

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (FALL) - MORNING

We are treated to a vista of rolling hills and wooded glens. It's a perfect picture postcard day. The trees are burnished gold and fiery red. The morning mist hasn't burned off the ground. Birds sing in the surrounding hills.

Everything appears peaceful and idyllic.

EXT. JUDGE'S FARM - CONTINUOUS

The century farmhouse sits next to a dusty looking rural road. There are no neighboring farms in sight.

There is a vegetable garden, a greenhouse, a henhouse, and a small orchard on the property.

Chickens strut about the yard. Rabbits nibble diced vegetables in their cages.

VEGETABLE GARDEN

DEBORAH, 14 (YOUNG DEBORAH), is picking carrots. She has a toned and muscular body like a gymnast. She's wearing loose overalls over a flannel shirt. Her hair is in a long braid.

A rake and shovel lie on the ground next to her. Her dog, Zeke, is gnawing a beef bone.

Deborah looks over and sees Zeke, digging a hole in the garden to bury the bone.

YOUNG DEBORAH

No, Zeke. No bones in the garden.

She wrestles the bone away from Zeke and tosses it across the yard. Zeke bounds after it, tail wagging.

A shadow falls across Deborah. She turns and greets her father, SAUL, with a nervous smile.

Saul is in his late forties. He's an imposing figure, dressed in dark fatigues, armed with a knife and pistol. The bill of his cap casts a long shadow across his face. To us he is a menacing, faceless figure.

YOUNG DEBORAH

(apprehensively)

Father.

(MORE)

YOUNG DEBORAH (cont'd)
 Zeke was trying to bury his bones
 in the garden again ...but I
 stopped him. See?

SAUL
 Fight me.

Deborah's face drains of color. She rises slowly to her feet.

YOUNG DEBORAH
 Oh, God, not again. Please ...

Saul whirls on his heel and kicks Deborah violently in the ribs. The kick knocks her sideways, lifting her off the ground. She lands hard on her back several feet away.

Deborah rolls over in pain, clutching a broken rib. She gasps for air, eyes wide with shock.

Saul stands over her.

SAUL
 I said fight me, Deborah.

Behind them, Deborah's mother, RACHEL, 43, and younger sister, SARAH, 11, run out onto the porch of the farmhouse. Rachel looks on stolidly with grim understanding. Sarah has seen this many times before, and is no less horrified.

Deborah sees Rachel and reaches out to her.

YOUNG DEBORAH
 Mother! Mo--

Saul kicks her in the face. She falls over backwards. Blood streams from her nose and lip. Zeke barks in alarm.

SAUL
 Your mother can't help you,
 Deborah. This is your battle.
 Yours! You must be strong, Deborah.
 God needs you to be strong for His
 War against the Darkness. You are
 God's champion. His Judge. You must
 be ready to fight the demon Mastema
 on the Day of Wrath. On your feet,
 girl. The Dark is rising and we
 must meet it. Fight me!

YOUNG DEBORAH
 No! I won't. I won't.

SAUL
 (striking her)
 Fight me!

YOUNG DEBORAH
 No ...

SAUL
 (striking her again)
 Fight me!

YOUNG DEBORAH
 (through streaming tears)
 No ...

Saul turns in disgust and frustration. He draws his pistol and shoots Zeke in the skull.

Deborah cries out in horror. She scrambles over to the dog's lifeless body.

DEBORAH
 Zeke! Zeke!

ON SARAH AND RACHEL

Sarah screams and hides her face in Rachel's aprons. Rachel's expression is one of stony resignation.

ON SAUL AND DEBORAH

Saul grabs Deborah by the hair and pulls her away from Zeke. He throws her roughly to the ground next to the rake.

SAUL
 If you won't wear the mantle God gave you, I will pass it on to your sister, and Sarah will take your place.

Deborah looks up in alarm.

ON SARAH

She is horrified by her father's words.

SARAH
 No! I won't do it! I won't! Keep away from me. Keep away!

She runs in terror into the house. Rachel runs after her.

ON DEBORAH

She snatches up the rake and springs to her feet. Her eyes are dark and fierce.

YOUNG DEBORAH

No!

She strikes Saul in the temple with the rake.

YOUNG DEBORAH

You stay away from her, do you hear me? You touch her and I'll kill you. I swear it.

Saul shakes off the blow.

SAUL

Yes, yes.

He tosses his gun aside and draws his knife.

He lunges at Deborah with the knife. She deflects the blade with the handle of the rake. It grazes her left shoulder, opening an ugly wound.

Deborah screams and swings the rake violently. The prongs bury themselves deep in Saul's thigh. He drops to his knees with a grunt. His knife falls harmlessly in the dirt.

Deborah throws down the rake and picks up the shovel.

YOUNG DEBORAH

I hate you! I hate you!

She hits him in the side of the face with the shovel. Saul takes the full force of the blow and falls face first in the dirt. He doesn't move.

YOUNG DEBORAH

I don't believe in Mastema or your stupid war. The only demon here is you. You're the one who's evil. You're the one I'm going to kill.

She throws the shovel at him and runs across the yard and into the house.

Saul stirs. He's still conscious, but barely so. The side of his face is red with the shovel's imprint. He smiles.

SAUL
Good soldier. Good soldier.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Deborah bolts frantically up the stairs to the second floor landing.

YOUNG DEBORAH
Sarah! Sarah!

Rachel stops her at the top of the stairs.

RACHEL
It's all right, Deborah. She's in her room. Leave her be.
(she looks at Deborah)
Lord, what he did to you. Come to the kitchen. I'll suture your wound and bind your side. Quickly now ...

She tries to steer Deborah back down the stairs. Deborah fights her off painfully.

YOUNG DEBORAH
Stop it, mother. Listen to me.

RACHEL
Deborah ...

YOUNG DEBORAH
Just listen a moment, please. We have to leave here. Right now. You, me, and Sarah.

RACHEL
Deborah!

YOUNG DEBORAH
He's going to kill us all. I know he will. Why won't you listen to me?

RACHEL
Hush, Deborah. Everything is going to be fine. You'll see. One day you'll understand. Your father is anointed by God. So are you. Before you were formed in my womb God consecrated you to be his champion against the Darkness. Why must you be so angry? Why won't you believe--

YOUNG DEBORAH
Stop it! This is insane.

RACHEL
Believe, Deborah. You've got to believe.

YOUNG DEBORAH
No! It's lies. All lies. And if you believe him then you're just as crazy as he is. Get out of my way. Get out! Sarah! Sarah!

Deborah pushes past her and runs down the hall to Sarah's room.

INT. SARAH'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Deborah enters and looks around the small room for her sister.

Sarah is huddled on the floor in the corner between the bed and the wall. She is shaking badly. Her eyes are huge and traumatized. We can only imagine the fear that she's feeling.

Deborah rounds the bed slowly, so as not to startle her.

YOUNG DEBORAH
Sarah? It's okay. I'm here. Don't worry. Don't worry. Father won't hurt you. I promise.

Sarah's eyes glance blankly at Deborah. Deborah stands clutching her rib. Her shirt is soaked with blood. Her face is bruised and swollen.

Sarah recoils.

SARAH
Stay away from me.

YOUNG DEBORAH
Sarah, it's me.

SARAH
(screaming)
I hate you all! Get out! Get out!
Get out!

Tears are flowing down Deborah's cheeks. Her legs are going limp as the effects of the fight suddenly overtake her. She goes faint.

YOUNG DEBORAH

No. I saved you, Sarah. I saved you.

SARAH

Get out! Get out! Get out!

Deborah collapses unconscious to the floor.

EXT. JUDGE'S FARM - MEADOW (SPRING) - DAY

It's five years later. Sarah, now 16, sits on the bank of a stream. She's a gaunt, ghostly looking girl with long blonde hair falling loosely below her shoulders.

She wears a DISTINGUISHING NECKLACE. It is necessary that we establish it clearly, as it will become important later on.

Her eyes are deep wells with dark circles. She wears a long dress. She is weaving a garland of flowers. She looks like a picture out of a Gothic novel.

The water in the stream trickles quietly. The sky is a perfect blue, dotted with cotton ball clouds.

Sarah is singing a hymn softly to herself. We HEAR the rustle of grass OS as someone approaches. Sarah looks up.

Her face shows neither surprise nor horror at the sight of the huge figure that steps up and sits next to her.

His body is black, but not solid. It's more like dark matter: the world before God said 'Let there be light.' His face is hidden behind a topaz mask, frozen somewhere between the masks of Tragedy and Comedy.

This is the demon MASTEMA, tempter and executioner of humankind. Although a fierce and feared adversary, his manner is that of a kindly and understanding uncle.

Sarah is not intimidated by his presence.

MASTEMA

Greetings, child.

SARAH

Hello.

MASTEMA

Do you know who I am?

SARAH
Yes. You're Mastema.

MASTEMA
Are you not afraid of me?

SARAH
No.

MASTEMA
I see. Perhaps you imagine you know
a devil worse than me?

Sarah's eyes narrow on the trickling stream.

SARAH
(thinking of Saul)
Yes.

MASTEMA
Ah. So much hatred in one so young.
(He looks at the garland
in her hands.)
That's a lovely garland.

Sarah looks at him in surprise.

SARAH
Do you like it? Really? I thought
that ...

MASTEMA
That I couldn't appreciate its
beauty?
(he gazes around the
meadow)
Who could appreciate creation more
than those who lost it? Even I can
dream, little one. Even I have my
own special romance with life.

Sarah looks at the garland, then at Mastema.

SARAH
Would you like this?

MASTEMA
(genuinely touched)
I would be honoured.

Sarah hangs the garland around Mastema's neck. It's an oddly lovely and tender scene, this monster adorned with flowers.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Rachel is tending the chickens. They are frantic, as if alerted to some danger. Rachel looks around confused. The goats are bleating in a panic. The pigs are running up against the fencing as if trying to escape.

Rachel looks around the yard. Nothing. She looks out across the meadow. There's a dark haze by the stream where Sarah sits. There's a strange figure beside her, as black as night.

Rachel screams in recognition.

RACHEL

Sarah! Saul! Saul! Come quickly!
Saul!

She runs out across the meadow.

EXT. JUDGE'S FARM - MEADOW -CONTINUOUS

Sarah looks up at Mastema.

SARAH

(soberly)

Have you come to kill me?

MASTEMA

Kill you? Why, no, my child. Who would put such a terrible notion in your head? I have come to take you away.

SARAH

Away? Away from here?

MASTEMA

Yes.

Sarah's eyes flicker with life for the first time.

SARAH

Away?

Sarah starts to weep softly as the thought of escape overwhelms her.

MASTEMA

Yes, my child. Away.

Mastema sits quietly beside her, until a woman's scream alerts them both.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Sarah!

Sarah looks back and sees her mother standing petrified a few yards away. Her face is white with terror.

Mastema slowly rises to his feet. For the first time we truly sense his power, his menace.

He removes the garland from around his neck. He reaches into the darkness of his body and draws a sword.

RACHEL

Oh, Lord, precious God. Sarah.
Sarah, step away from him. Lamb of
God, have mercy. Sarah!

MASTEMA

Reflect upon your life and make
your peace with God, woman.
(to Sarah)
Look away, little lamb. Look away!

Mastema leaps forward in a blur of motion. His sword flashes once in the sun as he cuts Rachel down with a single blow.

Rachel crumples to the ground dead.

Mastema looks back at Sarah. She is standing unmoved, watching. Her face is well practiced stone. There is a sense of grim satisfaction in her eyes.

SARAH

Take me away from here.

Mastema reaches out to her.

MASTEMA

Take my hand and stand beside me.

As Sarah steps up to Mastema she sees Saul running madly across the meadow toward them. He too, has a sword.

SAUL

Sarah! Sarah, no! No!

Sarah takes Mastema's hand and smiles smugly at Saul who skids to a stop beside Rachel's corpse.

SAUL

Sarah! Release her, demon. In the name of the Almighty ...

MASTEMA

I cannot relinquish that which was freely given to me.

Saul looks aghast at Sarah.

SAUL

Sarah? You gave yourself to him?

MASTEMA

(an admonishment)

No, foolish man. You gave her to me. Take care that you don't give me Deborah as well.

SAUL

No!

MASTEMA

Farewell, Saul. Look for me no more until we two meet again in the Inferno.

SARAH

(a sneer)

Goodbye, father.

Mastema and Sarah begin to fade from sight. Saul leaps at Mastema in a rage with his sword but only strikes the empty air.

He collapses on the grass in tears. He crawls over to Rachel's body and falls on it with wails of anguish.

EXT. JUDGE'S FARM - LATER

A blood red sun sets over the farmhouse.

INT/EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Deborah, now 19, pulls slowly up the long drive and parks in front of the farm house. The back of the pickup is filled with farm supplies.

She appears older and more hardened. She wears jeans and a short sleeved shirt.

Her rigorous physical training is evident in her muscular arms and powerful shoulders. Her shoulder length hair is tied back in a ponytail.

Deborah steps out of the cab slowly. There is a deathly stillness in the air. She immediately senses danger and tragedy.

She starts toward the house. Saul steps out onto the porch, blocking her way. His face is softened slightly by his tears.

SAUL

Deborah. Thank God you're safe.

He reaches for her but she recoils.

DEBORAH

Safe? Why? What's happened? Where's Sarah?

Saul's eyes flicker weakly.

SAUL

You must be strong, Deborah.

Deborah's eyes darken.

DEBORAH

Where's my sister?

SAUL

She was taken. By Mastema.

DEBORAH

What?

Deborah grabs Saul by the lapels and drives him back against the wall of the house. Saul cracks his head on the brick.

DEBORAH

What have you done, madman? What have you done?

She lets go and runs into the house. Saul slumps to the porch.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LIVING ROOM -CONTINUOUS

Deborah stops dead. Rachel's corpse is laid out on the floor, her hand clutching a bible to her bloody chest. Several candles burn around her.

Deborah goes white.

DEBORAH
Mother. Oh, mother.

She turns in shock and stares at Saul in the doorway.

SAUL
Rejoice, Deborah. Your mother died
serving the light.

DEBORAH
Murderer!

Deborah strikes her father a thunderous blow. Saul staggers
back out the door.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Saul falls backwards down the stairs and doesn't get up. His
nose looks like a red flower in bloom.

Deborah strides coldly out the door. She marches past her
father without so much as a glance. She climbs into the
pickup and drives away.

INT/EXT. PICKUP TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Deborah can hardly see the road through her tears. She's
sobbing uncontrollably. She's clutching the wheel so tightly
it looks like it might break.

The pickup disappears down the road in a cloud of dust. When
the dust settles, Deborah is gone.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Saul lies stunned on the ground.

SAUL
Rachel, weep for your children.
They are no more.

EXT. CITY SKYLINE - DAWN

The sun rises hot and heavy over a shattered industrial
skyline. The morning light appears distorted: the colors
surreal.

This is "The Inferno," a place of crushing poverty and
violence, peopled by the abandoned and dispossessed.

A FLOCK OF ANGELS flies low over the roof tops in front of the rising sun.

INT/EXT. BUS STATION - CONTINUOUS

A bus pulls into the terminal. The people depart and collect their luggage.

A weary looking Deborah steps out of the bus looking lost and out of sorts. She's dressed in jeans, a shirt, and a dusty jacket. She carries a small overnight bag.

Title: ONE YEAR LATER.

She steps off the platform and walks out onto the street.

INT. DONUT SHOP - LATER

Deborah sits with a coffee, a sandwich, and a newspaper. She's circling ads for rooms to rent. She pauses to stare thoughtfully out the window.

A group of rowdy kids catches her attention. They range in age from seven to their early twenties. A couple wear dirty and worn jackets with the insignia of "THE REBEL ANGELS" emblazoned on the back.

Unlike your typical gangstas in their designer hip hop colors, these kids are totally feral. Their clothes are worn and ratty. Their faces are drawn and hungry looking.

They look more like a pack of stray animals than an organized posse.

These are the ORPHAN GANGS that infest the Inferno.

Like the orphan gangs of Brazil, these children live by stealing and fighting. They have no set abode and are dedicated to crime from an early age as a way of getting by.

There are no adults to be found among them. As we shall see, death often comes long before adulthood for these children.

A truck pulls up to the corner and stops, distracting Deborah from the kids. On the side of the truck is a picture of another lost child: Sarah. Below her photo is the word, "MISSING".

The truck pulls through the intersection. Deborah watches it go. She stares down into the black depths of her coffee.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - FOYER - EVENING

Deborah steps into the lobby of grim hotel. It looks like an open wound with blistering paint and cracked plaster. The front desk is coated in dust and grease.

Deborah wrinkles her nose at the stench.

The wart-faced PROPRIETOR behind the desk is no better. As a matter of fact he's a far sight worse. Overweight and under-dressed in a pair of worn slacks and stained undershirt, he's utterly grotesque and foul.

His face lights up lasciviously when he sees Deborah.

PROPRIETOR
C'n I help you, miss?

His charm comes across like his body odor. Deborah can barely contain her disgust.

DEBORAH
(already regretting it)
I'd like a room for the night.

PROPRIETOR
A room. Sure. Rooms we got. Shared bathroom. Twenty bucks a night. No kitchen. Hot plate. Pay phone's behind you on the wall.

He fishes a key from a hook.

Deborah glances at the phone. A sign says "OUT OF ORDER".

DEBORAH
Your phone's broken.

PROPRIETOR
Yeah? Okay. Thirty bucks a night.

He laughs at his own joke as he pushes the registrar toward her.

PROPRIETOR
Sign the registrar, please.

Deborah signs the book as the proprietor rounds the desk and presses the elevator button.

DEBORAH
I can find my own way up, thanks.

PROPRIETOR
Wouldn't dream of it. All part of
the service.

The elevator opens. They step in.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The elevator is narrow and cramped. There's room for both, but the proprietor takes advantage of the space to rub his bulk against Deborah. She tolerates it with an icy silence.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The elevator opens. The proprietor steps out first, pressing himself against Deborah as he passes.

Deborah steps out after him, her anger mounting.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - DEBORAH'S ROOM -CONTINUOUS

The proprietor opens the door into a tiny room with a bed, desk, sink, counter and a hotplate. A sash window looks out onto a brick wall.

Deborah looks like she's going to be ill.

PROPRIETOR
Sweet deal, huh? G'wan. Have a look
around.

DEBORAH
Excuse me? "Have a look around"?
Are you serious?

PROPRIETOR
S'joke. Geeze. Lighten up, babes.

Deborah examines the mattress on the single bed.

DEBORAH
This place is a toilet.

PROPRIETOR
Look, sister. If you don' like it,
leave.

DEBORAH
I don't like it. But I'm staying.

PROPRIETOR
Look how thrilled I am.
(stepping out the door)
Frigid slut.

Deborah slams the door shut and locks it. She slumps back down on the bed and cries into her hands. She flops over onto her side and curls up into a fetal position.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - DEBORAH'S ROOM -LATER

Deborah lies asleep on the bed. We HEAR shouting coming through the wall. A man and a girl are screaming at each other.

Deborah stirs and props herself up on an elbow listening.

We HEAR the man SLAP the girl. This gets Deborah's attention. She sits up fully awake.

The girl is crying and screaming terrible things.

We Hear the man hit the girl again, followed by a sudden, startling THUD against the wall next to Deborah's head.

Deborah pounds her fist on the wall.

DEBORAH
Hey! What's going on in there? Hey!
Hey!

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
(answering Deborah)
Shut the hell up and mind your own
business, slag.
(to the girl)
Where d'you think yer going, ya
stupid little whore?

Deborah jerks back as we HEAR the sound of the man hitting the girl. Something like the sound of a head hitting plaster THUDS against the wall.

DEBORAH
Like hell.

Deborah jumps off the bed and bolts out the door.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - HALLWAY -CONTINUOUS

Deborah storms down the hall to the next room. She stops and listens a moment.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)
Ow. Please, Jimmy. No more. I'll do
like you tells me. I promise.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Don't screw with me. You're outta
chances. Y'hear?

Deborah's heard enough. She steps back kicks the door in.

INT. FLOP HOUSE - SECOND ROOM -CONTINUOUS

The door explodes off the frame hitting the man, JIMMY, 30, in the back. He is knocked forward by the impact and sprawls on the floor.

The GIRL, 16, cowers on the floor beside the bed. Her face is red and swollen from the beating. In the dim light she looks just like--

DEBORAH
Sarah ...?

As Deborah stands momentarily stunned, Jimmy crawls out from under the door. He has a knife.

JIMMY
I tol' you to mind your own
business!

He stabs the knife at Deborah's side. She grabs Jimmy's wrist and twists. He cries out in pain and drops to one knee. The knife clatters to the floor.

JIMMY
Ah! Yer breakin' my arm!

DEBORAH
When I break your arm, you'll know
it.

She breaks his arm. He screams and flops around on the floor like a fish out of water.

DEBORAH
See what I mean?

Deborah turns to the girl but she's already running out the door as fast as she can go.

Deborah chases her out into the hallway.

INT. FLOP HOUSE, HALLWAY -CONTINUOUS

DEBORAH
Hey, wait! Wait!

The girl is gone down the stairwell. Deborah follows.

EXT. FLOP HOUSE, ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Deborah emerges out of the stairwell into a deserted side alley. The girl is gone.

Deborah goes back inside.

INT. FLOP HOUSE, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Deborah re-emerges into the hallway in time to see the proprietor stepping out of Jimmy's room with a gun in one hand and a cell phone in the other. He's flanked by three mean looking bastards sporting the jackets and colors of The REBEL ANGELS. Two of the henchmen are assisting Jimmy, none too gently.

PROPRIETOR
(into the phone)
Yeah, emergency, hello? I need an ambulance. Yeah. Yeah. Jeeze, I dunno, I got a homicide here or somethin'. Yeah. Yeah. Some crazy, freakin' broad attacked ...

Jimmy spots Deborah coming out of the stairwell.

JIMMY
Ah! It's her! Keep 'er away from me!

The proprietor immediately swings the gun in her direction.

PROPRIETOR
You! You stay right where you are, lady, and don' move, or I swear I'll--

DEBORAH

Damn!

Cornered, Deborah pounces at the proprietor.

PROPRIETOR

Jee-zus!

He fires a shot past her head, missing by a mile. Deborah doesn't. She strikes like a cobra with the heel of her hand, driving the bone of the proprietor's nose back up into his brain. He's dead before he hits the floor.

The henchmen throw Jimmy aside and draw some nasty looking knives. They advance on Deborah with the same slow, chilling menace as the three alley dogs in "Lady and the Tramp".

JIMMY

Kill her, damn it! Kill her! Kill her!

EXT. FLOP HOUSE, ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Deborah bursts out of the stairwell and into the alley. She is covered in blood. Her face is frantic and streaked with tears.

She runs out into the street and disappears into the night.

EXT. FLOP HOUSE - LATER

The front of the building is taped off as a crime scene. Cops mill about, coffee in hand.

INT. FLOP HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The proprietor's body lies on the floor where he fell. Around him are the bodies of the three henchmen, all dead. Their thumbs have been cut off.

Jimmy is being strapped to a stretcher, his arm bound, by paramedics. He's in total shock, babbling incoherently.

Several other paramedics stand waiting for the police photographer and the medical examiner (M.E.) to finish their work.

The M.E. is poking a finger at what's left of the proprietor's nose.

LT. MAXINE DALEY, an attractive woman of 40, stands watching stolidly. Her eyes have seen the worst of humanity working Homicide in the Inferno. But they still say "I care."

Beside her is a man pushing sixty who looks like he carries the weight of the world on his shoulders. He does. Luckily he has the strength to bear it.

This is the indomitable Capt. THOMAS PILATE.

The M.E. stands, pulling off his rubber gloves. This is DANTE, 65. He's a jovial man, morbidly fascinated by his work.

DANTE
(to the paramedics)
All done, thanks. He's all yours.

PILATE
What happened, Dante?

DANTE
Well, it was quick, I can tell you that. A single precision blow to the nose. Drove the bone and cartilage back up into the brain. Death was instantaneous.

MAXINE
What was it? Baseball bat?

DANTE
No, no, no. The bruising is too localized. There's no spread. This was done by hand.

MAXINE
By hand?

Dante does a lame kung fu move to demonstrate.

PILATE
We don't have anyone on record with those types of skills.

DANTE
(shrugging)
Do now.
(pointing to the henchmen)
Actually, it's these three who interest me. See the hands? She cut off their thumbs. Brilliant.

MAXINE
Brilliant is not how I'd describe
it, Dante.

Pilate looks on grimly. Something is stirring at the back of
his mind. A dreadful realization. A nightmare come true.

PILATE
No. It's biblical.

MAXINE
It's what?

DANTE
Biblical. Exactly. Cutting off the
thumbs of your enemy. Renders them
impotent. Humiliates the warrior.

MAXINE
What freakin' Sunday school did you
two go to?

Behind them the elevator opens and Patrol officer BARB SILLS,
25, approaches the group.

SILLS
(joining the group)
At least we have a name, sir. If
you can believe it, she actually
signed the registrar.

Pilate still stands staring at the hands with the severed
thumbs.

PILATE
(whispering to himself)
Deborah Judges.

Maxine overhears him.

SILLS
(on cue)
Deborah Judges.

Pilate turns away, white as a sheet. Maxine stares at him in
astonishment.

SILLS
We got a pretty good description of
her from the pimp.

Pilate looks at the corpses on the floor.

PILATE

Yeah. These guys gave us a pretty good description of her too.