

MAGIC, INC.

Pilot Movie - "Shadows"

Written By

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FADE IN

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - NIGHT

Against a full moon, the city of angels ignites against the stars as a NARRATOR speaks.

NARRATOR (VO)

There is more magic in this world than you or I can ever imagine. It is sealed in a separate world, the supernatural world, by a doorway that opens once every year.

EXT. THE DOORWAY - NIGHT

Imbedded in a giant gray-stone wall, the wooden door begins to rattle and shake off its hinges! Storm clouds are brewing, and the wind is HOWLING through the night.

NARRATOR (VO)

On dates when the day, month, and year match, all the magic in the world goes haywire, and the door to the supernatural world opens!

The wooden door BURSTS OPEN--
A yellowish light pours out--
And VARIOUS DEMONIC BEASTS explode into our world!

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Various humans--SORCERERS, MAGICIANS, WIZARDS, WITCHES, and SWORDSMEN battle the creatures. It is a tumult unlike any other!

NARRATOR (VO)

The night is spent battling these creatures back to their home in the supernatural world. For twelve hours, there is nothing but utter chaos.

Leading the humans is a man in a purple sport coat with long, black hair, wielding a glowing sword. This is HAROLD TAYLOR, the former leader of Magic, Incorporated.

EXT. THE DOORWAY - NIGHT

The ragged band of humans have defeated and/or killed most of the beasts. Their clothes are rags on them.

NARRATOR (VO)

But, on this night, there would be no peace...for
the doorway never closed.

Just as Harold and his team thinks the battle's won--
A HUNDRED MORE BEASTS ARE UNLEASHED ONTO THIS WORLD!

HAROLD

Stand your ground! We can still win this night!

One of the humans, a spirit medium we will come to know as
SEISHIRO, rushes to Harold's side.

SEISHIRO

Why isn't the doorway closing, Chairman?

HAROLD

(hefting his sword)

That's what I intend to find out!

Harold tosses his sword, LADYSMITH, to Seishiro.

HAROLD

Pass this on to my son. He'll take good care of
her.

SEISHIRO

But what of you and your destiny, Chairman?

HAROLD

My destiny...is of no consequence.

CRIES OF PROTEST emerge from the humans as Harold runs up
to the doorway. He takes one look back at his comrade.

HAROLD

Seishiro! Look after my son, and tell him I love
him.

Seishiro DROPS LADYSMITH TO THE GROUND and goes running
after Harold...but it's like his feet are trapped in mud!

He can't get to him in time, can't stop him from

LEAPING INTO THE SUPERNATURAL DOORWAY

Which SLAMS closed directly thereafter!

Seishiro falls to his knees, puts his hands on the ground to support himself as he weeps for their fallen leader.

SEISHIRO
Harold...my comrade...my friend...I will do...as you request.

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE (DIFFERENT VIEW) - NIGHT

These words appear --

SIX MONTHS LATER

Under another full moon, the city is still gleaming as if nothing had ever transpired that night...but we know better.

NARRATOR (VO)
The beasts are still out there, hunting, lurking, searching for their next victims. But there is a group that defends innocents from these offenders--a group of paranormal peacekeepers whose mission it is to defend the natural world against the supernatural world. They are Magic, Incorporated...and this is their story.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A white box truck rockets down the deserted highway.

INT. BOX TRUCK - NIGHT

Seishiro, the 35 year-old Japanese onmyodo (spirit medium), is driving the truck with a microphone earpiece. KIERA, the 23 year-old mission coordinator, is riding shotgun. She has a laptop in her hands, along with wearing an earpiece.

KIERA
Are you sure this'll work?

SEISHIRO
Not particularly, but it beats sitting at the mansion playing go fish.

KIERA
Says you.

Seishiro peers into the side-view mirror.

IN THE MIRROR

Is a frightening image--a SHADOW HOUND, a mystical beast composed of black swirling energy in the shape of a wolfhound! Its large teeth seem real enough, as well as the giant leaps its taking toward the box truck!

SEISHIRO

Slams his foot to the gas pedal. The engine of the truck gives a THROATY VRROOMM as it gains speed!

SEISHIRO

He's gaining, Kiera.

KIERA

Then let's give him something to chew on besides our rear bumper. Ami--you're up to bat!

AMI (VO)

Ten-four!

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

AMI, the group's 16 year-old Shinto shrine maiden, throws open the back of the truck, revealing herself to the shadow hound! Like the other team members, she sports an earpiece.

THE HOUND

Unleashes a GUT-WRENCHING ROAR that sounds like it came from the depths of hell!

AMI

Eww. You need a mint.

Ami pulls her staff out of her kimono's left sleeve--spins it in front of her--positions her first two fingers at the tip and aims it toward the hound!

AMI

I call upon the Five Color Fudo Gods of Japan--let there be rest, let there be peace!

AN ORANGE BURST OF MYSTICAL POWER

Erupts from the glowing staff and at the hound, knocking it back...but only for a few moments, as it flips back onto its legs and starts charging toward the truck!

AMI

Oopsies...maybe that was the wrong spell...

Ami quickly slams the back of the truck closed and CRACKS a glow stick.

AMI

This is Ami to Kiera. My spell didn't work--it's up to Tess now!

INT. BOX TRUCK - NIGHT

Kiera shakes her head and types something into her laptop.

KIERA

Roger that, Ami. Tess, you're up--try and block the shadow hound's escape!

TESS (VO)

It's like I always say--

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A motorbike comes into view behind the hound, ridden by a woman dressed in white and black racing leathers. This is TESS, a 29 year-old modern-day witch who is a lot less capable than she thinks.

TESS (CON'T.)

--never send a shrine maiden to do a witch's job!

Tess REVS her bike and goes racing right after the hound!

It ignores her and continues chasing the truck--
Tess removes a small wand attached to her belt--

It glows with a violet aura--

She waves it in a rainbow-shaped arc in front of her--
AND A WIDE PURPLE ENERGY WALL APPEARS BEHIND THE HOUND!

Tess slides the bike to a stop and hops off, ripping her helmet off and letting long hair cascade down her back. She puts a hand up to her earpiece and speaks into it --

TESS

Consider this hound's exit blocked! It's all up to you now, Micah darling!

MICAH (VO)

Don't call me that!

UP AHEAD

The road forks in two directions. At the fork is MICAH TAYLOR, the 23 year-old leader of Magic, Incorporated. He's dressed in a long black coat and suit. He sports a mechanical left eye--a cross between a camera lens and several pieces that act as a neural interface.

KIERA (VO)

Are you ready, Micah?

MICAH

Do I look like I'm ready?

SEISHIRO (VO)

Open the box I gave you, Chairman.

Micah opens a long wooden box, removes a long string of what appear to be tea bags strung together to form a line.

MICAH

Seishiro, please tell me these aren't tea bags.

SEISHIRO (VO)

Hey, we had to cut costs somewhere. By the way, we put the van on your Mastercard.

MICAH

What? I don't even have a real job! How am I going to pay for that?!?

SEISHIRO (VO)

Oh dear, I suppose we'll be eating Ramen noodles for breakfast again...

MICAH

Just tell me what to do with your soggy tea bags!

SEISHIRO (VO)

Tie it to the guardrails on either end of the highway. The shadow hound will not be able to cross it.

MICAH

Ten-four!

Micah hurriedly carries out the order. He stands behind the tea bag barrier as the box truck approaches.

MICAH'S MECHANICAL EYE

Zooms in for a closer look.

THE EYE'S POV -- The truck is going to take the left fork, while the shadow hound is heading straight for Micah!

MICAH

Oh boy...

SEISHIRO (VO)

Chairman, get out of there!

KIERA (VO)

Micah!

Micah stands his ground--

The tea bag barrier smokes and catches fire--

The shadow hound STOPS--

As Micah reaches behind his back--

And unsheathes Ladysmith, his father's enchanted sword!

SEISHIRO, KIERA, & AMI

Have exited the box truck and take up positions behind the hound, hoping to assist Micah.

MICAH

Points Ladysmith at the shadow hound, who GROWLS at it, SNAPPING its teeth!

MICAH

Behold, beast of black magic! You cannot deny
this sword's power over you!

THE HOUND

Is getting ready to attack...

MICAH

Isn't budging an inch...

AND THAT'S WHEN

The tea bag barrier flickers out, crumbling to ashes on the ground! The wind has been knocked out of Micah's sails as he stares the shadow hound dead in its evil eyes.

MICAH

Um...nice pooch?

THE HOUND POUNCES WITH A FEROIOUS ROAR!

Micah slashes with his sword--
It cuts into the hound's underbelly--
But the hound lands on the right fork--
And takes off running!

Micah falls onto his butt and drops Ladysmith on the ground. Its tip is green with the 'blood' of the hound.

Kiera and Ami run over to see if Micah's okay. Seishiro just calmly walks, hands in the pockets of his leather bomber jacket.

KIERA

Micah, are you all right?

MICAH

I think I have a surprise in my pants.

AMI

Eww.

KIERA

At least you're okay--that's what counts.

Kiera helps Micah stand up. He wipes Ladysmith off on his pants leg and sheaths the sword.

Tess rides up on her motorbike and dismounts, holding her helmet in her right hand.

TESS

I take it we screwed up again?

SEISHIRO

After a fashion.

MICAH

If it weren't for your soggy tea bag barrier running out of gas, Seishiro, we would have bagged that shadow hound!

SEISHIRO

My tea bag barrier had nothing to do with it.

Seishiro stares off into the horizon.

SEISHIRO

That's no ordinary shadow hound. We have to find it--and quickly.

Kiera's cell is RINGING. She answers it by tapping her earpiece.

KIERA

Kiera here. Yes, Lieutenant Zandarski. No, sir, the hound got away from us. Yes, sir--the mission has failed.

HOLD on the five members of Magic, Incorporated--and their determined faces...faces that say next time, the shadow hound is theirs.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY - EARLY MORNING

The box truck drives back to the rental garage. Tess is riding behind it on her motorbike. She's using her earpiece to converse with her mother HELEN, head of the California Witches Guild.

TESS (VO)

Yes, Mother, I understand that we suck. What do you mean, come work for the guild? We already tried that, remember, and it didn't work out too well. Well, I would call it a disaster--anything the guild asks me to do ends up that way. I'll be over for breakfast, I promise. See 'ya.

EXT. RENTAL GARAGE - EARLY MORNING

Leaving behind one fully fueled truck and one fully paid mechanic, the main group (minus Tess) climbs into a Lincoln MKX and drives back to the Taylor mansion.

EXT. TAYLOR MANSION - EARLY MORNING

The Lincoln pulls in through the opening gate and to a Victorian-era mansion that has all the makings of Manderley from Daphne Du Maurier's 'Rebecca.' Tess's motorbike isn't far behind.

INT. TAYLOR MANSION - EARLY MORNING

Entering through the front doors and into the FOYER/SITTING ROOM, Micah plops down on one of two sectional couches that surround a coffee table. Ami and Kiera do the same.

Seishiro leans against the mantle, observing pictures of Micah and his wise father, the original chairman of Magic, Incorporated. Tess enters, closing the door behind her, and cuddles up next to Micah. He fusses in response.

MICAH

All I want to do is forget that last night ever happened.

AMI

I'm really sorry my spell didn't work, guys.

MICAH

Don't take all the blame yourself, Ami.

KIERA

You're right there, Micah. There's plenty of that to go around.

Micah frowns at Kiera. She sticks her tongue out at him.

TESS

Hey, I did my part. I don't know what the team's problem is.

KIERA

That is the team's problem--people like you!

TESS

Excuse me?

KIERA

People who only do what's required of them and nothing more. There's no "I" in team, you know!

TESS

Yes, but there's also an "M" and an "E" and that spells "ME", as in me gotta go meet Mom for breakfast.

SEISHIRO

(not looking)

Sending you on guild duty again?

TESS

She'd like to, but I won't let her. I like where I am right now. Don't you agree, Micah darling?

MICAH

Don't call me that.

Tess pecks Micah on the cheek and walks to the front door.

TESS

Gee, don't everybody say goodbye all at once!

Ami YAWNS. Kiera fiddles with her earpiece. Seishiro is waving bye, but he's still looking at pictures. Micah shrugs at Tess with a pensive smile on his face.

TESS

Even this witch knows when she's not wanted.

Tess rips open the door--

WHACK! It hits a Young Girl in the face--
And knocks her to the ground!

The group is staring at what has transpired in shock! Tess is oblivious to anything wrong. She turns to leave--then looks down at the girl she just zonked on the head. She looks back at the group, who has joined her at the door.

TESS

What? She should've moved!

KIERA

I swear, Tess, some days you can be so heartless...

Micah helps the girl stand up. She has quite the mark on her forehead. This is CASSANDRA, a former high school classmate of Micah's who is in need of some help--both immediate and not so immediate.

MICAH

Cassandra Lowens? The Cassandra Lowens?

KIERA

You know her, Micah?

MICAH

Know her? I was in love with her!

INT. TAYLOR MANSION (FOYER/LIVING ROOM) - DAY

Cassandra is sitting next to Micah on the couch, holding an ice pack up to her head. She's a petite thing, no older than twenty, and is so cute she'd make a bulldog break his chain.

MICAH

Cassandra Lowens...I didn't think I'd see you again!

KIERA

How do you two know each other?

MICAH

We're old high school classmates. I graduated two years ahead of her.

CASSANDRA

My head...

MICAH

Yeah, about that. I think someone here owes you an apology.

Micah glares at Tess, who leans against the front doors. She shrugs.

TESS

She totally walked into it!

CASSANDRA

Your friend has a point...

MICAH

Don't worry about her, Cassandra. Her medication is about to wear off.

TESS

My what?

SEISHIRO

(turning to face
the group)

Suppose you tell us why you're here.

CASSANDRA

That's...easy enough. I had heard the radio commercial you guys put together on the station at UCLA, where I'm going to school...

A collective GROAN emerges from the team members.

CASSANDRA

In any case, I need some help to find my uncle. He disappeared five days ago, no note, no...nothing!

SEISHIRO

What you need is a private investigator, Miss Cassandra, not paranormal peacekeepers.

CASSANDRA

That's what I thought at first, but then I found this in my uncle's things.

She reaches into her purse and removes a small piece of torn notebook paper. Drawn on it is a pentagram with a

wolf's head as the center. She places it on the coffee table, and everyone stands closer to get a good look.

CASSANDRA

Do any of you know what this is?

The grave looks exchanged between the members of Magic, Incorporated tell us all we need to know--this is serious business.

MICAH

We'll help you, Cassandra. I'll take care of it personally.

Cassandra's face brightens ten-fold.

CASSANDRA

You will? Thank you, Micah! I knew I could count on you!

Micah smiles confidently, gives his friend a nod. He'd do anything for that face, and everyone knows it...especially Tess!

LATER

Micah sees Cassandra out, waving and closing the door behind her. He falls against it, letting out a breath he didn't know he was holding in.

TESS

You'll handle it personally? That's very bold of you, Micah darling.

AMI

(sing-songy)

Somebody's got a crush, somebody's got a crush...

MICAH

Oh, knock it off! What I feel for Cassandra is--

SEISHIRO

(interrupting)

Dangerous.

MICAH

Right.

(beat)

Wait, what?

Seishiro grabs the pentagram sketch and holds it up to the light. It seems to shine with a life of its own.

SEISHIRO

This pentagram arrangement is done by an amateur, but it's a very powerful and very dangerous summoning.

TESS

For what?

SEISHIRO

A shadow hound.

AMI

No way!

SEISHIRO

Way, Ami. Cassandra's uncle may have summoned that shadow hound we faced last night.

TESS

But for what reason?

SEISHIRO

That remains unclear to me. This requires some old-fashioned gumshoe work.

KIERA

Leave that up to Micah and me. We'll go to Cassandra's place tomorrow and see what we can dig up.

SEISHIRO

Good thinking, Kiera.

KIERA

I have been known for it on occasion.

TESS

What about the shadow hound itself?

SEISHIRO

Shadow hounds are more powerful where there is little or no light. Daylight is when they are at their weakest.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

The shadow hound, wound still dripping 'blood,' saunters down the alley, sticking to the shadows. AN OLD WINO sits between two garbage cans, drinking from a tin of liquor.

SEISHIRO (VO)

Even now, that beast is looking for food to sustain its essence. And all shadow hounds feast on one thing and one thing only...

The hound has spotted the Old Wino, who doesn't comprehend what he's up against. He matches the hound's gaze--the eyes of the hound go RED WITH BLOOD--and it pounces as THE WINO SCREAMS!

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

The Lincoln MKX pulls into the alley entrance. The place is alive with the commotion of a crime scene. Kiera, Micah, and Seishiro exit the vehicle and pass under the tape, walking toward a large, bald man in a trench coat. This is LIEUTENANT DAN ZANDARSKI, a perpetual grouch.

ZANDARSKI

Glad to see some of you could make it.

KIERA

What's the situation?

ZANDARSKI

Take a look for yourself.

The gang's eyes turn to the body of the Wino...or what's left of him. Giant slash marks, made by claws, marr his chest and clothing. Micah crosses himself.

KIERA

Heaven help us...

ZANDARSKI

Heaven's got nothing to do with it. If you nitwits had caught that shadow whatchamacalit last night, I wouldn't be dealing with this!

SEISHIRO

We were unprepared, Lieutenant Zandarski. Next time we won't be.

ZANDARSKI

There may not be a next time, folks. The chief is really on me about this one. So is the brass downtown. If we don't bag this nasty son of a gun and get this city quiet again, your contract with the state may not get renewed.

Micah's mechanical eye 'blinks.'

ZANDARSKI

Get my drift?

MICAH

Oh, we get it, Lieutenant.

(turns to leave)

Come on, guys. We've got work to do.

Kiera and Seishiro follow Micah back to the Lincoln. Zandarski looks at the dead Wino, shakes his head.

ZANDARSKI

What a way to check out.

INT. LINCOLN MKX - NIGHT

Seishiro drives down Sunset Boulevard with Kiera riding shotgun, laptop in her hands. Micah sits in the back, arms folded over his chest and eyes closed.

SEISHIRO

Since when was our contract up for renewal?

KIERA

That's what I'm checking.

SEISHIRO

If we lose that, we lose our ability to move freely within the state.

KIERA

And if we lose that, we can kiss Magic,
Incorporated goodbye.

Micah's eyes open.

MICAH

Dad would have never let this happen. If I knew how to wield Ladysmith properly, like he did, we wouldn't be in this mess.

SEISHIRO

Chairman, your father had twenty years of experience wielding Ladysmith and running the corporation. You've had six months. I think you can cut yourself a little slack.

KIERA

(looking at Micah)

Seishiro's right, Micah. Don't be so hard on yourself.

Micah's mechanical eye 'blinks' at her.

KIERA

Do you know how creepy that is?

Micah smirks--just a little--before the Lincoln comes to a complete halt!

MICAH

Seishiro, what's going on?

SEISHIRO

There appears to be a disturbance up ahead.

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Six vehicles are backed up in all lanes as

THE SHADOW HOUND

Darts about in the middle of a four-way intersection! Red blood is running from its lips, and its previous wound appears to have healed!

Micah, Seishiro, and Kiera have joined the onlookers.

ONLOOKER #1 (OS)
Craziest darn thing I've ever seen--

ONLOOKER #2 (OS)
What should we do?

ONLOOKER #3 (OS)
I've called the police, they should be here soon!

ONLOOKER #2 (OS)
How are they going to get through the traffic?

Micah unsheathes Ladysmith. It begins to emanate an ivory glow. Kiera puts a hand on Micah's shoulder, concerned. He shrugs it off.

KIERA
Micah...

MICAH
Seishiro, back me up. Kiera, get Zandarski on the horn. Let him know we've got first crack at this thing.

Kiera pulls out her earpiece--inserts it--and dials the number on her cell, retreating back toward the Lincoln.

Seishiro reaches into the sleeves of his bomber jacket--removes a selection of extra-large fulas (pieces of holy paper with divinations written on them in kanji)--steps through the crowd with Micah taking the lead.

THE SHADOW HOUND

Senses Ladysmith's positive energy and begins to GROWL and spit violently!

MICAH

Grips Ladysmith in both hands and holds it vertically in front of his face. The shadow hound is reflected in the sword's blade.

Micah and Seishiro now stand directly across from the hound. The hound lets out a deep-throated ROAR!

MICAH
Seishiro, block his escape!

SEISHIRO
With pleasure.

Seishiro throws a pair of his fulas at each entrance to the intersection. They land in the asphalt like knives and morph into a giant translucent wall of positive energy, effectively creating a 'ring' for the combatants!

The hound turns to run--
Races right at the south wall--
SMACK! Hits it with his right side--
And is repelled back into the center of the 'ring' !

SEISHIRO
How gratifying. Something actually worked for a change.

The hound stands up on all fours--
His eyes glow RED WITH BLOOD--
And he charges at our heroes!

SEISHIRO
Chairman, when I give the word, duck.

MICAH
Excuse me?

SEISHIRO
Just do it!

The hound is getting closer...CLOSER...

SEISHIRO
NOW!

The two male members of Magic, Inc. duck, and the hound SLAMS into the north wall, getting electrocuted by positive energy! He WHIMPERS and WAILS, then gets repelled back into the middle of the 'ring', smoke drifting off his body!

SEISHIRO
Now, Chairman--while it's still dazed!

MICAH

Right!

Micah holds his sword horizontally in front of his face--
It glimmers and SHINES with that ivory glow--
And Micah unleashes a mighty downward energy slash!

MICAH

LADYSMITH--EXTINGUISH!

The ivory energy wave hits the hound square on--
The beast lets out a WAIL OF PAIN--
It begins to disintegrate--
As Micah's mechanical eye opens all the way--
REVEALING AN IVORY GLOW BENEATH!

MICAH

Seishiro....I'm....sensing something...

SEISHIRO

Hold it together, Chairman--just a few more seconds and this is all over!

Micah is sweating bullets and starting to shiver. His sword falls to his side as he falls into a trance, sensing the shadow hound's pain--and its past...

INT. SHADOW HOUND'S MIND

A completely white space without day or night, Micah floats on his back, holding Ladysmith in his right hand. His eyes open, and he looks around, trying to decipher his location.

MICAH

Toto, I passed up Kansas and Oz a long time ago...

OLD MAN'S VOICE (VO)

Only you can understand what I am becoming.

Micah holds Ladysmith in both hands, apprehensive.

MICAH

Who's there? Who is this?

OLD MAN'S VOICE (VO)

Only you can save me from myself.

MICAH

Who are you?

OLD MAN'S VOICE (VO)

Open your eyes--the eyes of your mind, body, and soul--and see...before it is too late.

Micah holds Ladysmith vertically in front of him--
Touches his first two fingers to its blade--
And his mechanical eye opens fully with a GREENISH GLOW!

MICAH

My God--the shadow hound is--!

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - NIGHT

Micah falls to his knees, his mechanical eye closing up.
The energy attacking the hound dissipates, and the hound regenerates!

SEISHIRO

Chairman!

Seishiro catches Micah in his arms, trying to revive him.
It's no use--their leader is down for the count!

The shadow hound GROWLS at Seishiro as the onmyodo's concentration breaks--the four translucent walls come crumbling down--and the hound turns away, running southbound on the tops of the vehicles!

Kiera rushes in through the stunned crowd with Zandarski and a few UNIFORMED COPS in tow. Kiera and the lieutenant kneel down in front of Micah, who is starting to come to.

KIERA

Micah! Are you okay? Does your eye hurt?

MICAH

It's a little itchy, but I'll make it.

Seishiro helps Micah stand up. The leader of Magic, Incorporated sheaths his sword and makes eye contact with Zandarski.

ZANDARSKI

What's the story, kid? I don't pretend to understand what that contraption over your eye does.

SEISHIRO

He had a divine vision from the shadow hound, Lieutenant.

ZANDARSKI

Let me get this straight--you were inside that monster's head?

MICAH

More or less. Only it's no monster, Lieutenant.

Micah reaches into his breast pocket--removes the pentagram sketch.

MICAH

This pentagram was used to summon the beast, but something went horribly wrong. That shadow hound is not just a creature of black magic.

A delicious pause.

MICAH

It also possesses the soul of Robert Lowens, Cassandra Lowens' uncle.

Stunned reactions from the other team members!

MICAH

And we have to find that hound and discover a way to change it back...or Cassandra may just lose her uncle for good.

PULL OUT to encompass all of downtown Los Angeles.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - NEXT MORNING

Tess rides up outside the cafe on her motorbike. She's dressed in a black leather jacket, mini-skirt, and red tube top. She dismounts, removes her helmet and hangs it on one of the handlebars.

Tess enters the cafe area and sits across from a white-haired, full-figured woman of about 60. This is HELEN, her mother and head of the California Witches Guild. Helen pulls off her lavender shades and gives Tess a disapproving glance.

HELEN

What in the name of all that is unholy are you wearing?

TESS

Oh, come on, Mom! I think it's hot.

HELEN

I think it's hoochie.

TESS

You said you had information for me. Now are we going to talk about that, or are we going to stay with the outfit?

HELEN

Oh, we're done with the outfit.

TESS

I thought so.

HELEN

Besides, you won't be able to fit into it in a few weeks anyway.

TESS

(irritated)

Excuse me?

HELEN

Mothers know these things, honey.

TESS

Just give me the information, please...

HELEN

Very well.

(beat)

I still say it's--

TESS

You've made your point, Mom.

HELEN

Very well then.

Helen reaches into her shoulder bag--removes an envelope of photos. Tess removes her red shades and takes a closer look at them.

THE PHOTOS

Are of an area destroyed by typical California wildfires-- only there's a makeshift gravesite set up in front of a destroyed house. Tess looks at the different angles of photos taken.

TESS

Where is this?

HELEN

Just outside of Santa Monica.

TESS

What does this have to do with Cassandra Lowens?

Tess comes to the last photo--
It's a close-up of the stone--
Which reads LOWENS FAMILY on it!

HELEN

Those are the Lowens. She and her Uncle Robert are the only survivors.

TESS

I'll check this out.

Tess puts her shades back on. Blows a kiss to Helen.

TESS

Thanks a bunch, Mom!

Helen watches as Tess rushes over to her bike--
Mounts it--
Slaps on her helmet--
REVS the bike--
AND TAKES OFF DOWN THE STREET!

HELEN

(sighing)

You may be a hoochie mama, but you are my daughter. Please be careful.

INT. LINCOLN MKX - DAY (LATER)

Kiera drives the vehicle through a suburban neighborhood. Micah rides shotgun. He's talking on his cell to Seishiro.

MICAH

Have you found anything useful yet?

SEISHIRO (VO)

Negative, Chairman. Some of these books in the library are so old that most of their contents is no longer applicable.

MICAH

Keep digging, Seishiro. We have to find a way to free Robert Lowens.

SEISHIRO (VO)

Understood. I'll be in touch if I find anything.

Micah hangs up. Kiera stops at a crosswalk to let some kindergarten students go past.

KIERA

So, you said you were in love with Cassandra...

MICAH

(blushing)

Uh, yeah, I guess.

KIERA

Have you ever felt those same feelings since?

MICAH

How do you mean, Kiera?

KIERA

I mean...have you felt that way about anyone else?

The students are past. The Lincoln moves down the street.

MICAH

No, I haven't...not in a long time.

EXT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY

Kiera pulls the Lincoln into the driveway of a yellow-brick rancher.

KIERA

(turning to him)

Really?

Micah's mechanical eye 'blinks' at her.

MICAH

Really.

Kiera looks down sadly.

KIERA

Sometimes, Micah, you can be so very cruel.

Kiera exits the Lincoln, carrying her attaché, and SLAMS the door shut. Micah is left watching her go.

MICAH

Something tells me the whole point of that conversation just went over my head.

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Decorated with 70's colors and accents, Cassandra sits at a small corner table with Micah next to her. Kiera is typing at her laptop, oblivious to what's going on...or is she?

KIERA

The spectral sweep of the house doesn't reveal any traces of demonic energy, so we're clear on that account.

CASSANDRA

Thank you very much. I'm grateful for all you can do, really...I just wish I understood more about what was going on. Magic isn't really my thing.

MICAH

It wasn't my thing either, until a few months ago.

Cassandra takes Micah's hand under the table.

CASSANDRA

What makes you say that?

MICAH

It has to do with my dad. He...

Micah pauses for a beat. His mechanical eye 'blinks.'

MICAH (CON'T.)

...disappeared and left me in charge of Magic, Incorporated.

Micah looks Cassandra in the eyes.

MICAH

I don't know if I'll ever see him again.

Cassandra puts a hand up to Micah's cheek. Gently caresses his mechanical eye.

CASSANDRA

I'm sure you will.

Micah and Cassandra look at each other for a long moment. Their faces inch closer. They both start to blush. Then--

KIERA

AHEM!

Micah and Cassandra split apart, embarrassed. Kiera isn't pleased at this new development, and her glare lets Micah know it.

EXT. LOWENS GRAVESITE - DAY

Tess works her way through blackened trees and burnt land. Skeletons of homes remain standing in this area...it's like Hiroshima after the bomb hit.

KIERA (VO)

Cassandra, do you have any other family besides your uncle?

Tess leaps over a steep hill and lands in a crouch at the base of the Lowens gravesite. Her wand slides down out of her right sleeve and into her gloved hand. She walks carefully, not wanting to disturb anything.

CASSANDRA (VO)

Uncle Robert is the only family I have left. The wildfires three years ago just outside Santa Monica set fire to my family's estate. The rest of my family didn't escape in time.

Tess sifts through some leaves and branches on top of the grave. Finds nothing. She stands up and scans the horizon. She takes a step--CRINKLING PAPER SFX. She looks down and finds ANOTHER PENTAGRAM SKETCH!

CASSANDRA (VO)

Uncle Robert took it really hard. He promised me from then on that I would never be without family.

Tess kneels down by the paper sketch--it's identical to the one Cassandra found. She stands back, bumps into a burnt tree--and finds A BUTTLOAD OF PENTAGRAM SKETCHES jabbed onto the end of the tree branches!

KIERA (VO)

What do you think he meant by that?

Tess pulls her wand close as AN UNEARTHLY GROWL erupts from behind her. It's followed by A CHORUS OF WOLF HOWLS! Tess's eyes go wide as she whips around--and comes face to face with FIFTEEN SHADOW HOUNDS! They've surrounded her!

CASSANDRA (VO)

I don't know...but I fear the worst.

TESS

Mom said there'd be days like this!

TWO HOUNDS LEAP AT HER

And Tess ZAPS them with her wand, turning them into toads!

TESS
Old habits die hard.

THREE MORE HOUNDS

Attack en masse, but Tess's wand extends into a fighting pike, allowing her to SMACK each hound away!

THE OTHER HOUNDS

Are regrouping, wondering whether they should attack or not!

TESS
Oh, come on! We're just getting started!

Tess drives her wand into the ground--

TESS
Let this parched land be a smiting force to my enemies--IGNITE!

The dry grass CATCHES FIRE WITH GREEN FLAMES! Five shadow hounds are evaporated in the blaze, but that still leaves eight more to deal with!

TESS
Stubborn little pups, aren't you?

Tess lifts her wand to the sky--

TESS
Let the power of Mother Nature be a smiting force to my enemies--ELECTRIFY!

VIOLET LIGHTNING ZAPS DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS! Four more shadow hounds bite the dust! That only leaves four shadow hounds to fight, but now they're meaner than ever!

TESS (VO)
I need to find a way to stop these buggers before they get up close and personal!

She spies the tree with the pentagram sketches and gets an idea. She lifts her wand to the sky--

TESS

Let the power of Mother Nature be a smiting force
to my enemies--ELECTRIFY!

THE REMAINING HOUNDS CHARGE--

Tess braces herself for their attack--
AS VIOLET LIGHTNING ZAPS DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS--
And strikes the tree, setting it on fire!

The pentagram sketches go up in flames--
Each hound disintegrates in mid-air--
AND TESS HAS SAVED THE DAY!

TESS

You know, I didn't really think that was going to
work!

Tess spins her wand in her hand and points it at the tree.
A BLAST OF WATER emerges from the tip, dousing the fire and
putting it out.

TESS

Now to warn Micah darling and the others.

She slips on her earpiece/microphone and taps it.

TESS

This is Tess to Micah or Kiera. Come in, please.

STATIC is her answer.

TESS

Micah darling, please respond.

MORE STATIC is her answer.

TESS

Blast, there's no reception out here! I've got
to hurry!

Her wand extends once more--
The bottom tip expands into a half-circle--
And she rides it like a broomstick!

TESS

Guess this'll do for now!

She SNAPS her fingers--
And the half-circle GLOWS ORANGE--
THEN IGNITES WITH ROCKET POWER!

Tess flies off into the horizon. CLOSE-UP of her determined face.

TESS (VO)
Hang on, Micah darling--I'm coming!

KA-POW! Tess applies turbo speed, and soon she's out of sight.

INT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Clouds are moving in, casting everything in gray as Kiera and Micah go over their collected data. Micah is looking at the original pentagram sketch closely. Kiera types at her laptop.

KIERA
Okay, so far the symbols on the sketch are consistent with the summoning of a shadow hound. What's the next one?

Micah flips through a pocket dictionary.

MICAH
Um...let's see...eternal life.
(beat)
Eternal life? Now why in the--

KIERA
Wait a minute. Remember what Cassandra said earlier, when her uncle told her she would never be without family?

Micah SLAMS his fist on the table!

MICAH
That has to be it! Her uncle's trying to use black magic to extend his life!

KIERA
What's the last symbol on the pentagram?

MICAH

Um...I can't make it out. It looks like a cross between possession and imburement.

KIERA

That would explain why the summoning didn't go as planned--one of the symbols wasn't properly drawn!

MICAH

No doubt about that, Kiera. But we still have one big problem--we don't know where that shadow hound is!

Kiera's cell phone RINGS. She inserts her earpiece and taps it.

KIERA

This is Kiera. Go ahead.

TESS (VO)

(garbled by static)

Kiera, this is Tess. I have--warn you--shadow hounds--Lowens gravesite--on my way--get out--

A low-pitched BLOOP signals the loss of Tess's call.

KIERA

Tess, come in. Tess!

MICAH

Something wrong?

KIERA

I don't know--she was really garbled. She was either out of range or the storm was interfering.

MICAH

What did she--

Micah's mechanical eye opens wide--

IT GLOWS GREEN--

And he whips around to the kitchen window!

MICAH

GET DOWN!

He throws himself over Kiera as

THE SHADOW HOUND

Leaps in through the window, shattered glass scattering everywhere!

CASSANDRA

Enters, rubbing sleep from her eyes, and stares in terror at the demonic creature before her!

CASSANDRA
Mi--Mi--Micah...!

The hound gives A THROATY GROWL at Cassandra, its eyes GLOWING BLOOD RED.

Cassandra turns and runs toward the front door--
The shadow hound gives chase!

MICAH
CASSANDRA, NO!

Micah takes off after the shadow hound!

MICAH
COME ON, KIERA!

Kiera gets up and follows Micah out through the LIVING ROOM and out the front door.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD (STREET) - DAY

Completely cloud-covered now, Cassandra runs from the shadow hound, while Micah and Kiera try desperately to catch up!

Suddenly, there's a BURST OF COLOR going past--
It grabs Cassandra by the waist--
Puts her on the 'broomstick'--
And flies back overhead!

MICAH
(looking up)
Tess!

TESS

You two bat clean up! I'll take care of the client!

MICAH

You're one in a million, Tess!

TESS

And my momma knows it!

Tess flies off, leaving Micah and Kiera to deal with the shadow hound. It stands in the middle of the street, teeth bared, SNARLING VICIOUSLY.

KIERA

How about that old routine we used to do when we were kids, Micah?

MICAH

You've got my vote.

Micah unsheathes Ladysmith--
It glows with an ivory aura--
And he aims it directly at the hound!

Small futuristic pistols emerge from Kiera's sleeves--
They COCK automatically as she aims them at the hound--
WHO LETS OUT A WOLF HOWL TO THE HEAVENS!

MICAH

Ready--

KIERA

Steady--

MICAH / KIERA

GO!

Kiera leaps into the air--
Does a triple spin--
Comes down a few feet away from the hound--
And lets her guns BLAZE COBALT BEAMS of magical energy!

The hound dodges from left to right, but takes a blast in the hip--the left front leg--the right rear leg--its left ear--its right eye--AND JUST KEEPS COMING!

KIERA

I can't hold him off, Micah!

MICAH (OS)

No sweat, Kiera--because here I come!

Micah leaps on top of Kiera's shoulders--
Bounces off them--
Does a somersault--
And comes down in a vicious ENERGY SLASH on the hound!

The hound is ELECTROCUTED with positive energy--
It lets out A WAIL OF PAIN--
As it begins to separate, disintegrate--
And reveal the body of ROBERT LOWENS!

KIERA (OS)

You've got him, Micah! BRING IT HOME!

Micah's mechanical eye opens wide--
AN IVORY GLOW IS SEEN UNDERNEATH--
As Robert Lowens becomes solid--
And crawls free from the hold of the shadow hound!

His body covered in green hound blood, Robert collapses on the street. Kiera stands over him with both guns held gangster-style, waiting for the shadow hound to make a move.

Micah removes his sword from the shadow hound. It's dripping green blood as the hound rolls several feet away. Barely able to stand, it still GROWLS at Micah.

KIERA

Finish it off, Micah!

MICAH

Gladly.

Micah holds his sword horizontally in front of his face--
It glimmers and SHINES with that ivory glow--
And Micah unleashes a mighty downward energy slash!

MICAH

LADYSMITH--EXTINGUISH!

The energy wave hits the shadow hound--

A blinding WHITE LIGHT surrounds the area--
The hound disintegrates inside the light--
And when it dissipates, the hound is gone!

Micah's mechanical eye closes up all the way as he sheathes Ladysmith. Kiera's guns slide back up into her sleeve holsters. Tess floats up on her 'broomstick' and deposits Cassandra safely on her feet.

TESS
Not bad for a day's work, eh?

KIERA
Not at all.

Cassandra rushes over to Uncle Robert, who is just regaining consciousness.

CASSANDRA
Uncle Robert? Uncle Robert, say something!

UNCLE ROBERT
How about, nice to see you again?

CASSANDRA
Oh, Uncle...

Micah's cell RINGS. He answers it.

MICAH
Micah Taylor.

SEISHIRO (VO)
Chairman, Ami and I believe we've found something that could help separate Robert Lowens from the shadow hound! But you have to hurry--if we don't perform this ritual within the next forty-eight hours--

Micah CHUCKLES.

SEISHIRO (VO)
What's so funny?

MICAH
Nothing, Seishiro...just a little something my dad used to call...magic.

EXT. CASSANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY (DUSK)

An orange sky with violet clouds reflects off of Zandarski's police cruiser as he lets Cassandra have some final words with her Uncle Robert. Tess, Kiera, and Micah are standing on the porch, watching.

TESS

How long are they locking Uncle Robert up for?

MICAH

Not long. Zandarski said that because he didn't fully understand what he was doing with the shadow hounds, he'll get a shortened sentence.

KIERA

That's good to hear.

Cassandra hugs her uncle tightly. Backs away with hands against her chest as Zandarski loads him up in the cruiser and shuts the door. Micah walks up to Cassandra as the cruiser pulls away.

MICAH

You okay?

CASSANDRA

(looking at him)

I will be...someday.

A tear rolls down her cheek.

MICAH

Hey.

He brushes her tear away.

MICAH

I know what it's like not to have any family, Cassandra. But I promise that things will get better.

Micah's mechanical eye 'blinks.'

MICAH

Remember, time doesn't heal all wounds...it just helps you forget you have them.

Cassandra steps closer to Micah.

CASSANDRA
Thanks for all of your help. I really do
appreciate it.

MICAH
It was my pleasure.

Cassandra is very close to Micah now as she says --

CASSANDRA
And here's your reward.

Cassandra KISSES HIM full on the lips, and Micah returns it in kind. They hold each other, standing against the setting sun.

CASSANDRA (VO)
Come back and see me sometime?

MICAH (VO)
Count on it.

INT. LINCOLN MKX - NIGHT

Kiera drives the vehicle back to the Taylor Mansion. Micah rides shotgun, staring out the window.

MICAH
This case got wrapped up nicely.

KIERA
(irritated)
You could say that.

MICAH
What's eating you?

KIERA
You must be stupid.

MICAH
Excuse me?

KIERA

That kiss? The smoochie-face you were making
with your old high school crush?

MICAH

Oh, come on, Kiera, that was nothing!

KIERA

No, that was definitely something!

MICAH

Kiera, are you jealous?

A beat.

KIERA

What if I am? What are you going to do about it?

Another.

MICAH

(smiling)

We'll have to wait and see, won't we?

KIERA

(smiling)

I suppose so.

Micah's mechanical eye 'winks.'

KIERA

If that was a wink, that was pathetic.

MICAH

I'll work on it.

KIERA

Please do.

EXT. LINCOLN MKX - NIGHT

As the vehicle rolls down the highway and into downtown Los Angeles, Micah and Kiera continue their conversation --

KIERA (VO)

Say, how about some ice cream? My treat.

MICAH (VO)
Sure--on one condition.

KIERA (VO)
What's that?

MICAH (VO)
I get to invite Cassandra.

A beat.

KIERA (VO)
Not on your life, you creep!

PULL OUT from the Lincoln to the Los Angeles skyline,
glimmering against the full moon.

NARRATOR (VO)
Another case has been closed for Micah Taylor and
his scrappy band of paranormal peacekeepers. But
how many other cases are out there, waiting to be
solved? Those are stories for another time, in
the continuing saga of Magic, Incorporated!

FADE OUT

THE END