

# Beauty and the Beast

## The Alchemist

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### **ACT ONE**

FADE IN:

EXTERIOR – NIGHT:

City street outside night club exit. The beautifully-manicured hands of a woman are caressing a small, glass bottle. Suddenly the bottle drops from her hands and clatters to the ground. The blond woman's eyes are dazed, and her face is covered with a glittering substance. She laughs dropping her feathery, white boa from her shoulders. She looks down at a fire hydrant and imagines she sees a little man dressed in red.

### **WOMAN**

Oh, you must be very cold. Here.

*(Handing over feather boa)*

She takes off the boa and imagines the little man catching it and holding it in his arms. The boa is wrapped round the fire hydrant. She giggles and steps out awkwardly into the road. She looks at the on-coming traffic and sees long colored lights stretching out before her. She closes her eyes and laughs. When she opens them again she sees two diffused circles of light growing closer. A horn blows and tires squeal as the lights turn into a car that slams into her.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – POLICE VAN:

Catherine is in a police van being fitted with a wire, she is holding her dress just below her navel as the technician finishes hooking her up. The microphone is secreted in the golden bra of her outfit and the wire runs down her torso.

### **CATHERINE**

Ouch!

*(Sighing to the technician)*

Glad you didn't go into neurosurgery.

### **JOE**

Not half as glad as his patients.

A voice is heard over the radio.

### **RADIO VOICE**

We are ready to move. Over.

**CATHERINE**

Speaking of patience...  
(*Exasperated sigh*)

**CLAUDE**

Almost done here, so relax. (*Pause*) All set.

**RADIO VOICE**

Two and three in position, waiting for your go number one.

**CLAUDE**

Remember, once it goes down,  
you're gonna have to get to the fire door and let us in.

**CATHERINE**

(*Slipping her arms into the dress*)  
I know, Claude, I know. We've been over it a dozen times.

**JOE**

(*Helping Catherine into her jacket*)  
Nervous?

**CATHERINE**

Not as bad as when I was in sixth grade,  
I had the lead in the school play, Joan of Arc.

**JOE**

(*Chuckles*)  
You know, its one thing signing on for the joint investigation, but going undercover...

**CATHERINE**

No one twisted my arm, Joe. I volunteered.

**JOE**

Well, if you ask me putting yourself on the line like this is not worth twenty five hundred a month.

**CATHERINE**

No one's asking you. Come on, we're past that. We both know why I'm doing this.

**JOE**

You just be careful in there. Let's go.

He opens the back door of the van. Catherine steps out and heads down the street to a night club. She walks right past the door security guard who has stopped a couple going in.

**GUARD**

I need to see some ID, please.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR – NIGHT CLUB:

Inside, the music is blaring, and disco light add to the frenzied atmosphere. A woman dances behind a curtain; the floor is mobbed with lithe, swirling bodies. The bar is packed with people drinking and smoking. Catherine walks through the crowd heading for the bar. A man puts some money on the bar and the bartender exchanges it for a small packet.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

Tyler Buckman is seated behind a large desk. Paracelsus is crumbling a substance between his hands.

**TYLER**  
Is that all?

**PARACELSUS**  
For the moment, yes.

**TYLER**  
I'm not meeting demand. Not even close.

**PARACELSUS**  
Then raise your price.

**TYLER**  
I'm already up to one thousand a gram, wholesale. Next time, I want more.

**PARACELSUS**  
*(Looking up and fixing the man with a hard stare)*  
You'll take what I bring. You'll pay me now.

The man looks over to an associate who puts several stacks of wrapped gold coins on the desk. Paracelsus picks one up and breaks it open scattering the coins.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB:

Shot of the dance floor.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE;

Paracelsus is pushing the coins into a bag.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB:

Catherine is seated at the bar, sipping a drink, looking around her, moving in time to the music.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

Paracelsus is gathering the last of the coins into his bag as the men in the room look on.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB:

A woman rolls her head back, her face is covered with glitter; a small vial is in her hand. She drops the vial on the table and a glittery substance spills out. Catherine is still at the bar surveying the crowd.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

The last of the coins go into the bag, Paracelsus straightens and stares at the man seated behind the desk.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB:

Catherine spots a man walking towards her.

**CATHERINE**

*(Whispering)*

He's coming. I should be inside in about a minute.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR – POLICE VAN:

**JOE**

Yeah, right inside the lion's den

**CLAUDE**

Let's go.

The men in the van move out.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB:

**CATHERINE**

*(Smiling at the man standing in front of her.)*

Well?

**JIMMY**

Okay, he's ready to see you now. She gets up and goes with the man.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR:

Outside the bar at different vantage points, swat team members wait. Sharpshooters with rifles are on a fire escape across the street. Joe, Claude and some others are in the alley by the night club waiting for Catherine's signal.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

Catherine walks into the office and stands in front of the desk. Tyler is seated behind it.

**TYLER**

Thank you, Jimmy.

**CATHERINE**

I'm Cynthia Hatch. Eric sent me.

**TYLER**

How is Eric?

**CATHERINE**

He told me you might want to do some business.

**TYLER**

Well, I'm a businessman.

What kind of business do you have in mind?

**CATHERINE**

Distribution. I have a solid client base, and they're getting curious about the new product.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR - NIGHT:

Joe stands against the brick wall of the alley outside the night club listening to Catherine. The men of the swat team move in closer.

**CATHERINE**

I want to keep them happy.

**TYLER**

That's noble, Cindy. It's real noble. What kind of money we talking about here?

**CATHERINE**

*(Setting a small metal box on the desk)*

Twenty five thousand.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR:

Joe is standing outside the night club listening to the wire.

**TYLER**

How do I know the money's in here?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

**CATHERINE**

How do I know you have the product?

Tyler gets up from the desk circling around it, one of his cohort's hands him a plastic bag containing a white powder. He places the bag on the desk and reaches for the metal box.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR:

Joe gives the men a signal.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR:

Tyler opens the box and looks at the money, he touches it. Catherine picks up the plastic bag. Tyler grabs her wrist.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR:

Joe listens worriedly to his ear piece.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

**TYLER**

Why the rush?

He caresses Catherine's face with his hand. She pulls him forward and rushes past him, she dodges the other men and opens the alley door letting in the swat team. Team members rush in.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR:

Three armed police standing on fire escape.

**SWAT TEAM MEMBER**

Police! Freeze!

Shots are fired. One of the night club men falls; another is shot and flips over the desk. Joe comes in. One of the swat team pushes Tyler up against a wall.

**SWAT TEAM MEMBER**

Where is he?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – NIGHTCLUB OFFICE:

Joe goes to Catherine who has fallen on the floor.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – POLICE CONFERENCE ROOM:

Police precinct conference room, Captain Farrell, Catherine, Joe, Jimmy and Detective Schneider are discussing last night's operation.

**FARELL**

About last night. You people all have a lot to be proud of. The suspect, one Tyler Buckman, is a major distributor, and both the commissioner and I feel that, in conjunction with this new surveillance, he'll help send us all home on this one.

**JOE**

Well, on our end Buckman took his lawyer's advice and accepted immunity. Miss Chandler conducted the first round of the interrogation this morning.

**FARELL**

Well, anything interesting?

**CATHERINE**

*(Smiling)*

Beyond the fact that he's not too fond of me, Buckman was pretty cooperative. We now have this composite

*(shows the sketch)*

which at least gives us some idea of what the supplier looked like.

**SCHNEIDER**

*(Taking the sketch and looking at it)*

General circulation?

**JOE**

I don't think so, we might scare this creep into permanent hiding.

**FARELL**

I agree, and since my opinion is the only one that matters, I don't want this picture leaving this room. All right, what else you got?

**CATHERINE**

Frankly, he wasn't able to tell us much. No names, no contacts, no numbers. Buckman was always reached by messenger on the night before. One thing did strike me, though *(sighs)*, the supplier always insisted on being paid with gold coins.

**SCHNEIDER**

Sounds like a major nut job.

**FARELL**

*(Watching Jimmy curiously)*

Is there anything you'd care to add, Detective Morero?

**JIMMY**

No sir.

**FARELL**

You know, Detective, if what we're trying to do here doesn't somehow hold your interest, please feel free to leave. Jimmy gets up and leaves the room.

**CATHERINE**

*(Concerned)*

Excuse me.

She follows Jimmy out, catching up with him in the squad room. She follows him to his desk.

**CATHERINE**

Hey, what just happened in there?

**JIMMY**

I really don't know Chandler, but it seems to me everybody's too damn busy slapping each other on the back to admit that we screwed up.

**CATHERINE**

*(Exasperated sigh)*

Jimmy, what is eating you? Buckman gave us some very solid information.

**JIMMY**

*(Furious)*

Buckman! We could've busted at any time during the last two months. We were supposed to nail the supplier while he was there!

**CATHERINE**

I know.

They sit down by Jimmy's desk.

**CATHERINE**

That doesn't alter the fact that you just acted like a jerk in front of Captain Farell.

**JIMMY**

I'm just real frustrated, Chandler. That's all.

**CATHERINE**

Well, you're not the only one.

**JIMMY**

*(chuckling)*

When you're right, you're right.

They smile at each other.

**JIMMY**

You know Chandler, you're okay.

Catherine sees a picture of a beautiful young woman on Jimmy's desk, she picks up the photograph.

**JIMMY**

*(Smiling)*

Her name is Carmen, she's my fiancée.

**CATHERINE**

*(Looking at the picture)*

She's lovely.

**JIMMY**

*(Chuckling)*

She is, isn't she? It was the best collar I ever made.

A young man in a lab coat approaches the desk.

**JIMMY**

Hey, Doctor Zeke, say hi to Chandler. Easy...She's with the DA.

**ZEKE**

Oh, hi. Ah, it's the analysis that you asked for. It was as unadulterated a sample of the drug as we've seen. Definitely organic. Some sort of a...fungal hybrid or a psilocybin derivative.

**JIMMY**

I want to know why it glows in the dark.

**ZEKE**

It's bacterial. The kind that occurs in caves or ocean depths, where there's no light.

Catherine looks thoughtful.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - TUNNELS:

Vincent is standing at the tunnel gate with his back to Catherine.

**VINCENT**

*(Concerned)*

We trust so few with our secret. All of them friends, helpers. Each of them knows the responsibility he bears.

**CATHERINE**

I'm not accusing them, or any of your people.

**VINCENT**

I know you're not.

**CATHERINE**

But our lab has identified certain mineral properties of the plant that suggest it's being grown underground. And this supplier (*sighs*), he's like a shadow.

She walks over to Vincent.

**VINCENT**

That grows over your city.

**CATHERINE**

We've linked forty nine deaths to this drug so far, and three times that many have been institutionalized.

He turns to face Catherine.

**VINCENT**

You say you brought a sample of the plant?

**CATHERINE**

Yes.

Reaching into her pocket, she pulls out a plastic bag and hands it to Vincent.

**CATHERINE**

Thank you.

He clutches it in his fist.

**VINCENT**

*(Taking her arm)*

Catherine, since that night when I found you in the park, I felt in you, time and again, a need to confront your fear... as you did last night.

**CATHERINE**

Why are you telling me this?

**VINCENT**

I don't want what happened to you to cause you to take unnecessary risks.

**CATHERINE**

Vincent, they needed my help.

**VINCENT**

You survived once.

**CATHERINE**

And it's because I survived then, that I'm doing this now, so that others are spared.

They gaze at each other.

CUT TO:  
EXTERIOR - NIGHT:

Paracelsus is clutching a satchel and walks furtively through an alleyway littered with debris. He continues into a warehouse, descending through a trapdoor, where he makes his way through to the basement and eventually into the tunnels, which glow with a phosphorescent green light.

CUT TO:  
INTERIOR TUNNELS – FATHER’S STUDY:

Father is carrying a plate over to the table where Vincent is seated. He places it in front of his son.

**END OF ACT ONE**  
**ACT TWO**

**FATHER**

What else did Catherine tell you?

**VINCENT**

That this man, in exchange for the plant, will accept only gold.

With a troubling thought etched on his face, Father sinks into his chair.

**VINCENT**

What is it Father? *(Pause)* Even if you only suspect, you must share what you know. This drug is powerful. It inspires violence. There is a moral imperative.

**FATHER**

Yes, I am aware of the implications Vincent.

**VINCENT**

Then why do you hesitate?

**FATHER**

Because...Because I hope I’m mistaken.  
*(Sighs)*

**VINCENT**

Who can this be, Father?

**FATHER**

A man. No one you know. We banished him from this place before you were born. It was our first *(sighs)* real test of government. His name was John Pater, but he called himself by another name...Paracelsus.

**VINCENT**

The Alchemist.

**FATHER**

Yes. John's model. Philosopher, scientist, magician...*(smiling in thought)* and John was all of those things. A large part of what we've created here, we owe to him.  
*(Looking reflective)*

**VINCENT**

What happened?

**FATHER**

What happened? *(Scratches head)* I don't know. I think, perhaps, in trying to seek knowledge, he began to desire power.

**VINCENT**

And so, you exiled him.

**FATHER**

*(Wry laugh)*  
He wouldn't go at first. Finally, he was forcibly taken beyond the perimeter.

**VINCENT**

And now? Do you know where he is now?

**FATHER**

*(Father nods.)*

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR – NIGHT:

Street in front of police headquarters.

**CATHERINE**

*(voice over)*  
How does a hamburger and beer grab you?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – POLICE CONFERENCE ROOM:

**JIMMY**

I don't think so.

**CATHERINE**

Oh, come on. It's late.

**JIMMY**

No, I can't. I have to meet a friend in about an hour.

**CATHERINE**

*(Looking bemused)*  
At one o'clock in the morning?

**JIMMY**

*(Smiling)*

He's a night person.

**CATHERINE**

Why is it I have a feeling you're not telling me the whole truth?

**JIMMY**

*(Laughing)*

I don't know what you're talking about, Chandler.

**CATHERINE**

I've never heard you say no to a hamburger. You're a lousy liar.

**JIMMY**

It's because I like you.

**CATHERINE**

Well then, why don't you tell me what's going on?

**JIMMY**

*(Pondering this)*

Okay. I got a new lead. One of my blabs told me, he know something about a deal. It's a long shot, but... it's all I got.

**CATHERINE**

When is this supposed to happen?

**JIMMY**

Tonight.

**CATHERINE**

*(Concerned)*

You're not going alone? God, Jimmy. Call for some backup.

**JIMMY**

No.

**CATHERINE**

*(Exasperated)*

Jimmy!

**JIMMY**

*(Indignant)*

It took me two and a half months to get inside that club. Me. Not Farrell, not you, not anybody else. And when it came down to the bust, Farrell wouldn't listen to me. He had to do it his way, and he blew it. And I'm not gonna let that happen again.

**CATHERINE**

How do you know you're not being set up?

**JIMMY**

*(Pauses)*

I don't.

**CATHERINE**

At least let me go with you.

**JIMMY**

No way Chandler, you are not a cop! This is not your job. Look, I only told you this because I trust you. Do the same for me, okay? *(Laughs)* Hey, I'm not a rookie.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – TUNNELS:

Father limps down a tunnel carrying a lantern. He turns a corner, following a tunnel that leads into the green light, and is surrounded by hundreds of bats. He fights them off with his stick, and continues through the tunnel until he finds Paracelsus in a cave pruning the roots of the deadly alkaloid.

**FATHER**

John?

Paracelsus looks up slowly towards Father.

**PARACELSUS**

*(Glaring)*

How did you find me?

**FATHER**

We've always known where you were. We have looked in on you from time to time.

**PARACELSUS**

Your...compassion will kill you one day, Jacob.

**FATHER**

It wasn't compassion, it was self-interest. Making sure you didn't try to return.

**PARACELSUS**

Oh, there's...no need to worry. I'm quite happy here.

**FATHER**

*(Moving further into the cave)*

I'm glad.

**PARACELSUS**

So they call you "Father" now. I heard it through the pipes. Ingenious idea... communicating on those pipes.

**FATHER**

Yes, it was ingenious... of you, John.

**PARACELSUS**

"Father"...I imagine you like that. It gives you all the authority you need without making you sound like a despot, but underneath everything, you're no different from me.

**FATHER**

I am different.

**PARACELSUS**

*(Turning back to his plants)*

What was your little idea? A family of individuals living according to a higher standard? Oh, how uninspired, Jacob, how small-minded. We could have been gods, you and I.

*(Pause)*

So why did you come?

**FATHER**

You know why I came. Your activities threaten to draw attention to our tunnels.

**PARACELSUS**

Ah, the first commandment. But they'll never catch me I'm much too clever for them.

**FATHER**

*(Imploring)*

John, people are dying. I can't let it continue.

**PARACELSUS**

Am I wrong, or is this place beyond your influence? Isn't that why I'm here... in exile?

**FATHER**

I was only asking...

**PARACELSUS**

Asking! Asking? Tell me what right do you have to ask me anything? What power do you bring here? Will you tear me from my home again? Will you inform the police and risk my exposing your...precious world?

*(Removing sunglasses)*

No. If you want me to stop, there is only one solution... This time you'll have to kill me...

Father. *(Sneering)*

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – TUNNEL:

Paracelsus is walking through the glowing tunnel that leads to the warehouse above. He reaches as far as the basement and stops abruptly by the steps when he hears a voice above him.

**JIMMY**

Hold it right there!

Jimmy steps out of the shadows, his gun drawn.

**JIMMY**

I'm a police officer.

*(Showing badge)*

Keep your hands where I can see them

*(Moving closer to Paracelsus)*

Let me see the bag.

Paracelsus hesitates.

**JIMMY**

Let me see the bag!

**PARACELSUS**

*(Looking feeble)*

I... I'm sorry, I... I don't hear so good. I'm lost.

**JIMMY**

What's in the bag?

**PARACELSUS**

The bag? Oh, my crystals, the family crystals, they're very old. I sell 'em... so I can eat.

Paracelsus bends towards his bag but triggers the mechanism of a hidden knife, and attacks Jimmy. The gun fires, and Jimmy's body slides to the floor. Paracelsus picks up his bag, pushing Jimmy's body away to continue up the stairs.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR – NIGHT:

Street in front of warehouse. Sirens wail as a police car pulls up front. Catherine slowly goes down the stairs, Jimmy's body is just being zipped into a body bag. Joe is there talking with Captain Farrell and some others. Joe spots Catherine.

**JOE**

Excuse me.

He heads up the stairs to Catherine.

**CATHERINE**

*(Concerned)*

What happened, Joe?

**JOE**

We're not sure, exactly.

**CATHERINE**

Well, tell me.

**JOE**

There's not much to tell. It looks like Jimmy was soloing a lead.

**CATHERINE**

*(Looking around)*

Where is he?

**JOE**

A transient found him, Cathy.

**CATHERINE**

*(Frightened)*

Don't tell me he's dead, Joe.

**JOE**

Yeah.

**CATHERINE**

*(Crying)*

No... Oh my God.

**JOE**

*(Whispering)*

I'm sorry.

*(Holding her)*

**CATHERINE**

I'm sorry.

*(Crying into his shoulder)*

CUT TO:

INTERIOR – TUNNELS:

Catherine and Vincent stand on opposite sides of the barred gate.

**CATHERINE**

A friend of mine was murdered

**VINCENT**

*(Sighing)*

The current of your feelings run deep, he must have meant a great deal to you.

**CATHERINE**

I wish I'd had a chance to know him better. There was a lot of...hope in him...idealism. He was engaged to be married.

**VINCENT**

I'm sorry.

*(Opening the gate)*

Catherine, the man who grows and supplies the drug...you were right; he lives below. Father knows of him.

**CATHERINE**

Well, then you must turn him in.

**VINCENT**

If we surrender him to the police he has promised to betray our secret.

**CATHERINE**

*(Pondering this)*

Well then, he must be punished to the full extent of your laws, I'll help. I'll document what he's done.

**VINCENT**

The ultimate punishment has been imposed. He was exiled from our world years ago; he no longer lives within our authority.

**CATHERINE**

Well, he's still your responsibility.

**VINCENT**

We are struggling for a solution.

**CATHERINE**

I can't wait! By waiting, I put other lives in danger!

**VINCENT**

Catherine, you must live according to your conscience, just as we must live according to the laws that have allowed us to survive.

He turns from her and goes through the gate, they regard at each other for a moment and then Vincent triggers the steel door. Catherine walks away.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR TUNNELS – FATHER'S STUDY:

Mary, Winslow, Vincent and Father sit around the table discussing what to do about Paracelsus.

**MARY**

Except there is this to consider... Paracelsus could never expose us without exposing himself. If he doesn't get caught, we're safe.

**WINSLOW**

I'm no gambler, especially not with those stakes.

**FATHER**

A terrible dilemma, but I don't know what more we can do.

**VINCENT**

Father, the moment he is caught above we are all in peril.

**WINSLOW**

Exactly why we have no choice, Paracelsus told you himself, the only way we can stop him is to kill him.

**FATHER**

*(Leaning towards Winslow)*

Would you be his executioner?

**WINSLOW**

*(Exchanging glances with Mary)*

We could do it by lottery.

**FATHER**

Even to consider such an alternative undermines the very principle on which this society was built. Now...please, we are here to discuss viable options.

**WINSLOW**

Yeah, well, discussing the problem isn't going to make it disappear.

**VINCENT**

*(Sighing)*

It does seem as though the more we talk the more elusive the solution becomes. We all agree that what is at stake here is the greater good of both worlds. Some course of action, anything, is better than to allow all that we are, all that we have built to be held hostage to one man's evil.

**FATHER**

So what do you propose?

**VINCENT**

I can stop Paracelsus from leaving the tunnels with his poison that will give us time to decide on a more permanent solution.

*(Looking at each one in turn)*

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR – DAY:

The flag above the 89<sup>th</sup> precinct flies at half mast honoring their fallen comrade. Inside, a group sits around the conference table.

**SCHNEIDER**

I hung around late last night where Jimmy died wondering what he was after. You said he had a lead, right?

*(Looking at Catherine)*

**CATHERINE**

*(Nodding)*

**SCHNEIDER**

I was thinking maybe the supplier has something in that abandoned building, or beneath it.

**JOE**

What, do you think he lives down there?

**SCHNEIDER**

I don't know what to think, all I know is that Jimmy was after something. Hey, a hundred transients live in the steam tunnels underneath the Waldorf, so it's possible.

**CATHERINE**

*(Worried)*

It's crazy.

**SCHNEIDER**

We've seen crazier...all of us. I think we should sweep the place.

Catherine looks disturbed by this thought.

**JOE**

I don't know maybe it'd be worth sending some of our people down there.

**CATHERINE**

It would be a waste of time to go that far. I mean, even if he was somewhere in that building last night do we really believe he stuck around?

**SCHNEIDER**

You have a better idea?

**FARELL**

Ms. Chandler's right, anyway we're stretched too thin, but I tell you what, Claude, if you want, you and Dean can keep an eye on the place. Item three: According to surveillance...

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - TUNNELS

Paracelsus negotiates his way through the tunnels, closely pursued by Vincent. Realizing he is being followed, he increases his speed, escaping through a trap door in the warehouse. Vincent is closely behind, but loses his trail behind a hidden door, where he is momentarily trapped. Before he escapes, Paracelsus releases some of the toxic drug into the air directly above him where it descends on Vincent, causing violent hallucinations.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR TUNNELS – FATHER'S STUDY:

He is sitting reading at his desk, and turns abruptly when he hears a long, drawn-out growl. He gets up and walks towards the source of the noise, hobbling quickly up to the chamber entrance leading into the tunnel.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR TUNNEL:

Father enters the tunnel cautiously.

**FATHER**

Is that you Vincent?

He sees Vincent.

**FATHER**

Vincent?

**VINCENT**

*(Growling)*

**FATHER**

It's me.

**VINCENT**

*(Snarling menacingly)*

Father moves cautiously towards him.

**FATHER**

Vincent...

Vincent snarls at him menacingly. As he gets closer, he can see Vincent crouched up half-leaning against a wall; his teeth bared, snarling.

**VINCENT**

*(Growling)*

Father approaches him, which causes further snarling and growling.

**FATHER**

*(Insistent)*

It's me, Vincent.

**VINCENT**

*(Growling and baring teeth)*

**FATHER**

*(Frightened).*

Father...

Suddenly, Vincent lashes out knocking Father to the ground. As Father lies there helpless, Vincent steps in closer, preparing for another strike when Winslow comes rushing up with a torch, closely followed by Mary.

**WINSLOW**

*(Aghast)*

Vincent!

Mary rushes to Father's side and cradles him in her arms as Winslow fends Vincent off with the torch, and he retreats into the depths of the tunnels.

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

CUT TO:

INTERIOR TUNNELS – FATHER'S STUDY:

Father's left arm is wrapped close to his body. Vincent had broken it. Catherine stands before him.

**FATHER**

He's holed up here... in a forgotten place, way below us. An old section of catacombs.

**CATHERINE**

According to our tests, the effects of the drug should only last three or four hours.

**FATHER**

I can't let you go close to him. He's unpredictable. I thought perhaps if he heard your voice... The empathic connection you share, might somehow get through to him.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR - TUNNEL:

Father leads the way to a chamber where Winslow and a group are standing watch over Vincent.

**FATHER**

Any change?

**WINSLOW**

We haven't heard anything for over an hour.

Father points the way into the chamber with his stick, and Catherine ducks through the opening. She crouches down, peering towards the darkness where Vincent has concealed himself.

**FATHER**

We don't know how far back he is. I thought maybe, if you could call out to him or...?

**CATHERINE**

*(nodding)*

Yeah *(softly)*. Vincent, I'm here now.

Vincent is lying in a niche in the wall.

**VINCENT**

*(Growling)*

**CATHERINE**

*(Distraught)*

God, he needs me. I have to go to him.

**FATHER**

I can't let you do that. I thought he needed me too, but all I did was frighten him.

**CATHERINE**

*(Determined)*

Well, I have to take that chance.

**FATHER**

He'll strike at you. He's not the Vincent we know. He could kill you.

**CATHERINE**

What did you think I'd do when you brought me here? Leave him alone like this? I have no choice.

She begins to walk towards Vincent. She sees him lying in the niche, growling and snarling at her. He sees her as if in a vision, a misty specter drifting towards him. Slowly, she walks closer to him. He gets up from his crouching position, roaring and baring his teeth, but she shows no fear of him. He leaves the niche, moving towards her. Catherine does not hesitate in her movement towards him. When she reaches him, she throws her arms around him, hugging him tight. He rests his head against hers, and is panting from exhaustion. Eventually, he awakens from his drug-induced mania.

**VINCENT**

*(Sighing from exhaustion)*

Oh, Catherine...Catherine

FADE TO:

INTERIOR TUNNELS – FATHER'S STUDY:

Vincent is slouched down in a chair, looking tired and vulnerable. Catherine walks over to him, circling the chair in her arms and leans into him. His head is bowed.

**CATHERINE**

What is it, Vincent? What are you thinking?

**VINCENT**

*(Sighing, keeping head turned away from her)*

How ashamed I am. That you saw me as I was,

*(Turning head to look into her eyes)*

and how grateful I am that you were there.

She places her hand on his shoulder and he covers it with his.

**VINCENT**

You saved my life, Catherine.

Father walks in.

**FATHER**

I contacted Mary and Winslow, they're ready to convene.

**VINCENT**

I'm sorry, Father, the time for that is past.

**FATHER**

Vincent, I do understand how you feel.

**VINCENT**

You can't understand how I feel.

**FATHER**

We're all agreed harsh measures are required, but it is not your responsibility to decide what they may be.

**VINCENT**

It is mine (*kindly insistent*).

I have seen the demons Paracelsus has unleashed. Felt them inside of me...How can I explain? You become... disconnected. As if the dark side of your imagination eclipses all compassion... all dignity.

(*Long pause*)

I must go.

He rises abruptly from the chair.

**CATHERINE**

You're still weak.

**VINCENT**

And there are fifty people already dead.

Vincent leaves the chamber and Catherine and Father look at each other, considering his remark.

CUT TO:

INTERIOR TUNNELS:

Vincent holds his lantern high as he walks through the sickly green light of the tunnel that leads to Paracelsus' lair. Dripping water noisily hits puddles along the tunnel floor. He enters the cavern that serves as Paracelsus' lab.

**VINCENT**

Paracelsus.

Slowly, he walks past the tables looking at the toxic plants. Paracelsus ducks through a low opening in the wall and sees Vincent.

**PARACELSUS**

*(Surprised)*

Vincent.

**VINCENT**

*(Guarded)*

You know my name.

**PARACELSUS**

I know more about you than your name...

**VINCENT**

*(Gently)*

I don't wish to harm you, but you must leave this place.

**PARACELSUS**

*(Mock distress)*

Leave? By whose judgment?

**VINCENT**

Mine.

**PARACELSUS**

What does Falstaff say? "The better part of valor is discretion." I'm no match for you. Of course I will. I will do as you say.

They both contemplate this in silence.

**PARACELSUS**

But wouldn't you like to hear me first? Or are you content to accept Father's story? Found as a babe outside Saint Vincent's hospital. Did you...did you really believe that all these years?

Vincent considers this admission, and he slowly walks around the table to face Paracelsus directly.

**PARACELSUS**

Vincent, I know the truth. Aren't you at all curious to know why you are... the way you are?  
*(He triggers the switch blade hidden up his arm)*

He lunges the knife at Vincent, who roars and drops the lantern he was carrying. It smashes to the floor and flames rapidly ignite the plants. Vincent and Paracelsus fight, and their struggle increases the blaze until the whole lab is engulfed in flames. Vincent manages to drag Paracelsus to safety, but just as he pulls him free, Paracelsus swipes at him with the blade and he breaks free of his hold.

**PARACELSUS**

*(Leaping up towards the inferno)*  
My gold!

He enters the flames.

**VINCENT**  
*(Shouting)*  
Paracelsus!

**PARACELSUS**  
*(Wailing)*  
My gold!

He disappears into the flames. Vincent stares for a moment, then turns and walks away.

CUT TO:  
EXTERIOR NIGHT:

View of a main street, then Central Park tunnel threshold. Vincent stands leaning back on the steel gate, facing Catherine who is a few feet away.

**CATHERINE**  
Jimmy... wouldn't compromise.

**VINCENT**  
Beyond the sadness... his life had great meaning.

**VINCENT**  
*(Moving towards her)*  
Catherine, I understand why you expose yourself to danger.

**CATHERINE**  
Because there are some risks worth taking.

**VINCENT**  
And there are some things worth risking everything for.

They gaze at each other for a moment and then Catherine walks towards the exit. She turns to look back at him and continues out. Vincent watches her go.

FADE OUT

**THE END**