

LUMEN

"Pilot"

Written by  
Chris Black

3rd REV. NETWORK DRAFT  
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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS - THE PROMENADE - NIGHT

Impressive brownstones, cobbled streets, gas flames dance in street lamps. If it weren't for the gleaming skyscrapers of Lower Manhattan rising across the East River it could be a hundred years ago.

An evening mist chills a small group of kids waiting outside a townhouse worth more than some actual towns. They're dressed in elaborate fantasy costumes: sorcerers, a princess, magical creatures. The door to the townhouse opens and a woman steps out. Reverent voices murmur, "It's her..."

She's strikingly beautiful, but with a weary, haunted look about her that makes her seem older and wiser than her thirty some years. This is HELEN ROYCE, author.

Helen signs some books, poses gamely for iPhone photos, finally reaching one boy waiting patiently at the back of the pack: He's alone, no parents, and is dressed in a simple monk-like robe. Meet CHARLIE DRAKE (12). As he holds out his book for her to sign she sees an ornate TATTOO -- a complex intertwining symbol -- on his wrist.

HELEN

(off the tattoo)

Please tell me that's not real.  
Your parents would kill me.

CHARLIE

It's marker. I copied it from the description in chapter two of "Journey of Light."

HELEN

(signing his book)

What's your name?

CHARLIE

Charlie.

HELEN

(re: his costume)

Why a Spiritwalker, Charlie?  
Wouldn't you rather be Captain Gravewood? Or Prince Dai? They have more fun.

CHARLIE

But they don't understand.

HELEN  
Understand what?

CHARLIE  
The magic.

HELEN  
(not a question)  
But you do.

There's a moment of connection between them, communion -- she can't put her finger on it, but there's something about him. She hands him his book back and heads up the street. Charlie looks down at what she's written: "*To Charlie, Believe. Helen Royce*"

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS - STREET - NIGHT

Helen walks briskly along the street. Then, as if sensing something, she looks behind her. One by one the STREET LIGHTS FLICKER OUT and a FIGURE steps into view at the end of the block, ominously backlit. Oddly, Helen doesn't seem afraid. More like... resigned, as if she knew this was coming. Nonetheless, she turns and hurries off --

EXT. BROOKLYN STREETS (VARIOUS) - NIGHT

A SERIES OF SHOTS as Helen darts urgently down the darkened sidewalks, ducking around parked cars, across the empty streets... Finally, she turns into --

EXT. BROOKLYN - ALLEY - NIGHT

A DEAD END. Damn it. She starts to backtrack, but there at the mouth of the alley stands the figure, faceless in the dim light. A silent, threatening presence.

HELEN  
You certainly took your time.

No response, or perhaps the faintest suggestion of a shrug.

HELEN  
It doesn't matter. You can tell  
him he'll never find it.

DARK FIGURE  
(a harsh whisper)  
Have you?

Helen squares herself, defiant, unflinching... but then her eyes flick to the mouth of the alley and she sees: Charlie standing there, wide-eyed. In that instant Helen makes a decision. She closes her eyes and begins to chant, strange words in a lyrical ancient tongue.

CONTINUED:

A WIND BEGINS TO RISE -- and then it becomes tangible, solid, a TENDRIL OF ENERGY writhing around her. The figure tries to step back, but the ENERGY WHIPS around him as well, holding them both in the eye of a magical hurricane. There is a BLINDING FLASH and Charlie is knocked to the ground, stunned.

A beat and he looks up. The wind is gone, the noise... and so are Helen and the figure. The only thing there now is a STRANGE, RUNE-LIKE MARKING SEARED INTO THE PAVEMENT. But as Charlie watches, the rune slowly FADES AWAY... evaporating until nothing remains.

And as we slowly PUSH IN on Charlie's young face, shocked, breathless, utterly mind-fucked, we --

MATCH CUT TO:

CHARLIE'S FACE, four years older. He's a handsome sixteen year old now, but with the same intensity behind that penetrating gaze.

CHARLIE

-- and as Fitzgerald depicted a glittering, decadent America during the Jazz Age, in her first novel, "Journey of Light," Helen Royce depicts an empire that is literally magical in its opulence.

REVEAL we are:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Charlie stands before his A.P. Lit class. A female TEACHER watches from the sidelines.

TEACHER

Are you comparing a young adult fantasy to "The Great Gatsby?"

CHARLIE

Have you read the Lumen Saga?

TEACHER

I've seen the movies. You were supposed to analyze a piece of literature.

CHARLIE

And this doesn't count because it's fantasy?

TEACHER

You could have picked C.S. Lewis. Or Orwell, or Vonnegut.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Not some sweaty teen romance about  
a headstrong princess coming of age  
in a magical kingdom--

CHARLIE

(frustrated)

Royce was using magic as a metaphor  
for class stratification: Haves  
and have-nots, the magical and the  
non-magical...

A SMART ASS pipes up from the class.

SMART ASS

The geek and the non-geek.

Laughter. Off Charlie, frustrated, embarrassed --

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

End of the school day. Kids pour out of this New York City  
school heading for buses and the subway. We pick up Charlie  
walking with his best friend HENRY, a kindred spirit.

HENRY

I say we caffeinate and head over  
to Forbidden Planet. Neil Gaiman  
is signing.

CHARLIE

I just saw him at Midtown Comics.

HENRY

So did I. Like there's such a  
thing as too much Neil Gaiman.

A girl drops into step beside them.

DAWN

So, in your interpretation Princess  
Aelin is Gatsby? That would make  
Captain Gravewood Daisy Buchanan.  
He doesn't seem that self-absorbed.

She's cute but not cheerleader pretty -- dark hair, dark  
clothes, dark eyes behind vintage frames. Girls can be  
geeks, too. Her name is --

DAWN

I'm Dawn. Aka the new girl.

Charlie nods a terse greeting. Despite his good looks and  
track star build, he's not that comfortable in his own skin.

HENRY  
He's Charlie. I'm Henry.

She nods, keeps her focus on Charlie.

DAWN  
You know, Ms. Tobin would probably  
give you an "A" if you didn't cop  
so much attitude.

CHARLIE  
It's not about the grade.

DAWN  
Cool. Enjoy community college.  
(then)  
So... where do you think she is?  
Helen Royce.  
(off his look)  
I heard you were there... the night  
she disappeared. You're kind of a  
celebrity.

Charlie freezes, instantly wary. This is dangerous territory  
for him; he's been sucker-punched before. A pregnant beat  
until --

DAWN  
Fine. Whatever.

She starts to walk away. Henry looks at Charlie, "What are  
you going to do, dude?" Charlie is gun-shy, but he's also  
hungry to make a connection.

CHARLIE  
Everybody thinks she had a mental  
breakdown and jumped off the Staten  
Island ferry or something. Or it's  
all just a crazy publicity stunt.

Dawn stops, turns back. His passion getting the better of  
him, Charlie pulls a bulging notebook from his backpack and  
shows her a sketch: the rune.

CHARLIE  
But I saw this burned into the  
pavement, right where she was  
standing.

DAWN  
I never heard about that.

CHARLIE  
Yeah, well, it disappeared.  
Everybody thought I made it up.

HENRY

But there's totally precedent for it in the books. Spells leave trace signatures, like fingerprints at a crime scene.

DAWN

Spells?

CHARLIE

(shoots Henry a look)  
Not literally. Whatever it is, I think it's the key to finding her, but there's no reference to this symbol in any of her books.

HENRY

Not in the ones she finished.

CHARLIE

Right. Helen Royce was supposedly writing the fourth and final book in the Saga when she vanished. But no one's ever found a manuscript. So, I've been trying to figure it out from the first three...

(goes for broke)

You could come over sometime. We could look together.

DAWN

Will you wear your wizard outfit?

CHARLIE

What?

DAWN

You had it on that night, right? Long robe, pointy hat... I bet you were totally adork-able.

Charlie hears laughter. He looks up to see a group of kids from his class (including Smart Ass) hovering nearby. They've been eavesdropping. Charlie realizes he's been set up. His face falls, shutting down. As he jams his Helen Royce diary into his backpack, we hear someone CLAPPING.

Charlie turns to see another girl moving toward him. She is cheerleader pretty, but she's also smart, tough and fiercely independent. This is BAILEY HARTMAN (17).

BAILEY

(to Dawn, caustic)  
Well played, new girl.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

BAILEY (CONT'D)

You want to make friends, get in the right clique. What better way than to make fun of my stepbrother.

CHARLIE

Let it go, Bailey.

Not a chance.

BAILEY

What I wonder is why? Why the desperate, pathetic need to be accepted?

HENRY

Oh boy, here it comes.

BAILEY

And then I get it. It's obvious. You were him at your old school. No one to have lunch with, to hang out with, to talk to. But that was okay, 'cause you're happier sitting alone with your journal, right? And your black nail polish, and your Dr. Who t-shirt, and that lump of self-loathing in your gut.

(off Charlie)

The sad thing is you could have had a real friend here. But now you got them. Until they decide you don't. Come on.

As she pulls Charlie away, leaving Dawn totally destroyed --

EXT. MANHATTAN - STREET - DAY

A couple walks down the crowded sidewalk. Though they're both in their early 40's, he's got his fingers hooked through hers and they're laughing like a couple of teenagers.

JAMIE

It's only been two years--

MICHAEL

"Only?!"

He's MICHAEL HARTMAN (Bailey's father) and there's a weight behind his boyish features. She's JAMIE HARTMAN (nee Drake, Charlie's mother) and there's likewise an emotional pain underlying her easy beauty. They've both been through a lot.

JAMIE  
(dryly)  
Don't get me wrong, it feels like a  
lot longer.

MICHAEL  
Two years is a big deal! Ninety  
percent of marriages fail in the  
first year.

JAMIE  
That's restaurants.

MICHAEL  
So, you don't want to go.

JAMIE  
Of course I want to go! How could  
I not want to spend two days  
rolling around naked on a bearskin  
rug in Vermont with you? It's the  
perfect anniversary present. But  
Charlie's got his therapist on  
Saturday morning--

MICHAEL  
He's sixteen! He can make it to  
the Upper West Side by himself.

JAMIE  
And you remember what happened the  
last time we trusted Bailey to be  
alone for the weekend.

Michael reacts, slightly defensive.

MICHAEL  
That's not fair.

JAMIE  
(regrets it)  
I'm sorry. I'm trying to  
understand her. She doesn't make  
it easy.

They stop in front of an office. A discreet brass plaque on  
the door reads: *DR. LAWRENCE A. GOODMAN - CLINICAL  
PSYCHOLOGIST - INDIVIDUAL AND COUPLES THERAPY.*

MICHAEL  
I guess that's why we're here.

JAMIE

I've got a better idea. There's a  
great Italian joint right around  
the corner --

She grabs his hand and begins playfully dragging him up the  
street past the doctor's office.

JAMIE

A little pasta, a little red wine.  
Doesn't that sound like better  
therapy?

MICHAEL

Stop, temptress! It's not about  
us, it's about our children.  
(with mock anguish)  
For God's sake, do it for the  
children.

She rolls her eyes. Idiot. As they head into the office --

INT. HARTMAN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Charlie sits on the floor, his Helen Royce diary and well-  
thumbed copies of her books spread around him. He looks up  
as Bailey enters, an excited gleam in his eye --

CHARLIE

I think I found it... what the  
symbol means. I'm still working on  
the translation, but it actually  
does look like a spell.

BAILEY

Your life would be a lot easier if  
you didn't act like such a freak.

CHARLIE

You know, it's not just me. These  
books have sold fifty million  
copies worldwide.

BAILEY

How many of those people think they  
can say some magic words and Helen  
Royce will appear in front of them?

CHARLIE

I don't-- I'm not delusional.

She cocks an eyebrow at him, "Really?" A beat...

CHARLIE

(sighs)

I thought that girl was different.

She softens, looks at him with genuine affection.

BAILEY

Some day she will be. Well, not her. She was a bitch. But some "her"... probably. Someday.

He can't help but smile.

BAILEY

Listen. There's something I've got to tell you... Just so you know, I don't hate your mom. But what she and my dad are trying to do... put together a whole family out of the pieces of two busted ones... it was a bad idea from the start.

CHARLIE

I think they love each other.

BAILEY

Good for them. I hope it works out. I'm not sticking around to find out.

(off his look)

My friend Gail just started at Columbia and she's looking for a roommate. I've been saving up--

CHARLIE

You're moving out?

BAILEY

I was leaving for college in the fall anyway. It's just speeding up the timeline.

He sits there, a bit stunned.

BAILEY

You okay?

CHARLIE

Sure. I just, um... I never thought I'd like having a sister.

This moves her more than she could have imagined.

BAILEY

Well, that's not changing. I'm  
always a phone call away. Just  
don't give Jamie the number.

She exits. He looks down at his copy of "Journey of Light,"  
open to the words Helen Royce wrote that night four years  
ago: "*Believe.*" He reaches into his book bag and takes out  
a knife. He ponders the blade for a moment... then jams it  
viciously into the hardwood floor.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Michael and Jamie sit together on the couch. The requisite  
box of tissues and bowl of candy nearby.

JAMIE

I think Bailey and I are doing  
better. We're not best buds or  
anything, but she doesn't storm out  
of the room when I walk in anymore.  
That's progress, right?

Reveal they are sitting across from DR. LAWRENCE A. GOODMAN,  
50's, glasses. He nods.

DR. GOODMAN

(to Michael)  
How about you and Charlie?

MICHAEL

It's been good. We went to the  
Knicks last week.

JAMIE

Charlie said he had fun.

MICHAEL

We did.  
(then)  
He spent half the game with his  
nose in one of those books.

JAMIE

You could use that to reach out to  
him, maybe even read one. They're  
actually pretty good.  
(off his look)  
You think it's a bad idea to try  
and connect with him? Show some  
interest in something he loves?

MICHAEL

Of course not.  
(delicately)  
(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

But I worry that's... enabling him.  
Fueling this obsession. He's a  
great kid, but he's got real  
issues.

JAMIE

And Bailey doesn't have "issues?"  
The acting out, her grades--

MICHAEL

She's been through hell. She  
watched her mother waste away, but  
she didn't make up a wild story  
about some author magically  
disappearing in a puff of smoke.

JAMIE

This isn't about Helen Royce. It's  
about his father. Charlie adored  
David, and he just walked out on  
us. Did you ever think that "wild  
story" is his way of dealing?

A beat. The moment is tense, uncomfortable.

DR. GOODMAN

Okay. Did you do your homework?

JAMIE

("no")

We're grown-ups. We don't need to  
make some silly list of reasons why  
we're together.

MICHAEL

C'mon. We agreed to commit to this  
process--

JAMIE

You're talking commitment now? You  
won't even read a book to show you  
care about my kid.

MICHAEL

He's my kid, too. What do I have  
to do to prove that? But those  
books were his thing with David--

JAMIE

Why do you always make this about  
David?

MICHAEL

You just said it was about David.

JAMIE  
Don't twist my words. I'm trying  
to make this work.

MICHAEL  
And I'm not? At least I did the  
homework.

He produces a sheet of paper. She snatches it away.

JAMIE  
(glancing at it)  
Don't be so smug, you only came up  
with one thing.

MICHAEL  
Don't--

JAMIE  
(reading)  
"She saved my life."

She's speechless, the wind totally out of her sails.

MICHAEL  
I went through a bunch of drafts.  
How I love your laugh, how watching  
you unclog the sink really turns me  
on...  
(off her look)  
I know, it was all super cheesy.  
And then I remembered the place I  
was at after Janet died. The place  
you found me in... and got me out  
of.  
(off his "list")  
That seemed to sum it all up.

She looks at him -- vulnerable, sweet, a little goofy. The  
man she fell in love with. And she feels like shit.

INT. HARTMAN APARTMENT - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Dark, quiet. Keys jingle in the lock and Michael and Jamie  
enter. He drops the keys on a table --

JAMIE  
I'm sorry.

MICHAEL  
You don't need to be. I just wish  
it wasn't so hard.

He gives her a weary smile. And they head into --

INT. HARTMAN APARTMENT - NIGHT

They enter to find Charlie seated on the floor surrounded by his "research." And carved deeply into the hardwood floor is an intricate engraving, four feet across: THE RUNE.

MICHAEL  
Charlie. What are you--

CHARLIE  
(excited, almost manic)  
I finally figured it out.  
(off the rune)  
I couldn't find it in the books  
because it's not in the books. Not  
exactly--

JAMIE  
Honey, give me the knife.

CHARLIE  
It's made up of different symbols  
scattered throughout the series  
combined into this.

JAMIE  
What symbols--

CHARLIE  
The pages the segments appear on  
coincide with words in the text,  
all in ancient Spiritwalker--

MICHAEL  
That's not even a real language.

CHARLIE  
Thanks, Michael. I'm not an idiot.

JAMIE  
Everybody take it easy.

Bailey enters from the bedroom carrying a duffel bag.

BAILEY  
What's going on?

CHARLIE  
It's what Helen was saying that  
night.

He speaks a LYRICAL SING-SONG PHRASE (**WORDS TO BE WRITTEN**),  
repeating it over and over as the scene continues --



And through it we see DAYLIGHT, BRIGHT SUNSHINE, WHAT APPEAR TO BE BUILDINGS LOST IN THE GLARE... ANOTHER WORLD.

And Charlie doesn't hesitate. He scoops up his Helen Royce journal and leaps through the rift, vanishing in a flash.

JAMIE

Charlie!

Horrified, Jamie lunges after him, just beyond the reach of Michael's grasping hands --

MICHAEL

No!

And the MAELSTROM BEGINS TO SUBSIDE, the RIFT SHRINKING, ZIPPERING SHUT right before their eyes. And Michael makes a split-second decision. He grabs a terrified Bailey.

MICHAEL

Come on!

BAILEY

Hell no!

MICHAEL

We're staying together!

And he pulls her through, just as the PORTAL SHRINKS TO A PINPOINT OF LIGHT AND VANISHES, leaving the apartment dark, quiet... and empty. A beat and we SMASH TO:

EXT. LUMEN - DAY

The family blinking in bright sunshine in the middle of a bustling city street. But not like any city they, or we, have ever seen. It's almost Victorian in appearance -- cobbled streets and ornate, fanciful architecture; women in elegant dresses and men in high collars and long coats.

CHARLIE

It worked.

He looks up and the others follow his gaze. In the distance we see the gleaming towers and parapets of a huge PALACE rising fifty stories into the sky. It's almost like a magical mirror image of the New York skyline.

Welcome to Lumen.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. LUMEN - DAY

ANGLE ON THE PALACE: a skyscraper of burnished metal, glass and polished stone, an almost Art Deco-looking engineering marvel. No whimsical home of a Disney princess -- it's the Chrysler Building of palaces.

And through the clouds wisping around its turrets an AIRSHIP appears, all graceful curves and delicate struts and sails. Pushed along by PUFFS OF BLUE LIGHT putt-putting from exhaust ports, the airship nudges gently alongside the uppermost spire of the palace, not quite touching --

A SHIMMERING "GANGPLANK" OF ENERGY extends out to a palace balcony. Tiny, distant passengers disembark, walking across this tenuous, translucent bridge and disappearing into the palace as if walking on air.

WE MOVE DOWN past a crowded cityscape of lesser, but no less fantastic, buildings to find our family, gaping in shock and wonder at it all --

BAILEY

Where are we?

JAMIE

It's Lumen.

There's a blast of a HORN and the family leaps out of the way of a "taxi," an ornate carriage that doesn't appear to run on engine power or horse power. Instead a glass and brass box at the front of the carriage contains a PULSING CLOUD OF BLUE ENERGY that pushes an intricate set of pistons and gears, turning the wheels. Charles Dickens meets Harry Potter.

JAMIE

Charlie... whatever you did, you need to undo it.

CHARLIE

How can you say that? Look around!  
It's real, it's all real.

His raised voice draws looks from a few passing Lumenites, and Michael herds the family to the side of the street.

MICHAEL

(low; trying to stay calm)  
I get it, okay? This is unbelievable. But whatever it is we can discuss it at home--

CHARLIE

No! I don't have a life because of this. For four years, all I've wanted is to find her. And I'm not leaving until I do.

BAILEY

Screw that! I'll do it!

She grabs his Helen Royce journal and begins to frantically flip pages.

CHARLIE

Hey!

She finds what she's looking for: the spell. She tries to recite it herself, but it comes out as A CRAZY NONSENSICAL RANT (**WORDS TO BE WRITTEN**).

CHARLIE

That's not even close.

MICHAEL

Take it easy.

Jamie sees Bailey's rant is drawing the attention of passing LOCALS, who react nervously and hurry off --

JAMIE

Bailey, you need to stop.

BAILEY

Don't tell me what to do!

JAMIE'S POV: Across the street a LOCAL is talking urgently to a SOLDIER in a crisp, elegant uniform -- a strange SIDEARM hangs at his hip (a tiny glass chamber on the weapon glows with the same BLUE ENERGY that powered the "taxi"). The agitated local turns and POINTS DIRECTLY AT US. Oh, shit.

JAMIE

Michael, I think we should go.

We SMASH TO:

EXT. LUMEN - HIGH STREET - DAY

Our family moves along the busy main street trying to remain inconspicuous in the bustle of pedestrians dressed in the distinctive garb of Lumen -- think the lavish look of a period costume drama but with a magical twist: the odd garment with MULTI-COLORED PATTERNS OF LIGHT DANCING ALONG STITCHING, EMBROIDERY THAT MOVES WITH A LIFE OF ITS OWN.

BAILEY

(to Charlie, nervously)

So... did you know this was real?

CHARLIE  
I told you, I'm not delusional.

BAILEY  
Then what did you think was going  
to happen?

CHARLIE  
I don't know. I just knew that she  
meant for someone to find her. Why  
not me?

MAN'S VOICE  
Looking for someone?

Startled, they all turn to see a SHADY CHARACTER slouching in  
the shadows. He nods for them to step closer.

SHADY  
I might be able to help.

Shady reaches into the folds of his cloak and produces a  
SHIMMERING ORB OF BLUE ENERGY about the size of a baseball.

SHADY  
A small spell to bring good fortune  
in your quest?

He rolls it back and forth between his hands, causing it to  
dance and bob, always hovering an inch above his fingertips.

SHADY  
I'm asking a fair price... and I'm  
not the type to quibble over  
whether you have the proper Royal  
Magic Permits.

CHARLIE  
Can I hold it--

MICHAEL  
We're not interested, thanks.

And he herds the family off up the street.

CHARLIE  
We might've been able to use that.

Michael just shoots him a look. As they move on --

JAMIE  
What's a "Royal Magic Permit?"

CHARLIE

Yeah, that's weird. You don't need a permit to practice magic. Everyone uses it. It runs the world, the economy, everything.

BAILEY

So, it's not the magic part that's weird, it's the permit part.

Michael is trying to take everything in -- fear and confusion giving way to absolute wonder. He spots a MAN astride a motorcycle that looks like something out of Jules Verne, its engine replaced by a glass box containing a SWIRL OF BLUE ENERGY. But the energy is down to a faint glimmer.

Under the watchful gaze of a SOLDIER, an ELEGANT WOMAN rests her hands on the box and murmurs an INCANTATION. The wan flicker inside the box suddenly FLARES LIKE A TINY BLUE SUN. The man on the motorcycle nods and hands the woman some official looking documents and a handful of gold coins and motors off, their transaction complete.

MICHAEL

Is everyone here a... wizard?

JAMIE

I think the word is Practitioner.

CHARLIE

Most Lumenites have some limited magical ability to cast simple spells. The Practitioners are like... retailers. They provide the magic Lumen needs to run.

MICHAEL

They pump the gas.

CHARLIE

But only a few rare people can tap the magic at its source, truly control it...

BAILEY

The Spiritwalkers.  
(off Charlie's look)  
Hey, they're in the movies, too.  
Very dark and brooding -- Benedict Cumberbatch played one.

At that moment they hear a disturbance behind them. They turn to see a squad of soldiers pulling Shady the magic hawker out onto the street. They roughly search him and come up with the GLOWING SPELL he just tried to sell the family.

SHADY

I'm holding that for a friend.

The soldiers aren't listening. As they start to haul him away, Shady suddenly breaks free and takes off running... right toward our family. One of the soldiers pulls his weapon and terrified locals scream and duck out of the way. And just as Shady reaches our family, the soldier FIRES --

Charlie is staring right into Shady's eyes as he's enveloped by a BLAST OF BLUE ENERGY from the gun. His face contorts in pain and then HE BEGINS TO AGE. His skin wrinkles, pulling taut against his skull, his hair thins and greys as his body withers... and then he simply DISINTEGRATES INTO DUST.

JAMIE

My God.

MICHAEL

Come on. Come on...

Michael literally has to pull the horrified Charlie away --

BAILEY

What was that?

Still reeling, Charlie doesn't answer.

MICHAEL

Charlie. Is that in the books?

CHARLIE

No... No. I don't understand. This looks like Lumen, but it feels... wrong.

JAMIE

Where should we go? We can't keep wandering the streets.

Bailey pulls her SMARTPHONE out, starts waving it around trying to get a signal.

CHARLIE

That's not gonna work.

BAILEY

How do you know? You didn't even think this place was real until an hour ago. Is me getting a cell signal any weirder than this sh--

Before the word is out of her mouth a rough-looking young man "bumps" into her, smoothly plucking the phone from her hand and disappearing into the crowd.

BAILEY

Hey!

Without a second thought she bolts after him.

MICHAEL

Bailey!

He runs after her, Charlie and Jamie following --

EXT. LUMEN - STREET - DAY

Bailey bumps, shoves and lunges through startled Lumenites. The thief glances back, surprised by her dogged pursuit, and pours on a burst of speed -- BUT CRASHES INTO A MERCHANT stepping out of his shop. The thief slams into the sidewalk and suddenly Bailey is on top of him, grabbing his arm, trying to wrench her phone away.

BAILEY

That's mine!

He gives her a smile. She's surprised to see that despite his rough street appearance he's roguishly handsome. A young Han Solo vibe. We'll learn his name is KALKIN (early 20's).

KALKIN

What is it?

(rubbing its glass screen)

A philosopher's stone? That's illegal.

BAILEY

(vamping)

It's dangerous.

KALKIN

Then I think I'll keep it.

She's breathless for more than one reason. Before she can come up with a response we hear SIRENS wailing urgently.

A GROUP OF SOLDIERS immediately react, defensively drawing their weapons and looking warily to the sky --

SOLDIER

Rebel attack! Off the street!

Everyone to shelter, now!

Panicked Lumenites rush to get off the street as we hear the ominous WHISTLE of what sounds like INCOMING ARTILLERY and a BLAZING BALL OF ENERGY slams into the street nearby. It sends out a RIPPLING SHOCKWAVE OF MAGICAL ENERGY, blowing out store windows and knocking people to the ground.

ANGLE ON MICHAEL, JAMIE AND CHARLIE -- who have lost Bailey in the chaos. Another BALL OF ENERGY EXPLODES NEARBY, rupturing many of those ubiquitous glass boxes that power Lumen's technology, setting off FIREWORKS OF ERRANT MAGIC SPELLS. As they duck --

MICHAEL  
Bailey! Bailey!

BACK ON BAILEY AND KALKIN -- as he grabs her arm, tugging her toward cover. But she jerks away. Fine. He ducks under an overturned street vendor's cart, leaving her standing, exposed, until a BALL OF ENERGY hits close by... and she scrambles to join him.

KALKIN  
Hello again.

All around them it's a hectic scene as the MAGIC BARRAGE CONTINUES. Some soldiers hustle people into cover (we now notice some businesses have sandbags piled up in front of their entrances), while others fire their weapons pointlessly into the sky. It feels like the London Blitz.

And then it's over. The sirens fade and people emerge cautiously back onto street. And Bailey notices that Kalkin has been shielding her with his body, intimately close. She pulls away just as Michael, Jamie and Charlie run up.

MICHAEL  
Are you all right?

BAILEY  
Yeah. I think so.

Michael eyes Kalkin warily, about to say something when --

VOICE (O.S.)  
There they are!

They all turn to see a WEASELY LOCAL (who we may recognize as the one who reported them while Bailey was trying to cast her "spell") pointing them out to three ARMED SOLDIERS.

WEASELY LOCAL  
They were using illegal magic.

KALKIN  
And I bid you farewell.

And he's gone, lost in the crowd in a flash... along with Bailey's phone. As the soldiers head toward them --

JAMIE  
I think he's got the right idea.

They walk quickly away, but are confronted by another SQUAD OF SOLDIERS. As they're roughly grabbed --

MICHAEL BAILEY  
Take it easy. We didn't do anything.

The commander of the troops, a handsome, battle-weary soldier whose noble bearing and intelligent eyes belie his gruff demeanor, steps forward. This is Captain of the Royal Guard BEVAN GRAVEWOOD (mid-30's).

GRAVEWOOD  
Your magic permits.

JAMIE  
The good citizen is mistaken. We used no magic.

Gravewood looks at them, taking in their strange clothing, but before he can speak --

CHARLIE  
We demand to be taken to the palace.

Charlie boldly steps forward to face Gravewood. Michael, Jamie and Bailey react, taken aback -- what the hell?

CHARLIE  
We need to speak to Aelin, the Rose Princess of Lumen.

Gravewood's face betrays the slightest emotion, a faint flicker of anguish, just as quickly buried...

GRAVEWOOD  
The Princess is a traitor to the crown.

CHARLIE  
What?

GRAVEWOOD  
(flat, as if by rote)  
Anyone known to associate with her is assumed to be in league with the Rebels and guilty of treason. The penalty is death.

CHARLIE  
(stunned, overlapping)  
No, that's impossible... This is her story. She's the heroine.

Gravewood nods to his soldiers, who push our family to their knees. He draws his sidearm --

JAMIE  
No!

MICHAEL  
We don't belong here!

GRAVEWOOD  
By order of Emperor Dralaren the sentence to be carried out at once.

CHARLIE  
This isn't how it goes!

As Gravewood raises his pistol, lethal BLUE ENERGY crackling in its glass chamber --

A MAN'S VOICE  
Stop!

They all look up to see a man step through the crowd: He's dark and dashing, handsome, dressed in regal finery, an aura of power and charisma about him. The crowd parts for him.

MAN  
He's right. This isn't how it goes.

This is CROWN PRINCE DAI of Lumen, but Jamie knows him as --

JAMIE  
David?

Yeah, her ex-husband David. She stares at him in utter shock. And he's clearly just as stunned as she is.

DAI  
Jamie...

He helps her to her feet, then turns to Charlie, groping for the right words. Finally...

DAI  
Hello, son.

Of all the things Charlie's imagination could have conjured this was not one of them. His father, the man whose absence has weighed so heavily on him, now stands before him... a real life prince of Lumen. Off Charlie, we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. LUMEN - STREET - DAY

Moments later. The soldiers disperse the curious locals as David/Prince Dai leads our family to a ROYAL CARRIAGE -- like the magical "taxi" they saw earlier, but larger and more lavish. Gravewood follows closely, watchful and inscrutable. Charlie is still spinning --

CHARLIE

This is where you went? How-- Did you know it was real... how did you get here?

DAI

Actually, I'm from here.  
(slightly sheepish)  
My name isn't David. It's Dai of Drake. Third of his name, heir to the throne of Lumen. There's a bunch of other titles, but you get the idea.

BAILEY

So... you're some kind of prince charming?

DAI

(goes for cavalier)  
Jamie used to think so.

Jamie stares at him. Really?

DAI

Sorry. I just... How did you get here?

BAILEY

(re: Charlie)  
Talk to Merlin.

Dai turns back to Charlie, looking at the son he hasn't seen in four years... and maybe never expected to see again.

DAI

Travel between the worlds has only been done a few times. It would take someone truly exceptional--

JAMIE

(sharply)  
He is.

DAI  
I don't doubt it. And I'm sorry  
you had to do everything alone--

MICHAEL  
She didn't.

Dai finally turns his attention to Michael.

DAI  
And you are?

JAMIE  
He's my husband.

Dai reacts. It's a blow, the last thing he expected.

DAI  
(to Jamie)  
You remarried?

JAMIE  
What did you expect me to do,  
David? Wait? I waited. A month.  
Then six. Then a year. Were you  
even planning on coming back?

DAI  
I didn't plan on leaving!

It's all too much for Charlie, and the floodgates open --

CHARLIE  
We read all the books together. We  
joked about how much the movies  
sucked. You'd get so worked up if  
the guy playing Prince Dai did  
something stupid. Remember?  
"Don't they understand how many  
people rely on him. How could he  
act like such a selfish jerk?"  
(pointed)  
You tell me.

Dai doesn't know what to say And as Charlie looks up to see  
the fifty story spires of the palace looming over them, we  
SMASH TO:

INT. PALACE - GREAT HALL - DAY

Massive doors are flung open and Dai leads the family into a  
vast majestic hall. Columns disappear toward a vaulted  
ceiling so high overhead the room seems to have its own  
weather system.

A man sweeps grandly forward to greet them: He's late fifties, powerfully built and imposing, but with a dry wit and an avuncular charm.

DAI  
May I present my father, Emperor  
Dralaren.

JAMIE  
(aside to Dai)  
Should I curtsy, or--

But Dralaren has already pulled her into a massive bear hug.

DRALAREN  
At last I meet the maiden who has  
so entranced my son.

Michael shifts uncomfortably.

JAMIE  
It's an honor, um... your majesty.

Dralaren steps to Charlie, almost getting misty.

DRALAREN  
And you must be my grandson.  
Welcome home.

The significance of his words suddenly land hard with all of them. Charlie is tied to this world, a part of it.

DAI  
Charlie and Jamie have come with  
their family. This is Bailey and  
her father Michael Hartman...  
(this is awkward)  
Jamie's new husband.

DRALAREN  
Husband?

Dralaren walks up to Michael, giving him a hard once over.  
Michael squirms under his gaze until --

DRALAREN  
No matter!  
(claps Michael's shoulder)  
We'll sort it out.

MICHAEL  
It's already sorted--

DRALAREN  
(grandly)  
Welcome to all the emissaries from  
Earth!

The Emperor sweeps his hands in front of them and suddenly our family's clothing TRANSFORMS -- jeans and t-shirts and sneakers SHIFT AND MORPH IN A RIPPLING WHIRLPOOL OF COLOR into boots and cloaks and stunning dresses, Lumanesque garb fit for royalty.

BAILEY  
Neat trick. Where is Earth exactly? Are we on another planet, in another dimension? What's the deal?

DRALAREN  
Young lady, smarter men than I have been trying to figure out that "deal" for a very long time.

DAI  
Our legends tell us that Lumen and Earth were once one world. Until a cataclysm ripped them apart.

CHARLIE  
That's in the books. Princess Aelin is searching for a way into a parallel world, but she never finds it. Everyone thought that was going to be the fourth book, but Helen Royce disappeared before...

Charlie looks at Dai, the pieces falling into place --

CHARLIE  
Helen Royce. Aelin Rose. Helen Royce is the princess, isn't she?

DAI  
My sister. Your aunt.

BAILEY  
(to Charlie)  
Dude, you would get so laid at Comic Con.

CHARLIE  
Where is she? I have to see her.

Dai and Dralaren exchange a look. Gravewood lowers his gaze.

DRALAREN

As you now know, Princess Aelin did find a way into her parallel world. She went looking for the Key.

MICHAEL

What's the Key?

DAI

No one knows. A talisman, a spell, a relic... But whatever it is, it will reunite Earth and Lumen.

BAILEY

That's... big.

DRALAREN

Indeed. Prophecy says that whoever brings the worlds together again will unleash an ancient magic of inconceivable power. Magic that my daughter wanted to control... for her own ends. I couldn't allow it. No one should have that much power.

Charlie looks troubled. Something doesn't seem right. But before he can speak, Jamie finally turns to face Dai.

JAMIE

And why did you come to Earth?

DAI

To stop her. I shadowed Aelin's movements for years -- everywhere she went I followed: London, San Francisco, Hong Kong, New York -- waiting, watching... hoping she would lead me to the Key. That was my mission, to get to it first.

(then)

But then I fell in love.

She doesn't know what to say. Michael grits his teeth.

DAI

I had my duty to Lumen. But I also had a family on Earth. What was I supposed to do?

(to Charlie)

Then one night you snuck out to meet your favorite author, and I realized I had no choice. If Aelin ever found out about you, or your mother, she would try to use you against me.

CHARLIE

That was you. In the alley.

DAI

I was going to finally end it, send her back to Lumen. But she pulled me through with her and sealed the portal behind us.

JAMIE

So how did we get here? How did Charlie open the portal?

DAI

I don't know.

MICHAEL

Then find out! Talk to this princess--

DRALAREN

That's not possible.

MICHAEL

Why not?

DRALAREN

Because she is leading the Rebellion! She's turned the Spiritwalkers against me, convinced them I'll destroy Lumen. She wants to seize the throne and the power that comes with it and use it to find the Key.

(sags, heartbroken)

She has betrayed me. She has betrayed her people.

(off the stoic Gravewood)

And betrayed the heart of this good man who was to marry her.

DAI

You think you know her, Charlie. Because of the books and the movies and the conventions. You know a fantasy version of her, the one she wants you to believe. She's not who you think she is.

Charlie takes this like a body blow.

INT. PALACE - ROYAL SUITE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a sculpture -- tiny, meticulously-carved figures in a battle scene: soldiers, horses, strange beasts in armor.

Dai waves a hand over it and the tableau SUDDENLY COMES TO LIFE, A MAGICAL BATTLE RAGING IN MINIATURE.

MICHAEL

(dryly)

Don't you need a permit to do that?

REVEAL they're in what looks like the most incredible hotel room you've ever stayed in... on acid. Timeless and tasteful art and decor mixed with Lumenite amenities -- lamps that flicker with a soft MAGICAL LIGHT, that moving sculpture. A servant girl (NORA, 18) lays out food.

DAI

I hope you'll be comfortable here.

MICHAEL

It's lovely but we won't be sticking around. We need to talk to your head magician or whoever about getting out of here.

DAI

It's not quite that simple--

MICHAEL

It is for us. We're going home.

DAI

And I assure you, I'll make every effort to send you there.

(to Charlie)

In the meantime, there's a lot to see. I'll come by early tomorrow. We'll go out and tour the city, okay?

CHARLIE

I suppose.

DAI

Come on, this has gotta be better than the books, better than the movies. Way better than Lumenworld in Florida.

CHARLIE

At Lumenworld there aren't soldiers killing people in the streets. Turning them into dust--

DAI

I'm sorry you saw that. A lot's changed here since my sister wrote the last book.

CHARLIE  
Like making magic illegal?

DAI  
Not illegal... regulated. You saw  
what the Rebels did today. That  
bombardment. It's terrorism. We  
had no choice.

MICHAEL  
(dryly)  
Make magic a crime and only  
criminals will use magic?

DAI  
Don't talk about what you don't  
know.

MICHAEL  
That would be pretty much  
everything here.

Dai lingers, looks to Jamie -- from his point of view he's  
leaving his wife to spend the night with another man.

DAI  
Well... good night.

JAMIE  
Good night.

Dai exits and Nora, the young servant, steps to the door.

NORA  
Will there be anything else?

JAMIE  
No, thank you.

She nods and exits. As soon as the door closes --

MICHAEL  
We've got to get out of here.

JAMIE  
And go where? David... um, Prince  
Dai is going to help us.

MICHAEL  
I don't trust "Prince Dai."  
(pointed)  
Do you?

JAMIE

What do you want me to say? That I'm confused?  
(off the moving sculpture)  
That I'm a little freaked out that my ex has magic powers? After all this you really want to talk about David?

BAILEY

Unbelievable. Charlie just found out he's some kind of half-breed Harry Potter character and you guys still found a way to make this about yourselves.

Michael and Jamie look at each other, a bit chastened.

MICHAEL

All right--

BAILEY

I'll make this easy for you, Dad. She's already married. Did you see the way she looked at him? She's in love with another guy.

JAMIE

Bailey--

BAILEY

So you can give it a rest and stop trying to replace my mother.

She storms off into a side bedroom. Slam.

JAMIE

(turns to Charlie)  
Are you okay?

CHARLIE

It's been a weird day.

He heads into another bedroom. An awkward beat, then --

MICHAEL

I guess we'll have a lot to talk to Dr. Goodman about.

They look at each other from opposite sides of the huge suite, never having felt farther apart.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PALACE - ROYAL SUITE - NIGHT

Later. Jamie stands alone on the balcony gazing out at the city lights. She's wearing a nightgown woven of some magically diaphanous Lumen material. She looks breathtaking.

DAI

James...

Startled, she looks up to see Dai standing near the door.

DAI

I knocked.

JAMIE

I'll change.

DAI

Don't. It beats that old Jets jersey you used to sleep in.

JAMIE

I only wore that because it got you so worked up on game day.

Dangerous ground. As they talk he walks slowly into the room, closing the distance between them.

DAI

I never meant to hurt you.

JAMIE

It doesn't matter what you did to me. Do you have any idea how it's been for Charlie?

DAI

I want to make up for it.

JAMIE

What does that even mean? What are we supposed to do? Stay here? Live happily ever after like the last four years never happened?

DAI

You can't go back. Believe me, I nearly died trying. James --

JAMIE

Stop calling me that! Okay, let's talk about what you did to me. Four years of not knowing why you left. Four years of wondering if it was something I did.

DAI

Now you know it wasn't.

JAMIE

And that makes it all okay?! I'm  
married--

DAI

To me.

JAMIE

Were you always this arrogant, your  
majesty? How could you not tell  
me? All the years we were  
together. You said you were from  
Ohio!

DAI

Look around. Would telling you the  
truth have been the better call?

JAMIE

It would have been the truth! I  
don't even know what I'm feeling  
right now. Am I furious at you for  
lying or happy to finally have some  
explanation... no matter how crazy.

DAI

Be happy.

He's two steps away. He could close the gap in a heartbeat.  
Who knows where this could go if not for --

MICHAEL

I heard voices.

They see Michael standing in the bedroom doorway, looking  
stricken. The intimacy of the moment isn't lost on him.

DAI

I was just checking to see if you  
were all right.

MICHAEL

(looks to Jamie)

Are we?

Off the three sides of the triangle...

EXT. LUMEN - NIGHT

HIGH AND WIDE above the city. The palace dominates the  
skyline, the glittering cityscape spreading out from it until  
it abruptly ends in the darkness of the countryside beyond.

INT. PALACE - ROYAL SUITE - CHARLIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

OUR P.O.V. CREEPS SLOWLY ACROSS THE ROOM, moving closer and closer to Charlie sleeping in the large bed. A hand snakes out and clamps over his mouth. Charlie's eyes go wide --

NORA

Do you believe the Emperor?

Nora, the serving girl from earlier, is leaning over him. She now seems in complete control, no longer the shy servant who laid out his breeches.

NORA

Do you think Princess Aelin is a traitor?

She holds his gaze, her eyes like blue glacial ice. Charlie is breathless from her intensity, her proximity, her beauty.

CHARLIE

I'm-- I don't know.

NORA

She sent me to bring you to her. But how can I risk her life with someone who doesn't believe in her?

CHARLIE

I don't know what to believe! This morning all this was a book. And a series of collectible trading cards. It was something I dressed up as for Halloween.

She doesn't blink. Just waits for his answer.

CHARLIE

My father says the Princess is trying to find this Key. And if she does it could destroy Lumen.

NORA

That is what your father says...  
(then)  
And if that were true? What would that mean to you? It's not your world. You know nothing about it.

CHARLIE

I know everything about it.

NORA

(exactly her point)  
From her books.

(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

Books that made millions of your people love our world almost as dearly as we do. Why do that if she only wanted to destroy it?

(then)

Make your choice. We don't have much time.

CHARLIE

How do I know I can believe you?

He suddenly seems vulnerable, like the high school outcast he still is inside. She reaches out, gently laying her fingers on his face. He flinches. There's something electric about her touch. His eyes flutter and SUDDENLY WE ARE:

EXT. ANCIENT LUMEN - NIGHT

Charlie and Nora are standing on a vast ancient plain -- a barren primeval landscape stretching to the horizon. Giant AURORA-LIKE STORMS lash overhead. As Charlie watches, the AURORAS begin to TWIST AND TEAR at the sky itself --

CHARLIE

Where are we?

NORA

The beginning.

As the world RIPS ITSELF IN HALF AROUND THEM, we SMASH TO:

INT. ROYAL SUITE - CHARLIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Back where they were... or where they never left. Nora lifts her hand from his face and he spots a TATTOO on her wrist, intricate and iridescent, inked with magic -- like the one he drew four years ago, but infinitely more beautiful.

CHARLIE

(breathless)

You're a Spiritwalker.

NORA

And what do your books tell you about me?

CHARLIE

That you're a Guardian of Lumen. Your fate is tied to it.

NORA

Close enough.

He just gapes at her.

NORA

What?

CHARLIE

I just always imagined you'd be  
more... brooding.

She turns and walks off. As he scrambles out of bed --

INT. PALACE - SERVANT'S AREA - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Nora leads Charlie along a narrow corridor. The surroundings  
are decidedly less regal here.

NORA

(quietly)

We're near the outer wall. I know  
a way the servants get in and out.

But as they duck AROUND A CORNER they run smack into Bailey,  
who is coming out of a doorway holding a bottle.

BAILEY

What are you doing out of the room?  
Who's she?

CHARLIE

What are you--  
(re: the bottle)  
Is that wine?

BAILEY

And I suppose you know the drinking  
age in Lumen. Wait, don't tell me,  
it's in the books. Who is she?

CHARLIE

(cards on the table)

She's taking me to the Princess.

Bailey gives Nora a suspicious look.

BAILEY

Not without me.

CHARLIE

What?

No.

NORA

BAILEY

You think you're going to leave me  
here at Medieval Times to deal with  
the slow motion train wreck that is  
our parent's marriage by myself?

(to Nora)

Lead on, Ren-Faire.

Nora hesitates. This isn't part of the plan. She holds her hands out in front of her, palms up, aimed at Bailey.

NORA  
If you like, I could--

CHARLIE  
No! No, it's fine. She's fine.

Nora nods and moves off. Bailey shoots Charlie a look --

CHARLIE  
It's nothing. Let's go.

He heads off after Nora, and Bailey follows.

INT. PALACE - SERVANT'S ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Nora leads Charlie and Bailey toward a heavy wooden door at the end of the darkened corridor.

NORA  
There it is. When we get outside  
move quickly and stay with me--

But she's cut off by the sound of approaching footsteps. They duck out of sight just as a figure appears at the end of the hall, blocking their escape. It's Gravewood.

NORA  
Back... Go back.

But now they hear VOICES and FOOTSTEPS behind them. More guards. Gravewood heads toward the voices -- and right toward them. They're trapped.

CHARLIE  
In "Book Two: Land of No Return" a  
Spiritwalker used a cloaking spell--

NORA  
Not inside the palace. The Emperor  
would sense it.

CHARLIE  
So? We'll be long gone--

NORA  
But I'll be exposed. All the work  
I've done to get in here will be  
wasted. Do you know how dangerous  
this has been for me?

(grimly)  
(MORE)

NORA (CONT'D)

If the Emperor knew there was a  
Spiritwalker right under his nose  
he'd have his sorcerer peel my soul  
apart and drain me til there was  
nothing left.

Gravewood is coming closer. Charlie turns to Nora, urgent --

CHARLIE

You said the Princess needed to see  
me. She brought me here for a  
reason. Maybe that's what you're  
in the Palace for... to take me the  
rest of the way.

She looks at him, weighing her options.

ANGLE ON GRAVEWOOD

who steps around the corner to where Nora, Charlie and Bailey  
should be crouching -- but he sees nothing. He hesitates, as  
if sensing something amiss. But then moves on...

Hold on the corridor for a moment, then THE AIR ITSELF SEEMS  
TO SHIMMER and Nora, Charlie and Bailey appear.

BAILEY

Freaky.

NORA

Let's go.

And as they hustle down the corridor and out through the now  
unguarded door, we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. PALACE - GREAT HALL - DAY (MORNING)

Michael and Jamie are barely keeping it together as they talk to Dai and the Emperor. As always, Gravewood stands nearby.

DAI

They can't have left the palace.

JAMIE

Then where are they?

DRALAREN

Probably spreading their wings. There's a wondrous new world for them to explore.

MICHAEL

A world with a war going on, where people are executed in the streets for doing magic tricks.

DAI

Relax. They're safer here than riding the subway.

JAMIE

Don't you even-- I have spent every minute of the last four years worrying for our son. I'm not going to "relax" because you're suddenly here to take charge.

Dai backs off, understanding how she feels.

GRAVEWOOD

Every man under my command is searching for them. They will be found.

DRALAREN

And, at the risk of offending you, my lady, safe and sound, I'm sure. Now please, my son will escort you to your chambers.

They don't seem assuaged. Dai leads them out, and as the door closes behind them the Emperor spins on Gravewood --

DRALAREN

A Spiritwalker? Inside the palace.

VOICE (O.S.)

Don't be too hard on the captain.

They both turn to see a man standing where there was no one a second before. His long dark robes make him one with the shadows, but there's a disarming twinkle in his eye and a wry smile on his face. He could be 40 or 60 or 600, it's impossible to tell. His name is THANE.

THANE

He's a blunt instrument. No offense. Trained to face men in battle. But against a Spiritwalker... he was out-matched.

DRALAREN

As were you, sorcerer.

THANE

(shrugs)

They are crafty. But this one is also very young. Powerful, but inexperienced. Impetuous. She will make more mistakes.

Off the Emperor, considering this --

INT. PALACE - ROYAL SUITE - DAY

Michael and Jamie wait anxiously. Hanging on, but only just.

MICHAEL

You know he went to find her.  
(she doesn't answer)  
It's the reason he's here, the reason we're all here. To find his damn princess.

JAMIE

I suppose I should take the blame for "enabling" him.

He turns to her, softening. He loves this woman, and is wrestling with the fear that he may have already lost her.

MICHAEL

I didn't say that.

JAMIE

What are we going to do?

MICHAEL

I'm going to find them.

JAMIE

David-- Dai said to wait here.

He nods. He isn't angry or jealous. Just determined.

MICHAEL

If that's what you want to do, I understand. David knows this world. He's got a whole army at his command. Hell, he's a prince. How can I compete with that?

JAMIE

You don't have to compete with him.

MICHAEL

I've been competing with him since the day we met. The history you two had, thirteen years together. A child. He was always this... presence hanging over us.

JAMIE

I never even talked about him.

MICHAEL

(a rueful smile)

That just made it worse. And the way he walked out on you...

(raw, exposed)

A day didn't go by I wasn't terrified he'd walk right back in.

JAMIE

(gently teasing)

And you never brought this up with Dr. Goodman?

MICHAEL

All I could do was try to create our own history. Just be your husband. Be a father to those kids. They're my kids, Jamie. Both of them. I'm responsible for them and I'm going to go get them because I love them.

He bends down and kisses her.

MICHAEL

And I love you, too.

He turns and heads for the door.

JAMIE

You won't last five minutes out there.

(shakes her head)

You haven't even read the books.

He grins. They're in this together --

EXT. LUMEN - FOREST - DAY

Lush and thick, heavy with morning dew and magic. Charlie and Bailey struggle to keep up with Nora, who slips silently through the woods like an Army Ranger.

BAILEY

Isn't there like a magic bus we can take?

NORA

We need to stay off the highway. Gravewood's men will be looking for you... and for me now, too.  
(pointed)  
So try to stop making more noise than an Imperial cavalry regiment.

And she stealths off into the foliage...

EXT. LUMEN - VILLAGE - DAY

What was probably once a quaint Lumen hamlet, a main street lined with shops and inns, bustling with life... has been reduced to an abandoned SMOKING RUIN. Charlie, Bailey and Nora step into the street, stunned by the devastation.

NORA

The Emperor's work...

BAILEY

Why?

NORA

Retaliation. The Rebellion has supporters here, friends.

CHARLIE

Had...

Nora nods grimly. Suddenly, there's a SCRABBLING SOUND nearby, someone moving in one of the burned out buildings.

NORA

Who's there?! Show yourself!

No response. Nora raises her hands, murmurs a few *indecipherable words (TO BE WRITTEN)* and a BRIGHT PULSE OF LIGHT shoots from her fingertips, hitting the burned out building with an impressive WHOOMP -- like a magical flash-bang grenade.

There's a yelp of surprise and a figure scrambles from the building, batting out FLAME-LIKE TENDRILS OF ENERGY that dance over his clothing. It's Kalkin, the cell phone thief.

BAILEY  
You! Are you following us?

KALKIN  
You may have noticed that I was here first.

NORA  
(not lowering her hands)  
Doing what?

There's a crack in his cavalier demeanor. He looks around at the smoldering ruins, his face dark.

KALKIN  
I was coming home...

CHARLIE  
Where is everyone?

KALKIN  
Gone. Into the hills if they're lucky. I'll find them.

NORA  
Good luck.  
(to Charlie and Bailey)  
Let's go.

As they start to head out of town --

KALKIN  
You'll never get to the Rebels.

NORA  
(freezes)  
What?

KALKIN  
I assume that's where a Spiritwalker who's sneaking through the forest with strangers carrying mysterious objects is going --

He produces Bailey's phone from his pocket.

BAILEY  
Give me that.

He tosses it to her with a shrug.

KALKIN

A worthless trinket with some  
pretty lights.

(to Nora)

There are Royal soldiers swarming  
all over the valley.

(pointed)

The Emperor's sorcerer is with  
them. I'd be careful about using  
any of your tricks.

NORA

Thanks for the warning.

KALKIN

I could lead you past them, for the  
right price.

Nora considers his offer, but then Bailey raises her cell  
phone and points it at him.

BAILEY

Help us or I'll steal your soul!

KALKIN

Excuse me?

She snaps his picture and holds out the phone for him to see.

BAILEY

This is a powerful weapon. Show us  
the way or I'll... delete you.

KALKIN

(peering at the phone)

That's quite a good likeness. How  
do you like mine?

He raises his hands toward her, A FAINT BLUE ENERGY DANCING  
ON HIS FINGERTIPS -- and a LUMINOUS IMAGE OF BAILEY, like a  
sparkling 3-D hologram, appears hovering in the air.

KALKIN

Shall I "delete" it?

Bailey gapes. Irritated, Nora DISSOLVES THE IMAGE with a  
flick of her hand.

KALKIN

Ouch. That spell was expensive.  
It's usually a hit with the ladies.

NORA

We'll pay your price... when we get  
where we're going.

KALKIN  
(considers, then nods)  
I'm a trusting soul.  
(gesturing up the street)  
Shall we?

As they head off --

EXT. PALACE - MAIN GATE - NIGHT

Michael and Jamie, now dressed in Lumen clothing, stand just outside the palace looking across the courtyard to the main gate -- which is SWARMING WITH ROYAL SOLDIERS.

MICHAEL  
How the hell did they get out of here?

JAMIE  
You mean your daughter Houdini?  
Who could slip out of a straitjacket if there was a good party to get to?

MICHAEL  
This place is huge, there's got to be a hundred exits --

They turn to go and find Gravewood standing right there, casually watching them.

GRAVEWOOD  
There are. And my men are watching every one of them.

He gestures for them to come along.

MICHAEL  
Listen, we're not going to break your laws or cause any trouble. I know you have your orders, but we're just asking what any parent would... let us find our kids.

GRAVEWOOD  
You're right. I have my orders. Come with me, please.

JAMIE  
No.

Michael reacts, "No?" Jamie steps up to Gravewood -- unafraid, unflinching.

JAMIE

We are going to walk through that gate, and you're going to help us.

GRAVEWOOD

And why would I do that?

JAMIE

Because if you don't, I'll tell the Emperor that you're a traitor.

Gravewood narrows his eyes.

MICHAEL

What are you doing?

JAMIE

Yesterday you were going to execute us for even mentioning the Princess's name. But you're doing much more than that, aren't you? How often do you talk to her?

Gravewood's jaw clenches, his hand resting on the butt of his sidearm.

JAMIE

How would the Emperor feel if he knew his most trusted soldier was still in love with the leader of the Rebels?

A tense beat, then --

GRAVEWOOD

(re: the main gate)

We can't get out that way.

He turns and strides off. Michael stares at Jamie. Wow. As they hurry after Gravewood --

EXT. LUMEN - FOREST - NIGHT

Kalkin quietly leads Nora, Charlie and Bailey through the darkened woods, which seem even more thick with danger and magic at night. Suddenly, Nora grabs Kalkin by the arm.

NORA

We're here.

Charlie and Bailey look around. There's nothing there.

CHARLIE

Where?

Nora steps forward, holding her hands in front of her. As she does, that BLUE MAGICAL ENERGY CRACKLES from her fingertips... and the AIR IN FRONT OF HER RIPPLES LIKE WATER. She steps forward PASSING THROUGH THE SHIMMERING SURFACE and disappearing. Kalkin smiles.

KALKIN

A cloaking spell. Never seen one  
that big before. You'd get a  
pretty penny for that.

He steps forward, following Nora into thin air. Charlie and Bailey exchange a look, then step through after them into --

EXT. REBEL CAMP - NIGHT

It feels like a cross between a special forces military compound and a fantasy convention. Tents, vehicles, heavy weapons abound, all with a magical twist.

NORA

This way.

Nora leads them to a command post where several REBELS are gathered. One of them has her back to us -- long curls tumble over a regal cloak draped across her shoulders. Charlie is breathless with anticipation. He steps forward...

CHARLIE

Princess...

The woman turns. She's older, probably sixty, with a stern expression. Clearly not Princess Aelin.

VOICE (O.S.)

Charlie.

He turns to see a figure emerging from a nearby tent. She's dressed in a sort of Victorian combat fatigues. An elegant sidearm hangs at her hip and a faint, thin scar arcs over one eyebrow. There is nothing remotely "princess-y" about her.

But as she steps into the light we see it is unmistakably Helen Royce, only now as she truly is: AELIN, THE ROSE PRINCESS OF LUMEN. She steps forward and grips Charlie by the shoulders and smiles --

AELIN

It's good to see you again.

Off Charlie's surprise and awe, we --

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. LUMEN - FOREST - NIGHT

Gravewood steps into a clearing, gazing warily about with a soldier's eyes. Satisfied, he gives a short whistle and Michael and Jamie stumble into the clearing, looking utterly exhausted.

GRAVEWOOD

(nods into the darkness)  
Their trail leads that way. There  
are four of them now. They must  
have made some friends.

He tosses them a leather knapsack.

GRAVEWOOD

We'll rest here for five minutes.

He moves off, quickly swallowed up by the darkness. Michael turns to Jamie, catching his breath --

MICHAEL

I've been trying to ask you for the  
last ten miles... How did you  
know? About Gravewood sending  
messages to the Princess.

JAMIE

I didn't.

She sits down and digs into the knapsack, pulls out cheese, bread. She gulps from a water bottle.

MICHAEL

(stunned)  
It was a bluff?  
(off her shrug)  
He could have killed us.

JAMIE

I don't think so.

MICHAEL

How do you know?

JAMIE

For the last time, because I read  
the books.

She pats the ground beside her. Michael collapses and she hands him some food. As they eat --

JAMIE

When Aelin first meets Gravewood in Book One she's only sixteen. She's just learned that her sweetheart, Denmer, has been killed at the first Battle of the Watchers--

MICHAEL

And you wonder why I never read them.

JAMIE

Shut up. She's destroyed. She feels like she's been abandoned by the only man who ever loved her, who ever could love her...

Michael watches her closely realizing this story has touched her in a very personal way.

JAMIE

So she wanders out into the Barrens to die. Gravewood, who's a young lieutenant then, finds her and brings her back. He falls in love with her the minute he sees her, but he knows she's too damaged to love him back. So, he waits. He waits while she's almost married off to the Viceroy of Guilford. He waits when she's lost off the Shoals of Irwin. He waits and he waits... until one day she opens her eyes and finally sees him.

Michael can't take his eyes off her. She meets his gaze...

JAMIE

A romance that epic endures.

Michael nods, understanding. She reaches out and touches his face, turning it toward hers, then leans in and kisses him. Off the two of them, finding each other again --

We see Gravewood standing at the edge of the clearing. He's heard everything and for the first time his stoic demeanor seems cracked, creased with pain and loss...

EXT. REBEL CAMP - COMMAND TENT - NIGHT

Charlie, Bailey, Nora and Kalkin sit around a table with Helen (who we'll now refer to as Aelin). Charlie can barely believe he's finally with her.

CHARLIE

My father said you went to Earth to find the Key that would unite Earth and Lumen. And he followed you there to try and stop you.

She looks at Charlie's searching face. He deserves the truth, no matter how painful.

AELIN

I'm afraid the truth is exactly the opposite. Dai went before me. The Emperor sent him to search for the Key. It seemed like a noble quest, to fulfill the prophecy and unite the worlds.

BAILEY

Unite how exactly? Some kinda Earth-Lumen mash-up? People throwing lightning bolts in Times Square? That doesn't sound like it'd go over real big.

AELIN

Earth and Lumen have taken very different paths, a reunification could indeed be... traumatic.

CHARLIE

Then why do it?

AELIN

So my father can access the power the Key will unleash.

BAILEY

That's what he said you wanted.

AELIN

(shakes her head)  
Magic is our birthright. Handed down by the Spiritwalkers for the benefit of all. It's not for one person to control. That's what this rebellion is about.

(sadly)

My father no longer deserves to rule.

CHARLIE

But in your books the Emperor isn't evil. He protects the magic for everyone.

AELIN  
And he did once. Before Thane.

BAILEY  
Thane?

NORA  
The Emperor's sorcerer. Some say he's a fallen Spiritwalker. He gave the Emperor a taste of magic's true power. And the taste of power almost always leaves you hungry for more.

AELIN  
So, with the help of the Spiritwalkers I went after my brother. To stop him.

BAILEY  
And had a sudden career change to bestselling author?

AELIN  
I wrote the books to try and draw Dai out. But he was too careful. Later, I figured with all the enthusiasm for Lumen the fans might inadvertently uncover some clue to what the Key was.

BAILEY  
And action figures and Happy Meals were a part of that plan?

AELIN  
(shrugs)  
My agents insisted licensing and merchandise were nonnegotiable.  
(then)  
When Dai finally came to me I realized it might be my only chance to stop him. I pulled us both through the portal and sealed it behind us.

BAILEY  
Then how did we get here?

Aelin looks to Charlie --

CHARLIE  
There was a symbol left behind, a rune...

AELIN

A residual effect from the spell.  
It's like a wax seal on an  
envelope. If you can crack it, you  
can open the envelope.

(smiles)

When I heard you had appeared here,  
I wasn't that surprised. I  
suspected that night there was more  
to you than a young fan in a  
Spiritwalker costume.

Nora looks at Charlie, who squirms with embarrassment. But  
before she can say anything there are sudden SHOUTS OF ALARM  
from the camp. A REBEL SOLDIER rushes up.

REBEL SOLDIER

Someone approaching the perimeter!

As they jump to their feet --

EXT. REBEL CAMP - PERIMETER - NIGHT

Aelin, Charlie and the others stand at the edge of the camp,  
surrounded by Rebel soldiers on high alert. A tense moment  
as they all stare into the seemingly empty woods beyond.  
Then the AIR RIPPLES and Gravewood appears, followed by  
Michael and Jamie.

NORA

We've been betrayed!

AELIN

No, we haven't.

Charlie and Bailey rush past Gravewood to Michael and Jamie,  
the whole family crushing together in a group hug.

BAILEY

Dad!

CHARLIE

Mom!

MICHAEL

Are you okay?

JAMIE

We were so worried.

Behind them neither Aelin nor Gravewood have moved. They're  
both standing there, staring at each other.

GRAVEWOOD

I waited.

AELIN

Too long, my love.

And she explodes into his arms, kissing him passionately.  
When they finally step back --

NORA

But he's the Emperor's thug.

AELIN

No. He's been helping us since I returned from Earth. Putting himself in danger, sacrificing his happiness for what's right...

GRAVEWOOD

For you. Four years is too long to see you only as a shadow in a messenger spell.

He reaches out and gently touches her face, as if reassuring himself that it's really her and not an illusion.

JAMIE

(aside to Michael)

Told you.

Michael untangles himself from his family and steps to Aelin.

MICHAEL

Um, your highness, I'm Michael Hartman and I understand that you're responsible for us being here. I hope that means you can also send us home.

AELIN

It is possible...

Michael sags with relief. But Aelin looks to Charlie.

AELIN

If that's what Charlie wants.

MICHAEL

What do you mean if that's what he wants?

AELIN

(to Charlie)

There's a reason you never felt like you belonged on Earth. Because you don't. You belong here... on Lumen.

MICHAEL

(flaring)

No, he doesn't! None of us belong here. I'm going back and I'm taking my family with me. All of them.

Before Aelin can respond there's a RUMBLING SOUND. A deep thudding, like an earthquake rolling closer and closer --

AELIN

No...

The air at the perimeter RIPPLES, LIKE A VAST SHIMMERING CURTAIN arcing around the entire camp. Then it simply seems to DISSOLVE, REVEALING:

A HUGE FORCE OF ROYAL TROOPS -- hundreds of soldiers on foot and on magical vehicles. And Prince Dai at the head of them.

NORA

I told you! He led them here!

But Gravewood sees the sorcerer Thane at Dai's side.

GRAVEWOOD

No. You did, young Spiritwalker.

DAI

Aelin! You can end this tonight. Come with me and your followers are free to go in peace.

AELIN

For how long? Until Father has the Key and there is nowhere for them to hide?

CHARLIE

(to Dai)

Is she telling the truth about you?

Dai looks to Charlie, genuine heartache in his eyes.

DAI

Charlie... I read those books with you because I wanted you to love Lumen as much as I do. If nothing else, I owe my sister for that. I want to make it what it was again -- the world of your imagination.

Charlie turns to Aelin. He doesn't know what to believe.

AELIN

I never had a chance to write the final book in the Saga.

(nods to Dai)

He and the Emperor have been writing it for the past four years. Is this how you imagined it would turn out?

Charlie is caught between the father he's yearned to see and the heroine of his dreams. And for a second everyone is frozen in place, each side poised. Dai's eyes lock on Jamie's, his gaze almost regretful, and then Thane makes the first move -- he raises his arms and a WAVE OF MAGICAL ENERGY SURGES FORWARD, rolling over the forward rank of Rebels, causing their legs to plunge, root-like, into the earth, anchoring them in place.

Nora launches a counter-spell, TURNING THE EARTH AROUND THE TRAPPED REBELS INTO WATER, freeing them.

And all hell breaks loose. With a roar the Royal troops charge, unleashing BLUE BOLTS of magic weapons fire. The Rebels defend their position and the forces clash in a maelstrom of steel and magic. We catch glimpses of:

GRAVEWOOD WADING INTO THE FRAY, FIRING HIS SIDEARM --

MICHAEL GRABBING JAMIE AND PULLING HER BACK INTO THE CAMP, AWAY FROM THE BATTLE. KALKIN PULLING BAILEY --

JAMIE

Charlie!

ANGLE ON CHARLIE -- frozen in the midst of the battle, the ear-splitting din ringing in his ears. Then he sees:

AELIN AND NORA FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE -- Aelin coolly firing her weapon, and Nora SENDING ROYAL TROOPS SPRAWLING WITH BLASTS OF MAGIC. But neither of them notice a ROYAL SOLDIER bearing down on them, raising his weapon to fire --

CHARLIE

No!

Instinctively, without even thinking, he raises his hands and A BLAST OF MAGIC ENERGY EXPLODES FROM HIS BODY, more powerful than anything we've seen, but unfocused. It RICOCHETS WILDLY across the battlefield --

And hits the attacking Soldier, knocking him off his feet. But the brunt of the BLAST ENGULFS NORA. She's thrown twenty feet, landing in a twisted, lifeless heap.

Only Aelin witnessed this, and she stares at Charlie in shock. She rushes to him, grabbing him --

AELIN

Come on!

But Charlie is frozen in horror, staring at Nora's crumpled form. Aelin hauls him away and we see the battle is turning into a rout for the Rebels, who are falling back through their camp toward the forest beyond --

WITH THEM IS MICHAEL, PULLING JAMIE. KALKIN AND BAILEY ARE RUNNING WITH THEM. Jamie is trying to wrestle free --

JAMIE  
Charlie! Charlie!

MICHAEL  
I'll find him.

But she breaks away and runs back into the battle --

MICHAEL  
Jamie!  
(to Kalkin, re: Bailey)  
Get her to the woods!

And he runs off after Jamie.

ANGLE ON DAI -- charging into battle, cutting down Rebels. Suddenly, he spots JAMIE PLUNGING THROUGH THE MELEE LOOKING FOR CHARLIE. He moves to head her off when he also sees:

GRAVEWOOD URGING AELIN AND CHARLIE TOWARD THE WOODS.

Dai is torn between pursuing Aelin, who he's been hunting for years, and going after Jamie. A second of indecision, then --

DAI HEADS TOWARD JAMIE, letting Aelin slip away.

ANGLE ON MICHAEL -- in the midst of the fighting, looking for Jamie. His head whips around when he hears:

JAMIE (O.S.)  
Let me go! Where's my son!

MICHAEL'S POV: Dai has a hold of Jamie and is dragging her, fighting and screaming, toward a Royal MILITARY VEHICLE.

MICHAEL  
Jamie!

As he runs toward her Dai turns and raises his sidearm, pointing it at Michael. A frozen moment. Is he going to pull the trigger? We'll never know because --

BAILEY RUSHES FORWARD, getting between Dai and her father.

BAILEY  
Dad!

Kalkin is right on her heels.

KALKIN  
Stop!

Dai shifts his aim and FIRES! A BURST OF BLUE ENERGY clips Kalkin on the shoulder, knocking him back into Michael.

As Dai forces Jamie into the back of the military vehicle, he turns to a SOLDIER and nods toward Bailey, who is bent over the wounded Kalkin.

DAI

Take her.

The soldier roughly grabs Bailey. Michael leaps to his feet and lunges at him, but the soldier savagely hits Michael with his rifle butt, driving him to the ground.

BAILEY

Dad!

The soldier forces Bailey into the back of the military vehicle with Jamie.

Michael looks up from the ground, stunned, and locks eyes with Dai. A beat as the two men stare at each other across the battlefield --

Then Dai leaps onto the side of the vehicle, which begins to pull away. Michael struggles to get up and follow them --

MICHAEL

Bailey! Jamie!

But he finds he's swimming against a tide of Rebels, now in full flight from the advancing Royals. Gravewood runs up to Michael with Aelin and a shell-shocked Charlie in tow. As Gravewood helps a stunned Kalkin to his feet --

MICHAEL

He took them!

Michael tries to push past him, but Gravewood holds him fast.

GRAVEWOOD

You'll be killed.

Michael struggles to get away, but Gravewood pulls him toward the safety of the woods.

MICHAEL

Jamie!

GRAVEWOOD

We cannot win. Not today.

Anguished, Michael watches the armored vehicle containing his wife and daughter pull away, before allowing himself to be swept away by the retreating Rebels...

INT. PALACE - ROYAL SUITE - NIGHT

Dark, empty. The door opens and Jamie and Bailey are led in by two ROYAL SOLDIERS. No longer guests, now prisoners. Dai steps in, still in his muddied uniform from the battle.

DAI  
I'm sorry about this.

She doesn't answer.

DAI  
I still love you, Jamie. All the time I was gone, I never stopped trying to find a way back to you.  
(torn)  
It's why I've been going along with my father's mad quest to find the Key. I thought if he could unite the worlds it would bring us together again.

JAMIE  
Is that supposed to be romantic?  
You started a war for me?

DAI  
And I had a chance to end it tonight! My sister was finally within my reach. Without her the Rebellion will crumble. But I let her go. I let her go because I couldn't lose you again.

JAMIE  
I'm not yours to lose, Prince Dai.

She holds his gaze until he finally turns and exits. Jamie steps to Bailey and wraps her in her arms. Bailey doesn't resist. Off them clinging to each other --

EXT. LUMEN - FOREST - DAWN

The defeated Rebels trudge through the mist-shrouded forest. We see Kalkin marching with them, his arm bandaged. We find Charlie and Michael among them, too, still numb with shock.

CHARLIE  
What are we going to do?

Michael looks at Charlie -- really looks at him -- and sees a frightened, confused teenager who needs some reassurance. Who needs a father.

MICHAEL

We're going to fight. We're going  
to find Bailey and your mother and  
we're going to go home. Together.

Charlie nods. He looks over to see Princess Aelin walking  
with Gravewood and her troops. He moves to her --

AELIN

Are you all right?

CHARLIE

(devastated)  
I killed someone.

AELIN

The princess from the book would  
have some wonderful words to give  
you comfort. I wish right now I  
could be more like her.

(then)

What you did... Has anything like  
that ever happened before?

CHARLIE

No. I don't know what it was. I  
just wanted to help you and... I  
couldn't control it.

AELIN

(nods, then)  
You can't tell anyone about it.  
Not your family, not Captain  
Gravewood. No one.

CHARLIE

Why not?

AELIN

Because no one can know what you  
are, Charlie...

She looks at him and fixes him with a gaze that is full of  
affection and utter amazement.

AELIN

You're the Key.

Off Charlie, his life changed forever and his adventure just  
beginning, we...

SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT