

SLAYER ACADEMY

"Fun & Games"

by
Lee A. Chrimes

TEASER

FADE IN:

1

EXT. TOWN CENTRE - DAY

1

Up close on a poster advertising a CIRCUS coming to town.
The lions. The tigers. Oh my.

Pull back to find SOFIA and BRAEDEN staring at the poster,
which is inside the window of a busy bakery, with a stream
of people passing in and out and past the two Slayers.

BRAEDEN

C'mon, Sofes, it'll be fun.

SOFIA

I don't class 'fun' as watching
several poorly-treated animals
get whipped to perform tricks for
the amusement of the baying
crowds.

BRAEDEN

What about the clowns? Everybody
loves clowns.

SOFIA

I hate clowns.

(turns to Braeden)

You should have heard this story
Xander told me about evil clowns
once.

(shudders)

No, thanks.

The duo turn away from the poster and start to walk down
the bustling high street, passing more shops and punters.

BRAEDEN

I just don't see what the problem
is. It's a circus, you know? What
could be bad about it?

SOFIA

All sorts.

BRAEDEN

That's not an answer.

SOFIA

(flat)

Yes, it is.

BRAEDEN

Well, okay, yeah, it's an answer,
but it's a pretty vague one.

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA
(shrugs)
I'm good at vague.

BRAEDEN
Then how about vaguely saying
'yes' to going along?

SOFIA
(eyes him)
We're in term time, Braeden. I
hardly think we can get away with
skipping into town for a night to
watch a circus!

BRAEDEN
Not everybody 'skips,' you know.

SOFIA
(huffs)
You know exactly what I mean.

They join SKYE and ALITA - Skye is loaded with shopping
bags from a variety of clothes stores, while Alita just has
her small shoulderbag. They're deep in conversation about
something as Sofia and Braeden step over.

SKYE
No, actually, I don't think it's
'too much'!

ALITA
I just feel...
(sees Sofia)
Oh, hello.

SOFIA
(eyes them both)
Hello. What's going on?

Skye sighs, glances at Alita then digs into one of her
bags. Alita suddenly looks rather mortified.

ALITA
(hisses)
Skye! Not here!

SKYE
Why not? We're all girls.
(glances at Braeden)
On the inside.

SOFIA
What's all this about?

BRAEDEN

My cue to leave, unless I'm very much mistaken. See you girls back at the Academy, right?

With a last grin to Sofia, Braeden backs off, heading out of frame. Once he's gone, Sofia turns back to Skye.

SOFIA

Alright, you scared him off. Happy?

SKYE

Yup. Check this out!

Skye lifts an item from one of the bags - a racy negligee set, all reds and blacks and ribbons. Alita blushes a deep crimson, but Skye just squints critically at the brassiere.

SKYE (cont'd)

What d'you think? Too much? I kinda like it. Dita von Teese meets Hot Topic.

SOFIA

(stuck)

Erm...

SKYE

'Cause, you know, if we're all goin' to this circus tonight, makes sense I should dress up!

SOFIA

By buying saucy underwear?

SKYE

Sofes, we live in a school where there are precisely two boys of grabbable age. One of them's into you, the other's into Alita.

(stuffs underwear away)

A girl's gotta start looking at what else is out there!

Sofia rolls her eyes and grins, and the trio continue along the high street.

SOFIA

So what have you two been buying?

SKYE

Clothes. Lots of clothes. English sizes suit me. In LA, I always felt like I was shopping for clothes to fit two people!

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

Alita?

ALITA

Oh, I, uh-

SKYE

She's too scared to get anything, because she knows it's only gonna make Tyson follow her around even more.

SOFIA

I thought you two weren't saying much to each other?

ALITA

We are not, it's just that-

SKYE

Tyson's persistent. That boy's got stamina.

Alita lowers her head, and Sofia gets the hint to drop the subject. The girls pass another circus poster and pause to check it out.

SOFIA

So you two are going, then?

SKYE

Yep. I figured, why not? It's not like we do much to relax at the Academy except do more work. Aren't you and Braeden going?

SOFIA

I don't know. Maybe. I'm not really a circus person.

SKYE

Sofes, it's a circus! What could be bad about it?

As Skye mirrors Braeden's words, Sofia glances at her, and we cut to:

Inside the circus tent itself, the arena busily being prepared for the following evening's show. Seating tiers are being hammered into place, the main ring is sprinkled with fresh sawdust, and dozens of workers flow past us.

Push in towards a large object ahead, covered by a heavy sheet of tarpaulin. More workers pass us by, their features obscured by protective headgear and face masks.

As we draw closer to the covered object, four feet tall and with a circular topside, two VOICES can be heard:

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
(raspy)
Are we all set for tonight?

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
(wheezing)
As planned.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)
Then let's take another look at
the star attraction!

A HAND reaches out for the tarpaulin - a hand in a red sleeve, and a hand that has noticeably long nails - and it grabs one edge, YANKING the sheet away to reveal:

A young GIRL, bound and gagged inside a thick metal CAGE, tears streaming down her bruised face as she SCREAMS frantically, her cries muffled by the gag!

VOICE #2 (O.S.)
Don't worry, my dear... it's
almost showtime!

The girl starts to WEEP helplessly, and as the two voices CACKLE, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

3

INT. CAMPUS - LIBRARY - DAY

3

Looking out from inside one of the bookshelves, as a thick text is slotted into place to reveal FRANKIE, a heap of books cradled in her other arm.

She's concentrating on what's she's doing, checking the books against a list in her other hand, and she isn't paying much notice to the handful of younger Slayers dotted around the library tables.

She moves towards another bookshelf, a heavy book in one hand, but her arm suddenly starts to SHAKE, and she stops dead.

Frankie stares hard down at her hand, watching her whole arm start to TWITCH. She narrows her eyes and fixes her glare on it, willing it to calm down...

... and it works. Her arm returns to normal, and Frankie lets out a deep SIGH.

She looks up to see two Slayers staring at her, confused over what they just witnessed.

FRANKIE

(snaps)

What are you two looking at? Get back to your work! *Rapidement!*

The scolded Slayers quickly gather up their things and scurry away, and Frankie lets out a more exasperated sigh as she watches them leave.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

(mutters)

Enfants...

She turns back to her work, noticing Sofia, Skye and Alita heading towards her. She does her best to look busy, but it doesn't stop the girls from joining her.

SOFIA

Hello, Frankie.

Frankie nods a quick greeting, her eyes flicking over each one of them. She pushes a few more books onto the shelves, then glances back to see the trio still looking at her.

FRANKIE

(tetchy)

Can I 'elp you with something?

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

I guess asking about a book is
kind of redundant...

SOFIA

(nudges Skye)

We were just, you know,
wondering, if you...

Sofia struggles to finish, and Alita steps up.

ALITA

Or, perhaps, if you would
consider...

She also trails off, and Frankie HUFFS, visibly losing
patience.

FRANKIE

I am a very busy woman, so unless
you 'ave something to say, please
get-

SKYE

D'you wanna come to the circus
with us?

FRANKIE

(beat)

Non.

Frankie steps away, and the others exchange curious glances
before following her.

SOFIA

'No'?

FRANKIE

That is what I said.

SKYE

Why not?

FRANKIE

Because I do not want to go out.
I am too busy 'ere.

SOFIA

All work and no play makes
Frankie a dull girl, you know.

FRANKIE

Than I shall 'ave to remain dull.
Excusez-moi.

Frankie sharply nudges past Sofia, who looks to the others.

(CONTINUED)

Skye shrugs, and Alita looks similarly clueless, but Sofia isn't giving up that easily. She leaves them behind and catches up to Frankie.

SOFIA

You could do with giving yourself a break, you know. You've hardly left this place since Barbara gave you the keys, and I just thought-

FRANKIE

(sharp)

While I would normally be all ears to whatever you 'ave to say, Sofia, this time I am not interested. I 'ave far too much work to do 'ere to waste my time watching stupid clowns and dancing bears.

Sofia folds her arms haughtily, Frankie's sass bouncing right off her.

SOFIA

Bollocks.

FRANKIE

Quoi?

SOFIA

You're just looking for an excuse to keep avoiding everybody.

FRANKIE

I do not need an excuse, Sofia.

SOFIA

So come out with us, then!

Frankie keeps filing, and Sofia changes tactics.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Look, I don't really want to go either, so I could use some moral support.

FRANKIE

(dry)

I am sure Braeden will be more than 'appy to offer all the support you need.

SOFIA

(blushes)

That's not- we're not-
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA (cont'd)
 (changes subject)
 Look, I just think it'll be good
 for you, that's all. There are
 other ways to take your mind off
 things than burying yourself in
 work, you know.

FRANKIE
 What 'things' do I 'ave to not
 think about, exactly?

SOFIA
 (awkward)
 Well... there's the fact that
 last time any of us saw you, you
 were a little... pregnant.

Frankie SLAMS a book down, making Sofia jump. There's fury
 blazing in Frankie's eyes as she slowly turns to Sofia.

FRANKIE
 (stern)
 Leave me alone.

SOFIA
 Frankie... has something
 happened? I mean, was there a
 problem, or are you still-

FRANKIE
 I said, leave me alone!

Frankie's raised voice gets the whole library's attention,
 and Sofia decides it's best to back off. Frankie turns her
 back on her and returns to her shelving, and Sofia sighs as
 she rejoins Skye and Alita.

SKYE
 So...

ALITA
 She is not coming, is she?

SOFIA
 (downcast)
 You heard her. Let's go.

Sofia casts a last look back at Frankie as the trio head
 for the exit, out onto:

The trio start down the spiral staircase that leads onto
 the rear of the main quadrangle.

SKYE
 What do you suppose happened?

SOFIA

'Happened'?

SKYE

You know, with the whole...

(looks round; lowers
voice)

B-A-B-Y thing.

SOFIA

I don't know, Skye.

ALITA

Do you think she is still
pregnant?

SKYE

The mood swings would say 'yes.'

SOFIA

Whether she is or not, it's
obviously something she doesn't
want to talk about at the moment.
And neither should we.

The girls push through the doors at the bottom, out onto:

EXT. CAMPUS - QUADRANGLE - CONTINUOUS

Skye and Alita follow Sofia out into the large square, with
a few Slayers trickling past and heading for the classrooms
on either side.

SKYE

Yeah, but still, there's got to
be something going on in that
peroxide-soaked brain of hers.
She's not been this bitchy since-

SOFIA

Since we all first got here, I
know. And that's not good.

Alita looks up - DEBBIE is heading towards them, and she
taps Sofia's arm to get her attention.

DEBBIE

Oh, good, you three are here.

SOFIA

Looks that way. What's going on?

DEBBIE

Big announcement, assembly hall,
ten minutes. I've been sent out
to gather the troops.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

Is the cafeteria changing its menu again? 'Cause, gotta say, the last one didn't really live up to the hype.

DEBBIE

Er... no. I'm not sure what it's about, just that Mrs. Griffin wants all faculty staff and students to attend.

Debbie nods to them and heads off on her way, leaving Sofia and the others to swap curious glances.

SOFIA

Any ideas?

ALITA

A new mission, perhaps?

SKYE

Five bucks says it's the menu.
(off their looks)
Sorry, five pounds.

Sofia looks over towards the rear of the assembly hall, and we cut inside to:

A large crowd has gathered - pretty much everyone in the Academy is here, Slayers filling up the seats before the stage and staff members lined up to the sides of the room.

A lectern and mic are waiting on stage, and after a few moments of chatter from the girls filling the room, BARBARA strides out and up to the lectern.

BARBARA

(taps mic)

Can everyone hear me?

(beat)

Alright, first things first. I've been asked to let you all know that the canteen's going to be switching to a different menu for the rest of term...

She pauses as Skye 'a-ha!'s from somewhere in the room.

BARBARA (cont'd)

... but that's not why I've called you here.

(MORE)

BARBARA (cont'd)

As you know, this academy prides itself on maintaining a high standard of alertness and response times from its students, ready to head out to tackle any situation, anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.

(beat)

However, I'm sure I'm not the only one who's noticed it's been rather quiet round here lately. So, with that in mind, I've got a treat for you all.

(beat; surveys room)

Tonight, you all get the night off. That's everyone - faculty, students, cleaning staff, everybody.

The girls start to MURMUR, and Barbara grins.

BARBARA (cont'd)

And I hear rumours of a circus show in town this evening, so if any of you wished to attend, guilt free... well, I'm sure I could turn a blind eye this once.

(beat)

That's all for now. See you all in class.

Barbara steps away from the mic, and as the girls stand and start to disperse, chattering animatedly to one another, we cut to:

As the girls start to spill out from the doors leading into the assembly hall, we pick up Alita as she waits for the others.

TYSON (O.S.)

Alita? Hey, Alita!

She glances round, trying to duck out of sight, but it's no good - TYSON has spotted her, and is busy pushing through the crowd of girls to reach him.

A little breathless, Tyson is still all smiles as he joins her. Alita manages a small, polite smile.

TYSON (cont'd)

Hey! Almost lost you in all that crowd there. Are you alright?

She nods, glancing round for any sign of the others to come and give her an exit strategy.

TYSON (cont'd)
So, er... about tonight?

ALITA
Yes?

TYSON
Well, I was just, you know...
uh... wondering if you, I mean,
you and me, would, uh...

Tyson stumbles over his words, but he's saved by the bell
as Skye throws an arm over Alita's shoulder.

SKYE
She'd love to go to the circus
with you, Tyson.
(to Alita)
Right?

Alita's stuck - and manages a half-hearted smile.

ALITA
I... would?

TYSON
(beams)
Great! Okay, uh, brilliant.
I'll... I'll see you later!

He heads off, clearly full of the joys of human happiness
as Alita turns angrily to Skye.

ALITA
Why did you do that?

SKYE
Because if I'd have had to watch
him try to get to the end of that
sentence much longer, I'd have
asked you to the fricken circus,
just to get it out of the way.

ALITA
(catches up)
You were standing behind me?

SKYE
(grins)
The whole time.

Alita scowls, muttering something under her breath.

SKYE (cont'd)
What was that?

ALITA
I said *shikatanonai*.

SKYE
Oh.
(beat)
Which means...

Alita glances up as the first BELL of the day rings.

ALITA
Which means we will have to
discuss this later. I have to go.

Alita hurries off, and as Skye frowns after her, we cut to:

INT. CAMPUS - BARBARA'S OFFICE - NEXT

Barbara and ELLEN are knee deep in paperwork when there's a KNOCK at her door.

She looks up to see BRYCE standing in the doorway, and Barbara blinks, a little surprised.

BARBARA
Oh! Er... hello.

Ellen grins slyly as she turns in her seat to look at Bryce, who waves merrily at them both.

BRYCE
Nice announcement. Thought it
contained just the right amount
of your trademark dry sense of
humour.

BARBARA
I try my best.

BRYCE
So...

BARBARA
(raises eyebrow)
Yes?

BRYCE
Well, I was just going to ask if
you fancied going along tonight,
is all.

BARBARA
Oh! Oh. Er... well, I'd like to
join everyone, but I've got all
this work to catch up on, and-

ELLEN

He means with him, B.

Barbara looks up to Bryce, who nods and grins.

BARBARA

Right. Go... with you.

BRYCE

Not a date, I should add. Because
that would cross the line, and
you know me. All about the lines.

Barbara looks to Ellen for support, but Ellen's loving
watching Barbara react too much to help. Barbara finally
looks back up to Bryce.

BARBARA

I'd... love to.

BRYCE

(beams)

Magic. See you later, then!

He exits, and it's several moments before Barbara exhales
again. Ellen's still smirking at her.

BARBARA

Oh, don't look at me like that.
It's not like I've never been on
a date with a boy before.

ELLEN

Yeah, but which decade are we
talking about?

BARBARA

(mock scowls)

It's been... a while.

ELLEN

Before or after the Beatles split
up?

BARBARA

(feigned shock)

Ellen!

ELLEN

(chuckles)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. You should
go for it. Bryce seems okay, and
besides, we could all do with
letting off a little steam.

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA

I'm perfectly happy with my steam
the way it is, thank you very
much.

Ellen raises an eyebrow, and Barbara can't help grinning
back at her. We leave these two and dissolve to:

EXT. CAMPUS - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The sun has set and the spotlights are on to illuminate the
front of the Academy, as a gaggle of Slayers waits by the
two campus minibuses.

AIDEN and GREG stand near one, talking to each other as JAZ
heads over.

JAZ

All set?

AIDEN

Pretty much. Greg and I are just
deciding who gets to drive.

Greg tosses Aiden a set of CAR KEYS.

GREG

We both do.

AIDEN

Come again?

GREG

Ellen's taking some people in her
jeep, and Barbara's squeezing a
few into her car. That only
leaves me and you to drive the
minibuses, so we may as well take
one each.

AIDEN

Right. Okay. Good plan.

Greg nods and heads over to the second bus, leaving Aiden
with Jaz. Jaz picks up on his downbeat expression.

JAZ

Trouble in paradise?

AIDEN

The storm's settling in for the
summer, as far as I can tell.

JAZ

At least we all get the night
off, though, right?

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

(sighs)

I guess. I just hope nothing else
goes wrong with my day today,
because that'd just about finish
me off.

Jaz rubs his arm sympathetically, as we cut to:

10

INT. CIRCUS TENT - NIGHT

10

WHUMP! The decidedly dead body of the captive girl in the
cage slumps into frame. Blank, glassy eyes stare back at
us, blood flowing from several deep GASHES along her face.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)

(disappointed)

Oh.

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

I told you not to do that!

VOICE #1 (O.S.)

(protests)

How was I supposed to know she'd
break that easily? I thought they
made them tougher than that?

The girl's body is slowly dragged off screen as the two
voices continue to bicker.

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

It's too late to worry about this
now. We need a new star
attraction for tonight, or the
whole thing's ruined!

(beat; malevolent)

Find me another Slayer.

The unfortunate Slayer's body finally disappears from our
sight, and we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

11

The big top rises into the night as the grand centrepiece of the circus spread out before us, with a wide variety of stalls and fairground rides circled round it.

There's a big wheel, a dodgems track, a ghost train, all the candy floss you can eat and some more modern rides that all seem to involve things spinning round at high velocity.

The second minibus, with Aiden at the wheel, pulls to a halt alongside the other bus, Ellen's jeep and Barbara's Volvo, with a crowd of girls and staff disembarking from the vehicles.

Barbara steps to the fore, raising her hands to get the crowd's attention.

BARBARA

Alright, everybody, here's the deal. It is now...

(checks watch)

... exactly eight o'clock. Be back here at eleven on the dot to head back to the Academy. That gives you all three hours, no questions asked. Go and have some fun!

The Slayers surge past her, as Barbara heads over to the small crowd of staff who've come along.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Alright, everyone, the same goes for all of us. There's still a few girls back at the Academy, so Ellen, keep an open line with them just in case there are any problems.

GREG

I can head back to do a sweep round, if you like?

Aiden seems surprised by Greg's suggestion, but Greg either doesn't notice or ignores his reaction.

BARBARA

Are you sure?

GREG

Yes, I don't mind. I'm not much of a circus person, anyway.

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA

Alright, thank you, Greg, that's very kind. Just be back here in time for the pickup, alright?

Barbara nods to the others, and they follow the last few girls into the grounds as Aiden steps over to Greg.

AIDEN

Greg, hey, wait a minute.

GREG

Yes?

Aiden scratches the back of his head, trying to find the right words.

AIDEN

Are you splitting up with me?

GREG

What?

AIDEN

It's just... look, things have been pretty sideways ever since you got back, and I don't want-

GREG

We're not breaking up.

AIDEN

Okay. Good. Just wanted to, you know... make sure.

GREG

Aiden, listen-

AIDEN

No, no, it's fine. You go off, patrol, do whatever you have to. I'll be here. With everyone else.
(pointedly)
Having fun.

Greg starts to answer, but Aiden is already walking away. Greg sighs, looking pretty frustrated, before opening the door of the nearest minibus and climbing inside.

The fairground attractions are a dizzying bustle of noise and colour, with flashing lights and medleys of tunes all battling for attention.

Sofia, Braeden, Alita and Skye are making their way through the crowds together, Alita seeming pretty bewildered by what's going on around her.

SKYE

Do they have anything like this back in Japan?

ALITA

Not really, no. Our street festivals are filled with music and dancing, but...

She pauses as a pair of drunk TEENAGERS stagger past, cackling to themselves about nothing in particular.

ALITA (cont'd)

... nothing like this.

SKYE

Hey, I'm a newbie to the British way of doing these things too.

She grabs Alita's hand and starts to lead her away.

ALITA

But what about-

SKYE

They're big enough to sit at the grown up table now. I'm sure they can take care of themselves.

Skye is all smiles as she drags Alita away - but Braeden catches her throwing him a dark look as she exits. Her meaning is clear - don't try anything.

Sofia is oblivious, but looks a little uncomfortable as she surveys the fairground rides.

BRAEDEN

(off her expression)

Hey, what's all this? I thought we agreed you were going to leave your Sad Face back home?

SOFIA

I did- I mean, I'm fine, it's just...

BRAEDEN

No, you're not fine. Darcie stayed at home tonight, so I figured that was one less thing you had to stress about, but looks like I was wrong!

(CONTINUED)

Sofia folds her arms, and Braeden gently lays an arm round her shoulder, aiming her at a candy floss stall.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
Never mind. I have the answer to
all your problems.

SOFIA
(raises eyebrow)
Candy floss?

BRAEDEN
Concentrated sugar. Lots of it.
And after that...

He looks skyward, and she follows his gaze to see he's looking up at the huge ferris wheel overhead.

SOFIA
(shakes head)
Oh, no.

BRAEDEN
Aw, come on! I love those things!

SOFIA
I bloody don't!

BRAEDEN
What's the matter? Are you scared
of heights?

SOFIA
(dry)
I almost died in a plane crash,
of course I'm scared of heights.

A beat. Braeden raises an eyebrow, and Sofia huffs, looking more apologetic.

SOFIA (cont'd)
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to snap.

BRAEDEN
It's fine.

Braeden carefully slips his hand over hers.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
Come on. Let's go and get lost.

Sofia manages a half smile at last, and as the grinning Braeden leads her away, we cut to:

13 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - WURLITZERS - NEXT

13

Tyson and Alita are standing in the queue for the wurlitzers, Tyson hopping from foot to foot with excitement. Alita, by contrast, is watching the spinning ride whizz past with a look of pure horror.

ALITA

Is that... is any of this safe?

TYSON

Huh? Oh, yeah! Of course it's safe. They wouldn't let us on it if it wasn't, would they?

ALITA

I suppose so...

She WINCES as one of the wurlitzers carriages zips past, the girls inside SCREAMING at the tops of their lungs. Tyson notices her expression and nudges her.

TYSON

Happy screams.

(beat)

Honest.

Alita doesn't look at all convinced as we cut to:

14 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - FOOD STALLS - NEXT

14

Bryce steps away from one of the hot food vendors, two huge, greasy hot dogs in his hands as he rejoins Barbara. She grins as she takes one from him.

BARBARA

You're already proving to be a very bad influence on me, you know.

BRYCE

I bet you say that to all the boys.

BARBARA

And just what are you implying, Mr. Bryce?

Bryce COUGHS as he realises he may have just said the wrong thing - but Barbara chuckles.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Sorry. Couldn't resist.

(CONTINUED)

BRYCE
(smiling back)
Aw, that was... that was just
mean.

Bryce takes a bite from his hot dog, noticing Barbara's eyes flicking from one group of Slayers to the next.

BRYCE (cont'd)
Remember what you said earlier?

BARBARA
(distracted)
Hmm?

BRYCE
You said, and I quote, 'tonight,
you all get the night off. That's
everyone - faculty, students,
cleaning staff, everybody.'
(beat)
That includes you, you know.

BARBARA
I'm off duty! This is me letting
my hair down. See?

She takes a bite out of her hot dog.

BARBARA (cont'd)
(through mouthful)
Stick around long enough and I
may even start humming.

Bryce shakes his head as we cut over to:

Braeden and Sofia are next in line as the wheel clunks to a stop, and Braeden grins as he starts to lead her into one of the large seats.

SOFIA
(wary)
This is a very bad idea...

BRAEDEN
Stop yer worrying. I'm here.
Everything's fine.

SOFIA
Oh, so you're going to catch me
if I fall, are you?
(off his look)
I didn't think so.

15 CONTINUED:

15

Braeden shares a grin with the attendant manning the wheel, and as he CLICKS the safety bar into place and starts the wheel back up again, Sofia involuntarily clutches Braeden for support as we cut to:

16 INT. CAMPUS - LIBRARY - NIGHT

16

After hours, and most of the lights are off - but Frankie is still hard at work. She's sitting at one of the tables, several piles of books spread before her along with reams and reams of paper.

She's busy scribbling away, checking the spines of various books as she continues cataloguing, but she's interrupted by a KNOCK at the door over in the reception area.

Frowning, Frankie gets up and heads over, passing through into:

17 INT. CAMPUS - LIBRARY RECEPTION - NEXT

17

She opens the door to reveal DUNSTALL, the young(ish) soldier dressed casually in a t-shirt and jeans.

FRANKIE

Dunstall?

DUNSTALL

Hey. Can I come in?

FRANKIE

(looks over shoulder)

I am busy. What do you want?

DUNSTALL

I came to see you.

Frankie hesitates, then after a moment steps back and holds the door open. Dunstall smiles as he steps inside.

18 INT. CAMPUS - LIBRARY - NEXT

18

Dunstall is talking as he follows Frankie into the main library area.

DUNSTALL

... so Macey and Dolman just took off into town to find some bars, but I was going to check out this circus until I found out you weren't going.

Frankie takes her seat, indicating the work before her.

(CONTINUED)

FRANKIE

This paperwork will not write
itself, Sebastian.

DUNSTALL

So I see.

He perches on the end of her table, and she frowns up at him. He doesn't look too bothered, however.

FRANKIE

Look, I do not mean to be rude,
but-

DUNSTALL

So I asked myself, 'what could
possibly make Frankie want to
miss the chance to go for a night
out with her friends?'

Frankie is silent as he continues.

DUNSTALL (cont'd)

Maybe it's the same thing that's
made her take this library job,
so she can spend her days working
and not have to speak to anyone?

FRANKIE

(softly)
Sebastian, please...

He pulls up a chair next to her, her resolve visibly
weakening by the second.

DUNSTALL

And that's when I realised
something. The best time to come
and see you is when nobody else
is around. You can't hide behind
anything, and you can't just
ignore me.

He lays a hand under her chin, lifting her face to his.

DUNSTALL (cont'd)

And, more importantly, we're not
about to get busted for
anything...

He leans forward slowly, and Frankie doesn't stop him as he
KISSES her. It's slow and tender, but after a moment she
breaks away.

FRANKIE

I- I am sorry, I... I can't...

(CONTINUED)

DUNSTALL

Frankie?

She looks up - and there are TEARS in her eyes.

DUNSTALL (cont'd)

What is it? You know you can tell me. You can tell me anything.

She bites her lip, and it looks like she's about to tell him something - but she just looks away.

FRANKIE

You should leave now.

Frankie hurries off screen, and as Dunstall leans back in his seat, defeated, we cut back over to:

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - WURLITZERS - NEXT

Tyson and Alita are just leaving the ride, Tyson bouncing with energy but Alita noticeably unsteady on her feet. She TRIPS and stumbles, but he manages to catch her.

TYSON

Woah! Steady on!

Their faces end up only inches apart.. but Alita quickly pushes away and straightens up. Tyson looks deflated - but then that twinkle returns to his eye.

TYSON (cont'd)

This really isn't your kind of thing, is it?

ALITA

(off wurlitzers)

I never knew having fun could be so... nauseating.

He glances around, making sure nobody they know is nearby - and more importantly, none of the Academy staff.

TYSON

Don't worry. I've got a backup plan. Follow me.

Alita hesitates, but he beckons her again, and as she starts to follow him away from the rides, we cut to:

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - BIG TOP - NEXT

ERIKA stands alone in a quieter part of the grounds, SLURPING the last of a soft drink and letting her other senses take over as the sounds and smells of the circus wash over her.

(CONTINUED)

She's holding on to one of the tent's guy ropes for support, but as she lifts her drink to drain the last of it, she doesn't notice two shady FIGURES emerge from the darkness behind her!

They close in on her from two sides, and though Erika suddenly twigs that they're there and whips round, she's met with a STAFF to the face that knocks her on her back!

Stunned, she's powerless to fight back as the two figures DRAG her off screen, as we look up towards:

Up high with Sofia and Braeden. She's nestled close to him, visibly scared, and he only has eyes for her - which is unfortunate, because if they were looking they might have seen Erika get kidnapped!

BRAEDEN

See? Nothing to worry about.
Solid as a rock.

SOFIA

(still scared)

Mmm.

BRAEDEN

(beat)

Sofes...

She looks up, and his face is full of genuine concern.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)

Are you alright?

SOFIA

(sarcastic)

I'm sitting on a flimsy metal
chair sixty feet up in the air.
I'm absolutely great.

BRAEDEN

I'm not talking about that.
You've been off ever since we got
here. Is it something I should
know about?

She looks away, out across the scenery and towards the glittering city lights, silent for a long beat before:

SOFIA

When I was a little girl, there
was this big set of fields just
down the road from my mum and
dad's house.

(MORE)

21

CONTINUED:

21

SOFIA (cont'd)
Every summer, without fail, this
local fairground and circus would
set up shop there, and every year
my parents would take me there.

Braeden stays quiet, letting her tell the story.

SOFIA (cont'd)
It was the one thing I looked
forward to more than anything
else, all year. The one night I
knew I'd have the best time I
could, all because it was just
the three of us... together.
(long beat)
I haven't been to anything like
this since they died. I didn't
want to.
(looks to Braeden)
It's... it's bringing back some
old memories. That's all.

He doesn't need words. He wraps his arms round her and hugs
her tightly, and she closes her eyes as she presses against
him.

The duo stay locked together as their ferris wheel cart
rises up and out of frame, and we cut to:

22

INT. CIRCUS - BIG TOP - NEXT

22

Crowds of people are starting to take their seats inside
the main circus tent now, with spotlights sweeping across
the assembled punters as loud music blares over the PA.

Tub of popcorn in hand, Debbie makes her way across the
seats until she joins HEIDI and ANNA. Heidi looks bored as
all heck as she fiddles with her mobile phone, but Anna
looks like she can't wait for things to start.

DEBBIE
(off Heidi's phone)
Oh, can you get a good reception
off that in here?

Heidi just shoots her a look, and Debbie coughs awkwardly
as she sits down.

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Okay then... Have either of you
two seen Erika?

HEIDI
If she's got any sense, she's a
long way away from here by now,
doing something she actually
wants to. Unlike us.

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Man, what's the matter with you?
This is gonna be cool!

HEIDI

How can you say that? I don't
know the words in any language
for how lame all this is.

ANNA

Ah, shut up, killjoy.

DEBBIE

Haven't you been to a circus
before, Anna?

ANNA

Nah, not really. Closest I got to
this back home in Brooklyn was
taking the L down to Central
Park. All this? Clowns, music,
tigers - this is gonna rule.

HEIDI

(coughs)
Loser.

ANNA

Say what?

HEIDI

Nothing. I coughed.

Anna scowls at her, but as the house lights drop she
quickly forgets the diss, CHEERING and WHOOPING along with
everybody else.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen! Boys and
girls of all ages, welcome one
and welcome all to the one
hundred and twenty-third annual
performance of the National
Circus of Svetlakistan!

More CHEERS. Heidi sinks her head into her hands.

ANNOUNCER (cont'd)

Let's open tonight's show with a
little magic. Please welcome out
into the arena, the dazzling, the
death-defying... Vizage!

The spotlights go up on VIZAGE, a tall man wearing a black
suit and cloak, his face covered by a black mask. He throws
his hands up for more CHEERS, backed by his theme music.

(CONTINUED)

Vizage stalks theatrically over to a large object hidden by a black sheet, which he WHIPS away to appreciative GASPS from the crowd.

Over with Debbie and the others, however, enjoyment quickly turns to alarm at what they see.

Strapped to a large, circular board painted like a giant bullseye is Erika, now wearing a glittering magician's assistant's outfit! She seems blank and unemotional, almost trance-like.

DEBBIE

Erika?

Heidi looks up, squinting down into the arena and spotting Erika at last.

HEIDI

Hey! How come she gets to be part of the show?

ANNA

(growing concern)
Heidi...

HEIDI

Oh, what now? Are you trying to tell me...

Anna's look tells her yes, that's exactly what she's trying to tell her.

HEIDI (cont'd)

Oh.

DEBBIE

We need to find the others...

Vizage flips his arm up - and a rack of razor sharp THROWING KNIVES pop into view!

DEBBIE (cont'd)

(gulps)
... and fast!

The three girls leap out of their seats as the crowd APPLAUD the magician down below, and as he circles the arena, milking the applause, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

23

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - SHOOTING RANGE - NIGHT

23

BLAM! The smoking nozzle of a rifle is lowered from frame as Bryce grins victoriously - and as he turns to Barbara, standing next to him, he sees that she's smiling too.

BRYCE

There you go! As if you could
ever doubt my phenomenal
marksmanship.

BARBARA

Alright, I'll admit. I'm
impressed. How did you learn to
shoot like that?

BRYCE

Very quickly.
(off her look)
Long story for another time.

Bryce lays the rifle down, then receives the large, pink fluffy bunny as his prize from the stall owner, making a big show of presenting it to Barbara.

BRYCE (cont'd)

And for the lady of the hour, I
give you this... thing.

They share a laugh, and Barbara looks like she's finally starting to relax in his company - so it's a crying shame that their moment is interrupted by:

HEIDI (O.S.)

Miss Griffin! Miss Griffin!

Barbara sighs, her smile fading, and Bryce manages a sympathetic look.

BRYCE

And it was going so well...

She turns round as Heidi, Anna and a breathless Debbie bound up to her. She registers their alarmed expressions straight away, clicking back to business.

BARBARA

What's happened?

DEBBIE

(panting)
Erika... she... and... the
knives!

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA

I'm sorry?

HEIDI

What the most special girl in school is trying to say is that we've got trouble.

BRYCE

On our night off? That's just rude.

ANNA

Something's happened to Erika. She went off just before the main show started in the circus tent, and next thing we know, she's showing up as the magician's assistant!

DEBBIE

She looked strange too, like she'd been hypnotised or something.

BRYCE

And there's no chance she could have just, you know, volunteered for the show?

All four girls turn to stare at him.

BRYCE (cont'd)

Right. Of course not. How stupid of me.

BARBARA

(all business)

Gather the others together. We need to get to the bottom of this, but quickly and quietly. We're out in the open here, we can't risk getting any innocent bystanders caught up in this. Debbie, call Greg and tell him to get back here on the double. Heidi, Anna, find Skye and the rest of the girls, regroup into your squads and then meet me back here.

The girls nod and dash off, as Barbara turns to Bryce.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Rain check?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

BRYCE
Rain check.

As Barbara turns back round, now looking at the fairground around her with different eyes, we cut to:

24 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - FERRIS WHEEL - NEXT

24

Still up on high, Sofia and Braeden are still cuddled close together when Sofia suddenly perks up, noticing something down below.

BRAEDEN
What is it?

SOFIA
(frowns)
Something's wrong.

BRAEDEN
What? How can you tell?

SOFIA
I don't know, just... we need to get off.

Braeden smirks, and she nudges him sharply.

SOFIA (cont'd)
Braeden, be serious for a second!
(points)
Look, there. See?

He follows her finger - and we can just make out Heidi and Anna dashing from stall to stall, gradually gathering together the various Slayers.

BRAEDEN
I knew this was going too well...

As Sofia anxiously waits for their carriage to reach the bottom of the wheel again, we cut to:

25 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - NEXT

25

Skye marches along with Heidi and a handful of other Slayers behind her.

SKYE
So what do we know?

HEIDI
Nothing so far. I think that was kind of the point of us all gathering together.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

Can you leave your Sarcasm Face
at the door for once? Erika's in
trouble!

Heidi 'hmp'h's loudly as Skye looks towards the ferris wheel
and sees Sofia and Braeden clambering out of their carriage
and hurrying over.

Skye's eyes scan the grounds as they join her, but she
starts to frown as she realises:

SKYE (cont'd)

Where's Alita? And Tyson?

SOFIA

I don't know, I thought they were
with you?

SKYE

Does it look like they're with
me?

SOFIA

Well, they can't have gone far!

HEIDI

Unless they're next up in the
act. Knowing our luck, it's lion
taming.

Sofia and Skye share a concerned look, as we cut to:

A bus pulls into frame, slowing down to let a load of
passengers off at a bus stop, and as it pulls away again we
see Tyson and Alita are part of the crowd.

Tyson rubs his hands together - he's clearly got a plan
here, but Alita looks less convinced.

ALITA

We have come a long way from the
circus, Tyson. We should head
back.

TYSON

'Head back'? We only just got
here! Don't you trust me to take
care of you?

ALITA

Something tells me it will be me
taking care of you.

TYSON

(beat)

Okay, that's probably true, but
still... have a little faith.

He takes her hand, and despite a moment's hesitation she
lets him lead her off.

TYSON (cont'd)

Don't worry, Allie. We're going
to have a great night. Just wait
and see.

Tyson's all smiles as he drags Alita along, and we cut to:

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - NIGHT

Debbie is dialling a number into her mobile phone, pressing
it to her ear as she looks around.

DEBBIE

(into phone)

Greg? Are you there?

GREG

(filtered; through
phone)

I'm here. Is the show over
already?

DEBBIE

Er, not exactly... Greg, we're in
a spot of bother here. This
circus may not be as innocent as
it looked. Barbara wants you to
come back, right away.

GREG

Alright, understood. I'm on my
way.

Debbie snaps her phone shut, and we cut to:

EXT. CIRCUS - CAR PARK - NEXT

In the small field cordoned off for a makeshift car park
just past the edge of the circus grounds, we pan along the
rows of cars until we find one of the Academy minibuses -
and Greg is sitting in the driver's seat!

He never even left, and from the intense expression on his
face, it looks like he's been doing some heavy thinking.

He tucks his phone away, and after reaching into the back
of the van to heave a bulky BAG onto his lap, he opens the
bus door and steps out as we head back to:

29

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - BIG TOP - NIGHT

29

The team of Slayers, along with Aiden, Jaz, Ellen, Barbara and Bryce are waiting not far from the entrance to the big top, watching as lines of people start to filter back out.

BARBARA

Looks like the show's over.
(turns to girls)
Does everybody know what they
have to do?

SKYE

Get girl, kill bad guys, save
entire planet.

BARBARA

Words to that effect, yes.

She glances up as Greg jogs over, depositing his sports bag onto the floor.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Ah, Greg. Just the man. Did you
bring what we need?

GREG

In a variety of styles.

Greg unzips the bags - and it's full of WEAPONS! The Slayers descend on the bag, sorting out their individual weapons and tooling up for a fight, as Aiden sidles over to Greg.

AIDEN

Hey.

GREG

Hey.

AIDEN

So...

GREG

We have work to do, Aiden.

AIDEN

Right. Yes. 'Work.'

Aiden steps back, his bubble burst once again as the two main Slayer squads form up.

SKYE

(to Heidi)
We'll go check out the main tent,
see if we can find Erika.

(CONTINUED)

HEIDI

(nods)

We'll sweep the rest of the grounds, see if we can work out who's running the show.

BARBARA

The rest of you, fan out and cover the perimeter. And if you do run into something looking for a fight, try not to get spotted while you're doing it!

The teams split up, and we follow Skye's team as they head for a rear entrance to the tent, sectioned off from the public and filled with mobile units, generators and other small vehicles.

Skye gestures for Sofia to go left and Braeden to go right, while she'll head straight on. The trio split up, ducking under the fencing and creeping stealthily onward.

Sofia reaches one of the open rear flaps of the tent, peeking into the big top as the crews of workers inside start dismantling things - and there's Erika, being loaded into a cage!

SOFIA

(quietly)

Oh, great...

Checking round, she slips into the tent as we cut over to pick up Skye, who is slowly lifting up a sheet of tarpaulin over one large object...

... and there's a GROWL as the lion inside LUNGES at her, rattling the cage!

SKYE

Woah! Ssh! Easy, kitty!

Skye jumps back, hearing raised voices and seeing a handful of workers hurrying over. She curses, scrambles to her feet and hurries off, trying to stay hidden as we cut to:

Sticking to the shadows and staying out of sight of the various workers, Sofia gets closer to the cage Erika sits inside, but before she can get any nearer, she spots the RINGMASTER talking to another figure, a man in a SUIT.

RINGMASTER

(raspy voice)

So it's a success, then?

SUIT

(wheezy voice)

A hundred per cent. If we can just get our hands on more of this, then we'll soon be very rich people indeed!

As the two men share a CHUCKLE, Sofia looks back towards the caged Erika, trying to get her attention.

SOFIA

(hisses)

Erika! Erika!

Sofia looks round, scoops up a small stone and tosses it at the cage. It PINGS off the bars, but Erika doesn't flinch.

Running out of options, Sofia takes a few careful steps forward - and a heavy HAND slaps down on her shoulder!

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey! You're not supposed to be back here!

Sofia slowly turns round - and can't help but GASP as she finally gets a good look at one of the workers!

It's a DEMON, his skin puckered and dark, his mouth malformed and brimming with teeth!

VOICE (cont'd)

Am I going to have to call your parents, young lady?

Sofia is momentarily frozen, and that's enough time for the Ringmaster to spot her.

RINGMASTER

What the- it's one of the Slayers! Get her!

Sofia snaps into action, KICKING the worker back and racing over to Erika's cage as several more demons race towards her.

SOFIA

Erika, come on! Wake up! We have to get out of here!

Sofia is GRABBED by another demon, but a sharp ELBOW to its face and a quick THROW over her shoulder buys her some more time.

SOFIA (cont'd)

(yells)

Braeden! Skye! Help!

(CONTINUED)

Sofia turns - four demons are closing in on her now, a variety of improvised weapons in their hands - wrenches, hammers, and one noticeably sharp KNIFE.

Sofia grits her teeth and draws her Scythe from its sling across her back, but before the demons can charge, something BARRELS into them - it's Braeden!

SOFIA (cont'd)

There you are!

BRAEDEN

Get Erika and go!

Braeden PUNCHES one demon, getting stuck into the rest as Sofia turns back to the cage - and sees more demons rushing over to join the fight!

Sofia looks in on Erika - who still hasn't moved - and with a GRUNT of annoyance she raises her Scythe and SMASHES it down against the cage's padlock. Two more hits and it breaks away, and she nips inside to grab Erika.

Skye appears outside the cage, sai daggers drawn and ready as she SLICES at one demon and SPIN KICKS a second.

SKYE

(off Erika)

She okay?

Sofia slings Erika over her shoulder and clambers back out of the cage, but the girls are quickly being cut off as more demons head towards them.

SOFIA

She will be. Where the hell is Alita?

SKYE

Don't know. Haven't seen her. I just hope to hell she's alright, 'cause I'm gonna kick her ass when I find her!

Sofia rushes for the exit as Skye moves to cover her from incoming demons, and as she starts trading punches with one, we cut to:

Alita and Tyson pour out of the exit of a small, indie theatre along with several other patrons, Tyson still wearing his ear-to-ear grin.

TYSON

Pretty good, huh?

ALITA

It was... interesting.

TYSON

See? Downtime can be fun, Allie.
You just have to make it work for
you.

ALITA

I still think we should be
getting-

TYSON

(takes her hand)
Getting back, yes, I know. But
not yet. I've got somewhere else
I want to show you first. The
night is still young!

He leads her away again, as we cut to:

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - NIGHT

Heidi, Anna and Debbie are patrolling the fairground, the
stalls around them closing down for the night.

HEIDI

This is pointless. There's
nothing here!

DEBBIE

Maybe we're just looking in the
wrong place?

A sharp look from Heidi silences her.

ANNA

Debbie's right, Heidi. If there
are demons or vamps or something
else here, they wouldn't be out
in the open. We've got to think
like they would.

HEIDI

So, what, 'if I was a demon,
where would I hide?'

Anna looks around, spots something promising and grins.

ANNA

Exactly.

She jogs off, heading towards the mobile units parked round
the back of the grounds, and as the other two follow her we
cut back to:

33

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - BIG TOP - NEXT

33

Sofia hurries into frame, searching for somewhere she can lay Erika down. She glances over her shoulder - Skye and Braeden can still be seen battling the various demon workers inside.

Sofia looks back round and spots Greg and Aiden, and she frantically waves them over.

GREG

Sofia?

They join her as she carefully lays Erika out on the ground.

AIDEN

Is she okay?

SOFIA

I don't know! She's in a trance or something. See what you can do, will you?

She starts to leave, and Greg calls out:

GREG

Wait! Where are you going?

SOFIA

I've got to help the others!

She takes off, and Greg looks back at Erika as Aiden checks her pulse and peels back one of her eyelids.

AIDEN

Well, she looks okay...

GREG

But clearly, she isn't.

AIDEN

(dry)

Yeah, thanks, I'd got that. We need to get her back to the minibus. Can you help me carry her?

Aiden takes one of Erika's arms, but Greg grabs her and scoops her over his shoulder instead.

GREG

(off his look)

This is quicker. Come on.

The two boys head back off screen, as we cut to:

34 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - NEXT

34

Heidi, Anna and Debbie are watching more of the circus workers hustle towards the big top, leaving several of the units unguarded.

ANNA

That's our cue. Let's go.

HEIDI

Oh, I'm sorry, did you suddenly get put in charge?

ANNA

(rolls eyes)

Fine. Call it.

HEIDI

(smug)

Let's go.

She marches forward, right up to one of the units, throwing the door open to reveal:

35 INT. MOBILE UNIT - CONTINUOUS

35

Inside what looked like an ordinary, caravan-style trailer is, in fact, a DEMON NEST! The buzzing of FLIES accompanies a stench that hits the girls, and as a disgusted Heidi scans the interior, she sees piles of rubbish, unsavoury pools of fluid and what look like CHEWED HUMAN BONES!

HEIDI

Okay... that is gross.

Heidi SLAMS the door shut:

36 EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

36

And turns round - and three CLOWNS are facing them! The girls freeze for a beat - but as the clowns open their mouths to reveal long, dripping fangs, Debbie GULPS.

DEBBIE

Uh... help?

The nearest Demon Clown LUNGES forward with a ROAR, and we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

37 INT. CIRCUS - BIG TOP - NIGHT

37

Straight back into the action as Skye tears across frame, leaping into the air and launching herself feet first into more demons, CRASHING to the floor as Braeden LEAPS over her, his sword STABBING into another's chest.

Both of them are bearing plenty of bloody cuts and wounds now, and as the two exhausted Slayers back up, a pile of dead and unconscious bodies all around them, we see they've still got an awful lot of opponents left!

SKYE

Do these things ever stop coming?

BRAEDEN

Ah, come on, Skye. You wouldn't want our lives to get boring, would you?

SKYE

'Boring' would be an improvement right now.

The Ringmaster steps before the crowd of muscular demons, CRACKING his bullwhip.

RINGMASTER

What is it about you Slayers? You always have to show up and bust up a perfectly good racket, don't you?

SKYE

Hey, we're not the ones kidnapping people and turning them into human targets!

RINGMASTER

(laughs)

Is that what you think this is about?

He motions to two of the largest demons.

RINGMASTER (cont'd)

Kill them. They're already irritating me.

The demons step forward, and Skye and Braeden strike their offensive poses, weapons ready, when they hear:

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA (O.S.)
Hey! Over here!

The Ringmaster spins round - and Sofia has the Suited Man, her Scythe blade pressed to his neck!

SOFIA (cont'd)
And look what I found. This is yours, isn't it?

The Suited Man doesn't struggle - despite the size difference over Sofia, she's got him covered.

SOFIA (cont'd)
Skye, Braeden - are you both alright?

SKYE
So far.

The duo take their cue to dodge round the crowd of demons and rejoin Sofia.

BRAEDEN
Alright... what now?

She pauses - then KICKS the Suit to one side, raising her Scythe and getting ready to charge!

SOFIA
(yells)
Now!!

As Sofia races forward, a chorus of YELLS erupts from behind the demons - and they whip round to see more SLAYERS pouring into the arena!

Sofia grins as her ambush kicks in, and as the demons are hit by two waves of Slayers, we cut over to:

SMASH! Heidi SLAMS into frame, bouncing off the side of one of the units as Anna spars with another of the Demon Clowns, the creature SLICING at her with its clawed hands.

ANNA
Debbie! Could use some help over here!
(beat; no answer)
Debbie?

Anna looks round - and Debbie is being THROTTLED by the other clown!

Anna grimaces, turns back to her attacker and manages to get in a good KICK to its gut, but as she tries to race over to help Debbie, she's GRABBED by the hair and yanked to the ground with a SHOUT.

She looks up as the HISSING demon looms over her, but as it rears back to strike, there's a loud BOOM - and a huge BULLET HOLE explodes on the clown's chest!

It tumbles over backwards, hitting the ground with a THUMP, and Anna looks up to see Bryce lowering a smoking shotgun.

Ellen and Barbara race into frame, trying to pull the other clown away from Debbie, as Heidi springs back to her feet and TACKLES the third demon with a WAR CRY.

She knocks it to the floor, raising her sword hilt-first and SMASHING it into the clown's face.

HEIDI

And this...
 (hits again)
 ... is why...
 (and again)
 ... I hate...
 (fourth time)
 ... the circus!!

Panting with exertion, she looks down at the bloody mess she's left of the demon, then lifts her head to see the others staring at her, Anna's sword through the heart of the last demon.

HEIDI (cont'd)

 (blinks)
 What?

ELLEN

Come on, there may be more of them. We have to find the others.

Anna gives Debbie a hand back to her feet, Debbie rubbing her reddened throat and COUGHING, and the group rush off - leaving Heidi behind.

She mutters under her breath as she gets back to her feet, jogging to catch up as we cut to:

The melee is going the Slayers' way, as more demons fall and the increasingly desperate Ringmaster finds himself cut off.

He SNAPS his whip to repel an attacking Slayer, but turns to find himself face to face with Skye.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

Roll up, roll up.

WHAP! She lands a HEADBUTT that knocks him off his feet, and she STAMPS on his whip hand, yanking the weapon away and tossing it off screen.

SKYE (cont'd)

There. Now we can talk in peace, without having to do that whole 'trying to kill me' thing.

RINGMASTER

I'll never-

STAMP! Bones CRACK in his hand as she stomps her boot down again, and the Ringmaster YOWLS in pain.

SKYE

(shakes head)

Word of advice? Don't ever start a sentence like that when you're being questioned. It only leads to pain.

RINGMASTER

(seethes)

This doesn't matter. You're not going to be able to stop us now!

Skye leans in, grabbing him by his jacket and pulling him in close.

SKYE

What was that? I think my hearing's a little fuzzy after all the punches I've taken...

She VAMPS OUT, and the Ringmaster recoils in her grip.

SKYE (cont'd)

... so maybe you should just start over.

The Ringmaster looks freaked for a moment - but then starts to LAUGH. Skye frowns, losing her advantage.

SKYE (cont'd)

What's so funny?

RINGMASTER

I should have known... it's you, isn't it?

SKYE

Yeah, it's me. And?

(CONTINUED)

RINGMASTER

He told me all about you.

SKYE

Who did?

RINGMASTER

(leans closer; whispers)

Roland...

Skye looks suitably shocked. She glances up - everyone else is still busy fighting, so nobody's close enough to hear. She looks back at the Ringmaster, getting angrier.

SKYE

What did you do to Erika?

RINGMASTER

I suppose I should be thanking you.

SKYE

Say what now? Are you missing the whole 'seconds from a bloody death' angle I'm working here?

She lifts one of her daggers, pressing the tip to his throat.

SKYE (cont'd)

Or maybe you're missing my point?

She STABS the dagger into his shoulder, and after a GRUNT of pain, the Ringmaster starts chuckling again, much to Skye's growing frustration.

SKYE (cont'd)

Start talking, or your eye goes next! Why should you be 'thanking' me?

RINGMASTER

Without you, they wouldn't have been able to develop the serum!

SKYE

The what?

RINGMASTER

(chuckles)

Your blood can be used for a lot more than you think. How do you think we were able to control your friend?

(CONTINUED)

Skye's face falls, and the Ringmaster's laughter grows in volume as he feeds off her confusion.

She looks up - Sofia is heading over, the last of the demons getting mopped up by Braeden now that Heidi and the others have finally arrived.

Skye looks back down at the Ringmaster - then quickly grabs his neck and TWISTS!

His neck SNAPS, and he drops limply to the floor. Skye DEVAMPS and pulls her dagger out of his shoulder just as Sofia joins her.

SOFIA

They knew who we were, although
God only knows how. And I lost
that on ein the suit, so we'll
have to wait to get any answers
on this one.

(off Ringmaster)

That was the leader, right?

SKYE

Uh... looks like.

SOFIA

(frowns)

What's wrong? You look a little-

SKYE

(quickly)

I'm fine.

(off her look; sighs)

I'm fine. Just took a few hits,
is all. Nothing I can't handle.

SOFIA

Right... Well, you'll be glad to
know we've got things under
control here.

SKYE

Yeah, I noticed. Nice work
setting up that pincer movement
thing. That's the kind of thing I
should be thinking of.

SOFIA

Don't worry about it. I've had
more practice being in charge.

Sofia smiles and wanders over to Braeden, but Skye looks back down at the Ringmaster's body, his last words echoing around her head as we DISSOLVE TO:

40

EXT. TOWN CENTRE - PROMENADE - NIGHT

40

Strolling along the promenade that encircles a lake, the lights of the town glittering across the water, are Tyson and Alita.

TYSON

It's a good night to be out,
isn't it?

ALITA

Mmm.

TYSON

(turns to her)

Are you feeling any less guilty
about striking out on our own
yet?

ALITA

A... little.

TYSON

(grins)

Good. Then my work here is done.
Now all we need to do is find a
band playing somewhere, and we
can-

He stops as his phone RINGS. He glances at Alita, then digs
it out of his pocket.

TYSON (cont'd)

(into phone)

Hello?

BARBARA

(filtered; through
phone)

Tyson? Where on earth are you? Is
Alita with you? Are you alright?

Tyson grimaces - busted.

TYSON

Uh... we're both fine, we just
took a little walk, and we-

BARBARA

Get back to the circus. Now. You
two had better have a bloody good
explanation for where you've been
all night, or you're both in a
lot of trouble!

She hangs up, and Tyson turns sheepishly to Alita.

(CONTINUED)

TYSON

Er... maybe we should head back.

Alita nods, and follows the sullen Tyson as we cut to:

EXT. CIRCUS GROUNDS - NIGHT

With MACEY, WEBBER and some more Initiative commandoes in the background loading dead demon bodies onto a truck painted in military camouflage patterns, Ellen steps over to Barbara, a radio in her hand.

ELLEN

They should have most of this cleared up in the next hour.

BARBARA

Thank you. Always helps to have a clean-up squad on call for nights like this.

ELLEN

Yeah, well, the boys aren't exactly happy at being called out for this, but hopefully they'll find a way to forgive me and move on.

Ellen's trying to joke, but Barbara can read her well enough by now to pick up on the dark edge to her words.

BARBARA

How are things between you and your superiors?

ELLEN

You mean after I got two of my men killed on an unsanctioned rescue mission?

(sighs)

Don't make me answer that.

BARBARA

Point taken.

Over with the girls, Debbie and Jaz are tending to the wounded as Braeden heads over to Skye and Sofia, holding a bandage to a wound on his head.

BRAEDEN

Good work all round, by the looks of it.

SKYE

(distracted)

Yeah...

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

How's Erika?

BRAEDEN

Oh, Eric and Greg're working on it. They think it's some kind of toxin in her body, they should be able to cancel out its effects and have Erika back on her feet by morning.

SKYE

Good. You know, because that's... good.

Sofia looks at her oddly, and Skye just turns and walks off. Braeden shrugs as she leaves.

BRAEDEN

What's with her?

SOFIA

I don't know, she's been strange ever since we got stuck into those demons.

He sidles up to her and wraps his free arm round her - and she leans into him.

BRAEDEN

She'll be fine. This is Skye we're talking about.

SOFIA

(distant)

Yes...

Sofia's eyes wander, and she steps away from Braeden as she sees Alita and Tyson heading over.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Alita!

She hurries over, a few more Slayers following as the increasingly guilty-looking Tyson tries to act casual.

TYSON

Hey. Did we, er, miss anything?

Sofia shoots him a look before turning to Alita.

SOFIA

Where have you two been?

ALITA

We have been out. Tyson took me to see a play.

SOFIA

(raises eyebrow)

A play?

ALITA

Yes. It was good. I enjoyed it, even if I didn't understand a lot of it.

SOFIA

Dare I ask?

TYSON

(quickly)

Hey, is that the time? Maybe we should be heading back now. Huh?

He scurries past, and a grinning Sofia turns back to Alita.

ALITA

What happened here tonight?

SOFIA

Oh, the usual. Evil clowns, demons running the circus and trying to kidnap Slayers. We think. It's a long story.

ALITA

Is everything... have I missed it all?

SOFIA

Huh? Oh, yes, well, we managed without you. I mean, we missed you and could have done with an extra pair of hands for the fighting, but overall, no problems.

ALITA

I... see.

Sofia pats her on the arm with a smile, then heads back to the others. Alita stays where she is, surveying the scene before her - Initiative agents clearing up the mess as the Slayers head back to the minibuses - and as it starts to sink in that the day was saved without her even needing to be there, she starts to smile, and we DISSOLVE TO:

42 INT. CAMPUS - RECEPTION - NIGHT

42

Barbara and Bryce watch the last of the girls troop inside and head for the dorms.

BARBARA

That was quite a night,
considering we were technically
off duty.

BRYCE

I'm starting to realise you lot
don't get many of those.

BARBARA

Maybe we'll have more luck next
year.

(beat)

Well, I suppose I should say
goodnight...

BRYCE

Oh, yeah, er, 'course.

He nods and smiles, but as he takes a step back to leave,
he notices Barbara is staring at him.

BRYCE (cont'd)

Er...

Before he can react, she steps forward and KISSES him once
on the lips. He's surprised, and all she does is smile
before turning and walking away.

We stay with Bryce for a moment as he exhales, rubbing the
back of his head - and then starting to GRIN.

43 INT. CAMPUS - STAFF QUARTERS - NEXT

43

Greg reaches his room and unlocks the door, turning as he
realises Aiden is standing nearby.

GREG

What?

AIDEN

Don't 'what' me. Are we going to
talk about what's going on now?

GREG

(sighs)

Aiden...

AIDEN

No. You don't get to fob me off
again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43

CONTINUED:

43

AIDEN (cont'd)
Something's up here, Greg, and
instead of rushing off to work,
or avoiding me or any of the
other crap you've pulled tonight,
I think I've earned an
explanation. So let's hear it.

GREG
You will.
(beat)
Tomorrow.

Aiden opens his mouth to retort, but Greg quickly slips
into his room - and LOCKS the door. Frustrated, Aiden cuts
a pretty pissed off figure as he turns and stomps away, and
we cut to:

44

INT. CAMPUS - DORMS - CORRIDOR - NEXT

44

Heidi, Anna and the others are slipping into their
respective rooms, revealing Sofia and Braeden standing in
the doorway to his room.

SOFIA
So... I had a good night.

BRAEDEN
Oh, yeah, I like all my first
dates to involve a bit of death
and mayhem. Glad I didn't let you
down.

SOFIA
(raises eyebrow)
'First date'?

BRAEDEN
(feigned shock)
Oh, no! Did I say that out loud?

She giggles, and he grins, keeping his eyes on her.

SOFIA
Well... goodnight.

BRAEDEN
G'night.

But she doesn't turn to leave. Braeden waits a beat, his
smile broadening.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
You know, you don't have to-

She suddenly grabs him and KISSES him - but this is a kiss
that means business.

(CONTINUED)

Braeden is quick to respond, wrapping his arms round her as they hungrily press against each other, Sofia breaking away after a few moments with a GASP.

SOFIA

Well! Er... I should...

BRAEDEN

Uh... yeah... probably.

SOFIA

(smiles)

Good night, Braeden.

He's all smiles as she steps away, not taking his eyes off her as she walks up to her dorm, pausing in the doorway to get one last look before she disappears inside.

Braeden starts to chuckle as her door closes, clearly pretty worked up by that little encounter, as we cut to:

Frankie steps out of the library, locking the door and heading off down the corridor.

She doesn't see Dunstall sitting in the shadows further back up the other corridor, watching her leave with an obviously hurting expression, and as her fading footsteps ring out down the hallway, we cut to:

Up in her haunt above the front doors, Skye's bewildered expression is a long way from the happy smiles we've just left behind.

RINGMASTER (V.O.)

I suppose I should be thanking you...

His words echo around her, and as the troubled Skye sinks her head into her hands, no closer to understanding what's been done to her, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW