

Fate  
1x10: "Pieces"

by

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Based on characters created by Joss Whedon

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's a sleek penthouse apartment at the top of a sleek, tall building. It's the kind where the outer walls are all windows; all the better to look down upon the world.

One such window is SMASHED.

JASON, DAWN and HUGHLY BROWN (50s), upper-crust gentleman with a dry pallet, stand at the edge and stare over it.

Jason and Dawn are in shock, almost horrified as they wide-eye over the ledge.

Hughly shows no outward expression.

HUGHLY  
(refined English  
accent)  
I suppose I'd better get that fixed.

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT, LOUNGE - NIGHT

A WHITE WALL

There is a loud CHUCKLE.

ON DEVON'S EYES

She tilts her head to see past the white wall across the room from her.

At an angle through a door, she sees Jason, Dawn and NADYA smiling. Jason is telling a story of some sort.

HUGHLY'S FACE blocks her view.

HUGHLY  
Hot chocolate?

DEVON  
I'm fine.

HUGHLY  
Are you sure? You look like you need it. Nothing solves the world's ails more than hot chocolate.

Devon gives a small smile.

HUGHLY  
Was the journey here tiring?

DEVON  
The journey always is.

He smiles, in a fatherly sort of way. Under his arm, he holds a leather-bound BOOK.

HUGHLY  
I've been wanting to meet you for a very long time.

Devon is rather confused by that.

HUGHLY

Anyone who teaches Jason a lesson  
or two in humility earns my  
eternal respect.

DEVON

(uncomfortable)  
He talks about me?

HUGHLY

Well, usually only within the  
context of his bruised ego, but I  
am rather adept at filtering  
through subtext.

He knows. She knows he knows.

There is movement to the side. Hughly looks away. Devon  
glances past him, through the door again.

Jason helps Nadya with a NECKLACE. He clips it at the back  
of her neck for her. She turns around, gives him a dazzling  
smile and lays a flirtatious hand on his shoulder.

There is a click to the side. Samuel walks into a the  
corridor beside the door. His face seems slightly damp.

HUGHLY

Excuse me for a moment.

Hughly opens his book as he nears Samuel.

HUGHLY

Mister Zabuto. If I might have a  
moment of your time.

SAMUEL

Of course. What can I do for you?

HUGHLY

I'm having a slight problem with  
the ritual.

(he flicks through the  
book)

I'm hoping a Watcher's expertise  
is just the solution.

Devon ignores another burst of LAUGHTER and joins Samuel and  
Hughly. She stares around Samuel's shoulder at the pages as  
he and Hughly speak in SILENCE.

FADE TO BLACK

JASON (O.S.)

Get down!

There is the sound of ROCK FALLING, and something very akin to FLAMES and a WIND TUNNEL.

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Devon looks upward. There are cuts and dirt on her face. Her clothes are dirty.

To the side, ORANGE LIGHT from a FIRE burning on the side of the street.

It's a standard inner city street, only there are huge chunks of RUBBLE lying in the streets.

JASON

We're going to get roasted out here.

He's in the same state as Devon: in need of a shower. He aims his crossbow upwards; watchful. He carries the sole bag of the group. It's obvious there is a SWORD HILT in the bag.

DAWN

I'm not arguing with that.

Dawn and Samuel walk low, worriedly staring up toward the sky. Equally mused. Nadya takes the back, eyes wary, hands ready.

VOICE (O.S.)

Pssst!

Devon sharply turns her head.

In the shadows of an alley, a HUMANOID GIRL (11), Katrid, with ears that extend into bony ridges on her neck and slanted violet eyes, motions for them to follow.

GIRL

(whispers)

Come. Come.

She moves off without waiting.

Jason considers.

JASON

In the event that she's evil...

DAWN

Rather her than them.

She leads the way after Katrid. Samuel and Nadya follow. Jason takes a moment to stare at Devon. She gives a small smile.

DEVON

Go ahead. I'll watch your back.

He grins and turns away-

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The gang are in a row following Katrid, threading through an alley filled with debris. They walk quietly and swiftly.

Jason walks ahead of Devon. She FALTERS and looks to the side as-

SOMETHING HUGE CRASHES THROUGH A WALL

BRICK and MORTAR EXPLODE toward the group.

Devon LIFTS HER HAND.

The DEBRIS BASHES against an INVISIBLE WALL and falls away.

JASON

Crap. Run!

A LOUD, UNEARTHLY GROWL sounds from overhead as the group really put on the pace.

Ahead of Devon, Dawn helps Samuel run faster.

NADYA

I can't see it!

JASON

You will.

Devon glances behind her.

A HUGE, SERPENTINE CLAW SLASHES into frame.

She ducks as a DARK SHADOW flies over her head.

A FULL FLEDGED DRAGON swoops down, right toward Jason and Nadya. They both see it, too late to do anything about it.

EYES INSTANTLY WHITE, Devon PUNCHES her hand in the air.

The dragon careens into a building, violently SHOWERING GLASS AND SHRAPNEL in its wake.

Devon shields her face with her arm.

INT. SHELTER - NIGHT

Devon leans against a table. The room has the makings of a laboratory. She glances around the room.

Dawn takes a breather by herself too.

Samuel is animatedly talking to Katrid. Nadya and Jason are locked in a discussion. Devon watches them for a moment. She turns her attentions to the last two people in the room.

NEKO, Male, 50s, and INGAR, Female, 40s, both the SAME SPECIES as Katrid, share an intimate conversation.

Devon looks away, an intruder. She peeks back at them.

INGAR

Remind yourself to rest, husband.

NEKO

I shall. I'm almost finished.

INGAR

(fondly)

You say that always.

NEKO

It is always true.

They smile in the way old lovers do, as Ingar walks away to see what Katrid and Samuel are up to.

Neko glances down at a foreign-looking MICROSCOPE, working despite the intrusion of their guests.

DEVON

Why don't you make them leave?

NEKO

I have. Again and again. But they return, each time.

DEVON

They could die.

NEKO

I know.

DEVON

It doesn't make sense for them to stay here. It's the knife's edge.

NEKO

(sadly)

Love. Because of it, they always return and leave me weaker. Love is strong enough to overcome rationales. There is no reason I can craft that they can't take from under me and each time they do, I find it harder to send them away.

(more to himself)

I sometimes wonder if I will be able to do what I must.

Devon looks upward at the sound of a DRAGON'S HOWL.

NEKO

(unconcerned)

Deprived of a meal again. He's not happy tonight.

Neko smiles at Devon. Ingar returns with Katrid.

INGAR

Oh! You're bleeding.

Devon glances down at her arm.

A DROP OF BLOOD hits to the floor.

Devon stares at it.

INGAR

(holding some cloth)

Here, let me help you.

Ingar places some cloth on Devon's upper arm. Devon doesn't look up; she continues to stare at her hand, covered in her own dripping blood.

The DRAGON HOWLS again.

Devon lifts her BLOODY hand slowly. She speaks in an even voice.

DEVON

You need to leave. Take your family. Go. Go now.

Ingar looks alarmed.

NEKO  
 (doesn't understand)  
 My work is too impor-

DEVON  
 Your work might be too early.  
 (regarding her hand)  
 Or too late. There's always a  
 reason for what's coming.

NEKO  
 I don't understand. Are you afraid  
 of your blood? Do not be worried.  
 This was where we brought our  
 wounded. We have never been  
 tracked here.

Devon closes her eyes.

DEVON  
 It never makes a difference.

JASON  
 Devon, are you okay?

A LOUDER HOWL, nearer...

Devon slowly opens her eyes and looks upward, waiting.

FADE TO WHITE

CRASH

JASON  
 Look out!

A SCREAM

INGAR  
 (screaming)  
 No!

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

FADE IN:

A WHITE BANDAGE

wrapped around Devon's arm in a sling. Her arm is BROKEN and  
 her face is scratched and bruised. She's cleaned up and in  
 different clothes. She sits on a white couch.

She blinks, stares forward.

It is a white room, with a few arty ornaments here and there and a LARGE DESK at the other end.

Ahead of her on the wall, A LARGE PHOTOGRAPH.

INSERT: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH of a young, sad-looking boy (11) holding a ridiculously ornate and impractical sail boat. He's flanked by a MAN and a WOMAN, Jason's parents, holding the same pose and wearing the same clothes and expressions as they did in episode 5, Enemy mind.

JASON (O.S.)  
Another dragon. Another broken arm.

Jason leans on the door frame, also cleaned up.

JASON  
(smiles)  
Is that the same arm?

DEVON  
(lifting it)  
Yeah.

JASON  
I think this is the universe's  
way of telling you to avoid giant  
reptiles.

She shrugs. He seems to guess what she's thinking.

JASON  
It wasn't your fault.

She doesn't look at him.

DEVON  
(without emotion)  
It's always my fault. And it never  
is.

He enters the room. He follows her eyes to the photograph.

JASON  
That was summer at my grandfather's  
spread. They were... home. For a  
while.

He sits beside Devon, staring ahead with her at the photo.

JASON

I went to the very best boarding school. Elite. Proper. I hated it there. Then one day, when I was eleven, Hughly showed up to take me home. I never went back.

Devon turns toward him.

JASON

(small smile)

Big ol' mystery. Something exciting to talk about in high society. They never found the plane. The mayday was... well, they figured it was a hoax.

(to himself)

It wasn't a hoax.

Devon reaches out slowly and places her hand on his. He turns and gives her a brave smile.

JASON

I'm not telling you this so we can start a club for sad backstories. Sometimes, things seem more sinister than they actually are. What happened earlier was... bad luck.

Devon shakes her head and turns away, back to the photograph.

DEVON

Do you still miss them?

He considers.

JASON

I missed them more when they were here. I never did figure out why they spent all of their time and mine hunting in god-forsaken corners of the world for rare crap that didn't do anyone but themselves any good.

DEVON

(smiles)

Have you found the answers now? Walking in their shoes?

JASON  
 (good humour)  
 I'm not like them. I don't keep  
 anything I find.  
 (looks her over)  
 Although, I might have found  
 something I'd like to keep.

Devon stands up, all nerves. She walks over to a JAR on a shelf next to the photograph.

DEVON  
 Like this?

She lifts the lid and sniffs the contents.

DEVON  
 Dijin protective powder.  
 (putting it back down)  
 A circle of this will stop just  
 about any offensive magick.

He gets up and joins her, quite close.

JASON  
 It was a gift from a warlock.

DEVON  
 Pretty impressive gift.

JASON  
 (getting closer)  
 Guess I'm a pretty impressive guy.  
 I'm nice. People love me.

He studies her for a moment, like he's waiting for something.

DEVON  
 What?

JASON  
 You don't think I'm a nice guy?

DEVON  
 I didn't say you weren't. Recently.

He grins. Talking is over. He moves in --

HUGHLY (O.S.)  
 Ahem.

Jason pulls away, pretending he hasn't been caught with his hand in the cookie jar by his mother.

Hughly smiles innocently. He holds a steaming cup of something.

HUGHLY

The lovely Miss Summers has  
cleaned the entrails off the  
latest acquisition.

JASON

(making no move to  
leave)  
Right.

Hughly stares at Jason. A standoff. Jason sighs and shoots a  
look at Devon.

JASON

(hands in surrender)  
Okay. I'm going.

HUGHLY

(ignoring Jason)  
I brought you some hot chocolate.

JASON

Hughly's answer to everything.  
Hot beverages.

HUGHLY

While your answer to everything  
shames the English language. Are  
you going to keep your other  
guests waiting?

Jason throws his hands up and leaves.

Hughly winks at Devon. She awkwardly takes the cup with her  
free hand.

HUGHLY

How is the arm?

DEVON

It's okay. Thank you.

HUGHLY

I wasn't sure if you needed  
rescuing. He's not a restful  
character to be around when injured.

Devon smiles sadly. She stares off into her cup.

HUGHLY

Forgive me for my presumptions,  
but is everything all right?

Devon startles at the question.

DEVON  
You've looked after him for a  
long time, right?

HUGHLY  
All his life.

DEVON  
Can I tell you something?

OFF A SERIOUS, ALMOST SAD, DEVON

FADE OUT.

END ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The FAUX-WOODEN DOORS OPEN.

INT. CORRIDOR - SAME

Jason leads the gang out of the elevator and into a long clinical corridor. There is another door on the far side (a stairwell) and a single door breaking the wall of the corridor. The side of the wall opposite the door is more window than wall.

Jason unlocks the door to--

INT. APARTMENT - SAME

It's a huge expanse of white and varnished wood. The entire floor is a converted office floor, complete with sun-tinted glass panels making up two of the walls, staring out over the dark city. It's evident from the lights from the other buildings and stars on the horizon that they are high up.

The two sides of the apartment nearest the door have been walled to create some rooms. The walls open to three doors - two beside each other (study and bathroom) and one by itself on the other-side (training room).

The rest of the apartment is a wide expanse. There's an open-plan kitchen beside a staircase leading upward. Near the kitchen is a small dining room table and lounge with trendy audio-visual equipment, but these are secondary in focus to what the room also contains.

The support pillars dotted around the room are painted white, and have grooves cut into them to hold ART PIECES behind glass. The overall vibe is of a minimalist art gallery rather than a lived-in apartment.

Jason dumps his gear at the first available spot.

JASON

Home sweet home. Feel free to  
make yourself at.

Jason meanders over to the kitchen. The ladies place their luggage in neat piles, out of the way.

Samuel doesn't notice he's still carrying his luggage as he heads to the nearest pillar in it. He squints at the art piece within it.

SAMUEL

Is this... is this a bone of Shafan?

He peers around at the other pillars near him and turns worriedly to Jason.

Jason places a PHONE BACK IN A CRADLE on the kitchen counter.

SAMUEL

("here's some bad news")

Uhm, Jason. Are you aware that--

JASON

Everything here has the potential to turn people into flaming piles of ash if they were in the wrong hands?

(no big deal)

Yeah.

SAMUEL

Oh. Well. As long as you know.

Jason walks toward them.

JASON

They're what's left of my parent's collection. We kept back the... questionable ones. It was a hell of a thing finding the loons, mystics and holy men with the mojo to neuter these critters.

DAWN

That's possible? To make things harmless without destroying them?

JASON

Looks like. But I don't put much stock in eternal promises.

Samuel's eyes linger on the nearest object.

DEVON (O.S.)

(quietly)

It's probably smarter to destroy them.

JASON (O.S.)  
Yeah. I'm not that smart.

HUGHLY (O.S.)  
Truer words were never spoken.

Samuel turns in the direction of the voice, startled by the new arrival.

The elevator doors close as Hughly walks into the apartment, book open, pen poised.

HUGHLY  
At least now, we can get things properly organised. Welcome back. I trust the flight from Italy was uneventful?

JASON  
Yeah. I guess a Slayer really does put the fear of god into godless demons.

Dawn smiles at Samuel brightly. She did good.

HUGHLY  
(looking at Dawn)  
Well you'll be pleased to know, Miss Summers, that I've already contacted your sister and let her know that you have arrived safely.

JASON  
Did you-

DAWN  
How did you-

HUGHLY  
(to Jason)  
Yes, Tanako has placed encryption on all the phone lines, and Miss Esbet has cloaked the accommodations with protective spells.  
(to Dawn)  
Jason sends me updates whenever he is this dimension. It is a pleasure to finally meet you.

He tucks his pen into the current page of his book and shuts it so that he has a free hand to shake hers.

HUGHLY  
 (shaking his hand)  
 Mister Zabuto. An honour.  
 (with extra warmth)  
 The elusive Miss Payne. Finally.

He clasps her hand and smiles. Next he's onto Nadya.

HUGHLY  
 And Miss Nadya... Jason never did  
 give me your surname.

She takes his hand.

NADYA  
 (smiling genuinely)  
 Nadya is just fine. My mother  
 used to say that if you can't  
 make a difference with the name  
 you go by, adding more to it is  
 as useless as a knight with no  
 kingdom to fight for.

HUGHLY  
 Well, she sounds like a wise lady.

NADYA  
 (laughing)  
 I don't know about wise, but she  
 did have a lot to say.

Hughly turns to Jason with question on his face. Jason holds  
 up a finger.

JASON  
 Before we talk shop, let's do  
 what we came here for.

DAWN  
 Ooh. The famous "impervious to  
 all" impenetrable safe. This I  
 have to see for myself.

NADYA  
 I admit I am curious to find out  
 if the boasts are true.

JASON  
 Ladies, ladies. Would I lie?

Dawn and Nadya both give him some "gal power" eye rolls.

JASON  
(walking away)  
You can put me to the test.

Nadya and Dawn follow.

NADYA  
Is that a challenge Mister Mandrake?

Samuel looks away from them.

SAMUEL  
Excuse me. Is there a place I  
might freshen up?

HUGHLY  
Back through the corridor. First  
door to your right.

SAMUEL  
Thank you.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Samuel looks into the mirror. He shuts his eyes tightly,  
then bends over and splashes water on his face.

He tiredly reaches down and brings up a hand towel. He runs  
it over his face, then folds it oh-so-neatly over the towel  
rail.

He stares at his reflection again, before smoothing his  
clothes down with his hands. Before he opens the door and  
clicks off the light, he reaches for his cane, lying to the  
side.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME

Samuel walks through the corridor and back into the main  
room of the penthouse. Hughly talks to Devon, but he looks  
up as Samuel approaches.

HUGHLY  
(opening the book)  
Mister Zabuto. If I might have a  
moment of your time.

SAMUEL  
Of course. What can I do for you?

HUGHLY

I'm having a slight problem with the ritual.

(flicking through the book)

I'm hoping a Watcher's expertise is just the solution.

Samuel looks at the pages that Hughly proffers. Devon hovers next to him unobtrusively.

HUGHLY

I'm having trouble tracking down a few of these ingredients? If that's the right word. I've gone through all of our contacts, and they have either never heard of them or have no idea where to get them. Is this the correct ritual?

SAMUEL

Let's see.

(taking the book)

Yes, that is the correct one.

(impressed)

And you managed to find this based on what little Jason knows of the ritual?

HUGHLY

We have access to vast occult resources...

(begrudgingly)

... and I have much more time on my hands recently.

SAMUEL

(smiles)

I take it his adventures don't always last this long?

Hughly shrugs good-naturedly. Samuel ponders the page. He energetically walks over to the table in the open-plan lounge and sits down. Hughly follows.

SAMUEL

I think I recall a few alternate names for some of these, but those two there pose a problem.

HUGHLY

I thought as much. Those two are the ones no one has heard of.

SAMUEL

If we can isolate their role in the spell, we may be able to determine substitute elements.

HUGHLY

(conversational)

Elizabeth's office is not far from here. You could visit her tomorrow. She expressed concern over some tests you skipped.

SAMUEL

(without ill will)

As I told the lovely Doctor Karvan last I saw her, I am quite able to complete my duties.

There's a bark of laughter from the side. Samuel turns and sees Jason, Nadya and Dawn exiting a room.

Devon has drifted along to one of the windows, staring out into the night thoughtfully. Jason is looking at her.

HUGHLY (O.S.)

It's not me that you have to convince.

SAMUEL

(distracted)

Pardon.

(shaking his head)

I'm not sure-

HUGHLY

It's difficult. Letting those people you love and feel responsible for go out there and face the world and all its dangers. Without you.

Samuel and Hughly share a look; a father's look. Hughly glances at Jason.

HUGHLY

It's difficult when they don't even notice they've left you behind.

(smiles thinly)

So, it's not me that you have to convince. But sometimes, one needs to be a rock on the shore. What else would the waves crash against each time they returned?

Hughly pats Samuel's shoulder and gets up to walk towards Jason. Samuel stares at the book again, all enthusiasm gone.

DAWN (O.S.)

Samuel!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Samuel FALLS to the street. Dawn ducks down beside him, grabs his cane for him, and helps him up.

DAWN

(breathless)

Are you okay?

Samuel looks upward.

The SKYSCRAPERS are without power, but there is enough natural light to see that they are extremely tall.

SAMUEL

I think so.

DAWN

Come on.

She holds his arm and runs with him. Jason and Devon are ahead. Nadya is behind them.

JASON

We're going to get roasted out here.

DAWN

I'm not arguing with that.

KATRID

PSST!

Samuel sees Katrid. He scans the area above her.

KATRID

(whispers)

Come. Come.

She moves off without waiting. Samuel worriedly watches after her.

JASON

In the event that she's evil...

DAWN

Rather her than them.

INT. SHELTER - NIGHT

Katrid opens the door and leads them in.

Ingar stands beside Neko. She's in distress. Neko is consoling her.

KATRID

Father, father. I found strangers.

Ingar sees her and rushes forward. She wraps Katrid in a hug.

INGAR

How many times have we told you  
not to leave the shelter?

She stares at her child, but can't stay angry. She hugs Katrid again.

KATRID

I told you I heard people speaking.

NEKO

You are not of this world.

JASON

What gave us away?

NEKO

Your interesting biological  
features, but mostly, it is  
because you are still alive.  
Please, make yourself comfortable.  
I am Neko, my wife Ingar and my  
youngling Katrid.

He motions for them to enter further into the shelter. Ingar smiles over Katrid's head as they all move away from the doors.

Samuel watches as Jason leads the show.

JASON

So uh... we noticed there was a  
little dragon problem in this  
neighbourhood.

NEKO

(enunciating)

Drah-gone. I think I prefer that  
name.

JASON

What do you call them?

NEKO  
 Biological entity AF179.  
 (off Jason's look)  
 I wish we'd called it drah-gone  
 earlier. The evacuation orders  
 lacked poetry I think.

Samuel startles and looks down. Katrid has pulled on his jacket.

KATRID  
 Would you like some refreshments?

SAMUEL  
 No thank you. I am quite fine.

JASON  
 So these things are recent  
 additions to your world. Did they  
 come through a portal?

KATRID  
 Are you sure? My granman is as  
 old as you and he needs much  
 refreshment.

Samuel smiles, not the least bit offended. He completely ignores the conversation between the others.

SAMUEL  
 (to Katrid)  
 And where is your granman now?

KATRID  
 On another world. Like you were.  
 I was on another world too. I  
 didn't like it there. I liked the  
 way it was before. Here. Before  
 the sky monsters came.

DAWN (O.S.)  
 So, they're science experiments  
 gone wrong?

SAMUEL  
 (curious)  
 What did you do before they came?

KATRID

Science... like everyone else.  
You can't see them anymore, but  
we learned in buildings that  
stretched higher than the sky  
monsters could fly. I don't know  
why we couldn't stay up there.

(sad)

Other worlds are so flat.

(upbeat)

Is yours?

SAMUEL

Well, yes. Mostly.

KATRID

(appalled)

What do you do there?

SAMUEL

I used to teach.

(off her look, with a  
smile)

Not science, I'm afraid. I know  
more of monsters than buildings  
or chemistry.

KATRID

(re: the others)

Do you teach them?

SAMUEL

(laughing)

No no. They have no need of an  
old man like me. I used to teach  
a girl, a special girl, not unlike  
you once. She was one girl chosen  
in all the world to fight monsters.  
To keep worlds safe.

KATRID

I can fight! Want to see?

She rushes off without waiting for an answer. Samuel watches  
her retrieve a sturdy METAL ROD.

KATRID

Watch!

She DIVES to the floor and rolls on the ground, bringing the  
bar up in a stabbing motion. She lies there fighting an  
imaginary enemy above her.

KATRID

They have soft feet. If you can get past their claws.

INGAR

Katrid! Don't bother our guests so.

SAMUEL

(smiling)

It's quite all right.

Ingar gratefully nods at him as he reaches out to help Katrid to her feet.

SAMUEL

Did you learn this by yourself?

She nods enthusiastically.

SAMUEL

Let me show you something.

He uses his cane in much the same fashion as Katrid, but does not duck or roll, but merely parries and stabs upward.

SAMUEL

Dragons are fast and some have worse weapons than claws. Never let yourself be pinned down.

Katrid concentrates on his words seriously. A most studious pupil.

SAMUEL

Keep moving, but keep a patient eye on the target. You cannot lose sight of your enemy. Not for a moment. All they need is one moment and...

SNAP

Samuel clicks his fingers together. Katrid is rapt.

SAMUEL

Now, can you try what I just showed you?

Katrid nods, eager.

She mimics his moves. Some are imperfect and awkward.

He shows specific moves to her again, and then motions for her to do them alongside him.

SAMUEL

Excellent! Though remember...  
learning to fight an adversary  
does not mean that you should  
seek one out. Retreat is often  
the wisest course when the enemy  
is larger.

(nods at Neko)

Besides, a father always worries  
for their children. Have pity on  
him and don't try your hand at  
hunting dragons as a hobby.

She laughs at his joke.

KATRID

(a fact)

You are a father. Why doesn't  
your child come here with you?

SAMUEL

(takes by surprise)

Oh. She...

(sad)

She would never-

INGAR (O.S.)

Oh. You're bleeding.

Samuel watches as Ingar approaches Devon. Devon stares at her hand, covered in blood, then upwards towards the wall beside her. Samuel can't hear what she is saying. He tries to lip read. Whatever she is saying panics Ingar and upsets Neko.

Samuel sees Devon staring in sad awe at her blood as Ingar administers aid. Jason approaches Devon.

DEVON

It's coming.

Samuel frowns.

CRASH

The wall beside Devon implodes into the room. A huge BLACK shape follows the flying brick.

SAMUEL WATCHES IN TERROR

Katrid SCREAMS and tries to run forward, toward the shape.

Samuel grabs her.

SAMUEL  
Stay with me!

FADE OUT.

END ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN:

PING

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Jason steps out of the elevator and into the corridor. The others follow him.

JASON  
Home sweet home. Feel free to  
make yourself at.

He dumps his stuff and heads into the kitchen. He grabs the PHONE and dials an internal number.

JASON  
Yeah. I'm back.

He places the phone back down and turns back to the others.

SAMUEL  
Uhm, Jason. Are you aware that--

He and Devon meet eyes across the room. He walks toward them, not particularly paying attention to anyone else.

JASON  
Everything here has the potential  
to turn people into flaming piles  
of ash if they were in the wrong  
hands? Yeah.

SAMUEL (O.S.)  
Oh. Well. As long as you know.

JASON  
They're what's left of my parent's  
collection. We kept back the...  
questionable ones. It was a hell  
of a thing finding the loons,  
mystics and holy men with the  
mojo to neuter these critters.

Devon turns away from him, toward the artifacts

DAWN (O.S.)  
That's possible? To make things  
harmless without destroying them?

JASON  
Looks like.  
(watching Devon)  
But I don't put much stock in  
eternal promises.

DEVON  
(sad)  
It's probably smarter to destroy  
them.

He nears her, trying to see her face.

JASON  
Yeah. I'm not that smart.

HUGHLY (O.S.)  
Truer words were never spoken.

Jason turns around and smiles.

HUGHLY  
At least now we can get things  
properly organised.

INT. TRAINING ROOM - NIGHT

The training room is what happens when a comic book, action movie and sci-fi geek grows up to be a kick-ass superhero. There are weapons on the walls; training mats on the ground; a punching bag; random posters of action heroes posted all over the walls and a BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINE movie poster block-mounted on the wall.

Jason holds the side of the movie poster and swings it open. It's not particularly original as far as secret stashes go. Behind it, a simple-looking safe.

He turns to Dawn and Nadya. They are not impressed thus far, but dutifully, Dawn starts unpacking the keys from a bag and placing them on a nearby table.

Jason sneaks a peek outside the door. Devon stands by herself.

NADYA  
Are you sure this thing is  
impenetrable?

JASON

(grin)

Try it. Give it your best shot.

Dawn and Nadya exchange bemused glances. Alright.

Nadya's eyes BLACKEN.

Jason taps his fingers on the wall, starts humming, even bobbing to his imagined music.

Nadya sighs loudly.

NADYA

All right. I give. What's the secret?

JASON

No secret. I'm only the living person who can open it.

He places his hand on the door. It SWINGS OPEN.

JASON

And I actually do need to be alive and in the state of mind where it's my choice.

DAWN

Why wouldn't it be your choice?

JASON

Guns, knives, blunt instruments. If I'm not happy, it don't open.  
(chuckles)

Once, I was worried about getting some golden idol to an associate in time before he sold something I needed, and the safe took it to mean I was in a hostage situation. It wouldn't open for hours until I thought of the swimsuit edition of...

(off their looks)

No one will get the keys.

NADYA

So no duress or stress of any kind... that's clever magic.

JASON

(shrugs)

I get things that people need,  
and I don't need more money.  
Favours like this work out better  
for me.

He holds his hand out.

JASON

Let's do what we came here for.

Dawn hands him a key. He places it in the safe.

JASON

(to Nadya)

Which one do you want to hold  
back for tomorrow? Does it have  
to be specific?

NADYA

Not really. I've already mapped  
out the next key. But...

She picks up the AMULET from episode 7.

NADYA (CONT)

This one is easy to transport.  
(considers)

And it does to have a little more  
style to it than the others.

DAWN

I'll say.

NADYA

Uhm Jason. Could you?

She holds up the amulet for him in one hand and lifts her  
hair from the back of her neck in the other. She smiles  
seductively.

JASON

(uncomfortable)

Sure.

He takes the amulet. Nadya turns around for him.

Dawn folds her arms, definitely annoyed about something. He  
tries to ignore her and places the amulet around Nadya's  
neck. He clicks the clasp shut.

She's all smiles as she turns back toward him. She touches  
his shoulder.

NADYA

Thanks.

JASON

You're welcome.

(uncomfortable laugh)

I'd better get this all away.

NADYA

I'm just going to go freshen up.

I'll see you soon.

He nods, but is unable to meet her eyes fully. She leaves the room. He starts packing the rest of the keys into the safe. He shuts the door when he is done, and puts the panel back in place.

Dawn GLARES at him meaningfully.

JASON

(whispers  
apologetically)

It's not the right time.

Dawn shakes her head and leaves the room as Hughly enters. He is sans his book.

Hughly pivots his head after Dawn.

HUGHLY

Problems?

Jason looks over Hughly's shoulder.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Devon is standing next to Samuel, reading the same thing he is. Dawn joins them.

INT. TRAINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jason shakes his head.

JASON

It doesn't matter. Any news?

HUGHLY

Well, apart from the Los Angeles office finding out that you were there and didn't stop by for a cup of tea, everything is running smoothly. In fact, Mister Zabuto is helping me with my second to last problem.

JASON

Good good.  
 (frowning)  
 What's the last problem?

HUGHLY

Professor Patel. He has been requesting your services for the past five weeks. In fact, he is even threatening to approach the lovely Miss Raiden.

JASON

(snort)  
 Well, she did fall into major bucks a few years back, maybe she'll take him on as charity.  
 (thinks)  
 Actually... I'm gonna need something to do once this little key quest is over. Can't have her stealing my clients.

He goes into a semi-pace as he mulls over the facts. And yes, even Jason gets eureka moment. He snaps his fingers.

JASON

Contact her. See if she'll consider acting as my proxy until I'm back in business. She can take the full commission for each job.

HUGHLY

You charge substantially less than she does.  
 (slyly)  
 Should I mention this is a personal favour to you?

Jason freezes and stares out the door again. Devon is once more standing on the outskirts of the group.

JASON

No... just ask her if she wants to help out.

Hughly turns his head and sees Devon too.

INT SHELTER - NIGHT

Ingar leans into Ingar intimately.

INGAR

Remind yourself to rest, husband.

Jason turns away, shaking his head. He motions for Dawn to walk with him. They stop when they are out of earshot.

JASON

I've been here less than an hour, and I hate this trip. I don't know how we're going to look for this key without becoming a side-dish. Not even Nadya can fight off something this big.

DAWN

It's close.  
(with regret)  
Close and *moving*.

JASON

Oh. No. Please don't tell me a dragon ate it.

DAWN

(bright side)  
Not just any dragon.

JASON

*That* one. The big one. The biggest one. Hey! That's great!

DAWN

I thought so too.

JASON

We'll just ask it to come down here, sit still and politely not kill us while we gut it for something shiny.

(eugh)  
Perfect.

He rubs his neck, tired. A hand reaches up to squeeze his shoulder. He startles and turns around.

NADYA

You look tired.

JASON

Uhm. Yeah. Dragons.

Dawn WHACKS him with her elbow as she discretely walks past him.

Jason pretends ignorance. Nadya isn't buying it this time.

NADYA  
Is something going on?

JASON  
(busted)  
Uh no. Like what?

NADYA  
(frustrated)  
You're avoiding me again. I  
haven't done anything wrong.

JASON  
No. You haven't.

He takes a breath: time to come clean.

JASON  
You really haven't done anything  
wrong. I'm the wrongdoer here.

NADYA  
Why?

JASON  
I implied promises I didn't know  
I wasn't going to make. I fooled  
myself, and worse, I fooled you.

She is still confused.

JASON  
Nadya. You are an amazing woman.  
You're beautiful and powerful,  
and pretty damn generous to do  
all this...

NADYA  
(getting it)  
But?

JASON  
No buts. You're all those things.  
I'm just not worth them.

NADYA  
(quite a blow)  
You mean I'm not worth being with.

He holds her shoulders, trying to comfort.

JASON

Of course you are. If things hadn't turned out the way they have, I'd be showering you with how worthy you are. It's just...

NADYA

(trying to be brave)  
Fate's whim.

JASON

Yeah. You never know which direction it'll spin ya. That's how I know you're going to grab hold of some lucky guy...

(grin)

No doubt unworthy of you, and he'll make you happy. Happier than someone like me ever could. I'm sorry I'm not him, and I'm sorry I didn't come clean earlier.

Nadya puts on a big brave smile.

NADYA

It's okay. Everything will be okay.

INGAR (O.S.)

Oh! You're bleeding.

Jason looks up sharply.

ON DEVON

She stares at her bloody arm.

Without even looking at Nadya, he pats her on the shoulder.

JASON

I'll be right back.

He moves toward Devon, Neko and Ingar.

DEVON

It never makes a difference.

JASON

Devon, are you okay?

Jason hears the DRAGON'S HOWL, quite close. He looks up in time to see--

THE WALL IMPLODES INTO THE ROOM

A HUGE SHAPE barrels through the debris - it has great momentum.

JASON

Look out!

He rushes forward to Devon, but she slams against the air, THROWING him backward and out of harms way.

He ROLLs on the ground, hard. There is the distant sound of a CRACK and THUMP.

INGAR

(screaming)

No!

Jason looks up to see Neko IMPALED under a large claw, bleeding.

The dragon is huge and dark.

Neko breathes his last.

Devon lies a short distance away; her arm at a funny angle. She doesn't make a sound as she pushes herself up with her other arm.

Dawn pulls a catatonic Ingar out of the dragon's range.

Samuel holds Katrid back.

Nadya steps beside him. From his lower angle, she seems regal and proud - stiff and unafraid.

The dragon's mouth LUNGES for Devon.

She throws her arm up.

The DRAGON REELS BACK like it's taken a HEAVY UNDERCUT. Its underbelly is revealed.

There is a faint glow - an UNNATURAL GLOW.

LIGHTING HITS THE SPOT

Nadya's magicks are a furious tempest above Jason's head. Most of the dragon is obscured from his view, but he can hear it THRASHING ABOUT.

Devon struggles to crawl out of its way with only one arm. Nadya's storm is very close above her.

Jason sees how precariously close Devon is to meeting Neko's fate. He takes a deep breath and half-crawls, half-skids to reach her.

NADYA (O.S.)

Jason, get out of there!

Jason loops his arm underneath Devon's waist and acts as her support as they rush away.

FADE OUT.

END ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Dawn looks around her, concerned. There is a bright GLOW on her face, which fades as a PORTAL CLOSES.

JASON  
(whistles)  
Look at the size of those scrapers.

Dawn follows his gaze. The DARK buildings are indeed impressive.

NADYA  
There's no power. No movement. No sound.

JASON  
And we're back to being creeped out.  
(hoisting up his crossbow)  
Let's just make this quick ladies. Get the shiny. Vamoose.

Dawn watches closely as Nadya clasps the AMULET KEY around her neck in her hand. Her eyes are BLACK as she concentrates heavily.

NADYA  
(pointing)  
That way.

Nadya moves off, in the lead.

Dawn concentrates for a moment, gives a small little smile and nods. Devon sees this and gives a tiny smile of her own. She follows Nadya, with Jason close by.

SAMUEL  
I take it that tracking them is getting easier for you as well?

DAWN  
 (beaming)  
 Yes sir.  
 (frown)  
 Pity we only have four to go.

They head off together, after the others.

SAMUEL  
 (laughs)  
 Some might find that fortunate,  
 especially given the trouble we've  
 had recently.

DAWN  
 Yeah. Those pesky demons show up  
 in the darndest places.  
 (thoughtful)  
 Still...

SAMUEL  
 Still?

DAWN  
 Yes, I know I am the sister of a  
 Slayer - which might tend to make  
 some people think I'm paranoid -  
 but has this seemed a little too  
 easy lately?

Samuel frowns: is she jesting?

DAWN  
 Picture this: I'm an all-powerful  
 being, or pair of all-powerful  
 brothers as the case may or may  
 not be, with the power to control  
 portals and find long-hidden keys.  
 And all I send to get them back  
 are lackeys? And they're not even  
 good lackeys. You could even beat  
 them.

Samuel smiles.

DAWN  
 (backtracks)  
 I mean, not that you're a  
 lightweight when it comes to  
 fighting, because you're a Watcher  
 and Watchers know things like  
 weapons and tactics and...

She gives a sheepish grimace.

SAMUEL

No offense taken. I do see your concern. In fact, an entire chapter of the Slayer handbook is dedicated to predicting worst case scenarios-

DAWN

See! I knew--

SAMUEL

But you are forgetting one thing.  
(off Dawn's look)  
Nadya.

Dawn glances ahead at Nadya, confused.

DAWN

You think she's scaring away the bad guys?

SAMUEL

No... well, maybe she is. She is extremely powerful, but, as strong as she is, she can only follow the natural path the keys point toward each other. It is possible our unseen adversaries must follow the same rules, and if that is the case...

DAWN

We hold all the maps.

There's a RUMBLE like thunder. Dawn stares ahead thoughtfully as Devon and Jason share a look before turning their heads heavenward.

Dawn follows their lead and looks up. Her's eyes WIDEN.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

Exactly. So, it is not so much easy, as we are lucky.

DAWN

Oh yeah. We're really, really lucky. Run.

SAMUEL

Pardon?

Dawn grabs his arm and runs, pulling him with her. The others are on the same wavelength.

SAMUEL (OS)  
(absolute shock)  
Oh my-

Dawn chances a look upwards.

There's the sound of AIR FOLDING IN ON ITSELF as a MASSIVE SHAPE dives through the clouds high in the atmosphere. The CLOUDS SWIRL AWAY from the disturbance.

There's a loud SIGH of air, like someone taking a deep breath.

JASON  
Is it doing what I think it's  
doing?! Take cover!

His words are barely out when FIRE slams down from above.

Dawn and Samuel duck, the fire missing them, but coming very close to the others in front as they run for cover. They head toward a building--

A BIGGER SHAPE LURCHES UP over the building.

The dragon's CHEST GLOWS.

Dawn sees this: she's already worked it out.

Nadya and Devon duck behind the first available hiding spot. Jason rolls as the LARGER DRAGON ATTACKS THE FIREBREATHER.

Without waiting, Jason gets to his feet and takes off running into an alley. Devon and Nadya follow. Dawn and Samuel not far behind.

Dawn looks back as they enter the alley. There is the sound of FLESH TEARING. Dawn pulls away, grossed out.

The group race through the alley and back into open city.

There's the sound of ROCK FALLING. Dawn looks back. The large dragon CRASHES the firebreather against the roof of the building.

JASON  
Get down!

They all take cover as stone falls.

Samuel falls badly beside Dawn.

The larger dragon continues to fight the firebreather.

They drop out of sight. Far above them, more dragons CIRCLE the clouds.

DAWN  
Are you okay?

SAMUEL  
I think so.

DAWN  
Come on.

She helps him up.

JASON  
We're going to get roasted out here.

DAWN  
I'm not arguing with that.

KATRID  
PSST.

INT. SHELTER - NIGHT

Dawn stares in horror at Neko. Ingar helps him by working alongside him as they talk. She occasionally glances up to watch Samuel and Katrid.

DAWN  
So, they're science experiments gone wrong?

NEKO  
Not wrong. They were recreated perfectly. We, however, miscalculated the ingenuity of their simplistic nature: feed and procreate. They do both aggressively and with alarming efficiency. We should have relocated them to our test world sooner.

DAWN  
But to lose an entire planet to test a theory--

NEKO

As a people, we understand the risk of scientific exploration.  
(pointing at his lab equipment)

I am very close to the ends of my work. This viral agent will target the pilahn gland in a large percentile of the drah-gone population. I am confident my people can return one day.

JASON

So this stuff will kill them all?

NEKO

The gland is responsible for releasing the chemical that maintains their life-cycle. This will accelerate it. Significantly.

DAWN

You said large percentile. What about the ones who aren't affected?

NEKO

They will be relocated to our test world so that phase two testing can begin: integration of a larger predator.

Dawn and Jason stare in disbelief.

JASON

There's something bigger?

NEKO

Yes. A remarkable species that can survive any environment, including vacuums, where they maintain an indefinite dormant state. This we know, because we have found the few remnants of their species banished into blackest space. We do not, however, know what sent them there or how their numbers were thinned. It is rumoured that the Penance demon was once without equal. We will find its superior.

(smiling)

Forgive me. I must return to my work.

NADYA

Of course.

Nadya smiles, and looks toward Jason, as he motions toward Dawn.

Dawn notices Nadya's confusion as he moves away.

INT. SHELTER - LATER

Nadya and Jason are locked in a heavy conversation. N

adya is being brave as Jason holds her shoulders: looking very much the messenger of bad news. Dawn is saddened by it.

INGAR (O.S.)

Oh! You're bleeding.

Dawn glances at Devon, then back at the uncoupled couple - unsure of who needs her help more.

Jason moves away from Nadya, ignoring her almost immediately.

Decision made, Dawn bites her lip, and starts moving toward Nadya. She sees Nadya turn and follow Jason with her eyes; feels the sting of Jason ignoring Nadya and heading toward Devon.

Nadya puts two and two together: she understands and is devastated.

DAWN

Hey. Are you okay?

Nadya can't look at her. She keeps her eyes hidden.

NADYA

(broken)

I'm fine.

DAWN

If you need to talk--

CRASH

INGAR

No!

Dawn turns, sees the carnage.

DAWN

Oh God.

She rushes forward and pulls an unresponsive Ingar away.

Samuel is trying desperately to keep Katrid with him.

Devon is trapped. Jason can't get to her. Dawn looks around desperately for an out.

She sees Nadya - a woman growing from pain to FURY.

Her eyes BLACKEN.

LIGHTNING forms in one hand - she LASHES OUT.

The blast hitting the dragon dangerously close to Devon. Nadya begins moving forward, anger in each stride. She raises her other hand. Lightning shoots from both hands, not caring where it hits, as long as it destroys something.

Dawn's eyes are wide; in awe; afraid. There's so much power.

Jason rushes forward toward Devon.

NADYA

Jason, get out of there!

Nadya aims further up, trying to keep the power away from Jason.

He pulls Devon to safety. Nadya blinks and focuses away from him. The light in the room grows more intense. The roar of it all speaks of pain.

Dawn pulls herself away from Ingar and nears Nadya. She touches her shoulder.

DAWN

It's okay.

Nadya startles.

DAWN

It's okay. It's dead.

Nadya stares ahead, with no expression on her face. The dragon is indeed very, very dead.

KATRID

Monan!

Ingar races toward Katrid. They collapse in each others arms, sobbing. Samuel stands beside them, an honour guard.

The mood is very sombre.

JASON (O.S.)

Let me see.

Devon keeps her broken arm away from him, out of sight.

DEVON  
 (pulls away)  
 Let's just do what we came here for.

Jason reluctantly nods, and heads toward the bag he had earlier and retrieves a short sword.

He unsheathes it and approaches the dragon. Then stalls.

He stares at it; that sick look on his face again.

DEVON  
 Do you want me to do it?

He glares at her.

Dawn deftly walks between the two and grabs Jason's sword from him. She clambers up the dragon, kneels down and deftly STABS DOWN.

JASON (O.S.)  
 (sickly)  
 Yuck.

OFF DAWN, UNCONCERNED

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dawn scrubs away at a SHINY RED KEY in soapy water. She lifts it out of the sink, gives it the once over and smiles.

DAWN  
 Done.

HUGHLY  
 I'll go get Jason.

Nadya hands her a cloth. She's very quiet and subdued, her mind is elsewhere.

DAWN  
 (drying)  
 How are you feeling?

NADYA  
 Alright. Tired.

DAWN  
 It has been a hard day.

NADYA  
 Yes.

DAWN

I guess we should be glad it's almost over.

Nadya nods her head. Dawn places the key on the counter. She's concerned for her friend, but not sure how to tackle it.

DAWN

I'll probably go back to Italy. Try the college thing again. You could do something like that too. You know, a place with learning and social events that attract social interactions and--

NADYA

I know what you're trying to do.  
(small smile)  
Thank you.

JASON (O.S.)

You sure all the blood's off that thing?

Dawn rolls her eyes and grins at Nadya, before moving off.

DAWN

No, I left the best parts.

JASON

You are a cruel person.

They head into the safe room.

INT. TRAINING ROOM - SAME

Jason heads for the safe and goes about putting the key in.

DAWN

It's better this way, right?

Jason pauses without looking at her. He knows what she's talking about.

JASON

I don't know. I don't feel better. I know she doesn't.

He puts the key in the safe and shuts the door.

JASON

But at least she knows.

Dawn nods. They leave.

INT. APARTMENT - SAME

Hughly exits the study and heads swiftly towards Samuel. He seems anxious.

HUGHLY  
Would you care for a drink Mister  
Zabuto?

Without waiting for an answer, Hughly heads straight for the drinks cabinet and places two drinks on the counter. He pulls out an expensive looking decanter with deep golden liquid in it.

HUGHLY  
I think I'll have one too.

Dawn and Jason glance at each other, bemused. They head toward the two older men, as Nadya walks past them. She glances at Jason and nods her head, with a small smile. He nods back.

Dawn puts her arm around his.

DAWN  
It'll be okay.

JASON  
That your professional opinion?

Hughly downs his full glass and pours another one. Samuel's is still empty.

JASON  
(laughing)  
Hey! You offering any to the rest  
of us?

He shakes his head. Dawn smiles.

BOOM

BRICK AND MORTAR EXPLODES behind them.

Nadya and Devon TUMBLE into the room - obviously in the middle of a FIGHT.

There's complete shock on the faces of Samuel, Dawn and Jason.

JASON  
What the hell--

Devon and Nadya get to their feet swiftly.

Nadya readies LIGHTNING.

Devon curves her uninjured hand into a ball, but no apparent power can be seen.

DAWN

Stop it!

Jason rushes forward, in between them. Dawn nearby.

JASON

What the hell is going on?

NADYA

She attacked me! For no reason.

Devon does not lower her hand. She watches Nadya like a wary cat.

JASON

Wh- no. She... Devon?

Samuel nears the fracas.

SAMUEL

Is it true Devon?

Devon doesn't move. She's emotionless.

JASON

Dev? Come on. Say something. This makes no sense. Devon, I know you feel bad about what happened today, but acting out against Nadya--

DEVON

I don't feel bad. About today. About any other day. It's what I am. It's what I do.

JASON

You can't control what happens.

Devon regards them all darkly.

DEVON

Oh. Can't I?

She stares him down. There is a heavy silence on them all.

DAWN

Why are you doing this? What are you doing?

DEVON

The work that I have to do. The reason I'm here. You don't have to understand. You don't have to like it.

Devon lowers her head, but keeps her eyes squarely on Nadya.

DEVON

You just need to know that it's not over yet.

Dawn, Jason and Samuel are beyond confused.

Devon gives a small smile - a sincere smile, with no malice - turns around and runs toward one of the large panelled windows.

Keeping her broken arm in front of her, she DIVES TOWARD THE GLASS AS IT SHATTERS before she hits it.

Dawn and Jason run toward the edge and look down.

She's gone.

Hughly joins them, unaffected.

HUGHLY

I suppose I'd better get that fixed.

OFF JASON AND DAWN'S SHOCK AND CONFUSION

FADE OUT.

END SHOW