

SLAYER ACADEMY

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&

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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. STREETS - DAY 1

A narrow alleyway, where it's SNOWING furiously, coating everything in a layer of white. A solitary figure, wrapped in a dark cloak and obscured from view makes their way down.

TITLE OVER: MOSCOW, RUSSIA - FEBRUARY 2004

As they reach a door, they turn around, checking around, revealing that this is ERIKA, our Russian Slayer.

However, her eyes are perfectly clear, not the cloudy hue we're used to - Erika can see!

As Erika opens the door to the building to the left of her, the coast being clear, she quickly shuts it behind her as we CUT TO:

2 INT. APARTMENT - NEXT 2

Erika opens the door to the apartment and shuts it behind her, before locking it with a series of BOLTS.

As she turns around, she deposits a bag of GROCERIES on the kitchen counter and starts to unpack them.

FEMALE (O.S.)
(in Russian)
<There is no need for that, honey.>

Erika turns to a woman in her early forties, with dark hair and a warm smile. This is JANICE NEMEROV, Erika's mother, the family resemblance being clear.

ERIKA
<It's fine, mother. It's only one bag.>

JANICE
<You do too much for us.>

ERIKA
<Well, it's my fault you can't leave, so...>

Janice gets up from her position in the comfortable armchair and goes over to Erika, helping her with the groceries.

JANICE
<It is not your fault. Destiny chose you for this, and it is a small sacrifice for you to bring good into the world.>

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA

<Right now, I'd sell my soul to the Devil himself for ten minutes where I don't have to check over my shoulder every few steps, in case someone is trying kill me.>

(beat)

<Where is she?>

JANICE

(rolls eyes)

<It's four in the afternoon.>

ERIKA

(nods)

<Ah. The daily worship.>

She looks across to:

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NEXT

The start of MTV's 'Total Request Live' blares into life. PULL BACK to see it's on a TV within a typical girl's bedroom.

As TRL starts, with Russian voice-overs, PULL BACK again to see a girl of about ten years old, with long, dark brown hair and eyes fixed on the screen, as she lays on her stomach.

This is MARIA NEMEROV, Erika's sister, and as Erika enters, the older girl rolls her eyes at her younger sister. She picks up a flower-shaped cushion, playfully throwing it at her.

Maria kicks it away with her leg without even looking and sends the cushion spinning towards a vase. Erika snatches it, catching it before it connects, before placing the vase on a chest of drawers.

ERIKA

(glares; in English)

No wonder we can't keep anything in one piece with you around.

MARIA

I'm born clumsy. Comes with being blonde.

ERIKA

(confused)

You're not bl -

MARIA

(interrupts)

Blonde at heart, not in hair.

(CONTINUED)

Erika CHUCKLES at this.

MARIA (cont'd)
(long beat)
I take it your hooded friends
haven't been following you around
again?

ERIKA
No, not since last week.

MARIA
Be careful. You can tell they're
bad news.

ERIKA
Comes with being a Slayer.

MARIA
(good naturedly)
Whatever happened to being just a
normal seventeen year old?

ERIKA
Fate.

MARIA
Is a bitch.

They GRIN at each other, and Erika's attention drifts towards
the TV screen for a moment...

... and an EXPLOSION shakes the entire apartment! The girls
whip round towards the sound, Maria rising from the bed.

MARIA (cont'd)
What was -

ERIKA
(urgent)
Stay here.

She's out of the room in a flash, but Maria quickly follows
and runs into:

Maria almost barges into Erika, who is rooted to the spot as
SMOKE fills the apartment.

The front door is in tatters, and through the smoking hole
step three BRINGERS!

Janice is stood between Erika and the door, eyes wide and
trembling with fear.

Erika quickly reaches out and grabs something - it's a STAFF, and something she clearly knows how to handle.

ERIKA
<Mother, get down!>

Erika charges forward, SHOVING her mother out of the way as she rushes the Bringers.

Janice tumbles into Maria's arms, the younger girl shaking as she watches her sister fly into action.

One of the Bringers flicks up a DAGGER and hurls it towards Erika, but one quick SWAT from her staff deflects it, sending the dagger into the wall with a THUNK - inches from Maria!

MARIA
<Come on, mom, get inside!>

Maria starts to drag Janice back into her room as Erika gets stuck into the three Bringers.

She SLAMS the staff into the gut of the nearest foe, snapping it up and CRACKING it up into his chin.

The second Bringer ducks past her and tries to prise his dagger from the wall, while the third draws a wickedly curved KNIFE of his own, turning towards Janice and Maria!

Janice SCREAMS as the Bringer advances, Maria still trying to haul her mother out of danger.

JANICE
<Erika!!>

Erika turns just in time to see the Bringer SWIPE his knife at Janice, Maria pulling her back just in time.

The Bringer turns and SWATS Maria out of the way for her trouble, sending her tumbling across the room.

Erika CRACKS her elbow into her Bringer's face, but then is GRAPPLED from behind by the second one, who now has his dagger back.

He PLUNGES it towards Erika's chest - but she kicks him off, and swings the dagger straight into his own gut! She TWISTS and then looks over his shoulder.

The Bringer with Janice SMACKS her in the face with his forearm - and then SINKS his dagger into her stomach!

ERIKA
(screams; in Russian)
<Mother!>

(CONTINUED)

The Bringer wrenches the dagger free and Janice collapses onto the floor, GASPING with shock as she clutches her belly.

Erika ROARS in anger and pulls the dagger free from her dead Bringer, facing off against the two remaining.

Maria, meanwhile, scrambles from the wreckage of the doorway and spots a smaller piece of wood nearby.

She dives for it and then launches herself at the Bringers, SMACKING the board across one's back as Erika neatly DROP KICKS the other!

The Bringer turns and with an almighty punch, he SNAPS the wood into two pieces, leaving Maria defenceless.

Erika spots Maria and then without a second's hesitation SHOVES the dagger into the Bringer's neck. She pushes, until the knife is up until the hilt, and then PULLS it free, sending a SPRAY OF BLOOD across her.

The final Bringer sizes them up, dagger in his hand, and Erika doesn't take her eyes off it.

ERIKA (cont'd)

Maria, go and help mother.

MARIA

But -

ERIKA

Now!

Maria scuttles over to Janice, who is still wheezing weakly, BLOOD staining her blouse.

ERIKA (cont'd)

(to Bringer)

Who sent you? How did you find us here? Who told you where to look?

MARIA

I don't think it can speak.

Suddenly, the Bringer clenches its free hand into a fist, the hand shaking with tension as it grips as tight as it can.

A LOW, drumlike HUM begins to sound from around the Bringer, and wisps of DARK GREEN ENERGY begin to form around its closed fist.

Erika takes a few steps back, getting between the Bringer and her family.

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA

Leave them out of this. Your fight
is with me, not them.

MARIA

Erika, no!

ERIKA

He's here because of me...

Maria stands, coming to Erika's side and trying to pull her back.

MARIA

The world needs you! Don't let -

The Bringer suddenly SNAPS its hand forward, its fist opening as a streak of GREEN ENERGY flies towards Erika!

SLOW MOTION:

The streak of energy heads towards the girls... until Erika grabs Maria by the collar of her tee shirt and THROWS her into the safety of the armchair.

Erika twists back to the Bringer, HURLING her knife towards it - but the energy catches her full in the face!

RESUME:

Erika SCREAMS in pain and her momentum keeps her moving until she SMASHES against a door:

BLACK OUT:

ON BLACK:

Shallow, panicked breathing, with muffled, indistinct sounds. The scene starts to LIGHTEN, with smudges of colour shifting before us.

DISSOLVE IN to reveal Erika, on the floor of the apartment. Her eyes are literally weeping blood, her skin burned from the impact of the spell.

ERIKA

Maria! Maria!

Her hands scramble desperately, trying to locate her sister and mother - and they fall upon the corpse of the final Bringer, the KNIFE embedded in his forehead.

Erika drags herself to her feet, hands out before her as she stumbles forward. She brings an entire cupboard of food down as she moves into the main part of the apartment.

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA (cont'd)
<Maria? Mother? Where are you?>

After a few more steps, she hits something solid. She reaches down, feeling with her hands.

It's Janice's body. She checks the pulse in hope...

Tears well in Erika's eyes as she closes her mother's eyes and silently whispers a prayer for her. Erika then twists round and screams:

ERIKA (cont'd)
Maria!!

PULL AWAY as the sound drops out, leaving Erika screaming silently for her sister before we DISSOLVE TO:

An older Erika now sits on her bed, looking both physically and mentally drained after the huge fight they've had on their hands. Erika breathes an audible sigh.

TITLE OVER: PRESENT DAY

The dorm room is otherwise empty. There's a soft KNOCK at the door and Erika looks over.

ERIKA
Come in.

The door opens and REIKO walks in, face tear-stained and eyes red and blotchy from crying.

ERIKA (cont'd)
How are you?

REIKO
Probably worse than Tsula. She's used to... friends dying and everything, but...

Erika stands up, following the sound of Reiko's voice before she envelops the girl in a hug. After a beat, they separate.

ERIKA
Although this will be of little comfort to you, I can say that you will get used to it. It is one of the unfortunate arrangements of being a Slayer.

REIKO
(sniffs; lighter)
Who'd be one, right?

ERIKA
(smiles)
Right.

REIKO
Anyway, I've got to...

ERIKA
(nods)
The memorial.

REIKO
Oh, a message came for you.

Reiko hands Erika a thick, manilla envelope.

ERIKA
Thank you.

Reiko leaves, looking only fractionally better than when she arrived.

Erika takes the envelope, opens it and unfolds the paper.

There appear to be no words on the paper. However, Erika turns the paper slightly and we see faint, Braille writing on the letter.

Erika reads the message with her hand and frowns. What does it mean? Then she goes to sit on her bed and takes a pen from her bedside table. She tears an unused piece of the paper and rests it against her knee.

She follows the first two words and writes down the letter 'T'.

Erika runs her fingers all over the messages, writing down letters and then crossing some of them out.

She looks worried now, knowing what she's written.

ANGLE: LETTER

The letters Erika has written down spell: 'THE CABAL ARE COMING FOR ME.'

Off Erika's fearful expression, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

6

INT. CAMPUS - INFIRMARY - DAY

6

Business as usual - the infirmary is filled with young SLAYERS, sporting a variety of injuries. An exhausted looking DEBBIE walks into frame, carrying a clipboard.

She checks it and walks over to one of the beds where NEELA (from 3x15) is lying, eyes closed. Debbie shakes the girl slightly, trying to wake her, to no avail. She checks the girl's pulse, shaking her head.

DEBBIE

Bollocks.

She puts the clipboard down, taking off the first sheet of paper and throwing it into a nearby bin. She places both hands over her face, then picks the clipboard up, regaining her composure, and pulls the sheet over the girl's body.

She sees the next sheet and closes her eyes, walking over to another bed currently occupied by AIDEN. He's looking a little under the weather, but nothing major.

AIDEN

She didn't make it, did she?

Debbie just nods, not ready to talk about it just yet. Aiden exhales, hanging his head in frustration.

AIDEN (cont'd)

I don't understand. I thought I'd done enough for her. Her Slayer healing should've -

DEBBIE

(over him)

Well, it didn't.

(beat, calms herself)

You did everything you could. She was just too far gone.

There's an awkward silence. Debbie searches for something to say, but nothing comes.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

Are you going to the memorial?

He falls silent. A flash of guilt and grief crosses his features but he quickly dispels it. Debbie recognises the expression, however.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

It wasn't your fault.

(CONTINUED)

He looks up, less with the self pity now, more towards the angry side of the spectrum.

AIDEN

(cold)

If he hadn't stopped me -

DEBBIE

It wasn't his fault either!

(beat)

If you try something like that again, it could kill you. He saved your life!

AIDEN

And Jennifer paid the price.

DEBBIE

She was already dead.

She stops, upset by her own harsh words. Not that he notices.

AIDEN

(ignoring)

You don't know that.

DEBBIE

(fumes)

You know what? Sod it! If you want to do this to yourself, be my guest!

He looks stunned as she walks away, before she turns to add:

DEBBIE (cont'd)

Just do me a favour and don't do it here. I need the bed.

Debbie turns and keeps walking, biting her lip to force herself not to take the sting back. Aiden keeps watching her as we CUT TO:

A small group of mourners, some Slayers, others staff, are gathered together - noticeably dressed in black.

BARBARA is saying a few inaudible words, while GREG looks down at the space the mourners are stood around.

PAN AROUND the group. Some slayers we know, others we don't. SKYE is a mixture of guilt and anger, ALITA unreadable, but ANNA is all guilt.

The staff stand together and Greg closes his eyes, unable to look at ground in front of him, or the people around him.

(CONTINUED)

CERYS doesn't even blink, hiding her emotions completely. FITZGERALD looks at the ground, then to Barbara, her anger all too obvious.

Barbara stops talking and a couple of the Slayers start to walk away, including Alita, Skye and Anna.

Aiden steps into frame, opposite Greg. The two share a brief look, but neither says anything and they soon leave the scene.

Barbara is left alone. She bows her head and backs away. PAN DOWN to see a small row of PLAQUES in the ground, each one naming a Slayer fallen in battle - Da-Xia, Melanie, Samia, Jennifer, and finally Juanita Davalos.

Barbara walks into the room, not saying a word. She takes a seat behind her desk and looks down at the vast amount of paperwork that seems to have accumulated. She sighs, putting her head in her hands before there's a KNOCK at the door.

BARBARA

Come in.

The door opens to reveal Erika on the other side, worry written all across her face.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Erika? What's wrong?

Erika doesn't answer, carefully taking a nearby seat.

BARBARA (cont'd)

What is it?

ERIKA

Miss Griffin, I need to leave.

Barbara straightens up in her chair, confused and concerned.

BARBARA

'Leave'?

ERIKA

Only on a temporary basis, I have...

(beat)

... business to deal with at home.

BARBARA

This 'business,' what is it, exactly?

ERIKA

I... would prefer not to say.

BARBARA

(stern)

Erika. After the hiding we just took, I'm not about to let one of my best Slayers travel across the globe without some sort of explanation.

Erika hesitates, then nods curtly.

ERIKA

Yes, Miss Griffin. It's my sister, Maria. She's in trouble.

BARBARA

(frowns)

Your sister? I thought she was...

She trails off - with recent events she's unable to use that word.

ERIKA

I... lied.

(beat)

I'm sorry, Miss Griffin, but when my family was killed, Maria was all that survived. When I came here I made sure that she was safe.

BARBARA

And you couldn't tell us? Erika, why didn't you think you could trust us with this?

Erika would be looking at her shoes right now if she could. She avoids Barb's gaze.

ERIKA

It wasn't...

(beat)

My sister was nearly killed because of who I am. I thought that if she was kept a secret, that if I didn't tell anyone about her, that would never happen again.

(beat)

I was wrong.

Barbara looks sympathetic at last.

BARBARA

Do you know what it is?

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA

(beat)

No. All I know is that she is in danger, and she needs me.

BARBARA

(concedes)

Fine. I'll organise transport with the Council, and I'll inform the rest of the squad -

ERIKA

(quickly)

No.

(beat)

No, I need to do this alone.

Barbara narrows her eyes, but Erika keeps her expression clear. Barbara finally nods.

BARBARA

Alright. If you're sure?

Erika smiles, a silent thank you. She stands to leave as Barbara watches her.

BARBARA (cont'd)

Take care.

Erika doesn't answer, just walking out of the room and leaving Barbara alone again.

Erika enters the dorm to see the rest of her team doing their thing. Skye is doing push ups, Anna lying on her bed, motionless, while Alita is in a meditative position. None of them pay any particular attention to Erika, who heads to her bed and grabs a pre-packed bag.

Skye stops doing push ups, pulling her legs in and crouching on the floor.

SKYE

You going somewhere?

ERIKA

No, I just wanted to see if I could pack a bag of clothes.

SKYE

(impressed; to others)

See that? Sarcasm. I've taught her well.

She smiles, but Erika looks eager to get out of there.

SKYE (cont'd)
Going anywhere nice?

ERIKA
I'm going home. Family business.

SKYE
Oh, okay.
(thinking)
Wait, I thought -

ERIKA
(quickly)
I'm sorry, I have to go.

With that she exits quicker than she came in, leaving a confused Skye in her wake as we CUT TO:

10 EXT. AIRPORT - EVENING

10

A plane touches down on an airport. The sun is setting in the distance, the light reflecting on the snow to either side of the runway.

11 EXT. MOSCOW - NIGHT

11

Erika walks alone, taking each step along a quiet road in the outskirts of the city as slowly as possible. She sniffs the air, listens to every sound, trying to find her way around.

TITLE OVER; MOSCOW, RUSSIA - EIGHT HOURS LATER

She hears a GRUNT somewhere off screen, coming to a sudden stop. Her breathing is slow, calm, but she's on red alert.

ERIKA
(subtitled, Russian)
<Who's there?>

GRUFF VOICED MAN
(subtitled, Russian)
<What are you doing out alone in
the dark, little girl?>

ERIKA
<Show yourself.>

Her breath mists before her. Hearing a CRUNCH somewhere to her left, she spins around.

The GRUFF VOICED MAN, dressed lightly despite the cold, steps out of the darkness towards Erika. He's grinning, licking his lips.

(CONTINUED)

GRUFF VOICED MAN

<It isn't safe for girls like you.
Not alone. Not here.>

ERIKA

<I can take care of myself.>

Her voice is confident, her features match it.

GRUFF VOICED MAN

<From those that walk in the light,
perhaps. But do you really think
you can fight those that prowl in
the dark?>

The man ZIPS round to face her side on, moving silently in the snow now. She smiles slightly, catching on, and decides to play along. She hunches down a little, acting like she's terrified.

ERIKA

(mock fear)

<The... the dark?>

The man licks his lips again, this time VAMPING OUT. She hears the noise, and back up a step.

ERIKA (cont'd)

<What... what's wrong with your
face?>

He grins again, baring his fangs.

GRUFF VOICED MAN

(proud)

<I, am a vampire!>

He CHARGES at her, GRABBING her by the neck and lifting her a few inches off the ground. She struggles, flailing her legs.

GRUFF VOICED MAN (cont'd)

<So, do you still think you can
take care of yourself?>

He stops mid-word, looking into her eyes - her milky, sightless eyes. He looks confused.

GRUFF VOICED MAN (cont'd)

<What?>

His eyes suddenly widen, and he drops Erika who lands neatly on the ground.

The vampire staggers back a step - a STAKE is lodged in his chest! The vamp opens its mouth, but DUSTS without another word.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

ERIKA
(in English)
I manage.

She continues on her way, leaving a pile of ash that used to be a vampire as we CUT TO:

12 INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

12

Erika is stood inside a cosy looking living room. It has all the comforts one could ask for, a large couch that is currently folded out into a bed, a television set, and a door sporting more than a dozen locks.

At the back of the room is a door which leads to the kitchen, and a small fridge is visible from here.

Erika turns round, looking towards someone off screen. Her eyes are now the pale shade we're used to.

ERIKA
(frustrated)
Are you even listening?

She SNATCHES the magazine from MARIA, alive and well, who looks up with fury in her eyes, wet with tears.

MARIA
(angry)
You're leaving me?

ERIKA
(sighs)
I have to. We've been over this.

Her sister sobs again. Erika leans in to hold her, but Maria pushes her away.

MARIA
They're gone, and now you're leaving me too!

Erika bows her head, feeling the pinch of guilt as Maria shuffles away from her.

ERIKA
I have to. The things that attacked us -

MARIA
You! The things that attacked you!
Mom and Dad didn't do anything!
Those men wanted you, and now our parents are dead and I'm all alone, all because of you!

(CONTINUED)

She breaks down completely. Erika goes to hold her sister, but this time she doesn't get pushed away.

MARIA (cont'd)
(sobbing)
I didn't mean... I'm sorry.
(sniffs)
I miss them...

Erika wipes away her sister's tears, a little clumsily, but Maria looks comforted at least.

ERIKA
Me too, *devotchka*. Me too.
(beat)
We can stay in touch. I will only ever be a few hours away. Whenever you need me, any time, you know how to contact me.

MARIA
(nods)
Use the code.

ERIKA
That's right. Anton and Yelena will be by to check on you twice a day, every day.

MARIA
And if I need you... you'll come back?

ERIKA
I'll come back.
(beat)
This is the safest way, Maria. If I'm away, they won't come here looking for me.

Maria squeezes Erika again, and she kisses her sister on the forehead as we FADE TO:

Back to the present day, and the very same safe house is in total darkness. All is quiet until a loud BANGING at the door starts.

Eventually it gives way, allowing a little light to enter, shortly followed by Erika.

ERIKA
Hello? Anton? Yelena?

She doesn't bother with the lights, head turning as she steps into the gloom. She manages a few feet before she TRIPS.

It's the television set, the screen long since broken, lying on the ground.

ERIKA (cont'd)

Maria?

Erika walks a few more steps until she reaches the couch, which is in bed form yet again.

ERIKA (cont'd)

Maria, please, if you're here, tell me!

She kneels, feeling the surface, and her fingers slip into a hole which is surrounded by a dark stain. BLOOD.

Erika lets out a quick GASP of horror, standing as her mind spins with all manner of terrible explanations.

ERIKA (cont'd)

(panic)

No... no... no...

She stumbles out of the room, holding her head. She pushes the door open fully as she leaves.

The added light reveals that the entire safehouse is ransacked, trashed. There was one hell of a fight in here.

Erika stumbles outside, still reeling as she sinks to her knees in the snow. She balls up her fists, trying to rein in her feelings, before turning and PUNCHING the wall!

She recoils, clutching her bruised knuckles - and stiffens when she realises a MAN stands nearby, watching her.

MALE VOICE

Hello, Erika.

Erika snaps round, locking in on the voice's location. A wave of emotion crashes over her as she recognises its owner.

ERIKA

You?

The man steps forward - unshaven but smartly dressed, with a crisp British accent and an air of good breeding. A WATCHER.

WATCHER

I take it you were looking for your sister?

ERIKA

Where is she, Charles? If you have
done anything -

MARIA (O.S.)

Erika?

Erika blinks as Maria suddenly races into view - she's a few
years older now, but that doesn't stop her throwing her arms
round Erika in a grateful embrace!

Erika is completely thrown, reaching a cautious hand down to
Maria as she looks towards CHARLES, and we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

15

EXT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

15

Maria is still clamped round Erika, who doesn't look like she quite believes this is happening.

After a beat, Erika gently pushes Maria back, reaching a hand down to trace her features.

ERIKA
(in Russian)
<Maria...>

MARIA
(also in Russian)
<Nice to see you too, sis. If you know what I mean.>

ERIKA
(shocked)
<I thought...>

MARIA
(smiles)
<You can't get rid of me that easily.>

Erika hugs her tightly, years hitting her all at once.

ERIKA
<You... you grew up.>

MARIA
(rolls eyes)
<Obviously.>
(looks up)
<You look about the same, though.>

Charles steps up to the two girls gingerly, not wanting to break the gentle moment between them.

CHARLES
(in English)
We should get inside. It's not safe out here.

ERIKA
(nods; reluctant)
Yes. Yes, of course.
(beat)
But where to?

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

Don't worry, Erika. Charles has
this all worked out.

Maria takes her by the hand and leads away, Charles casting a
few quick glances around before we CUT TO:

INT. SAFEHOUSE - LATER

PAN ACROSS a musty, dingy room, blessed with only the most
basic of necessities. Erika sips a mug of hot coffee.

Maria pads across the bare floorboards towards her, pulling
up a chair with a SCRAPE.

MARIA

I'm glad you came.

(beat)

We are glad you came.

ERIKA

(tense)

Maria, I don't know what's going on
here, but I want to know why you're
here with that...

MARIA

He's been looking after me, Erika!

ERIKA

(snaps)

After he led those Bringers to our
door?

(beat; softer)

How did you...

She trails off as Charles enters. Erika straightens, her body
language closing up.

ERIKA (cont'd)

I will talk to you later about it.

Go and get some sleep.

Maria glances over to Charles, who nods. Maria stands and
leaves the room, pausing for a last glance inside.

The tension is palpable as Charles walks over, pulls up a
chair and sits down opposite her.

CHARLES

(long beat)

I know there's nothing I can say to
even begin to apologise for what I
did to you. You and your family.

ERIKA

(dry)

You would be correct.

(beat)

Why?

CHARLES

(long pause)

I was foolish. I had only just graduated from the Council's College and... when I was assigned to you, I was overwhelmed. All of the training and research, all of those hours spent in the Library, all of those days with those bloody tests and... I didn't know it was going to be like this in the field.

ERIKA

So you betrayed me. Betrayed Maria. Betrayed my mother.

CHARLES

I... you were one of the best Slayers in Europe. And there was me, trying to deal with you. A rank amateur. And... one day, they found me. The Bringers. They subjected me to torture until I gave up your location.

(bows head)

I was scared. I didn't want to die, Erika. I told them everything they wanted because I was too much of a coward to say no.

(beat; imploring)

I never wanted this life for myself. My father was a Watcher, and his father before him...

ERIKA

And so you led them to us like lambs to the slaughter.

CHARLES

Erika, I -

ERIKA

(interrupts)

No. I never chose to be a Slayer. Don't you think I wanted an ordinary life, where all I had to worry about was boys, and television, and college?

(beat)

But I didn't get to lead that life.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

ERIKA (cont'd)
I had a calling. A destiny.
Something greater than I was. So I
accepted it and did everything I
could to be the best Slayer I
could.

CHARLES

(beat)
After they attacked, I realised
what I'd done. I went straight over
to your apartment, but it was too
late...

We CUT TO:

17 INT. APARTMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

17

Charles enters the desolate apartment, pulling up sharply as
he almost trips over the first dead Bringer.

He steps over him, seeing the next two dead Bringers - and
Erika's mother, laid out on the floor and covered by a sheet.

POLICE SIRENS wail in the distance, so Charles quickly makes
his exit.

CHARLES (V.O.)

I thought you were both dead, so I
went to ground, trying to work out
what I should do next. And then,
one day... I saw you.

18 EXT. MOSCOW - STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

18

Blowing on his hands, a haunted Charles leaves a grubby
liquor store, a plastic bag in one hand that CLINKS as he
travels.

He heads across the famous Red Square, before he catches a
glimpse of someone across the way and stops.

He stares hard, not sure what he saw - and catches another
glimpse of Erika, stealing round a corner and out of sight.

19 EXT. ALLEYWAY - NEXT (FLASHBACK)

19

Erika heads for a battered doorway cut into an old, condemned
building, checking both ways before she TAPS a sequence of
knocks against the door.

It opens and she steps inside - unaware that Charles has been
watching her from just round the corner. He sags against the
wall, sighing with relief.

CHARLES (V.O.)

When I saw that you were alive, I
knew Maria must be too.

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA (V.O.)
Why didn't you come and speak to
us? Explain what had happened?

CHARLES (V.O.)
Would you have listened? You'd have
beaten me to death on sight.

Charles slips away from the alley, and we DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The same place but a different time - Charles is holed up
across the street, his eyes on the safehouse door.

CHARLES (V.O.)
I spent the next few months keeping
a close eye on you both. From a
distance, of course. I was there
the day you finally left for the
Academy...

The safehouse door opens and Erika emerges, a heavy canvas
bag over one shoulder. She pauses to wipe TEARS away.

CHARLES (V.O.) (cont'd)
... and even though your two
friends came by twice a day, every
day, I was still always there. Just
in case.

ERIKA (V.O.)
So what happened? I found blood at
the safe house. Was it...

CHARLES (V.O.)
(sighs)
I'm afraid I was too late...

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Charles swings round the corner and approaches the alleyway,
well rehearsed by now - and freezes as he hears SHOUTS.

He hurries forward, seeing that the door is wide open, and he
can hear sounds of FIGHTING from inside!

INT. SAFE HOUSE - STAIRS - NEXT (FLASHBACK)

Wasting no time, Charles barrels up the rickety staircase,
closing in on the clamour on the next floor.

He rounds a corner - and sees the dead body of ANTON, a
middle aged Russian male, spread awkwardly across the floor.

22 CONTINUED:

22

Charles hears a SCREAM from the next room, and reaches into his coat to draw a HANDGUN as he heads inside:

23 INT. SAFE HOUSE - NEXT (FLASHBACK)

23

He sees YELENA, presumably Anton's wife, struggling with a DEMON as another KICKS down a door leading to a bedroom.

Yelena tries to fight back, but with a vicious SNAP the demon breaks her neck, letting her slump to the floor.

BLAM! A smoking hole opens up in its chest, and it sinks silently to its knees before keeling over, face first.

The second DEMON bursts from the bedroom, but Charles is ready - BANG! He hits it dead in its forehead, blasting the hooded figure off its feet.

24 INT. SAFE HOUSE - BEDROOM - NEXT (FLASHBACK)

24

Charles bursts into the next room - and sees the prone, but alive form of Maria as she slowly regains consciousness.

CHARLES (V.O.)

I found Maria, she was alive, but
your friends... I couldn't save
them.

Charles steps over and scoops the weak, limp form of Maria up in his arms. She doesn't try to resist.

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

I knew I couldn't leave her there,
so I took her away.

As Charles strides slowly out of the safe house, DISSOLVE TO:

25 INT. SAFE HOUSE - NIGHT

25

Charles is over by the single, boarded-up window, peering into the night.

CHARLES

I brought her here. Somewhere
secure, a place I could guard and
protect. I wanted to keep her safe
so that when you returned - if you
ever returned - then you'd be
reunited with her, and I could just
melt back into the shadows where I
belonged.

Erika is silent, digesting Charles' testimony.

ERIKA

Who sent me the coded message?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

(smiles)

The one with the spelling cipher?
That was my handiwork. I had to
make it sound like Maria had
written it, otherwise you wouldn't
have come.

ERIKA

Why did they come for her?

CHARLES

You mean, why wasn't it more
Bringers? I think you can work that
one out for yourself.

ERIKA

(beat; exhales)

The Cabal.

CHARLES

You know of them?

ERIKA

(dry)

You could say that. But that still
does not explain why they would
come back for Maria.

CHARLES

My thoughts exactly. When I checked
the bodies of the demon agents they
sent, I discovered one had some
sort of syringe device, so I
assumed they planned on taking some
kind of blood or tissue sample.

He heads for a cupboard, opening it and taking down a dented
metal case, which he opens as he continues:

CHARLES (cont'd)

There's an abandoned research
facility three miles north of here.
After the attack, I drove her up
there and laid a few rubles across
the hands of the right people to
get a sample of Maria's blood
analysed.

(beat)

Maria has a rare antibody within
her blood.

He takes out a thick wad of lab notes, using them as
reference as he carries on:

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA
(confused)
Her blood?

CHARLES
When you dived in front of the
spell that blinded you, it had a...
whiplash effect on her. It unlocked
a dormant gene within her
bloodstream. It's harmless, but one
of my contacts informed me that the
Cabal need the antibody to help
increase the amount of demons made.
(beat)
They suffered a heavy blow, with a
destruction of some facility a few
months ago. Something about a solo
Slayer suicide mission...

Erika smiles a fond smile at this.

CHARLES (cont'd)
... so right now, any help they can
get, willingly or unwillingly, is a
priority.

ERIKA
(beat)
They'll kill her, won't they?

CHARLES
Worse than that. They'll drain her
dry of every last drop so they can
harvest it and replicate its
effects, and then they'll kill her.

ERIKA
Have you told her?

CHARLES
(shakes head)
I didn't know how.

ERIKA
(nods)
Leave it to me.

Erika walks from the room as we DISSOLVE TO:

Despite the peeling wallpaper, bare floorboards and rising
damp, Maria has made this room her own. Posters cover the
cracks in the wall, scavenged furniture hides the floor and
plenty of trinkets from home have joined her here.

Maria looks up as Erika enters, smiling. She pops out her mp3 player headphones and sits up.

MARIA

Hey.

ERIKA

Hello.

MARIA

Has Charles told you everything?

Erika nods, and Maria seems satisfied.

MARIA (cont'd)

He's a good man, Erika. He made a terrible mistake, but he saved my life from those monsters.

ERIKA

That does not excuse what he did to us.

MARIA

No, but he's trying to make amends.

(beat)

There's another reason you came, isn't there?

ERIKA

Apart from discovering my sister is alive and well?

(sighs)

Maria, there are... people who may be coming after you again.

MARIA

You mean like the last time? When they killed Anton and Yelena?

ERIKA

(nods)

When... when Mother died, and that Bringer attacked us, he blinded me, as you know. But the spell... whipped around onto you. You have something in your blood that... that the bad people want.

MARIA

(nods towards other room)

Does he know?

ERIKA

Yes. But that does not mean trust him.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

Forgiveness is the greatest gift
there is. Better than vengeance.

ERIKA

(beat)

Have you been reading the Bible?

MARIA

Look, I don't -

She stops as Charles suddenly bursts inside:

CHARLES

We need to get out of here, right -

BOOM! Charles ducks as DEBRIS flies into the room behind him,
and as he spins round and charges back into the smoke, Erika
is quickly on her feet and back into:

INT. SAFE HOUSE - NEXT

Carnage! The windows have been SHATTERED by several gnarled,
fearsome looking DEMONS!

Erika immediately grabs her quarterstaff, WHACKING one demon
in the face. As she's swarmed by half a dozen demons, more
and more are added to the fray, surging inside the room!

TRACK OVER and see Charles, a sword in his hand as he swings
and BEHEADS one demon, before turning and SKEWERING another!

Maria edges out of the bedroom, eyes wide as she watches the
fight, before she starts to creep across the room, trying to
reach something - but she fails to notice a DEMON behind her,
it's axe ready to strike her!

THWACK! The Demon slumps dead, Charles's sword in its chest
and he nods at Maria as she manages to grab what she was
looking for - a SWORD, similar to the one buried in the chest
of the Demon.

Without a moment's hesitation, Maria ducks a blow and SLASHES
across the chest of the demon, before STABBING it with all
she's got, a spray of turquoise BLOOD spraying across her!

Erika is slashing and smacking with her staff. One demon
grabs it but she spins around with it, pirouetting and
sending the demon CLATTERING into a group of others.

She faces off against a huge demon, tapping the ground with
her staff to get her bearings. He's all muscles and teeth,
and the demon bares its fangs and ROARS down at her, a huge
SCIMITAR in one hand.

She stabs at him and he dodges, bringing his scimitar down on her arm. She wrenches her arm back, but the blade manages to slice across her arm.

She SCREAMS in pain and then SUCKER-PUNCHES the demon in the face. She manages to grab the handle of the scimitar and SLAM it into the chest of the demon.

Charles is tackling two demons at once, but as he pushes both into a large demon, another lashes out with a sword and SLICES across his side. He YELPS as he goes down and Maria spots him, racing over.

MARIA

Erika!

Erika SPINS and DUCKS simultaneously, causing two demons to behead each other!

MARIA (cont'd)

He's hurt! To your left!

Erika backs up - several demons are down but plenty are left, a wall of angry bodies ready to charge again.

One HOWLS to her left, and as she turns it SLAMS into the ground - and once again, Maria is the victor.

Erika reaches her, her hand finding the demon blood spattered across Maria's shirt - and then the sword in her hand!

ERIKA

What are you doing? Where did you learn this? Did he teach you?

MARIA

No.

(beat)

I learnt from you.

Erika crouches by Charles, who COUGHS as he tries to rise.

ERIKA

Can you move?

CHARLES

Not really... why are they waiting?

MARIA

I think they want us alive.

(turns to Erika)

Let's make it hard for them.

As Maria rushes ahead, a look of warm pride crosses Erika's face before she STABS another demon.

(CONTINUED)

With a collective GROWL, the remaining demons surge towards them, but the Nemerov sisters meet them halfway.

Charles KICKS upwards, sending another demon backwards. He clutches his wound with one hand and then props himself up, his sword CLASHING with another demon.

With demons on all sides, Erika nudges Maria back so she and Charles are between her and their opponents.

One demon makes its way through both of them, but a decisive STAB from Maria drops him. Charles and his former Russian Slayer are taking them out with precision, looking almost as the team they would have been.

The demons are getting cut down rapidly, and with a SMACK, the last demon drops to the floor with a WOUND in his CHEST, but is still BREATHING.

Erika stands above him and presses the edge of her quarterstaff against his throat.

ERIKA

Are there more of you?

DEMONS

(laughs; rasps)

You really...

ERIKA

(angrier)

I said, are there more of you?

The demon just laughs, descending into a spasm of coughs before Erika puts a BOOT across its jaw to silence it.

CHARLES

Does that mean yes?

ERIKA

Worse.

(beat)

That means Braeden is here.

Maria and Charles exchange a look - Erika's tone tells them all they need to know as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

28

EXT. AIRFIELD - NIGHT

28

A car skids into view, and Erika, her sister and Charles get out quickly. Charles points to the other side of the air strip, where a small private plane stands.

MARIA

That's it? That's the escape plan?

CHARLES

It's the fastest way to put enough distance between us and them. I've always had this worked out in case they ever found us again.

Erika frowns, picking up on the ambient sounds of the location.

ERIKA

Are we... at an airfield?

CHARLES

It's a small, private strip. Nobody comes out here. Come on! Over there!

ERIKA

I am going to need a little more than 'over there'!

Maria grabs her sister's hand and they begin to run towards the plane. Charles, who makes sure to check behind him every few metres, brings up the rear.

CHARLES

So, who's this 'Braeden' then?

ERIKA

He works for the Cabal, hunting down and killing Slayers.

CHARLES

The anti-Slayer?
(off look)
I've heard rumors. I just never thought they were anything more.

MARIA

Can we talk about this later?

The trio are closing down on the small plane quickly, with only a few metres to go...

(CONTINUED)

... but the plane suddenly EXPLODES! The blast rips its belly open, showering the group with hunks of flaming bodywork as they stumble to the ground.

Charles is the first to stand, hands on his head as he watches his carefully-planned escape go up in smoke.

CHARLES

But... but... how did they know?

He hyperventilates in rising panic as Erika checks on Maria.

ERIKA

Are you okay?

MARIA

(weakly)

I think so. Are you?

Erika nods, helping her to her feet. They join Charles, who looks utterly lost.

ERIKA

I am assuming we need a new plan?

CHARLES

I... I don't... we haven't...

VOICE (O.S.)

See, I'd have thought you Russians would appreciate a sudden burst of warmth like that.

Erika stiffens. She turns to face the speaker behind, pushing Maria back. Charles looks round to see:

DEXTER. He grins, the detonator for the device used on the plane in one hand.

Behind him, several CARS power across the airfield, closing in fast on the group.

DEXTER

You know, Charles Sweeney, if you're going to have a private aircraft on standby in case you ever need to make a quick getaway, it might be an idea in future to not have it registered using your real name. Makes it very easy for someone like me to find it.

ERIKA

(to Charles)

We have to go.

Erika and Charles back away, but Maria doesn't budge.

ERIKA (cont'd)

Maria?

MARIA

You can beat him in a fight. Why run away?

ERIKA

I don't have time to explain! When I say run, you -

BRAEDEN (O.S.)

(interrupts)

Stay exactly where you are.

Maria and Charles turn to see the new arrival - BRAEDEN, accompanied by CASSANDRA, walking over from the two now parked cars behind Dexter.

They join Dexter, weapons ready. Braeden's Scythe seems to give off an inky black aura. Erika tries not to let it get under her skin.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)

What, you're not going to look me in the eye and tell me how I'll never get away with it?

(snaps fingers)

Sorry, my mistake, love. Wasn't thinking.

ERIKA

Charles, take Maria and get as far away from here as you can.

MARIA

But -

ERIKA

Just do it! Go!

She PUSHES them back, and Charles doesn't hesitate to start running, half-dragging the protesting Maria.

CASSANDRA

Do you really think they'll get more than half a mile away before we catch them again?

ERIKA

That is why I am still here. To slow you down.

(CONTINUED)

BRAEDEN

(chuckles)

It's three against one! This won't even last as long as your friend did against us. What was her name?

DEXTER

Oh, the Spanish one? Uh... Jenny?

CASSANDRA

No, it was more like 'Jennifer.'

DEXTER

That's what I said! And anyway, didn't one of the demons get her?

BRAEDEN

It had a 't' in it, I'm sure.

DEXTER

(thinks)

Jentifer?

ERIKA

(roars)

Enough!

The Cabal trio fall silent, but their taunting has done its job of rattling Erika's cage. Cassandra looks over at the retreating Maria and Charles.

CASSANDRA

Not meaning to worry you, Braeden, but we should probably get -

BRAEDEN

Go. I've got this one.

DEXTER

(coughs)

I think you'll find I called that one.

CASSANDRA

(weary)

Oh, do shut up, Dexter.

BRAEDEN

Remember, we want the girl alive. Do what you want with him.

(beat)

In fact, bring him along. Make him watch her die when we're finished.

(CONTINUED)

Cassandra and Dexter rush forward, but as Erika tries to block them she's suddenly TACKLED to the floor as a fourth figure blurs into action!

Erika recovers, but too late to stop the two Cabal agents as they sprint past her!

ERIKA

No!

She scrambles to her feet, staff up just in time to block a CHOP from the new attacker - who also wields a SCYTHE.

It's SOFIA. She grins, keeping her Scythe pressed against Sofia's staff in a battle of Slayer strength.

SOFIA

Sorry about the sneak attack,
Erika. I'm sure you can find it in
your heart to forgive me.

WHAP! Erika snaps out with a KICK, right into Sofia's gut, that knocks her back off her feet.

ERIKA

You're forgiven.

The two slayers size each other up, circling around, both with weapons at the ready, prepared to strike at any moment. Braeden hangs back, ready to jump in.

Sofia moves first, swinging the blade of her scythe towards Erika's gut. She just misses as Erika steps back a split second before the weapon can make contact.

Taking advantage of Sofia's temporary lack of balance, Erika lunges forwards, catching her in the chin with the blunt end of her staff.

She follows this up by swinging the weapon low, sweeping Sofia's legs out from under her and sending her down.

A dazed Sofia hits the ground hard. She takes a moment to regain her composure then kicks into the air, catching the advancing Erika in the gut. She uses the same movement to get back to her feet, staring down her former friend.

SOFIA

Is it me, or is your heart just not
in this?

Erika curses in Russian.

SOFIA (cont'd)

(shocked)

Erika!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOFIA (cont'd)
Where did you learn a word like
that?
(beat)
I'm just guessing, though, because
I have no idea what you just said.

With a CRY Erika darts forward again, her staff barely visible as she rains down a series of lightning fast strikes from all angles against Sofia, who struggles to block them all.

Finally, one connects with Sofia's cheek and she stumbles to the side, spitting out a little blood.

ERIKA
Is my heart in it now?

BRAEDEN
Now we're getting somewhere!

Braeden lunges into the fight, swinging his scythe at Erika's neck. Erika ducks and catches her opponent dead in the chest with a STRIKE from her staff.

SOFIA
You've gotten better.

She attacks again, this time charging with the stake end of her weapon. Erika sidesteps and SWINGS low again with her staff.

Sofia is ready for it and jumps, landing on the staff with perfect balance and PUNCHING Erika square in the jaw before diving forwards, kicking her in the back of the head as she goes.

BRAEDEN
Aw, nice one, babe!

Erika staggers forwards, and takes a ONE-TWO from Braeden which knocks her back again. She barely recovers in time to miss a neck-height SLICE from his Scythe.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
This is gonna be a better fight
than the last one. I can tell.

Erika twists away to give herself some room, but now both Sofia and Braeden are facing her, and she's got no way to reach Maria in time!

ANGLE ON: MARIA & CHARLES

Still running, Charles and Maria are fast approaching the perimeter of the airfield - and the tall WIRE FENCE that surrounds it.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

We can't leave her! We have to go back!

CHARLES

There's no time! She wouldn't want you to get caught while she was buying us the time to escape!

Maria looks round desperately, seeing Erika struggling to hold off Sofia and Braeden.

Dexter and Cassandra are moments away, and Charles has to grab Maria's arm and pull her towards the fence.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Come on! You can get over before they catch us!

MARIA

What?!?

Charles gives her a BOOST, pushing her upwards so Maria can grab hold of the fence.

Charles looks round - seconds to go before they cabal agents are on them!

CHARLES

Climb, damn it!

Maria flails, trying to pull herself up the fence.

DEXTER

Woah there!

Charles turns - as Dexter's FIST connects with his jaw, sending him sprawling.

Cassandra looks up to Maria, who GASPS and doubles her efforts.

CASSANDRA

You know, if this wasn't so pathetic I think it'd actually be quite touching.

She reaches for her belt, drawing a large TASER and stepping up to the fence.

She presses the device to the fence and hits the charge - and a SHOCK of electricity snakes up and hits Maria, BLASTING her straight off the fence!

(CONTINUED)

Cassandra jumps back to CATCH her as she falls - but the recovering Charles BARGES her to the floor, sending all three sprawling!

Dexter grabs Charles by the hair, painfully dragging him up and delivering a KICK to his shin.

DEXTER

I'm pretty sure I said 'woah.' That means...

POW! He socks Charles once again, leaving the Watcher spitting out a mouthful of blood.

DEXTER (cont'd)

... stop.

Maria writhes and tries to kick away from Cassandra, but her iron grip is too strong.

MARIA

Let go of me! Put me down!

CASSANDRA

Oh! Alright, then.

She starts to lower Maria - and then quickly SLAPS her before wrapping an arm tighter round the young girl's waist.

CASSANDRA (cont'd)

And that was baby's first lesson in 'why brats never get what they want.'

DEXTER

Hey, Cassie?

She turns to see Dexter has the stunned Charles at knifepoint.

DEXTER (cont'd)

What d'you reckon? Ear to ear? Columbian?

CASSANDRA

Bring him with us.

DEXTER

What? Why?

CASSANDRA

Because that's what Braeden said, you soft pillock.

Dexter grimaces, slipping his knife away before YANKING Charles' bloodied face up close.

(CONTINUED)

DEXTER

It's your lucky day.

(beat)

Okay, not really.

He pushes the Watcher away and quickly lunges forwards, planting his ELBOW into the older man's neck. Charles crumples to the ground, out for the count.

MARIA

No! Charles!

Maria sees him drop and tries to break free of Cassandra's grip, but without any luck.

CASSANDRA

That's getting very irritating now.

She tries again, just managing to get free. She rolls forwards, avoiding Cassandra as she tries to get her hands on her again.

She grabs Dexter's sword and waves it around wildly as the two Cabal agents approach her from opposite sides.

DEXTER

Please, don't do this, we'd hate for you to get hurt.

(beat)

Actually, that's a lie. Personally I wouldn't mind cutting you open just to see what comes out, but our boss was sort of specific about the 'not killing you' part of the plan.

While Maria is distracted by Dexter, Cassandra draws out a DAGGER. She flips it in her hand a couple of times, taking aim, and throws it at an unsuspecting Maria!

The knife barely misses her, but it catches her attention. She turns to Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

Would you believe I slipped?

Dexter circles behind Maria, grabs her arm and knocks the sword from it before getting her in a strangle hold. Unable to defend herself, Maria quickly passes out from the lack of oxygen.

As she slumps, Dexter holds on, supporting her before passing her limp form back to Cassandra.

DEXTER

Easy enough.

(CONTINUED)

He looks towards where Sofia, Braeden and Erika are fighting, their weapons are crossed as they try and push each other away.

DEXTER (cont'd)
Looks like someone isn't having
quite so much luck.

CLOSE ON: ERIKA, BRAEDEN AND SOFIA

Erika is duelling with Braeden, BLOCKING his attacks whilst also DUCKING to avoid Sofia's own strikes.

Erika is showing signs of fatigue now - her movements are slower and she's sporting several bloody cuts.

The fight has moved across the airstrip itself, with the trio now battling on the edge of a steep run-off embankment.

Erika manages to push Sofia away, and follows it up with a spinning back kick. Braeden catches it before it can make contact and pushes it away, sending Erika rolling to the floor.

BRAEDEN
If you girls don't mind, we're on a
tight schedule here, so if we could
just finish this one up and catch
our train...

He's cut off by a dark look from Sofia, and raises his hands in defense.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
Never mind me. Carry on.

They square off one more time. Sofia swings down with her scythe, then tries to swing back up. Erika blocks with her staff, keeping the blade down. If she lets go, she'll be sliced in half!

The two girls try with all of their might to outdo the other. They grit their teeth, pouring everything they've got into the struggle.

With all the effort she can muster, Sofia pulls her weapon towards her, and with it comes Erika's staff!

The staff clatters the floor and Sofia takes her brief advantage, SMACKING the flat edge of the scythe's blade into Erika's face.

SOFIA
Sorry Erika, but you're just not
good enough any more.

(CONTINUED)

Erika is spent, exhausted from fighting both of them, and as Sofia plants her heel against Erika's throat, the Russian Slayer stays pinned down.

ERIKA

You'll end up like Juanita if you stay, Sofia.

SOFIA

(rolls eyes)

Not this again... Look, what happened to Juanita was her own stupid fault. She shouldn't have taken him on by herself.

ERIKA

Careful, Sofia. People might start to think you still care.

Sofia blinks, suddenly uncertain, and Erika glances towards Braeden.

ERIKA (cont'd)

If he thinks he can no longer trust you, he'll kill you in a heartbeat. You know that.

SOFIA

(shakes head)

No, no. Not my Braeden. He wouldn't do anything -

ERIKA

Keep telling yourself that. Perhaps you can even start to believe it. Right before he slits your throat in your sleep.

Sofia's had enough, and raises her scythe high above her head, aiming the stake down at Erika, ready for the killing blow!

She brings it down, but Erika doesn't even move, accepting her fate...

Nothing. Sofia hesitates, just for a moment, but it's long enough. Erika grabs Sofia's boot and PUSHES it off of her.

She springs back to her feet and lands a perfectly timed spinning BACK KICK to Sofia's ribs. She reaches out and grabs the Scythe, pulling it free of Sofia's grasp as the corrupted slayer falls to the ground.

Triumphant, Erika stands over the fallen Sofia, the Scythe held at the ready, prepared to make the final blow if need be.

(CONTINUED)

ERIKA (cont'd)
We are done.

BRAEDEN (O.S.)
Actually...

She turns just in time to be sent flying by a vicious
UPPERCUT from Braeden.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
... now we are.

Erika sails backwards - and right over the edge of the
embankment! She hits the dirt hard, BOUNCING Down the slope
as she quickly rolls out of view.

Braeden steps up to the edge and looks down - but Erika's
gone. Wherever she's landed, it's too far away to reach.

Braeden heads for Sofia. He offers her a hand up but she
doesn't take it, getting up on her own. She brushes herself
down and grabs her Scythe from the ground.

SOFIA
I could have handled her.

BRAEDEN
Sure you could.

Dexter and Cassandra approach, the unconscious Maria and
Charles over their shoulders.

DEXTER
We done?

SOFIA
Yes. We're done.

She starts to walk away, pointedly not waiting for Braeden,
and with a last glance down into the darkness of the
embankment, he starts to follow as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

29 EXT. AIRFIELD - NIGHT

29

Starting up on the strip itself, we begin a slow PAN DOWN the side of the embankment, soon dropping past the range of the lights and into the gloom below.

And there's Erika, laid out like a discarded toy, covered in dirt and showing plenty of damage from her fight.

She COUGHS, her body jerking to life as she rolls onto her side, every movement sending fire through her veins.

She sits halfway up, hands finding the grassy slope as she tries to get her bearings.

ERIKA
Maria! Maria!

She manages to get to her feet, screaming:

ERIKA (cont'd)
MARIA!!

Nothing.

She sags, a wave of desperation hitting her despite her efforts to shake it. She clutches her head, overwhelmed.

And then she remembers something. She lifts her head, the fog lifting inside her mind.

ERIKA (cont'd)
Trains... catch our train...
trains!

She bursts to life, scrambling up the slope as fast as she can, hands clawing clods of earth away as she climbs.

30 EXT. ROAD - NEXT

30

Erika FALLS into view, landing on the right side of the airfield's fence - just not on her feet. Her splintered quarterstaff is in one hand.

She hauls herself up, half-staggering as she builds up speed again, her senses misfiring as she BUMPS into a garbage dumpster.

Gritting her teeth, she keeps moving, the distant WHISTLE of a departing train keeping her aiming in the right direction as we CUT TO:

31 INT. JEEP - NEXT

31

Cassandra is driving and Dex is beside her. PUSH BACK into the cab of the Jeep to see Maria and Charles, both tied up. Facing them are Sofia and Braeden.

BRAEDEN
(cheerful)
Don't worry, sweetheart. Soon all
of this'll be all over.

Maria SAYS something in Russian - clearly it's not friendly, by the way she SPITS it out.

BRAEDEN (cont'd)
(sighs; to Sofia)
Why do people assume I speak the
language?

MARIA
(in English; smirks)
Trust me. If you knew what I said
to you...

SMACK! Maria's head jerks as Braeden SLAPS her.

BRAEDEN
No one asked you to speak.

MARIA
No one asked to be alive.

This enrages Braeden, but it's only the intervention of Sofia that stops him from slapping her again.

SOFIA
She isn't worth it.

Sofia settles back down, but Maria's focus is on her now.

MARIA
My Watcher found a contact, when
you first came after us. He told me
what you are.
(beat)
How you betrayed your friends. How
you watched them get killed by your
boyfriend there, one by one...

SOFIA
(furious)
Shut your bloody mouth, you little
harpy!

(CONTINUED)

MARIA
(smirks)
The truth hurts, doesn't it?

SOFIA
No...

She leans forward and PUNCHES Maria, knocking her cold.

SOFIA (cont'd)
... that does.

She leans back to find Braeden staring at her.

SOFIA (cont'd)
What? She was worth it that time.

CASSANDRA (O.S.)
Braeden! We're at the rendezvous.

BRAEDEN
(exhales)
It's about damn time...

The Jeep comes to a stop as we CUT TO:

It's an abandoned train station, with old trains stood like rusty metal skeletons. It's also now SNOWING profusely, covering everyone in a blanket of SNOW as they step out from the Jeep. There are also several cars and motorbikes, clearly left behind, but in working order.

Charles and the woozy, recovering Maria stare defiantly into the faces of their kidnappers as a pair of CABAL GUARDS step over, and Braeden addresses them:

BRAEDEN
(off Charles & Maria)
Watch these two while we make sure
their carriage is ready.

CASSANDRA
(grins)
And if the little one gives you any
lip, just smack her about a bit.
It's strangely satisfying.

The Cabal agents board the train, heading into a carriage a little further down as the Guards keep their guns trained on the captives.

Maria is leaning against Charles for support - until she spots something moving in the thick, swirling snow behind the guards.

She closes her eyes, trying to act natural, before straightening and looking up at Charles.

MARIA

What's an eight-letter word for 'to catch unawares'?

Charles frowns, and the Guards exchange a brief, puzzled glance...

SHINK! A piece of METAL RAILING bursts from the chest of one guard, and as his comrade spins round, Erika bursts from the shadows, PUNCHES him and knocks him backwards!

Charles obligingly sticks a leg out and TRIPS him, the Guard hitting the floor so Erika can pounce down and SNAP his neck with a quick twist.

MARIA (cont'd)

Surprise!
(to Erika; beams)
I knew you'd come.

Erika manages a smile, although she's on the ragged edge of her endurance here.

ERIKA

Come... we do not have long...

DEXTER (O.S.)

Alright, we're ready, bring 'em on in here!

Erika lurches out of sight as Dexter emerges from within the train.

DEXTER (cont'd)

Come on, what's the...

He trails off at the sight of the dead guards.

CHARLES

It was her! Erika! If you move fast, you'll catch her!

MARIA

(shocked)
Charles!

Dexter leans back into the carriage and WHISTLES loudly, before jumping down to the platform and hurrying over.

As he passes Charles, however, the Watcher STAMPS on Dexter's foot, and Maria SMACKS her weight against him, knocking him off balance and sending him stumbling over the edge of the platform!

(CONTINUED)

MARIA (cont'd)
Good diversion.

CHARLES
You're welcome.

Erika reappears and tries to free them both, but the bonds round their wrists are too tight. They hear the other agents hurrying down the carriage - they're mere seconds away.

ERIKA
(hisses)
Go! Run! I'll be right behind you!

With that, Maria is off, heading towards one of the buildings of the ruined train station, her arms still tied behind her.

Charles follows, both figures vanishing into the thick snowfall as Braeden, Sofia and Cassandra emerge from the train.

BRAEDEN
(looks round)
What did you do with Dexter?

ERIKA
I believe he is lying down. The excitement wore him out.

Braeden moves towards her, but Sofia puts a hand on Braeden's chest, stopping him.

SOFIA
I'll get the brat.
(beat; off look)
And yes, I'll make sure there's enough blood left for their little scheme.

BRAEDEN
(smiles)
There's my good girl.

And with that, Sofia is off chasing Maria and Charles. Braeden and Cassandra advance on Erika, weapons drawn.

CASSANDRA
Correct me if I'm wrong, but if you're blind, shouldn't you have a little white stick or something? Maybe some dark glasses?

ERIKA
I never needed to see to know what you are.

CASSANDRA

This is just cruel. I feel like I should be putting some change in a little box every time I hit her.

Erika moves into a fighting position, weight balanced on the balls of her feet. And with a faint smile, she beckons for the agents to attack.

With that, they charge towards her and throw punches, Erika dodging and leaping them effortlessly. As she lands an UPPERCUT on Cassandra, sending the blonde woman flying backwards, we CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION - NEXT

Sofia strides into the abandoned, ruined station, darkness enveloping her. The moonlight casts silver shadows across the scene as Sofia treads softly across the floor.

There's a FLUTTER of movement and Sofia turns, spinning her Scythe - as Maria JUMPS toward her, trying to barge her over!

Sofia SLICES down on the prone girl, but Maria spins, holding out her tied arms - and the Scythe SPLITS the ropes!

Maria FLIPS up, though not as strong or elegant as her sister, and ducks a SWIPE from the Scythe.

She SWINGS her fist, throwing a lucky PUNCH that smacks into Sofia's jaw, sending the girl off-guard.

Sofia, angered, tries to GUT the girl, but she smartly side-steps, leaving the Scythe hanging in mid-air. Maria rears back and SMASHES her elbow into Sofia's face.

The Russian girl attempts to grab the Scythe, but Sofia does at the same time, leaving both girls trying to force the other off of the weapon.

Sofia THROWS all her weight into the throw, sending Maria flying backwards over an overturned vending machine. She reappears, looking pissed.

MARIA

My sister's going to beat you into another time zone for what you've done to us!

SOFIA

And this would be me not quaking in fear at that prospect.

As they circle each other, we CUT BACK TO:

34

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - NEXT

34

Erika ducks her head, avoiding a high kick from Braeden and at the same time, avoids a low kick from Cassandra behind her.

She FLIPS UP, spinning in the air and sending Braeden FLYING with a perfect ROUNDHOUSE KICK, snow spiralling off her.

She lands with a wobble, still running on empty, but as the snow falls ever thicker she smartly steps back - out of sight.

Braeden and Cassandra spin round, eyes darting to try and look through the blanket of snow.

BRAEDEN

Where is she? Where'd she go?

CASSANDRA

I can't see a thing either, can I?

Frustrated, Braeden SNARLS before yelling:

BRAEDEN

Come on out and fight us, you
sneaky bitch! Never mind all this -

Out of nowhere, Erika appears and promptly SPIN-KICKS him, sending him flying!

As Braeden hits the deck in a spray of snow, Cassandra whirls round and swipes at her, catching Erika's arm with a quick spurt of BLOOD.

Cassandra smirks as Erika fades back into the snow, flicking the blood from her blade.

CASSANDRA

Not so clever now, are we?

Cassandra's smirk soon fades as she realises she still can't see anything - and as Braeden rises beside her, the duo go back-to-back for their own protection.

Braeden squints, trying to listen for Erika's footsteps - and POW! He takes a swipe in the face from her staff.

He starts swinging wildly with his Scythe, but Erika can easily dodge the blows to land a FLYING KICK into his chest, knocking both agents down.

They struggle to get up, pushing off each other as Erika BLURS past, in her element now that sight is off the menu. The agents rise again as we CUT TO:

35

INT. TRAIN STATION - NEXT

35

Maria DUCKS a blow from the Scythe, which SLAMS horizontally through a COFFEE MACHINE, sending water and other liquids spilling out onto the floor.

Sofia advances towards the visibly scared girl, as she scrambles away from the Slayer.

SOFIA

You know, for someone related to Erika, I would have expected a hell of a lot more than just cowering in fear. You're embarrassing yourself.

MARIA

This isn't fear!

A hand CLAMPS down on Sofia's shoulder, and she's spun round to be confronted by:

CHARLES

And this isn't light.

WHAM! He SMASHES a hunk of stray metal across her face, and Sofia pirouettes to the floor, stunned.

She GROANS, stirring again as Charles hurries over to Maria, grabs her hand and hauls her away.

CHARLES (cont'd)

Come on, we can't stay here!

MARIA

But what about Erika?

CHARLES

She said she'd be behind us!

The duo quickly clatter away. PUSH IN on Sofia as her face scrunches up in pain - almost like she's having a nightmare.

SOFIA

(murmurs)

No... can't stop... don't... Skye..
I'm... I'm sorry...

The fever passes, and she slumps, unconscious at last.

36

EXT. TRAIN STATION - VEHICLE BAY - NEXT

36

Maria and Charles find themselves in a graveyard for old, decaying vehicles - until Charles spots a MOTORCYCLE in decent condition and hurries over.

(CONTINUED)

Maria stands anxiously nearby as he pops off the cover and starts fiddling with the ignition wires.

MARIA

What are you doing? Come on! We
don't have time for -

The bike starts with a ROAR, and Charles grins at her.

MARIA (cont'd)

(in Russian)

<Perfect.>

Charles climbs on and Maria hops on behind him, and as he executes a wide turn, kicking up a spray of dirt, he REVS the bike and heads for the exit as we CUT TO:

Erika FRONT-FLIPS and smacks Cassandra in the face, before DROP-KICKING Braeden and then SWEEPING her leg, tripping both of the dazed Slayers onto their back.

That's when she hears the GROWL of the motorbike, heading off as fast as her bruised body will carry her.

Charles and Maria wait astride the bike as Erika stumbles down from the platform.

MARIA

Erika!

Erika almost falls, dredging up her last few ounces of energy to haul herself towards the waiting bike.

A sudden volley of BULLETS chew up the ground between them forcing Erika to DIVE for cover!

Charles guns the engine and swings the bike round - as Maria sees the bloodied form of Dexter glaring down at them from the platform, MACHINE GUN in his hands!

DEXTER

Sucker punch me, you little
bitch?!?

He OPENS FIRE again, and this time Charles has to drive away to try and avoid the hail of gunfire:

But a bullet CLIPS his arm, and he pulls the bike down with a CRASH as he falls from the seat.

Maria rolls to a halt next to him, looking up to find a snarling Dexter aiming his gun at her...

And with a YELL, Erika TACKLES him, fists raining down blow after blow, sibling instinct kicking in as she batters him into unconsciousness.

Maria is trying to heave the heavy bike up as Erika staggers over, leaving a trail of BLOOD drips behind her.

ERIKA
(in Russian)
<Maria, don't you dare move that bike.>

MARIA
<What? How else are we going to get out of here?>

ERIKA
(angrier)
<Do not argue! It's too dangerous! We need to find something else.>

MARIA
<Like hell! I've got perfect eyesight, and I can ride this thing better than you!>

ERIKA
<I am your sister, and I'm in charge. Get off the bike!>

Erika drops to her knees by Charles, who pushes himself up as he clutches his bloody arm.

ERIKA (cont'd)
Can you move?

A beat - and then Charles shakes his head.

ERIKA (cont'd)
Charles?

CHARLES
No, Erika. I... I'm not coming with you.

ERIKA
Do not try to be a hero. I have taken far too much punishment to have the patience for it.

CHARLES
I'll be a dead weight on you. At least this way, you can get a head start.

MARIA

No! Charles, no! You can't!

She joins them, the motorbike now upright and puttering away on its kickstand.

CHARLES

Maria, please! This is your best chance to go! When they find me, I'll give them the wrong direction, slow them down further...

ERIKA

Charles, this is madness. They'll kill you.

CHARLES

I should have died when those freaks murdered your mother. I should have been there. With you.

Erika looks away. She knows he means this. Maria isn't giving up yet, however.

MARIA

Charles, don't be stupid. Come on. You're not badly hurt. You can still come with us!

He smiles, reaching a hand to touch her cheek - and then shakes his head again. Erika is up, trying to gently prise Maria away from him.

ERIKA

Come on, Maria.

MARIA

No... no! We can't leave him!

CHARLES

It's alright, Maria. It's alright.

Maria is SOBBING now, working herself into hysterics as Erika pulls her back towards the bike.

MARIA

No! Please! Erika, we can't! We can't!

Grim-faced, Erika climbs onto the bike, pulling Maria into the seat before her. Maria blinks, confused, and looks up.

ERIKA

(off bike)

You need to steer.

(CONTINUED)

Her breathing fast and ragged, Maria shoots a desperate look back to Charles, who nods solemnly to her.

With TEARS streaming down her cheeks, Maria GUNS the throttle, the bike speeding out of frame in moments.

Charles stays where he is, listening as the sound of the bike's engine fades away. He smiles - mission accomplished.

A noise behind him makes him turn - a furious Braeden stands at the edge of the platform, Scythe in his hand.

CLOSE on Charles as he keeps his smile up, at peace with himself at last as we DISSOLVE TO:

PUSH IN on a pair of seats that overlook the cabin windows, occupied by Erika and Maria. Maria moves towards the aisle, but Erika's hand stops her.

MARIA

What?

ERIKA

Where are you going?

MARIA

("duh!")

The bathroom.

ERIKA

(beat)

Oh. Sorry.

Maria sits back down, intertwining her fingers with her sister's.

MARIA

Don't worry. I'm not going anywhere. Not again.

ERIKA

(sighs)

But they are going to come after you. The Cabal has been suffering great losses, and any opportunities they have...

(beat; meaningful)

... they are not going to just forget about them.

MARIA

I know. But this Academy and you... they're the best protection I'm ever gonna get.

Erika NODS as Maria stands, but once again she pauses.

MARIA (cont'd)
Erika? Do you think... do you think
he suffered? When... when they
found him?

Erika offers a reassuring smile.

ERIKA
No. I think he gave his life to
save us, and any pain he may have
felt was tempered by the knowledge
that we were safe at last.

Maria turns and heads away, an air of sadness still around her, and Erika turns to look out across the bright lights of Russia far below.

ERIKA (cont'd)
(whispers)
Thank you...

PULL BACK as she continues to stare into the night, before we finally:

BLACK OUT

END OF SHOW