

Family Jewel
an original screenplay by
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1 INT. NELSON HOME - DAY

Super: 45 years ago

SANDRA NELSON, 40, works on a case for the police. Her son John, 15, looks over her shoulder. The office is a time capsule from the 1940's. Roll-top desk. Tiffany lamp. Lace curtains. A photograph of an elderly woman peering into a crystal ball.

SANDRA
What does your tummy tell you?

JOHN
I'm not sure.

SANDRA
Just make it up. It may be true.
You can check it later.

John looks at a picture of a gun, then recoils.

Flash Cut: Merku

JOHN
I saw a very mean man with a
moustache.

2 EXT. YUCATAN - DUSK

Super: 25 years ago.

The Sun sets behind an ancient PYRAMID, projecting GOD RAYS.

Two tiny figures walk into the pyramid.

3 INT. PYRAMID

Sandals SCRAPE on a stone floor.

INNOCENTE, 14, walks ahead of his teacher HERALDO, 48.

INNOCENTE
Are there snakes in here?

HERALDO
There might be.

Innocente turns a corner and emerges into a dimly lit ceremonial chamber. He is fearful and eager.

He sees the elders wearing masks and animal skins.

A small fire casts giant shadows on the walls of the ceremonial chamber, which is painted with fantastic images.

Heraldo puts on his JAGUAR mask.

The HIGH PRIEST throws incense into the fire, which flares and smokes.

They sit down around the fire and one of them drums.

They go into a trance state.

The High Priest pours a black liquid into a small clay cup and passes it to Innocente.

Innocente takes a sip and makes a face.

INNOCENTE
This tastes terrible.

HIGH PRIEST
Drink or die.

Innocente looks to Jaguar for reassurance. Jaguar nods.

JAGUAR
If you don't drink it we will
sacrifice you tonight.

The High Priest shows him a jade knife.

Innocente drinks, hands shaking.

Innocente hands the empty cup back to the High Priest.

HIGH PRIEST
Sometimes people die from this.
The gods decide.

Innocente blacks out.

Innocent has a vision of playing with a giant anaconda.

Innocente wakes up.

HIGH PRIEST (CONT'D)
What did you see?

INNOCENTE
I was playing with a Cancun.

The elders confer while Innocente waits.

HIGH PRIEST
Your ceremonial name will be
SNAKEHEAD.

INNOCENTE'S POV:

JAGUAR

Never forget who you are.

4 EXT. SAN JUAN LA LAGUNA, GUATEMALA - DAY

Super: 1 year ago.

A small village at the edge of a lake. The conical shapes of volcanoes loom in the background.

5 EXT. GARDEN - DAY

INKA CHAMAHEZ, 35, and her daughter SARA, 17, tend their garden. It looks like a wild tangle of plants.

SARA

How do you know which one to use?

INKA

Remember what I tell you, but when you are uncertain pray to Ixchel, the goddess of healing.

Her mother pulls a leaf off one of the plants.

INKA (CONT'D)

This one is for when the stomach is upset.

6 INT. SARA'S HOME - NIGHT

Inka and Sara make supper. Inka rolls tortillas while SARA stirs a pot of beans.

INKA

There are three kinds of seeing: with your eyes, with your mind, and with your heart.

Sara touches a piece of fabric hanging on the wall.

SARA

I see grandmother.

INKA

She is always watching over you.

7 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

MERKU, 28, is a powerful drug dealer in East LA. He sits in a throne-like chair behind a Rococo desk. Lurid paintings with black backgrounds hang on the wall. A mirror with a gold frame lies on the desk. On the mirror, a rolled up hundred-dollar bill and lines of coke. Merku is stocky and strong, with close-cropped hair and a Fu Manchu moustache.

MERKU
Gather the men.

SOLDIER
Yes, Jefe.

8 EXT. COURTYARD OF MERKU'S COMPOUND - DAY

His soldiers are lined up, sweating in the noon-day sun. Merku walks up and down the line, staring harshly into the face of each man.

MERKU
What is the first rule?

SOLDIERS
No mistakes, Jefe.

Merku walks down the line until he comes to FURIO, 22, wearing an orange t-shirt.

Furio's POV:

Merku pulls a gold-plated pistol and shoots him in the face.

CUT TO BLACK.

BACK TO SCENE

MERKU
Clean up this mess.

Merku turns on his heels and walks back inside.

9 EXT. SAN PEDRO LA LAGUNA, GUATEMALA - DAY

The Catholic Church. In the background, San Pedro volcano.

10 INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

People gather for the funeral of Sara's mother.

Many candles light the sanctuary.

Sara stands before her mother's coffin, weeping.

11 INT. HOME OF SARA'S AUNT - DAY

People gather after the funeral.

AUNT
You're welcome to come live with me.

SARA

Thank you. Uncle Fredo has invited me to stay in Los Angeles for awhile, just for a change.

AUNT

That's a very different place.

12 EXT. UNCLE FREDO'S HOME - DAY

Super: East LA.

A small crowd of people gathers outside the front door.

13 INT. UNCLE FREDO'S KITCHEN - DAY

Sara sits at the kitchen table talking to a pregnant woman.

SARA

This will help you with the mornings.

Sara puts some leaves into a baggie.

SARA (CONT'D)

Just make a cup of tea every night before you go to bed.

WOMAN

Thank you, Santa Sara.

SARA

Hush! I'm just giving you what God gives to me.

14 EXT. UNCLE FREDO'S HOME, EAST LA - DAY

Merku, driving a black Hummer, cruises by.

15 INT. UNCLE FREDO'S KITCHEN - DAY

One of Merku's soldier's waits in line, watching what is going on.

16 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

The soldier reports to Merku.

SOLDIER

She heals many people. They think she's a saint.

MERKU

I want her.

17 EXT. UNCLE FREDO'S HOME, EAST LA - DAY

A van with "Aztec Plumbing" painted on the side pulls up outside.

Two big guys jump out, run into the house, and rush out carrying SARA.

Her uncle runs behind, trying to get her away from them.

One of them hits Fredo. He falls down.

The men put Sara in the van.

The van drives away.

18 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

SARA sits in a chair across the desk. Merku stands leaning on the desk, glaring down at her.

MERKU

Listen, you little bitch, if you ever want to see your family again, you'll do what I ask. I'm not going to fuck you, and my men won't bother you either. But I do expect you to give me good advice. Got that?

SARA

Yes.

MERKU

Yes, what?

SARA

Yes, Jeffe.

MERKU

Take her to her room.

Two soldiers escort her out.

19 INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

SARA shops for clothes. The two soldiers hover nearby.

20 INT. SNAKEHEAD'S CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Jaguar and Snakehead are preparing to do ceremony.

JAGUAR

My son, you should consider who you are serving. He is not a good man.

SNAKEHEAD

He pays well.

21 INT. SARA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sara tosses and turns in her sleep.

She dreams of being caught in a terrible storm.

She looks for shelter and sees a store called On Angel's Wings in Healdsburg.

22 INT. OFFICE AREA - DAY

Sara lurks in the hall, waiting for the bookkeeper to go to the bathroom.

When she does, Sara slips into the office.

She sits down at the desk.

She opens a browser.

She finds the address for On Angel's Wings.

She makes a note.

Sara closes the browser.

She leaves.

Returning from the bathroom, the bookkeeper sees Sara going down the hall.

23 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

SARA sits in front of the desk. Snakehead stands in the dimly lit background.

MERKU

Is that bastard El Condor going to make a move on me?

SARA

Not anytime soon.

MERKU

But you think he will?

SARA

He wants to beat you to the punch.

MERKU

Shit! He's been a sneaky puta ever since grade school.

Merku turns to Snakehead.

MERKU (CONT'D)
Find some way to get rid of him.

24 INT. SARA'S ROOM - DAY

SARA counts the little stash of coins she has accumulated.

SARA
Enough. Just barely.

25 INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Sara flips through a rack of dresses.

The thugs hover close by.

Two cops walk past the store entrance and pause.

Sara runs out between them.

The thugs run after her.

The cops stop them.

COP1
Hey, guys, where ya going so fast?

The thugs do not respond.

COP2
You got ID?

No response.

COP2 (CONT'D)
Doesn't matter. Smile for the camera!

The cop takes a picture and transmits it.

After a few minutes, he gets a response.

COP2 (CONT'D)
OK. You're coming with us.

26 EXT. ON ANGEL'S WINGS SHOP IN HEALDSBURG - DAY

Sara arrives in a cab and goes inside.

27 INT. ON ANGEL'S WINGS - DAY

Sara and MELODY PARSONS(55) drink herb tea in the back of the store.

SARA

I'm so sorry to barge in on you like this but he's a terrible man and I need help.

MELODY

There's no room here but maybe my friend John can put you up.

Melody picks up her phone and dials John.

28 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

Snakehead sits across from Merku.

MERKU

I want that little bitch back.

SNAKEHEAD

I'll do what I can.

29 INT. SNAKEHEAD'S CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

AMULETS and CHARMS decorate the walls.

An ALTAR holds a small statue of an AZTEC GOD surrounded by candles.

Naked except for a LOINCLOTH, Snakehead sips a BLACK FLUID from a small clay CUP.

He DRUMS and goes into trance.

Snakehead sees the STORE On Angel's Wings.

30 INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

The room is just as his mother left it.

Her PICTURE sits on the desk next to the PICTURE of his grandmother.

The only change is the LAPTOP COMPUTER he uses.

There's a bloody glove on the desk, crime scene photos, police reports.

John's PHONE RINGS. He picks up.

MELODY

I'm sending someone to see you. She needs help.

JOHN

With what?

MELODY

She'll tell you. Call me when she gets there.

31 EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

SARA KNOCKS on the front door.

John opens the door.

SARA

Melody sent me.

John pauses a second, then motions her in.

John speed-dials Melody.

JOHN

She's here. OK. Talk to you later.

John leads SARA to the kitchen.

32 INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

John motions Sara to have a seat at the kitchen table.

He starts the tea kettle.

He grinds coffee with an old HAND GRINDER and spoons the ground coffee into a FRENCH PRESS.

JOHN

How long have you been in the States?

He puts a few COOKIES on a PLATE, and puts the plate on an OLD SILVER SERVING TRAY.

SARA

I've been living with my uncle since my Mom died.

JOHN

How old was she?

SARA

Thirty-six.

The tea kettle WHISTLES.

John makes the COFFEE. Pours the water, waits a moment, stirs it and presses it down.

He puts the FRENCH PRESS and two CUPS on the tray.

He picks up the tray and leads Sara out toward the living room.

33 INT. JOHN'S LIVINGROOM - AFTERNOON

John pours coffee, and they settle into two OVER-STUFFED CHAIRS.

SARA

Do you have a wife?

JOHN

Had. I talk to her every day-she's as real to me as if she was alive.

SARA

Back home talk to dead people, too. Anglos think we're crazy.

JOHN

I guess we won't tell them.

SARA

Any kids?

JOHN

No. We really wanted some. Didn't happen. Why did that drug dealer kidnap you?

SARA

He wanted what I can do.

JOHN

Which is?

SARA

I'm a healer.

JOHN

Is this a tradition in your family?

SARA

For as long as we can remember. My Mom knew I had the gift. Taught me plants, how to prepare them. A lot of things didn't make sense until later.

JOHN

Surely you weren't the only healer in Los Angeles.

SARA

No, but my mom used to call me the family jewel because she thought my gift was very strong.

JOHN

He wanted your power.

SARA

I see things that other people don't see.

Conversation ebbs.

Sara dozes off in her chair.

John picks up her cup and takes the dishes to the kitchen.

John gently wakes her up and points her toward the guest room.

He lays out a TOWEL and a TOOTHBRUSH in the bathroom.

34 INT. JOHN'S BASEMENT - EVENING

John practices martial arts moves.

35 INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

John sits at the table with a cup of coffee reading the PAPER.

Sara comes in wrapped in a TOWEL, her hair still wet.

John averts his eyes.

She goes to the CUPBOARD and reaches for a CUP. The towel creeps up.

John peeks, and catches a glimpse of her dark patch.

She fills her cup and smiles at him.

He watches her as she walks back out to the guest room.

36 EXT. HEALDSBURG PLAZA - DAY

One of Merku's thugs walks around the plaza until he locates "On Angel's Wings." He walks across the street, sits down on a bench, and makes a call.

37 INT. ON ANGEL'S WINGS - DAY

Furio, wearing an orange t-shirt, slaps her.

FURIO

We know she's around here. Tell me
where she went.

No answer. He slaps her a few more times, harder, drawing
blood.

MELODY

John's house.

FURIO

Where's that?

MELODY

Computer.

Furio drags her to her desk where her laptop is open.

FURIO

Show me.

Melody opens her email and scans the contacts. Find's John's
address.

38 INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John and Sara are in his office. She's watching him work a
case. His PHONE RINGS.

MELODY

They're coming. I'm sorry.

JOHN

Who's coming?

John hears a CLUNK as she drops her phone.

39 INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John and Sara hear wood SPLINTERING as the Furio bursts
through the front door.

JOHN

Quick, into the closet.

Furio rushes around the house and then into the office, gun
drawn.

FURIO

Where's the girl?

JOHN

What girl?

FURIO
We know she's here.

JOHN
Do you see her?

FURIO
Tell me where she is or I'll beat
the shit out of you.

John slaps the gun out of Furio's hand and points it at him.

JOHN
Get out and don't come back.

John calls Melody. No answer.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Let's go.

40 INT. ON ANGEL'S WINGS - DAY

John and Sara rush in and find Melody slumped in her chair,
her face bruised and bloody.

John calls 911 and an ambulance arrives.

41 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

John sits anxiously by the bed.

SARA
Do you see any of them?

JOHN
No.

Sara reaches into her bag and brings out some herbs. She
waves them over Melody from head to toe while chanting in a
low voice.

42 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - DAY

Furio stands before Merku's desk giving his report.

FURIO
I swear, Jefe, there was no girl.

MERKU
Thank you, Furio. Gather the men.

FURIO
Yes, Jefe.

43 INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door opens.

The outline of an older woman appears.

She pads across the floor to the side of the bed.

She leaps on the bed, pinning John under the blankets.

Her hands close around John's throat.

In his dream, John sees his mother trying to strangle him.

He wakes up and sees Snakehead choking him, wearing the feathered headdress and day-of-the-dead makeup.

He thrashes underneath Snakehead for a moment to no effect.

His self-defense training takes over.

He forces his arms between Snakehead's arms, breaking the grip on his throat.

They fight on the bed.

They roll off onto the floor, and John ends up on top.

John strangles Snakehead.

Snakehead shape-shifts to elude his grasp.

Snakehead pauses in the doorframe before running out.

SNAKEHEAD

Send her back!

44 INT. JOHN'S LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

John stumbles in and collapses in one of the over-stuffed chairs.

He sits there unmoving until the light of dawn peeps through the windows.

45 INT. JOHN'S BATHROOM - MORNING

John looks in the mirror and feels the bruises on his throat.

46 INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John sits slumped at his desk.

He shuffles his papers but doesn't focus on them.

He gets up and walks to the window and stares out.

47 INT. ON ANGEL'S WINGS - DAY

John and Melody sit on a COUCH in the back of the shop having a GLASS of WINE.

JOHN

I'm not sure I can do this anymore.

MELODY

You may not have a choice. Do you want to go upstairs? It'll help you.

JOHN

I guess so. OK.

48 INT. MELODY'S SEX MAGIC ROOM - DAY

They go into a small, windowless room draped with Indian fabrics. Oriental rugs on the floor. A few small cushions. A boom box. A hookah.

Melody closes the door, lights several candles, turns off the light.

They undress in the way of people who are used to seeing each other naked.

Melody goes to a small cabinet and takes out two boxes.

From one box she pours a generous amount of pot into the bowl of the hookah. She takes a cube of hash out of the other box and puts it on top of the pot.

She starts the boom box playing soft, meditative music.

They sit on cushions with the hookah between them and smoke.

After awhile they put the hookah aside.

Melody stands up and moves to John.

She squats, wrapping her yoni around his lingam, and they settle into the connected meditation position.

They breathe together, raising their energy.

In time their orgasm comes from deep within, and they stay wrapped around each other in a blissful embrace.

49 EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

A young man walks down an urban street.

A van marked "Aztec Plumbing" pulls up beside him.

The side door opens.

Two big guys jump out and grab him.

They drag him into the van.

They pummel him until he stops resisting.

The door slams shut.

The van drives away.

50 EXT. MERKU'S COMPOUND - DAY

The Aztec Plumbing van pulls into the courtyard.

The side door opens.

The two guys drag the young man out of the van.

They drag him into the house through an open door.

51 INT. MERKU'S COMPOUND - DAY

The thugs hustle the young man down a hall until they reach a steel door.

They open the door and throw the young man in.

52 INT. CELL - DAY

The heavy steel door CLANGS shut.

All he can see is a thin sliver of light at the bottom of the door.

Sometimes he sees shadows moving as people walk by the door.

53 INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

John meets his friend Gandy.

GANDY

Looking kinda tough, big guy. Are you and Melody doing weird stuff in bed?

JOHN

No, it's not that, you asshole.

GANDY

You can tell me. I'm your friend.

JOHN
It's nothing.

GANDY
If it wasn't Melody, who was it?

JOHN
I'm not sure you'd believe it.

GANDY
Try me.

JOHN
A couple of weeks ago a young Maya woman showed up at Melody's shop.

GANDY
And you told Melody what you and the girl did?

JOHN
No, no. Jeez.

GANDY
Out with it.

JOHN
She came in very scared and looking for help.

GANDY
What kind of help?

JOHN
Protection from someone who was chasing her.

GANDY
Why Melody?

JOHN
She's a healer, so she thought Melody would be sympathetic.

GANDY
How does that turn into bruises on your neck?

JOHN
Melody asked me to hide her for a few days. Couldn't say no.

GANDY
Still doesn't tell me how...

JOHN

A couple of days later four of the gang showed up, beat up Melody, and then came to the my house looking for Sara- that's her name.

GANDY

Is that when you got hurt?

JOHN

No. I went out of the body and tracked them down. I made it pretty clear they shouldn't come back.

GANDY

You snuffed them?

JOHN

No. Just put three of them to sleep in a way they won't forget.

GANDY

I didn't know you had that in you.

JOHN

Neither did I. A few days later this sorcerer goes out of his body and tries to strangle me.

GANDY

You've been pretty busy lately.

JOHN

I fought him off, but it was a close thing.

GANDY

So is it finished?

JOHN

I wish it was. This will only be over when one of us is dead.

GANDY

I hate to ask what's next.

JOHN

I'm not sure yet. Something.

GANDY

Need some help?

JOHN

Maybe. It'll be very dangerous.

54 INT. JOHN'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

John, Melody, and Sara drink coffee and eat cookies.

MELODY

Who are these people, Sara?

SARA

The man who tried to strangle John
is called Snakehead.

MELODY

Is that his real name?

SARA

No, it's his totem name. I don't
know what his real name is.

Melody fetches the pot and pours more coffee.

MELODY

What's all that about the headdress
and skull makeup?

SARA

He's an Aztec sorcerer from a very
old tradition.

MELODY

Sure about that?

SARA

I know about these things. My family
tradition is just as old, but we do
white magic.

JOHN

And he...

SARA

He does black magic. He is very
powerful and very evil.

MELODY

I don't really believe in evil.

SARA

You will.

55 INT. JOHNS BASEMENT - DAY

John stands at a loading bench making three-oh-eight sniper
rounds.

A black Remington seven-hundred hangs over the bench. Synthetic stock. Heavy barrel. Bi-pod. Tactical scope.

John continues the ritual: Primers, powder, bullets.

Gandy peruses John's library. He scans the titles and pulls down a book from time to time, flips through it, puts it back.

Gandy walks over to the bench.

GANDY

Why do you go to all that bother?
Why not just buy'em.

JOHN

These are special. Subsonic.

GANDY

What does that mean?

JOHN

They're very quiet. Lengthens the
life of the barrel while shortening
the life of the target.

GANDY

If you have that, why don't you have
an A.R. fifteen?

JOHN

That's for the spray and pray crowd.
We're not into that.

GANDY

Who's "we"?

JOHN

The guys I shoot with. One shot, one
kill. A much smaller group, no pun
intended.

Gandy gestures toward the rifle.

GANDY

You planning to use that on those
guys in LA?

JOHN

I'd like to, but it's not practical.
Hard to get away clean.

GANDY

So what are you going to use?

JOHN
Magic. Dark Arts.

GANDY
I'd like to see that.

JOHN
Maybe not. I may not survive.

GANDY
Might be worth it. Might be the
challenge I've been waiting for my
whole life.

John finishes with the first box of ammo and arranges his
bench to start on the next lot.

JOHN
Don't be in such a hurry to put your
life at risk. I don't have a choice
at this point. You do.

GANDY
If you're not going to shoot'em, how
are you going to kill them with magic?

JOHN
I have a few tools, but what I really
need is a way to get to their psyche.
Tap their fears.

GANDY
Exactly how would you do that?

John goes over to the stairs and calls up.

JOHN
Sara, can you come down here for a
minute?

After a few moments, Sara comes down.

John motions toward a small table and chairs.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Let's go over there. You too, Gandy.

Sara and Gandy sit down.

John grabs a legal pad and a pen from the bench. Sits down.
Flips the pad to a fresh page.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You said the sorcerer's totem name was Snakehead. How did he get that? I mean, I know he had an initiation, but why that name?

SARA

He said it was because in his vision he made friends with a giant anaconda that could have killed him.

JOHN

That's a start. Anything else?

SARA

Another sorcerer came to visit him once. His name was Jaguar.

GANDY

Hey, I just saw something about that in one of your books.

Gandy jumps up, strides to the bookshelf, and scans the titles. He finds the right one and brings it back. The title is "Totem Animals and Their Significance."

JOHN

That's part of it. What to do with it.

GANDY

You did say the sorcerer went out of his body sorcerer attacked you, and you went out of the body to get the guys who beat up Melody.

JOHN

How does that relate to totem animals?

GANDY

Beats me. Just an idea.

56 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Snakehead is standing before Merku's desk.

SNAKEHEAD

El Condor is dead.

MERKU

How did he die?

SNAKEHEAD

His sorcerer poisoned him.

MERKU

Who's running the gang now?

SNAKEHEAD

The sorcerer.

MERKU

Don't get any ideas.

Snakehead silently turns and leaves.

Merku lays out some lines of coke and snorts them.

57 INT. DOJO - DAY

MASTER SUN, 60, stands on one side of a large room. John and Gandy stand on the other.

MASTER SUN

You will never be as strong as I am,
but you can be much stronger than
you are. Are you ready?

John nods.

Master Sun places his hands on his hips, takes a breath, and takes a small step forward. John and Gandy stagger back.

MASTER SUN (CONT'D)

Are you ready to learn?

John looks at Gandy.

JOHN

We are, Master.

MASTER SUN

Very well, it starts with your breath,
which carries the Chi.

Master Sun begins to teach them various Chi Gong moves.

58 INT. JOHNS BASEMENT - EVENING

John and Gandy are hanging out, having a few beers.

GANDY

This guy Snakehead seems to be very
powerful.

JOHN

He is, but he's not invincible.
I've been looking at some ideas.

John gets up and goes to the loading bench. He comes back with a large old leather-bound book, "Imitato Dei."

GANDY
What does that mean?

JOHN
Imitation of God.

GANDY
You read Latin?

JOHN
Not very well, but good enough for this.

John flips to a page with an image of 3 circles surrounded by Gothic Latin text.

JOHN (CONT'D)
This is a circle of power.

GANDY
I don't suppose the Church approves of that?

JOHN
We aren't asking them, are we?

GANDY
What's it do?

JOHN
It controls energy. You can use it for offense or defense.

GANDY
And you know how to make this circle?

JOHN
We could get trapped inside it if we do it wrong.

GANDY
With that sorcerer.

JOHN
Yup.

GANDY
Doesn't sound like fun to me.

JOHN
Wouldn't be.
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

By the way, can you and your cop friends keep an eye out for any more strange people coming around?

GANDY

No problem. We're meeting for coffee tomorrow morning.

59 INT. JOHNS BASEMENT - EVENING

John and Sara sit in front of a monitor showing a Google Maps view of the LA area.

JOHN

Do you remember anything about where you were?

SARA

They were always talking about East LA.

JOHN

That's a big chunk of territory. Can you remember anything specific?

Insert: Sara gets a mental picture of a street.

SARA

I remember some streets we used to get to the shopping center.

JOHN

Give me one.

SARA

The big street was Olympic Blvd.

JOHN

Cross street?

SARA

C something. It had a divider. Looped around. Sometimes we went the other way.

JOHN

Other way?

SARA

The other loop. Uh, uh, something V, like a city, uh, Vancouver.

John searches for that combination but comes up dry.

JOHN
Anything else? What stores did you
go to?

Insert: Sara gets a mental picture of some stores where she
shopped.

SARA
K-Mart, Target.

JOHN
OK. Let's try that.

John searches more and finds a Target on Whittier Boulevard.
He zooms into street view.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Look familiar?

SARA
That's the one.

JOHN
OK. Was it a long way to get to the
marble place?

Insert: Sara gets a mental picture of a place where empty
containers are stored.

SARA
Maybe 10 blocks. Sometimes I saw a
lot of shipping containers.

John pans around until he finds railroad tracks and containers
to the south of the Target.

Insert: Sara gets a mental image of a yard where there are a
lot of vehicles painted in desert camouflage colors.

SARA (CONT'D)
And sometimes lot's of Army trucks
in a big parking lot.

Insert: Sara gets a mental picture of Indio Wholesale.

SARA (CONT'D)
Indio something.

John scans.

JOHN
Indio Wholesale Store?

SARA
That was the first thing I saw.

JOHN
That's where he lives? It's all
industrial.

SARA
No, he had an office there.

JOHN
Why didn't you say so in the first
place?

SARA
You didn't say you wanted his house.

JOHN
Damn. I mean, sorry, I should have
been more precise.

John leans back and looks at her quizzically.

Insert: Sara gets a mental picture of a house, a sign showing
the boundary of a suburb.

SARA
Avocado Heights. Near 5th and
Proctor. It had a red roof. Swimming
pool.

John searches to the location and finds a possible house.

JOHN
That it?

SARA
I never saw it from the sky but it
looks about right.

60 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

John and Gandy are meeting Friedrich Jung, a distant relative
of Carl Jung.

JOHN
We're not here for therapy, although
some people might think that we need
it.

FRIEDRICH
Why is that?

GANDY
You know what we want to talk about.

FRIEDRICH
Yes, I do.

JOHN

You don't think it's crazy?

FRIEDRICH

Some people say our reality is nothing but images projected from our minds.

GANDY

So we can make images that operate on the physical world?

FRIEDRICH

I think you need more than I can teach you, but let's start with projecting force. It starts with your emotions.

61 INT. SNAKEHEAD'S CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Smoke hangs in the air. The ceremonial cup is by Snakehead's side, empty. His god glares down from an altar crowded with candles. Snakehead and his acolyte drum themselves into a trance state.

ACOLYTE

What do you see?

SNAKEHEAD

They are getting help from many men of power.

ACOLYTE

Are they coming here soon?

SNAKEHEAD

Very soon. We must prepare to receive them and turn them into corpses.

62 INT. JOHN'S BASEMENT - AFTERNOON

Gandy is watching John trying to project mental force. Sometimes he sees a little wavering in the light. Most of the time he sees nothing.

JOHN

Do you think I'm doing it right?

GANDY

How would I know?

JOHN

You heard what Dr. Yung said.

GANDY

Yeah. Form a fist in your head.
Imagine it striking across the room.
Sounds easy.

JOHN

Wanna give it a try?

Gandy gets up and stands beside John. He takes a few breaths while he forms a fist in his head. A can of spray paint across the room falls over.

GANDY

Your turn.

JOHN

I think I need more help with this.

63 EXT. 16TH AND MISSION BART STATION - DAY

John and Gandy come up the escalator and are flooded with impressions of street life. Homeless people. A man shouting about Jesus. Drug dealers. People who just want to get to work or get home.

JOHN

He said it was close. Cap or Cop something. His accent was a little thick.

GANDY

I checked Google maps. Copp street, just past 17th.

The men cross Mission and walk the short block to Copp. They turn and walk down a street that stinks of old urine.

They cross 17th and continue to a small house.

They knock on the door.

A middle-aged Latino woman comes to the door.

JOHN

We're...

WOMAN

I know. He's out back.

64 INT. SMALL HOUSE - DAY

They walk through the house and out the back door.

65 EXT. YARD - DAY

There's a tiny shack in the yard. She knocks.

A man opens the door. His face is lined with age and sun but his eyes glitter with life and intelligence.

JOHN

Emilio?

EMILIO

Si. Come in, please.

66 INT. EMILIO'S SHACK - DAY

John and Gandy stoop to get through the low door. The shack is unfurnished except for a cot and two chairs. Herbs and amulets hang from the roof. A frame drum hangs on the wall.

Emilio closes the door. He motions John and Gandy to the chairs and sits on the bed.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

I have heard of this man who is troubling you.

GANDY

You have?

EMILIO

I know how to use a telephone, and I have friends in LA.

JOHN

Excuse my friend. He thinks brujos are old-fashioned.

EMILIO

So do some of my people. They should know better. And the padre's don't like the competition.

John and Gandy chuckle.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

But you know better, don't you?

JOHN

We have traditions, too.

EMILIO

But not for this situation.

JOHN

That's why we're here.

EMILIO

I have decided I will help you, and my spirit guides will help you, but you will have to work very hard.

JOHN

I don't have any choice.

EMILIO

What about your friend?

GANDY

I'm all in.

EMILIO

I don't understand.

JOHN

He plays poker. It means he is completely committed.

EMILIO

That is necessary for this work.

67 EXT. FOREST - DAY

John and Gandy walk down a trail near a stream. John carries a shotgun and Gandy has the mushroom book.

GANDY

Why the gun?

JOHN

Even the cougars are hungry these days. Not to mention pot farmers. See anything that looks right?

GANDY

Not yet.

JOHN

He said they grow near running water.

GANDY

We've been running parallel to this creek for almost a mile.

JOHN

Maybe we need to slow down and look closer.

They slow down and pause from time to time, looking for tiny mushrooms.

GANDY
These look pretty close.

JOHN
Spots aren't right. Let's keep going.

They stop again, rummage around in the weeds.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Ahhhhh. These are the babies.

GANDY
You sure?

JOHN
They're talking to me.

68 INT. EMILIO'S SHACK - NIGHT

John, Gandy, and Emilio sit on the floor around a CANDLE. There's a MORTAR AND PESTLE, a CUP, a FLASK OF WATER and a BAG OF DRIED MUSHROOMS in front of Emilio. The FRAME DRUM is at Emilio's side. A BUCKET sits in the corner.

Emilio takes a few mushrooms out of the bag and grinds them into a powder. He pours some WATER into the CUP and then mixes in the mushroom powder. He takes a sip and hands the cup to John.

EMILIO
Drink half of that.

John drinks and hands the cup to Gandy.

EMILIO (CONT'D)
Drink the rest. If you feel sick use the bucket.

Emilio drums while they wait for the mushrooms to take effect.

69 INT. THE SPIRIT WORLD - NIGHT

John, Gandy and Emilio are in a place where all the objects glow with strange colors.

EMILIO
This is where we come from, and where we go when the body dies.

John and Gandy look around like children at Disneyland.

EMILIO (CONT'D)
This is where the power you need will come from.

John see's Snakehead at a distance. Emilio notices.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

He is part of this, too. When the time comes, I will send him a dream to weaken his heart.

JOHN

How will I know when I have the power I need?

EMILIO

When you see your totem animal. Be quiet and see what you see.

After some minutes:

JOHN

I see a Golden Eagle flying over the desert.

70 INT. EMILIO'S SHACK - ANOTHER NIGHT

John and Gandy are making amulets with Emilio instructing them how to combine plants, bones, and stones into objects of power.

Emilio drums and sings and smudges the amulets to awaken them.

Later, they take mushrooms and go into the spirit world.

GANDY

A wolf came up and laid down beside me.

EMILIO

That's your helper.

71 EXT. YARD - NIGHT

John, Gandy, and Emilio are out in the yard under a full moon.

EMILIO

The anaconda wraps around you and squeezes tighter when you let out your breath.

John throws the apparition at Gandy, you yells stop when he starts to feel the squeeze. The apparition dissolves.

EMILIO (CONT'D)

The jaguar wants to jump on your back and bite your neck. You can try it on me. Don't worry. It can't hurt me.

John throws the apparition several times. Each time it lands on Emilio's back and Emilio absorbs it.

JOHN

If you can do that, can't Snakehead do it too?

EMILIO

He's not as strong as I am. And I will make him afraid when you go to fight him.

72 EXT. EDGE OF LOS ANGELES - DAY

John, Gandy, and Sara drive through a pass and see Los Angeles spread out below them.

JOHN

Second thoughts, anyone?

GANDY

Too late for that.

Montage:

They make their way through the tangle of freeways to Merku's neighborhood.

73 EXT. MERKU'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Montage: They cruise the area around Merku's neighborhood confirming locations for the ring of power.

Gandy checks off the locations on a map as they pass them.

JOHN

That looked better on Google than it does in real life.

GANDY

Maybe we should use that tree across the street.

JOHN

Mark it.

74 EXT. MERKU'S NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

They drive by Merku's house taking pictures as they go.

One of the guards spots them and raises the alarm.

The gate opens and a big black SUV comes roaring out.

John steps on the gas, going through stop lights and stop signs.

75 EXT. LOS ANGELES - DAY

The cars race through several neighborhoods until they come to a freeway entrance.

John careens up the entrance with the gang car close behind.

They weave in and out of traffic at high speed.

Finally, John accelerates through a gap in the traffic and somehow the cars close up, keeping the gang car from following.

76 INT. JOHN'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

John, Gandy, and Emilio do ceremony. They are surrounded by all the things they will need for the upcoming battle.

77 INT. SNAKEHEAD'S CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Snakehead and his assistant prepare to do a special ceremony.

SNAKEHEAD

Bring him.

78 INT. MERKU'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

Two thugs walk down the hall to the cell where the young man is kept.

They unlock the door and go in.

They grab him and march him to Snakehead's ceremonial chamber.

79 INT. SNAKEHEAD'S CEREMONIAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

Snakehead stands by his altar, jade knife in hand.

As the young man is brought in he realizes what is about to happen.

He begins to scream and struggle against the two thugs holding him.

YOUNG MAN

No! I don't want to die.

The two thugs stretch him over the altar, screaming and struggling.

Snakehead raises the knife and plunges it into the young man's chest.

The young man screams and screams, then goes limp as his still-beating heart is pulled from his chest.

Snakehead throws it on a brazier of hot coals, where it sizzles until it stops smoking, a burnt offering to the dark gods.

In his vision he sees the anaconda and the jaguar fighting.

80 INT. EMILIO'S SHACK - MORNING

Emilio calls his shaman friends in LA to make final arrangements.

EMILIO
Yes, Tuesday night. Thank you
brother.

81 EXT. FRINGES OF LOS ANGELES - DAY

John and Gandy drive over a pass and see Los Angeles spread out before them.

82 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Montage: John and Gandy go over their equipment and plans, then rest.

83 EXT. MERKU'S NEIGHBORHOOD - EVENING

Montage: John and Gandy drive around placing the amulets for the ring of power.

84 INT. MERKU'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Merku instructs his men about setting up a security perimeter.

MEN
Yes, Jefe

The men leave the room.

85 EXT. MERKU'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

The guards run out the gate and down the street.

86 INT. MULTIPLE ROOMS - NIGHT

MONTAGE: Brujo's and shamans all over LA are drumming to support John and Gandy in the battle.

87 EXT. MERKU'S COMPOUND - NIGHT

John and Gandy walk down the street. Gandy carries a sledge hammer. The street is empty. All the people have gone inside. Shadowy figures look out through darkened windows.

The door in the gate to the compound is ajar. John walks up and looks through the crack. He sees no one.

He opens the door.

88 INT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

John steps in and looks around. Empty. The door to the house is ajar. John walks up and looks through the crack.

He stands back from the edge and pushes the door open.

Silence.

89 INT. MERKU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John steps in and looks around.

Ahead he sees a large living room filled with a garish collection of furniture and gold-plated statues of nude women. Nobody in sight.

He sees a hall to the left and goes down it. It turns a corner. He peeks. Nothing but a door at the end of the hall.

He goes down the hall to the right.

He peeks around the corner and recoils when he sees Snakehead at the far end. Huge feathered headdress, jade necklace, rattles at his ankles, death's-head makeup.

SNAKEHEAD

Step out where I can see you. I won't hurt you, yet.

John steps out and faces Snakehead.

SNAKEHEAD (CONT'D)

Who are you to challenge me?

JOHN

Who are you to stand in my way?

SNAKEHEAD

I come from 100 generations of men
of power.

JOHN

I come from 100 generations of people
who see.

SNAKEHEAD

My way is greater than your way.

JOHN

My way is not afraid of your way.

SNAKEHEAD

I will crush you like an ant.

JOHN

I have seen your fear. Jaguar has
turned against you.

Snakehead scuttles up to him, shape-shifting to look like John's mom, and throws a painful bolt of dark energy at him.

John shakes it off as Snakehead retreats and returns to his normal form.

GANDY

Can I help?

JOHN

No, I have to do this myself.

John gathers himself and throws a powerful bolt of light energy.

90 EXT. EAST LA - NIGHT

The bolts of energy startle the whole neighborhood. John's bolts are like lightning piercing the sky. Snakehead's are like pitch black cracks in the Earth. People several blocks away come out to see what's going on.

91 INT. MERKU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John and Snakehead exchange blows, some hitting and some fended off.

Snakehead shape-shifts to look like John's mom, scuttles up to John, and throws a heavy bolt that hits John directly and burns the skin over his heart.

John collapses.

Snakehead shifts to his normal shape and moves back.

SNAKEHEAD
Stupid white man!

John crawls around the corner to recover. His friends come up and lay hands on him.

Insert: John has a quick vision- his grandmother touches him on his heart to heal him.

John jumps out into the hall and throws the anaconda apparition at Snakehead.

The anaconda wraps itself around Snakehead and begins to squeeze the breath out of him.

Snakehead grabs the anaconda by the throat, pulls out the jade sacrificial knife, and cuts off the head.

He recoils in horror when he realizes that he has killed his totem animal.

John launches the jaguar apparition. The jaguar grabs Snakehead by the neck and shreds his back with its hind claws.

With blood gushing from many wounds, Snakehead collapses under the weight of the Jaguar.

John dissolves the Jaguar apparition.

John sees Snakehead's chakras as balls of light, and turns them off one at a time- red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. With the last one off, Snakehead dies.

92 INT. A DARK PLACE

Snakehead stands in a featureless space, bleeding from many wounds.

The bloody arms of his sacrificial victims reach up and pull him down.

93 INT. MERKU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John and Gandy rest in the living room.

GANDY
Where's this Merku guy?

JOHN
Must be behind that door.

GANDY
Ready?

JOHN
Do I look ready?

GANDY
Does it matter?

94 INT. RIGHT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gandy breaks down the door with a sledge hammer.

95 INT. MERKU'S BOARDROOM - NIGHT

Merku and his top guys glare at John and Gandy from the board table.

MERKU
Two guys? Two fucking guys? Here
to take us down? You crazy.

John and Gandy stand calmly.

John walks forward and is stopped by a soft force field.

He steps back.

JOHN
Now what?

GANDY
Theoretically there's so much space
between our atoms that we can walk
through walls.

JOHN
Care to demonstrate?

They stand up.

John performs a series of chi gong moves. His body shimmers as he eases into the force field.

MERKU
Kill the fucker!

The men at the table empty their guns at John, but the bullets bounce off the force field.

One of them is wounded by a ricochet.

As John moves through the field, Merku and his men start to rise but John freezes them.

John walks around the table. He touches each of Merku's men and they are sucked through a pinhole into another dimension.

He stands at the foot of the table and throws a powerful bolt at Merku.

Merku screams, throws up, and collapses face down in his own vomit.

96 EXT. MERKU'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

John and Gandy drive around picking up the amulets, then get on the freeway and leave LA.

97 INT. MERKU'S BOARDROOM - NIGHT

Cops look around trying to figure out what happened. Guns and cartridge cases. No sign of the board. Merku slumped at the table, no physical injuries.

98 EXT. JOHN'S BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

John, Gandy, Melody, Emilio, Sara, Gandy's family are having dinner. Sara wakes up after falling asleep on a chaise lounge. She sees Gandy's 19-year-old son smiling at her in a friendly way.