

The Shared Curse

by

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FADE IN

Author's note: Italicized dialogue is spoken in Latin, with English subtitles.

EXT. ANCIENT ROMAN CITY - EVENING

SUPER: Western Italy, 270 B.C.

An ancient city of the Roman Republic.

Monochromatic buildings dominate the space. A few CITIZENS shuffle home for the night.

The swift approach of sandaled feet breaks the rhythm of the scene.

OCTAVIA (early 20s), a vision in draped white, hurries down the street. Alert and wide-eyed, her movements are sharp and close to the body.

She clutches a small satchel to her chest.

She pauses and uses the wall to support herself while she gathers her resolve.

The moonlight illuminates terrible bruises along Octavia's extended arm.

She resumes her rush.

INT. LIVIUS'S SURGERY - NIGHT

An unseen hand lights a single candle and places it in the middle of a small table.

Weak light bathes a shabby room. Rows of jars line the shelves and bundles of dried herbs hang all around.

Octavia takes a seat at the table. LIVIUS (late 30s), a doctor in the loosest sense of the word, joins her.

LIVIUS

Where is your sister?

Octavia lifts her chin and displays angry hand-shaped bruises on her neck.

OCTAVIA

She said you could get me out.

LIVIUS
Did you bring payment?

Octavia places the small satchel on the table and opens it. She pulls out a gold brooch in the shape of a coiled snake.

She slides the brooch across the table to him.

LIVIUS (cont'd)
*This is not the price that was set.
This does not cover the cost of
passage, much less the risk I assume
smuggling you both out.*

He goes to a window and peeks out.

OCTAVIA
It is only me.

Tears spring to her eyes. Octavia breaks down.

He goes to a shelf and takes down an earthenware cask and two cups. He pours and places one in front of her. He lifts his own cup in a salute.

Octavia quiets her sobs and takes a large swallow from the cup. Livius sets his own cup down without drinking.

Octavia's eyes widen and she clutches her chest.

She sinks to the floor.

The doorway fills with torch light.

MARCUS (early 40s) enters, large and imposing, and sneers at Octavia. He rams the end of the torch between the boards of the table. It lodges there with the force of his anger.

MARCUS
*You fool. Who do you think told me of
your sister's plans?*

Marcus tosses a bag of coins at Livius, who feels the weight of the bag and tucks it in his robe.

OCTAVIA
Marcus. Husband. Please.

MARCUS
Silence!

Marcus picks the cup up from the table.

Octavia tries to stand and falls back down.

Livius holds the brooch out for Marcus, who snatches it from his hand.

MARCUS (cont'd)
The deal has been done?

LIVIVS
Yes, my Lord, but --

Marcus smiles and runs his thumb over the brooch.

Marcus holds the brooch over the cup.

MARCUS
Now, Livius.

LIVIVS
Blessed goddess, Trivia, mistress of sorcery, honor our bargain. Bind the life of this woman. Secure her obedience!

OCTAVIA
Marcus!

He dunks the whole brooch into the cup.

An invisible force drags Octavia toward the brooch.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
No! Please!

Octavia tries to slow her progress toward the brooch. She grabs at anything. Jars tumble to the ground and smash.

A great rush of noise and light fills the room, as if stars fall from the sky and streak around it.

The flames of the torch and candle burn bright blue.

Livius takes shelter under the table.

Octavia levitates high into the air.

She lets out a great wail and dissolves into a mist that shimmers in the blue light.

The mist shoots into the brooch.

The stars leave and the flames revert to yellow.

Marcus laughs and examines the brooch.

Livius comes out from his hiding place and approaches Marcus.

LIVIUS
*I must warn you, my Lord, all magic
comes with consequence.*

Marcus fastens the brooch to his chest.

The brooch glows and latches onto Marcus.

He screams as it seers through his clothes. It melds onto his skin.

The mist seeps back out of the brooch.

Octavia reforms, bewildered and terrified. She feels her body, solid once more.

Marcus tries to pull the brooch off. He claws at it.

When that fails, he grabs Livius by the neck.

LIVIUS (cont'd)
No! No!

MARCUS
What have you done to me?

LIVIUS
She must obey, my Lord. As promised!

Marcus brings his face inches from Livius's.

MARCUS
Octavia. Come to me.

Octavia comes.

The brooch glows and the head of the snake burrows under Marcus's skin. It grows and expands under his skin.

Marcus drops Livius and clutches at his chest. He grunts against the pain.

MARCUS (cont'd)
Kill him.

Octavia turns to Livius.

LIVIUS

My Lord! No!

The brooch moves into Marcus further. The movement under his skin indicates it is wrapping around his collar bone.

Octavia watches her own hand extend toward Livius. She turns her head and closes her eyes against her own actions.

MARCUS

Like you said, all magic comes with consequences.

Marcus pulls his bag of coins out of Livius's robe.

Octavia's hands wrap around Livius's neck.

LIVIUS & OCTAVIA

Gods, forgive me.

EXT. EXCAVATION BASE CAMP - AFTERNOON

SUPER: Present Day

The outlines of ancient foundations poke out from the dirt, broken up by the rigid grids of systematic excavation.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS, INTERNS, and HIRED WORKERS labor in the sun.

Trucks, tents, crates and equipment, marked with "Caccini," litter the site.

A canopy shields a busy work area filled with tables of maps, books, computers, and tools.

Small models of the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Tomb of Eurysaces, and other Roman monuments act as paperweights.

DR. MIA SULPIZIO (early 30s) stomps into the camp with an armful of folders and books. People stop to watch her.

Her dark hair escapes from a haphazard bandanna, which has been pressed into service as a headband. She whips her head back in an attempt to save the sunglasses that slip down her nose.

Interns scatter and give her a wide berth.

She catches sight of a small clutch of archaeologists who whisper in a corner.

MIA
You. Doctor whats-your-name.

DR. GOLDSTEIN (late 40s) looks up from the group.

DR. GOLDSTEIN
Me?

MIA
Sure. You expecting the artifacts to
uncover themselves?

Dr. Goldstein ventures over to Mia with a stack of papers.

DR. GOLDSTEIN
It's just that...this notice...it
says --

MIA
That I've been dismissed.

Mia pulls a box from under a table and collects her things.
Despite her small frame, she hauls books and equipment
without strain.

DR. GOLDSTEIN
Well...yes.

MIA
Does it say you've been dismissed?

DR. GOLDSTEIN
What? No!

MIA
Then get back to work.

Dr. Goldstein and the others hustle from the tent.

Mia looks back to find them all gone and sighs.

Mia picks up a small leather-bound journal with "Martino"
embossed in the lower corner. She runs a thumb over the
name.

She contemplates it while she fiddles with the pendant on
her necklace. It's a half-moon shaped symbol, known as a
lunula.

She throws the journal in a nearby garbage can.

SYLVIA CACCINI (mid 40s) saunters into the canopy, all big
hair and heavy makeup.

Meticulously manicured and sporting knee-high leather boots, Sylvia does not look like a woman who belongs at an archaeological dig.

SYLVIA

Mind you don't pack any of my things, Ms. Sulpizio.

MIA

Doctor. It's Doctor Sulpizio, Sylvia.

SYLVIA

And it's Ms. Caccini, if you please. We aren't friends.

MIA

(sarcastic)

First you fire me and now I find out we aren't friends. What a day.

Sylvia runs a distinctive gold locket back and forth on the chain around her neck.

SYLVIA

I agreed to sponsor this dig because you promised me the Altar of Answered Prayers.

MIA

I need more time.

SYLVIA

What is today's date?

MIA

The nineteenth.

SYLVIA

Yes, and I'm scheduled to make my speech on the twenty-first. Time's up.

MIA

Reschedule!

Sylvia picks up the model of the Pantheon.

SYLVIA

Do you have the power to change the date of Rome's founding? Everyone will be at the Pantheon for the celebration. Hundreds of people.

(MORE)

SYLVIA (cont'd)
All the news outlets. The publicity
is priceless!

MIA
This is archaeology, not politics.

SYLVIA
In Italy, they are the same.

MIA
I need more time.

SYLVIA
Lucky for you, we've managed to
uncover a few other items that should
get us some press. Otherwise, I'd
have to sue you to recover expenses.

MIA
You wouldn't dare.

RAKESH BHATT (late 20s), runs into the canopy. Wind-swept
and breathless, his soft brown eyes and British accent lend
sincerity to his precise nature.

RAKESH
Doctor Sulpizio!

MIA
Yes...um...

RAKESH
Rakesh. Rakesh Bhatt.

Mia does not react.

RAKESH (cont'd)
I facilitate the weekly briefing.

He looks at Sylvia for help, but none is offered.

RAKESH (cont'd)
I helped you excavate the aqueduct?

Mia shakes her head.

RAKESH (cont'd)
I'm roughly this tall...brown hair,
brown eyes...answer to the name of
Rakesh...

MIA
What do you want?

RAKESH

Right. We've uncovered a room...a chamber.

MIA

Under the magistrate's residence? Intact?

RAKESH

Yes.

MIA

Yes!

Mia grabs a camera from a table and moves to leave.

SYLVIA

Stop!

Mia turns back.

MIA

What?

SYLVIA

You've been let go.

RAKESH

Let go? As in fired?

Mia resumes her exit.

SYLVIA

Ms. Sulpizio!

Mia stops.

SYLVIA (cont'd)

Check your contract. If you are terminated, you are no longer privy to any discoveries made here. Effective immediately. Kindly remove yourself from my dig.

Sylvia turns on her heels and leaves Mia stunned.

RAKESH

Can she do that?

Mia throws the model of the Pantheon through a large hanging map of Italy.

MIA

No.

Mia fishes the "Martino" journal out of the garbage can.
She marches out of the canopy in the direction Sylvia left.
Rakesh runs after her.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - AFTERNOON

The freshly uncovered outline of a building's foundation
surrounds Sylvia and a team of workers.

Under her supervision, they clear loose dirt from around a
two-by-two hole in the center of the site.

Mia blasts past everyone with Rakesh at her heels.

MIA

Flashlight!

A bewildered worker hands her one.

SYLVIA

Ms. Sulpizio! You're trespassing!

MIA

It's Doctor!

Mia lays down on her stomach and puts the top half of her
body through the hole.

SYLVIA

Security!

Two burly GUARDS move through the gathering CROWD toward
Mia.

INT. UPPER CHAMBER

The upper half of Mia's body dangles through the hole in the
ceiling of a large room.

She sweeps her flashlight over the walls. Gold inlaid
symbols sparkle back at her.

MIA

All hail the mighty gods.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

Mia pops back up from the hole and examines a page in the "Martino" journal.

Rakesh takes a turn to look down the hole.

MIA
We're already losing light. Let's go!

Rakesh straightens up.

RAKESH
If I hadn't been sent on a wild archaeologist chase, you would have had plenty of daylight.

Mia's head snaps up from the journal.

MIA
What?

RAKESH
I couldn't find you. I was told you were down at the southern dig.

MIA
Told by who?

Rakesh points at Sylvia.

MIA (cont'd)
Did you fire me before or after this was uncovered?

SYLVIA
Remove her. Now.

MIA
Before or after?

The guards push Rakesh aside and grab Mia.

SYLVIA
Really, Ms. Sulpizio, such a scene. I suggest you get a life outside of work.

MIA
Before or after? Sylvia!

Mia kicks and flails. She topples equipment as they haul her away.

SYLVIA
Get that cleaned up. We'll go down
tomorrow.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - NIGHT

A couple of flood lights provide spotty illumination.

The two guards walk through the area and sweep flashlights
back and forth.

They disappear down a path. Mia comes out from behind a
stack of crates with a rope over her shoulder and a bag in
her hand.

She throws her bag in the back of a nearby open-top Jeep.
She pulls the journal out and tucks it in the back of her
waistband.

She grabs a flashlight from a nearby crate, secures the rope
to the Jeep's bumper, flicks on the flashlight, and uses the
rope to drop down into the hole.

INT. UPPER CHAMBER - NIGHT

Mia lowers herself into the chamber.

She goes to the nearest symbol on the wall. She can barely
contain her excitement.

MIA
Vesta, goddess of the hearth.

She moves her flashlight to the next symbol, reverent in her
observations.

MIA (cont'd)
Vulcan, god of fire.

She reaches out, but stops short of caressing the next one.

RAKESH (O.S.)
Minerva, goddess of wisdom.

Mia whips the beam of light back to the opening above her.

Rakesh leans down to look at her.

She hardens to all business.

MIA
You gave me a heart attack...you.

RAKESH
It's Rakesh.

MIA
Whatever.

Rakesh lowers himself into the chamber.

RAKESH
You're nothing if not predictable.

MIA
You don't know me.

RAKESH
You're right, I'm sure.

MIA
Why are you here?

RAKESH
Professional curiosity and a personal
need to stick it to the man.

She shines the light in his face and considers him.

RAKESH (cont'd)
The man being Ms. Caccini. What she
did to you...it wasn't right.

Mia gives him a curt nod and turns her attention back to the chamber.

She sweeps the light around the chamber to illuminate the symbols.

MIA
Have you ever seen anything so
perfect? Beautifully preserved.

RAKESH
Twelve gods in gender-balanced pairs.

Mia pulls out and consults the journal.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Ah, the infamous journal.

MIA
Excuse me?

RAKESH

It has been the subject of much speculation. Everyone wants to know why you have it. Doctor Martino was a legend. You know, I --

Mia snaps the journal shut and returns it to her waistband.

MIA

The power of these twelve gods was harnessed to fuel the Altar of Answered Prayers.

RAKESH

Was the altar...invisible?

Mia stares at him.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Well, do you see one?

A murmur tumbles down from above them.

Mia kills the light and they move away from the opening.

GUARD ONE (O.S.)

Do you see that?

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

The guards approach the opening.

GUARD TWO

I think it was already there.

GUARD ONE

I would have remembered.

INT. UPPER CHAMBER

Rakesh pushes himself against a wall. He bumps into a symbol.

A small section of the symbol falls off of the wall and into the dirt.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

Thunder shakes the sky.

Lightning strikes the ground inches from the chamber opening.

The heavens open up and rain falls in sheets.

The guards run for it.

INT. UPPER CHAMBER

Mia watches the rain fall down through the opening.

MIA
You've angered Jupiter.

RAKESH
Pardon?

MIA
Jupiter, the god of the sky and storms. You defaced his symbol.

She points to the symbol behind Rakesh and to the rain.

RAKESH
Is that your expert opinion? As a scientist?

MIA
It's a hypothesis based on initial evidence.

Mia throws her flashlight at him. He catches it. Barely.

RAKESH
I am a scientist, you know. We aren't known for our ability to catch objects thrown at us.

MIA
Aim here, Rahesh.

She kneels down where the rain hits the dirt floor.

Rakesh does as directed.

RAKESH
It's Rakesh, in fact.

Mia pushes mud aside to reveal a stone floor beneath.

She moves deeper into the chamber and kicks dirt aside every few feet so she can follow the stone.

Rakesh trails after her.

When they pass the halfway point of the room, the floor rumbles.

Like a teeter-totter, the floor tips. The side closest to the opening rises and the side Mia and Rakesh stand on, sinks.

The angle becomes too much. Mia and Rakesh fall and slide toward the back wall.

A gap opens between the back wall and the floor.

Rakesh drops the flashlight as he flails around for something to grip.

Mia grabs the flashlight as it slides past her.

MIA
That's our only light!

Mia extends her legs straight out and braces herself between the floor and the wall, her midsection suspended over the gap.

Rakesh manages to get one foot on the far wall. He struggles to adjust and get a good grip.

Mia looks from the opening to the dark abyss below her.

MIA (cont'd)
Move.

RAKESH
What? Where?

Mia points the flashlight beam past Rakesh to the right hand wall. It illuminates a platform four feet below the tilted floor.

RAKESH (cont'd)
What do I look like to you?

MIA
Move or fall.

RAKESH
Well, if you put it that way...

Rakesh walks sideways on the back wall. He shimmies toward the platform with Mia close behind him.

They reach the platform and drop down to it.

RAKESH (cont'd)
How do we get out?

Mia uses the flashlight beam to point out gaps chipped out of the stones up one side.

MIA
Handholds.

Rakesh takes the flashlight from her and illustrates...

RAKESH
They're eight feet from the opening.
How do we get from there to the rope
without sliding back down?

Mia grabs the light back from him.

She finds a stone that protrudes from the wall, which holds the floor in a locked tilted-down position.

MIA
If I retract this stone, the floor
should go back down.

RAKESH
Brilliant. Retract the stone.

Mia pushes on the stone. It doesn't budge.

She consults the journal. Rakesh looks over her shoulder.

RAKESH (cont'd)
What does the good Doctor Martino
have to say about this?

MIA
That the goddesses demand a male
sacrifice.

RAKESH
Very funny.

Mia puts the journal away again.

They are at the top of an exaggerated staircase - each stair stretches two feet high.

The flashlight beam reflects off something far below - gold.

She hops down the first step.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Wrong way!

MIA

Maybe it's something that can help.

RAKESH

This place doesn't seem designed for helpfulness.

He follows her.

INT. LOWER CHAMBER

Mia reaches the bottom.

Rakesh stops one step up to assess the situation.

A large stone altar dominates the lower room. The symbols of the gods, chiseled into the altar, surround a hollowed out area in the center.

Mia throws the flashlight at Rakesh. He catches it. Barely.

RAKESH

Kindly stop doing that!

MIA

I need the light up high so I can see everything.

RAKESH

You certainly know how to make a man feel needed.

Mia approaches an ancient skeleton off to the side of the altar. Nestled in the rib cage rests a coiled snake brooch made of gold.

Mia bends low to get a better look. Rakesh comes up behind her.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Good god.

Mia yelps and jumps back, surprised at Rakesh's sudden proximity.

MIA

Rakesh!

RAKESH

No, my name...oh, yes. Rakesh. Right.
Good.

MIA

This is a sacred space that hasn't
been disturbed since...since...

RAKESH

That gentleman?

Rakesh gestures at the skeleton with the flashlight. It
slips from his grip and flies into the bones.

They disintegrate.

Mia shrieks and falls to her knees.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Oh! My apologies! I'm not usually
so --

Mia throws the flashlight at him.

MIA

Don't. Breathe.

She picks the brooch up and blows the dust away.

RAKESH

Is it wise --

Mia snaps her fingers at Rakesh and points to the brooch in
her hand.

He directs the light at it.

RAKESH (cont'd)

What is it?

MIA

A brooch. Would have been worn here.

She holds it just below her left collar bone to illustrate.

The brooch lights up and seers through her clothes. It melds
to her skin.

Mia screams and claws at the brooch.

RAKESH

What...what...what is happening?

Mia grabs the flashlight and hits the brooch with it.

He catches her arm.

RAKESH (cont'd)
What are you doing?

They both look down at the brooch.

Mist seeps from the brooch and gathers in front of the altar.

RAKESH (cont'd)
I'd like to leave now, I think.

The mist arranges itself and Octavia appears before them in a deep bow.

MIA
Holy hell.

OCTAVIA
The brooch lives.

RAKESH
It's speaking. In Latin.

Rakesh turns and scrambles up the first few steps.

He stops when he realizes Mia isn't following him.

Octavia spots the brooch on Mia.

OCTAVIA
A woman?

Mia watches Octavia with rapt attention.

RAKESH
Doctor Sulpizio? Doctor?

OCTAVIA
Are you a goddess?

MIA
I'm Mia.

RAKESH
Fine. Mia. Time to flee in terror.

OCTAVIA
Are you here to pray for my release?

Octavia approaches the altar with reverence.

Rakesh comes back to Mia.

MIA
(whispering)
What is she?

RAKESH
Do you have ice in your veins? That woman just materialized out of carnivorous rib cage jewelry. Let's go.

MIA
No. I need light.

Octavia's head snaps to attention.

Octavia bows to Mia and throws a hand upward.

OCTAVIA
Light.

Light floods the chamber.

Mia screams as the brooch glows and the head of the snake burrows under her skin.

RAKESH
Mia!

Mia pulls out a pocket knife, snaps it open, and turns the blade toward the brooch on her chest. Just as she is about to dig in, Octavia howls.

They watch as Octavia scrambles around the Altar. She looks for something.

Mia puts the knife away and joins Octavia. She looks into the Altar's hollow. An ancient bronze axe rests in a bed of dust and crumbled leather.

RAKESH (cont'd)
That thing seems upset. Maybe we should leave it alone?

OCTAVIA
The fasces. Gone. Is there another?

RAKESH
My conversational Latin is a little rusty. What is it saying?

Mia runs her hand over a carving of a fasces - an axe surrounded by a bundle of sticks, held together with leather straps.

MIA
The altar's power comes from a fasces.

RAKESH
The stick and axe thing?

MIA
An ancient symbol of strength through unity.

Octavia goes over to Rakesh and studies him. He stands rigid, like if he doesn't move, maybe she'll leave.

OCTAVIA
Is he a priest? Can he make another fasces? To free me? To save you?

RAKESH
What is happening? What's she saying?

Octavia picks up the flashlight. She taps, shakes, and examines it.

MIA
Save me? What do you mean save me?

OCTAVIA
Is this an instrument of the priesthood?

RAKESH
Does she want the flashlight?

MIA
Hold on! Save me from what?

Octavia hands the flashlight back to Rakesh.

OCTAVIA
I entreat you, most holy priest, to reconstruct the fasces.

RAKESH
Mia! What is she saying?

OCTAVIA
Will he help us?

Mia and Rakesh move toward the stairs, unsure.

RAKESH
That's new.

OCTAVIA
You must restore the altar!

Mia throws the axe back in the hollow, but nothing happens.

The step retreats again. Now it's six feet high.

Mia and Rakesh sprint to the stairs.

They both jump to grab the step.

Rakesh hauls himself up, but Mia's hand grabs loose stone and she slips back down.

RAKESH
Give me your hand!

She ignores him and jumps again.

As she tries to haul herself up, the step retreats again and she falls.

Rakesh manages to get to the next step.

Now the first step is eight feet high.

Octavia walks over to Mia's side.

MIA
Go away!

OCTAVIA
I apologize, but I am unable to obey.
I cannot be parted from the brooch.

Mia searches the wall for a place to get a grip.

MIA
Obey?

RAKESH
Mia!

OCTAVIA
I am compelled to obey the one who
bears the brooch.

The step retreats again. Ten feet.

MIA
Great! Don't kill me!

OCTAVIA
All who wear the brooch eventually
succumb to it. Tiberius was the last.

RAKESH
Mia!

MIA
Tiberius?

Octavia points at the dust that was once a skeleton.

MIA (cont'd)
Fine! Get it off of me! I don't want
it.

The step moves again. Rakesh scrambles up. Twelve feet.

OCTAVIA
I am unable to effect the brooch.

MIA
Then what use are you?

RAKESH
Mia!

MIA
Is the brooch poison? Is that it?

The step moves again. Fourteen feet.

RAKESH
Amelia Alexandria Sulpizio!

MIA
That is not my middle name.

RAKESH
Are you quite incapable of focusing
on the critical bits?

He gestures to the steps as they move again.

MIA
Settle down. I've got it.

She turns to Octavia.

MIA (cont'd)
Get me up there...uh...please.

Octavia nods.

In a blink, Mia and Octavia join Rakesh on the step.

Mia grabs her left bicep as the brooch blazes to life again. The movement ripples the skin of her upper arm.

She looks at Rakesh and makes a "ta-da" gesture.

RAKESH
Why didn't you ask her to get us both
above ground?

Mia's face falls, annoyed with herself.

MIA
You're distracting me! Just shut up
for a few minutes!

Octavia points at Rakesh.

Again, the brooch glows and moves.

Mia grips her left forearm and cringes against the pain.

Rakesh opens his mouth to speak, but no sound comes out.

He grabs Mia's arm and points to his throat.

MIA (cont'd)
Ow! Don't touch me!

A swipe of Octavia's hand through the air and Rakesh is thrown backward, away from Mia.

Mia cannot contain a scream as the skin of her left hand quivers.

Rakesh nearly falls off of the towering stair. He manages to barely catch himself on the edge.

MIA (cont'd)
Rakesh!

Mia grabs his hands to pull him back up, but she yanks her left hand back. Gold, with the texture of snake skin, comes out from the nail beds of her fingers and covers her fingernails.

Rakesh gets up in time to scramble to the next step up before it retreats.

MIA (cont'd)
The brooch moves, uh, expands when you do something I say.

OCTAVIA
All magic comes with consequences.

Rakesh throws a fistful of dirt at Mia to get her attention. He points from Octavia to his throat.

MIA
I can't! Consequences!

Rakesh glares at her.

OCTAVIA
She said "for a few minutes."

MIA
See? You'll be fine. Soon.

They all climb the remaining steps.

At the top, Mia sees that the stone that holds the floor at an angle clicks back a notch with each step that retreats.

Mia grabs a handhold.

MIA (cont'd)
So, if I replace the fasces, I can pray this thing off of me?

Rakesh motions for Octavia to go next.

Thrown off by this kindness for a moment, Octavia climbs.

OCTAVIA
That is what Tiberius believed.

MIA
It didn't work for him?

OCTAVIA
He died before he could try.

Rakesh gets his feet secured just as the last step retreats out from under him.

The stone which holds the floor disappears into the wall.

The floor wobbles, now unsecured on either side.

They struggle to maintain their grip.

Mia climbs and the others follow.

They make their way past the halfway point. The weight balance shifts and the floor tips toward level.

It slams down into place.

SYLVIA (O.S.)

Sulpizio!

Mia rolls over onto her back and groans.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - NIGHT

Mia climbs out of the opening, followed by Octavia and Rakesh.

Sylvia watches them appear.

MIA

Sylvia! You won't believe --

Sylvia snaps her fingers at the two guards, who take a few steps toward Mia.

SYLVIA

These gentlemen will be escorting you to the airport or to jail. Your choice.

MIA

Sylvia, no, wait! Down there --

At the sight of Octavia in her toga, Sylvia puts up a hand to stop Mia from speaking.

Octavia stares, bewildered at her surroundings. She takes in the ruins.

OCTAVIA

How long...how long have I been down there?

SYLVIA

Who is this?

MIA
That's what I'm trying to tell you!
She's from another --

SYLVIA
You're letting unauthorized tourists
contaminate my excavation?

Mia snaps.

MIA
Your excavation? Your excavation!
You're just the money. I've done the
research. I've done the work.
Everything you claim is "yours" is
rightfully mine!

Octavia pushes both of her hands out from her chest in an aggressive move.

A burst of wind explodes through the site.

Mia feels the movement begin on her right collar bone and tries to dig her fingers in to stop it. It does not work.

SYLVIA
Arrest her.

The guards look at Mia and back at Sylvia. They mutter under their breath in Italian and walk away.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
Hey! I'm talking to you!

Sylvia chases after them until one of the crates catches her eye. It doesn't say "Caccini" anymore. It says "Sulpizio."

SYLVIA (cont'd)
What's this?

She looks at Rakesh. He points at Octavia.

OCTAVIA
"Everything you claim is 'yours' is
rightfully mine."

RAKESH
Bloody hell. Oi!

He feels his throat and tries a few more sounds.

RAKESH (cont'd)
(to Octavia)
Thank you!

OCTAVIA
I was only following the command
exactly as given.

SYLVIA
Who is this person?

OCTAVIA
Octavia.

RAKESH
Exactly as given...What else do you
claim is yours, Ms. Caccini?

He runs a hand over the name "Sulpizio" on a piece of
equipment.

RAKESH (cont'd)
You may want to check your bank
accounts.

Sylvia glares at him and then pulls out her phone.

MIA
Seriously?

Octavia shrugs.

MIA (cont'd)
Let's end this. Get me a new fasces
and I'll go back down there.

Octavia shakes her head.

OCTAVIA
I cannot harness the power of the
gods. Each rod must be blessed by a
priest in the god or goddess's temple
to imbue them with their power.

RAKESH
Well, that's not likely.

OCTAVIA
You do not wish to restore the altar?

MIA
That isn't what he means.

OCTAVIA
What does he mean?

MIA
(distracted)
Pick Rakesh's brain. I'm thinking.

Sylvia looks up from her phone, enraged.

SYLVIA
What have you done to me?

Octavia crosses to Rakesh and puts one hand on either side of his head.

Rakesh's eyes flash gold. His body goes rigid. Octavia's eyes vibrate, as if rapidly reading text.

Octavia releases him and he falls to the ground.

MIA
Whoa! Hey!

Mia groans and massages her right bicep as it is invaded by the expanding gold.

MIA (cont'd)
Not everything I say is a command!

OCTAVIA
Thank you, Rakesh.

Rakesh waves a hand at her as he tries to recover from the experience.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
Fascinating.

Sylvia makes the connection that Octavia is doing what Mia says.

SYLVIA
She did this somehow, didn't she? Fix it!

OCTAVIA
I do not obey you. Only Mia.

SYLVIA
Tell her to fix this.

MIA
Do you see this?

Mia holds up her left hand.

SYLVIA
Tell her!

MIA
No, I have to --

SYLVIA
Now!

Mia ignores her.

MIA
(mumbling)
Priests in temples...

Sylvia stalks toward Mia.

MIA (cont'd)
Just give me a minute!

Octavia flicks a hand toward Sylvia. Sylvia stops in her tracks. She can't move her body.

The brooch glows. Mia grabs her right forearm and grits her teeth against the pain.

MIA (cont'd)
Stop doing that!

OCTAVIA
I cannot. Chose your words carefully.

MIA
Fine. Bye.

Mia pulls the rope off the Jeep and hops in.

RAKESH
Where are you going?

MIA
To get some sticks and persuade some gods to bless them.

RAKESH
What about Ms. Caccini?

MIA
I am not killing myself faster for her bank account.

Mia fires up the Jeep. Rakesh guides Octavia to the back seat and takes shotgun.

OCTAVIA
This is a...car, yes?

RAKESH
You may want to hold onto something.
I've seen her drive.

OCTAVIA
As have I.

RAKESH
What?

Octavia holds her hands out in the way she did when she read Rakesh.

RAKESH (cont'd)
That's not upsetting at all.

Octavia smiles at him.

Mia stomps on the gas.

Sylvia remains frozen for a few seconds and then unfreezes.

She runs a few steps toward the retreating Jeep, catches her locket as it bounces in front of her face. She screeches to a halt.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Mia drives like a maniac over rough terrain.

Rakesh and Octavia hang on for dear life.

Octavia whimpers, eyes shut tight.

RAKESH
Can you slow down?

MIA
How long do I have?

OCTAVIA
It depends on how quickly you use the
commands. Tiberius lasted two days.

MIA
Okay, how many do I have?

OCTAVIA
The twentieth command will complete
the cycle.

Mia and Rakesh do some quick mental math.

MIA
Twenty? That seems like a lot.

RAKESH
By my calculation, you've used over a
third of them already.

Mia pulls the Jeep alongside a large tree.

EXT. LARGE TREE - CONTINUOUS

The lights from the dig site are on the horizon.

Mia hops out and grabs a saw from the back of the Jeep.

Octavia opens her eyes to look at the tree.

OCTAVIA
Birch.

Mia blinks at Octavia, shocked.

MIA
Excuse me?

OCTAVIA
The wooden rods of a fasces are --

MIA
From a birch tree, of course.

She looks around.

MIA (cont'd)
Sicily then.

RAKESH
Sicily is seven and a half hours from
here.

MIA
I'm not going to drive around
aimlessly, hoping to run across some
birch trees. There's a famous grove
of them around Mount Etna.

RAKESH

I'm not sure you're using the word
"famous" properly.

OCTAVIA

Even if we have the rods, I saw the
state of things in Rakesh's mind. All
of the temples are ruins.

MIA

Surely Rakesh knows there is one
temple that fits the bill.

RAKESH & OCTAVIA

The Pantheon.

Mia nods.

MIA

One stop shop for all the gods. After
Sicily.

Mia drops the saw in the back and opens Rakesh's door.

RAKESH

Want me to take first shift?

MIA

No. Get --

Rakesh holds up a hand to stop her command. He points at her
gold fingernails.

RAKESH

Careful.

She tries again, with a sideways glance at Octavia.

MIA

Would you consider getting out of my
Jeep?

RAKESH

No.

Mia drums her gold plated fingernails on the Jeep's hood.

MIA

I don't need a sidekick.

OCTAVIA
Sidekick? Like Jimmy Olson to
Superman or Robin to Batman or
Jughead to Archie?

MIA
(to Rakesh)
That's what's in your head?

Rakesh shrugs.

RAKESH
Archie is wildly underappreciated.

Mia shifts her focus to Octavia.

MIA
There are real clothes in my bag.

OCTAVIA
Real clothes?

RAKESH
She means your current attire is a
little...conspicuous.

Octavia takes the bag and goes around behind the tree.

MIA
I can handle this.

RAKESH
I believe you.

MIA
So...

RAKESH
I'm not leaving.

MIA
Why on earth not?

Rakesh fishes for a reason.

RAKESH
You're going to publish a paper about
this discovery, I presume.

MIA
I might leave out a few parts, but
preserving and documenting history is
my job.

RAKESH
I want to co-author it.

Mia bristles.

MIA
What?

RAKESH
I uncovered the chamber.

MIA
Based on my research.

RAKESH
I helped you find the brooch.

MIA
You destroyed skeletal remains with a
flashlight!

He closes the Jeep door in defiance.

Octavia comes back in jeans and a loose shirt.

OCTAVIA
I look like you now, yes? But you
wear a lunula.

She points to Mia's necklace.

RAKESH
Aren't those supposed to protect
against sorcery?

He indicates Octavia with raised eyebrows.

OCTAVIA
If they are sanctified.

MIA
Well, mine was sold by a street
vendor who specialized in Pope snow-
globes and gladiator bobble-heads, so
there you go.

Mia climbs in the driver's seat.

Rakesh gets out and opens the back door for Octavia.

OCTAVIA
You're grandparents would be pleased.

RAKESH

Pardon?

OCTAVIA

Your grandmother told you that your grandfather always opened doors for her and it made her feel special. Respected. You've been doing it ever since.

RAKESH

She did?

OCTAVIA

You were five years old.

RAKESH

I don't remember that.

OCTAVIA

It is all there.

Octavia smiles at him and points at his head. She gets in the Jeep.

MIA

Wow.

Mia starts the Jeep and pulls away.

Rakesh has to run to hop into the moving car.

EXT. EXCAVATION BASE CAMP - NIGHT

Sylvia's knuckles turn white from her grip on her locket. She stares at a laptop.

She slams it shut and hurls it across the canopy.

She goes on a rampage of destruction.

A crate, with "Sulpizio" stamped on the side is reduced to splinters.

Dr. Goldstein approaches with a small crowd of workers.

DR. GOLDSTEIN

Ma'am! Ma'am! We've called the authorities.

Sylvia stops mid-swing.

SYLVIA
You don't know me either?

DR. GOLDSTEIN
Should we?

SYLVIA
That thing. That thing said they
needed to get blessings in temples...

DR. GOLDSTEIN
What?

Sylvia runs to the map of Italy. She searches for a clue.

She notices the hole and sees the model of the Pantheon in
the dirt, where it landed after Mia threw it.

Sylvia steals a Jeep and nearly runs over Dr. Goldstein.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Mia concentrates on the road ahead of her.

RAKESH
This will be a long trip if no one
engages in any conversation.

He looks back at Octavia, who stares out the window in
wonder.

Mia's phone rings. She takes it from her pocket, looks at
the caller ID, and throws it in a cup-holder.

It stops and then begins again.

RAKESH (cont'd)
That usually means someone would like
to speak to you.

Mia glances at it.

MIA
Same number. No one I know.

RAKESH
Then tell them to bugger off.

Mia answers it.

MIA
(on the phone)
Who is this?...Antonio?...I don't
know any Antonio Ferrera... You have
the wrong number, man.

She hangs up.

An awkward silence stretches for a moment.

The phone rings again. Same number.

Mia turns it off.

RAKESH
So...all right?

MIA
Who me?

RAKESH
Yes...

MIA
I'm fine.

RAKESH
I don't think I'd be fine if there
was something slowly killing me by
burrowing under my skin. I have panic
attacks when I get a flu shot. I
despise needles and blood and all
that.

MIA
How manly.

RAKESH
I'm very secure in my manhood. I can
be a man and still have a healthy
fear of pain.

MIA
Whatever you say.

RAKESH
I can grow an impressive mustache in
a week. I laugh at crude body humor
and watch movies that have more
explosions than plot. I routinely
yell at sports teams on the
television as if they can hear me.

MIA
Name one team. Any sport.

RAKESH
The San Francisco...sea lions.

Mia laughs. Octavia joins in, unsure of the joke but wanting to participate.

Alerted again to Octavia's presence, Mia turns serious again.

MIA
You're a terrible liar.

RAKESH
So are you.

MIA
When did I lie?

RAKESH
There's no way you're "fine."

He flips on the radio.

INT. SYLVIA'S JEEP - NIGHT

Sylvia drives with her phone to her ear.

It rings and rings.

SYLVIA
Come on, come on.

She gives up and throws the phone onto the passenger seat.

The screen reads "Antonio - Call Failed."

She runs her locket back and forth on its chain as she speeds down the road.

Her car passes a sign which reads "Rome 180 km."

INT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - NIGHT

The Jeep has a flat tire. The three stand on the side of the road.

Mia growls in frustration.

She digs a flashlight out and throws it at Rakesh.

RAKESH
Oh good, this again.

Mia gets to work changing the tire. Octavia watches her, impressed.

RAKESH (cont'd)
You know, if you weren't going ninety kph, you might have been able to see the pothole in time to avoid it.

MIA
I have my reasons.

RAKESH
Showing off for your new friend?

MIA
She's not my friend.

Octavia's face registers this statement.

RAKESH
Worried all the good birch will be gone?

MIA
I'm in a hurry because there aren't any priests.

RAKESH
Do you enjoy being cryptic, or do you honestly believe you're explaining yourself?

Mia's hand slips off of the lug nut wrench and she pitches forward. She bumps her shoulder against the Jeep.

MIA
Oh, I'm sorry. I should really take the time to give you a detailed explanation right now.

Octavia waves a hand.

A hazy image of the Pantheon appears in front of Rakesh.

Mia falls to her knees. The gold comes out of the nailbeds of her right hand and extends to her fingertips.

MIA (cont'd)
I was being sarcastic!

Octavia directs a hand toward Mia, who goes rigid and speaks like an automaton. As she speaks, the image of the Pantheon illustrates...

MIA (cont'd)
With no priest to perform the rituals, the only hope is Founding Day. At noon on that day, the gods send down their blessing through the oculus, at the moment it aligns perfectly with the entrance to the temple. In the days of the Empire, the doors would be thrown open to reveal the Emperor, bathed in light, to the waiting crowd in the piazza and they would know he was sanctified by the gods.

Once it plays out, the image fades away.

RAKESH
Now was that so difficult?

Mia snaps out of the trance and throws a lug nut at Rakesh.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Rakesh dozes in the passenger seat.

OCTAVIA
Are you normal?

MIA
Excuse me?

OCTAVIA
Are you a typical woman of this time?

MIA
Didn't you get an understanding of this time from him?

Mia nods toward Rakesh.

OCTAVIA
There seems to be many conflicting ideas and ideals for women in this time.

Mia coughs out a little laugh.

MIA
Got that right, sister.

EXT. MOUNT ETNA - MORNING

The Jeep pulls up to a grove of trees.

Mia, Rakesh, and Octavia get out. Mia goes around to the back and digs through supplies.

Rakesh turns to Octavia.

RAKESH
Ever been to Mount Etna before?

OCTAVIA
Yes.

RAKESH
No one commanded an eruption, I hope.

OCTAVIA
Before the brooch.

RAKESH
What was that like?

OCTAVIA
Not much different than after.

Mia hands Rakesh a small saw.

MIA
Time to earn your keep, manly man.
Twelve relatively straight lengths of
two feet each.

Mia walks toward a stand of trees with a much larger saw.

She scales a tree easily, sits on a branch, and begins to saw.

Rakesh manages to get to a lower branch.

RAKESH
You might be more manly than me.

MIA
Obviously.

Octavia watches them from the ground.

RAKESH
Have you ever heard of anything
like...her before? Is there anything
in Doctor Martino's journal?

MIA
About ancient Roman genies? No.

RAKESH
I don't believe she's a genie. She
was a real woman.

Two Rangers, GALLO and CONTI, approach.

GALLO
Ehi, tu! Cosa fai?

Octavia backs away.

RAKESH
Good morning!

CONTI
What are you doing? Get out of that
tree!

Rakesh drops the saw and dangles to drop down.

MIA
No.

Rakesh pulls himself back up. Sort of.

CONTI
Miss! You cannot destroy these trees.
This is protected land.

Gallo approaches Octavia, who runs to the Jeep and climbs
in.

Mia drops a stick to the ground. It nearly hits Conti.

CONTI (cont'd)
That's enough. Come with us. Now.

Gallo pulls handcuffs from his belt as he nears the Jeep.

RAKESH
Um...Mia?

Octavia huddles in the backseat.

Gallo taps on the door with the handcuffs.

Conti walks over to the Jeep. Moving Gallo aside, he yanks open the door.

Conti's phone tumbles from his pocket onto the floor of the Jeep as he grabs Octavia and pulls her out.

OCTAVIA

Mia!

RAKESH

Hey, mate! Calm down!

CONTI

Think they can do whatever they please.

Octavia struggles against his grip.

RAKESH

Mia...

MIA

I'm almost done.

RAKESH

Leave her alone!

GALLO

You are the ones making this difficult.

RAKESH

Are you going to let them take her?

Gallo moves in to handcuff Octavia.

MIA

She has magical powers for god sake.

Octavia closes her eyes. She shakes and mumbles something under her breath.

CONTI

Why don't you tell your friends to come on down?

Octavia extends her hands toward the Rangers.

Her eyes fly open and flash gold.

The Rangers disappear.

Octavia's eyes roll back in her head and she collapses, unconscious.

EXT. MILES AWAY

The Rangers look around, stunned. They stand alone in a secluded section of the park.

GALLO

Che cavolo!

Conti feels his pocket for his phone.

EXT. BIRCH TREE

Mia and Rakesh drop down from the tree.

Mia taps at the brooch. It didn't move.

Mia collects the birch sticks.

Rakesh runs to Octavia.

RAKESH

Octavia?

Mia loads the sticks into the Jeep.

MIA

Are you coming?

RAKESH

She's unconscious.

MIA

Great. Are you coming?

RAKESH

What about her?

Mia gets into the Jeep.

RAKESH (cont'd)

You're not serious.

MIA

It'll be faster!

Rakesh doesn't go to the Jeep.

MIA (cont'd)
She'll be fine! You saw what she just did.

RAKESH
She's unconscious!

Mia fires it up.

Rakesh moves in front of the bumper.

Mia throws it in reverse and backs up several feet.

RAKESH (cont'd)
You're better than this!

Mia stops and puts the Jeep in park.

She gets back out.

MIA
Based on what? You said it yourself back in the chamber. I must have ice in my veins. So what evidence do you have that leads you to believe I would do anything different? Why are you still here? Really?

Rakesh begins to say something, then visibly changes his mind.

RAKESH
I've seen the look in your eyes when a discovery is made. She's the ultimate discovery.

Mia assesses Rakesh.

MIA
So I'm a history nut. That's why I won't leave her?

Rakesh shrugs.

Mia marches over to Octavia, and picks her up.

Rakesh moves to help Mia.

MIA (cont'd)
For your own safety, I suggest you get in the Jeep.

He does.

EXT. PIAZZA DELLA ROTUNDA - DAY

Sylvia walks into the piazza, dark circles sit heavy under her eyes.

She takes a seat at the outdoor cafe and snaps at a waiter.

An espresso arrives almost immediately.

She pulls out her phone and tries a call.

SYLVIA
Antonio! It's Sylvia. Don't --

She drops the phone on the table.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
-- hang up.

She sips and watches the front door of the Pantheon.

INT. JEEP - AFTERNOON

Mia stares straight ahead as she drives. Octavia lays unconscious in the back seat.

Rakesh picks up Martino's journal from the dashboard.

RAKESH
How did you come about this?

MIA
The Altar of Answered Prayers was my doctoral thesis. I poured over dusty archives and tedious translations and turned some heads in the process. Including Martino's. He offered to partner with me for the dig. Together we secured prestigious grants, attracted some big donors. And then he pulled out. Just like that, no one would fund me. Something of this scope, being led by a baby PhD with no track record? I had to take anything I could get. I got Sylvia.

RAKESH
Why'd he back out?

She presses her lips into a thin line.

MIA
Heart condition.

RAKESH
That sounds like a legitimate reason.

MIA
He chose, instead, to go back into
the classroom. Had a heart attack
mid-lecture.

RAKESH
Do you honestly believe it wouldn't
have happened if he was here?

MIA
Well, if it did, at least he would
have been with his daughter and not a
bunch of students who apparently
didn't know C.P.R.

RAKESH
Daughter?

MIA
I went back to my mother's name after
that. It's my journal.

Octavia shifts in the backseat. Mia notices that she's
awake.

MIA (cont'd)
How long have you been up?

OCTAVIA
You were going to let those men try
to take me?

MIA
I'm not your babysitter.

Octavia scowls and looks out the window.

MIA (cont'd)
You're fine.

OCTAVIA
No thanks to you.

MIA
Hey! I didn't ask for --

RAKESH
What happened back there?

OCTAVIA
I used the magic.

RAKESH
What were you using before?

OCTAVIA
I used it outside of a command. It is forbidden.

RAKESH
By whom?

OCTAVIA
The curse.

MIA
I thought I was the one who was cursed here.

Octavia lets out a strangled half-laugh.

MIA (cont'd)
What's that supposed to mean?

Octavia stares out the window again.

MIA (cont'd)
Tell me!

Octavia shifts and holds a hand out to Mia's head.

FLASH OF IMAGES

LIVIOUS (V.O.)
*Blessed goddess, Trivia, mistress of
sorcery, honor our bargain. Bind the
life of this woman. Secure her
obedience!*

-- Marcus dunks the brooch.

-- Livius cowers as Octavia's hand reaches toward him.

-- Snakeskin gold covers Marcus's fingernails.

-- A parade of anonymous faces, terrified as Octavia reaches out to them.

-- Buildings crumble at the wave of Octavia's hand.

-- Snakeskin gold covers Marcus's eyes.

-- A sequence of other men - movement under their skin, snakeskin gold covers fingernails and eyes.

-- Burning fields, terrified faces, destruction.

-- A body drops next to the altar in the lower chamber, Octavia dissolves and gets pulled into the brooch.

END FLASH OF IMAGES

Mia slams on the brakes.

The Jeep skids to a stop as Mia clutches her chest.

RAKESH

Mia! What is it?

Mia gets out of the Jeep and dry heaves.

MIA

Oh god...oh my god.

She hyperventilates. She pulls her shirt collar down enough to see the movement around her sternum.

Octavia and Rakesh get out.

OCTAVIA

Just breathe. The chest is always a particularly painful one.

Mia turns on Octavia.

MIA

Why didn't you fight?

OCTAVIA

Some battles can not be won.

MIA

So you just went along with it? Doing all of those horrible...You can use the magic!

OCTAVIA

I learned early on that it was not wise to be unconscious around those who wear the brooch.

MIA
I would have had some backbone. I
wouldn't have given up.

OCTAVIA
I didn't give up. I had hope.

MIA
For what?

OCTAVIA
Help.

Mia stares her down and then gets back into the Jeep. The others climb in.

INT. GAS STATION - DAWN

Mia fills up the Jeep at a Tamoil station. Rakesh watches her from the passenger seat.

Octavia looks at the car at the next pump.

A FATHER pumps gas while two little GIRLS in the back seat - sisters - play together on an iPad. They giggle and tease one another.

RAKESH
When you were in my head...

Octavia shifts her attention from the girls.

OCTAVIA
I did not damage you.

RAKESH
No, no. It's just that you saw...

He indicates his head.

OCTAVIA
Everything. Yes.

He blushes and looks back at Mia.

RAKESH
Could you, perhaps, keep the bit
about Doctor Martino to yourself?
Please?

OCTAVIA
She may benefit from knowing.

RAKESH

Equal chance that she would leave me
on the side of the road.

The back door of the car next to them opens and the little
girls climb out. The iPad tumbles to the ground and smashes.

The father roars his anger and both girls burst into tears.

Mia gets back in the Jeep.

OCTAVIA

Mia.

MIA

What?

OCTAVIA

Can I help them?

Mia looks around, confused. Then she sees the drama playing
out next to them.

MIA

Are you kidding me right now?

Octavia sinks down in her seat.

RAKESH

Maybe --

MIA

No!

Mia pulls out of the gas station.

INT. JEEP - AFTERNOON

Mia's eyes droop.

Rakesh carves symbols of the gods in the birch rods.

The Jeep veers off the road.

RAKESH

Mia!

Mia snaps the wheel back, fully alert.

MIA

Got it, got it.

RAKESH
Why don't you let me drive?

She looks at him and then at the rods.

MIA
What are you doing?

RAKESH
If each one of these things
represents a specific god or goddess,
I figured it might be helpful to be
able to distinguish --

Mia dozes off and jerks her head back up.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Mia! If you aren't going to let me
drive, we need to stop for you to
sleep.

MIA
I'm fine.

RAKESH
Do you ever say that when you are
actually fine?

Mia yawns deeply.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Mia! You've been awake for at least
thirty-six hours.

MIA
Maybe a few hours wouldn't hurt.

Mia pulls the Jeep into a motel parking lot.

EXT. MOTEL - AFTERNOON

Mia comes out of the office and throws a key at Rakesh.

MIA
See you in the morning.

RAKESH
What about her?

Rakesh points at Octavia, who waits in the backseat of the
Jeep.

MIA
Do you sleep?

OCTAVIA
No.

Mia shrugs at Rakesh and turns to go.

RAKESH
Mia!

MIA
I don't want her sitting in my room
staring at me!

Rakesh opens the door again.

RAKESH
Follow Mia.

He double-times it toward Room 12.

MIA
Rakesh!

RAKESH
It would be highly inappropriate for
her to room with me!

Rakesh closes his room's door and leaves them alone.

With a mighty sigh, Mia heads for her own room. Octavia follows.

INT. MOTEL

Mia kicks off her shoes and washes her face in the sink.

Octavia stands by the door staring at Mia.

MIA
You're being creepy.

Octavia looks around and sits in a chair.

Mia turns her phone back on and sees ten missed calls from the same number.

MIA (cont'd)
What is this guy's problem?

Mia turns it back off and throws it aside.

MIA (cont'd)
 You can turn on the TV, if you want.
 It won't bother me.

OCTAVIA
 No.

MIA
 Suit yourself. Thought you might be
 curious.

Mia climbs into bed.

OCTAVIA
 After millennia of silence, the last
 twenty-four hours have been...
 overwhelming.

MIA
 What have you been doing since the
 last time the brooch was...active?

OCTAVIA
 Waiting.

MIA
 Waiting?

Octavia shrugs.

MIA (cont'd)
 You mean you know what's happening...
 that time is passing?

Octavia nods.

MIA (cont'd)
 That sounds like torture.

OCTAVIA
 I do not believe Marcus was concerned
 with my comfort when the curse was
 cast.

MIA
 Marcus? Was that the first man?

OCTAVIA
 My husband.

Mia lays down.

MIA
(under her breath)
Wow.

OCTAVIA
You are lucky to have Rakesh.

MIA
I don't have Rakesh.

Mia rolls over to face the wall and closes her eyes.

OCTAVIA
You need more information.

MIA
Yeah, sure. Whatever you say.

Octavia comes to her side and puts a hand by her head.

Mia's eyes fly open and flash gold.

FLASH OF SCENES

-- Rakesh arrives at the Base Camp, backpack slung on his back. He sees Mia for the first time. She explains an artifact to an intern with fiery enthusiasm.

-- Rakesh shares a laugh with a group of workers as he walks away. He rounds the corner to see Mia eavesdropping. A laugh dies on her face when she sees he caught her.

-- Mia sits on a patch of dirt where she can see the foundation being uncovered. She eats her lunch alone and draws in the dirt with the end of a plastic fork. Rakesh walks by and sees she has written the word "Martino."

-- Mia labors under the sun as she uncovers a piece of pottery. Rakesh deposits a bottle of cold water just behind her. He's gone before she notices it there.

-- Mia stands in front of a large group, railing against some careless mistake. Rakesh stands at the back of the group with an amused appreciation on his face.

-- At dusk, Rakesh sits in the passenger seat of a van full of interns and workers. The driver checks his watch and turns the key. Rakesh puts a hand on the driver to stop him. Mia runs to the van and hops in. Rakesh releases the driver.

INT. MOTEL

Mia falls out of the bed with a yell.

She clutches her left side and looks up at Octavia.

MIA
Do you drink?

INT. ROADSIDE BAR

Mia and Octavia sit at the bar with several shots lined up in front of them.

OCTAVIA
I do not know about this.

MIA
Live a little.

Octavia gives her a look.

MIA (cont'd)
Or whatever.

Mia throws back a shot.

Octavia imitates her, like a pro. Mia nods her approval.

MIA (cont'd)
Salute.

Mia throws back another. Octavia matches her.

And another.

MIA (cont'd)
How do you feel?

OCTAVIA
Like I do right before I'm pulled
back into...

She taps the brooch on Mia's chest.

MIA
Oh god, you aren't going to do that
here, are you?

OCTAVIA
No, it's a...fuzzy...feeling.

MIA
I'll drink to that.

Mia signals the bartender and he brings pints.

MIA (cont'd)
So...what was life like in whatever
B.C. you come from?

OCTAVIA
Lonely.

MIA
You didn't have any family? Other
than your husband, I mean.

OCTAVIA
I had a sister.

MIA
Didn't get together much?

OCTAVIA
Marcus did not allow it.

MIA
So, you didn't see her after you got
married?

OCTAVIA
Only twice.

A SLEAZY MAN sees the women and sits next to them with an
oily smile.

SLEAZY MAN
Ciao, belle signore.

MIA
Not interested.

SLEAZY MAN
American! Let me buy your drinks.
Welcome you to my country.

Octavia shrinks behind Mia. Mia notices.

MIA
Octavia, what do you think? Would you
like this man to buy us drinks?

OCTAVIA
Oh...I...

MIA
If he does, he'll probably expect us
to be grateful in the form of
attention, company, or favors.

SLEAZY MAN
No, no, no, you misunderstand --

Mia throws up a hand to silence him.

MIA
Octavia?

Octavia shakes her head. Barely.

MIA (cont'd)
What was that?

Octavia finally leans around and looks at the Sleazy Man.

OCTAVIA
No, thank you.

MIA
You heard the woman.

The Sleazy Man slinks away. Mia acknowledges Octavia's
breakthrough with a raise of her glass.

MIA (cont'd)
A woman should be able to handle
anything that comes her way.

The door to the bar opens and a crowd of young, loud MEN
enter. Several look at Mia and Octavia in a predatory sort
of way.

MIA (cont'd)
Mio Dio. Wish we had this place to
ourselves.

Octavia flicks her wrist and everyone else disappears.

Mia slams a fist into the bar. She leans into the pain on
her right side.

She looks around at the empty bar and then at Octavia.

MIA (cont'd)
How many is that?

OCTAVIA
Twelve.

MIA
You know what? Worth it.

They both burst out laughing.

INT. ROADSIDE BAR - LATER

Mia stands behind the bar, which is littered with spent shot glasses and pint glasses.

She serves Octavia another drink.

Octavia spots the lunula on Mia's necklace.

OCTAVIA
You know, our parents would give us a lunula when we were young girls to protect us from magic and the evil eye.

MIA
Yep, yep.

OCTAVIA
Then we would give them up when we got married.

MIA
Good call there.

Mia and Octavia share a laugh. Then Mia becomes somber.

MIA (cont'd)
Tell me about your sister.

OCTAVIA
Carina was pure light. Thought she could do anything. Change the world. She would have loved this time.

Octavia goes very still.

MIA
What happened?

OCTAVIA
She knew what kind of man Marcus was. She showed up one day and begged me to run. I told her it was too dangerous, we needed help. So, she said she would come back when she had made arrangements.

(MORE)

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
When she returned Marcus walked in
and...Carina fought back. He didn't
like that.

Mia watches Octavia for a moment.

MIA
Drink.

They do. Octavia drains her pint.

OCTAVIA
Thank you.

MIA
For what?

OCTAVIA
The brooch has been worn by twenty-
seven men.

MIA
Twenty-seven!

OCTAVIA
And not one of them ever...

Mia looks away, not wanting things to get mushy.

OCTAVIA (cont'd)
...offered me a drink.

Mia smiles and raises her glass to Octavia.

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

Rakesh waits next to the Jeep.

Mia and Octavia emerge from their room.

RAKESH
You look worse than yesterday.

MIA
I didn't sleep much.

OCTAVIA
Can I drive?

MIA
Sure.

GALLO

Of course, that is not why we come all this way.

MIA

I'm real sorry about your trees, boys. When I get home, I'll make a big donation to the parks service or whatever. But I have a date with a sunbeam at noon.

CONTI

We want her.

He points at Octavia.

MIA

That's a terrible idea.

GALLO

She can do things.

MIA

You ought to be more concerned with what I can do.

Gallo and Conti pull large knives from sheaths on their belts.

CONTI

Why don't you show us.

MIA

Octavia, will you please relieve these these gentlemen of their personal effects and send them to... Finland?

RAKESH

Interesting choice.

Octavia raises her hands and flicks her wrists. Their phones and wallets fly away from their bodies.

Conti realizes what's happening and throws his knife at Mia.

They disappear.

Mia catches the knife by the blade an inch from her chest.

She drops the knife and grabs her left leg. She falls to the ground.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Mia!

He runs to her side and pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket. He wraps it tightly around her bleeding hand.

MIA

You carry a handkerchief?

RAKESH

You don't?

Octavia comes around to the two of them.

Mia toes off her left shoe and sock. Her toenails are covered over in gold.

OCTAVIA

That was two more, Mia.

Rakesh tosses his hands up in frustration.

MIA

What? I wanted them gone and I didn't want it to be too easy for them to get back.

Rakesh watches the handkerchief become saturated with blood.

RAKESH

I believe you need stitches.

MIA

I'll just have Octavia --

RAKESH

No! You have to stop. No more.

Mia pulls back the handkerchief. Gold glints under her skin. She checks her watch. Ten o'clock.

MIA

Well, I can't go to the hospital. One, we don't have time. And two, they might have questions about the fact that there seems to be a precious metal inside my body.

Rakesh opens the trunk of the Ranger's SUV. He finds a first aid kit and brings it to the ground next to Mia. He opens it and pulls out a needle and thread.

MIA (cont'd)
What are you doing?

RAKESH
Suppressing my gag reflex.

He threads the needle.

After a moment of stunned realization, Mia dumps antiseptic on her hand.

She offers her hand to him. He takes a deep breath and gets to work.

RAKESH (cont'd)
It would help if you would --

He pauses to stop himself from throwing up.

RAKESH (cont'd)
-- talk or something to distract me.

MIA
I'm not sure I want you distracted.

OCTAVIA
Can I have money for the machines?

Octavia points at some vending machines.

MIA
Take those.

She nods a head to Conti and Gallo's wallets on the ground.

Octavia grabs them and heads over to the vending machine. Mia watches her for a moment.

RAKESH
All right?

MIA
I'm going to have to pray us both free.

RAKESH
What will that mean for her?

MIA
I don't know.

RAKESH
She may disappear...die.

MIA

Those guys got one small glimpse of her power. Imagine if other people found out. It could be --

RAKESH

Catastrophic.

Octavia finishes feeding all of the money from the wallets into the machines. She delights in pushing the buttons and watching the falling food.

Rakesh finishes the stitches.

RAKESH (cont'd)

That's you sorted.

Mia sits for a moment, content to have her hand in his.

He smiles at her.

She shakes herself and yanks her hand back, as if burned.

MIA

We have to get on the road. We're wasting time.

She grabs some gauze from the kit and wraps her hand.

RAKESH

You're welcome.

MIA

What?

RAKESH

You are welcome for stitching your gaping laceration that involved a great deal of horrible blood and nauseating inside parts of your hand.

MIA

Well, it wasn't my intention to offend your delicate sensibilities when I caught the knife thrown by the men who found us thanks to you!

RAKESH

Thanks to me? How do you figure?

MIA

You made us stop for sleep which gave them time to catch up with us.

RAKESH
You cannot be serious.

MIA
Well, you're welcome to go! In fact,
you are the only one in this little
party who has that option. Like I
told you, I can handle this myself.

RAKESH
Unbelievable.

Octavia comes over with armfuls of junk food.

OCTAVIA
I got your favorite snacks, Rakesh!

EXT. PIAZZA DELLA ROTUNDA - DAY

People pour into the piazza. Sylvia paces around the Fontana del Pantheon. She watches every possible entrance into the square.

INT. JEEP

Mia drives like a crazy person. She swerves around pedestrians and cuts off other vehicles.

MIA
Roman drivers!

Octavia holds on and stuffs food in her mouth. No longer scared, she enjoys the ride.

Rakesh looks ill.

Mia pulls onto a side street on the north side of the piazza.

She gives up on finding a place to park and just stops the Jeep.

RAKESH
You're stopping here?

MIA
It's almost noon!

Mia, Rakesh, and Octavia get out. Mia slings the bag containing the birch rods over her shoulder.

EXT. PIAZZA DELLA ROTUNDA

Sylvia spots the trio and makes a beeline for them.

Thanks to the commotion Sylvia causes by shoving people out of her way, Mia sees her coming.

Mia ducks behind Rakesh.

RAKESH
Brilliant, Mia. She'll never find you
now.

He steps aside.

RAKESH (cont'd)
You can handle this yourself,
remember.

Mia glares at him.

Sylvia sees Octavia and stops short.

SYLVIA
We need to talk!

RAKESH
(to Mia)
Watch what you say.

SYLVIA
Without that...thing.

MIA
Her name is Octavia. And I've tried
to be without her. But she said --

OCTAVIA
I cannot be parted from the brooch.

SYLVIA
Mia. Please.

MIA
Mia? I'm sorry. Are we buddies now?

Sylvia holds out a flier.

SYLVIA
Look.

Mia takes it from her. It is a schedule of Founding Day Celebration events. At noon it says, "Dr. Mia Sulpizio."

SYLVIA (cont'd)
That's my speech. You took my whole
life.

Mia looks at her watch. Eleven fifty-five. She moves to get
around Sylvia.

MIA
I'm working on it.

SYLVIA
Working on it? Mia! You do not
understand!

Sylvia grabs Mia's arm.

MIA
Gods, Sylvia! Chill out!

Octavia waves a hand.

Sylvia collapses. She shivers and turns blue.

Mia grabs her right leg and hollers.

MIA (cont'd)
No! Octavia! Undo it!

Octavia waves again. Sylvia is released from the cold.

Mia stumbles. Rakesh catches her, takes the bag from her
shoulder, and puts it on his own.

OCTAVIA
Mia, it's almost time.

Sylvia gets to her feet.

Mia tests her leg and foot. She winces, but grabs the bag
back from Rakesh.

MIA
I've got it.

RAKESH
Oh, of course. How silly of me.

Mia and Octavia take off.

SYLVIA
Rakesh!

RAKESH
I'm sorry, Ms. Caccini.

An Italian PROFESSOR speaks in rapid Italian from a podium on a dais in the doorway of the Pantheon.

A solid wall of people stands between Mia and the podium.

Mia plows through people.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Mia! Wait!

Rakesh and Octavia struggle to catch up.

A frantic man, ANTONIO (late 40s) intercepts Mia.

ANTONIO
Where have you been?

MIA
You've got the wrong person, buddy.

ANTONIO
Mia. This isn't funny.

Mia pushes past him.

He grabs her arm.

MIA
Look, Mister, you can't --

ANTONIO
Stop it, Mia. I don't know what kind of game you're playing --

SYLVIA (O.S.)
Antonio!

Sylvia elbows tourists out of her way.

MIA
Antonio? From the phone?

Rakesh and Octavia catch up to Mia.

Sylvia breaks through the crowd, grabs Antonio, and drags him away.

RAKESH
That was weird.

MIA
Add it to the list.

EXT. PANTHEON

Mia makes one final push through the crowd.

Mia approaches the OFFICIALS who stand to the side of the dais.

MIA
Doctor Mia Sulpizio.

They welcome her and shake hands all around.

LEAD OFFICIAL
We were beginning to think you
wouldn't make it, Doctor!

Sylvia pushes her way to Mia. Antonio makes his way to the side, obviously avoiding Sylvia, but trying to get close to Mia.

SYLVIA
Mia!

Mia steps up onto the dais to wait for her turn to speak.

Sylvia maneuvers to be in front of the dais.

MIA
Sylvia, did you send that Antonio
character after me?

SYLVIA
Fix what you did to me!

MIA
I have to do this right now.

SYLVIA
No, you have to listen to me!

The Professor finishes up his speech and switches to English.

PROFESSOR
It is now my great pleasure to
introduce our next speaker.
(MORE)

PROFESSOR (cont'd)
 Doctor Mia Sulpizio is a generous sponsor of many important archaeological excavations in and around Rome. Please welcome Doctor Sulpizio.

Mia approaches the podium to polite, if disinterested, applause.

SYLVIA
 Mia! I'm talking to you!

Mia motions to the lead official, who gently, and then forcefully, pulls Sylvia away.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
 I demand you make things right!

Mia looks at the sun filtering in behind her. She sees the beam is close to alignment with the doorway. She checks her watch. Eleven fifty-nine.

MIA
 Thank you all. Um...if you'll...
 uh...bear with me...

Mia pushes the Professor's notes off of the podium and opens her bag. She lines the birch rods up on the podium.

Mia turns back toward the sun and watches as it lines up with the door frame.

Her lunula glows.

She turns back to the rods and as the sun hits each one, light emanates from each god symbol in turn.

MIA (cont'd)
 I knew it. I knew it would work!

The Professor clears his throat loudly.

Mia looks up and laughs nervously at the crowd that watches her with increasing confusion.

As each birch rod receives its blessing, she puts it back into her bag.

MIA (cont'd)
 (to the crowd)
 Do you know what you call an answered prayer? A miracle.

Sylvia breaks away from the official and climbs onto the dais. She charges Mia.

RAKESH

Mia!

Before the last rod can receive its blessing, Sylvia crashes into Mia and the podium. The rod flies into the crowd.

LEAD OFFICIAL

Polizia!

The crowd reacts as Mia and Sylvia wrestle on the dais.

Sylvia's hand becomes tangled in Mia's necklace and she pulls it from her neck.

A POLICE OFFICER arrives and pulls Sylvia away.

POLICE OFFICER

Signora!

Sylvia continues her mad struggle.

The officer radios for back up.

Mia runs to the edge of the dais. She tries to see where the last birch rod went.

MIA

Where is it? Does anyone see it?

The bewildered crowd looks around, in no particular hurry.

Sylvia wrestles the officer's gun away from him and fires into the air.

Mass hysteria. People scatter and run. Antonio bolts.

Sylvia disappears into the chaos.

The rod rolls further and further away under the feet of panicked tourists.

RAKESH

Mia! Ten seconds!

Mia and Octavia lock eyes.

Octavia shakes her head in a silent plea to not use another command.

MIA
Give it to me.

The rod jumps out of the crowd into Mia's hand.

The brooch glows and moves again. This time the movement crawls up her neck.

Mia lunges into the sunlight.

The god symbol glows.

MIA (cont'd)
Thank God.

Mia adds the final rod to the bag and turns to find Sylvia holding the gun to Rakesh's head.

Mia looks at Octavia.

MIA (cont'd)
Give me the gun!

Octavia waves her hand, but nothing happens.

Sylvia opens her other hand to reveal Mia's lunula, which glows for a moment and then stops.

MIA (cont'd)
No! Send her away!

Octavia tries again, to no avail. The lunula absorbs the magic.

MIA (cont'd)
Get Rakesh --

Sylvia rests the lunula on Rakesh's shoulder. She still holds it, but protects him as well.

Other officers arrive and surround the piazza. One shouts at Sylvia in Italian through a megaphone. The last few bystanders are shuffled out of harm's way.

MIA (cont'd)
Sylvia, we have everything we need now. Just let him go and we can --

SYLVIA
No! You had your chance to help me, to listen. I'll take care of it myself.

She taps Rakesh on the shoulder with the gun.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
You know how to make the Altar work?
To get me my miracle?

RAKESH
I'll need the rods.

MIA
Rakesh.

SYLVIA
Give him the bag.

Mia throws the bag to Rakesh.

MIA
Sylvia, please.

Sylvia assesses the situation. She notes all of the emergency personnel that has surrounded them.

SYLVIA
Ms. Sulpizio, if you'd be so kind as
to ask your genie to get me out of
here?

MIA
I can't. The lunula is protecting
you.

SYLVIA
Is it protecting all of these people
who are blocking my way?

Mia looks around, desperate.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
And make sure it will only be me and
Rakesh leaving.

OCTAVIA
Mia. This would be eighteen.

Sylvia pushes the gun into Rakesh again for emphasis.

MIA
Octavia, clear the way for Sylvia and
Rakesh to get to the chamber.

Octavia waves her hand.

Everyone in the piazza disappears, including Octavia and Mia.

Sylvia directs Rakesh across the square to the Jeep.

SYLVIA

You drive.

EXT. ALLEY

Mia and Octavia appear in an alleyway.

Mia grabs her face as the movement under her skin works its way around her cheeks, nose, and forehead.

OCTAVIA

Are you okay?

MIA

I'm fine.

OCTAVIA

Liar.

MIA

Where are we?

OCTAVIA

The outskirts of Rome.

MIA

I need --

OCTAVIA

Mia! You only have two commands left. With the next one, the gold will cover your eyes. The last one will kill you. Please, don't.

MIA

But Rakesh...

Mia runs to a nearby car and tries all the doors. Locked. She searches for something to smash the window.

OCTAVIA

This is important, Mia. Listen. When the fasces is placed in the Altar, it will only work once. One prayer answered.

Mia stops her search.

MIA
Are you kidding me?

OCTAVIA
If it were easy, everyone would have
been getting prayers answered left
and right. Miracles are rare.

MIA
Well that's just great.

She finds a brick and throws it through the car window. She gets in and looks for keys. No luck.

She slams her hands into the steering wheel and breaks down.

MIA (cont'd)
Octavia?

OCTAVIA
Yes?

MIA
What do I do?

OCTAVIA
I have to keep their path clear, but
I'll get you as close as I can.

MIA
What?

Octavia closes her eyes, shakes, and mumbles. She opens her eyes and they flash gold. She thrusts her hands outward.

EXT. LARGE TREE

Mia and Octavia appear at the large tree where Octavia got changed into "real clothes" a couple of days ago.

Octavia collapses. Unconscious.

MIA
Octavia!

Mia shakes her, tries to rouse her.

INT. SYLVIA'S JEEP - NIGHT

No other drivers on the road, nothing to impede their progress, Rakesh drives while Sylvia keeps the gun trained on him.

Sylvia has wrapped Mia's necklace around her hand to keep the lunula close. She watches the road behind them.

RAKESH

If you don't know how to assemble the fasces and you shoot me, you won't get your miracle.

SYLVIA

Neither will Sulpizio. Drive faster.

RAKESH

You realize she'll die, right? Is it worth killing her over some money and a professional reputation?

SYLVIA

You think that's all I lost?

She opens the locket on the chain around her neck and shows Rakesh.

Two small faces smile up at him. A boy and a girl. Twins.

RAKESH

Are these...

SYLVIA

After you left with that Octavia thing, I called my ex-husband to arrange to pick up the kids. He didn't know who I was. Said I was crazy. That their mother's name was Mia Sulpizio.

RAKESH

Your ex-husband?

SYLVIA

Antonio.

EXT. LARGE TREE - NIGHT

Mia's phone rings and she answers without looking at the caller ID.

MIA
Rakesh?

ANTONIO (O.S.)
Mia! It's Antonio. The kids miss you.

MIA
For gods sake...wait, what kids?

ANTONIO (O.S.)
Your kids! Our kids! Mia, what is
going on?

Mia tosses the phone at the tree. It smashes into pieces.
She resumes her efforts to wake Octavia.

MIA
Octavia! Octavia?

Octavia doesn't respond.

MIA (cont'd)
C'mon.

She shows no signs of waking up.

MIA (cont'd)
Octavia! I need you.

She looks to the lights of the dig site on the horizon.

MIA (cont'd)
I'll come back for you. I swear.

Mia runs toward the site.

She gets about a hundred yards away and slams into something
invisible. She's thrown backwards.

MIA (cont'd)
What the hell?

She tries again, but she cannot walk any farther. She puts
her back to the invisible barrier and pushes as hard as she
can with her feet.

Back at the tree, Octavia's sleeping body trembles a little
and slides towards Mia a few inches.

Mia moves a few inches at the same time.

Mia makes the connection. She walks back to Octavia.

MIA (cont'd)
"I cannot be parted from the brooch."

Mia shakes her head, picks Octavia up, and slogs toward the dig site.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - NIGHT

Sylvia stands next to the hole to the chamber. Rakesh attaches two ropes to the back of the Jeep.

RAKESH
If you would just talk to Mia...

SYLVIA
You heard her. She isn't going to kill herself faster for me.

RAKESH
She doesn't know about your kids!

SYLVIA
You know, I watched you follow Sulpizio around like a lost puppy for months. She looked right through you and everyone else. You think she suddenly cares about anyone other than herself? Stop being so naive, Rakesh. You can't fix frigid.

RAKESH
Thanks for the advice, lady holding me at gunpoint.

Rakesh puts the bag over his shoulder.

SYLVIA
Let's go.

RAKESH
Wait! We need leather straps. To hold the fasces together.

Sylvia looks around. She goes to a crate and pulls out a large knife.

She pulls off one of her boots and tosses it at Rakesh. She holds the knife out to him.

SYLVIA
Hurry up.

She keeps the gun carefully trained on him.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE

Mia struggles under the strain of carrying Octavia. She talks to herself to keep herself going.

MIA
 You know, I always knew his name.
 I acted like I didn't remember his
 name for the longest time. Why would
 I do that, you ask? Because I didn't
 want to need to know it.

Mia collapses and Octavia rolls to stop and stirs.

MIA (cont'd)
 Octavia?

She looks up at Mia.

OCTAVIA
 Did I get us close?

MIA
 Don't do that again.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

Rakesh puts the leather straps in the bag and hands it to Sylvia.

She indicates that he should throw the knife aside, which he does.

Sylvia points to the opening to the chamber.

INT. UPPER CHAMBER

Rakesh and Sylvia lower themselves into the chamber.

Rakesh takes off toward the back right corner.

SYLVIA
 Stop.

Sylvia pulls out another rope and holds it out to him.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
 Together.

Rakesh takes it and tethers them together.

RAKESH
We're going to need to anchor a rope
to the right wall.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

Mia and Octavia approach the chamber opening as the ground rumbles.

MIA
The floor.

Mia puts a hand on Octavia's arm.

MIA (cont'd)
I'm going to ask that the brooch be
destroyed.

OCTAVIA
Yes.

MIA
What about you? What will happen to
you?

OCTAVIA
I do not know.

MIA
Octavia...

Octavia picks up the knife that Rakesh dropped.

OCTAVIA
A woman should be able to handle
anything that comes her way.

INT. LOWER CHAMBER

Rakesh and Sylvia jump down from the last step and approach the altar.

RAKESH
When I lift out the axe, the steps
are going to retract.

SYLVIA
Then how will I get out?

RAKESH
We.

SYLVIA
What?

RAKESH
How will we get out.

OCTAVIA
You jam it.

Octavia and Mia stand half-way down the steps.

Sylvia whips around and fires the gun. She misses by a mile.

Seeing his opportunity, Rakesh rushes at Sylvia.

Sylvia turns around just in time for Rakesh to crash into her.

A gun shot rings out and the gun goes spinning across the floor.

MIA
Rakesh!

Rakesh lays on the floor. He clutches his stomach as blood seeps from his gut. Sylvia kneels beside him.

SYLVIA
I...I didn't mean to...

Mia and Octavia run to Rakesh.

Sylvia unties the rope tethering her to Rakesh and scampers backward to the Altar.

Octavia turns on Sylvia and stalks toward her with the knife drawn.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
I was only trying to get my kids back!

MIA
Rakesh! Oh god, oh god. Please.

Octavia lunges at Sylvia, who darts out of the way.

Rather than pursuing Sylvia, Octavia plunges the knife into the hollow of the Altar.

She wedges it into the crevice on the side of the panel the axe rests on.

She picks up the axe and the panel does not move. She threatens Sylvia with the axe.

OCTAVIA
Give me the bag! Now!

Sylvia drops the bag.

SYLVIA
But my kids, please!

Octavia dumps the contents out and assembles the fasces.

MIA
I'm so sorry. Rakesh, please.

He coughs and gasps for breath.

With the fasces complete, Octavia approaches the altar.

Sylvia makes one last desperate attempt to take control. She makes a run for the gun and picks it up. She points it at Mia.

SYLVIA
(to Octavia)
Drop it!

Octavia looks at Mia, then puts the fasces on the floor.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
Now move! Away from the Altar!

Rakesh pushes something into Mia's hand.

It's the lunula. He got it from Sylvia in the struggle.

He smiles at her.

Sylvia picks up the fasces and heads to the Altar.

Octavia comes to Mia's side. Mia shows her the lunula.

MIA
Put Sylvia to sleep.

Octavia waves her hand.

The brooch glows and moves.

Sylvia drops a foot from the altar.

Mia grabs her head and screams.

Octavia attempts to comfort Mia, who keeps her eyes shut against the pain.

Mia opens her eyes. They are covered over in snakeskin gold.

MIA (cont'd)
Octavia?

OCTAVIA
I'm here.

MIA
Can you save him, if I command it?

Rakesh struggles to disagree. He can't get any sound out.

OCTAVIA
Yes, but you're out of commands, Mia.
It will kill you.

MIA
He'll be alive to say the prayer.

RAKESH
Mia...

MIA
When she heals you, destroy the
brooch, Rakesh. Okay?

Rakesh passes out.

MIA (cont'd)
Rakesh!

OCTAVIA
He wouldn't want you to do this.

Mia squeezes Octavia's hand.

MIA
Heal him.

The brooch blazes.

Mia's body goes rigid.

Both of Octavia's hands move to hover over Rakesh.

Mia's body rises, as if being pulled by invisible forces.

Rakesh's eyes open.

Octavia closes her eyes. She mumbles and shakes. She opens her eyes, which flash gold, and forces one of her hands away from Rakesh, toward the altar.

The fasces rises from the floor.

Rakesh sees what she is doing.

He tries to speak. He can't.

Octavia looks at him, shaking. Not using her full power on his healing takes its toll. He isn't healing quickly.

The fasces moves over the altar.

Mia's body convulses, and the glow of the brooch fades.

Mia's body goes limp.

The fasces drops into place.

OCTAVIA

Now!

Octavia passes out.

Mia's body lowers to the floor and Octavia begins to fade into mist.

Rakesh coughs and forces his voice to work.

RAKESH

Gods, I humbly pray...release them
from the brooch's power.

Mia's body falls the rest of the way to the ground with a thump. The brooch falls off of her chest and clatters to the floor.

Octavia reforms and opens her eyes. She rushes to Mia.

Rakesh struggles up and joins her.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Mia! Mia!

Mia's doesn't stir. Rakesh looks to Octavia for help.

Mia groans.

RAKESH (cont'd)

Mia! Mia!

Mia squeezes her eyes shut and then opens them wide. The gold is gone.

MIA

Rakesh?

She sits up and feels his stomach. While mostly healed, some bleeding continues.

RAKESH

It's okay.

MIA

You didn't heal him all the way?

OCTAVIA

You're welcome.

Octavia walks over to the brooch on the floor. She stomps on it until it's unrecognizable.

MIA

Octavia?

OCTAVIA

Handled.

Mia struggles to her feet and walks over to Octavia. She reaches out and feels Octavia to make sure she is really there and solid.

They embrace.

Sylvia sits up.

They turn to look at her.

MIA

It's over, Sylvia.

She deflates in defeat.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - LATER

Mia and Octavia help Rakesh up through the opening. Sylvia follows.

Sylvia looks at a crate. It says "Caccini" again.

She runs to it in disbelief.

SYLVIA
Does this mean...?

MIA
(to Rakesh)
What was your prayer?

RAKESH
Release them from the brooch's power.

MIA
Them?

RAKESH
I thought it may cover all our bases.

Sylvia runs to him and embraces him.

SYLVIA
I...I can't possibly begin...thank
you! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Rakesh grunts, in pain.

She releases him.

SYLVIA (cont'd)
Oh! I'm sorry! I...I...I just...

MIA
Sylvia. Call your kids. Quickly.
We're about to have company.

Emergency vehicle lights appear on the horizon.

SYLVIA
(into the phone)
Antonio! Yeah, it's me! Can I talk to
them?

She breaks down crying through a huge smile. As she talks,
she walks toward the approaching lights with one hand in the
air in surrender.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE - LATER

Rakesh sits in the back of an ambulance as a PARAMEDIC
dresses his wound.

Officers try to interview Sylvia. She keeps her mouth shut, but smiles and runs her locket back and forth on its chain.

Mia and Octavia stand off to the side.

MIA

I have to say, I'm shocked you're not...

OCTAVIA

Dead? Me too. Although, I never actually died. I've just been in a kind of limbo.

MIA

What are we going to do with you? You don't have a birth certificate or passport. You don't have any education or job skills.

OCTAVIA

Actually, I have all of Rakesh's education and job skills.

Mia looks at her for a bit.

MIA

You're hired.

OCTAVIA

What?

MIA

Welcome to the team.

OCTAVIA

I...accept.

MIA

Excellent. I need you to go destroy an artifact.

OCTAVIA

What?

Mia gets up and pulls a hammer, a chisel, and a lighter out of a crate.

MIA

Miracles are dangerous things.

Octavia takes the tools from her.

MIA (cont'd)
Just enough to prevent it from being
used again. Please.

Octavia smiles her and slips off around all of the
officials.

Mia walks over to the ambulance as the paramedic walks away.
She climbs up inside to sit with Rakesh.

MIA (cont'd)
Hey.

RAKESH
Hey yourself.

Mia tries to speak, but can not quite manage it.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Do you know why I applied for this
dig?

Mia shakes her head.

RAKESH (cont'd)
Dr. Martino was my mentor at Berkley.

MIA
What?

RAKESH
I was looking for an opportunity to
get out in the field. He told me
about this brilliant, stubborn,
strong, impossible, up-and-coming
trail blazer who was about to start a
dig in Italy and turn the world on
its head.

MIA
No.

RAKESH
He went on and on about you. The only
thing he failed to mention was that
he was your father.

MIA
I can't --

RAKESH

I was in the classroom the day he
died. We did, in fact, try C.P.R.

Mia walks out of the ambulance. Rakesh watches her go.

INT. LOWER CHAMBER

Octavia approaches the Altar with chisel and hammer in hand.

She looks down at the fasces in the hollow and the knife
holding the panel down.

She lights the fasces on fire.

She looks all around the chamber. Alone.

OCTAVIA

I haven't been this alone in...ever.

MIA

It isn't all it's cracked up to be.

Octavia looks up to find Mia sitting on the top-most step.

OCTAVIA

Amelia Sulpizio! What are you doing?
Get back to Rakesh!

MIA

Octavia --

OCTAVIA

Right now!

MIA

But he --

OCTAVIA

Now!

Mia gets up and climbs up the tilted floor with a few
glances back at Octavia.

Octavia puts the chisel to a fasces symbol and chips it off
with enthusiasm.

EXT. MAGISTRATE SITE

Mia climbs out of the chamber opening.

Rakesh stands there, waiting.

MIA
She yelled at me.

RAKESH
You deserve it.

Mia looks at him.

RAKESH (cont'd)
I should have told you sooner.

MIA
I should yell at you.

He takes a step toward her.

RAKESH
I have a suggestion for an alternate
approach.

Mia closes the space between them and kisses him.

Octavia's head peeks out from the chamber opening with a big
smile.

FADE OUT.