

Fluids - Episode 2

By

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EXT. CHRYSALIS SCHOOL GATES

Students are arriving in droves at the front gates and entering the school courtyard, most of them wearing pristine and immaculate uniforms while accompanied by parents or servants. The clear reflective glass of the buildings makes them look as if they're made of crystal, and they all ascend down into the ground giving them a pyramid appearance.

A short, fat middle-aged man with a big beard wearing a wool cap and hunting jacket, ROLAN, is checking students into the grounds.

ROLAN

Exam numbers for entry. If you
forgot your exam number go home.

On a stage in front of the school a beautiful Indian woman with long black hair in a ponytail embroidered with razor blades wearing traditional attire, NADIA, is checking the time on her PCD.

NADIA

Where is that idiot? If he's dead
in a gutter somewhere I'll kill
him.

Nadia looks over to see a limousine with black windows rolled up on the street in front of the school. There's a student, RASPUTIN, sitting in the back but it's too dark for us to see him. He's covering his face.

RASPUTIN

(to the chauffeur)
What are you doing?

CARLTON

Dropping you off.

RASPUTIN

Go around the back.

The limousine drives away and around the corner. The scene pans over the courtyard to a high rise building overlooking the gates. The office at the front has large glass windows giving the people inside a clear view of the students pouring in.

INT. HEADMISTRESS'S OFFICE

It is filled with books and oak furniture. A woman with blonde hair, LACY, 45, is applying makeup to an elderly woman in a chair. The woman has a headscarf wrapped around her scalp and is wrapped in a shawl from the neck down. We see a close-up of her face, it's covered in burns. Glasses sit in front of two wide staring eyes, this is CHRISTINA.

LACY

You must be excited. There are more applicants this year than ever before. And it's all thanks to you...

Lacy finishes applying makeup. Christina's expression hasn't changed. There's a knock on the door.

LACY (CONT.)

Come in.

A tall teenage girl with long straight black hair and big eyelashes, VIRGINIA, 15, enters the office. She's wearing a formal uniform and has a refined aura.

LACY (CONT.)

Oh, Virginia? What are you doing here? Your year doesn't start back until tomorrow.

Virginia ignores Lacy and walks over to Christina and gives her a wooden, half-embrace. Christina's pupils focus on her.

VIRGINIA

Grandmother, you look well.

Lacy walks over to the window and looks down on the students arriving through the gates.

LACY

You really didn't have to come in on your day off.

VIRGINIA

Didn't I? I am Student Body President, am I not?

Turns back to look at the students.

EXT. CHRYSALIS SCHOOL GATES

Aurai is walking into Chrysalis for the first time with a cage containing Snowdrop under her arm. She's reading one of the pamphlets for Chrysalis. Some of the snooty prospective students give her looks as they pass her by. She looks up and addresses someone standing beside her.

AURAI

Thank you so much for everything
you've done.

The person stood beside her is Julius, smiling down at her.

JULIUS

You've had your head in that
pamphlet since the crack of dawn.

AURAI

I need to learn everything I can
about this school.

Close-up on Aurai's face. She's smiling, but it looks forced. The dimples on her cheeks are protruding and her eyes appear wide and staring.

AURAI (CONT.)

So I can save my grandfather.
(beat)

Julius places his hand on Aurai's back, taking her by surprise. He leads her into the grounds. Suddenly, a banged up classic car comes hurtling through the gates behind them, swerving in and out of control. Students duck and dive out the way but Aurai does not have time to react. The car speeds towards her and time seems to slow down. At the last second Julius grabs her, pulling them out of the way and to the ground. The car crashes into a wall. Aurai opens her eyes and blushes as she realizes she's on the ground being held in Julius's arms.

JULIUS

Are you okay?

AURAI

I... uhm...

Julius looks up at the car as the driver's door falls off, and ZEKE, a shabby man in his late 30s stumbles out, clearly drunk. He drops a notebook as he gets out the car and begins shouting at Aurai and Julius.

(CONTINUED)

ZEKE

Hey! Watch where you're going! You could've gotten blood all over my Bugatti 57.

Julius looks fierce. He stands up and walks up to Zeke, confronting him.

JULIUS

What the hell is wrong with you!?
You've could've killed someone!

Zeke looks him up and down with a disgusted expression.

ZEKE

Who the fuck are you? The fun police?

Julius recoils at the smell of Zeke's breath. He wafts it away.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Piss off. Mind your own business.

Zeke begins to walk away when Julius grabs him by his collar.

JULIUS

Don't walk away whilst I'm speaking with you.

ZEKE

Get your hand off me, you posh toff.

Zeke pushes Julius's hand off him.

ZEKE

Don't I know you from somewhere?

Julius stares angrily at him. There's a cold, menacing in his eyes. Aurai walks over and picks up Zeke's notebook. She begins reading it.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Oh shit! You're that research guy, aren't ya? What a small world! Well, technically it is! Found a cure yet?

Julius slips his hand into his pocket and grips hold of something. He prepares to pull it out when Aurai comes up behind him and puts her hand on the back of his arm. Julius snaps out of his hand and lowers his hand.

(CONTINUED)

JULIUS

Please be more careful in the future.

Zeke tuts and walks away. Julius turns to Aurai.

JULIUS (CONT.)

Are you sure you're alright?

AURAI

I... I think so. I should probably go. Thanks again.

JULIUS

Good luck.

Aurai rushes off in the direction Zeke went, clutching the notebook. Julius watches her until she's out of sight. He takes out his PCD and makes a phone call to someone.

JULIUS (CONT.)

She's here. Safe and sound.

INT. ASSEMBLY HALL

All the students are sat in chairs talking amongst themselves. The parents have gone, there are no teachers anywhere and an air of confusion. A shy girl, HEATHER, with brown hair in a bow is sitting by herself, she's reading 'The Metamorphosis' by Frank Kafka.

An Asian boy is sitting near the back, BLADE. His hair is cut really short and his uniform is smart and iron-pressed, he's sitting perfectly still with his eyes fixed on the stage.

Someone is walking down a dark hallway towards the assembly hall. It's a student, but his uniform is a mess, it's not tucked in, his tie is hanging loose, his sleeves are rolled up and he's decorated his trousers with chains. His hair is in a mohawk with clear shave marks down the sides and almost his whole body is covered in piercings and tattoos. There are black bags under both his eyes. He stops at the doors and looks in at the other students. He takes a deep breath before kicking the door in with his thick boot. All the others students turn around as he walks in with his fists clenched looking intimidating.

RASPUTIN

Alright! All you fucking pussy little rich scroats outta my way! This is my school now!

(CONTINUED)

All the other students look scared except for Blade, who doesn't even distract from what he's doing. Rasputin walks up to a student.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

What're you lookin' at!?

The boy flinches and looks away. Rasputin addresses the entirety of the row with Blade on it.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

I want this row all to myself!
Move!

The students all look awkward.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

I SAID MOVE!

An uppity boy stands up.

TOLLAR

Excuse me, I don't know who you
think you are, but my father is
Labarum's leading manufacturer of-

Rasputin pushes another student out of his fold-in chair, lifts it up and starts beating Tollar with it. Tollar falls to the ground as Rasputin continues to hit him repeatedly with the chair, almost rendering him unconscious as all the other students watch in shock and horror.

Lacy, Virginia, Nadia and Rolan are watching the events play out from behind a two-way mirror, none of them react or attempt to intervene. Eventually Rasputin throws down the chair on him.

RASPUTIN

"Leading Manufacturer of AAAH"?
Well I'm the leading manufacturer
of 'Suck My Bollocks You Little
Scroat!' Trademark 'Your Mom'! I'm
Rasputin, bitches! And you all
better show me some fucking
respect, or else!

Rasputin kicks Tollar on the ground as he tries to crawl away. The other students swiftly evacuate the row for him, he looks smug until he realizes that Blade is still sat there in the exact same position. Rasputin is initially shocked but then turns hostile.

(CONTINUED)

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

Hey! Didn't you hear me, you little scroat? Move your ass!

Blade finally moves his head slightly and sees Rasputin. He seems surprised, as if nothing has registered up until now.

BLADE

Huh? Wha-?

Rasputin kneels onto the chair next to Blade, grabbing the back of his and getting up close.

RASPUTIN

Get out of my chair...

BLADE

Uhh... Uhhhh-

RASPUTIN

...NOW!

The lights suddenly go on and the teachers start to emerge on the stage at the front of the hall.

LACY

Alright boys and girls, take your seats.

The students all turn their attentions forward. Rasputin looks frustrated, he turns to Blade and whispers threateningly.

RASPUTIN

You're dead.

Rasputin moves away and takes a seat several away, but continues to stare at Blade, leaving him visibly shaken and confused.

LACY

Hello everyone and welcome to Chrysalis School of Combat and Weaponry. I'm Lacy Garments, the deputy headmistress. You've all done extremely well to have made it through the application process and here, to the Chrysalis Entrance Exam. The exam will be presented to you in two stages. Firstly academic, then it will move onto combat. But unfortunately, this is as far as the majority of you will go...

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Zeke is walking down the hall clutching his shoulder. Aurai is running behind him.

AURAI

Excuse me.

Zeke doesn't look back and continues walking.

ZEKE

Ugh! What do you want? I'm not apologizing.

Aurai catches up with him and joins his pace.

AURAI

It's not that. You just dropped this.

Aurai hands him the notebook. A surprised Zeke checks his pockets and realizes it's not there before snatching it from Aurai.

ZEKE

Give me that!

Aurai looks nervous upon being snapped at. Zeke looks a tad guilty as he pockets the notebook, but maintains his arrogant demeanor.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Shouldn't you be in assembly?

AURAI

Uhm... Do you know anything about P-4?

Zeke is taken back.

AURAI (CONT.)

It's just that pad... was filled with notes on it.

ZEKE

You looked at my notes?

AURAI

I'm sorry! I didn't mean to!

Zeke notices Snowdrop being carried under Aurai's arm. He gestures towards it.

(CONTINUED)

ZEKE

What the hell is that?

AURAI

Huh? This is my pet chicken,
Snowdrop.

Zeke suddenly snatches the cage from a shocked and
panic-stricken Aurai.

AURAI

W-What are you doing!?

ZEKE

I'm confiscating this.

Zeke starts to walk away.

AURAI

What!? Why!?

Zeke turns back to her, looking angry.

ZEKE

Do you really think you can keep a
filthy animal like this in a school
like Chrysalis? I'm taking it to be
destroyed.

Zeke continues walking down the hallway.

AURAI

Destroyed!? No! Please!

Aurai goes to chase after Zeke but she's stopped by Virginia
walking out into the hallway in front of her.

VIRGINIA

What do you think you're doing?

AURAI

I-I'm sorry! I just need to speak
to that man!

VIRGINIA

You're a freshman, aren't you? You
should be in the induction assembly
by now.

AURAI

No, I really have to-

Virginia checks her watch.

VIRGINIA

I guess it's too late now. I may as well take you straight to the exam room.

Virginia takes Aurai's hand and begins pulling her down the hallway in the opposite direction.

AURAI

W-Wait! You don't understand!

Virginia ignores Aurai's pleas. Aurai looks back worriedly in the direction Zeke took Snowdrop.

INT. EXAMINATION HALL

The mental exam is already underway and everyone is working hard at computers when Aurai slows walks in. The load creaking of the door as she opens it echoes through the room. The other students all turn to look at her. Rasputin, Blade and Heather are sitting at different places in the room. Lacy walks over.

LACY

What time do you call this?

Aurai looks at her watch.

AURAI

Uhm... 9.51?

Lacy gives the frazzled and confused Aurai a cold deathly stare.

AURAI (CONT.)

Was that the first question?

Lacy starts laughing.

LACY

You're lucky *I'm* exam moderator and not someone uptight like Nadia. What's your name, shug?

Lacy takes out a clipboard with a list of names on it.

AURAI

Aurai Willems.

LACY

Let me show you to your computer. Unfortunately you've missed the first 20 minutes of the exam.

(CONTINUED)

Lacy leads Aurai over to a computer in the far corner of the hall next to Heather. Aurai sits at it and looks at the screen, perplexed. She clearly doesn't know how to use it properly. She presses random keys. Heather looks over awkwardly and whispers.

HEATHER
Hi, I'm Heather.

Aurai ignores her.

HEATHER (CONT.)
Do you need help with that?

Aurai snaps at her.

AURAI
No!

Aurai forces an awkward smile.

AURAI (CONT.)
I'm on a mission.

Aurai continues fiddling with the computer.

HEATHER
Are you okay? You seem distracted.

AURAI
I'm fine!

Aurai gets her screen on and the first question appears.

"How long can a human in outer space last without a spacesuit before exploding?"

Aurai has no idea of the answer and stares at the question blankly for a while. Eventually she slowly types in '5 minutes'. Heather notices and contemplates saying something, but doesn't. The next question appears.

"Does the $E=mc^2$ equation apply to a black hole?"

Aurai looks even more confused. Sweat runs down her forehead as she becomes frazzled and anxious. Her breathing becomes heavy. It looks as if she's about to have a panic attack. She snaps out of it when Heather puts her hand on her shoulder.

HEATHER
May I...?

Heather leans over and types in the answer for Aurai. Lacy clearly notices but does nothing. Aurai looks ashamed. Blade is watching them from the desk behind. Aurai suddenly hears the sound of someone snoring. She looks around to see Rasputin on the other side of the hall sleeping at his computer with his feet up on the desk. The students around him look shocked, including Aurai.

INT. OUTSIDE THE EXAMINATION HALL

The students are all taking a break. Aurai is by herself in the corner, looking depressed. She's twisting the corners of a napkin into little worms. Blade approaches her.

BLADE

HI!

Aurai looks up at Blade. He's visibly nervous.

BLADE (CONT.)

I'm Blade.

Aurai goes back to twiddling with the napkin. Blade stands there awkwardly not knowing what to say.

BLADE (CONT.)

You looked a little... stressed in there.

Aurai gets up and walks away.

BLADE (CONT.)

I didn't mean to upset you!

Aurai stops and turns back to him.

AURAI

How long is it until the second exam?

BLADE

Uhm, about an hour.

AURAI

Do you know your way around this school?

BLADE

Yeah, I've come here a lot with my dad. He's in the army.

(CONTINUED)

AURAI

You don't happen to know where the caretaker's room is, do you?

As they talk, the scene pans down through the floor to a level underground. There's a small door at the end of a long corridor.

INT. ZEKE'S STUDY

The room is dusty, filled with books and papers. Zeke sits down at his desk, puts his feet up and takes out of bottle of rum. He stares at the photo of a young girl about Aurai's age for a while until he hears the sound of knocking coming from outside his door. He opens it to see Aurai and Blade further down the hall knocking on another door.

AURAI

Are you sure this is the right one?
I can't hear anything.

ZEKE

Hey! What are you two doing?

Aurai rushes over to Zeke. Zeke looks unimpressed.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Oh, it's you.

AURAI

Please sir, can I have my chicken back?

Zeke tries to reenter his study and close the door behind him but Aurai barges her way inside.

AURAI (CONT.)

Please! She's my best-

Aurai is horrified as she walks in to see a half eaten greasy roast chicken on Zeke's desk. Blade walks in behind her. A look of horror washes over Aurai's face. She puts her hands on her head, falls to her knees and begins to weep, mumbling uncontrollably. Zeke and Blade both look shocked as Aurai buries her head into her knees and crumbles into a ball.

AURAI

Granddadgranddadgranddadgranddad...
Grangrangrangrangrangrangran...

(CONTINUED)

ZEKE

Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Kid! You got the wrong idea! That's not your chicken.

Zeke kneels down and grabs her shoulders, shaking her.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Come on! Get a grip!

Aurai hears the faint sound of clucking. She looks up to see Snowdrop in her cage on the other side of the room.

AURAI

Snowdrop...?

Aurai slowly stands up and walks over to the cage, embracing it. Zeke leans back on his desk, clearly perturbed.

ZEKE

Jesus...

AURAI

I'm so sorry, Snowdrop. I should never have brought you here.

ZEKE

No you shouldn't have. Chrysalis has a strict no animal policy, especially poultry. I wasn't lying when I said it would be destroyed.

Aurai looks extremely depressed.

ZEKE (CONT.)

But... if you just leave it with me... None of the other faculty members ever venture down here.

AURAI

Thank you.

ZEKE

Whatever.

Zeke sits back down and pours some more rum.

BLADE

Uhm, we're going to miss the second exam.

Aurai starts to follow Blade out of the room.

(CONTINUED)

ZEKE

Based on the chicken and the
callouses on your fingertips I'm
guessing you lived on a farm back
on Earth.

Aurai stops and looks at him.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Had to leave it behind, huh? So now
the question is, why would a
country bumpkin like you ever want
to come to a school like Chrysalis?

Aurai forces a smile.

AURAI

I'm on a mission. I'm here to find
a cure for P-4.

Blade looks surprised. Zeke suddenly starts laughing
uncontrollably. Aurai looks offended.

AURAI (CONT.)

Why are you laughing?

ZEKE

Look kid, take it from someone who
knows. If Labarum's top scientists
can't find a cure what makes you
think you can? I mean, do you even
know anything about biology?

AURAI

I can learn.

ZEKE

Ahh, so naive. Easy as that, huh?

AURAI

Julius thinks I can do it.

ZEKE

Well you should give up now. At
least that way you won't waste
years of your life.

Zeke unscrews another bottle of rum while shaking his head.

ZEKE (CONT.)

Stupid, stupid, little girl...

(CONTINUED)

Aurai walks over to the desk and leans over until she's face to face with Zeke. She's looks emotional and somewhat erratic. There's a shakiness in her voice.

AURAI

You don't know anything.

Aurai leaves the room. Blade quickly follows. Zeke turns back to his drink before shouting out the room after her.

ZEKE

You're the one that doesn't KNOW
ANYTHING!

Zeke slams the wall behind his chair with the back of his clenched hand before gulping his rum. Outside, Aurai is running up the stairs with Blade behind her.

BLADE

Did you really come here to find a
cure for P-4? Huh?

Blade runs forward and tries to grab her arm.

BLADE

Hey!

Aurai pulls away.

AURAI

Get off me! Why are you still
talking to me?

Aurai runs forward even faster.

BLADE

Wait! You still haven't told me
your name!

INT. GIRL'S CHANGING ROOM

Aurai is changing into the combat outfit Eoghan bought her for the physical side of the exam. It resembles dungaree overalls decorated with several mashed together pieces of farming equipment, including a leaf-blower on her left sleeve and a miniature combine harvester on her right.

Aurai is struggling to do up the zip on the back of her combat outfit. She looks around at all the other girls as they finish getting changed. She contemplates asking for assistance but doesn't follow through.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD

There are several stages set up, upon which students have been paired up and are fighting one on one as teachers observe from stands. Aurai walks out from the girl's changing rooms to see all the other students sparring on stages, all of them wearing unique combat outfits. She looks slightly intimidated.

Aurai watches as a student is suddenly sent flying from a stage in front of her and crashes into some wooden crates covered in cuts, bruises and blood. Rasputin is shouting at him from the stage as medics rush over to the injured student.

Rasputin's outfit is black and decorated with metal spikes and silver skulls, there's a blade on his right arm and the end of a flamethrower on his left.

RASPUTIN

COME ON! IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT!?
BRING ME A REAL CHALLENGE!

Zeke staggers up one of the stands, bottle in hand, and takes a seat next to a disconcerting Nadia. They sit in silence for a while.

ZEKE

Just get it over with.

NADIA

How could you be so bloody irresponsible? Even by your standards.

ZEKE

Yeah, and it'll cost a small fortune to repair. You don't have to tell me the damage I've done.

NADIA

Your battered car's not the problem here! This has to stop. You can't rely on Christina to protect you forever. One more incident and-

ZEKE

Who cares? I wish it had burst into flames.

Zeke swigs from his bottle. Nadia is clearly accustomed to this type of depressing commentary from him.

INT. MALE BATHROOM

Blade is leaning against the sinks with his head hanging low, avoiding eye contact with himself in the mirror. His Combat Outfit is slick, tight fitting and grey, with armour plating around the cuffs and crotch.

RASPUTIN

Oi "Posh Boy".

Blade looks to his right to see Rasputin standing between him and the door looking vengeful.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

You and me got unfinished business.

BLADE

Excuse me.

Blade tries to walk past him but Rasputin slams his hand against the wall, blocking Blade's exit. Rasputin grabs his arm and squeezes it.

RASPUTIN

You think you can disrespect me and just walk away?

BLADE

Please. I don't want any trouble.

RASPUTIN

It's too late for that.

Rasputin looks Blade up and down with disgust.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

Look at you. How much did that slick, state of the art Combat Outfit cost? 1000, 2000 chimes? I bet it was barely a drop in the ocean. Rich snobs like you make me sick!

Rasputin squeezes harder on Blade's arm.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD

Aurai is watching one of the fights when the door to the male bathroom is suddenly blown open by an explosion and Blade is sent flying across the courtyard grass, ending up flat on his back covered in grazes and sears, clearly in pain, as Rasputin walks out menacingly from the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

RASPUTIN

Get up.

Aurai watches in awe as Rasputin approaches Blade.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

Fight me like a man, Posh Boy!

The teachers do not intervene. Zeke, Nadia and Virginia watch casually from the stands as Blade starts to get up.

BLADE

I'm not going to fight you.

Rasputin kicks Blade in the face and stomach, knocks him back to the ground and begins stomping on him.

RASPUTIN

HAHAHA! Come on! Didn't a privileged posh boy like you have a private tutor or some shit?!

Rasputin continues to beat Blade on the ground as no one intervenes, yet he refuses to fight back. Aurai looks concerned. She hesitates, contemplating whether to step up.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

This is what happens when you use money to advance instead of training! Feel that!? That's the feeling of reality beating you in the face! Too easy! Just too easy!

Rasputin is suddenly kicked in the side of his face by a wellington boot and knocked off Blade. Through blurred vision Blade slowly looks up as the figure of Aurai comes into view, having come to his rescue. Rasputin sits up, holding his chin, he looks fiercely at Aurai.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

And who the fuck are you?

Rasputin stands up and starts walking intimidatingly up to Aurai. Aurai remains determined and doesn't back down.

AURAI

No one. I'm just returning a favour.

Aurai swallows some saliva. She's visibly nervous, but trying to hide it.

(CONTINUED)

RASPUTIN

A favour? To this rich scum?

AURAI

My grandfather always said to stand up to bullies.

RASPUTIN

So I'm a bully now, am I?

Rasputin gets right up in Aurai's face, examining it.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)

I can see the fear in your eyes. You know, I won't go easy on you just because you're a girl, right?

AURAI

That's fine. I grew up on a farm and my grandfather made me do everything a boy would've been expected to do.

Rasputin turns to Lacy who has been watching this whole time.

RASPUTIN

I wanna fight her next.

LACY

That's not your call to make.

Virginia stands up in the stands and pronounces down.

VIRGINIA

Let them fight. As Student Body President and on behalf of my grandmother I'll allow this match.

Lacy looks remiss.

EXT. OUTDOOR STAGE

Rasputin and Aurai are facing off against each other. Zeke, Nadia, Virginia and Lacy are watching from the stands. Zeke recognizes Aurai. Rasputin looks Aurai up and down.

RASPUTIN

What's up with your Combat Uniform? It looks like you just stuck a bunch of machinery you found lying around the farm to a piece of leather.

(CONTINUED)

AURAI
My grandfather made it for me.

RASPUTIN
(smirks)
Senile, is he?

Aurai looks offended by this.

LACY
That Rasputin boy has defeated every one of his opponents thus far without breaking a sweat. I suspect this sweet-natured looking girl has bitten off more than she can chew.

VIRGINIA
You cannot predict the outcome of these things based on appearance, Miss Garment.

RASPUTIN
Right! Let's get down to-

Aurai puts her hand up.

AURAI
Hold on. Before we start...

Aurai turns around revealing her back to Rasputin and showing that the zip on her suit is down.

AURAI (CONT.)
Can you zip me up?

Rasputin looks flabbergasted, completely lost for words.

RASPUTIN
Are you serious...?

AURAI
Please. I don't want my suit to fall open in the middle of our battle.

Rasputin shakes himself off and reluctantly walks over to Aurai and begins slowly zipping up the back of her suit as Aurai holds her hair up for him. Rasputin looks increasingly uncomfortable, Aurai is clearly feeling the pressure.

AURAI (CONT.)
That's tight...

Rasputin looks annoyed and embarrassed.

(CONTINUED)

RASPUTIN
Don't talk.

Rasputin finishes zipping her up.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)
There. Done.

Aurai turns around and backs away, putting the same amount of distance between them as before.

AURAI
Thank you.

RASPUTIN
Look, since you're the only other one here who's clearly not a rich scumbag, I might consider letting you off. But only if you get down on your knees and lick my boots!

Rasputin holds up the bottom of his boot and shakes it for Aurai. Aurai looks repulsed.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)
I'd take the offer if I were you. I've had a hard-knock life, and it's made me tough as nails. If we fight, you'll walk away with more than just a few broken bones. In fact, you won't be walking at all!

AURAI
Only the weak brag before a fight.

Rasputin becomes enraged. He grits his teeth.

RASPUTIN
What did you just say to me...?

A bell dings and Rasputin bursts off his spot and immediately starts charging at Aurai.

RASPUTIN (CONT.)
YOU BITCH!!!

Rasputin goes to punch Aurai but she steps to one side and avoids it. In his rage he almost runs right off the edge of the ring, while almost falling Aurai turns around and turns on her leaf-blower, pushing him off the edge. He lands face-first in the grass below.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAN

Out!

The bell dings. Rasputin raises his head with a look of utter disbelief. Aurai starts walking away. Rasputin grips the grass and dirt between his fingers in rage. He turns back to the ring, teeth gritted, seething with rage.

Rasputin activates mini-grenades on his boots and launches himself back into the ring. Before Aurai has a chance to react Rasputin is directly behind her and punches her in the back of the head, causing her face to smash into the stone ring. Aurai quickly rolls across the floor as he tries to bring down his blade and stab her. Aurai quickly gets back on her feet and turns to face him, there is some blood on her forehead.

Rasputin turns to her and comes at her baring his blade. Aurai uses her leaf blower on the ground to push herself away off the stage and into the air. Rasputin launches himself towards her in pursuit and spins his right leg around to kick her in mid-air. She tries to block but he still sends her flying towards one of the glass school buildings which slopes up at an angle from the ground like a pyramid. Aurai plants her boots on the framework, shattering the glass around her.

Rasputin continues to come after her. Aurai holds up the combine harvester on her right sleeve to defend against his blade, which Rasputin embeds inside, showering both of them with a fountain of sparks. They begin to run across the side of the building while continuing to lock horns, every step they take shattering more glass around their feet. Nadia stands up.

NADIA

Stop them! Before they destroy the school!

Zeke looks unmotivated. Rasputin unleashes his flamethrower directly into Aurai's face, engulfing her, Virginia seems effected. Aurai negates the flames and blows them away by spinning a rake between her fingers by the handle, she then swings it at Rasputin, knocking his blade away. While Rasputin is off balance she crouches down and sweeps her legs under his feet, tripping him and sending him tumbling down the side of the building. Zeke's interest is peaked.

Aurai slides down the side of the building as Rasputin hits the ground. She sticks the end of her rake into the dirt and uses it as a springboard to propel herself at him. As Rasputin picks himself back up Aurai comes at him with her rake as he slashes at her with his blade, and their weapons

(CONTINUED)

clash. It becomes a battle of strength as they glare angrily, trying to push each other back, digging their feet into the ground.

Suddenly, they both get smacked in the face by a whip, separating them and knocking them both backwards a few feet. Rasputin ends up with his back against the side of the stage, he almost slides down against it. Nadia is rushing across the courtyard towards them, brandishing the whip.

NADIA (CONT.)

That's enough! Control yourselves!

As Nadia gets in between them, Aurai wipes the blood from her mouth and tries to come at Rasputin again with her rake. Nadia steps forward and attempts to block her way.

NADIA (CONT.)

I said that's enough!

A look of urgency washes over Zeke's face as he watches. Still slumped down in his chair in the stands, he's watching Rasputin as he pulls out the 1851 colt navy revolver from the inside of his Combat Outfit.

The scene slows down as he points it at Aurai, her expression transitions from anger to shock as she tussles with Nadia. Everything goes white as Rasputin presses his finger down on the trigger and the sound of a gunshot rings out.

EXT. WHITE SURROUNDINGS

Aurai is lying on her side surrounded by pure nothingness. A vapid void with no sound. She slowly opens her eyes and looks around. She appears unable to move. She sees Eoghan lying a short distance away, also on his side, although he is perfectly still and his eyes are shut.

Aurai stares weakly at him. Black patches of mold begin to appear and swarm around Eoghan. Aurai looks horrified as they creep onto his body and start covering him. She calls out but there's no sound. She cannot move. Soon the black patches eat away at Eoghan's skin, exposing his bones. Blood spurts as boils pop and maggots eat away at his flesh.

A traumatized Aurai has not even realized that the same black patches have also surrounded her, and she begins to experience the same horrific sequence.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Aurai opens her eyes. She is being hit by the brightness of the strip lighting as she stares up at the ceiling from an infirmary bed. Her vision becomes less blurry as she slowly begins to gage her surroundings. She's wearing a strap-on bra and her left shoulder is wrapped in bandages. There is also a fan on the ceiling which is gently blowing her hair and a window to her right. She looks to her left to see Zeke sitting beside the bed, arms folded, legs crossed, cigarette in mouth, staring at her.

ZEKE

Welcome back.

Zeke blows smoke directly in front of the 'No Smoking' sign on the back wall. Aurai tries to sit up but she winches in pain upon trying to move her shoulder.

ZEKE (CONT.)

I wouldn't try to move yet.

AURAI

Was I shot?

Aurai curls up and turns on her right side before pulling the covers up over her head. Zeke stares at the lump in the bed. He can hear her weeping.

AURAI (CONT.)

I'm sorry Grandfather... I'm sorry...

ZEKE

What're you talking about?

AURAI

I failed to get into Chrysalis. I messed up. Everything's a mess.

ZEKE

You got in, kid.

Aurai slowly reappears from the top of the covers, revealing her eyes which widen and stare intensely at Zeke.

ZEKE (CONT.)

You knocked him out the ring first. Technically it was your win. Besides, the teachers judge you on more than just who wins and who loses. You can lose every match, but as long as they were impressed

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ZEKE (CONT.) (cont'd)
by your performance and the skills
you displayed you can still pass
with flying colours.

Aurai looks relieved. Zeke gets up and starts to leave.

ZEKE (CONT.)
Anyway, you better get some rest.
Classes start tomorrow. Even for
students with holes in them.

AURAI
Thank you.

Zeke stops in his tracks having just reached the door. He glances back at the placard on the end of Aurai's bed, 'Aurai Willems'.

EXT. BALCONY, NIGHT

Overlooking a crystal pool at the back of the school. Zeke walks out, leans against the railings and starts to light another cigarette when it starts to rain, putting out his light.

ZEKE
Are you fucking kidding me?

Nadia approaches him from behind holding an umbrella.

NADIA
Didn't you know rain was scheduled
in the forecast for today?

ZEKE
You know I never check that thing.
What's the point? We're all just
rats, scurrying about in our
bunker, set aimlessly adrift in an
endless void.

NADIA
(sarcastically)
Nice. Misanthropy is such a turn
on.

ZEKE
Are you seriously trying to
spearhead the conversation towards
sex with all that's going on out
there?

(CONTINUED)

NADIA

Oh please, don't flatter yourself. You know when that girl was shot, I saw a side to you I haven't seen in years. Was it because she reminded you of April?

Zeke says nothing, he continues to stare at the crystal pool. Nadia rests against the railings.

ZEKE

This makeshift society we've concocted is like a paper Mache project the kid made five minutes before hand-in. He'll get a 'D', at best. How long before ours crumbles?

INT. JULIUS'S LABORATORY

Madison is hard at work at her desk in front of several large computer screens. She looks intense.

WORCESTER

Excuse me.

Madison jumps. She spins around in her chair to see Worcester standing in the doorway.

MADISON

What are you doing here? Besides trying to give me a heart attack.

WORCESTER

I'm here to see a patient. The gentleman we brought in last week.

Madison stands up and walks towards him.

MADISON

Why?

WORCESTER

Do I need a reason? I have jurisdiction.

MADISON

Fine. Just give me a minute. I'll get the paperwork.

Madison leaves the room. After a few seconds Worcester gestures down the hallway to several of his men who rush

(CONTINUED)

into the lab and begin accessing the network's security camera log. They find the footage of Worcester attacking Aurai in the hospital room. Worcester watches intensely. The henchman sitting at the keyboard goes to press the delete key when Worcester quickly and fiercely grabs his wrist.

WORCESTER

Send a copy to me before you erase it.

INT. AURAI'S DORMROOM

Early morning. Aurai is waking in her bed as the sun hits her face. Her shoulder is still in bandages. Her room is small, and most of her stuff has not been unpacked yet. She clambers out of bed in her pajamas, plugs her phone into the small TV and begins watching a video of Zinnia entitled "First Day at High School". Zinnia is talking to someone behind the camera, which is slanted.

ZINNIA

Straighten it. Straighten it! I'm gonna look all... skewiff!

A voice from behind the camera replies.

???

I am! I am!

The camera is straightened.

ZINNIA

Good morning my darling Aurai. It's your first day of big school and I'm sure you're experiencing a slew of emotions. But if you are feeling somewhat nervous-

Zinnia's warm tone shifts to serious.

ZINNIA (CONT.)

-you have every reason to be!

Aurai is unfazed.

ZINNIA (CONT.)

High school is a dark, toxic environment of social anarchy, and if you're not careful they'll eat you alive! But I'm sure you'll be fine as long as you keep your head down and don't make yourself a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ZINNIA (CONT.) (cont'd)
target. Love you, my angel!
...Okay, you can turn it off now.

The camera zooms in on her.

ZINNIA (CONT.)
That's not how you turn it off.

???
Sorry. You know I'm bad with
technology.

Aurai looks through the videos she has of Zinnia. She notices something strange.

AURAI
Huh? Why is "Romance" gone? I was
only watching it the other night.
Oww, please don't tell me I deleted
it by accident.

INT. CLASSROOM

Around 20 students are sat at state of the art desks, including Blade and Heather. Rasputin is at the back with his feet up on the desk in front. Rolan is standing at the front.

ROLAN
You will now all be assigned
sparring partners for the year.
Talila Marinia and Wasame
Knickerbocker.

Cuts to Aurai's legs as she runs down the hallway.

ROLAN (CONT.)
Desmond El'dorado and Rocher
Ferrero.

Cuts to Aurai's sweaty and exasperated face as she runs down the hallway.

ROLAN (CONT.)
Blade Janvier and Heather
Bellicose.

Aurai pulls open the door to the classroom, out of breath. Everyone looks over. She starts making her way over to a desk while trying to catch her breath. Rolan waits, expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

ROLAN
...Well?

AURAI
(confused)
Well?

ROLAN
Why are you late?

AURAI
I was looking for something.

ROLAN
Oh were yeh? And did you find it?

AURAI
No.

ROLAN
Well you're just in time, Miss
Willems.

Aurai looks up, confused.

ROLAN (CONT.)
Aurai Willems, your sparring
partner for the year will be
Rasputin Chadwick.

Aurai and Rasputin both look equally horrified. Aurai turns around to look at him at the back and they stare at each other across the classroom.

INT. WORCESTER'S OFFICE

Worcester is sitting at his desk talking on his PCD with someone.

WORCESTER
Yes Mr. Prime Minister, the wheels
are in motion. In only a few weeks
time we'll enter the Altar star's
gravity. We'll detach Juvenal from
the back of Labarum, and leave it
to float into the sun as we pass
by. Soon P-4 will be eradicated
once and for all...