

FAITH

"Ageless"

by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. CRAWFORD'S SHOPPING MALL. EVENING.

1

Inside a fairly low-budget mall as the sun sets outside, visible through the dirty glass ceiling of the wide, two-tiered floor we're in.

A last few stragglers are winding through the mall, past shop fronts as the bored-looking assistants pull down the shutters and start to lock up for the night.

Walking quickly through the scene is NOA, a point of light in this otherwise dark setting, her long blonde hair bouncing as she makes her way out.

She casts an eye round at the closing shops, then down at her own shopping bags with a satisfied smile - whatever she needed to do tonight, she's done it.

Noa turns a corner and disappears from view, leaving us in the deserted mall's main square for a moment.

A last few outlets remain open, but none of them are any interest to FULBER, a portly, middle-aged man, two heavy-looking bags of goods in either hand as he huffs and puffs her way along.

He glances up as soft chimes sound from the PA system, marking an announcement.

PA
(filtered)
The mall is now closing, would all
customers please make their way to
the nearest exit. Thank you, and
good evening.

Fulber tries to double his efforts, spotting a ramp that leads into the multi-storey car park next door and making a beeline for it.

2 INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - CAR PARK. EVENING.

2

Fulber heads into one floor of the nearly empty car park, bathed in a sickly yellow glow from the cheap neon lights dotted around.

As another car sweeps down towards the exit ramp and out of view, Fulber pauses to rest his bags on the floor, patting his coat pocket and retrieving a crumpled packet of cigarettes.

(CONTINUED)

He lights one and takes a deep, grateful drag from it, closing his eyes and psyching herself up for the walk to his car.

He leaves the cigarette hanging from his lips as he reaches and picks up his bags again, starting to walk towards us.

He's soon over by his car, a bog standard stationwagon, its colour halfway between beige and dull brown.

Fulber lays the bags down again and tries to find his keys, eventually producing them from his pocket with a rattle, but then fumbling and dropping them as he tries to open the driver's side door.

FULBER

(mutters)

Damn it!

He reaches down for the keys, with a little difficulty, and sees that they're perched on top of a drain, balancing precariously.

Fulber reaches out a cautious hand, but as soon as his fingers brush the keys, they drop down the drain, out of sight.

Fulber closes his eyes and sighs, then shuffles forward, almost on all fours as he peers down into the drain.

Looking through the slits of the drain, we can see that there is a basement level just below us, and the keys have landed out in the open, easy to find again.

Fulber stands, looks from side to side and then starts towards a staircase leading down.

Fulber pushes open a bright yellow exit door with a CREAK, glancing round as he steps into the basement level of the car park.

A flickering light BUZZES nearby, showing us that this part of the car park is home only to empty boxes and trolleys from the shops above us, as well as a few employee's cars.

Fulber walks onward, trying to work out where his keys landed.

He doesn't see whoever's watching him from the shadows, well hidden in the dimly lit basement. Someone, breathing gruffly, is watching the hapless shopper intently.

As Fulber rounds a pillar, out of sight, his observer HUFFS impatiently, and ducks to the side, back into the darkness.

Back with Fulber, his only company in the basement being the rattling sounds of a distant generator and the flickering of the lights.

Fulber spots something glinting and hustles towards it.

Success - it's his car keys. He quickly scoops them up, tucking them back into his pocket with a triumphant grin.

Suddenly, he hears something GRUNT from somewhere behind him, and he whips round, suddenly tense.

Fulber scans the basement - nothing in sight, or at least nothing living.

FULBER
(calls out)
Hello? Is someone there?

Silence. Fulber waits a beat, then starts to head back to the exit - but a little quicker this time.

He gets to the yellow door and opens it, throwing one last glance round his shoulder as something RATTLES in the distance. With a suitably freaked look, he's gone.

Fulber dashes back over to his car, red-cheeked from the run, and brings the keys back out to finally get into his car.

And, of course, he drops them - again.

Muttering a curse under his breath, Fulber leans down to pick them up.

Looking out at him from beneath his car, Fulber concentrates on stretching out to rescue his keys - and doesn't spot the large pair of FEET that step calmly into frame behind him.

Whoever these feet belong to, they either don't believe in washing much or have dark, almost scaly skin - and long, jet black toenails as well.

Fulber finally stands, and whoever's stood behind him is silhouetted before one of the car park's lights. We can't make out a face, just that whoever it is is big.

Fulber opens the car door - then double takes as he notices the reflection of whoever's behind him in the driver's side door mirror.

CONTINUED:

Trembling, he slowly turns to face us - and as his new neighbour GROWLS, Fulber throws his hands up and SCREAMS in fear, trying to protect himself, and from that we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF TEASER**

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 INT. FAITH'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

5

The sun rises on another day in New York, its ray filtering across the city's busy skyline and into the apartment of FAITH - who, as a contrast, sits huddled up on the sofa, her jacket wrapped round her.

From the looks of her straggly hair and darkly-rimmed eyes, she's been here a while. She stares at the TV set, which is on but with the sound muted, some mass-produced reality show busy doing its bit to rot her brain.

Goliath, Faith's cat, MEOWS as he pads into frame, looking up at his mistress and wondering when the heck breakfast is going to be served.

Faith reaches out a hand absently, which Goliath sniffs and then rubs his head against in greeting.

FAITH

Sorry, cat. Mom doesn't feel like getting up just yet.

Faith winces and presses a hand to her forehead - and suddenly we realise that she's nursing a nasty hangover.

As a ray of sunlight falls on her, she squints against it and finally gets up, marching over to the window and pulling the blinds down with a decisive FWIP.

Faith SIGHS, finally free to nurse her aching head in peace and quiet - when there is a KNOCK at her apartment door.

With a dark look, she wanders over and flips open the deadbolts, opening it up.

Standing in the doorway, beaming back at Faith, is Noa, who holds up a brown paper bag.

NOA

Bagels!

FAITH

(blinks)

Huh?

Noa steps past Faith and into the apartment, and Faith pushes the door shut, the look on her face telling us she'd rather be very much alone to suffer right now.

(CONTINUED)

NOA

I was trying to think of what to have for breakfast this morning, and I thought 'well, what haven't we had for ages?' and then I was going 'french toast? No, had that two weeks ago. Oo, coffee! Naah, too cliched.' But then, thought-

FAITH

Noa, look, I don't want to sound rude or anything, but-

NOA

Oh, it's cool, I figured you might not like bagels, so I got us some plain old toasted bread too. There's this great little guy makes the stuff, sits basically on your doorstep - how come you never went to him before?

FAITH

(lost)

What guy?

NOA

The little guy, you know! German. Bad teeth. Looks like he could use a haircut.

Faith shrugs, not any clearer, and Noa sighs.

NOA (cont'd)

Always calls every girl who walks past 'schlampe' or something.

FAITH

(snaps fingers)

Yeah, got him.

(beat)

Wait, he makes bagels? I thought he just yelled stuff at people.

Noa shrugs and heads for the kitchen, busily fetching down two plates and filling up the kettle as Faith returns to the sanctuary of the sofa.

NOA

So anyway, where've you been getting to the past few nights, Little Miss Night Prowler? Pryor keeps calling round here to see if you were okay after... you know, all that happened.

(CONTINUED)

Faith thinks - and then remembers all too well. After losing Vi to the kidnappers, and then her disastrous encounters with Gabe and Quinn, she's had a lot of reasons to go missing for a few nights herself.

FAITH
(evasive)
Nothing much, you know. Went out,
got wasted, came back. Pryor
probably just missed me.

Noa glances over from the kitchen area, a knowing grin on her lips. She knows how Faith speaks in code by now.

NOA
'Just missed me'? Now if that
doesn't say 'I was out all night,'
then my name isn't Noa!

Faith shuffles further down on the sofa, pulling the jacket over her head as Noa heads back into the front room, a plate of fresh bagels in each hand.

NOA (cont'd)
Hey! Come on, don't bail out on me
now. We've got a lot to do today,
remember?

FAITH
(still under her jacket)
We do?

NOA
Yeah, that thing Pryor wanted us to
go help him work on? Collecting
samples for those new anti-demon
stun grenade thingies?

Faith drags the jacket away and throws Noa a disgruntled look.

FAITH
Oh, yeah. That.

NOA
So! Here. Eat.

Noa hands Faith one plate of bagels, but Faith doesn't look like her stomach's too hot on the whole eating thing, especially this close to a bad hangover.

FAITH
(pushes it away)
I'm not-

(CONTINUED)

NOA
(pushes it back)
Yes, you are.

Noa's determined look finally makes Faith give in, so she scoops up one of the bagels and starts eating.

After a few bites, she realises that it's actually pretty good, and looks over to Noa, who is flicking through the TV channels.

FAITH
Hey, these aren't bad.

NOA
I know. Someone's gotta make sure
you eat properly, right?

Faith rolls her eyes and manages to sit up, holding a chunk of bagel out for Goliath to sniff.

FAITH
(sarcastic)
Yeah, thanks, mom.

NOA
(chuckles)
I'm sure your real mom wouldn't
want to see you looking like death
on what is otherwise a bright,
sunshiny day!

FAITH
(shrugs)
Wouldn't know. She's dead.

Noa blinks, but Faith just carries on eating. It's not like that's a new thought to her.

NOA
Oh, I-I'm... I'm sorry, I-

FAITH
Don't be. We didn't get on. Long
story.

Faith puts her plate down and heads over to the kitchen as we hear the kettle boiling off screen.

Noa watches her go, at a sudden loss for words.

FAITH (O.S.) (cont'd)
D'ya bring any coffee at least?

NOA
(snaps out of it)
Uh, yeah, there's a jar in the bag
I brought over.

FAITH (O.S.)
Cool.

We hear coffee-making sounds from the kitchen as Noa blinks again, trying to process that new fact about Faith.

We cut from her to:

EXT. NY CITY STREET. MORNING.

Noa and a now more-presentable looking Faith stroll through the morning crowds, heading towards the part of town that houses Pryor's lab.

Noa keeps glancing at Faith as though she wants to say something, and eventually Faith just stares back at her.

FAITH
What?

NOA
How did it happen?

FAITH
How did what happen?

NOA
Your mom, I mean. How did she die?

FAITH
Long time ago. Before I became a
Slayer, back when we were still
living in a trailer in the part of
Boston that even the bad part of
town didn't go down.

Noa watches intently as Faith continues her story.

FAITH (cont'd)
We were always fighting, mainly
over my dad - he bailed on us when
I was little, and I guess I did the
classic thing and blamed my mom for
it every day. Never occurred to me
that he might have got a bit
freaked out by his six-year-old
daughter being tough enough to
bench press eighty pounds.

NOA
(impressed)
Wow! You could do that?

FAITH
Part of being a Slayer. Before you
get called or whatever, you're
still tougher than most, you just
don't get the shiny badge and
uniform 'till the girl before you
bites it.

They turn into an alley, almost at the lab.

EXT. ALLEYWAY/WEBB RESEARCHING. MORNING.

The girls approach the front door of the lab, tucked away
down the alley wall.

NOA
I had no idea it was all so...

FAITH
All so what?

NOA
Complicated.

FAITH
(grins)
You get used to it.

She opens the door and steps inside.

INT. LAB - EXAM ROOM. MORNING.

The girls head into the main part of the lab, seeing PRYOR
sat behind his desk, flicking through a paper and staring
intently at the pages.

FAITH
Jeez, Pryor, I know we're late, but
no need to go checking the
obituaries for us!

Pryor glances up and nods when he sees them. Faith shrugs off
her jacket and sits near him, eyeing him for a beat.

FAITH (cont'd)
What's up, Pryor? No 'good morning,
girls?' No 'did anybody remember to
feed Morty'?

In answer, Pryor lays the paper on the desktop and turns it
round for Faith and Noa to read, tapping his finger on one
article in particular.

PRYOR

Looks like a job for us.

FAITH

(reads)

'Man found dead in shopping mall
car park'?

Faith studies the article - the accompanying picture shows Fulber, sprawled out by the side of his car, but he looks a lot older than the last time we saw him - his hair greyed and his skin shrivelled and wrinkled.

NOA

(reads)

'Martin Fulber, from Queens, was found dead by his parked car in the parking area of Crawford's Shopping Mall last night. The police has stated that despite Mr. Fulber's driver's license listing his age as forty-three, his body looked to be almost in its early seventies. They are looking into a possible case of license fraud.'

Faith sits back, looking at Pryor with a shrug.

FAITH

Some old guy drops dead on his way back from the local K-Mart? What's that got to do with us?

PRYOR

Did you miss the part about the age discrepancy?

FAITH

So he never renewed his license for about thirty years. Big deal.

Pryor frowns and leans across to his computer, turning the screen to face Faith and Noa.

On it is a diagram of a tall, muscular demon, its figure athletic and toned, its skin dark and scaled in places.

PRYOR

What you're looking at is an insiro demon. They live for hundreds of years, somehow keeping their bodies in peak physical condition throughout that time.

NOA

Demons that don't get old?

(CONTINUED)

PRYOR

Exactly. Demonologists such as myself have been speculating on how they get this ability for years, but recent discoveries from live specimens have given us an interesting insight.

NOA

(grimaces)

Oh God, this is going to be something nasty, isn't it...

PRYOR

The insiro injects its victim with a potent cocktail of accelerants and other substances, drawn directly from its own bloodstream, before withdrawing the chemicals again and absorbing them back into its system. This appears to pass over nutrients and other regenerative cells directly into their bodies, in effect replacing dead cells and keeping their bodies from suffering any kind of entropy.

FAITH

(beat)

Can we get that insight in non-geek speak?

PRYOR

They suck the life out of their victims.

FAITH

Oh. So, bad, huh?

PRYOR

Very bad indeed.

Pryor taps the newspaper article again.

PRYOR (cont'd)

This attack not only has all the classic signs of being an attack by an insiro demon, it also corroborates with similar sightings in the area.

FAITH

(nods)

We've got a nest.

(CONTINUED)

PRYOR

I'd like you and Noa to head out to the mall where the attack happened, look around for clues. Their nest may be in the mall, beneath it, or in the nearby area. I'd appreciate it if you could bring me back some skin or scale samples, too.

FAITH

What for? We know these things are the bad guys, why don't we just kill 'em?

Pryor grins, stands and heads for the row of filing cabinets by his desk. He opens the middle drawer, removes a thick file and drops it on the desk, leafing through it as he speaks.

PRYOR

It's been an assumption... well, more of a theory of mine, really, for some time now, that insiro demon DNA holds the key to curing many of mankind's most indefatigable illnesses.

FAITH

(losing track)
A little clearer?

PRYOR

Think about it - their blood takes human cells and DNA and converts them into substances its own body can use to repair itself. What if there was some way to reverse this process?

NOA

Use their blood on humans?

FAITH

(catching up)
You think there's a way to make them heal us, not the other way round.

PRYOR

Well, as I said, it's just a theory, but...

(grins)

... yes. I'll give you a little gadget that should be able to detect their unique signatures, it'll help you find any samples they may have, er... deposited.

(CONTINUED)

NOA

Say no more, Pryor, we'll bring you
all the skin samples we can get our
hands on!

FAITH

(stands)

Yeah, you'll be doing that part.

NOA

That's right, I-
(blinks)
Huh?

Noa looks to Faith as she heads back over for her jacket.

NOA (cont'd)

What are you going to be doing
while I'm knee deep in demon
shavings, then?

FAITH

What I do best.
(grins)
Killing the bad guys.

And from Faith's grin, we dissolve to:

EXT. STREET/SIP & SURF INTERNET CAFE. MORNING.

Blackened and abandoned, the burned out shell of the internet
cafe is still cordoned off by yellow police tape, strips of
loose tape flapping in the wind to mark the final resting
place of detective Lehto, Quinn's partner.

And standing across the street, staring at the burned out
building as if it'll give him some answers is Detective JON
QUINN, hands in his pockets and an intense look on his
features.

After a few beats he crosses the street and walks up to the
outside of the cafe, circling it slowly, looking it up and
down.

Nothing but brickwork, broken glass and an array of scorched
tables inside, the neon signs behind the main desk shattered
and blackened.

QUINN

(quietly)

Why were you here?

Quinn glances over his shoulder to make sure nobody's paying
attention, before discretely lifting up the closest line of
tape and ducking into the building.

10

INT. SIP & SURF INTERNET CAFE. MORNING.

10

Quinn paces through the mess inside the cafe, trying not to disturb anything.

He pauses as he comes to a chalk outline that highlights Lehto's last exit.

Crouching, he stares down at the outline for a few beats.

QUINN

I'll find out who did this to you,
man. I owe you that much.

Quinn looks around, trying to spot something that'll give him a clue, something he can work with.

He hasn't been looking long when his phone RINGS, and he digs it out of his jacket pocket.

QUINN (cont'd)

(answering)

Jon Quinn.

DETECTIVE SING

(filtered; through phone)

Quinn, where are you? Thought you
and I were gonna take advantage of
us both being off at the same time
and go catch a few beers before the
Knicks game?

QUINN

I'm afraid I can't today, Sing.
I've got a few things to take care
of.

Quinn looks down at he outline again.

QUINN (cont'd)

Gotta put a few things to bed. You
know how it is.

DETECTIVE SING

Okay, Jonny boy, whatever keeps you
happy. Don't forget, the Captain
just said take a few days off,
don't you go disappearing on me
too, alright?

QUINN

(grins)

Wouldn't dream of it. See you
around.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

Quinn hangs up, stands, and with a final glance round the cafe, starts to head back out.

11 EXT. STREET/CRAWFORD'S MALL. MORNING.

11

We follow Quinn as he walks along a busy part of the city centre, head down and hands in his pockets.

He pauses and looks to his right - he's right outside of Crawford's Mall, where he sees two uniformed cops chatting at the front door.

Sensing that there's a crime scene here he can use to take his mind off things for a while, he turns and heads towards the mall entrance.

We pan up towards the roof as Quinn walks on - just in time to catch a shadowy figure dart across the rooftop!

Before we have chance to take in what we've seen, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL. DAY.

12

We pick up Faith and Noa, making their way through the crowds of shoppers. The mall is much busier than the last time we saw it, even with last night's murder still fresh in the news.

Faith keeps alert, glancing all round her and scanning the avenues, as Noa keeps spotting new places to go shop.

NOA
(points)
Oo, Faith! Look!

Noa points excitedly at a second-hand clothes store, and Faith shrugs.

FAITH
Look, Noa, I know I shop on a budget, but I have this thing about wearing other people's cast offs.

NOA
Huh? Oh, no! Not for you, for me! I keep finding all these great little things in there. I swear, it's like an older version of me just keeps throwing all her old stuff out in there, ready for me to swoop in and grab it.

FAITH
(wry)
Yeah, you're a real fashion victim alright...

The duo come to a T-junction in the mall, an avenue stretching off either side of them.

FAITH (cont'd)
(motions to left)
I'll take this way, you head up there. Remember, we're looking for maintenance corridors, ways to get down below without being seen.

NOA
Got it.

FAITH
We can't go the direct way through the car park, too many cops, so find a back door and then call me.

(CONTINUED)

NOA

(nods)

Check.

(beat)

Hey, wait - you don't have a phone!

Faith is already walking away, but she turns, and with a grin holds up a shiny new cell phone from her pocket.

FAITH

And for today, neither does Pryor.

Noa grins back and starts to head off, pausing when faith shouts back over to her.

FAITH (cont'd)

And no shopping!

Noa SIGHS and carries on walking.

We pan away from her as Quinn walks back down over the ramp leading into the car park. He waves a goodbye to the cop standing just at the park entrance, before rubbing a hand through his hair.

We rejoin Noa, who is standing before a high-rent clothes store's window display, her eyes greedily devouring the finely-tailored sights before her.

Quinn joins her, glancing casually at the suits on display alongside the lavish dresses.

QUINN

Never saw the point in them myself.

NOA

I'm sorry?

QUINN

Suits. Just never seem to find the right place to wear one, I guess.

Quinn seems down, distracted, but this doesn't stop Noa from quickly sizing him up, and with a grin she takes a small step closer to him.

NOA

Well, maybe you haven't been going to the right places?

QUINN

Yeah, I thought that too. Figured my friends must be too cheap or something.

(CONTINUED)

NOA

You don't look too cheap to me!

Quinn finally looks at Noa, and for a moment there's a flicker of warmth across his face - before he remembers he's still meant to be feeling down, and he looks back to the display.

Noa frowns, sensing his mood, and steps closer still.

NOA (cont'd)

You look kinda blue. What's up?

QUINN

Lots of things. Lots of questions, no answers. Spent all last week seeing if I could find any in fortune cookies, but when all they said was 'that wasn't chicken,' I figured I'd try something else.

Noa giggles and Quinn manages a smile for her at last, holding out his hand.

QUINN (cont'd)

I'm Jon.

NOA

(shakes hand)

Noa. What brings you to Crawford's today, Jon?

QUINN

(shrugs)

Saw some of the boys out front, figured I'd see what was up.

NOA

(puzzled)

'The boys'?

(gets it)

Oh, you mean cops!

QUINN

Yeah, that's it. I'm a detective. Well, sort of.

He starts to walk, and she starts to follow.

QUINN (cont'd)

I'm on an involuntary holiday at the moment. My partner died a few weeks ago and we only just found out, so I guess I'm on bereavement leave or something.

(CONTINUED)

NOA
(sympathetic)
Oh, that's awful! Are you okay?

QUINN
Been better. Just trying to
distract myself, you know?

NOA
Yeah, I know.
(thinks; smiles)
Oh, hey, wait! I know just the
thing.

QUINN
You do?

NOA
Yeah, yeah, totally. I'm on this,
uh... science experiment at the
moment. I work in this lab just
across town, Webb Researching, you
heard of it?

Quinn shakes his head.

NOA (cont'd)
Doesn't matter, we're only small.
Anyway, I'm out here to collect
some, uh, skin samples, from some
of the uh... rodents that are
living here, you know, testing for
disease and stuff? So, uh, if
you're stuck for something to do,
why not come help me out?

Quinn looks her up and down, a little suspicious.

QUINN
You don't look like you're here to
do anything scientific.

Noa grins and reaches into her pocket - pulling out half of a
pair of latex gloves.

NOA
See? All I need!

She SNAPS the gloves back into place, and Quinn grins again,
intrigued by her.

QUINN
Alright, I'm listening. What's the
plan?

NOA

Well, first of all, seeing as you said you're a detective and all, I may need a tiny, weeny little favour from you so we can get started. I mean, you know, you totally don't have to if you don't want to, I know we only just met, and-

QUINN

(chuckles)

It's fine. Lead on.

Noa beams up at him, and as the two walk on, we cut to:

INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - CAR PARK. DAY.

We're looking out across one level of the multistorey car park, which is filled with many more cars this time, as another uniform cop strolls past, humming to himself.

He doesn't spot a pair of legs swing down into view from the next level up, shortly followed by the rest of Faith - she's clambered down the long way round from the floor above, and with another swing she lands gracefully inside the level itself.

Checking all around, she stays low and uses the cars for cover as she heads towards the yellow door that opens onto the staircase.

Reaching the door, she makes a final scan round before opening it and heading down, out of sight.

INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - BASEMENT. DAY.

Faith steps out into the same sub level where Fulber rescued his keys the previous evening, pressing herself against a wall as two shop assistants walk past, chatting to each other.

When the coast is clear, she steps out and heads across the basement, sweeping her head left to right as she looks for any signs of the demons she's after.

She passes a row of steel dumpsters, pausing as she picks up on something.

She reaches up and with a heave manages to roll one of the dumpsters round - and there's a large handprint on the back of it. Definitely not human, given the size.

Faith grunts with exertion as she pulls the whole dumpster bodily out of line - it doesn't look like it's been moved for years, as it's cracked and empty, although it still weighs quite a bit.

As Faith peers into the space she's created, she sees what she's after - a hole tunneled into the concrete wall behind, large enough to let something human-sized pass through.

The edges of the opening are stained with bloody handprints, and a trail of filth leading in and out of the hole tells us that it's been in recent use.

Faith grins at her find, and as she steps towards the opening, we cut back to:

Noa and Quinn approach the two cops we saw on duty earlier, who look up towards us.

COP #1

Back again, Detective?

Quinn nods and motions to Noa.

QUINN

This woman's a witness to the incident, I'm just going to take her past the crime scene, see if it can help her recall anything for us.

The cops exchange a look, then with a shrug, the first one steps aside.

COP #1

Knock yourselves out. Not much to see down there, so if she does pick anything up, we'd sure love to hear about it!

QUINN

Thanks.

He walks casually past the two cops, Noa taking a moment longer to smile at both of them before following Quinn.

She whispers to him, glancing back over her shoulder at the cops.

NOA

Wasn't that kind of illegal?

QUINN

Like they said, not much to see down here. I've checked this all out once already. You said this was the best way to get to the areas you need, so... Here we are.

Noa eyes Quinn warily, but as he grins at her, she finds herself smiling back.

NOA

Okay, okay, I'll buy it. The detective dupes a couple of his own guys just to help out some random girl he just met with her science project. I guess that could make sense to some people.

Quinn doesn't answer as they walk on, towards the yellow doors that lead down to the basement.

NOA (cont'd)

I mean, yeah, this was the only way to get down here 'cause the police have blocked off the other exits, so, you know thanks for getting me this far, but... Aren't you gonna get into trouble?

QUINN

(beat)

Maybe I don't feel like being a detective today.

Still not sure what to make of him, Noa stays with Quinn as they approach the yellow doors, and we cut to:

Faith pads slowly through the tunnel she found, taking a small flashlight from her pocket and using it to try and see where she's going.

It's small beam doesn't offer much help, but she can at least make out the rough, almost hand-carved tunnel walls as she heads onwards.

She freezes as she hears sounds of movement ahead - grunts, shuffling sounds, what could be an open fire crackling away.

As she sees a bend in the tunnel and light coming from the other side of it, Faith wisely tucks her flashlight away and replaces it with a trusty stake, edging forwards as we cut back to:

17

INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - BASEMENT. DAY.

17

Noa is kneeling down by what looks like a mound of droppings, waving another of Pryor's small, boxy gadgets over it.

The box BEEPS and a small red light flashes, and Noa grimaces as she realises that these are the 'samples' she was looking for.

They're over in a far corner of the basement, the metal dumpsters Faith found visible in the background.

Arms folded, Quinn stands a few feet away, leaning against a pillar and watching Noa with a bemused grin.

QUINN

So... You do this sort of thing often?

Noa glances round as she retrieves her latex gloves.

NOA

What sort through dem- er, rodent poop in dirty basements? Oh, yeah, all the time.

She turns back round, muttering under her breath.

NOA (cont'd)

More and more, these days, too...

QUINN

And this 'experiment' you're helping out with, it's all about finding where these rodents are, then working out what to use to kill 'em, based on the samples you find, right?

NOA

(hesitant)

Uh... yeah, that's right!

Quinn nods, glancing round the basement. He grins as Noa snaps on her gloves and reaches a hand gingerly out towards the pile of droppings.

NOA (cont'd)

I hate this part...

QUINN

Hate to interrupt, but don't you need something to keep the samples in? You know, like a bag, or a dish, or even a tissue?

(CONTINUED)

Noa pauses, then silently curses - busted. She quickly fixes her best smile in place and turns round.

NOA

Heh, whoops? Silly me. Guess you can tell why they give me these jobs, can't you?

(points to hair)

I'm, like, so blonde sometimes...

QUINN

Yeah, I get that.

Quinn grins back at her - Noa isn't sure if he's worked out that she's making her whole story up or not, but decides to go with 'not' for now.

NOA

Okay, so, yeah, you got me. I forgot my little, uh, petri dish thing. But come on, you got me this far, you can't let me go back to the lab empty handed, can you? I mean, all we'd need would be a-

Quinn reaches over and snatches up a bottle of shampoo from a trolley next to him - its loaded up with other toiletries and goods, ready to be stacked on the shelves of one of the shops above.

He unscrews the lid and pours the contents down into a drain by his feet, as a surprised Noa watches on.

NOA (cont'd)

You just don't have any morals at all, do you?

QUINN

I'm helping a damsel in distress. End justifies the means.

He passes her the now empty plastic bottle, and, still bemused, she uses it to gather up a healthy dollop of the droppings before her.

She stands and turns to Quinn, smiling.

NOA

There! All set. Well, guess I've made you break the law long enough, how's about you escort me off the premises and we can call this a day?

QUINN

Don't mind if I do.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

Noa snaps off the gloves and wraps them round the lid of the bottle, making sure its secure, then heads back towards the exit, Quinn following after he takes a few more glances round the basement.

His expression is serious for a moment - as though he knows there's something down her he should be looking for.

As he follows Noa, we cut back to:

18 INT. TUNNEL - CAVE. DAY.

18

As Faith peeks round the bend in the tunnel, she looks into a small chamber built into the tunnel.

Inside are four of the insiro demons, tall and dark-skinned, sitting cross-legged round an open fire.

Faith is hidden by the shadows, but as she takes one step forward, one of the demons slowly turns its head to face her, starting to SNARL.

Seeing that her cover is blown, Faith steps boldly into the chamber, stake raised.

FAITH

Alright, you got me. I never was
much good at hide and seek.

As the four demons stand, showing that they're all taller than Faith, she tightens her grip on the stake and takes up a more defensive stance.

FAITH (cont'd)

So let's play a new game.

As the first demon ROARS, baring a mouthful of pure white teeth inside its otherwise black head, we quickly cut to:

19 INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL. DAY.

19

Noa and Quinn walk on, chatting more easily now. The shampoo bottle has been securely wrapped in about three plastic bags - and Noa's even talked Quinn into carrying it for her!

NOA

So, then, I'd been there a few
months and was starting to wonder
what the heck it was all for, when
this new girl shows up, and since
she's been there, things have
been...

Noa trails off, searching for the right word.

(CONTINUED)

QUINN

Different?

NOA

Exciting.

QUINN

(wry)

Funny, the whole 'sneaking round basements, filling bottles with poop' side of your work doesn't sound all that exciting to me.

NOA

It's hard to explain, she's just - there's a lot of layers to her, you know? Like she only lets a few people close enough to know her, to really know her, and when she's around, stuff just... happens.

QUINN

Trouble magnet, you mean.

NOA

Oh, it's not all bad. This one time, we even-

Noa stops as her cell phone starts RINGING.

NOA (cont'd)

Oh, 'scuse me.

(answers it)

Hello?

We intercut with:

Faith stands, panting with exertion, over the bodies of the four demons. Her hands are caked in the green blood of the creatures, and she looks like she took a fair few hits in the process.

FAITH

Noa? Slight change of plan. Get whatever you've got and get out of here.

NOA

Oh, it's cool, I found plenty of, you know, the samples. There was this nice guy to help me who-

FAITH

(interrupts; winces)

Sounds great - look, just get back
to the lab and I'll meet you there,
okay?

NOA

Okay, got it. See ya.

Faith hangs up, and as she puts the phone away, we see that she has a nasty gash running down her left arm.

Faith examines the wound, which is clearly causing a fair bit of pain, and reaches over to it.

With another wince and a quick tug, she pulls out a long, black spine which was lodged in her arm. Faith peers at the spine for a moment, then flicks it away.

As she turns and starts to head for the cave's exit, we shift down to take a look at the discarded spine.

Close up on it - a single drop of green venom hangs on the tip of the spine for a beat, before dropping to the floor with a SPLASH, and from that, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

21 INT. LAB - 'THE SLAB.' EVENING.

21

Back in the exam room of Webb Researching, as Pryor studies a sample of the droppings Noa found.

In the background, Faith is gingerly flexing her arm, as Noa finishes wrapping a bandage round the wound.

FAITH

So is that all you need, Pryor?

PRYOR

It's a start, yes. What I could really do with are some skin samples and most of all some blood, that'd really help me fill in the full picture.

Faith glances round, spots her discarded jacket and scoops it up, tossing it towards Pryor.

FAITH

Plenty on there.

Pryor studies the jacket - it's spattered with the green blood of the insiro demons, and a little of Faith's by the tear in the left arm. He raises an eyebrow.

PRYOR

Are you sure that injury of yours isn't too bad? From the looks of it, they got you pretty deep.

FAITH

'S fine. Just a scratch. Found these little spine things in my arm, but I picked 'em out, so I don't think...

Faith trails off as she sees that Pryor has paled visible. She and Noa exchange a confused look.

FAITH (cont'd)

Pryor?

PRYOR

Did you say 'spines'?

FAITH

Yeah, that's right.

PRYOR

Oh, dear.

(CONTINUED)

Pryor quickly gets up and hurries over to his computer. Noa starts to look worried too as Faith stands, trying to laugh it off.

FAITH

No, see, I'd know if they got any poison or anything into me, 'cause I'd have started to feel it by now, right? You know, Slayer blood and all, works quicker than most, and-

PRYOR

(interrupts; serious)

Faith, if you did get any of their secretions into your system, then your enhanced Slayer metabolism is exactly the worst thing to have.

FAITH

(beat)

Oh.

NOA

(catches up)

It'll get round her system quicker, won't it?

Pryor nods and turns back to his computer, rapidly typing as Faith marches over, not looking happy.

FAITH

C'mon, Pryor, leave the doom at the door for a second! Didn't we get enough samples to analyse these things, so you can cook up an antidote or something?

PRYOR

Faith, I've only just started to make my notes. Ordinarily, we're looking at months of hard work here to isolate and identify the agents in the demon's blood that causes the rapid ageing we've observed in its victims.

NOA

Months?

PRYOR

At best.

Faith sighs and sits back down, well used by now to getting bad news.

(CONTINUED)

FAITH

Okay, so, if I've got some of that
poison in my system, how long till
I end up like the other victims?

Pryor taps on his computer for a second, double checking
something, before turning back to Faith.

PRYOR

Well, from the autopsy reports I
managed to hack into and download,
the victims seemed to last about
eight hours. Their bodies aged
overnight, the demons leaving them
to ripen, almost, before coming
back to extract the nutrients they
needed. But with your metabolism,
my best guess is-

FAITH

(stern)
How long?

PRYOR

(beat; sighs)
Less than four hours.

Faith closes her eyes, and Noa looks suitably horrified.

FAITH

Chances of you working out an
antidote in that time?

PRYOR

Virtually nil.

NOA

'Virtually' nil is better than,
like, completely nil, though...
Right?

PRYOR

If you were able to get me some
better samples, maybe even a
specimen, live or dead, then I
could get through this a lot
quicker, so-

Faith stands, cutting Pryor off.

FAITH

Bound to be more of those things
back in that mall, I'll just go
find one and drag its ass back
here.

PRYOR

(shakes head)

Out of the question. Physical exertion on your part will only make the toxins travel round your bloodstream more quickly. If you go running after demons and fighting them, you're signing your own death warrant.

Faith falls silent for a beat, then nods, accepting the situation.

FAITH

Only one thing for it, then.

Faith and Pryor both turn to look at Noa, who double takes when she finally realises they're staring at her.

NOA

(shocked)

Me?!?

PRYOR

I have to stay here and keep working, see if I can do anything to help in the meantime. Faith, you'd better get back to your apartment, stay rested up. That should slow down the toxins.

NOA

Wait, wait, back up a few blocks here, everybody. Are we forgetting the part where I'm not exactly cut out for killing a demon, on my own, and then bringing it back here? I'll get killed!

FAITH

Noa, the bodies of the ones I killed earlier are probably still there. Just get in there, grab one and come back. Simple.

(to Pryor)

You got any gadgets she can use?

Pryor scans the tabletop nearby that is covered with his prototype demon-hunting devices, nodding and picking up a bandolier of bulky, grapefruit-sized grenades.

PRYOR

These should repel any insiro demons you encounter, the gas they release has been designed to be toxic to them.

(CONTINUED)

NOA
(gulps)
Gas?

PRYOR
It won't hurt you, don't worry.
Plus, it'll make an excellent
smokescreen.

Noa looks from Pryor to Faith, and back.

NOA
You're both serious, aren't you?

FAITH
You're the only shot we've got at
this, Noa.

Faith steps towards Noa, who looks overwhelmed by this new mission, but Faith manages as close to a comforting smile as she can for her.

FAITH (cont'd)
You always did want to be a hero,
right? Now's your chance.

And from Noa's less-than-convinced look, we cut to:

It's a little later, the moon up in the sky and the lights of the city surrounding us on all sides, along with the customary hordes of New Yorkers on the sidewalks.

Through them weaves Noa, her jacket pulled tight around her as she fights her way through the heaving crowds.

She's making slow progress, gritting her teeth in frustration until she spots someone off screen, and with a relieved smile makes her way over to them.

Quinn is standing by a news kiosk, casually flicking through a paper. A half-eaten hot dog lies on top of a bench next to him.

He looks up as Noa hustles into frame, out of breath, and he raises an eyebrow.

QUINN
Well, if it isn't Science Girl!

NOA
Hi! Help. Quick. Please?

QUINN
I'm sorry?

NOA
(deep breath)
I need your help again, sorry, but
we have to move real quick. Please?

Quinn folds the paper up and drops it on the bench, picking up on Noa's urgency.

QUINN
What's the problem?

NOA
Uh, it's kind of complicated. Come
on, I'll explain on the way.

She grabs his hand and starts to dash away, dragging the bemused Quinn after her, as we cut to:

INT. FAITH'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

We're inside the apartment as the keys rattle in the door, before the door opens to reveal an already tired-looking Faith.

Goliath MEOWS happily and rubs against her legs as she steps into the apartment, seeming a little unsteady on her feet.

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Faith steps into the small bathroom and clicks the light on, studying her reflection closely.

She notices the large, dark bags under her eyes still, a leftover from her hangover, but she squints as she spots something else.

A GREY HAIR, standing out sharply against the dark browns of the rest of her hair.

Faith reaches up and plucks the offending hair out, staring at it before shaking it away from her fingers.

She SIGHS, runs the taps and splashes a little cold water onto her face, towelling off and stepping back out.

INT. FAITH'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

As Faith heads back into the main room of her apartment, she doesn't spot GABRIEL standing in the still-open doorway for a few beats.

Her Slayer Sense finally kicks in, and she spins round, fists up, relaxing a little when she twigs who it is.

GABRIEL

(grins)

Most people just say 'hey,' or 'oh,
did I leave the door open?'

FAITH

(not in the mood)

Not tonight, Gabe.

Gabriel steps into the apartment, leaving the door open, and with an annoyed grunt, Faith marches over, SLAMS it shut and then flops down on the sofa, wincing as she brushes her bad arm against something.

GABRIEL

Heard you had a little accident
earlier today.

FAITH

I get that a lot.

GABRIEL

Accidents?

FAITH

People hearing stuff about me. Used
to it by now.

She turns to face him, still scowling as he casually scans the apartment.

FAITH (cont'd)

Look, have you got something to
say, or not? I don't want any
company at the moment, so say your
piece, and then get on out of here.

Gabriel crouches as Goliath wanders over, the cat staring up at Gabriel curiously, keeping his distance.

GABRIEL

(grins at cat; speaks to
Faith)

Be patient.

Faith waits for more, but Gabe carries on studying the cat, and vice versa.

FAITH

That's it?

(bitter laugh)

Great, just when I think you
couldn't get any more annoying,
then you come out with a classic
like that!

(CONTINUED)

GABRIEL

(stands)

It's a nice night. Let's go up on the roof.

FAITH

(blinks)

Are you high? Did you miss the 'get the hell out of my apartment' speech?

Gabriel turns and starts to walk towards the rear of the apartment, towards a window that opens onto a fire escape.

GABRIEL

We can get out this way, right? Do these ladders go all the way to the roof?

Faith glares at him for a beat - then admits defeat, standing and heading over to him.

She YANKS the window up, and Gabriel TUTS at her.

FAITH

What?

GABRIEL

Stay cool. Remember? You've got insiro demon venom in your system, you give it any excuse to work more quickly and it'll kill you before you get a chance to fill out your pension plan.

Faith stares at him - and Gabriel's calm expression manages to ease her tension a little. She nods towards the window.

FAITH

After you.

Gabe grins and steps out, onto the fire escape gantry outside. He calls down to Faith as he starts to jog up the steps, which rattle around him.

GABRIEL

And don't go looking at my ass!

FAITH

(mutters)

Yeah, right...

But despite herself, she can't help having a little smirk before she steps out through the window, and we cut to:

26

INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL. NIGHT.

26

The mall is definitely closed for the evening now, as we pan across the sealed shop fronts, shutters down and lights out. No stray shoppers are wandering around this time.

There's a RATTLING sound from somewhere, and after a moment we start to push in on a fire door near the ramp leading to the car park.

The fire door SHAKES a few times, and then finally BURSTS open, revealing a red-faced Noa, arm braced against the door as Quinn looks on.

QUINN

Alright, remind me how I let you talk me into doing this?

NOA

(catching breath)
Matter of life or death!

QUINN

(dryly)
Oh yeah, right.

Noa steps forward, scanning the mall to make sure it's empty, then she starts heading for the car park.

NOA

Come on, Jon, you know as well as I do that this place doesn't have proper alarms, or security cameras, or even a guard watching the place at night. There's nothing here worth stealing!

QUINN

That's not the point! By rights, I should bring you in now for breaking and entering.

Noa stops, turning to face him with her sweetest smile.

NOA

You wouldn't do that... would you?

Quinn stares at her for a beat. He resists the puppy dog eyes for about three seconds - a new record. With a bemused grin, he shakes his head.

QUINN

Look, you're obviously an expert at getting men to do what you want, so I'll help you out this once.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED:

26

QUINN (cont'd)
But we're out of here in five
minutes, alright?

NOA
(enthusiastic)
Course!

She dashes towards the ramp, and with a last, cautious glance round, Quinn follows as we cut back to:

27

EXT. APARTMENT BLOCK - ROOFTOP. NIGHT.

27

Faith climbs the last few steps, taking her time as per Pryor's orders, her boots crunching on the gravel of the rooftop as she joins Gabriel.

He's standing near the edge of the roof, looking out across the glittering lights of the NY skyline.

Faith looks out for a beat, then SIGHS loudly.

FAITH
I'm sure it's very pretty, Gabe,
but why don't you tell me why we're
really up here?

Gabe turns to Faith - and double takes.

FAITH (cont'd)
What?

In the time it's taken her to climb the stairs, Faith's face has developed a few extra wrinkles, as though the journey aged her a handful of years.

GABRIEL
(guilty)
I'm sorry, this was a bad idea.

He starts to walk away, but Faith reaches out a hand to stop him.

He jerks away from it, and she slowly brings her hand back.

FAITH
Okay, okay, no touching, I get it.
I'm probably contagious or
something.

GABRIEL
Can't be too careful.

Faith looks out across the city for a beat, then sits down, her legs hanging over the edge of the roof.

(CONTINUED)

FAITH

C'mon, Gabe. Sit. It's probably the only thing I should be doing right now, anyway.

Gabriel hesitates - then joins her, sitting beside her and sharing a few moments of silence with Faith.

GABRIEL

I did have a few things to tell you, you know.

FAITH

They can wait.

Gabe smiles and nods, and we cut away from them to:

INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

Noa paces nervously forward, her eyes scanning the basement level as she looks for any signs of the insiro demons.

Quinn is a few steps behind, now starting to look less happy by the moment.

QUINN

Listen, Noa, I know I said I'd help you out here, but we really should-

NOA

(holds up hand)
Ssh! You hear that?

They both listen - nothing. Quinn shrugs.

QUINN

There's nothing down here. Except maybe a few fats and bugs - isn't that what you're after?

NOA

(distracted)
Uh, rats, yeah, that's it.

Quinn is now very suspicious, and he walks up to Noa, placing a hand on her shoulder and turning her to face him.

QUINN

Okay, I've been patient enough. There's obviously something weird going on here, and if I don't get an answer in the next five seconds, I'm frogmarching your ass out of here and straight into the precinct. Now. What the heck are we looking for down here?

Noa opens her mouth to answer - then freezes as a low, guttural GROWL echoes around the basement.

Her eyes bulge - there's something behind Quinn. He twigs and slowly turns round to face it.

Another insiro demon stands about six feet away, its gleaming white fangs bared as it HISSES at the duo.

Noa points a trembling finger towards the demon.

NOA

Uh... One of those.

As the insiro suddenly ROARS and lunges towards us, we quickly:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

29 INT. CRAWFORD'S MALL - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

29

Straight back into action, as the insiro demon POUNCES towards Quinn and Noa.

QUINN

Look out!!

Quinn SHOVES Noa out of the way as the demon barrels into him, knocking him to the floor.

Noa YELPS in alarm and fumbles with her jacket, trying to open it up.

NOA

(frantic)

Come on, come on!

Quinn struggles with the demon, managing to get a hand under its chin to keep its jaws from closing round its neck. It SWIPES a claw at him, catching him across the head and leaving a nasty cut.

Noa finally unzips her jacket - revealing the bandolier of Pryor's stun grenades. She pulls one loose and looks over to where Quinn is busy fighting the demon.

NOA (cont'd)

Jon! Close your eyes!

QUINN

What?!?

Noa presses the trigger on the top of the grenade and THROWS it towards the demon - and it sails past it, missing by miles.

NOA

Oops...

QUINN

Noa! Run!!

NOA

No, wait, I can get it this time...

Almost detached from the situation, Noa readies a second grenade and aims it.

Quinn, meanwhile is trying and failing to keep the insiro demon's jaws from his neck, the creature's teeth getting closer every second.

(CONTINUED)

He tries to HEAVE it away from him, but it's too heavy, and he SHOUTS with exertion as he tries to summon every last bit of strength...

And then with a BANG, Noa lands a stun grenade right next to the demon, which detonates in a burst of yellow light and a rapidly-developing cloud of gas.

The insiro SCREECHES and falls away from Quinn, who scrambles to his feet, coughing.

Noa runs over to him, keeping an eye on the convulsing demon a few feet away.

NOA (cont'd)

Oh, my God! Are you alright? That thing almost killed you!

QUINN

Almost doesn't count, but what the hell was in those grenades?

(beat)

And where does a science student get grenades from?

NOA

(evasive)

Uh, well, the thing is, we-

There is an off screen ROAR before the insiro demon, back on its feet, makes another lunge towards them.

QUINN

Get down!!

Quinn gets between Noa and the demon, drawing his gun and FIRING five times in one swift motion.

Noa, stunned, watches on as Quinn calmly steps up to the demon, its breathing shallow and ragged, and after a beat he puts a final bullet into its head.

Noa's jaw scrapes the floor as Quinn casually wipes away some of the blood from his head wound, turning round.

QUINN (cont'd)

Sorry, didn't have much chance to react there. Are you okay?

NOA

But- what- how- you-

QUINN

Killed it, yeah.

(shrugs)

Wasn't the first.

(CONTINUED)

Noa frowns, then the penny finally drops.

NOA

Wait, wait - you know about...
(whispers)
Demons?

QUINN

(chuckles)
No need to whisper, Noa, there's
nobody who can hear us! And yes, I
do. Have done for years.

NOA

Oh.
(beat; smiles)
Cool. That makes things much
easier.

We cut from Noa's grin to:

EXT. APARTMENT - ROOFTOP. NIGHT.

Back with Faith and Gabriel, still side by side as they look
out across the city lights.

Faith looks to have aged a little more - more grey hairs
streak her dark browns, and there are more lines around her
face.

She catches Gabriel giving her a concerned look over, and
chuckles.

FAITH

Not looking so hot now, huh?

GABRIEL

What? Oh, no, just that-

FAITH

Relax. I've had worse. Spent a
while in someone else's body once.
Now that was a weird coupla days.
Still not quite as freaky as
getting stuck in someone else's
memories, though.

She COUGHS, sounding like she's been smoking a few packs of
cigarettes, and it takes her a moment to catch her breath
afterwards.

GABRIEL

How are you feeling?

FAITH

On a scale of hot to not, I'm
feeling like I shoulda just stayed
in bed this morning like I wanted
to.

Gabriel manages a comforting smile.

FAITH (cont'd)

So are you gonna tell me what you
had to say or what? 'Cause all I'm
saying is, may not have much longer
to tell me.

GABRIEL

I'll get to it. I'm just soaking up
the moment.

FAITH

(raises eyebrow)
'Moment'?

GABRIEL

This is the first time we've had
chance to talk since we met. The
people I work for, they prefer me
to just show up, give out the news
and go. Makes moments like this
worth saving.

FAITH

(sarcastic)
Oh, yeah, the first time we get
together when I'm off duty, and I'm
busy turning into George Burns. You
sure know how to pick 'em, Gabe.

GABRIEL

(grins)
I suppose I do.

Faith glances over at him, then smirks and looks back across
the view as we cut to:

INT. LAB - 'THE SLAB.' NIGHT.

With a heavy THUNK, the body of the insiro demon is dropped
onto the main exam table.

Pryor stands over it, his goggles and lab coat on as he looks
it up and down, smiling.

PRYOR

Yes... yes! Perfect. Excellent!

(CONTINUED)

He looks up, over to where a proud-looking Noa stands next to Quinn.

PRYOR (cont'd)
(to Quinn)
I'm sorry, what did you say your name was?

QUINN
Jon. Jon Quinn.

PRYOR
Well, Mr. Quinn, you've done us a great service tonight, and hopefully saved our friend's life!

QUINN
Just doing my bit. Like I said to Noa, I've known about things like this for years now. Don't run into them all that much, but it helps to know what you're doing.

NOA
Oh, and speaking of 'knowing what you're doing,' Pryor, those stupid stun grenades of yours lasted about five seconds! That's less 'stun' and more like 'hesitate.'

Pryor tries to think of an excuse, then gets back to the insiro demon, a scalpel in his hand.

PRYOR
Nobody's perfect.

NOA
Hmph. Well, luckily, Jon was there to save my ass.

She beams up at him, and Quinn smiles back.

NOA (cont'd)
(flirtatious)
I have a feeling we'll be seeing a lot more of him!

Pryor looks up again and holds out his hand, which Quinn shakes.

PRYOR
Yes, thank you. We were in a lot of trouble tonight until Noa stumbled across you!
(thinks)
(MORE)

PRYOR (cont'd)
Actually, that's a good point. How
did you two meet, exactly?

Noa looks to Quinn, but he's ready with an answer.

QUINN
Window shopping.

He smiles back at Noa, who looks like she just woke up on
Christmas morning.

The moment is spoiled a little by a wet SQUELCH from off
screen as Pryor starts to cut into the demon's chest. Noa
rolls her eyes and looks back over to Pryor.

NOA
Do you have to do that right now?
We still have guests!

PRYOR
Yes, well, time is of the essence
here, so I'm afraid this is the
part where we get our hands dirty.

NOA
'We'?

In response, Pryor holds out a pair of latex gloves to Noa
with his free hand.

PRYOR
I'll need your help to extract the
venom gland from the creature! If I
had three hands, I could do it
myself, but-

NOA
(sighs)
Alright, alright, point taken.

Noa takes the gloves and turns to Quinn.

NOA (cont'd)
Uh, you should probably get going,
this part gets kinda icky.

QUINN
(bemused)
So I can see... Do you guys do this
sort of thing a lot?

NOA
More often than you'd think.
Especially lately.

QUINN
Why's that?

NOA

Oh, since that new girl I told you
about started here. Trouble sure
seems to follow that girl around! I
remember this one time, she was-

PRYOR

(interrupts)

Noa.

Noa looks over - Pryor has his 'now's a good time to stop
talking' look on, and Noa nods before turning back to Quinn.

NOA

Um, sorry. Anyway-

QUINN

It's okay, I'm on my way out. Nice
meeting you, Pryor.

Pryor doesn't look up, raising a hand as a goodbye as he
focuses on the body before him.

Quinn turns back to Noa.

QUINN (cont'd)

So, I guess I'll see you around
sometime, huh?

NOA

Yeah! Seeing me around is good.

QUINN

I picked up one of your little
leaflets by the door, it's got this
place's number on. I'll give you a
call, see if we can meet up for a
night without any of that scooping
up demon crap stuff.

Noa giggles, and Quinn turns to leave. She watches him all
the way to the door, where he turns and gives her one last
grin before leaving.

Noa bounces over to Pryor, giddy with excitement.

NOA

Did you see that? Did you? Did you?
He gave me The Look!

PRYOR

(concentrating)

Did he...

(CONTINUED)

NOA

That was totally a Look. Classic sign. You let 'em walk away, and if they stop and turn round before they go, then that means they like you. Never fails.

PRYOR

Dish.

Pryor holds out his hand, and Noa picks up a small metal dish, which Pryor drops a yellowy green organ into - it's the insiro's venom sac, looking like a squashed tennis ball. Noa grimaces and puts the dish back down.

NOA

Gross. Now what?

Pryor stands, removing his goggles and picking up a syringe, which he injects carefully into the venom sac.

PRYOR

Now, we extract a sample of the venom and let the computer decipher the sequence we need to create an antidote.

NOA

And then?

PRYOR

And then, you run as fast as you can to Faith's apartment to get the antidote to her.

NOA

Why didn't we just ask her to stay here? It'd have saved me some legwork.

Pryor carefully drops some of the venom into a test tube connected to a device on his computer, then taps a few keys.

He leans back and scratches the back of his head as he searches for the right words as the computer starts its work.

PRYOR

I didn't think we'd do it. If Quinn hadn't been there to help you, you'd probably be the next meal for that creature by now.

NOA

I guess... Wait, are you saying you thought Faith was going to die on us?

(CONTINUED)

PRYOR

(nods)

I'm afraid so. I sent her home
because...

(beat; sighs)

I didn't want her to die here. I at
least wanted her to be comfortable.

NOA

(beat)

Have you seen her apartment?
'Comfortable' isn't a word that
springs to mind. She keeps calling
it 'spartan,' whatever the hell
that means.

Pryor grins, just as the computer BEEPS. He turns to check
it, looking back to Noa with a victorious grin.

PRYOR

We have a winner.

Noa smiles happily back at him, as we cut to:

As the tune of 'Rakimou' by Plaid plays over the scene, we
rejoin Faith and Gabriel on the rooftop of her apartment
block.

Gabriel takes a deep breath, then looks across to Faith - and
he sees with alarm that she's slumped a little forward, as
though she's dozing off to sleep.

GABRIEL

Faith? Faith!

(louder)

Faith!

She JOLTS awake with a SNORT, her balance returning. She
realises how close she came to pitching forward off the roof,
and leans back.

FAITH

(groggy)

Woah...

GABRIEL

Maybe sitting this close to the
edge isn't such a smart idea any
more.

FAITH

Yeah...

They shuffle back a few steps, away from the edge.

Faith now looks in bad shape - her face is a mess of lines and wrinkles, and her tired eyes blink out from beneath hair that's more grey than brown by now.

Gabriel looks worried, still, but Faith catches his expression and manages a grin, her breath short and wheezy.

FAITH (cont'd)

Guess I missed my chance...

GABRIEL

Sorry?

FAITH

I said, I guess I missed my chance with you, huh?

GABRIEL

(not understanding)

'Chance'?

FAITH

Don't try and be all coy with me, Gabe. It doesn't suit you. Looks like I missed my chance by about sixty years or so, I was going to say.

Gabriel tries to grin at her joke, but he can't.

FAITH (cont'd)

It's not all bad. At least if I'm gonna go, it's not out there, down some back alley with a knife in my gut, or getting drained by some street punk vamp that got lucky one day.

GABRIEL

You think that's how you're going to die? By accident?

FAITH

(shrugs)

Karma. I figured a girl with my record doesn't get to go out in one of the easy ways, like living to get all grey-haired and dotty and die in a rest home watching reruns of 'Cheers.'

GABRIEL

Somehow, you strike me more as a 'King Of Queens' kind of girl.

(CONTINUED)

FAITH

(chuckles)

'Nikki' ain't too bad either. But
do you know what I mean?

GABRIEL

I think so. There was this fighter
pilot in the first World War,
German guy by the name of Baron von
Richtofen, or 'the Red Baron' to
his enemies. He shot down eighty-
five enemy planes in his career, a
record that nobody ever came close
to touching. You know how he died?

FAITH

Bad bratwurst?

GABRIEL

(shakes head)

Some Canadian rookie, can't
remember his name, but he was up on
his second mission, got jumped by
the Baron, then got a clear shot
and took it. Boom. No more Red
Baron, just like that.

FAITH

(nods)

Yep, sounds like a guy after my own
heart. Spends his life doing his
job, then his reward is to get laid
out by some newbie who probably
couldn't even see who he was
shooting at!

Faith tries to chuckle but starts COUGHING again, and after
another concerned look, Gabriel glances over his shoulder,
towards the fire escape, then back at Faith.

GABRIEL

(serious)

You're not going to die up here.

FAITH

(weakly)

Huh?

Gabe glances over his shoulder again before replying.

GABRIEL

You'll always get another chance.

Gabriel suddenly stands up, his eyes locked on Faith.

(CONTINUED)

GABRIEL (cont'd)

I have to go.

FAITH

Go? Go where?

Gabe looks over to the fire escape again, then back at Faith. He obviously doesn't want to leave her, but he doesn't appear to have any choice.

Without another word, he walks off screen, leaving Faith alone on the rooftop.

She tries to turn round to look for him, but he's gone. She tries to call out, but her voice is too weak, cracking up.

FAITH (cont'd)

Gabe... Gabriel! Gabriel!

NOA (O.S.)

Faith! Oh, thank God!

Faith looks over - Noa is just dashing up the fire escape, hopping onto the roof and dashing over to Faith.

She holds a small white bottle in her hands, which she presses into Faith's hand, her face full of worry as she takes in Faith's aged appearance.

NOA (cont'd)

Drink this, quick. We made you the antidote, but Pryor says you don't have long left.

FAITH

Did you... Did you see him?

NOA

(blinks)

Who?

FAITH

Gabriel, he was... He was right here with me, he just left... Did you see where he went?

Noa scans the rooftop, but Gabriel is nowhere in sight.

NOA

No, sorry, I can't see him. There's about three ways down off here, he's probably gone down another way. Drink!

Faith manages to sip the antidote at last.

(CONTINUED)

NOA (cont'd)
(smiles)
There you go. I need you all better
so I can tell you about my night?

Faith takes another GULP and looks up at Noa suspiciously.

FAITH
Why am I already not liking the
sound of this?

NOA
Don't worry, it's all good.
(proudly)
And I met a guy!

Faith raises an eyebrow as she carries on drinking, and we
cut to:

Quinn sits on his sofa, the apartment round him still
somewhat dishevelled.

In his hand is the flyer from Webb Researching, a small promo
leaflet with their address, opening times and a few
paragraphs about their other clients.

Quinn stares at the leaflet for a beat - then grins. Maybe
today wasn't such a bad day after all.

From his satisfied look, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW