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EXT. COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK - NIGHT

PULL BACK from a neon red cross ablaze in the cold December night to REVEAL an inner-city, store-front clinic. Trash and leaves blow over wet, snowy pavement.

ANGLE ON a PALE FIGURE standing across the street. He looks feverish and strung-out, in serious need of a fix. This is JARED NOMAK, 20s. He starts towards the clinic.

INT. COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Potential DONORS sit in a waiting area, filling out forms, leafing through informational material. A sign in the window reads: "Se habla Espanol". Others read: "YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE", "GIVE LIFE", and "BECOME A PLATELET DONOR". We overhear a bored-looking EMPLOYEE behind the information desk quizzing someone over the phone:

EMPLOYEE
Have you recently visited a tropical country? Uh-huh? In the past twelve months have you gotten a tattoo, non sterile acupuncture, or undergone any ear, skin or body piercing?

We MOVE PAST the employee to Nomak, waiting.

NURSE (O.S.)
Jared Nomak?

Nomak looks up. We get a better look at his face now - he has a thin scar running from his lower lip down his chin. A childhood accident, perhaps. A NURSE smiles and motions for him to join her. She's carrying a clipboard.

NURSE (CONT'D)
Hi. We're ready for you now.

INT. COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nomak follows the Nurse into a dimly-lit hallway. We track their progress in a convex safety mirror suspended from the hallway ceiling as they pass all manner of medical supplies -- centrifuges, an apheresis device, etc.

NURSE
(referring to her clipboard)
I see from your questionnaire that you don't have any immediate next of kin?

NOMAK
Not that I'm in contact with.

NURSE
Nobody to call in case of an emergency?

NOMAK
No --
(apprehensive)
Does that mean I can't be a donor?

NURSE
It depends. We came up with some unusual results on your blood test.

Nomak follows the Nurse to a steel door were TWO SECURITY GUARDS await them. Both look bored, paying little attention to the monitor which offers a view of the examining room beyond. There is also a small window with safety glass. GUARD #1 opens the door, following Nomak and the Nurse inside. GUARD #2 remains behind, manning the hallway.

INT. COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK - EXAMINING ROOM - NIGHT

The Nurse ushers Nomak into the room, indicating he should sit in a kind of reclining dental chair with arm and headrests. Nomak notices a security camera mounted above.

NOMAK
(anxious)
How unusual?

Beat. The Nurse sets aside Nomak's file, looking uncomfortable.

NURSE
Your blood has a very rare phenotype, one that's quite valuable to people like us.

NOMAK
Us? What are you talking about?

A kind-faced DOCTOR enters, nodding to Guard #1.

DOCTOR
It's a good news-bad news scenario, Jared. Good news for us, bad for you.

The Doctor and Nurse smile, BARING FANGS. We realize now that they are both vampires. The Guard, too. He grips Nomak by the throat, forcing him back into the restraint chair. As the vampire Guard does so, his hand brushes against Nomak's jaw. The flesh on Nomak's chin briefly separates along the scar - almost as if it were a seam.

The guard pauses - and Nomak LAUGHS. Definitely NOT the reaction the vampires were expecting from a potential victim. Nomak starts to shake and twitch, like he's going into some kind of seizure. The whites of his eyes bleed red. He throws his head back, opening his mouth as a PAIR OF RAZOR

SHARP CANINES extrude from his gums. These are longer, much more lethal-looking than the fangs of the vampires and --

Nomak lashes out, knocking the Guard backwards. The Nurse SCREAMS. Nomak clamps his mouth onto her throat, SLAMMING her back against the wall.

The vampire Doctor rushes to the door, scrambling to unbolt it. Nomak reaches for him, HOWLING with blood-drunk laughter as he lifts the Doctor up. Nomak flings the Doctor about like a toy, using his body to SMASH the lights, then the security camera above.

INT. COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK - HALLWAY - NIGHT

We hear SCREAMS and HORRIBLE NOISES coming from the examining room. Guard #2 draws a gun and looks to the security monitor with alarm. The screen goes black. He looks to the small window, trying to peer into the now-darkened room beyond --

SPLASH! A wave of blood smears across a window. A HAND wipes a patch of blood away, revealing Nomak's baleful, distorted eyes. Guard #2 starts to back away when --

BANG! Nomak slams against the other side of the steel door. BANG!BANG!BANG! The door begins to bend, hand-shaped impressions bulging outward as Nomak starts to peel the door apart like it was an aluminum can.

Guard #2 has seen enough. He turns and runs even as the door CAVES INWARD off its hinges. Forward momentum sends the door sliding across the hallway floor where it trips up the Guard.

ON THE DOORWAY

as Nomak steps into the hallway. Because of the lights above, there are alternating pools of light and shadow in the hall. Nomak advances towards us, his face coming in and out of darkness.

NOMAK
Vampires --

With each pool of light, his awful smile seems to distort further and further, until his mouth seems to be widening all the way back to his ears.

NOMAK (CONT'D)
I fucking hate vampires.

On the floor, the vampire Guard CRIES OUT in fear, helplessly raising his hands to defend himself. Nomak HOWLS and leaps towards him/us, blacking out the screen with his hurtling form as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. INNER-CITY BACK-ALLEY - NIGHT

BOOM! A second-story door flies open and FIVE VAMPIRE thug wannabes come spilling out. They race down a flight of stairs, tripping and tumbling over themselves. In descending order, they are: RUSH, a pimped-out Vanilla Ice clone wearing Karl Kani gear, followed by JIGSAW, ST. CLOUD, T-BAG and SEGURA.

BLADE

exits just behind them, eschewing the stairs completely and vaulting over the railing. He unholsters his MACH pistol as he drops, FIRING it as he lands in a cat-like stance on the snowy ground below --

BA-BANG! A silver-tipped bullet punches through T-Bag's chest. He turns to ash even as his fellow vamps dash through the disintegrating cloud that used to be his body. The embers melt the snow where they land.

A super-charged foot chase ensues, with hunter and prey moving at speeds in excess of anything a human would ever be capable of. We're talking thirty-five, even forty miles an hour.

ON BLADE

Running like a bull, condensed vapor streaming from his mouth and nostrils. Splashing through puddles of icy water storming through barriers of plywood and razor wire, leaping over mountains of garbage bags.

ON THE VAMPIRES

as they flatten a length of cyclone fencing like it was crepe paper. They scramble up an obstacle of waste bins, leaping into the air --

BACK TO BLADE

pulling out his twin-bladed boomerang as he runs. He flings the weapon. It twirls around, catching --

ST. CLOUD IN MID-LEAP

and cutting the vampire completely in half. As the disintegrating halves of St. Cloud fall to the side, Blade storms over the waste bin.

EXT. INNER-CITY - SECOND ALLEY - NIGHT

The remaining vampires stumble into a narrower alley where a GROUP OF BUMS are warming themselves over a series of oil drum fires.

Jigsaw slips, TRIPPING over one of the burning oil drums, catching himself ablaze. He doesn't give a shit. He keeps on running, barreling his way into --

INT. NOODLE FACTORY - NIGHT

-- the back entrance of a cramped, sweat-shop. Some kind of noodle factory filled with steam and equipment and YAMMERING FOREIGNERS and --

-- here comes Blade, hot on the vampires' heels, shouldering workers aside and --

EXT. NOODLE FACTORY - NIGHT

-- Rush and the remaining vamps spill out onto the street where a number of motorcycles are waiting for them -- two BMW R1200 motorbikes and a tricked-out Panhead Harley chopper with ape-hanger handlebars.

Rush and Segura leap atop their BMWs. Jigsaw rolls into a puddle of water, dousing himself, then jumps onto his chopper. As the vamps peel out --

BLADE

Bursts from the factory. Segura revs his BMW, trying to run him down. At the last second, Blade pivots aside like a matador. Segura circles around for another try.

Blade leaps, somersaulting through the air, then lands on the back of the bike behind Segura. SHINGGG! Blade pulls a retractable garrotte wire from the sleeve of his jacket and wraps it around Segura's throat.

With a violent twist, Blade decapitates Segura. As the vampire's headless body turns to ash before him, Blade leans forward and takes the controls of the speeding motorcycle.

WHOOSH! Blade speeds after the other vamps.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Rush and Jigsaw gun their bikes for all they're worth. Up ahead, a line of construction barricades are blocking the way. The vampires power on through the barricades, then abruptly brake --

THE OVERPASS

before them is under construction. There's a twenty-foot gap in the road where a portion is missing, pieces of re-bar poking out from the ends of the prefabricated sections.

Rush and Jigsaw consider their options, but then they hear the ROAR of Blade's engine as he comes SCREAMING over the rise in the road!

Fuck it. Rush powers his chopper forward, making the jump, burning rubber as he lands on the far side. Jigsaw torques his handle and follows, rocketing towards the gap.

ON BLADE

as he snaps his hand up -- a trio of Japanese throwing stars appearing between his fingers like a magician's cards. He flings the stars at Jigsaw's bike --

The throwing stars hit Jigsaw's back tire and the bike goes down, vomiting SPARKS as it slides forward. Jigsaw is flung forward like a ragdoll, out over the gap in the overpass and

-- WHUNK! Jigsaw is impaled on the protruding re-bar! He HOWLS, instantly disintegrating as Blade makes the jump!

UP AHEAD

Rush cuts onto an on-ramp, powering his way onto the freeway.

EXT. FREEWAY - NIGHT

Hyper-speed. Rush slouches low, trying to cut wind resistance and will his bike faster. He hazards a look back.

BLADE

is gaining on him like demon of speed.

Rush pulls a TEC-9, FIRING back at Blade. It's no good. Blade is nearly upon him, unsheathing his sword from his back scabbard --

Blade JABS his sword forward into Rush's rear-wheel. The bike locks up, flips over, BURSTS INTO FLAMES. The whole screaming wreck slews forward, SHOWERING SPARKS --

RUSH

goes flying onto the road, rolling over and over, one of his legs SNAPPING at a bone-breaking angle. As he lies there MOANING, Blade circles around, sweeping past Rush's decimated bike, retrieving his sward from the burning wreckage.

Blade kills the engine on his own bike and dismounts. Rush is pathetically trying to drag his broken body to safety. Blade approaches, placing his boot heel on the back of Rush's neck, forcing his face against the asphalt. He unholsters his MACH, pointing it at the vampire's bleeding head. Blade's opening line:

BLADE
Tell me where he his now and I'll consider you a loose end.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOO-COW CREAMERY - MILK FACTORY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a peeling wall mural -- smiling 30s cartoon cow winking at us, licking her chops. The logo reads: "TASTY".

Blade's matte-black Charger RUMBLES into view and parks in front of the abandoned milk factory. Blade steps out, heaving an equipment sack onto his shoulder.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

THREE LACONIC VAMPIRE TOUGHS are playing poker at a card table, dealing out novelty nudie cards. We hear a NOISE. One of the vampires approaches a reinforced door. He slides open a viewing slot and peers through. Nobody outside. The vampire turns back to his poker buddies, shrugging --

VAMPIRE
Nobody's th--

Before the vampire can even finish his sentence, Blade's SWORD punches straight through the door into his chest. He gasps and turns to ash as the sword disengages back out through the door and --

CRASH! The door explodes open, sending clouds of burning vampire embers every which way. In walks Blade, grinning wickedly, MACH ready --

As the other two vampires rise - POW! A silver hollow-point hits the first one in the neck. POW! Another hollow-point takes out the second. The vampires drop, turning to ash.

Blade holsters his MACH, striding through vampire ash piles. The place is eerily quiet here, in stark contrast to the mayhem of the last few minutes. Just the steady, low-pitched HUM of machinery.

Blade starts forward. Up ahead, a FAINT GLOW is emitting from behind an area that's been sectioned off with canvas tarps. Blade sweeps one of the tarps aside --

THREE LARGE TANKS

are hidden inside. The first two are empty. A MAN is suspended within the third, bobbing weightlessly in a sea of red plasma. His long, gray hair floats about his face, shrouding his weathered features. We're not sure if he's sleeping or dead.

BLADE
Old man, old man, what've they done to you --

Whistler's ace drifts around into view. Blade shakes his head in sadness. He looks about for a way to extract Whistler, doesn't see any obvious means, then --

CRASH! Blade kicks through the glass. Blood and fluids flood out around him as Whistler's limp body tumbles partly down, but he's still suspended by the wires and medical leads. Blade unsheathes his sword, severing the wires --

Whistler falls into his arms. Blade cradles him, then -- the gunsmith's eyes abruptly snap open, flooding with rage.

Blade staggers back as the HOWLING horror that used to be his mentor wraps his hands around Blade's throat, forcing him to the ground. Whistler ROARS, revealing a set of jagged fangs.

WHISTLER
Why didn't you finish me off?!?! I told you --

Whistler SLAMS the back of Blade's head against the concrete floor again and again, punctuating his words with each SLAM --

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
-- TO -- FUCKING -- FINISH -- ME -- OFF!

Blade knees Whistler in the balls. Whistler lets go, cupping his groin as Blade heaves him aside.
Blade strips off his gauntlets. Whistler springs at him again. Blade sinks his fist deep in Whistler's stomach. As Whistler doubles over, Blade twists Whistler's hands behind his back, cuffing his wrists together with a pair of titanium manacles.

Blade pulls a restraint hood from his equipment bag and quickly slips it over Whistler's head, cinching it tight.

Another beat. Whistler doesn't stir. He's down for the count. Blade pauses a moment, catching his breath as he leans on Whistler's still form. He's exhausted.

BLADE
Come on, Whistler.

He rises, heaving Whistler's body over his shoulder.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Let's go home.

EXT. THE CITY - NIGHT

Blade's battered Charger knifes through the snow-dusted urban blight like a shadow. Boarded up businesses, tent cities, doorways bombed with graffiti throwups -- wherever this godforsaken Gomorrah is, it's definitely a notch down on the misery scale from the city Blade used to call home.

Up ahead, the sprawl levels out, giving way to an ice-bound harbor wreathed in fog.

INT. BLADE'S CHARGER - NIGHT

Blade drives on, inured to the sqaulor. He made peace with the darkness a long time ago.

EXT. SHIPYARD - NIGHT

The Charger weaves its way through a maze of scrap metal and rusty shipping containers, homing in on a sprawling warehouse that's been cordoned off by cyclone fencing and razor wire. Utlra-violent floodlights illuminate the area, while security cameras keep a watchful eye.

INT. WAREHOUSE - INDUSTRIAL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

More UV lights flicker on. We're in a massive loading elevator/platform which HUMS as it ascends, eventually reaching its destination with a BOOMING CLANG. The doors at the rear glide open. Blade guides the Charger out.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Santa's workshop by way of Soldier of Fortune. Industrial equipment is strewn everywhere. Mills, old furnaces, gutted vehicles, an ad hoc surgical theater. We also notice the big rig which Scud had been piloting. Because of various leaking overhead pipes, the floor is slick with a sheen of water. Blade kills his Charger, looking around as he climbs out.

BLADE
Scud!

Blade's voice ECHOES throughout the cavernous room.

SCUD (O.S.)
Lock up your daughters, people --

ANGLE ON SCUD

A handlebar moustached, weed-sucking stoner. Thrift-store chic, wearing a Jimmy Walker "Dyn-O-Mite!" T-shirt.

SCUD (CONT'D)
The Dark Knight returns.

Scud is lowering himself down from the ceiling on a rope and pulley system where he'd been suspended in a safety harness, doing some kind of electrical wiring job. He reaches the floor and unclips himself. We notice he's wearing a surfer's charm around his neck that's been strung with vampire fangs.

Scud pulls a half-smoked roach from behind his ear, using a lighter in the shape of a woman's torso to fire up. The flame jets from a hole in one of her tits. He takes a Spicoli-sized hit and offers the roach to Blade.

SCUD (CONT'D)
Little toke of the smokage, B?

Blade slaps it from his hand.

BLADE
Knock it off. We've got work to do.

Blade opens the trunk. Scud joins him.

WHISTLER

is inside. Blade unfastens the hood, slipping it off. Immediately, Whistler sits up, LUNGING at Blade!

SCUD
Fuck me!

Blade gets Whistler in a headlock, choking him as he drags him out of the trunk. It's like trying to wrestle a rabid pit bull. He looks to Scud, annoyed.

BLADE
You going to stand there crapping your pants or are you going to help me?!

Scud steps forward, tentative. Together, he and Blade drag Whistler kicking and SCREAMING across the workshop, forcing him into a small, cell-like room.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - CELL - NIGHT

WHAP! Blade throws Whistler onto the concrete floor, pinning him as Scud quickly slips a series of chains around him which have been secured to the wall. The opposite wall is covered by a series of steel shutters. As Whistler continues to thrash, Blade affixes a muzzle to the older man's mouth.

SCUD
You got something in mind, Blade?

BLADE
Ultra-rapid detox. They use it on heroin addicts, make 'em go cold-turkey in one night.

Blade pulls out a pneumatic syringe, plunging an ampoule of amber-colored fluid into the bottle mount.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Gonna try and OD Whistler on a retroviral cure.

SCUD
I don't know about this, man --

Blade injects Whistler with the syringe. Whistler HOWLS in pain, nearly throwing Blade and Scud off him.

BLADE
(to Scud)
Get back!!!

Scud scurries away. Whistler's struggles have taken an even more violent turn. Blade beats him back down.

Finally, Blade steps on Whistler's neck, pinning his head as he draws a shotgun from a holster beneath his armpit. He shoves it in Whistler's SNARLING FACE.

BLADE (CONT'D)
If there's anything of you left in there, Whistler, listen up now. Come morning, those shutters are going up. Either you'll be cured, or you'll fry.

Blade raises his foot from Whistler's neck, quickly backing out the door. Whistler THROWS himself at Blade, nearly tearing the chains from the wall as --

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

BOOM! Blade slams the cell door closed. The door is heavy steel. Nevertheless, Whistler kicks against it, threatening to tear it off its hinges. Blade throws a heavy cross-bar over the door. Then he steps back, joining Scud.

WHUMP!WHUMP!WHUMP! Whistler hammers the door again and again and again. But the crossbar holds. Blade glances at Scud, who's looking winded and shaken by the ordeal.

BLADE
It's going to be a long night.

Scud nods and exits. Blade drags a chair across the floor, setting it in front of the door. He sits down, shotgun resting across his knees, holding vigil. And off that grim, stoic image we --

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY DUMP - DAY (20 YEARS AGO)

Daylight bleaches the image, almost whiting it out. A WINO sifts through refuse, collecting bottles. Three MUTTS are tethered to his side with rope. He reaches for a bottle, cuts himself on a piece of glass. As he inspects his wound, his dogs GROWL. The Wino looks up --

A BLACK KID (14) is standing atop a mountain of refuse -- wiry and intense, perched there like a predator. The Wino glances at his wrist again, the blood, then back up at the black kid. Unnerved, the Wino starts to back away, then turns -- BUMPING right into the black kid, who has moved beside him with uncanny speed. (NOTE: this all happens within a single, continuous shot.)

The boy SLAMS the Wino against the trestle wall and SNARLS, baring FANGS. And just as he's about to tear the man's throat out --

A HAND reaches in from off-screen, pulling the boy back. It's WHISTLER, twenty years younger and spryer, with a head full of RAVEN BLACK hair.

Whistler throws the boy into the light, forcing him onto the ground. He shoves a .45 against the boy's face and is just about to pull the trigger when he stops, NOTICING overhead sun reflected in the boy's eyes. Whistler looks up and SEES the sun at high noon, then glances back at the boy in understanding. He smiles.

WHISTLER
Daylight. Son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - DAWN

Blade wakes up, lifts his head. A shaft of sunlight shines directly down onto him, reflecting back at us from his now adult eyes. Blade hasn't moved. He sits in the chair in front of the cell door which is now silent. He stands, unlocking the cell door. He heaves the cross-bar away. The door GROANS as he opens it.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - CELL - DAWN

Blade enters. It's dark. We can just make out Whistler's figure huddled in the corner like some kind of caged animal, his lanky, gray hair obscuring his face.

Whistler doesn't stir. Blade crosses over to the steel shutters. For the briefest moments, he hesitates. Then he hits the switch, readying his shotgun. With a HUM, the shutters rise, throwing a SHAFT OF BLINDING SUNLIGHT over Whistler.

Nothing happens. Blade lowers his shotgun. Whistler slowly raises his head, fixing Blade with a bloodshot eye.

BLADE
How do you feel?

WHISTLER
Like a fucking heifer took a dump in my mouth.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - BATHROOM AREA - LATER

Whistler stands bare-chested before a corroded mirror, splashing water from a sink over his face, rinsing off shaving cream residue. He inspects his features -- he's cleaned himself up a bit, trimmed his beard, etc.

He pulls on a fresh shirt, then turns to face Blade, who stands behind him.

WHISTLER
You came back for me.

BLADE

Did you think I wouldn't?

WHISTLER
Took you long enough.

Blade smiles. That was as close to a thank-you as this old junkyard dog is ever going to give.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - BACKSTORAGE AREA - DAY

Whistler has fired up a Lucky Strike. He's moving through the storage area where much of his old equipment has been shelved, pulling tarps off, checking things. Blade follows.

BLADE
Let's just hope you've kicked the Thirst for good. I'll be watching you close. You start to back-slide --

WHISTLER
You put a bullet in my brain. Wouldn't expect anything else.

Whistler takes a long drag, expelling the smoke slowly, studying the cigarette in his hand.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
I'll say one thing for doing time as a suckhead. Seems to have knocked that cancer of mine back into remission.

Blade nods. Then Whistler stops, obviously frustrated.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
Where the hell's my lathe?

Just then we hear the SOUND of an industrial lathe firing up. Curious, Whistler exits into --

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The workshop proper. Scud is working at Whistler's old lathe, bopping his head along to MUSIC which is playing on a nearby TV. The them song to SPEED RACER. Now he's wearing a Ron Jeremy T-shirt that says "Daddy".

TV (O.S.)
Here he comes, here comes Speed Racer! He's a demon on wheels. He's gaining on you so you better look alive. He's busy revving up the powerful Mach Five --

Whistler cocks an incredulous eyebrow at Blade, who has fallen in beside him. Scud kills the lathe and approaches.

SCUD
Whistler. Cool beans. Nice to meet you, man. Heard a lot. I'm Josh

Frohmeyer. You can call me Scud, though. That's what most people do.

Scud offers his hand. Whistler doesn't take it. Scud shoots an uneasy glance at Blade, raising an eyebrow in question. Is Whistler okay, or not? Blade nods. Whistler moves over to the Charger which has its hood up.

WHISTLER
Tell me something, Skid --

SCUD
Scud.

WHISTLER
Whatever --
(checking the motor)
What'd you do to the Charger?

SCUD
The pimp-mobile? Just made a few after market modifications. Nitrous-oxide injection system, forged aluminum pistons and crankshaft, higher flowing fuel pump.

WHISTLER
Gave it a more aggressive exhaust profile ramping.

SCUD
Fuck yeah. Whole package'll crank this betty up another three-hundred horsepower.

WHISTLER
(cutting him off)
And you'll burn the damn thing out before your next fucking oil change.

Whistler just looks to Blade and shakes his head.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
Where'd you dig up this shit-bird anyway?

SCUD
Look, what's your problem?

Whistler gets in Scud's face. Scud looks to Blade for help, but he just watches, letting the two of them sort things out.

WHISTLER
My problem, shitbird, is that I tried to blow my fucking head off and wound up sucking blood clots for the last year and a half! Now you're standing there choking your chicken like we're all

walking around some fucking candy-ass vampire sitcom!

Scud attempts to show some balls, but stammers all the same.

SCUD
Hey, you think I don't know what's at stake here? We practically compromised our whole operation to save your puckered old ass! And for what?

WHISTLER
(grabs Scud's shirt)
Our operation?! Our operation?! I built this operation, you fucking turd stain.

Just then, however, an alarm starts BEEPING. Scud checks a display as Blade readies his MACH.

SCUD
Motion sensors. Looks like Zone Three.

BLADE
Human?

Scud checks a series of thermal signature displays.

SCUD
Body temp's fifty so I'll guess suck head.

Scud looks to a bank of security monitors -- the views break into static as a FIGURE rushes past them. He tries a few keyboard commands.

SCUD (CONT'D)
I don't understand, I'm not getting anything on the surveillance cams.

Whistler makes a few adjustments on the nearest monitor.

WHISTLER
They're fried. Whoever's out there is using magnesium flares. Seems like they've got your security system stopped out pretty well.

Whistler moves to a rack of weaponry. As he reaches for CAR 15, Scud moves to stop him.

SCUD
Whoa, whoa, easy cowboy - I'm not trusting you with a weapon just yet.

Whistler SMACKS Scud in the face with the butt of the CAR-15 and pushes past him. We hear a CRASH.

ANGLE ON

TWO BLACK, LATEX-CLAD, NINJA LIKE INTRUDERS

Running on all fours, racing upside down across the ceiling at break-neck speed. Then they drop, somersaulting down fifty feet, landing in a cat-like stance.

BLADE
Hit the God-lights.

Scud, with his nose now bleeding, activates a series of stadium-style lights secured to the ceiling. The entire place goes white with UV light, the image nearly blowing out.

CLOSE ON FIGURES' FACES

They are wearing metal goggles with iris shut to mere pin prick openings.

Whistler trains the CAR-15 on --

THE FIRST LATEX CLAD FIGURE

Who is now removing something from a satchel. Whistler FIRES. The Intruder drops the object and cartwheels away.

In the blink of an eye, the Second Intruder has launched himself at Whistler, hand-springing off the floor, then kicking him in the mid-section. As Whistler falls back, the Second Intruder presses forward.

ON BLADE

Unsheathing his sword, rushing at the First Intruder.

WHAP! The Intruder traps Blade's forearm, pivoting, planting a boot in Blade's ribcage. Obviously, the Intruder is a serious martial arts student.

WHAP!WHAP!WHAP! The two of them go at it, unleashing a flurry of kicks, blocks, and punches. The Intruder gets Blade in a back-choke. He twists out of it, throwing the Intruder over his shoulder, who neatly cartwheels, springing back off the wall at Blade again --

Blade ducks beneath one of the Intruder's kicks, then traps the Intruder's foot, giving it a savage twist. CRACK! Blade backhands the intruder with a blow so strong that it knocks the Intruder to his knees. Then the Intruder reaches for a short sword. In a heartbeat, the sword is out and against Blade's throat. Just as Blade's sword is not against the Intruder's. It's a stalemate.

SECOND INTRUDER
Stop!!!!!

Blade and the First Intruder freeze. The Second Intruder

steps away from Whistler, whom he clearly had the drop on, and tosses the CAR-15 to the ground.

SECOND INTRUDER (CONT'D)
We didn't come here to fight. We came to deliver a message.

Blade looks back to the First Intruder. Then slowly withdraws his sword. The Intruder does the same. Blade turns off the God-lights. The UVs fade and normal lighting returns. Scud and Whistler pick themselves up off the floor.

BLADE
Take off your masks.

The Intruders remove their masks. The first is ASAD, a cautious Sufi Muslim possessing a restrained nobility.

The second is a woman, NYSSA. 20-something, with emerald eyes and strong, darkly exotic features. Both are Vampire.

ASAD
My name is Asad. This is Nyssa. We represent the Shadow Cabinet. The ruling body of Vampire nation. They're offering you a truce. They want to meet with you.

SCUD
(wiping blood from his nose)
Bullshit.

Blade holds up his hand, silencing Scud's outburst. He nods for Nyssa and Asad to continue.

Nyssa slowly crouches and reaches for the object she dropped - a CD. She tosses it to Blade. Still keeping an eye on them, Blade slips the CD into a reader. We SEE a slide-show of video capture shots taken from a surveillance camera. Nomak tearing into the blood bank staff, etc.

NYSSA
For decades you've been the thing we've feared the most. But there's something else loose on the streets now --

CLOSE ON

The final still. A blurry, horrific shot of Nomak's half turned face and back. We get a sense of distorted, inhuman physiognomy.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
Something worse than you.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLADE AND SCUD'S WAREHOUSE - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Blade, Whistler, and Scud stand near the ledge, while Asad stands a few yards off, talking on a phone. Nyssa stands even further away, watching them with distrust.

SCUD
This whole deal's giving me a serious case of the butt-willies.

WHISTLER
Look, kid, they obviously found your base of operations. If it was a trap, why flip their dicks by announcing themselves?

BLADE
I agree. We play along for now, we might wind up learning something about how their world ticks.

WHISTLER
(grinning at Scud)
Either that or feeding the worms.

Asad finishes his call and approaches them.

ASAD
They're ready to see you now.

As if on cue, we hear the THRUM of helicopters. Seconds later, two Bell Jet Rangers appear above them, illuminating them in their searchlight.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKY - NIGHT

We track the helicopters across the night sky. We SEE Whistler and Asad in one, Blade, Scud and Nyssa in another.

INT. JET RANGER - NIGHT

Blade and Nyssa sit in the rear of the first helicopter. Nyssa is studying Blade.

BLADE
What?

NYSSA
They tell bedtime stories about you. Blade the big, bad boogie-man. Frankly, I'm disappointed.
(Blade raises an eyebrow)
That you were willing to come along so easily, I mean. Without any assurances.

Blade smiles and opens his coat, gesturing to a bandolier of

plastic explosives secured to his chest.

BLADE
Semtex explosive. Enough to level a city block. How's that for assurance?

The helicopter abruptly banks right, dropping down low.

EXT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The Bell Jet Rangers touch down outside a terraced, Frank Lloyd Wright structure overlooking the ocean. As Nyssa and Asad lead Blade, Whistler and Scud towards the facility we SEE a circular crimson logo encircling a double-helix.

Scud notices a series of RED LIGHT DOTS on his arms and chest. He looks up to see DOZENS OF VAMPIRE MARKSMEN on the roofs above, training their weapons on them.

INT. ELEVATOR CAB - NIGHT

The group rides down. The elevator stops. The doors open.

INT. DAMASKINO'S STRONGHOLD - 4-WAY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

Nyssa and Asad lead them into a hub out of which multiple corridors project. They take the central corridor.

INT. STEEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The corridor ends at a pair of steel security doors. Nyssa stands before a biometric scanner, allowing a beam of light to play over her face. The scanner acknowledges her identity and the doors HISS open, revealing a series of security doors beyond these which successively open into --

A FINAL DOOR

Oak, set into a stainless steel wall. Incalculably ancient, elaborately carved. Brought over from the "Old World."

NYSSA
The House of Erebus you encountered before were nothing but feudal lords. The true power of the Vampire Nation lies here --

As they move towards the final door, Whistler shivers. Scud watches as his breath escapes from his mouth in a frosty plume. Asad takes notice.

ASAD
Few warmbloods have seen what's beyond this door.

He pushes the doors open into --

INT. DAMASKINO'S LAIR - NIGHT

A crescent-shaped room filled with antiquities: quarry columns from Middle Kingdom Egypt, stacks of arcane volumes, Medieval frontispieces. A Borgia-esque Renaissance portrait staring down at us with a severe gaze. Towering over all of these is a massive Greek Cross carved from stone. MUSIC echoes around them -- Boito's Faust. Standing in the midst of this is OVERLORD ELI DAMASKINOS, wearing a robe of black silk.

NYSSA
Father --

Damaskinos holds up his hand. He waits for the music to crescendo, then turns, his face still hidden in shadow.

DAMASKINOS
I hope you don't mind the cold. When one such as myself reaches an advanced age, certain precautions are needed in order to preserve the flesh.

ASAD
Blade, this is Overlord Eli Damaskinos.

DAMASKINOS
(in vampire dialect; subtitled)
Welcome, Daywalker. I thank you for coming. I've been anxious to meet you for quite some time.

Damaskinos draws closer now, stepping into the light. Bright eyed with smile like moonlight gleaming off a knife blade. His skin is impossibly pale, almost marble-like, with traceries of blue blood pulsing underneath.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)
And the late Abraham Whistler. I trust your time amongst our numbers was agreeable?

Whistler glares at Damaskinos. The two men stare at each other a moment, sizing one another up.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)
(smiling knowingly)
It has been said, you may have enemies whom you hate, but not enemies whom you despise. Be proud of your enemy: then his success shall be yours, too. In that regard, I should thank you.

BLADE
For what?

STEVENS (O.S.)
Eliminating Deacon Frost.

CARTER STEVENS, an officious-looking familiar who has been quietly watching from the wings now steps forward.

STEVENS (CONT'D)
All that unseemly business with LaMagra. You did us a favor.
(offering his hand to Blade)
Carter Stevens.

As Blade and Stevens shake, Blade notices a vampire glyph poking out from beneath the familiar's shirt cuff.

BLADE
You're human.

STEVENS
(with a smile)
Barely. I'm a lawyer.

ASAD
Mr. Stevens works with the National Institute of Health.
(off Blade's look)
Given that they monitor the nation's blood supply, a strategic alliance seemed prudent.

STEVENS
We also finance a number of humanitarian organizations -- the National Institute of Infectious Diseases for one, the Human Genome Project...

BLADE
Why?

NYSSA
Survival.

Blade and the others turn to Nyssa, who uses a complex mechanical key to activate a holo-projector mounted above the table. As she focuses the image, a 3-D DIORAMA of vampire viral nucleocapsids swirls into view. The nucelocapsids begin attacking human red blood cells.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
As you may know, Vampirism is an arbovirus, one that's spread through the saliva of parasitic organisms --
(motioning to the hologram)
In this case, vampires are the vector. The virus replicates within the human bloodstream, evolving its host into an entirely new life-form.
(beat)
Unfortunately, viruses evolve too --

As Nyssa talks, one of the viral nucleocapsids changes, mutating from its original, elegant design into a harsher, more menacing form.
The mutated nucleocapsid begins feeding on the original vampire capsids, causing a chain-reaction of mutation. In seconds, the holo-image is filled with throbbing, microscopic horrors which then mutate into --

NYSSA (CONT'D)
We've dubbed this new virus the Reaper Strain. And like any good pathogen, it appears to have found a carrier -- a "Patient Zero".

A rotating 3-D image of Jared Nomak's face. Eyes red, his skin in full "blood mode" blush.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
His name is Jared Nomak.

DAMASKINOS
Thiavolos, as we used to say in Greece. The Devil. Pure Thirst. Nothing more. He was born a vampire, but he is an anomaly.
(to Blade)
Like you. Unlike the rest of us, however, he feeds on not just humans, but vampires as well.

BLADE
Seems like he's doing me a favor, then.

NYSSA
You're missing the point. Their vampire victims don't die. They turn. They become carriers. If the Reapers continue unchecked, there could be thousands of them before the month is over. Do the math.

Blade turns to Damaskinos.

BLADE
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
You want me to hunt them for you.

DAMASKINOS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
Not alone.

ASAD
We've been training a small tactical unit -- the Bloodpack. We want you to lead them.

WHISTLER
Just how long has this little social club of yours been together?

NYSSA
Two years.

BLADE
Then they weren't created to go after your "patient zero".

NYSSA
No. They've been training to hunt you.

CUT TO:

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - DAWN

Blade, Whistler and Scud enter through the loading elevator. Blade turns to Whistler.

BLADE
What do you think?

WHISTLER
Sounds like a plan.

BLADE
What do you really think?

WHISTLER
(lighting a cigarette)
These guys are shitting bricks cause they're no longer on the top of the food chain. They're going to fuck us the first chance they get.

Whistler moves away. Blade shrugs off his jacket, begins putting away his weapons. Scud lingers, apprehensive.

SCUD
So you're going to do this?

BLADE
Keep your friends close and your enemies closer. Isn't that how the saying goes?

Scud follows Blade's gaze, watching Whistler, who has collapsed into a chair at the far end of the workshop. The grizzled hunter pulls off his leg brace, then massages his bum knee. Scud nods in Whistler's direction.

SCUD
I'm worried about him.
(off Blade's look)
Look, I know he's your friend, but just watch him, okay? Nobody goes cold Turkey from the Thirst in a night.

BACK ON WHISTLER

Surrounded by the salvaged parts and massive gears of long discarded machinery, half-hidden in shadow. A shaft of morning sunlight cuts in through one of the windows, slowly moving across the floor towards his position. He shifts in his chair, moving slightly --

Away from the light.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

It's late. An ice-encased streetlight HUMS and flickers. The pumps are vacant. A heavy blanket of sooty snow covers the grounds of the station. The fluorescents of the mini mart are the only beacon of light in an otherwise fog-bound night.

INT. MINI-MART - NIGHT

A KOREAN WOMAN (30s) mans the counter. Her TODDLER sits in a circular safety walker nearby. The kind that rolls and is affixed with toys to keep a baby occupied. The woman glances at two surveillance monitors. On the first monitor we see --

A CAR

pull up to the pumps outside. A MAN gets out, slides his credit card through the reader, starts pumping gas.

ON THE SECOND MONITOR

We SEE a FIGURE standing at the back by the Slurpee machine. The figure turns, approaching. It's Nomak. He sets a package of gum on the counter, looks to the baby. He smiles, wriggles his finger. The child COOS and smiles back.

Unnerved by Nomak, the Korean woman quickly rings the transaction, gives him his change. He removes a stick of gum from the pack, carefully unwraps it, slides it into his mouth, watching the child all the while. Finally, he nods to the woman and leaves. The door CHIMES as he exits.

Beat. The woman looks to the surveillance monitors again.

THE FIRST MONITOR

The car is still there, but the man pumping gas is gone.

Puzzled, the woman steps from behind the counter and moves to the glass doors, looking out --

HER POV

The car's driver side door hangs open. Even more disturbing, the hose for the gas pump lies untended on the icy ground,

spilling fuel from its nozzle.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The Korean woman cautiously exits the mini-mart. No one is in sight. She hurries to the abandoned car, disengaging the lock on the pump handle, then setting it back in its cradle. She looks to the open driver's door. A FEW DROPLETS OF BLOOD have stained the snow just outside it. Then she sees --

A GHOSTLY FIGURE

Standing off in the fog-bound shadows. The woman looks back to the mini-mart, then back again to where the figure was standing. But the figure is gone! Growing increasingly anxious, the woman hurries back.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The woman shuts the door, locks it. But she's still just a target standing inside a well-lit glass box. She moves to the safety walker, scoops up her child.

After another moment's indecision, she slides the accordion style gate down over the doors and windows. Then she turns off the lights. Feeling somewhat more secure, the woman moves back around the counter and SEES --

An unwrapped stick of gum resting on the tray of the baby walker. It wasn't there before. With a rising sense of dread, the woman backs away, bumping right into --

NOMAK

He smiles cruelly, the scar/seam in his chin just beginning to part. The woman gasps, turns to run --

and bumps into THREE MORE REAPERS. Gaunt and feral-looking. All three with shaved heads.
No eyebrows, and hairline scar/seams running down their chins. As one, the reapers descend on her. We hear the child's TERRIFIED WAIL and we --

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY - NIGHT

A sulfur-colored moon shines its baleful light down upon the icy cityscape as NOMAK'S ROAR echoes through the canyon of buildings.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - BLADE'S SLEEPING AREA - NIGHT

Blade is just finishing injecting himself with serum. He sighs, falling back into the chair he's sitting in, waiting for the shakes to subside. He unwraps a piece of rubbing tubing which he'd been using as a tourniquet, flexes his hand.

The door to his room opens. Scud stands there in silhouette.

SCUD
Um, we've got company.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Blade emerges into the workshop proper with Whistler and Scud.

NYSSA AND BLOODPACK

Stand before us. They represent an assortment of ages and races, their one unifying characteristic being a callous, almost fanatical disregard for human life. In short, these guys are the most stone-cold motherfuckers we've ever seen.

WHISTLER
Well if it isn't Snow White and the Seven Suckheads.

Their leader, DIETER REINHARDT (30s), is a square-jawed, chiseled Austrian. Next to Reinhardt is SNOWMAN, a wire albino, LIGHTHAMMER, a massive Blackfoot Indian, and PRIEST, a bald-headed modern primitive with copious piercings and facial tattoos. Rounding out the bunch is CHUPA, a blunt featured Puerto Rican, and VERLAINE, a familiar-looking curvaceous beauty with bee-stung lips that exudes a predatory sexuality.

(NOTE: Verlaine looks familiar because she is the twin sister of Raquel, the bodacious vamp played by Traci Lords that Blade killed in the opening scene of the first film.)

REINHARDT
Check it out, troops. Count Chocula.

The vampires LAUGH. Asad quiets them with a look, then gestures to them in turn.

ASAD
Blade, this is Reinhardt. That's Snowman, Lighthammer, Priest, Chupa and Verlaine.

Reinhardt advances until he and Blade are nose to nose.

REINHARDT
Tell me something, Chief. Can you blush?

A tense beat. Then Blade flashes a broad smile.

BLADE
Alright, you want to play this game?

Blade pulls out one of his silver stakes. In response, the

vampires reach for their weapons. But Blade merely twirls it around his fingers. Then tosses it to Reinhardt.

BLADE (CONT'D)
You've been training two years to take me out. Here I am, the big, bad vampire hunter. So do it.

NYSSA
What the hell are you doing, Blade?

BLADE
We're going to be working as a unit, you people will be taking orders from me.
(spreading his hands wide)
So let's get it over with. I'll give you a free shot, Reinhardt.

Reinhardt looks to Nyssa, uncomfortable.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Why are you looking at her for? You need permission? I'm giving it to you.

CHUPA
Take him, cabron!

Blade grabs Reinhardt's wrist, pulling the stake against his chest, fixing the vampire with the deadliest of poker gazes.

BLADE
What's wrong, Reinhardt? You need a fucking manual?

VERLAINE
Do it, Reinhardt. Do it!!!

Reinhardt tenses, thrusting the stake forward -- but Blade has already whirled out of the way, trapping his hand, then violently twisting it backwards.

Before Reinhardt even knows what's happening, Blade swings him around into a headlock. In his free hand he's got a tiny, barbed flechette. The barbs spring open like a tick's gripping mandibles as Blade drives the flechette into the base of Reinhardt's skull. Reinhardt HOWLS in pain, but Blade just tightens his grip, choking off Reinhardt's air.

BLADE
Listen up, Adolph, I just popped an explosive charge in the back of your head. Silver nitrate. Rigged to blow if anyone tampers with it. I'll be keeping the detonator on me at all times. You so much as look at me crosswise and I swear you'll be macking your girlfriend's pie with a fucking

neck stump! Got it?!

Reinhardt lets loose a choked GRUNT. Blade releases him, dropping the GASPING AUSTRIAN to the floor.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Any questions?

No one says a word.

CUT TO:

WHISTLER

Hefting a heavy ordnance case on the table. Blade and company sit on one side, the Bloodpack on the other.

WHISTLER
(opening a case of bullets)
Glaser safety rounds in .38, .45, and 9mm caliber. Foil capsules at the tip filled with silver nitrate grains. They pack a major kinetic energy dump. And since you suckheads don't like sunlight, we've modified the entry lights with UV filters --

Whistler flicks on the entry light. Then notices that Chupa isn't paying attention. The vampire is looking at Snowman who is saying something in sign-language. Chupa snickers. Whistler picks up a massive gun with a modified C-mag (hundred round cylindrical mag). It has a strange electromag assembly barrel with shockwave ports running along it.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
This puppy here? Hyper-velocity railgun. Spits up silver-tipped iron core needles at six thousand butt humping feet per second. Like this --

Whistler FIRES -- BA-BANG! A SONIC BOOM rocks the workshop, SHATTERING a number of windows and computer monitor screens as a wad of needle rushes just millimeters past Chupa's face, embedding in the wall behind him.

CHUPA
Hey, hey! The fuck you doing?!

WHISTLER
Getting your attention, Paco.

CHUPA
Well you've got it, warmblood. Now what the fuck are you gonna do with it?

Blade clears his throat and stands.

BLADE

If you girls are finished flirting, I'd like to get started.

MOMENTS LATER

Blade, Whistler, and the Bloodpack are silently suiting up for war -- strapping on body armor, securing stakes and knives, CLICKING ammo cartridges into their various weapons.

We SEE them lacing up combat boots, checking rifle sights, entry lights. Blade dons one of his EDTA pneumatic gauntlets. Whistler loads custom rounds into a shotgun. Then he reaches to clip on an ammo vest. But his hands are shaking slightly and he can't seem to clip the locking mechanism together. After a beat, Blade reaches over and does it for Whistler. Like a son helping his father. A beat passes between them, Whistler and Blade looking at one another. Then Whistler nods, satisfied.

As Blade crosses towards Asad and Nyssa, he stops by Verlaine, sizing her up.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Didn't I kill you already?

VERLAINE
(cold)
That was my sister.

Beat. Blade smiles coldly.

BLADE
This the part where you beat your chest and vow revenge?

VERLAINE
Something like that.

BLADE
Save it for the director's cut.

Blade moves on, stopping before Nyssa.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Where to first?

NYSSA
The House of Pain.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Blade, Whistler, and the Bloodpack are gathered on a rooftop overlooking a derelict city block.

THE HOUSE OF PAIN

Rises before them, a Gothic Revival hotel marred by graffiti scrawls and boarded up windows. There's a large neon "HOTEL" sign on the side of the building.

NYSSA
From what we can gather, the Reapers hunt in packs, targeting places where vampires congregate. So far, they've attacked bloodbanks, safehouses, underground clubs like this --

WHISTLER
I don't see any traffic, no vampire glyphs --

Whistler lifts up a pair of night-vision binoculars and scans the building.

WHISTLER'S POV (THROUGH BINOCULARS)

He scans the graffiti scrawls, doesn't see anything.

NYSSA
Look closer. Because of your efforts, we've had to re-think our habits, tighten our security.

WHISTLER'S POV (THROUGH BINOCULARS)

Whistler switches to infra-red. A previously unseen Vampire GLYPH is now revealed, hidden amongst the haphazard graffiti. Just beneath the glyph are a pair of loading doors set flush into the concrete sidewalk.

WHISTLER
(lowering binocs; to Blade)
Let's put this clusterfuck in gear.

Reinhardt reaches for Whistler, stopping him.

REINHARDT
You're not going anywhere, greenjeans. You won't be able to pass for us.

WHISTLER
Like I give a shit.

Before things can escalate, Blade steps between them.

BLADE
(to Whistler; sotto)
He's right. They'll smell that you're human. Stay here, watch our backs.

WHISTLER
(bristling)
I don't like it.

BLADE
I'm not giving you a choice, old man.

Whistler considers Blade's words, then reluctantly nods. Blade rejoins the vampires. Reinhardt grins.

REINHARDT
You don't keep that dog of yours curbed, Blade. We might have to do it for you.

Blade pulls out the remote for the flechette in Reinhardt's head, holding it up for view.

BLADE
Keep pushing, asshole.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - UNDERGROUND ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Nyssa leads the group into a loading area. The only light is coming from a series of burning trashcans. VAMPIRE SENTRIES crouch on the steps, watching, smelling Nyssa's group as they move past. Adjacent areas are walled off with sheets of vinyl. We hear the pulsing, bass-heavy beat of MUSIC coming from beyond the sheeting, beckoning us onward.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - UNDERGROUND HALLWAY - NIGHT

The MUSIC is louder. Neon-lit, corridor-long steel counters line both walls, displaying various surgical instruments offered as party favors. As Blade's scans the area, we SEE the deadly instruments reflected in his sunglasses. Nyssa looks to him.

NYSSA
This is our world you're entering. You may see things -- feeding.
(off Blade's inscrutable face)
Just remember why you're here.

BLADE
(cryptic)
I haven't forgotten.

They reach a steel loading door emblazoned with warning signs -- the kind that is split horizontally, one-half retracting into the ceiling, the other into the floor.

PRIEST
So what are we looking for, exactly?

ASAD
Anyone who looks suspicious.

On that portentous note, Nyssa hits a button. The hydraulic doors open on into --

BLADE
You gotta be kidding me.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

A high-ceilinged ballroom packed with SWAYING BODIES. Retrofitted into a trance-dance hall. Off to the sides, people are being pierced, tattooed, ritually scarred. Silver trays piled high with razor blades are passed through the writhing crowd. Everyone looks suspicious.

AN ELABORATE S&M STAGE SHOW

is under way. Joel Peter Witkin channeled by Julie Taymor. A SHE-VAMPIRE hangs from the ceiling, her body supported by steel pins which have been hooked through her flesh. THREE PVC-clad spindly FIGURES minister to her.

TWO VAMPIRES

French kiss, exchanging razor blades with their tongues.

BLADE
(to Nyssa)
What is it with you people and pain?

NYSSA
We need it. Sensations are addictive and pain cuts the deepest.
(off his look)
Tattoos, piercings, tribal scarring -- because we regenerate, none of it's permanent. So we have to take it to the next level. To remind us we're alive.

The Bloodpack fans out through the trancing crowd.

ON BLADE

Drifting through the press of flesh. Feral faces flash by us, distorted by the stroboscopic lights. A SHE-VAMPIRE latches onto him. He shoves her aside, keeps scanning faces. It takes every ounce of his restraint not to cut loose.

BLADE
You reading me, Scud?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A nondescript van with primer blotches is parked nearby.

SCUD (O.S.)
Loud and clear, B.

INT. OPERATIONS VAN - NIGHT

The interior of the van has been outfitted into a mobile "op center". Scud sits in a cluttered nest of electronic ephermera, munching on a bag of White Castle hamburgers. He's watching a video feed from a camera mounted on Blade's

gear, listening to the Bloodpack's CHATTER coming in from various audio channels. In the background, he's also got Barry White's "Love Machine" playing.

SCUD
Everything's copacetic in the Mystery Van. How you doing, Whistler?

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Whistler is atop the roof of a nearby building, outfitted with a sniper rifle on a tripod.

WHISTLER
Walking on sunshine, toke-boy.

WHISTLER'S POV (NIGHT VISION BINOCULARS)

The view pans from the hotel entrance to Scud's van.

Whistler puts down the binoculars, lights a cigarette. He takes out a knife and slices open his palm. He stares at the blood, his hand slowly trembling.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Blade works his way through the crowd. The beat is getting heavier now, the crowd more energized. He briefly makes eye contact with Nyssa, but then she's gone again, disappearing into the sea of flesh, ducking past one of the vinyl sheets into a corridor beyond. Chupa, Asad, Snowman and Priest remain behind, searching the crowd.

As Blade walks, he notices a series of grates beneath their feet. We shift our POV --

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - DRAINAGE AREA - NIGHT

-- and we are below Blade, looking up at him through the grate. We are in a blood-encrusted drainage area just beneath the ballroom that slopes inward towards a large, octagonal iron culvert. As we watch, a section of the culvert rises, a pair of RED EYES peering out from the darkness within.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Blade follows Nyssa up a narrow staircase into a corridor lined with gangrenous, peeling wallpaper. Some of the room doors are shut, some open. Clearly, many are occupied.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A 1930s industrial kitchen filled with corroded equipment. Reinhardt, Verlaine, and Lighthammer work their way inward, searching the area. Lighthammer carries massive war hammer like his namesake.
Reinhardt nods to Verlaine, who opens a walk-in, shining her

entry light over an assortment of rusting meat hooks.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - FIRST CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Blade checks more doorways, catching half-glimpses of FLESH, LEATHER, and STEEL. He hears SOBBING, MOANS, WHISPERS. Then, a distinctly HUMAN WHIMPER catches his attention.

Nyssa opens a door onto an empty room. A vacant stainless steel examination table gleams in the center, waiting.

Blade pushes open another door. We SEE a fearful YOUNG WOMAN crouching in the corner of a soiled room. A corpulent VAMPIRE in a leather apron is hosing down the floor.

CORPULENT VAMPIRE
Close the fucking door, buddy.

Blade makes eye-contact with the woman. She's clearly human. Blade tenses. The corpulent vampire is getting irate when --

CORPULENT VAMPIRE (CONT'D)
I said, close the f--

THUNK! Blade throws a sliver stake into the vampire's forehead. Even as the vampire turns to ash, Blade motions for the girl to leave and we're out the hallway again, Nyssa turning around.

NYSSA
What was that?

BLADE
(poker-faced)
Nothing.

We SEE the woman duck out the room behind him.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Reinhardt, Verlaine, and Lighthammer. A Styrofoam cup rolls across the floor, blown by a breeze. Reinhardt pauses, notices another walk-in freezer door ajar, moves in that direction.

Unseen behind them, a door BEHIND THEM slowly swings open.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Chupa, Asad, Snowman and Priest. THREE SHADOWED FIGURES are lurking near one of the exits -- skinhead types, each with a hairline scar running down their chin.
Asad silently motions to snowman and the others, indicating figures. Snowman signs something back. The vampire trio starts towards them.

INT. OPERATIONS VAN - NIGHT

Bored to shit, Scud plucks a joint from behind his ear. As he fires up his woman torso lighter we HEAR SOMETHING just outside the van. Scud kills the Barry White, listening. Silence. Then, a FAINT SKITTERING.

SCUD
Um, Whistler, you out there?

No response.

SCUD (CONT'D)
(more urgently)
Whistler?

Still no response. Scud reaches for a handgun and creeps into the front of the van. He looks out the windshield -- nothing. He looks left, then right - nothing.

Unnerved, Scud returns to the back of the van. He reaches for the handle of the rear door and abruptly jerks the door open, aiming the gun out --

There's nothing outside the van. But then Scud hears the SKITTERING AGAIN. His eyes shift apprehensively to the floor of the van below him.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - FIRST CORRIDOR - NIGHT

As they near the end of the hall, Blade notices a drop-down attic door in the ceiling above. He unsheathes his sword and uses the tip to unlatch the trapdoor. The counter-weighted door CREAKS and LOWERS, unfolding a sectioned ladder. We see darkness beyond. As Blade cautiously mounts the stairs --

Nyssa's attention is drawn to a billowing piece of vinyl. A BLURRY FIGURE is visible behind it. Then it moves away. Nyssa ducks past the vinyl.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

As the music reaches a crescendo, Asad notices MORE SHADOWY FIGURES by another exit. And even MORE by a third. Snowman signs to Asad again, more urgently this time, as the first potential Reaper begins to turn and we are --

INT. OPERATIONS VAN - NIGHT

-- back with Scud. He ducks his head outside, looking beneath the van. Nothing there. Relieved, Scud shuts the rear door, laughs to himself.

A PAIR OF CLAWED HANDS

Suddenly rip down through the ceiling of the van, peeling it up and back like it was tinfoil! A REAPER with a bloody bandage covering his eye SNARLS down at us.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The first skinhead figure spins towards us. It's a Reaper. All three of them are, eyes wide with bloodlust as they leap at Asad and the others.

Suddenly, the Reapers are everywhere, blocking the exits, ripping into their vampire victims, tossing them aside like toys. Vampires scream and run, some taking to the walls as a means of escape, some racing across the ceiling.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - FIRST CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Blade stops half-way up the ladder as he hears GUNFIRE. He drops back to the floor, then notices that Nyssa is gone. HE pushes through the vinyl curtain and finds -- Nyssa forced back against the wall, wrestling with --

SCUD (O.S.)
(filtered; panicked)
They're here!!!!

-- Nomak, who swings his head around towards Blade! Blade FIRES his MACH pistol point-blank into Nomak's face, blasting the Reaper backwards --

But Nomak is back on his feet in a split-second, SMASHING through a window onto the fire escape beyond. Blade rushes to the window, looks out --

BLADE'S POV

Nomak is scaling his way straight up the neon hotel sign, jumping from one letter to the next with lightning speed.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A Reaper EXPLODES out from the walk-in, rather than the door behind them. He leaps atop Reinhardt, SLAMMING him to the floor. Lighthammer swings his hammer, missing the Reaper, taking out a chunk of the wall instead.
Lighthammer swings and misses again, taking a chunk out of the floor. Verlaine empties her automatic rifle into the Reaper even as --

The Reaper turns on Lighthammer, catching the war hammer, Reaper's lower jaw disengages and splits open, revealing a freakishly enlarged esophagus lined with serrated, sharklike teeth.

All of this takes a split-second. No time for Lighthammer to react as the Reaper latches its grossly expanded mouth onto his throat and begins draining him before our eyes. The Reaper SHUDDERS and the whites of his eyes bleed red as an ecstatic wave washes over him. His pale flesh, pulsing with engorged veinwork, becomes flushed, turning crimson as --

LIGHTHAMMER
Ohmygodhe'sfuckingkillingmehe's --

Lighthammer's face becomes increasingly pallid! His face begins caving inward, shrinking as every millimeter of blood is vacuumed out of him.

BLOOD VESSELS

Are popping up beneath the Reaper's briefly translucent skin, becoming engorged and dilated. The veins continue to swell, racing up his neck, then branching out over his face, chest, and arms -- like an instant network of varicose veins.

Verlaine retreats, horrified. Reinhardt scurries backwards, then scrambles to his feet, running for his life into --

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

Chaos. Vampire patrons flee. The Bloodpack FIRE, unleashing a hailstorm of bullets, cutting into vampires and Reapers alike as --

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - NIGHT

Blade steps out onto the icy fire escape. CRASH! Nomak has dislodged the "H" from the hotel sign. It comes HURTLING towards Blade, who ducks back into the center of the "O" to avoid being hit. The "H" continues falling, SMASHING down into the street near the Mystery Van where --

INT/EXT. OPERATIONS VAN - NIGHT

Scud unloads his handgun into the Reaper atop the van. The Reaper should turn to ash, but it doesn't! Scud flees, DIVING into the front of the van, ducking behind the wheel. He keys the ignition --

WHAM! Now the Reaper is atop the hood, SMASHING his feet through the windshield. Scud SCREAMS as he slams the van into the drive and floors the pedal --

WK-KRUNCH! Scud CRASHES the van against the side of a building, pinning the Reaper between the van's front bumper and the crumbling wall. He keeps his foot on the gas pedal, GRINDING the van's wheels.

This gambit should cut the Reaper in half, or at the very least, fatally wound it -- but it only enrages it further. The Reaper stretches forward across the van's crumpled hood and resumes BATTERING away at the cracked windshield --

SCUD
UV headlights, c'mon, come on!!!

Scud fumbles for the headlights. They won't go on! Then he notices a mess of wiring haphazardly duct-taped together. He reaches for the wiring, fiddling with it --

SCUD (CONT'D)

FuckmefuckmefuckmeFUCKME!!!!

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - NIGHT

The Reaper nearest Priest turns in his direction. We recognize her as the Nurse from the bloodbank. She LEAPS at Priest --

Priest fires a Glaser round through the she-Reaper's head. The Reaper twists in mid-leap, falls to the floor, then picks herself up again. Like Scud's Reaper, she seems unaffected by the custom-made ammo.

ON THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BLOODPACK

Having similarly disastrous results. The Reapers are shrugging off their firepower. Asad leaps, snapping a Reaper's neck with a spinning heel kick, but the Reaper keeps coming!

BACK TO THE PRIEST

Alarmed, reaching for a specialized shotgun instead. The Reaper continues forward, moving so fast she almost seems a blur as BA-BOOM! BA-BOOM! Priest pumps his shotgun repeatedly. Two projectiles fire out, chained together by a length of titanium cable. The cable catches the Reaper in the mid-section, cutting it clean in half!

The upper half of the Reaper falls, then rights itself, landing on its clawed hands.
Impossibly, the she-Reaper keeps coming! She skitters towards Priest on his hands like the half-man from Todd Browning's "FREAKS".

The half-Reaper launches itself at Priest, hitting him in the chest, knocking him back to the floor. Priest panics as he struggles with the thing, trying to fend off its claws and fangs as it locks its mouth into his arm. He SCREAMS.

CUT TO:

EXT. VAN - NIGHT

As Scud continues to fiddle with the faulty headlight wiring, the windshield finally SHATTERS beneath the Reaper's pounding fists. It latches onto Scud's collar and pulls him forward over the wheel even as the seam/scar in its chin splits apart and the Reaper's enlarged maw flowers open. Scud is just centimeters away from having his face being bitten off when --

-- the wires SPARK and the headlights come on, illuminating the Reaper in a wash of UV light! The effect is instantaneous. The Reaper HOWLS and lets go, then promptly BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

Scud cups his ear, shouting via the comm system.

SCUD
Use your entry lights! They can't stand the UV!!!

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Asad hears Scud's message as he continues fending off a Reaper's attack. Then he manages to get hold of his rifle. He FLICKS on the UV entry light, aiming it at the Reaper's face. The Reaper's head catches fire. Asad SHOUTS to the others --

ASAD
Use your entry lights!

One by one, the members of the Bloodpack CLICK ON the entry lights mounted atop their guns. It's working -- the UV beams are the only thing that seems to be driving the Reapers back.

EXT. HOUSE OF PAIN - ROOF - DAWN

BOOM! Blade kicks open the roof access door. He hurries outside, followed by Nyssa, who hesitates when she SEES --

THE SUN

beginning to rise beyond the cityscape horizon. Nomak is already at the opposite side of the building, moving fast.

BLADE
(into com-link)
Whistler! He's heading across the roof! Take him!

Nyssa falls back into the shadows as Blade continues onward, unsheathing his sword.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Whistler!!!

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Whistler's sniper rifle and binoculars have been abandoned and --

EXT. HOUSE OF PAIN - ROOFTOP - DAWN

We're back with Blade as he chases Nomak across the roof.

UP AHEAD

Nomak abruptly stops, having reached the end of the roof. The nearest neighboring rooftop is too far away and the drop from this last ledge looks unsurvivable, even for someone like Nomak.

As Blade cautiously advances, Nomak turns around and smiles -- a wolfish grin, unnaturally wide. The Reaper's face is

beginning to smoke beneath the rising sun's rays. In response, a polarized nictomembrane slides down over Nomak's irises -- like something you'd see on a crocodile to protect its eyes from harsh light.

NOMAK
Is the enemy of my enemy my friend or my enemy? What do you think, Blade? What am I to you?

Nomak LAUGHS, then LUNGES, scooping up a rusty iron bar that lies nearby. He swings it at Blade. Blade parries and steps backward, taking a blow to the head in the process, then another to the side.

The two of them exchange a flurry of blows back and forth until their weapons lock and they are face to face. Nomak's back is to the rising sun, now. His whole body is beginning to lightly smoke.

Both men are trembling, straining against their weapons, using every ounce of strength to keep the other at bay. And just when it looks like Nomak is gaining the upper hand --

NOMAK (CONT'D)
Athelfiki singenia ex amato.

-- Blade pivots the flat edge of his sword upwards, catching the light of the rising sun, reflecting it directly into Nomak's eyes!

Nomak SCREAMS and rears back, his face catching fire. Then he stumbles backwards and falls -- right off the ledge of the roof! Blade hurries to the roof's ledge and looks down --

But the Reaper is nowhere in sight. Dumbfounded, Blade retreats, haunted by the conviction that Nomak is still alive.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - BALLROOM - DAWN

Blade has returned to the scene of the melee. The Reapers have fled, leaving Nyssa and the others to lick their wounds and survey the carnage. Quite a few full-body ash outlines marking the passing of various vampires. Blade approaches Nyssa. She notices his wounds.

NYSSA
You're hurt.

BLADE
(brushing off her concern)
I'll heal.

NYSSA
What about Nomak?

BLADE

He escaped. You didn't tell me they were immune to silver and garlic.

NYSSA
I didn't know.

Beat. Tense. Does he trust this woman? No way.

BLADE
We lose anybody?

NOMAK
Lighthammer and --

Just then, we hear an unearthly SCREAM.

ANGLE ON

Priest, being held down by Chupa and Snowman. He's thrashing about, clutching his wounded, infected arm.

PRIEST
Oh god, oh God it hurts! It hurts, it hurts, fuck, it hurts. Ugh!

Priest lets loose an agonized SCREAM as Blade and the others gather around him. He's undergoing a horrific change, taking on the gaunt, vein-engorged features of a proper Reaper. He SNARLS and WAILS, GNASHING his teeth like a rabid animal.

Reinhardt and his team look uneasy. Shaken by their teammate's downward progression.

BLADE
how long since he was bitten?

NYSSA
Minutes.

Blade draws closer. Already, the flesh on Priest's chin is splitting as a seam begins to form.

BLADE
It's already changing him --

Reinhardt paces, annoyed by Priest's WAILING.

REINHARDT
Jesus, can't you get him to shut the fuck up!?

NYSSA
(gravely)
His blood cells aren't producing oxygen anymore. His own body is suffocating him. These things are like crack addicts. If they don't feed every few hours, they'll feed on themselves.

As if in response, Priest starts convulsing. His flesh tightens, drawing taut around his increasingly skeletal form. His screams become unbearable, twisting into a high-pitched ululation that's making the Bloodpack's skin crawl.

REINHARDT
Somebody put him out of his misery for fuck's sake!

VERLAINE
You kill him! I'm not killing him!

Asad pulls out his handgun and empties the clip into Priest's body -- but Priest keeps SHRIEKING.

Unnerved, Reinhardt unsheathes a machete, decapitating Priest even as the others protest.

The headless body continues thrashing, still making noise from it's open throat! If anything, it seems to be redoubling its efforts. It LURCHES forward, jerking itself free from Chupa and Snowman's restraining arms.

CHUPA
Mierda!!

The juddering horror that used to be Priest staggers to its feet. Reinhardt and his men panic, stumbling backwards. The headless monstrosity LUNGES STRAIGHT AT --

BLADE

Without batting an eye, he draws his MACH pistol, briefly aiming at the on-rushing creature's chest, then adjusting his aim to one of the blacked-out windows above and behind it.

BAM!BAM!BAM! Blade shoots out the window and BLAZING SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT slices down through the darkness, spotlighting Priest like an ant beneath a magnifying glass.

FWASH!!! The headless body is incinerated in mid-step. It collapses to the floor, just inches before Blade. One of its blackened claws feebly grabs Blade's boot, then grows still.

Beat. You could hear the pin drop in the silence that follows, every one of the Bloodpack thinking some variation of "there but for the grace of God go I". Asad lays a hand on Nyssa's shoulder, steadying her.

Blade shifts his foot, causing the cinder-like hand gripping his boot to crumble to dust.

WHISTLER (O.S.)
If this is the best you turd-stains have to offer, I'm not impressed.

Blade looks over to see Whistler, who is just entering. He

moves over to him, angry. Chupa follows, equally pissed.

BLADE
I thought you were supposed to be watching our backs.

WHISTLER
Ran into a little Reaper trouble myself.

CHUPA
(approaching, hostile)
Oh yeah? Like how little? In case you hadn't noticed, we lost two men while you were out farting around.

WHISTLER
(poking Chupa in the chest)
You need to ratchet those 'nads of yours down a few notches, paco.

Chupa flushes with anger and flicks his knife across Whistler's shoulder, opening a gash. Whistler goes ballistic and PUNCHES Chupa in the face. A brief tussle ensues before Blade and the others can separate them. As Chupa is pulled away by Asad, he looks back at Whistler.

CHUPA
Listen, hillbilly, you are a cunt-hair away from cowboy heaven.

WHISTLER
Ain't no thing but a chicken wing, buttercup.

BLADE
(still suspicious)
Where were you, Whistler?

WHISTLER
I'll show you.

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - DRAINAGE AREA - CONTINUOUS

Whistler, Blade and the surviving members of the Bloodpack are now gathered around the octagonal iron culvert just beneath the ballroom. Whistler turns on a flashlight. We HEAR something moving in the darkness. The group tenses, then Whistler's flashlight beam reveals --

A REAPER

Cowering by the culvert. One we recognize. The other vampire guard from the bloodbank, now transformed. He's shrunken and emaciated, pale. And although he's obviously dying, he still HISSES, his fanged mouth snapping ineffectually at them. His arm has been trapped -- pinned under one of the sectional culvert coverings. It looks like he's been trying to gnaw it off in order to escape.

REINHARDT
What the hell?

WHISTLER
I found him like this. I think he was trying to crawl back into that culvert.

Blade looks to the culvert in question. He pulls back one of the sectioned covers. The opening is about two feet wide, just large enough for a man to gain access.

INT. SEWER/OUTFLOW AREA - CONTINUOUS

Blade drops into the sewer line. The area is claustrophobic, damp. There are torn pieces of insulation hanging from the ceiling, saturated and dripping with blood.

Blade crouch-walks further in. We hear WIND. He shines his FLASHLIGHT. A portion of the brick wall looks like it's been clawed open.

NYSSA
(calling down)
Everything okay?

Blade retreats back to the drain-pipe, pulling himself back up. We HOLD for a beat, then drift up to the blood-saturated strips of insulation. SOMEONE is crouched in the shadows there, clinging to the ceiling upside down.

It's NOMAK, red-eyes shining in the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. DAMASKINO'S LAIR - BATHHOUSE - DAY

We are in a previously unseen portion of Damaskino's vast bedroom. An elegantly tiled pool area has been partitioned off by a series of latticed screens. In the counterpoint to this are a series of muted monitors tuned to the pulse of the world -- CNN, MSNBC, C-SPAN, etc.

Damaskinos sits in a robe, finishing a meal, his eyes flicking over the monitors -- tracking current events, market fluctuations. We get the sense that the man is a true polymath. That he owes his five thousand-plus years of existence to resourcefulness rather than luck.

Stevens enters, waiting to be acknowledged.

DAMASKINOS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
Yes?

STEVENS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
They've made contact with the Reapers.

DAMASKINOS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
Any casualties?

STEVENS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
Two so far.

Unconcerned, Damaskinos slices into a piece of raw meat.

DAMASKINOS
(reverting to English)
An inevitability, I suppose. Nyssa was not among them, I trust.

STEVENS
No. This is a dangerous game, you're playing, Damaskinos.

DAMASKINOS
Any game worthy of being played is. One must be patient. In this way, I have outlived my enemies. All of them.

Damaskinos steps beyond the screens now, into the pool area -- and although we can't see the water from this angle, we can see patterns of ruby light flickering off the tiled walls. Stevens follows, uncomfortable.

STEVENS
Blade's too volatile. You're not going to be able to keep manipulating him --

Damaskinos steps into the steaming liquid, which we now see is BLOOD. His robe spreads out, floating on the surface.

DAMASKINOS
You worry too much, Stevens. I have assurance from our friend inside that events are unfolding as scripted.

STEVENS
As scripted? You've already lost two of your own. How many more are you willing to sacrifice?

Damaskinos sinks until he's waist-deep in the crimson fluid.

DAMASKINOS
As many as it takes.
(pointing)
Do you see that jar over there?

Stevens looks to a shelf where a gold and crystal Coptic jar rests. A HUMAN HEART floats within.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)

It contains my human heart --
(touching a pale scar on his chest)
Something I relinquished a long time ago. Only a fool would appeal to it now.

CUT TO:

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - CELL - NIGHT

The dying Reaper has now been chained inside the cell. It WHEEZES and MOANS, clearly in agony. Blade and Nyssa stand watch. Blade grips the Reaper beneath its jaw, turning its face towards us.

BLADE
Recognize him?

NYSSA
(nodding)
From the surveillance footage in the bloodbank. He was one of the guard's Nomak attacked.

BLADE
Which means he turned about seventy-two hours ago.

NYSSA
Right. So why is he dying? He doesn't appear to have any broken bones, no entry wounds of any kind -- what's killing him?

BLADE
Time.

Blade nicks the Reaper's carotid artery with a knife. CLEAR SERUM oozes out, no red blood cells at all.

BLADE (CONT'D)
No hemoglobin left.
Their metabolisms are too fast. They burn out. That's why they're having to feed so often. Their systems are self destructing.

NYSSA
If that's true, what about Nomak? He's been alive longer than the others.

BLADE
Nomak's different. He's the carrier.
(shaking his head)
There's something driving him beyond the Thirst. Something we're missing.

As they watch, the Reaper shakes through its final death throes, then grows still, the nictomembranes over its eyes slowly sliding down.

MOMENTS LATER - A SERIES OF ISOLATED CLOSE-UPS

A pair of GLOVED HANDS spreads apart the Reaper's eyelids. In response, the protective nictomembrane slides mechanically down over the pupil.

NYSSA (O.S.)
They appear to have a nictating membrane here, like you'd see on a crocodile or camel. Shields the eyes from sunlight.

The hands now part the Reaper's mouth, probing the seam in the chin, then splitting the mandible apart to reveal the enlarged esophagus. The fingers push back on the gums and the pressure-sensitive fangs extend even further in response.

NYSSA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
A bifurcated mandible. More developed masseter muscles and zygomatic bones around the mouth allowing for a much larger, stronger bite --

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Blade, Nyssa, and Scud are gathered around the autopsy table. The rest of the crew linger further back.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
Epidermal layers are thicker, tougher --

Nyssa begins the Y-incision along the chest. Once again, CLEAR SERUM oozes out. She cracks open the thoracic cavity.

SCUD
Ho-lee shit.

We SEE inside the abdominal cavity. A complex, pinkish/gray parasitic organism has taken over every organ visible.

NYSSA
I've never seen anything like this. The Reapers are as different from us as we are from you.
(probing the organism)
It's almost as if the virus is re-wiring their bodies, creating new, parasitic organs which consume the old ones.

BLADE
Like cancer with a purpose.

NYSSA
Exactly. Look at the digestive system.

It's been drastically simplified. Super charged. And this --

She pulls back the lungs -- a calcified structure encasing a fibrous mass rests where the heart would normally be. She taps the calcified structure with a scalpel.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
The heart is completely encased in bone.

She tries to cut into the bony shell and the scalpel snaps. Scud WHISTLES, impressed.

SCUD
Good luck getting a stake through that.

Blade studies the Reaper corpse, then looks to the Bloodpack.

BLADE
We've got six hours till sunrise. Be ready by then.

ASAD
What happens at sunrise?

BLADE
We take up the hunt again.

CHUPA
You gotta be fucking joking.

BLADE
You've seen what we're up against. Daylight's the only advantage we've got. They'll be more vulnerable then.

REINHARDT
(pointedly)
And so will we.

BLADE
Look, I care about the humans who are dying, not you, got it?

REINHARDT
(snarling)
Spare me the race card, OJ. We're not going out into the sun. It's too risky.

BLADE
You don't have a choice. You're just going to have to protect yourselves as best you can.

Blade spins and leaves. Whistler follows. Nyssa watches them disappear into Blade's room. Reinhardt and the other vampires approach her.

REINHARDT
You buying any of this chocolate Elvis bullshit?

Nyssa just stares him down, obviously conflicted.

CHUPA
This guy doesn't know what the fuck he's doing. We already lost Priest and Lighthammer, who's gonna be next? Fuck him. Fuck his rules. First chance I get, I'm chowing down on that fucking HeeHaw sidekick of his.

Snowman signs something to Verlaine.

VERLAINE
What do you think, Asad?

ASAD
(pointedly)
I don't think. I follow orders.

Asad looks to Nyssa once more -- perhaps he's even concerned now. She's still staring in the direction Blade left.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - BLADE'S SLEEPING AREA - NIGHT

Blade sits in the shadows, wrapping a piece of rubber tubing around his arm, injecting himself with pneumatic syringe of serum. He shivers, convulses violently, then throws back his head in relief. When he does so, he SEES --

Whistler standing in the doorway. They eye each other a moment as Blade unwraps the tubing from his arm, puts away his syringe and serum. Whistler lights a cigarette, then nods through a window towards Nyssa and the others.

WHISTLER
You ask me, you and Miss Muffet are getting a mite too cozy for my taste.

BLADE
I wouldn't worry about it.

Blade moves to walk away, but Whistler stops him.

WHISTLER
I am worrying. Seems to me, you're starting to get confused as to which side of the line you're standing on.

BLADE
Pretty hollow words coming from a man who spent the last year running with the enemy.

WHISTLER
What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BLADE
It means I'm starting to wonder if the vampires still have their hooks in you. You've been acting strange ever since I gave you the cure. Reckless, quick to anger --
(beat)
You said it yourself, Whistler. Those vampires knew our defense system backwards and forwards. Where'd they get their intel?

Whistler steps closer, his voice dropping to a lethal, whisper.

WHISTLER
I'm compromised?! Me?! I'm not the one playing stink-finger with Vampirella out there!

Blade stares back at Whistler, calm as a viper.

BLADE
You're out of line, old man.

The two comrades in arms stare each other down. Then, finally, Whistler backs away.

WHISTLER
(quietly)
We'll see.

Whistler turns and strides exits. We HOLD ON Blade, torn, conflicted, watching Whistler retreat.

EXT. BLADE'S WAREHOUSE/SHIPYARD - NIGHT

We SEE a FIGURE emerge from the shadows -- CHUPA.

EXT. CITY SLUM - NIGHT

Chupa walks the night, scanning shadows.

CHUPA'S POV (VAMPIRE VISION)

Like heat-vision, only tinged with crimson. There are DRUG DEALERS and bottom feeding WHORES trolling for tricks out here, BEATING HEARTS and BRANCHING ARTERIES highlighted on their ghostly silhouettes.

Chupa moves to the mouth of an alley, nodding to a DEALER.

DEALER
Lookin' to get hooked up?

CHUPA
What you got?

As the dealer glances around to see if anyone's watching --

DEALER
Horse, Hawaiian ice. Whatever you want.

Chupa sniffs the air, glancing at a pulsating vein on the dealer's neck, and smiles.

CHUPA
Whatever, huh? Well I'm all off the hook on that bitch.

Chupa steps into the alley with the dealer.

DEALER
So what's it gonna be?

CHUPA
Fear.

Chupa is at the dealer's throat before he can finish, flashing his fangs, shoving him backwards. Then --

CHUPA (CONT'D)
I like a little adrenaline chaser.

WHAP! A HAND

Grabs a fistful of Chupa's hair, jerking his head back. It's Blade. He yanks Chupa off the dealer.

BLADE
What do you think you're doing?

CHUPA
Trying to feed, puto baboso!

The dealer takes off as Blade swings Chupa around. They exchange a couple of blows, then Blade knees him in the balls, twisting him around by his arm, dislocating it.

Blade releases Chupa, shoving him forward. Chupa's broken arm dangles awkwardly. Furious, Chupa reaches for his .45 with his good hand -- only to hear the CLICK of another gun as it's placed against the back of his head.

ANGLE ON NYSSA

Standing behind him, looking grim and determined.

NYSSA
Do it and you die.
(Chupa considers options)
You heard Asad. Until this is over, these people are our allies.

CHUPA
Oh I haven't forgotten about Asad. I'm just wondering if you have.

Chupa re-holsters his gun, then jams his dislocated arm up against the wall and resets it. He backs away. Nyssa watches him leave, looks to Blade.

NYSSA
He's right about one thing. We do have to survive.

BLADE
You don't have to hunt to do it.

NYSSA
Really? What are we supposed to do, then? Starve ourselves because we fee on others in order to live? What about that scumbag you just let off the hook? A nothing. A drug-dealer. How do you justify saving people like that?

Blade doesn't answer, just moves away. She follows.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
You know the Thirst better than any of us. You're barely managing to tread water yourself. Living in a constant state of pain, having to shoot up that serum of yours. That's not what I call surviving, Blade.

Off Blade's stony expression we --

CUT TO:

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

The back of the workshop. Scud takes a hit of weed then resumes working on one of the UV entry lights -- it's been taken half-apart and tweaked-out with cables and a crystal prism. Whistler is there too, loading magazines.

WHISTLER
(observing Scud)
The hell are you fiddling with there?

SCUD
(proud, succinct)
Tweaked the phosphor rod, modified the collimated beam, wanna concentrate the light, get something like a UV laser going.

WHISTLER
(shaking his head)

You're wasting your time, already been tried.

SCUD
Yeah, but you didn't have the Scudster working on it, did you?

WHISTLER
(testy)
Nope. Back then we did not.

SCUD
(unfazed)
So how long have you known Blade, anyway?

WHISTLER
Going on twenty years now.

SCUD
Blade doesn't talk about the old days much.

WHISTLER
Blade doesn't talk about anything much.
(nodding to Scud)
What about you, though?

Scud pulls up his T-shirt. His abdomen is covered in a network of horrific scars. Like something you'd see on the survivor of a shark attack.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
Pretty.

SCUD
I was backpacking. Hooked up with these two chicks who were off to see the Burning Man festival. We were gonna take "E", have ourselves a little freeball out in the desert. You know the riff, "Dear Penthouse, I never thought this would happen to me, but --"

Scud takes a Phillip and adjust some screws on the laser.

SCUD (CONT'D)
Anyway, halfway through our Three's Company marathon, Janet and Chrissy started taking chunks out of me. Woulda died too if Blade hadn't shown up and staked those mamacitas a new honeyhole.
(shrugging)
Things kinda fell in place after that.

Scud jiggles the necklace of fangs around his neck.

SCUD (CONT'D)

Took myself a few souvenirs, though.

Scud triggers the modified entry light. The light PULSES like a series of flash-bulbs going off, creating a stroboscopic effect as a wafer-thin, super-concentrated BLUE BEAM OF LIGHT slices through the shadows. Scud looks to Whistler and smiles.

SCUD (CONT'D)
Mmm-mmm. Poppa's got a brand new bag.

EXT. CITYSCAPE - PRE-DAWN

Beyond the shadowed skyline of monolithic buildings, the night is beginning to give way to dawn.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - PRE-DAWN

Scud stands before the others. He looks bleary-eyed but pleased with the night's work. The fruit of their efforts are laid on a work table before them -- a half-dozen UV laser guns, along with a collection of UV flashbang grenades and a much bigger explosive device secured into a backpack carrier.

Blade picks up one of the UV lasers. He sights down the length of it. Scud takes a power pack and slaps into the base of Blade's gun.

SCUD
The powerpacks have a limited charge, maybe ten minutes of continuous use at most.

Nyssa gestures to the flashbang grenades.

NYSSA
What are these?

SCUD
UV flashbang grenades with plug-in phosphor sticks --
(pointing to a backpack carrier)
This is for the grand finale. Wired together a couple-dozen of those puppies. But I'd be careful where you pop your load. Might end up frying yourselves in the process.

WHISTLER
What about you? You're not coming?

SCUD
After last night? Dude, I'm a lover, not a fighter.

Asad looks to Blade.

ASAD
What good is all this firepower if we don't know where they're hiding?

BLADE
We won't need to. They'll come to us.

REINHARDT
How?

Blade looks to Nyssa, who tosses Reinhardt an aerosol cannister. He sprays a little, then wrinkles his nose in disgust, gagging.

REINHARDT (CONT'D)
This is fucking foul!

NYSSA
They're pheromones. I infused them from that Reaper's adrenal glands. All mammals use them to mark their territory. Even vampires.

CHUPA
Fuck that! I'm not spraying some gash hound's nut-juice on me!

NYSSA
Trust me, the Reapers will key to it. If we use this, we'll draw them out.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE OF PAIN - DRAINAGE AREA - DAWN

Beneath the ballroom gratings. A high-angle shot looking down at the octagonal iron culvert around which Blade, Whistler, and the remainder of the Bloodpack are gathered. The mechanized, sectional portions of the culvert covering are GRINDING UPWARD, flowering open and apart like some blood and rust-encrusted gateway to Hell.

INT. SEWER/OUTFLOW AREA - DAWN

One by one, the group of hunters descend into the claustrophobic chamber. Verlaine is lugs the UV bomb on her back. Blade leads them to the clawed-open portion of the brick wall, then on through.

INT. SEWER LINE - CONTINUOUS

Blade leads the group along a grime-encrusted line which slopes gradually downward, sloshing through ankle-deep run off water collected from the city above them. Tendrils of mist drift about, cutting their field of vision even further. Here and there, thin SHAFTS of SUNLIGHT cut down through cracks in the street above, requiring the vampires to cautiously circumvent them.

They reach a four-way intersection of tunnels. Blade pauses.

BLADE
Time for Nyssa's pheromones.

Blade opens a statchel. Inside are a dozen distinctive aluminum atomizers. He hands them out to the others. Whistler triggers a can, spraying a thin mist over his face, wrinkling his noses in disgust.

WHISTLER
Eau de suckhead. Tasty.

BLADE
We'll split into three units. First team that makes contact wins the prize. Try to maintain radio silence from here on out.

Blade points to Chupa and Whistler, indicating the Eastern tunnel. They head off. Next, Blade directs Nyssa, Asad, Snowman, and Verlaine down the Western tunnel. Blade nods to Reinhardt and starts down the Northern branch.

INT. EASTERN TUNNEL - DAY

It's darker here, no shafts of sunlight slicing down from above. Whistler turns on his UV entry light. Chupa reaches out with his hand, partially blocking the beam.

CHUPA
Turn it off.

As the shifting patterns of light and shadow play across Chupa's face we SEE his pupils contract and dilate unnaturally large in response.

CHUPA (CONT'D)
We want to attract them, not scare them off.

WHISTLER
Yeah, but you fangs can see in the dark. What am I supposed to do?

Chupa tosses Whistler a pair of night-vision goggles.

CHUPA
Bifocals, grandpa. And try to keep up.

Chupa heads into the darkness, moving with uncanny speed.

INT. TUNNELS - VARIOUS

We intercut between the three teams now, back and forth as they progress deeper into the city's bowels.

INT. NORTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade and Reinhardt trudge along. The tunnel slopes inward, forming a V-shaped channel where a trickle of water flows. Blade notices SOMETHING bobbing in the water. He nudges it with his foot and knocks it free. It's a broken HUMAN TIBIA which twirls around, then flows past their legs.

A few steps later on, Reinhardt notices SOMETHING ELSE. He stoops into waist-deep water, picking up what he thinks is an isolated HUMAN RIB -- but ends up snagging a tangled mass of hair, mud, and bones.

INT. EASTERN TUNNEL - DAY

Whistler and Chupa move side by side. Chupa is anxious, eyes darting about. Occasionally, they come upon a transection with smaller conduits leading off to the right and the left. Then they reach a stooped, narrower tunnel and have to move single file.

Suddenly, a BLAST of LIGHT and THUNDEROUS SOUND explodes above them. They look up --

WHISTLER
(startled)
Shit!

A subway TRAIN rockets by on a track just above them, pummeling them with soot and dust.

Unseen by them, briefly illuminated by the flashing subway lights we see three Reaper faces, pale and haunting, hanging upside down.

INT. NORTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade and Reinhardt reach a dead-end where the tunnel has caved in. A BERM OF HUMAN BONES slopes upward from the water -- skulls and ribs, vertebrae, tibias, metatarsi. Blade kneels, inspecting them. There are gnaw marks on them.

BLADE
Must be hundreds of these skeletons here.

REINHARDT
So?

BLADE
So I think you people may have underestimated how many Reapers you're dealing with.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL - DAY

As Nyssa, Snowman, Verlaine, and Asad cautiously move forward, Nyssa GASPS, startled by --

HALF A DOZEN REAPERS laying on the tunnel floor before them in a stagnant pool of sewage water. Dead.

INT. EASTERN TUNNEL - DAY

Back with Whistler and Chupa, Whistler is in the lead.

CHUPA (O.S.)
Hey,hillbilly.

As Whistler turns around, Chupa SLAMS Whistler in the side of the head, swiping his night-vision goggles off. As Whistler vainly searches for his goggles.

WHISTLER
What the fuck you doing?

CHUPA
Ain't nobody here but you and me, chicken wing. I'd say this is as good a time as any to settle up.

Chupa moves stealthily in darkness, violently KICKING the older man. Whistler tries to crawl away, then reaches for his pheromone atomizer and locks it in the "on-position". As Chupa continues to lay into Whistler we SEE the atomizer roll away, dispensing its contents.

INT. NORTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade and Reinhardt by the berm of human bones.

NYSSA (O.S.)
(filtered; over comm.)
Blade. We've got six Reapers. They're all dead.

BLADE
Fry 'em.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL - DAY

Nyssa nods to Asad and Verlaine. They train their UV lasers on the area where the Reaper corpses were -- but the Reaper bodies are gone. And so is Snowman for that matter.

ASAD
What? Where did they go?

VERLAINE
Screw that, where did Snowman go?

Just then, we hear a NOISE from above. Nyssa and the others whip their UV lasers in that direction.

NYSSA
Jesus, they were playing possum!

THEIR POV

A HORDE OF REAPERS skitter away from the lights.

INT. EASTERN TUNNEL - DAY

CLOSE ON the pheromone atomizer, the spray petering out. Whistler is beat to shit, bleeding from his mouth. Chupa reaches for his handgun, whipping it out just as --

Whistler's hands brush the damaged night vision goggles. He swings them upward.

WHISTLER'S POV (THROUGH GOGGLES)

Whistler has just enough time to register Chupa, the handgun pointed directly at him/us before noticing SOMETHING ELSE just beyond Chupa.

A DOZEN REAPERS

Clinging to the ceiling above. They drop down on Chupa like a pack of rabid dogs, literally tearing him in half.

INT. NORTHERN TUNNEL - DAY (20 YEARS AGO)

Hearing GUNFIRE and SCREAMS, Blade charges back in Whistler's direction as --

THE BERM OF HUMAN BONES

EXPLODE apart. Reapers CHARGE towards them, hitting Blade in the chest, driving him backwards. As Blade falls, his entry light swings upward, illuminating.

ANOTHER REAPER

Drops down atop Reinhardt, knocking his UV gun into the water. We SEE even MORE REAPERS converging in on them from the side tunnels in a cacophony of SHADOW and NOISE.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL - DAY (20 YEARS AGO)

Verlaine, Nyssa and Asad are FIRING their UV lasers. The pumping flashes of their guns throw crazy shadows in every direction. Adding to the unbridled chaos of strobing light and NOISE. More and more Reapers are swarming towards them, moving towards us at an unearthly clip! Nyssa and her compatriots retreat, running for their lives.

A REAPER

Leaps, landing on Verlaine's back. It grabs her head and deftly SNAPS her spine in half with a sickening CRUNCH!

INT. EASTERN TUNNEL - DAY (20 YEARS AGO)

Whistler panics, backing away from the SOUNDS of the reapers

slaughtering Chupa. He finds his gun, flicks on the UV entry light --

And just like that, the attacking reapers have vanished. Whistler whirls about, sweeping the UV beam around, but all he SEES is darkness.

Then, a bone-chilling WHISPER cuts through the shadows.

NOMAK (O.S.)
Whistler.

Whistler spins. NOMAK RIGHT BEHIND HIM. As Whistler whips the UV gun up, Nomak stops it. The beam is mere millimeters from the Reaper's face -- close enough to illuminate his nightmarish features, but not close enough to burn.

NOMAK (CONT'D)
If you survive this, tell your master.
My end is my beginning.

In an eyeblink, Nomak is gone. Whistler spins, shining the UV this way and that. Alone in the dark.

INT. NORTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade FIRES his UV into a Reaper's torso. As the Reaper incinerates, Blade spins, FIRING at a second Reaper --

ON REINHARDT

Firing his non-UV weapon. Two Reapers are closing in on him.

BLADE
Take mine!

Blade throws Reinhardt his UV laser and unsheathes his sword. Reinhardt sweeps the lethal beam over the two reapers.

Blade retreats back into the water, calm, letting the creatures comes to him. As they close in on him, he slips the tip of the sword beneath the surface of the water, waiting --

As one, the Reapers converge on Blade. He swings his sword up from the water, hacking away at them, using their own momentum against them.

Reinhardt considers his options. He decides to run for it --

BLADE (CONT'D)
Reinhardt!

Reinhardt races away, abandoning Blade. Blade reaches for one of the UV flashbangs clipped to his harness. He pulls the pin with his teeth and shoves it into an on-rushing Reaper's mouth as --

Reinhardt slips on the wet concrete and --

BANG! Searing LIGHT fills the tunnel, instantly incinerating the Reaper.

Reinhardt's unprotected face CATCHES FIRE. He SCREAMS, falling back into the water, trying to douse the flames. ANOTHER REAPER lands atop him, dragging him down as --

INT. NORTHERN AND WESTERN TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS

We hear GUNFIRE and SCREAMS coming from all directions. Blade retreats. A reaper, fully ON FIRE from the UV explosion, races towards him. As Blade decapitates it:

BLADE
(shouting into radio)
Re-group! Re-group!

Asad and Nyssa also retreat. Nyssa pulls a pin on a UV flashbang, throws it behind her. BA-BANG! UV light fills the tunnels and --

INT. SEWER LINE - FOUR-WAY INTERSECTION - DAY

Blade, Nyssa, Whistler and Asad abruptly find themselves back in the four-way juncture, knee-deep in water. They quickly regroup, out of breath, riding adrenaline highs.

NYSSA
Where's Chupa?

WHISTLER
Forget him, he's chunk-style.

ASAD
Same with Snowman and Verlaine.

WHISTLER
Guess that perfume of yours did the trick after all?

BLADE
(quietly)
A little too well, I'd say.

The others turn to look in Blade's direction.

DOZENS OF RED EYES

are staring out at them from the darkness of the Eastern Tunnel. Then we hear a HISSING SOUND coming from the opposite direction. Blade and the others spin around --

MORE RED-EYED REAPERS

are closing in on them from the West. AND THE NORTH. AND THE SOUTH! There must be forty of them in all.

WHISTLER
Perfect. We got the whole fucking Partridge family here.

They retreat until they are back to back, each one of them covering their respective tunnel opening.

A REAPER

Lunges at them from the North. Asad triggers his UV laser, scorching the creature. It HOWLS and slinks backwards.

TWO MORE REAPERS

Attack from the East and the West. Blade and Nyssa respond in kind, burning their assailants in mid-air. But even as they fire, their UV beams weaken, the flashes of light coming from their barrels pulsing less frequently.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
Unless anybody has any bright ideas, I'd say we're about half a battery away from a reaper gang-bang.

The foursome are managing to keep the Reapers at bay, but just barely. Blade motions to Nyssa.

BLADE
Give me the rest of the pheromones.

Nyssa reaches inside her harness, handing Blade the remaining atomizers. He crushes them in his fist, letting the fluid within spill over his face and chest.

ASAD
What are you doing?

The Reapers become even more agitated, HISSING loudly, pressing in on them closer and closer. Blade nods his head back down the Western tunnel.

BLADE
Verlaine's body is back there somewhere with the UV bomb. If you train your guns in that direction, you'll drive an opening in their ranks. I'll run for it. When the Reapers come after me, you make a break for it the other way.

Asad studies Blade with newfound respect.

ASAD
You won't make it.

BLADE
(hefting his UV gun)
Then I'll die trying, won't I?

NYSSA
Blade.

BLADE
Save it. I don't want to hear your words. Let's do this NOW!!!

The foursome spin, FIRING their UV lasers down the Western tunnel. The Reapers SHRIEK, falling to either side, their bodies burning --

Blade CHARGES FORWARD, firing his dying UV laser. As he makes it past the line of Reapers, they start after him, driven into a frenzy by the pheromones. The Reapers in the Northern and Eastern tunnels flood after Blade too, leaving --

Nyssa, Whistler and Asad to contend with the Reapers in the Southern tunnel. They discharge their weapons, shouldering Reapers aside, making a mad dash for freedom.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade runs, splashing and stumbling through the water, just a hair's breadth ahead of the HOWLING Reaper horde. Suddenly, the tunnel widens out into a larger chamber.

INT. SOUTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Whistler and the others FIRE BACK at the small group of Reapers which have followed them, rather than Blade.

ON WHISTLER

cut off from Nyssa and Asad. He spots a maintenance ladder and runs for it, dragging himself up the rungs. A Reaper leaps up the ladder after him --

Whistler reaches the top of the ladder, but his exit is blocked by a manhole cover! It's STUCK! Whistler swings up his shotgun, FIRING into the cover.

The cover is BLOWN UPWARDS, sending a shaft of blinding sunlight down on the Reaper below him. As the Reaper incinerates, Whistler scurries upwards to safety.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL/CHAMBER - DAY

Blade reaches Verlaine's half-submerged body. He tears the backpack carrier off the dead vampire and hefts it onto his shoulder, charging up an elevated concrete embankment as --

INT. SOUTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Nyssa and Asad find themselves cornered. Their UV lasers are shot. The Reapers are closing in and we're --

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL/CHAMBER - DAY

Back with Blade, the Reapers overrunning him. They pile atop one another in a frenzied effort to get to him. Dozens and dozens of them. And still Blade struggles upward, lifting the UV cluster bomb triumphantly above his head, triggering the device.

The world goes white.

No explosions. Just BLINDING, PURIFYING LIGHT leaving us with a retina-burn image of Blade's silhouette surrounded by Reapers. In that brief instant, the Reapers are frozen, revealed as WRAITH-LIKE X-RAY IMAGES of bone and muscle.

INT. SOUTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

A BLAST-WAVE of LIGHT fills the tunnel, chasing its way towards Nyssa and Asad, overtaking the Reapers before them. Asad throws himself at Nyssa, knocking her into the knee-deep water, shielding her body with his own.

BENEATH THE WATER

Asad still burns, flaring up and disintegrating from the surface on downward like a piece of liquid-drenched magnesium, bubbles streaming from his writing body.

INT. WESTERN TUNNEL - DAY

Darkness, then patterns of subtle shadow and light as our vision slowly returns. FWASH! Blade strikes a FLARE. In the sputtering aureole, the aftermath is slowly revealed.

Blade crouches, unscathed, as if he were standing ground zero in the aftermath of Hiroshima. Scores of Reaper ash-outlines radiate out from him, some of them flash-seared into the surrounding brickwork walls like permanent shadows.

INT. SOUTHERN TUNNEL - DAY

Blade slowly makes his way down the tunnel, using the sputtering flare to guide him. As before, he sees nothing but Reaper ash outlines. But then, Blade sees --

NYSSA

Bleeding and horribly burned despite Asad's sacrifice. Blade crouches, scooping her up into his arms.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - INNER-CITY TRAUMA WARD - DAY

BANG! Blade kicks open a pair of doors, hurrying Nyssa inside. He's carrying her limp form in his arms, having wrapped her in a blanket. Blade himself looks like hell warmed over -- covered in blood, ash, and grime.

He rushes her towards the ER, navigating through a maze of PATIENTS and VISITORS. An ER NURSE approaches.

ER NURSE
Sir, you can't just --

WHAM! Blade shoulders the ER NURSE aside, barreling into the triage where bewildered DOCTORS and ORDERLIES wait.

DOCTOR
What?!

BLADE
She needs a hypertransfusion. NOW!

Blade sets Nyssa down on an operating table, pulling off the blanket. She's badly burned and she's lost an enormous amount of blood. As we watch, she GROANS, revealing her fangs.

DOCTOR
(aghast)
God in Heaven.

Just then, a POLICEMAN enters, gun drawn.

POLICEMAN
Alright, buddy, step away if --

WHAP! Blade slaps the cop's gun away and KICKS him in the chest. The cop flies backwards, SLAMS into a bank of equipment, falls. A NURSE SCREAMS. In a near blur, Blade has his MACH out and pressed against the Doctor's forehead.

BLADE
Do you want to die?

DOCTOR
Not particularly.

BLADE
(holstering his MACH)
Then get your fucking team in gear.

Blade unsheathes his sword, deftly drawing the edge across his wrist, opening a vein. He cradles Nyssa's head, pulling her mouth to the wound on his wrist. And as she starts to feed we pull back and --

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY - DUSK

The sun dips towards the horizon. The shadows of the urban landscape lengthen and darken in time-lapse.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - SHOWERS - DUSK

Blade stands beneath the showerhead, turning his face up into the scalding spray, rinsing the blood from his chiseled physique. Crimson water circles the drain.

INT. SCUD'S WORKSHOP - BLADE'S SLEEPING AREA - DUSK

Nyssa now rests on a cot. Peaceful, the color having somewhat returned to her features. After a moment, her eyes flutter open and she takes in her surroundings. She is in Blade's austere bedroom -- there are tatami mats, a basin for water, a well-thumbed volume of Zen koans.

A SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT

cuts through an icy window pane above, angling down near Nyssa's cot. Dust motes swirl about it.

Nyssa focuses on it. Longingly. Then she raises her arm and reaches towards it. Closer, closer -- just barely extending her hand into the light. Her fingertips blacken and smoke, yet Nyssa endures the pain for another moment. Finally, she withdraws her hand, inspecting the damage -- then notices Blade watching her from the doorway.

NYSSA
Each day is a little life.

BLADE
What?

NYSSA
"Each day is a little life. Every waking and rising a little birth, every fresh morning a little youth, every going to rest and sleep a little death."

She looks back to the sunlight, wistful, sits herself up.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
Anyone else make it?

BLADE
I don't think so.

Blade enters, kneeling by the edge of the cot, inspecting her wounds. Studiously avoiding her gaze.

NYSSA
Thank you.

BLADE
For what?

NYSSA
It would've been easy for you to let me die back there today, but you didn't.

BLADE

(shrugging)
I wouldn't read too much into it.

She reaches for his face. Blade stops her hand.

BLADE (CONT'D)
You don't want to go there.

NYSSA
Why?

BLADE
Because one of us is going to kill the other before this ends.

NYSSA
It doesn't have to be like that. We don't have to be enemies.

BLADE
Get real. I was useful to Damaskinos as long as the hunt was still on. Now that it's over, all bets are off.

NYSSA
(pointedly)
If that's true, then why'd you save me?

Blade stands now, moving to the ice-covered window, troubled by the question. Damned if he knows the answer. After a beat, Nyssa rises too, keeping to the shadows.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
Why do you hate us so much?

BLADE
I am a hunter. A weapon. It's what I do. It's in my blood.

NYSSA
Well it's in mine, too. I'm a pureblood. I wasn't turned. I was born this way. Just like you. Am I evil because I want to survive?
(beat)
What about a wolf? What about any predator?

Nyssa pursues Blade, circling around in front of him so he has to face her again.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
The only difference between you and me is that I made peace with who I was a long time ago. I'm not ashamed of what I am.
(beat)
You haven't been hunting us all these

years. You've been hunting yourself.

Blade moves away. She reaches for his shoulder. He whirls on her, angry, traps her hand. She tires to pull it free but he grips her wrist tightly, pulling her closer --

NYSSA (CONT'D)
You're hurting me.

BLADE
Pain cuts the deepest, isn't that what you said?

And closer, their faces are just inches apart now --

BLADE (CONT'D)
Reminds you you're alive?

And Blade kisses her, hungrily. Nyssa responds in kind. Her head drops low, her mouth finding the cords of his neck -- sucking at his flesh, then sinking her teeth in deep and --

WHAM! Blade clamps a hand around her throat, slamming her head back. A droplet of blood dribbles from her lips as she lets loose a breathless shudder. She's in the ecstatic throes of the Thirst now, all reason gone.

Blade reaches his other hand to her shirt, ripping it open as he runs his fingers across her breasts, then over her exposed rib cage. He turns her around, forcing her against the wall, sinking his own fangs into the back of her neck. She groans as we --

CUT TO:

THE TWO OF THEM

Naked on the tatami mats upon which Blade sleeps. Skin beaded with sweat. Breath steaming in the chill air. He's atop her, moving inside her with measured thrusts.

Nyssa's limbs are wrapped around him. She claws at the expanse of his back with her fingernails. Her mouth is locked on Blade's throat, then his is locked on hers. Together they drink, leeching blood from one another.

PULLING BACK AGAIN

Nyssa clutching greedily at Blade like she never wants to let go. Her soul is gone -- transported to that place we drift to when the euphoria overtake us and we're somehow able to transcend the horror of our fleeting lives.

Finally, Nyssa GASPS, climaxing as she retracts her fangs from Blade. Her head rolls to the side as her pupil -- focused on nothing short of eternity -- dilate unnaturally large.

LATER

Blade and Nyssa lie in each other's arms, awash in moonlight, blissfully dead to the world until --

SOMETHING MAKES BLADE STIR

He sits up, listening. Nyssa stirs beside him. She moves to speak but Blade holds up a hand, silencing her. Together, they slowly creep towards a nearby window where --

JARED NOMAK'S NIGHTMARE FACE

is pressed up against the icy glass, staring back at them! Nyssa GASPS. Blade draws back with a start. But in the time it takes to blink, Nomak is gone. Just then, we hear a NOISE. Scud appears in a doorway, groggy.

SCUD
What's going on?

BLADE
He was here. Watching us.

SCUD
Nomak?

BLADE
He wants us to know he's hunting us now.

MOMENTS LATER

Blade is at the computer workstation. He activates the footage of Nomak he was viewing earlier. He fast-forwards to a specific moment, then plays it back at normal speed.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Nomak said something to me before he disappeared the first time --

Blade points to the screen, saying the words as Nomak silently mouths them.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Athelfiki singenia ex amato. At first I thought he might've been using one of the vampire dialects. But it turns out, it's Greek. Do you know what it means?

Nyssa shakes her head.

BLADE (CONT'D)
It means "bloodbrother."

NYSSA
I don't understand.

WHISTLER (O.S.)

Well maybe I do.

Blade spins, his MACH pistol up and ready to fire. Whistler sits on the opposite side of the room, watching them as he smokes.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
(to Scud)
Your security's for shit, kid.

BLADE
Where the hell have you been?

WHISTLER
Just out connecting a few dots.

Whistler rises from his chair. He flicks his cigarette butt into the shadows and fixes Blade with a heavy stares.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
Bangin' some vampire chick. Kind of a faux pas in our line of work, wouldn't you say? Hope you double bagged it, at least.

Blade is still guarded, not yet ready to lower his MACH.

BLADE
What's your problem, Whistler?

WHISTLER
Why don't you ask your girlfriend?

Blade looks to Nyssa, but she seems equally perplexed.

WHISTLER (CONT'D)
I did some checking on that Carter Stevens character. That familiar of theirs who claimed he was with the NIH? Turns out he used to work for them, but he doesn't anymore.

BLADE
Then who does he work for?

Whistler gives Nyssa a rueful stare, then tosses Blade a research folder. On the cover is the same red, double-helix logo we saw at Damaskinos' facility.

WHISTLER
Some biotech outfit called Caliban Industries. They've been lying to us since day one. This Nomak fucker didn't evolve. He was designed.

Nyssa look to Blade, imploring.

NYSSA

I don't know what he's talking about.

WHISTLER
You expect us to believe that?
(to Blade)
Who you going to trust, Blade? Me or her?

EXT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - NIGHT

A high-tech, heavily guarded industrial complex nestled within an expanse of unassuming wooded acreage overlooking the ocean.

INT. DAMASKINOS' LAIR - NIGHT

Carter Stevens shuts down his computer workstation, then moves to the heavy oak door, glancing at a medical chart as he opens it. When he looks up --

STEVENS
You?

A fist PUNCHES Stevens in the face.

BLADE

Stands in the entry way. Whistler is behind him, holding a gun to Nyssa. Scud is there, too.

BLADE
(mobing in on Stevens)
Start talking, bitch.

STEVENS
I don't know what you --

Blade spins Stevens around, shoving his face against a glass case, crushing the man's nose, spiderwebbing the glass.

BLADE
Nomak! You created him!

Blade clamps his fingers around Stevens' broken nose and twists it with a sickening CRUNCH. Stevens SCREAMS, caving.

STEVENS
Ohgodohgodohgod...
(in agony)
Alright, alright. Yes, we did...
(gasping)
PLEASE! PLEASE!!!

Blade releases him. Stevens sinks to the floor, cradling his brutalized face.

BLADE
Keep talking, Stevens. Tell me why.

STEVENS
(sputtering)
The Shadow Cabinet. For decades they've been trying to find a way to rid themselves of their hereditary weaknesses. Viral epidemiology, immunochemistry. Recombinant DNA was the next logical step.

NYSSA
(genuinely horrified)
No, that's not possible. They wouldn't keep something like this from me...

STEVENS
Your father didn't want you to know.
(haltingly)
Something went wrong. The Reaper strain was too aggressive. Then Nomak escaped.

WHISTLER
And we're supposed to clean up your mess. Fucking perfect.

STEVENS
(defensive)
Look, the fact that Nomak was artificially created didn't make the threat any less urgent. He was still out there, spreading the Reaper virus.

But Blade's not concerned about that now. He's got something more pressing on his mind.

BLADE
The genetic material you spliced into Nomak --
(beat; almost fearful)
Where did you get it?

DAMASKINOS (O.S.)
I should think that would be obvious at this point.

ANGLE ON DAMASKINOS

Standing behind them.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)
We took the genetic material from you.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - ELEVATED CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Damaskinos leads them down a corridor.

DAMASKINOS
Jared Nomak is your genetic brother.

And I suppose if you follow that line of reasoning to its logical conclusion, then these are your offspring.

Damaskinos reaches to a nearby control panel, pressing a button. A pair of massive doors slide apart, revealing:

THE EUGENICS CHAMBER

We are in a vast, multitiered, temperature-controlled chamber -- equal parts 21st century medical facility and Hammer House of Horror.

A network of catwalks look down upon the circular chamber, the center of which is dominated by a massive, steel cask, which is in turn ringed by a safety railing. The operation looks not unlike a small-scale water purification plant, or perhaps a futuristic distillery. Only in this instance, the liquid churning within the cask is HUMAN BLOOD.

TINY EMBRYOS

Each no bigger than a thumbnail, line the walls of the chamber, preserved in credit card sized cryo-cases. There are thousands of them, resting atop one another in racks with stretch from the floor on upwards.

As Damaskinos removes an embryo from the rack, we see ANOTHER EMBRYO behind it. That cryo-case now slides forward with a WHIR, taking the place of the one which Damaskinos removed. Like some kind of perverse vending machine. God knows how deep they're stacked. If thousands are visible, there could be tens of thousands in total.

Damaskinos holds the translucent cryo-case up to the light. The Embryo within shudders, its tiny heart beating.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)
(proudly)
A new breed, begotten from your own flesh. Immune to silver, even sunlight.
(stepping towards Blade)
The wolves have lain with the sheep long enough. No more compromises. No more deals. Only closure.

BOOM! We hear the tread of HEAVY FOOTSTEPS approaching. All eyes turn towards a side corridor.

REINHARDT

enters from the shadows, holding Scud's rail-gun. Much of his face has been burnt away, leaving him with a ghastly death's head mask of blackened muscle and exposed bone.

REINHARDT
Put it back in park, Blade.

BLADE
Thought you were dead.

REINHARDT
Seems like there's a lot of that going around these days.

As Reinhardt aims the rail gun at Blade, a DOZEN VAMPIRE GUARDS appear on the catwalks above, also taking aim.

REINHARDT (CONT'D)
Six-thousand feet per second, isn't that what Whistler said? Let's see you dodge this one --

Blade does his level best, pulling his MACH, squeezing off a SHOT even as Reinhardt FIRES. BA-BANG! Blade is hit in the side, spun clear around. His shot goes wild, hitting one of the Guards in the head, turning him to ash as Blade himself falls to the floor.

NYSSA
Blade!

Blade GASPS in shock. The rail-gun needles have ripped a brutal hole through the side of his chest-plate. He clutches at his flank, trying to staunch the blood that's seeping between his fingers. As he sits forward, we see MORE FLECHETTES have embedded in the wall behind him, having torn completely through him.

Whistler steps forward. One of the vampire sentries LASHES OUT, striking him in the face with the butt of his rifle. Whistler sinks to his knees, stunned. The guard disarms him.

ON BLADE

Gritting his teeth against the pain. He reaches inside his combat harness, pulling out the remote detonator for the explosive flechette in Reinhardt's skull.

BLADE
Kiss your ass goodbye, Reinhardt.

SCUD
You're wasting your time, Blade. The flechette's a dud.

Scud crosses over to Reinhardt's side. Whistler stares at him in disbelief.

SCUD (CONT'D)
It was never supposed to explode. All it was supposed to do was make you feel like you were in control.

Blade's eyes darken with hatred. Reinhardt laughs.

REINHARDT
Thought you had me on a short leash, didn't you, chief? Only it turns out, you're the one that's been on the leash.

Reinhardt digs his claws into his scalp and tugs the barbed flechette from his skull. As he does so, Blade's remote detonator BEEPS to indicate it's being tempered with. Reinhardt finishes removing it and sighs contentedly.

REINHARDT (CONT'D)
That's better.

Reinhardt tosses the fletchette to Scud, who grins, flipping down his lower lip to reveal a vampire glyph tattooed on it.

SCUD
See, I'm one of Damaskinos' familiars.

Blade looks to Nyssa who averts her gaze.

SCUD (CONT'D)
Yeah, your little cootchie knew.

WHISTLER
You little shit. When did they get to you?

SCUD
Back when Blade had me hunting down your puckered old ass. What's up with your hair, anyway? Fucking Willie Nelson look-a-like?

Scud punches Whistler in the face.

SCUD (CONT'D)
Man, I so wanted to do that.

Scud shakes his hand, which is smarting from the blow. He looks to Blade now, angry.

SCUD (CONT'D)
And you. You never cared about me. I gave you everything. All you cared about was digging up the old fuck! You think they scoped out my security system?
(chuckling)
I let them in. Dude, I practically gave 'em the fucking keys. I've been feeding Damaskinos information the whole time. Providing them with samples of your genetic material -- helping them with the Reaper program. They're close, Blade. Right up against it. Any day now, they're all going to be Daywalkers.

And when that happens, well, let's just say, I don't want to be on the losing team. You may be strong, you may be fast, but in the end, you're just too human, B.

He pinches Blade's cheek. Then he stands up.

SCUD (CONT'D)
So that's down and dirty. Got anything to say for yourself?

BLADE
(weak, but defiant)
Two things. One, I was on to you the moment they turned you. And two --
(raising the detonator; smiling)
I switched that dud of yours back with the real one.

Scud has a split-second of terrified, wide-eyed realization before Blade pushes the button and BOOM! The flechette in Scud's hand EXPLODES, blowing his body apart, spraying those nearest him with blood. Primarily Reinhardt.

REINHARDT
Son of a bitch!

As the others react with varying degrees of surprise and horror, Reinhardt savagely KICKS Blade across the face. He HITS Blade again and again, driving him down to the floor. Then he bends and tugs the sword from Blade's back-scabbard, preparing to cut his throat.

DAMASKINOS
Reinhardt!

Reinhardt hesitates. Nyssa takes a step towards Blade, but Damaskinos stops her. Damaskinos gestures to his guards. They haul Blade up and drag him from the lab. Reinhardt gestures to Whistler.

REINHARDT
What about him, then?
(crossing to Whistler, handcuffing him)
Me and Hobo Kelly here have a little unfinished business.

Damaskinos waves dismissively. Reinhardt takes Whistler away.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

Blade is dragged into a large autopsy room. The vampire guards lay him on a steel autopsy table. He struggles

against them, but he's just too weak from loss of blood. Eventually they get him secured, clamping his wrists and ankles into steel manacles which are affixed to the table.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON

Blade's sword pommel as the booby-trap blades in the handle spring out.

REINHARDT (O.S.)
Nice.

PULL BACK to reveal Reinhardt holding Blade's sword. He gives it a few practiced swings, then runs his thumb along the blade.

REINHARDT (CONT'D)
How many vampires do you think he's killed with this thing?

ON WHISTLER

Sitting in the corner, his hands cuffed behind his back. We are in a security station filled with surveillance monitors offering various views of the laboratory complex.

WHISTLER
Not nearly enough, Fritz.

REINHARDT
Keep talking, warmblood.

Reinhardt KICKS Whistler in the face.

REINHARDT (CONT'D)
When I'm through with you, you'll be begging for a dirt nap.

Whistler spits blood and glares up at Reinhardt.

WHISTLER
Been dead before. Didn't much cotton to it. Tell you what, chicken shit. You do your worst. We'll settle up after.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - EUGENICS CHAMBER - NIGHT

Nyssa stands before the banks of vampire embryos, clearly troubled. Damaskinos regards her.

DAMASKINOS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
My child --

Damaskinos moves in close to her, running a finger along her

throat. She doesn't acknowledge it.

DAMASKINOS (CONT'D)
(in English)
I would hate to think you were losing your perspective. Who do you think God favors in the web? The spider or the fly?

NYSSA
Nomak said something to Blade in Greek. Athelfiki singenia ex amato. Where did he learn that?

DAMASKINOS
From his father, of course.

NYSSA
(horrified)
You experimented on your own, son?

Damaskinos slowly tightens his hand around Nyssa's throat.

DAMASKINOS
I have fathered thousands of children in centuries since I first walked this earth. Make no mistake, Nyssa. Those blood-ties mean nothing to me when measured against the ascendancy of our race. Nothing.
(giving her an extra squeeze)
If you have any interest in remaining alive, you would do well to remember that.

Damaskinos releases Nyssa. She falls, GASPING for breath. He stares down at her with disdain, then exits.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

Damaskinos enters, followed by Carter Stevens. The guards remain posted at the main entrance of the room. Damaskinos approaches, looking down at Blade.

Blade stares back at him, still defiant, but fighting a losing battle. He's dying and he knows it. His breathing is shallow. It's an effort just to keep his eyes open.

DAMASKINOS
With every century, humans become more repulsive to me. Once, you were souls to be taken, corrupted. But you have disgraced yourselves to being nothing more than blood and meat.

TWO SURGEONS snap on surgical gloves. Stevens is enjoying seeing Blade helpless.

STEVENS
We're going to harvest you, Blade.
(injecting fluid into Blade)
Bone marrow, organs, everything. Your tissue's too valuable to let go to waste.

BLADE
(weakly)
Nomak is still out there.

DAMASKINOS
True, but thanks to you, we know his weakness. We can keep him contained. It's just a matter of time before we hunt him down.

BLADE
Too bad you're out of it.

Damaskinos is amused by Blade's seeming lack of concern.

DAMASKINOS
And why is that?

BLADE
Revenge. That's what Nomak wanted all along. To pay back the people who created him.

STEVENS
You may be right. Fortunately for us, he has no idea where this facility is located.

Blade smiles, laughing tiredly.

BLADE
He does now.
(off their concerned looks)
He's been watching me since the tunnels. Following me. I led him right to you.

Blade lifts up his hand, unfurling his previously closed fist. There is a deep gash in his palms.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Just like a trail of bread crumbs.

Damaskinos stares at Blade's hand, then looks to the floor. A line of blood droplets lead back to the doors through which he entered.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

Various hallways, the helipad outside Caliban industries, etc. In rapid succession, we SEE more TRAILS OF BLOOD DROPLETS. Then, just as quickly, we are back --

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

With Damaskinos and company. Suddenly, the lights above them flicker then go out. As emergency lights kick on --

BANG! BANG!BANG!BANG! All eyes turn towards a steel security door which is shuddering -- bulging and bending inwards as Nomak throws himself against it.

Damaskinos looks to a bank of security monitors which are flickering back to life now. We see Nomak's blurred silhouette from various angles, pummeling the door. Then --

RIPPPPPP!!! A portion of the door is clawed open and we see a glimpse of Nomak's SNARLING FACE.

NOMAK
(roaring)
FATHER!

Damaskinos' eyes widen in terror as he stumbles backwards, activating an ALARM. He looks to the guards, SCREAMING.

DAMASKINOS
Stop him!

Damaskinos runs for his life, rushing out the opposite door, quickly followed by Stevens as we --

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Nyssa hears the ALARMS and moves into a corridor lit by red, strobing emergency lights. VAMPIRE GUARDS are rushing past.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Reinhardt also hears the ALARMS. He looks to the surveillance monitors where he SEES Nomak.

REINHARDT
Shit!

Behind him, we see Whistler taking advantage of the distraction. He folds his legs up under him, working his cuffed hands over his feet. When Reinhardt spins back away from the security monitors --

Whistler is GONE. A steel grating in the floor lies half open. The obvious means of exit.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

As Nomak continues tearing down the autopsy door, BULLETS hammer into his back. He turns, sees a DOZEN GUARDS FIRING at him, their gunfire chewing the shit out of the concrete walls around him. Nomak staggers, but doesn't go down as CLEAR BLOOD sprays from the body hits.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - MAINTENANCE CONDUIT - NIGHT

Whistler shuffles forward through the narrow conduit on his elbows. We hear footsteps. Through the metal gratings above, we glimpse TWO FIGURES rushing past --

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Damaskinos and Stevens round a corner, spilling into several GUARDS. He shoves his fellow vampires aside.

DAMASKINOS
Get out of the way.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a grate moving up from the floor. Whistler emerges, rushing to Blade's side. As he starts frantically releasing Blade from his bonds, he looks to the ravaged door --

WHISTLER'S POV (THROUGH THE V-SHAPED GAP IN DOOR)

Nomak savages the guards, flinging them into the air. A guard's body hits the V-gap in the door and obscures our view as --

Whistler redoubles his efforts, finally freeing Blade. He helps him from the autopsy table. Blade is sinking, starting to fade. Whistler slaps his face, shaking him.

WHISTLER
Come on, Blade. Talk to me!

BLADE
(weakly)
Blood...

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Carnage. A frazetta painting come to life. Nomak atop dead guards, draining the last of his victims' blood. He whips his face in our direction and ROARS, charging the door --

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - AUTOPSY ROOM - NIGHT

WHAM! The door gives way and Nomak enters. To the right, he SEES Whistler and Blade exiting. To the left, he SEES the security monitors. Damaskinos and Stevens can be glimpsed in

one of these monitors.

Nomak moves to the left.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - THIRD CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Blade clutches his bleeding side, staggering down the corridor towards a door marked "Eugenics" with Whistler's help. By all rights, Blade should be dead. But he continues on, moving towards the door with determination.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - 4-WAY INTERSECTION - NIGHT

CLOSE ON a hand twisting a safety lever on the floor. PULL BACK to reveal Stevens manually activating a series of hydraulic lock-down latches.

CHINK!CHINK!CHINK! The doors of the Eastern, Northern, and Western corridors are sealing, lock-down latches clamping down for extra security. Even as the Western door seals, we glimpse Nomak rushing towards it with inhuman speed.

ON STEVENS

panicked, turning towards the open elevator cab where --

DAMASKINOS

is waiting. But even as Stevens starts towards the elevator, Damaskinos dispassionately presses the "CLOSE DOOR" button.

STEVENS
What are you doing?!!

Stevens rushes towards the closing elevator doors, but it's too late. He pounds his fist against them. Behind him, we hear a terrible RENDING OF METAL as the Western door gives. Stevens looks in that direction --

In an eyeblink, Nomak is upon him, SLAMMING his hand over Stevens' face, crushing it.

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - ELEVATOR CAB - NIGHT

As Damaskinos slides a security card through a reader and punches in a code, a thin SPRAY OF BLOOD jets across his pale forearm. He looks to the elevator doors. The spray of blood is coming through the vertical door seal. The metal doors SHUDDER violently and then the cab begins to ascend. Damaskinos retreats to the far corner of the elevator, breathing a sigh of relief.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - EUGENICS CHAMBER - NIGHT

WHOOSH! A pneumatic door slides open. Blade and Whistler enter. They are on the second level now, up amongst the

catwalks. Below them is the churning cask of purified blood. They have almost reached the end of the catwalk when --

REINHARDT AND HIS MEN

converge on the lab from two directions at once. Some of the vampires spill through the door on the second level with Reinhardt, while others enter on the ground floor.

REINHARDT
Stop him!!!

As Reinhardt takes aim at Blade with the shotgun, the other vampires FIRE. Whistler is HIT in the leg. He goes down, CRYING OUT, then grips Blade's arm, shoving him onward --

WHISTLER
GO!!!

ON BLADE

gripping the guard rail for support, dragging himself along. Reinhardt fires. A SHOTGUN BLAST hits Blade, grazing him but otherwise missing him. As Reinhardt curses and prepares to fire again --

Blade makes it to the end of the catwalk, pitching himself out into open space. Time slows to a crawl as Blade tumbles downward, plummeting into --

THE BLOOD CASK BELOW

Blade sinks from view, disappearing beneath the churning slurry of crimson. A beat passes as Reinhardt and his men draw closer, apprehensive. Then, an explosion of BLOOD gushes over Reinhardt and the others. They fall backwards, blinded, slipping --

BLADE

surfaces from the cask in morbidly glorious slow-motion. Think of Sheen in the end-sequence of Apocalypse Now, only instead of a river of mud, Blade is covered head-to-toe in crimson. Majestic and glistening. A primordial god. He rears back his head, letting loose a triumphal ROAR.

Reinhardt's men hesitate. One look at Blade's eyes and we can see he's tapped into a well-spring of fury even he never knew he had. The man is super-charged and ready for war.

Blade tears into the vampires, unleashing a blizzard of martial arts moves. He powers a right hook into the first vampire's face, then pivots, launching a devastating spinning back-fist into the face of a second. At the same time, he rips the second guard's security belt from his waist, twirling it around nanchadku-style to blind a third guard and capture the wrist of a fourth.

Some vampires FIRE their guns, but Blade is a whirlwind, shifting and dodging. BULLETS go wild, hitting circuitry, EXPLODING APART cannisters of combustible chemicals. In seconds, FLAMES are licking across the laboratory floor.

Blade drops, causing a pair of vampires to FIRE their guns at one another.

Then Blade knocks two more vampires onto their asses with a foot sweep. Then he's up again. Slamming the bridge of a fifth vampire's nose into his brain with a palm heel strike.

A snap kick, an overhand elbow strike, a knee stamp that shatter's the vampire's knee cap. An upward block, a jab, a cross, a shin kick aimed at a vamp's quadriceps.

Overhand punches, rising punches, parallel punches, spinning rear elbows, deep kicks, on and on and on and on in an orgy of super-hero violence until --

WHAM! Blade cuts the last of the vampire soldiers down, turning from the creature's disintegrating body to face --

REINHARDT

The vampire mercenary clutches Blade's sword in his hand, but the weapon provides him with little sense of security given that he's just seen a dozen of his men slaughtered. The automatic sprinkler system is on now, spraying water down upon Blade and Reinhardt alike. Blade advances.

Reinhardt's been cornered. There's nowhere else for him to run. Refusing to be cowed, Reinhardt SCREAMS and brings the sword down at Blade's head when WHOOSH --

But Blade swings his hands upward, slapping them on either side of the blade, trapping the sword on its downward arc.

Reinhardt strains, trying to tear the sword away from Blade's grip. The vampire's eyes widen in fear. And during that split-second in which the two men are frozen, connected by the weapon which vibrates between them, Blade says:

BLADE
Tell me something, chief. Can you blush?

TWHISH! The sword twists free from Reinhardt's grasp, spinning upward into the air. Reinhardt stumbles backwards against the blood cask railing as --

Blade catches the sword on its way down, swinging it around in one fluid motion, slicing Reinhardt's torso in half, along with a diagonal axis! Reinhardt sinks to his knees as the TWO HALVES split apart, turning to ash before they hit floor.

Beat. Blade stands beneath the spray of the overhead sprinklers, rinsing the blood from his body. He turns

towards the exit, sword in hand.

CUT TO:

INT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - LOBBY - NIGHT

A set of elevator doors open, disgorging Damaskinos. Beyond the lobby windows we can SEE a waiting helicopter, VAMPIRE SOLDIERS readying it for take-off. Damaskinos rushes across the lobby and is almost at the exit when --

CHUNK!CHUNK!CHUNK! A series of steel shutters slam down over the doors and windows. Damaskinos tries to tug one of the shutters upwards, then moves to a keypad nearby. He starts hurriedly tapping in a numeric sequence when we hear:

NYSSA (O.S.)
I overrode the security codes.

Damaskinos spins around. Nyssa stands behind him. She's got Whistler's rail-gun in her hands.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
We're locked in.

DAMASKINOS
Are you insane? He'll kill us both!

NYSSA
Maybe it's better that way.

AS if in response, a GRINDING SHUDDER comes from the elevator doors. Damaskinos spins in wide-eyed horror, then --

BLADE (O.S.)
What's it going to be, Damaskinos?
Thiavolos. The devil you know --

BLADE

enters the lobby from a mezzanine above, sword in hand.

BLADE (CONT'D)
-- or the devil you don't?

Damaskinos turns back to his daughter, making a last appeal.

DAMASKINOS
(vampire dialect; subtitled)
For God's sake, Nyssa! Let us out of here!

WHAM!WHAM!WHAM! Nomak pounds away. The elevator doors are starting to buckle, then they tear apart completely --

NOMAK

bursts into the lobby, ROARING. If anything, he is even more animalistic now, his features having become grossly

distorted.

NOMAK
(in vampire dialect)
Why are you frightened, father? The prodigal son has returned.

Damaskinos scurries backwards, but there's nowhere left to run. Nomak descends on him, lifting the vampire into a rib crushing embrace, chomping his elongated canines into Damaskinos' throat.

Damaskinos SQUEALS like a child as his life-blood is sucked out of him. His body begins to cave inward, shrinking and twisting until there's nothing left but shriveled husk.

Nyssa hefts the rail-gun and FIRES at Nomak's back. Nomak HOWLS, releasing Damaskinos' body, then turns, focusing his blood-drunk gaze on Nomak.

BLADE
(alarmed)
Get out of here!

But Nyssa stands her ground, rachetting back the slide on the rail-gun, readying to unleash another barrage of needles. Nomak CHARGES, moving at unbelievable speed. She FIRES AGAIN, aiming at Nomak's chest --

but then Nomak is upon her. He slaps the rail-gun from her hands, SMASHING IT TO PIECES.
Then he wraps his hand around her throat, pulling her forward, sinking his teeth into her neck. Nyssa SCREAMS.

BLADE (CONT'D)
Nyssa!!!

ON BLADE

as he leaps from the mezzanine level, sword extended, like Beowulf diving to slay Grendel. He PLUNGES the sword deep into Nomak's upper torso. Then DRIVES it in even further --

Nomak releases Nyssa and back-hands Blade across the face, sending him sailing through the air. He lands, skids across the floor --

ON NOMAK

stumbling backwards into the wall. The sword has sunk so deep that the tip is actually protruding out his back, SCRAPING a gash across the wall as Nomak slides towards the floor.

Nomak GRUNTS, then reaches for the pomeel with his ruined hand. He grips the pommel and SNAPS the sword-blade in half. Then he SLAMS against the wall, forcing the half of the broken blade that's still embedded in him out back through

the front of his chest. As Nomak rises to his feet --

Blade is on him again, snap-kicking the Reaper in the chest. Nomak retaliates. Blade somersaults out of the way, then springs back again, KICKING Nomak in the face, BREAKING Nomak's NECK. Nomak's head lolls unnaturally sideways for a heartbeat and then Nomak swings his head around, somehow righting his neck vertebrae with a snap of his head.

They trade blows, a brutal death-match that seems to defy gravity. Blade moves in for a round-house punch, but Nomak catches his fist, holding it for a split-second, then bending Blade's hand at an unnatural angle, SNAPPING his wrist bones. The pain is enormous.

Nomak starts beating the living shit out of Blade, pummeling him with his fists, gripped by an uncontrollable rage. He SMASHES Blade against a marble column, cracking it. Then he flings Blade against one of the brushed steel walls - so hard that Blade's body actually leaves an indentation.

Before Blade can recover, Nomak is in front of him, launching another kick. Blade rolls his head out of the way, barely avoiding Nomak's boot heel which dents the wall. Nomak kicks a second time. Blade avoids Nomak, but third time's the charm and Nomak lands one squarely in Blade's gut.
Blade falls beneath a flurry of blows, unable to defend himself any longer. Blood stains his eyes, obscuring his vision. He strikes out blindly, but Nomak has forced him to the ground, pinning him there. As Blade struggles to free himself --

NOMAK

lowers his head towards Blade's face. The scar/seam in Nomak's chin splits open and Nomak's lower jaw flares apart, distending and widening to reveal the awful, glistening hell maw -- the hollow inner fangs and striated cartilage which are closing about Blade's face. Blade twists his head violently to the right, then glimpses the broken tip of his sword resting a few feet away. He reaches for it in desperation, plunging it up into Nomak's chest. Nomak HOWLS. Because the hilt has been broken off, Blade is forced to grip the cutting edge of the weapon with his bare hands. It slices into his fingers --

but Blade just grips the broken sword tighter, ignoring the pain, driving it deeper and deeper -- until, suddenly, it penetrates the cartilaginous shell around Nomak's heart and --

NOMAK
(in vampire dialect)
Blood brother.

Nomak smiles, covering Blade's hands with his own. He looks blade in the eye, then drives the broken sword home.

Nomak's body stiffens, his eyes grow unseeing, an oddly serene look spreading across his tortured face. A patch of BLACKNESS begins radiating outward from his chest, moving over his body, carbonizing him from within. As his blackened flesh begins to crack, BLUE FLAMES flicker out from the fissures. In seconds, Nomak is gone.

Beat. Blade stands, exhausted. Then he looks to where Nyssa rests. He moves to her side, kneeling beside her. She smiles up at him, bravely, but frightened all the same. Blade inspects the wound on her neck. It's clearly fatal.

NYSSA
How does it look?

BLADE
(with genuine sadness)
Not good.

Nyssa nods. Blade has only confirmed her existing fears.

NYSSA
It won't be long now. I can already feel it burning inside me --

She grips Blade's arm, her eyes welling with tears.

NYSSA (CONT'D)
I don't want to become what Nomak was --
(beat; straining)
I can't. I want to die while I'm still vampire.

Blade sighs. The burden is all to familiar to him.

BLADE
What do you want me to do?

NYSSA
I want to see the sun rise.

ON BLADE

his face a mask of sad resignation. He lifts Nyssa into his arms. She closes her eyes, resting her head on his chest.

EXT. CALIBAN INDUSTRIES - JUST BEFORE DAWN

The shutters over the doors and windows slowly rise. Blade shoulders open the front door, moving across the lawn towards a bluff overlooking the ocean. A moment later, Whistler emerges into the light, watching as Blade sets Nysa down on the grass. Her eyes flutter open and she looks into --

THE HORIZON

where the faintest glimmer of pre-dawn light brightens the cloud-swept sky. It's peaceful. We can hear the SURF

crashing on the shore below.

Together they wait.

A GLIMMER OF LIGHT emerges over the earth's curvature, spreading its dazzling radiance out across the skyline. Nyssa's eyes widen in expectation, her breath catching. She looks up at Blade, stroking his face, smiling.

NYSSA
Each day is a little life. Remember?

Blade nods, he's strong for her. Despite his best efforts, a tear slides down his cheek. They kiss then as the sun rises in full glory, flooding the world with its brilliance.

Blade holds Nyssa tightly to his chest, refusing to relinquish his grip as her body catches fire. The end is blessedly quick -- not a slow-burn of blazing agony, but a nearly seamless transition from life --

To ash... Nyssa collapses apart in Blade's arms, billowing out around him in a cloud of glowing embers. One moment she's there, the next she's gone. Blade remains where he is, kneeling on the bluff, the wind carrying the last traces of Nyssa aloft into the sky. He shuts his eyes. Turns his face to the warmth of the sun, surrendering himself to acceptance.

WE RISE UP

isolating Blade alone on the windswept bluff. After a moment, Whistler moves to Blade's side. He rests a hand on Blade's shoulder, but doesn't say a word. We keep moving up and up until the two of them are just a pair of tiny figures on the rolling coastline. Then we --

DISSOLVE TO:

A SERIES OF CLOSEUPS

Images of a weapon being forged, all filtered through shimmering convection waves of intense heat. We SEE a HAMMER CLANGING DOWN. The FIRES of a ROARING furnace. SPARKS showering up from titanium slowly being given shape. Molten silver. Acid etching. And then we PULL BACK to reveal --

INT. BLADE'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Blade works before a forge by moonlight, his body dripping with sweat. He slips his hand in a protective glove and grips the red-hot weapon, dousing it in a quench bucket. As a cloud of steam envelops Blade, he lifts it up for view.

A NEW SWORD

perfect. Lethal. Wrought from titanium, plated in sliver. As Blade inspects the sword, we hear his earlier words again:

BLADE (V.O.)
I am a hunter. A weapon. It's what I do. It's in my blood...

Satisfied with his work, Blade smiles --

EXT. FUCKINGHAM PALACE - NIGHT

A shit-hole porno emporium offering the latest in bagged-for your-pleasure Euro-raunch.

INT. FUCKINGHAM PALACE - NIGHT

Rush, the vampire brother wanna-be from the opening of the film, is up at the register, exchanging a twenty for a handful of tokens. He's humming along to that old E-Rotic song "Voulez-vous couchez avec moi".

RUSH
-- yelling for your tender touch, you can never get enough --

We FOLLOW HIM down a hall lined with video booths, serenaded all the while by the cheesy SYNTH SOUNDTRACKS and faked ORGASMOGROANS coming from beyond the doors.

RUSH (CONT'D)
-- cover me with your love --

Rush stops at "Buddy Booth No. 3 - HOT ONE-ON-ONE ACTION."

INT. BUDDY BOOTH - NIGHT

Rush steps inside. There's a chair set in front of a Plexiglas window, an intercom with a phone receiver, box of Kleenex, and a slot for the tokens.

Rush gets himself situated, picks up the receiver, then eagerly pops some tokens in the slot.

RUSH
Voulez-vous coucher avec moi, ce soir!
Voulez-vous coucher AVEC MOI!!!

With a HUM, the screen in front of the window rises, offering us a view of the booth on the other side of the Plexiglas. Only instead of a skanked out booth girl, Rush finds himself staring in open-mouthed astonishment at --

BLADE

Who flashes an evil smile at us.

BLADE
What? You think I forgot about you?

In a near blur, Blade draws his new sword from his back scabbard and stabs it RIGHT INTO CAMERA, SMASHING apart the

Plexiglas window as we --

FADE TO BLACK.

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