

**THE HIDDEN PEOPLE**

Episode 2.09

"Esurience"

Written by

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96. The Court. Gavel bangs.

ALDER ODHRAN

This is an outrage! Alder Niamh was behind the theft of my book and killing of my fetch!

ALDER NIAMH

As if you actually cared about either of them.

ALDER ODHRAN

These proceedings must be put on hold while the Court convenes on this issue. Without Alder Niamh.

ALDER NIAMH

You will do no such thing. The end of the tale draws near, doesn't it?

NARRATOR

We're getting there.

ALDER ODHRAN

I refuse to sit here while a traitor moderates this hearing.

ALDER NIAMH

I suppose you have never done anything of the sort, Alder Odhran. Never stolen from another alder. Never destroyed the personal property of another alder. Go on. Profess your spotless record of above-board behavior. I'm certain the inquisitors present will confirm your righteousness.

ALDER ODHRAN

I am not the one on trial here.

ALDER NIAMH

And neither am I. Wouldn't you agree that the accused is far more dangerous than a conniving alder?

ALDER ODHRAN

For now. But this isn't over, Alder Niamh. Before we reach the end of this hearing and all it brings, we will settle this. You and I.

ALDER NIAMH

I very much look forward to it.

### **MUSICAL TRANSITION**

97. The Thorne house. Nissa types on laptop. Front door opens. Nissa stops typing.

NISSA

Good. You're back.

THOMAS

You found her? Sam's body?

NISSA

Well, I found where she's been.

ALFIE

How does that help us find her now?

NISSA

When I track each incident and plot them, we get a straight line. Like really straight. With a consistent pace, too. If she maintains this, we can know every place she'll be within a few meters and minutes.

MACKENNA

A straight line? Why? Where does it lead?

NISSA

I'm not sure. It goes through cities, parks, farmland, even through mountains...all the way to South Carolina, if she plans on walking until she runs out of ground.

NARRATOR

Perhaps you're looking at the wrong map, Nissa.

THOMAS

That doesn't make any sense. A straight line should be deliberate, but it's not going anywhere significant.

ALFIE

It might be significant to her, though. She is possessed by an alien monster right now. We couldn't possibly understand its motivations. And I've read too much Lovecraft to want to try.

NARRATOR

Cygnus. Which I suppose, for a being without a name, is as good a moniker as any. While it's true that you'll never fully understand it, are its motivations truly so alien? What did it do on its own world? Eat. Collect. Eat more. Why would you assume it's doing anything differently here?

MACKENNA

It remembers things that Sam knew. Thomas, could there be any places along the way that would matter to Sam?

THOMAS

Not that I can think. As far as I know, she never lived outside the state. Maybe she went somewhere on vacation? I should know that.

Murphy whimpers.

MACKENNA

How would you know that?

THOMAS

I don't know. Maybe she mentioned a place back in high school?

NISSA

Thomas, it's not your fault if you don't remember a random detail from a decade ago.

THOMAS

But still...

ALFIE

I see your blame and raise you a hearty "none of this is your fault." None of it.

THOMAS

But maybe, if Sam hadn't even been here when we brought you both back...

MACKENNA

Yeah, then maybe Cygnus would have jumped into one of us instead. Can you imagine the state we'd be in if it had jumped into Shaylee? Or me?

NARRATOR

Yes. How very fortuitous.

ALFIE

(shudders)

We're talking full-on Enigma Force, Uni-Power, Captain Universe stuff.

NISSA

Unstoppable, if you don't speak nerd.

THOMAS

She doesn't seem stoppable now, either.

MACKENNA

We didn't know what we were dealing with. We do now. And according to Nissa, we know where she'll be. We set a trap, catch her, and switch her back. Sam into her body and Cygnus into its rotting head.

ALFIE

Poof. No more monster.

THOMAS

What kind of trap? We don't want to hurt Sam.

NISSA

We'll find a way to get her back in one piece, Thomas. We will.

NARRATOR

More or less.

THOMAS

We don't have any more love-in-idleness, either.

MACKENNA

Leave that to me. Nissa, we need a good spot to confront her.

Mouse clicks.

NISSA

Here's the map. Take your pick.

ALFIE

What about there? Looks like she'll be there tomorrow morning.

MACKENNA

What is that? Zoom in.

Mouse clicks.

NISSA

It's a diner. She'll walk right behind it.

ALFIE

How do you know that's the back?

NISSA

There's a dumpster right there. Probably the back.

ALFIE

Oh. I thought that was the diner.

NISSA

You thought the dumpster was a diner?  
What did you think the building next to  
it was?

ALFIE

An IKEA?

MACKENNA

Diner or furniture hell, either way  
it's too populated. Too much risk for  
bystanders to get hurt.

THOMAS

What's this further down? Green means a  
park, right?

NISSA

Yeah. That's a pretty big park.

MACKENNA

When will she get there?

NISSA

About an hour after the diner. Six  
thirteen AM, specifically.

MACKENNA

Probably before the park gets crowded,  
especially on a weekday.

THOMAS

That's a good spot. Gives us time to  
prepare, figure out a plan.

(beat)

We'll figure out a plan, right?

MACKENNA

I'll get her back. I'm going to go meet  
up with Shaylee and tell her what we've  
learned. Get some rest, everyone. We  
leave at four in the morning. Nissa,  
before you turn in, find us a circle  
near that area.

NISSA

On it.

ALFIE

What can I do?

MACKENNA

Get some sleep.

ALFIE

Come on. I want to help.

MACKENNA

(beat)

You know what? I do need your help.  
Make sandwiches. A lot of sandwiches.

ALFIE

You hungry?

MACKENNA

They're not for me.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

98. Shaylee's beach house. Knock at the door.

SHAYLEE

Give me a--

Door opens.

SHAYLEE (CONT'D)

--minute.

MACKENNA

Whatcha doing?

SHAYLEE

Cleaning.

MACKENNA

It's a lot messier in here than it was  
last time I saw it.

SHAYLEE

I'm a slob. Gotta work on that.



MACKENNA

The lamp embedded in the drywall is a nice touch.

SHAYLEE

They were plotting against me.

MACKENNA

Yep. Those shifty lamps.

Some silence.

SHAYLEE

Did you need something?

MACKENNA

Right. Yeah. We found Sam. Cygnus. Alfie's calling it Samnus, which is the last time I ever say that combination of letters.

SHAYLEE

Where?

MACKENNA

Just walking in a straight line. To South Carolina, apparently.

SHAYLEE

What's in South Carolina?

MACKENNA

Your guess is as good as mine.

SHAYLEE

I doubt that. I'm from Ireland.

MACKENNA

The guess of a person who has never heard of South Carolina is as good as mine.

SHAYLEE

Okay.

NARRATOR

Ah. The awkward tension of distrust. Questioning. A far cry from dreamers who sat together not long ago and gazed out over the city.

MACKENNA

We're gonna ambush her...it...whatever. Gonna ambush it in a park.

SHAYLEE

That worked so well last time.

MACKENNA

I have a plan, but we need a few things from Robin.

SHAYLEE

Robin Goodfellow? No, Mackenna. He was moments from killing us last time.

MACKENNA

I'm me now. I can take him.

SHAYLEE

You think you can go toe to toe with an Old One?

NARRATOR

We may see soon enough.

MACKENNA

I handled the Magister just fine.

SHAYLEE

You tricked the Magister. I don't think Robin will follow you to a bell tower.

MACKENNA

I'll have you to back me up.

SHAYLEE

You trust me to do that?

MACKENNA

Of course I do.

SHAYLEE

You shouldn't.

MACKENNA

Come on. It won't come down to a fight. I promise. We need to get more love-in-idleness. And something else.

NARRATOR

Glorious, isn't it? How Mackenna Thorne constantly needs the help of others but believes herself to have agency, power. Arrogance comes from both sides of your blood, Mackenna. Perhaps you are not the best of both worlds, after all.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

99. Robin's dank alley.

ROBIN

Well soil my britches and wipe my bottom. It's Mackenna Thorne and her girlfriend.

SHAYLEE

I'm no one's girlfriend.

ROBIN

I know who you are, Shaylee. Black Annis's favorite changeling.

MACKENNA

Of course you're friends with Black Annis. You two would make a cute couple.

ROBIN

(aghast)

Have you seen her? All scraggly, with the patchy hair and beady eyes?

MACKENNA

Ugh. Typical man.

ROBIN

Now, now. I'm merely stating that my interests in the fairer sex do not coincide with Black Annis's unique qualities. Do not think me so shallow.

MACKENNA

Yeah, I'm sure you're really into brainy chicks.

ROBIN

Boobs. I like boobs.

SHAYLEE

Maybe trying to kill him would be worth it.

MACKENNA

We need more love-in-idleness potion.

ROBIN

Do you, now?

MACKENNA

Yep.

ROBIN

And what will you give me for it?

MACKENNA

Nothing. The amount you provided last time was inadequate. We needed one more dose. That's on you.

ROBIN

(dark)

Is it?

SHAYLEE

Aye. You're a cheat.

ROBIN

Robin never cheats. So spake Wodan. Take your accusation back, or enjoy being mulch.

MACKENNA

Prove that you don't cheat by giving us one more dose.

ROBIN

Your bitch insulted me.

MACKENNA

Call her that again, and I'll change your name to Robin Lightshow.

ROBIN

(silly laugh)

Oh, Mackenna. I'm so glad we're friends.

MACKENNA

We are not friends.

ROBIN

Bring it in, bestie.

MACKENNA

If you hug me, I will end you.

SHAYLEE

Can we just get the potion, Robin? I'm sorry for calling you a cheat. All better?

ROBIN

Of course. Here it is. It's definitely the potion you want and not poison. I wouldn't trick someone I warned never to return here.

MACKENNA

I'm starting to think I overestimate the quality of my plans.

SHAYLEE

You're well-connected, aren't you, Robin? You knew that Mackenna killed the Magister. You know who I am, how I know Black Annis. What have you heard about the all-powerful alien monster about to rip this planet apart?

ROBIN

You mean like Cloverfield?

SHAYLEE

It's currently pre-occupied. But eventually, it will turn its attention to the Hidden People. And even if you're able to defeat it, it will expose you all in the process. All out war with the humans. All out war with each other. Give us the potion, and we can stop this.

ROBIN

That's the rumbling I've been hearing about? An alien monster?

SHAYLEE

Aye.

ROBIN

And you can stop it?

MACKENNA

With your help. Give us the real potion.

ROBIN

Yes, yes. Fine. I already gave you the real potion.

(beat)

Wait, let me see that one.

Shuffles bottles around.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

Yep, the real one.

MACKENNA

That's a different bottle.

ROBIN

Is it?

MACKENNA

You seriously gave us poison the first time?

ROBIN

Maybe.

NARRATOR

Robin Goodfellow. Truly my favorite.

SHAYLEE

Are we good, Mackenna?

MACKENNA

Hang on. We need something else. A sedative.

ROBIN

So needy. What do you think I am, a mystical drug dealer?

MACKENNA / SHAYLEE

Yes.

ROBIN

Well, all right, then. Fifty bucks.

MACKENNA

You want...money?

ROBIN

An Old One's gotta eat. I might step over to Louisiana and order some Popeye's.

MACKENNA

You're going to Louisiana to get fake Louisiana food?

ROBIN

Have you tried those biscuits?

MACKENNA

You know what? Not looking a gift faerie in the mouth.

Pulls out money.

MACKENNA (CONT'D)

I just have sixty. Consider it a tip.

ROBIN

So generous! Making me rethink stabbing you in the back as you leave. Here's your sedative.

MACKENNA

Thank you.

SHAYLEE

(whispering)

We're backing out of the alley, right?

MACKENNA

(whispering)

Oh hell yeah.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

100. Thomas's bedroom. White noise plays.

NARRATOR

Thomas Thorne. Even on the worst day of your life...so far, anyway...you manage to fall right to sleep. White noise machine lulling you to fitful slumber. Unfortunately for you, it can't silence the voices in your dreams.

Thomas's dreamscape merges with and then takes over the white noise.

PAIGE

(ethereal)

Hi, Thomas. It's your mother.

THOMAS

Mom?

PAIGE

(ethereal)

Happy birthday, Thomas.

THOMAS

Mom, I miss you so much! It's...it's not my birthday today, is it?



ROBERT  
(ethereal)  
Close up on birthday boy!

PAIGE  
(ethereal)  
You make us very proud.

ROBERT  
(ethereal)  
We love you.

THOMAS  
I love you, too. Both of you. So much.  
(beat)  
Wait, where are you going? Mom? Dad?  
No, don't leave! I don't know how to  
find you!

PAIGE  
(ethereal)  
We'll wait for you at the exit.

Everything whooshes and swirls around. Settles into the  
bar's music.

SAM  
(ethereal)  
You remember I went on a date with  
Jacob Hornsby, that guy from the soccer  
team?

THOMAS  
Sam? What?

SAM  
(ethereal)  
I called you from the bathroom because  
I needed an excuse to get out of there.

THOMAS  
What's going on? Are you Sam or Cygnus?

SAM  
(ethereal becoming normal)  
Don't you understand, Thomas? I'm both  
now. Isn't that how you wanted it?

THOMAS

What? Why would I want that?

SAM

You're slowly losing everything you love. Your parents. Your sisters. Me. Now, I'm just a dog you can take with you everywhere. Nothing bad will ever happen to me again.

THOMAS

No, Sam. We're going to find you, save you. I'll get you back.

SAM

That's cute. Isn't that what you said to your sister at one point? She's in prison now. And if you think the Hidden People are just going to leave her alone in there...

THOMAS

Sam, please, don't talk like that.

SAM

Almost time to go, Thomas. You know you're not going to be able to save me.

THOMAS

That's not true.

SAM

You know I'm not going to make it through this. Your plan is going to fail, and Mackenna is going to kill me. To save the world. An epic tragedy.

THOMAS

I'll never let that happen. You know I won't. I will protect you.

SAMNUS

Who's going to protect you from me? See you soon, Thomas.

**MUSICAL TRANSITION**

101. Stepping sideways arrival. Outdoors in a park, early morning.

MACKENNA

Gang's all here.

ALFIE

Why do you always bring me last?

MACKENNA

I don't trust anyone else to watch our backs.

ALFIE

Oh. Well, uh...that's probably too much pressure, so I'm going to pretend I didn't hear it and still be annoyed with you.

MACKENNA

Cool.

THOMAS

We're all set up. Sandwich buffet is laid out and ready.

SHAYLEE

What's the plan, Mackenna?

MACKENNA

We wait. According to Nissa's calculations, we have a few minutes. Just play a game on your phones or something.

SHAYLEE

Could be a good time to catch up.

MACKENNA

Yeah, I'm kinda groggy. I'm just gonna go sit at that picnic table.

Mackenna walks off.

THOMAS

I'd like to be alone, too, I think. Let me know when she's close.

Thomas walks off.

ALFIE

Well, I'm going to play some Candy  
Crush.

(beat)

What the hell...Nissa, did you beat all  
my Candy Crush levels when you were me?

NISSA

I was bored.

ALFIE

But you already beat them on your  
phone. You did it from your perfect  
memory. How was that even fun?

NISSA

It's fun now.

ALFIE

You're a butthole.

102. Alfie walks off.

NISSA

Looks like it's just me and you,  
Shaylee.

SHAYLEE

Yeah.

Some silence.

NISSA

I know you're upset about Mack.

SHAYLEE

What? I don't know what you're--

NISSA

Come on. Really? She's totally freezing  
you out.

SHAYLEE

I mean...not totally...

NISSA

It's not about you.

SHAYLEE

You don't have to talk to me to make me feel better. In fact, we don't have to talk at all. I'm a fan of silence.

NISSA

I know some things you don't. I don't know if I should tell you, but I'm going to anyway.

SHAYLEE

What do you mean? What things?

NISSA

Mack likes you. She's completely different around you. I've never seen her open up to someone like that before. Like ever. And remember the whole never forgetting thing. I would know.

SHAYLEE

Could've fooled me.

NISSA

I also know what the Magister said to her. Only Alfie and I heard it.

SHAYLEE

What? When?

NISSA

When they fought in the junkyard. After you left. He told her that you didn't actually care about her. You just felt the pull of her Hidden People-ness.

SHAYLEE

That's horrible.

NISSA

Tell me about it. His exact words were "the changeling does not love you any more than the bee loves the flower."

SHAYLEE

My god. It's not true.

NISSA

I never thought it was. And I'm sure Mackenna didn't either. But like, how could you just forget about that? How could you not have that eat away at you every time you thought about the other person?

SHAYLEE

So evil. He knew it would mess with her head.

NISSA

Yeah. Almost got her killed.

SHAYLEE

Bastard.

NISSA

I think you're missing the point, though. If Mackenna didn't care about you at all, why would this bother her?

SHAYLEE

Well...okay, I see your point.

NISSA

Good. It's hard to miss.

SHAYLEE

Look at you, using all your logic and common sense to trick me. So why didn't you talk to Mackenna about this? Tell her he was just saying things to beat her?

NISSA

Because I would be obligated. No matter what I thought, as Mack's best friend, I have to tell her he was lying. It's part of the best friend contract. So she has no reason to actually believe me. She'll say "thanks, Nissa" and then go sit by herself.

SHAYLEE

Good lord, you really do know her so well.

NISSA

I think she needs to see that it doesn't matter.

SHAYLEE

But how can I prove something like that? His words were insidious. Acting like I care just plays into his lies.

NISSA

No. That's not it. Show her that it doesn't matter.

SHAYLEE

But it does.

NISSA

It kinda doesn't. Honestly, most relationships are like that. Take Thomas and Sam, for instance.

SHAYLEE

That's oddly both relevant and inappropriate.

NISSA

What drew Sam to Thomas at first?

SHAYLEE

Uh, he's beautiful.

NISSA

So beautiful.

SHAYLEE

If I liked men...

NISSA

And if he weren't my best friend's brother, y'know? So Sam thinks Thomas is hot and wants to get to know him. She does, finds out he's just as great on the inside, and poof, she likes him. So what if her initial motivations were basically just hormonal reactions? She still loves him now.

SHAYLEE

You're saying all love starts as the bee and the flower.

NISSA

Pretty much.

SHAYLEE

That's profound. I like profound.

NISSA

I am the queen of "I'm fourteen, and this is deep."

(beat)

Look, you two are the most stoic women I've ever met. I'm sure you could stonewall each other for the next century. But just be vulnerable for two seconds. Go talk to her.

103. Sliding our POV over to where Mack sits. Alfie approaches and sits with her.

ALFIE

Hey, Mack.

MACKENNA

Hey, Alfie. What's up?

ALFIE

Nothing. Just checking on you.

MACKENNA

I'm right here. Just fine.



ALFIE

Cool.

(long beat)

Hey, remember junior prom?

MACKENNA

What about it?

ALFIE

Remember Miranda?

MACKENNA

Of course. She was your date.

ALFIE

Yeah, obviously. But remember how that happened?

MACKENNA

You pined for her for a year. I convinced you to ask her to go, and she said yes.

ALFIE

"Convinced" is an interesting way to say "threatened and held your comic book collection hostage."

MACKENNA

It worked, didn't it? You got the girl and your first kiss.

ALFIE

All true.

MACKENNA

I feel like you're lulling me into nostalgia in order to trick me.

ALFIE

All I'm saying is that our friends have a better idea of what we need to do than we do. Sometimes, our friends need to give us that push. A little "convincing."

MACKENNA

You realize I have superpowers and can squish your head.

ALFIE

You like Shaylee. Shaylee likes you.

MACKENNA

Does she?

ALFIE

Uh, yes. Everyone knows it. It's stupid obvious. Murphy knew it before he let a human share his body.

MACKENNA

But...never mind.

ALFIE

But what? But the Magister? Is this about him? You can't believe anything he said. He was your Joker! Your Skeletor! Your Venom!

(beat)

Okay, no, Venom is Spider-Man's dark mirror, so Fack is your Venom. The Magister was your Green Goblin.

MACKENNA

Okay, okay. I get it. He was my archnemesis.

ALFIE

Precisely. You're going to let a supervillain decide which of your friends truly likes you?

MACKENNA

Of course not. But he had a point.

ALFIE

A point that applies across the board. If it's true for Shaylee, why isn't it true for the rest of us?

MACKENNA

Maybe it is.

ALFIE

I'm really irritated with you at this exact moment, so I'm thinking not.

MACKENNA

I know, Alfie. I know I shouldn't let him get into my head. But how do you fight against doubts like that?

ALFIE

No clue. I just know you gotta do it.

MACKENNA

Well, I don't have a comic book collection, so you have no leverage.

ALFIE

We're adults now, Mack. This isn't high school. I'm not going to manipulate you into doing this. I just have to hope that you'll do something for your own happiness and the happiness of those you love.

(beat)

Also, if you don't talk to her, Nissa and I will Parent Trap you two until you fall in love. We're tenacious.

MACKENNA

You're an asshole, and I hate you.

ALFIE

That's the spirit.

(beat)

Speak of the Shaylee. Here she comes. I'm just going to mosey on over to see how Thomas is doing. Toodles.

104. Alfie leaves. Shaylee approaches.

SHAYLEE

Hey, Mackenna. Mind if I sit?

MACKENNA

Uh, sure. I mean no, I don't mind.

SHAYLEE

Thanks.

Awkward silence.

MACKENNA

So I was--

SHAYLEE

Hey, I just--

MACKENNA / SHAYLEE

(laughs)

SHAYLEE

You first.

MACKENNA

No. You. I insist.

SHAYLEE

Mackenna...Mack...Nissa told me some things. About you. And the Magister. And I just wanted you to know that--

NISSA

(calling out)

She's coming!

NARRATOR

Ah. Perfect timing.

MACKENNA

Hold that thought, Shaylee. We have a monster to trap.

(beat)

And Shaylee, if this doesn't work...if she can't be subdued...

SHAYLEE

I know what we have to do.

MACKENNA

Thomas isn't going to like it.

SHAYLEE

If it comes to that, I'll step him out so he can't watch.

MACKENNA

Thank you.

SHAYLEE

It won't come to that. We'll do it without hurting Sam.

MACKENNA

You really believe that?

SHAYLEE

(beat)

No.

MACKENNA

Me neither. I need more positive friends. Where's Alfie?

NARRATOR

Mackenna is learning the true hero's first hard lesson: you cannot save everyone.

SAMNUS

(calling out)

Do you think me foolish? Simple? Weak? That I would mindlessly consume food you've laid out? Food that smells of you.

Mackenna and the others approach Samnus.

MACKENNA

Come on. Look at all these sandwiches. Tasty tasty.

SAMNUS

I am not a mindless void, Mackenna. I know this is a trap.

ALFIE

It's not a trap. Honest. I made them myself.

NISSA

Yeah, he's way too stupid to trick you.

SAMNUS

I know you are lying. Thomas is crying. Clearly, this is a trap.

THOMAS

I'm not crying because of a trap. Look at what you're doing to her.

SAMNUS

This body? Yes. It cannot contain me. The skin is yellowing, cracking. I seek a new form. A stronger one.

THOMAS

So leave her and find one.

SAMNUS

I will leave her when I find a worthy body. Whatever is left of her will then be yours.

SHAYLEE

You won't be getting a stronger body. You know we won't let that happen.

SAMNUS

And how will you stop me? With sandwiches? I am not a fool.

MACKENNA

Well, at least you confirmed something important for us. We weren't sure if you had Sam's mind or just her memories.

SAMNUS

What do you mean?

MACKENNA

Sam would probably have figured out the trap before she fell into it. She was a really good detective. I mean, she technically had the right murder suspect even if she did mistake me for her.

SAMNUS

I did not fall into your trap. Move aside, or I will move you aside in pieces.

MACKENNA

We weren't really sure how the sedative would affect you. Didn't know how long it would take to kick in.

NISSA

You were supposed to arrive a few minutes before you did. Looks like it's kicking in.

SAMNUS

What do you mean?

ALFIE

The sandwiches are just the decoys to distract you. The real trap was back at the diner. That hot, fresh bread in the dumpster?

SAMNUS

That was not you. I would have smelled you.

MACKENNA

Bitch, I once tricked these suckers into eating a cake that was apparently made of flour, eggs, and shit. I can hide a little scent from you.

SAMNUS

You're...lying.

SHAYLEE

Might want to sit down.

SAMNUS

I am...you cannot...

THOMAS

I'm sorry, Sam. We'll save you.

SAMNUS

I am...not...

Samnus collapses.

NISSA

Ouch.

SHAYLEE

I told her to sit down.

MACKENNA

Come on, everybody. We have work to do.

NARRATOR

The creature you call Cygnus is not the only one among you who hungers, ravenous to fill a void inside that will forever remain empty. Acceptance. Trust. Love. These yearnings are no different from the monster's own hunger for sustenance, and they are just as impossible to sate.

THE END