

Cast of Characters

Annie- Almost eighteen and working illegally. Speaks English at home and and “work” but speaks Esperanto everywhere else. Dislikes talents. Likes normal people. Can nullify any talent she encounters. She has hard, metallic looking eyes that are a little distracting—too pale to be blue but not yellow but not white--almost predatory, but not cat-eyed or anything like that. They’re natural but unusual.

The Mark- A normal, un-talented person who can play card games well and has a lot of money to throw around. Takes an interest in Annie’s abilities and wants to capitalize on them. Speaks English and German.

Mom- Annie’s mother. A manipulative and self-centered empath. Speaks English and some Esperanto.

Dad- Annie’s father. An impatient and weak-willed precog. Speaks English.

Brother- Annie’s younger brother. A demanding genetic. Speaks English poorly.

Pudge- An un-talented player at the casino. He’s got a look of noisy desperation to him. He’s fat and sweaty and wrings his hands. Plays cards poorly and speaks English.

Client- An un-talented player at the casino. An English speaker and average card-player.

Dealers- There are two. Both are talented and speak English. Work at the casino.

Wei-Ling- An un-talented person who works as a hat-check girl. Likes Annie. Speaks Esperanto only. Knows that what Annie is doing is illegal but helps out anyway. Hates talents.

Teacher- One of Annie’s teachers at school. Un-talented and likes Annie. Has little control over his talented students. Speaks Esperanto with a Russian accent.

Sandipan- One of Annie’s un-talented classmates. Speaks Esperanto.

Talented Students- Only four have speaking roles and all in Esperanto. Talented, cruel. They like to pick on un-talented students.

Cop- Harasses Annie on the street in Esperanto. Un-talented.

Chauffer- Talented servant of The Mark. Speaks Esperanto with a French accent.

Older Servant- Talented servant of The Mark. Speaks Esperanto with a French accent.

Old Guy- Un-talented, German speaking card-player.

Big Guy- Un-talented, speaks German and English with a thick accent. Plays cards well and is The Mark’s boss.

Little Guy- Talented, plays cards poorly, speaks German, works for Big Guy.

CEO- Speaks Japanese and is un-talented.

Talent- Well... talented, works for CEO, translates to Esperanto.

Young Annie- Annie age 8. No speaking line, only on screen for a few seconds.

Baby- Annie’s little brother ten years ago. Tortures Mom for the brief amount of time he’s on screen.

0.0.1 INTERIOR CASINO NIGHT

Opening shot is a crowded casino. Many people milling about, some playing cards, some at different wheels. We pan through this until we stop on ANNIE. She's dressed in a tight red dress and has big, thick, blonde hair. She fidgets with a curl of hair watching the MARK across the way. He's an older gentleman and playing at cards, but not doing well. We watch the dealer pull his chips away time and time again. Cut back to ANNIE, who has been watching all of this intently. She smiles to herself as the MARK walks away from the table and heads towards the bar. ANNIE strides up next to him and cocks her hip.

ANNIE: Hey there. Wanna get lucky?

MARK: You a dancer?

ANNIE: I'm not talking about that kind of luck. I mean at the tables. Looks like you could use some.

MARK: And let me guess, you can sell it?

ANNIE: Sure can.

MARK: Can I buy you a drink?

ANNIE Maybe after you've won a few hands. You really shouldn't drink when you're playing here, anyway. All the dealers here are talented. Drinking is just going to help them do their job.

MARK: So, it's luck you're selling? What's your price?

ANNIE: Ten percent the first time. After that, after you've seen what I can do, we'll talk.

MARK: *(Looking around)* How are you at roulette?

ANNIE No. Just cards. No chance games. It's not like that.

*ANNIE and the MARK make their way to a card table. The DEALER passes out the cards and looks at each person at the table. It's a slow sweep and we CLOSE-UP on his eyes. Now we see everything through his eyes for a moment and hear a **fugue** of voices. He can hear what everyone is thinking. MONTAGE of people's mouths so we can see they aren't talking. The MARK hasn't picked up his cards yet.*

DEALER Ante up, ladies and gentlemen. Ante up.

CLOSE-UP on Annie's face. She's concentrating on something rather intensely. The MARK picks up his cards and lays down his chips. MONTAGE of the MARK winning hand after hand and the DEALER getting increasingly frustrated. Back to dealer-vision and there's an odd silence when he gets to the MARK.

DEALER The gentleman wins again.

The MARK has just been dealt his cards when a PUDGE comes walking up to ANNIE.

PUDGE Annie, I need you.

ANNIE Scram.

The MARK has his cards, but hasn't looked at them yet. ANNIE notices.

PUDGE Annie, please.

ANNIE Go away. You can't play for crap.

PUDGE I'll pay you twice as much as usual.

ANNIE Fifty percent of nothing is still nothing. Even with me standing there, you still play for an inside straight or ask for too many cards. Get lost.

The PUDGE reaches out and grabs Annie's naked shoulder. The MARK snaps a hand out and twists the PUDGE's clammy hand off Annie's shoulder. It's a smooth professional move that results with the MARK digging a finger into the PUDGE's wrist.

MARK *(In a calm easy voice)* The lady doesn't want you to bother her. Please refrain from doing so or I'll call security and have you removed.

The PUDGE pulls his wrist away and rubs it. He pouts at ANNIE and leaves the table.

MARK Okay, the distraction's gone. Back to work, girlie.

ANNIE nods slightly to herself. It's as if she's offended, but has accepted the situation.

CUT-TO: ANNIE and the MARK walking away from the table. The MARK hands ANNIE several of the chips from the win.

ANNIE Now that you've seen what I can do, maybe next time you come by here, you can pay me what I'm worth.

MARK *(He looks her up and down)* How about I buy you a decent dress, so you don't look like a painted whore?

ANNIE Okay, mister, that's it. First the girly comment, now this. Why don't you take your chips and eat them backwards, okay? See ya.....

0.0.2 INTERIOR CASINO ENTRANCE NIGHT

ANNIE walks towards the entrance and goes to the hatcheck girl, WEI-LING. ANNIE slides a couple chips across the counter. Their conversation happens with subtitles.

ANNIE Saluton, Wei-Ling. <Hi, Wei-Ling>

WEI-LING Bonan vesperon, Annie. <Good evening, Annie>

ANNIE Cxu ili lasos vin disdoni? *<Are they ever going to let you deal*

WEI-LING (*Jokingly*) Ohhhhh, jes. Ili ne permesos min disdoni. Talenta mi estas ne.
<Yeah right. They'd never let me deal. I'm not talented.>

ANNIE Jes, sed iam talento ne estas cxio. *<Yeah, but sometimes talent isn't everything.>*

WEI-LING Ili volas disdonatonj talentaj nur. *<Well, they only want talented dealers.>*

ANNIE Eble ili devas akiri disdonatonj kiu povas disdoni? *<Maybe they should get dealers who can deal?>*

They both laugh and WEI-LING hands ANNIE a duffle bag. ANNIE takes the bag to the bathroom.

0.0.3 INTERIOR BATHROOM NIGHT

Inside the bathroom, we watch ANNIE remove a blonde wig and change into her street clothes: baggy pants, boots and a heavy coat. ANNIE has short-cropped, dark hair.

0.0.4 INTERIOR CASINO ENTRANCE NIGHT

ANNIE walks back to the hatchback and hands WEI-LING the bag containing the wig and dress.

ANNIE Ion talento reale. Tiuj bastardoj neniam perceptis min. *<Talent indeed. Those bastards have never noticed me.>*

WEI-LING Cxu vi komprenas kiom problemo nin havos se ilin fari? *<Do you know how much trouble we would both be in if they did?>*

ANNIE Ne faras lasos via gardo malsupera. Teni ilin supozas. *<Just don't let your guard down. Keep them guessing.>*

WEI-LING Hey, vi devu rapidi. Vi maltrafonta elirtempon. *<Hey, you better hurry. You're going to miss curfew.>*

ANNIE Fasistoj. Pub-trans stulta devas esti libera. Plej geknaboj ne havas monon. Stulta elirtempo. Stulta legxo ne labora.... *<Fascists. The stupid pub-trans should be free. Most kids don't have money. Stupid curfew. Stupid no-work law....>*

As we watch ANNIE walk out, we pan to the sign on the wall "18 and up only".

0.0.5 EXTERIOR CASINO ENTRANCE NIGHT

Outside the casino, ANNIE comes walking out. The MARK is waiting near the door and smiles when he sees her. She stops dead in her tracks because he's recognized her.

MARK Can I offer you a ride home? Looks like pub-trans might be late tonight.

ANNIE *(answering to him with subtitles)* Kial? <Why?>

MARK Drop it. I know you speak English.

ANNIE I don't ride with peds.

MARK I was actually hoping to talk to you about a business proposition.

ANNIE I told you already. I'm not a dancer.

MARK Not that kind of business. What you did back there was really impressive.

ANNIE Look. I've got to go. Okay? I don't want to be out much later.

ANNIE turns her back and starts to walk down the street to where the station is. Out of nowhere the MARK shows up and grabs her wrist. He twists it open and shoves a card into her hand.

MARK I'll make it worth your while.

ANNIE stands on the curbside holding her wrist and pouting. She watches the MARK walk to the parking lot. He doesn't look back at her once. CLOSE-UP on Annie's clenched fist holding the card being slowly shoved into her coat pocket.

0.0.6 INTERIOR CLASS ROOM DAY

A state of the art classroom. It looks like it shined once but it hasn't been cleaned and the kids have abused it. The walls have been painted over in patches and the desks have carvings and burn marks. The students sit with what looks like laptops. On top is the brand name: B.U.X. Some kids have put stickers on theirs and you can see where they've peeled the off stickers from classes before. ANNIE sits at her desk, trying very hard to pay attention. The other kids in the class are creating a bedlam around her. The teacher is trying—vainly—to continue with the lesson. This entire scene is in subtitles.

TEACHER Ecx se la salamandro havas suficxa venenon mortigi musojn milaj, la serpento povas mangxi la salamandron. <Even through the salamander has enough toxins in its skin to kill a hundred mice, the snake can still eat the salamander.> Cxi raso de armoniologia estas tial en via malantaŭan korton estas animaloj venenegaj en la munon. <This biological arms race is part of the reason why some of the most poisonous creatures in the world live right here in your own backyard.>

One of the TALENTED STUDENTS gasps and hits another student, SANDIPAN, on the back of the head.

TALENTED STUDENT Mi drias! Sandipan estos prepensinta la animalo venenega estas la talenton! *<I'm telling! Sandipan was just thinking that the most poisonous creature was a talent!>*

TEACHER Sandipan, gxi estas vera? *<Sandipan, is this true?>*

SANDIPAN Ne. *<No>*

TALENTED STUDENT Li mensogas! *<He's lying!>*

ANNIE Vi estas la personon kiu mensogas. *<You're the one who's lying.>*

TEACHER Annie, cxu vi havas io adicii al la interparoladon? *<Annie, you have something to add to this conversation?>*

ANNIE Mi ne opinias Sandipan estas mensogas. *<I don't think Sandipan is lying.>*

TALENTED STUDENT #2 Li estas! *<He is!>*

ANNIE Cxu vi estos bandi kontraux lin? *<You going to gang up on him?>*

SANDIPAN Mi ne prepensis ajna ajxon! *<I wasn't thinking anything!>*

TEACHER Nu, Sandipan.... *<Now, Sandipan....>*

ANNIE Cxu personoj havos problemojn por kion ilin prepensas nu? *<People get in trouble for what they think now?>*

TALENTED STUDENT #3 Jes, kial ne? Ni komprendas kion farigxas. *<Yeah, why not? We know what's going on in there.>*

TALENTED STUDENT #4 Vi ne estas talenta. Kiel estos vi komprende kion lin prepensas? *<You're not talented. How would you know what he's thinking?>*

ANNIE Mi ne zorgas pri kion lin prepensas. Nek devas vi. *<I don't care what he's thinking. Nor should you.>*

TEACHER Nu, Annie... *<Now, Annie...>*

ANNIE Juxs tial ke vi decidis parigi sur la konton. Vi povas konsistigi cxio! *<Just because you guys decide to match up on a story. You could make anything up!>* Vi povas.... povas sendi personojn en militojn aux konvikti personojn senkulpaj pro murdon! *<You could...could send people into wars or convict innocent people of murder!>*

TEACHER *(Almost in a trance)* Annie, Sandipan, mi devas demandi vin iru al oficejon de precipon. *<Annie, Sandipan, I'm going to have to ask you to go to the principal's office.>*

ANNIE whips her head around and zeroes in on TALENTED STUDENT #3

ANNIE Cut that out! NOW!

TALENTED STUDENT #3 pulls back as if struck--offened that Annie is using her own language.

TALENTED STUDENT #3 Kio en inferon vi opinias estas fari? <What the hell do you think you're doing?>

TEACHER OK, gestudentoj, tio estas suficxa! <All right, students. That's enough.>

SANDIPAN Mi ne prepensis ajna ajxon! <I wasn't thinking anything!>

ANNIE and TALENTED STUDENT #3 have gotten into a starting contest.

TALENTED STUDENT #3 Mi ne komprende kio vi estanta fari. Vi devu halti. Vi ne povu forbati nin, vi komprende cxu? <I don't know what you're doing. But you better stop. You can't beat us, you know.>

ANNIE Mi ne devas forbati vin. Mi devas jxus esi cxi tie. <I don't have to beat you. I just have to be here.>

With that, the bell for end of class rings. Students start to file out slowly; ANNIE is still in a death-stare with TALENTED STUDENT #3. The Talented Students are trying to get to the door and ANNIE sits at her desk, staring at them, until they are out the door. Only when they are in the hallway does ANNIE pick up her things and head for the door. The TEACHER stops her.

TEACHER Vi havu luncxon cxi tiam. Mi havas permeson paroli al vin? <You have lunch this period. May I speak with you?>

ANNIE Yeah.

TEACHER Cxu, vi testis negativa? <You tested negative, didn't you?>

ANNIE Yeah.

TEACHER Eble ili devas re-skribi la testo, cxu vi opinias? <Maybe they should re-write the test, don't you think?>

ANNIE Gxi estas nenion. <It's nothing.>

TEACHER Ne, gxi estas ion. Kio vi faros per gxin? <No, it's something. What are you going to do with it?>

ANNIE Gxi? <It?>

TEACHER Via donacon. <Your gift.>

ANNIE Gxi estas reale nenion. <Really, it's nothing.>

TEACHER Annie, mi me komprendas kiel dicis al vin. Vin estas pasxon posta, cxu vi vidas? Studentoj talentaj incitenas studenojn ne telentajn, sed vi iras kaj solvas tion. *<Annie, I don't know how to tell you this. You are the next step, don't you see that? The talented students pick on the non-talented ones, but then you come along and solve that.>* Vi egalas la kampon de luda. Cxu vi kompredi tio estas grava? Cxu vi komprendas tio signifas? *<You level the playing field. Do you know how important that is? Do you know what that means?>*

ANNIE Star-bellied sneetches.

TEACHER Shto?

ANNIE Gxi estas raso de armon. Gxi signifas tial. Gxi estas serpentoj kaj salamandroj. *<It's an arms race. That's what it means. It's snakes and salamanders.>*

TEACHER (*Self-satisfied*) Almenaux, vi auxdis la lecionon. *<At least you heard the lesson.>*

ANNIE Yeah.

TEACHER Vi akiru via gradojn bonegan, eh? Vi havas gradoj testaj bonaj sed mi devas vin reiri vin hejmtaskon. Penu fari iam momenton en la vesperon por via studiojn, Okay? *<Just get your grades up, huh? You have good test scores but I need you to turn in your homework. Try to make some time in the evenings for your studies, OK?>* Kio vi faras post lernejon estas gravan por via estonon kiel kio vi faras en lernejon. *<What you do after school is just as important to your future as what you do in school.>*

ANNIE Okay.

ANNIE turns away to walk to the cafeteria and mutters under her breath.

ANNIE Oh, how right you are....

0.0.7 INTERIOR CAFETERIA DAY

The kids in the cafeteria don't wear backpacks. Most of them have over-the-shoulder bags or laptop cases. Some students have their B.U.X. on shoulder-straps—similar to the Panasonic ToughBook. ANNIE is standing in line for her meal. The LUNCH-LADY hands ANNIE a white paper box and a set of chopsticks in paper. At the end of the line, ANNIE runs a card through a reader and it prints a yellow paper ticket. ANNIE takes her lunch to the cafeteria door and walks out to the courtyard.

0.0.8 EXTERIOR COURT YARD DAY

ANNIE tears opens her chopsticks and white paper box. Inside is a noodle dish and she starts eating but is interrupted by a ruckus. SANDIPAN, the non-talented kid, is surrounded by the TALENTED STUDENTS from earlier. He's dancing around like a marionette and occasionally strikes himself with his laptop—very Monty Python Holy Grail.

ANNIE drops her lunch and runs into the circle. SANDIPAN collapses to the ground and ANNIE stands protectively over him.

ANNIE Vi monstroj! Vin devas esti iperitinta! Vi malkuragxuloj! Vi...vi salamandroj!
<You monsters! You should all be gassed! You cowards! You... you salamanders!>

The TALENTED STUDENTS start to close in but back off at Annie's hard stare. They look at each other, trying to figure out what's going on. They stare hard at Annie, at Sandipan. It's like something from the "Village of the Damned", but it isn't working. Annie's nose has started to bleed as she paces in tight circles, staring each talented student down in turn.

ANNIE Tio kiel volu gxin? Tio ests kia ludon vi volu ludi? Mi signos ludonj al vin!
<That's how you want it? That's the kind of game you want to play? I'll show you games!>

And with that, she clocks one of the talented students: bows him right across the temple with her elbow. The TALENTED STUDENTS close in but they're no good in a fight. ANNIE pops another one with a kick to the knee. Another gets a strong head-but. One TALENTED STUDENT gets a lucky shot and punches her in the mouth. ANNIE grabs the kid and pulls her fist back. She smiles wide with a mouth full of blood.

ANNIE Diru saluton al evolution. <Say "hello" to evolution.>

0.0.9 INTERIOR ANNIE'S HOME LATE AFTERNOON

ANNIE and her family live in a crowded apartment. It's cluttered, neglected, and dirty. Annie's DAD sits at a table nervously rapping his fingers on the kitchen table. Her BROTHER is playing with toy cars. He's tele-kinetic and the toy cars run around the kitchen floor by their own accord. BROTHER makes car noises as they run around. ANNIE comes in from outside and hangs up her coat on a hook on the wall. There are other coats, but they lay on the floor under the hooks. ANNIE bends down to pick them up and starts to hang them on hooks. Her conversation with her father is slow and methodical. She'll say something and assume the conversation is over. Then he'll start it up again.

DAD Why would a teacher be calling here?

ANNIE Why don't you wait until they call and then you can ask them?

ANNIE goes to the kitchen sink and starts to load the day's dishes into the washer.

DAD I want to know now.

ANNIE Don't be so impatient. You can find out the way the rest of us do: when it happens.

ANNIE has finished loading the dishwasher and adds the soap for the load.

DAD Why won't you just tell me?

ANNIE You need to learn patience.

DAD Annie, just tell me. Stop hiding things.

ANNIE I told you already, Dad. Wait until they call. Okay. Just wait. You don't have to know everything yesterday.

DAD Yes, I do. It's my job.

ANNIE Not at home, it isn't.

ANNIE walks to the kitchen table and starts to open mail, organizing things into stacks: bills, letters, mailings, and magazines. It looks like it hasn't been done in a while.

DAD Why are you like this? Why are you so un-cooperative?

ANNIE Because being cooperative never got me anywhere.

DAD Listen, in two hours, a teacher is going to be calling this house and I need to know why so I can tell them what needs to be done.

ANNIE No, you don't.

DAD Well, I need to explain to your mother. She'll be home soon.

ANNIE Fine. You can ask her after she answers the phone.

ANNIE has opened the bills. She gets up, walks to the kitchen drawer, and pulls out a checkbook. She's doing the bills. We can see over her shoulder that she isn't signing her name.

DAD Wait until your mother gets home, young lady!

ANNIE Fine, I can wait. Can you?

BROTHER is sitting on the floor with his cars. They've stopped rolling around on the floor. ANNIE stops the bills and looks at him.

ANNIE What do you want?

BROTHER floats one of his toy cars and it flies at Annie's head. It drops out of the air before it can hit her.

ANNIE Cut it out.

BROTHER Dad wants to know! Tell him!

More cars fly at Annie's head and drop out of the air before they can hit her.

ANNIE You're being a pest. Why don't you go set something on fire?

BROTHER You're mean.

ANNIE You're a spoiled little brat.

DAD Don't talk to your brother like that. Just because he's talented and you're not....

Another car falls out of the air as ANNIE stares at her father.

ANNIE You were saying?

DAD Well, you tested negative.

ANNIE Hooray for me.

She's finished writing out the checks and has placed them in their appropriate envelopes. ANNIE starts to lick the envelopes closed. A plate flies at her head but falls out of the air.

ANNIE Cut it out. I'm not in the mood.

A heavy book flies at her but falls.

ANNIE I mean it. I don't want to deal with you tonight.

The door opens and MOM comes in. She drops her coat by the hooks.

MOM What's all this mess?

ANNIE (*Gesturing to her brother*) He was throwing stuff again.

MOM Well, clean it up. I don't want to come home to a messy kitchen.

ANNIE has finished with the bills and goes to put them in her coat pocket. While she's over by the hooks, she picks up her mother's coat and hangs it up.

MOM You should have seen them today. Sometimes I can't believe I can convince them they actually look good.

ANNIE is picking up the toy cars and pantomimes throwing one at her brother. BROTHER winces.

MOM Annie, stop picking on your brother.

*The phone **rings**. MOM goes to answer it.*

DAD That's the teacher.

ANNIE (*sarcastically--almost sports announcer*) Thanks for the update, Dad.

MOM takes the phone call in the hallway. She's pacing back and forth and DAD is trying to listen in. MOM shoos him away. Meanwhile, BROTHER has started a staring contest

with his older sister. They stare intently at each other. A small fire starts in the center of the kitchen table, and then--just as quickly--goes out.

ANNIE Cut it out. Okay?

BROTHER But you said....

ANNIE Not in the kitchen!

MOM *(From the other room)* I'm on the phone!

ANNIE *(Between her teeth)* You got a month, mister. That's it. And I am gone.

BROTHER I'm telling.

ANNIE I don't care.

BROTHER Moooooooooom!!

MOM *(From the other room)* I am on the phone! *(More quietly to Dad)* Go see what's going on in there. I can't tell; she's doing it again.

DAD *(Entering the kitchen)* What's going on in here?

ANNIE stops staring at BROTHER and snaps her attention to her father. Just as she does this, her sleeve catches fire.

ANNIE *(patting it out)* Damn it! I swear! I'm going to kill you!

BROTHER runs into the other room. ANNIE goes tearing after.

ANNIE You little freak of nature! Come back here!

DAD *(calling after them)* Don't call your brother a freak!

Pan to kitchen hallway where MOM is trying to have a conversation.

MOM People! I am on the phone! *(To the receiver with subtitles)* Komprenoble me komprendas...Jes...Uh-huh....Sxia patron kaj mi estis malsatintega tiam sxi testis negativa....Komprenoble....Jes.....Mi estas dironta al sxi pri gxi. *<Of course I understand... Yes... Uh-huh... Her father and I were very disappointed when she tested negative... Of course... Yes... I'll talk to her about it.>*

The siblings have run back into the kitchen. ANNIE has caught BROTHER and has wrestled him to the ground.

ANNIE I'll teach you. You think you're so much better. You're not. I'm bigger and I'm meaner, you got that? *(Her nose is starting to bleed)* And don't think you can 'talent' your way out of this! You should have been spanked more, that's all there is to it.

DAD tries to break the two of them up but as he lays his hands on them, they both turn their attention to him and he falls backwards. ANNIE goes back to punching her little brother in the arm and such.

ANNIE Don't bring him into this!

BROTHER Moooooooooom!

ANNIE And don't try to bring her into this, either. It's just you and me, mister.

MOM comes into the room and puts her hands on her hips.

MOM What's the meaning of this?

ANNIE drops her brother and crosses her arms.

ANNIE Just doing a little parenting. It doesn't look like anyone else is going to it.

MOM (*Fussing over BROTHER and smoothing his hair*) Leave your brother alone. He's very sensitive and needs to learn how to control his talent.

ANNIE He needs to control his temper is what he needs to control. He should be in a school. He tested positive. They're going to come and take him away eventually.

MOM They'll do no such thing. (*She gives BROTHER a kiss on the forehead.*)

ANNIE You know, when he hits puberty it's going to be a real hell around here. I hope you're ready for that.

MOM That's won't be any problem.... (*To BROTHER*) Will it, pumpkin?

ANNIE: (*Throwing her arms up in disgust*) Whatever! (*She turns and walks out of the room.*)

MOM Annie! Annie, come back here.

ANNIE (*From the other room*) NO.

MOM scrunches up her face and starts to break a sweat. She's trying to use her 'talent' to manipulate her daughter back into the room.

ANNIE (*Walking back in the room*) Cut it out.

MOM (*Smiling*) It worked. Here you are.

ANNIE (*Rolling her eyes*) Oooo... I'm under your sway. (*Raising her arms, zombie-style*) Your wish is my command, master... What is your bidding?

MOM I don't think you're funny.

ANNIE You have no sense of humor.

DAD Try to show your mother a little respect.

ANNIE Stay out of this.

MOM Don't talk to your father that way.

ANNIE Can I just live my own life? Okay? Anyone?

MOM I'm very angry with you, young lady, and you know why.

ANNIE You read someone's mind to figure that out?

MOM Your teachers at school are very concerned about you.

ANNIE (*Imitating*) Oh, poor Annie. She has no talent. How will she ever get by in the big scary world?

MOM I'm serious. You have some severe behavior problems. You're never going to survive in a talented world.

ANNIE Forgive me if I remain un-impressed.

MOM That little stunt you pulled earlier today....

DAD What little stunt?

MOM (*Ignoring him*) That little stunt you pulled today isn't going to win you any friends.

ANNIE What are you talking about? They started it by picking on him. The non-talented kids look up to me! I'm their hero.

MOM (*Glossing over the fact*) It's not going to win you any friends that matter.

ANNIE Norms matter!

MOM They won't. Give it time.

ANNIE What is that supposed to mean?

MOM starts to walk to the door.

MOM We'll discuss this later. I have somewhere to be.

ANNIE What do you mean, 'give it time'? What the hell is that?

MOM Well what do you think it means?

ANNIE Look, I might have lousy grades, but I know my history. That sounds like a threat.

MOM It's not a threat. It's evolution in action.

ANNIE So what about me? Huh? Am I just the next stage in evolution? Huh? How can you explain that?

MOM I don't try to explain you. You're just one of those unfortunate experiments of nature gone wrong.

ANNIE What?

DAD You're mother's right, you know.

ANNIE (*Turning in on him*) And that little monster in there isn't?

BROTHER (*From the other room*) I'm not a monster!

DAD Annie, honey. It's not talent. You were already tested, remember? You tested negative.

ANNIE I have my own talents!

MOM It's not talent. It's just poor behavior.

MOM picks up her coat and walks out the door. A five count before ANNIE goes to the door and puts on her coat.

DAD Where are you going?

ANNIE Oh, you can't tell anymore?

DAD Where are you going? Annie?

ANNIE (*Holding up the envelopes from her pocket*) I'm going to go pay the bills.

0.0.10 INTERIOR CASINO ENTRANCE NIGHT

ANNIE walks in wearing her street clothes. WEI-LING smiles at her and hands her the duffle bag. ANNIE walks into the bathroom and we CUT TO her walking out of the bathroom, completely transformed. She hands the duffle bag to WEI-LING. They joke in subtitles.

WEI-LING Fuku ilin. <*Screw them.*>

ANNIE Mi faras cxiam. <*I always do.*>

0.0.11 INTERIOR CASINO NIGHT

ANNIE is working with a different CLIENT. He seems to be winning okay, but he's not as good as the MARK from the night before. They run a few hands at the card table and the CLIENT looks at his watch.

CLIENT Well, I need to go home. It's my wife's birthday tonight.

ANNIE (*Distracted*) Wish her well for me. Good luck.

The CLIENT hands ANNIE a cut of the winnings.

CLIENT That really means a lot to me, coming from you. Things haven't been so good since she lost her job. They only want talented sales-clerks at the store now...and, well. It's good to know there's someone like you looking out for us poor norms.

ANNIE (*Laughing half-heartedly*). Yeah, sure. Okay.

ANNIE starts to meander through the casino. She's fingering the chips the CLIENT gave her and sighs. She's looking around for something and is a little depressed that she isn't finding it. The MARK drops a hand on her shoulder and she jumps. She turns around with a look to kill but softens when she sees who it is.

MARK Hey there, Lady Luck. You want to show these dealers who's got the real talent?

ANNIE smiles wide. It's obvious she likes to watch this guy play. The two of them head to a card table and let the dealer go through his usual routine. The MARK waits to pick up his cards and ANNIE does her hard stare at the Dealer's head.

DEALER Ante-up, ladies and gentlemen. Ante-up.

MONTAGE of the MARK winning multiple hands. Afterwards, he and ANNIE walk out onto the patio so he can have a cigarette.

0.0.12 EXTERIOR CASINO PATIO NIGHT

The MARK starts to offer ANNIE a cigarette but she waves it away. He puts the pack up.

MARK I'm glad you made it tonight. I needed to talk to you about something. How would you like a forty percent contract?

ANNIE I don't play contracts. I don't like games that go on for hours. And anyway, contracts ask me to play and I can't play poker to save my life. I'm no good at bluffing (*pause, then reflective and sad*) never learned how to lie right. (*She shakes it off*) Did a contract once for a skinny guy who played weekend poker with his friends. They spotted me right away and told him no girls allowed in the game.

MARK No, this isn't like that. It's a big game and you don't have to play. I'll pay you a flat fee to serve drinks then add a percentage of the winnings. Forty percent's a good deal, considering....

ANNIE Considering what?

MARK Considering the stakes.

ANNIE Yeah, that's what the last guy had said to me. Sure, I had a high percentage but the winnings were too small and I couldn't get out of the game quickly enough.

MARK My chauffeur will drive you, so you don't need to worry about curfew.

ANNIE stops dead and whips her head around to stare at the Mark.

MARK It will help you get more money saved up so you can get your own place.

ANNIE blanches. She's hot and shaky and there's sweat forming on her upper lip.

MARK No, I'm not talented like that. I rely on something a little more old fashioned—observation. The other night, you said you didn't ride with peds, and I would only be a pedophile if you were a child. You're too young—legally—to be living in your own place or own a vehicle. You're not on any drugs—you refused a drink and a cigarette. What else would you be working so hard towards? I'm guessing you're coming up on your birthday soon. You're saving up.

The MARK smiles again and ANNIE swings at him. It's a punch from Cleveland and the MARK catches it effortlessly in his hand. He holds her fist while she struggles to pull away.

MARK I used to box. You pulled back too far for that punch and you threw your arm too slowly.

ANNIE Bastard! You're one of them. The casino hired you! Bastard! You can't prove anything!

MARK Hey now, it's not like that at all. I don't work for these creeps. (*The MARK drops her fist.*) How'd you get your talent anyway?

ANNIE (*Pouting and rubbing her wrist*) It's not talent.

MARK It's a talent. A talent I'm willing to pay highly for. How'd you get it?

ANNIE I got tired of my mom getting in my head. I got tired of my dad always knowing what I was going to do. I got tired of being thrown around the room by my baby brother. Need I go on?

MARK So you can counter-act all three forms, huh?

ANNIE I guess.

MARK Why a casino? Why work here? Why not somewhere else?

ANNIE Opportunity. There's a lot of people here trying to forget. They don't notice little things.

MARK Like your fake ID?

ANNIE (*Antsy*) Look, mister. You're not playing. As long as you don't play, that's less in the end for me. Let's go back to the tables.

He digs in his pocket and pulls out a chip.

MARK Here, if it'll ease your mind any.

ANNIE I don't take handouts. I get paid for services rendered.

He grabs her hand and forces it open with a wrist-twist.

MARK Take the goddamn chip! That's your retainer fee. Do you still have my card?

ANNIE rubs her wrist and nods meekly.

MARK Fine. You call me tomorrow at five. My chauffeur will pick you and give you your instructions. And you can leave your silly casino costume here. We don't deal with that kind.

The MARK stubs his cigarette and walks away, never looking back at her. CLOSE UP on Annie's clenched fist, holding the poker chip.

0.0.13 INTERIOR ANNIE'S HOME NIGHT

ANNIE walks into the kitchen and hangs up her coat on the hook. While she's there, she hangs the other coats up as well. Her MOM is sitting at the kitchen table, rapping her fingers.

MOM Where have you been?

ANNIE You tell me. You're the talented one.

MOM I was serious when I said we would discuss this. You haven't been doing your homework and your grades are starting to suffer.

ANNIE You afraid they'll declare you incompetent? Why, they'd come and take your little baby away....

MOM And this acting out in class. Annie, you need to learn some manners.

ANNIE What a lie.

MOM Excuse me?

ANNIE Manners. It's just lying. That's all it is. Not telling someone what you think.

MOM Well, you've never had a problem with that.

ANNIE Maybe they were reading my mind. Maybe I didn't say anything and it was just something I was thinking?

MOM I seriously doubt that.

ANNIE Fine. Whatever.

MOM You're never going to be successful if you go on like this.

ANNIE Like what?

MOM Annie, with no talent and poor grades, you'll never be able to make a living.

ANNIE I'll get by.

MOM Get by? Annie, you can't live here all your life. You're going to have to be out on your own eventually.

ANNIE (*Under her breath*) I've always been on my own.

MOM (*Ignoring it*) Your father and I can't support you your entire life.

ANNIE Mom, hey, calm down. I'm moving out in three weeks, so don't give me any more hassle.

MOM Move out? (*She's honestly surprised*) To where? You can't afford the double deposit they'll want from you.

ANNIE Yeah, well, that's where you're wrong. I've got a job and it pays me well enough to get me away from you. I've been saving up for the past year and you can't touch it, I made sure.

MOM (*Crying*) Don't you know your father and I could go to jail for that? How could you break the law like that and work? How could you hide something like that from us?
(*Changing tactics*) You're such a clever girl. I always knew you were the rational one. I don't know how I'll go on without you. My poor baby's leaving home. My darling little girl!

ANNIE Jeeze, Mom. It's not like the house is going to be empty. Anyway, what you want a no-talent troublemaker like me around for?

MOM But, it's just been so wonderful to have you around; you're so much help around the house. You're the only one who has a head for numbers. You keep receipts and you always keep the access from being cut off. You're such a godsend. Why, I remember when you put out that fire that your little brother started in his crib. Your father and I were just so helpless when that happened, but my little girl had a cool head and put out that fire. You were such a little hero back then and you still are...

ANNIE Mom...

MOM Why, I was just reading the other day about how most talents will even hire people to take care of them. If you leave, that's what we'll have to do. I just know we can't take care of ourselves.

ANNIE (*Realizing what's been going on*) That's why you had me! You decided to have a no-talent to take care of you and Dad and that...that thing. You had to have me first because you knew you'd never be able to take care of a talented baby on your own!

0.0.14 INTERIOR NURSERY DAY

Flashback to MOM lying on the floor of a nursery. The BABY is standing in his crib, crying. MOM is holding herself and writhing in agony. She's started to spit up blood. The BABY continues to cry and with each cry, Mom's pain increases. YOUNG ANNIE, maybe 8 or so, comes running into the room to her mother's side. YOUNG ANNIE stares long and hard at the Baby as MOM struggles to get up. It's obvious that Young Annie's presence has stopped the pain.

0.0.15 INTERIOR ANNIE'S HOME NIGHT

CROSS-FADE to Annie's forehead as we pull out of her memory. MOM winces at that.

ANNIE How's that? Huh?

MOM I'm your mother! I love you. You know that. You know I love you, don't you honey? I would never do something to hurt my baby. You're the most important thing I have in the world. You're my little extension of me. You're my chance at immortality!

A look of disgust from ANNIE. She shuts her eyes and breathes out slowly. MOM winces again at the action. It's obvious that Annie had done something to quiet her mother.

ANNIE I'm going to bed, Mom. Gotta go to school tomorrow and work on being a successful member of society. Might be late coming back. Don't screw with my dreams while I'm sleeping; I wouldn't put it past you.

ANNIE starts to walk away, but turns around for one final blow.

ANNIE Let me know if you have an original thought any time soon. That must be why Dad likes you so much. You're so predictable.

0.0.16 EXTERIOR SCHOOL LATE AFTERNOON

ANNIE is hanging up a public phone and putting the Mark's wrinkled card back into her pocket. She glances at her watch and looks around. A COP drives by and gives her a hard stare. ANNIE stares back. He stops his vehicle and addresses her.

COP Kie estas gepatroj via? <Where are your parents?>

ANNIE Ili iras per ilin vojon. <They're on their way.>

COP Vi havas via ID? <You have your ID?>

ANNIE Yeah. Benzonu ekzameni gxin? Cxu ekstaras sur la stratangulo kaj gxiatendas por mia rajdo estas mallauxlegxa? <You need to run it? Is it illegal for me to wait on the corner for my ride?>

The COP parks his car and gets out. ANNIE has realized that it's for real and pulls out her ID's. She sees that she's pulled out the wrong one—the one of her in the blonde wig, and quickly recovers to get the proper one.

COP Kio estis tio? Cxu vi ne laboras? <What was that? You're not working, are you?>

ANNIE Vi komprenas min ne povas labori. (*Waves at the school behind her*) Cxu studi estas mi laboron? Iras al studejon? Iel, mi labori estas mallauxlegxa. <You know I can't work.> <School is my work. Right? Going to school? Anyway, it's illegal for me to work.>

COP Ne dictiu kio estas legxon. <Don't tell me what the law is.>

ANNIE hands the COP her proper ID.

COP Cxi tio estas vi? <This is you?>

ANNIE Yeah.

COP Vi estos dek ok en tri semajojn. Bonsxanca vi. <Gonna turn eighteen in three weeks. Lucky you.>

ANNIE Yeah, bonsxanca mi. <Lucky me.>

COP Kio vi dirinta per telefone? <Who were you talking to on the phone?>

ANNIE Mia gepatronojn. Mia patrinon. Penas kalkuli kial sxin estas malfruan. <My parents. My mom. Trying to figure out why she's late.>

COP Cxu via gepatroj ne estas neglektema? Cxu ili penas direkti vin larbori? <Your parents aren't being negligent, are they? They aren't trying to make you work?>

ANNIE Mia gepatronj estas bonaj. <My parents are fine.>

COP Iam, personoj sendos ilia gefilon al intervjuon por ke ilin havos labron gxisatendi por ilin. (*Looks at the ID*) Ne talento, malbonsxanco. <*Sometimes people will send their kids out for interviews so they'll have a job waiting for them.*> <*No talent, tough luck.*>

ANNIE Ne. Ne talento. <*Nope. No talent.*>

COP Gxi estos malfacila por vin akiri laboron per ne talenton. <*It's going to be hard for you to get a job without talent.*>

ANNIE Yeah. Mi komprendas. Mia patrino ploris kiam testo reiris negativa. <*I know. My mom cried when my test came back negative.*>

COP Estas tia gepatronj talentaj? <*Your parents talented?*>

ANNIE Yeah.

COP Malfacila por vin. Gefratonj? <*Tough for you. Brothers or sisters?*>

ANNIE Virfraton. <*Brother.*>

COP Talenta? <*Talented?*>

ANNIE Yeah.

COP (*Laughing to himself*) Mi supozas vi ne malpacigxi ofte, eh? (*He laughs again.*) <*Guess you don't quarrel much then, huh?*>

ANNIE (*Coldly*) No.

COP (*Offened that she has reverted to English*) Ne kio? <*No, what?*>

ANNIE (*pushing it*) No, sir.

COP Restu tie. Mi reironta. <*You stay right there. I'll be right back.*>

The COP takes the ID and starts to walk back to his car--just as the limo drives up. The CHAUFFER parks the limo and steps out.

CHAUFFER Cxu estas problemo tie, oficiro? <*Is there a problem here, officer?*>

COP Cxu sxi estas via? <*She yours?*>

CHAUFFER Mi veninta porti sxin heje. (*Odd close-up on the CHAUFFER*) Cxu tio estos ne problemon? <*I've come to take her home.*> <*That won't be a problem, will it?*>

COP (*Trance-like*) Tio estos la ne problemon. <*That won't be a problem.*>

The CHAUFFER takes Annie's ID from the COP and hands it back to her.

CHAUFFER *(To ANNIE)* Enauxtigxu la auxton. *(To the COP)* Mi portonta sxin heje nu. *<Get in the car.> <I'll take her home now.>*

COP *(Still in his trance)* Portu sxin heje nu. *<You take her home now.>*

The CHAUFFER walks back into the limo and starts to drive.

0.0.17 INTERIOR CAR EVENING

ANNIE sits in the back of the car. The CHAUFFER never looks back at her.

CHAUFFER La sako estas tie por vi. Gxi havas uniformon internan. Vestu gxi. *<There's a bag back there. It has a uniform in it. Put it on.>*

ANNIE opens the bag and looks at the drab uniform. She looks around and out the windows.

CHAUFFER Ili ne povas vidi vin. Vi estos bona. *<They can't see you. You'll be fine.>*

ANNIE looks up at the CHAUFFER. He hasn't looked back yet. She tentatively starts to pull her jacket off. She stops to ask a question.

CHAUFFER Loku viaj objektojn en la sakon. Gxi gxiatendanta por vi tiam vi finos. *<Just put your things in the bag. It'll be waiting for you when you're done.>*

ANNIE snaps her head back. Close-up on her eyes as she stares intently at the back of the Chauffeur's head. The CHAUFFER looks back at her in the mirror.

CHAUFFER Kiel vi faras tio? *<How'd you do that?>*

ANNIE *(Grinning)* Vidu ne. OK? *<No peeking. Okay?>*

CHAUFFER *(Startled)* Jes, frauxlino. *<Yes, miss.>*

ANNIE smiles wide and pulls off her coat.

0.0.18 EXTERIOR MANSION LATE EVENING

The limo pulls up to a back entrance of a huge mansion. An older servant in a uniform similar to Annie's is waiting outside. The CHAUFFER parks the limo and exits the vehicle. He stares directly at the OLDER SERVANT and the two of them seem to be having a conversation until ANNIE steps out of the vehicle. She stares intently at the two servants and they stop their conversation.

OLDER SERVANT *(To the CHAUFFER)* Je vois ce que vous voulez dire. *(Then to ANNIE)* Postiru mi. *<I see what you mean.><Follow me.>*

0.0.19 INTERIOR MANSION KITCHEN NIGHT

ANNIE and the OLDER SERVANT walk through a huge kitchen. ANNIE stares at the back of the OLDER Servant's head intently.

OLDER SERVANT L'arretent! Haltu pavi! <Stop it!>< Stop showing off!>

ANNIE (*Mock innocence*) Mi estas praktikanta. Mi devas aseki mi estas supre sur mian ludon. <I'm just practicing. I have to make sure I'm at the top of my game.>

OLDER SERVANT (*Ignoring the comment*) Vi estas servilo sola en la spacon. <You'll be the only server in the room at the time.> Ion vi bezonas, vi povas peti per la konsulton kaj ni sendos per la kelneron mutan. <Anything you need, you can request through the console and we'll send it up via dumb-waiter.>

ANNIE Mi komprenas kiel konsulton funkcias. Mi estis labori en lekumejon cxe mian lernejon. <I know how a console works. I used to work one at the café near my school.>

OLDER SERVANT (*Stopping*) Kiom jorojn vi havas? <How old are you?>

ANNIE (*Indignantly*) Cxu estas problemo tie? Cxu mi estas laboranta nu? <Is there a problem? Am I not working here right now?>

OLDER SERVANT Ne permesu cxiu en la spacon kompreni kiom jorojn vi havas. Cxu vi komprenas? <Don't let anyone in that room know how old you are, do you understand?> Ne ni volas ajna problemojn. < We don't want any trouble.>

ANNIE Ne faru elsendi gxin al cxiu kio estus en la spacon. <Just as long as you don't go 'broadcasting' it to anyone who might be in that room...>

0.0.20 INTERIOR PLAYING ROOM NIGHT

The playing room is huge. One table, and four chairs with ash-trays. Big windows with plush velvet curtains, lots of dead things on the walls. ANNIE and the OLDER SERVANT walk in.

OLDER SERVANT Tie vi estas. Tie estas konsulto. Tie estas kelnero muta. <Here you go. Here's the console. Here's the dumb-waiter.> Kaj ili iras per ilin vojon. Vi estas sola. < And they're on their way. You're on your own.>

The OLDER SERVANT walks out of the room and a five-count later.

ANNIE Thanks. Bye.

A three count later, the MARK opens the doors and is followed in by an OLD GUY, a LITTLE GUY, and a BIG GUY.

MARK Ah, Annie. A scotch and soda. (*gesturing to the LITTLE GUY*) Und Sie? Was werden Sie haben? <And you? What will you have?>

LITTLE GUY (*Waving his hand*) Nien Nien. Nicht ich. Es liebt mien Spiel. <No, no. Not me. It affects my game.>

OLD GUY Ein rostiger Nagel. <A rusty nail.>

BIG GUY Gerade ein Whisky auf den Eis fur mich. <*Just a whisky on the rocks for me.*>

MARK A rusty nail and a whisky on the rocks.

ANNIE nods and looks up "rusty nail" on the console.

OLD GUY Oh, ein englischer Sprecher? Wo fanden Sie sie? <*Oh, an English speaker? Where did you find her?*>

ANNIE looks up to take a peek at the Little Guy. The LITTLE GUY looks up and they make eye contact for a split second.

LITTLE GUY Wo Maurice ist? <*Where's Maurice?*>

MARK Gab ich Maurice die Nacht davon. Seine Tante stard diese Woche. <*I gave Maurice the night off. His aunt died this week.*>

LITTLE GUY So, wer ist das? <*So, who's this?*>

MARK Ist Das Annie. Sie wird fein sein. <*This is Annie. She'll be fine.*>

LITTLE GUY Ist Es schlechtes Gluck! <*It's bad luck!*>

MARK Oh, jetzt. Ich dachte, dass wir vorbei daran ganze gekommen waren. <*Oh, now. I thought we had all gotten past that.*>

OLD GUY Ist Poker ein Spiel der Mannes. Ich rauche preiswertr Zigarren nicht, und ich spiele Karten mit Frauen nicht. <*Poker is a man's game. I don't smoke cheap cigars and I don't play cards with women.*>

BIG GUY Ausgeschnitten es. Sie spielt nicht. Sie dient gerade den Getranken. Sie haben keine Probleme mit einer Frau die Ihnen Getranke, stimmt dass? <Cut it out. She's not playing. She's just serving the drinks. You don't have any problems with a woman serving you drinks, do you?>

*The men sit down and ANNIE places their drinks out in front of each of them. The BIG GUY deals the first hand. Pan to the LITTLE GUY and we zoom in on his eyes. We're in little guy-vision now and we can hear the **fugue** of voices as the LITTLE GUY is reading everyone's mind.*

BIG GUY Ante-up, Herren. Ante-up.

A chorus of "Einsatz bis" from the men. CUT-TO: ANNIE staring intently at the Little Guy's head. She knows he's the talent and she's out to get him. The men chat during the game.

OLD GUY Ist Es nett, dass Sie einen englischen Sprecher fanden. Sie sollen sie statt dieses französischen Esperanto-Sprechers behalten. *<It's nice you found an English speaker. You should keep her instead of that French Esperanto speaker.>*

MARK Ist Esperanto okay. Jeder kann jeden sonst verstehen. *<Esperanto is O.K. Everyone can understand everyone else.>*

OLD GUY Wie konnten wir mit Engländer? *<Like we could with English?>*

MARK War Engländer gut. Es borgte von jedem. Es war eine lebende Sprache... *<English was good. It borrowed from everyone. It was a living language...>*

OLD GUY Bis... *<Until...>*

MARK Machen Wir eins wenig Fehler, und Sie werden es, stimmt dass? *<We make one little mistake and you'll never drop it, will you?>*

BIG GUY Sprechen Sie Deutsche, stimmt dass? *<You're speaking German, aren't you?>*

MARK I can speak English if I want to. I still have that right.

LITTLE GUY Was sagte er? *<What did he say?>*

BIG GUY Nichts Wichtiges. Tailen Sie gerade Karten aus. *<Nothing important. Just deal the cards.>*

MONTAGE of the LITTLE GUY losing hand after hand while the MARK and the BIG GUY rake in the chips. Finally, the LITTLE GUY throws down his cards and stands up.

LITTLE GUY Kann ich mich nicht gerade mit allen Ihren vollgestopften Köpfen konzentrieren, die auf mich starren. *<I just can't concentrate with all your stuffed heads staring at me.>*

BIG GUY Was ist das darüber? *<What's this about?>*

MARK Haben Sie Muhe mit ihnen nie gehabt. *<You've never had trouble with them before.>*

LITTLE GUY (*Gesturing madly around the room*) Toteten Sie alle wirklich jene? Sie sind ein Fleischfresser, kannten Sie das? *<Did you really kill all those? You're a carnivore; did you know that?>* Sie warten gerade auf etwas, um genug schwach für Sie zu werden, sich zu stürzen. *<You're just waiting for something to get weak enough for you to pounce.>* Ich wette es ist, wie Sie schnell dazu kletterten.... *<You've always been like that. I bet that's how you climbed so quickly to...>*

MARK Jetzt, jetzt... *<Now, now...>*

BIG GUY Ist Er wo er ist, weil er gut ist. Sehen Sie gerade den Weg die Mann spielen Karten. *<He's where he is because he's good. Just look at the way the man plays cards.>* Sie sind danei, mir eienen Mann zu erzählen der kann Karten spielen gut, die sollen nicht gut sein? *<You're going to tell me a man who can play cards that well shouldn't be good?>*

OLD GUY Werden Sie an den kommenden Verhandlugen nutzlich sein. *<You'll be useful at the upcoming negotiations.>*

The BIG GUY turns his head in disgust.

BIG GUY Jene gottverdammte Leute! Ich kenne nicht wie wir dabei sind sich damit zu bafassen. *<Those goddamned people! I don't know how we're going to deal with that.>*

MARK Fassen Wir daran mag wir haben immer. Es nimmt gerade ein wenig Tauschung *<We handle it like we always have. It just takes a bit of bluff.>*

LITTLE GUY Ist Es das ist mit Ihnen! Sie sind nichts als rauh! *<That's all it is with you! You're nothing but bluff!>*

OLD GUY In den alten Tagen der alles war, brauchten Sie. Gerade waren eine gute, starke, überzeugte Stimme und ein unvernderliches Auge genug, um den anderen Kerl aus dem Wasser zu erschrecken. *<In the old days, that was all you needed. Just a good, strong, confident voice and a steady eye was enough to scare the other guy out of the water.>*

LITTLE GUY Tja, ist es nicht wie dieser jetzt, stimmt dass? Es gibt viel Begabung aus dort, und Sie können nicht es mit einen unveranderlichen Auge gerade bekämpfen. *<Well, it's not like that now, is it? There's a lot of talent out there and you can't just fight it with a steady eye.>*

OLD GUY Haben Wir unsere Begabugen. *<We have our talents.>*

BIG GUY Ist Es nicht genug gewesen. *<It hasn't been enough.>*

MARK *(A knowing glance at ANNIE)* Vielleicht haben wir nach der falschen Art der Begabung gesucht. *<Maybe we've been looking for the wrong kind of talent.>*

OLD GUY Tja, es ist zu spat genug. Ich denke nicht, dass ich eine andere Hand uberleben kann. *<Well, it's late enough. I don't think I can survive another hand.>*

LITTLE GUY Ja. Ich brauche aus hier. Ich brache etwas frische Luft oder etwas. *<Yeah. I need out of here. I need some fresh air or something.>*

Those two get up and start to walk out.

LITTLE GUY Wenn Sie mich, Herr... *<If you need me, sir...>*

The BIG GUY waves him off and the LITTLE GUY shuts the door behind him. BIG GUY puts his feet on the playing table and puffs on his cigar.

BIG GUY Ist das sie. Das ist derjenige über den Sie sprachen? *<So, this is her. This is the one you were talking about?>*

MARK Ja, ist sie nicht wunderbar? Ich denke nicht dass irgend jemand über ihre Art noch kennt. Ihre Mutter ein empathik, ihr Vater ein prekognizant, und ihr Bruder ist ein kinetsch. *<Yes, isn't she wonderful? I don't think anyone knows about her kind yet. Her mother's an empath, her father's a precog, and her brother is a kinetic.>* Es ist ein echter Fund, Sie werden zugeben. Ich stelle mir vor, dass sie nicht der einzige ist. Sie werden nicht enttäuscht. Ich denke dass wenig Beweisführung von die Nacht genug war um das zu beweisen. *<It's quite a find, you'll admit. I imagine she's not the only one. You won't be disappointed. I think tonight's little demonstration was enough to prove that.>*

BIG GUY *(Eyeing ANNIE up and down)* Ich denke dass sie gerade lausige Poker-Spieler sind. *<I think they're just lousy poker players.>*

BIG GUY makes a weird motion with his hand and the door to the playing room opens. LITTLE GUY enters the room. LITTLE GUY looks at BIG GUY then at ANNIE then back at the BIG GUY with a shrug.

LITTLE GUY Brauchen Sie mich, Herr? *<You needed me, sir?>*

BIG GUY points at ANNIE, frustrated that the LITTLE GUY didn't already know what he wanted. The LITTLE GUY stares long and hard at ANNIE, breathing heavy. Objects next to ANNIE are starting to rattle but ANNIE just stands there, staring back at the guy. The LITTLE GUY has broken a sweat and is starting to wheeze. BIG GUY orders LITTLE GUY out of the room with a wave.

ANNIE My little brother's better than him and he's ten. Next time, get a bodyguard who can throw a punch. *(She looks straight at the MARK)* Or is that your job?

MARK *(Crossing his arms)* I used to box. I don't now.

ANNIE How about you just pay me so I can go home?

The MARK starts to laugh, but stops once he notices BIG GUY isn't.

BIG GUY *(Chewing on his cigar and brooding)* Hat Sie absolut recht. Ich habe zu viel von Begabungen abgehängt. *<She's absolutely right. I've been depending too much on talents.>*

MARK *(Sits back down)* Dann werden Sie ihren Bezeichnungen zustimmen? Sie konnten sie mehr als benutzen ich konnte auf der kommenden Konferenz. *<Then you'll agree to her terms? You could use her more than I could at the upcoming conference.>*

BIG GUY *(Staring long and hard at Annie)* What are your terms?

ANNIE (*She has to think for a second, then makes something up off the top of her head*) My terms....are....residence in my name and a ten-year contract.

BIG GUY (*Chewing his cigar*) Girl, you're shrewd. I like that. You don't have to serve me drinks at the conference; you can be my secretary. The others will accept that. How old are you?

ANNIE I'll be eighteen in three weeks.

BIG GUY (*whistles through his teeth*) Would you be willing to sign a contract on your birthday?

ANNIE I could sign a contract now and you can post-date it to my birthday. That's still legally binding.

MARK She's right.

BIG GUY But you can't do a move-in until you're of age; I need you before then.

ANNIE You can pay me cash for this job and I'll do the move-in later. Does that work?

BIG GUY (*nodding*) That works. We can do that. How much is your fee?

ANNIE Ten percent for first time players. Twenty-five for repeat customers, forty percent on contracts.

BIG GUY (*confused*) Percent of what?

ANNIE Of winnings, of course. What did you think I was talking about?

0.0.21 INTERIOR CONFERENCE ROOM DAY

CUT-TO: a giant conference room. The ceiling is high and the table shines like bright-work. The LITTLE GUY sits next to Big Guy's right while BIG GUY gestures to his left and ANNIE sits next to him. She's dressed in a smart looking suit that curves in all the right places and she now has bright red hair. It's vividly red—distracting. At one end of the table is a CEO who looks like he's always been in charge. Standing next to him is a highly-strung looking TALENT. The TALENT squints his eyes and starts to scan the room. We go to talent-vision and the fugue of voices starts up. He stops to look at ANNIE for a moment. She's doodling in a note pad and tapping her chin with her pen.

ANNIE (*voice-over*) I should get my nails done. Am I getting fat? This dress looks wrong on me...

The TALENT nods to his superior and the CEO clears his throat. As the CEO starts speaking in Japanese, the TALENT immediately starts translating into Esperanto. As he is doing so, the Big Guy's Talent, LITTLE GUY starts translating into German.

CEO *<Okay, let's get these negotiations out of the way.>*

Tight CLOSE-UP on Annie's face. She smiles wide and big.

ANNIE *(Voice-over)* Ante-up, gentlemen. Ante-up.