

THE HIDDEN PEOPLE

Episode 2.07

“Needy Things”

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TEASER

73. It is outside yet quiet as it's very early in the morning. No one around. There is a breeze in the air.

NARRATOR
Sounds like someone's on the prowl.

SAMNUS
(deep inhale through nose)
My hunger grows.
(beat)
I must find food.

Samus walks towards the scent, all the while sniffing. Footsteps on pavement. The bakery door swings open, ringing the bell. Busy baker and worker noises: some pans clang, and oven doors open and shut. A couple steps in on the hardwood of the bakery floor.

SAMNUS (CONT'D)
(big inhale and sigh of relief)
Yes. This will do.

BAKER
Good evening, or morning, I guess! How did you sneak in here? The back door?
(beat)
Unfortunately, we're not quite open yet. Come back in a few hours, and we'll be fully stocked for your morning croissants.

Samus ignores the Baker. Walks, sniffs, and picks up miscellaneous baked goods. She takes a few bites.

BAKER
Hey! You need to pay for that before you eat it, and we're not even open yet.
(beat)
Hello? Are you hearing...
(beat)
Oh shit. Is that...is that blood? Are you hurt? Annie, call 911!

ANNIE

(in the background underneath the
next several lines)

Yes. There is this woman who came into
our bakery, which is closed right now.
She won't leave. There is blood all
over her.

(beat)

I can't tell if she is injured. She is
acting erratically.

(beat)

Right now? She is devouring a loaf of
bread.

(beat)

She doesn't appear to be dangerous, but
she's...off.

SAMNUS

I'm so hungry.

BAKER

Okay. Yes. Yes. Have some bread. Annie?
Tell the police to come here ASAP, and
we may need an ambulance. I can't tell
if she's been hurt.

NARRATOR

Oh, poor naïve human. Someone will need
the ambulance. But certainly not "her."
It doesn't take a detective to see the
blood spatter without an injury. Oh,
wait. Your perpetrator is the
detective. Pity.

Samnus quickly starts grabbing and eating as much as she
can.

BAKER

Hey! Slow down there. You're going to
choke.

(beat)

You'll be fine. The police are on their
way. We'll get this all sorted out.

SAMNUS

(sniffs)

(sigh of temporary relief)

BAKER

Okay. Good. Let's just take a moment.

(beat)

Here, let me help you. Take a seat here.

NARRATOR

Perhaps, if you had just slipped out, not called attention to yourself...

Samnus puts down the bread. Walks toward the Baker.

SAMNUS

(sniffs)

Samnus licks his face.

SAMNUS

(spits)

Blech!

BAKER

What the hell? Did you--did you just lick me? You need to leave. Now.

(to Annie)

Annie? Where are the fuck are the police?!

ANNIE

They're coming!

SAMNUS

(grunt turning to scream of frustration)

NARRATOR

Without even bothering to look, the monstrous Samantha hits the annoyingly helpful baker. Hard, launching him across the shop and slamming him into racks of baked goods. Shame. All of that food to waste.

BAKER

(screams as he is flying through the air)

Large crash into some bakers racks--metal clanging. Bones breaking.

ANNIE
(screams in horror)

Annie runs from the bakery.

Samnus grabs some more bread. Takes a bite. Walks to the door. Opens the door, doorbell rings. She exits into alley. Sirens in the distance fade into theme song.

END TEASER

74. Thorne house. Start with audio POV of Sam/Murphy and then transition to the group. Audio drawn into lower POV, maybe can hear other house-type things. The creaks of the floor. The ticking of a clock. The bark is louder. Maybe go in and out of focus with the humans' talk. When they say "Sam" or "Murphy" or "we thought it was dead," attention is back.

MACKENNA
Sam?

Murphy barks.

MACKENNA
Are you Sam?

Murphy barks. Panting.

ALFIE
*That doesn't make any sense, though.
Sam was here. She didn't switch with
Murphy.*

Murphy grumble.

SHAYLEE
*That wasn't how the body switch worked.
We didn't directly swap with each
other.*

THOMAS

But no one else was here.

NISSA

No. No, someone else was here.

Something else was in the room when we all switched. We thought it was dead, but a severed head usually lives for a few seconds.

THOMAS

No. No way. That's not possible.

MACKENNA

Nissa...are you saying...oh no.

Smurphy walks around anxiously. Whining. Occasionally grumbling. Scratching behind ear (clanging of collar tags).

Audio focuses back on group, not Smurphy.

NISSA

Yes. Sam is in Murphy's body. The now headless monster...that is in Sam.

Murphy barks.

MACKENNA

Shit.

THOMAS

Nope. I don't believe it.

(to Sam/Murphy)

You're not really Sam, are you?

Murphy barks.

ALFIE

You're doing that wrong.

NISSA

What? I'm sorry. Okay, dog whisperer.

Please show us how we're supposed to communicate with a dog. Is there really a precedent for this sort of thing?

ALFIE

Well, not for this exact situation, but when talking with animals or with ghosts or with drug lords that can no longer speak--

EVERYONE ELSE

Alfie!

Murphy barks.

ALFIE

You have to establish a simple code. Like: One for yes, two for no.

SHAYLEE

Brill. Otherwise, Sam is just a barking dog. No real intelligence.

Murphy growls.

THOMAS

Okay. Sure. I'll prove it to you. Murphy, come here.

Murphy walks over. Murphy sighs and flops to the ground.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Please bark once for yes. Twice for no.

ALFIE

I swear Murphy is nodding his head.

NISSA

I hate to admit this, but I think I see it, too.

THOMAS

Are you Sam?

Murphy barks once.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

(beat)

This is dumb. How long am I supposed to wait? How am I supposed to understand if the barks aren't just random?

MACKENNA

Good point. Ask Murphy...er, Sam a few things in rapid succession. To take away randomness.

ALFIE

Ooo. Ooo. And ask Murphy something only Sam would know.

THOMAS

Okay. Was your partner at the police station named Chris?

Murphy barks twice.

ALFIE

Ha! I mean, she didn't have a partner before Ron whose name was Chris, right?

THOMAS

Well, crap. Not that I know of?

Murphy whines, growls in frustration.

SHAYLEE

There must be something else specific.

THOMAS

Okay. Okay. Was Big Bird the nickname that my dad gave to our car growing up?

Murphy barks definitively twice.

MACKENNA

Did you think I was guilty of murdering my parents?

Murphy barks once.

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

Ha! I knew it!

ALFIE

The night Fack attacked you and Thomas, were you making out with Thomas?

Murphy barks once.

MACKENNA

Ohhh. I see. The truth comes out. She thought I was guilty, and when you were supposed to be protecting me, you were just Netflix and chilling with Sam.

THOMAS

Hey. It wasn't like that.

Murphy barks once.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Murphy or Sam, I'm going to give you a slightly different question. When we went to IHOP or Waffle House after homecoming, we ordered lots of what kind of food? Bark once for bacon. And twice for hashbrowns.

Murphy barks twice and adds a happy howl.

ALFIE

How did Murphy score? No. How did Sam score? No. Smurphy?!

MACKENNA

So is Murphy Sam? Did she pass?

THOMAS

This can't be happening.

SHAYLEE

I think the answer is yes, unfortunately.

ALFIE

"Okay...so...she's a dog."

THOMAS

I'm so sorry for doubting you, Sam. That was so brilliant of you to use the sticks to communicate. Oh, you want to shake? Or is that you trying to hold my hand? This is so weird.

Smurphy's stomach growls. Smurphy walks over and hits an empty stainless steel bowl with his/her nose.

ALFIE

I think Smurphy's hungry, and all of this talk of eating and food is making me hungry. Pizza?

MACKENNA

Starving. Please pizza me. Crap. I don't think any pizza places are open now.

Thomas flips the stainless steel bowl over. Scoops some kibble and then stops. One or two pieces fall into the bowl. Smurphy whines.

THOMAS

I can't feed Sam kibble! She deserves so much more. Oh no. I've already fed her kibble. Idiot. How could I not realize that Sam was Murphy? I'm making her a steak.

NISSA

I'll take a steak.

THOMAS

I only have one. I could whip up some eggs and bacon.

Thomas walks to kitchen. Smurphy follows. Kitchen saute pans clang and sizzle.

ALFIE

Mack, the urge to stress your brother out so he cooks for you must be very, very strong.

MACKENNA

(whisper)

Shhh. Don't say that too loudly, or he'll skip making pancakes.

Pots clinging. Stovetop fire lit. Whisking in bowl. Eggs cracking.

THOMAS

(calling out)

I could make pancakes, too.

MACKENNA

Now that we've confirmed Sam is currently a dog, can we return to the fact that the monster is in Sam's body right now?

NISSA

Doing goddess knows what.

NARRATOR

Yes, what would an otherworldly monster be doing right now?

MUSICAL TRANSITION

75. Sam's basement--cement floor, little echo-y. Samnus is wandering around working on something. Hear a few metal things clink as they fall to the cement ground--some metal, some softer.

NARRATOR

Well, well, well. Old habits die harder than Officer Sitwell. Speaking of things not dying, the monster whose head was chopped off is currently making a nest with its Samantha body and in its new habitat. What is that in the middle of its hoard? Why yes. It's the monster's rotting, decapitated head. She must have needed someone to talk to.

SAMNUS

What?! What could I have done? What can I do now? I hunger. This body is weak, brittle. I can feel it peeling away from itself to try and escape me. I must find a way back to myself before it gives out. But I hunger. I need. I need more!

(outraged yell)

Samnus punches a hole in the wall.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

76. Thorne house.

THOMAS
Bon appetit.

Sam/Murphy scarf's down some steak. Plates get passed around. Silverware noises.

MACKENNA
We need to find Sam...I mean the monster. Now. Before she does anything irreparable.

SHAYLEE
Aye, but how do we find her? And what will we find when we do? Did the creature have any sort of special abilities?

MACKENNA
It was gigantomous. It flew.

NISSA
It was corporeal and not at the same time.

MACKENNA
So many teeth.

ALFIE
Those are all physical things, though.

NISSA
That's true. They were all characteristics of its body. Which it doesn't have anymore.

THOMAS
No. It has Sam's body.

MACKENNA
We never saw anything beyond that. Nothing magical, exactly. Lots of powerful stuff in its lair, but it just flew around and tried to eat us.

THOMAS

Who wants the last pieces of bacon?

ALFIE

Oooo. Who doesn't?

SHAYLEE

Hmmm.

MACKENNA

Bacon spark an idea?

SHAYLEE

No. Well...maybe. When I think about motivations of changelings and tracking them down, I pay attention to their needs and whether they are being met.

NISSA

Like Maslow?

SHAYLEE

Exactly. Everyone needs food and shelter. These are our basic needs that we all seek. Hence our noshing on some food whilst we come up with a plan to find the monster.

MACKENNA

So, you're saying we should figure out what the monster in Sam's body needs.

SHAYLEE

Aye.

MACKENNA

Well, like you said: food and shelter are probably at the top of its list.

ALFIE

What does a monster eat? Brains?

NISSA

It's not a zombie, but brains do have nutrients, so I don't know. Based on its nest and what we saw on the other world, it didn't seem picky. What about shelter? It did have a den in the other world, and with the size of its hoard, it was definitely there a while.

MACKENNA

Well, it said it was heading back to Sam's house. Would it know how to get there?

NISSA

It fooled all of us into thinking it was Sam--it remembered how Sam interrogated me, so it's clever. There must have been some residuals from Sam left with her. Also, it spoke English, and not like a weird alien just learning.

MACKENNA

Maybe we split up? Half of us drive around the neighborhood to check for 24-hour restaurants or grocery stores, and half of us go to Sam's house?

ALFIE

I call dibs on team shelter.

NISSA

Dibs on team food.

THOMAS

This isn't a game.

(beat)

Let's finish up quickly and head out.

Murphy barks.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

77. Thomas, Alfie and Shaylee head to the truck. Thomas dials.

THOMAS

Shaylee and Alfie, give me a second.
I'm going to give Sam--that thing--a
quick call before we show up
unannounced.

Thomas dials.

SHAYLEE

But what ab--

THOMAS

Shh.

Replay voicemail greeting from 206, scene 55.

SAM

(voicemail)

*You've reached Detective Samantha
Mulligan. If this is an emergency,
please hang up and dial 911. Otherwise,
leave a message.*

NARRATOR

What did you expect, Thomas? And what
could you possibly say to such a being?
Come out, come out, wherever you are?

THOMAS

Shit. What was I thinking? I'm glad it
didn't answer. We need a plan if it
answers the front door.

ALFIE

Shaylee, you're all subterfuge-y. Give
us some pointers.

SHAYLEE

If it answers, we play it cool. Like we
still think it's Sam.

ALFIE

Okay. Like the "I know but you don't
know that I know," right?

THOMAS

That sounds risky.

ALFIE

Or we just peek into some windows and run away if we find it.

THOMAS

Maybe I can talk her down? It. Do you think part of Sam is in there? Can we reach it?

(beat)

No. I think we go stealthy.

TRANSITION

78. Interior Nissa's car. Driving around.

NISSA

Mack, remember when all we were trying to do was get you to work on time and occasionally smile at our customers?

MACKENNA

Hey, I came to work on time. Well, at least not that late. On most days. I usually thought about coming on time.

NISSA

And now we're driving around trying to find and stop an extra-dimensional monster who tried to kill us and is now stuck in our friend's body.

MACKENNA

Friend? I thought you didn't like Sam?

NISSA

Sam did try to put you away for a crime you didn't commit, and I unfortunately can remember every little slight against me and my friends.

MACKENNA

Right. So I thought you couldn't forgive and forget.

NISSA

I cannot forget, which makes forgiving a lot harder, but I'm working on it. Especially when it comes to Sam helping to catch your fetch, hide you from the cops, and I guess the fact that Thomas likes her. Also, us ladies gotta stick together, right?

MACKENNA

Look at you becoming all warm and fuzzy.

NISSA

That's me. A big, puffy sweater.
(beat)
So what are we looking for?

MACKENNA

General hysteria, destruction, and a slender lady hunting or foraging for food.

NISSA

Check. So I'm guessing those emergency lights up ahead count.

MACKENNA

Well, shit.

TRANSITION

79. Outside Sam's house.

THOMAS

(whispering)

Do you see anything?

SHAYLEE

(whispering)

I do see some muddy footprints on the sidewalk leading up to the porch. Looks like she came home at least once. I think I see someone else's footprints, too, but I can't tell if they left.

ALFIE

(whispering)

I don't see much of anything through this window. It's so dark inside her house.

THOMAS

(whispering)

Really dark. Even my phone light isn't helping much other than to cause a blinding glare off the window.

ALFIE

(whispering)

Right. Phone light. I totally thought of that. Wait. Move your light again, Thomas. I think I see something from my angle.

(beat)

Uhhh...is that a foot?

THOMAS

(whispering)

What?

ALFIE

(whispering)

There! On the ground near her kitchen...

SHAYLEE

(whispering)

Oh, no.

(beat)

Her ottoman is circular. I'm going in.

Shaylee draws a circle: chalk on wooden front porch.

THOMAS

(whisper yelling)

Wait, Shaylee. We'll all go in. I can find the key.

Thomas rummages in a potted plant; planter falls and cracks. A metal key falls. Shaylee stepping sideways departure.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
(whisper yelling)
Shaylee!

Key in the door. Door opens.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Shaylee, we're a team. We go together.
We have to be careful.

ALFIE
(horror movie scream)

THOMAS
Oh no! No, no, no, no.

NARRATOR
Right there in the living room of Sam's house is the un-living body of Ronald Sitwell. A would-be detective who started to catch on, but didn't pick up on his most untimely clue. Instead, his body lies nearly torn in two, the guts he mustered up now splayed across the floor.

THOMAS / SHAYLEE / ALFIE
(gross / gagging reactions)

THOMAS
Poor Ron.

ALFIE
I'm going to vomit or pass out. Or both. I...I can't...

Alfie collapses on floor.

THOMAS
Alfie. Alfie. Can you hear me?

Shaylee slaps Alfie's face.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
Shaylee, did you need to slap him?

SHAYLEE

Aye. It helps to interrupt the shock of it all.

THOMAS

For Alfie or for you?

SHAYLEE

Aye.

THOMAS

Alfie. Alfie, wake up.

ALFIE

(groans)

THOMAS

Are you okay?

ALFIE

If by "okay," you mean that I have seen a freshly murdered body of someone I know, but I'm awake, then yes, I'm okay. But I'm not. My delicate constitution can't handle this.

THOMAS

Here, let's help you back to the front porch. Fresh air will do all of us some good.

ALFIE

My face is stinging. I must have come down hard.

SHAYLEE

Yes. Right smack down on your face.

THOMAS

Shaylee, can you check to make sure there's no one else in the house? I'm gonna call Mackenna.

(sigh)

Thomas helps Alfie to the front porch. Dials Mack.

80. Front porch

MACKENNA
(through phone)
Hey, Thomas.

THOMAS
You actually answered your phone.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
I'm a new person. Putting you on
speaker.

THOMAS
Have you found her yet?

MACKENNA
(through phone)
No, but we found a trail. We think.

NISSA
(through phone)
We're outside of "Knead bread and more"
bakery. That's knead: k-n-e-a-d...I
hate punny business names. We see cops
and an ambulance, and we've been
watching and listening as best we can.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
It looks like a tornado went through
the shop. There are pans, baking
sheets, bread, flour...all over the
floor. They took one guy out on a
stretcher. I'm pretty sure his leg is
turned in a direction it shouldn't be.

NISSA
(through phone)
The other baker said a woman got very
upset, that the woman was covered in
blood and threw the baker across the
shop. She couldn't provide a
description, and the police think the
witness is crazy.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
How can you tell?

NISSA
(through phone)
Seriously? They were rolling their
eyes. You need to up your perception,
Mack.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
You need to lower your attitude, Nissa.

THOMAS
Hey. Both of you. This is serious.

NISSA
(through phone)
Yes. Yes. Anyway. Destruction, blood
and a super-strong woman. Sounds like
our monster-Sam.

THOMAS
Lovely. It has superpowers. Of course
it does.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
We can keep driving around to see what
else was left in its wake.

NISSA
(through phone)
At least nobody was killed.

THOMAS
Ummm. I have something to tell you.

MACKENNA
(through phone)
You jinxed it, Niss.

NISSA
(through phone)
No such thing.

THOMAS

Please just come to Sam's place right away. She doesn't seem to be here, but Ron was here, and now...he's dead. She tore him apart.

MACKENNA

(through phone.)

Oh no.

NISSA

(through phone)

We'll be there in eight minutes.

81. Hangs up phone. Thomas starts to pace outside on the porch.

THOMAS

(breathes in and out)

(to himself)

I can't believe she killed her friend.
This will devastate her.

(beat)

We can figure this out. We can save
her. We have to save her.

Shaylee steps out to join Thomas and Alfie.

SHAYLEE

Did you say something?

THOMAS

(coughs)

Uh, yeah. I just got off the phone with
Mackenna and Nissa. They're on their
way here.

ALFIE

Did you tell them? Poor Ron. So many
thoughts, fears, regrets. What do we
do?

THOMAS

I don't know. We should probably call
the cops.

SHAYLEE

If we call the cops, they'll think Sam did this. Just like they thought Mack murdered your parents but worse.

THOMAS

They wouldn't just assume Sam murdered him.

SHAYLEE

They will have tons of physical evidence, and the scene of the crime is in Sam's house.

ALFIE

And as far as motive goes, he did get her fired.

THOMAS

You're right. We can't just doom Sam to life in prison once we get her back. She didn't do this. That thing did.

(beat)

But we shouldn't just leave him here. I'm sure he has friends and loved ones who will notice he's gone and file a missing persons report.

ALFIE

What if they're already looking for him? What if the cops are on their way here right now? It is getting late, or early.

SHAYLEE

You're right. No time to be wasted.

THOMAS

So what do we need to do?

Shaylee pacing on porch.

SHAYLEE

We divide and conquer this. I'll call Mack and Nissa and ask them to do a few things on their way over. The two of you? Well, Alfie...

ALFIE
Reporting for duty.

SHAYLEE
Can you just stay here and be on look out?

ALFIE
Oh, thank you.

SHAYLEE
Eyes sharp. Don't pass out.

ALFIE
Yes, ma'am.

SHAYLEE
Thomas, come with me.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

82. Interior of Sam's house.

NISSA
Okay. So I hacked into Ron's phone. Added some phone calls to other numbers and checked in at a few of the bars around town. Making it appear as though he went bar hopping, which by the looks of his social media appears to be a pretty regular occurrence for him.

SHAYLEE
Great, Nissa. Are you sure that you found an area without cameras?

NISSA
I'll check all the local traffic cameras, and we'll stay out of sight from business cameras. We also don't want cops seeing footage of Sam around the bakery, either. I didn't find any closed-circuit or cloud-based cameras on the local businesses. Probably because there's so little crime in Conley. Well, until recently. I think the bakery scene is safe.

ALFIE

Geez. I'm always impressed with your evil genius-ery.

NISSA

Genius, yes. I would go with benevolent genius, though, thank you very much.

THOMAS

This seems to fall into a gray zone. Not telling the truth but doing it for good?

NISSA

Good is relative to the philosophy you hold yourself accountable to.

MACKENNA

Okay. Well, my philosophy is let's get this done so we can stop the monster and save our friend.

SHAYLEE

Yes. I like this philosophy. So, Mack, we're going to take the body through the circle to the location nearish the bakery. Are your gloves on?

MACKENNA

My gloves are on. Sorry if they're masked by our surgeon costumes. If anyone sees us, it will look like the cast of Grey's is operating on Ron.

SHAYLEE

We'll be fine. There and back. Quick as you like. Just don't forget the bags.

MACKENNA

How could I forget the creepy bags of blood and gore?

83. Stepping sideways - departing Sam's house, arriving in alley. Body thud in a gravelly alleyway. Faint street noises in the backdrop.

MACKENNA

Dead bodies are heavy.

SHAYLEE

You're super strong and only had to carry him for five seconds.

MACKENNA

Heaviest five seconds of my life.

(beat)

This sucks. We finally break free of the Magister, get out of the In-Between, all just to come slamming back into reality with the Ron's murder and who knows what else. I was hoping the Sam-monster would just be so confused by our world that it would hide in the basement.

SHAYLEE

It's sad about Ron, but I'm more concerned about the monster. If it has enhanced strength, who knows what else it could do? It may not be easy to stop, assuming we can even figure out how to get Sam back.

MACKENNA

I am done with this shit. Having magical powers should be awesome, but every day it's just another crisis. I get caught up in the little victories and think we can make a difference, but then something worse happens. Once we get Sam back, and we will, we're leaving the drama behind and getting on with our lives.

SHAYLEE

You should. I can't, but the rest of you should.

MACKENNA

We'll find a way out for you, too.

SHAYLEE

Right.

(beat)

Okay, drop the guts and gore so we can get some good splatter. Influence the splatter to go that way, like the picture.

Blood splatters as organs drop to the ground.

MACKENNA

I think I'm going to barf.

SHAYLEE

Hold it in.

MACKENNA

But this is Ron. I know this person. I've talked to him. He was trying to catch my parents' killer. He just wanted to be a plain old detective, and now...

(gagging)

SHAYLEE

Breathe. Slow, shallow breaths. We cannot add more DNA to this scene.

Final drips of gore.

SHAYLEE (CONT'D)

Done. Let's go back.

MACKENNA

Thank god.

84. Stepping sideways, departing the alley and arriving at Sam's house.

THOMAS

Just in time.

MACKENNA

Whoa. How can you breathe in here, Thomas?

THOMAS

Bleach is my scent of choice. But we should go get some fresh air. I think I got everything.

NISSA

Yes, Mr. Clean was quite thorough. I didn't know how dirty my shoes were.

THOMAS

You're welcome. Now can we get the hell out of here?

ALFIE

(from outside the front door)

Second that! The sun is coming up, and the newspaper deliveries are en route.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

Back at the Thorne residence. Murphy barks multiple times. Murphy happy noises.

THOMAS

We're happy to see you too.

ALFIE

Smurphy!

Murphy growls.

MACKENNA

I don't think she likes her nickname.

ALFIE

Would she prefer us to call her Murphy?
I don't think so. We all had combo
nicknames when we swapped.

(to dog)

You deserve to have one, too! Cute
little Smurphy.

Dog gives kisses.

THOMAS

So how do we find Sam?

Murphy barks and then growls.

THOMAS

I mean the monster.

Murphy barks.

MACKENNA

We know that it was attracted to food, so we could always track some food options. Now that it's daylight, though, that could really be anywhere.

SHAYLEE

We didn't find a nest at Sam's place, so maybe it's hunkered down somewhere new after Ron?

NISSA

Belonging.

MACKENNA

Huh?

NISSA

If we keep moving up the needs as Maslow suggested them. A sense of belonging is right after food, shelter, security.

ALFIE

So we need to initiate her into our fraternity of awesomeness?

NISSA

Yes, we'll light candles, wear white and--no, dumbass. I don't think we create a fictitious fraternity to lure her out.

MACKENNA

No, we're overthinking it. I don't need a fraternity to belong. If I have just one person who gets me for me, I can feel like I belong.

ALFIE

That's me. You're welcome, Mack. You do belong.

Smack.

ALFIE (CONT'D)

Ow!

THOMAS

Sam and I are very close. We have been for years. If there is any bit of her left in there, it would feel a connection to me. I'll do it.

MACKENNA

You'll do what?

NISSA

He's going to be the bait.

MACKENNA

No, Thomas. You saw what it did to Ron. This thing is way too dangerous.

THOMAS

But if she needs a sense of belonging, I can bring that to her.

Murphy whimpers.

MACKENNA

Are you forgetting something important?

THOMAS

What?

MACKENNA

You're a horrible actor.

THOMAS

Am not.

NISSA

(clears throat)

Well, Thomas, when you were Prince Charming in high school, the school newspaper tore you apart.

THOMAS

They said that I was the epitome of Prince Charming.

NISSA

No, they said that you were the physical embodiment of Prince Charming. They also said that even when Snow White was in her death-like slumber, she exhibited more emotion than you.

ALFIE

Hey, at least you look like Prince Charming.

THOMAS

I don't remember that.

MACKENNA

Why do you think dad wouldn't let you into any of his community theater productions? You had all of the connections but landed none of the roles.

SHAYLEE

Okay, okay. So don't think of it as acting. Be yourself. Turn on empathetic Thomas. You need to think of her as a feral cat in a scary place, and you're going to help save her.

THOMAS

I can handle this. For Sam.

SHAYLEE

We'll be right there. Just distract her. Disarm her emotionally so that we can catch her off guard. If she's on edge, she might attack.

THOMAS

Right. No pressure. I'm gonna text her.
How can she refuse food?

Cellphone-like typing noises.

85. Switch to Sam's basement.

Buzz.

SAMNUS

"Hi, Sam. How crazy was the other
night? We're back to normal now! Thank
goodness."

Buzz.

SAMNUS (CONT'D)

"Now that I'm back in my own body. I'd
love to see you. I miss hanging out."

Buzz.

SAMNUS (CONT'D)

"We could grab some food and coffee?
We all need to eat, right?"
(talking to her head)
Yes. More food would be good. More
than bread. But also more bread. I can
find out more. About them. What
they're doing. If they pose a threat.

Switch back to Thorne house.

THOMAS

Oh. Oh. It actually texted back. So
quick.

ALFIE

What did it say? Did talking about
eating work?

Murphy barks.

THOMAS

"Hi, Thomas. I like food." Then there is an emoji of a chicken leg? And she finishes with "Where should we meet?"

NISSA

Artificial intelligence suggesting emojis. Lovely and terrifying.

(beat)

Suggest a place that has a big parking lot so we can find a corner without cameras.

MACKENNA

Also, pick a place that Sam would have known.

Murphy barks.

THOMAS

How about this: "Let's meet up at IHOP. We can have lots of hashbrowns."

Text send noise.

Sam's garage.

SAMNUS

Hashbrowns. Sounds interesting.

Typing.

Thorne house. Buzz.

THOMAS

She wrote: "Thomas, I will meet you there." Okay, when?

SHAYLEE

Tell her an hour. That should give us enough time.

Sam's garage.

Buzz. Typing.

SAMNUS

"Great....thumbs up." They use words and pictures together. This world is strange, but it has many sources of power.

(beat)

I like it.

MUSICAL TRANSITION

86. Inside Thomas's truck. Driving. Pulling into parking lot.

THOMAS

(big exhale)

I'm here. In the far corner.

SHAYLEE

(whispering a block away)

Nissa, do you have eyes in the sky?

NISSA

(through phone)

Yes. I'm really getting used to having a rich friend who can buy me fun gadgets.

SHAYLEE

You're welcome.

NISSA

(through phone)

Okay. Here we go. She's approaching on foot.

ALFIE

(through phone)

She can speak English but not drive a car?

NISSA

(through phone)

Be careful out there.

MACKENNA

(through phone)

Okay, Prince Charming. Let's give it a try.

NARRATOR

This should be entertaining. Thomas, who can tell no lies, trying to 'act' his way into the heart of a monster. And what if you fall in love with this version of Sam, too?

Thomas turns his truck off. Gets out of the truck.

THOMAS

Sam! Over here!

Samnus approaches.

SAMNUS

I'm here.

NARRATOR

Thomas, approaching cautiously with that inauthentic grin? You'd better hope the thing didn't inherit Sam's detective skills.

THOMAS

Hi, Sam. I feel like I've been off lately. But now that we're together, it's like I'm turned on again. Uh...I mean...uh...I missed seeing you?

NARRATOR

Yes. That would definitely fool anyone and was in no way a disaster.

SAMNUS

Are you okay?

THOMAS

I guess I'm a little nervous, but now that we're all alone, we can be together.

SAMNUS

Yes. Together. Where are the others?

THOMAS

Oh, they're around here and there.

SHAYLEE

(through phone)

Stand by everyone.

SAMNUS

Here and there? Where, exactly?

THOMAS

Oh. I didn't mean here, here. I meant they aren't here. They are wherever they are. Um. Enough about them. Let's go get some food. I'm starving. Are you hungry?

SAMNUS

Food? Yes. I'm hungry, as well.

(sniffs)

I smell...

Stepping sideways arrival as Mackenna appears at the scene.

NARRATOR

Just as the creature is about to take one step into a circle carved into the pavement, it whirls on Mackenna, grabbing her by the throat and then launching her through the air.

MACKENNA

(choked)

Oh shit.

(screams)

Mackenna crashes onto one car and then a second. Car alarms go off.

NARRATOR

Fortunately for Mackenna, those two steel cars broke her fall. Perhaps Shaylee will fare better.

Loud punch, crash, third car alarm.

SHAYLEE
(groan)

NARRATOR
Then again, perhaps not.

SAMNUS
You betrayed me. You sought to trick
me, attack me.

THOMAS
I'm so sorry. We know that you didn't
mean to get stuck here, but Sam, my
Sam, is stuck somewhere she doesn't
belong either. We all need to get back
to normal.

SAMNUS
There is no normal. She killed my body.
She must die.

THOMAS
Who? Mackenna? She didn't mean to kill
you. She just wanted to go home.

SAMNUS
I now have no body. No home. Nothing
but hunger I cannot sate. It is all her
fault.

THOMAS
We can help you.

SAMNUS
How?

THOMAS
I don't know, but we'll figure it out.
We're good at these things.

SAMNUS
I need things, but I do not trust you.
I am beyond you. I can find what I need
on my own.

NARRATOR

Prince Charming might have been getting somewhere, but now onlookers are stirring. Phones are out. Eyes are watching. The thing piloting Sam walks off determinedly.

Samnus walks off briskly.

NISSA

(through phone)

Uh, team? Cops have been called. Ambulances are coming. Seeing as Mack and Shaylee are not exactly human, you need to get out of dodge. Or at least get them off of the dodges.

Thomas starts after Samnus.

THOMAS

I have to go after her.

NISSA

(through phone)

Did you see what she did to Mack and Shaylee? She threw them around like dolls. She does that to you and you're probably not getting up.

ALFIE

(through phone)

Also, she's doing that Jason Voorhees thing where she's just walking but still managing to move very quickly. I don't think you'll catch her.

MACKENNA

Ow. Ow, ow. That hurt, but I can move.

SHAYLEE

I'm here. A bit banged up. Could use some help standing.

NISSA

Alfie, you're up. Work your distraction so we can get Shaylee and Mack.

ALFIE

Okay.

(beat)

Free pancake breakfasts! I'm buying free pancake breakfasts for one and all. Come here for your free breakfast coupons!

NISSA

(through phone)

Good idea, Alfie. Free stuff always works.

(beat)

Thomas? Thomas, what are you doing?
You're not going to catch her.

Thomas stops.

THOMAS

(heavy breathing)

I lost her. I lost Sam. We nearly had her, and I screwed up.

NISSA

(through phone)

Stop. We'll get her back, but right now we need you.

Truck pulls up beside Thomas.

SHAYLEE

Get in, Thomas.

Thomas gets in the truck.

MACKENNA

Come on. We can't go after her now. She's too strong, and we need a better plan. Let's go home. Regroup. Figure out what to do.

THOMAS

Home? How can I face her?

Truck drives away.

THE END