

# Season of the Witch

by

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"Behold, they met a woman with an unclean spirit who had her dwelling in dark forests. And no man could bind her. No, not with chains because she had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder, and the fetters broken in pieces. Neither could any man tame her.

And always, night and day, she was in the mountains, crying against God, and bringing with her death over all the land."

--from a Benedictine scroll,  
dated 1344.

EXT. COAST OF FRANCE - NIGHT

Dark, foreboding waves...rising and falling...THUNDERING against rocks.

Out to sea we GLIMPSE something -- the prow of a boat cutting through the waves, struggling against a massive swell, then CRASHING down again with brutal force.

IN THE PROW

Stands a man. LaVEY, a Knight of the Crusades. His hair is whipping in the wind and his cloak is coated in ice.

Behind LaVey, his loyal companion FELSON is grappling with the tiller. Felson is a mountain of a man. 200 lbs. from summit to peak and right now all of it engaged in keeping the boat pointed shoreward.

Gradually the NOISE of the storm gives way to another sound. An OLD MAN'S voice.

This is the NARRATOR:

NARRATOR (O.S.)

In the year of our Lord thirteen hundred forty-nine, on the second day of the first month of winter, a Knight of the Crusades returned home to France.

The boat reaches the shallows.

LaVey grabs the bowline and leaps out. He struggles through the surf, stumbling, exhausted, dragging the boat behind him.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

He had fought many wars in the dark, godless lands of the south, and was tired in body and soul, having learned of the wickedness of the world and the evil men do...

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

LaVey reaches the shore and collapses face first in the sand. Exhausted.

Several yards away, Felson also collapses. Both men lie motionless. Utterly spent.

CLOSER.

LaVey's face. A hard countenance. The face of a soldier, chiseled and marked with scars.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

And though he hoped to live in peace the remainder of his years, this was not to be, for he had returned to France in her darkest hour...

...on this ominous note, we FADE to BLACK:

EXT. BEACH - MORNING

Blinding light.

LaVey awakens, squinting in the harsh sun. The storm has passed and the oceans are calm again. Water laps languidly at his ankles. He rises with some difficulty and looks around for Felson. But there is no sign of him.

EXT. SANDY DUNES - MORNING

LaVey appears over a rise in the land. He scans both directions...and suddenly he is startled by a sharp NOISE from above. A loud KAWING.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

Circling overhead, a RAVEN.

BACK TO - LAVEY

Staring up, distrustfully, as if it were an omen.

The raven lands on a section of driftwood, the dead husk of a tree, gnarled and pale like a skeleton. The bird stares at LaVey, and we see it has one blind eye, a milky-white orb.

LaVey reacts, chilled. A moment filled with foreboding.

FELSON (O.S.)

LaVey!

LaVey turns to see Felson approaching over a dune. He has a walking stick in one hand.

FELSON

I know where we are. I saw a road back that way. Marseille is less than a day's ride east of here.

LAVEY

Marseille?

(looking around, puzzled)

But where are the fishermen...the traders? This is fine weather, and there isn't a sail on the horizon.

Felson hadn't noticed. But now that LaVey mentions it he looks around and it seems odd to him as well.

LaVey suddenly remembers the bird.

He turns to look...but it's gone.

FELSON  
What is it?

LAVEY  
Nothing.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - LATER

They keep a brisk pace through the wintry landscape, passing beneath trees that are frozen with frost and have a strange crystalline appearance.

They emerge onto...

EXT. A MUDDY ROAD

Farther down, we SEE sheep and cattle chewing at the weeds.

LAVEY  
(puzzled)  
Flocks roaming free...and no shepherd in sight.

FELSON  
Maybe they jumped the pen.

LAVEY  
Both sheep and cattle?

Felson shakes his head "no," unlikely.

EXT. LONG SHOT, ROAD - DAY

...where we find them trudging along a sodden countryside, the only sound the CRUNCH of their feet on the frozen earth.

CLOSER. LAVEY.

He glances up at the darkening sky and pulls his cloak in tight, chilled by the sight.

Felson notices the gesture from the corner of his eye.

FELSON  
What's the matter?

LAVEY

This place. The air, the land...  
(he looks around)  
...it feels empty.

Felson slaps his hands together to warm them.

FELSON

My belly feels empty. We should have  
slaughtered one of those sheep.

LAVEY

They're the only living thing we've seen  
all day. Don't you think it's strange? No  
tracks, no footprints.

FELSON

Maybe the storm washed them away.

LaVey is about to respond, when something arrests his attention.  
He stops in his tracks.

FELSON

What is it?

LaVey points. Felson follows his arm.

FELSON'S P.O.V.

At the far side of the field, just beyond the treeline, there's  
a thin column of smoke rising into the sky.

EXT. TREELINE - DAY

They emerge into a small clearing and take in the source of the  
smoke -- it's coming from a small farmhouse. A simple peasant  
dwelling.

To one side, a stable is situated, and in the pen we can SEE  
several large gray horses.

FELSON

(gesturing)

LaVey. Horses.

LaVey nods quickly as he moves towards the house. Then he falters  
in his tracks, as he sees the doorway... it's wide open.

There's something a little chilling about it; a doorway, in the  
forest, wide open in the middle of the winter...

He draws his sword and proceeds.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

LaVey appears in the doorway, looking in, distrustfully.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

Low rafters in the ceiling. A single wooden table with a lantern on it. The windows have blown open, and one of the shutters is BANGING open and shut with the wind.

It is the only sound.

LAVEY  
(calling out)  
Hello?

No response.

LAVEY  
(louder)  
Is anyone here?

Still nothing.

LaVey moves inside, followed by Felson.

FELSON  
I don't like this...

The fire is lit in the hearth, and it casts a flickering light over the small room. In the far wall, an adjoining doorway leads to another darkened room. It is the only other entrance.

LAVEY  
Hand me that Lantern.

Felson passes it to him, and LaVey cautiously approaches the doorway.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

LaVey enters, lifting the lantern to illuminate the room.

It's a tiny bedroom, with a single bed. But what's truly unsettling -- is the perfectly still form of a body on the bed, draped by a sheet.

LAVEY AND FELSON

They take in this disquieting image.

LaVey silently moves towards the bed. He reaches slowly out, to draw back the sheets and suddenly he FLINCHES at a sharp CRY from Felson.

FELSON

LaVey!

He is pointing to the corner of the room, and as LaVey turns, he SEES why... There's a second figure seated in a chair, perfectly still, eyes wide open, and staring at LaVey.

LaVey lifts the lantern, spilling light onto the form of a horrible corpse, covered in boils and sores. THE PEASANT FARMER...gray patches of mottled flesh and festering lesions cover his arms and face.

FELSON

(horrified)

Mother of God!

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

A horrible revelation dawning on him. He spins back and YANKS the sheet off the bed.

And it's just what he feared...a second corpse. Possibly the farmer's wife, although it's difficult to tell, because this corpse is even more disfigured than the other...blood is oozing from it's nostrils and ears, covering the sheets.

LAVEY

(frightened, retreating)

Get out, Felson! Quick!

As Felson runs to comply...

...we CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

LaVey and Felson, saddled on horses now, are staring at the farmhouse, which has been put to the torch. Flames and smoke billow into the night sky.

FELSON

What in Hell's name was it?

LAVEY

(unsure)

Some kind of...plague.

FELSON

I've never seen such a thing.

LAVEY

Neither have I.



Felson draws the sign of a cross in the air, and LaVey, with a final solemn glance, SNAPS the reins and turns his horse away.

EXT. ROAD TO MARSEILLE - NIGHT

A bitter wind blows. Rain turning to sleet.

LaVey and Felson plod on, heads tucked in against the wind. They stop at strange NOISE, building in the distance. Almost like THUNDER.

...ba-BUM...ba-BUM...ba-BUM...

LaVey cocks his head. It's difficult to tell which direction it's coming from.

EXT. HILLCREST - NIGHT

They spur their horses to the top of the hill and come to a stop.

Below them, a bizarre sight:

Marching slowly out of the gloom is a line of MONKS, barefoot, clad in rags, carrying torches. It's insane, in this temperature they must be near delirium.

But even more bizarre...they are whipping themselves on the backs with straps of leather, all to macabre tempo of a DRUMMER.

Ba-BUM...ba-BUM...ba-BUM...

LAVEY AND FELSON

They can only stare in horror.

As the monks near, LaVey calls out:

LAVEY  
What form of lunacy is this!?

THE MONKS

They don't respond. They simply divide and pass silently around either side of them.

VOICE (OFF SCREEN)  
They will not answer, my friend.

Both men start in their saddles. There is a KNIGHT on horseback, on the far side of the road, watching them.

This is SANCIERRE.

SANCIERRE

They have taken a vow of silence.

LAVEY

What in God's name are they doing?

SANCIERRE

Penance. They believe it is the only way to regain God's favor, through mortification of the flesh.

FELSON

They're mad!

SANCIERRE

Perhaps, but the Black Death drives them to it.

(he offers his hand)

My name is Sancierre. I have been sent to greet you.

FELSON

(doesn't understand)

Greet us?

LAVEY

You are mistaken, my friend. We are crusaders, from Palest--

SANCIERRE

You are the Knight, LaVey, sworn to the order of Saint John the Baptist. Survivor of Hattin, first through the breach at Jerusalem.

A long pause.

Felson and LaVey share a look, incredulous.

LAVEY

How do you know this?

SANCIERRE

I have been told of your coming.

SABHA

(suspicious)

By whom?

LAVEY

No one knew of it, except we two.

Sancierre is strangely silent for a moment.

SANCIERRE  
There is another.  
(a dark pause)  
But I cannot speak of it here. If you will  
come with me, you'll soon have your  
answers.

LaVey and Felson share a look. Unsure.

EXT. ROAD TO AVIGNON - LATER

They ride along the banks of a wide river. Mist hangs over the  
surface. Felson and LaVey linger behind Sancierre, WHISPERING  
to each other.

FELSON  
I don't like it.

LAVEY  
Nor do I.

FELSON  
We wash ashore in a storm, we could have  
landed anywhere...and he's waiting for us.  
How? Why?

LAVEY  
And the moment I would be satisfied to know  
where he is taking us.

SANCIERRE

He answers without turning.

SANCIERRE  
To the Palace of the Cardinal d'Ambroise.

FELSON AND LAVEY

They look up, startled. He heard them?

SANCIERRE  
If you are going to whisper behind my back,  
lower your voice.

LAVEY  
What does the cardinal want with us?

SANCIERRE  
That is for him to say.

EXT. WINDY HILLOCK - NEAR DAWN

The riders reach the top of a ridge and stop. Sancierre points.

SANCIERRE

There.

ANGLE - OPPOSITE VALLEY

*Le Palais de Papes.* The seat of the Catholic Church in France, it rises majestically from the hillside. Massive stone walls, parapets, turrets... commanding the high ground for miles around.

THE KNIGHTS

They take in the sight.

EXT. CASTLE WALLS - HIGH ABOVE

A SENTRY appears on the ramparts, looking down as the three riders approach.

SENTRY

Halt and announce yourselves!

SANCIERRE

(calling up)

It is I, Sancierre. I bring the Knight LaVey.

The sentry stares down, studying them with an odd expression.

SANCIERRE

Well, move man -- I haven't all day!

The sentry SNAPS to and runs to comply.

THE GATE - MOMENTS LATER

With a SOUND like the turning of unseen GEARS and WHEELLOCKS it begins to rise.

The Knights move forward...

INT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

A PRIEST is already approaching through one of the vaulted entries to greet them.

This is FRA' DeBELZAQ, advisor to the CARDINAL. He is dressed in a simple brown robe, bound at the waist with the traditional rosaries of his order, and he carries a torch by which he studies them.

DEBELZAQ

Which of you is LaVey?

LAVEY

I am.

DeBelzaq sizes him up.

Then, with a sudden flourish, he spins and leads the way across the courtyard.

DEBELZAQ

Please follow me.

INT. PALACE - NIGHT

DeBelzaq leads the Knights down a long marble corridor lit on either side by torches.

DEBELZAQ

The Cardinal wishes to thank you for coming. Indeed all of France owes you a debt--

LAVEY

My patience grows thin, priest. I am not in the mood for politics.

DEBELZAQ

Of course.

He brings them to a halt in front of a tall gilded doorway. He pushes open the doors and leads them into...

INT. CARDINAL'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

A room with a massive domed ceiling. The marble floors are littered with rare furs.

At one end, seated on a darkened dais surrounded by PHYSICIANS, is CARDINAL D'AMBROISE (note: in the dim light, he is seen only in silhouette).

DEBELZAQ

Gentlemen, the Cardinal D'Ambroise.

(a pause)

Your eminence, the Knights.

The Cardinal leans forward. And as he leans into the torchlight, we see he is deathly pale, almost ghostlike...

CARDINAL

Is it true? You are called LaVey?

LaVey steps forward.

LAVEY  
Yes, but how--?

CARDINAL  
Please! Come no closer. I am stricken.  
(COUGHING)  
The Black Death is in me.

He glances sidelong at his PHYSICIANS, who are hovering just out of arm's reach.

CARDINAL  
Leave us! Go.

PHYSICIAN  
But your eminence... You grow weaker.

CARDINAL  
(sharp)  
No. I die. And your leeches and ointments are of no use. Now go!

The Physicians - they share a look. And quickly gather their jars and medicines...and make a general exit.

Once they have left, the cardinal faces LaVey.

CARDINAL  
You must have many questions...you want to know why you are here, how I knew of your coming?  
(off LaVey's glance)  
The answer, at this moment, is beneath my very feet in the dungeon.

LaVey shoots a look at Felson. *The dungeon?*

CARDINAL  
Three weeks ago a woman was found in the forests, wandering...mad, muttering strange words that none could understand. She came to a small village near Marseille.

DEBELZAQ  
Louresse.  
(darkly)  
That place is gone now.

CARDINAL  
From there she traveled west, from Marseille to Avignon...and everywhere she went it was the same. In her footsteps followed death--

The Cardinal is interrupted by a sudden COUGHING fit, which wracks his entire body. He tries to stifle it with a handkerchief. When he draws his hand away, we GLIMPSE the white silk, flecked red with blood.

CARDINAL

(recovering a bit)

--she came here two weeks ago and cried out from the walls. Many terrible things she said, that she had cursed the land...cursed mankind, that our judgement was at hand.

The cardinal looks up at LaVey, as if to judge his reaction.

But LaVey doesn't have one.

CARDINAL

What do you believe?

LAVEY

That we...live in dark times.

CARDINAL

A guarded response.

LAVEY

I'm a knight. Not a priest.

CARDINAL

And as a knight, as a soldier of God, you hold no beliefs?

LAVEY

(a dark pause)

What would you have me believe?

CARDINAL

The truth.

He looks to DeBelzaq, who takes his cue and steps forward.

DEBELZAQ

The witch must be taken to the abbey Severac, in the mountains, where our Benedictine brothers are preparing an ancient ritual to destroy her.

CARDINAL

Only there can the witch be slain.

LAVEY

And we?

CARDINAL  
You are to deliver her.

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

His eyes darken, but he says nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. DUNGEON STAIRS - NIGHT

The Knights descend a flight of dank, stone steps that wind in circles downward. DeBelzaq leads the way with a torch.

DEBELZAQ  
A word of caution; the witch will attempt to question you. Do not answer her, for her questions are traps. Neither ask too many, for the witch is a deceiver. She will mingle truth with lies. She will try to turn one man against the other.

Suddenly LaVey stops in his tracks, flinching at a SOUND from below. The VOICE of the WITCH, booming, loud... Filled with animal rage.

WITCH (O.S.)  
Lavveeeyyyyyyyyyy!

The men share a moment of stunned silence.

FELSON (O.S.)  
She knows your name?

WITCH  
(louder)  
LAVVEEYyyyyyyyyy!

DeBelzaq looks back at LaVey, who is frozen on the steps.

LAVEY  
Someone told her I was coming?

DEBELZAQ  
No one told her.

LAVEY  
Then how--?

DEBELZAQ  
She has been calling your name for three days.

LaVey blanches. DeBelzaq continues down the steps.



## DEBELZAQ

The witch is chained, but do not step too close. She will snap your neck like kindling. She has killed two jailers already.

He reaches the bottom of the steps and unbolts a heavy steel door. The Knights move past, into...

INT. DUNGEON - NIGHT

A BURLY JAILOR rises as they enter and proceed past, into a wide room, circled on all sides by heavy cell doors.

ONE DOOR IN PARTICULAR

Has been reinforced with steel, and braced with a thick-oak beam. It looks capable of withstanding a battering ram.

LaVey takes a torch down from the wall and moves towards it, the Jailer following behind him.

LAVEY

Open it.

The Jailer looks to DeBelzaq. The priest nods his assent.

The Jailer moves forward with a heavy ring of keys, and unbolts the lock. He pulls the beam away with both hands and slowly pulls the door open...

Creeeaaaaaak! It swings open like the vault of a tomb.

Sancierre and LaVey move forward, followed by Felson.

Suddenly there's a scurrying motion on the floor as dozens of oily slick RATS swarm past them and up the steps. LaVey hangs motionless in the doorway, recovering.

He looks to Sancierre. The old Knight gathers his courage and they step through together...

INT. CELL

...into a dank stone cell.

LaVey can't see anything at first. It's too dark. He raises the torch, tensing, ready for anything...

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

The torchlight spills onto the cowering form of a SMALL PEASANT GIRL. A thin, hungry-looking child, no more than sixteen.

CLOSE ON - THE KNIGHTS

Reacting with surprise.

FELSON  
She's just a girl.

THE WITCH

Her head whips up and locks onto LaVey. And despite her age, we notice something disturbing...in her eyes, something alluring and darkly sexual.

WITCH  
(a soft whisper)  
...laveeeeeey?

A beat.

LAVEY  
You know my name?

WITCH  
...yesssss...

LAVEY  
But -- how?

WITCH  
Bring your sword closer...

LaVey, unsure.

He takes a cautious step.

WITCH  
Closer.

Sancierre places a hand on LaVey's shoulder, cautioning him. The girl sees this and begins GIGGLING softly.

WITCH  
Are you afraid?

LaVey considers this, takes another step closer.

LAVEY  
Now speak. How did you know of my coming?

WITCH

I know...many thingsss...

LAVEY

I see.

(pause)

Then tell me, from where have I come?

WITCH

From the east. Over seas...over sand.

LaVey looks to Felson. A lucky guess?

LAVEY

And where was I born? What was the name of my father?

WITCH

(another burst of  
GIGGLING)

You were conceived in the belly of a whore!  
You're a bastard! Jean-Pierre LaVey the  
bastard of Crecy!

LaVey stares at her for a moment.

LAVEY

(to Felson)

She knows nothing.

LaVey turns away, dismissively, and starts for the door of the cell again. But just as he reaches it, he is stopped in his tracks by the sound of her CHUCKLING... a chilling noise, that causes LaVey and Felson to turn slowly back.

WITCH

Where will you go, LaVey? What will you do?  
You cannot leave. It was my will that  
brought you to this place...

LAVEY

Your will--? But I have been brought her  
to deliver you to your death. Surely that  
isn't something you desire?

WITCH

Oh, but it is.

LAVEY  
You desire death?

WITCH  
I desire you.

LaVey stares at her for a moment, startled by her intensity.

LAVEY  
They say you have called up this plague.

CLOSE - THE WITCH

A smile spreads over her lips, a willful smile, like a child who has done something naughty. She nods her head, as she plays with a stray strand of hair.

WITCH  
...yessss... A plague to curse the land.  
To wipe from the earth all things in which  
flow the breath of life.

LAVEY  
You would destroy all France?

WITCH  
(with sudden venom)  
I would destroy all mankind! I would see  
rats chew the rancid meat from your bones!  
I would see your flesh rot inside your  
armor--!

And then it happens, inhumanely quick! The girl lunges at LaVey...her hands SNAPPING for his throat. The chain jerks taut at the last instant, yanking her back, inches from LaVey where she thrashes frantically, in a frenzy, as she tries to reach him.

FELSON AND SANCIERRE

They move back a pace, shocked.

LAVEY

Holding his ground.

WITCH  
Proud scum! Monks of war! Your fatted  
souls will hang in the smoky pits of hell!  
Like shanks of rotting flesh!

LAVEY  
 (sharp, commanding)  
 Silence!

The girl suddenly falls silent. She hangs there, still, staring back at him as her chest heaves with exertion.

LaVey moves a little closer...to the very end of her chain. He studies her.

LAVEY  
 Tell me your name?

CLOSE - THE WITCH

Her head jerks back and violently yanks to one side. When she speaks next her VOICE has taken on an entirely new aspect...loud, booming, filled with menace.

WITCH  
 I am Sodom! I am Bor!  
 (a second voice)  
 Call me Abbadon!  
 (a third)  
 Beelzebub!  
 (a fourth)  
 Baaaal...

And the word "Baal" stretches into a cacophony of names, uttered rapidly, one blending into the other, and each accompanied by a change in tone, coming so fast now that, impossibly, the VOICES seem to overlap.

WITCH  
 GehennaMolochaiAzazelMalthusSabnockBalam  
 NahulaOraiGallamCimeies...!

LAVEY, FELSON AND SANCIERRE

They stare in mute horror as she tosses her head violently back and forth, YANKING the chains, the mortar, CRACKING and flaking.

FELSON  
 (terrified, retreating)  
 Pater noster...

LaVey draws his sword, starts backing away.

And she lets out a horrendous bellow, an inchoate sound, filled with hatred, that grows louder and louder... filling us with dread, penetrating our souls...

...until we CUT TO:

CLOSE UP -- A BLAZING FIRE.

The embers glow and smoke.

FELSON  
Blessed Virgin! What a thing!

Wider. Now we SEE that we are inside...

INT. THE GUEST HALL - NIGHT

And Felson is pacing nervously back and forth. LaVey is standing before the fire, staring at the flames. He has a goblet in one hand from which he sips occasionally.

LAVEY  
She's a girl, Felson. Nothing more.

SANCIERRE  
You mean you don't believe it?

LAVEY  
That she is a witch? Certainly not.

FELSON  
But she confessed.

LAVEY  
Oh, that I do not doubt. The church can  
be...  
(choosing his words  
carefully)  
...very persuasive.

SANCIERRE  
And yet she knew your name. She knew of your  
coming.

LAVEY  
(with a shrug)  
It means nothing. She heard my name  
somewhere. There are many who have  
returned from Palestine.

He takes a long swig of his ale.

FELSON  
What do we tell the Cardinal?

LAVEY

I will not have the blood of an innocent girl on my hands, no matter how crazed she is.

FELSON

It would not be wise to go against him.

LAVEY

What can he do? Burn me?

FELSON

Very possibly, yes.

LAVEY

Let him try.

SANCIERRE

Felson is right. One does not lightly disobey the church. The Cardinal still has power. Especially here.

LAVEY

(SLAMMING his goblet down)

And I have shed enough blood in the name of the church! If they want this girl dead let them dirty their own hands. Let them kill her themselves.

VOICE (O.S.)

We have tried. Three times.

The men all turn-- startled-- to see the priest, DeBelzaq, standing in the entranceway. Felson and Sancierre exchange a nervous glance. How much has he heard?

The priest folds his hands behind his back and crosses to the fireside.

DEBELZAQ

The spirit of the demon cannot be destroyed. Each time upon the moment of death it leaves the body and possesses another. We have seen it take three forms since we brought it here.

LAVEY

Just a moment...

(he sets his glass down,  
incredulous)

Do you mean to tell me that the girl we just saw in the dungeon is not the same one you arrested?

DEBELZAQ

In spirit, yes.

LAVEY

In body!

DEBELZAQ

In body, no. It is a serving girl from the kitchen.

The men exchange glances. Expressions of disbelief.

FELSON

And before that?

DEBELZAQ

The cellarer. And before that a stable hand. He was the first.

FELSON

(exploding)

Good Christ!

DEBELZAQ

That is why she must be taken to Severac. Only there, on holy ground, can the Roman ritual be enacted. Only there can she be slain.

LAVEY

Tell me, priest. Who has witnessed this... possession?

DEBELZAQ

Myself, the Cardinal. A dozen others. And each time the witch gains in strength.

A moment of silence as this sinks in.

DEBELZAQ

What shall I tell his eminence?

LaVey looks up and catches eyes with Felson. There is something cautionary in his glance.

LAVEY

He will have my answer in the morning.

Before the priest can protest, LaVey spins from the room. DeBelzaq watches him go with a disquieting frown upon his face.

EXT. PARAPET - NIGHTTIME

Overlooking the palace grounds. A quiet moment.



LaVey is alone with his thoughts.

SANCIERRE (O.S.)  
I am going to Severac.

INT. LAVEY'S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHTTIME

Sancierre is standing behind LaVey, seated on a chair.

LAVEY  
You are so certain she is a witch? You have no doubts?

SANCIERRE  
Two weeks ago...I buried my children. Both of them, with my own hands. And the wife who bore them. I am the last of my line...when I am gone there will be none.

LaVey turns back to stare at Sancierre.

SANCIERRE  
Shall I tell you how it happened? How a child dies of the plague?  
(off LaVey's silence)  
On the first day the child is stricken with boils and lesions. On the second day, the skin grows black and begins to bleed. From under the arms and from the eyes and ears. By the third day the boils burst...and death comes.

LAVEY  
(with difficulty)  
Sancierre, I am sorry for your loss but--

SANCIERRE  
It is a curse from Hell, LaVey. I have seen it with my own eyes, and I know the truth. I am going to Severac to watch this demon burn at the stake.

He rises grimly, and turns away.

LAVEY  
(calling after him)  
Sancierre.  
(pause)  
What if you are wrong?

SANCIERRE

When you asked her name she used the word  
Bor. Do you know what it means?

LaVey shakes his head slowly. No.

SANCIERRE

It is a place. The lowest pit in Hell.

...as Sancierre turns and walks we FADE to BLACK.

INT. CHAPEL - DAWN

A vast chamber lined with statues. The martyrs. They stare down  
in stony silence.

DeBelzaq enters through the vaulted doors and moves down the  
aisle. His footsteps echo on the marble floors.

He stops before the altar and draws the sign of a cross in the  
air, mutters a silent prayer-- and then suddenly flinches, as  
he notices for the first time that he isn't alone!

There is a dark figure sitting in the pews to his left.

It's LaVey.

DEBELZAQ

(recovering)

Forgive me. I - I didn't see you.

LaVey doesn't respond. He is staring at something beyond the  
altar, at something a million miles away.

DEBELZAQ

I do not wish to disturb your prayers.

LAVEY

I am not praying.

He turns to face DeBelzaq, his expression inscrutable. Partly  
hidden in shadow.

LAVEY

You may tell the cardinal...I will do as he  
commands.

DEBELZAQ

His eminence will be pleased, he--

But LaVey simply rises and starts off down the aisle past him.  
DeBelzaq watches him go, puzzled.

INT. DINING HALL - MORNING

LaVey is seated at a table with Sancierre and Felson. They are eating. Tearing and ripping at the food with their bare hands.

Felson speaks between mouthfulls.

FELSON

Sancierre and I have been talking. Mind you, we are not afraid. But we are only three men. If we are to accomplish this, we will need more.

LaVey continues eating in silence.

SANCIERRE

It will take two, preferably three, to guard the wagon at all times. One to lead the way. And another at the reigns.

FELSON

Also it would be wise to bring a guide. Someone who knows the roads.

LaVey finishes and pushes his plate aside.

LAVEY

Six men.

SANCIERRE

We are short by three.

Suddenly, from the far side of the banquet hall, a VOICE calls out:

VOICE (O.S.)

Short by two!

THE KNIGHTS

Turn in their seats.

A knight is standing in the entrance. His name is KAYLAN and we can tell at a glance he's barely seventeen. He moves towards them with a wide grin.

KAYLAN

Odin's beard, something smells good!

He SLAMS a mace down, burying it in the surface of the table, and proceeds unceremoniously to devour a leg of lamb, ripping into the meat with ferocious appetite.

By comparison to the others, this man is an utter savage.

KAYLAN  
(between mouthfuls)  
I am Kaylan.

SANCIERRE  
(unsure)  
You are a knight?

Kaylan freezes in mid-bite and looks up, offended.

KAYLAN  
Of course!

SANCIERRE  
I only ask, because--

KAYLAN  
Because what?

A tense moment as they study each other.

LAVEY  
(interceding)  
How old are you, boy?

KAYLAN  
I am eighteen! And I have ridden twice in  
the lists and won flags for valor.

LAVEY  
This is no tournament. The Abbey Rouen is  
six hundred leagues from here, beyond the  
Forest Wormwood, through plague-infested  
lands...

KAYLAN  
Did you think I came along for a stroll?

LAVEY  
We are delivering a woman to her death.  
Have you the stomach for that?

KAYLAN  
A witch. Not a woman.

LaVey shares a glance with Felson.

LAVEY  
Go home, boy. There is no glory in this.  
He rises to leave. Sancierre and Felson follow.

As they reach the door, Kaylan calls after them:

KAYLAN

Wait!

(pause)

Please. I - I have ridden for three days.  
I left behind my brothers, my parents...all  
I know. I cannot go back now. It - it would  
be shameful.

An awkward moment. Felson and LaVey look back at him.

FELSON

(softening a touch)

He's big for his age.

SANCIERRE

And eager.

LAVEY

Tell me truthfully, lad, how old are you?

KAYLAN

I-- I am sixteen.

LaVey studies him a moment, then spins away again.

LAVEY

I need Knights. Not boys in armor.

KAYLAN

But I am--!

LAVEY

(quickly, harshly)

I said no. Now begone! Go home!

LaVey spins and leaves the room. Felson and Sancierre linger for a moment, and then reluctantly follow.

CUT TO:

A CLOSE UP -- OF A MAP.

BEING UNFURLED, across a table. A finger points at a spot on the chart, indicating...

DEBELZAQ

The abbey is here, in the mountains.

(indicating another spot)

And we are here.

...WIDEN to REVEAL, we're inside:

INT. MAPROOM - AFTERNOON

DeBelzaq stands over a long mahogany table across which several charts have been spread.

DEBELZAQ

The distance between the two is nearly one hundred, seventy leagues. Thus, according to the speed at which a wagon travels over rough terrain, it should be no more than two weeks travel.

SANCIERRE

Two weeks... I see a river, heavy forest, and a mountain pass. A hard road in any weather...but in two weeks?

DEBELZAQ

These are the best charts in the land. And I assure you the distances are correct.

LAVEY

Tell me, priest, have you ever made the journey yourself?

DeBelzaq blanches.

DEBELZAQ

Of course not.

LAVEY

Of course not. Shall I tell you the average speed of a wagon stuck in the mud? Or crossing a river during high flood? Or the condition of a mountain pass?

DEBELZAQ

I see.

SANCIERRE

Maps are fine. But we need someone who knows the lay of the land.

DeBelzaq thinks. Draws a blank.

DEBELZAQ

I can think of no such person.

LAVEY

Anyone who has traveled. Anyone who knows the roads between here and Severac. Perhaps a collector? Or a merchant?

At this, DeBelzaq looks up. Something has clicked.

DEBELZAQ

(reluctant)

There is one. Though I cannot sing his praises...

...off LaVey's glance, we CUT TO:

EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD - LATER

Sancierre and LaVey. Their feet echo on the flagstones, as they approach the stocks, where we SEE a man chained up.

This is HAGAMAN. His head and hands protrude through holes in the stock, so that he can't lift his head or look around. All he can do is stare at the ground.

HAGAMAN

(hearing their footsteps)

Ah, visitors! What can I do for you, gentlemen? Perhaps you'd like to pelt me with fruit? Or kick me in the groin?

HAGAMAN'S P.O.V.

Lavey kneels into frame, and stares at him.

LAVEY

You are Hagaman? The swindler?

HAGAMAN

No! I mean, yes. I am Hagaman. But I never swindled anyone. I sold relics. Genuine relics.

LAVEY

Where?

HAGAMAN

(confused)

What--?

LAVEY

Where did you sell your trinkets?

HAGAMAN

(with a touch of pride)

Everywhere. I have happy customers from here to Prague.

LAVEY

And Severac?

Hagaman thinks for a second.

HAGAMAN

Yes, the monks. I sold them the tail of an ass ridden in the flight from Egypt.

SANCIERRE

(dryly)

At a bargain, I'm sure.

HAGAMAN

They even bought a lock of hair from the head of John the Baptist.

LAVEY

So it's safe to assume you know the way to the abbey?

HAGAMAN

Like the back of my hand. I'd be happy to draw you a map but as you can see...

He wiggles his hands in the stocks.

NEW ANGLE - LAVEY AND SANCIERRE

They step aside and speak in hushed tones, so that Hagaman cannot hear them.

SANCIERRE

The tail of an ass--!? That man's a complete scoundrel!

LAVEY

No doubt. But our options are few.

SANCIERRE

I tell you he will flee at the first chance.

LaVey considers this. Realizes Sancierre is probably right.

HAGAMAN'S P.O.V.

LaVey returns, kneeling down again.

LAVEY

We need a guide. But I want to be certain we understand one another.

(he draws his sword,  
fingers the tip)

If I release you...and you attempt to flee...



HAGAMAN

What -- say no more! The devil is with you  
to give you such thoughts.

LaVey studies him skeptically.

HAGAMAN

I swear by all the saints. May they strike  
me dead if I tell a lie!

LAVEY

That you should have the ear of any saint  
is doubtful.

Hagaman strains to turn his head as LaVey abruptly stands up  
again. But all he can see are LaVey's legs - which suddenly take  
up a stance like an axeman at the chopping block.

HAGAMAN

Wha-what are you doing?

No response. And now Hagaman's confusion is starting to mount  
into terror because LaVey's sword has also risen upwards.

HAGAMAN

No! Please--!

WHAM!!! LaVey brings the sword down on top of the block, slicing  
the lock in half, spilling Hagaman to the ground, where he lies  
SCREAMING like a schoolgirl...

A beat.

Hagaman clutches his throat, surprised. It's still there.

INT. CASTLE - NIGHTTIME

An empty corridor. Torchlight flickers in the polished marble  
floor. All is calm...all is silent...UNTIL an eerie CRY echoes  
through the halls. The SOUND of the WITCH bellowing. A horrible  
NOISE...filled with animal like rage.

INT. DINING HALL - NIGHTTIME

The Knights are eating dinner when they hear the sound. They  
continue, unfazed, except for Hagaman. He looks up from his  
plate with wide eyes.

But the others seem unbothered by it. They continue eating in  
silence.

HAGAMAN

Hey.

(to Felson)  
What's your name?

Felson looks up from his food.

FELSON  
Felson D'Armitaine, son of Lucas  
D'Armitaine, second cousin to the duke of  
Chartres.

He looks back at Hagaman expectantly.

HAGAMAN  
Hagaman.  
(he tries to think of  
something to add)  
Of France.

Felson is unimpressed. He goes back to eating.

HAGAMAN  
So tell me. Why are you doing this?

FELSON  
Doing what?

HAGAMAN  
This fool's errand. In my case, I mean,  
it's obvious. I have no choice really, but  
you...  
(aside, a whisper)  
They are paying you?

FELSON  
Of course not. I am not a mercenary. I am  
a knight.

HAGAMAN  
Yes, but as a knight how much are you paid?

FELSON  
Nothing.

HAGAMAN  
Come now. Between friends -- you can tell  
me.

FELSON  
(starting to get annoyed)  
I am not paid!

HAGAMAN  
Then why--?

FELSON

We do it for the honor, for the privilege  
of serving God.

HAGAMAN

Ah! So the Church pays you.

FELSON

(exploding)

No one pays me, you imbecile!

He shoves his plate aside and storms off. Hagaman watches him  
go with a puzzled expression.

When he looks back at the table, all eyes are on him.

HAGAMAN

I was only trying to make conversation!

INT. CARDINAL'S BED CHAMBER - LATER

A tall arched window overlooks the room. Blue moonlight casts  
a pale glow over the Cardinal, huddled in his bed, his forehead  
feverish and glistening with sweat.

DeBelzaq kneels by the bedside.

CARDINAL

(weakly)

Tell me, my friend. What do you think of  
him?

DEBELZAQ

LaVey?

CARDINAL

Of course.

DeBelzaq rises and walks to the window.

DEBELZAQ

I do not think he is equal to the task. He  
has no faith, your eminence. If ever he had  
it, it is gone now. And clearly he has no  
love of the Church.

The Cardinal smiles oddly, knowingly.

CARDINAL

Perhaps. But he has paid a price. I have  
seen it before in his kind.

DEBELZAQ  
 (doesn't understand)  
 His kind?

CARDINAL  
 Crusaders. LaVey was among those who took  
 the Holy City. He was at Jerusalem when the  
 wall fell...when the Knights turned their  
 wrath upon the people of that place...  
 (softly, with shame)  
 A black day. They say the streets ran red  
 with blood. Blood of women. Blood of  
 children. Arabs and Christians alike.

DeBelzaq stares at the Cardinal. Horrified.

DEBELZAQ  
 Do you think LaVey was among those  
 who--?

CARDINAL  
 No. If he were, he would not hesitate now.  
 But he does, and you see why.

DEBELZAQ  
 Yes.

CARDINAL  
 And you see also why you must go with them.

DeBelzaq - his head snaps up.

DEBELZAQ  
 Me? But I am a priest!

CARDINAL  
 LaVey is the sword. You are the cross.  
 Where he is weak you must be strong. And  
 when he loses the path...you must stay the  
 course.

DeBelzaq stares for a moment, a little stunned. And then with  
 quiet dignity, and though he is obviously terrified, his head  
 drops in a gesture of acquiescence.

DEBELZAQ  
 As you command.

EXT. PALACE - DAWN

The first bleak rays of dawn.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAWN

The Knights emerge, fully clad. Chain mail, swords, crossbows slung...feet CLANKING on the cold marble as they stride down the hall.

They move with purpose...grim, determined...

INT. COURTYARD - DAWN

They emerge and take in the sight before them:

THE WAGON/CAGE.

It waits, like a silent monolith.

Inside we SEE the witch, slumped, lifeless in her shackles.

The Knights approach and stare in through the bars.

HAGAMAN

I have never seen a witch before.

(puzzled, to LaVey)

Why doesn't she move?

VOICE (O.S.)

She has been drugged.

The Knights turn and see DeBelzaq at the reigns of the wagon.

DEBELZAQ

She has been given Ethelroot in her food.  
She will not awaken for many hours.

FELSON

Ethelroot? But that's a poison.

DEBELZAQ

Yes. And she ate enough to kill an ox. Even  
so it won't last long. If we are lucky--

LAVEY

We?

DEBELZAQ

I am accompanying you to Severac. It is the  
Cardinal's will. I am to watch over you,  
to guide you with prayer.

LAVEY

(dryly)

Surely you can pray more effectively from  
here.

DEBELZAQ

You will need me. I am the only one who  
knows the ways of the witch.

HAGAMAN

(he casts another glance at  
the cage)  
She doesn't seem so dangerous.

DEBELZAQ

Wait until she awakens.

LaVey and the priest eye each other.

LAVEY

Very well. But we ride hard and do not stop  
until nightfall.

LaVey slings himself into the saddle.

LAVEY

(calling out)  
Guards! Open the gates!

HIGH ANGLE - THE RAMPARTS

The sentries rush to comply...turning a mighty gear... CRANKING  
open the portcullis.

ANGLE - DEBELZAQ

He CRACKS the whip.

With a jerk, the horses move forward. The wagon passes under  
the dark, foreboding portico, as if into the maw of some terrible  
beast...

HIGH ABOVE - PALACE WINDOW

The Cardinal watches with a solemn gaze, as they diminish in the  
distance. He draws the sign of a cross in the air.

CARDINAL

Christophori sancti speciem quicumque  
tuetur...

On this ominous note...

...we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

The wagon rattles down a narrow dirt lane.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

So began the journey. On the fifteenth of October, five men departed from the palace of the Cardinal D'Ambroise.

CLOSER. HAGAMAN.

He glances up at the darkening sky and a FLASH of lightning illuminates his face.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Three knights, the swindler, Hagaman, and the priest, DeBelzaq. They traveled east into the foothills of Avignon. And from there, deeper into plague infested lands...

Hagaman cranes his neck around to look back at the witch.

HAGAMAN'S P.O.V.

She is still drugged, but her head is rocking with the motion of the wagon. It's a disturbing effect.

BACK TO - HAGAMAN

Turning around again, chilled.

DEBELZAQ

Forget her.

HAGAMAN

How?

DEBELZAQ

Think of something else. Look at the countryside.

Hagaman looks to his left -- there's a rotten, gnarled tree with a vulture in it.

He looks to his right -- a cemetery filled with headstones.

HAGAMAN

Lovely.

DEBELZAQ

Put your mind at ease. She is shackled hand and foot. And you are traveling with an armed escort. Three Knights.

HAGAMAN

I don't care if there are a dozen knights led by Richard the Lionheart. I don't like this.

DEBELZAQ

Just remember what David said unto Goliath--

HAGAMAN

(brightening a notch)

Ah! Speaking of David, I have something here that might interest you.

He fumbles in his pocket and produces a round stone.

HAGAMAN

Do you know what this is, my friend? A priceless relic. The rarest in my collection. And for the right price, I just might be willing to part with it...

CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD - LATER

It has started to drizzle. A cold, misty rain.

The wagon RUMBLES along, winding in and out of the turns. Felson and LaVey ride side by side.

FELSON

(aside, softly)

We are being followed.

LaVey doesn't react.

LAVEY

How many?

FELSON

One. Behind us, on the ridge.

LaVey casts a disinterested glance over his shoulder, trying to look casual.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

A lone figure on horseback, dimly visible through the rain.

FELSON

He has been following us since we left the palace.



LAVEY

Damn fool. It's that boy. The one who wouldn't take no for an answer.

FELSON

If we ignore, perhaps he'll turn back.

ANGLE ON - KAYLAN - LATER

Still following. At the same distance as before.

FELSON

(looking back)

He's still there.

LAVEY

Of course. His skull's too thick for reason.

He SPURS his horse a little quicker.

LAVEY

Let us put some distance between us. Hagaman. What village is that ahead?

HAGAMAN

(looking up)

Fouret. A flea bag of a town. But we may find a place to stay out of the rain, if we are lucky.

LAVEY

We will not stop. We ride through.

INT. SMALL VILLAGE - NIGHTTIME

Dark and grimy. Heaps of wet garbage. Rats swarming between them.

The occasional torch illuminates the thatched houses on either side of the street. It's just another impoverished village, wasted to nothing by the plague.

As the wagon RATTLES past, we PAN UP slowly to the windows above. Inside, darkened faces peer out. The villagers of Fouret. Faces filled with suffering and distrust.

THE KNIGHTS

Continue past, seemingly unaware of the attention they are drawing.

FELSON

LaVey.

LAVEY

I see them. Just keep moving.

FELSON

Why do they look at us? What do they want?

DEBELZAQ

The witch. Word has spread through the region. She is much hated.

The priest SNAPS the reins and the wagon RATTLES on a little quicker now, as more and more villagers are drawn to their windows.

We hear WHISPERED VOICES, raised in fear. Mutterings of "it's her...the plague witch! She's to blame!"...etc...

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

They emerge into a small cobbled square, ringed all around with houses. Several doors are opening now and PEOPLE are beginning to emerge.

Wasted people with nothing else to lose. Thin, starving, sick faces...filled anger.

THE KNIGHTS

They pass through the square, Felson and LaVey moving ahead of the wagon to take the lead now. They casually un-sling their crossbows.

Ahead we can see the last few houses and the road leading out of town again. But between them and the road -- a group of rough looking VILLAGERS are beginning to form.

ANGLE - THE VILLAGERS

Carrying torches, sticks, etc. The beginnings of a mob. They are led by a particularly BURLY VILLAGER with a nasty scowl.

The wagon RUMBLES to a stop before the mob. LaVey leans forward in his saddle, eyes the group.

LAVEY

Well, what's it to be? Trouble?

BURLY VILLAGER

No trouble. Just give us the witch and you can go.

LAVEY

What would you do with her?

VILLAGERS

(overlapping VOICES)

Burn her! Put an end to our misery! Send  
her back to Hell, from whence she came.

The others chime in with cries of support. "Yes...burn her!  
She's to blame..."etc...

LAVEY

And if I say no?

BURLY VILLAGER

Then you'll learn we mean business!

(he SMACKS his open palm  
with a cudgel)

And there are twice as many of us as you.

LaVey looks back to the others. He seems more amused than  
worried. But DeBelzaq does not share his lack of concern.

DEBELZAQ

LaVey, they know not what they do! You must  
tell them. You must make them understand.

LAVEY

I do not think they will listen.

DeBelzaq rises, to address the crowd.

DEBELZAQ

Hear me! People of Fouret--!

VILLAGERS

(overlapping)

Give her up! You haven't a chance!

DEBELZAQ

(struggling to be heard)

This is the business of the Church! He who  
stands in our way--!

WHAP! DeBelzaq is struck with a piece of fruit.

He staggers backwards, clutching his head. The crowd surges  
forward, growing restless. And the burly villager is through  
talking. He gestures to the others, "let's go!"

Suddenly the tension is broken by the incongruous sound of  
LAUGHTER.

All heads turn to find...KAYLAN.

He has been watching from a distance, and can't contain himself anymore. He bursts into uproarious laughter.

For a moment this is so surprising, so out of place, that nobody speaks.

But when his laughter gradually subsides, the Burly Villager steps forward angrily.

BURLY PEASANT

Who is this fool!?

KAYLAN

Someone who knows a little more than you.  
(he points at them)

Look at you! All of you, farmers, smithies,  
cobblers...meddling in the business of  
priests!

His face suddenly goes serious.

KAYLAN

What do you know of witches, eh? Do you  
think any old fool can burn a witch?

The Burly Villager starts to form a response, but Kaylan cuts him off.

KAYLAN

A burning is not to be taken lightly. It  
must be done on Holy Ground, by Priests,  
under the protection of powerful relics and  
indulgences. Even then it is a dangerous  
business.

BURLY VILLAGER

You're bluffing...trying to trick us.

KAYLAN

Am I?

He spins to face the priest.

KAYLAN

Tell them! Tell them what will happen if  
any harm to comes to her.

DEBELZAQ

He - he speaks the truth. If the witch is slain, her spirit will leave her body and possess another.

THE MOB

A nervous silence settles over them as they take this in.

BURLY VILLAGER

(trying to rally)

They're lying! I say we take her!

KAYLAN

He spurs his horse forward and gestures the others to one side.

KAYLAN

Stand back! Let them through!

(waving them back)

Move, I say!

The Knights reluctantly clear a path.

KAYLAN

Go on then! Take her! Do it!

THE MOB

Unsure. Nobody wants to be the first.

KAYLAN

Well, go on! Surely a little thing like damnation won't stand in your way.

Another villager steps forward, a LARGE SHAVEN-HEADED MAN.

SHAVEN-HEAD

I say we let them pass.

There are MURMURS of assent. And then gradually the crowd chimes in.

PEASANTS

(overlapping voices)

Yes! Let them through! Let the witch go!

LaVey watches with surprise as the crowd begins to part before them.

DeBelzaq snaps the reins and the wagon surges forward once more.

Kaylan, with a slight smile, falls in alongside the Knights.

EXT. THE ROAD - LATER

Kaylan is riding alongside Sancierre.

SANCIERRE

You handled them well.

KAYLAN

Indeed.

SANCIERRE

But it was a dangerous bluff. How did you know it would work?

KAYLAN

Peasants are an ignorant lot, full of superstitious nonsense. It's not difficult to scare them.

SANCIERRE

You seem to know them.

Kaylan flashes him a look.

KAYLAN

What do you mean?

SANCIERRE

Nothing. I meant it as a compliment.

Kaylan nods grudgingly, and turns back to look at LaVey who is riding ahead several paces.

KAYLAN

Tell me about him.

SANCIERRE

LaVey? I only know him a little.

KAYLAN

They say he was at Jerusalem.

SANCIERRE

Yes. They say he was first through the breach. He and Felson. And they lived to tell.

KAYLAN

If I had been there, I would have been first. I would have leapt the wall! I would have leapt into the thickest part of the battle!

SANCIERRE

Be thankful you were not there.

KAYLAN

If I had gone, you can be sure I would have killed many Turks!

Sancierre shakes his head tiredly.

SANCIERRE

How many times have I heard the same? Dreams of glory and battle. Fight well young master and someday, who knows? A dukedom may be yours. Even a crown.

KAYLAN

I don't expect you to understand.

SANCIERRE

Oh, I understand. It is a fever. I once had such a fever.

(gesturing to LaVey)

So did he.

KAYLAN

And now?

SANCIERRE

(tiredly)

Now I am an old man. And what have I done? Nothing. My life has been spent in battle, and I have nothing but wounds.

Kaylan looks at the old Knight, scanning him quickly.

KAYLAN

You seem none the worse.

SANCIERRE

I am an old dog.

(he looks up,

forces a weak smile)

But I still have some bite left in me.

## EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

The men are gathered around, warming their hands over the flame. DeBelzaq pokes the flames absently with a stick.

DEBELZAQ

The witch will awaken soon. We must be on our guard.

LAVEY

We will take turns watching her. Three hours a piece.

KAYLAN

(jumping up, eager)  
I will go first!

LaVey looks up, surprised.

LAVEY

Perhaps it would be better if--

KAYLAN

No, I am ready. Let her come.

He throws on his sword belt and before anyone can object, is starting off in the direction of the wagon.

LAVEY

(calling after)  
Kaylan. Be watchful. She is dangerous.

Kaylan nods once and then spins away. The others share a bemused look.

SANCIERRE

Ha! Impetuous youth!

HAGAMAN

With any luck, he'll take the watch all the way to Severac.

## EXT. THE WAGON/CAGE - NIGHT

Kaylan takes a seat with his back to a tree.

He lays his scabbard across his knees, ready to draw at a moment's notice.



ANGLE - THE WAGON/CAGE

The witch, still asleep. Her back is to Kaylan, and we can HEAR the regular SOUND of her BREATHING.

BACK TO - KAYLAN

Settling in, getting comfortable. Lulled by the rhythm of her breathing...in and out...in and out... And then it changes, suddenly becoming quicker.

Kaylan looks up. Thinking maybe he imagined it.

The witch still hasn't moved.

But Kaylan decides to move a little closer. To listen.

Still nothing.

And he leans a little more...straining to hear...JUST AS the witch lets out a GASPING wet intake of breath.

WITCH

Ahhhhhhh...!

Kaylan staggers back, startled.

The witch is awake. She cocks her head, SNIFFS the air. And realizes she isn't alone.

WITCH

Whose company have I tonight? Eh? That murderous, poisoning priest? Or the sniveling old fool?

(SNIFFING the air again)

No...the pup...The cub in armor.

Kaylan reacts - impressed despite himself.

WITCH

And where is the bastard knight, LaVey?

KAYLAN

He is near.

WITCH

Good.

KAYLAN

It pleases you?

WITCH

Of course. I must keep you all close, my precious little piglets...so very close...

KAYLAN

Why is that?

WITCH

(with sudden vitriol)

So I may enjoy the slaughter! So I may watch as you are gutted and bleed in the mud like stuck pigs!

She has spun around and spit this out with such fierce hatred that Kaylan has involuntarily snatched his sword from the scabbard.

The witch CHUCKLES softly, pleased by the impact of her words.

KAYLAN

(with false bravado)

The only one whose days here are numbered, are yours!

Her head swivels around to face Kaylan. A piercing stare, that penetrates him to the core.

WITCH

False courage from a false knight.

Kaylan's expression goes white.

KAYLAN

What did you say?

WITCH

(innocently)

Me? Nothing.

KAYLAN

Say it again.

A pause -- and then the witch SPITS it out all at once.

WITCH

I said you are no knight! You're nothing but common trash, worthless scum! The son of a stinking drunkard!

KAYLAN

My father was a noble man. He fought at the battle of--!

WITCH

Don't lie to me, foul hypocrite! I know the truth. He was a penniless drunk who spent his life in a debtor's prison!

Kaylan has leapt to his feet, and is brandishing his sword.

KAYLAN

Be quiet, you devil!

WITCH

And now he rots in a lime pit, too poor to pay for a pine box!

Kaylan, in a sudden burst of anger, steps to the cage. And it happens this quick...a blur of movement as the witch lunges through the bars, and suddenly Kaylan's sword clatters to the ground!

The witch has slapped it away, like a toy, and the next instant Kaylan is yanked viciously off his feet and slammed against the bars of the cage.

She has him by the throat and Kaylan manages a single, strangled CRY, before he is cut off.

WITCH

Where is your courage now, proud scum!?

She tightens her grip and Kaylan's face begins to turn white. His arms flail desperately in an effort to pry her off. But her grip is inhuman.

WITCH

(softly, crooning)

Ready to join your father? Ready to die like a man?

Kaylan's eyes are bulging now as the witch's hands continue to tighten inexorably around his throat, like the coils of a snake.

Just as Kaylan begins to convulse... THWAK! A crossbow bolt suddenly imbeds in the side of the wagon. The witch whips around, to look at--

ANGLE - LAVEY

Rushing forward with Sancierre and Felson, even as he reloads a fresh bolt.

WITCH

Ah, the bastard Knights! Come to see my handiwork?

LAVEY

Felson! Help me!

They struggle to pull Kaylan free. The witch lets go with one arm and-- WHAP!!! LaVey is sent reeling backwards.

Felson and Sancierre redouble their efforts. WHAP! Felson is also sent flying. The witch turns her attention on Sancierre. One arm locks around his throat too, so that the witch is now strangling both men at once.

DeBelzaq comes running to the rescue, swinging his torch like a madman at the witch.

DEBELZAQ (O.S.)

Back, demon! Get back!

She lets out a horrible BELLOW and spews a torrent of VOMIT directly at him. It strikes the torch and the fire sputters out.

ANGLE - DEBELZAQ

Staring in horror. Momentarily frozen, dripping with bile and unspeakable filth.

ANGLE - LAVEY

Struggling to his feet. He retrieves his crossbow. Ka-CHUNK! Chambers the bolt and raises it. But DeBelzaq is standing in his line of fire, frozen with terror.

LAVEY

DeBelzaq!

No response. The priest is paralyzed.

LAVEY

(louder)

DeBelzaq!!

He snaps out of it and spins around as LaVey raises the crossbow... And suddenly he sees what LaVey intends to do and lets out a desperate CRY.

DEBELZAQ

No!

ANGLE - THE WITCH

THWAK!!!

The crossbow bolt imbeds in her forearm. She lets out an anguished HOWL and releases Kaylan. He tumbles to the ground, CHOKING and GASPING.

THE WITCH

Ahhh! Bastards! Piglets! I curse you all!

(pointing to Sancierre)

You first, you senile fool! Beware the stick that bites for its sap is a deadly venom that shall course in your veins!

(then Hagaman)

And you next! No living creature shall ever harm you, but the circle will come! The ring of death, and you will be torn to shreds, limb from limb!

(DeBelzaq)

And you... murderous priest! You and I shall form a pact and you will give your heart to me.

She jerks to face LaVey. A momentary silence as she stares at him, and then a slow smile forms on her lips.

WITCH

But the greatest agony I reserve for you...  
LaVey, king of maggots! May words burst  
into flame, and may fire consume you! May  
you burn until the flesh falls from your  
bones in black smoking heaps!

She reaches out with one hand, grabs hold of the bolt, and slowly  
draws the shaft out of her arm. It emerges slick and red, covered  
with blood.

KAYLAN

(trembling)

Dear God!

LAVEY

Kaylan.

LaVey moves to Kaylan's side and tries to draw him away. But  
the young knight is mesmerized, staring at the witch in horror,  
as she brings the bolt to her lips and slowly licks the shaft  
clean in a grotesque display of menace.

LAVEY

Kaylan, go and rest for a while! All of you.  
I will take the watch.

Sancierre and DeBelzaq lift Kaylan to his feet and lead him away.

FELSON

I will stay. Two are better than one.

LaVey nods, thankful for the company, and turns back to face the  
witch.

WITCH

(a seething WHISPER)

You will burn, LaVey!

SMASH TO:

A BOLT of LIGHTNING.

It slashes across the sky, briefly illuminating a stark vista  
-- the desolate countryside and the tiny campfire.

CLOSER. THE KNIGHTS.

Huddled near the fire. The men are sitting around, staring gloomily at the flame.

HAGAMAN

Do you believe what she said? That we would all die?

DEBELZAQ

Of course not. The witch is a liar and a deceiver. You must not listen to her words for they are like venom, they will drip into your ears and poison your soul.

HAGAMAN

She said I would be killed... by no living creature.

(puzzled)

What does that mean?

KAYLAN

It's a riddle.

The men all turn to look at Kaylan.

The young knight has a bloody rag tied around his throat and is staring into the fire with a haunted expression.

KAYLAN

She has cursed us all.

DEBELZAQ

She is only trying to break our spirit. She said I would give her my heart, but that can never be...

(crossing himself)

...for my heart belongs to Christ, and I will never betray Him. It means nothing.

Hagaman regards the priest uncertainly.

KAYLAN

You are wrong, priest. It does mean something.

ANGLE - THE FIRE

It flickers weakly in the cold...

...as we TIMELAPSE TO:

DAWN.

The fire is dead now.

CLOSE ON - HAGAMAN

He awakens. He looks around. The others are still sleeping.

HAGAMAN'S P.O.V.

At the bottom of the hill -- the horses are tethered.

BACK TO - HAGAMAN

Considering the situation.

And then he rises silently. He for his satchel of relics and starts across the camp.

He steps carefully over Kaylan, who is sprawled on the ground beside him. Then past DeBelzaq, who is SNORING loudly on his side...and lastly past Sancierre.

The old Knight stirs in his sleep.

HAGAMAN

Freezes. Waits a moment, as Sancierre adjusts his position... and then he continues again.

BOTTOM OF THE HILL - MOMENTS LATER

Hagaman quickly unties one of the horses. He takes the reins, starts to lead it away on foot. But suddenly he JERKS to a stop, at a SOUND from behind.

LAVEY (O.S.)

There is a strange sight.

Hagaman rotates slowly to see LaVey. He is sitting on a rock, fingering the tip of his sword.

LAVEY

An ass leading a horse.

Hagaman stammers, trying to find something to say.



LAVEY

Don't say anything. Just tie the horse, and take your place with the others.

HAGAMAN

But I-- I--

(plaintive)

I am cursed! You heard the witch. She has foretold my death! My only hope is to get as far from her as I can. I beg you! Let me go.

LAVEY

Of course. After you take us to Severac.

HAGAMAN

You have your maps, you don't need me.

LaVey - still staring, with all the compassion of a rock.

Hagaman realizes with a long SIGH, that it's futile.

HAGAMAN

You're a difficult man, LaVey.

He hands LaVey the reins and starts slowly up the hill.

EXT. THE WAGON/CAGE - MOVING - DAWN

Kaylan is riding alongside DeBelzaq. He is riding in silence, staring grimly ahead. Oblivious to the priest, to the wagon, to anything...but his own thoughts.

DEBELZAQ

You carry a burden, my son.

KAYLAN

(turning to look at him,  
surprised)

A burden? I don't know what you mean.

DEBELZAQ

Come now. It's obvious. I am a priest, it is my gift to see such things.

Kaylan studies him for a moment. Unsure.

KAYLAN

And if I told you something...in confidence. You would not speak of it?

DEBELZAQ

If you told me as a matter of  
confession...no. I would not.

KAYLAN

(still unsure)  
You swear this?

DEBELZAQ

Before God. Now speak your mind, my son.

CLOSE ON - KAYLAN

He looks away, uncomfortably.

KAYLAN

Forgive me father...for I have sinned.  
(beat)  
I have spoken falsely. I have lied.

DEBELZAQ

To whom have you lied?

KAYLAN

To them.  
(he nods - indicating  
LaVey, Felson, et all)  
To you.

DEBELZAQ

In what way have you lied?

KAYLAN

When I said I was a knight. I have never  
been given the oath.

DeBelzaq turns to regard him.

DEBELZAQ

But the crest upon your armor--

KAYLAN

It isn't mine. I took it from the body of  
a dead knight I passed on the way to  
Avignon.

He sinks his head, guiltily.

KAYLAN

It barely fits.

DEBELZAQ

This is a grave deception. To lay false claim...

KAYLAN

The witch. She knew it. She saw into me. Though I never spoke of it, she knew.

DeBelzaq falls silent.

He stares at Kaylan.

KAYLAN

You will not tell the others?

DEBELZAQ

I gave you my oath.

KAYLAN

Good.

DEBELZAQ

Why have you done this?

KAYLAN

(faltering)

I wanted...I wanted to be like them. A knight. A soldier. I wanted to fight for God.

DeBelzaq hears this, and can't help softening a touch.

DEBELZAQ

There are other ways, my son.

KAYLAN

What ways?

DEBELZAQ

You could have joined the church. You could have become an apprentice. I could arrange it—

KAYLAN

(shaking his head angrily)

I don't want to be a priest! Such a life is not for me.

DEBELZAQ

Why not?

Kaylan falters. Unsure how to respond.

KAYLAN  
There is no glory in that.

UP AHEAD - LAVEY AND FELSON

They are speaking quietly, so the others won't hear.

FELSON  
The others are afraid. LaVey. They fear the witch. This curse...

LAVEY  
She's only a crazed woman, Felson.

FELSON  
(unsure)  
But her strength--? You felt it too.

LAVEY  
Madness lends strength. That is all.

FELSON  
Not like this. I tell you, I never felt such strength. It was like...like the strength of some animal.

LAVEY  
I once saw a man break a yoke upon his back. He was mad as a rabid dog.

FELSON  
And suppose -- you are wrong?

LaVey looks up from beneath his cowl, gives the question its due.

LAVEY  
If she is a servant of the devil?  
(musing)  
Then I should think her powers are beyond all of us and we needn't give it another thought.

Felson stares solemnly at LaVey.

LAVEY  
But how can that be? If she is truly what she claims, then how can a few bars of wood and chain hold her back? How have we come so far?

Felson consider this. But his expression remaining dark.

FELSON

Perhaps she is deceiving us. Perhaps it is not her will to escape.

LAVEY

Then what is her will? To burn at the stake?

FELSON

I do not know. But I fear it is something darker than we can imagine.

ANGLE - THE WITCH

Staring at them, blindly, as they ride ahead. She allows a thin smile to form on her lips, as if she could hear them.

EXT. WIDE SHOT, BARREN PLAINS - DAWN

The wagon creeps along. A tiny mark upon the horizon, like a ship at sea.

CLOSER.

The Knights. They look up as they feel the sun upon their faces.

ANGLE - THE WITCH

She shies back from the light, shuffling into a crouch at the rear of the cage. Almost as if the sun hurt her eyes.

HAGAMAN

Notices this odd reaction. He watches, fascinated, as she draws into a fetal position.

DEBELZAQ

She cannot look upon the beauty of the sun.  
For it is God's beauty, and she is a  
creature of darkness.

HAGAMAN

(grim)

Good. May she burst into flames at the  
sight.

EXT. THE RIVER LOIRE - LATER

Dark and churning. Raging currents.

THE FERRY - LATER

Everyone has crossed. The wagon sits on the far shore, hitched and ready to go again.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

We crossed the river Loire on mid-winters day, our spirits recovered, our fears largely forgotten.

EXT. THE ROAD - LATER

The wagon continues again, into the setting sun. The Knights surround it, riding two ahead, and two behind.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

And though the mist and gloom stayed with us through the flatlands, we traveled onward...ever onward...

DISSOLVE TO:

WIDE SHOT - THE COUNTRYSIDE - AT SUNSET

Torrential rain. It hammers down on the men. But they ride on, grimly determined.

CLOSE - THE WAGON

Hagaman is at the reins. DeBelzaq is next to him, trying to catch some sleep, but it's obviously difficult. The wagon is lurching and BUMPING along, and the rain is freezing cold, pelting his face.

ANGLE - THE WITCH

A dark, still form, in the cage.

Suddenly a BOLT of LIGHTNING slashes through the sky and briefly illuminates her. And we SEE that her eyes are wide open, and her lips are moving rapidly as she WHISPERS some unknown spell.

CLOSE - THE HORSES

As if on cue, they all suddenly jerk to a stop.

HAGAMAN AND DEBELZAQ

Nearly spill forward, out of their seats. DeBelzaq glares at Hagaman, annoyed.

DEBELZAQ

Can't you hold them steady?

HAGAMAN

(SNAPPING the reins sharply)

What the devil--? Heeyah! Move!

## ANGLE - THE HORSES

Felson is WHIPPING the horses, but they aren't moving. We can SEE their eyes, rolled back in their hands, and their breath PANTING harshly as they struggle, as if by some unseen force.

## BACK TO - HAGAMAN/DEBELZAQ

The priest gestures impatiently at Hagaman. Sancierre comes riding up alongside them, to see what's the matter.

SANCIERRE

What is it? Why have you stopped?

HAGAMAN

(frustrated, pointing)

It isn't me! It's them, they won't budge!

Sancierre climbs down from his horse.

SANCIERRE

Come down from there. Let me try.

Hagaman and DeBelzaq slide out, as Sancierre climbs in.

## BEHIND HIM - THE WITCH

Her head whips up excitedly as Sancierre takes the reins.

SANCIERRE

I have a way with horses. Watch and learn--  
giddap! Giddap!

## THE HORSES - AGAIN

They SHIE and STAMP the earth with their hooves, seemingly wanting to move, but somehow unable... as if the witch had an invisible hold on them.

## CLOSE ON - THE WITCH'S HAND

Clenched and trembling in a balled fist. Suddenly it opens, and all at once, the horses bolt forward and take off at a gallop!

## DEBELZAQ AND HAGAMAN

They leap aside, just in time, as the wagon races past them!

DEBELZAQ

Sancierre!

LaVey and Felson, back a ways, see what has happened and give chase. They SPUR their horses after the wagon.

## MOVING - WITH THE WAGON

Sancierre struggles to regain control of the terrified horses. He WHIPS the reins repeatedly, but the horses seem to be possessed. They bolt onward, panic stricken, racing blindly through the rain.

## BEHIND SANCIERRE - THE WITCH

She has produced something, which she holds up in her hand, behind Sancierre's back. It appears to be a stick, or--

As another BOLT of LIGHTNING strikes, we SEE that it is the crossbow bolt. It shimmers suddenly in her hand and begins to writhe.

## WITCH

(a throaty whisper)

The stick that bites!

She holds the writhing bundle through the bars, and releases it. It drops into the bench beside the unsuspecting Sancierre, and begins to glide silently towards him.

## CLOSE - THE HORSES

Their panic gradually subsiding. They slow to a cantor, then a trot. And finally, stop.

## CLOSE - SANCIERRE

Breathing with relief.

## CLOSE - THE SERPENT

It slides into his lap, unseen, and begins to wriggle between the plates of armor.

He starts to rise, when suddenly -- he seems to pause and clutch his chest. A brief expression of confusion spreads over his face. Then pain.

He glances down at his chest, and fumbles frantically with a clasp on his armor. It falls away with a heavy -- THUNK!

And inside, we SEE the snake, coiled, writhing.

Sancierre whips out his sword, and in one fell swoop, has struck the snake in two.

## ANGLE - THE SERPENT

Both halves instantly revert into the broken pieces of the crossbow bolt again.



A stunned pause - as Sancierre stares at it, in horror.  
Then he sinks to his knees.

LAVEY (O.S.)  
Sancierre!

REVEAL - LAVEY AND FELSON

They come galloping up, with Kaylan close behind. They leap from their horses and run to where the old Knight is slumped on the ground.

FELSON  
(holding him)  
What's wrong? What happened?

Sancierre manages a weak, trembling response.

SANCIERRE  
The curse...the snake...!

FELSON  
What are you talking about?

SANCIERRE  
(he lifts a weak arm to  
point)  
God help me, it's true...the curse... She  
conjured a snake! I cut it with my sword  
and it -- it changed before my eyes!

Felson looks at LaVey, baffled.

ANGLE - FOLLOWING LAVEY

As he rises and walks several paces to where Sancierre's armor lies on the ground. He sees something in the dirt and stops to pick it up.

CLOSE - THE OBJECT

As he lifts it up, we SEE it is one of the broken halves of the crossbow bolt. LaVey turns it over slowly in his hand.

In the background, Sancierre lets out an anguished CRY.

FELSON  
Kaylan! Ride back, bring the priest!

Kaylan nods and races off.

ANGLE - LAVEY

He glances from the crossbow bolt to the witch. And for the first time we SEE what appears to be a glimmer of uncertainty in his eyes.

LAVEY  
What have you done?

WITCH  
(with malicious glee)  
By nightfall he will be dead.

LaVey - struggles with a decision, then yanks out a knife. He moves towards Sancierre.

LAVEY  
We must cut open the wound! Draw out the venom. Help me.

Felson RIPS open Sancierre's tunic and bends to examine his side. But after a moment he looks up, baffled.

FELSON  
I -- I cannot find the wound.

LAVEY  
Look again.

FELSON  
I tell you, he has no mark! See for yourself.

LaVey examines him.

And after a moment he looks up, stone-faced. Felson is right.

Just then -- Kaylan returns, with DeBelzaq and Hagaman.

DeBelzaq kneels and examines Sancierre.

DEBELZAQ  
He is sick with fever. He must have medicine.

LaVey thinks for a moment.

LAVEY  
Which way is the nearest village?

HAGAMAN  
Mareiz. Due East.

LAVEY  
How far?

HAGAMAN

Half a day's ride. With the wagon, maybe  
a day.

DEBELZAQ

He will not last a day! LaVey, he must have  
medicine now.

LaVey looks to Felson. Something unspoken passes between them.

FELSON

The wagon will slow you down.

LAVEY

Then I will ride ahead. I will take  
Sancierre and seek help.

FELSON

We will meet outside the village.

LAVEY

(to DeBelzaq)  
Priest! I will need your help.

DEBELZAQ

I will go with you.

LAVEY

Good. The rest of you stay with Felson.

LaVey kneels by Sancierre.

LAVEY

Have you strength enough to ride?

SANCIERRE

(nodding, weakly)  
I - I think so.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT - HOOVES

TRAMPLING the earth, kicking up a spray of mud as LaVey, DeBelzaq  
and Sancierre THUNDER past.

WIDER - BARREN PLAINS

They are riding hard, neck and neck...the wind and rain whipping  
against them as they gallop.

ANGLE - SANCIERRE

He is clinging to his saddle, feverish and pale, every moment an unbearable strain. DeBelzaq is behind him and happens to look up as Sancierre TUMBLES from his saddle...and SLAMS to the ground.

DEBELZAQ  
Sancierre!

DeBelzaq and LaVey rein to a stop and leap from their horses. They rush to where he lies sprawled on the earth.

LaVey turns him over gently.

LAVEY  
Sancierre, say something.

SANCIERRE  
(feverish, weak)  
M-my legs... I - I cannot feel them. They are numb.

DeBelzaq produces a small flask which he presses to the old Knight's lips.

DEBELZAQ  
Here. Drink. It will put the warmth back in you.

SANCIERRE  
(he takes a pull)  
It's no use... M-my strength has gone. You must leave me.

LAVEY  
I'll tie you to the saddle if I must.  
DeBelzaq! Bring me some rope.

SANCIERRE  
(a weak smile)  
You're a stubborn man.

LAVEY  
That I am.

They share a look. Sancierre signals his assent, and steels himself for what he knows is going to hurt like hell... and then with a CRY he is hauled to his feet again.

EXT. A WINDSWEPT RIDGE - LATER

Three silhouettes race past, framed against the setting sun...

CLOSER.

LaVey reaches the top of the ridge and comes to a rapid stop as he sees something in the distance. DeBelzaq is close behind him.

DEBELZAQ  
(out of breath)  
What is it?

LAVEY  
Mareiz. There.

He thrusts an arm out, pointing and we SEE a plume of smoke in the distance. The tell-tale sign of civilization.

DEBELZAQ  
Heaven be praised!  
(turning his horse back)  
I will tell Sancierre!

NEW ANGLE - FOLLOW DEBELZAQ

As he gallops down the trail again.

DEBELZAQ  
Sancierre, we've found it! San--

But his VOICE trails off as he comes riding up and sees the old knight, slumped in his saddle, staring.

DEBELZAQ  
Sancierre?

No response.

And we realize Sancierre is dead. Only the lashes around his legs have kept him from falling off the horse. DeBelzaq stares a moment. And then slowly bows his head.

BACK TO - LAVEY

He can tell something is wrong, even from a distance.

CUT TO:

A GRAVEMOUND - LATER

A makeshift cross. Two pieces of wood tied together and thrust into the earth. It is a lonely sight...the cross, in the rain...a bleak monument.

WIDER.

And now we SEE LaVey and DeBelzaq. They are standing over the grave, staring solemnly.

DEBELZAQ

He is dead. The riddle...the  
stick...everything just as the witch  
foretold.

(looking up at LaVey)

Can you still deny the truth?

LaVey doesn't meet his eyes. He just stares at the grave mound.

LAVEY

Your truth. Not mine. All I know is that  
an honest man...a brave man...lies in the  
ground.

DEBELZAQ

Will you pray with me?

LAVEY

I - I am sorry. I cannot.

DEBELZAQ

For Sancierre. He was your comrade.

LAVEY

(suddenly harsh)

And I will mourn him in my own way!

DeBelzaq reacts, surprised at the harshness of LaVey's tone.

But he doesn't respond. He simply folds his hands and bows his head.

DEBELZAQ

Dear Lord...

(searching)

We pray thee take thy servant into the  
heavenly realm. For he was a faithful  
servant, and fought in thy name and in the  
name of thine only son, Jesus Christ. And  
thus did he die for the glory of God.

(beat)

Amen.

A moment of silence. When the priest raises his head again, LaVey is staring at him curiously.

LAVEY

It is easy for you, I suppose, to believe  
in something you have never seen.

DEBELZAQ

(with compulsive honesty)

No. It is not. But I know in my heart the  
Lord is with me.

LAVEY

Was He there too, when we sacked Jerusalem?  
When we conquered Acre?

DeBelzaq wants to say something, but what can he?

LaVey starts for his horse.

LAVEY

The others will be waiting.

DEBELZAQ

LaVey.

(as he looks back)

The witch knows what weakness lurks in our  
hearts. She can see the dark of our souls  
and what she finds there she may use against  
us. If you cannot see her for what she is...  
I fear we have already lost.

LaVey - torn. Unsure.

He looks up, into the rain-swept skies.

LAVEY'S P.O.V

Storm clouds gathering overhead.

BACK TO - LAVEY

His face clouded with uncertainty.

EXT. THE WAGON/CAGE - MOVING - LATER

The wagon RUMBLES down the narrow dirt lane.

Hagaman is at the reins. He glances up and his expression  
suddenly brightens.

HAGAMAN'S P.O.V.

LaVEY and DeBelzaq, dimly visible in the road ahead. Waiting  
for them.

BACK TO - HAGAMAN

His expression darkening now, as he notices too...they are alone.

No sign of Sancierre.

And then he sees the riderless horse behind LaVey. And his expression falls as he realizes what has happened.

CUT TO:

THE KNIGHTS.

On the road again.

FELSON

The witch's riddle has come to pass.

LAVEY

Sancierre is dead. That much is true.

Suddenly they are interrupted by the SOUND of CHUCKLING. The witch, behind them.

She leers out through the bars.

WITCH

He died in agony, you know. Whimpering, like a calf on the butcher's block.

They turn to look at her.

WITCH

(offhand, casual)

You should thank me. I've spared us all his pitiful whining.

KAYLAN

Overhears this and leaps from his horse. He rushes at the cage with his sword.

But DeBelzaq leaps between them.

DEBELZAQ

Kaylan! Don't--!

KAYLAN

Stand aside, priest!



DEBELZAQ

(frantic)

Felson! LaVey! He knows not what he does!

Felson and LaVey move between Kaylan and the cage.

KAYLAN

You would stand between me and that demon?  
That hell thing?

DEBELZAQ

She cannot be slain! Not like this!

WITCH

(goadng him on)

Take up your sword! Strike me down! DO  
IT!!!

A tense moment - as they stand off.

And then DeBelzaq places a hand on Kaylan's sword arm.

DEBELZAQ

Don't you see? You would only accomplish  
her purpose. If you strike her down, she  
will rise again.

Kaylan falters, unsure.

He looks to LaVey.

KAYLAN

Can this be true?

A beat.

LAVEY

I don't know anymore.

Kaylan sinks inward a bit.

ANGLE - HIS SWORD

Slowly lowering.

KAYLAN

Is this our fate? To die one by one...at  
the whim of this...this devil?

WITCH (O.S.)

You pitiful cowards! Your mewling sickens  
me! All the trappings of men, and not a  
spine among you!

INT. WAGON CAGE/MOVING - LATER

Looking out from within the bars of the cage, as the wagon BUMPS and RATTLES along.

THE WITCH

Languidly staring out. Watching LaVey, who is riding alongside, just a few feet away.

WITCH

Tell me, LaVey. Before you buried the old fool, did you offer him the last rites?

(with sarcastic emphasis)

Did you pray for his soul?

LaVey turns, slowly, to regard her. And though he doesn't respond, we SENSE that she has touched a nerve.

The witch's expression brightens.

WITCH

What -- can it be? You actually did? You prayed to that whoring bastard? Oh, how priceless...

(with obvious mockery)

Christophori sancti speciem tuetur...

She raises her arms in imitation of the Holy crucifixion.

WITCH

How precious. The faithless crusader, kneeling like an altar boy. Truly your hypocrisy knows no bounds.

LAVEY

Do not presume to know me, woman!

WITCH

Ahhh... Finally, I have hit a nerve.

She leans forward, coiling her hands around the bars.

WITCH

But you needn't get your hackles up. I mean it as a compliment. Faith is for the weak -- for the simple minded.

(gesturing with her head)

Like that gibbering idiot priest. You are not like him. You cannot blindly follow the rest. You require a more. You require proof. Evidence.

LAVEY

And what evidence do you offer, as a  
"servant of the devil"?

WITCH

(softly CHUCKLING)

Oh, LaVey... I never said I was a servant  
of the devil.

LAVEY

No? Then what are you?

ANGLE - THE WITCH

Her face suddenly contorts with rage, and for a moment she is  
unrecognizable. Even her VOICE, when she speaks, has taken on  
a frightening new aspect. It is masculine and deep,  
reverberating with power.

WITCH

I AM THE DEVIL!

ANGLE - LAVEY

He jerks to look at her, startled. But her features have already  
remolded into those of the witch again.

LAVEY

And where is your proof? If you are what  
you claim...summon forth a bolt of  
lightning. Shatter those bars, strike me  
down. Surely it is within your power.

WITCH

Assuredly.

LAVEY

Then do it.

WITCH

In time.

LAVEY

Now. Show me.

WITCH

In time. At the moment I have something  
sweeter in mind.

LAVEY

And what is that?

WITCH  
(with sudden venom)

To take your companions first! So you may watch them fall, one by one! So you may know the meaning of despair!

LaVey stares at her, chilled.

He is about to respond, when he is interrupted by an excited SHOUT.

DEBELZAQ (O.S.)  
LaVey!

He looks up.

DeBelzaq is pointing excitedly into the distance.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

Just barely visible in the dusk, the treeline of a distant forest. It looms up before them, stark and foreboding.

HAGAMAN, KAYLAN AND FELSON

They all come riding up to take in the sight.

KAYLAN  
(with a touch of awe)  
Wormwood Forest.

DEBELZAQ  
From here are a week's ride from the monastery.

HAGAMAN  
(grim, low)  
In a week we'll all be dead.

He WHIPS the reins and starts down the hillside.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - NIGHTTIME

The road has dwindled to a narrow dirt path barely wide enough for the wagon. A heavy mist drifts between the trees in long tendrils... suffusing everything in a ghostly pallor.

Even the SOUND of the horse's HOOVES seem muffled.

KAYLAN

He is looking upwards, with awe, at the dark firs looming above.

KAYLAN

They say there are places in the deepest parts of the forest where the sunlight doesn't penetrate at all, where everything is shrouded in gloom.

FELSON

They say worse things than that.

Kaylan looks at him anxiously.

KAYLAN

What else do they say?

HAGAMAN

Talk of spirits. Talk of creatures who consume the flesh of man.

EXT. FOREST PATH - LATER

The fog has grown thicker. Visibility has been reduced to a few paltry yards and the wagon has slowed to a crawl.

HAGAMAN

Damn this fog! It's like swimming through milk!

DEBELZAQ

How far to the other side?

HAGAMAN

How should I know? I can't see my own hand in front of my face. We could have turned around completely and be going the wrong way.

SEVERAL YARDS AHEAD - LAVEY/FELSON

LaVey stops his horse.

LAVEY

Hagaman. Unpack those torches. I want them lit. We'll ride in single file and follow the light of the torches.

EXT. FOREST PATH - LATER

Gradually, out of the gloom, several torches appear...

FELSON

He is squinting into the fog, trying to keep sight of LaVey, who is several paces ahead of him.

FELSON

This fog is unnatural. It only grows thicker.

HAGAMAN

Perhaps we should stop, wait for this fog to pass.

DEBELZAQ

And if it doesn't?

FELSON

Soon we won't be able to see the torches at all.

LAVEY

He reluctantly REINS his horse to a stop. He glances back at the wagon, barely a dim shape in the fog.

LAVEY

Damn.

(a pause, as he considers  
his options)

Very well. Unhitch the wagon. We'll camp here on the path.

EXT. THE WAGON/CAGE - LATER

DeBelzaq is seated before the cage. Keeping watch on the witch.

THE WITCH

Glaring back at him.

She begins to WHISPER something. Her lips move but we cannot hear what she is saying. It just sounds like demented, nonsensical gibberish...but she is muttering it rapidly now, and rocking back and forth as she continues to stare at the priest.

BACK TO - DEBELZAQ

Growing uneasy. He looks around with concern, as the fog suddenly seems to thicken. When he glances back at the witch, she is barely visible.

And then she vanishes into the fog.

DeBelzaq rises, with the torch.

REVERSE - ANGLE

Looking through the bars, as the priest approaches. He is squinting, trying to catch sight of her again through the thickening fog...and as he finally arrives before the cage, his eyes fly open with a horrified expression!

EXT. CAMPFIRE - LATER

Hagaman kneels over a pile of twigs. He is trying unsuccessfully to light a fire.

HAGAMAN

Damn this infernal place! The wood won't even burn.

LAVEY

It's damp. You must have patience.

He takes the torch from Hagaman and starts again.

FELSON

It's this confounded fog.

HAGAMAN

(hollow)

It is the witch. She has bedeviled us all.

LAVEY

If it is, she will profit nothing by it. The dawn will burn it away and we will continue.

Suddenly there is a startled CRY -- the men all jerk around at the sound, and we SEE DeBelzaq stumbling up the path with indescribably fear on his face.

DEBELZAQ

(breathless)

LaVey! The witch -- she is gone!

EXT. WAGON/CAGE - NIGHTTIME

The men come rushing up, carrying torches, swords, bows, etc...Whatever they could grab at a moment's notice.

ANGLE - THE CAGE

It is deserted. The shackles lie empty on the floor.

BACK TO - THE MEN

Reacting, in shock and disbelief.

KAYLAN

But how?

HAGAMAN

It's impossible!

LaVey steps forward and examines the heavy lock on the cage.

LAVEY

(puzzled)

It's still shut.

DEBELZAQ

We must find her! Or all is lost!

The priest crosses himself frantically as the others wheel around, searching the fog.

FELSON

She cannot have gone far.

KAYLAN

Let us divide in two groups! We may cover more ground that way.

LAVEY

Quiet!

Lavey jerks his hand up, signaling for silence.

The others regard him, curiously.

LaVey circles around the cage, skeptically. Studying it with a strange, distrustful expression.

LAVEY

Hagaman, give me that torch.

Hagaman passes it to LaVey, who takes it and stands before the bars squinting in.

DEBELZAQ

What is it?

LAVEY

(unsure)

...something...

He holds the torch between the bars and stirs the fog slowly. As the torch swings to the left -- WHAP! He strikes something, and his arm is pushed roughly aside as we HEAR a CRY of pain!



LaVey and the men stagger back, startled...as gradually, out of the fog...the shape of the witch materializes! She is clutching her shoulder in pain, where LaVey struck her, and glaring at him with simmering eyes.

WITCH

...ahhhhhh, LaVey! I curse you! I curse the day in which you were conceived! You ask for miracles? And I bring them in abundance! Here is your proof, proud scum!

She drops suddenly to all fours.

LaVey and the others take an involuntary step back, not sure what she is going to do next, but ready for anything.

ANGLE - THE WITCH

Her mouth begins to open slowly...wider and wider... CRACKING impossibly wide, until we HEAR an inhuman noise issue forth... the BAYING of a wolf!

BACK TO - THE KNIGHTS

They react at the NOISE.

KAYLAN

What the devil is she doing?

DEEP IN THE FOREST

The unholy SOUND echoes through the trees.

BACK TO - THE WITCH

Crouched on all fours, her mouth foaming with drool. Baying LOUDER and LOUDER...resonating with hatred...

ANGLE - FELSON

He moves to the edge of the path, to stare into the forest.

KAYLAN (O.S.)

I don't understand. What's she doing?

But Felson doesn't answer him. He is too busy staring into the darkness. Staring at something beyond the trees... something he can't quite see, but somehow seems to sense.

Kaylan moves closer to LaVey.

KAYLAN

What's happening?

The horses are starting to STAMP their hooves now too, and shift nervously.

Lavey's eyes also go to the treeline, as he realizes what is happening. He spins back.

LAVEY

The witch -- silence her! Quick!

Kaylan rushes at the cage with his torch, and thrusts it through the bars! She recoils with inhuman speed, SNAPPING at the torch like a dog!

JUST THEN -- from the depths of the forest comes a chilling response. The lone CRY of a WOLF.

The Knights wheel around. Reactions of disbelief and dismay.

KAYLAN

My God. She has summoned wolves!

Hagaman turns to Felson. He is obviously terrified but struggling to maintain his composure.

HAGAMAN

What do we do?

LAVEY

Quick -- to arms!

Hagaman snaps out of it and rushes to the side of the wagon. He begins to unpack swords, crossbows, etc...

The witch watches, amused, as the men snatch up their weapons and take up defensive positions.

In the distance the HOWLING is multiplying. Growing louder...nearer...as the men struggle to load their bows, CRANKING back bolts, taking aim, etc.

DEBELZAQ

Blessed Mary Mother of Jesus, protect and watch over these--

LAVEY

Priest!

(he tosses DeBelzaq a sword)

Make yourself useful!

DEBELZAQ

But I -- I don't know how.

LAVEY  
Learn. Quickly.

DeBelzaq holds the sword awkwardly.

The HOWLING is nearer now, almost on top of them. The men form a circle around the wagon. Crossbows snap up, as they shoulder their weapons and take aim.

LAVEY  
Find the one that leads the pack. Kill him  
and the rest will flee.

HAGAMAN  
(terrified)  
How many do you think there are?

LAVEY  
(unsure)  
Four. Maybe five.

HAGAMAN  
Sweet Jesus.

Suddenly the forest goes deathly still. The HOWLING stops.

CLOSE - LAVEY

Looking up.

His finger tenses on the trigger.

LAVEY (O.S.)  
Steady.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

Panning the treeline.

Gradually several dark hulking forms begin to emerge from the fog. Bristling, monstrous shapes...moving between the trees...

HAGAMAN

Panic rising. The sword trembling in his hands.

LAVEY (O.S.)  
Steady.

FELSON

Tightening his grip on his sword.

## THE WOLVES

Advancing into the torchlight now. We GLIMPSE them through the fog. They stand five feet tall. Massive, monstrous creatures, their coats matted with filth...their lips drawn back in a silent SNARL, the red torchlight reflecting in their eyes.

LAVEY

(a whisper)

Felson, take the one on the left. Kaylan,  
the one on the right.

The men adjust slightly, each picking a target.

But as they prepare to fire, a chilling NOISE comes from directly behind...The SOUND of more WOLVES.

CLOSE SHOT - HAGAMAN

Eyes widening with terror, as he realizes -- they have been flanked.

He turns and sees another four wolves directly behind them!

CLOSE - THE WITCH

A thin smile spreads across her lips.

WITCH

My pets have come to play.

CLOSE ON - HER HAND

Poised in mid-air. Clutched in a tight fist.

With a sudden downward thrust -- the wolves charge!

Ka-CHAK! CHAK! CHAK! A volley of arrows, as the men let loose with their crossbows. Several great furry shapes CRASH heavily to the ground.

TRACKING WITH - LAVEY

As he moves, like a blur. In one fell motion, tosses aside the bow and brings his sword up in a low WHISTLING arc. He strikes a wolf in mid-leap, cleaving it in half, killing the beast instantly.

FELSON AND KAYLAN

They are swinging their torches and swords like madmen, stabbing and thrusting, struggling to fend off three wolves at once.

## THE WOLVES

All around. HOWLING and SNARLING, beginning to encircle the men.

LAVEY

Keep them back! Don't let them cut us off!

HAGAMAN

There are too many! LaVey! Felson! We must flee!

HAGAMAN

Desperately outnumbered, facing four wolves at once. He stabs at a leaping wolf...impales another through the chest. The wolf CRASHES to the ground, the blade caught in its ribcage.

FELSON (O.S.)

(screaming)

Hagaman!! Look out--!!

Suddenly, WHAM!!! Hagaman is knocked flat by a hurtling mass of gray! He CRASHES to the ground, buried under a mountain of fur and SNAPPING teeth.

CLOSE - HAGAMAN

Struggling to keep the creature from his throat. The wolf lets out a low GURGLE as its jaws clamp around Felson's upthrust arm.

Suddenly, Ka-WHAM! The creature is decapitated from behind. Its head tumbles loose, the jaws spilling open.

REVEAL - FELSON

Blood spattered, HACKING and CHOPPING with every ounce of strength. He has just saved Hagaman's life, and spins away without a word to face the next attack.

Hagaman struggles to his feet, his arm streaming with fresh blood. He retrieves his sword, and his face suddenly blanches as he sees:

A SECOND GROUP OF WOLVES

Tearing through the thicket, hurtling directly at the knights.

LAVEY

(panting, breathless)

...here they come!

The men barely have time to brace for the attack. In an instant the wolves are among them -- famished, desperate, leaping at their throats!

## THE KNIGHTS

Responding with equal desperation. They are rending and slicing, their tunics are torn and ripped, their swords are dripping in blood...

And then, suddenly, the battle is won. There are no wolves left.

## ANGLE - LAVEY

Breathless, his chest heaving heavily as he looks around and takes in the carnage. There must be dozens of carcasses.

He looks to Felson, who is also panting with exhaustion.

Then he turns to face the witch.

## LAVEY

You will have to try harder than that if you want us dead.

## CLOSE - THE WITCH

A cryptic smile forms on her lips.

## WITCH

Indeed. Anything less would be an insult. A warrior as great as you, LaVey -- the butcher of Hattin-- deserve an equal opponent!

She LAUGHS full and mockingly at LaVey. Then she begins to CHANT...in low, half-muttered, nonsensical words...coming more and more quickly as she utters them...slowly gaining in volume...

## WITCH

(curse to be translated  
into Latin)

From ashes and death, I conjure you! Rise up! It is I who calls you! Rise up!

## BACK TO - LAVEY

As he stares at her warily.

## WITCH

(growing louder)

Obey me and tremble! For I am calling! Rise up! RISE UP!

## CLOSE - LAVEY'S HAND

Tightening on his sword, as with a sinking feeling, he turns to face the forest again.

## THE MEN

Gather their courage and turn as well, bracing for a renewed onslaught. But nothing comes.

As the witch's CHANTING grows louder, LaVey feels a strange twitching at his feet and slowly looks down.

## ANGLE - AT HIS FEET

A horrible gut-wrenching revelation. LaVey sees that one of the slain wolves is beginning to jerk and spasm.

It's impossible -- the creature's head is cloven wide open and we can see into its skull, and yet it is beginning to move again!

DEBELZAQ

(horrified, drawing a  
cross in the air)

Pater Noster!

The others stare with dread...as all around a similar phenomenon begins to take place. The carcasses of the slain wolves are coming to life again, struggling upwards with a grotesque flopping/jerking motion.

## CLOSE - HAGAMAN

A slow, dawning horror comes over him as he remembers the witch's riddle:

HAGAMAN

...no living creature...

His eyes dart up, and lock with LaVey's, who has realized the same thing but still can't quite believe it.

HAGAMAN

They won't get me, LaVey! I won't die like that. Not the way she said...torn limb from limb...

LAVEY

No one's going to die -- not if you do as I say! Now get to the horses! Quick!

## THE MEN

They take off at a dash, as all around them the wolves continue to regenerate. Bent bones reform, shattered limbs grow strong again...the air all around filling with the sound of GROWLING...

## WIDE SHOT - THE CAMPSITE

The witch's LAUGHTER echoes in the fog, as the Knights frantically mount up.

DeBelzaq leaps into the wagon and frantically WHIPS the REINS! The horses bolt forward in terror.

## HAGAMAN, KAYLAN, FELSON AND LAVEY

They SPUR their horses and race after the wagon.

## HAGAMAN

Heeyah!

They race off down the path, as more and more wolves begin to regenerate around them and give chase.

## EXT. FOREST PATH - NIGHTTIME

The horses THUNDER past, racing blindly through the mist. All concern for direction is lost now, as they flee for their lives.

## THE WOLVES

Tearing through a thicket...fully regenerated and moving with horrible, supernatural speed!

## LAVEY

Risks a glance over his shoulder. Nothing but fog. Then -- a glimpse! A dark, sleek shape. And another. They are coming in great leaps and bounds!

LaVey SPURS his mount faster!

## THE WAGON

Careening wildly around a bend as DeBelzaq WHIPS the REINS madly.

## BEHIND THEM

The wolves are gaining. The pack splits suddenly in two as they begin to overtake them.



FELSON

(shouting to be heard)

LaVey! We cannot outrun them! They are too quick!

LAVEY

We must hold them back, allow the wagon to escape!

LaVey struggles to draw his sword while he gallops.

Felson and Hagaman, in the rear, do the same. They glance up on either side and see the sleek forms of the wolves running with them, barely glimpsed between the dark trees.

Suddenly -- a great, grey mass explodes from the ridge overlooking the path! Directly at Hagaman! He is SLAMMED backwards from his saddle. The horse tumbles to the ground, head first, 400 lbs. of steel and flesh crashing to the earth.

ANGLE - LAVEY

He jerks the reins, wheeling around for Hagaman.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

Hagaman is on his back, swinging the sword frantically. He drives it through the wolf's belly and we SEE the blade emerge out of its back.

He struggles to kick it off and rises weakly, GASPING. He staggers to where his horse has fallen.

REVEAL - THE HORSE

Dead. It's neck broken by the fall.

BACK TO - HAGAMAN

He spins to face LaVey.

They share a momentary glance, an unspoken communication.

HAGAMAN

(shouting)

Go!!

LAVEY - FROZEN ON HIS HORSE

Torn with indecision. Part of him knows Hagaman is already doomed.

HAGAMAN

You cannot save me! She has already  
foretold my death!

FELSON

LaVey!

HAGAMAN

Damn you -- go!

Lavey gives a grudging nod - he raises an arm to salute Hagaman  
- a final gesture of respect, and then he SPURS his horse away.

We HOLD on HAGAMAN.

Wheeling around to face the wolves. One hand grips his sword  
and the other- trembling slightly- reaches into his pocket to  
draw out something. We recognize it as the relic he tried to  
sell to DeBelzaq, the small stone.

He grips it tightly in his palm.

ANGLE ABOVE - LOOKING DOWN

As the wolves emerge from the fog all around. Loping towards  
him. Low, skulking shapes that close from all sides, circling  
in...a circle of death, tightening... as Hagaman circles with  
them.

HAGAMAN

Come on, you devils.  
(he grips his sword)  
HAVE AT!!!

And they come - all at once! Leaping from several sides as  
Hagaman whirls and spins...CHOPPING with desperate strength as  
the wolves tear into him, ripping away his tunic, and thrashing  
his legs!

But Hagaman doesn't fall. He continues to struggle with every  
ounce, even as he is gradually pulled down, and we slowly PAN  
AWAY, knowing he is doomed...

EXT. FOREST PATH - LATER

The Knights continue their frantic dash, racing wildly through  
the fog and trees as -- gradually the SOUNDS of the WOLVES  
diminish in the distance.

CUT TO:

THE FOG, beginning to break.

Through the canopy of trees we GLIMPSE the first weak rays of dawn.

THE WAGON

It slows to a stop.

DeBelzaq leans over the reins, exhausted. The horses are spent, frothing at the mouth, their flanks steaming in the cold air.

LAVEY, FELSON AND KAYLAN

They look back, as a chilling NOISE echoes in the distance. The lone HOWL of a solitary wolf.

The men react, each affected in his own way.

KAYLAN

He gave his life for us...so that we might live.

DEBELZAQ

He died nobly.

KAYLAN

(exploding with grief)

He wasn't noble! And he didn't choose this fate! He didn't even want to come. And we are to blame for his death!

LAVEY

(quick, sharp)

No!

They look at LaVey, startled by his tone.

He climbs down from his horse.

LAVEY

Never think that. The witch is to blame, the demon. No one else.

(softer)

And what would Hagaman say now, if he saw us falter? What would Sancierre say? Shall their death's amount to nothing? Would they not demand more?

Kaylan looks away, unsure.

LaVey stands before Kaylan, looking down.

LAVEY

Now is not the time for doubt. We have been given a task, to return this demon back to Hell.

(he offers his hand)

And we will succeed.

KAYLAN

Nodding slowly. He reaches for LaVey's hand.

But suddenly the moment is interrupted by LAUGHTER. Loud and mocking.

WITCH

What arrogance! What hubris! Even while my children are feasting upon the flesh of your pathetic companion, you have the effrontery to think you can defeat me!  
ME!!!

(her VOICE suddenly changes, deepens)

Forget not your own fate, LaVey! You will burn! Your stinking carcass will smoke in the fiery pit!

LaVey - a grim moment.

He stares at her.

LAVEY

Perhaps. But you will burn with me.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The wagon emerges.

The men appear haggard and worn, like Dante and his companion emerging from hell. Their clothes are torn and bloody, their faces masked in grime and sweat.

CLOSE - LAVEY

Squinting and blinking his eyes. He looks around, puzzled as his eyes fail to adjust to the strange gloom all around them.

A gray dusk that seems to hang over everything like a shroud.

THE KNIGHTS

They gradually come to a stop and stare in puzzlement.

FELSON  
(confused)  
Is it nighttime?

DEBELZAQ  
No. It is midday.

FELSON  
Where is the sun?

DEBELZAQ  
This day is not like others. Look.

He points.

The men look up into the sky and take in a frightening spectacle.

Where the sun should be -- a hole fills the sky. A black circle that blocks the sun perfectly...blanketing the land in darkness.

The Knights stare with foreboding.

FELSON  
(crossing himself)  
Lord protect us.

LAVEY  
What place have we come to, where the sun  
is black and the land, dark?

DEBELZAQ  
The end. We have come to the end.

FELSON  
What's he talking about?

DEBELZAQ  
The book of Revelations. It is written  
therein.  
(quoting from memory)  
For the sun shall become black as  
sackcloth, and the rivers shall run red...

WITCH (O.S.)  
And the earth shall be as a wasteland. And  
all who walk upon it shall die, for this is  
the day of judgement.

DeBelzaq turns to stare at the witch.

She is grinning at him, bile spilling from the corners of her mouth and running down her chest in long rivulets.

DEBELZAQ

This is the second sign. There is still time.

LAVEY

Kaylan, get that wagon moving.

He SPURS his horse forward again. And the men take up their weary pace...

...as we DISSOLVE TO:

A HIGH ANGLE - PANORAMIC VIEW

The snow-peaked tips of the Alps.

THE WAGON TRAIN

Inching forward. Into the foothills of the mountains, past snow covered pastures.

THE KNIGHTS

Buffeted by a strong wind. They pull their tattered cloaks in tight. LaVey looks up and sees that pastures are gradually giving way to rock, and oak trees to firs, as they continue ever higher...

FELSON

We have come a long way, LaVey.

LAVEY

Yes.

FELSON

The fall of Chevalier...the Horns of Hattin. You and I, we were the only ones who survived. We've been blessed.

LAVEY

We've been fortunate.

FELSON

(darkening a bit)  
But this time it's different.

LaVey risks a glance from under his cowl, to study his friend's face.

LAVEY  
Different?

FELSON  
This time I think we will not be so fortunate.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DUSK

To one side, a steep cliff rises upward. To the other, a precipice plunges into the abyss.

THE WAGON

Emerges around a curve in the road. DeBelzaq yanks the reigns and brings the wagon to a halt.

THE KNIGHTS

Reactions of amazement and surprise. They crane their necks upwards.

DEBELZAQ (O.S.)  
(in wonder)  
Severac.

DEBELZAQ'S P.O.V. (HIGH ABOVE)

The ABBEY SEVERAC. A monastery, hewn out of the mountainside. It looms out of the mist like something ancient and ominous.

The men share a collective moment of silence. The end of their journey is in sight.

EXT. THE ABBEY - NIGHT

Massive stone walls extending upwards fifty feet. Thick as time, and built to withstand a siege.

ANGLE - LAVEY

As he approaches, peering up to the tops, which are only dimly visible in the darkness. He cups his hands to his mouth and SHOUTS to the ramparts:

LAVEY  
Hello!

No response, except the lonely sound of his echo.

Felson moves alongside LaVey. He SHOUTS a little louder.

LAVEY

Is anyone there?

Still nothing.

FELSON

A fine welcome this is.

KAYLAN

I don't understand. Where are they?

DEBELZAQ

They should be at vespers.

LaVey swings down from his horse and approaches the entrance. Two massive, oaken doors reinforced with steel, set deeply into the wall.

He takes hold of one of the brass knockers and BANGS it loudly. The SOUND echoes faintly within.

The men wait for a response.

But there is none.

LAVEY

Felson. Kaylan. Give me a hand.

They swing down from their horses.

Together with LaVey, they brace, and begin to push at the doors. And to their surprise -- they swing open silently... slowly... like the vault of a massive crypt.

REVEAL - THE ABBEY COURTYARD

A Dantean vision of hell... Death carts fill the courtyard. Piles of putrescent corpses, the dead monks, brimming over...spilling onto the flagstones.

BACK TO - THE KNIGHTS

Reacting, in horror.

Expressions of defeat, despair.

FELSON

It - it cannot be!



Felson and LaVey pass slowly through the entrance, into the courtyard. They are peering left and right, in shock, at the bodies, which are piled up along the walls, in the alleys, everywhere that there is room.

DeBelzaq pushes past them, to take in the sight.

DEBELZAQ

Oh, God...no.

KAYLAN

(a cold edge coming into  
his voice)

They are dead. All of them.

DEBELZAQ

It cannot be! God would not abandon us, not when we have come so far! When we have suffered so much!

The witch lets out a soft CHUCKLE. Her expression turns to glee.

WITCH

Did you truly think He was watching over you? Did you actually believe He would save you?

From the men - no response.

None of them has the strength.

WITCH (CONT.)

(bursting into LAUGHTER)

Oh, what exquisite delight! How precious your pain!

(low, pointed)

Tell me, LaVey, now that you have come to the end of your pitiful quest, what has it brought you?

LaVey tries to ignore her.

LAVEY

Felson...you and the others wait here.

FELSON

Where are you going?

LAVEY

Inside. To see if perhaps...someone still lives.

Felson's arm darts out to stop him. A gesture full of warning.

FELSON

LaVey. It isn't safe. We should go at once.

LAVEY

Go where?

Felson falters. Uncertain.

LaVey pulls free and walks off into the monastery.

INT. MONASTERY, DORMITORY - NIGHT

LaVey moves past rows of beds, each one holding the still form of a monk. They are covered with sheets. A few - apparently the last to die- are uncovered.

LaVey passes by them, peering left and right, in silence, as he checks each corpse for a sign of life. But there is none.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Kaylan moves alongside DeBelzaq.

The priest is staring despondently at the walls of the monastery.

KAYLAN

What will become of us? What will we do now?

DEBELZAQ

Do? Nothing.

KAYLAN

Are we going somewhere else then?

DEBELZAQ

There is nowhere else. The monks, the book...they were our only hope.

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - NIGHT

The doors are pushed open.

LaVey stands in the entrance, staring in.

He walks slowly down the aisle, stopping before the altar. And then he does something odd; he kneels down on one knee and draws his sword.

He holds it before him and bows his head.

LAVEY

(faltering, with  
difficulty)

Lord, if you can hear me...if you still hold  
us in your heart, I pray to you. For we have  
shed blood in Your name. We have broken  
steel and we have bled. We have paid the  
cost with our souls.

(looking up slowly)

And now we come to this place.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

The cross, hanging over the altar. The figure of Christ, staring  
back at him, with impassive eyes.

LAVEY

I pray to you...hear my words...

CLOSE - HIS HAND

Tightening on the hilt of his sword.

LAVEY

...I pray to you...do not forsake us.

LaVey stares upwards, his eyes filled with intensity. Filled  
with a final, desperate hope. And then miraculously...there is  
a response! A low whisper that seems to echo through the chapel.

VOICE (O.S.)

Heeeeeere...

LaVey surges to his feet, startled. His eyes widen as he stares  
at the cross.

And then it comes again. Weaker.

VOICE (O.S.)

Oooooovvver...heeeeerre...

And suddenly LaVey realizes -- it isn't coming from the cross  
at all. It's coming from behind the altar! He rushes forward.

LAVEY'S P.O.V.

A hand thrusts into frame. Beckoning him.

A skeletal arm, bony and emaciated.

It belongs to a MONK who lies sprawled on the floor behind the altar. It's a miracle he's lived this long. The plague has wracked his body, the boils have already burst... yet he clings to life by a thread.

LAVEY  
(shouting, frantic)  
Felson! DeBelzaq!

EXT. RECTORY - NIGHT

The knights snatch up their swords and race after LaVey.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The monk is convulsing, struggling frantically to press something into LaVey's hands. A book of some kind.

MONK  
...the book! Take it...you must...!

LAVEY  
(calling, louder)  
Felson!

MONK  
Please...no time! You must...

LAVEY  
Please! Just wait!

MONK  
(feverish)  
No! Listen! Inside...the ritual! The words must be spoken before the witch can be slain.

LAVEY  
What ritual?

MONK  
(with sudden intensity)  
The Roman Ritual -- of exorcism!

Behind LaVey, the doors of the church BURST open.

Felson and DeBelzaq rush in. By they are too late. The Monk's hands fall open, the book dropping out, as we realize...he is dead.

DEBELZAQ

In nomine patri spiritu sancti.

CLOSE - LAVEY'S HANDS

As he reaches out for the book and slowly lifts it up. He opens it. INSIDE -- we SEE pages and pages of Latin.

BACK TO - LAVEY

Looking up, helpless.

LAVEY

It's in Latin. I - I cannot read Latin.

DEBELZAQ

I can.

INT. RECTORY - LATER

DeBelzaq is standing over a table, studying the book. Felson is holding a torch for him to read by, and we can hear DeBelzaq occasionally muttering some passage aloud as he flips the pages.

He stops suddenly and squints at a particular passage.

LaVey is slumped in a chair to one side, waiting- as he has been for some time- and he flinches as DeBelzaq suddenly SLAMS a fist down on the table.

DEBELZAQ

I have it!

(looking up, intense)

The Ritual of Exorcism!

He turns to face Felson.

DEBELZAQ

I will need you to go across to the chapel. See if you can find some holy water and a cross. Silver, understand? Not wood. And bring me a cassock.

Felson nods and runs to comply.

LaVey looks to the priest, awaiting instructions.

LAVEY

And me?

DEBELZAQ

Prepare the pyre. We begin at once.

INT. CHAPEL - NIGHTTIME

Felson rushes into the chapel.

He scans the space, frantically searching -- and spots a basin of water in the far side of the chamber.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

Kaylan is furiously building up a pile of wood around the wagon. He is stacking the pieces up, and off to one side LaVey is breaking one of the wooden carts into scrap, to add to the pile.

INSIDE - THE CAGE

The witch is oblivious. She seems to be in a trance of some kind. Her head is lolling to one side and we can see her lips moving.

INT. CLOISTER - NIGHT

DeBelzaq, dressing in vestments.

He pulls the cassock on, with deliberate care. Before him on the table lie a silver cross, a flask of Holy Water, and the book of rituals.

His hands wander over them, gently, almost reverently.

WIDE SHOT - THE ABBEY - NIGHTTIME

Still in the night. Like the calm before a storm. The only SOUND is the wind WHISTLING off the ramparts.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHTTIME

DeBelzaq emerges from the rectory, garbed in priestly robes.

He appears different than we have seen him before. He carries himself with purpose, with strength.

The book is held in both hands, as he crosses to where the men are waiting.

They rise.

DEBELZAQ

(he pauses, studies them)

The ritual, the words...they must be spoken before the pyre is lit. This is not something to be trifled with. No matter what tricks or deceits the demon may use to lead us astray, the rite must be finished before any harm comes to her.

The men nod their understanding.

DEBELZAQ

Good. Let us begin.

He proceeds across the courtyard.

THE KNIGHTS

Follow, flanking him protectively on either side.

EXT. THE WAGON/CAGE - NIGHTTIME

The witch is sitting with her back to the men. She cocks her head to one side, as if she could sense their presence, and we can HEAR her BREATHING...a wet, raspy sibilant SOUND...

DEBELZAQ

He steps to the cage.

He takes out the vial of holy water and opens it.

DEBELZAQ

(sprinkling the water)

Ecce crucem domine, fúgite partes  
advérsae.

The witch jerks around to face them.

And there is a sharp intake of breath-- a reaction of horror from the men-- as they see her face. It is covered in gruesome welts, massive lacerations that crisscross the skin to form a macabre pattern on the flesh.

WITCH

You will fail, pig!

The witch tips back her head and begins to LAUGH gleefully.

DeBelzaq ignores her.

He replaces the holy water and draws the sign of a cross in the air. The gesture is directed at the witch, and she SPITS at him as he does so.

WITCH  
Your souls are mine!

DEBELZAQ  
Be silent!

The witch falls instantly still.

DeBelzaq opens the book and begins to read.

DEBELZAQ  
I command you, unclean spirit, in the name of God Almighty, in the name of his only son Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, by the coming of our Lord for judgment, by all these things I command you; tell me your name!

THE WITCH

She begins to writhe, as if by some unseen force.

She starts to jerk and twitch in her shackles, the chains SHAKING and RATTLING as she flails her arms.

DeBelzaq repeats the invocation, louder this time.

DEBELZAQ  
By all the Saints, by the courage of Christ and the blood of the martyrs, I command you; tell me your name!

WITCH  
I'm the devil, you stinking maggot!

DEBELZAQ  
Your name! Speak it!

WITCH  
(a BOOMING VOICE)  
I AM LUCIFER!

She thrusts her arms up in the shackles, like some malevolent angel, summoning all her demonic power...

THE WAGON

It begins to rock violently on its wheels.



## THE KNIGHTS

They draw their swords and move back several paces.

## DEBELZAQ

He stares for a moment, transfixed. Terrified.

## LAVEY

DeBelzaq!

The priest recovers and continues reading.

## DEBELZAQ

Depart, Lucifer, king of worms! Depart  
foul serpent! Depart seducer, full of lies  
and cunning!

## THE WITCH

With a tortured RENDING NOISE the shackles on her wrists begin to TWIST open. The Knights stare in awe, watching as the steel slowly bends and GROANS apart.

They fall to the floor with a heavy -- THUNK!

## FELSON

I suggest you read faster!

## DEBELZAQ

(double pace)

I adjure you to depart, foul serpent! I  
adjure you to leave this place and return  
to the deepest pit of hell, to the lake of  
fire unto which God cast you!

The witch, free of her shackles, now points at the bars of the cage. And the knights witness a horrifying spectacle...the bars of the cage begin to rot away before their very eyes!

Like some horrifying time-lapse effect, they begin to age several hundred years in a few moments. First they grow gray, then black, then moss and fungus quickly crawl up them, rotting the wood out from within...decaying spreading up the bars and consuming the roof...

## CLOSE ON - LAVEY

He yanks his sword up.

## LAVEY

Felson! Kaylan! On your guard!

The men SNAP up their blades in response and move forward, taking up positions between the witch and the priest. Protecting DeBelzaq.

DEBELZAQ  
(with more urgency)

It is not I who commands you, foul serpent,  
it is God Almighty! The King of Kings, the  
lion and the lamb--!

ANGLE - THE WAGON/CAGE

The ceiling of the wagon sags inwards, rotting away, great pieces and chunks of wood collapsing.

SUDDENLY -- the roof erupts in a massive blast that sends the men sprawling. Bits of rotted wood rain down from the sky.

LAVEY

He looks up from where he has fallen. Through the dust and smoke, and raining debris...a chilling sight. The witch is loose!

With a horrendous leap she catapults into the air, across the courtyard, and lands at the rear wall of the abbey.

THE WITCH

She lands before a doorway; the entrance to the scriptorium.

With a gesture of her hand the doorway CRACKS violently apart.

She vanishes within.

BACK TO - THE KNIGHTS

Staggering up, still dazed.

DeBelzaq regains his feet first and runs after the witch.

DEBELZAQ  
Quickly -- there's no time to lose! We must  
follow her!

LAVEY  
(COUGHING through the  
dust)  
Wait! DeBelzaq!

LaVey catches up to the priest just as he is about to step through the shattered doorway. He pulls him back.

LAVEY  
Stay behind me.

LaVey and Felson step through the entrance. DeBelzaq follows, and then Kaylan bringing up the rear.

INT. SCRIPTORIUM - NIGHT

They enter a large windowed room with tables and chairs, the place where the monks would work at their scrolls.

The men proceed silently past the tables, leading with their swords. They hear the SOUND of LAUGHTER coming from somewhere ahead, from deep within the bowels of the monastery.

LAVEY  
(stopping to listen)  
She is in the catacombs.

He continues again, the others doubling their pace. They arrive at a passage in the far side of the room.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHTTIME

A darkened stone hallway carved out of the mountain. LaVey squints down the passageway.

It seems to extend the length of the entire abbey, and beyond, deep into the mountain itself.

Suddenly the passage springs into light, as torches along either side BURST into flame, one by one, down the entire length of the corridor.

LAVEY  
I think we are meant to go this way.

He reaches up and takes down one of the torches. They proceed.

END OF THE HALL

A stone stairway leads downwards, into a lower level of the catacombs. A ruddy glow is visible at the bottom.

They begin to descend.

The glow becomes stronger as they make their way downwards, as if they were descending into the belly of some monstrous furnace.

## INT. CATACOMBS - LOWER LEVEL

The passage here is narrower. More cramped. The men must proceed in single-file.

Suddenly they are stopped by a BOOMING NOISE - the sound of something heavy and massive, CRASHING to the ground. It reverberates dreadfully in the small stone corridor. Echoing so loudly that the men must cover their ears.

Finally the sound stops and the men exchange looks.

Tense, frightened glances.

KAYLAN

What was that?

FELSON

I don't know.

LAVEY

Come on.

They press on.

## INT. ARCHIVES - NIGHTTIME

They enter a massive chamber filled with shelves. Each shelf is stacked high with manuscripts and volumes and scrolls...this is the Benedictine Library.

The sight is staggering. The volumes appear endless. A maze of stacks extending out in all directions.

LAVEY

Frozen in place. Staring at the books, as something dreadful dawns on him.

LAVEY

(softly, to himself)

...fire of knowledge...

He looks up.

FELSON, DEBELZAQ AND KAYLAN

They are staring at him. Each of them has realized the implications at the same time.

FELSON

LaVey...you should turn back.

KAYLAN

He's right.

LAVEY

(grim)

No. Let us end it together.

He starts off through the stacks.

INT. AEDIFICIUM

The innermost sanctum of the library. A circular room deep in the catacombs. Here the most precious volumes are kept. But the stacks have been pushed over, on against the other, to form a massive pile of rubble in the center of the room.

And seated laconically upon this pile, like the Queen of the Damned, is the witch.

WITCH

I am disappointed! I was prepared to offer you far more. Power beyond power. The riches of all the earth.

DEBELZAQ

Your gifts are nothing to me!

WITCH

(with sudden venom)

Not you, stinking priest! Do you know how many of your kind already populate my dominion!?

The witch gestures impatiently at DeBelzaq and suddenly, with a HOWL of ANGUISH, his leg CRACKS open! Splintering as if it were wood.

DeBelzaq collapses, SCREAMING in agony.

WITCH

(to LaVey, apologetic)

A vulgar display...forgive me. But I grow tired of his prattling.

(serious again)

I meant you, LaVey. You would have been a rare prize; the protector of God who turns abandons his Master.

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

Hearing this. Reacting with trembling uncertainty.

LAVEY

I have not abandoned Him.

DEBELZAQ

(in agony)

Do not respond, LaVey!

WITCH

LIAR!!! You cannot deceive me! You despise Him. You have given everything up for Him, and what does He give you in return?

LaVey takes a step forward. Kaylan and Felson, moving with him to meet her advance.

But the witch sends them both flying with another flick of her wrist. They SLAM up against the wall at the far side of the chamber and collapse to the floor, bleeding from their nose and ears.

LAVEY

He steels himself, raises his sword for a blow--

THE WITCH

Lashes out with one arm and grips him by the throat.

He is hoisted into the air, choking. The torch, and his sword, both CLATTER to the ground.

WITCH

If you would give yourself to me, LaVey, willingly, freely...you would see perfection. I am perfection!

(softly, crooning)

Your trials would be at an end. The miseries you endure in His name, the atrocities... all would end.

She pulls him closer. WHISPERS to him.

WITCH

You have no love of Him. Why do you pretend? You are on the edge already, LaVey. So close...all that needs to happen is a small token act and you are mine. A small pledge, a small betrayal. No greater a betrayal than God has committed against you.

CLOSE ON - THE TORCH

Lying where it fell. The flames catch against a piece of parchment and the flames begin to spread along the mound of books.

FELSON

He struggles to retrieve his sword.

LAVEY

His face turning white now. He seems to want to say something, and the witch loosens her grip to hear him, but instead LaVey uses the opportunity to SPIT in her face.

She contorts with rage.

WITCH

At every turn you defy me! My patience is at an end, LaVey!

As if on cue, the stacks suddenly burst into flame! The fire spreads upwards and out, in either direction. Flames begin licking up all around him. Clouds of smoke begin to form.

FELSON

He has managed to stagger to his feet and is pulling the unconscious Kaylan backwards through the stacks, away from the fire.

They reach the entrance again, and Felson lowers him to the ground.

Then he takes a deep breath and runs back into the smoke...after LaVey.

DEBELZAQ

He looks up and sees Felson rushing at the witch from behind.

DEBELZAQ

No!

CLOSE ON - THE WITCH

Suddenly Felson's sword comes slicing up through her belly. LaVey falls free, CHOKING and GASPING and we realize... Felson has impaled her from behind.

DEBELZAQ

(horrified)

I did not finish the rite!

One bony hand WHIPS out and grasps Felson's face and a horrible transformation begins to take place. The witch's soul begins to possess Felson's body.

Electric SNAPS of energy, like blue flames, snake out and course into Felson. He begins to convulse...his very soul in agony, as the witch's physical appearance merges with his own.

His features contort, his flesh changes color, bruising and mottling, becoming instantly riddled with scars and lesions just like the witch's... Even his hair seems to grow and darken into a hideous mass.

As the witch's body slumps away lifeless, Felson spins around to face LaVey - and he has been reborn into the form of THE WARLOCK now!

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

Too stunned to even raise his sword.

The Warlock approaches -- and WHAM! A vicious blow sends LaVey flying into the wall.

The warlock approaches again -- WHAM! A second blow!

DEBELZAQ

He struggles to his knees again, and with trembling fingers reaches for the book. He begins to read again.

DEBELZAQ

He has cast you forth into the outer darkness, where everlasting ruin awaits you! You are guilty before his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you presumed to tempt, whom you dared to nail to the cross!



CLOSE - THE WARLOCK

His head WHIPS around and he drops LaVey.

WITCH

Do not utter that name in my presence, you  
foul hypocrite!

He leaps across the courtyard and snatches the startled priest up by the neck. DeBelzaq drops the book, but continues to recite from memory now:

DEBELZAQ

You are guilty before all mankind, to whom  
you proffered by your enticements the  
poisoned cup of death! Give place,  
abominable creature! Give way, monster!  
Give way to Christ! GIVE WAY TO CHRIST!  
(frantic, to LaVey)  
It is done! LaVey -- It is done! Strike  
quick!

LaVey, his senses still reeling, staggers to his feet.

CLOSE - DEBELZAQ

As The Warlock cocks back a fist, like a pile-driver and SLAMS it directly through the startled priest's chest.

It emerges bloody, grasping the man's still-beating heart.

LAVEY (O.S.)

No!

THE WARLOCK

Spinning to face LaVey, the bloody mass still clutched in one hand.

But suddenly his expression darkens with confusion... then fear. He looks down and we REALIZE -- LaVey has driven his blade up to the hilt into his belly.

A beat.

The warlock's face contorts in agony. He collapses, mortally wounded...and those same blue arcs of electricity course wildly in the air.

They attempt to enter LaVey. He writhes in pain, staggering back, as they course through his body...but fail to possess him!

The energy goes streaking skyward, like a bolt of lightning, sucking up debris and papers, and smoke in a massive funnel, a

vortex that causes LaVey to stagger forward. He clutches at one of the tables, clinging to it.

There is a loud ROAR of wind, almost animal-like, and then suddenly the wind is gone. So too is the fire, and the smoke. Everything is strangely calm.

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

Stunned.

He looks down and sees that the face and features of the warlock have reverted once again into Felson's. His comrade lies sprawled on the ground, the sword still driven through his belly.

LaVey kneels by his side.

Felson, slowly, painfully reaches out for LaVey's hand and grips it weakly. His lips move as he struggles to speak.

LAVEY

Felson...don't speak.

FELSON

(with desperate urgency)

Is it-- is it-- dead?

LaVey nods, slowly. He squeezes Felson's hand.

CLOSE ON - FELSON

The briefest trace of a smile.

BACK TO - LAVEY

As he struggles to say something.

LAVEY (O.S.)

Felson, I--

But his voice trails off as he notices...

CLOSE ON - FELSON'S HAND

The fingers have gone slack. They fall open.

LAVEY

Oh, God...Felson.

INT. ABBEY COURTYARD - DAWN

The aftermath. Smoke and burning pitch waft across the courtyard.

## THE ENTRANCE

A figure appears, stumbling, dazed.

It's Kaylan.

He staggers out of the smoke, coughing. He stops and takes in the devastation all around.

A NOISE causes him to turn.

KAYLAN'S P.O.V.

There is a second survivor - a dark form, limping slowly out of the smoke. It's LaVey.

He is carrying Felson's body.

LAVEY  
(simple, flat)  
It is done.

KAYLAN

Wracked with grief.

He sinks slowly to his knees, his head falling into his hands. LaVey slumps down beside him, lowering Felson gently to the ground.

KAYLAN  
DeBelzaq?

LaVey shakes his head solemnly.

LAVEY  
You and I are all that remain.

KAYLAN  
(with difficulty)  
They were -- the finest men I have known.

LaVey pushes himself to his feet slowly.

LAVEY  
That is the cost. The price we pay.

KAYLAN  
It isn't just.

LAVEY

No.

Kaylan turns to stare at LaVey, understanding him for the first time.

LaVey picks up Kaylan's sword from where it has fallen. He offers it to him.

LAVEY

Tell me now, is it still something you desire?

CLOSE ON - KAYLAN

For the first time, unsure.

After a long moment, he shakes his head. No.

KAYLAN

I - I am sorry.

CLOSE ON - LAVEY

His expression softening a touch.

LAVEY

Don't be.

(he extends his hand)

You're a good man, Kaylan.

Kaylan reaches out, and they clasp each other in friendship.

And then LaVey turns to leave.

He walks to the hitching post, where his horse is tied. Kaylan trails behind.

KAYLAN

Where will you go?

LAVEY

(unsure)

East. Perhaps.

He slings himself into the saddle. Looks down at Kaylan.

LAVEY

Bury them well, Kaylan. Place their swords  
in the earth...let steel mark the place  
where they lie.

Kaylan nods quickly, fighting a wave of tears as LaVey takes the  
reins and turns his horse slowly away.

KAYLAN

Will I see you again? LaVey? Will you come  
to Avignon someday?

LAVEY

There is nothing for me in Avignon.

A beat.

Kaylan nods.

And then LaVey whips the reins sharply, and wheels away. He turns  
his horse and starts out the gate. Headed back into the  
mountains. But not the way the way they came...he's headed East.  
Farther into the mountains.

ON KAYLAN

Running to the gate.

KAYLAN

LaVey! LaVey, don't go...please!

ON LAVEY

He doesn't look back.

He continues...turning into the mountain path now, beginning to  
ascend. And gradually he diminishes from view, like a distant  
memory...

BACK ON - KAYLAN

Staring after him, with a haunted expression.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

That is the last I ever saw of LaVey.

CUT TO:

A WIND SWEEPED RIDGE - LATER

Three grave mounds, side by side. A lonely monument.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

But I did as he asked and I buried Felson,  
and DeBelzaq, side by side. I buried also  
the body of the peasant girl, whose name we  
never knew.

Kaylan stands over them, staring down.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

The Black Death ended in the winter of that  
year. The death toll included the Cardinal  
D'Ambroise and nearly half of France.

CLOSER. THE SWORDS.

Buried in the earth.

A symbol of strength, of steel...but also of faith.

NARRATOR

As for me...I returned to Avignon. I put  
away my sword and took up a different oath,  
the oath of priesthood. And in time I  
received the title of Abbot.

(beat)

Now I am old and near the end of my days.

(beat)

But still I remember LaVey. And the years  
mean nothing. I pray for him often. I pray  
he made his peace with God finally.

MUSIC COMES UP...

...as we FADE to BLACK.