the order. Past the triumphs.

Slowly, the end comes into view: the final unfinished panel.

Frayed threads. Incomplete.

HOLD – the silence thickens here, the gallery heavier now.

**KAELARYS**

(too quiet for Lyra; mostly  
to herself)

Yes... I think that would suit you.  
To make something of your own.

HOLD – silence. Lyra beams, still caught in her imaginings. Kaelarys does not smile. Her eyes fix on the ragged threads, the unfinished edge.

**KAELARYS**

(steady, measured, breaking  
the silence.)

The Normans began this work with  
such certainty. A grand vision.  
And yet... they left it hanging.  
They didn't finish. They slipped  
away.

Lyra, captured by Kaelarys' sudden words, stops dancing.  
Turns towards Kaelarys.

**LYRA**

(curious, indulgent)

Unfinished. Yes. Strange that they  
would leave it so.

**KAELARYS**

(inward)

Didn't even stay to see it through.  
Didn't even wait... to see what it  
became.

Lyra listens.

**KAELARYS**

We preserve it.  
 We call it whole.  
 (Her breath quickens)  
 As though the absence was holy.

**LYRA**

(steps closer, unsettled)  
 Kaelarys?

Lyra moves towards Kaelarys.

**KAELARYS**

He didn't stay.

**LYRA**

(reaching out to her sister)  
 Kaelarys, what's wrong?

**KAELARYS**

He didn't even wait to see what we  
 became.

**LYRA**

(worried, confused)  
 Who? The embroiderers? What are -

**KAELARYS**

(cutting Lyra off)  
 No. Him. The Architect. He made us  
 and then just ...

**LYRA**

(reaches out, gently)  
 Kaelarys. The Architect gave you  
 purpose-

**KAELARYS**

(cuts her off again)  
 Purpose?

HOLD. Lyra recoils. Kaelarys presses her palm against the  
 tapestry, making contact with it for the first time.

**KAELARY**

We are the loose threads, Lyra.  
 We are the unfinished embroidery.

HOLD – silence stretches. Lyra's face stricken.

**LYRA**

(Calmly)  
 No–He sees. The Architect always  
 sees. He gave you your resonance,  
 your–

**KAELARYS**

(interrupts, her voice cracks, brittle with frustration.)

What if He never meant to be with us?

What if we're nothing more than scraps He abandoned?

**LYRA**

No—don't say that.

**KAELARYS**

(softer, quieter)  
It's true. He didn't stay.

Silence floods the gallery.

Lyra, from behind, places her hands on Kaelarys' shoulders.

**LYRA**

(softly)  
Kaelarys... don't lose yourself.  
Remember The Pattern.  
(beat)  
It's written into everything. Every path, every choice, every end. It doesn't fail us.

**KAELARYS**

(lifts her head slowly)  
The Pattern.  
(she laughs once, hollow)  
We say it cannot lie.  
That it charts the future like scripture.  
(beat – her hand gestures to the final panel)  
But look here, Lyra.  
The Pattern did not finish this tapestry.  
The Pattern did not stay when He left.

HOLD — silence. The words echo in the marble hall. Lyra recoils as though struck.

**KAELARYS**

(softer now, trembling, almost to herself)  
The Pattern does not create.  
It only predicts.  
(beat – eyes wet, hollow)  
And what is a prophecy worth...  
if the one who wrote it is already gone?

Lyra wraps her arms around her sister, from behind, hugs her tightly.

**KAELARYS**

(breath ragged, voice  
breaking )

He's never coming back.

(beat – she grips Lyra's  
hand, eyes wet)

**CUT TO: MONTAGE.**

**MONTAGE - HALF-SPEED/MUSIC VIDEO STYLE** "Famous Last Words" –  
My Chemical Romance

**MUSEUM GALLERY CLOSE** on KAELARYS' face–tears, breaking:

**KAELARYS**

We act like gods, but we're nothing  
more than orphans.

Beat.

Music EXPLODES.

**CUT TO:**

**MUSEUM PROP ROOM – BURST OF MOVEMENT** Doors SLAM open. Lucian and Rexus barrel out, prop swords gleaming under fluorescent lights. Staff member frozen, mouth agape.

**HALLWAY – RUNNING** Lucian's feet POUNDING marble. Rexus behind him, gaining. Both laughing like schoolkids.

**LUCIAN SPINS** – half-speed, coat flaring.

Rexus' sword ARCS down.

CLANG. Lucian parries. The impact reverberates. These aren't just props in their hands—every movement is precise, trained, deadly serious beneath the absurdity.

**CUT TO:**

**NYC STREETS – GOLDEN HOUR** Aella and Zadie drifting out of the alley doorway. Cigarette smoke curls between them. They bump shoulders—giggling.

They step out onto the sidewalk.

SCREECH. Electric scooter VEERS. They SCATTER—

Zadie catches Aella's arm. They BURST into laughter, bodies pressed against the wall, hearts racing.

**CUT TO:**

**HOUSE - PLUSHIE PILE** Evander's POV—ceiling spinning slowly.  
Colors breathing.

**REVERSE** - Evander sits up through a sea of stuffed animals.  
Jennifer and Mandy on either side.

**THE PARTY:**

Someone dancing alone by the window, backlit. Two people deep  
in conversation, gesturing wildly about nothing.

Evander's hand reaches out—SLOW MOTION—fingers closing around  
a joint in an ashtray. He brings it to his lips. Lighter  
FLARES. Orange glow. Inhale. Hold. Exhale—smoke fills frame.

**CUT TO:**

**CLUB - VIP SECTION** PUSH IN on Val's face. That smirk.

**THE CLUB:** Adrian's silhouette disappearing into the crowd.  
Val leans back, scotch in hand.

CHAOS. Bodies moving. Lights strobing. Bass THUMPING through  
everything.

Val raises his glass slightly. Victory.

**CUT TO:**

**MUSEUM GALLERY - WIDE OVERHEAD SHOT** Kaelarys wrapped in  
Lyra's arms. The Bayeux Tapestry stretches across the entire  
background—medieval figures frozen in their ancient war.

Just music.

Hold. Hold. Hold.

Lyra's hand strokes Kaelarys' hair.

**CUT TO:**

**MUSEUM LOBBY - ESCALATING CLANG.** CLANG. CLANG. Lucian and Rexus  
burst into the main space.

Patrons TURN—

An elderly woman clutches her purse.

A teenager pulls out his phone, filming.

A security guard speaks urgently into his radio.

Two college students CHEER.

The fight continues—parry, thrust, dodge. They're moving  
toward the MAIN ENTRANCE. Glass doors visible ahead.

More staff converging. Running. Shouting.

**CUT TO:**

**NYC STREETS - RECKLESS CLOSE** on Zadie's hand. Coke on his skin. He brings it to his nose—**SNIFF**. Doesn't even look around. People passing. Cabs honking. He dabs another bump.

Extends his hand to Aella.

She leans in—**SNIFF**. Straightens up, head tilting back.

They walk—swaying, serpentine.

Aella SPINS—arms out, face to the sky, streetlights becoming stars.

Zadie watches her, laughing—pure, unguarded.

**CUT TO:**

**HOUSE HALLWAY - BEHIND EVANDER** Wide shot. Evander NUDE, walking down the narrow corridor. His arms outstretched like he's underwater. Joint between his lips, smoke trailing behind him like a veil.

He SWAYS. His hips move to the music. Completely unselfconscious. Completely gone.

His fingers drag along the wall.

Reaches the bathroom door.

Hand on knob.

Turns.

Steps in.

Door closes.

HOLD on the closed door.

**CUT TO:**

**CLUB - CLOSE ON VAL**

Tight on his face. The smirk. The satisfaction.

Then—

Something flickers.

The smile doesn't quite reach his eyes anymore.

He blinks slowly.

Around him—**REVELERS**. Dancing. Screaming. Laughing. Kissing.

But Val is REMOVED. We PUSH CLOSER as the world around him blurs.

His face relaxes.

The satisfaction drains away.

What's left is emptiness.

He stares into his glass.

Val sinks into his seat.

Deeper.

His eyes go distant.

Deeper.

The lights play across his face but don't touch him.

Deeper.

Until he's just a body in a chair, surrounded by life he can't feel anymore.

**HOLD.**

**FADE TO BLACK.**

Bridge of montage, volume drops-

**INT. SERIM GALLERY - TIMELESS**

Kaelarys stands in Lyra's arms. Her eyes are open, calm but wet, fixed on the tapestry's unfinished edge. Lyra gently strokes her hair, steady and tender.

**KAELARYS**

(soft, almost amused  
through the exhaustion)

...Stupid tapestry.

**LYRA**

(comforting, playful)  
Stupid tapestry, indeed.

Kaelarys exhales—a quiet, broken chuckle.

(beat)

She turns to face Lyra. Her sister's face—calm, steady, still holding her.

**KAELARYS**

(quieter now, raw)  
Look at me. I'm a mess.  
(beat – her eyes soften)

**LYRA**

You're perfect.

Lyra's smiles. Tender. She strokes Kaelarys' hair once more.

**KAELARYS**

(barely a whisper)  
I love you.

Lyra's breath catches. She rests her forehead against Kaelarys', holding her a little tighter.

**LYRA**

(soft)  
I love you too, sister.

HOLD – the two of them, huddled in front of the unfinished tapestry. Still. Safe. Together.

**CUT TO CREDITS – montage music rises, carrying us out.**