



MONSTER

ZERO

PRODUCTIONS

# RIFT

## "CHILD'S PLAY"

EPISODE NUMBER: 1.03

RELEASE DATE: 17/09/08

- TEASER -

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

A suburban street that'd put Wisteria Lane and Stepford to shame: every house picturesque, every garden perfectly cared for.

We PUSH IN on a window on a nearby house, a light shines from within.

The curtains have stars and planets on them against a dark blue backdrop. This is the FORD RESIDENCE.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD RESIDENCE - TOMMY'S ROOM

TOMMY FORD (5) is lying in his bed, tucked in tight while SUSIE, his mother, sings him a lullaby.

SUSIE

(singing)

*And watch your boat from Hushabye  
Mountain, sail far away from  
lullaby bay.*

She nearly whispers the last words as Tommy has drifted off into a sleep, smiling happily in his dreams.

Susie gently leans in and KISSES him on the forehead, then turns to leave. She can't help but stop and take one look back at her sleeping son.

There's so much love here, it's almost too good to be true.

Having stared at him long enough, she reaches for the light and switches it off before leaving, making sure the door closes without a sound.

We're almost in total darkness now, so we move to where there's a little light - the window. The moonlight shines even through the curtains.

Something is there. A shadow, watching, waiting.

CUT TO:

INT. FORD RESIDENCE - PARENT'S BEDROOM

Susie walks in, still smiling broadly as she YAWNS. Her husband, RICHARD, glances up from the book he's reading.

RICHARD

He get off okay?

SUSIE

As always. He's so cute when he's asleep.

RICHARD

He gets that from his mom.

She slips into bed and rolls over to kiss her husband softly.

Richard closes his book and places it on the bedside table. He then kisses Susie again, this time it lingers a little longer.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

I love you.

SUSIE

Love you too.

They both switch off their bedside lamps, and the room is dark, silent. For a moment at least.

**CRASH!**

They don't take a second before switching on their lights. Both of them are sat upright in bed, listening out for anything.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

What was that?

RICHARD

I don't know.

Something hits him and he suddenly looks terrified.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Oh God. Tommy.

He springs out of bed, running out of the room without informing his wife, not that she needs any more information. The very mention of her son's name has her up just a second behind her husband.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The two parents sprint into the room, virtually breaking the door off of its hinges as they do so.

REVERSE ANGLE

Tommy is sat bolt upright in bed, completely still. We CLOSE UP on him, his eyes are fixed on one spot, he's not even blinking.

ON SCENE

RICHARD  
Where is it?

SUSIE  
Where's what?

Right on cue, a FIGURE, clearly the owner of the silhouette we saw earlier, standing BEHIND Susie and Richard!

Their only warning is Tommy as he quickly looks at them, his eyes wide with fear. He opens his mouth to scream, but there's nothing.

The Figure looks as though it's about to strike, but Susie and Richard seem to take the hint from Tommy and turn around, seeing it for themselves.

We get a good look at it, or rather, her, for ourselves now. It's a woman, crooked and ancient, dressed in a long dark cloak. Old fashioned as it may be, she's a stereotypical WITCH!

RICHARD  
(to Susie)  
Stay back.  
(to Witch, stern)  
Get out.

The Witch takes a step forward, Susie and Richard hold their ground.

RICHARD (CONT'D)  
Susie, get him out of here.

His wife isn't listening. She's staring at the Witch, clearly afraid, and yet, like her husband, not entirely surprised.

The Witch raises her hand, and a soft blue GLOW comes from the end of her fingernails (think ET, but creepier). The glow is released in a beam of LIGHT heading towards Richard and Susie but:

	SUSIE	RICHARD
<i>Haltem!</i>		<i>Excudo!</i>

With those two words, the Witch's spell is stopped in its tracks, and the witch herself is sent SOARING across the landing, SMASHING into a wall at the other end.

SUSIE  
What's happening?

RICHARD

I heard rumors... We have to get  
Tommy -

He's cut off mid sentence. He looks down at his chest as a pool of BLOOD starts to form there.

SUSIE

(shocked)  
Richard?

He COUGHS blood and collapses. He's dead.

Susie WHIPS around and sees the witch standing there as if nothing happened to her. She killed Richard.

Fury takes over Susie, her eyes turn RED and an unearthly WIND starts to blow around the room, sending things flying around.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

I cast you into oblivion, the  
deepest depths of hell from which  
you will never return.

She SCREAMS, the sound forming a WAVE in the air through which her spell is carried. It hits the Witch head on, but she doesn't move.

The wind dies down, Susie is completely drained. She PANTS, falling to her knees. She takes a look at her unmoving son, her dead husband. She knows she's beaten.

She raises her chin, stiff upper lip and all that, not giving the Witch any satisfaction. Not that it matters. The Witch raises her hand and we CUT AWAY:

To the wall as blood SPLATTERS up it. We slowly PAN AROUND to see Susie lying on the ground, her throat cut and her eyes vacant.

We move to Tommy's bed. It's empty. Finally we move to his broken and we:

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - NIGHT

A far cry from the peaceful and picturesque suburbs we just left, these streets are loud and foreboding.

Oh yes, and there's a fight going on nearby as ALEX BUTLER sails into view SLAMMING into a wall with a GROAN.

ALEX

Alright, maybe not.

He gets to his feet and CHARGES in, his shortsword raised, ready to attack his unseen assailant.

PAN AROUND to reveal he's joined by MARIA SUTHERLAND and GWEN RAIDEN, also getting their arses handed to them by a particularly nasty looked ARMORED DEMON.

Covered head to toe in a thick shell, it's a wonder this thing can move at all, but move it does, and it's fast too.

Gwen focuses on her hand, a ball of electricity forming quickly, she throws it at the demon and it hits it dead in the chest. The demon stops dead.

GWEN

Yes!

**ROAR!**

GWEN (CONT'D)

(gulp)

Or no.

The roar came from deep within the demon's shell. Gwen barely dodges out of the way in time to avoid it as it races towards her.

It PLOUGHS into a wall, demolishing a fair chunk of it, then shakes it off and tries again, this time aiming for Maria, though she gracefully leaps over it.

ALEX

Great work. Now not only is thing impossible to kill, but it's pissed off as well.

His quip almost runs on too long as the demon goes for him too, this time ending up in a nearby alleyway.

There's not quite enough room for the demon to turn around, and as the great brute tries to in vain, quickly getting frustrated. It seems as though it's getting claustrophobic.

Alex, Gwen and Maria advance on it, Maria and Alex with their weapons held high, and Gwen with her gloves quite literally off.

The demon has managed to turn around, but it is quickly running out of room to back away into.

MARIA

This isn't exactly fair.

Alex stops advancing for a moment, casting a bewildered look her way.

MARIA (CONT'D)

What? I'm just saying.

Gwen and Alex roll their eyes, and continue to advance on the demon. There's a turn up ahead, no way out now. Then the demon seems to change almost immediately.

It HUFFS, like the noise a rhino makes right before it's about to charge. Alex is the first to figure it out.

ALEX

Oh.

(beat)

Bollocks.

The demon charges full speed, its trap working perfectly, it can get to them before they can escape. Not that they don't try of course.

Each does their best to get out of the way as quickly as possible, with Maria racing ahead of the pack, and Alex trailing at the rear.

The demon stops quite suddenly, letting out a small WHIMPER as it COLLAPSES to the floor, an AXE embedded in its lower back, a previously unnoticed and unguarded area along its spine.

The gang stop running, a collective "PHEW" across all of their faces.

They approach the demon, making sure to be quiet, just in case its still alive. Gwen KICKS it, nothing.

GWEN

Well, it's dead. Or sleepy.  
Either way I'm calling this a  
win.

MARIA

Who did this?

Alex is just staring at the small unguarded section of the creature's back where the axe now resides.

ALEX

(missing the point)  
How did we miss that?

MAN (O.S.)

If I had to hazard a guess I'd  
say you were too busy attacking  
head on. Plus, it helps knowing  
where to look.

The group look around for the source of the voice, when someone steps out of the shadows.

He's mid forties with receding hair. He has eyes that could look right through you, and give nothing away as to whether he's friendly or not. This is BENJAMIN CRANE.

Maria recognises him, to say she looks stunned would be an understatement.

BEN  
Hello Maria.

ALEX  
(to Maria)  
Who is this?

She takes a moment to compose herself, not quite believing that he's standing there.

MARIA  
This is Ben. He's my watcher.

Off of everyone, including Maria's surprise, we:

BLACK OUT.

- END OF TEASER -

**STARRING**

MAX PERLICH  
ELISHA CUTHBERT  
JOHN SIMM  
ALEXA DAVALOS

**WITH**

JOSH HOLLOWAY  
JAMES NESBITT

**AND**

JEREMY IRONS AS AMARRA

**GUEST STARRING**

SAVERIO GUERRA AS WILLY  
KRISTEN BELL AS TESS  
RUTINA WESLEY AS KERRI

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(C) MUTANT ENEMY, INC. AND FOX**

- ACT ONE -

FADE IN:

EXT. LONDON - DAY - FLASHBACK

A normal day in London; cars unmoving, BEEPING at each other as the early morning traffic jam reaches the climax of its first hour, signaled by the half hour chiming of Big Ben.

People are walk around, going about their business, smartly dressed men seemingly talking to themselves, their hands-free earpieces invisible.

Frantic mothers searching through their handbags while absent mindedly pushing a pram, not looking to see who they bump into on the way.

We PAN AROUND to see a large building, unnoticed by the public, they walk on by, never acknowledging it being there.

No one except for one girl approaches the ancient wooden door, opening it and stepping through into:

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

We're in a massive open space, just beyond the cobbled ground there is a large grass area, big enough for a sports field, with more than a hundred students of all ages around.

Many are girls dressed in an all manner of clothing, obviously they're of different nationalities. These are the slayers.

The men are, on average, a little older, and all wear suits. Meet the watchers in training.

- "THE ACADEMY" -

- 2005 -

At the center of the field is a large bronze STATUE of a stern looking man in his fifties, beneath it a plaque which reads:

"These are the times that define us" - Quentin Travers

The girls chatter is interrupted by a loud bell RINGING. Without a fuss, they get up, brushing themselves down and heading off into the buildings which surround us.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

A class of twenty girls, all in their mid teens are chatting loudly to each other, laughing, turning round.

In one corner of the room, sat all by herself, is a beautiful blonde slayer who nobody seems to have any interest in talking to.

The girls stop playing around as the door opens at the front of the class, and every girl in the room does her best to look innocent.

Ben, looking a little younger than that he does now, mostly due to slightly darker hair and less baggage under his eyes.

BEN  
(cheery)  
Good morning girls.

SLAYERS  
(chorus, unenthusiastic)  
Good morning sir.

BEN  
(laughs)  
I see you have already met the stricter members of staff around here, no need for that in here.

The girls all seem to loosen up, the tension lifted a little. Ben walks over to the blackboard picking up a piece of chalk and writing "Mr. Crane" on the board, before crossing it out and writing "Ben" underneath.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Twenty first century and we're using chalk, brilliant.  
(moving on)  
Anyway, you can all call me Ben, I will be your teacher. For some of you, I'll be your watcher also, which I'm sure you're looking forward too.

Nobody reacts, their indifference is almost painful to see and you can't help but feel sorry for him.

BEN (CONT'D)  
(coughs, moving on...)  
You girls are going to be out in the field, on your own, in just a few short years. You have to be ready, that's my job.

He turns back to the board, picking up a thick, worn book, opening it, and copying a passage from inside. The language is made up of strange intricate symbols and patters, but he writes as if he was fluent in the written language.

As he finishes the last symbol, he turns to the class, who look baffled at best.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Anyone have any idea what this  
 is?

Blank faces all over, total silence. The door opens once more, and a girl wearing sweatshirt walks in, her face disguised by the hood.

As she enters, the outcast blonde slayer in the corner looks up, paying close attention to the newcomer as she walks over and takes the seat right next to her.

HOODED SLAYER  
 Sorry I'm late I -

BEN  
 Yes, you.

The girl stops, not turning around.

HOODED SLAYER  
 Me what?

BEN  
 What does this mean?

The girl turns, her head bowed.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 And, take your hood down please,  
 it's summer and we're inside, I  
 think you're safe without it.

She does, and we see that its Maria! As she bites her lip with uncertainty, scanning the board we:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - NIGHT

We rejoin our heroes and the mysterious newcomer Ben, who hasn't taken his eyes off of Maria since she introduced him. Nobody talks for a moment.

GWEN  
 Your watcher? Like a stalker?

BEN  
 Not quite, no.

ALEX  
 Vampire slayers don't get to just  
 run around, or at least they  
 never used to. Each slayer gets a  
 watcher assigned to her.

BEN  
 (curious)  
 You seem to know a lot.

Alex extends his hand, Ben shakes it.

ALEX  
 Alex Butler.

Ben raises an eyebrow, there's a vague hint of recognition  
 there for a moment and then it's gone.

BEN  
 Ben Crane.

The two brits SQUEEZE each other's hands tightly, neither  
 of them wanting to be the first to let go, but it's  
 eventually Ben who gives up first.

GWEN  
 So, what brings you to LA?

BEN  
 I have business here, and there's  
 something I believe you may be  
 able to help me with.

ALEX  
 Oh?

An unearthly ROAR unsettles them as a MUSCULAR DEMON, grey,  
 armored, complete with sharp teeth and huge arms appears.

BEN  
 (raising bow)  
 Perhaps now isn't the best time?

Taking the bow that hangs over his shoulder, he places an  
 arrow into the weapon and FIRES, the arrow piercing the  
 demon's armor. No effect.

ALEX  
 Agreed.

They all back behind Gwen as she lunges forwards, placing  
 both hands on the demon's armor. The metal acts as a  
 conductor, spreading the deadly energy across its body.

The demon writhes in agony as it is slowly cooked by the  
 energy, its skin blackening until finally it COLLAPSES in a  
 smoking heap.

BEN  
Impressive.

GWEN  
(breathing heavily)  
Thanks.

Another ROAR not too far away signals the approach of another demon.

ALEX  
Think you've got another one in you?

GWEN  
Doubt it.

MARIA  
There's no way we can keep going.

We notice that the whole team is looking a little worse for wares. It's been a long night.

BEN  
I wasn't aware the demon problem in Los Angeles was quite this bad.

GWEN  
It's not. We've been attracting them ever since...

She trails off, opting not to tell him what's causing the demons to track them down.

GWEN (CONT'D)  
We're a little weaker than we'd like just now, demons seem to have taken notice.

BEN  
Then perhaps we should retreat. Is there somewhere?

Alex shoots Maria a look, can Ben be trusted? She thinks it over and nods.

MARIA  
Come on.

As another DEMON approaches from the shadows, the team retreat into the night.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

A group of three DEMON MONKS converse around an alter. They seem both excited and jittery at the same time.

DEMON MONK #1  
If this is the one...

DEMON MONK #2  
Then this will all be over.

DEMON MONK #3  
Assuming everything goes to plan.

DEMON MONK #1  
Nothing appears to have gone to plan so far, I wouldn't get too excited.

DEMON MONK #2  
Forgive me, but a little hope never harmed anyone.

He bows to the first demon, and this, accompanied by the slight golden hem on his robe seems to indicate he's the leader.

DEMON MONK #1  
Noted.  
(beat)  
I suppose worrying won't help us, it is time.

He takes out a knife, holding it before DM#2's neck, the other demon whimpering, quickly regretting his earlier comment.

Quick as a flash, the leader grabs DM#2's hand and slices it open, then does the same to DM#3, and finally, himself.

As their blood trickles down onto the alter it fills GROOVES. The blood runs through them until it forms a PENTAGRAM.

WHISPERS are heard all around, coming from everywhere and nowhere at once. Dark bolts rise up from the pentagram, scattering like lightning across the air until:

The Witch from the teaser appears in the room, her head bowed, a hood disguising her ancient, disfigured face.

Her breathes are raspy, laboured, and as she walks towards the alter she visibly struggles with every step. This isn't the incredibly powerful being we saw earlier.

She stops at the alter, the monks watching her with awe, and a little fear.

After staring down for a moment, she reaches into the alter revealing Tommy Ford, looking remarkably calm considering the situation.

Eyes wide, he stares up at the witch, waiting to see what she'll do as the monks take a step back.

The witch opens her mouth wide, and as she does a trail of white light escapes from it, snaking its way towards Tommy. As it touches him we:

CUT TO:

INT. WHISTLER'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT

The study is as we remember it, rich reds and a warming fire burning at one end as the team enter the room, Ben in tow.

BEN

Interesting place you have here.

GWEN

You have no idea.

They each take seats around the room, enjoying the chance to relax for a moment before going back to business.

BEN

So, the extra demon attention?

GWEN

We were brought together by someone, he's kinda like our leader.

ALEX

And now he's gone missing.

Ben goes to ask the obvious question.

MARIA

(cutting him off)

It's a long story, you don't need to know. We're looking out for him but in the meantime we're doing everything we can to help the city, can't be focussed on one little thread all the time.

ALEX

Especially when everything's a dead end.

MARIA

(ignoring him,  
insistent)

Why are you here Ben?

BEN  
Business.

Maria looks suspicious.

BEN (CONT'D)  
We've been getting rumors of  
children going missing in LA. We  
heard there were people here that  
could help.  
(smiles)  
Here you are.

ALEX  
Kidnappings aren't usually the  
sorts of things the council gets  
involved in, are they? Can't say  
it's what I usually do either if  
I'm honest.

Ben doesn't answer.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Besides, how did you know we'd be  
able to help? We don't advertise.

Ben merely smiles, amused by Alex's naivety.

BEN  
We know a lot more than you'd  
realise. As for the council's  
interest, that's none of your  
concern.

ALEX  
No.  
(stands)  
It isn't.

He starts to walk towards the door, putting his jacket on  
as he goes.

GWEN  
Where are you going?

ALEX  
Things to do, people to see.  
Problem?

He leaves before she gets a chance to answer. As the door  
closes, the sound of the BANG forces us to:

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BAR - LATER

An even louder BANG as Alex is thrown head first into a table, which splits in half upon impact. He GROANS, pushing himself up off the floor, slowly standing up.

He turns to face his opponent, a VAMPIRE, fully vamped out, bouncing from side to side. This boy has some energy in him alright.

The rest of the patrons, clearly without even a hint of demon blood in their veins, look horrified at the spectacle, and yet, they keep watching.

ALEX

Right, now I'm in a bad mood.

The vampire, unable to control his excitement, DIVES towards Alex. His mistake turns out to be fatal as he lands on top of the demon hunter, taking them both to the floor.

The vamp looks down, a shard of wood from the table is nestled in his chest thanks to Alex who's holding tightly, the sharp edge cutting into his palm.

The vamp looks somewhat disappointed before he dusts, covering Alex with his remains.

His fight won, Alex stands again, dusting himself down. He opens out a wallet that appears to have belonged to the vampire, and hands a few notes to the bartender as he leaves.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(dismissive)

For the table.

And with that, he discards his stake and walks out of the doors, leaving behind a dumbstruck crowd of patrons.

In the corner, a young woman, around mid twenties dressed in simple clothes, and holding an empty glass of water, stares after Alex. She's not stunned at all.

She waits a moment before finishing her water and then heads off after him.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Alex isn't too far away as the woman exits the bar. She sees him and follows, making sure to be as quiet as possible. Her skulking is actually quite impressive.

Up ahead, Alex turns towards an alleyway. His stalker picks up the pace, heading towards where he turned only for a hand to GRAB HER and pull her in!

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Alex grabs her by the collar and forces her up against the wall. He stares into her eyes and she suddenly looks very intimidated.

ALEX  
I'm not thick, I know when I'm  
being followed. What do you want?

Her fear gets the better of her and she freezes up. With a roll of his eyes, Alex lets go and his stalker gets her breath back.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Better?

Still a little shaken, she just nods her head.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Good. Now, your name is?

KERRI  
It's Kerri, and please don't hurt  
me.

Sensing the genuine fear in her voice, he tries his best at sounding kind, caring.

ALEX  
I won't, just be careful who you  
follow in these streets, lot of  
bad people out here.

She nods enthusiastically.

KERRI  
And the demons.

Beat. Okay, he wasn't quite expecting that.

ALEX  
Why are you following me?

KERRI  
I've been waiting, heard one of  
you went to that place every so  
often, thought I'd catch you  
eventually.

ALEX  
Okay, but why were you - Wait,  
one of who?

She looks side to side, all of a sudden not too sure if she's got the right person.

KERRI  
I'd heard rumors, people in the  
city, helping the helpless. Isn't  
that you?

Alex grits his teeth, he's not in the mood for this any  
more.

ALEX  
(frustrated)  
Did we put up a bloody billboard  
or something?

KERRI  
(cuts him off)  
It's my son.

His expression quickly changes into one of concern as she  
finally tells him what's going on.

KERRI (CONT'D)  
We've been hearing things.

ALEX  
There's something wrong with your  
son?

Beat. She scrunches up her face.

KERRI  
What? No! He's fine. Look, we've  
been hearing about children going  
missing. We've seen people  
outside the house, watching.  
We're worried.

Alex's concern drops completely, now he's really not in the  
mood.

ALEX  
Oh for crying out...  
(wound up)  
We're not the sodding...  
(calms)  
Look. This isn't what I... what  
we do. Call the police.

KERRI  
But...

He waves his hand dismissively, he's done, whether she  
likes it or not.

KERRI (CONT'D)  
What happens if...

ALEX  
(shouting back)  
Call the police!

He's gone. Defeated, she slumps against the wall, tears starting to trickle down her face.

INT. WHISTLER'S HOUSE - LATER

Ben, Maria and Gwen are still sat in their chairs. There's an uncomfortable silence which eventually, someone is going to have to break. With a HUFF, Gwen decides it's her.

GWEN  
Look, I have things to do, and I'm guessing you two have a lot to catch up on, so how about I leave you be?

Maria smiles, it's a little hollow, but in her haste to escape Gwen doesn't notice.

The second she does, both slayer and watcher are on their feet, staring each other down.

MARIA  
Why are you here Ben? Oh, and don't give me the crap about missing kids.

He chuckles, unfazed and unafraid by the fiery look in her eyes.

BEN  
I don't remember you being so aggressive.

MARIA  
What can I say, stabbing me in the back tends to get me a little tetchy.

BEN  
Stabbed you in the back?  
Interesting choice of words, considering.

Maria looks as if he's just knocked the wind out of her. Her rage takes over as she delivers an UPPERCUT to his chin and he sails across the room landing unceremoniously on the other side.

MARIA  
(firm)  
Get out.

Still on the floor, Ben rubs his chin. He SPITS out a little blood, the girl sure can hit.

BEN

Do you still get the headaches?

The rage vanishes from Maria's features and she turns away from him, and us, hiding her expression completely.

MARIA

No.

Curious, Ben stands, walking towards her.

BEN

How did you...

MARIA

It's not important. What is important is that you found me, how?

BEN

The council isn't quite what it was ten years ago Maria, but a lot's changed since you left. We can find people if we have to. They've been following you since Amsterdam, caught up with you here.

She bites her lip. This isn't good news to her, at all.

MARIA

They know where I am?

BEN

No. They pinpointed you here in Los Angeles, I said I'd take this the rest of the way. I'm supposed to check in when I find you.

MARIA

And then what? You take me back?

Slightly regretful, Ben nods. Maria looks away, things clearly getting worse and worse for her.

BEN

Those are my orders.

MARIA

(defiant)

I won't go.

BEN

You have to, there's really no  
choice in the matter.

MARIA

Then we're going to have a  
problem.

They both fall silent, acknowledging the difficult position they're both in. They avoid eye contact, they have nothing left to say to each other and don't want to prompt conversation.

From their silence, we:

CUT TO:

INT. KERRI'S HOUSE

To say the place was a little run down would be an understatement. The walls are damp and cracked, the floorboards exposed with large gaps where there are some missing.

The front door creaks open, and Kerri walks in, avoiding all the possible pitfalls in the floor like a pro.

She takes a look around, sighing at the state of her home, and partially because of her earlier failure.

After a moment taking it all in, she approaches the stairway, looking up at the next floor.

KERRI

(shouting)

Michael?

There's no response. She looks a little worried.

KERRI (CONT'D)

(concerned)

Michael?

Still nothing. Now looking very concerned indeed, she starts to walk up the steps, most of them protesting with a creak as she does.

KERRI (CONT'D)

Elliot? Where's daddy?

She looks around for any sign of life. There doesn't appear to be anything.

INT. KERRI'S HOUSE - FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

As she reaches the top floor she spots an open doorway with a shadow coming from it. She approaches with caution, looking inside and GASPS at what she sees.

INT. KERRI'S HOUSE - ELLIOT'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Her husband MICHAEL is propped up against a bloodied bed with a gaping wound across his chest. He's not moving and he looks worryingly pale.

To the side of him there appear to be scorch marks on the carpeted floor, and next to them a bloodied battle axe, a stark contrast to the bright blue walls and child's toys lying all around.

She races towards him and starts to shake him, trying to get him awake, with no luck. Panicking, she checks his pulse, but thankfully there is one.

A quick glance up to the nearby window confirms her fears, her child is gone!

Realising that she needs to take care of her husband first, she goes back to him, putting pressure on the wound before taking out her (quite old looking) cell phone.

As she dials, we PULL AWAY, moving towards the ceiling until we're looking down at the scene until finally we:

BLACK OUT.

- END OF ACT ONE

## - ACT TWO -

FADE IN:

INT. THE ACADEMY - GYM - FLASHBACK

We're back in 2005 and Maria, now dressed in full gym gear is holding a wooden katana, concentrating hard. She holds her sword high at a horizontal angle as if blocking.

She steps forward, DRIVING the blade forwards in a horizontal position before stepping back, swinging the blade low in an arc.

Before she can move into the next step, she becomes distracted by the sound of footsteps nearby.

She turns to see the outcast slayer from before steps up to Maria's mat. Maria rolls her eyes.

MARIA

Let me guess, you want to get some practice in so could I please move.

(shakes her head)

Not a chance.

OUTCAST SLAYER

Actually, I was going to join you.

Beat. Maria's surprised.

MARIA

Um. Okay?

The slayer grins.

OUTCAST SLAYER

Good.

She walks to where there's a selection of more wooden samurai swords, each with its own subtle unique feature. A moment of indecision later, she picks up one with a slightly longer blade, swinging around to test it out.

All the while, Maria watches this other girl, trying to sum her up.

OUTCAST SLAYER (CONT'D)

Let me guess, none of the others talk to you?

MARIA

You too huh?

The slayer steps onto the mat and BOWS, Maria follows suit, and they both fall into stance.

OUTCAST SLAYER

Bunch of prima donnas acting like they're the "chosen one". Half of them have never ever seen a vampire.

She moves in, striking high, but Maria blocks. She then steps forward, pushing her opponent's blade away, and uses the opportunity to swing for the neck.

The unnamed slayer ARCS her back, avoiding the sword by a hair's width, then pivots before standing back up. No sooner has she done so, Maria is on the attack again, swinging down with a heavy blow.

The blow misses as the outcast takes a step back and puts one foot on the blade, trapping it, whilst kicking Maria in the chest. She grins, smug, and although Maria's winded, she can't help but smile.

After a beat, they launch everything they have at each other, a mad frenzy of blows, each blocked or dodged with amazing speed and grace.

Finally, Maria strikes again, this one also blocked, but the force drives the two slayers together.

Less than a few centimeters apart, the two girls stare into each other's eyes. There's a feeling of immediate mutual respect as their eyes blaze with the full fury of their slayer powers.

OUTCAST SLAYER (CONT'D)

The name's Tess by the way.

MARIA

(smiles)

Maria.

They separate, twirling around until they face each other. Breathing heavily, both ready for the next attack, and as they charge in we:

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Tess' blade morphs into that of a DEMON SAMURAI as Maria puts her skills to good use, blocking the demon's blow.

Not too far away, Ben is watching her go, deep in thought, analysing every single move.

As she takes a step back to dodge a blow, he pipes up.

BEN

Don't let him gain the advantage.  
Push forward, don't fall back.

MARIA

(unappreciative)  
I'll keep that in mind.

She blocks an attack but the distraction of Ben is enough to allow the demon a quick jab to her face which knocks her off her feet.

Ben shakes his head, disappointed with her style, though we don't see him doing much to help...

Gwen, thankfully, steps into frame and manages to stun the demon with a minute blast of energy, giving her enough time to swing an axe down to the middle of its forehead.

With a sickening CRUNCH, the axe goes through and the demon collapses.

The group all relax, yet another demon dealt with, and no real casualties. That is, of course, if you ignore Alex, who's currently leaning against a tree clutching his head and looking rather woozy.

Gwen gives the man a hand up, giving him a light shock as he takes her hand to wake him up. He jumps back and gives her a scolding look, but all she can do is try not to smirk.

ALEX

That hurts you know?

GWEN

And yet, I don't care.

He goes to complain some more, but she hoists him up to his feet, this time without a zapping, and walks away.

GWEN (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Baby.

He mutters something under his breath, not that she cares, and follows behind, stopping to free his axe from the demon's skull. He yanks it away, demon brains and all, cringing.

ALEX

Well this'll take forever to clean.

KERRI (O.S.)

(shouting)

Hey!

He turns and sees her, letting out a long sigh as he prepares for her begging for help again.

ALEX

Look, love, I've had a long night  
and I don't need the aggro  
alright?

He's shocked as she full bawl SLAPS him round the face. He looks around to see that the others are watching, Gwen now biting her lip.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What the bloody hell's wrong with  
you?

KERRI

(fuming)

They took him. My son, something  
came to my house, attacked my  
husband and it took my son!

Guilt washes over Alex, maybe he shouldn't have shrugged her off after all.

KERRI (CONT'D)

My husband's barely alive and  
when he wakes up...

She SOBS.

MARIA

Alex?

Alex thinks, choosing his words as carefully as he can, even though he's well aware that he's never going to come off in a good light here.

ALEX

She followed me, told me about  
people hanging around her house.  
I didn't think...

GWEN

Hold on...

She steps forwards.

GWEN (CONT'D)

You knew the Watcher's Council  
were interested in missing kids  
and you didn't say anything?

He hangs his head in shame, knowing full well there's no way to defend himself.

She shakes her head in disgust, walking towards the sobbing Kerri, hugging her softly.

GWEN (CONT'D)  
Come on. We'll check out the  
house, see what we can do.  
(beat, comforting)  
We'll find your son.

Kerri appreciates the sentiment, though we're not sure if she actually believes it. She walks off with Gwen, with Maria and Ben close behind.

Alex goes to follow, but Maria turns around first.

MARIA  
(cold)  
Maybe you should stay out of this  
one?

He stops dead in his tracks, the usually warm and friendly Maria isn't someone he's about to mess with when she's like this.

Ben turns back, walking towards Alex as Maria watches, unsure of what to make of him.

The two Brits stare at each other for a beat before Ben whispers something in Alex's ear. The younger man looks a little confused, but he nods anyway, and Ben turns to leave, catching up with Maria.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
What was all that about?

BEN  
Just some friendly advice.

He doesn't look at Maria, so he doesn't see the look of distrust she's giving him.

While Alex watches them go, we:

FADE TO:

EXT. WILLY'S PLACE

Establishing shot.

INT. WILLY'S PLACE

The bar is more or less empty, a bad night for business if you're WILLY, but it's perfect for our heroes.

BEN  
Have you heard anything?

WILLY  
 (huh?)  
 You new?

Ben nods, he looks a little annoyed.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
 (to Gwen)  
 It's not easy you know, running  
 this place and ratting half my  
 clientele out to you, you know?  
 You keep bringing in new people  
 I'll lose the other half too.

Gwen and Maria look at each other, just to confirm that  
 neither of them actually care.

GWEN  
 So, you hear anything?

WILLY  
 Look, I really shouldn't.

Beat. Gwen reaches over the bar, grabs him by the head and  
 SLAMS him into the bar.

GWEN  
 So, you hear anything?

She raises her free hand, sparks flowing from her fingers  
 as a nearby light bulb BURSTS.

WILLY  
 (whimpers)  
 Okay, okay.

She lets up and he cracks his neck as he stands, rubbing it  
 tenderly.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
 There's been a whole lot of dark  
 magic circling, more than usual,  
 even for LA.

BEN  
 Where?

WILLY  
 Bad side of town.

They all blink, there's a good side to LA anymore? Sensing  
 their meaning, Willy pulls out a piece of paper and writes  
 an address out, handing it to Maria.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
 There.

Thankful, the trio walk towards the door, Gwen bringing up the rear.

WILLY (CONT'D)  
 (shouting after her)  
 Hey!  
 (she looks)  
 You weren't going to do it, were you?

She doesn't answer, he shrinks back until she leaves. As soon as she's gone, he picks up a glass and pours a stiff drink.

EXT. WILLY'S PLACE - SAME

Ben hangs back as Maria and Gwen laugh about Gwen's actions in the bar. He senses that he's not particularly wanted here, but he's not letting Maria out of his sight.

MARIA  
 You wouldn't have done it, right?

Gwen still doesn't answer the question, and both girls burst into laughter. We CU on Maria laughing, and make a smooth:

FADE TO:

INT. CLUB - FLASHBACK

Back in 2005 once more, Maria is laughing here as well, Tess too as she downs a brightly colored drink. Both girls appear to be completely sloshed.

Their friendship appears to have blossomed, as they're talking at a maddening speed, even though the ghastly club music makes it impossible to make out quite what they're saying.

A couple of young men (we'll call them OLLIE and MATT) approach, both dressed in their finest pulling outfits, and by the cocky swagger in their steps, they expect this meeting to go well.

Ollie is a cheeky chappy looking lad, clean shaven, blindingly white teeth and hair gelled up in small spikes.

Matt on the other hand has a little stubble, relying on the best rugged look he can manage at eighteen, which is a lot less impressive than he thinks.

Ollie steps up first, putting his hand on Maria's shoulder, squeezing gently to get her attention. She looks up from her drink, scrunching up her nose. She's not impressed.

OLLIE

Hi.

MARIA

(uninterested)

Hi.

She turns back to her drink, but ever persistent, Ollie pulls up a chair facing her.

OLLIE

My friend and I...

He nods to Matt, who pulls up a chair also, this one facing Tess, who's equally unimpressed by their obvious intentions.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

We were wondering if we could buy you a drink?

He flashes those pearly whites, hoping his boyish smile will get him the answer he's after.

MARIA

You know I would, but I think I'm okay.

He looks down at her glass, a small pool of clear green liquid sitting in the bottom.

OLLIE

Come on, one drink.

Matt reaches over and tries to put his hand on Tess' arm, but she quickly pulls back.

TESS

I don't think so.

MATT

One drink? Come on, we're only looking for a quiet sit down.

The girls raise their eyebrows, the music is still blaring.

TESS

So you come here?

She stands up, Maria following suit, and the girls turn to leave. Ollie reaches forward, grabbing Maria's arm in a last ditch attempt to stop her leaving. Big mistake.

On instinct, the blonde slayer turns around and SMACKS him right in the face with a powerful punch. He goes down hard, taking the girls' table with him.

People take notice, shocked. Matt turns to Tess, who shakes her head and floors him too. Maria looks shocked at her friend.

MARIA  
What did he do?

TESS  
(shrugs)  
He was annoying.

The girls laugh, but their fun is soon interrupted as the club's BOUNCERS; men with tough expressions, massive arms and very little in the way of hair, step forward.

Realising it's best to go quietly, the girls raise their arms in surrender and walk towards the exits, still snickering as the shocked clubbers stare at them.

CUT TO:

INT. ACADEMY - HALLS OF RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The girls sneak down the corridor as quietly as they can, though with the amount of alcohol in their systems, that's still pretty loud.

Tess stumbles into a wall, putting her hands out to stop herself, GIGGLING all the while. Maria tries to HUSH her, but it's too late.

BEN (O.S.)  
What do you think you're doing?

Busted. The girls look around to see Ben standing not too far away, and he's not happy.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Where've you been?

MARIA  
(defiant, drunk)  
Out.

She tries to stand up straight, hands on hips, but wobbles a little, detracting from the effect she's after.

BEN  
What the hell were you thinking?  
Sneaking out? This is hardly the  
time, with everything that's  
happening...  
(frustrated)  
Just get to bed.

TESS  
Hey, calm down, we were just -

BEN  
(cutting her off)  
I don't care what you were doing.  
You're both on warning.

With that, he turns away, and the girls smirk, biting their lips.

They make their way towards one of the dorm room doors and open it. Tess walks in first, JUMPING out of sight, hopefully landing somewhere soft.

Maria meanwhile hangs back. She's holding on to the door frame with one hand, clutching her head with the other. She looks in a bad state.

Tess appears from the dorm, putting her hand on her friend's shoulder.

TESS  
Someone had too much to drink.

MARIA  
(weakly)  
Maybe...

Her legs fold under her and she drops to the floor, out cold before she even hits.

Assuming it's the drink, Tess is slow to kneel down, half laughing as she SHAKES Maria in an unsuccessful attempt to wake her. She shakes harder, still nothing.

Beginning to panic, she shakes harder and harder but still Maria doesn't wake up.

TESS  
Help! Somebody?

She checks Maria's pulse, looking worried at the result and continues to shake her.

A number of SLAYERS emerge from their dorms, unhappy at being woken at such an ungodly hour, and see the panicking Tess while we:

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Back in the present, Alex steps up to look into one of the many hospital rooms through the window.

Inside lies Michael, Kerri's husband. He's hooked up to a number of machines, the only things keeping him alive right now.

The sight only feeds the guilt he's feeling right now, and it's about to get worse as Kerri approaches. Her eyes are red and her minimal makeup is a mess.

KERRI

What are you doing here?

Despite her harsh tone, Alex doesn't go on the defensive.

ALEX

I want to help you.

She looks briefly infuriated at him.

KERRI

A little late don't you think?

ALEX

Maybe. But... Look I want to help you find your son. I need to know what he looks like.

Kerri thinks for a minute, softening slightly as she's grateful for the offer of help.

KERRI

He has a birthmark on his neck, it looks like a shield, you know, the old ones?

He nods, then smiles reassuringly and leaves without a word. Kerri watches him walk down the corridor before turning to see her husband, fresh tears running down her face.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Alex steps out of the hospital, surveying his surroundings, there's very few people about here. One or two ambulances parked up and a few cars, but otherwise, nothing.

That is until someone steps out of the shadows under one of the walls. He's still shrouded in darkness, enough to make it impossible to make him out, but Alex knows who he is, as do we.

ALEX

Do you have it?

BLACK COAT MAN

You can't keep doing this Alex.

ALEX

Can and will. Do you have it?

The BLACK COAT MAN throws a BROWN ENVELOPE towards Alex, who catches it, but doesn't open it just yet.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Thanks.

The Black Coat Man doesn't disappear just yet, and Alex guesses why he's hanging around.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You can put it on my tab.

BLACK COAT MAN

You're going to have to pay up at some point, you know that, right?

ALEX

I'll get to it.

He walks off, opening the envelope as he goes. He looks inside and turns back to the hospital, but there's no sign of his "friend".

With a shake of his head, Alex heads off, reading the information from the envelope as he does.

CUT TO:

EXT. DERELICT BUILDING - LATER

This would be the previously mentioned "bad" part of town, and it's worthy of the title.

The building itself looks like it's barely standing, windows have been smashed, walls have been spruced up with graffiti courtesy of the local kids, and there's a burn out car sitting outside. Lovely neighborhood.

INT. DERELICT BUILDING - SAME

Ben, Maria and Gwen are snooping inside, the floor creaking with every step. There's holes in the walls with bits of cut off wire hanging out.

GWEN

You ever wonder why demons never live the high life? Why the crap holes?

BEN

You'd be surprised actually. There's a demon in Vegas, has his own show, luxury suite.

GWEN

Really?  
 (beat)  
 What's the show?

BEN

Singing, dancing. Quite good  
 actually.

MARIA

Guys?

They look around at her.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Is this the time?

She's really not herself, and while Gwen looks puzzled, Ben knows it's thanks to his presence.

They turn a corner and come to a door, just about the only one left standing.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Think this is the one?

GWEN

We've tried everywhere else, it  
 must be.

MARIA

Only one way to find out.

She opens it, and sure enough, on the other side is a staircase leading down into the basement. Just what they were looking for.

GWEN

After you.

Maria takes point, with Gwen following and Ben just behind her. They walk down the stairs in silence as to not alert anyone to their presence, until they reach another door at the bottom.

She opens it cautiously, peering around before seeing that there's nothing there, and opens it wide.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The basement is bare, and at the other side, a tunnel has been cut into the foundations, presumably leading to the demon monks' hideout.

GWEN

Think they're down there?

BEN

Probably, demons do seem to like their ominous tunnels and caverns.

ALEX (O.S.)

They've really got no originality.

The team turn to see Alex standing there, none of them exactly happy to see him.

MARIA

(cold)

What are you doing here?

ALEX

I'm here to help, if you'll let me?

There's a brief silence that seems to indicate they're not going to.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Look, I can help here, just let me make up for what I did.

Maria and Gwen take a moment to look at each other, what harm could it do? They nod.

GWEN

Just keep out of my way.

She turns and walks towards the tunnel, quickly disappearing down it. Maria follows close behind, leaving Ben and Alex behind.

BEN

Did you find anything out?

ALEX

The kid's got a birth mark on his neck. Surely we won't need it though, the parents can pick their kid up, it's not like they've never seen him.

BEN

I'm not so sure.

ALEX

What makes you say that?

He doesn't get an answer.

Wondering what Ben could mean, Alex walks towards the tunnel, looking at the smooth surface. It's round, perfectly round actually.

ALEX (CONT'D)

This wasn't cut out. Not conventionally anyway.

BEN

No, so what can cut through this much rock?

They both ponder as they continue to follow Maria and Gwen, while we:

FADE TO BLACK.

- END OF ACT TWO -

## - ACT THREE -

FADE IN:

INT. ACADEMY - MEDICAL WARD - FLASHBACK

Maria, now dressed in a modest hospital gown, is lying in one of the many beds in the Academy wing. As she stirs she clutches her head.

Groggy, but awake, Maria slowly sits up in bed clutching her head and GROANING.

One of the nurses approaches, a quick look at her badge tells us that this is NURSE LIVESLY, who looks sympathetic towards Maria.

NURSE LIVESLY

Awake at last.

Maria squints, not quite able to look up at the lights just get. She actually seems a little embarrassed and her cheeks flush slightly.

MARIA

Okay, hangovers? No fun.

The nurse looks a little bewildered at the statement, taking a look at Maria's chart just to be 100% certain. It confirms what she thinks.

NURSE LIVESLY

Miss Sutherland, is it?

Maria nods, shielding her eyes from the sunlight.

NURSE LIVESLY (CONT'D)

(relieved)

Good, the charts around here get mixed up from time to time. Miss Sutherland, you don't have a hangover.

Maria smiles sheepishly, daring to move her hand away, though the painful rays soon make her regret it.

MARIA

Too much to drink, passed out, headache, sensitivity to light and the cotton balls in my throat? Hangover.

The nurse doesn't look particularly pleased to be questioned by a patient, but just this once she lets it slide.

NURSE LIVESLY  
I'm afraid that's not possible  
Miss Sutherland.

MARIA  
(bemused)  
And why's that?

NURSE LIVESLY  
You were brought here Saturday  
night.  
(beat)  
Maria, it's Thursday morning.  
You've been out for nearly a  
week.

The bombshell well and truly dropped, Maria's jaw quickly follows it.

MARIA  
A week? No, you must have the  
wrong chart.

The nurse is starting to grow quite irate now, she really doesn't like being questioned. She opens her mouth, preparing to give Maria an earful, but someone interrupts.

TESS (O.S.)  
You finally getting your lazy ass  
out of bed?

Tess steps out from the doorway, she's more than pleased to see her friend awake, though by the dark lines under her eyes, she's not had much sleep herself.

MARIA  
It's true then?

Tess' smile falls. She nods. Wondering what the hell could have knocked her out for an entire week, Maria falls silent.

FADE TO:

INT. ACADEMY CORRIDOR - LATER

Now dressed in usual clothes, a simple white top and jeans combo, Maria walks down the corridor with Tess. They're both looking quite serious.

TESS  
I don't see it happening, not for  
a while at least, until he knows  
you're back on form.

MARIA

On form? When was I ever off my form?

TESS

(raises eyebrow)  
You were asleep for a week.  
Unless you're a bear, that's not exactly "on form".

Maria can't argue with that logic. Well, she won't win, but she'll try.

MARIA

I'm fine, really. Ben can't keep us off duty for long.

TESS

I hope you're right.

The girls come to a door marked "BRIEFING ROOM", they don't break pace at first but soon slow as they hear a heated conversation inside.

MARIA

What's going on?

TESS

I don't know.

They get closer to the slightly ajar door, allowing them to hear what's being said by what sounds like three WATCHERS inside. Two men, one woman, all with distinctly upper class English accents.

FEMALE WATCHER (O.S.)

The reports confirm it.

MALE WATCHER #1 (O.S.)

Damn the reports, they've been wrong before. Until we find a body -

MALE WATCHER #2 (O.S.)

Until? If the reports are accurate, and despite the occasional fault, they usually are, there isn't likely to be a body to find.

MALE WATCHER #1 (O.S.)

I don't care, I'm not giving up until -

FEMALE WATCHER (O.S.)  
 You don't have a choice. The  
 council is registering Miss  
 Lehane as K.I.A.

(beat)  
 We can continue this discussion  
 at another time, but right now  
 there are more important matters  
 to attend to.

The sound of footsteps approaching the door signal that the  
 watchers are about to leave. Hearing it, Maria and Tess  
 dive behind a corner, just avoiding being seen as the three  
 watchers leave the room, closing the door behind them.

Once the coast is clear, the girls step out of their hiding  
 spot and a stunned Tess turns to Maria.

TESS  
 You know who they were talking  
 about, right?

Maria looks blank, she's got no idea.

TESS (CONT'D)  
 Come on, I'll explain.

As they finish their journey down the corridor, Tess  
 prepares to explain the situation.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Lights from the city pour in through grates above, the group  
 have travelled a fair way by now as the basement of the  
 derelict building is no longer visible down the tunnel.

GWEN  
 How long does thing go on for? LA  
 is only so big.

BEN  
 Can't be much further.

They turn a corner, and sure enough, they're at the end,  
 the cavern we saw earlier now right ahead of us. Ben looks  
 surprised at his accuracy.

Alex moves up to the front to get a proper look around,  
 keeping an eye out for the demons.

ALEX  
 This is the place.

GWEN  
 And you're sure because...?

ALEX  
How many underground caverns can  
there be in LA?

Realising that he's probably tempting fate just by asking  
that question, he moves back into the tunnel.

The cavern itself is relatively bare, no sign of the witch,  
demons, or children. Only the burning torches and the altar  
remain.

GWEN  
Come on, we should...

She stops as the demon monks enter the room, their pace is  
a little hurried, and we soon see why as the witch follows  
closely behind them.

MARIA  
(re: witch)  
What is that?

Ben looks shocked, obviously knowing full well what he's  
looking at.

BEN  
That's impossible.

ALEX  
Care to enlighten us?

BEN  
They're called Lilitu, witches  
beyond evil. They're said to be  
consumed by magic, their bodies  
long since shut down it keeps  
them alive for ever. They don't  
exist.

GWEN  
I'm guessing they do.

The LILITU reveals something in her arms, a four year old  
child. More specifically, this is ELLIOT.

ALEX  
That's him.

GWEN  
Who?

ALEX  
Kerri's kid, I'm sure of it.

GWEN  
Maybe, but we can't afford to  
just go charging in.

Alex nods, then promptly emerges from the tunnel, much to the surprise of the demon monks, and the horror of the others.

ALEX  
Mind if I join?

Their cover well and truly blown, the rest of the team step out of the tunnel.

INT. CAVERN - CONTINUOUS

The demons look worried, they had hoped nobody would be able to find them.

DEMON MONK #1  
I told you to seal up all the entrances.

DEMON MONK #3  
(stuttering)  
I - you said - we needed ways out.

DEMON MONK #1  
Oh believe me, you are going to need more than a tunnel to get you out.

The demon GULPS, but his fate isn't yet decided.

DEMON MONK #1 (CONT'D)  
(to the witch)  
Finish this.

The Lilitu proceeds to do its thing, opening her mouth and allowing the light inside of her to emerge, snaking its way towards Elliot.

Alex is first to draw his weapon, a short sword strapped to his side. He moves to attack the witch but his blow is REFLECTED off of an invisible barrier! The witch has some way of protecting herself.

ALEX  
Oh, fantastic.

He turns to the demons as Gwen and Maria step up, Maria armed with dual knives, Gwen taking off her gloves.

MARIA  
If we can't stop her...

GWEN  
Maybe we can stop you.

The demons cower as Gwen proceeds to generate a wave of electricity from her hands, but it ARCS AROUND the demons, who are as surprised by it as our heroes.

DEMON MONK #2

What happened?

The monks turn to the Lilitu, she's protecting them too!

MARIA

Okay? Now what?

Alex tries again to hit the Lilitu, but his sword just keeps bouncing off of her barrier. The snaking light reaches Elliot, who opens his mouth to scream but no noise comes out.

ALEX

No!

The light envelops the child. As soon as it does, his form seems to change, moulding into something new.

It doesn't take long for the light to disperse, the changed form of Elliot now perfectly clear. He's an ADULT!

The whole team watch wide eyed for a moment, before Alex spots something out of the corner of his eye. The witch is slightly slumped, she's tired.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Worth a try!

He swings at the witch's neck, and sure enough her head is taken clean off, her barrier is gone!

As the body of the witch crashes down, seemingly disintegrating on the way down leaving only her robes and dust on the ground below, Alex and the team turn to the monks.

MARIA

(to the monks)

What did you do?

Elliot, now fully grown and dressed in tattered brown clothes presumably conjured as part of the witch's spell, is living proof of what they did, but she still needs to hear it.

The monks seem much less cocky now, they know full well that they're defenceless, and the only way out is through Alex, and more importantly, the pointy end of his sword.

DEMON MONK #1

We had to take him, turn him. Our other attempts failed. We couldn't fail.

BEN

Other attempts?

DEMON MONK #1

The process was flawed, the right individual was needed.

(re: Elliot)

It's him!

GWEN

What is he?

DEMON MONK #2

A warrior.

DEMON MONK #3

A mighty soldier, capable of so much good or evil, depending on the one controlling him.

GWEN

Which would be you.

The demons shake their heads.

ALEX

Then who?

DEMON MONK #1

We cannot say.

Alex pushes his blade into the demon's neck, more than enough to draw blood.

ALEX

Who?

The demon is too frightened to answer, despite the consequences he knows he'll have to face.

Gwen puts her hand on Alex's arm, he takes the hint and lowers the sword.

GWEN

Where are the others?

DEMON MONK #3

Others?

MARIA

The others you did this to.

The demons look at one another, the answer isn't going to be good.

DEMON MONK #1  
We informed the one who hired us  
that we possessed the one he  
needed.

BEN  
And what did he say?

DEMON MONK #1  
To release the others.

ALEX  
(surprised)  
Release? You just let them go?

A disturbing smile crosses the demon's face.

DEMON MONK #1  
Not let them go. More...  
(beat)  
Set them loose.

The group all figure out exactly what he means by that, and they quickly convene, never taking their eyes off of the demons.

GWEN  
We should find them. If they're  
right, these kids could do some  
damage.

BEN  
(re: demons)  
What about them?

Gwen thinks it over, turns to Alex.

GWEN  
Think you can get more  
information out of them?

Alex turns and looks at the demons, smiling. The demons retreat a little, guessing what's in stall.

ALEX  
I'm sure I'll manage.

GWEN  
Good. Ben, Maria, you're with me.

They both nod and run out of the room, leaving Alex to turn back to the demons, who try to back away but find themselves up against a wall.

ALEX

Now then...

He raises his sword, holding the blade just over the fires of the torch, the metal slowly heating up.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Who's first?

Alex's face betrays no emotion as he walks towards them, looking positively menacing. The demons look as if they're ready to scream.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

In the middle of a school playground, Maria and Tess are fighting off small gremlin-like demons as best they can.

Maria IMPALES one with her sword then swings the sword around, the body of the first demon knocking another off of its feet.

TESS

This is too easy.

Ben steps into frame BLASTING one of the demons with his shotgun, splattering it all across the ground. Not pretty, but it does the job.

Maria spins around on instinct, SLICING a demon that was about to dive on her, leaving it in two neat halves.

A demon is about to dive for Tess from behind, she doesn't notice, but Maria does. She's about to step forward when she CRIES OUT, dropping to one knee.

She clutches her head, agony hitting her in an instant without any warning.

The demon manages to attack Tess and it BITES DOWN on her back, going in deep. Ben sees it and SMACKS it away with his gun, then blasts it.

BEN

Tess, you alright?

TESS

Uh huh.

She's bleeding badly, all the bravado isn't going to work, she can't carry on and he knows it.

BEN

Come on, we need to go. Maria?

She's still on the ground and he has to physically pull her to her feet, dragging her and Tess in one hand, firing at the demons with the other.

As he valiantly tries to take on the demons solo, we:

CUT TO:

INT. ACADEMY - BEN'S OFFICE - LATER - FLASHBACK

A short while later, Ben is covered in battle wounds, nothing serious, but they look bad enough.

He's sat opposite a very sheepish looking Maria, who knows she's in trouble. Ben looks at her with disappointment and regret.

BEN

I'm taking you off patrol duty.

MARIA

What? No!

He's serious.

BEN

You're becoming a liability. The headaches, they're crippling you in the field.

MARIA

I'm fine.

Even she doesn't believe that, but she isn't about to just lay down and let him take her out of the field.

BEN

Until we know what's causing them-

MARIA

I'm fine. Honestly.

Ben isn't listening.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Look, I can do this, honestly. Don't take me off duty, I can handle it.

(beat)

If I become a problem, I'll take myself off, just.

She's virtually pleading with him, and something must get to him because he leans back in his chair, actually considering it.

After a long beat.

BEN

Fine. Don't make me regret it.

She jumps out of her chair, grinning from ear to ear.

MARIA

Thank you. So much.

She runs out of the room having gotten her way, leaving Ben wondering how the hell she just did that.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - NIGHT

Gwen and the others are making their way through the streets, searching everywhere for any signs of the transformed children.

MARIA

How do we even know where to look?

BEN

We don't, but until Alex gets the information we need we may as well keep looking.

As if on cue, Alex sprints up to the gang, out of breath, and they stop for him.

GWEN

You get anything?

ALEX

Just a bit.

He takes a moment to get his breath back, the others standing around impatiently.

ALEX (CONT'D)

(finally)

They're vessels.

A collective look of "huh" goes around the group, but Alex quickly elaborates.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Some demon, it wanted a new body, something strong. It didn't work, the experiments didn't work, but Elliot...

(beat)

Elliot's the one. They were going to put the demon into his body once they were done.

He stops talking for a moment, allowing the group to absorb all the information.

GWEN

How did they know how to go for him?

(off looks)

Hundreds of kids in LA, they get it on what, the sixth try?

ALEX

Fifth.

BEN

Even so, she's got a point. Did they say how they chose the children?

Alex prepares to explain, and to help demonstrate, we:

FADE TO:

INT. KERRI'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Kerri's son Elliot lies peacefully in bed, fast asleep, dreaming of whatever it is four year old boys dream of. It doesn't last long.

His window is suddenly SMASHED open and he shoots up in bed just in time to see the witch, her form somehow weaving through the small gap. As soon as she's in the room, she approaches the bed.

Elliot looks terrified, but he's somehow unable to do anything. It's as if he's hypnotised. She reaches for him, her long, boney fingers stretching out beyond her robes.

**CRASH!**

The door is burst open as the boy's father storms into the room, diverting the witch's attention immediately.

He's holding an axe, its hilt embedded with odd looking jewels, but we don't get long to admire it as he swings for the witch.

She dodges, and counters with a blast of bright green light from her hand, a spell of some sorts.

The spell is about to connect, but Michael twists the axe in the air, intercepting the spell. It seems to absorb the magic, and with one swing of the weapon towards the window, the light is discharged.

The witch seems surprised, Michael just looks cocky.

MICHAEL

Enchanted blade, comes in handy  
from time to time.

He attacks again, the sword passing through the witch's magical barrier with ease, just missing her by no more than an inch.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

See, this is the thing. Back in  
the day, this was business as  
usual, but now, now I'm retired.

He attacks again and again, the witch struggling to dodge his blows.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I don't appreciate the past  
coming back. Time was it stuck to  
days gone by.

He drives forwards, but his blow misses, and the witch takes full opportunity, BLASTING him with a spell in the back. He stumbles, but he's okay.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(breathing heavily)  
See you, you're just being rude.

He tries again, this time really regretting it. The witch sidesteps and blasts him in the side, forcing him into Elliot's bed, the boy himself is still unable to move, though he's clearly afraid for his father's safety.

She picks up his axe from the floor, and before he can react, she SLASHES across his chest and he CRIES OUT.

He closes his eyes briefly, the pain almost unbearable, and when he opens them, the witch and her son are gone!

He starts to cry, realising he's failed his son, and then passes out, the blood loss finally getting to him.

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

He finishes explaining, and the team are dumb struck, it all makes sense at least, though it's a little horrific.

MARIA

They took the kids because their  
parents were champions? How does  
that work?

ALEX

Sometimes powers go to the kids.

MARIA

The parents couldn't put up a fight?

ALEX

None of them were still fighting, they were easy targets.

BEN

Especially for something as powerful as the Lilitu.

They all fall silent, suddenly realising that they are talking about their fellow heroes, people who fell trying to protect their children.

GWEN

What happened to the demons?

ALEX

(cold)

They're taken care of.

For the first time, Gwen notices Alex's bloody hands. He went to town on those demons for sure.

Before Gwen can comment on it, there's movement up above that our heroes turn to look at. There, on top of a small building not a few metres away, are the four WARRIORS grown by the demons.

Recognisable by their clothes, which match the ones we saw Elliot in before, they all have absent looks on their faces. They're plain simple, nothing more than what they're needed for.

In perfect sync, the four jump down from the rooftop, they're here to fight apparently.

MARIA

You think they might be here for us?

Alex looks down at the blood on his hands.

ALEX

Could be.

He goes to draw his sword, but Maria stops him before he gets a chance.

MARIA

We can't kill them.

BEN

Agreed. They're just children.

ALEX  
(shaking his head)  
They're not. They've been  
changed, there's nothing left of  
what they were.

GWEN  
(firm)  
Tough. Do what you have to do,  
but don't kill them.

Alex goes to argue, but a scornful look from Gwen makes him think twice, and he nods in agreement.

The two sides advance on each other, but before they come to blows, we take our leave:

BLACK OUT.

- END OF ACT THREE -

- ACT FOUR -

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Maria, Ben, and Tess are in the middle of fighting off what looks like an ambush. Half a dozen VAMPS have closed in around them, but it appears the council's team is about to fight back.

Maria tosses a stake across towards one of the vamps who smacks it out of the way, only for it to impale one of his comrades.

Ben uses his shotgun and aims it at one of the vamp's chest, the vamp CHUCKLES.

CHUCKLING VAMP

Won't kill me.

BEN

(simply)

You'd be surprised.

He fires and the vamp DUSTS as its head is blown clean off its body.

Tess finishes off another, decapitating it with an axe before swinging around at another. The second vamp dodges the blow, stepping backwards but TRIPS, impaling himself on a nearby tree branch.

TESS

(wincing)

Ouch.

With a shrug, she moves off to the next vampire, swinging her axe wildly.

Maria on the other hand is going hand to hand with the only other remaining vampire, and he's causing her some trouble.

MARIA'S VAMP

(taunting)

Come on little girl, you can do better than this.

He's not wrong. She PUMMELS him with successive blows until he's on the ground. Pulling out her stake, she's just about to deal the finishing blow when she grabs her head in agony!

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - DREAM

These woods are different, the trees are dead and the ground looks rock solid. Everything is BLURRED as we move, and sound is MUFFLED.

MARIA'S POV: She's fighting someone, we can't see who because of the blurring, but we see shoulder length dirty blonde hair and what looks like a slight beard.

What we can tell is that her opponent is winning. He throws her from side to side until finally he pulls her in close, about to bite her:

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Maria lashes out wildly with a single punch, and it connects with someone: Tess.

She was stood next to Maria, trying to wake her. She's lifted off of her feet, soaring through the air and coming to an abrupt stop at a tree, her eyes widening.

She looks down as blood trickles from her mouth. There's a tree branch poking through her chest. With one last gasp, she's gone.

Maria looks up and sees her friend, running to help her but Ben grabs her, trying desperately to stop her.

MARIA  
(crying)  
Let me go!

BEN  
No. Maria we have to -

MARIA  
Let me GO!

He's not going to do that and she knows it. She drops to her knees, tears flowing down her face as she sees her friend's cold, empty eyes.

BEN  
We have to leave.

He looks horrified at what's happened, but he can't deal with that now. There's a crunching sound nearby, leaves and twigs under feet. They're not alone.

BEN (CONT'D)  
COME ON!

He yanks her to her feet. Surprised, Maria snaps out of it and the two run off into the night leaving the fallen Tess behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - NIGHT

Ben, Alex, Gwen and Maria aren't faring too well in their fight against the warriors. They've been grown for this, and as they fight there's no trace of effort about them.

Alex takes a blow to the chest which badly winds him, but he comes back with a sucker punch to the jawline that keeps his opponent at bay.

ALEX

This is a joke. Gwen!

He motions to the sword strapped to his side, but she shakes her head just as she SHOCKS her opponent, stunning him long enough for Maria to interject and deliver a strong blow to the face. He's out for the count.

The girls then team up and quickly take out the one about to knock Ben to the floor with a punch zap punch combo that does the trick nicely.

BEN

Thanks.

Aware that they're turning the tides on their opponents, the trio join Alex, pulling the warrior away from the struggling Alex.

ALEX

About bloody time!

He SMACKS his warrior hard under the chin, and he's out cold too. That leaves one, and he's been stood there, watching, the whole time.

MARIA

Okay, one to go. How hard can it be?

ALEX

Oh, you had to say it!

The warrior steps forward, throwing a lightning fast punch that knocks Alex off his feet. Gwen retaliates with a shock, but it does nothing!

With little effort, the warrior picks up Gwen and LAUNCHES her at Ben, knocking them both over.

Maria is last, realising just how hard it can be. She throws a punch which he grabs, SQUEEZING her fist, hard.

With an uppercut, she's picked up off of her feet as she flies to the other side of the street, impacting on the wall.

Alex gets to his feet, hobbling towards the brute, knowing he has no chance but trying anyway. He draws his sword, ignoring Gwen's orders.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Alright, sharp and shiny wins the  
race.

He slashes one way, catching the warrior on the arm. The warrior tenses up, fury rising inside him and he GRABS Alex by the collar, punching him in the face.

Alex drops to the floor, bloodied and beaten, his sword missing. He looks up, the weapon now lies in the warrior's hands, and he's about to meet the sharp side of it.

As he prepares for the inevitable, all he can do is smile as the blade comes down until:

**CRACK!**

He looks up as the blade CLANGS against the concrete road, mere inches from Alex's body. The warrior's head sits at an odd angle as he collapses to the floor.

Stood just in front of us, is ELLIOT, recognisable by the small shield shaped birthmark on his neck.

The whole team breath a sigh of relief, climbing to their feet. They survey Elliot, who has returned to a docile sight.

MARIA  
How did he...

ALEX  
(frowning)  
Must have followed me here. More  
importantly why help?

GWEN  
You saved him.

MARIA  
They said they needed a vessel.  
Maybe that's all he is. A shell,  
little bits of human left inside  
but that's it.

GWEN  
(re: warriors)  
What do we do with them?

BEN  
The council has facilities that  
could hold them. I'll make the  
call.

Gwen nods, smiling slightly, a silent thank you.

ALEX  
Not him. I'm taking him to his  
parents.

He nods to Elliot, and the team look apprehensive at the  
idea, but Gwen understands, nodding.

While Alex guides Elliot off down the street, Ben, Maria  
and Gwen proceed to do the cleanup.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

We're looking through the window into Michael's hospital  
room as Alex, accompanied by an extremely docile looking  
Elliot, explains the situation.

Kerri is crying, but Michael, who despite looking  
incredibly weak is comforting her, having woken from his  
catatonic state.

Alex leaves, Elliot staying behind with his parents who  
must now come to terms with what's happened.

CUT TO:

INT. WHISTLER'S HOUSE - LATER

Maria and Ben enter the house, which seems to have remained  
in the apartment form. Maria takes off her coat, tossing it  
in no particular direction, and turns to Ben.

They stare each other down, the talk they've been needing  
to have is about to begin.

FADE TO:

INT. ACADEMY - MEDICAL WARD - FLASHBACK

Once more, Maria is lying in a hospital bed looking more  
shell shocked than anything else. Ben is stood at the foot  
of her bed, and both speak in low voices, trying not to be  
heard.

MARIA  
Did they find her bo...  
(beat, gulps)  
Did they find her?

He shakes his head.

BEN  
The vampires must have come back,  
taken it away.

Maria cringes, her friend's fate isn't something you'd wish on anyone.

MARIA  
What happens now?

BEN  
I tried my best but... They want  
to put you on trial. They could  
drop you from the academy, but  
more likely -

MARIA  
I get it. Pretty soon people will  
be asking "where's Maria". Or  
they would if they cared...

She's getting emotional again, her voice breaking. Taking a moment to think about her situation, Maria looks away from Ben and up out of the window.

CUT TO:

INT. ACADEMY - MARIA'S ROOM - LATER - FLASHBACK

Ben walks into the room and sees Tess' bed, stripped bare since her death, regarding it sadly. He then looks at Maria's bed, and something strikes him as being odd.

He rushes towards the nearby chest of drawers and looks inside. They're all empty, every single draw. She's gone!

He races out of the room and we:

CUT TO:

INT. WHISTLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As we left them, the slayer and her watcher are staring each other down. Maria lets up first, folding her arms in front of her and turns away from Ben.

MARIA  
What happens next?

BEN

I've already contacted the council.

Maria closes her eyes, dreading what's to come. She turns back to Ben, unable to say anything. It falls to him to fill the silence.

BEN (CONT'D)

I told them everything. I came to Los Angeles, saw what's happening here and that I want to stay.

She looks shocked, not entirely sure whether or not to believe him.

MARIA

What about me?

BEN

(shrugs)

I couldn't find you. I found your apartment but you'd already moved on. You're probably still in LA so I'm going to keep an eye out.

Maria blinks, she can't believe what she's hearing, but when his face softens and a caring smile appears, it's confirmed.

She takes a moment, trying to compose herself, but it doesn't work. She steps forward and hugs him tightly.

MARIA

Thank you.

BEN

(struggles)

No problem.

They separate, Maria composing herself at last.

MARIA

What about what happened. Ben I killed -

He shakes his head.

BEN

What happened was an accident. You didn't kill anyone. I never blamed you... at first maybe but it wasn't you. I let you go out there when you weren't fit. What happened was my fault.

MARIA

Like hell it was.

His expression tells us he's not about to hear otherwise, Maria lets it go.

She nods, trying to take that in. As she reflects on everything that's happened, we:

FADE TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Tess' body, pale and covered in blood, is still lying against the tree, a branch poking through her chest.

Footsteps nearby gain our attention, and we're shocked as Tess herself steps up to the body, surveying it with amusement.

As she touches it, the body SHIMMERS before disappearing, taking with it a lot of the blood that appeared to be lying around.

TESS

Now that... That's impressive. Is that a glamour?

She looks around as a second person joins her. We don't see his face but don't need to. The BLACK COAT MAN is stood next to her, she seems pleased to see him.

BLACK COAT MAN

Thank you. You've been a big help.

Tess grins, looking slightly childish as she appreciates the positive attention perhaps a little too much. At the same time, there's something wicked in that smile...

TESS

Is everything in place?

BLACK COAT MAN

For now. That girl has an interesting future ahead of her.

(beat)

Everything is falling into place.

With that, he moves back into the shadows and Tess takes a moment to look around, contemplating the future.

FADE TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Demon Monk leader is kneeling on the ground, whimpering with every breath. He's bleeding badly, the marks of Alex's interrogation style.

DEMON MONK #1  
We failed sir. We couldn't create  
a stable vessel.

He shudders, terrified as someone steps forward, presumably the demon's BOSS.

BOSS (O.S.)  
No need to worry.

The demon looks relieved, but it's short lived as the boss' hands shoot out and SNAP the demon's neck. He slumps to the floor and we TILT UP to reveal:

DRAKE!

The vampire leader looking a little miffed at the bad news. Still, he doesn't seem completely beaten as he turns.

AMARRA, dressed in a smart suit, his head still firmly attached to his body, is standing not too far away. He transforms into his HUMAN FORM.

AMARRA  
A pity.

DRAKE  
Still, there's always Plan B.

AMARRA  
Then I think it's time we got to  
work.  
(over his shoulder)  
Wouldn't you?

They both turn around and look at a metal chair, strong bonds holding a struggling prisoner. WHISTLER.

BLACK OUT.

- END OF EPISODE