

SLAYER ACADEMY

"Girl, Corrupted"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

1

A long, narrow corridor of rock, stretching into darkness from the light entrance before us. COBWEBS hang from both walls, and INSECTS scuttle over every surface.

A SHADOW appears at the entrance as someone steps into view - it's a young, frightened-looking girl, no older than sixteen. She's also carrying a SWORD.

She's a SLAYER.

She stares into the tunnel, then fumbles at her belt for a flashlight, shining it into the gloom.

SKYE (V.O.)

I know keeping some kind of war
diary seems like a lame idea,
but... well, right now, I'm just
trying to tell our story before
there's nobody left to remember it.

The Slayer edges down into the tunnel, using her sword to slice through the walls of cobwebs as she stalks forward.

She tries to suppress a SHUDDER as she sees the wall-to-wall bugs slithering around her, taking a moment to compose herself before carrying on.

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

In the three months since Braeden
switched on the Hub in the Arctic,
we've already logged almost two
hundred and fifty Hellmouths coming
to life - and that includes all the
ones we shut down.

The girl paces on, clearly scared out of her wits. She comes to a junction, and turns into:

2

INT. CHAMBER - NEXT

2

The Slayer steps into a larger chamber, her eyes fixing on something ahead of her.

SKYE (V.O.)

Luckily for us, we know what we're
looking for, and for the most part
we know where to find 'em all, too.
Just a matter of having a girl of
the right kind of local blood to
close it up again.

(CONTINUED)

The Slayer walks forward, bringing into view:

A HELLMOUTH.

A large SEAL of some silvery metal embedded in the ground, its surface covered with arcane symbols and a huge PENTAGRAM.

The Slayer exhales - this is what she was looking for. She heads forward, her flashlight illuminating the various glyphs and symbols on the Hellmouth's surface.

Holding the torch in her mouth, she reaches into her jacket and takes out a small NOTEBOOK, popping its clasps and opening it up. She leafs quickly through it.

ANGLE: OVER HER SHOULDER

Each page of the book has a photocopied illustration of another HELLMOUTH - each one different from the last. A few have LINES etched through them.

The Slayer stops when she finds an illustration that matches the seal before her.

SKYE (cont'd)

So we do what we can. We send girls
out to every place we can find,
trying to shut them all down, but
everywhere we go it's the same
story.

There's a SOUND from behind her, and she spins round, torch beam cutting into the darkness.

A quick BLUR of motion as something ducks out of view. She's not alone.

The Slayer GULPS, her knuckles whitening as she grips her sword more tightly.

And from behind her, something HUGE steps into view, letting out a low GROWL.

The Slayer whips round - and her torch beam falls on a monstrous DEMON!

Halfway between a bear and a scorpion, its mandibles drooling spittle as it stares the Slayer down through its compound eyes, reflecting her flashlight back at her.

And then ANOTHER steps into view. And another. And another.

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

Too many bad guys, not enough
Slayers.

(CONTINUED)

The Slayer knows she's in trouble - and more GROWLS from behind her just confirm it.

She spins round to see she's surrounded - almost a DOZEN of the demons have crept into view on all sides.

Fear washes over her for a moment, her hands SHAKING as she raises her sword and closes her eyes.

And when her eyes snap open again, the fear is gone. In its place sits the kind of rage only a Slayer can feel.

Her lips twisting into a SNARL, she fixes on the closest demon as it takes one lumbering step forward, and as she lets out a YELL of fury and LAUNCHES herself at it, we:

SMASH CUT TO:

Back outside the entrance to the tunnel, high up on some frosty mountainside as the sun blazes down.

There's movement inside the tunnel - and a TORCH BEAM bobbing through the darkness.

Moments later, the Slayer stumbles out and collapses onto the grass outside the entrance. She's battered and bloody, her clothing ripped and torn - but she's alive.

She rolls onto her back, gulping in deep lungfuls of air and wincing as the pain starts to catch up with her.

SKYE (V.O.)

But even with all the new
Hellmouths, even with the ghosts,
and the vampires, and the demons,
and the God only knows what else,
that's not all we've got to take on
every day.

The Slayer stays on her back, panting - before a SHADOW falls across her.

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

There's also him.

Her eyes bulge at what she sees, and she quickly scrambles to her feet, hands grasping for her sword.

Standing before her is BRAEDEN, his wickedly sharp Scythe strapped across his back as he grins.

Beside him are two more figures - a lean man in his late twenties and a classically elegant woman with long blonde hair. Both are armed.

(CONTINUED)

The Slayer's eyes flick from one to the next, and she takes a faltering step back.

The weapons held by the lean man and blonde woman are GLOWING very faintly, and as this happens the Slayer seems to become dizzy, wobbling unsteadily on her feet.

Braeden takes a step forward, unsheathing his Scythe and bringing it to bear on the woozy Slayer.

SKYE (V.O.) (cont'd)
We know he was created, or
activated, or whatever, because of
us. We know his job is to kill all
of us and restore the 'balance.'

Braeden sizes up his opponent, who bravely raises her sword to meet his Scythe.

He snaps to the attack, SLICING the Scythe in a quick arc which she barely BLOCKS, staggering back.

Braeden follows, raining down more blows which she tries to fend off, before he CUTS into her arm and she cries out.

He lets her back up a few more steps, giving her chance to catch her breath before he attacks again, their blades SPARKING as they meet.

Silhouetted against the mountain range behind them, Braeden pushes the Slayer back with every swing.

She takes another SLICE across her leg, and she stumbles to the floor, dropping her sword.

Braeden looms over her, and the gasping Slayer meets his gaze as he aims his Scythe at her.

SKYE (V.O.) (cont'd)
It's a war...

She SPITS in his face. He flinches.

And then he CHOPS down, the Slayer letting out one short SHRIEK before she's silenced.

SKYE (V.O.) (cont'd)
... and we're losing.

Braeden wipes away the spit from his cheek, and we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4

EXT. ACADEMY - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

4

The Rupert Giles Academy For Girls stands before us, framed against the morning sunrise. The tall gates at its main entrance loom over us, casting long shadows on the ground.

PULL BACK to bring two young girls into frame, their backs to us as they stare up at the gates.

FIRST GIRL

So...

SECOND GIRL

Yep. This is it.

As a bus engine REVS a little behind them, the girls turn.

ON THE BUS as it pulls away, finally revealing both girls as they watch it depart.

On the left is REIKO, a perky Japanese girl with brightly-coloured hair. She POPS some bubble gum and turns to:

JUANITA, an olive-skinned Hispanic girl with long, dark hair. Juanita hefts her bag up onto her shoulder.

JUANITA

Let's go. These bags ain't gonna carry themselves.

Reiko nods, picking her own bag up and following Juanita as she approaches the INTERCOM to the side of the gates. She hits the buzzer and waits for an answer.

INTERCOM

(filtered)

Rupert Giles Academy, how may I help you?

JUANITA

We're -

REIKO

(over her)

We're new!

Juanita shoots her a look, but Reiko just blinks and smiles.

INTERCOM

Ah, yes. Reiko and Juanita, right?

JUANITA

That's us.

(CONTINUED)

INTERCOM

Sit tight, I'll be up to meet you
in a moment.

The line disconnects, and with a loud CLUNK the gates slowly start to swing open.

REIKO

(impressed)

Wow. This is all so totally 'Harry
Potter.'

Juanita just shakes her head - she's heard too much of this already.

INT. ACADEMY - RECEPTION - NEXT

The girls step into the main reception area to find it buzzing with activity - SLAYERS fuss past in all directions, while older men and women follow them, some gathering to talk before splitting up again.

GREG (O.S.)

As you can see...

They turn as GREG steps in after them and shuts the front door. He looks like he hasn't had a good night's sleep for some time.

GREG (cont'd)

... things are still a little
frantic around here.

They head forward, Reiko and Juanita looking round to soak up the hive of nervous activity all around.

JUANITA

Yeah, I get that.

GREG

How much do you two know already
about what's going on?

REIKO

Oh, you mean like the Hellmouths
and stuff? My Watcher, Mrs.
Schofield, told me everything.

JUANITA

Lucky you. I ain't heard much.

(off Greg's look)

We got attacked on our way to the
airport. Had to leave my Watcher
behind.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Oh. I'm... I'm sorry to hear that.

JUANITA

I'm not. He was an asshole.

GREG

(blinks)

So, anyway, we'll do a quick tour before -

VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Giles?

Greg turns as McKENZIE, a bookish female Watcher, steps into frame, her arms overflowing with papers.

MCKENZIE

I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm up to my neck in these new reports to process and I could really use a hand!

GREG

Uh, okay, just give me...

(turns to girls)

Could you excuse me for a minute? I just need to...

And he leaves with McKenzie. Reiko keeps on looking around, but Juanita is clearly out of patience.

JUANITA

(nudges Reiko)

C'mon, let's go find somewhere to stick these bags.

REIKO

(bright)

Okay!

The two girls head off screen as we CUT TO:

With a thick stack of reports in one hand, Greg enters the main staff room - couches and chairs are arranged around small coffee tables, with a larger conference table at the far end.

BARBARA smiles as he enters, waving him over to the table. Several other people are sat round it - some are new, some we recognise like FITZGERALD and AIDEN.

BARBARA

Did Alison find you?

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Yes, I was just with two new recruits in the foyer. I should really get back to -

AIDEN

They'll manage without you.

Greg hesitates - then sighs and nods as Aiden pulls back the chair next to him and indicates Greg should sit.

Once he's seated, Barbara presses a button on a remote control, and the centre of the table flickers to life - it's a video screen displaying a map of the world.

BARBARA

Alright, everyone, with the time rapidly approaching...

(checks watch)

... eleven fifteen, it's time for a belated daily status report.

She hits another button, and hundreds of different coloured dots pop up all over the map.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Grace?

Fitzgerald nods and rises, addressing the room.

FITZGERALD

Our global Hellmouth count has increased. Again.

That gets a few groans from the assembled faculty.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)

(pointing to map)

With confirmed sites in Venezuela and Lisbon, this now puts us at two hundred and sixty-three active Hellmouths worldwide.

AIDEN

Only eighty-four to go and we've got the whole set.

Greg nudges him to stay quiet as Fitzgerald continues.

FITZGERALD

Our Slayer count was constant at eighteen hundred and seventy-nine, but as of last night I'm afraid we've lost another of our girls.

Barbara passes her the remote, and she clicks a button.

(CONTINUED)

The map zooms in to show the Swiss Alps, with a flashing red dot and a scrolling list of information beside it. A small photograph of the Slayer from the Teaser appears.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
Margrit Furnell, based in the Tyrol region of Switzerland. She was investigating a potential Hellmouth up in the Alps, but it seems she ran into you-know-who. Police found her body this morning.

Images of local news reports on the death pop up on screen.

BARBARA
(heavily)
She was only sixteen.

GREG
Do we know it was Braeden?

FITZGERALD
By the usual calling card.

She clicks another button, bringing up a crime scene photograph - and a NUMBER has been cut into the Slayer's exposed belly.

FITZGERALD (cont'd)
As you can see, he proudly proclaims this to be his thirty-fourth kill.

Greg rubs his tired eyes. There's a real dark cloud hanging over the table at this news.

GREG
The sick bastard...

BARBARA
That means we now have four hundred and seventy-two Slayers affiliated with the Academy.

She resumes control, flipping the map back to its global view and watching as more RED DOTS pop up across it.

BARBARA (cont'd)
Cabal offensives against our operations in Moscow, Shanghai and Shinjuku have also taken their toll.

GREG
Any casualties?

(CONTINUED)

FITZGERALD

We don't know yet. We've lost contact with our operatives in each instance.

GREG

Any word from Ellen or Dunstall?

BARBARA

Dunstall is still recuperating back home in Dakota, while Ellen remains on leave.

AIDEN

So when is she coming back?

BARBARA

I honestly don't know, Aiden. Hopefully soon. That's down to her.

SKYE (O.S.)

A-hem.

The faculty turn to see SKYE waiting by the door.

SKYE (cont'd)

Can I interrupt?

Barbara switches the map off before waving Skye inside.

BARBARA

Of course, Skye. What is it?

SKYE

Oh, you know. Same as yesterday. Asking when we're going back to find Alita.

Barbara lowers her head and sighs. This is a request Skye's made several times, it seems.

BARBARA

Skye...

SKYE

(raises hand)

Don't give me the speech, it's okay. Been hearing it every day, I know it by now. That's not gonna stop me asking.

FITZGERALD

You know we can't spare the resources for another rescue attempt right now, Skye.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

And I repeat, I'm not asking for resources. I just need a couple of girls to -

BARBARA

(cuts her off)

The answer's still 'no.'

Skye tries to keep her chin up.

BARBARA (cont'd)

You know I want Alita back as much as anybody else, but the truth is...

SKYE

The 'truth' is that you've all given up on her.

Silence. Skye looks each Watcher and teacher in the eye.

SKYE (cont'd)

I get it. I do. We've got Braeden and his goons finishing off every girl that the local demons don't eat all over the planet, still no sign of Sofia and one of our best Slayers MIA in the middle of the Arctic. If I was in your shoes, I'd be telling me to leave it alone too.

She takes a step forward.

SKYE (cont'd)

But I'm not in charge here. You all are. And until one of you gives me what I need to go back and find our girl, I'm not gonna stop asking.

BARBARA

Understood.

A beat. Skye senses that's all she'll get for today. Without another word, she turns and heads for the door, when:

GREG

Oh, Skye? Did you see two new girls waiting out in the foyer?

SKYE

Nope. Want me to go find 'em?

GREG

Please. It's Reiko and Juanita.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

(nods)

Yeah, I saw the memo. I'll show 'em
to their rooms.

(beat; to room)

Well... see you tomorrow.

And she exits. Barbara sits back down, running her hands
through her hair.

FITZGERALD

Sooner or later, we're going to
have to tell her -

BARBARA

(firm)

No. I can't have Skye's focus
compromised. Not now.

There are a few quick glances between the faculty as Barbara
switches the video screen back on, and we CUT TO:

INT. ACADEMY - CORRIDOR - NEXT

Reiko follows Juanita as the girls stroll down a long
corridor, Juanita peering up at some hastily-printed signs
pointing to different blocks of the campus.

REIKO

(points)

Look, there. See? 'Dorms.'

JUANITA

What the hell is a 'dorm'?

SKYE (O.S.)

Four walls and a bed to you.

They turn as Skye jogs towards them.

SKYE (cont'd)

Hey. Newbies, right? I'm Skye.

REIKO

(offers hand)

Reiko Kimusume.

JUANITA

Juanita Davalos. You're the main
squad leader, right?

SKYE

Last time I checked.

JUANITA

Heard a lot of people mention you.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

If it's that thing with the dolphin
at Sea World, I swear I thought it
was legal at the time.

A beat. Reiko and Juanita swap a blank look.

SKYE (cont'd)

O-kay... follow me.

She leads them into:

INT. ACADEMY - DORMS - NEXT

As more Slayers buzz past them and pop in and out of the
rooms lining the corridor, Skye continues talking.

SKYE

I'll just introduce you to my girls
first, then I'll show you your
room.

She stops by one door, opening it and stepping into:

INT. ACADEMY - A SQUAD DORM - NEXT

Spread across the room are ERIKA, ANNA, TSULA and FRANKIE,
who looks up as Skye steps in with the two new girls.

SKYE

Girls, newbies. Newbies, girls.

ANNA

Hey.

REIKO

Hi!

ERIKA

(steps forward)

Welcome to the Academy. I am Erika.

JUANITA

The blind chick, right?

SKYE

Hey, show a little respect, huh?

ERIKA

No, it's alright.

(to Juanita)

That is correct.

JUANITA

Cool. Heard a lot about you. All
good.

FRANKIE

Do not feed 'er ego. We will never
'ear the end of it!

JUANITA

You could only be Frankie... right?

FRANKIE

C'est vrai. You know us all
already?

JUANITA

(shrugs)

Had my ear to the ground about this
place for a while. Helps to know
who's who.

SKYE

This is Reiko and Juanita. Latest
recruits.

(to Tsula)

The hippy in the corner is Tsula
Nimeda. She's kinda new as well, so
I'll get her to show you two round
later, and after that Frankie's
gonna take you down to the
infirmary to get checked in.

TSULA

Looking forward to it.

REIKO

(smiles drops)

In... infirmary?

SKYE

Alright, kids, let's go.

(to others)

Ladies.

Skye nods to her team as she exits:

Skye continues as they head back down the crowded corridor.

SKYE

We're running at capacity here, but
even with two-thirds of the school
out in the field at any one time,
we've still got people using pretty
much every spare inch of space
around this place.

REIKO

How come?

SKYE

We opened our doors to everyone and anyone on our side, basically. Wiccans, demon hunters, refugees, Council agents, you name it. Made sense to keep everyone together.

JUANITA

This is your way of telling us we're gonna be sharing, right?

SKYE

Actually, no. You've lucked out.

She stops by one room, opening it and motioning the girls inside:

INT. ACADEMY - DORM ROOM - NEXT

Skye follows them in, indicating the empty three-bed dorm. Suitcases and other effects are scattered around.

SKYE

This little palace is all yours for now. I'd recommend settling in before anyone else moves in.

Juanita drops her bag, but Reiko heads for the dresser, picking up a framed photograph.

REIKO

Who's this?

Skye peers over at the frame.

SKYE

That would be Sarah, Gabrielle and Kylie. This dorm's former occupants.

REIKO

'Former'?

SKYE

They were based in LA, working for the big Council office over there.

JUANITA

'Were'?

Skye nods. Reiko looks to Juanita.

REIKO

You mean...

SKYE

I mean, they won't be back to claim
their things any time soon.

(beat)

Anyhoo, I gotta go do important
squad leader stuff, so... sit
tight, Frankie'll be along to take
you to see Debs soon. Oh, and if
you hear a big ol' alarm bell,
ringing, well... that means 'run.'
Just follow everyone else.

(beat)

See ya.

She exits, leaving the stunned Reiko and Juanita in silence
before we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. ACADEMY - INFIRMARY - DAY

12

Reiko pushes open the door and peeks inside, casting here eyes over the infirmary before her - several beds, a few pieces of pretty modern monitoring equipment and plenty of well-stocked shelves of supplies.

She hesitates in the doorway, and behind her an impatient Frankie HUFFS loudly.

FRANKIE

Allons-y! What are you scared of?

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Oh, hello? Come in.

Reiko glances over her shoulder to Juanita, and then steps inside as Juanita follows her. Reiko seems noticeably nervous, glancing quickly round the room.

They're met by DEBBIE, smiling brightly at them in her white coat and glasses.

FRANKIE

Bonjour, Deborah. 'Ere are the two new girls.

DEBBIE

You must be Reiko and Juanita. I'm Debbie, I'm in charge of the infirmary here at the Academy.

Reiko blinks, then thrusts her hand out - she's holding a sheet of paper. Debbie frowns.

JUANITA

Don't mind her. She's scared of hospitals.

DEBBIE

Er... this isn't exactly a hospital.

JUANITA

Close enough.

FRANKIE

It always smells like one.

Juanita takes Reiko's paper and passes it to Debbie with one of her own. Debbie takes the forms and scans over them.

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

Oh, excellent. Always makes my life easier when people fill in their paperwork!

With Reiko still pale and timid, Juanita steers her out of the way as she follows Debbie over to her desk.

JUANITA

So what's the score here?

DEBBIE

I just need to get you registered.

REIKO

Sounds... official.

DEBBIE

It was an idea I had to help speed up treatment. We need to keep trace of everyone's blood type, allergies, patient histories, all that kind of thing. I'm afraid it's a sad fact of life that you'll both probably see more of this place than you'd like.

JUANITA

So how come you're in charge here? You seem kinda young.

DEBBIE

Oh, I've got plenty of on-the-job training, don't worry.

FRANKIE

Deborah is a Slayer, like us.

REIKO

Really?

DEBBIE

That was a while back. I wasn't cut out for the field, so I went to where I could do the most good.

Juanita shrugs, not seeming too bothered. Frankie hangs back, keeping a watchful eye on Reiko.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

I'll also need to take a blood sample from you both, if that's okay.

JUANITA

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

Reiko's eyes bulge, but she stays silent as Debbie heads to a cabinet and starts taking out her equipment - gloves, sterile instruments, and a nice big syringe.

ON REIKO as Debbie raises the syringe, her wide eyes staring at the needle (which seems five times bigger to her).

FRANKIE

Reiko? *Qu'est-ce que c'est?* Are you...

And Reiko's eyes flutter, before she FAINTS dead away! Frankie lunges to catch her.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Merde!

Reiko falls on Frankie's injured arm, and she grimaces under the weight.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

Do not just stand there! 'Elp me!

Juanita hurries over, helping to hoist Reiko up onto the nearest bed.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

What is the matter with 'er?

JUANITA

Remember I said she was scared of hospitals? Well, she's really scared of needles.

Debbie sighs as she heads over, lifting Reiko's eyelids and shining her penlight into her eyes.

FRANKIE

Is she alright?

DEBBIE

You'd better leave her with me.

Debbie tucks her penlight away, and motions for Juanita to take a seat.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

If you just want to roll up your sleeve, this won't take a moment.

Juanita sits. Debbie, meanwhile, looks at Frankie for a beat until Frankie realises:

FRANKIE

Quoi?

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

Is your arm... er, I mean, she
didn't hurt you just then when she
fell, did she?

Frankie flexes her arm.

FRANKIE

I am fine.

DEBBIE

Good, good.

(beat; cautious)

Er, have you... heard from
Dunstall?

Frankie is quiet for a beat, then:

FRANKIE

Not for a few days. Where is Aiden?

At the mention of his name, Debbie's expression sours, and we
CUT TO:

Inside a quiet, city centre demon bar, with a handful of
DEMONS sitting around and sipping their drinks. Minding their
own business.

When Aiden strolls boldly in through the front doors, the
atmosphere quickly turns frosty.

Ignoring the cold, silent stares coming his way, he strolls
up to the counter and takes a seat. The hefty female
BARTENDER narrows her three eyes at him.

AIDEN

Just a beer, thanks.

The bartender hesitates, but Aiden's cool, easy smile stays
in place. As the bartender stomps off to get his drink, Aiden
still doesn't react to the stares as we CUT TO:

ON FRANKIE as she rattles away at her keyboard. PULL BACK to
show she's sitting behind the front desk, with Juanita and a
still pale-looking Reiko before her.

JUANITA

So you run the library here too? I
thought you were on Skye's team?

FRANKIE

(beat)

I used to be.

REIKO

What happened?

FRANKIE

I was injured.

That's all they're getting. Reiko still looks a little unsteady, but Juanita grins and gives her a playful nudge.

JUANITA

Feeling any better?

REIKO

Not really. I can't believe I just passed out like that...

(groans)

I bet everybody's gonna know that story by tonight!

JUANITA

Ah, don't sweat it. We're all scared of something stupid.

REIKO

What are you scared of?

JUANITA

(thinks)

Graves.

REIKO

Huh?

JUANITA

Long story.

She stops as Frankie's printer CLICKS and BUZZES to life, and within moments she presents the girls with two shiny new laminated LIBRARY CARDS.

FRANKIE

Bon. Follow me.

She rises and heads into:

In the main hall of the library, a few groups of Slayers are sitting at the tables between the shelf stacks. A cluster of WICCAS sit round one table, its surface covered with spellbooks.

FRANKIE

Anything you will ever need for
your studies can be found in 'ere.

(points)

Academic subjects are there to
there, mystical there to there, and
books on combat and training there
to there.

JUANITA

What's upstairs?

FRANKIE

My office, and the Restricted
section.

(off their looks)

Spell books, prophecies, and many
other things you are not to touch.
Ever.

Juanita grins, strolling forward to take a nose around. She
stops when she notices some thinly-hidden CLAW MARKS etched
into the wall.

JUANITA

Hey, uh... what are these?

FRANKIE

(matter-of-fact)

We 'ad a poltergeist in 'ere once.

REIKO (O.S.)

Miss DuCont?

Frankie turns - Reiko is pointing to several HOLES and GOUGES
cut out of the staircase and surrounding shelves.

REIKO (cont'd)

What about these?

FRANKIE

I 'ad to fight an intruder.

(smirks)

She didn't pay 'er overdue fines.

Frankie wanders off, still grinning to herself. Juanita
raises an eyebrow - what are they getting themselves into at
this place?

Frankie returns to her desk, looking up as Greg enters,
accompanied by Tsula.

GREG

Ah, there you are.

(CONTINUED)

FRANKIE

Your two recruits are in there.

GREG

Tsula?

TSULA

Right.

She heads back into the library as Greg approaches Frankie.

GREG

How's it going?

FRANKIE

They seem alright. I am sure they will 'ave no trouble fitting in.

GREG

Good. Barbara wants to see them about that new idea of hers, so let's hope they're as good as we were told they are!

FRANKIE

Greg? May I ask you something?

GREG

Of course.

FRANKIE

'Ave you 'eard anything at all from Ellen since she went back to 'er family?

Greg's hesitation answers Frankie's question.

FRANKIE (cont'd)

People are beginning to talk. They say she will not be back.

GREG

They can talk all they want. Ellen's just got some things she needs to take care of. She'll be back in no time.

Greg tries a hopeful smile, and we CUT TO:

And ELLEN lurches into frame as she VOMITS loudly into the toilet. She coughs and retches, taking a moment to catch her breath.

She's in a modest bathroom over on the other side of the Atlantic, still in her dressing gown.

As she straightens and looks into the cabinet mirror, she sees BLOOD on her lips.

She SIGHS and turns on the taps to wash herself down, FLUSHING the toilet with her other hand.

Splashing water on her face, she looks back up and stares at her reflection. Her skin is pale and blotchy, dark rings beneath her eyes.

She opens the cabinet and grabs a bottle of PILLS, popping the cap and tipping a few into her hand. She hesitates - then tips out several more.

VOICE (O.S.)

Ellen? Honey? Are you okay?

ELLEN

I'm fine, mom. Just feeling a little off is all.

VOICE (O.S.)

Are you sure?

Ellen stares down at the pills, then snaps them back into her mouth and SWALLOWS.

ELLEN

Yeah... I'm alright.

VOICE (O.S.)

Okay, then, honey. Dinner'll be served soon.

Ellen waits as she hears FOOTSTEPS heading away from the door, before she rubs her tired eyes.

ELLEN

Alright, Ellen... time to get your game face on.

She stares at herself, not believing her own hype any more than we do, and we CUT TO:

There's a KNOCK as the door opens and Tsula enters, Reiko and Juanita behind her. Reiko looks back to her usual self now.

TSULA

Miss Griffin? I've brought them over, like you asked.

Barbara looks up from behind her desk.

BARBARA
Thank you, Tsula.

Tsula starts to leave, but Barbara calls out:

BARBARA (cont'd)
Oh, you can stay. This concerns you
as well.

Tsula nods, shutting the door and joining the other two girls
before Barbara's desk.

BARBARA (cont'd)
So! How are you settling in so far?

REIKO
Oh, no problem.

JUANITA
(grins)
Except for the infirmary.

REIKO
(blushes)
Well, yeah, except that, but I
mean... uh...

JUANITA
She means 'yeah.' We're good.

BARBARA
Glad to hear it.
(beat)
What do you girls know about
Sennybridge?

Reiko quickly raises her hand.

REIKO
I know! I know!

JUANITA
Okay, that's gonna get old real
fast.

BARBARA
(smiles)
Go ahead, Reiko.

REIKO
It's a Council training ground
built onto an old army base in some
place called 'Wales.'

BARBARA

That's right. With the pressing need to have combat-ready Slayers in hotspots and flashpoints all over the world, we've turned the old Watchers retreat there into an all-purpose Slayer training camp - and you three will be the first to try it out.

TSULA

We will?

REIKO

Cool!

JUANITA

Why us?

BARBARA

Because I'm reliably informed you three are the best.

The girls exchange looks at this. Barbara opens up each of their school files across her desk.

BARBARA (cont'd)

You all come highly recommended from your Watchers - even you, Juanita, despite the... 'relationship' you two had.

Juanita SCOFFS at that.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Simply put, you're the current cream of the crop, so we're pushing you through advanced training more quickly. We need you out there making a difference now, not later.

TSULA

What about my place on Skye's team?

BARBARA

That still stands. I'm arranging a form of mentorship scheme with Cerys Mason, the Watcher who's running the Sennybridge operation, so I'll have more details for you all in due course. I just wanted you to be informed ahead of time.

JUANITA

Sounds good.

(CONTINUED)

REIKO

We won't let you down.

BARBARA

That's what I like to hear.
Alright, girls, you're dismissed.
Tsula, report to the briefing room,
the others are waiting for you.

The girls turn and leave, Reiko's excited smile getting a grin from Juanita as we CUT TO:

INT. ACADEMY - BRIEFING ROOM - NEXT

Tsula enters to find Skye, Erika and Anna waiting for her, with Greg setting up the video screen at the front.

SKYE

C'mon, slowpoke! We've already used
up all of Greg's good jokes.

GREG

I haven't told any jokes!

ERIKA

Exactly.

Tsula chuckles as she takes her seat. Greg brings up a satellite photograph of an industrial estate, focusing in on a large warehouse.

GREG

This is your next target - we
believe it's a distribution centre
for magical supplies and weapons,
sourcing out to several bases
across Europe.

SKYE

What's the security like?

Greg brings up another image - closer photography of the warehouse itself, showing several patrols of armed guards.

GREG

Heavy at best. No confirmed
sightings of any non-human guards,
but that doesn't mean they're not
there.

ANNA

When do we head out?

GREG

Tonight. Seems they're ready to send out their next big shipment, so if we strike now we may be able to get the locations of several of the intended recipients.

SKYE

Greg, you know, it wouldn't kill you to throw a little more English into your briefings now and then.

GREG

This is a serious one, girls. If we do this right, not only will we cut off a large scale supplier to a clutch of bases, but we'll gain crucial inside information on the Cabal's operations across Europe.

ERIKA

Do not worry, Greg. We all realise what is at stake.

SKYE

Yeah. The humour's just a defence thing.

GREG

Alright, then. You've all got your notes, so read and digest. We'll meet in the foyer at half six.

The girls get up to leave, with Anna staying behind as the others file out of the room. She glances towards the door as Greg is the last to leave.

Anna then digs out her mobile phone, and with a guilty look calls a number, lifting up her notes.

ANNA

It's me. There's gonna be a raid tonight, and I've got the information on it.

And from her heavy-hearted expression, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

20

INT. ACADEMY - GYM - EVENING

20

CLACK! Two STAFFS crash together in front of us, and we PULL BACK to find Skye and Erika indulging in a spot of last minute sparring.

There's a pause before the two girls return to their fight, Skye spinning and whirling as she CHOPS and STRIKES but Erika BLOCKS every attack, staying defensive.

She SWEEPS her staff at Skye's legs, forcing her to FLIP into the air - at which Erika plants her staff in Skye's gut and TOSSES her over her head!

Skye manages to twist in mid-air and land in a crouch, ROLLING to avoid Erika's next attack.

Skye is now on the back foot, ducking and weaving as Erika attacks again and again, barely giving Skye chance to get her own weapon up against the onslaught.

Erika jinks to the side and CHOPS across the back of Skye's legs, sending Skye to the floor with a SHOUT. Erika rears back and SLICES down in a two-handed overhead swing:

And with a SMASH Skye's staff breaks in two as she blocks the attack!

She FLIPS to her feet, Erika sent stumbling back with momentum, before Skye realises she now has a smaller staff in either hand.

With a smirk, she changes her style to attack with both arms at once, forcing Erika to snap her own staff left and right, blocking both sides.

Skye gets a clean SHOVE to Erika's gut, DUCKING under her return swing to TRIP Erika up, following through to PIN her to the ground, pressing one staff against her throat!

A beat as the two breathless girls take a moment.

SKYE

And I think that's one to -

POW! Erika KICKS back and connects with Skye's head, sending her tumbling over.

Erika plants her hands on the floor and power FLIPS back to her feet, recovering her fallen staff in time to parry Skye's next strike.

(CONTINUED)

Skye hops back, circling Erika slowly as Erika begins spinning her staff round in her wrist.

SKYE (cont'd)
As I was saying... one to me.

ERIKA
You didn't finish saying it.

SKYE
So what, that doesn't count?

ERIKA
Those are the rules.

SKYE
You kicked me in the damn head!

Erika just GRINS, and as Skye launches forward again, LEAPING into the air, Erika is BLASTED back off her feet.

Skye CHOPS down with both sticks, but Erika SWEEPS round and tangles Skye's legs, sending Skye crashing to the mats.

Both girls stay on the floor, chests heaving, before Erika pushes herself upright.

ERIKA
Perhaps we should leave further training until after the mission.

SKYE
Good call.

Skye hauls herself up, taking Erika's hand and pulling her to her feet.

21 INT. ACADEMY - GYM - CHANGING ROOM - NEXT

21

Skye, back in her usual outfit, is just lacing up her boots as Erika steps over, towelling her hair dry.

ERIKA
I didn't hurt you, did I?

SKYE
When? The kick or that thing with the spin and the...
(gestures)
... choppy hand... thing?

ERIKA
It's called reverse *te-gatana*.

SKYE
Yeah. That. And no, you didn't.

(CONTINUED)

Skye finishes lacing her boots and straightens, stretching.

SKYE (cont'd)
So don't worry, every time we
practice you prove that you haven't
lost your touch since, you know...

Skye doesn't need to finish. A quick, guilty glance at
Erika's cloudy, unseeing eyes does the rest.

Erika sits down, still drying her long, dark hair as Skye
starts packing away her gym clothes.

ERIKA
Do you still believe Alita is
alive?

SKYE
Of course I do.

ERIKA
It has been several months, Skye.
Even as a Slayer, the chances of
her having survived this long are -

SKYE
(tense)
I know about the odds.
(beat)
I also know that this is Alita
we're talking about. The girl's
been training since she was old
enough to waddle. If anyone could
find a way to stay alive that long,
then she could. Besides, you
weren't down there in the Hub.
We're not talking sub zero
temperatures.

ERIKA
So I have heard.
(beat)
And Sofia?

Skye pauses. She turns and sits down, leaning back.

SKYE
I have abso-god damn-lutely no
idea.

ERIKA
If you listen to the gossip, then
they would have you believe she has
joined forces with Braeden.

SKYE

(scoffs)

Yeah, right. A Slayer teaming up with a guy whose job it is to kill Slayers? That's a bit more hardcore than Capulet and Montague, ya know?

ERIKA

Even so...

SKYE

Look, I'm gonna wait until we find her before I make my decision on what happened to her. I just want to see her again.

Erika reaches across, finds Skye's hand and gives it a squeeze.

ERIKA

You will. She is lucky to have you as her friend.

SKYE

(smirks)

Damn straight she is.

Skye stands and zips up her bag, and as Erika tosses her towel into her bag and follows, we CUT TO:

Anna is alone in the girls' room, waiting for a cell phone call to connect.

ANNA

(into phone)

Josh? It's Anna.

She smiles, sighing with relief.

ANNA (cont'd)

Yeah, of course I'm checking up on you. I'm your big sister, remember? That's what I do. How are mom and dad? Everyone okay back home?

She listens, starting to become a little emotional.

ANNA (cont'd)

That's... that's good. And Carl? How's Elise and the baby now?

(smiles)

Wow. Six months already? Man. Doesn't feel like yesterday she was still waddling around the 'hood...

Anna trails off. She blinks away a stray tear.

ANNA (cont'd)
Me? Oh, you know. All good. Just
keeping an eye on everything.
(listens; smile drops)
No, I haven't spoken to mom. You
know that.
(tense)
She wouldn't understand why I left,
Josh. No matter how hard I tried to
explain.

Anna glances at her bedside clock - twenty-five past six.

ANNA (cont'd)
Josh, I gotta go. I'll call you in
a few days, alright? You take care.

She hangs up, letting out another heavy sigh as she wipes her eyes dry.

A moment later, her phone RINGS again. She looks at the display - 'Caller Unknown.' The look on Anna's face suggests she knows who it is, however.

ANNA (cont'd)
(answers call)
Hello?
(darkens)
Yeah, we're heading out now.

The line goes dead. Anna lowers the phone, glaring at it.

ANNA (cont'd)
Screw you.

She TOSSES the phone away angrily, seething for a beat before she reaches and grabs her bag, and we CUT TO:

Meanwhile, at the North Pole...

Wisps of snow blow across the blindingly white landscape, the huge CRATER in the ice stretching out before us.

A POLAR BEAR clomps into frame, pausing to look towards the crater as tiny bubbles of LIGHT drift up from its depths.

And with a sudden ROAR, two DEMONS burst from the snow either side of the bear, launching themselves at it in a flurry of teeth and claws!

The bear lets out one anguished CRY as the demons pull it down, a spray of BLOOD staining the pure white ground.

As the creatures continue to feast on the twitching bear, we PUSH FORWARD and approach the crater.

As we reach the lip, PAN DOWN to peer into the depths, following down a winding series of walkways and passages that spiral deep into the black, before we CUT TO:

Following a red-skinned DEMON NERD named GOGOL as he hurries down a long corridor, everything around him seemingly carved out of the ice itself.

The walls GLOW from within, lighting up his path, and he passes several larger areas filled with activity - WARRIOR DEMONS barking their way through training exercises, howling BEASTS like the ones lurking on the surface, and RITUALS in progress as hooded magi CHANT and conjure up swirls of colourful magic overhead.

Gogol reaches an office suite, approaching a large set of double doors and KNOCKING.

VOICE (O.S.)
(through door)
Come.

The demon takes a breath, then opens the door and steps into:

We may be deep beneath the Arctic, but the office could have come out of any luxurious corporate suite. A log fire burns, a wide desk sits before a window-like slab of glacial ice, and if not for the walls being made of ice you'd think you were in any director's office.

A high-backed leather chair faces away from us behind the wide desk, and Gogol cautiously approaches.

VOICE
(behind chair)
Are you bringing me a status
report, Gogol?

GOGOL
(clears throat)
Y-yes, sir.

The chair turns round - revealing a perfectly human-looking man in his fifties. His wiry hair tops a diminutive frame, and he peers across at Gogol through his glasses.

This is ALARIC, and he is very definitely in charge around these parts.

The man in the chair is silent for a long beat, and Gogol finally realises this is his cue to speak.

GOGOL (cont'd)
Uh, well, we've received intel from our source at the Academy that the Slayers are planning a strike on our Portsmouth supply warehouse.
Er, sir.

Alaric nods, linking his fingers and continuing to stare at the increasingly sweaty Gogol.

GOGOL (cont'd)
It's the main squad, sir.
Underwood's team.

ALARIC
It's about time.

GOGOL
Sir?

ALARIC
Skye's been too concerned with finding her missing friends to embark on any real missions for some time. This finally puts her firmly in our territory.

GOGOL
This does mean that our source will be on the team as well, however.

ALARIC
She won't be harmed. And even if she is, it'll just keep her free from suspicion a little longer.

GOGOL
Yes, sir. I'll send word to Braeden and despatch him immediately.

Gogol turns to leave, but stops when:

ALARIC
I think it's time we tried something new.

GOGOL
(turns back)
Sir?

ALARIC
The majority of Braeden's kills to this point have been lone Slayers.
(MORE)

ALARIC (cont'd)

This time, he's going up against an entire squad, and even with Dexter and Cassandra he may find his work cut out for him.

(beat)

It's time to field test our latest agent.

GOGOL

Are you sure about that, sir? The test results are still inconclusive.

ALARIC

Then it's time to see if those lab rats were right or not. Send the full team.

GOGOL

Yes, sir.

Gogol turns and exits, looking relieved to be getting out of there, and as Alaric leans back in his chair we CUT TO:

Aiden leaves the same bar he entered several hours earlier, looking a little disappointed as he flicks his coat collar up against the breeze.

He turns and heads off down the street - but doesn't notice two DEMONS leave the bar, glance at each other and then start to follow him.

Aiden walks on, the demons staying on his trail, until he finally slows to a halt.

AIDEN

You know, if you're going to try following someone...

He turns to face the demons as they step out of the shadows.

AIDEN (cont'd)

... you might want to try a less potent aftershave.

The demons march up to him - pink-skinned with red deformities twisting their features round, they're not exactly pleasant to look at.

One GRABS Aiden and SHOVES him up against a wall, but Aiden still maintains his composure.

DEMON #1

Listen, skin bag, I don't know what the hell your game is, or what you're trying to pull waltzing onto our turf like some kind of tourist, but you shoulda taken the hint and left a long time ago!

AIDEN

So I see.

DEMON #2

(to first demon)

Come on, this isn't worth it! It's just some dumb human looking for his kicks!

DEMON #1

(not listening)

Why did you come here?

AIDEN

I was looking for someone.

DEMON #1

Well, you found me.

AIDEN

Good.

The demon scrunches his face up (as best he can) - what the hell is this human playing at?

AIDEN (cont'd)

I can help you.

DEMON #1

'Help' me? What kind of help can some skinny little human fleshling give me? I'm a koichi demon!

AIDEN

I know. Which is why I know your face isn't supposed to look like that.

The demon freezes. He slowly releases Aiden and steps back, eyes wide.

DEMON #1

How... how did you know that?

AIDEN

You were born that way, weren't you? That's why you were cast out of your clan?

(CONTINUED)

DEMON #2

There's no way you could -

AIDEN

Let's just say I do my homework.

(beat)

So what do you say? You want to let me help you? Or do you want me to just walk away and never come back?

The demons exchange a glance, not knowing what to make of any of this as we CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

It's a little later as we look out towards the supply warehouse that's the focus of tonight's mission.

PULL BACK to find Skye's team, along with Greg, peering out towards the compound from the nearby cover of an empty builder's yard.

Greg is scanning the complex with his binoculars, but as he lowers them he's frowning - something isn't right.

SKYE

Well?

GREG

There's nobody there.

And he's right - no guards, no vehicles, not a single sign of activity in the darkened warehouse.

ERIKA

How is that possible?

SKYE

This isn't going to be like that slavery ring we tried to bust up in Venice, is it?

TSULA

Or those bikers in El Paso?

Anna keeps quiet while the others speak. Good job, too, given her nervous expression.

GREG

I don't know what to say. The most recent satellite images we took were only from a few hours ago. There's no way an operation of this size could have just disappeared in that space of time.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

Yeah, but we still don't know that much about this 'Cabal,' do we? They would be the demon equivalent of the X-Men for all we know.

Greg turns to the girls, who hunker down around him.

GREG

Skye, Erika, take the main entrance. Get past the security lighting and cameras and you should be able to walk straight in. Anna, you and Tsula are with me. We'll find a back entrance, wait for Skye's signal and then go in.

TSULA

Understood.

The team split up, scurrying across the darkened industrial estate. STAY ON Skye and Erika.

Pausing by a low wall, Skye quickly scans for a safe path forward, avoiding the range of the security lights.

She taps Erika on the shoulder, and Erika reaches out with her open palm. Skye quickly traces a few symbols across her palm, and Erika nods - some sort of code.

Skye hops over the wall, and Erika follows as they zig-zag across the compound, Erika close on Skye's heels.

They're soon at the warehouse itself, Skye drawing her sai daggers as she edges towards the main doors.

She neatly scampers to one side, waiting for Erika to take her position opposite, and then Skye whispers a countdown:

SKYE

Three... two... one!

As one, the girls KICK the doors open and burst into:

Empty. Skye and Erika walk out across the warehouse floor, but there's nothing to see. Just empty space.

There's a sound overhead as Anna, Tsula and Greg appear on a walkway above them, Tsula with an arrow already notched in her bow, but their reaction is the same.

SKYE

(furious)

Son of a bitch!

She KICKS a stray cardboard box across the floor in frustration.

SKYE (cont'd)
Every time! Every god damn time!

GREG
It's like you said, Skye. We don't know for sure what we're up against here.

BRAEDEN (O.S.)
Oh, I wouldn't say that...

Skye and Erika spin round - as Braeden emerges from the shadows!

SKYE
You!

BRAEDEN
In the flesh.

Up on the walkway, Tsula takes aim with her bow - but freezes as she hears the CLICK of a gun close by.

DEXTER
While I've got no doubt you could hit from way up here...

ANGLE ON the lean man from the Teaser, pistol trained on Tsula as he steps into the light. This is DEXTER.

DEXTER (cont'd)
... it's probably better if you don't.

Anna looks panicked, starting to draw her sword - when she feels another BLADE press into her back.

VOICE (O.S.)
Boo.

PULL BACK to find the blonde woman, CASSANDRA, has snuck right up on her, and now has a DAGGER pressed firmly against her spine.

Stuck in the middle, Greg is helpless - either way, he's cut off by Braeden's team.

Down below, Skye and Erika carefully shift into attack poses, ready for anything. Braeden, however, seems remarkably cool.

BRAEDEN
It's good to finally see you all again.

(CONTINUED)

SKYE

No, it isn't. Don't be a dumbass.

ERIKA

Have you come to try and add us to your tally?

BRAEDEN

Well, maybe. I just go where I'm told and see who's about when I get there. This... this is a surprise. But one of those good ones, like a Kinder egg or finding free porn.

SKYE

Enough talk. Let's do this.

BRAEDEN

That eager, eh? Can't say I blame you.

Skye takes a step forward.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)

But there's someone I'd like you to meet first.

Skye hears FOOTSTEPS behind her and whips round:

Someone is emerging from the shadows. Petite, pale, and with long, black hair.

It's SOFIA.

SOFIA

(grins)

Hello at last, Skye.

Skye's jaw drop, which just makes Sofia grin even more.

SOFIA (cont'd)

Did you miss me?

And with that, she draws her SWORD, and from a disbelieving Skye, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

30

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

30

Standoff. Skye stares in utter shock at Sofia, while Erika still faces towards Braeden.

Up on the walkway overhead, Dexter and Cassandra have Anna, Tsula and Greg pinned down. They can't quite believe what they're seeing as Skye and Sofia start to circle each other down below.

GREG

Oh, my God...

TSULA

Is that...?

Cassandra and Dexter exchange a grin as we return to Skye and Sofia:

SKYE

Sof... Sofia? What happened to you?

SOFIA

Isn't it obvious?

SKYE

(off Braeden)

You're... with them now?

SOFIA

They made me an offer I couldn't refuse. Literally. It was either this, or bleed to death from a gunshot wound back in the Arctic.

SKYE

No... no. This can't... this can't be right!

SOFIA

What can't? Come on, Skye, you know how this works. Nobody wanted me at the Academy any more. Everyone blamed me for what happened when Braeden defected. I'd been on probation all term.

(grins)

I was already one of the bad guys in most people's eyes.

SKYE

Not in mine.

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA

Don't kid yourself. I mean, it's sweet that you still thought you could save me after all this time, but... no. Sorry. Too late.

ERIKA

Sofia? Please tell me this is some sort of trick.

SOFIA

If only it was that simple.

SKYE

(shakes head)

No way. I don't buy it. Your ex has spent the last three months killing as many of us as he could find. You expect me to swallow that you'd get asked to join his team?

(penny drops)

You're not her. You're some kind of... shapeshifter or something, like that Rachel chick.

SOFIA

Really? Try me. Ask me something only I would know.

SKYE

(beat; narrows eyes)

What was the last thing I said to you? Back in the Hub. Before you went off to fight him.

A long beat. Sofia starts to grin wickedly.

SOFIA

(mimics Skye)

'Don't go far without me, alright?'

Skye's jaw hits the floor once again.

SKYE

No...

Sofia closes in, but Skye's too stunned to react.

SKYE (cont'd)

This can't be happening...

Up above, Anna sees the GLINT of metal as Sofia reaches for something from behind her.

ANNA

Skye, look out!

(CONTINUED)

Skye blinks, snapping out of it - and jinks back just as Sofia SLICES towards her with a dagger!

The blade CUTS into Skye's arm, and she stumbles back with a YELP. A fraction earlier, and it'd have cut her throat.

On the gantry, Anna suddenly stiffens as Cassandra sinks the dagger into her back!

CASSANDRA

Wrong move.

Anna slumps to the floor, but Greg is quick to TACKLE her to the floor.

Tsula swings her bow to face Dexter, just as he FIRES his pistol.

Tsula DIVES to the side, the bullet SKIMMING past her as she fires the arrow - and it SLAMS into his shoulder!

Dexter SHOUTS and drops the gun as Tsula tumbles to the floor, as behind her Cassandra starts PUNCHING Greg.

Down below, Sofia brings her sword up and round, forcing Skye to block with her healthy arm.

Braeden grins, advancing slowly on Erika as he reaches round to his back for his Scythe.

BRAEDEN

Ready to do our dance?

ERIKA

I am not afraid of you.

BRAEDEN

(beat)

You should be.

Skye is off balance as Sofia lays into her, spinning round with a KICK that knocks Skye back and following with another SLICE of her sword, opening a GASH across Skye's belly.

SKYE

Agh! Son of a...

SOFIA

You're getting sloppy, Skye. Are you going easy because it's me?

Braeden feints left and right and then HACKS down at Erika, who manages to block and hold the Scythe with her staff.

On the gantry, Cassandra KICKS Greg back off her, jumping to her feet as he recovers.

(CONTINUED)

CASSANDRA

You think you can just jump me like
that, you arrogant little prick?
Don't you know who I am?

She charges forward, but Greg reaches up and grabs a light fitting, WRENCHING it free and SLAMMING it down into her face!

GREG

Nope.

Lightbulbs SHATTER as Cassandra falls back, and Greg hauls the wounded Anna to her feet.

GREG (cont'd)

(to Tsula)

Come on!

Tsula races forward - Dexter has disappeared from the gantry, so the trio have a clear path back downstairs.

Down below, Skye is TRIPPED by Sofia, who knocks her remaining sai away and PLUNGES her sword into her chest!

Skye ROARS with pain, VAMPING OUT as she howls. Sofia just smirks - pure, unfiltered delight.

Braeden keeps up the offensive on Erika, her staff SPLINTERING with every attack she blocks until it finally SNAPS and sends her to the floor.

BRAEDEN

Nice moves, Erika... but not good
enough.

He reaches for his belt and draws a dagger - and its blade GLOWS as soon as its unsheathed.

Skye and Erika both suddenly reel, as though a wave of nausea has hit them out of nowhere.

ERIKA

What...

BRAEDEN

Secret weapon, sweetheart.

And he STABS Erika with the blade! She CRIES OUT - and that's just about all Skye's going to take.

She ROARS again as she grabs Sofia's sword and YANKS it out of her chest, turning to PUNCH Sofia across the jaw before she HURLS the sword straight at Braeden!

(CONTINUED)

He's forced to duck as the sword STREAKS through the air - CUTTING across his cheek.

Skye grabs Erika and hauls her up, the two girls heading for the exit as Sofia goes to Braeden.

ERIKA

(weak)

Skye...

SKYE

Hang on! We're getting out of here!

Skye looks back - and with a sinking heart she watches Sofia help Braeden back to his feet!

Limping herself as she carries the wounded Erika, one arm slung over her shoulders, Skye's quickly out of places to hide as she stumbles across the compound.

Behind her, Sofia and Braeden exit the warehouse, both re-armed and closing in on the wounded Slayers, but slowing as they realise they can savour this one.

SOFIA

Oh, this should be fun...

BRAEDEN

Where are you gonna run to, Skye?

Skye turns to face them, glaring defiantly at Braeden as he closes in.

SKYE

I don't need to run anywhere.

BRAEDEN

(laughs)

Yeah, doesn't look like it!

BRAEDEN (cont'd)

It's almost a shame we have to -

SOFIA

(gasps)

Look out!

She SHOVES Braeden out of the way as the campus minibus BARRELS into frame, missing them by inches!

Skye blinks as Tsula throws open the side door, frantically calling out:

TSULA

Get in!

Skye quickly heaves Erika into the bus, which pulls away as she's still clambering inside.

Sofia and Braeden recover to see Greg swing the bus round in a wide arc, flooring the gas and SCREECHING down the access road and away.

Braeden huffs, about as irritated as someone who didn't get any Lottery numbers.

SOFIA

(strokes his arm)

Never mind, lover. There'll be a next time.

Sofia reaches up and turns his head towards her, and with a grin he leans down to KISS her, dropping their weapons as they hungrily embrace each other, and we CUT TO:

INT. CAMPUS MINIBUS - NIGHT

It's bedlam inside the bus as first aid supplies are frantically thrown around.

Anna CRIES OUT as Tsula tries to pad up the knife wound in her back, blood running down her back.

Erika reels, in great pain as Skye TEARS her shirt open and tries to staunch the blood from her own wound, the floor of the bus already wet with blood.

Greg shouts back to them as he races home as fast as he can but their urgent, raised voices are blurred and indistinct as we DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DEMON BAR - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Aiden sits with the two koichi demons in a store room of the bar, surrounded by empty crates and bottles.

DEMON #1

So... this thing you do...

AIDEN

It doesn't hurt.

DEMON #2

How long will it last?

AIDEN

For good.

The demons look like they can't believe their luck.

(CONTINUED)

DEMON #1

What's the catch?

AIDEN

There's no catch. I just... I have this gift, and I want to help.

DEMON #2

There's always a catch.

AIDEN

Guys, seriously! No catch.

He looks round, spots a knife inside a tray of cutlery and grabs it.

AIDEN (cont'd)

Watch.

He draws the knife across his palm, a line of BLOOD oozing out. He then holds his palm up to show the demons.

Before their eyes, the blood flows back into his hand, and the wound knits itself shut. In moments, it's like the cut was never even there.

The gobsmacked demons are stunned into silence. Aiden just grins, nodding towards Demon #1.

AIDEN (cont'd)

Now give me your hands.

Slowly, the demon reaches out until Aiden takes both his hands, closing his eyes and exhaling.

As Aiden's hands start to GLOW, the demon gasps, sitting upright as he feels energy wash over him, and we CUT TO:

A concerned Barbara and Fitzgerald barge into the infirmary, Barbara's hand going to her mouth when she sees Erika and Anna up on the beds.

BARBARA

Oh, God...

Her clothes soaked in blood, Skye steps over.

SKYE

They're gonna be alright. Don't worry. Erika took a worse hit, but Anna got lucky. The knife she took missed anything vital.

GREG

There's a Council facility in Portsmouth itself, we were able to get there before the girls lost too much blood.

FITZGERALD

What on earth happened?

GREG

It was an ambush. Not only did they know we were coming, they sent Braeden and his team to intercept us.

BARBARA

So this was just to lure them out? What about the supplies at the warehouse?

GREG

Gone. They must've moved them as soon as they knew we were on our way down.

SKYE

That's not all. Braeden had some kind of dagger, looked ordinary enough, but the second he pulled it... I dunno, it was like I just felt sick to my stomach and all I wanted to do was lie down, vomit and sleep. Not necessarily in that order.

FITZGERALD

Some kind of magical weapon?

SKYE

Can't say for sure. I'll go see if Frankie can help me figure out what the hell they were.

(beat)

But that's not all.

BARBARA

There's more?

Greg and Skye exchange a dark look.

SKYE

Sofia was there.

FITZGERALD

Is she alright?

SKYE

Oh, she's fine. She's on a whole new career path now.

(beat)

She was with Braeden.

Barbara can't quite believe it, and Fitzgerald looks thoroughly confused.

FITZGERALD

I'm sorry... 'with' Braeden?

TSULA

(steps in)

She means on his team. On his side.

FITZGERALD

How is that even possible?

SKYE

I don't know... but we have to get her back.

BARBARA

Excuse me?

SKYE

They've obviously done something to her, so we have to undo it! We -

FITZGERALD

Skye, if Sofia has really gone rogue... I'm afraid the Council policy is quite clear in this current climate.

SKYE

Meaning?

BARBARA

(grave)

Zero tolerance.

Skye looks between the two women, mouth open.

SKYE

Say what?

BARBARA

I don't like it any more than -

SKYE

(raging)

Screw you! Screw you both! She's one of us! We owe it to her to get her back!

(CONTINUED)

FITZGERALD

What if she doesn't want to come
back?

Skye doesn't have an answer for that. She turns and stomps away, returning to Erika's bedside. Fitzgerald looks to Barbara, who lays a hand on her arm - she understands.

Over with Anna, she looks across at Erika, who dozes under sedation as Skye stares at her, a million thoughts running through her head.

Debbie checks a few things on her chart, looking down on Anna with a smile.

DEBBIE

That was a close one. You were
lucky to get out of that in one
piece!

Anna knows luck had nothing to do with it - not where she was concerned.

ANNA

Yeah... luck.

She stares at the ceiling as we CUT TO:

It's even later as Aiden finally staggers back into his room on campus, shrugging off his coat as he flicks on the light.

He flops down onto his bed, looking like he's had a rough night on the tiles. He presses his hands to his stomach and WINCES.

Lifting his t-shirt, he reveals ugly RED MARKS - the same kind of puckering of the skin that the koichi demons had on their faces.

He gingerly presses the skin, but it seems like he's stuck with this for a while.

Exhausted, he flops back onto the bed, and in a moment he's asleep, the bedroom light still on as we CUT TO:

Alaric is on the phone, looking pleased with what he hears.

ALARIC

Excellent. And the operation's re-
established at the beta site? Good.
(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

36

ALARIC (cont'd)
You've got time to make up now if
the shipments are to stay on
schedule. Don't let me down.

He puts the phone down, still wearing his smug grin as he turns in his chair, looking out through the block of ice that forms his office 'window.'

37

INT. ARCTIC - DEPTHS OF THE HUB - NEXT

37

And we're out in the chambers beyond, looking back into his office as we PULL BACK, taking in the maze of walkways that criss-cross the cavern around us.

ANGLE DOWN and start to descend into the depths, the glowing lights within the walls growing dimmer as get deeper, the walkways becoming less frequent the further we go.

Come to rest on an outcrop thick with snow - and a hand-made TUNNEL has been dug out of it.

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INT. ARCTIC - DEPTHS - TUNNEL - NEXT

38

PUSH INTO the tunnel, following as it twists down and round, away from what little light is left from the cavern.

A faint glow of light comes from the walls, no more than a nightlight, as we come to a bundle of something up ahead.

There's a brief ripple in the glow and the tunnel lights up a notch - and the 'bundle' reveals itself.

It's ALITA. And DELANEY. Both girls are huddled up, sleeping like hibernating animals, their skin pale but still with a little colour.

And they're both BREATHING.

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW