

FADE IN:

INT. ALICIA'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The Midnight Sun glows through sheer curtains, blue light washing across the room. Clothes scattered across clean polished wood, breathing loud, urgent. Alicia and Ray are entangled in a fevered collision of bodies, both of them desperate, unfiltered, almost violent in the way only two controlled people allow themselves to lose control.

This is not romance, it is combustion. Her nails drag across his back to tear at his skin, while his hands grip her hips hard enough to bruise. Their mouths clash, heavy swearing between breaths.

"Fuck!"
"Deeper!"
"Don't stop!"
"Oh, my Gods!"

It's loud, not careless, but unrestrained. The kind of sound that comes from people who have denied themselves too long. The Vigil Mark glows faintly beneath Alicia's collarbone again, pulsing in rhythm with her heartbeat.

EXT. ROOFTOP OPPOSITE - SAME TIME

MICHAEL SLATTERY watches through a high powered sniper scope, the rain misting his coat, his rifle steady. He sees everything, the bodies, the heat, the vulnerability. His finger rests on the trigger.

He exhales slowly. Ray's face visible in flashes of blue light, a Law Lord. Michael hates Law Lords, because they smile in daylight and sanction ruin by night. But he hates The Governance more, because he remembers being used... by them. Abandoned... by them, and exiled... by them.

He whispers to himself:

MICHAEL SLATTERY
We are assassins of The
Paroxinate Order...

Pause.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
Not executioners for cowards and
traitors.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ray suddenly stops, mid-motion to look toward the window by instinct of predator sensing predator. Alicia notices immediately.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Who the fuck is that?

Ray doesn't answer, he quickly rolls off the bed fluidly, grabbing the pistol from the nightstand. Not frantic, but precise. He walks naked toward the glass doors slowly, Alicia follows, not bothering to cover herself. She knows the feeling too, of being watched. Ray stares directly at the building opposite. He cannot see Michael, but he feels him. Michael lowers the rifle slightly.

Ray's voice is calm:

LORD RAY THEON
You can come down now.

Alicia's eyes sharpen as she moves past Ray to walk to the wardrobe, opening a hidden compartment to remove her own weapon.

Then... without hesitation... she fires off one precise round, the bullet shatters the corner of the rooftop railing across the street, but Michael doesn't flinch. He steps into view deliberately, rain sliding down his face, rifle still in his hand. Alicia inhales sharply with recognition.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
You.

Ray glances at her.

LORD RAY THEON
You know him?

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
He was the one who attacked you
at the party.

Michael smirks faintly from across the street.

He calls out loudly:

MICHAEL SLATTERY
That wasn't personal.

Alicia shouts back:

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
It rarely is from an assassin!

Michael disappears from sight.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICIA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Michael enters through the front door, uninvited, but his weapon lowered, though not surrendered. Ray stands half-dressed but composed, Alicia now wearing only a shirt thrown loosely over her body... nothing else. The sexual tension is still thick in the air. Michael notices, and his jaw tightens again. Convenient timing.

Ray replies dryly:

LORD RAY THEON
You could have knocked.

Michael studies him intensely.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
Law Lord Raymond Theon. You're a very popular person.

Ray shrugs slightly.

LORD RAY THEON
Disgraced Lord Michael Slattery, an illusive outcast, also a very sought after man.

A flicker in Michael's eyes of recognition as reputation is acknowledged.

Ray plays dumb casually:

LORD RAY THEON
I've heard stories about you, some that say you served with a flawless will of honour.

MICHAEL
I can assure you, they're greatly over exaggerated.

LORD RAY THEON
They usually are, considering the person you murdered!

Alicia steps between them.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Why are you here, Michael?

Michael's gaze shifts to her, softening only for half a second. Old memory flickers: Crimson River, training yards. She was younger then. She smiled once, he looks away quickly.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I have instructions to kill you.

LORD RAY THEON
From whom?

MICHAEL SLATTERY
You know who.

Silence.

Alicia's voice lowers:

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
The Architect.

Michael doesn't confirm, though he doesn't deny.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT (CONT'D)
They say that Ray is the reason
the Governance is destabilising.
I say it deserves destabilising.

Michael snaps slightly:

MICHAEL SLATTERY
That's our call to make!

Alicia steps closer to him.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
It wasn't yours at Crimson River
either, Michael.

That hits him like a physical blow. He looks at her fully now. The trigger of the past rages forward.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
You think you were the only one
that they used, My lady?

His voice cracks slightly.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
I lost everything... and more.

Ray watches quietly, observing more than speaking.

Michael continues:

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
They stripped my standing, my
title, my name, and all for

asking questions. What kind of
Order has their own Knight's
exiled, when my actions saved
this entire island?

He gestures between Alicia and Ray.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
And now they want him dead.

Ray speaks evenly:

LORD RAY THEON
And you, Michael, do you want me
dead?

Michael looks at him.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I hate Law Lords, My Lord.

LORD RAY THEON
That's fair, there are some that
I would like to see their story
ending myself, if you...

Michael interrupts unapologetically.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I hate Governance more for what
they did.

Pause.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
But, I hate being used most of
all. The decay of true justice is
a hard stench to tolerate.

Silence thickens, when Alicia steps even closer. Now
only inches away from Michael.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Then stop letting them. Join us,
Ray and me...

His breath falters, she sees it... that he is breaking.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
We are assassins of The Order!

Michael's voice erupts... raw.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
We are trained to eliminate the
threats... not to question the
fucking morality of it!

Alicia doesn't flinch.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
No, you're right.

Pause.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT (CONT'D)
We were trained to obey.

That line lands deeper. Michael's eyes shine with anger and something else... Grief, perhaps.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I was in love once. She was the
most beautiful and kindest woman
I'd ever met.

The confession surprises even him.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
She believed in the Code.

He swallows.

MICHAEL SLATTERY (CONT'D)
And, she died believing in it.

Silence.

The room shifts, as Michael lowers his rifle completely.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I killed for them. I bled for
them. And they called it
structural balance.

Ray steps forward slightly.

LORD RAY THEON
And what about now?

Michael looks at him, at the man he was sent to kill. At the woman he once respected... the woman he used to love in another lifetime and at the life he could have had.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
Now, I'm tired. I just want to
enter The Veil... and never come
back.

Alicia's voice softens.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Then choose differently, Michael.

Long pause.

Michael looks at the Vigil Mark glowing faintly beneath her shirt.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
You're changing, again.

She nods.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
I know, it's different this time,
somehow.

Ray watches the exchange carefully.

LORD RAY THEON
If you shoot me, you will solve
nothing, you do understand that,
right?

Michael gives a weak half-laugh.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I know. But for those who want
you dead, it doesn't matter if I
do.

Pause.

And if I don't... I declare war
on the Order that trained me.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
You were already in a war, the
only difference now, is whether
you stand on the right side.

Michael's hands tremble slightly, and for the first
time in a long time, he experiences vulnerability.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
They'll come for you both. There
will be no hiding place.

LORD RAY THEON
Well, they will have to come for
us with more than a single armed
man?

Long silence.

Michael finally steps back toward the door.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I won't be their blade.

Alicia exhales slowly.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Then don't disappear again. Stay
and join us?

Michael looks at her one last time, pain and release
mixing as one.

MICHAEL SLATTERY
I don't know who I am without the
Order, but I cannot join you. It
is safer that I stay away.

Ray replies quietly:

LORD RAY THEON
Isn't that the whole point?

Michael leaves. Door closes.

SILENCE

Alicia leans against the wall, her emotions finally
breaking through her armour. Ray approaches slowly.

LORD RAY THEON
You used to care about him,
didn't you?

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Without complicating things
between us, Ray, I still do.

Pause.

In another life...

Ray nods.

LORD RAY THEON
You mean you get more than one
life (baffled). How does that
work, exactly?

She looks at him.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
I meant like Katerina, not like
us. It's complicated.

He brushes her hair back gently.

LORD RAY THEON
Mortal, just how it should be.

She exhales.

ALICIA PIEREPOINT
Fuck.

He smirks softly.

LORD RAY THEON
That too, though I can't imagine
anyone wanting to be immortal.

They pull each other close again, but this time slower,
not fevered, more grounded and connected. Outside The
Midnight Sun pulses once, brighter than before.

CUT TO:

VEIL CHAMBER - UNKNOWN

The Architect watches the decision. Three projections
are still active.

Alicia.

Ray.

Michael.

Silence. And then...

Free will confirmed.

Another voice:
And now?

Long pause.

The Architect:

Now we escalate.

CUT TO BLACK.