

SLAYER ACADEMY

"Field Trip"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ACADEMY CAMPUS - MORNING.

1

Looking down across the wide, well-manicured grounds of the Academy, the large building itself highlighted against the background by a bright morning sun as 'Pure Shores' by All Saints begins to play.

The edges of the grounds are lined by thick walls of trees, and it's through these that we catch glimpses of somebody cycling past, their shape flitting between gaps in the treeline.

It's SOFIA, the young Slayer's long, dark hair flowing out behind her as she pedals along, a quiet, reflective look on her face. Sofia comes to a turning and veers off to the right, heading towards a lake with an island in its centre.

We cut away from Sofia to pick up SKYE, dressed in tracksuit pants and a sleeveless t-shirt, her trusty iPod plugged in as she jogs round the grounds, starting her second lap as she passes the front gates.

She passes BARBARA, jogging round in the opposite direction, and the two nod a brief greeting to each other before continuing on their way.

Craning up from Skye towards the roof of the main assembly hall, we see ALITA, dressed in a plain white silk outfit as she continues her morning Tai Chi routine, her limbs gracefully sweeping through the air as she runs through the movements.

We look up towards the sun, away from Alita, before finding ourselves inside the indoor swimming pool, where FRANKIE is busily racing up and down the pool, pausing at the end of one lap to drain a little excess water from her goggles before she takes a deep breath and kicks away, using the backstroke this time.

2 EXT. ACADEMY GROUNDS - LAKE/ISLAND - MORNING.

2

Sofia brakes her bike to a stop at the edge of the lake, resting it against a nearby tree and stretching her muscles out, doing a few quick exercises to limber up.

She looks out towards the island, which is covered with trees just like the lake banks around it, about thirty feet away in the middle of the lake.

She glances to her right and we see there is a small, old rowing boat moored loosely at the shore. Sofia heads over and starts to untie the ropes.

3 INT. GREG'S CAR - MORNING. 3

We cut away from Sofia to the interior of a somewhat scruffy saloon car, driven by GREG PIERCE. Greg is a handsome young man in his late twenties, with glasses, curly blonde hair and a day's worth of stubble.

He takes a bite from a sandwich in one hand and tries to unfurl a road map with his other, peering out through the windshield and trying to navigate his way.

4 EXT. ACADEMY GROUNDS - LAKE - MORNING. 4

Sofia is rowing patiently across the lake, its still surface dissolving into ripples as she moves across it.

Within a few moments, she's covered the last of the distance to the island, the boat gently bumping the shore and coming to a stop. Sofia hops out, ties the mooring ropes to a tree stump, and heads on into the small spinney covering the island's surface.

5 EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - MORNING. 5

Greg is out of his car now, parked by the side of a long, empty road, with nothing but fields, hedges and dry stone walls in any direction.

The road map is spread across his car's bonnet as he studies it, looking up at a nearby road sign and scratching his head - he looks more than a little lost.

6 EXT. ACADEMY GROUNDS - ISLAND - MORNING. 6

Sofia pushes her way through the trees and overgrown foliage covering the island - it's more like a miniature, dense forest than anything else.

She comes to a stop, looking down at something off screen, and a sad smile crosses her features.

SOFIA
Hello, again.

She's looking down at a plain gravestone marking the last resting place of Emma Preston, the unfortunate new recruit who lost her life at the hands of the dream demon she and Sofia faced.

Sofia kneels down, clearing away some of the advancing plant life from the gravestone, and takes a small, potted plant from the small backpack slung over her shoulder, placing it carefully down at the graveside.

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SOFIA (cont'd)

Sorry it's taken me so long to get back out here, Emma. We've had new people showing up every few days at the moment! I was all set to just have you, me, Skye and the others for company, now we're up to at least thirty and counting.

She looks around, taking a moment as a sudden wave of emotion hits her. She laughs as she wipes away a tear from her eye.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Oh, look at me, only been here five seconds and I'm crying already!

She takes a moment to compose herself, then reaches out and places a hand against Emma's gravestone.

SOFIA (cont'd)

I know we didn't exactly have long to get to know each other, but... I miss you.

(beat)

And I wish you were still here. I need somebody else to talk to!

Sofia smiles, and as a wind rustles through the leaves around her, we cut back to:

7

EXT. ACADEMY - FRONT GATES - MORNING.

7

Greg's car finally arrives at the front gates, and he hops out to look down the driveway, through the tall iron gates and towards the Academy beyond.

Seeing a small intercom box, he wanders over and pushes the buzzer, waiting a beat for a reply.

VOICE

(filtered; through intercom)

Hello?

GREG

Oh, er, hello, I'm Greg Pierce from the Watchers Council, I'm here to see your headmistress, Miss Griffin.

VOICE

Oh, yes, just a moment.

There's a BUZZ before the gates start to swing slowly open with a whirr of hidden machinery. Greg heads back to his car and hops inside, starting the engine again.

Greg's car rolls down the long, winding drive that leads up to the front of the main building, pulling neatly to a stop in one of the parking spots.

He opens the door and steps out, grinning thoughtfully as he scans the pleasant surroundings - water bubbles quietly in the ponds that line the entrance, birds chirp happily in the tall trees, swaying in the wind , and-

SKYE (O.S.)

Look out!!

Greg spins round - and his eyes bulge in shock as he sees a DEMON racing towards him!

The demon has long, thick arms and green skin, with tentacles cascading down from its head. Skye is in hot pursuit, a sword in one hand as she sprints after the demon.

Greg only has a second to react before the demon SLAMS into him, bouncing him off his car and hard onto the floor, before it jumps up onto his car, which BUCKLES under its weight. The demon ROARS and then jumps off again, disappearing into the distance.

Looking through Greg's eyes, we see nothing but sky - until Skye herself appears in the frame, peering down at Greg.

SKYE (cont'd)

Woah. You okay?

Greg sighs, lifts his glasses with one hand and rubs his eyes with the other.

GREG

This must be the right place,
then...

Skye reaches out a hand to him, and as Greg grabs it, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 INT. BARBARA'S OFFICE - MORNING.

9

Greg is in one of the thick chairs in the headmistress' office, a hand pressed to the back of his sore head as Barbara steps into frame, holding out a bag of frozen peas.

BARBARA

I know an actual ice pack would be better, but we're still stocking up on the essentials at the moment.

Greg grins and takes the bag, pressing it against his head.

GREG

This'll do just fine, thanks.

Barbara makes her way round to her desk and sits, opening up a file on the desk and starting to leaf through it. Greg takes the opportunity to glance round the interior of the office, taking in the wide selection of framed photos and occult knick-knacks.

BARBARA

You certainly come to us with high recommendations, Gregory.

GREG

Just 'Greg' will be fine.

BARBARA

(nods)

I can see letters of approval and references from several different levels of the Council, both before and after the attack.

GREG

I was just an apprentice when the Council was bombed, really. It's the two and a bit years since then that I've been upgraded to full time Watcher status, you know, to assist with the, er, manpower shortage.

Barbara closes the folder and pushes it to one side, interlocking her fingers and leaning forward across the desk to fix Greg with a stare.

Greg blinks and shifts in his seat, a little uncomfortably, but Barbara cracks into a grin.

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BARBARA

I'm sure you're going to fit in just fine around here, Greg. The Academy is still in its infancy, there's a lot of pressure on all of us to make sure it lives up to its potential, and the high aspirations Rupert Giles had for the place.

GREG

Yes. I heard about his passing, it was a real tragedy.

BARBARA

Rupert was an inspirational man. He transformed the Council in the space of two short years as Head Watcher, and this office we're now sitting in is a testament to that.

GREG

Don't worry, I'm part of his fan club as well.

Barbara raises an eyebrow, and Greg coughs nervously.

GREG (cont'd)

Sorry. As you can tell, I'm a lot younger than most of the Watchers I know, so I tend to talk a little more...

BARBARA

Modern?

GREG

Something like that.

BARBARA

Believe me, here that'll be an advantage. How much do you know about the Slayers you're being assigned to?

GREG

Uh, a little. I received some basic data to read on the way over, but there was a little, er, incident involving an emergency stop and a cup full of hot coffee, and-

BARBARA

(smiles)

Never mind. I'll give you a potted history.

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CONTINUED: (2)

We cut away from the office, but Barbara's voice over stays with us as we head into:

10

INT. ACADEMY - CAFETERIA - MORNING.

10

Sofia and Alita are waiting in line to get their breakfast, a handful of new faces around them - other girls all in their mid to late teens, looking noticeably more nervous than the relaxed and settled Sofia.

BARBARA (V.O.)

Sofia Romero is one of the two most experienced girls here. She spent several months working alongside Buffy Summers herself in Cleveland, and also took part in the battle to defeat Syn three months ago, out in the Pacific.

GREG (V.O.)

Yes, I was looking forward to meeting Sofia. She's been through a lot for a girl of her age!

BARBARA (V.O.)

I'm sure you're aware of the loss the school suffered last week, however, and Sofia was the one closest to it. She seems to be holding up well, but it's probably best if you don't mention it around her just yet.

Sofia and Alita grab some cereal and juice from the buffet and dispensers before them, loading up their trays with some fruit and heading out towards the cafeteria tables.

BARBARA (V.O.) (cont'd)

Next up is Alita Kagemura, the youngest of the squad. Alita's family have always trained her to be a warrior, and when her Slayer powers were activated that routine only grew tougher. She's an excellent fighter and swordswoman, but very, very quiet.

Sofia points towards one of the tables, and she and Alita head over to join Skye and Frankie. Skye is tucking into a much bigger breakfast than anyone else, while Frankie's minimal meal has already been finished, and she's busy adjusting her makeup using a small compact. Skye nods a greeting to Sofia and Alita as they sit.

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BARBARA (V.O.) (cont'd)
Skye Underwood can be something of a handful - she spent most of the last year in Los Angeles, working alongside Angel and his team out there, but from what I've gathered their relationship ended badly somehow, so her attitude to life at the Academy is somewhat negative.

GREG (V.O.)
And Skye is the girl with the most... unique condition, right?

BARBARA (V.O.)
Yes. And that's something else it's best not to mention. Skye can be quite suspicious of anyone who comments on her dual nature, I'm sure she thinks we're plotting against her.

GREG (V.O.)
But we're not... right?

Sofia chats to the girls around her - Skye smirks as Sofia cracks a joke, Alita smiles politely, not really understanding, while Frankie just rolls her eyes.

BARBARA (V.O.)
And last up is Francoise DuCont. She prefers to be called 'Frankie.' She's quite spoilt and likes to make things difficult for those around her, but as long as you show her right off the bat that you won't tolerate her behaviour, you should be just fine.

We cut away from the girl and back to:

11 INT. BARBARA'S OFFICE - MORNING.

11

Barbara glances down at a securely wrapped package sitting in the chair next to Greg, and he gets the hint.

GREG
Oh, you want to see this, I'm sure.

He reaches for it and passes it over to Barbara, who uses a letter opener to start slicing away the packaging.

GREG (cont'd)
All the tests came back fairly inconclusive, I'm afraid.

(CONTINUED)

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GREG(cont'd)

Whatever power has been unlocked
inside the weapon, it's off all of
the Council's charts.

BARBARA

So I gather.

Barbara makes one final cut and starts to fold open the wrapping around the package - and reveals the Scythe, Buffy's chosen weapon which she handed down to Sofia. The Scythe still looks like it's fresh out of the shop, glinting in the sunlight filtering across the office.

BARBARA (cont'd)

(impressed)

It's magnificent, isn't it?

GREG

I thought so at first, but after
spending three months looking at
lab reports and photographs of it
every day, I'm afraid it's lost a
little of its appeal.

Barbara smirks as she runs her hands over the Scythe.

BARBARA

Sofia will be very pleased to get
her hands on this again, and I must
add that I'm glad we have such a
powerful tool at our disposal once
again.

Barbara is lost in thought for a beat as she looks at the Scythe, before she finally turns her attention back to Greg.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Right then! Let's get you
introduced to the girls.

Greg flashes a hopeful smile, and we cut away to:

12

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS.

12

We find ourselves down in the murky depths of a long, pitch black tunnel for a beat, before two MEN walk into frame, holding burning torches that light up the walls around them.

They're dressed in hooded, robed cloaks over their normal street clothes, and as we follow them we see them approach a large opening up ahead, with the light of more torches within.

13

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - CONTINUOUS.

13

The two men walk out into a large cavern, which has several tunnel entrances leading off from it and what look like eight rows of church pulpits side by side, facing an altar and podium at the back of the room, with a large, stylised painting hanging behind that.

The room is filled with other men wearing identical cloaks, some standing round the edges of the room with more torches, the rest seated and facing the podium.

A taller man, ROLAND, stands with his back to us before the altar, looking up at the painting, which appears to show the sun rising high in the sky with a mass of monstrous creatures cowering beneath it, except for one figure that boldly raises its face towards the sun.

There is a hum of background chatter before the man at the podium turns round, and the room falls silent. He has shoulder length curly dark hair, a beard and intense, burning dark eyes.

He stares out across the men assembled before him for a few beats before he speaks.

ROLAND

Brothers in arms! We have waited in the darkness for many centuries now, blocked from the pleasures we once enjoyed in our lives by the curse placed upon us.

A murmur of agreement ripples through the crowd.

ROLAND (cont'd)

Our time has been spent planning, plotting, scheming and working, but now at last our goal is within our grasp.

(beat)

Soon we will be able to walk amongst those we were forced to leave behind again, soon we will be able to hold our loved ones in our arms, and soon we can finally get ourselves out of these damn caves!

A CHEER and a round of applause from the assembled throng, who rise to their feet and applaud the man at the podium, who grins and bows respectfully to them.

He waits a few beats for the applause to calm down before he speaks again.

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ROLAND (cont'd)

So let us begin this day with a
feast, that we may fill our hearts
and bellies with the strength we
will need!

The gathered men turn to the back of the room - as four
TEENAGERS, two girls and two boys, are dragged in, kicking
and struggling in the iron grip of two of the cloaked men
each.

As the crowd start to CHEER boisterously, and the captive
teenagers start to SHOUT in alarm, we cut back to:

14

INT. ACADEMY - BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING.

14

The briefing room is set up like a high tech classroom -
several rows of desks line up, all facing towards a large
projector screen which has a lectern either side of it. Each
desk has a small fold-up screen mounted on it, as well as a
folder crammed with files and photos.

Sofia, Skye, Alita and Frankie are all seated, chatting among
themselves and flicking through the folders, quietening down
as the door opens and first Barbara, then Greg walk in, Greg
carrying the re-packaged Scythe under one arm.

The girls exchange glances as they study Greg, who takes a
seat at one of the desks at the front as Barbara stands
behind one of the lecterns.

BARBARA

Good morning, girls.

SKYE

(sarcastic)

Good morning, Charlie.

Sofia chuckles, as does Greg, but a sharp look from Barbara
shuts both of them up.

BARBARA

We've got a lot to get through
today, so I'll start with the
introductions.

(to Greg)

Greg?

She motions to him and he stands, adjusting his glasses as he
joins her at the lectern.

GREG

Ah, hello, girls, I'm Gregory
Pierce, I'm going to be your new
Watcher.

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Skye raises her hand, and Greg glances at Barbara. With a weary look, she nods.

GREG (cont'd)
Uh, yes, Skye, is it?

SKYE
That's me. Just wanted to apologise for that little incident out front this morning, you know. We were using that remlock demon for training when it got out, so I figured I should check you're okay.

GREG
Oh, good, I'm fine, thanks.

BARBARA
Greg is going to be taking charge of your Slayer training from now on, I'll still be overseeing your academic duties. When any of you head out into the field on a mission, Greg will accompany you.

Greg looks round at the faces of the girls - and finally spots the flirtatious smirk Frankie has been giving him since he walked in. He GULPS and readjusts his glasses.

GREG
That's right, I'll be your liaison and backup when we're out there fighting the bad guys.

Skye raises her hand again.

GREG (cont'd)
Yes?

SKYE
Aren't you kinda young to be a Watcher? I mean, no offence, but all the ones I ever met in LA were way past thirty. You look kinda...

FRANKIE
(devilish)
Sexy.

Sofia giggles, and Greg looks to Barbara for help.

BARBARA
All right, that's enough.
(to Greg)
Do you want to...

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GREG

Hmm? Oh, yes, right.

He reaches over for the package and starts to open it up again. The girls lean forward, curious.

GREG (cont'd)

Now, I do bring some good news, because what I have here is fresh from several months of exhaustive testing at the Council, but it's finally been cleared for use in the field. So, ladies and, well, ladies, I proudly present...

He holds up the Scythe, which looks dazzling in the sunlight.

GREG (cont'd)

The Scythe of the Slayers.

SOFIA

(happily)

Excellent!

Greg walks towards the girls and hands the Scythe out towards Sofia, who takes it as the others look on enviously.

SKYE

Woah, woah, back up - how come she gets to have that? I want a Scythe thingy too!

FRANKIE

Oui, 'ow are we meant to fight the vampires? With our 'ands?

BARBARA

Weapon selection and orientation classes start right after this briefing, Skye. Greg's going to help each of you select your weapon of choice, then do some training with you before your field mission later this evening.

ALITA

Excuse me - our what?

GREG

If you want to check your notes?

Sofia stops admiring the Scythe and puts it on the desk next to her, opening up her folder along with the others.

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GREG (cont'd)

It's nothing too strenuous - reports of potential vampire activity near a village a few miles from here. We're still on full alert as we try to locate all the reactivated Hellmouths across the globe, however, so we're treating this operation as the real thing, not a test.

SKYE

Tests aren't really my strong point.

GREG

Maybe, but I've heard fighting is.

Skye smirks, as Frankie squints at something in her notes and raises her hand.

FRANKIE

Pardon, but where is this... 'Shrewton' place we are meant to be going to? And why do all your English towns 'ave such silly names?

SOFIA

Would you rather we named them after spoilt little rich girls?

FRANKIE

Actually, yes.

GREG

(stepping in)

Shrewton's a small village just off the Salisbury Plains. Quiet, not much going on, which is why vampire activity there is so unusual - they tend to stick to larger cities. We're treating this incident as suspicious, that's why we're going out there to learn more.

SOFIA

Makes sense.

BARBARA

Glad you think so. Now, let's go over the last few details.

Barbara hits a remote control and a map of the target area pops up on the screen behind her, and as she begins to talk, we DISSOLVE to:

15

EXT. VILLAGE STREET - DAY.

15

Sofia walks down a deserted street inside a modestly sized English countryside village, looking puzzled as she scans the area for any sign of life.

She walks out into the middle of the road, looking up and down it but seeing nothing - no cars, no people.

She shields her eyes from the sun and glances up into the sky, startled out of her thoughts by a voice:

EMMA (O.S.)

Only thing you'll find up there is
a headache if you stare too long.

Sofia snaps round - and sees EMMA PRESTON walking down the street towards her. The deceased Slayer is wearing a bright, summery dress and looks well, smiling warmly at Sofia.

SOFIA

(beat)

Sorry, I must look like I've seen a
ghost.

EMMA

That's probably because you have.

Still pretty startled, Sofia glances round again.

SOFIA

Where is everybody?

EMMA

Still here. You're just not looking
in the right place yet.

SOFIA

Where should I be looking?

EMMA

(grins)

Can't tell you everything.

Emma turns and starts to walk away, but Sofia calls out after her.

SOFIA

Emma?

She stops and turns round.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Are you... I mean, are you alright?
Wherever you are?

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CONTINUED:

EMMA

Don't you worry about me, Limey.
I'm where I'm needed. Oh, and it
was out.

SOFIA

(frowns)

What?

SKYE (O.S.)

Sofia!

We SMASH CUT over to:

16

EXT. ACADEMY - TENNIS COURTS - DAY.

16

Sofia wakes up with a start - she'd dozed off, sitting on one
of the benches alongside the row of tennis courts built onto
the Academy's front grounds.

Skye and Alita are playing a game, both of them staring over
at Sofia, who blinks, not sure what's going on.

SKYE

I said, 'was that out or in?'

Skye points towards a stray ball over in one corner, and
Sofia realises she's being asked for her umpire's opinion.

SOFIA

Er... it was out?

Alita smiles, and Skye mutters under her breath. As Skye
grabs another ball and gets ready to serve again, we push in
on Sofia's dazed expression, before we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT ONE**

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ACT TWO

FADE IN:

17 INT. ACADEMY CAMPUS - CORRIDOR - DAY.

17

Sofia walks down one of the long corridors that link up the east wing of the campus' teaching rooms, a folder in her hands and a bag slung over her shoulder.

Her head is down and she's lost in thought, walking straight past Skye and Frankie as they stand and wait for her. Skye frowns and jogs to catch up with her.

SKYE

Sofia?

SOFIA

(looks up)

Huh?

SKYE

What's the matter with you? You've been quiet all day, and for someone who normally talks as much as you do, that's pretty noticeable.

SOFIA

Have I? Oh, I'm sorry, it's just...
(sighs)
I've not been sleeping very well.
You know, ever since-

SKYE

Ever since Emma, yeah, I get it. Look, what's happened is done. You can't spend your days thinking about what could have happened, you have to just focus on what you've got around you.

Sofia eyes Skye, who shifts uncomfortably.

SKYE (cont'd)

What?

SOFIA

That was an oddly profound thing for you to come out with, that's all! Your advice normally starts and ends with 'get over it.'

SKYE

(smirks)

Yeah, well, the first one was free. Future pearls of Skye wisdom come at a price. You have been warned.

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CONTINUED:

Frankie walks up to them both, coughing loudly to get their attention. Skye notices her and rolls her eyes.

SKYE (cont'd)

Oh, yeah. Queen Bee here wanted to come find you, apparently that new Watcher guy's been asking for us all to meet in the briefing room before we head off.

SOFIA

Oh, okay. When?

FRANKIE

Ten minutes ago! He sent us out to find you, but if I'd known you'd be wandering around the campus in a daze, I'd 'ave told him not to bother!

Sofia's look darkens, but as Frankie turns on her heel and heads away, Skye and Sofia dutifully follow.

SOFIA

Think she'll ever stop being like that?

SKYE

Not likely. I say we kill her. Make it quick, but definitely kill her.

Sofia eyes Skye - is she joking? Skye chuckles at Sofia's expression, and pats her on the shoulder.

SKYE (cont'd)

Lighten up already! Takes a lot more than a week of digs at the way I do my hair to make me want to kill somebody.

SOFIA

Oh. Well, for what it's worth, I like the way you do your hair.

SKYE

Damn straight you do. I'm a god damned style guru round this place.

They turn a corner, and we cut from the girls into:

18

INT. ACADEMY - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY.

18

Frankie opens the door and waits for Skye and Sofia to appear. Greg, Barbara and Alita are all already seated.

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CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

(to Greg)

Excusez-moi for 'ow late we are,
these two were busy having a *petit*
chat, and I did not want to break
them up.

Frankie smirks at Skye as she heads for her seat, and as Skye starts to mutter something under her breath, Sofia nudges and glares at her to stay quiet.

GREG

No problem, girls. Just wanted to
have you all together to see this.

Sofia and Skye take their seats as Greg hauls up a selection of different sized flight cases up onto the desks before him, flipping the locks.

BARBARA

I hear weapon orientation went well
this morning?

Skye and Sofia glance sideways at each other and grin, as we cut from them to:

19

INT. ACADEMY - TRAINING ROOM #1 - MORNING.

19

Dressed in their various gym outfits (tracksuits pants and t-shirts, pyjama-style kung fu robes for Alita), we see a montage of each of the girls in turn doing a few test runs with their new weapon of choice:

A) Skye has two triple-pronged sai daggers, which she holds close to her chest as she narrows her eyes and aims at something off screen - before throwing them both forward, where they SLAM into a wooden training dummy with a satisfying pair of THUDS. Skye grins and nods.

B) Frankie has a thin, lightweight sword, which she takes a series of graceful, almost balletic swings with, hopping delicately from foot to foot as she dances across a long row of crash mats.

C) Alita practices with a pair of nunchucks, spinning them round her body with dazzling speed, her face calm as she concentrates hard.

D) And finally, Sofia wields the scythe, looking a little overawed by the weapon before taking a deep breath, closing her eyes then launching into a series of slices, sweeps and chops with it, the blade slicing through the air with ease.

Sofia stops her test drive, smiling, before we cut back to:

20

INT. ACADEMY - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY.

20

Back inside the briefing room, as Alita nods.

ALITA

Yes, Gregory-san's lesson was most instructive.

FRANKIE

(sly)

Oui, I was busy watching 'im the whole time.

Frankie leans forward and gazes flirtatiously at Greg, but he's too absorbed in opening the cases to notice.

Finally, with a nod to Barbara, he starts to turn the cases round so their contents face the girls. Inside each one is a mass of complicated-looking electrical equipment - laptops, headsets, video monitors - and Greg smiles proudly as the girls crane forward to take a look.

SKYE

What's all this? Somebody try to find out how their Transformers worked or something?

BARBARA

This is your new mission tech.

SOFIA

Our what?

GREG

Oh, don't worry, you're going to love all this.

Greg is clearly excited as he starts taking out odd bits of equipment and arranging them on the desks.

GREG (cont'd)

As I'm sure you girls are all aware, the Academy isn't funded just by the Watchers Council. I mean, we're rich, but we don't have the money to maintain a school of this size.

SOFIA

Yes, Mr. Giles told me he'd managed to get several third parties interested in providing financial backing to the academy.

Sofia notices Skye looking oddly at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOFIA (cont'd)

What?

SKYE

Do you always talk like that?

GREG

Sofia's spot on - there are a number of private investors who want to see a school like this succeed, other people who know about the threat the underworld presents to us and who want to make sure we have all the latest tools at our disposal to fight it.

Greg switches on the video screen behind him and activates one of the headsets, and with a little fiddling with some cables, we see the picture transmitted by the small camera on the headset projected onto the screen.

Sofia and Skye look suitably impressed as a grinning Greg takes a few sweeps of the room with the headset.

GREG (cont'd)

Now, while some members of the Council remain horrified at the thought of introducing new technology into the Watcher/Slayer relationship...

Barbara COUGHS, and Greg turns and winks at Sofia.

GREG (cont'd)

... for the most part, they're welcoming the new toys. What you see here is a top of the range mobile communications array, supplied by one of our oh-so beneficial, er... beneficiaries.

SKYE

Slayer TV?

GREG

Something like that, yes.

BARBARA

Your mission out to Shrewton tonight will be the first field test of this equipment. It'll allow Greg to monitor and co-ordinate your actions, even if you're all separated, and make sure that the entire team always remains in contact.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Greg hands the headset to Skye.

GREG
Here, try this on. It's pretty
lightweight.

Skye slips the headset on and scans round the room.

SKYE
Not bad.

GREG
There's a torch built into the
camera, which will also allow me to
see what you're seeing in infra red
for those dark sewers and catacombs
we're doubtless going to end up in.

BARBARA
It also allows us to monitor your
heartbeat and respiration, so if
any of you are injured, we'll be
able to keep track of your vital
signs.

Greg frowns, pushing some buttons on the console in front of
him and checking the cable connections.

GREG
Er, yes, except Skye's doesn't seem
to be picking up a...

Greg catches himself and looks up to see Skye smirking back.

SKYE
A heartbeat? Sorry to disappoint
ya, chief. Try somebody with a
little more life in them.

GREG
(beat)
Let's move on. Barbara?

BARBARA
There've been more reports of
vampire attacks from the village,
but so far no confirmed sightings,
just victims. You four are to head
out when the sun goes down and look
around, investigate the scenes of
the attacks and try to locate and
eliminate any nests in the area.

ALITA
Why at night? That will make the
vampires more bold, surely?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GREG

Unfortunately, yes, but seeing as we're having to go in there fully armed, the cover of darkness will make it much easier for all of us to move around.

BARBARA

We'll meet again in the main reception in one hour, the Academy has a minivan which we'll use to get you all into the village unnoticed.

SKYE

Riding in style, huh?

BARBARA

That's all for now. Dismissed.

The girls stand and start to file out, as we cut to:

21

EXT. SHREWTON - STREET - NIGHT.

21

We're on the outskirts of the quiet Wiltshire village of Shrewton - a small place, only a few hundred people live here in a selection of large farms and townhouses, spread out across the fields that stretch off into the distance.

The village square is dominated by a large clock tower and a war memorial, with roads leading off in all directions to link the local shops and houses together.

A plain silver minibus rolls into frame, flicking off its headlights and coming to a stop at the kerbside, before the side door slides open and the Slayers begin to step out.

Each one is wearing one of the headsets, and each carries their brand new weapon of choice, Skye glancing enviously at Sofia's scythe.

SKYE

You know, I'd still feel a whole lot safer if we all had one of those things.

FRANKIE

Wait and see if she knows 'ow to use it first, maybe she'll want to trade it after tonight!

SOFIA

(rounds on her)

Now look here, I'll have you know-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG (O.S.)
(hisses)
Girls!

They turn and look back into the van - behind the six seats in its passenger section sits behind a small desk that is covered with the communications equipment, a laptop bringing up the view from the four girls' cameras.

Greg is busy clambering across from the driver's seat into a chair in front of the desk.

GREG (cont'd)
I think it's time we all remembered
to practice a little stealth.
That's English for 'stop bickering
and start looking for clues.'

SKYE
Relax, we'll sort this out. You
stay here and look up porn or
something.

Greg opens his mouth to reply, but Skye is already sliding the minivan door shut, which closes with a loud BANG.

SOFIA
(glares at Skye)
Stealth isn't really in your
vocabulary, is it?

SKYE
Same way 'virginity' isn't in
Frankie's.

FRANKIE
And 'ow would you know that?

SKYE
Don't need to, princess.
(taps nose)
I can smell it.

Frankie looks horrified, but as she goes to speak, Alita raises a hand to shut the girls up.

ALITA
Sorry, but we must be quiet.
Listen.

They look around - a few lights are on inside a handful of the surrounding buildings, but for the most part the village seems deserted.

FRANKIE
I don't 'ear anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALITA

Yes, exactly. Where are all the people?

SKYE

Michelle Yeoh's got a point. Aren't there supposed to be, like, three hundred people living round here?

Sofia looks up and down the empty streets around her - and suddenly realises that this looks very similar to the dream she had with Emma earlier today!

SOFIA

(darkly)

They may need to take a new head count. Come on, let's look around.

The girls follow Sofia as she heads off screen.

22

EXT. SHREWTON - ALLEYWAY - NIGHT.

22

The girls pace down a long, narrow alleyway, hedged in on both sides by high walls that lead off into the back gardens of a pair of public houses.

Up ahead is what's left of a crime scene - blue and white police tape stretches across the alley, which the girls duck under, and a chalk outline marks the inelegant last position of whoever died here, a telltale spatter of blood by the outline's neck clueing us in on what did this.

Skye crouches by the outline, studying it carefully as Alita and Frankie carefully shift around the alley's contents looking for clues - a stack of empty beer crates, some old boxes and a row of silver garbage cans.

SOFIA

(to Skye)

Anything?

SKYE

This one's pretty recent, last four hours, I'd say.

SOFIA

Can you get a scent?

SKYE

(shoots her a look)

I'm not a fricken sniffer dog!

SOFIA

Sorry, poor choice of words. I meant to say-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE
(interrupts)
She meant to say 'can you find who
did this or not?'

Skye glares at them both, then turns back to the outline, dipping her finger in the blood and lifting it to her nose, taking a deep sniff.

Sofia and Frankie wait as Skye looks up and down the alley, concentrating, before she nods.

SKYE
I've got something. Dunno if it's
our vamps or just somebody who
walked through the blood, but it's
a start.

SOFIA
Excellent.
(taps headset)
Greg? Can you hear me?

GREG
(filtered; through
headset)
Loud and clear, Sofia.

We cut from Sofia into:

23 INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT. 23

Greg studies the signals from the girls' cameras carefully.

GREG
Follow Skye's lead, see where the
trail takes you. I've been looking
round a little myself, and Alita
was right - this place is empty. Be
careful.

Greg reaches for a sandwich and takes a bite, as we cut to:

24 EXT. SHREWTON - STREET - NIGHT. 24

The girls leave the alleyway, Skye up front as they check the streets are still deserted before following her lead.

She heads towards a cluster of shops up ahead, their shutters down for the night, her gaze focused as the other Slayers keep scanning the town around them.

SKYE
(points)
They went in here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALITA
Are you sure?

SKYE
The nose never lies.

She tries the shop's front door, but it's locked. She rattles it once, then pauses - and with a GRUNT, a burst of Slayer strength snaps the handle off, allowing the door to swing open.

SKYE (cont'd)
Slayers would make wicked cool burglars, you know.

GREG
(filtered; through headset)
And you can stop that train of thought right now, young lady.

Skye smirks as she steps into the shop, the others following.

25

INT. SHREWTON - EMPTY SHOP - CONTINUOUS.

25

The girls enter a closed down bookstore, the place looking tidy and recently used.

SKYE
I'm just saying, is all, with the reflexes, and the strength, and everything else, it'd make the whole stealing thing kinda easy.

SOFIA
Speak for yourself! I'm as clumsy as a very large bull in a very small china shop.

Frankie and Alita start to nose round the store.

SKYE
When I was in LA, I always made sure I was on the right side of the law, you know? Being around Angel tends to have that effect on people, he's pretty inspiring with all that selfless hero stuff.

SOFIA
But now?

SKYE
But now, I'm starting to think Spike had the better handle on things.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKYE(cont'd)

(beat; grimaces)

And I never thought I'd say that...

SOFIA

What happened between you and
Spike, anyway? I heard a little,
but it was-

FRANKIE

Quiet! You two are making enough
noise to raise the dead back in
France!

SKYE

Hey, we're discussing tactics!

FRANKIE

Oh, really? It sounded like you
were about to start whining away
about some old lover of yours.

SKYE

(scowls)

You watch your damn mouth,
frenchie. You haven't got a clue
what you're talking about.

Sofia steps between them, looking exasperated.

SOFIA

Will you two stop it? We're
supposed to be looking for clues!
Honestly, if we're not careful,
we're going to walk right into a-

ROLAND (O.S.)

Trap?

The girls freeze, and slowly turn round.

Roland stands in the doorway, grinning, four of his cloaked
men standing menacingly behind him, and from Sofia's worried
look, we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT TWO**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

26 INT. SHREWTON - EMPTY SHOP - NIGHT. 26

The Slayers form a circle, back to back, as Roland steps forward, his four accomplices fanning out around him to pen the girls in.

GREG
(filtered; through
headset)
Alright, girls, nobody panic, we've
got this.

As the Slayers keep a wary eye on the new arrivals, we cut back into:

27 INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT. 27

Greg is watching the displays before him carefully, his mind racing as he thinks up a strategy.

GREG
Okay, here's what we do. Skye, you
go for the lead guy, Sofia, back
her up. Alita, Frankie, keep the
rest of those goons away from Skye
until we figure out-

ROLAND
(filtered; through
monitors)
I'd ask why you were here, but...

Greg pauses and listens, and we cut back to:

28 INT. SHREWTON - EMPTY SHOP - NIGHT. 28

Roland is looking down on Skye, whose hands are slowly reaching for her sai daggers.

ROLAND
... we all know why.

SKYE
I'm guessing the lack of any people
round here is thanks to you guys?

ROLAND
Mostly, yes. Some ran away when we
revealed our true intentions.

SOFIA
Then you should know we're here to
stop you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROLAND

So I see.

He glances round at Sofia, Alita and Frankie, not looking at all worried.

ROLAND (cont'd)

And tell me, little one, how
precisely are four scared little
girls going to stop me and my
brethren?

Skye grins - then unsheathes her daggers in the blink of an eye, armed and ready to rock.

SKYE

Oh, I'm sure we'll think of
something.

Roland stares her down for a beat - then LUNGES forward.

The Slayers scatter in all four directions, Sofia attacking the two nearest the door, Alita and Frankie going one-on-one with the other two cloaked men as Skye battles the leader.

GREG

(filtered; through
headset)

No, no! Stay focused! Don't get
split up, they'll be able to-

THWACK! Frankie is floored by a powerful kick from one of the cloaked goons, dropping her sword, and Alita is powerless as the next grapples her, lifts her into the air and THROWS her into one of the bookshelves, which shatters as she hits it.

Sofia is faring better, her scythe blade flashing in the moonlight streaming in through the open door as her two opponents draw long, sharp knives from their robes and attack.

Skye is throwing everything she's got at Roland, but he's too fast for her, ducking her sai attacks before slapping both weapons out of her hands, and PUNCHING Skye hard in the chest, sending her flying backwards.

ROLAND

Now then, would you care to
rephrase your threat?

Skye glares up at him from the floor as she recovers.

ROLAND (cont'd)

I was thinking you could go from
'we're here to stop you, to...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Roland grins - and then VAMPS OUT with a snarl!

ROLAND (cont'd)
(mock terror)
... 'please, spare me!'

He charges at Skye with a GROWL, but she kicks her legs out, knocking him back as she flips neatly to her feet - only to be barged to the ground by Alita's former opponent.

SOFIA
Skye!

Distracted, Sofia is quickly knocked backwards by a series of punches and kicks from her attackers, tripping over a pile of unsorted books and crashing to the ground.

Frankie is in trouble - her cloaked goon has her by the throat - he's also vamped out, and is trying to pull Frankie into biting distance, HISSING ferociously.

Alita leaps into frame, deftly split-kicking the goon away from Frankie, stepping towards Sofia's goons and unleashing a barrage of chops and kicks to push them back.

29 INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT.

29

Greg is frantically shouting into his headset.

GREG
Frankie, on your left! Watch out!
Alita, cover her! Sofia, try not
to...

We hear a CRASH and the sounds of the fight continuing to go badly for the Slayers, and with a firm look, Greg wrenches off the headset, jumps to his feet and yanks open the sliding minivan door, racing out into the night.

30 INT. SHREWTON - EMPTY SHOP - NIGHT.

30

Back in the battle, and Skye is doing her best to fight off Roland, but he catches her with a powerful BACKHAND across her face - and when she looks back round, the shock of the blow has made her VAMP OUT on reflex.

Roland's eyes boggle in surprise as he sees the transformation in her.

ROLAND
(shocked)
You!

SKYE
(frowns)
'Me' what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roland pauses for another beat - then PUNCHES Skye twice in rapid succession, knocking her to the ground. She's out cold.

Sofia is pinned to the floor, her attacker trying to choke her with the Scythe handle, pressing his weight against it and forcing it down against her neck.

Frankie tries to push the cloaked vamp away, but he SWATS her to one side and gets back to choking Sofia.

Roland reaches down and scoops up the unconscious Skye, darting over to the door and away from the battling Slayers. With a last glance at the melee, he turns and disappears out through the door.

Moments later, Greg clatters into the shop, fumbling in his pockets and producing a wooden crucifix and a vial of holy water.

GREG

Alita, get down!

Alita dutifully ducks, and Greg THROWS the vial into the face of the vamp behind her. It SMASHES into him, and he SCREAMS in pain as the blessed waters within burn him.

Clutching his smoking face, he tears out of the shop as Frankie finally bests her attacker, kicking him against the shop counter, drawing a stake and SLAMMING it into his chest in one smooth motion.

As he DUSTS, Greg and Alita help tear the vamp pinning Sofia away, and as Greg grapples him, Alita STAKES him.

That leaves one vamp, who starts backing towards the door as Alita and Frankie advance on him. Behind them, Greg helps a coughing and spluttering Sofia back up.

LAST VAMP

Okay, listen, I'm sure there's something we can work out here, I mean, I haven't been part of the team for very long so I don't know everything, but-

GREG

Who are you? What are a pack of vampires doing in a place like this?

LAST VAMP

I just said, I don't know! We used to be based in Italy, we moved out here a few months back, something to do with the-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The vamp GASPS - and then DUSTS as Frankie steps back, clutching her stake.

FRANKIE
That was for hitting me, you
vandale!

Greg steps over, looking from the ashes to Frankie, who beams proudly at him.

FRANKIE (cont'd)
There! All gone.

GREG
Frankie, we needed him in one
piece, he could have led us to the
others!

Frankie's smile drops as Sofia steps over, rubbing her sore neck and scanning the rest of the shop.

SOFIA
Where's Skye?

ALITA
I believe one of the vampires took
her.

GREG
Took her? Why?

ALITA
I do not know, sorry.

SOFIA
I think we need to find out, and
quickly.

GREG
Agreed. He can't have gotten far,
get out there and start looking,
I'll check the equipment back in
the van and see if I can get a
position on her.

The girls nod and dash out of the shop, and we cut to:

31

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - NIGHT.

31

Skye, head bowed and still out cold, is being dragged along by two more of the cloaked vampires, who have an arm each, her trainers dragging through the dirt of the tunnel we find ourselves in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The vamps head towards the cavern we saw earlier, which this time is much rowdier despite there only being the same number of people in here - around fifteen or so.

32

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - CONTINUOUS.

32

The crowd of chattering people, some obviously vampires, some not, some wearing the uniform cloaks, some not, all fall silent as the two vamps dragging Skye between them enter the cavern.

After a pause, they start to walk between the two sections of pulpits, the assembled vamps barging each other as they try to get a look at Skye, who finally starts coming round.

She's dumped unceremoniously on the floor at the base of the altar, and as she looks blearily upwards, she sees Roland staring down at her.

SKYE

(groggy)

What...

ROLAND

Ssh. Be quiet, my child. Your hour of glory is almost at hand.

Skye cranes her head round and sees the horde of vampires, all staring back at her in silence.

SKYE

(wearily)

Crap.

And we quickly cut back to:

33

EXT. SHREWTON - STREETS - NIGHT.

33

Greg is walking down another of the town's empty streets, a small device that looks like a GPS unit in his hand. Alita jogs into frame, and Greg looks up from the device.

GREG

Anything?

ALITA

(shakes head)

I am afraid not.

GREG

(off device)

I can't get a fix on her transponder signal.

Sofia walks into frame, along with Frankie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

'Er what?

GREG

Transponder, like a little homing beacon built into the headset. The idea is that we can find you girls wherever you are, should something like this happen.

SOFIA

Yes, well, hate to be the killjoy here but it's not exactly doing us much good at the moment, is it?

GREG

(shakes device)

Maybe it's faulty, it could just need a little-

Sofia snatches the device from Greg's hand, then turns it off and hands it back to him.

GREG (cont'd)

(blinks)

Sofia! That was-

SOFIA

Slowing us down, is what it was doing. We're looking in the wrong places.

(to Alita and Frankie)

Come on, girls, think about it. You're a pack of vampires hiding out in what was until recently a modestly-populated town. Where do you hide to make sure you can't be found, and where you can stay safe from the sun?

Alita and Frankie look at each other, then see Sofia looking at something off screen. Following her gaze, they see a manhole cover on the other side of the street.

GREG

(snaps fingers)

Of course!

SOFIA

Now, I could be wrong, I mean, if they've cleared this town of people then they could easily be in one of the houses, so...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

No, the sewers make sense. They could be discovered too easily if they were in one of the houses, anybody could roll through here and stumble across them.

Greg heads for the manhole cover and rolls his sleeves up, getting ready to help Sofia as she uses the scythe as a makeshift crowbar.

FRANKIE

(horrified)

We are not going down there, are we?

GREG

I'm afraid so. If Sofia's right, this is where we'll find Skye.

Sofia grimaces as she starts to lever the heavy manhole up.

SOFIA

Yes, and besides...

The manhole POPS open, and Greg is able to drag it to one side as Sofia takes a breath.

SOFIA (cont'd)

An awful lot of vampires and demons live and move around in sewer tunnels and the like, so you might as well get used to using them sooner rather than later!

Sofia crouches, reaches for a ladder leading down into the tunnel below and starts to climb out of sight, as Alita starts to follow, then Greg.

FRANKIE

(mutters)

Merde...

As Frankie, with a face like thunder, starts to tentatively climb down the ladder, we cut to:

34

INT. UNDERGROUND CAVERN - NIGHT.

34

Roland has Skye on her feet now, her hands bound behind her back as he proudly displays her to the crowd.

ROLAND

This is the one! She who will deliver us from the darkness!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CHEER from the vamps, and Skye looks increasingly bewildered by what's going on.

ROLAND (cont'd)
Rejoice, my brethren! Our feast may
now begin, and let the bodies of
those who dwelt above us fill us
with the sustenance we need!

The vamps rise to their feet with a roar of applause, before quickly starting to surge towards the altar. Skye winces and braces for impact - but the crowd flow either side of the stage, into tunnel entrances either side, with a third line of them going into another exit directly behind the stage.

SKYE
Alright. Now I'm lost. What the
frick is going on?

ROLAND
All will be revealed in time,
child.

SKYE
(beat)
Are you high? 'Cause, you know,
you've got that whole big pupils
thing going on.

ROLAND
Come. Let me show you the honour
that awaits you.

SKYE
Yeah... look, I'm pretty much full
up on honour, so why don't we skip
to the-

SMACK! Roland lays a heavy punch across Skye's jaw, and she staggers backwards, reeling.

ROLAND
Your insolence is... troubling. But
when you see the potential you will
unlock in us with your own eyes,
then you will understand. Then you
will learn to show us the respect
we have earned.

Skye is still too dazed to reply as Roland grabs her and drags her off towards one of the tunnels, and we cut to:

35

INT. SEWER TUNNELS - NIGHT.

35

Down in the depths with Team Slayer, as Sofia leads the way forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The three girls are using the flashlights fixed on their headsets for light, but they're not doing much against the thick gloom before them.

FRANKIE
'Ow much further?

SOFIA
Ssh!

FRANKIE
We've been down 'ere for hours!

GREG
It's been seven minutes, Frankie,
calm down. Alita, are you okay back
there?

Alita nods, but looks particularly nervous, which Greg picks up on. He hangs back and lets the other two girls go ahead to talk to her.

GREG (cont'd)
Are you alright? You look a little
spooked.

ALITA
I... I will be fine.

Greg waits, but Alita's said all she's going to, so he lets her go first to catch the others up, then starts to follow.

Sofia pauses by a gaping hole dug into the sewer tunnel wall, and peers into it.

SOFIA
I'd say this looks suspicious
enough to be a good place to start
looking. Greg?

GREG
Lead the way.

As Sofia takes her first step into the tunnel, we cut to:

36

INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT.

36

As the last of the third line of vampires filter out of the tunnels and into the much larger chamber before us, Roland appears, leading Skye by the rope round her wrists.

ROLAND
Here we are. This is where the
flock will gorge themselves on the
flesh of the innocent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Skye's eyes widen at what she sees - and as we get a look ourselves, we can understand why!

The hollowed out chamber is filled with two dozen tall blocks of ice, with moisture condensing and smoking away from them - and sealed with the blocks are the hazy forms of human bodies!

The group of vampires start handing out pickaxes, hammers and crowbars to each other, and they descend on the ice blocks, starting to smash through them and exposing the bodies within.

ROLAND (cont'd)
(calls out)
Start the fires! Warm the frozen so
that their blood may heat our
veins!

SKYE
(sickened)
Oh my God...
(to Roland)
Is this what happened to all the
people who disappeared from the
town?

ROLAND
(nods)
They serve a higher purpose now.

SKYE
What, feeding your damn army?

ROLAND
(broad smile)
Yes.

As Skye starts to look round, frantically trying to see a way out of this one, we cut back to:

37 INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - NIGHT.

37

Sofia pauses and holds a hand up to stop the group as the sound of the ice blocks breaking echoes down the tunnel.

SOFIA
Do you all hear that?

ALITA
What is it?

SOFIA
I don't know... but something tells
me it's what we're after.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She picks up the pace, jogging along as we cut back to:

38

INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT.

38

Roland leads Skye forward, passing the rows of ice blocks as the busy vampires continue to dig out their frozen victims.

SKYE

So what's the plan here? Keep your next few meals on ice, then move on and find another town to turn into a frozen food snack-o-rama?

ROLAND

Oh, no, our 'plan' was to await your arrival. You, who are the Chosen One, she who will bring us out of the darkness.

SKYE

Yeah, you said that already. Doesn't tell me much apart from you being a few cows short of a milkshake, you know?

Roland suddenly spins round and grabs Skye by the shoulders, gazing into her eyes, his own burning with sudden intensity.

ROLAND

Your sacrifice will free us all, don't you understand that? It has been written that you will save us from our eternal torment!

SKYE

'Eternal torment'? You are high! What'd you do, feed on somebody who'd done half a pound of acid or something?

SOFIA (O.S.)

Skye!!

Skye looks round - and Sofia and the others have just run out into the chamber. They freeze, shocked by both the frozen bodies and the vampires currently staring back at them.

SOFIA (cont'd)

(uncertain)

Er... we're here to rescue you?

Roland points towards the Slayers.

ROLAND

(fierce)

Kill them!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With a mighty SHOUT, the vampires charge towards the Slayers, who quickly draw their weapons and prepare for the fight of their lives.

Roland drags Skye away from the battle, with Skye kicking and struggling all the way, and they disappear down another, smaller tunnel.

Back with the Slayers, the first pack of vampires hits them and they start fighting back, Sofia's scythe taking out a pair of nearby vamps as Alita and Frankie also kick back.

Greg does what he can, grappling with one vamp and using his crucifix to keep another at bay.

FRANKIE

There's too many of them!

SOFIA

Forget that, go after Skye!

GREG

We can't! We can't get through the-

Greg is cut off as one of the vamps grabs him from behind - and BITES him!

Greg YELLS in pain as the vamp sinks its fangs into his neck, and as Sofia screams out his name, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

39 INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT.

39

Greg is weakly trying to push the vampire away from him, but after another beat the vamp DUSTS to reveal Frankie, who quickly turns and kicks a second vampire away as Greg staggers to the ground, clutching his wounded neck.

SOFIA

Greg! Are you-

GREG

(groggy)

I'm fine, stay close to me!

Sofia, Alita and Frankie dutifully back up closer to Greg.

GREG (cont'd)

(shouts)

Cerchio di fuoco!

FWOOSH! A ring of flames suddenly flares into life, surrounding Greg and the Slayers and neatly incinerating a handful of vampires who were too close.

The remaining vamps are driven back by the fire, encircling the Slayers, fangs bared and hissing.

FRANKIE

Marvellous! Now you 'ave trapped us
as well!

SOFIA

Frankie, don't be dense! We were
about to be overrun and killed,
Greg just saved us!

She crouches by Greg, who winces as he takes a handkerchief from his pocket and presses it against his wound.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Are you alright?

GREG

(woozy)

Er... sort of. First ever vampire
bite, you know... stings a lot more
than I expected...

SOFIA

How long will that fire stay up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

Not long, but it'll hold while you
three go after Skye.

SOFIA

What? We're not leaving you here!

GREG

I'll be fine! I know a lot more
barrier spells yet, nothing's going
to get to me. You need to get Skye
back.

ALITA

But how are we to get through the
flames?

GREG

That's the easy part.

Greg holds his hand up, palm first, towards the wall of fire.

GREG (cont'd)

Aprire!

A slim gap opens up in the flames - just enough for the girls
to get through.

With a last glance at Greg, Sofia is the first to dive
through, and as the other two Slayers follow, the girls
already have a head start before the vampires notice they've
gotten past them.

They race towards the smaller tunnel we saw Skye and Roland
head down, and as Sofia dives into it, we cut through to:

40 INT. CATACOMBS - NIGHT.

40

Sofia slides down a short slope to find herself in a long,
winding catacomb, lit by torches fixed to the walls and with
deep alcoves dug into the walls on both sides, their contents
hidden by shadow.

Alita and then Frankie race down the slope to join her,
Frankie looking back up towards the tunnel entrance.

FRANKIE

Quickly! They were right behind us!

SOFIA

Right, let's go, they must have
gone this way so let's-

FRANKIE

Attente!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sofia and Alita pause and look back - Frankie is frowning as she peers back up the slope.

FRANKIE (cont'd)
(puzzled)
They are not following.

SOFIA
What?

FRANKIE
They've stopped. I can 'ear them
and see a few of them back up at
the entrance, but they are not
following us down.

SOFIA
Why on earth not?

ALITA (O.S.)
Um, Sofia? I think I know why.

Alita is standing by one of the alcoves, looking at its contents in disbelief. Frankie and Sofia join her, and also register surprise at what they see.

Lying in the alcove are three skeletons, crammed in on top of each other - but all three have FANGS for their front teeth!

FRANKIE
They're...

SOFIA
Vampires?

ALITA
How can that be? Vampires don't
leave a skeleton when they die!

SOFIA
(serious)
I don't know. But whatever this
means, I'm betting it's why those
vampires upstairs aren't right
behind us. This must be some kind
of sacred place to them.

Sofia's head snaps round as we hear Skye's voice, distantly shouting out, and Sofia is off and running in an instant.

We follow her down the winding tunnels, until she rounds a corner and finds Skye, sprawled on the ground, with Roland nowhere in sight. There is a steel door set into the tunnel wall a few feet away, but it's completely smooth, with no obvious way to open it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sofia goes to Skye as Alita carries on up the tunnel.

SOFIA (cont'd)
Skye? Can you hear me? Are you all
right?

SKYE
(winces)
He... he cut me...

Sofia looks down, and Skye has a deep, ugly wound on her belly. Sofia grimaces and starts to tear off a strip of her shirt, quickly wrapping it round Skye and tying it tight across the wound.

SOFIA
Can you walk?

SKYE
Not sure...

Sofia helps Skye to her feet as Alita heads back towards them, shaking her head.

ALITA
No sign of that other vampire, the
one who was taking Skye away.

SKYE
Forget him, he's long gone.

FRANKIE
What did he do to you?

SKYE
I don't know, he... he must have
hit me with something, 'cause last
thing I remember is being on my
back on some kind of table and
feeling a sharp pain in my gut,
then I'm out here on the floor.

Skye looks back towards the steel door, her brow creasing as she tries to recall what happened to her.

SOFIA
Come on. Greg's waiting for us, and
we still have some vampires waiting
for us before we can get out of
here.

ALITA
Leave them to me.

Alita draws her nunchucks from their holsters across her back, and as she CRACKS them into shape, we cut to:

41 INT. UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT.

41

Greg is still within his circle of flames, looking weak but still conscious.

He JUMPS as the body of a vampire suddenly flies into the circle, landing half in, half out and bursting into FLAMES as it hits the fire.

Greg looks up to see Sofia peering in on him from outside the wall of flames.

SOFIA

Er, Greg? They're gone now.

GREG

They are?

SOFIA

(nods)

All taken care of. And we found Skye.

GREG

Oh, good, good...

(beat)

Spegnere!

The flames die away in an instant, and Frankie and Alita help Greg to his feet as he sees Sofia, who has one arm keeping the wounded Skye upright.

GREG (cont'd)

Is she okay?

SKYE

I've been hurt worse.

(winces)

Doesn't mean this don't hurt like a beyatch, though.

GREG

Let's get out of here. We need to call in the authorities and let them deal with this now.

As the team starts to walk, or limp, back towards the tunnel entrance that leads back out, we slowly DISSOLVE to:

42 INT. BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING.

42

Greg, still looking pale and with a large plaster across his neck wound, closes the lid on the last of the flight cases, turning to Barbara as he locks it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GREG

And then, the girls showed up again with Skye in tow. Skye had been wounded in the belly but she couldn't recall how. After that, we got ourselves out of there and I made the customary anonymous call to the police. I'm sure the incident will be absorbed into local legend, the same way these things always do, and the police will no doubt play their part in covering the whole thing up. Again, the same way they always do.

BARBARA

(nods)

And no sign of the vampire who was in charge of this operation?

GREG

Skye said she dimly remembers him leaving, but we couldn't find any trace of him down there.

BARBARA

Never mind. We'll just have to hope we catch him before he kills again next time. What about the new technology? Did it do the job?

GREG

Actually... no.

BARBARA

(surprised)

No?

GREG

See, here's the problem. As I understand it, part of being a good Watcher is being able to give guidance and advice in the field, both on battle strategies and also to help with problem solving. It's a little hard to do that when you're sitting inside a van half a mile away from the action.

BARBARA

You feel the communications setup hinders your ability as a Watcher?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GREG

Absolutely. I need to be close to these girls when we're in the thick of it, not watching them fight for their lives on a computer screen. I think i was just seduced by all the flashing lights of that stuff when it arrived, but in practice... it could get them all killed.

BARBARA

I see. And you're sure about this?

GREG

I'm positive. Maybe in time we can try to introduce them again, but for now I want to keep on doing things the old fashioned way.

BARBARA

(grins)

I think we can manage that. We've survived without relying on technology for hundreds of years so far, after all!

Greg nods and picks up the first case, ready to take it away, as we cut to:

43

INT. ACADEMY - INFIRMARY - MORNING.

43

JAZ, the Academy nurse, is at her desk, filling out a chart when Sofia taps the door and leans inside.

SOFIA

Knock, knock?

JAZ

Oh, hello, Sofia. She's just through there.

SOFIA

Thank you.

Sofia heads towards the row of beds in the next room of the infirmary, aiming for the one occupied by Skye. Skye is leafing through a music magazine as Sofia approaches.

SKYE

If you're gonna ask me how I'm feeling, the answer's still-

SOFIA

'Fine'?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SKYE

(beat)

Yeah, I guess. How's everyone else?

SOFIA

Still a little shaken. We almost got ourselves wiped out on our first official mission, so I think we can expect some rigorous training from now on.

SKYE

Hey, we weren't the ones in trouble, remember?

SOFIA

Well, not to focus on the negative, but you were the one in trouble!

SKYE

You know what I mean. With the fighting. Alita and Frankie? They're newbies. You and me, we know what the score is. Soon as they start getting closer to our level, we'll all start working better as a team out there.

SOFIA

At least Greg seems to know what he's doing.

SKYE

(shrugs)

He's okay. You're more Watcher-friendly than I am.

SOFIA

Yes, I suppose I am.

A beat. Skye drums her fingers on her chest.

SKYE

So... anything else?

SOFIA

No, no, just checking up on you.

SKYE

Oh, okay. Well, like I said, I'm-

SOFIA

Fine.

Skye smirks, and Sofia stands and starts to head back out. She pauses in the doorway and turns back to Skye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SOFIA (cont'd)

And you still don't remember what happened to you after you were taken away?

SKYE

Nope. The tall dude with the black hair kept ranting about how I was going to 'bring him out of the darkness,' or whatever. I still say he was high. We must have gone up against the vampire equivalent of Heaven's Gate or something.

Sofia smiles again, then exits, leaving Skye to it.

We stay with Skye for a beat, and once she's sure Sofia has gone, she tentatively pushes the bed covers back and stares down at her belly.

She then starts to roll up the bottom of the black t-shirt she's wearing - and she reveals what looks like a small surgical scar cut into her belly. Skye rubs a finger lightly across it, looking pretty anxious, as we dissolve over to:

44 INT. BOARD ROOM - NIGHT.

44

Inside a long, darkened board room, with a lengthy table in its centre, lined by chairs filled with old, craggy faced men in expensive but muted suits.

They look up as the double doors leading into the room swing open, and Roland strides in - his cloak and robes replaced by a similarly sharp suit.

OLD MAN #1

Well? What news do you bring?

Roland bows respectfully before answering.

ROLAND

Our work has entered its final stages, my lords. The final ingredient in our puzzle was recently acquired at last.

There are murmurs of approval from the men.

OLD MAN #2

You mean...

ROLAND

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roland reaches into his pocket and brings out a small, clear plastic tube, which appears to have a slice of human skin inside it.

He rolls it across the table towards the old man who sits at its head, and he lifts the tube, peering into it.

ROLAND (cont'd)
DNA from the child of darkness who
moves in the light. This is all we
need to begin our transformation.
(smiles)
Our time of waiting in the shadows
is finally at an end.

The Old Man at the head of the table bows his head - then he puts the tube down and starts to CLAP.

Soon, the rest of the elders have followed his lead, applauding Roland who bows to them again, and from this round of applause, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW