

THE WRETCHED LIBERATION OF WHAT'S-HIS-FACE

Written by

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Address
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INT. X'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING - SLOW MOTION

X (M, 30, dressed wiz-casual) sits in a rickety chair against a wall, staring blankly ahead as FEDERAL AGENTS FROM THE FBMI (Federal Bureau of Magical Investigations) flurry around him, boxing COMPUTERS, HARD DRIVES, and SPELL TOMES.

DAVEY (V.O. VOICEMAIL)
(slick, salesy)
Hey hey, guess who just hit a million users- it's WizWeb! Good stuff, huh? Couldn'ta done it without ya, bud. Hope that tickles your techie ego somewhat. Tell Zanylla to hold onto her hair dye, it's only up from here.

Across the room, X's girlfriend ZANYLLA (late 20s, bottle-blond Long Islander) pleads with an AGENT to keep her sticker-encrusted LAPTOP. The agent wins, wresting it away. Zanylla turns and glares at X. He remains blank-faced.

DAVEY (V.O. VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)
Theere's one other thing. *Little* thing. Early stages, you know, could be nothing. But, uh, you know how we built our financial system to allow exchanges in Sygillium? Well, turns out *criminals love crypto*. Who'da thought? And who'd've guessed our plucky little networking site would end up attracting so many illicit sorcery users, so soon after launch? Aaaanyway, just thought I'd warn ya that some official-looking folks might come knocking. I really wouldn't be concerned.

In an open EVIDENCE BOX in front of X lay some PAMPHLETS advertising *WizWeb: your hub for connecting with and hiring specialized magicians. No accreditations needed, user recommendations only. Better than MagePage!*

DAVEY (V.O. VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)
But *maaaaybe* just stash the computer for now. Tuck those hard drives into some little hacker hidey-hole til this all blows over. And it *will* blow over. That's a Davey promise you can take right to the bank. Oh, and make sure you delete this message. That's common sense, right?

The Feds do a final sweep. One unplugs the coffee machine and takes it away. Another nabs a box of cookies from the pantry.

DAVEY (V.O. VOICEMAIL) (CONT'D)
 Bottom line, don't worry about it.
 This'll all pan out. We're wizards,
 man. Abracadabra- and everything's
 fine.

X sighs, leans his head against the wall, closes his eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. MAGICAL NYC - SCENIC MONTAGE - DAY - 2 DAYS LATER

A spray of scenery, our familiar NY skyline interspersed with fantastical towers. Witches, werewolves, faeries, etc walking around, sitting at cafes, riding CitiBrooms in bike lanes.

EXT. MCRAVEN PARK, WARTSBURG - DAY

X lands his CITIBROOM and clicks it into a DOCK.

Stony-faced, he strolls into the park, where DAVEY (30, scruffy) reclines on a BLEACH-STAINED TOWEL under a tree, smoking something from a HAND CAULDRON. Tinny POP MUSIC plays from a CRYSTAL BALL RADIO.

DAVEY
 (exhales purple smoke)
 Man, the new Diva Syrenne album is
 pure ass. I know she was hexed to
 never rest a day in her life, but
 seriously, she needs to take a
 break. And so do you.

He tosses X another RATTY OLD TOWEL. X catches it, but doesn't sit.

X
 You said there was something
 important we had to discuss.

DAVEY
 Yeah- getting you out of the
 Zanylla doghouse. Just sit down.

Davey flicks his finger and produces a small FLAME. He re-lights the hand-cauldron and takes another puff as X sits.

X
 What even is that?

DAVEY

This, my friend, is a toast to our next big move.

X

Bro, *fuck no*. The Feds are already on our asses, if they get a whiff that we're pushing-

DAVEY

That's not what this is, just listen. This is Tyrian glowdust. It's good stuff, organic or whatever. Smooth on the intake and'll have you seeing auras after just one hit. But that's not the point. It's who I got it from.

Davey pulls out his SMARTPHONE and shows X an image of a SMILING CARTOON MAGE holding a small plate with a symbol on it. X takes the phone, inspects it. Then scoffs and chucks it back into Davey's lap.

X

Seriously? An NFT? Nobody does that shit anymore, man. I hope you didn't spend actual money on that.

DAVEY

Bro, you don't even know. This is a real SygMonk, fresh from their new drop. Yeah, I spent the money, but it's not just the JPEG. Buying one of these is your ticket into the Monastery- the Sygillium Monastery. I know you've heard of it.

X

Yeah, I've seen the memes.

X takes the hand-cauldron and lights up.

DAVEY

And you know who made those memes? Jealous people. Probably all Sparkless neckbeards just *wishing* they could brush elbows with the magical bigwigs. Because every top wizard is in the club, man. Grandmaster Barthelius, Dark Jacob, Odious Aldrador, Lupo Parnaxus. They still do meetups, and they've got hookups like you won't believe.

(MORE)

DAVEY (CONT'D)

And *money*. I'm already pitching
WizWeb 2.

X

(coughs purple)
Seriously?

DAVEY

Deader than deadass, bro. You gotta
get one of these. I know you've got
Sygillium in your wallet just
rotting.

X

And you're sure this is legit? Half
those big crypto-casting projects
turned out to be rug-pulls or
poisoned apples.

DAVEY

Oh, it's legit. Each Monk comes
with an AI-composed Sigil of
Blessing. Look at this shit. I got
a Brighten.

Davey waggles his fingers over the image, muttering. The air
around him begins to GLOW. X shields his eyes until it dies
down, then leans in to look with wary disbelief.

X

AI made that? You're saying that's
real generative sigillustration?
Nobody's cracked that yet. Not
publicly.

DAVEY

Nobody but the best tech mages in
the world. Who happen to be my new
SygMonk brethren. And sistren. And...
siblingdren?

As Davey rambles, X takes out his PHONE. His browser is
already open to a post-grad dev-casting course page where the
tuition is listed as *MORE THAN YOU CAN AFFORD*. He goes to the
SygMonk website, which features a photo of Lupo Parnaxus.

X

(to self)
Best in the world, huh?

X begins to fantasize (BRIEF MONTAGE): *him as a successful
tech mage, shaking hands with important mages, announcing
IPO, hanging with Odious Aldrador and Lupo Parnaxus and other
cool-looking wizard types in fancy wiz-streetwear attire.*

A RUBBER KICKBALL smacks X on the head, startling him back to reality. Two CRONE KIDS (humans but with an excess of skin, like shar-pei dogs) run up, giggling.

Davey chucks the ball back to them, but misses wildly.

DAVEY
(to the kids)
Ope. Well, you got it.

The kids chase after it, running back into the field.

DAVEY (CONT'D)
(calling after them)
Don't trip on your own cheeks!
(to X)
Crones, man. Do you remember when Nancy— oh, uh, I mean...*somebody*— told us that in the olden times, they used to circumcise those little guys? Just take em by the scruff like kittens and... well. Girls, too. But, you know, twice for boys—

Davey gestures downward. X, however, isn't listening. He's got a fresh sparkle in his eyes, and it's not just the glowdust hitting.

X
I gotta go.

He gets up and ambles away.

DAVEY
(shouts after him)
Okay. Uh, good hang. Glad you're not still mad at me for all this shit. Because soon— WizWeb 2, comin' atcha!

INT. X'S SHITTY APARTMENT - DAY

X is definitely a little toasted as he enters, smiling at his phone. He looks up and sees Zanylla standing in the kitchen, arms crossed. Her AURA is visibly crimson.

X, grinning, stumbles forward to show her his phone.

X
Babe. This is it. I'm about to change our lives.

Zanylla looks at the Sygmonk picture. Her scowl deepens.

ZANYLLA

That'd better be a fucking joke.

X

(stoned sigh)

Right. Sparkless. I should've known you wouldn't get it.

ZANYLLA

What is there to get? I know what that is. You just blew your savings on a dumbass picture that looks like a little kid drew it.

X

Whoa, whoa, whoa. This is modern art. One of a kind, and spelled— no screenshots, no saves, no dupes. It's tied to *my* wallet, *my* name, so I'm the only one who can ever have it. Very cool tech magic. And anyway, it's about the *community*. Every big-name mage has a SygMonk. You like Lupo Parnaxus, right? Now we're in the same exclusive club.

ZANYLLA

(dubious)

You and Lupo? Really?

X

Really. Maybe I can take you to meet him at the next event.

Zanylla twirls her hair, takes out a Kpop-style BEDAZZLED PHOTOCARD of Lupo Parnaxus to admire. Her aura goes pink.

ZANYLLA

Must be a nice event if Lupo's going. I'd need to look the part. That means new hair, new nails, new products, new clothes...

X

You're gorgeous already. You don't need any of that. Just be yourself.

Zanylla's aura flares red again.

ZANYLLA

Now you're the one who doesn't get it.

(MORE)

ZANYLLA (CONT'D)

You can't be yourself and get ahead. You've got to be *better*. Even if you have to fake it.

X

Yeah? Whose money are you faking it with?

ZANYLLA

(pouts)

My loving boyfriend's, who said he was gonna take care of me and make me happy. What kind of wizard are you? Can't you just magic us some nice things?

X

That's not how it works. There are laws against-

ZANYLLA

Fuck the *laws*. You've got the Spark. If you stopped being such a wuss about it, you could make your life so much cooler. You think Lupo hasn't transfigured himself some extra cash here and there?

X

I'm sure he has. People like him can do that sort of thing without a spell-sniffing cop batting an eye. But I'm not him. I'm under federal orders not to leave the city from the last time I tried to flex the rules. I'm doing all that I can, Zee. But the bills have gotta come first, and I'm still not sure if Davey can send me my last paycheck while the investigation's on. Maybe, just *maybe*, if you got a job, too, you wouldn't have to rely on me to treat yourself.

Zanylla's crimson aura blazes.

ZANYLLA

You really are the bottom rung, you know that? You think you're gonna make it big, but you haven't even started climbing. And I'm done trying to show you how.

(MORE)

ZANYLLA (CONT'D)

Have fun with Dead-Weight Davey and your faerie-scam wiz club. I hope it's worth it.

Zanylla storms into the bedroom. X sits down on the couch with his phone, looking at the SYGMONK on his lockscreen.

X

You'll be worth it. She'll see.

The smiling cartoon mage just grins.

INT. X'S LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

There's a NOTE from Zanylla on the table. *Gone to my sister's. Don't wait up.*

X, freshly awake and rubbing sleep from his eyes, sighs. It's low lighting and we can't see him well. He gets out his phone and goes to text her, then pauses and looks at his Monk in Photos instead. Zooms in on the SIGIL PLATE.

X

Let's see what you do... then we'll show her some magic.

INT. X'S BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

MOSTLY CUS: X sits down at his bedroom desk, conspicuously clear of all electronics. There are outlines of dust on a stack of BOOKS he was using as a monitor stand.

The books are an old TEXTBOOK (*Infusing Symbolism - Advances in Dynamic Sigillustration*) and some NOTEBOOKS with CUNY Orbtower logos. X cracks one open. It's pages of COMPLICATED NOTES. Daunted, he runs a hand through his hair.

MANY STRANDS OF HAIR rain onto the paper. X freezes, then moves his hand over his scalp again. More hair falls out.

X

What the-

X looks at his hand. It's covered in hair. He jumps up, sending his ERGONOMIC GAMING CHAIR swiveling backward, and bolts to the bathroom.

INT. X'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

X slams on the light and looks in the mirror in horror.

Patches of hair are missing, and the skin on his face and neck is dry, like a peeling sunburn.

X

What the *fuck*.

X looks closely and picks at one of the cuticles of skin. It peels— and keeps peeling. He gags. Thinks for a moment, then realizes who might've done this.

INT. X'S LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

X sits on the couch, making a call, leg bouncing anxiously.

ZANYLLA'S INBOX (V.O.)

You've reached Zanylla, like vanilla but *za-ny!* I'm not here right now, but you can leave a message—

X hangs up and dials again.

ZANYLLA (V.O.)

(sleepily)

What.

X

What do you mean, 'what'? You had your friends fucking hex me again.

ZANYLLA (V.O.)

No, I didn't. Whatever you screwed up this time is your own damn fault.

X

My *hair* is falling out, Zanylla. My *skin* is peeling off. Are you sure you didn't say something to the girls that might've pissed them off on your behalf? Maybe something they misinterpreted? 'Cause, you know, they're not really the most patient and understanding—

Zanylla laughs, cold, exaggerated. Then her voice falls abruptly flat.

ZANYLLA (V.O.)

Fuck. You. Don't call me again. I'll come by later in the week to pick up my stuff. By then, I hope you're bald. *Dick*.

X

Zee-

She hangs up.

X tosses phone, looks around- *what else could it be?* There's not much left in the place. X looks in THRIFT SHOP BAGS, checks the WARD MARKERS on his windows. Then realizes...

INT. X'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

X returns to his desk, pulls up the SygMonk on his phone, and starts annotating.

BRIEF MONTAGE - Flipping through TEXTBOOK pages about sigil parts like arcs, intercepts, trines, recursions, starmarks. Measuring angles, writing complicated equations, finger sliding down a code-letter list.

Letter by letter, he writes out the CORE WORD: S-C-O-U-R... then fills in the rest without even checking.

SCOURGE. He looks it up in the textbook to be sure. We see lines like *'target will soon find life swiftly, meticulously, and perhaps even literally torn to shreds.'*

X

Oh, fuck.

X dials Davey, who picks up, but sounds absolutely zooted.

DAVEY (V.O.)

Yeeello? Oh- I saw your message about the paycheck, I just need...

X

What the actual fuck, man. My SygMonk is a freaking *Scourge*. I just read the sigil. Did I get scammed?

DAVEY (V.O.)

Huh? That can't be right. You got it from the site I sent you, yeah?

X

Yeah, I did. So what the fuck happened? Did I get bait-and-switched? Or did their stupid AI go haywire and actually mint me a hex?

DAVEY (V.O.)

I dunno, man. I'd ask around the Monastery subscrolls if anyone else has had an issue like that. Maybe the admins can swap it out for you. At least it doesn't have an auto-trigger. Shit would *suck* if that took effect.

X snaps a pic and sends it.

DAVEY (V.O.)

(sucks in breath through teeth)

Oogh. That's... Well, you know what? I got a silver lining for ya: this is perfect timing for a bit of disguise. 'Cause, uh, the Feds came back, and they were asking a lot of questions, and they gave me a funny little bracelet to wear around my ankle...

X pinches his nose bridge. *Things just keep getting worse.*

X

What did you tell them.

DAVEY (V.O.)

C'mon, man. You know I'm no yapper. But this old wiz came in with an Orb of Truth. I don't think that's even legal outside a courtroom-

X

What did you say.

DAVEY (V.O.)

Just... that I was aware all along who our users were. That I *maaaybe* might've advertised in a few underground locales. That it was all my idea, of course... but I *miight*'ve mentioned you designed the entire platform. I know, I know- but they really seemed impressed by your code, man. I was just trying to give you props. I mean, when you think about it, the whole situation is pretty funny. In a few years, we're gonna look back at this from our yachts and *laugh-*

X hangs up.

INT. X'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

On X's phone, a VIDEO plays (*SygMonk FAQ*), featuring two LAWYERS, a smirking Jinn and an overenthusiastic Faerie.

JINN LAWYER

So you're looking to part ways with your SygMonk.

FAERIE LAWYER

(in bad rhyming verse)

We're sad to hear your Monk has made you so unhappy! Are you sure you want to leave our fantastical community?

X, with more scabs and less hair than before, watches grimly.

X

Oh, I'm sure.

JINN LAWYER

Just remember, per the terms and conditions you agreed to upon purchase, there are no returns or refunds. Once it's minted, the SygMonk is yours to keep- until you sell it.

FAERIE LAWYER

(tiny voice, mimicking SygMonk)

Don't sell me, please! Let's keep making magic together, whee!

JINN LAWYER

You can list your Monk through our official exchange platform at sygmonk dot exchange dot s-y-g...

X closes the video, goes to site. Taps for a while, putting Monk for sale. Hits submit, then flops back on couch, sending up a plume of SKIN DUST in the lamplight.

A moment later, there's a DING. X scrambles to look.

NOTIFICATION

ALERT. Listing reported. Reason given: Fake Listing. Appeal?

X scoffs in disbelief.

X

It's the fucking blockchain, how
can it be fake?

X hits appeal, then opens the SCROLLD app and posts in the
SygMonk.scroll subscroll.

X'S POST

*What just happened? I listed a Monk
for sale on the official platform
and it got reported for being fake,
but I've got the certificate, hash,
& metadata to prove it's real.
Help?*

Comments start appearing underneath.

@SWEETMARIE112

*Obvi its gonna get taken down if
youre scamming asshole*

@PARNAXUS_FAVE_KITTEN

*O shit ur the guy who listed the
fake monk? howd u do it?*

@TEXMEXHEX

*We all know its a scam bro. you
cant mint a cursed sgmk*

@FARTHOLOMEW

*@sigilscraper777 confirmed it's got
hostile geometries, there's no way
the AI spit that out. mad hack tho*

X throws up his hands.

X

The hell? You can't tell that from
a low-res preview.

X thinks for a moment, then goes to SygBoys.scroll, which is
full of memes. X grins evilly.

X (CONT'D)

Alright, Sparkless neckbeards,
let's see who's desperate to brush
elbows now.

(mutters as he types)

*Selling spare SygMonk, floor price,
new mint. Looking to add more under-
appreciated talent to the
Monastery. DM for proof of
ownership.*

Hits post, sits back with his hands up like his phone might spontaneously combust, and waits. A moment later, it DINGS.

@4SWORNF8KER MESSAGE

Hey, my friend is interested if the SygMonk is still clear. He's not on this subscroll, but you can reach out here.

X cackles, clicks link, which opens Scrollld browser site, where it prompts him to log in.

X

Ugh. Whatever.

He punches in his login info. Then the screen glitches out. X watches in blank-faced dismay as an animation of a Fae with a fishing rod appears.

TEXT ON SCREEN

Foolish being, you have bequeathed your account to the Folk. Follow our commandments if you wish to regain the yoke.

X

Shitty ass rhyme.

He closes the page, tosses phone away, waves a hand to shut the curtains, and goes to get ready for bed.

The room's lights shut off, but the glowing lock screen remains lit for a moment, the SygMonk's grin almost sinister.

INT. X'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

X sits upright in bed, hair gone, skin scabby, eyes hollow, and *done with this shit*. He gets up, but we linger on the bed, and the body-shaped PILE OF DEAD SKIN on his DARK BLUE BOY SHEETS.

INT. X'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room is a mess. ART and PHOTOS have fallen from the walls. X is expressionless as he shakes out moldy CEREAL. The MILK is curdled. He tosses the whole BOWL into the TRASH.

Then he spots some ENVELOPES behind the trash can that have clearly been slid under the door. Picks them up. They're rent overdue notices, including a FINAL NOTICE.

X chucks them back onto the floor and calls Davey. The line's been disconnected. Tries Davey's other burner phone. No luck.

X
Fuck. *Fuck...*

X sinks into rickety KITCHEN CHAIR, head in hands. Then glances at a PHOTO of him and Davey that's fallen off the wall and broken out of its frame.

X (CONT'D)
So much for the greatest tech-magic disruptors the city had ever seen. What the hell happened to us, man?

The chair buckles under X, sending him crashing to the floor. The NEIGHBOR'S DOG starts BARKING next door.

X (CONT'D)
Come on!

From his position on the floor, X can see the photo is folded back. Grabs it, unfolds to reveal someone else in the photo, too. A CRONE GIRL, smiling alongside them. X gets an idea.

EXT. TWIXT-THE-BRIDGES - DAY

A few exteriors of the area (Two Bridges neighborhood). FDR Drive in the background, magical folks in the foreground.

X stalks down the road wearing a CLOAK with the hood up, looking magely.

INT. TWIXT-THE-BRIDGES APARTMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

It's a classic old NYC tenement. X goes up to a battered DOOR with a SIGN outside that reads *Cursebreaking & Artificing Services*. He KNOCKS.

The door is tugged open, then stops abruptly, braced by a SLIDING CHAIN. A crinkly-lidded YELLOW EYE peeks out. It belongs to NANCY (30, a Crone, looks way older than she is).

NANCY
Whaddaya want? I'm working, so whatever this is, make it snappy.

X pulls back his hood.

X
Nance, it's me.

NANCY

(squinting)

Hag's honkers, it is you. You look like an old tortilla. This some lover's quarrel, or another experiment gone wrong?

X

Neither. Look, I know I said you'd never see me again, but I need your help. I've been hexed. A Scourge.

NANCY

Guess your Sparkless girl isn't of much use on that front.

X

We broke up.

NANCY

Maybe you do have a couple neurons still knocking together in there.

Nancy slams the door in X's face. Then the chain slides.

INT. NANCY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

X follows Nancy into the apartment, looking around. MAGICAL ARTIFACTS cover every surface, some inside CAGES and CASES.

NANCY

A cursed NFT, huh? You tech-mages. Go stand on the containment square. I'll get the hex kit.

Awkward and uneasy, X steps onto a GLOWING SQUARE, continues looking around as Nancy rummages. On a nearby TABLE, behind a bunch of objects, he spots a familiar PHOTO.

He lifts it up. It's the same photo we've seen of X, Davey, and Nancy. Nancy is wearing a CUNY Orbtower sweatshirt.

Something else falls out from the back of the FRAME- a PHOTOBOOTH STRIP. It's of X and Nancy, looking cozy together. There's a shot of them kissing. X looks at it regretfully.

Nancy comes back in, and X hurriedly puts the pictures down.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Hey, hey, don't touch anything. Some of this stuff is still cursed.

(MORE)

NANCY (CONT'D)

Don't want anything to proximity-trigger from whatever the hell you've got going on.

Nancy sits at her cluttered DESK and begins inspecting the SygMonk on X's phone with a complex set of CRYSTAL FILTERS.

X stands in place, growing increasingly nervous. He dabs at some forehead sweat, only to find it sticky.

NANCY (CONT'D)

You really are a dipshit, you know.

X

Oh, I know. And- I'm sorry, Nance. I never should've let her say those things to you. Sparkless girls, they grow up around their own sort and don't know how to act... and you're right, I'm a clout-chasing idiot who caved the moment a "pretty girl" looked at me for the first time in my life. I didn't know how to act. So if you're still pissed, I understand. But look, Nance, I'm scared-

NANCY

No, idiot. This isn't a Scourge. It's a Scour. I don't know why you jumped to conclusions. There are only five letters in the Word.

X

(sheepish)

Oh. I was... in a rush. What's a Scour, then?

NANCY

Not a curse, for one thing. Just a rough cleanse. It removes that which does not serve you.

X

My *hair* isn't serving me? My *skin*?

NANCY

I'll admit, this Scour has more intense geometries than others I've seen. But the principle is the same: only by purging the old can the new settle in.

X

I don't want to purge the old. I *like* the old. I mean, not really, but it's sure as hell better than this. Can you break the sigil or not?

Gravely, Nancy shakes her head.

NANCY

It's too deeply entangled. Blockchain magic has been a nightmare for us cursebreakers. This thing has been tied to your identity across the whole system, permanently marking you into a shit ton of decentralized, uneditable virtual ledgers. So, the only way to completely de-associate it with you is...

It's a moment before X realizes what she's saying. Stunned, he steps off the containment square and grabs his phone.

X

No. Absolutely not. I can't just... give that up.

NANCY

The Scour seems to think you can. Has it really been serving you well?

X

It's my whole *life*, Nance. It's everything.

Nancy shrugs.

NANCY

Like I've told you before: it's not as big as you think.

EXT. EAST RIVER BELOW FDR DRIVE - GOLDEN HOUR

X walks aimlessly towards the river, looks out at water.

His phone BUZZES. He glances at the screen; it says *Maybe: The Feds*. From the road overhead, sirens blare, and X ducks his head. But they just pass by.

X slumps onto a BENCH and thinks about the rest of what Nancy said in the apartment.

INTERCUT PRESENT/FLASHBACK SHOTS

NANCY (V.O.)

I mean, you could just let the spell run its course. See how far it thinks it needs to take you before you're 'cleansed'. Though...

X (V.O.)

Though it might not cease until the last atoms that had ever comprised my being have leached into the soil, taken up by the worms whose names are so primal, not even the Fae can claim them?

NANCY (V.O.)

It's possible. Or... you can make it stop.

(beat)

It might not be such a bad thing. A fresh start. Just think about it. Is your past really worth more than your future?

In the present, X scoffs. Looks out at the river. Across the way, a BILLBOARD of Lupo Parnaxus advertises magic cologne.

X

My future...

FLASHES OF X'S IMAGINATION (SLOW MOTION): *Sirens, red-blue strobes, shouting, handcuffs. Mug shots. A Jinn LAWYER sits across from him in a holding room. X is bald, peeling badly.*

IMAGINARY LAWYER (V.O.)

Can't wish this one away, son.
It'll be on your record for life.

In a courtroom, X, at the defendant table, turns back to see Davey in the audience, who glances up from his phone to shrug casually with a 'sorry man, what can I do?' expression. He's clearly gotten off scot-free.

X looks hopeless. A Dumbledore-looking JUDGE with a CRYSTAL BALL on his podium shakes his head sternly. Zanylla lounges in the stands beside a fan-swarmed Lupo Parnaxus. The yelling PROSECUTOR jabs a finger, and is revealed to be a Faerie-

In reality, X has a revelation.

With fresh resolve, X opens Scrollld, makes a new account. Finds @4swornf8ker and types out a message with all of his login credentials- Scrollld, his Sygillium wallet, his SSN, a pic of his DRIVER'S LICENSE. Hits send.

A moment later:

@4SWORNF8KER MESSAGE

Utter fool, you dare to cede your name? With full understanding you shall never be the same? Your life and your possessions are now under my thrall. Should you want them back, you'll need to heed my every call.

X

(aloud)

All yours, asshole. Enjoy.

X puts down his phone, then chucks his WALLET into the river. The SygMonk vanishes from his lockscreen.

X exhales in relief, rubs his face. The final flakes of skin peel away, leaving him glowing. Rejuvenated. The calm sounds of the city seep in, a fresh summer breeze.

He stands, picks some LEAVES off a tree, and transfigures them into CASH.

EXT. TWIXT-THE-BRIDGES - SUNSET

X, smiling, gleaming bald, walks towards Nancy's apartment with an OVERFLOWING BOUQUET.

CUT TO BLACK.