

THE FEMPIROR CHRONICLES

Episode 1x09

"Can't Escape The Past"

by

George Willson

TEASER

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

A carnival is set up with portable rides, concessions, games -- the works. The place is lit up like daytime and the noise is overwhelming with voices and music overlapping relentlessly.

Weaving through this cacophony are ALEX SMITH and ISABEL FUENTES, both 18, holding hands. They smile and talk inaudibly under the sounds. Alex is dressed as a typical teenager, free of his Rastem garb.

Alex and Isabel stop and kiss. Suddenly, the sun rises over the horizon. They don't notice it.

The shadow quickly shrinks between the horizon and the carnival as the sun rises higher and higher. Alex and Isabel break the embrace. The sun reaches them.

Alex cringes from the sun, but he isn't burning. Nothing is happening to him at all. He smiles. He laughs, overjoyed. He turns to Isabel.

She stares at him in shock. Her skin turns red and then black. She bursts into flames! Alex's eyes grow wide.

ALEX

NOOOO-

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - SMITH HOUSE - DAY

Alex flails under the covers of his bed, completing his half-finished "no" from his dream.

ALEX

-OOOOO!

He stops and looks around his darkened room, eyes wide and frantic. He breathes heavily and sweat rolls down his face.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. AMERICAN ATLANTIC FEMPIROR CITY - DAY

The city sparkles in the dark depth of the ocean floor.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CAFÉ - DAY

David and Beth sit at a table. They have drinks in front of them.

BETH

Sorry nothing came up last night.

David shrugs.

DAVID

It was a long shot anyway. I'm glad we got an idea of their monorail system, but I was hoping we'd get further on the Empegen source.

BETH

Al said it has stopped at a few new places, and we've sent people out there, but all they're doing is stopping at one point and then taking the monorail to another point to get off. It's like the whole system is just for transportation, but the magic happens somewhere else.

DAVID

We can look at places near the higher usage areas tonight

Beth nods. They each take a drink.

BETH

How's Alex holding together?

David sighs.

DAVID

He's doing ok. He is very hung up on his girlfriend, Isabel. I'm trying not to be too concerned about it. These things take time.

BETH

You should know.

David nods.

DAVID

I should. It took years to get over your ancestor. Yori helped, but once she was gone, it was Beth that stayed on my mind. That was why I stayed so long with Voivode. It was an escape.

BETH

How long do you think you would have stayed with him?

DAVID

Truth be told, I'd probably still be there if... well, that didn't end well.

BETH

Yeah. You can't seem to get away from us, can you?

David laughs and shakes his head.

BETH

It's weird when you consider that she was my first cousin.

David looks at her with a confused look. He casts his eyes upwards as if trying to add this up. He shakes his head.

DAVID

It's a wonder I can keep you all straight.

BETH

So how are you dealing with me then?

David looks at her.

DAVID

Beth, you are a dead ringer for the Beth I knew. I do a double take almost every time I see you to make sure I'm not dreaming.

BETH

Any chance of your looking at me for just me?

David looks at her sadly. He sighs.

DAVID

I hope so.

Beth nods. They take another drink.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - SMITH HOUSE - DAY

Alex enters the living area from his room. He is dressed in his Rastem clothing. He sits on the couch.

CARLA SMITH, his 15-year old sister, darts out of her room and into the bathroom. She is dressed in a button down men's shirt and boxers. Her hair is in curlers, but she has no makeup on.

She looks out of the bathroom.

CARLA

Well good morning, sleepy head.
Or, I guess it's afternoon now.

She laughs. Alex looks at her with a haunted look.

CARLA

Are you ok?

ALEX

No. What are you doing?

CARLA

Um... I'm going out.

ALEX

Really? I never would have guessed that.

CARLA

Come on, Alex, you think I'm going to spend my life down here?

ALEX

I guess choice is a good thing.

Carla stares at him for a moment. She closes her eyes.

CARLA

Sorry.

ALEX

Forget it.

Alex doesn't move. Carla disappears into the bathroom for a moment.

ALEX

I just keep having these dreams.

Carla slowly leans out of the bathroom.

ALEX

I'm with Isabel, and we're having a good time-

CARLA

Oh, Lord. I don't wanna hear this, do I?

ALEX

Come on, Carla, I'm not being sexual or anything.

CARLA

Just checking.

ALEX

No, it's like being on a date...
in public. Every time, though, I
die somehow in the end before I
wake up. But last night...

Alex runs his hands through his hair.

CARLA

What about it?

ALEX

This time... she died.

CARLA

In your dream, right?

Alex rolls his eyes.

ALEX

Yes, in my dream. You're not
even listening.

CARLA

Look, I know you think I don't
care. I really do, but I just
don't know what to do. I can
listen, but... I just don't
know. Maybe you've forgotten
about us both losing mom and
dad.

ALEX

No, I haven't forgotten that.
It's easier to deal with their
deaths than it is to know she
is still alive, and I can't be
with her. I miss her.

Carla stands in the bathroom doorway looking at Alex. She looks
away uncomfortably.

CARLA

I'm sorry. I wish I could help.
I just don't know what to say.
I've got to get ready.

Carla ducks into the bathroom and rifles through a makeup case.

ALEX (O.S.)
What are you getting ready for?

Carla pauses looking through her makeup.

CARLA
Um...

ALEX (O.S.)
School dance?

Carla closes her eyes in a pained expression.

CARLA
Yeah.
(whispers, to herself)
Don't ask... Please, don't ask.

ALEX (O.S.)
Do you think Isabel will be
there?

Carla steps back to the bathroom door.

CARLA
I don't know, Alex. I have
been looking forward to some
time with Micah. I barely see
him outside of school. He's
going to be here shortly to
pick me up.

Alex looks away for a moment.

ALEX
Um...

CARLA
Fine, I'll say hi for you.

ALEX
Thanks.

CARLA

You might be getting all the attention around here, but you know, if this isn't easy for you, it might not be easy for other people too. Think about that for awhile.

Carla walks back into the bathroom and closes the door.

INT. FUENTES HOUSE - ISABEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Isabel's room is a simple setup with her bed, a dresser, and a vanity along with bookcases, books, and a variety of knick-knacks.

Isabel sits at her vanity, looking into the mirror. Her eyes are bloodshot. She's perspiring and breathing heavily. Tear streaks stripe her face.

She takes several tissues from a box and wipes her face clean. She exhales. Takes out a compact and puts on some base makeup. She stops for a moment. Takes some more tissues and wipes her eyes again.

She looks into the mirror. She slams the compact on the countertop and holds her head in her hands. She looks over to a frame placed face down on the vanity.

She reaches over and looks at the picture. It's Alex.

ISABEL

I can't do it, Alex. I just can't.

Suddenly, Isabel looks around, eyes wide. Sounds of tapping emerge from all over her room. She looks terrified. She puts the picture back down and opens a drawer to the vanity.

She rifles through the items in the drawer until she comes out with a syringe. It's Empegen. The tapping gets louder. Frantically, Isabel pops the end off the syringe and injects herself with the fluid.

She looks around the room. The tapping gets quieter until it dies out. Isabel sighs, relieved. She looks at the syringe. She looks up.

ISABEL

Oh God, what am I doing?

She looks back at Alex's picture.

ISABEL

How did you drive me to this?
I just wanted to try and forget
you. Just a night of trying to
drown my memory of you.

She drops her head into her hands, careful not to stab herself
with the needle.

ISABEL

This was supposed to help. That
was supposed to help. But all I
got was a hangover and stab
wounds.

She cries.

DING DONG.

Isabel's head jerks up.

ISABEL

He's here.

She puts the cap on the needle and tosses it into her purse. She
takes some tissues and wipes her face.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

Isabel snaps toward her closed door.

ISABEL

Sí?

MR. FUENTES

Isa, tú niño está aquí.

ISABEL

Gracias, papá.

Isabel looks back at her mirror. She exhales and opens the compact again.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A Levi-Cart moves through the streets of the city. The sun is low in the sky.

INT. LEVI-CART - DAY

CHILDRESS MACCULLUM, appearing 40, drives as VERA SARAJE, appearing 29, rides. She watches the people go about their lives outside the vehicle.

VERA

I miss it sometimes.

CHILDRESS

Miss what?

VERA

You know... the real world?

CHILDRESS

What about it though?

VERA

Just... Well... I don't know.
There's just something about
being out there with them that
I miss.

CHILDRESS

I used to miss it. Maybe I'm
used to being a night owl by now.

He yawns.

CHILDRESS

Which is why I hate the day shift.

VERA

I was a night owl for years.

CHILDRRESS

I know.

VERA

Maybe we should rotate partners occasionally. I feel like we're married.

CHILDRRESS

Only because we've talked about everything. If you want someone else, Kaplin is actually pretty good about that.

VERA

I know.

CHILDRRESS

You should.

VERA

Yeah, this comes up every...

CHILDRRESS

Week?

VERA

No. Year, maybe.

CHILDRRESS

Month?

Vera laughs.

VERA

Whatever.

Beth's voice comes in over the communicator.

BETH (V.O.)

Childress?

CHILDRRESS

What is it, Beth?

BETH (V.O.)

Got a new stop for you.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The Levi-Cart changes lanes and speeds up, driving through town.

EXT. ANOTHER CITY STREET - DAY

A dark limousine drives down a street very slowly. Its windows are tinted very dark. It is impossible to see inside. Two Tepish sit in the front seat, one driving. Even the front window appears to have a tint to it.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

ERECH, the Elrod Malnak of the Tepish Order who appears to be around 28, sits in the back of the vehicle. He looks very annoyed. Sitting in the seat next to him is MAURICIO SALAZAR, 28 and Erech's Cortz Sufru.

Across from him are GIN FRINGRA, a woman who appears to be 33 and the Kurvatz Malnak, and LORNDIS EROFKA, a man who appears to be 27 and the Morgad Malnak.

ERECH

I want to know why we've had agents show up at nearly every depot we have. I need to know when it started, why it's happening, and why we haven't stopped it yet.

GIN

My apologies, Lord Erech, but since they show up long after anyone uses it, we have no way of tracking it.

ERECH

Gin, I need results, not excuses. You are the Kurvatz Malnak. Why hasn't anyone died by your hand over this? Someone made a mistake and they aren't admitting to it!

Erech turn to Lorndis.

ERECH

And you, Lorndis. You offer no reason for this?

LORNDIS

I have none, my Lord.

ERECH

I also understand that a Kepinürsk has disappeared as well.

LORNDIS

Our Empegen dealer on the West side of the city. We got reports that someone new came into the restaurant, made short work of his human bodyguards, and left with him out the back door.

ERECH

I want the right answer to this one. Has there been any reports that the Empegen facility has been compromised?

GIN

No, my lord.

ERECH

Good. Let's let Empegen do the big work for awhile and keep a low profile. Our biggest problem is the Rastem agents, and we'll handle them as they come. I'm not concerned for the moment.

Erech spots something outside the car. He presses a button on the door console.

ERECH

Stop the car.

The car comes to a halt. Erech smiles.

ERECH
We'll do things the old-fashioned
way.

Erech rolls down the window.

ERECH
(out the window)
Excuse me.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A woman, JESSICA "DAISY" HARRIS, 22 and dressed like a tramp,
leans against an alleyway wall. She smiles and saunters over to
the car.

ERECH
I'm looking for a little action.
You game?

JESSICA
You bet, baby.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - SMITH HOUSE - NIGHT

Alex sits in the living room, staring at the floor.

IMAGES: Alex's Dream: The sun rises over the horizon ... Isabel erupts into flames ... Alex screams.

DING DING DING. A chime sounds over the room. Alex jerks his head up. He runs his hands through his hair.

DING DING DING. Alex walks to the door and opens it. David stands there. He looks Alex up and down.

DAVID
You look terrible.

ALEX
Thanks.

David holds up his communicator.

DAVID
You didn't answer.

ALEX
Sorry.

David puts his communicator away. They stand in silence at the door for a moment.

DAVID
You want to talk about it?

ALEX
Wouldn't do me any good.

David nods.

DAVID
Well, come on. We're going to be chasing that monorail car again tonight, so I want to give you an update.

ALEX

Sure. Whatever.

David walks away from the house. Alex closes the door and follows.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Alex catches up to David who walks leisurely along the street.

DAVID

You know, I'm letting a lot go at the moment because you're still new, but this disrespect has got to stop.

Alex scoffs.

DAVID

Yeah, that stuff.

ALEX

I want to see Isabel.

David shakes his head.

DAVID

It's not a good idea.

ALEX

So it's ok for you to do it, but not me? How is that fair?

David stops and looks at him.

DAVID

You know what? It wasn't ok for me to do it. Zechariah, the Rastem who saved my life, told me not to do it. He warned me and even threatened me, but I did it anyway. I regret it every day.

David continues walking. Alex catches up.

ALEX

I'm not like you. I just want to talk. We're not going to do anything.

DAVID

Talking can lead to other things.

ALEX

I can tell you don't even care. How do I even know this sob story of yours is true? Huh? How do I know? That could be a thing they tell every newbie who comes in here like fungus stories to get you to wear flip flops in the gym shower or maggots in mouthpieces to tell you not to eat and play your instrument.

DAVID

Ask Kaltesh. He was there.

ALEX

Whatever. He's on your side. He probably tells the same story.

DAVID

Doubt it. Look, I don't care if you believe me or not. The point is that you two have a history, and when two people in that situation think they'll never see each other again, they do things they wouldn't normally do.

ALEX

I want my life back.

DAVID

I know, but you can't go.

ALEX

Wait, you can't tell me what to do. You're no one. You're just a guy.

DAVID

I'm your mentor and hopefully
your friend. I'm also the oldest
Fempiror here other than Kaltesh.
I do know a thing or two about
this.

ALEX

Just leave me alone.

Alex turns and runs off. David sighs and watches him disappear
around a corner. He shakes his head.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

MICAH GRIFFIN, Carla's 16 year old boyfriend, stands next to his
1996 Mustang. He watches the water...looks at his watch...looks
at the water.

A bubble emerges from the water and floats toward land. It
"parks" itself on the beach. A door opens in the side of it and
Carla steps out, dressed to the nines.

Micah smiles. He walks to her, and they embrace briefly.

MICAH

You look incredible.

CARLA

Thank you.

They take hands and walk towards the car. He looks at her.

MICAH

What is it?

CARLA

It's Alex. He is so hung up on
Isabel.

MICAH

Yeah, James mentioned that Alex was asking about her, and he didn't have the heart to tell him. I'd be pretty hung up too though.

Carla smiles for a moment. She sighs.

CARLA

I just hate keeping this from him. He needs to know.

MICAH

Then why don't you tell him?

Carla shakes her head.

CARLA

I just can't.

He walks her to the car and opens her door. She gingerly gets in, careful not to muss her dress or hair. He leans down.

MICAH

Hey, let's have fun tonight. I know things are hard, but you're mine right now. Ok?

Carla smiles and nods. He leans down to her and she lightly pecks him on the lips, careful not to mess up the lipstick. He closes her door, trots around the car and gets in his side.

The car's engine roars to life. Micah backs out of the beach parking and drives off toward the city.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

The Levi-Cart pulls up to a city park with playground equipment and a bridge over a little creek through the middle of it.

Childress and Vera exit the vehicle and look around. Childress takes out his communicator.

CHILDRESS

Beth, are you sure we're here?

BETH (V.O.)

Blue activity for only a moment,
and according to David's tracker,
it's still there.

CHILDRESS

Where?

BETH (V.O.)

About 30 yards to the Northwest.

Childress and Vera look off in the distance and beyond the
playground is a small building with restrooms.

AT THE RESTROOM BUILDING

Childress and Vera walk around the building. Childress holds his
communicator.

CHILDRESS

(to communicator)

Is this it?

BETH (V.O.)

Looks like it. What is it?

CHILDRESS

Restrooms. I'll get back to you.

Childress puts the communicator away. He and Vera walk around
the structure.

VERA

Well?

CHILDRESS

It's got to be here somewhere.

A mechanical whirr sounds. Childress and Vera stop and listen.
Childress gets close to a door with a deadbolt instead of a
knob.

VERA

Someone's coming!

Childress and Vera run away from the building and hide in the
shadows behind a tree. They watch the building.

From the parking lot, two men in dark, hooded cloaks (THE FUMBLER and THE CARRIER) walk to the restroom building. One of them knocks.

Childress pulls out his weapon. Vera does the same.

A third man, the DRIVER of the cart David attacked in 1x08, opens the door. He carries out a small crate. Vera moves, but Childress holds her back.

The Fumbler gives the driver money. The Driver disappears back into the deadbolted door.

VERA

(whispers)

Why didn't we go for it?

CHILDRESS

(whispers)

That rail car is more valuable to us if they don't know it has a tracker on it. We'll take out those guys. Let's go.

The Carrier carries the crate towards their car. Childress and Vera sneak around them, quickly running across the park to get to the men's car.

The men arrive

AT THE CAR

where they set the crate down and The Fumbler fumbles for the keys to the trunk. Suddenly, a gun barrel is at Fumbler's head. He looks up in shock.

CHILDRESS

All right. Now put your hands in front of you and back away from the vehicle.

Carrier steps forward, but Vera speaks.

VERA

That means both of you.

Fumbler smiles.

FUMBLER

I don't think you know who you're dealing with.

Fumbler nods at Carrier. In unison, they swing around and slap Childress' and Vera's guns out of their hands. Childress and Vera take a few steps back from the pair, who assume a ready-to-fight stance.

CHILDRESS

You're Tepish.

CARRIER

You're dead.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - TRAINING ROOM - NIGHT

David sits on the floor in the sword training room. Kaltesh sits near him. David holds his head in his hands, apparently frustrated.

DAVID

I suppose this was inevitable.

KALTESH

I thought this might be happening too quickly. New Fempiror need time to themselves, and he hasn't been giving himself that.

DAVID

I'm just afraid he'll try to go and see this girl of his. He's not listening.

KALTESH

So what are you going to do about it besides sulk in here with me?

DAVID

I'm not sulking. Anyway, he stormed off. I let him go. He'll probably cool off after a moment alone.

KALTESH

He's a quick learner and a bright young man. He knows the Rastem code and always seemed to understand why we have it.

David nods.

DAVID

I hope so.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - OUTER WALL

Alex walks to one of the bubble access doors. He presses a few buttons and the door opens. He steps in and the doors close.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Erech's limousine pulls up outside a hotel. A valet opens the door.

INT. LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Erech scoots to exit the car. He looks at Gin and Lorndis.

ERECH

I'm going to play with Daisy here. Keep checking around. I want to know how they're doing this.

Erech moves to get out, but then stops.

ERECH

Actually, get down to the terminals. Have all the cars sent to a central location and check every one of them. Tear them apart if you have to. I'll bet a Rastem slipped one of those idiotic trackers into one of them. Keep me informed.

GIN & LORNDIS

Yes, my lord.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Erech steps out with Jessica. Mauricio follows close behind them as they walk into the hotel.

The valet closes the door. The limousine drives away.

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Erech walks down a hallway with Jessica on his arm.

JESSICA

So you must be very important.

ERECH

I am very important. I'm the most important person you'll ever meet.

Jessica looks behind them at Mauricio.

JESSICA

Is he ... joining us? I mean, it's ok, but there's not a group discount or anything.

ERECH

Oh no, he's my Cortz Sufru.

JESSICA

What's a ... quartz suff-roo?

Erech laughs.

ERECH

Like a bodyguard. He'll wait in the hall.

JESSICA

Ok.

Erech reaches a door and uses a key to open it. They enter the room. Mauricio assumes a position in the hall.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jessica walks into the room and looks around. It's a very spacious hotel suite with a large living area and a room off to one side.

JESSICA

Wow. You come here often?

ERECH

I do. This is my room. No one else uses it. Someday, you might want to find me again. If you come here, you just might get lucky.

JESSICA

Now, I ain't looking for a relationship or nothing.

ERECH

And I didn't offer one. You know what we're here for, and I'll pay you well. I am not asking for anything more.

JESSICA

So how do you want to start?

ERECH

Is Daisy your real name, or a name you use with customers?

JESSICA

What do you care?

ERECH

I like to know. Real names make it more personal and less business.

JESSICA

What if I want it to stay business?

ERECH

Then it's your loss.

Erech moves in close to her. He closes in on her lips but she turns her head. He kisses her neck.

JESSICA

Oh, my God, you're cold. Are you all right?

ERECH

(between kisses)

I'm fine. What's your name?

JESSICA

Mm... I don't know.

ERECH

You can tell me.

Jessica seems to be enjoying his touch. Her head dips back as Erech moves around her neck.

JESSICA

Mm... Jessica.

Erech smiles.

ERECH

Ok, Jessica. I promise I won't tell anyone.

He kisses her again.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The bubble rises to the surface and floats to the beach. The door opens. Alex steps out and press the button to send the bubble back down.

He walks to the road and looks both directions. He runs towards the city.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. OCEAN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A large truck with an open bed moves down the road at around 45mph, its light illuminating the road ahead. The road is dark all around and completely deserted.

Alex hides just off the side of the road watching the truck approach. As the truck passes him, Alex leaps from hiding and bolts into a full speed run after the truck.

Alex's legs move faster and faster under him. He gains on the swiftly traveling truck. He reaches the back of the truck and grabs the tailgate, hefting himself up and into the truck's bed causing a light clatter as he lands.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

A 40-ish MAN in a baseball cap looks up in his rearview mirrors. He glances through the back window. He shrugs and keeps driving.

EXT. TRUCK BED - NIGHT

Alex lies in the back of the truck staring at the stars overhead. He lets out a breath of tired air and smiles.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

David enters and walks to where Beth is sitting.

DAVID

What's up?

BETH

Look at this.

Beth presses a few buttons and a white dot labeled "Alex" is shown moving quickly towards a sea of red dots.

DAVID

Forgive me if I can't quite read
all that yet.

BETH

That's Alex. He left the city a little while ago, and was on the ocean side for a few minutes before he suddenly took off. I think he probably hitched a ride or something.

David looks worried.

DAVID

Why didn't you tell me when he left the city?

BETH

Every one goes ocean side occasionally. It helps to clear the mind and get a little fresh air-

DAVID

Well, this is different.

BETH

You know, most people don't leave. If there was going to be a problem, it would help to know before hand.

DAVID

How was I supposed to know he'd actually try and go after her?

BETH

I thought you knew him. Where's he going?

DAVID

I think he's after his former girlfriend, Isabel. He's been on about it for a few days. I need a Levi-cart.

BETH

Hang on.

Beth presses a button on her panel.

BETH
Mayor Kaplin.

KAPLIN (V.O.)
What is it Beth?

BETH
Number 4. Alex. David.

KAPLIN (V.O.)
Approved.

BETH
Go get him.

DAVID
What just happened?

BETH
Possible Rastem Code violation
request for a Levi-Cart. What
number, who's doing it, who's
going after them. Makes it
quick. You better go.

DAVID
Thanks.

David runs out. Beth smiles and spins back to her panel.

BETH
You're welcome.

An alert goes off and Beth zeroes in on Childress' and Vera's
signal along with two blue dots that appear near them.

BETH
Where'd you come from?

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Fumbler and Carrier have dropped their cloaks to reveal two very
well-built men.

FUMBLER

Not so tough without your guns,
are you?

CHILDRESS

We're not so helpless.

Childress and Vera each draw short swords that are no longer than their thighs from scabbards that run between their hip and knee.

CARRIER

Those are cute.

Fumbler and Carrier draw their own swords which are considerably longer and contain jagged edges and an ostentatious hilt whose guard curves into its own mini-swords on either side towards the business end of the blade.

CHILDRESS

Ok, Vera. Just relax. We can
take them.

Vera does not look relaxed. Her eyes are wide open.

VERA

You know how often we practice
this.

CHILDRESS

I told you to go in more.

Fumbler and Carrier each strike Childress and Vera respectively.

Childress blocks each blow very easily, but his sword takes a lot of damage. With each strike, Fumbler draws his sword back like a saw, cutting divets into Childress' short weapon.

Vera blocks but Carrier is easily driving her back to the edge of the creek running through the park. Her sword is taking the same damage Childress' is.

Fumbler swings. Childress ducks the blow and swings at Fumbler's leg, slicing through it. Fumbler reacts and swings at Childress. Childress barely ducks the blade in time. He thrusts at Fumbler's chest, but Fumbler blocks his thrust.

Carrier is beating Vera relentlessly. She tries to side step him, but he swings down hard on her sword, breaking it in half. She breaks into a run for her gun on the ground near the car quite a distance away.

Childress glances over the see Vera running towards the car with Carrier in hot pursuit, wildly swinging his sword.

Childress continues blocking the wild blows of Fumbler. His sword continues to take damage from the jagged edge of Fumbler's sword. Childress sidesteps Fumbler again and slices his other leg. Fumbler reels wildly and Childress blocks the blow.

Vera dives for her gun, but only nicks it, sending it skittering off across the pavement. Carrier swings his sword down on top of her. She holds her hands up and grabs his hands in a desperate attempt to stop the death blow.

Childress holds Fumbler's sword in a dead lock. Finally, he brings his foot up and decks Fumbler between the legs. Fumbler falters for only a moment. Childress uses his sword to push Fumbler's sword back and slices off his hands.

He quickly runs Fumbler through, leaving his sword in Fumbler's chest. He runs over to his discarded gun and picks it up.

Vera is losing the battle as Carrier pushes all his weight and strength down on top of her. He moves one hand from the blade and punches her face. Her hands push to one side allowing the blade to puncture her shoulder. She yells in pain.

Childress fires two shots at Carrier's head, penetrating his skull. He collapses. The sword remains buried in Vera's shoulder.

Childress walks over to Vera kneels beside her. He looks at the wicked blade sticking through her shoulder and into the asphalt underneath. She breathed heavily.

CHILDRESS

How are you doing?

Vera nods.

VERA

I'll live.

Childress pulls out his communicator.

CHILDRESS

Beth, Vera's injured. She'll be fine, but she's got a sword in her shoulder I don't want to pull out on my own.

BETH (V.O.)

I'll get Dr. Fenrik out there.

CHILDRESS

Ok.

(to Vera)

You heard?

Vera nods.

VERA

I'll just stay here.

Childress smiles and nods. He walks to the crate sitting on the ground behind the Tepish's car. Childress opens it and takes out a small bottle of clear fluid. The crate is full of them. He shows it to Vera.

CHILDRESS

Is this really that important?

He smashes it on the ground. The bottle shatters splattering the fluid everywhere.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

A stereotypical high school in the dark, lit by only street lamps and minimal exterior lighting on the outside. It is well lit on the inside, and one can make out forms waking here and there within the structure.

Micah's mustang drives through the parking lot and parks.

INT. MUSTANG - NIGHT

Micah sits at the wheel, staring forward. Carla is looking at the floorboards.

MICAH

I can appreciate your wanting to protect your brother, but can we please have our date?

CARLA

Sorry. It's just that-

MICAH

Then why don't you just tell him?

CARLA

Come on. Not even James has told him.

MICAH

It isn't fair to him, and you know it.

CARLA

He doesn't need to know. He's bad enough as it is. He dreams of her every night. He clings to the hope of-

MICAH

-of what? Getting better?

Carla shrugs.

MICAH

Remember the description of this thing? It's like AIDS. That means it's forever. He's not going to get better. He's supposed to outlive us all and never come back after awhile. Alex needs to know what's going on out here, and frankly, you need to realize that at some point, you can't live down there anymore. Can we please stop going over and over this and go to the dance?

Carla looks at him with cold eyes.

CARLA

Fine. Enjoy your stupid dance.

Carla exits the car and slams the door. Micah stares ahead, a very annoyed look on his face. He pounds the steering wheel.

MICAH

Stupid!

He gets out of the car and runs after her, his voice fading into the night.

MICAH

Carla!

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

The truck moves into town. It stops at a stoplight. Alex removes his communicator from his pocket and tosses it onto the bed of the truck. He leaps off the back of the truck and quickly ducks under a tree.

He watches the truck drive off. He smiles. He looks beyond the tree to another. He runs quickly to the next tree, stopping at its trunk. He takes off in a breakneck run towards the school.

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Beth watches as Alex's tracker continues moving through the city. A blue alert sounds in close proximity to Alex's tracker.

She leans forward and watches. The blue dot moves quickly away from the truck. Beth smiles and rolls her eyes.

BETH

Amateur...

She presses a button on her panel.

INT. LEVI-CART - NIGHT

David flies over the city.

BETH (V.O.)

Hey David.

DAVID

What is it, Beth?

BETH (V.O.)

I think your boy left his tracker on whatever he used to get into town. It's moving one way, but we have a sudden blue sighting heading towards the school.

DAVID

Can you keep up with him?

BETH (V.O.)

It won't be as easy, but I shouldn't have any problem doing so.

DAVID

Well, he probably did it to be more difficult.

BETH (V.O.)

He doesn't know what we can do yet, I guess. He's going toward the school from the South. He's off my screen, but no reason to believe he's going anywhere else.

DAVID

I'll catch him.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Alex stays underneath a dense row of trees moving quickly, but carefully towards the school building.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Erech puts the last vestiges of his clothes on. Near him, Jessica sits on the bed, and is also finishing getting dressed.

ERECH

So, how are you feeling?

Jessica looks at him, bemused.

JESSICA

I'm all right. It's not like this is my first time or anything. You are certainly the coldest man I've ever been with. Are you sure you're not sick or something?

Erech smiles.

ERECH

No, I'm fine.

JESSICA

Well, you better not be. People don't think much of my job, but I do have a law-

Jessica gasps. She drops to the floor, hyperventilating. She looks at Erech in shock. He smiles.

ERECH

Welcome to the family.

Jessica screams.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

A HOTEL PATRON walks down the hall and pauses at the scream. Mauricio looks at him and smiles.

MAURICIO

It's my boss. The women love him.

The patron gives him a disgusted look, and walks onward.

Gin emerges from the elevator. She spots Mauricio and walks toward him. Mauricio looks at her.

GIN

I need to talk to the Elrod Malnak.
It's an emergency.

Mauricio nods and knocks. Erech answers the door. He looks at Gin.

ERECH

What is it?

GIN

We have a problem.

Erech steps back and Gin enters. He closes the door behind them. A few moments pass as Mauricio just stands in the hall, like the stoic guard he is. Suddenly, Erech's voice rises above the calm.

ERECH (O.S.)

WHAT!

EXT. CITY - NIGHT

A Levi-Cart comes out of the sky and lands on a mostly deserted street.

INT. LEVI-CART - NIGHT

David looks out the front window at the road ahead.

DAVID

Still on course?

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Beth looks at the large viewscreen on the wall.

BETH

He's in and out, but generally
on the same course.

INT. LEVI-CART - NIGHT

David nods.

DAVID

Understood.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The Levi-Cart takes off down the road at high speed.

EXT. SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS - NIGHT

Carla stands next to a tree standing in the open field of the school grounds. Her arms are folded and she looks into the sky.

Micah runs up behind her.

CARLA

I don't know if you understand this, but he's my brother.

MICAH

Of course I understand that. I'm sorry.

CARLA

You want me to just blow him off. That's what you were saying. That I need to forget him. I know what happened to him, Micah. It happened to me, too. I don't need a reminder, I live with it every single day. We lost our parents, and then... Oh God, everything else. It's so screwed up. You have no idea what I'm going through.

She turns away from him. Micah stuffs his hands into his pockets. He shrugs.

MICAH

Ok. I don't understand. I will probably never understand. I got it.

Carla turns and walks to him. They embrace briefly.

CARLA

I can't handle what's going on out here. I am not ready for him to find out yet. I only knew her as my brother's girlfriend, but he loved her. He'll be crushed.

Micah nods.

MICAH

Ok. I'm sorry.

CARLA

Come on. I'm ready.

MICAH

Ok.

They turn and walk hand in hand towards the building.

ALEX

walks along the edge of the parking lot, staying out of the light. He settles close to the building behind a row of cars, watching the cars arrive and park.

His eyes follow one car in particular as it moves through the parking lot and parks. CAREY JUNGER, a stocky 20 year old, gets out of the car and walks around to the passenger side.

He opens the door and Isabel, dressed in an evening gown, steps out. Alex stares at her for a long moment, entranced.

His gaze is broken when Carey steps into his field of view and takes Isabel's arm. Alex watches them walk toward the building. A tear rolls down his face.

DAVID (O.S.)

It's hard, isn't it?

Alex nods.

DAVID

No matter how hard you try, there are some people you never really let go of; that you can never forget, no matter how hard you try.

ALEX

How can she look so happy, when I'm so miserable?

DAVID

How do you know she's happy?

ALEX

If you give me the whole Beth story again, I'll puke.

DAVID

Come on.

Alex glances once more at Isabel as Carey leads her inside. He walks away with David.

DAVID

No, this time, I think you need the whole story. Maybe it will help.

ALEX

Ah, geez, there's more to that?

DAVID

Maybe you'll actually believe it.

ALEX

Fine. Try me.

DAVID

Well, it all began in a little town called Hauginstown...

INT. FEMPIROR CITY - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Beth looks at the screen as David's signal moves with a blue dot. She smiles.

A blue alert goes off. Beth presses a button and the screen zooms in on a set of three blue dots.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Mauricio carries Jessica into the alley where they picked her up and lays her down where she would be in the shadows in the morning. Mauricio steps back. Erech stands over her.

ERECH

Rest, my child. Perhaps, we'll
pick you up in a few days.

Erech turns and walks to the limousine with Mauricio in tow. They get into limo and the limo drives off.

INT. SCHOOL - NIGHT

Carey and Isabel exit the dance floor and walk to a stairwell. Isabel is perspiring, and it looks like they may be on the verge of making out, but...

ISABEL

Do you have any?

CAREY

Of course, I have some. I just want
a little something extra in return.

ISABEL

Come on, I'm going crazy here.

CAREY

Yeah, you want one of these?

Carey reaches into a jacket pocket and pulls out an Empegen syringe. Isabel nods, desperate.

CAREY

You know what I want in return.

ISABEL

Carey, come on. Please.

CAREY

Oh, shut up. You're a stupid
Emps junkie who can't afford
your stuff. You gotta pay
somehow.

Isabel looks around, as if she hears something. She leans into
Carey, her eyes welling.

ISABEL

Please.

CAREY

Stop that. Come on.

Carey leans in and kisses her. She responds, but reluctantly.

CAREY

Do you want this?

He holds up the syringe. She nods. She reaches for it, but he
jerks it away from her.

CAREY

Then you know what to do.

ISABEL

Carey, I don't-

CAREY

You want the stuff, you gotta
pay the price.

Isabel sniffles as if she is going to cry. She drops out of
frame.

END OF EPISODE