

FADE IN:

INT. RESTROOM - DAY

HARPER EVANS, early 30s, stares into the mirror. A pretty smile hides behind a tortured face; she always appears to be solving a difficult problem in her head.

She straightens her glasses and pats down her blouse before taking a deep breath.

She smiles for a moment but it quickly fades.

INT. MANHATTAN SKYSCRAPER - DAY

88TH FLOOR - OFFICE

A greasy-looking hotshot named CHUCK WESTMORELAND dances past a slew of empty cubicles. A JANITOR listens to music on a small radio as he vacuums.

Westmoreland turns the corner to the elevator bay and stops. He notices Harper waiting patiently. He pops in a stick of bubble gum before approaching.

He checks his watch, merely a subterfuge to hide his inappropriate staring.

WESTMORELAND
These things take forever
sometimes.

She turns and nods.

WESTMORELAND (CONT'D)
Yeah, I hear they shut down all but
one after 6.
(laughing)
Cheap bastards.

She doesn't respond. He sucks his teeth.

ELEVATOR

They enter. As it starts to shut, a plain-looking FEMALE ACCOUNTANT calls out from the hall.

ACCOUNTANT
(rushing)
Hold the door.

Westmoreland pokes the 'door close' button a few times.

The door closes.

WESTMORELAND
(grinning)
Oops.

He sticks out his hand.

WESTMORELAND (CONT'D)
I don't think we've met. Charles
Westmoreland the third.

Harper stares at the numbers showing what floor they are passing.

WESTMORELAND (CONT'D)
What's your name, gorgeous?

HARPER
Harper. But that's not important.

WESTMORELAND
What?

She bobs her head from side to side.

HARPER
My name doesn't matter.

She turns to him.

HARPER (CONT'D)
But yours does, *Charles*
Westmoreland the third.

He finally lowers his hand and raises an eyebrow.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I know some other names that
matter: Liz Connors, Brenda
Albright.

She looks him in the eye.

HARPER (CONT'D)
They tell me Charles Westmoreland
the third has a secret.

He examines her for a moment and starts to grin.

WESTMORELAND
They didn't tell you shit. They
haven't said shit to anybody.
(MORE)

WESTMORELAND (CONT'D)

Not since I ripped them into a
million pieces, just like I'm gonna
do you.

The car jerks to a halt as the emergency stop engages and the
light's dim.

A pair of lips press close to his ear.

HARPER

Well I have a secret too.

The woman has disappeared, her purse lying at Westmoreland's
feet.

He starts to laugh and spits his gum onto the floor.

WESTMORELAND

(looking around him)

I'm gonna grind up your bones and
make a stew.

A silver pole hits his legs and he falls onto his back.

Harper now stands over him, pressing a silver staff into his
chest.

WESTMORELAND (CONT'D)

Let's play, witch.

Westmoreland's skin begins to squirm and turn change colors.
His hands morph into stone-like claws. A GREEN DAEMON now
pushes the staff away and rises to it's feet.

Harper stands back as the daemon grows and grows until it's
head bends the roof of the elevator. She clenches her jaw.

A giant hand grips Harper's neck, lifting her off the ground.

She closes her eyes and presses two fingers to her forehead.

A blue light flashes in it's eyes and the daemon lets out a
painful screech before throwing her against the wall.

It busts through the metal siding. Harpers catches her breath
and follows the beast into the shaft.

ELEVATOR SHAFT

Harper balances on a I-beam between elevator tracks as she
looks around.

Nothing but shadows and the occasional flicker of light.

Harper closes her eyes and concentrates. When she opens them again, her pupils are glowing royal blue.

START OF ASTRAL PLANE:

- Harper's mind leaves her body. She glances around for a moment before noticing daemonic whispers, thoughts from the beast's subconscious, coming from a shadow above.

- Her mind zooms in. The daemon is watching her, while hanging from a metal beam in the darkness.

- She now sees through the daemon's eyes as it leaps towards her motionless body. Just before it reaches, her eyes stop glowing.

END OF ASTRAL PLANE

Harper ducks the attack and begins swiping the monster with her staff.

From the beam, the two of them exchange a quick flurry of blows before the daemon knocks her off.

She hits the wall before landing on an adjacent I-beam.

The daemon howls as a pair of black wings sprout from its back.

It launches towards Harper who dives out of the way. The daemon just misses her and slams into the wall.

88TH FLOOR - OFFICE

A picture falls off the wall as the whole floor rattles. The janitor continues cleaning, music keeping him oblivious to the world around him.

ELEVATOR SHAFT

As Harper struggles back to her feet and the beast shakes off the blow, one of its talons grabs Harper's ankle. She fails to pry it loose and the monster proceeds to fly up and out of the elevator shaft.

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYSCRAPER - DAY

The daemon crashes through the ventilation shaft with Harper dangling in the air beneath it.

A yellow light pierces the daemon's back. The beast turns and notices Harper dematerializing.

Another yellow light flashes above.

As the daemon flies upwards, the accountant from the elevator bay dives towards it with a compound hunting bow in hand.

She pulls back the string and yellow energy pours from her hand, taking the shape of an arrow.

The arrow pierces the daemon's skull, causing it to the plummet to the rooftop with a smash.

The accountant disappears in another flash of light.

As the daemon takes it's final breath on the rooftop, Harper walks up to it. The accountant re-appears right next to her.

Harper's cohort is AIKO TANAKA, early 30s. She has a neck tattoo of a dragon and a pleased with herself grin, both eager to burst out of her corporate subterfuge.

HARPER

He really stuck that landing.

AIKO

Eh, I'd give him three 6s.

Harper looks at her puzzled.

AIKO (CONT'D)

Cuz he's- It's a biblical thing.

(sigh)

Whatever.

Harper nods.

HARPER

Think you can you cover for me?

AIKO

Give lover-boy my regards.

Harper gives her a hug and dematerializes again.

INT. RESTROOM - DAY

Harper's glowing eyes turn back to normal. She is still standing in front of the mirror, hands resting on the counter.

She looks in the mirror. In front of her is an over the counter pregnancy test with a little blue plus sign in the window.

EXT. SHADOWCREST - DAY

The world of HYDOR has a distinctly different feel than Earth due to the sky being more green than blue.

An ancient cobblestone fortress sits on the side of a snow-capped mountain.

Sentries in black and blue padded leather uniforms patrol the perimeter and watchtowers.

On one edge of the fortress, a large CATHEDRAL appears to be carved into the mountain itself.

A gathering is taking place on it's steps.

APEX COURTYARD

At the top of the steps, a small group is conferring amongst themselves.

Each is wearing a similar uniform to the guards, more formal. There are glowing orange patterns slithering over their left breasts.

At the base of the stairs a dozen teens in identical grey tunics stared up at them with rigid posture and hands by their sides.

One is MAYA LOWELL, 19, a plain girl who never seemed to run out of fingernails to bite. Her calm, neutral expression was betrayed by her loud, anxious breathing.

To her left stood QUENTIN BLACKWELL, also 19, a wiry teen who couldn't look more smug if he tried. And he was trying. Despite its lack of size, his chest seemed to poke out more than some of the girls.

At the top of the staires, one of the woman steps forward. MISTRESS ALANA KERISS, early 30s, is sweet and maternal. Her voice puts everyone at ease.

KERISS

Let me be the first to commend you
on your hard work and dedication;
the past three years have not been
easy. And now, for your final year
of training, you will leave the
classroom behind and practice our
craft in the field beside real
Hunters. Not all of you will
succeed. Some may not survive.

(MORE)

KERISS (CONT'D)

But those who do will form the next generation of Hunters and Huntresses. I hope you are ready. Now, she's a woman of few words, the overseer of all battlecraft, Arch Huntress Venji Asahd.

A short, bald woman steps forward. ARCH-HUNTRESS VENJI ASAHD, early 70s, has dark, wrinkled skin yet had a commanding presence despite her age.

She looks over all of their faces before stating in a booming voice.

VENJI

By becoming Initiates, today, you have proven your courage. Now you must prove your strength.

There crowd waits in anticipation.

The Arch Huntress takes a step back.

Quentin leans over to Maya

QUENTIN

(whispering)

Seriously?

Keriss steps forward again.

KERISS

Thank you Arch Huntress. When all are ready, please come and join us in the Apex.

The large doors of the cathedral swing apart.

MAYA

(whispering)

She really is a woman of few words.

INT. APEX ENTRANCE - DAY

The cathedral is cold and empty. Unlit sconces line the wall with cobwebs gathering on them.

Mistress Keriss and the Arch Huntress stand at the front of the room with the others.

As the Initiates gather in front of her, she continues.

KERISS

Throughout your training as Initiates, you will become entitled to learn many of our Hunter's Secrets. The first we share with you today. Hunters have not operated out of the Apex cathedral for decades.

She waves her hand and the pulpit along with the floor slowly vanish. A dark stairway leads down with streams of blue light lining the walls.

KERISS (CONT'D)

Our Order was built on top of the remains of the Daemon Lord's fortress over 400 years ago. This has served two purposes...

The teens gather in a line to enter the stairway.

KERISS (CONT'D)

Depriving our enemies of their stronghold while also gaining access to their secrets. The intricate network of tunnels and chambers buried within the mountain itself is Shadowcrest truly lives.

She guides them down the staircase.

INT. APEX COMMONS - DAY

They enter a large busy chamber filled with mages working on various tasks. Some are in the same cloaks and tunics as the others, while others are wearing normal clothes.

A large representation of two planets hover in the middle of the room, pathways and halls curving around them.

KERISS

Welcome to the Apex Commons, your new home. This is where all Hunter operations on Terra and Hydor originate. We coordinate with agents scattered across both worlds to fight real threats in real time.

The Initiates are amazed.

KERISS (CONT'D)

Ah, bless the Cosmos, it seems the Arch-mage himself has graced us with his presence.

Up walks ARCHMAGE ARTHUR BLACKWELL, late 60s, a sturdy man with a trimmed white beard and golden plate armor. He didn't have the face of someone who had lived over 500 years, although he spoke like he had countless tragedies etched into his memories.

ARTHUR

Pay me no mind. Just wanted to inspect the new Initiates.

KERISS

Yes, a large lot this year. We sense a few extraordinary picks in the bunch.

The Archmage turns to the Initiates.

ARTHUR

I'm sure you'll all make us proud.

As he turns to walk away, Quentin throws him a brief wave.

QUENTIN

Hey, Dad.

The Archmage gives him a slight nod and smile.

ARTHUR

(nodding)

Son.

He then ducks away gracefully.

Quentin, deflated, glances towards the floor.

MAYA

He's probably really busy.

Her looks up at her.

QUENTIN

(with scorn)

Obviously.

He shakes his head.

KERISS

Alright. Well that's enough from me.

(MORE)

KERISS (CONT'D)

The constables will guide you to the living quarters where you'll find your new uniforms. Later this evening we will give you assignments. Here's some final words from the Arch Huntress.

The little old woman steps forward again.

VENJI

Make us proud.

Another long pause.

KERISS

That is all.

The others start to guide the teens towards the barracks.

Keriss and Venji turn around and find Aiko, leaning against a pillar.

KERISS (CONT'D)

Huntress Tanaka.

AIKO

Doing the whole "woman of few words" routine?

Venji smiles.

VENJI

I enjoy it. The look on their faces when they report in. It catches them off-guard hearing me stay more than three words. You remember?

AIKO

Yeah, freaked me out. So twisted, I love it.

Keriss grins and walks away.

They begin to walk down a large hallway.

VENJI

Oh, before it escapes my mind, the Archmage has asked for your help on a special assignment.

AIKO

Is that good?

VENJI

Could be. Who knows. Could have something to do with the Council. There is a open seat, y'know.

Venji smiles at her suggestively.

AIKO

Armor doesn't really suit me.

VENJI

Well, it's always good to keep an open mind.

AIKO

Me, a Guardian? Nah. Harper, maybe.
(shaking her head)
But me? Pssh.

VENJI

Speaking of which, where is Mistress Evans. I was hoping to debrief about Westeros.

AIKO

You know where.

Venji lets out a sigh.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A romantic candlelit spot with low lights and a live string quartet on weekends.

DANTE EMERSON, early 30s, is sitting alone at a table. He's calm and oblivious. His dark suit hangs quite loose but he doesn't wear it enough to bother getting it brought in. He might after tonight though.

One hand rests on the table while the other holds open the lid of a jewelry box. Inside, a diamond ring.

He's staring at the gem, deep in somber contemplation.

He quickly snaps the box shut and covers it with his napkin.

Putting on a smile, he turns.

HARPER

Hey. Sorry I'm late. Got held up at work.

Dante gets up and kisses her.

DANTE

Not a problem. Nothing too stressful, I hope.

HARPER

Stress comes with the job.

He pulls out her chair for her and then takes a seat.

He stares at her oddly.

HARPER (CONT'D)

What?

DANTE

Since when do you wear glasses?

Harper touches her face.

HARPER

Oh, yeah. Um— Since we're gonna be out on Halloween, the school decided to do a dress-up day for the kids. I decided to go as Mrs. Raleigh, one of the other teachers. You'd kind of have to know her.

Dante nods. She takes off the glasses.

DANTE

I'm sure the kids loved it.

HARPER

Yeah, it was fun.

There is silence and her smile soon fades.

DANTE

Something wrong. You seem distressed lately.

Harper struggles to find the words.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Is it your friend? The one whose brother died.

Harper nods.

HARPER

I don't know. She's been so withdrawn. You know, after Matti died I was really worried.
(MORE)

HARPER (CONT'D)

She wasn't eating or sleeping for so long. Then it seemed like she had turned a corner, you know. But now...

(shaking her head)

I don't know. She's still got a lot of pain, more pain than I could ever imagine. And I'm just worried about what she'll end up doing because of it.

DANTE

You think she'll hurt someone? Hurt herself?

HARPER

No- I don't know. She's had a rough life. So much darkness. Sometimes I wonder if she can ever put it behind her. If she even can...

Dante nods silently.

The waiter comes and asks for their drinks while Dante slips the jewelry box back into his pocket.

EXT. SHADOWCREST - DAY

In the center of the fortress lies a tower known as THE CONDUIT; crafted from marble it pierces upward from it's wide base and tapers off to a fine point.

INT. THE CONDUIT

There is a hollow chasm inside.

A swirling ball of red energy, twice the size of a house, floats in the air.

A flat stone lies underneath. Three white-haired ENCHANTRESSES in red robes stand in a triangle around it. Hands folded, as if in prayer.

Keriss enters.

A timid young enchantress named ISLA, late twenties, approaches and bows her head.

ISLA

She is arriving now Mistress.

KERISS
Thank you, Isla.

The other enchantresses begin to chant in an ancient tongue.
The energy grows more chaotic and turbulent.

There is a violent burst and Harper steps off of the pad.

HARPER
Sisters...

Harper notices Keriss and Isla waiting for her.

HARPER (CONT'D)
To what do I owe the honor.

KERISS
Sorry to ambush you like this. But
the Arch Huntress has an urgent
assignment for you.

HARPER
(slightly peeved)
Really?

KERISS
Normally, she'd wait for you to
settle in but Lina is reporting
Blight on Terra and requesting
backup. We thought you would want
to respond.

HARPER
(nodding)
Just let me grab a few things to
take with me.

VENJI
Speaking of which...

She steps to the side to reveal MAYA and QUENTIN.

EXT. SHADOWCREST - DAY

MAIN GARDENS

Arch Huntress Venji is drinking tea on a patio overlooking a
training yard.

Harper walks in, Keriss behind her.

KERISS
She insisted on seeing you ma'am.

HARPER
I'm sorry to interrupt, Arch
Huntress. But I can't take on two
Initiates, right now.

Venji sets down her cup and looks at Harper.

VENJI
Why is that Mistress Evans?

HARPER
Now is just not a good time for me.

VENJI
It would seem.

She stands up and approaches her.

VENJI (CONT'D)
Now, I've always had high hopes for
you Harper. You've been one of my
most loyal and disciplined
Huntresses. There was once a time
when I deemed you a worthy
successor for my position.

Keriss, still lurking in the background, shifts uneasily.

VENJI (CONT'D)
But lately, you've been lax with
your responsibilities, neglecting
your duties.

HARPER
Ma'am, I've bee—

VENJI
There is no room for excuses in the
life of a Huntress. Now, I'm glad
you've found love and I wish you
the best. But you made a commitment
upon joining this Order. A
commitment not to be taken lightly.
If you can't honor those duties
here, then maybe it's time you
consider Uncoupling.

Silence envelops the patio. Harper wipes away a tear.

VENJI (CONT'D)
With Aiko away on assignment, we're
down a trainer and I need you to
double up. Can you do this,
Mistress Evans?

Harper nods.

VENJI (CONT'D)
Good. Get them equipped and ready
to go. Time is of the essence.

HARPER
Yes, Arch Huntress.

GROUNDS

Quentin and Maya wait outside the Garden Gates as Harper exits.

She forces a smile and approaches them.

HARPER (CONT'D)
You're Quentin, right? Archmage
Blackwell's kid?

Quentin nods.

HARPER (CONT'D)
And you are?

Maya extends a shaky hand.

MAYA
Maya Lowell, Mistress Evans.

Harper shakes.

HARPER
(curious)
Any relation to a Marshall Lowell?

MAYA
My father, ma'am. Adopted.

HARPER
Ah. He was a fine Loremage. It's a
shame...

Harper shows a tinge of sadness.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Call me Harper.

Maya nods.

HARPER (CONT'D)
So, we have an assignment so I need
to do a quick assessment real
quick. Show me what you guys got.

She looks at Maya who nervously pulls her hands out of pockets.

QUENTIN
(sarcastic)
Be ready to be amazed.

Maya sticks out her arm. With much concentration, a fuzzy shape of cyan energy appears on her arm and then morphs into a hawk.

The translucent bird takes flight, circling around overhead.

HARPER
That's pretty neat.

Quentin chuckles.

QUENTIN
Yeah, she can distract the bad guys
and then run away.

Maya frowns and the hawk disappears.

HARPER
What about you then?

Quentin grins.

His skin begins to sparkle and shimmer before a metallic liquid spreads over his entire body. He appears to be made out of gold.

QUENTIN
Pretty sick, huh?

HARPER
Not bad.

Harper looks at the two of them.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Can you fight though?

QUENTIN
Just give me a weapon and see.

INT. APEX COMMONS - DAY

ARMORY

Harper slaps a four inch dagger into Quentin's palm.

QUENTIN
The hell is this?

HARPER
Your weapon.

Maya lets out a chuckle. Quentin shoots her a dirty look and she stops.

Harper grabs a crossbow from the wall and hands it to Maya.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I assume they taught you how to use one of these.

MAYA
I got a 98 on my ranged assessment.

HARPER
Awesome.

QUENTIN
Oh this is some bullshit.

HARPER
What?

QUENTIN
So she gets a weapon and I get dick.

Harper tilts her head to the side.

HARPER
Look, all Hunters are required to bring a supplementary weapon but let's be honest, you can't really beat metal skin.
(turning to Maya)
On the other hand, the bird is nice but you'll need something to protect you out there.

Maya smiles while Quentin sucks his teeth.

INT. THE CONDUIT - NIGHT

Harper, Maya and Quentin stand underneath the giant swirling vortex. The Enchantresses chant and the three of them disappear.

Panning down, we see a room underneath...

INT. THE DARK GARDEN - NIGHT

Incandescent flowers and vines illuminate a small patch of grass inside a vast chamber. A few scattered trees cast shadows which blanket the walls.

There is an oddly placed bench where Aiko sits and looks at the flowers.

A male voice comes from behind her and she wipes a tear away.

ARTHUR

Thank you for coming, Huntress.
Please stay seated.

AIKO

Yes, Grandmaster.

ARTHUR

And please, call me Arthur.

Aiko gives an awkward nod as he takes a seat beside her.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Do you know why I've asked you
here?

AIKO

No, Gran- No, I don't.

ARTHUR

Harper tells me that you're a good
person. Honest and loyal.

AIKO

(grinning)
I wouldn't trust anything she says.
She's a habitual liar.

ARTHUR

And modest too. She says she trusts
you with her life.

(gazing off)
I've known Harper since before she
was born. Her father. And her
grandfather as well.

He turns to Aiko.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Her family has a long history with
the Order, dating all the way back
to it's inception. When we lost
them, I was wracked with grief.

Aiko looks at him, nonplussed.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
Forgive my dawdling, tendencies of
an old man. And I'm older than
most. Few mages live to see one
hundred and fifty years. By some
chance, I'm now encroaching on
triple that.

AIKO
A true miracle, they say.

ARTHUR
(laughing)
Don't make me feel any worse.

He looks out at the plants.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
But I fear this miracle may soon
come to an end.

AIKO
What? Is something wrong?

ARTHUR
No, just... Call it intuition.
Foresight, maybe. Perchance just
fatigue.

AIKO
Is that why you brought me here?

ARTHUR
Are you familiar with this place?

Aiko looks around.

AIKO
Kind of. A friend brought me here
once. It's kind of haunting yet
beautiful.

He nods in agreement.

ARTHUR
I never understood the magic that
rests here but I've always found it
inspiring; light still thriving
amongst the darkness.

Arthur shakes his head.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Which is why my darkest secret lies beneath it.

She turns to him.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If I should perish before I find the courage, I need your assurance that it shall be unearthed.

He looks her in the eye.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Can you promise me that?

AIKO

(surprised)

Sir, I don't want to be rude but that sounds like something the Council should take care of or the Arch Mages?

ARTHUR

The Celestial Guardians are bound by a sacred code, their duty may conflict with this task. Besides, I have other concerns regarding my Council. And in the event of my demise, the Arch Mages will have their hands quite full; this is of too great importance to fall through the cracks. No, I need someone trustworthy to do what is right and good, no more and no less. Harper tells me that is you.

AIKO

Okay, why not Harper then?

ARTHUR

Because I fear Harper may be leaving us soon.

Aiko is taken aback.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Do you not sense it? She's pulling away, spending more and more time on Terra. Eventually, I suspect she'll want to start life anew. A husband. A family. Which, of course, means she'll have to cut ties to this life, this world.

Aiko looks upset. A tear rolls down her face.

AIKO
I guess I just didn't want to think
about it.

She wipes her cheek.

AIKO (CONT'D)
So what kind of secret is it?

ARTHUR
A box. The contents of which I've
kept hidden for over four
centuries. If I should perish and
those contents have yet to be
revealed...

AIKO
Revealed to who?

ARTHUR
That will become apparent. Aiko, I
need your word.

Aiko ponders for a moment before replying.

AIKO
You have my word.

ARTHUR
Thank you. This means more to me
than you could ever know.

They both stand.

AIKO
So, is that it?

ARTHUR
I'm afraid not. That was not your
assignment but merely the humble
request of an old man. Although we
have roused the issue.

Arthur begins pacing.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
As I said, I have concerns
regarding the Celestial Guardians.
A matter which requires discretion.

AIKO
Point me to the problem.

Arthur smiles.

ARTHUR
I'm beginning to see why Harper
speaks so highly of you.

EXT. SPOOKY JUNGLE - DAY

A butterfly lands on a wild flower. It's being observed from nearby.

EMMETT COOLIDGE, early 30s, is much more vibrant than the salt and pepper locks would suggest. His left arm is covered in a black neoprene sleeve and is giving off a strange red glow.

MORGAN BLACKWELL, 19, has not a single hair out of place despite being in the middle of nowhere. She watches in fascination as the insect feeds on the plant's nectar.

EMMETT
(whispering)
Look here? I believe they call this
one a butterflea. Humans consider
it beautiful but you'll notice it's
actually quite grotesque up close.

MORGAN
Intriguing.

EMMETT
Sort of an analogy for humanity
itself.

HARPER (O.S.)
Same could be said about us.

Harper appears behind them as Emmett and Morgan turn around startled. The butterfly flutters away.

EMMETT
(smiling)
Harper. I suspected they would send
you.

She gives him a big hug.

EMMETT (CONT'D)
Let me introduce you to my
Initiate-

HARPER
Oh I've known Morgan for years.

She steps forward and gives her a hug too.

EMMETT

Ah, indeed. The Archmage's
Debutante Balls.

MORGAN

I still have nightmares about that
music.

EXT. LOREMAGE CAMP - NIGHT

A small campfire sits surrounded by two tents and a set of
camping chairs and chests.

Emmett and Harper sit on a log and drinking out of green
mugs.

EMMETT

You must come out here a lot with
Dante.

Harper giggles.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

What?

HARPER

Well, this is Venezuela. Dante
lives in Manhattan. Not exactly
around the corner.

EMMETT

Ah, Terran geography was never a
strength of mine.

HARPER

You should spend some time here.
It's pretty fun.

Emmett shrugs.

HARPER (CONT'D)

You never know, Em. You might find
a nice Terran girl and settle down.

EMMETT

I doubt it.

He stares at the side of Harper's face in the firelight.

HARPER
Matti used to say *never let
happiness slip by you.*

Emmett smiles and nods.

HARPER (CONT'D)
Speaking of which?

They share a somber look.

EMMETT
You know she doesn't talk to me.
Except for what food not to eat and
what not to wear. She understands
this world so much better than I
do.

HARPER
That's not saying a lot.

The two of them laugh.

BY THE CAMPFIRE

Maya, Morgan and Quentin are gathered around the fire.

MORGAN
It's horrible. We're three days
behind schedule and that'll hardly
give us time to catalogue and
sample before the next expedition
launches.

QUENTIN
They're rocks. Not like they're
going anywhere.

MORGAN
Fontana just announced a new
expedition on the Nuusem ice
caverns. If we don't finish this
site soon, they may give that to
someone else.

MAYA
Figures, only Morgan would be upset
about not having *enough* work to do.

Quentin and Maya share a laugh while Morgan pouts.

MORGAN
(to Quentin)
So have you spoken to father or
mother since your graduation?

QUENTIN
He stopped by as we were touring
the Apex.

MORGAN
What did he say?

QUENTIN
You know. Typical dad stuff. How
he's proud and all that.

MORGAN
Sounds like him.

Maya gives him a forlorn glance. He shrugs it off.

MAYA
Since your he's like a million
years old, does that mean you two
are going to live forever too?

Morgan shuffles the rocks with her feet.

QUENTIN
He's not immortal. He can die. Just
like the rest of us. The Blessing
just slows things down for him.

Harper and Emmett approach.

HARPER
Alright, so I brought a surprise.

She reaches into her bag and produces a bag and two boxes.

HARPER (CONT'D)
It's an mystical Terran treat the
Humans refer to as S'mores.

EXT. ANCIENT TOMBS - DAY

The next morning, Harper treks through the forest.

She enters a clearing and sees the moss-covered stone
structure in the shape of a human skull.

A twig breaks nearby.

HARPER
One of these days.

A female voice comes from behind her.

LINA
A year ago I wouldn't have gotten
this close. Getting pretty sloppy.

Behind her is LINA MACHADO, early 20s, with two hatchets tucked in holsters over her abdomen. She was full of energy and speaks to Harper like a sister.

The two of them hug.

HARPER
How have you been?

LINA
Just dandy. Getting my ass eaten by
mosquitoes.
(looking around)
Where are the others?

HARPER
I decided to scout ahead. Em and
Morgan are on their way. Along with
Maya and Quentin, my new Initiates.

LINA
Really?

HARPER
(joking)
Yeah, I did such a great job with
you, they decided to give me two
this time.

LINA
What do you think of them?

HARPER
Too early to say. You were in the
Academy together. You have any
thoughts?

LINA
Maya's cool. Quiet but strong. Q.
(shaking her head)
The boy's a wildcard.

Harper smiles.

LINA (CONT'D)

What?

HARPER

Nothing. Just... That's what Matti
used to say about you.

Lina begins to gaze off into the distance. Harper pats her on the shoulder.

HARPER (CONT'D)

He would be so proud of you of the
woman that you're becoming.

LINA

(smiling)

He'd be proud of you too.

A bush rustles nearby.

Lina and Harper draw their weapons and investigate. Nothing.

They turn around to find a small HOWLER MONKEY charging at them.

Harper extends her staff and prods it away. The animal's eyes turn black and grey. It lets out a low rumbling shriek and flees through the arched mouth of the ruins.

HARPER

That thing was Blighted.

LINA

Ya don't say.

HARPER

How'd a daemon end up all the way
out here?

A high-pitched scream tears through the woods.

They run towards the campsite when the Initiates emerge from the bushes, followed by Emmett.

MORGAN

I swear I saw someone.

QUENTIN

Quit freaking out, ya big baby.

HARPER

What happened?

EMMETT

Ms. Blackwell thinks she saw
someone in the brush. I checked,
and no one was there. Probably just
all the sugar from the s'mor-ays
last night.

Harper scans the treeline.

LINA

(concerned)

C'mon, let's get this over with.

HARPER

Everyone stay together and keep
your eyes open.

They enter the tomb.

INT. ANCIENT TOMBS - DAY

OUTER CRYPT

Lina and Harper lead the pack as they creep through a dark
tunnel, flashlights strapped to their shoulders.

MAYA

(covering her nose)

Cosmos, what's that smell?

QUENTIN

What sme- Holy hell.

Emmett kneels down and runs a finger through a streak of gray
liquid on the floor.

LINA

Blighted blood smell like ass. Ya
get used to it after a while.

A rock falls behind them, followed by some skittering
footsteps.

A trio of BLIGHTED JAGUARS emerge from two side halls behind
them.

Quentin rushes forward when Harper's staff slaps across his
chest.

HARPER

Rule #1 when dealing with the
Blighted?

MAYA
Don't let them bite you.

LINA
Bingo.

Lina crosses her hatchets. The flashlights begin to flicker as electricity dances in her eyes.

She casts her arms forward and a surge of lightning shoots forth, knocking each of the jaguars down.

They recover and find Harper standing over them. All three cats pounce and begin ripping her to pieces.

A few yards away, the real Harper watches as the Jaguars viciously tear each other apart.

Morgan, Quentin and Maya turn away as fur and blood fly into the air. The last cat howls loudly and then perishes.

HARPER
(reluctant)
Let's move.

INNER CRYPT

They are now deeper into the tomb.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I think we're safe, Emmett. And we
could probably use the light.

She gestures towards his arm.

He nods and begins to remove the sleeve. Underneath lies, instead of an arm, light in the shape of an arm. It moves and acts like flesh but pulses with a translucent maroon glow.

Emmett notices Maya's staring and face away, shoving the sleeve into his backpack.

They push on.

MORGAN
So those animals drank the blood of
a daemon?

EMMETT
Most likely.

MORGAN
Poor things.

MAYA

How would a Daemon get on Earth?

HARPER

Same way we do, dimensional portals.

MORGAN

The war was 400 year ago. How are they still alive?

LINA

How's your father still alive?

Harper and Emmett glance at each other.

EMMETT

All we know is after the death of Ry'naughk, most scattered and went into hiding.

HARPER

Majority of Hunter assignments deal with the quelling the remaining Daemon threats.

Harper notices bloody paw prints leading down a long hall.

Following them, they find a small room with a large stone sarcophagus inside. They begin inspecting the room.

EMMETT

Must've been someone important to earn such a large tomb.

LINA

Dead is dead. What difference does it make the size of the box they throw you in.

Emmett ponders.

MAYA

Hey, guys.

Maya pushes aside an overgrown mess of vines, revealing a small passageway.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

On the other side they find a cavern.

Maya grabs her nose.

MAYA
It's worse down here.

MORGAN
What's wor—

Morgan gags.

HARPER
Look.

Across the chamber a gigantic stone-like corpse lies in a pool of grey liquid, overtaken by vines and foliage.

LINA
Well, there's your problem.

Lina and Emmett approach the body and start examining it.

EMMETT
Hmm. Strange.

HARPER
What?

EMMETT
Lacerations. Straight. Like from a blade.

LINA
Had to die someday.

EMMETT
No. This corpse has been here for ages, decades probably. But these cuts are fresh.

HARPER
You're saying someone sliced this thing open recently?

MAYA
Guys, you hear that?

The sound of someone whistling in the distance, growing louder behind a rock formation.

Harper draws her staff and approaches, motioning the others behind her.

Oblivious to them, GREGOR THE PRESCIENT steps out from behind the rocks, holding a teapot. He starts to sing as he passes by them.

GREGOR

*The end, The end , Oh how it all
shall end / The daemons on my back
shall make a corpse of all within.*

HARPER

Gregor?

He stops.

GREGOR

Guests? Strange, I wasn't expecting anyone. No matter, I'll simply grab more tea.

Harper watches as he walks over with the teapot.

Lina clenches her hatchets, her knuckles turning white.

Gregor turns to Harper.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

I remember you. We tried to kill each other once. How do you like your tea?

EXT. MOUNT ARETHE - DAY

The peak of Mount Arethe pokes through the clouds.

Floating above the mountain, attached via a gigantic chain, is an building carved from white marble. The three suns of Hydor reflect brightly off of the golden columns that line the entrance.

INT. MOUNT ARETHE - DAY

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Stone braziers hang from the ceiling. A long mahogany table rests in the center with thirteen chairs surrounding it.

Archmage Blackwell sits at the head. Two chair lie empty on the ends opposite him. The rest are filled with creatures in the same armor gold and pearl armor as his.

To his right: a dwarf, three mages, a dark elf and a dragon in humanoid form.

To his left: a gorgon, an imp, an ogre and a golem.

They all sit in silence, looking distressed.

The dwarf (HAVERN MOREHAVEN SATINE) finally speaks.

SATINE
This is outrageous!

Arthur's folds his hands in front of him.

SATINE (CONT'D)
You claim we speak as one voice and
yet your ego decides matters for us
all.

The dark elf (LARKFOOT BAEN) chimes in.

BAEN
I was under the impression this
council was a group of peers, not
the peons of a tyrannical
megalomaniac.

The dragon growls at the elf. Arthur shakes his head at him.

ARTHUR
I'm sorry you feel this way Baen.

The snake-haired gorgon (MANTISA CALIPHA) speaks. Her forked
tongue hissing occasionally.

CALIPHA
What about the other chair? Can we
at least be trusted to promote a
candidate of our own.

ARTHUR
Of course, my dear. And know, this
is not a matter of distrust. But a
matter of urgency. The balances in
the human realm are most in
disarray.

SATINE
There are already more than enough
of you smoothbeards. Why add
another?

ARTHUR
Havern, my friend, I-

SATINE
(interrupting)
Especially after the last traitor
you brought into our midst.

Tense whispers and sharp glances.

ARTHUR

Guardians, of the four mages none are suited to work in the human realm. With a Huntress in our ranks, we will have the means to operate on Terra without complication.

SATINE

Then tell us that. Present your argument and let us discuss it. But no!

The dwarf slaps the table.

The golem and the orge begin arguing amongst themselves. Soon the table is shouting and the room is swallowed in catastrophony.

The dragon, FAEDRIS, barks and a loud boom fills the room, silencing the other Guardians.

FAEDRIS

Enough!

The dragon rises to his feet.

FAEDRIS (CONT'D)

Many are too young to remember the beginnings of this council. Well, let me remind you. This council would not exist were it not for Arthur's sacrifice and wisdom. He was chosen by the Cosmos and we were *all* chosen by him.

SATINE

But by process!

BAEN

Yes, chosen by our peers.

The dragon begins to retort when Arthur extends his hand.

ARTHUR

Let them speak their mind.

The dragon sits, a puff of smoke exiting it's nostrils. The room settles.

CALIPHA

How is this any different than Ry'naughk's Court?

One of the humans gasp, and several look shocked at the comparison. Faedris's nostrils flare again.

Arthur stares at her. After a prolonged pause, he stands up.

ARTHUR

You were too young to appreciate the true horror of the War. So I shall forgive your last statement as the folly of youth. You'd be best to reconsider before you make such egregious comparisons so lightly.

She averts her eyes, the snakes recoiling in response.

He turns to the rest of the council and continues.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

And while I value all opinions and wish to hear your dissent, know that my decision today was not made out of arrogance or haste but out of necessity. I don't expect all to agree but understand that this decision is final.

OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Aiko sits beside the Council doors, arms folded and eyes closed. She appears to be meditating.

The doors burst open. She's startled.

The ogre is the first one out, followed by the other Guardians, some giving disapproving glances towards her as they leave.

Finally, Arthur and Faedris emerge.

The dragon eyes her up and down. And then gives a bow towards Arthur and leaves.

AIKO

How did it go?

ARTHUR

Terrible. Which was quite better than I expected. But regardless, it's done.

He rests his hands on her shoulders and leans in.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
You remember your assignment?

AIKO
I do.

ARTHUR
(whispering)
Remember: trust no one.

He steps back.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
And welcome to the Celestial
Guardians.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Gregor leads Emmett and Harper into a small crevasse-turned-hideout. A poster of a Venezuelan soccer team is stretched over a rock, three parallel slashes running through it.

There is an assortment of trinkets and junk spread across the dirt.

Gregor walks over to a porcelain tea pot with caked-on grey stains.

EMMETT
(looking around)
My god? What has happened to him?

GREGOR
Tea?

EMMETT
No, thank you.

GREGOR
It's oh so refreshing.

Harper silently declines and turns to leave.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

Harper joins Lina who is pacing nervously while the Initiates fiddle with their walkie-talkies.

LINA
You're leaving them alone together.

HARPER

He's barely lucid, I don't think
he's much of a threat. Besides, I'd
feel sorry for him if he tries to
pick a fight with Emmett.

Lina gives her a questioning look. Harper rubs her shoulder.

HARPER (CONT'D)

You doing okay?

Lina stares deeply into her eyes.

LINA

20 feet. The sonofabitch is 20 feet
away. It would be so easy.

HARPER

Trust me, I want to just as badly
as you do. But there's a right way
and a wrong way to handle this. And
Matti would want both of us to do
it the right way.

Lina looks away, eyes watering.

Emmett leaves the hideout and start towards the Initiates.

LINA

You really think he's crazy?

HARPER

How else do you explain it?

LINA

Blight doesn't do that.

EMMETT

(interrupting)

To be fair, we don't truly
understand *what* the Blight does.
We've never done an effective study
on it. Simply too dangerous.

HARPER

And Gregor was a Guardian. With the
Blessing of Light interacting with
the curse, Symius only knows
happens.

Lina shakes her head. Harper tries to comfort her before she
pulls away.

LINA

I need some air. I'll call for
containment and a Guardian to
pickup Mary Poppins.

HARPER

Let me go with you, it's not safe.

LINA

I'll be okay. Stay here and watch
after the kids.

HARPER

Call if you see anything.

Lina nods.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Harper enters to find Emmett and the Initiates scouring every
inch of the small nook.

They are sifting through old books and other collected junk.

MAYA

What's this?

Maya picks up an old vinyl sleeve and an aged brittle record
falls out and shatters on the floor.

GREGOR

My treasure!

Everyone tenses up and stares at him.

Gregor jerks his head to the side and starts to whimper.

Emmett shakes his head and continues searching.

EMMETT

It looks like he's been down here
for ages, surviving solely off
Daemon's blood.

MORGAN

So he's Blighted, like the rest. Is
that why he's so...

She twirls a finger by her head.

EMMETT

Presumably, Ms. Blackwell... Although
I've never heard of Blight
presented like this before, there
is very little we-

Without warning, Harper grabs Gregor and flips him over onto
a table. He falls through and lands hard on the floor.

She then drives her booth into his neck. With a clean punch
to the face, she knocks him out.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

(shouting)

What are you doing?

Harper reaches into the splintered remains of the table and
pulls a long, curved blade from his hands.

HARPER

You almost became a folk tale,
Emmett the Headless.

They all turn to look at the sleeping Guardian.

EXT. ANCIENT TOMBS - DAY

ENTRANCE

Lina exits the cave and glances around the treeline.

She takes off her backpack and kneels into a praying
position. Using her finger, she draws a runic symbol in the
dirt and closes her eyes.

INT. THE CONDUIT - DAY

In a dark quiet room at the back of the Spire, Isla sits in a
prayer pose.

She lifts her head and opens her eyes to see Lina kneeling in
front of her.

ISLA

Greetings, Huntress Machado.

LINA

Isla, I have an urgent message for
the Arch-Huntress...

Lina's head turns to the right.

EXT. ANCIENT TOMBS - DAY

Lina is still kneeling and Isla the Enchantress has appeared in front her above the hand-drawn sigil which is now glowing.

A DARK MAGE wearing a purple cloak has appeared at the treeline. They stare at each other.

ISLA

Ma'am?

LINA

We need a containment team here right away. We've found a Daemon on-site, deceased. Tell her to also send a Guardian escort. We've found Gregor the Prescient. He's Blighted.

ISLA

Is that all, ma'am?

Lina still staring at the Dark Mage.

LINA

Yeah.

ISLA

I'll convey the message right away.

LINA

Thank you, Isla.

ISLA

Tis my duty, ma'am.

The enchantress fades away and Lina starts walking toward the Dark Mage.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Gregor awakes to find his arms bound behind him.

Harper and Emmett stare from across the room, her arms crossed.

HARPER

Look whose awake.

GREGOR

I needed a nap. The last few months have been sheer exhaustion.

Harper unfolds her arms and steps closer.

HARPER

I should have known you weren't to be trusted.

GREGOR

We live and we learn. Can't beat yourself up forever, especially considering how close the end is.

HARPER

For you at least. The end is definitely coming. So I won't beat myself up about it.

She kneels down in front of him.

HARPER (CONT'D)

The Guardians are on their way, Gregor. The Council knows about your crimes and we both know they aren't the forgiving type.

(looking puzzled)

I'm pretty sure betrayal earns you Banishment to the Void. The way Arthur describes it, sounds pretty bad. Nothing but still, quiet, empty blackness for eternity.

She takes a step closer.

HARPER (CONT'D)

And after what you did to Matti, I can't think of a better punishment.

Gregor smiles.

GREGOR

Where's the girl?

EMMETT

None of your business.

GREGOR

(laughing)

Your ignorance is understandable. Vision is a burden but also a gift; a gift not given to many for they would squander it. The Void may actually be preferable to what she'll bring down upon you all.

EMMETT

What are you talking about?

GREGOR

What? Did you think I was trying to kill you? You are of no consequence to me, Loremage. But the girl...

Gregor looks Harper in the eye.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

She is trouble. I've foreseen it.

Harper turns away to leave.

HARPER

Desperate words from a doomed soul.
(to Emmett)
I'm through with him.

GREGOR

Believe me or not, the future has been written. Blood will be shed either way. Either her's now or billions later.

Emmett blocks Harper with his arm.

EMMETT

Shouldn't we hear what he has to say?

HARPER

If you want to have your time wasted, sure. But I have better things to do.

Gregor shouts from across the room.

His tattered clothes are soon replaced with golden and pearl armor as his eyes begin to glow.

GREGOR

(booming voice)

The kin of Ry'naughk's slayer will resurrect the Daemon Lord and bring upon the Apocalypse. So it is said, so it is written.

His eyes turn back to normal.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

(normal voice)

You called her Blackwell, correct?
(MORE)

GREGOR (CONT'D)

The daughter of my former master, Arthur Blackwell, slayer of the Death Cosmos himself. That must be his precious Morganna. I doubt even he knows the suffering she will inflict upon the worlds.

HARPER

And here I thought the crazy was an act.

GREGOR

My mind comes and goes. The voices, they never cease. But this is no rambling. This has been foretold and unless someone acts to stop it, it shall come to fruition.

HARPER

Well aren't we so fortunate.

GREGOR

There is a reason I was a Celestial Guardian. My prophecies diverted countless catastrophes. You'd do well to remember that.

EMMETT

That may be. But clearly, your mind has been tainted by the Blight. You're too far gone to be reliable.

GREGOR

I wouldn't expect you to believe me. But I know what I saw. I know what is coming. And I'll do what I must to stop it.

HARPER

Well, good luck with that.

GREGOR

Luck is unnecessary. As you said, I have been touched by the Blight. Combined with the strength of my Blessing, I see nothing you can do to stop me.

HARPER

Those aren't regular ropes.

GREGOR

I'm not your regular mage.

HARPER
If that's true, why haven't you
just broken free?

GREGOR
Waiting.

HARPER
For the ropes to wither from age?

GREGOR
No. For my lovelies to come join
the party.

A scream echoes from outside the cave.

Harper turns to Emmett who immediately runs outside.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

Emmett finds Morgan kneeling behind a boulder.

Quentin and Maya are in the center of the cavern, staring
into a sea of shadows with countless purple glowing eyes
looking back at them.

EMMETT
Initiates, get outta there.

Quentin cracks his knuckles.

QUENTIN
This is what we trained for.

Maya loads a bolt into her crossbow.

MAYA
Remember, don't let them bite you.

QUENTIN
No, don't let them bite you...

Quentin's skin turns to metal.

QUENTIN (CONT'D)
I hope they break their teeth.

Emmett joins a panicked Morgan behind the boulder.

EMMETT
You remember defensive training?

She takes a deep breath and closes her eyes. Her palms start to glow red-hot before she opens them.

She looks at Emmett and nods.

EMMETT (CONT'D)
Just like in the Academy.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Harper grabs her staff with a twirl and faces Gregor.

His hands snap free as his eyes pupils shine indigo.

GREGOR
The kin of Ry'naughk's slayer will
resurrect the Daemon Lord and bring
upon the Apocalypse. So it is said,
so it is written. I shall rewrite
it.

HARPER
Over my dead body.

GREGOR
Fair enough.

He attacks with his now-armored fists.

She swings her staff and he catches it mid-blow.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
Oh, it really is nice to have
company. I've been ever so lonely.

INT. MOUNT ARETHE - DAY

ARMORY

Mantisa Calipha stands before a single brazier in the middle of an dark, windowless library.

Fire pours out the mouths on the snakes, lighting the brazier and the room.

Rather than books, the shelves are lined with a collection of seemingly random objects and artifacts.

Aiko stands be the door, next to an orc named OLAR JA'PHAEEL.

Calipha faces them.

CALIPHA

(hissing)

This is the armory. From here you shall select a talisman before your initiation.

(waving her arms around)

But be careful, some of these objects are quite immense in their power.

The orc glances at Aiko nervously. She smiles and nods.

CALIPHA (CONT'D)

Let the talisman choose you.

They both begin scouring through the shelves.

AIKO

Where did you get these?

CALIPHA

Some are artifacts we've collected over the years. Others are trophies. Powerful totems we've gathered from foes the Council has defeated, too powerful to fall into civilian hands.

Ja'phael touches a large helmet and lets out a howl.

CALIPHA (CONT'D)

Careful. Like I said, these items are powerful.

Aiko runs her hands across a long spear with an obsidian tip.

AIKO

This is amazing. Weapons like these could save Hunters lives.

CALIPHA

As I said, these are too powerful to fall back into the civilian world. The selection process for your Order allows too many unstable individuals in. They could never be trusted with such power.

AIKO

It's good to know the Guardians have never let any bad apples in.

(grinning)

Oh wait...

The snake's on Calipha's head start to rattle and hiss loudly.

Ja'phael lets out a grunt. On the shelf in front of him a stone shield with a cracked gemstone in the center.

JA'PHAEEL

This! Ma'go Shield. Belong in ancient legend. Lost to fates long ago. But here all along.

CALIPHA

Indeed. There is a strong, proud Orc history with that shield. Try it out, see how it feels.

He grabs the handle and snorts.

JA'PHAEEL

This. Ma'go shield. Olar, talisman.

CALIPHA

Excellent. By returning that shield to your people, I hope in some way that can go even further towards mending the relationship between orcs and the rest of the world.

JA'PHAEEL

It start.

Calipha nods and turns to Aiko.

CALIPHA

And what about you, mage?

The Huntress sucks her teeth.

AIKO

Nothing's really jumpin-

Aiko stops in her tracks.

Sitting in front of her, a longbow which appears to be crafted out of glass.

She places her hand on it and the stock shimmers a bright white.

CALIPHA

The Bow of Lyaris.

The gorgan steps closer.

CALIPHA (CONT'D)

It is said that the Cosmos Lyaris forged this bow to atone for the havoc her brother Ry'naughk had wrought. They say only those pure of heart and spirit can wield it properly.

Aiko grabs the string which glows and emits an odd tone as she pulls it back.

The Guardian raises a hand and a target appears across the room.

Aiko looks at her and then back at the bow.

She pulls the string back, forming an energy arrow in it's place. As she lets go an eerie whistle accompanies the arrow and turns to a small boom as the target shatters to a million pieces.

Ja'phael's jaw drops.

Calipha looks surprised as well.

CALIPHA (CONT'D)

It would seem Arthur may have chosen wisely.

Aiko smiles.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Council has reassembled with Aiko and Ja'pheal standing in front of the two empty seats.

Arthur grabs a goblet from the table and the room quiets. The others follow suit.

ARTHUR

Today marks an auspicious occasion as we induct two new members into our ranks.

He turns to the new arrivals.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Beyond that, it's a privilege to welcome the first orc in the entire Council's history.

Arthur smiles.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

For too long, your people have suffered from deep-seated prejudice. I'm ashamed to say, I'm guilty of it as well. It's been far too long but no more. And I hope that in time, we can help rebuild the long neglected Orcish people.

He locks eyes with the orc.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

So welcome, Olar Ja'phael. I'm certain you'll make a great addition to our Council.

The group cheers.

A gold light fills the room. It subsides and Olar is now donning the same pearl and gold armor as the rest of them.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

And finally, in a decision I know was unpopular but I hope you will come to respect, I have chosen to add a Huntress to our Council. In the short time I've known her, she has proven herself to be brave, honest and just. I believe she possesses all of the qualities needed to excel as a Guardian. I hope you all will give her a chance to impress you as she has impressed me. Welcome Aiko Tanaka.

The light flashes again.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Now, let us toast the Cos-

As Aiko looks over her armor, a loud banging comes from the door.

Another set of loud knocks.

Arthur lowers his glass and opens the door.

A thirty foot tall FLAME ELEMENTAL stands on the other side.

Olar drops his goblet and grabs his shield from his back, preparing for a fight.

Aiko smirks.

The flame elemental shrinks down until it's the size of a small human. Its features morph into that of Venji Asahd.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

You've caught us at an unfortunate time, Arch-Huntress.

As the elemental speaks, Venji's voice comes out only deeper and eerie.

VENJI

I'm sorry, Archmage. It could not wait. It's Harper's team.

Arthur turns and faces Aiko who has now put down her drink, hanging on the every word.

ARTHUR

What is it?

VENJI

They've found Gregor the Prescient.

The chamber snaps to life with murmurs and whispers.

FAEDRIS

Finally, the traitor shall pay.

SATINE

(shouting)

To the Void with him!

Arthur turns back to Venji.

ARTHUR

We shall send someone at once.

With a nod, the flame Venji elemental disappears.

He turns back towards the Council.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

It would appear festivities will have to wait.

CALIPHA

I'll fetch that devil.

ARTHUR

Might I suggest you bring Aiko along with you. Her experience as a Huntress may prove useful in navigating through Terra and the Order.

Calipha looks at Aiko reluctantly and nods.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

The burnt remains of a jaguar disintegrate in a cloud of soot as it slams against the cave wall.

Morgan lowers her hands, pink flames dancing from her palms.

Emmett yells from behind.

EMMETT

A little help!

Three more beasts surround Emmett, kept at bay by three mini-tornadoes under his control.

Quentin is wrestling with a large jaguar, his metal hands pulling either side of the cat's mouth.

QUENTIN

(struggling)

Kinda busy!

One of the cats surrounding Emmett falls to the ground, an arrow sticking out of it's side.

Maya loads another bolt into her crossbow.

A glowing green hawk screeches past Morgan's face. She turns just in time to dodge another jaguar leaping towards her.

Electricity crackles through the beast as a hatchet blade pierces it's skull.

Lina helps her to her feet.

MORGAN

Great timing.

LINA

I always strive to make an entrance.

Emmett grunts across the cavern. Lina heads to his rescue.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Gregor has Harper in a bear hug, gripping her tightly against his chest.

Harper headbutts him and he falls to his knees.

Gregor rises to his feet as a purpleish aura envelops him.

Her eyes begin to glow as 11 more Harpers appear in front of him.

GREGOR
Funny girl.

A surge of energy knocks all 12 Harpers backwards.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
Let's play.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

Quentin is on the ground, being overwhelmed by two beasts. The metal armor is showing cracks and scrapes, revealing his normal skin underneath.

The others are battling even more creatures.

A wisp of red lightning strikes one of the animals in the side. An arrow catches another.

A small pack get caught in a vortex of fire cast by Morgan and Emmett.

MAYA
They keep coming.

Lina surveys the situation for a moment.

LINA
Everyone back up.

She crosses her blades together as electricity begins to arc between them.

She slams them down into the dirt and a giant wall of electricity shoots out. They yelp and screech and run away as the lightning hits them.

Lina tries to stand but collapses. Emmett helps her to a nearby rock.

EMMETT
I hope Harper is faring better with Gregor.

He turns to look at the hideout entrance.

INT. GREGOR'S HIDEOUT - DAY

Gregor and the Harpers are brawling. They each appear to be getting winded.

He lets out two pulses of energy which knock each Harper onto the ground.

11 Harpers fade away leaving the real one, knocked out on her back.

GREGOR
No more games...

He walks past her, shaking his head.

INT. SECRET CAVE - DAY

Gregor exits his hideout.

GREGOR
Where have all of my pets gone?

Before he can react, a stream of lightning hits his chest.

LINA
Die you piece of crap.

Gregor turns and laughs, the lightning being absorbed into his energy aura.

The lightning becomes surrounded by a vortex filled with rocks and pebbles. Emmett focuses on him.

Morgan casts flames from her hand which join the air vortex making a FLAME TORNADO.

Gregor laughs as he pushes through the tornado and lightning towards Lina.

As he closes in, her electricity starts to arc and jump chaotically.

GREGOR
Game over.

The electricity surges backwards and strikes Lina in the chest. She flies back, landing on the dirt unconscious.

The others stop their spells and look.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
 I've been merciful.
 (pointing at Morgan)
 No one, aside from the girl, has to
 die today. But that choice is
 yours.

Harper appears behind him, blood streaming down her forehead,
 and swings her staff.

He blocks it without looking. He then turns and grabs her by
 the throat before tossing her clear across the room.

Gregor walks over and punches Emmett square in the face,
 knocking him out.

Quentin and Maya are now forming a protective barrier between
 Gregor and Morgan. All three are badly scuffed. Patches of
 Quentin's real skin are bloody and exposed beneath his metal
 skin.

Gregor trots toward them.

MORGAN
 What do you want with me?

GREGOR
 It's the prophecy.

QUENTIN
 The hell are you talking about?!

GREGOR
 Arthur Blackwell's child will cause
 the Apocalypse. I'm merely
 preventing that.

The Initiates look at each other.

MAYA
 You're insane.

GREGOR
 Yes. But that doesn't change my
 prophecy. I'm so sorry it has come
 to this.

Gregor is closing in now.

GREGOR (CONT'D)
 There are no more options. You
 cannot win.

Maya and Quentin look at each other, perplexed.

Morgan places her hands on their shoulders and pushes past them.

MORGAN

Okay. Just let them go. Please.

Gregor stops and smiles.

GREGOR

Indeed. A brave choi-

QUENTIN

(interrupting)

Hey, dipshit. Arthur Blackwell has
TWO kids!

Quentin pushes Morgan out of the way as he lunges towards Gregor with his dagger.

The blade pierces his ribs and he lets out a snort.

Maya charges him as well.

Gregor smacks them both to the ground, Maya's crossbow slides away, but they both rise once more.

Maya swipes him with her bare hands, leaving a large set of lacerations on his exposed abdomen.

The metal on Quentin's body focuses onto his fist as he starts punching him in the body.

Morgan watches from the dirt, wind knocked out of her.

GREGOR

So you must be Quentin. The old
man's other cherub.

He lets out another pulse of energy and they fall again.

He walks over to Quentin who is writhing in pain.

A red and black spear materializes in Gregor's hand. He raises it with a smile.

GREGOR (CONT'D)

Excuse my mirth, I take little
pleasure in this. But your father
has it coming.

Morgan looks at the downed Huntresses and Emmett. She sees Maya struggling to stand up.

A tear rolls down her eyes and she crawls away.

Maya grabs Gregor's leg, failing to do more than annoy him. He kicks her away, knocking back his last bit of opposition.

He looks down at Quentin, scowling back at him.

QUENTIN
Go ahead, do it. My Dad's gonna
kill you.

GREGOR
That may be. But the world will
thank me.

Gregor starts to lunge when a giant ball of light red energy slams into his chest.

He sees Morgan, eyes glowing, grey and black liquid dripping from her lips.

MORGAN
(daemonic voice)
Enough!

The chamber begins to shake as energy pulses from her body.

QUENTIN
(to himself)
No. What did you do?

Gregor tightens the grip on his spear.

A sword and shield form from dark energy in Morgan's palms.

GREGOR
This shall be interesting.

Gregor lunges at her. She dodges and counters his strikes effortlessly. From behind glowing red eyes, she smirks.

INT. ANCIENT TOMBS - DAY

INNER CRYPT

Gregor crashes through the wall, crushing the sarcophagus.

Their weapons morph into balls of energy.

GREGOR	MORGAN
(daemonic voice)	(daemonic voice)
This ends now.	This ends now.

Their orbs turn to giant streams which meet in the middle of the room.

They each grimace and strain as the streams clash.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
Can't hold on.

The DARK MAGE appears in the middle of the room.

INT. SECRET CAVE - NIGHT

Lina wakes up to Harper's face hovering over her.

HARPER
You okay?

Lina sits up and looks around.

LINA
Where'd he go?

She spots Emmett, unconscious on the ground nearby.

They rush over to him.

Lina pulls bandages out her backpack. She checks her watch.

LINA (CONT'D)
Containment team should be here by
now.

Harper turns to head outside and notices Quentin and Maya lying on the ground.

She checks their vitals and wakes them.

HARPER
Where is Morgan?

Quentin is groggy.

QUENTIN
Oh no... Morgan...

He struggles to his feet but loses his balance. Harper catches him.

HARPER
Calm down. What happened?

Quentin begins to cry.

MAYA
Up there.

Maya points out a hole in the cavern wall. Light is peeking through.

INT. ANCIENT TOMBS - NIGHT

INNER CRYPT

Harper enters.

Morgan and Gregor are both lying on the ground, unconscious. The room is empty.

OUTER CRYPT

Harper is walking through the tunnels when she notices a light ahead.

She pulls out her staff, preparing for a fight, until she recognizes Aiko's face atop a mass of glittering armor.

They both smile upon seeing each other.

EXT. ANCIENT TOMBS - NIGHT

A half dozen Mages are gathered around the entrance of the tomb while another half dozen are filing in and out. Mostly Loremages with a couple Hunters.

A pair of CLERICS are tending to the wounds of Maya and Quentin.

The Arch Huntress stands in the circle with Harper, Lina and Aiko.

VENJI

...And so he'll be returned to the
Council where he will face
tribunal.

She nods to Calipha who leads a shackled Gregor away, his eyes white and his expression blank.

Harper nudges Aiko.

HARPER

(excited)

Guess it's time for you to go,
Guardian.

Harper glances at her with curious eyes and smiles as she walks away.

The Arch-Huntress turns to Harper and Lina.

VENJI
Sounds like things got out of hand.

LINA
That's an understatement.

HARPER
No kidding.

Emmett walks over, bandaged and limping. He walks toward them.

HARPER (CONT'D)
I just want to know what the hell happened in there.

VENJI
We'll have to ask the girl when she wakes up.

EMMETT
(sighing)
We'll be waiting then... The clerics say that she's in a coma.

They look down in despair.

EMMETT (CONT'D)
They don't know when or if she'll wake up.

Harper turns to Quentin and Maya in the distance, laughing amongst themselves.

VENJI
That's unfortunate. We must find out what happened to that daemon.

INT. SECRET CAVE - NIGHT

The chamber is filled with Loreimages and Hunters. The pool of daemon blood remains but the corpse is missing.

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

We see the daemon corpse, vertical slash marks with blood still oozing out of it.

Standing above is the hooded DARK MAGE.