

SLAYER ACADEMY

"Broken Hearts Don't Beat"

by

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&

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TEASER

FADE IN:

1

INT. CAMPUS - INFIRMARY - DAY

1

AIDEN sits on one of the beds, a blood pressure cuff round his arm and a weary expression on his face.

Standing nearby are DEBBIE, who is working the blood pressure pump, and GREG, clearly agitated and tapping his foot loudly on the floor.

DEBBIE
(to Greg)
Er... Greg?

He glances at her, then realises what he's doing and starts pacing instead.

AIDEN
Look, I really don't see what all
the fuss is about here.

Debbie shoots him a classic 'are you serious?' look, and Aiden just shakes his head and sighs.

AIDEN (cont'd)
I'm fine. Really. I just-

GREG
You're not 'fine'!

Aiden and Debbie turn to him, startled by his outburst.

GREG (cont'd)
You were dead, Aiden! Don't you
understand? Dead! That's not
something you can just shrug off,
and try to say you feel-

DEBBIE
Fine.
(looks up)
He's... well, he's fine.

AIDEN
As I keep saying.

GREG
This doesn't make any sense! How
could he- I mean, what did...

DEBBIE
Greg! Try to stay just a tiny bit
calm for me, alright?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Debbie turns back to Aiden, adjusting her glasses. She unhooks the cuff from his arm as she speaks:

DEBBIE (cont'd)
As best I can tell, Aiden's healing ability seems to have just, well... switched on.

GREG
What?

AIDEN
That's what I said.

DEBBIE
We all know Aiden's body produces some kind of chemical or substance that allows him to heal, but we also know it hasn't exactly worked on command up until now.

GREG
So...

Debbie glances round, spots a scalpel sitting on a tray next to one bed and grabs it.

DEBBIE
Observe.

She quickly JABS the scalpel into Aiden's finger. He yelps in surprise, but Debbie holds his hand still.

A stunned Greg watches as the blood on his finger OOZES BACK into place, the tiny puncture wound sealing in seconds.

DEBBIE (cont'd)
It must be what brought him back. I mean, I'm still running tests, and to say I'm a little out of my league would be the biggest understatement of the bloody year, but still... the evidence speaks for itself.

Aiden hops down off the bed, brushing himself down.

AIDEN
And this is the evidence getting back to work.

He starts to head for the door, with Greg catching him up and grabbing his arm.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Aiden, we... we should talk. About this. We need to talk about this.

AIDEN

What do you want me to say, Greg? That I understand what happened to me? Of course I don't!

GREG

(struggling)

But... I don't understand how you can be so...

AIDEN

Laid back? Casual?

(shrugs)

Maybe it hasn't sunk in yet. All I know is, last thing that I remember before waking up in the infirmary here was fighting with Roland. And losing. And now, here I am.

He gently pushes Greg back a step.

AIDEN (cont'd)

I'll worry about the 'how' later. Right now, I'm just glad I'm not dead. And I thought you would be too.

Greg's mouth flaps as he searches for the right words, and after waiting a beat Aiden turns and leaves, and we cut to:

A full-fledged row is kicking off, with BARBARA and ELLEN on one side of the room and STANLEY and FITZGERALD on the other.

BARBARA

Did you even have any idea what they were up against?

STANLEY

Of course I did! Our intelligence clearly outlined-

ELLEN

'Outlined,' my ass! We were three seconds away from getting massacred out there!

STANLEY

If your Slayers can't do what's expected of them, then I can't be held-

BARBARA

(steely)

Oh, please finish that sentence.

FITZGERALD

Look, everybody, calm down! Yelling at one another isn't going to solve anything!

ELLEN

Tell that to him!

STANLEY

I'd advise you to watch your mouth, Miss Marklew!

ELLEN

And I'd advise you to watch my mouth - bite me!

Fitzgerald seethes at the two Academy womens' righteous indignation, but Stanley doesn't look like he's backing down.

STANLEY

We formulated a plan based on what we knew. I stand by my actions, and if you had any kind of sense of duty then you would too!

BARBARA

I have a duty to the girls of this school, to make sure they're ready for what's out there and not throw their lives away fighting battles they can't win!

STANLEY

We're always fighting battles we can't win!

That comment gets a moment of silence. Stanley takes a deep breath, trying to calm down.

STANLEY (cont'd)

Of course I don't plan on wilfully throwing away the lives of any of our Slayers. They're too valuable for that. But a Slayer's place is out in the field, battling the foes that ordinary people like us can't stand against, and casualties are an unfortunate fact of their lives.

(beat)

You must both concede that, at least.

(CONTINUED)

Barbara and Ellen exchange a look, far from happy with the way this is going.

STANLEY (cont'd)

Now. Can we possibly save this debate for another time? We have more urgent business to attend to.

FITZGERALD

Starting with the whereabouts of Skye. There's still been no sign of her since the attack on the Tor.

Barbara exhales, trying to push her anger back down.

BARBARA

I've got people out looking for her, but so far they've reported nothing.

ELLEN

I hate to be the one to say it, but there's a good chance Roland took her from under our noses.

STANLEY

(nods)

While the Council's position on Miss Underwood is... divided, to say the least, we can't let her fall into the hands of our enemies. Who knows what they could be doing with her.

Barbara's expression changes to one of concern, as we cut to:

And there's SKYE, chained to a steel operating table inside some kind of makeshift science lab, dozens of NEEDLES sticking out of her as she WRITHES and HOWLS in pain, desperately trying to get free.

PULL BACK to see a tall, cloaked figure watching her - ROLAND. He wears a smug smile - looks like things are going according to plan.

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4

INT. CAMPUS - STAFF ROOM CORRIDOR - DAY

4

Ellen is leaning against the wall just outside her office, hands on her knees as she breathes slowly and deeply.

GREG (O.S.)
Everything alright?

She quickly straightens as Greg steps into frame, eyeing her curiously.

GREG (cont'd)
You've gone very pale. Especially
for an American.

ELLEN
(grins)
I'm good. Just a little light-
headed, is all.

GREG
(not buying it)
Of course you are.

ELLEN
(quirks eyebrow)
Is that sarcasm I smell?

GREG
Sorry, it's just... I've had a very
strange night.

ELLEN
So I hear. How's Aiden?

GREG
Alive and well. Apparently. I don't
know.
(deep breath)
He's completely *au fait* with it,
whereas I seem to be the one
running around and shrieking with
my hands in the air.

ELLEN
You're concerned. That's perfectly
natural.

GREG
And coming back from the dead is...

(CONTINUED)

ELLEN

(beat)

Point taken.

GREG

So what's the matter with you?

ELLEN

Hmm?

GREG

Come on, Ellen. We've all seen the evidence by now. The nausea, the blackouts... if there's something medically wrong with you, then we need to know about it.

Ellen pauses for a long beat, but Greg holds her gaze - he's not dropping this one.

GREG (cont'd)

You know you can trust me.

Ellen lowers her head, but the moment is broken as a scowling Barbara steps out of the staff room. Ellen steps away from the wall, and Greg knows he's missed his moment.

BARBARA

That idiotic... gah!

ELLEN

So... not good news?

BARBARA

He's promised to give us more involvement in the next offensive, but he's obviously still planning something else, and soon.

GREG

I still don't understand why the Council would cut us out of any decisions about the girls anyway. It doesn't make sense.

BARBARA

(dry)

I had an affair with a spy, Ellen used to work for the Initiative and you spent your summer doing God knows what and apparently pissing off half the Council in the process. Are those good enough reasons?

A beat. Barbara runs her hands through her hair.

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA (cont'd)
I've got something I want to ask
both of you, but this isn't the
place for it.

GREG
What do-

Barbara nods her head back towards the staff room. Greg gets the hint and shuts up.

BARBARA
Meet me by the guest houses in one
hour.

With that, she walks past them both, leaving a puzzled Greg and Ellen behind as we cut to:

In the slightly messy library, sitting cross-legged on the floor between several high piles of dusty books is Debbie, busy reading through various volumes with a look of grim determination on her face.

She leafs through one book at high speed, then groans and places it on a large pile next to her, rubbing her tired eyes.

DEBBIE
Okay, if I have to look at one more
pixie engraving, I might just have
to vomit.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Fine. Just do not do it in 'ere.

From the other side of the library, FRANKIE appears, pushing along a small cart with her good arm. She dumps it over on the other side of Debbie's book fortress, and they tumble down onto the floor.

FRANKIE (cont'd)
Keep looking.

Debbie sighs heavily, turning the page in her most current book.

DEBBIE
(sarcastic)
Who would have thought British
folklore could be so... British?

Frankie regards Debbie with a raised eyebrow.

FRANKIE
(confused)
You are British, Deborah.

DEBBIE
Yes, well...
(beat)
I'm not allowed to hate my
ancestors?

Frankie looks at the gathered books.

FRANKIE
I can see why you would. None of
these texts 'ave any useful
information.
(beat)
May I 'ate your ancestors as well?

Debbie sighs again, shoving the book in front of her away.

DEBBIE
Be my guest.
(beat)
Frankie, this is useless. We've
been sitting here for hours,
researching nothing, and we haven't
made any progress, and meanwhile
Kira's Slayers are out there
roaming around doing God knows
what, Skye's still missing, I'm
still stuck for an answer as to how
Aiden's come back from the dead,
and...

Frankie shushes her, coming closer.

FRANKIE
Calmer, *mon cheri*. It will be okay.
Try to breathe, *non*?

DEBBIE
(growing frustrated)
How is it that in an entire library
of mythological and supernatural
texts, we can't find a single piece
of sodding information on Roland's
plans, or anything that tells us
just what in the name of sod
Braeden is supposed to be?

Frankie pulls a book off one of the piles.

FRANKIE
Try this.

Debbie leafs through the pages of the newest tome, eyes flitting back and forth distastefully. Within a few moments, she tosses it aside, frustrated.

DEBBIE

Nothing. Again.

Frankie's arm comes into frame with yet another book. Debbie takes it begrudgingly.

FRANKIE

'Ere.

Debbie looks up at Frankie helplessly.

DEBBIE

Are you just going to keep doing that?

FRANKIE

(innocently)

Doing what?

DEBBIE

Keep handing me book after book despite the fact that we're getting nowhere?

FRANKIE

Until we find something useful, *oui*.

DEBBIE

(face falls)

I thought you might say that.

FRANKIE

There must be something 'ere.

Debbie looks around at all of the discarded volumes surrounding her.

DEBBIE

I think Darcie stole all the ones with the bits we need.

FRANKIE

(bitter)

Do not say that name.

Debbie looks chastised.

DEBBIE

Sorry. I know I shouldn't say the "D" word, but it's just...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE (cont'd)
without those Slayer Codexes, how
can we ever hope to find the
information we need to stop Roland?
All I've got on Avalon and the Tor
is a bunch of half-baked myths and
some very bizarre theories about
what the huge zodiac beneath it
could be used for.

(sighs)
We need those Codexes, Frankie. I
keep getting pointed towards them
by other books.

FRANKIE
We must find a way around without
them.

DEBBIE
(sarcastic)
When you put it that way...

Frankie sighs and pulls a chair out, sitting down, picking up
yet another dusty book.

FRANKIE
Keep looking.

DEBBIE
Oh, you want me to keep looking? I
thought we were just trying to come
up with a new version of the Dewey
decimal system.

FRANKIE
(narrows eyes)
I am French, not deaf.
(beat)
And I understand sarcasm.

DEBBIE
(defeated)
Sorry.

Frankie leaves her book alone for a moment, her facial
features softening a little.

FRANKIE
I am sorry, Deborah. I am not
trying to snap at you. But figuring
this out could be the difference
between life and death.
(beat)
Skye's life, such as it is.

DEBBIE
I thought you didn't like her very
much, anyway?

(CONTINUED)

FRANKIE

(shrugs)

She is not my most favorite person
in the world, but she is a Slayer.
One of us. And that means she is
worth saving.

DEBBIE

Suppose if it were any one of us,
we'd be sitting here just the same,
wouldn't we?

Frankie takes this in, thinking.

FRANKIE

Except for maybe 'Eidi.

Debbie nods in agreement, and the two of them continue going
about their research quietly, as we cut to:

EXT. CAMPUS - GUEST HOUSES - NEXT

With Barbara waiting round a corner, Greg and Ellen approach
the row of little chalets just on the edge of the campus
grounds, overlooking the rear car park.

ELLEN

Something tells me I shoulda
brought a pack of cigarettes or
something.

Her smile fades as she registers Barbara's severe expression.

ELLEN (cont'd)

Alright, we're here. What's up?

BARBARA

We have to do something about
Stanley.

GREG

That much is obvious.

BARBARA

He's going to get us all killed,
and we all know it.

ELLEN

Hey, I think they guy's a jackass
too, but what can we do? It's not
like we can get him kicked out
without persuading the Council to
fire him, is it?

BARBARA

Maybe we can do that.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

(beat)

Alright, you've lost me.

BARBARA

Fitzgerald.

ELLEN

What about her?

BARBARA

She's a weak link. She's more sympathetic to our side of the argument. She always ends up acting as a peacekeeper, a mediator. We can use that.

GREG

(frowns)

That's not like you.

BARBARA

What do you mean?

GREG

Advocating exploiting someone's good will for the gain of others.

BARBARA

(stern)

I'm not letting that man lead my girls into another slaughter, Greg. I'm just not.

Barbara's phone suddenly RINGS, making the trio jump. She fishes it out as Greg checks his watch.

GREG

Balls!

(to the others)

Sorry. I've got to meet someone.

BARBARA

That's alright. We'll pick this up later. I just needed to know you were both in on this.

ELLEN

I'm in.

GREG

Me too.

BARBARA

(nods; off phone)

Excuse me.

(CONTINUED)

She wanders away to answer it, and in the background Greg hurries back towards the campus.

BARBARA (cont'd)
(into phone)
Hello?

KIRA
(filtered; through phone)
Miss Griffin, I presume? This is
Kira Brogan. I have a proposition
for you.

Barbara's jaw drops as we cut to:

INT. CAMPUS - DORMS - NEXT

SOFIA is curled up on her bed, knees drawn up to her chest, looking lost in her own little world. From the stereo, SAD MUSIC plays.

A framed photograph catches her attention on her bedside table.

ANGLE ON:

The photo - it's one of her and Braeden, smiling and clearly larking around. Happy - and together.

ON SOFIA:

She lays the photo down on the bed beside her, and it's clear that she is about to cry. She slowly begins to settle down further into the bed, pushing the covers down, completely lost in her despair and confusion.

A KNOCK at her door catches her attention, and she immediately collects herself, wiping a stray tear out of her eye, hopping to the edge of her bed.

SOFIA
Who is it?
(beat)
I mean, come in!

The door slowly opens, revealing Greg, poking his head in with a small, waning smile.

GREG
Hey there. Feeling up to having
visitors?

Sofia sniffs a little, straightening her hair.

SOFIA
Of course, Greg, come on in.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

I'm, uh, not actually talking about me.

(beat)

There's someone here to see you.

Sofia cocks her head, narrowing her eyes.

SOFIA

Who is it?

GREG

Some strange American fellow. I'm not quite sure what to make of him...

Sofia's eyes start to widen, and with a grin Greg pushes the door open to reveal XANDER HARRIS, a wide grin on his goofy face.

XANDER

Hey there, brown-eyed gi-

WHUMP! Sofia races over and BEAR-HUGS him, and Xander's eyes bulge as she squeezes with added Slayer strength.

SOFIA

Xander! Oh my God, I have missed you so much!

XANDER

(strained)

I can tell, because of the sound my cracked ribs are making...

Sofia releases him from her Slayer's grip and grins, looking up at him, eyes sparkling. Xander keeps his arms around her as she moves away a little.

XANDER (cont'd)

Your buddy Greg thought you could use a friendly face, and seeing as I happen to have the friendliest face of all, he gave me a call and set me up on a flight over here.

SOFIA

You have no idea how much this means to me right now.

She looks over at Greg, smiling gratefully.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Happy to be of service. I'll let you two go off and catch up. Keep your phone with you in case we need to contact you.

Sofia nods, still smiling. Greg makes his exit, waving goodbye to Xander. Sofia moves away from Xander and they move further into the room.

XANDER

Is it just me, or did he get taller?

SOFIA

It's been a strange year. Anything is possible.

Xander drops a small suitcase down, stretching his back out as he examines the dorms.

XANDER

Nice. Still lacking the kinds of feminine touches I'd expect, but still...

SOFIA

Such as?

XANDER

You know, Hello Kitty posters, stacks of scratched CDs out of their cases, enough piles of shoes to scare Imelda Marcos...

Sofia rolls her eyes, heading back to her bed and flopping back down onto it.

SOFIA

I'm afraid this campus hasn't exactly been full of the joys of spring lately.

XANDER

That's why I'm here. I want to hear all about it.

SOFIA

(hesitant)

Careful what you wish for...

Xander chuckles.

XANDER

Remember, I grew up on a Hellmouth, nothing can phase me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

XANDER (cont'd)

(beat)

Except maybe icky girly things.
I'm still not man enough for that.
Throw me some demons and satanic
rituals and I'm your guy.

Sofia shrugs a little.

SOFIA

Well...

Xander raises an eyebrow.

XANDER

Why do I get the feeling we have a
lot to talk about?

(beat)

You wanna get out of here?

SOFIA

(nods)

I would love that.

XANDER

Then let's roll. I know this great
place in... Cleveland.

(beat)

They have places that serve hot
food and beverages in England,
right?

Sofia chuckles again, and as they prepare to go, we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

8

EXT. CAMPUS - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

8

As Xander and Sofia head towards the exit of the Academy grounds, they notice Barbara and Ellen standing off in the distance, talking.

SOFIA

I wonder what that's all about?

XANDER

My lip-reading skills aren't what they used to be, but it looks like they're having a pretty serious chat.

Sofia turns to him with a slight smile.

SOFIA

How do you do that?

XANDER

(smiling)

Do what?

SOFIA

You just... you never seem to be down. You never let it get to you. The darkness of the world. You always seem to be above it.

Xander simply shrugs.

XANDER

Years of practice?

(beat)

Plus, you know, tons and tons of therapy.

Sofia chuckles.

SOFIA

Yep, been there, done that.

(off his look)

Long story. I wish I could be like that. Sometimes it's just so hard, you know?

Xander nods, empathizing. As they continue to walk on, we
TRACK OVER:

Catching up with Barbara and Ellen. They notice Sofia and Xander heading away from them.

(CONTINUED)

ELLEN

Is that Xander Harris?

Barbara nods, distracted.

BARBARA

Apparently Greg thought it would help Sofia to have someone she was close to around. Ireland isn't a far hop from here, so...

ELLEN

That's nice. I guess we could all use a boost now and then.

(beat)

Oh, yeah, who was that phone call from? You looked pretty spooked by it.

BARBARA

(distant)

It was... just somebody I wasn't expecting.

(beat)

I... I need you to cover for me for a few hours. Is that alright?

ELLEN

Barb...

BARBARA

Ellen, please. You have to trust me on this one.

ELLEN

No problem. As long as you don't mind explaining to me what it's all about.

BARBARA

I can't.

(off her look)

I'm sorry, but I just can't. I'll tell you everything when I get back, I promise.

Ellen thinks this over for a beat, then nods.

ELLEN

I'll do what I can.

BARBARA

Thank you.

She hurries off, and as Ellen watches her go, we cut to:

9

INT. PUB - DAY

9

Tucked away in a private booth, Xander and Sofia are seated on comfortable leather seats, a dangling light accentuating their features. The pub isn't overly crowded, and SOFT MUSIC plays lightly in the background.

SOFIA

Nice place.

XANDER

First time here?

SOFIA

(wry)

Not really a lot of time for bar-hopping.

XANDER

You're eighteen, right? That's the legal age here, isn't it?

(beat)

Have I ever told you how jealous I am of that?

SOFIA

As if you waited until you were old enough to drink!

XANDER

Well, mom did always like to put a bit of whiskey in my bottle. Said it put hairs on my chest.

A WAITRESS approaches their table, nodding at Xander.

WAITRESS

What'll it be?

XANDER

Two of your finest English beers, please.

The Waitress heads off, and Xander regards Sofia with a raised eyebrow.

XANDER (cont'd)

She didn't even check ID.

SOFIA

Somehow, I doubt she cares.

(beat, looking around)

This place looks like it could use the business, anyway.

The two of them sit in silence for a couple of moments.

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA (cont'd)
So, you never really told me. What
are you doing here, exactly?

XANDER
(joking)
And here I thought you missed me.

Sofia smiles, tucking some hair behind her ear.

SOFIA
Of course I missed you. I just want
to know if there are any ulterior
motives I should know about.

XANDER
No worries, my motives are
totally... non-ulterior.
(beat)
What's the opposite of ulterior,
anyway?

SOFIA
You just came to check up on me,
then?

XANDER
Well now that Buffy isn't the
Slayer anymore, I need something to
occupy my time with. Besides, how
could I miss up a chance to come
visit my good friend Sofia?

He tries to casually look round the pub, but Sofia's on to
him by now.

SOFIA
All right. Spill.

XANDER
'Scuzy?

Sofia looks at him knowingly.

SOFIA
Who told you to come here? Was it
Barbara? Ugh, as if she hasn't
caused enough problems...

Xander raises an eyebrow.

XANDER
'Barbara,' huh? So, did they give
you a promotion?

SOFIA

Pardon?

XANDER

Well, back when I was in school, I usually didn't call my teachers by their first name. Maybe you do things differently across the pond.

Sofia looks uneasy.

SOFIA

It's just... well, you know. Things are...

XANDER

Complicated? Yeah, you've alluded to that.

SOFIA

So much has happened, Xander.

(beat)

I'm not even sure I understand it.

The beers arrive, and the waitress scoots off as Xander takes a sip.

XANDER

Aah, frosty goodness.

Sofia wraps her hands around her glass, but doesn't drink.

XANDER (cont'd)

Afraid someone slipped you a roofie?

Sofia looks distant, and shakes her head.

SOFIA

What?

XANDER

O-kay. I've obviously got a lot of work to do here.

(beat)

So come on. Hit me with your best shot.

SOFIA

(puzzled)

You want me to hit you?

XANDER

Pat Benetar never crossed over to England? Come on, Sofes, spill.

(CONTINUED)

Sofia takes a giant swig of her beer and Xander watches in awe as she downs almost half of the contents. She lowers the glass, wipes off her mouth and stares ahead.

SOFIA

How much time do you have?

Xander looks from her, to the half-empty beer.

XANDER

I think we're gonna need more beer.

As Sofia steels herself to begin talking, we cut to:

10 INT. BARBARA'S CAR - EARLY EVENING 10

It's a little while later, and with a road map spread across her steering wheel Barbara is attempting to navigate down a winding country lane.

It doesn't look like she's having much luck, until she comes to a fingerpost at a junction in the road.

11 EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - NEXT 11

Barbara's car comes to a stop as we PAN UP to take in the fingerpost, pointing down one lane with a sign that reads 'Bennington.' Below that is a larger sign which reads: 'Tourist Attraction - Ghost Town.'

Barbara's car indicates and follows the road to Bennington, heading off into the diminishing sunlight until we cut to:

12 INT. CASTLE - EVENING 12

Looking towards a thick door in one of the long, stone-walled corridors as JAZ walks into frame. She KNOCKS on the door.

JAZ

Kira?

She waits, then tries to open the door, but it's locked.

BRYCE (O.S.)

She's out.

Jaz spins round to see BRYCE casually lighting a cigarette, stepping out from another doorway. Jaz narrows her eyes coldly at the sight of him.

BRYCE

Sid she had to go and meet an old friend or something. I wasn't really listening. She never-

(CONTINUED)

WHAP! Jaz suddenly SLAMS Bryce against the wall, the cigarette flying from his lips.

BRYCE (cont'd)

Hey! What the-

She SLAPS him, fury blazing in her eyes.

JAZ

Shut up!

Bryce manages to raise his hands.

BRYCE

I'm shut.

(beat; off her grip)

Er, Jaz?

JAZ

Actually, I suppose I'm glad I managed to run into you alone, Eric. Seems like every time we see each other you've got Kira and your new best friend Hamish close by.

BRYCE

Safety in numbers.

Jaz is not amused, bonking Bryce's head against the wall.

BRYCE (cont'd)

Ow! Right, right. I take it there's something on your mind, then?

JAZ

Want to hazard a guess at what that could be?

BRYCE

Well, I'm guessing it's not to show off your new-found Slayer powers, 'cause you did that the other day, so...

JAZ

This is about you killing an innocent boy.

BRYCE

Oh... that.

Jaz tightens her grip on Bryce, who shifts uncomfortably.

JAZ

I've been meaning to ask you why you shot him ever since we broke out of the Academy. Was it just wrong place, wrong time?

BRYCE

He wasn't supposed to-

Jaz PUNCHES him in the gut, and Bryce WHEEZES.

JAZ

Don't give me that! There were ways out of that situation that didn't involve you shooting Tyson in the chest!

BRYCE

Like what? You were the one who set that part of the plan up! You were supposed to meet me at the storeroom alone so we could clear it out and get away, not bring along some hired help!

JAZ

I couldn't- he didn't...

She falters, and Bryce presses his advantage.

BRYCE

You didn't leave me any choice. If you'd stopped him from coming with you, maybe he'd still be around.

Jaz lowers her head, releasing her grip on him. Bryce makes a big show of smoothing down his shirt.

BRYCE (cont'd)

Listen, I know your part of the deal with Her Royal flamin' Ice Queen was to get you out of that place and let you get your chance to be a Slayer, but I don't have a deal with her. I'm just here to look after Braeden.

He starts to walk away from her, but doesn't get two steps before Jaz suddenly SHOUTS OUT!

She snaps her leg round and SWEEPS Bryce to the floor, grappling him before he can react and SLAMMING him up against the wall again.

(CONTINUED)

JAZ

Don't even pretend to understand
why I did this, you bastard! You've
got no idea what I've been through!
You don't know what it's like to-

BRYCE

(interrupts)

To have the power and then have it
taken away? No. I don't. But you're
the one who shopped your boss to
the Council and left your friends
behind to get what you wanted.

Jaz hesitates again, but this time Bryce doesn't push his
luck. Sh releases him and steps back, and Bryce sits up.

BRYCE (cont'd)

We all had to make a few tough
calls on our way here, sweetheart.
Don't think you're any better than
the rest of us just 'cause you
played with the other team for
longer.

Jaz looks like her confidence is fading with every second,
and as Bryce rises she turns and stalks away, leaving him to
gather his cigarette back up as we cut to:

With her car parked on top of a hill a little way behind her,
Barbara wraps her arms round herself and SHIVERS in the chill
evening air.

She comes to the edge of the hillside and looks down over the
small village of Bennington - deserted and abandoned. A
modern day ghost town.

She frowns as she surveys the dark streets below her, no sign
of life anywhere within the crumbling buildings, until:

KIRA (O.S.)

Apparently, it was left after the
Second World War.

Barbara spins round - and KIRA slinks her way out of the
shadows towards her. She looks casual, but Barbara visibly
tenses up.

KIRA (cont'd)

Took one bomb too many, and the
residents decided to just clear out
and find somewhere harder for the
German bombers to hit.

BARBARA

That's very interesting. And, I'm guessing, completely irrelevant.

KIRA

'Irrelevant'? Do you have any idea of the kinds of natural magic levels you get from a place like this?

Kira offers Barbara a cheeky grin as she saunters past.

KIRA (cont'd)

(purrs)

It's intoxicating.

Kira walks to the edge and looks out across the village, closing her eyes and inhaling deeply with a smile.

KIRA (cont'd)

(exhales)

Aah. Like a vineyard in the spring.

BARBARA

I'm sure all this is fascinating to those of us who give a damn about it...

Kira slowly turns to face her.

BARBARA (cont'd)

... but we have something to discuss, don't we?

Kira smirks and walks back up to her.

KIRA

Roland.

BARBARA

(frowns)

Roland? What about him?

KIRA

He's a thorn in your side, and soon to be one in mine.

BARBARA

Funny, you and your rogues seemed remarkably comfortable fighting alongside his minions when we last met.

KIRA

Yes. That was... unfortunate.

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA
(raises eyebrow)
'Unfortunate'?

KIRA
Oh, don't give me that tone. You
know as well as I do that religious
crackpot would kill us both without
even blinking.
(beat)
He's using me.

BARBARA
And I should care because...

Kira pauses, stung by Barbara's continued defensiveness.

KIRA
You should care because sooner or
later he's going to be done with
me, and then he'll attack my group
and I before turning his attention
on you. And if I'm gone, then so is
your only real chance of stopping
him.

BARBARA
(incredulous)
Wait a minute... you're offering to
help me stop him?
(laughs; shakes head)
How stupid do you think I am?

Barbara continues chuckling - until Kira SNAPS her hand open
and lets a small FIREBALL fly at her!

Barbara GASPS - but the fireball hits some kind of ENERGY
FIELD before it gets to Barbara, and in a flash of BLUE LIGHT
it dissipates harmlessly.

KIRA
Not stupid enough not to come here
without magical protection.

Barbara's rattled, but tries not to show it.

BARBARA
I like to be prepared.

KIRA
And so you should. Never know who's
lurking around on these plains.

BARBARA

Look, are you going to say anything useful, or shall we stand here wasting each other's time a little while longer?

KIRA

(stern)

I'm making you an offer. Your chance to accept or decline expires the second I leave.

BARBARA

(beat)

I'm listening.

KIRA

The Council are planning another raid on Roland's base, this time going all out to destroy him.

BARBARA

How do you-

KIRA

Just presume that I do.

(beat)

I'll be there to help you.

BARBARA

(suspicious)

What's the catch?

KIRA

It'd be one favour you owe me.

Barbara looks away, seriously considering this, Kira raps her fingers against her arm theatrically.

KIRA (cont'd)

Tick, tock...

BARBARA

Alright.

Kira smiles, but before Barbara can say another word, she SNAPS her fingers and POPS away in a quick burst of PURPLE LIGHT.

Barbara's left alone on the deserted hilltop, and as she lets out a heavy sigh, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

14

INT. PUB - NIGHT

14

Sofia and Xander are still at their table in the corner. Several empty glasses now surround them, and the waitress brings over two fresh beers. Sofia looks to be a fair bit more loosened up and Xander is totally enraptured.

SOFIA

And I told the therapist that she was full of it, and to stop showing me ink blots, because I am not crazy, and we could play 'name the blob' with those things all bloody night and I still wouldn't be crazy.

(beat)

Who makes ink blots, anyway? I mean, honestly, that does not seem like a valid career choice. It's not art, so it isn't creative.

XANDER

(deadpan)

That is... fascinating.

SOFIA

It just seems like everything I do, I get into more trouble. How can I be a Slayer if I'm not allowed to break the rules sometimes?

(beat)

Look at Buffy. She quit the Council when she was my age! She showed them. She didn't listen to anyone. She was her own boss! I want to be like that. I think I'd make myself a very good boss... for myself.

Xander softens, as he realizes now what Sofia's problem is.

XANDER

True, Buffy did tend to have a little problem with authority now and then...

SOFIA

She blew up your high school!

XANDER

Well, that was more of a "combined" effort than a true solo mission, but...

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

The point is, she wouldn't have let
Barbara run her around like some
kind of... some kind of...

XANDER

Woah, woah, slow down.

Sofia takes another large gulp of beer.

SOFIA

(hesitant)

And I haven't even started on
Braeden yet.

XANDER

Braeden?

Sofia looks at the empty glass before her.

SOFIA

(sadly)

Empty.

(beat)

Bad.

Xander puts his hand out, covering Sofia's. She looks up at
him, distracted from her empty beer glass.

XANDER

Sofia. Look at me. Whatever
happened to you, whatever this guy
did to you...

(beat)

You can get past it. I know you
can.

Sofia sobers a little at this, her face falling.

SOFIA

(quietly)

How do you know?

XANDER

Come on, I'm the guy who sees
things. I just know.

(beat)

Besides, I'm older, and therefore
wiser, so shut up and listen to me.

Sofia chuckles at this and she nods slightly.

SOFIA

I'm sure you have a lot of
questions. About... everything.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA (cont'd)
(beat)
I want to answer them. All of them.

XANDER
So you noticed the big question
mark hanging over my head? Darn, I
was trying to hide it.

Sofia sighs, smiling slightly, but there is a sadness in her eyes.

SOFIA
I suppose I have a lot of
explaining to do.

XANDER
You're definitely giving Lucy a run
for her money.

Sofia looks at him with a quirked brow.

XANDER (cont'd)
Geez, turn on Nick at Nite once in
a while.
(beat)
Continue.

SOFIA
God... where do I even start?

Xander shrugs his shoulders, signalling for another beer.

XANDER
I hear the beginning's a nice and
cozy place.

Sofia nods, and as the conversation prepares to move further,
we cut to:

Ellen is waiting outside the door to Barbara's office as the
woman herself finally returns, and Ellen pushes away from the
wall.

ELLEN
Hey.

She registers Barbara's dark expression as she fumbles with
her keys.

ELLEN (cont'd)
What's up.

BARBARA
Nothing. I... nothing.

ELLEN

Right. 'Kay.

(exhales)

Uh, look, Barb, I think it's time we had, you know... a talk. About stuff.

BARBARA

Ellen, can this wait at all? I've had... this really isn't a good time for me.

ELLEN

Hey, me either.

Barbara pauses, rubbing her eyes. It's been a long night.

BARBARA

Alright, alright. What did you want to talk to me about?

ELLEN

Why I've been getting sick.

Barbara freezes. Ellen holds her gaze.

ELLEN

You said you wanted to know, and I said I'd tell you when I was ready.

(beat)

I guess I'm ready.

Barbara glances up and down the corridor, then unlocks and opens her office door.

BARBARA

You'd better come in.

Ellen nods, stepping into the office as Barbara does one last check up and down, and as she shuts the door again we cut to:

Skye comes to, still tied down to a gurney. Various wires and tubes are connected to her arms and legs. She winces, blinking her eyes several times.

VOICE (O.C.)

Good evening.

Skye looks over and sees ROLAND standing in the corner of the chamber, arms crossed over his chest. He moves closer to her and Skye glares at him.

SKYE

What's the good part?

ROLAND

You're still alive, aren't you?

SKYE

(dry)

You'd know better than me, with all this poking and prodding. Gee, you must know me better than anyone.

(beat)

How does that make you feel?

Roland comes closer to the bed.

ROLAND

I don't think you realize how momentous this occasion really is, Skye.

SKYE

Just wait until you feel my momentous foot up your ass.

(beat)

Not that my feet are momentously huge or anything. Was sort of going for a metaphor there.

(beat)

I am so going to enjoy killing you when I get free...

Roland can't help but smile.

ROLAND

I admire your bravery. You are a fine warrior, Skye. However, I believe the biggest surprise is still in store for you.

SKYE

Meaning?

ROLAND

Haven't you wondered why you are here? All of the experiments? The tests?

Skye's face is one of boredom.

SKYE

Is this the part where you twirl your moustache and I scream while the train comes barreling down the tracks?

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SKYE (cont'd)
'Cause, I gotta tell you, I'm not
much for the screaming.

ROLAND
(darkly)
I would beg to differ.

Skye shifts in her bonds so she can try and face Roland better.

SKYE
Okay, then. Tell me your secrets.
You already know mine.
(beat, forceful)
Why am I here?

Roland takes a seat on the edge of the bed. Skye's body goes rigid from his closeness.

ROLAND
How much do you remember about this
past summer?

SKYE
That a trick question?

Roland is completely serious.

ROLAND
You remember travelling across
Europe, don't you? Paris, Spain,
Amsterdam, Switzerland... the list
goes on.

Skye rolls her eyes.

SKYE
Shouldn't you have a crystal ball,
maybe some low lighting?
(beat)
Cut to the chase, already.

ROLAND
I suppose you've waited long enough
for the truth.

SKYE
Understatement.

Roland stands back up.

ROLAND
The simple answer is that none of
your memories are real. You were
never on the road.
(MORE)

ROLAND (cont'd)

My brothers snatched you shortly after you left the campus at the end of your last term there, and then you were with me the entire time.

(beat)

I gave you those memories so you could go back to the Academy and stay out of my way until I needed you again.

Skye is suitably taken aback.

SKYE

How...

ROLAND

Memory spells are easier than you might think. Kira Brogan was able to help me with that part of the plan, so you can thank her for your exciting and colorful memories.

SKYE

What... what do you want from me?

ROLAND

You are special, Skye. You are the first and only Slayer to have been turned into a vampire. The powers you possess are quite intoxicating to think about.

(beat)

We want them for ourselves.

Skye processes this.

SKYE

Sunlight, stakes...

ROLAND

For centuries, vampires have had to fear those things. We have hidden in the shadows for far too long, Skye.

(beat)

It's time for us to shine.

SKYE

(shakes head)

It's impossible. There's no way.

Roland cocks his head.

ROLAND

(grinning)

Actually...

(CONTINUED)

Skye can't pretend to be brave anymore. Things have officially gone from bad to 'oh, crap' bad.

SKYE

What are you going to do?

Roland begins moving around the chamber, becoming more excited about his plans.

ROLAND

This place? It is a mystical convergence of energy. Its power will allow me to funnel your essence into myself and my followers.

(beat)

Sadly, you won't survive the ritual.

Skye's eyes widen as true fear finally courses through her.

ROLAND (cont'd)

I should let you rest.

(beat)

Your final moment will be here before long.

He exits the chamber, and as the closing door echoes through the room, Skye sits, immobilized, a stunned look on her face.

Ellen sits opposite Barbara, one lamp casting shadows all across the small, cluttered room.

Barbara's resting her head on one hand, looking like the world's spinning and she wants to get off. Ellen looks downcast, but not as spaced out as Barbara.

ELLEN

So... that's it.

A beat.

ELLEN (cont'd)

Barb?

BARBARA

(dazed)

Yes?

ELLEN

You were pulling a voidy on me. You okay?

BARBARA

I'm just... this is a lot to take in, and I... hold on, a what?

ELLEN

A 'voidy.' Avoiding. You know, being evasive.

BARBARA

Oh. Was I? Sorry. I've...

(sighs)

This is the second head-spinningly major piece of news I've had this evening, that's all.

ELLEN

What was the first?

BARBARA

I think we can save that for later, don't you? What about everything you've just told me?

ELLEN

Hey, for me, that's old news.

BARBARA

Ellen, you can't just... I mean, this isn't something you can just forget about! It-

ELLEN

Actually, it is.

Barbara pauses as Ellen leans forward.

ELLEN

I told you what's going on because I wanted you to know. But I don't want anybody else to find out. Not until I decide it's the right time to tell them.

BARBARA

Don't make me have to do that, Ellen, please. I won't lie to my staff for you.

ELLEN

I'm not asking you to lie to anyone. Just cover for me.

Barbara leans back in her seat, exhaling loudly.

BARBARA

Kira wants to arrange a truce.

(CONTINUED)

ELLEN

What?

BARBARA

That's where I went earlier. She told me she's convinced Roland's going to turn on her, and she wants to help us take him down. She said she's the only person who has the power to do so.

ELLEN

And do you trust her?

BARBARA

I'm not sure yet. I can't think of why she'd lie about it.

ELLEN

To get us into a false sense of security?

BARBARA

(shakes head)

Doesn't add up.

ELLEN

You think? 'Cause I'm adding two and two and getting four over here.

BARBARA

What would she have to gain? Why go to so much effort to keep it a secret? And... and what if she's right? What if we are going to need her to stop Roland?

ELLEN

Then I think I'm going to want front row seats for when you explain this plan to Stanley.

BARBARA

(beat)

Who says I will?

Ellen also leans back, just as conflicted as Barbara over this scheme, when there's a KNOCK at the door.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Come in.

The door opens - it's ANNA.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

ANNA

Uh, sorry to bother you so late,
Miss Griffin, but... well, you're
gonna want to see this.

Anna exits without an explanation, and as a puzzled Ellen and
Barbara get up, we cut to:

18 INT. CAMPUS - RECEPTION - NEXT

18

A small crowd of Slayers has gathered in a half-circle around
the front doors as Barbara approaches.

BARBARA

What's going on here? What's all
the...

She trails off as the girls part, and Barbara sees what's
causing the commotion.

ERIKA stands before her.

She nods her head respectfully.

ERIKA

Good evening, Miss Griffin.

Barbara looks shocked once again, and we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT THREE**

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

19 INT. CAMPUS - RECEPTION - NIGHT

19

Erika stands calmly before Barbara, a half-circle of tense (and armed) Slayers either side of her.

ERIKA

As you can see, I am unarmed.

(beat)

'See' being the operative word.

She grins at her own joke, but nobody else sees the funny side.

BARBARA

What... Erika? What are you doing here?

ERIKA

I have come back.

Barbara is joined now by Ellen, ALITA, Debbie and Anna.

BARBARA

I can see that, but-

ALITA

Erika?

ERIKA

Hello, Alita.

Alita SNAPS her nunchucks into position, ready to attack, but Erika slowly raises a hand.

ERIKA (cont'd)

That will not be necessary. I am not here to fight anyone.

ANNA

Yeah, so forgive us if the last memory we have of you is Skye opening up on you.

ERIKA

(bows head)

I am sorry for that. It was necessary to maintain my cover.

DEBBIE

Your... 'cover'?

Erika nods, reaching for her backpack.

(CONTINUED)

The motion causes the circle of Slayers to jolt a little, but Erika makes sure her movements are slow and clear as she starts to unfasten the bag.

ERIKA

I will explain everything in time,
but for now, I think I have
something that will prove my good
intentions.

She takes something out of her bag and holds it out before her. The others exchange puzzled looks - all except Debbie, who takes a step forward.

DEBBIE

That's...

ERIKA

(nods)
The first book of the Slayer
Codexes, yes.

Debbie hurries forward and snatches the book out of her hand, forgetting herself as she's awed by the book in her hands.

DEBBIE

This is... we didn't... I mean, now
we can...
(to Barbara)
We're back in business!

Debbie looks over the moon, and as Erika chuckles at her old friend's enthusiasm, we cut from the bemused crowd to:

Xander and Sofia are at their table still, and Sofia seems to have gotten over her tipsiness, and has gone into full-on emotional mode.

SOFIA

And then... and then that's when I
realised that he was the one who
took the power from the Scythe.

XANDER

Yikes.

SOFIA

(nods)
I don't know how, or why, but I
know I've got to get it back.
(beat)
It can't be for anything good,
Xander. I can just feel it.

She sags back in her seat, checking her glass - still empty.

SOFIA (cont'd)
So there you have it. The entire story.

XANDER
Well.

SOFIA
Go ahead. Say it. I'm crazy.

XANDER
From someone who is pretty experienced in the whole "my date turned evil" department, I've gotta say, job well done.

SOFIA
Braeden isn't evil.
(beat)
He's just... confused.

Xander nods knowingly.

XANDER
(dry)
And when Angel lost his soul and murdered a bunch of people, he was just a little curious.

Sofia sighs, relenting a little.

SOFIA
I know I sound incredibly foolish right now. You must think I've lost my mind.
(beat)
But the truth is...
(beat)
I think I still love him.

A beat as Xander takes this in.

XANDER
You mentioned therapy...?

SOFIA
Xander!

XANDER
Sorry, serious face.

Sofia shakes her head slowly, looking down, eyes averted from Xander's stare.

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

I must be some horrible person.

XANDER

Hey, don't say that.

Sofia looks up, and tears have started to form in her eyes.

SOFIA

It's true! How could I even say
that I love him? After everything
that's happened? After what he did
to us? To me?

(beat)

Everything is falling apart and
it's all my fault...

Xander gets up and moves over to Sofia's side of the booth,
taking her into his arms. She breaks down further, sobbing
into his chest.

SOFIA (cont'd)

(muffled)

All my fault...

XANDER

Don't let yourself think that.
It'll just eat you up from the
inside out.

Sofia looks up at him.

SOFIA

(soft)

I want to hate him.

Xander doesn't answer, letting her continue:

SOFIA (cont'd)

I want to look at him and feel
nothing but hatred, so that when I
fight him again I won't hesitate if
I get a chance to stop him, but...
but I know that's not what's going
to happen.

XANDER

Believe me, people have been in
your situation before. Details were
different, I'll admit, but the
basics are all there.

SOFIA

What if he's not sure? What if
there's a part of him that doesn't
want what's happening around him?

(CONTINUED)

XANDER

(wary)

Sofia...

She's running with this now, sitting up and becoming more animated.

SOFIA

What if... what if I can bring him back? Make him see what he's doing, and get him to come back over to us? People have done that, right?

(thinks)

Spike! What about Spike? He went from William the Bloody to William the Bloody Hero, and look at everything he did! What if there's-

XANDER

(louder)

Sofia!

She stops. A few people in the pub turn to glance at him, but his attention is fixed on Sofia.

XANDER (cont'd)

Yes, some people have come back. But not everybody can. Not everyone wants to.

SOFIA

I know he can. I know if I just show that I'm not giving up on him, that I still believe in him, then he'll see that-

XANDER

(over her)

And thinking like that could get you killed.

Sofia trails off. Xander lowers his head, then meets her wide, emotional eyes again.

XANDER (cont'd)

I think I'm seeing why Greg got me to come see you now. He knows I'd be able to get through to you.

Xander gently lays a hand on her shoulder.

XANDER (cont'd)

You want to believe you can save him, and that's good. That's really good, but... but you can't let that guide you.

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

(soft)

Why not? Why can't I have a little hope for once?

XANDER

Promise me something.

SOFIA

Xander, don't...

XANDER

Please.

She pauses, then nods.

XANDER (cont'd)

Don't let how you feel about him get you killed.

She looks up - and sees that he means it.

XANDER (cont'd)

Your feelings'll just get used against you. Even if Braeden himself doesn't do it, then the people around him will. They'll take that big ol' heart of yours and turn it against you. And I do not want to see that happen. You're too good for that.

Sofia lowers her head again, and Xander pulls her close to him. She SNIFFS, tears still rolling down her cheek.

As Xander runs his hand through her hair, a lost look on his face, we cut to:

Erika sits at the table, quietly sipping a mug of coffee as Barbara, Stanley, Ellen, Fitzgerald and Greg stand round her.

The three thick, leather-bound books that make up the Slayer Codex sit on the table before her - Greg is reading through them.

ERIKA

And so when the offer was made to me a short while before Kira attacked the Academy, I decided to take advantage of the unique opportunity it afforded me.

ELLEN

How did she contact you?

ERIKA

In my dreams.

(off their looks)

She is a lot more powerful than
some of us realise, I think.

FITZGERALD

And the books? Was retrieving them
always part of your plan?

ERIKA

At first, no. My plan was just to
gather what intelligence I could
about Kira's operation and then
return to the Academy when I was
able to. When I learned of the
theft of the Codexes, I decided to
see if I could expand on my plan.

BARBARA

Alright, here's one question I'm
sure we'd all love to know the
answer to - how did you get the
books and get back here?

Erika just smiles, and we cut to:

INT. CASTLE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The door to the library hangs open, and we push into the
room, its tall shelves filling every wall as a roaring open
fireplace CRACKLES in one corner.

There's a gap in the shelf directly ahead - roughly the same
size as the three Codexes, as it happens - and we pull back
to see something lying on the floor.

DARCIE.

A bruise is forming on her cheek, and she's out cold as we
cut to:

EXT. CASTLE - COURTYARD - NEXT

HAMISH steps out of a side door and into the night, glancing
round the small courtyard and along a row of CARS parked
along one wall. He twirls his CAR KEYS round on one finger,
HUMMING tunelessly to himself.

There's a very prominent gap in the row of cars, and Hamish's
face falls as he sees it.

The keys fall from his hand and CLATTER to the ground as we
cut back to:

24

INT. CAMPUS - STAFF ROOM - NIGHT

24

Erika takes a sip of her coffee.

ERIKA

Let us just say that I do not think
I have left many friends behind me.

STANLEY

I still don't see why we have any
reason to believe her story.

FITZGERALD

Oh, for goodness' sake, Edward!
What more proof do you need?

STANLEY

How do we even know those are the
real Codexes? This could all be
some kind of ruse to-

GREG

They're real.

All eyes turn to him as he looks up.

GREG (cont'd)

I've read them enough to know. And
besides...

He holds up a small amethyst crystal, which GLOWS faintly.

STANLEY

What's that?

GREG

Counterfeit charm. If this was
faked in any way, manually or
magically, then this would pick up
on it.

Fitzgerald turns back to Stanley and raises a victorious
eyebrow, as Barbara and Ellen share a knowing look.

STANLEY

Alright, so the books are genuine.
But we'll have to keep her
downstairs in the cells while we
verify her story.

BARBARA

That's not-

ERIKA

If you wish.

(CONTINUED)

Even Stanley looks surprised by her compliance.

ERIKA (cont'd)

I appreciate that you will all need some more time to discuss my return, but I am prepared to wait while you do so. I do not want there to be any doubts over my place here.

STANLEY

Your 'place' here? Do you expect you can just come waltzing back in here after sleeping with the enemy and defecting so publicly?

ERIKA

Yes.

Barbara grins and turns to Stanley, who lets out an irritated grunt.

STANLEY

Very well. Giles, escort her to the cells and keep her under close watch. I'll call the Council and get a decision on our returnee, so until then-

The phone mounted in the centre of the table RINGS. The faculty members glance at one another, until Fitzgerald leans forward and puts it onto speakerphone.

FITZGERALD

Yes?

KIRA

(filtered; through phone)
Get me Barbara Griffin.

Her sharp tone gets everyone's attention as they turn to Barbara.

BARBARA

I'm here.
(beat)
Hello, Kira.

STANLEY

I'm Edward Stanley, Acting Headmaster of this Academy, and I must insist that you-

KIRA

Is your name Barbara Griffin? No? Then shut the hell up!

(CONTINUED)

Stanley scowls, looking to Barbara before motioning for her to continue. He doesn't look at all pleased.

KIRA (cont'd)
Is Erika with you?

BARBARA
(glances at Erika)
She's not available, but yes, she's back at the Academy.

KIRA
That ungrateful little... I suppose she's gleefully handed you your books back by now, hasn't she?

BARBARA
(grins)
They were our property to begin with, to be fair.

KIRA
(sighs)
Well, they're of no use to me any more anyway. You're welcome to them.

BARBARA
(dry)
How gracious of you.

KIRA
And tell Erika to look after those new eyes of hers, because I'm sure she knows that's not a favour I'm likely to repeat.

BARBARA
I'll be sure to pass on your best wishes.
(beat)
Was there something else you wanted?

KIRA
Have you told your so-called 'superiors' about our arrangement yet?

Barbara suddenly gets a lot of attention. She manages to keep her composure.

BARBARA
Not yet, although something tells me I'm about to.

(CONTINUED)

KIRA

Good, good. Well, ta-ta for now,
then. Have fun explaining yourself.

The line goes dead. There's a long, awkward beat before Fitzgerald reaches forward and turns the phone off.

Another beat. Stanley slowly turns to Barbara, folding his arms.

STANLEY

(icily)

I think you need to tell us why
that witch seems to think you two
have an 'arrangement' now.

Barbara looks around the room, but she's on her own with this one, and with a sigh she turns back to Stanley as we cut to:

Frankie is closing the place down for the night when the main door opens behind her, and she turns to see Aiden walk in.

FRANKIE

Aiden!

She hurries over and embraces him.

AIDEN

Hey, Frankie.

FRANKIE

I am glad you are okay. We all
'eard... well, I am sure you can
add the rest.

AIDEN

Yeah, something along the lines of
'Aiden's dead... no, wait...'

They share a chuckle as Frankie reaches over the counter to switch her PC off.

FRANKIE

So! What can I do for you? If it is
a book you wanted, I am afraid you
will 'ave to wait until morning.

AIDEN

Actually, I wanted to do something
for you.

He reaches out and takes hold of her bad arm, and Frankie flinches.

FRANKIE

What are you-

AIDEN

Ssh. Just wait and see.

Frankie looks down - and Aiden's hands starts to GLOW with a soft light.

Frankie's eyes widen in surprise, and as she stares down at the light spreading up her arm, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW