

CONNOR

"All the Hard Choices"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN.

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

We're in midair following an AIRPLANE as it starts to descend through the clouds. The Los Angeles skyline can be seen just at the bottom of the frame.

CONNOR (V.O.)
My name is Connor. I guess I
should talk about who I am, what my
purpose is...

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

We FOLLOW the shapely rear end of a flight attendant as she walks down the aisle.

CONNOR (V.O.)
On the other hand, forget all that
crap. I'm not even sure myself.

ARC AROUND to the front of the attendant as she stops at a passenger a few seats in front of Connor and offers a drink.

PULL BACK to reveal CONNOR in the very back of the plane, secluded from the rest of the passengers by a couple of empty rows.

He's wearing an iPod and barely looks awake.

PILOT (O.S.)
(filtered through
intercom)
*Ladies and gentlemen, we're
beginning our final approach to
LAX. We should be touching down in
about ten minutes. Temperature
tonight is a brisk 77 degrees. The
flight attendants will be around to
offer you any last minute
refreshments. Thank you for flying
with us today.*

The attendant reaches Connor and lightly taps him on the shoulder to get his attention. He removes his iPod headphones.

ATTENDANT
Sir, can I offer you a drink before
we start our final descent?

CONNOR
No, I'm good. Thanks.

He reaches over to a bag in the seat next to him. PUSH IN past the attendant to a close up on Connor.

ATTENDANT (O.S.)
Well, would you mind if I had one?

Connor looks back up at the attendant, standing in full VAMP FACE.

CONNOR
(muttering)
Friendly skies...

He looks in front of him. Every passenger in the next four rows are VAMPIRES too!

BACK ON the attendant as she growls and lunges at the camera.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - NIGHT

Various passengers are exiting the tunnel leading to the plane. They chatter amongst themselves, some of them greeting people in the waiting area with hugs and kisses.

Connor comes out last. His hair is a mess. His clothes are torn, and there's dust all over him.

A nearby RECEPTIONIST rushes up to him.

RECEPTIONIST
(alarmed)
Sir, are you alright?

CONNOR
Yeah, I'm good. You might want to get a vacuum cleaner though.

He walks away, shaking some loose dust out of his hair. The receptionist watches him, quite confused.

INT. AIRPLANE - SAME TIME

We TRACK through the empty plane. The first class area is immaculate. Through the curtains to the coach area. The front section looks fine.

When we get to the wing, we see a pile of DUST in the aisle. Followed by several piles in seats. The very back of the plane where Connor was sitting is coated in dust.

Several arm rests and drink trays are scattered on the floor.
Hell of a fight.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. GABRIELLA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A taxi pulls into frame. WRAP AROUND to Connor paying the driver and getting out of the backseat. The driver also gets out and retrieves Connor's luggage for him as Connor stares at the house.

No car in the driveway. All the lights are off. It looks deserted.

The driver finishes unloading Connor's stuff and with a shared nod, he drives off. Connor walks up to the front door and produces a KEY, the same one Gabriella gave him months ago.

He tries it on the door with no luck. With a loud sigh, he walks back down to the street where his bags sit. He stops as he notices something to his right.

PAN OVER to a grass and a 'For Sale' sign. A 'Sold' banner overlays it.

CONNOR
(to himself)
Wonderful.

He bundles his bags up in his arms and slowly walks away.

EXT. THE CHARON HIGH RISE COMPLEX - NIGHT

Establishing shot of this high rise condo building. The word "Charon" is displayed prominently above the door.

INT. HALLWAY - THE CHARON - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on a peephole of a door. Connor's hand comes into frame and knocks three times.

The door opens to reveal GABRIELLA HERON, slender, mid twenties, long black hair, gorgeous.

Her face lights up as the camera rotates to show a haggard looking Connor.

PULL BACK to the side to show Connor's luggage bundled up in his arms.

GABRIELLA
(excited)
Hey you!

CONNOR

Hey.

GABRIELLA

What are you doing here?

CONNOR

Ah, nothing much. Got bored in Europe, so I figured walking through downtown Los Angeles in eighty degrees carrying sixty pounds of luggage would be much more fun.

(beat; off luggage)

Not to intrude or anything, but would you mind...

GABRIELLA

Oh God, I'm sorry. Come in.

She relieves him of two of the bags...the lightest ones. Connor enters behind her.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - CONTINUOUS

Connor gets about three steps past the threshold and promptly drops everything else he's holding, totally exhausted.

He takes in the surroundings. Just about every square inch of wall space is covered with various pieces of artwork, trinkets, and a massive bookshelf packed with thick, old looking books.

The furniture is high quality leather. There's a huge projection television with surround sound. It looks like a guy's bachelor pad.

Gabriella's taken to stacking up a few magazines on her living room table. Connor eyes her warily.

GABRIELLA

When did you get back?

CONNOR

(unsure)

Couple of hours ago.

She's fluffing the pillows on the couch now.

GABRIELLA

Was the flight okay? I bet it was pretty long.

CONNOR
Couple of layovers. Killed a
couple dozen vampires. I kept
busy.

She's closing the blinds to her bay windows.

GABRIELLA
(not looking)
Can I get you something to dr-

CONNOR
(exasperated)
Gabriella!

Gabriella turns and meets Connor's eyes, trepidation written
all over her.

CONNOR
It's okay to hug me.

There's a beat. Gabriella slowly moves around the couch,
letting out a sigh.

GABRIELLA
(relieved)
Thank you.

She practically tackles him in a tight bear hug. Connor
returns the warm embrace.

CONNOR
(softly)
Think I left the door open.

Gabriella, whose back is to the door, reaches back and swipes
her hand through the air. The door closes immediately. She
pulls her arm back into the hug.

Clearly neither of them plan on letting this go anytime soon.

CONNOR
By the way...

Gabriella lets go and backs up a bit, holding Connor's
biceps. Connor holds her by the waist.

CONNOR
Thanks for the heads up on the
relocation.

GABRIELLA
(smiling)
Sorry about that. How'd you find me
anyway?

Connor touches his nose.

CONNOR
I could never forget that scent.

They finally let go of one another, Gabriella beaming from ear to ear.

A low whimper out of frame diverts Connor's attention. PULL DOWN to show a full grown Scottish terrier.

CONNOR
Hey, who is this?

Connor bends down and rubs the dog's head.

GABRIELLA
This is Lesi.

Connor looks back up at her.

GABRIELLA
It's umm short for...

CONNOR
Yeah, I get it.

GABRIELLA
(avoiding)
So how about that drink?

CONNOR
Well, I'm a little tired. Do you
have any coffee?

GABRIELLA
No, but there's a Starbucks around
the corner.

CONNOR
(pointing behind himself)
Yeah, I remember passing one on the
way over.

GABRIELLA
That way? I was talking about the
one-

(MORE)

GABRIELLA (CONT'D)
(points in the other
direction)
-on that corner.

CONNOR
(smiling)
I missed this town.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Gabriella and Connor are walking down a faintly busy main street, both holding cups of coffee.

GABRIELLA
You met the Buffy Summers?

CONNOR
You say it like she's some rock
star.

GABRIELLA
Well, to those in the know, she's
pretty famous.

CONNOR
I didn't think much of her. Nice
girl, but I don't go for blondes.
That's my dad's thing.
(winking at Gabriella)
I'm more a brunette kind of guy.

GABRIELLA
(rolls eyes)
Riiiiight.

She says it as if the word were two syllables.

GABRIELLA
So it was a good trip then?

CONNOR
Sure, if you count the fact that I
ran out of money a week into it.
The Watcher's Council set me up
though.

GABRIELLA
I don't know how you put up with
those people for that long.

CONNOR
They weren't all that bad. Just
really...British.

GABRIELLA

They're a bunch of self important,
uptight, shady politicians posing
as the good guys.

CONNOR

Says the woman who worked for
Wolfram and Hart.

Gabriella scowls. That hit a nerve.

CONNOR

(bowing his head)
Sorry.

GABRIELLA

No, it's okay.

CONNOR

They weren't all bad though, just a
little weird. I felt like a 3rd
grade science project the way some
of them were gushing over me.

GABRIELLA

How much did you tell them about
your origins?

CONNOR

Not much. I mentioned The Destroyer
and they sort of ran with that. By
the way, you ever seen what that
thing really looks like?

GABRIELLA

In native form? Yeah.

They both shudder in disgust.

CONNOR

(wry)
I also casually mentioned that the
spell wiped out my college
registration and bank account.

Gabriella stares at him blankly, then her mouth opens in a
silent 'oh' as she gets it.

GABRIELLA

How much did they give you?

CONNOR
 Enough. I'm not rich or anything,
 but I'm set for awhile. Got some
 forged diplomas and stuff, so I can
 get back in school too.

GABRIELLA
 Well, that's good.

CONNOR
 Yeah.
 (beat)
 So...why the move?

GABRIELLA
 (bows her head)
 After that whole mess with Drusilla
 and...yeah, I couldn't be there
 anymore. Got a good price on the
 house, enough to buy the condo.

CONNOR
 Right.

He waits for her to continue, but she's done talking.

CONNOR
 So...that's it?

GABRIELLA
 Pretty much. Got a reception job
 that gets me out of the house, so
 I'm not a total hermit.

CONNOR
 What about...Alessia's old shop?

GABRIELLA
 (sighs)
 Surprisingly, she listed me as her
 benefactor. Insurance wrote all the
 damage off as gang violence and
 give me a check for the repairs.
 Thinking I'm just going to sell it
 though.

CONNOR
 You sure about that?

GABRIELLA
 I don't know.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

GABRIELLA (CONT'D)

There's nothing there for me
anymore.

They come to a huddle of people at a street corner, waiting for a light to change. An attractive older woman stands at the front of the group.

A THIEF in a ski mask zips past the group, snatching the woman's purse and necklace as he moves.

OLDER WOMAN

(shocked)

Hey!

Gabriella turns to the departing thief, her eyes starting to sparkle yellow. She raises her hand, but Connor grabs her wrist and puts it back down.

GABRIELLA

(surprised)

What?

Connor looks at the thief, then back to Gabriella, a pleading look in his eyes.

Gabriella scoffs and rolls her eyes.

GABRIELLA

Fine. Go be a guy.

Connor grins and takes off running.

ANGLE ON our thief bumping into people, his breath coming in ragged gasps.

ZOOM BACK TO Connor effortlessly ducking, dodging, and weaving in and out of the crowd, never losing sight of his target.

ON SCENE

The thief sprints across an intersection. By the time Connor reaches it, the streetlight has turned green and cars are zooming by.

ANGLE ON Connor watching the cars go by. In the distance, the culprit is getting away. CLOSE IN on Connor as he smirks.

ON SCENE

Connor gets a running start and LEAPS onto the hood of a moving car.

CUT TO the interior of the car and a very startled driver ducking his head as his roof sinks a back.

BACK TO Connor jumping to another moving car, almost playing hopscotch as he crosses the busy intersection.

He takes one final huge bound, landing on the back of a van as it turns on the street the thief is running down.

CUT TO a front shot of the thief. In the background, we see the van gaining on him, Connor poised on all fours like a cat looking to strike.

OVERHEAD SHOT as Connor leaps off the van, over a nearby newsstand. He shoulder rams the thief in the back, knocking him down.

ON SCENE

Connor rolls with the landing to his feet, turning and taking the time to dust his shirt off. He has the ski mask in his hand.

A crowd is quickly gathering around them, having seen Connor's stunt. The thief scrambles to his feet, the contents of his stolen purse spilling out.

He quickly scrambles to his feet and we get a good look at him now. He's young, a few years younger than Connor, and mightily pissed off.

THIEF

(irate)

You crazy bastard!

The thief rushes in and swings a wild haymaker at Connor, who cuts an angle and counters with a perfectly timed left hook, dropping his assailant to his back.

Connor quickly mounts him and triangles the right forearm between his own left hand and right forearm.

CONNOR

(cranks the arm one way)

Broken fibula. Orthoscopic surgery.

About 3 months in a cast.

The thief howls in pain.

CONNOR

(cranks a different way)

Dislocated shoulder.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)
6 weeks in a sling. About a month
of rehab. Pick one.

He cranks harder to make his point. The thief squirms from underneath, but without full control of his arm, he's not going anywhere.

CONNOR
(matter of fact)
Or you can give the purse back,
apologize, and spend about a month
in jail. Sound good?

THIEF
(gritted teeth)
You. Don't. Understand.

Connor looks down at him, confused by that remark. PULL BACK to show the now enormous crowd watching the whole thing.

Gabriella and the thief's victim push their way to the front of the crowd, along with a couple of POLICE OFFICERS.

Connor releases the thief to the custody of the officers, one of whom gives him a nod of respect as they drag him off.

The woman walks up and collecting her belongings. Connor helps her as multiple cameras flash around them.

CONNOR
I am in Los Angeles, right? They're
taking pictures of us like crime is
a rarity.

WOMAN
Well it isn't, but good samaritans
such as yourself are.
(extends her hand)
Selene Alba.

CONNOR
(shaking it)
Connor.

ANGLE ON one particular piece of jewelry lying on the ground.

ANGLE ON Gabriella staring at it, a thoughtful expression on her face.

BACK TO Connor and Selene standing back up. The cameras are still flashing.

CONNOR
(agitated)
This is getting ridiculous.

SELENE
(exasperated)
I'm sure it'll make the headlines tomorrow. Great fodder for my opponent.

CONNOR
Come again?

SELENE
I'm running for a seat in the city council.

She pulls out a business card and hands it to Connor.

SELENE
If you wouldn't mind, could you stop by my headquarters tomorrow? I'd like to show my gratitude.

CONNOR
You don't need to do that.

SELENE
Well, could you stop by anyway? In the morning, I'm sure I'll have a slew of reporters on my front lawn. If you could just give your story, it'd clear any negative press I could get out of this.

CONNOR
Umm...sure. No problem.

SELENE
Thank you...er...Connor, is it?

Connor nods. Selene smiles and starts pushing her way through the crowd, shielding her eyes from the cameras.

Gabriella approaches Connor, still looking deep in thought. They both watch Selene and her traveling press conference leave the scene.

GABRIELLA
You okay?

CONNOR
 (distracted)
 Yeah.
 (looks at her)
 What's with you?

GABRIELLA
 Nothing, just...thought I
 recognized something. Didn't get a
 good enough look.

CONNOR
 Mystical?

GABRIELLA
 I don't know. My eyesight's
 terrible.

CONNOR
 Well, if it's any help...
 (off Selene)
 ...she's not human.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

Lesi rushes up to meet Connor and Gabriella at the door.
 Connor ignores the dog and heads straight for the bookshelf.

CONNOR
 (looking at the books)
 We need to find out what kind of
 demon she is.

GABRIELLA
 (petting Lesi)
 A bit paranoid, aren't you?

Connor goes to pull one book out, but pulls his hand back.

CONNOR
 Never take your chances with
 demons.

GABRIELLA
 Well there's not much to go on.
 Unless your nose is a smellapedia
 of demonic pheromones...

Connor is still looking through the volumes of books.

CONNOR
 (agitated)
 I'm being serious here.

GABRIELLA

So am I. There's about 10 million citizens in the greater Los Angeles area. Twenty five percent of that is comprised of demons. You randomly encounter one and all of a sudden it's a jihad?

CONNOR

Oh, I see. Gotcha. So you must not have been around when the sun was blacked out of the sky. Or the rain of fire. Or the other couple dozen apocalypses...apocalypsi...apocali..whatever.

GABRIELLA

And a chance encounter with a demon when the human in the scenario was the bad guy makes you think the end of the world is coming? I think you're being a little too jumpy.

CONNOR

(sighs)

You're probably right. Look, I've had a long flight and I'm tired. Just wanna grab a shower and get some sleep.

GABRIELLA

(nodding)

Okay. Come on, Lesi. Dinner time.

She heads off towards the kitchen, Lesi trailing behind her. Connor looks around the room confused.

CONNOR

(thinking out loud)

Bathroom...bathroom.

GABRIELLA (O.S.)

There's a shower in your room.

CONNOR

(surprised)

I have a room?

GABRIELLA (O.S.)

I figured you'd be back eventually. Sprung for a two bed.

Connor smiles and shakes his head in disbelief as he heads towards a nearby bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - THE CHARON - CONTINUOUS

PAN AROUND the room. It's completely bare. The bed immaculately made. No decoration to be found anywhere.

Connor heads to a walk in closet and opens it up.

ANGLE ON the closet, full of women's clothing and shoes.

He shuts the closet and a picture on the nightstand catches his eye. It's of Gabriella with her deceased husband and child.

This isn't his room.

GABRIELLA (O.S.)

Hey.

Connor turns to see Gabriella in the doorway, drinking a bottled water.

GABRIELLA

(pointing behind her)

Your room's across the hall.

INT. CONNOR'S BATHROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

PAN ACROSS the drawn shower curtain, the silhouette of Connor's upper body is visible through it.

CUT TO a close up of a soaking wet Connor as the shower water runs down the back of his head and neck. He exhales deeply.

PAN UP to a small shower radio hanging on the wall. Connor's hand comes into frame and clicks it on.

MALE VOICE

(through radio)

With the dissolution of the Los Angeles branch of Wolfram and Hart, many city developers are scrambling to-

Connor tunes to another station.

FEMALE VOICE

(through radio)

-district race between candidates Selene Alba and Adrian Combs comes to an end this Friday.

(MORE)

FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)
*The two candidates will have one
 final opportunity to sway voters
 with a public debate-*

ANGLE ON Connor frowning as he tries again.

MALE VOICE
 (through radio)
*-veral local business owners are
 pooling their resources in an
 attempt to secure a stronger
 footing in-*

CONNOR
 (frustrated)
 The hell?

He turns the radio off. No chance for music to ease his clouded mind.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

Gabriella runs her finger across the spines of the various books on the shelf. She settles on one and pulls it out.

INT. CONNOR'S BATHROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

ANGLE ON the water faucet as Connor's hand turns it off.

ANGLE ON the towel being wrapped around his waist.

CONNOR'S POV

The shower curtain hangs in front of us. Connor's hand reaches up and pulls it aside to reveal DARLA leaning casually against the door.

ON SCENE

CONNOR
 (startled)
 Jesus!

DARLA
 (waving)
 Hey.

Connor blinks, still in disbelief.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

Gabriella is sitting in the lotus position on the couch, her eyes closed, her breathing coming in slow, controlled heaves.

The book she grabbed earlier lies open on the coffee table in front of her.

A low gust of wind seems to come from nowhere, billowing through her hair. PULL AWAY from her as she starts to LEVITATE off the couch.

INT. CONNOR'S BATHROOM - THE CHARON - SAME TIME

Judging by Connor's heaving shoulders, he's still recovering from being startled.

CONNOR

Wha? Huh?

DARLA

(rolling her eyes)

We going to go through this every time I show up?

CONNOR

Sorry. I haven't exactly adjusted to getting visits from my dead mom.

Darla moves over to lean against the sink.

DARLA

The trip's not so pleasant on my end either. You think you have jet lag right now?

Connor holds up a hand to stop her.

CONNOR

Please, can we just get to the point? I've had a long day.

Darla looks a little hurt by that comment, but quickly regains her composure.

DARLA

The higher ups are a little concerned that you don't completely understand what it is you're meant to do.

CONNOR

Thought it was pretty straightforward. Some omnipotent ancient being shows up and I kick its ass. Lather, rinse-

DARLA

So you really think you're meant to save the world?

CONNOR

I'm a-

(makes airquotes)

-champion right? Isn't that what I'm supposed to do?

DARLA

Save the world from what exactly?

CONNOR

(unsure)

The...the bad guys.

DARLA

Well I know where you got the naivete from. Connor, you're not meant to save the world. Quite frankly, it doesn't need saving.

CONNOR

This really couldn't wait until I was out of the shower?

DARLA

This world's been around for billions of years. Comparatively speaking, the existence of mortals like us is like a miniscule second. Do you really think any single power is capable of destroying it?

Connor leans against the wall opposite his mother as he takes that in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - SAME TIME

We rotate around Gabriella, still in lotus position with her hair lifting and tossing from an invisible wind. She's a good six feet off the ground now. The room is only lit by the white swirling energy radiating from her body.

CLOSE IN on her as we hear multiple WHISPERS. Her eyes slowly open, realization clear on her face. The energy fades slowly away.

GABRIELLA

Oh crap.

She falls out of frame, yelping in shock.

INT. CONNOR'S BATHROOM - THE CHARON - SAME TIME

Back where we left them.

CONNOR

So if I'm not meant to save the world, then what the hell do...
(points to the ceiling)
they want with me?

DARLA

Just because the world can't be completely destroyed doesn't mean it can't be changed.

CONNOR

I'm supposed to change the world?

DARLA

No.

Connor throws his hands up. He's completely lost now.

DARLA

Some events, some people, some things are meant to happen. Change the world and push it along its natural evolution. Then there's stuff that isn't supposed to happen. There's a balance to be maintained. You, my darling boy, are supposed to be the keeper of that balance.

CONNOR

Who determines what is and isn't meant to happen? The Powers and the Senior Partners?

DARLA

There's negotiations and this and that. It's all very bureaucratic.

CONNOR

And how am I supposed to know? You going to show up and lay it out for me?

DARLA

Nope. You'll get some hints here and there. May want to pay attention to the radio more often.

CONNOR

Damn. I was hoping it'd be as easy
as someone bursting in and saying-

Gabriella swings the door open, nearly out of breath. A
frightened Connor drops his towel.

GABRIELLA

We've got a problem!
(looks at Connor)
Gah!

She averts her eyes and covers them with her hand. Connor
looks back in Darla's direction. She's not there anymore.
He pulls his towel back up.

CONNOR

How big of a problem?

GABRIELLA

It's...pretty big.

Off Gabriella still covering her eyes, we:

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - NIGHT

Connor is fully dressed now. Both he and Gabriella are seated on the couch with a stack of Gabriella's books scattered across the table.

GABRIELLA

One of the things that fell out of Alba's purse was a gem I knew I recognized.

CONNOR

So you just looked it up? I thought we were dropping this.

GABRIELLA

(looking at Connor)

You had a feeling. That's enough reason to look into it.

She points to a picture of a drawing in the book.

GABRIELLA

Scion's Pendant.

CONNOR

How'd you know it in the first place?

GABRIELLA

It used to belong to Wolfram and Hart.

CONNOR

(sighs)

Of course it did.

GABRIELLA

We...they kept all sorts of talismans, artifacts, and scrolls in their archives. When your dad took down the local office, all that stuff was auctioned off on the black market.

CONNOR

What does it do?

GABRIELLA

I'm not sure, but there's more.

Connor looks at her questioningly.

GABRIELLA

I tried this thing Alessia taught me. See, every person, human or demon, has a...a flow I guess. It connects them to their native dimension and binds their physical presence to their spiritual one.

CONNOR

Meaning?

GABRIELLA

When I looked into hers, well, her body is still human, but it's basically a shell. The spirit residing within, the demon, wasn't tied to this physical plane.

CONNOR

So the human girl is possessed?

GABRIELLA

Or it's simply a very good glamour spell. Either way, that demon isn't supposed to be here.

CONNOR

And you did all this just because I had a bad feeling?

GABRIELLA

That and I was bored. You take long showers. Whatever the case, if she went through all that trouble, she has an agenda. Like any good politician, knock on wood, she can't be trusted.

Connor nods in agreement.

EXT. LAPD PRECINCT - NIGHT

The front doors open and our thief from earlier emerges.

ANGLE ON a stretch limo waiting outside for him. The window rolls down and a stern faced man in his mid forties stares a hole right through our thief. This is ADRIAN COMBS.

THIEF

Dad, I-

ADRIAN
In the car, Colin.

Colin climbs in, not looking too happy about it.

INT. LIMO - NIGHT

Colin hangs his head in shame. This sort of detachment is something he's experienced before.

COLIN
I'm sorry.

ADRIAN
Not as sorry as I am. I ask you to do one simple thing that actually plays to your delinquent tendencies and you can't even do that for me?

Colin opts to look at the fine scenery outside his window, trying to tune out the berating.

ADRIAN
I'm behind in the polls already and Alba's sure to use this debacle to get more media on her.

COLIN
Maybe they'll think it's a publicity stunt?

ADRIAN
If I want your opinion, I'll tell you what it is, so you can repeat it back to me. Your screw up messed up the whole strategy.

COLIN
Stealing her jewelry and using it to blackmail her into dropping out?
(sarcastic)
Great plan dad.

Colin recoils as Adrian's hand snaps up, almost striking him in the face. Adrian calms himself and hands Colin a file folder instead.

ADRIAN
These are photos of the kid who caught you. According to a tape of the conversation he had with Alba, his name is Connor.

COLIN

Connor...?

ADRIAN

Just Connor. That's all he said. Alba asked him to meet her at her campaign office. Stake it out, follow that kid, get me some dirt. Alba will spin this disaster into a PR bouquet for her. I need to counteract that.

COLIN

Isn't this something you hire like a P.I. for or something?

ADRIAN

It always shows up on the books, even if you pay someone under the table. Consider this your segue into the political world.

COLIN

By stalking a guy and getting dirt on him?

ADRIAN

It's how we all got our start. What do you think prosecutors do when they're not in courtrooms?

Father and son share a smile. It's forced on both ends.

ANGLE ON the sky. TIME LAPSE SHOT of the sun rising in the sky.

INT. ALBA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Connor and Gabriella step into a political jungle. There are signs, banners, hats, t-shirts, all bearing Selene Alba propaganda.

The lady herself is in the middle of an interview. She catches Connor out of the corner of her eye and motions for the reporter and cameraman to follow her.

SELENE

(beaming)

Cameron!

CONNOR

(bitter)

Connor.

SELENE

Connor. Of course.

(turns to the camera)

This is the wonderful young man who stopped that boy last night from getting away.

(to Connor)

I can't thank you enough for your help. It's fine young men like you that serve as an example for the children of our fair city.

Gabriella looks like she's about to choke on all the bullshit. Selene is obviously playing to the cameras.

SELENE

Connor, do you have anything you would like to say?

ANGLE ON Connor as the camera, complete with blinding light, turns to him. Literally a deer in headlights.

CONNOR

(nervous)

Um. No.

SELENE

He's so modest too. The mark of a true hero.

Gabriella can't help but let out a laugh of disbelief.

SELENE

(to the reporter)

Thank you for coming by today.

(to the camera)

And to all you voters out there, remember this Tuesday is the big day.

She shoos the cameraman and reporter away, visibly sagging once the little red light isn't on anymore.

SELENE

Thanks for stopping by. Let me show you around a bit.

GABRIELLA

I can't imagine the amount of resources you must need to run a campaign like this.

SELENE
I'm sorry Miss?

GABRIELLA
(haughtily)
Oh where ARE my manners?
(extends her hand)
Gabriella Heron.

SELENE
(shaking hands)
Yes, Miss Heron. It does a lot to
pull this sort of thing off.
Sometimes it's a matter of knowing
the right people.

GABRIELLA
That how you got your hands on
Scion's Pendant?

Now it's Selene's turn to look like a deer in headlights.

SELENE
(nervous)
Umm...would you mind if we spoke in
private?

GABRIELLA
(fake smile)
Not at all. Lead the way.

Selene turns sharply and walks towards a private office.
Connor and Gabriella trail behind her.

CONNOR
(whispering)
Nice subtlety there.

GABRIELLA
(whispering)
I'm a master of it.

They follow Selene into:

INT. SELENE'S OFFICE - ALBA'S HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Selene quickly locks the door behind her. She makes sure all
the blinds are closed before turning to the duo.

GABRIELLA
We already know you're not human
either, so let's skip all that
ambiguity.

SELENE

You're not going to try to cut my head off?

CONNOR

(caught off guard)

No.

SELENE

Forgive me, but my experience with your kind has never been pleasant.

CONNOR

(deadpan)

Well, decapitation doesn't always work on demons anyway. Sometimes it takes a bit more hacking. Fire every now and then.

Selene stiffens a bit at that. Not the answer she wanted.

GABRIELLA

What are you anyway?

Selene sighs and closes her eyes. An ethereal grey energy surrounds her, growing in intensity until it blankets her whole body.

The light dissipates to reveal Alba's true form. Same height and weight, blue skin, solid green eyes, dark blue lips, and spiked red hair.

Gabriella looks almost in awe. Connor tries to fight a snicker and fails miserably.

SELENE

Something funny?

CONNOR

Sorry. You just look like the receptionist from Beetlejuice.

SELENE

(incredulous)

I'm Smyrnic.

CONNOR

That near France?

GABRIELLA

Smyrnic? I wasn't aware there were any of you in this dimension.

SELENE

A small group of us migrated here
just a few months ago.

(taps the pendant)

My home dimension wasn't conducive
to raising a family.

GABRIELLA

And now you're running for office?
How are you even qualified to do
this?

SELENE

Got my law degree through online
courses over the past few years.
Back home, T3 LAN lines are pretty
cheap.

CONNOR

I don't get it though. Why are you
running?

SELENE

When Wolfram and Hart packed up and
moved out of Los Angeles, a power
vacuum was left. That law firm had
a hand in everything in this city.
Now with a void left there by their
departure-

CONNOR

(catching on)

Every mogul and their mother wants
a slice.

SELENE

Precisely. God forsaken company
wasn't the paragon of good, but
they were fairly accepting of the
demon world. There are other
sources of power in this city that
aren't quite as...open minded I
guess you could say.

GABRIELLA

Like Adrian Combs?

CONNOR

Who?

SELENE

(nodding)

My opponent.

GABRIELLA

(to Connor)

He's infamous in the demon world for being something of a tyrant. About a decade ago, he supposedly referred a horde known as the Scourge here to wipe out a part of the demon population.

Connor looks back and forth between them.

CONNOR

I'm supposed to feel bad about this?

SELENE

I beg your pardon?

CONNOR

Sounds like he's doing the world a favor.

SELENE

(snapping)

How dare you!

Her eyes flash with the outburst. Connor recoils and instinctively gets his hands up to defend himself. Selene quickly calms herself.

SELENE

I'm sorry, I just...I'm a demon, yes, but Combs is a monster. Look, I own a halfway house for wayward demons that Combs has been trying to get rid of for the last year. Part of the reason I'm running is to keep it open.

GABRIELLA

How noble and charitable of you.

SELENE

Don't patronise me. Look, just come down and see the place. It wouldn't kill you to see how the other side lives.

Gabriella and Connor share a look. They're both asking the same question to one another. Connor sighs and turns to Selene.

CONNOR
When and where?

A flash of light returns Selene to her human form.

EXT. ALBA CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Pull away from a shot of the front door to the interior of a car across the street.

ANGLE ON Colin Combs on his stakeout.

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

Establishing shot of a street corner in a rundown part of town now. Connor and Gabriella are leaning against her car, both drinking coffee.

CONNOR
So...

GABRIELLA
You thinking trap too?

CONNOR
Pretty much.

GABRIELLA
So why'd we come?

CONNOR
(shrugs)
Morbid curiosity?

GABRIELLA
Do I have to say it?

CONNOR
(shaking his head)
I never liked cats anyway.

A transit bus pulls into frame. ARC AROUND the bus to show passengers departing, including Selene, she smiles and waves goodbye to the passengers.

Gabriella and Connor share a confused look before waving her over.

CONNOR
The bus? Shouldn't you be in a limo or something?

SELENE

Public transportation gets me
closer to the people. I get more
votes that way.

Gabriella rolls her eyes. Oh please. They start walking down
the street, Selene leading the way. Connor looks around at
the run down buildings surrounding them.

CONNOR

Not exactly the safer confines of
downtown LA.

SELENE

The lower class neighborhoods are
more in the know about the demon
population. Most of the demons in
this town squat here...

She trails off as something in front of her catches her
attention.

ARC AROUND to a large apartment building in front of her, a
raging fire burning inside it.

GABRIELLA

Oh no.

Gabriella whips out a cellphone and dials 911.

GABRIELLA

(into phone)

Yes. I want to report a fire at-

(to Selene)

What's the address here?

Selene doesn't answer, her attention fully on the fire in
front of her. Gabriella grabs her arm and shakes her back to
reality.

GABRIELLA

Address!

SELENE

2727 Lansdowne Drive.

GABRIELLA

(into phone)

2727...Connor!

PULL BACK to show Connor has already taken off towards the
complex.

ZOOM AHEAD to a ledge on the building to show a young female demon perched on the window sill. Smoke pours out of the window and the room itself seems to be completely ablaze.

Connor cups his hands to his mouth as he runs, never breaking stride.

 CONNOR
 (yelling)
 What room are you in?

 DEMON
 (yelling)
 230.

Connor picks up the speed, busting through the front door into:

INT. DEMON SAFEHOUSE - EVENING

Several demons are laid out on the ground. Most of them sporting bruises and blood stains on their bodies.

PAN OVER to the stairs to show one in particular littered with gunshot wounds. Connor leaps into frame, landing on the fifth step. He quickly ascends.

BACK TO our endangered demon on the ledge. A burst of flame shoots out the window, causing her to slip on the ledge. She grabs a pipe to steady herself, but her grip is weakening.

CUT TO Connor almost flying up the stairs, dodging falling bits of flaming debris as he moves.

BACK TO the demon. CLOSE UP on her hands slowly slipping off the pipe. All of the sound drops out except for her panicked breathing.

Her grip continues to loosen and she whimpers in fright.

CUT TO Connor reaching apartment 230. He tries the doorknob and singes his hand, quickly pulling it away.

He takes two steps back and kicks the door in.

ARC AROUND to face Connor, the fire prominent in the foreground. He shields his face from heat and spots the window over to the left, completely blocked by the fire.

Frantically, he looks around for some way to help.

CLOSE UP on the demon's eyes, wide open in terror.

ANGLE ON Connor heaving a bookshelf in the air and throwing it on the fire in front of him. The impact creates enough of a break in the fire for him to get through.

CUT TO the demon, finally letting go. She barely has time to scream before Connor reaches out the window, just managing to catch her wrist with his hand.

CONNOR
(strained)
Hi there.

CUT TO the outside of the apartment. Connor walks out with the demon, who is still badly shaken up.

CONNOR
(pointing to the stairs)
That way's clear. Get yourself to safety.

DEMON
(frantic)
No. My baby brother. I have to save him.

CONNOR
I'll get him. Where is he?

DEMON
Third floor with my father. 316.

CONNOR
Got it.
(running off)
Get out of here!

ANGLE ON the demon, standing there looking dumbfounded.

EXT. DEMON SAFEHOUSE - EVENING

Gabriella and Selene watch helplessly as the inferno rages on. Selene's face slowly changes to an expression of fury.

Behind them, several FIRE TRUCKS are rounding the corner.

INT. DEMON SAFEHOUSE - EVENING

ANGLE ON a door leading to a stairwell. It swings open to reveal Connor, looking left and right, getting his bearings.

ANGLE ON an apartment door labeled '316.' A foot comes into frame, knocking it off its hinges.

INT. APARTMENT 316 - EVENING

Connor enters the apartment. A baby's crying can be heard in the background. This apartment is engulfed in flames as well.

Another demon lies face down on the ground. Connor turns it over. The face is swollen almost beyond the point of recognition. One of the arms is bent at a horrific angle. Someone beat the hell out of it.

ANGLE ON Connor shaking his head in remorse. The crying from earlier snaps his head around. He runs into a neighboring bedroom.

A carriage lies off to the right. Connor runs over and scoops the tiny demon in his arms. He starts to leave the way he came in and stops cold.

ANGLE ON the fire having spread to the entire apartment. The door frame to the bedroom is going up.

Connor looks around for another exit.

EXT. DEMON SAFEHOUSE - EVENING

Several FIREFIGHTERS are spraying water into the windows, hoping to quell the blaze.

Gabriella is watching the whole thing. Selene is nowhere to be seen.

CLOSE UP on a window on the third floor. A body comes CRASHING through it in slow motion.

WIDE ANGLE on the body sailing out of the window in slow motion, the legs kicking back and forth. SPEED UP as the figure continues to fall, finally landing on both feet on the ground.

ANGLE ON Connor standing back up. The sidewalk is cracked from the force of his landing.

 CONNOR
 (pained)
 Oww.

He pulls back his jacket, which was cradled in his arms, to reveal the baby, safe and sound.

ANGLE ON the baby, gurgling with delight.

CONNOR
(to the baby)
Sorry. We're not doing that again.

The female demon from earlier runs up to Connor, crying hysterically. Connor hands the tiny demon over.

DEMON
Thank you! Thank you so much!

She looks back to the building.

DEMON
Did you see my father in there? Do you know if he made it out?

CONNOR
(unsure)
He...

He trails off. He's got nothing. Looking down at the baby, he slowly removes his jacket and limps over to Gabriella.

GABRIELLA
You okay?

CONNOR
(nodding)
Where's Alba?

GABRIELLA
She stormed off.
(beat)
You're thinking what I'm thinking, aren't you?

CONNOR
(solemn)
Yeah.

PUSH IN on Connor's face, his expression unreadable.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN.

INT. ALBA CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A bright flash brings us in. PULL BACK to reveal the flash coming from a cameras. We go into a wide angle shot with Selene in the center of a large group of reporters and photographers.

It's a press conference. Selene is in mid speech.

SELENE

This act of arson will not go unpunished. The party or parties responsible will be found and punished to the full extent of the law.

A chorus of requests for questions come from the crowd. Selene acknowledges a female reporter in the front of the pack.

FEMALE REPORTER

(holding up a microphone)

Ms. Alba, with the fire claiming a property of yours and the insurance claims and investigations to follow, do you have any intentions of delaying the live debate scheduled for tomorrow evening?

Gabriella slips in the front door of the room. She and Selene share a glance.

SELENE

No. I can assure all my loyal followers that this heinous act will not deter my resolve or slow my campaign down. I intend to go through with the debate as planned.

MALE REPORTER

(holding up a microphone)

Ms. Alba, do you think the fire set to your property was any sort of warning or threat from your opponent and or his faithful?

SELENE

I'm not prepared to make any wild accusations towards Mr. Combs.

(MORE)

SELENE (CONT'D)

It's no secret that a lot of people would prefer to see me drop out of this or lose, but again, my resolve remains strong.

Gabriella silently scoffs. She slinks towards Selene's office. Selene's eyes follow her.

SELENE

That's all the questions I'm prepared to answer at the moment. Thank you for coming.

Selene ignores the further pleas for more questions and steps into her office behind Gabriella.

INT. SELENE'S OFFICE - ALBA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Selene locks the door and shuts the blinds to keep the reporters out. Gabriella stands with her arms crossed.

SELENE

Miss Heron. I wasn't expecting-

GABRIELLA

You stormed off to do a press conference?

SELENE

I figured Cameron had the matter in hand. Plus the proper authorities were on their way to the scene.

GABRIELLA

Oh right, I get it. Doesn't matter if young children and babies are dying, you need to keep that facade up for the public.

(beat; emphatic)

And his name is Connor.

SELENE

Everyone puts on a front for the world, Miss Heron. Whether it's the waiter at the restaurant smiling at you when he's having a bad day or a murderer pleading innocent, nobody is ever completely open with themselves. You're a fool if you think otherwise.

Gabriella looks away. Selene's hitting a little too close to home.

GABRIELLA

(avoiding)

Look, I didn't come here to judge.

SELENE

No, you did that before you walked in the door.

GABRIELLA

I'm just here to make sure you're not going to do anything drastic.

SELENE

I'm not going to do anything to put this election in jeopardy, but let me reiterate: Adrian Combs is a monster. He's persecuted demons for years. If he wins this and gets into any position of power in this city, each and every demon will have a bullseye on its back.

GABRIELLA

So now you're some sort of righteous crusader for demon rights? Sure weren't upholding the right to live for all those that died in that building.

SELENE

You have the audacity to question my good intentions? This election means everything to me and my kind. If I win, I can change things. Make things better. And rest assured, Combs won't get away with last night.

Gabriella scoffs and walks past her, done with the conversation. She quickly changes her mind and turns around at the door.

GABRIELLA

You really think a guy that high up would torch a building just to set you off?

SELENE

Whatever it takes to win.

GABRIELLA

What sense would it make to burn
down a building you own if it's
only going to get press on you?

SELENE

It's part of a plan. I know it.
He's setting me up for something.
You don't know this man like I do.

Gabriella shakes her head, not wanting to believe what she's
hearing.

GABRIELLA

You used a bunch of innocents as a
bargaining chip to rope Connor and
me a few hours ago. Get over
yourself. You're only in this for
the power.

(beat)

And you're a fool if you think
otherwise.

Gabriella opens the door and exits, leaving a stern faced
Selene behind.

EXT. COMBS HEADQUARERS - DAY

The campaign headquarters for Adrian Combs is a lot bigger
than Alba's. If possible, it's also more pompous, with a huge
portrait of a winking Combs hanging over the doorway.

Connor enters the front door, which echoes in the virtually
empty building when it shuts. Adrian is at the opposite end
of the room on his cell phone, arrogance hanging off him like
the extravagant suit he's wearing.

A well dressed bodyguard approaches Connor from his right.

Connor turns his head sideways as the guard approaches.

BODYGUARD

Spread your legs and hold out your
arms.

In the blink of an eye, Connor stretches both of his arms
out. The bodyguard goes wide eyed just before he DUSTS.
Connor calmly puts his stake back up his sleeve.

ADRIAN

(into phone)

I'll call you back.

(MORE)

ADRIAN (CONT'D)
(hangs up; to Connor)
How'd you know?

CONNOR
Noone living is that pale in this city. Didn't think politicians were in the business of employing vampires.

ADRIAN
Cheaper labor. Keep 'em in blood and they're satisfied.

CONNOR
(looking around)
Kind of empty for this time of day isn't it?

ADRIAN
I've got my street team out promoting. Never been much for keeping an entourage with me anyway. Is there something I can do for you, Mr...?

CONNOR
Connor. Just Connor. You hear about the fire earlier?

ADRIAN
Yes, unfortunate business, but frankly couldn't care less about a bunch of slaughtered demons and a burnt down building.

CONNOR
Alba owned that building. She might be looking for retribution.

ADRIAN
With all due respect young man, I didn't realize I was a two year old. You've told me nothing I haven't already considered. Now, I'm preparing for a debate with Miss Alba tomorrow. If you have nothing for me, I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

Connor is completely caught off guard.

CONNOR

Umm, right. Just uh, watch your back I guess. Sorry for wasting your time.

Connor leaves. Adrian waits until he's out the door before making another call on his cell.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - DAY

Connor enters through the front door. Gabriella is sitting on the couch flipping through the television channels. Connor plops down on the couch next to her.

CONNOR

How's Alba coping?

GABRIELLA

Oh just fine. So fine she did a press conference.

Her pressing of the remote control gets a bit more fierce.

CONNOR

You're joking.

GABRIELLA

Nope.

CONNOR

Unbelievable.

(beat)

You think she could've done it herself?

Gabriella looks at him and blinks.

GABRIELLA

I see point A and point Z, but I'm missing the other twenty four inbetween.

CONNOR

Think about it. She has a press conference just hours after the fire, like she'd planned it all along. Quick way to get attention on her and potentially more voters.

ANGLE ON Lesi sitting on her hind legs in front of the couch looking at Gabriella.

GABRIELLA (O.S.)
 She's a politician, not a genocidal
 maniac. The two don't go hand in
 hand.

(beat)
 Well, excluding the president.

Lesi looks at Connor.

CONNOR (O.S.)
 The president's a demon?

Lesi looks back to Gabriella.

GABRIELLA (O.S.)
 Not in the literal sense, but here
 are demons in Senate, the House,
 the courts-

Lesi looks at Connor again.

CONNOR (O.S.)
 And this is just fine with you?
 Excuse me if I don't think human
 laws should be decided by things
 that aren't human.

Back to Gabriella.

GABRIELLA (O.S.)
 That's a little narrow minded.

Back to Connor.

CONNOR (O.S.)
 Sorry, but every demon I've ever
 met in my life has tried to attack
 me.

(beat)
 Except one, but his taste in
 clothes was pretty lethal.

Lesi whimpers. The loud noise is bothering her. PULL UP to Gabriella finally noticing her pet. She pats her lap and Lesi jumps up into it.

CONNOR
 Maybe you've been around too many
 demons to know what they're really
 like.

GABRIELLA
 (stroking Lesi)
 Maybe you haven't been around
 enough. Or slaughtered a few too
 many.

CONNOR
 Slaughtered?

GABRIELLA
 Killed. Massacred. Either of those
 better words for you?

CONNOR
 No, I told you the demons were dead
 before the fire. Alba doesn't know,
 hypothetically speaking.
 (beat)
 But Combs knew the demons were dead
 before the building was lit up.
 There's no way he could've known
 that.
 (realizing)
 Unless he did it.

GABRIELLA
 Well that makes...absolutely no
 sense whatsoever.

Connor groans in frustration and gets up.

CONNOR
 I need something to hit.

ANGLE ON Lesi curling up into a ball and whimpering. Connor
 stalks off. Gabriella follows him out to:

EXT. BALCONY - GABRIELLA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Connor leans on the rail. Gabriella comes up behind him,
 laying her hand on his shoulder.

FIRST PERSON POV

Through a pair of binoculars, we can see Connor and Gabriella
 out on the balcony. The view zooms in for a better look.

ON SCENE

Connor has his head down with a death grip on his hair.

GABRIELLA

Look, maybe we should just let this go. You just got back and-
(beat)
Connor?

Connor isn't paying attention anymore. His eyes are scanning the streets.

GABRIELLA

What is it?

CONNOR

That scent. I noticed it when we were at Alba's too. Just thought it was coincidence.

GABRIELLA

You were with me the whole time.

CONNOR

Not when I went to see Combs and I picked it up there too.

His eyes fall on an alley across the street where Colin Combs is on his cell phone, a pair of binoculars in his other hand.

CONNOR

We have a fan club.

Connor leaves the balcony and Gabriella follows.

We pull away and down to:

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Colin has his back to the apartment complex. He closes the flip on his phone and turns around to see Connor and Gabriella right in front of him.

Colin throws a wild right hand that Connor ducks. It pops Gabriella right on the chin and sends her down.

Connor grabs the arm and locks it behind Colin's back, slamming him face first into the wall.

CONNOR

(to Gabriella)
You okay?

GABRIELLA

(rubbing her jaw)
I'm good.

CONNOR
 (to Colin)
 Here's another anatomy lesson for
 you.

Connor grabs Colin's left hand and bends it at an unnatural angle.

CONNOR
 The human hand has about thirty
 bones in it. Half of those are in
 your fingers.
 (bends the hand further)
 You start talking or I start
 counting.

Colin's in so much pain he's shaking. That hand looks like it's going to twist right off.

COLIN
 (strained)
 You're in league with that demon
 bitch.

CONNOR
 Alba? Not really, but I can put in
 a good word for you if you want.

COLIN
 Screw you.

Connor squeezes his grip around Colin's hand. Some small audible POPS echo in the alley. Gabriella winces. Colin is turning a ghostly pale, sweat pouring from his face.

CONNOR
 Why are you following us?

GABRIELLA
 Connor.

CONNOR
 I'm busy.

GABRIELLA
 (worried)
 Connor, I think that's enough.

Connor turns his head and neck to Gabriella. That's all the opening Colin needs. He frees his hand and hits Connor with a back elbow, knocking him away.

Colin knocks over Gabriella as he flees out of the alley. Gabriella regains her senses and motions to a nearby crate.

It lifts off the ground and goes hurtling towards Colin, smacking him in the back of the head, dropping him to his knees.

Connor helps Gabriella to her feet and they start towards him. Colin gets back up and starts running. He skids to a stop just before he gets out of the alley.

SLOW MOTION.

ANGLE ON a convertible blocking the way to the streets. As Colin watches, they both draw GUNS and open fire.

CONNOR
(tackling Gabriella)
Down!

Colin is hit with a barrage of bullets, his body convulsing from the impact.

END SLOW MOTION

All the sound drops out except for the loud thumping of a HEARTBEAT. Colin slumps lifelessly to the ground and the convertible speeds away. The thumping slows.

Gabriella crawls out from underneath Connor over to Colin's body. The thumping slows to a stop. Blood is already forming a puddle on the ground.

GABRIELLA
Oh my God.

She begins to administer CPR. Connor slowly approaches her, a look of sorrow hanging on him. Gabriella pumps her palms violently into Colin's chest, desperately trying to revive him.

CONNOR
(sadly)
Gabriella.

GABRIELLA
(hysterical)
He's just a kid.
(pumping the heart)
I can't leave him here.

Her breathing is turning uneven very quickly. Verging on a panic attack.

Connor gently grabs her wrists and pulls them away from the body. Her blood soaked hands are shaking violently.

CONNOR

There's no way you can. He's
already gone.

Gabriella looks down at her still shaking hands, then up at Connor.

CONNOR

We have to go.

Gabriella stands and Connor drapes his coat around her. He slowly leads out towards the other end of the alley.

FADE TO BLACK.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - DAY

ANGLE ON the television showing a news broadcast.

REPORTER

Just a few hours before the scheduled debate in the race for the 6th district chairman, we've just received word that candidate Adrian Combs's son Colin was found murdered in a downtown alley.

INT. GABRIELLA'S BATHROOM - THE CHARON - DAY

A running faucet washes the blood from Gabriella's hands. She's furiously scrubbing them with soap, stopping to move her long hair out of her eyes.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Eyewitnesses say the sixteen year old the unfortunate victim of a drive by shooting.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - DAY

PUSH IN on Connor watching the broadcast from the couch. Lesi is sitting on the couch with him, her head in his lap.

REPORTER (V.O.)

At this time, authorities have no leads or possible suspects. We take you live to the campaign headquarters of Adrian Combs.

The television switches to show Combs standing on a podium.

ADRIAN

I'm really not sure what to say. No parent thinks about the possibility of burying their own child. All I can say is that I hope the person or people responsible for this are caught and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

INT. COMBS HEADQUARERS - SAME TIME

Cameras flashes light up the scene as Adrian continues to address the press.

ADRIAN

I want to thank all of the people who have supported me throughout this campaign and especially during this trying time. My family and I greatly appreciate each and every one of you.

RANDOM REPORTER

Mr. Combs, does this mean you're pulling out of the election?

ADRIAN

Of course not. I sat down and spoke with the rest of my family. We agree that the best thing to do now is press on. This race has taken a lot of patience, time, and effort from all of us and I think Colin would want me to see it through.

He flashes a remorseful smile, the kind that says ain't nothing funny right now.

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE CHARON - SAME TIME

Connor turns the television off. Gabriella enters from her bedroom, arms wrapped tightly around her like a straitjacket.

CONNOR

How do you feel?

GABRIELLA

With my hands.

CONNOR

I meant-

GABRIELLA

I know what you meant.
 (looks at her hands)
 Half an hour and I can still see the blood.

CONNOR

Cold water and shampoo does the trick. Normal soap doesn't always-
 (off her look)
 Oh, you meant...yeah, sorry.

GABRIELLA

(sighs)
 So what now?

CONNOR

I don't know. Starting to think politics isn't my thing. I mean what good have I done here?

GABRIELLA

You saved that baby.

CONNOR

One baby yeah, but against a whole building of innocent...

(beat)

...demons.

He looks almost pained to be saying that phrase.

CONNOR

And Combs's kid on top of it. I just...

(sighs)

I don't think I'm doing the right thing here.

GABRIELLA

I don't know if you are either, but we're involved in this now. Kind of think we owe it to ourselves to see it through to the end.

ANGLE ON Connor looking at Gabriella...and nodding.

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - EVENING

The open debate between Alba and Combs is underway. We pan through the audience. It's a mixed bag of people. A group of young children sit at the front of the room.

A young woman sits at the edge of the stage. She comes to the center where a microphone is waiting. This is our MODERATOR.

MODERATOR

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to thank you all for attending tonight. I'd like to introduce our two candidates. To my left, Ms. Selene Alba.

(pause for applause)

To my right, Mr. Adrian Combs.

Another round of applause.

SELENE

Before we get started, Mr. Combs on behalf of all of us, I'd like to express my sincere condolences for the loss of your son.

Combs nods, his face a mask of sorrow.

ADRIAN

Thank you, Ms. Alba. Part of me almost wanted to cancel tonight's meeting, but I know my son would have wanted me to carry on.

SELENE

Of course. I'd also like to personally welcome Mrs. Whitney's fourth grade class from Chambers Elementary.

She waves to the aforementioned group of kids in the front row, who give themselves an ovation and cheer.

MODERATOR

Very well. Let's get started. If you have a question, simply raise your hand and I will do my best to get you all in.

As she points to a raised hand in the audience, we pull back from the stage to see Connor and Gabriella sitting in the back row.

CONNOR

(whispering)

Am I the only one waiting for lightning to strike 'em both?

GABRIELLA

(whispering)

There is a spell for it if you're interested.

PAN UP to the control room for the auditorium. We see a figure moving around in the darkness.

INT. AUDITORIUM CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

We see an unconscious man sprawled out on the ground, his neck bent at an awkward angle.

PULL UP to see a set of hands opening a suitcase, revealing the pieces to a high power assault rifle. A series of cuts shows the gun being put together.

The gun is mounted by our would be assassin on the window sill.

RIFLE TARGET SIGHT POV

In the crosshairs, we can see the moderator pointing to a citizen. The target moves to that citizen, up to Combs, and over to Alba.

ANGLE ON a small switch on the side. A thumb moves it to a vertical position.

CUT TO a shot looking directly at the barrel of the gun. A red laser casts a glare on the frame.

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - EVENING

In the background, Alba is fielding a question. Connor yawns deeply.

CONNOR
How long we been here?

GABRIELLA
(checks her watch)
Twenty minutes.

CONNOR
How long is this scheduled for?

GABRIELLA
Two hours.

CONNOR
(beat)
Damn.

The moderator points to another citizen, a portly woman who takes a moment to get out of her chair.

WOMAN
This question is for Mr. Combs.
(squints)
You have a red dot on your shirt.

Combs looks down and sees the laser sight pointed at his chest. He looks to the school kids and smiles.

ADRIAN

Do one of you nippers have a laser pen?

BANG!

A bullet rips through Combs's shoulder, a splatter of BLOOD flying behind it.

Connor and Gabriella snap to attention.

CONNOR

That's more like it.

GABRIELLA

(looking up)

It came from the control room.

Connor dashes off. Another rifle shot blows out the big speakers on the stage.

People are scrambling everywhere, trying to get to safety.

Combs is on his back, clutching his shoulder in pain. Alba just stands there looking shell shocked. She looks at the control room.

ANGLE ON the control room. The red glare fills the screen again.

OVER TO Gabriella looking up at the control room. Her eyes glaze over to yellow and her face tenses up.

INT. AUDITORIUM CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

The windows to the control room SHATTER in the face of the shooter, who we now see is wearing a mask. He yelps in fright and pain, dropping to his knees.

The door swings up to reveal Connor, fists clenched.

CONNOR

Now we're talking.

He rushes in, connecting with a knee to his already downed opponent, knocking him to his back.

The shooter pulls knife from a holster on his hip, shuffling to his feet. He threateningly jabs the knife at Connor, who has dropped into a fighting stance.

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - SAME TIME

It's pandemonium as people scramble to evacuate the building. Gabriella is pushing and shoving her way through the crowd, trying to move towards the stage.

Alba emerges from behind the curtain on stage, her briefcase in hand.

INT. AUDITORIUM CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

The shooter is stabbing at Connor, who deftly dodges and swivels out of the way.

The shooter takes a big swing and misses, stumbling off balance. Connor lands a spinning back fist and grabs the mask with his other hand, yanking it off.

We get a look at the shooter. Connor looks at him in shock.

INT. ALLEY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

In SLOW MOTION, we see the convertible with Colin's murderers at the end of the alley.

CUT TO a closer look at the passenger side shooter. It's the same guy.

INT. AUDITORIUM CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Connor's face is a mask of rage. Now he's pissed. As he throws his next punch, we:

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - SAME TIME

Selene rushes up the aisle to the exit. From her POV, we see Gabriella step directly in her path, eyes crackling yellow with magic.

GABRIELLA

Absentis.

Selene is sent FLYING through the air. She lands hard back on the stage. Gabriella stalks towards her, flexing her fingers, warming them up.

INT. AUDITORIUM CONTROL ROOM - SAME TIME

Connor is punching the crap out of the shooter, who eyes are glazed over from the heavy blows he's eating.

Connor yanks him to his feet by his collar and throws him out of the window, his body hits the perched gun on the way out, knocking it down with him into:

INT. MAIN AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The shooter crashes to the floor below. He tries to sit up before slumping back down. He's not getting up. The rifle is about ten feet away from him.

Selene gets to her feet, only to be magically hurled through the air again, into the backstage area. Gabriella follows, cracking her knuckles.

Connor jumps down from the balcony, landing next to the shooter. He checks for a pulse. The shooter stirs a bit, starting to come around.

 CONNOR
 (shaking him)
 You alright?
 (slapping his face)
 You okay?

The shooter opens his eyes.

 CONNOR
 Good.

Connor lands another punch, knocking him out again.

 CONNOR
 I feel so much better.

He stands up and sees Combs squirming on the stage, still clutching his shoulder.

BACK TO Gabriella being throttled against the wall by a pissed off Selene, now in full demon form.

Gabriella's eyes roll up and start to glow bright yellow.

Her hands, which are pushing on Selene's shoulders, start to glow as well.

Gabriella grits her teeth and in a flash of light, Selene is sent flying across the room.

Gabriella doubles over, gasping for air. Pan down to her hand and the Scion's Pendant she ripped off.

Her eyes meet Selene's, who is staring in horror at the pendant in her hand. Gabriella smirks.

SELENE

No, no, no!

Gabriella throws the pendant with all her strength.

It lands with a harmless THUNK, still intact.

Their eyes meet again. Gabriella laughs nervously. Selene HOWLS in rage and bullrushes her. Gabriella steps down on the pendant with her heel, the spike piercing the jewel in the center.

Selene dissipates into multicolored dust just before she reaches Gabriella.

GABRIELLA

Bitch.

BACK TO Connor kneeling over Combs. A ripped part of Connor's shirt is tied around Combs's shoulder.

CONNOR

You're gonna be okay. We just need to keep pressure on the-

BANG! Connor's body goes stiff. A blood stain soaks through his shirt at his right shoulder. He stands and turns around to see the shooter, aiming at him again.

He dives off the stage just as the shooter fires again. The bullet graves Connor's left leg. He lands on the floor in front of the stage, clutching his leg with his uninjured arm.

BACK TO the stage area.

The shooter comes to the front of the auditorium and aims the rifle right at Connor's face, point blank.

ADRIAN

No! Don't kill him.

The shooter looks up at Combs.

ADRIAN

(wry)

I think there's been enough bloodshed for one election.

The shooter lowers the gun and hops up on stage, helping Combs to his feet.

SHOOTER

You okay, boss?

ADRIAN
 (wincing)
 Remind me to never try something
 this stupid again.

Adrian drapes his healthy arm around the shooter's neck.

SHOOTER
 I hit you in the shoulder like you
 wanted.

Connor looks incredulously at the two of them, mentally
 putting two and two together.

CONNOR
 (gasping)
 You...set this...whole thing up?

ADRIAN
 Whatever it takes to win, kid.

CONNOR
 (eyes narrow)
 Your own son?

ADRIAN
 A sympathetic parent gets the rubes
 out in droves. At least now he'll
 be of some use to me.

CONNOR
 (beat)
 You know I'll testify against you.

ADRIAN
 A punk kid's word against a
 respected district attorney?
 (scoffs)
 Grow up.

In the background, we hear the sound of SIRENS.

ADRIAN
 (to the shooter)
 Get going.

The shooter leaves via a back exit. Several POLICE OFFICERS
 enter the room and rush to Adrian's side, who is just getting
 to his feet.

POLICE OFFICER
 Mr. Combs, are you alright?

Adrian looks off to the side of the stage. Connor is gone.

EXT. BALCONY - THE CHARON - EVENING

Connor stands at the edge of the rail, his arms resting on the ledge as he watches the setting sun. His right shoulder is in a sling.

Gabriella appears at his left side. Connor doesn't turn to meet her eyes. He's obviously deep in thought.

GABRIELLA

How's your arm feel?

CONNOR

(matter of fact)

Like a bullet went through it.

(beat)

Been awhile since I watched one of these.

(another beat)

I really screwed up.

GABRIELLA

You tried to do something right. That's more than most other people can claim. And for the record, I had a hand in it. Got a broken heel as proof.

CONNOR

I envy people like my dad. Something evil shows up, stake it or stab it. Now the girl scout going door to door could be evil.

GABRIELLA

(nudging his shoulder)

Come on, they've been evil forever.

She looks at him hopefully, but his face doesn't even crack.

GABRIELLA

Not even a smirk?

CONNOR

(shaking his head)

Sorry.

GABRIELLA

Damn.

CONNOR

If it's any consolation, that was pretty funny.

GABRIELLA

Thanks.

Gabriella visibly relaxes, her tense shoulders slumping as she leans over the edge, her head resting on Connor's left shoulder.

Connor rests his cheek on her head.

CONNOR

How am I supposed to know how to make the right choices?

GABRIELLA

I don't think you're meant to know. Plus whose to say there is such a thing as right and wrong anymore? It's all subjective. If it were as simple as following a diagram, anyone could do it.

CONNOR

Just don't get why I'm the one stuck with all this. My dad hardly ever went through this. He always knew where to stick the sword.

GABRIELLA

Probably explains why he's not in the fight anymore.

Connor stiffens up. Gabriella, still laying on his shoulder, feels it and squeezes him arm a bit.

GABRIELLA

Hear me out.

(beat)

You said it yourself. The evil used to practically wear name tags to identify itself. People like your dad, Buffy, the Watchers, they all come from that. Can you look at me and honestly say any of them would've done better in your place?

CONNOR

(beat)

I guess not.

(MORE)

CONNOR (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Doesn't mean I have to like it.

GABRIELLA

The quote unquote bad guys don't all wear black anymore. Hell, these days the good guys are doing it. The whole struggle's evolved now. Both sides need to change to keep up.

Both of them are gazing at the rapidly setting sun.

GABRIELLA

It's beautiful. Living in this city, you don't get to appreciate stuff like this. It's...

She trails off, her words failing her.

CONNOR

Special.

GABRIELLA

Yeah.

We slowly PULL AWAY from the roof. PAN OVER to the sun.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR

END OF EPISODE