

PRODIGIUM: Chapter 1 "Welcome to San Bartletown, Welcome to  
Lex Andria"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. TOWNSCAPE - NIGHT

Moonlight lazily attempts to illuminate through the thick shadows and haze of the town underneath. Poverty, pollution, and vice can be witnessed from just around every sector of the town. It seems as if a horrible nightmare has come true and laid waste here. This is San Bartletown.

EXT. SAN BARTLETOWN - ALLEY - NIGHT

SCREAMING can be heard coming from the alley but the passersby on the sidewalks walk past like its ordinary. Because sadly it is.

In the alley, a young cocktail WAITRESS is harassed by five members of a street gang known as the MUTTS. They all look intimidating, buff, and dirty. Two wear spiked dog collars, SPIKE and RUFF. The main guy in charge is DINGO. He wears bloodstained dog tags around his neck.

He grips on tightly to a leash pulling back a vicious Doberman Pincher, HELL HOUND, inches from the crying waitress's face. She is being held in place on her knees by a Mutt, FLEA BAG. Her outfit has been torn and nearly stripped off.

DINGO

What's a matter, baby? Are you scared. You don't like playing with dogs?

WAITRESS

Please, don't do this. I almost have the money.

Flea Bag grabs her by her hair and forces her back to a wall.

FLEA BAG

It's too late for that.

The others laugh. Dingo hands the leash off to TRAMP, the grimmest of the gang, and grabs her by the throat.

DINGO

You see we've been more than patient with you. Did you really think that we weren't gonna collect what was promised to us?

(CONTINUED)

He begins sniffing her body and finishes ripping off her dress so she's just in her bra and panties.

WAITRESS

I'm begging you. Don't do this.  
Just give me a little more time and  
I can --

Dingo backhands her. She slides down the wall but he picks her back up by her hair.

DINGO

Whoops. Too late. Now it's time for  
you to just shut up and relax and  
get ready to get acquainted with  
man's real best friend.

He tosses her to the ground and the Mutts surround her in a circle. Flea Bag holds her arms and props her back up on her knees as Dingo unbuckles his belt.

TRAMP

(cackling)  
Yeah. Give her what for Dingo.

They hear a MOTORCYCLE ENGINE REVVING. A bright beam of LIGHT flashes on and blinds them. They all cover their eyes, partially blinded, trying to see the source of the light.

DINGO

What the hell? Shut that damn light  
off.

The RIDER on the motorcycle revs the engine again and cuts it off. The Rider steps off the bike and in front of the light. The Mutts look on confused when they see him. All that can be made out from him is he is wearing a thick helmet which distorts his voice when he speaks.

RIDER

(fearless)  
Let broad go.

FLEA BAG

Who the hell are you supposed to  
be?

RIDER

A concerned citizen.

The Mutts share a laugh.

DINGO

Yeah right. Ain't no such thing as good citizens in San Bartletown. Now who are you really?

RIDER

Just call me The Rider.

TRAMP

(sarcastic)

Ooh. *The Rider*. Scary.

DINGO

This is Mutt territory. That means this is Mutt business and none of yours. Get the hell out of here.

RIDER

I'll say it again. Let her go.

DINGO

What? You must not be from around here. So I'll say it again, don't screw with Mutt business. Unless you want to get bit.

The Rider steps forward and can clearly be seen. He definitely looks like a teenager. He wears a black duster coat, torn jeans, fingerless gloves, and sneakers.

RUFF

Hey. This guy looks like a kid. I'll be damned, he is a kid.

FLEA BAG

Shouldn't you be doing homework somewhere?

SPIKE

You better have a license to ride that hog or I'll have to take it from you.

DINGO

You got no idea what the hell you're doing.

RIDER

Actually, I know exactly what I'm doing. Punking out low-life pieces of shit like you. Ganging up on a defenseless woman. How damn pathetic can you get?

(CONTINUED)

Dingo and the Mutts are now aggravated. Dingo snaps his fingers to Spike and Ruff.

DINGO

Big mistake boy. Spike. Ruff. Learn him something.

RUFF

With pleasure. I'll show this punk how we throw down doggie style.

Ruff cracks his knuckles and advances the Rider, but this Rider stands firm. Just as Ruff approaches him, Rider jumps delivers a devastating roundhouse to the Ruff's face. He soars through the air and lands on top his head.

The other Mutts are taken by surprise. Spike pulls out a heavy black ball bat. He swings with powerful force several times at the Rider who dodges his attacks with ease, using quick reflexes and agility. But he does so seemingly without effort.

RIDER

Is that all you got, Spiky? My sister swings harder than that.

SPIKE

What did you just say to me?

RIDER

Are you deaf Mutt? I said you swing like a little bitch.

Spike growls and goes on the offensive again. The Rider dodges the first attempts. Spike goes for a huge swing but Rider sidesteps and grabs the bat. He uses Spike's own momentum to flip Spike over his shoulder. Spike SLAMS face first into the adjacent BRICK WALL. He's down and out.

Rider swings the bat around playfully.

RIDER

You don't have a license for nice bat like this. I think I will take this from you.

The remaining Mutts look concerned, except for Tramp.

DINGO

What are you waiting for Tramp? Sic 'em.

Tramp places two metal grills over his teeth, with the teeth molded and shaped to all be pointed and sharp like a dog's.

(CONTINUED)

RIDER

Come on. Is that even hygienic?

TRAMP

These are my custom made dog jaws,  
I can bite through steel with these  
bad boys. Which means I'm gonna rip  
you to shreds.

RIDER

I think I might be in more danger  
from smelling your filthy breath.

TRAMP

I'm gonna enjoy this.

Tramp savagely charges for the rider, his jaws open, ready to clamp down with his sharp teeth.

Tramp closes in for a huge bite. The Rider leans back lunges forward, delivering a vicious headbutt right to Tramp's face. The impact and weight of the helmet shatters Tramp's nose and knocks his dog-toothed grills out his mouth, and even some of his real teeth. Blood flies out from his nose and he flops to the deck, K.O.'ed.

RIDER

(to Dingo)

So, you had enough yet, or do I  
gotta break a sweat?

DINGO

(getting desperate)

Chew on him Hell Hound.

Dingo unleashes the beast and it runs for the Rider, barking and foaming at the mouth. It lunges in the air for the Rider's neck but he only clamps down on the bat's barrel.

Rider falls to the ground with Hell Hound on top, gripping the bat in its jaws. The Rider struggles for a moment before flipping off the dog.

He makes it back to his feet and so does Hell Hound who goes on the attack again. Rider grips the bat and gets in position.

RIDER

He's winding up --

Hell Hound lunges through the air again.

(CONTINUED)

RIDER (CONT'D)

The pitch --

Rider swings the bat and cracks Hell Hound in the head. It whimpers as it flies through the alley and lands inside of a dumpster, so hard that it makes the lid slam shut.

RIDER (CONT'D)

And it's out of here.

Flea Bag releases the girl and he and Dingo pull out their handguns. Rider glances over his shoulder and sees them ready to fire. He turns and launches the bat like a spear. It crashes directly into Flea Bag's throat. Blood gurgles from his mouth. He clutches at his throat, coughing, desperately gasping for air.

DINGO

Flea Bag. God damn you.

Dingo fires, frustrated and pissed off. The Rider breaks away to dodge the incoming bullets. He does a series of front flips and jumps to avoid the bullets.

A bullet shatters the motorcycle's headlight, darkening the alley. Rider stops dodging and looks towards the bike, distracted.

RIDER

Damn it. You just shot out my headlight.

Rider faces back to Dingo. Dingo shoots and a bullet nails the Rider right in the middle of his helmet. The Rider falls back to the ground, lying prone and motionless. Dingo smiles and chuckles as he walks to the Rider's body.

DINGO

Dumb ass kid. Classic case of having more balls than brains. And now you got even less.

Dingo kicks at the Rider's body.

CLICK.

Dingo stops and looks back to the waitress. She has Flea Bag's gun. She aims at Dingo with trembling hands. Dingo walks back to her.

DINGO (CONT'D)

My, my. I almost forgot about you?

(CONTINUED)

WAITRESS

D-don't m-move. I'll shoot you. I swear.

DINGO

Shut up slut. Don't make me laugh. You ain't even got half what it takes to kill a son of a bitch like me. Now you put that gun down, or else I'm really gonna really have to hurt you.

Dingo continues moving towards her. She shakes, full of fear and anxiety. She puts her finger on the trigger. The closer he comes to her the more she tries to squeeze, but she just can't bring herself to do it.

WAITRESS

Please, just stay away. I'll do it. I will.

Dingo stands before her. A wide disgusting grin forms on his lips. She closes her eyes, her finger tightening to squeeze. She's afraid to see what might happen next.

RIDER (O.S.)

That won't be necessary.

She opens her eyes. Her and Dingo turn and stare in disbelief at the Rider who is back on his feet.

RIDER (CONT'D)

I got this under control.

Dingo aims back at the Rider.

DINGO

You're pissing me off kid. Just die already.

Dingo goes to fire. The Rider leaps into the air. Dingo shoots but can't land a direct a hit.

In mid-air, The Rider somersaults, dodging Dingo's shots. A FLASH of METAL appears from out of the duster. The Rider comes down, with a KATANA in one hand a SCABBARD in the other.

Dingo's eyes widen in terror. Rider comes down swinging.

All that is heard is the katana SLASHING the air and sickening sound of FLESH being SEVERED.

(CONTINUED)

The Rider lands on one knee beside Dingo. Dingo's left hand and the gun fall to the ground.

Dingo's SCREAMS echo throughout the alley, and the whole district. He flails about wildly on the ground, screaming and wailing. He clutches his bloody stump, trying to prevent his gushing blood from spilling on the ground.

DINGO

My hand. You sliced off my goddamn hand.

The Rider sheathes his sword. He presses his foot down painfully on Dingo's stump. Dingo howls out in pain.

RIDER

Consider yourself lucky I missed. I was aiming for your head. But I can promise you the next time I see you, you won't be so lucky. Now get the hell out of here.

Rider releases him and Dingo darts out of the alley opening.

DINGO

This ain't over. The next time the Mutts see you, you're gonna be the one that's dead, hero boy.

Dingo runs off. The Rider checks on the terrified waitress.

RIDER

Relax. You're safe now.

WAITRESS

I - I thought he shot you dead.

RIDER

The helmet stopped the bullet's impact. Besides, there was no way I was gonna get myself killed by those bums.

He collects the baseball beside an unconscious Flea Bag. He walks back to his bike and hops onto the seat, placing the bat into a side compartment. Then, he conceals the katana into the inside flap of his duster.

WAITRESS

Why... why did you let him live?

RIDER

(after a beat)

I guess the noble answer is that I wanted to spare you from having to see me kill him like that.

WAITRESS

But what's the real answer?

RIDER

Like I said. I missed. I was too concerned with dodging the shots instead of aiming for his neck. And there was no point in killing him when he was already down.

WAITRESS

But he'll be back. With more of them. You know that.

RIDER

Well, I'll give 'em all the same treatment.

WAITRESS

(sighs)

You really are a stupid kid.

(pause)

Why would you risk your life to save someone like me?

RIDER

Shut up. You talk as if your life isn't worth saving. It wasn't really much of a risk anyway.

The waitress begins to cry, yet she smiles. A sense of joy pouring along with her tears. The Rider starts up the motorcycle and turns it around towards the street.

WAITRESS

Who are you?

RIDER

I'm just the Rider. That's all you need to know.

Rider starts the engine and spins the bike around in a quick 180. He revs the engine and takes off out of the alley, turns into the street drives off into the unforgiving night.

WIDE SHOT of him driving as we hear his VOICE OVER.

(CONTINUED)

RIDER (V.O.)

San Bartletown. No matter how many times I pass through here, it's never a boring night. There's always some law being broken or some poor schmuck or broad that needs rescuing from these low-life assholes. For every one I cut down, five more are respawn in their place. Just means there's more asses for me to whip. I don't care for recognition or thanks. It's a filthy job and I got the skills and the balls to clean it up. And that's exactly what I'm going to keep doing, but first -- I got to get my damn headlight fixed.

PAN UP and take another look at the moon as we --

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LEX ANDRIA ACADEMY - COURTYARD - DAY

-- the Sun shining in the clear blue sky. PAN DOWN to the green grass and flowers dancing from a breeze. The entire scene is calm and serene and beautiful. We are not in San Bartletown anymore. We are on the grounds of Lex Andria Academy, several miles outside of the city.

A young girl lies in the grass, eyes gazing up observantly at the sky. She is TABITHA TEMPO, but is simply known as TABBY (16). Smart and determined. Her appearance can only have her described as a nerd girl.

She wears her school uniform consisting of the standard shirt, medium buttoned jacket, skirt, cap, and tie. Her frizzy, dishwater blond hair frames her face. With her glasses there is a subtle pretty book-wormy appeal to her.

TABBY (V.O.)

(sighs)

Everyday this is where I come to unwind and take my eyes off of things. I always feel so refreshed just by laying here and staring into the sky.

Tabby plucks a flower from the ground and puts it to her nose and sniffs.

(CONTINUED)

TABBY (V.O.)

Smelling the flowers. It just makes me so happy that I have been given the opportunity to live and study on the estate of Lex Andria Academy. I mean this may not exactly be the best place to take a nap --

Beside her in the B.G., several other male students are flinging a Frisbee and whooping. One boy catches it but gets tackled down hard. Tabby looks at them annoyed. She lays down and closes her eyes.

TABBY (V.O.)

But I don't have to worry about being bothered by those stupid boys. The boys here have never even acknowledged my existence since I was enrolled. Not so much as a "Hey Tabby" or "How's it going?" even in passing.

(sighs)

And thankfully I am far away from all the dumb love-sick girls here who only talk to me to probe information about my brother who could care less about any of them in the first place.

(pause)

Oh well. Who needs friends in this school anyway? All I need are a few good books and my own little spot here in the courtyard where I can get some sunshine.

A shadow appears over Tabby. A long pair of feminine legs stand above Tabby's face.

TABBY

You're blocking my sun. Could you move please?

LOTTE

I figured I'd find you here, Tabby.

Standing over Tabby is her sort of friend (the closest thing she has to one) LOTTE (16). Tall, spunky, and perky. Her optimism, smile, as well as her sexy thighs can all go for days. She is never seen with her uniform on correctly, her tie remains untied draped around her neck.

Tabby opens her eyes and can see under Lotte's skirt. She immediately shuts them.

(CONTINUED)

TABBY  
 (with shock and abhorrence)  
 Eww! Lotte. I told you not to stand  
 over me like that.

Lotte bends over. Smiling, unashamed,

LOTTE  
 Oh come on Tabby. If you've seen  
 what I have on under my skirt once,  
 you've seen it a thousand times.

The Frisbee boys all stop and glare at Lotte's protruding  
 hot backside. Tabby stands up, not looking pleased with her.

TABBY  
 That's the problem Lotte. I never  
 want to see anything under your  
 skirt. Can't you understand that?

LOTTE  
 Oh. Come on.

*FRISBEE BOYS(V.O.)*  
*...Man, Lotte is so hot./ I love*  
*how she always shows off her*  
*panties without a care in the*  
*world.*

Tabby turns to the Frisbee boys behind Lotte who stare at  
 Lotte's backside, smiling and grinning like the little horn  
 dogs that they are. Tabby reacts like she heard their  
 thoughts. Because in fact she has.

**[Author's Note: whenever the characters' V.O. is written in  
 italics, this is Tabby hearing their thoughts.]**

*FRISBEE BOYS (V.O.)*  
*...I wonder what color underpants*  
*she has on today. I bet it's the*  
*blue and pink polka dots./ I can't*  
*believe she wasted a peek on that*  
*loser Tempo girl. Wait what if*  
*there in a lesbian relationship.*  
*They sure do hang out a lot and I*  
*never see tabby talking to boys./*  
*If that Tempo girl was half as cool*  
*as her bother she might be a bit*  
*attractive. The only time a guy*  
*looks at her is when she's standing*  
*beside Lotte./ Man, I want to slide*  
*down her legs like a fireman pole.*

Tabby's face turns sour and she glares at them.

TABBY (CONT'D)  
(to Frisbee boys)  
Quit your ogling and fling your  
Frisbee, you stupid lousy perverts.

The boys snap out of their lustful trances. One boy holds out the Frisbee.

FRISBEE BOY  
Hey Lotte you want to join in with  
us.

The other Frisbee boys faces light up as they encourage her to come and play.

LOTTE  
Well, I don't know. I'm not really  
dressed for sports.

FRISBEE BOYS  
Oh no it's fine. You look  
wonderful. We'll make sure you  
don't get dirty.

Tabby snatches Lotte's hand and drags her away from them.

LOTTE  
You're so touchy and uptight Tabby.  
You should really try to relax. You  
know?

TABBY  
I was.

INT. LEX ANDRIA ACADEMY - HALLWAY - DAY

Tabby gathers her books and supplies from her immaculately clean and organized locker. Lotte peers over her shoulder, sporting begging puppy dog eyes.

LOTTE  
Come on. Tabby. Please. Just one  
peek.

TABBY  
Lotte. I told you to stop falling  
asleep in History class.

LOTTE  
I tried but its sooooo boring.  
That's why I depend on you and your  
notes because you're so awesome.

(CONTINUED)

TABBY

You have to stop being so irresponsible.

LOTTE

Puh-lease. I'll be your best friend.

TABBY

No.

LOTTE

I'll kiss you. I'll let you kiss me. I'll find you a boy who wants to kiss you.

TABBY

Give it up. Lotte.

Lotte pouts and walks off down the hall.

BUFFIE LACHIC (17) leads a pair of her lackeys, FRANCI (17) and GIGI (17) towards Tabby. Everything about Buffie equals glamorous. Her beautiful orange hair, her tan, and the way her uniform is worn makes her stand out from everyone else. Franci and Gigi are neither as attractive or glamorous as Buffie, but they are ridiculously loyal and devoted to her.

Buffie puts on a plastic smile for Tabby, but she isn't fooled.

TABBY (V.O.)

Yuck! Buffie LaChic. A certified plastic doll. I know she can't stand me and she knows I despise her down to her very core. She's such a fake and phony. And there's nothing I hate more than phony people.

BUFFIE

(phony greeting)

Hello Tabby.

Tabby responds with a fake smile of her own.

TABBY

What do you want Buffie?

It's obvious to see from their interactions the mutual level of contempt these two share for each other. Tabby tries to walk away but Buffie and co. follow her.

(CONTINUED)

BUFFIE

Oh nothing. I just wanted to know when Dane was coming back. His suspension was lifted yesterday and no one's seen him. He isn't sick or anything is he?

TABBY

I couldn't tell you. Dane comes and goes as he pleases. Who knows what he's been up to.

BUFFIE

Well, did you ever give him that letter I asked you to pass on to him.

TABBY

Actually, I think it got lost somewhere. Besides, my brother isn't much into reading love letters. He thinks they're immature and pathetic.

Tabby smiles at this and walks on. Buffie, Franci, and Gigi all make faces behind her back but keep following her. Buffie keeps up the fake persona.

BUFFIE

Oh. Tabby. You're such a joker. I guess you and Dane got your sense of humor from the same side of the family.

*BUFFIE (V.O.)*

*...Too bad you got all the ugly loser genes from the other side.*

Tabby slightly scowls.

*BUFFIE (V.O.)*

*She must have been adopted or something and Dane just hasn't told her yet. Look at that God awful hair, and the way she's wearing the uniform. Horrendous.*

Tabby stops and faces Buffie who is still smiling, along with her two lackeys.

TABBY

If that's all about my brother I'd like to walk to class, in peace.

(CONTINUED)

BUFFIE

Oh. Well far be it from of us to  
get in your way, T.T.

TABBY (V.O.)

She knows I hate it when she calls  
me that.

DISCIPLINED STUDENT (O.S.)

I didn't do anything. Let me go.  
Let me go.

Gigi taps Buffie on her on the shoulder and points behind  
Tabby to someone OFF SCREEN. Buffie turns around and her  
face lights up. She bumps Tabby out of the way and fixes her  
hair.

BUFFIE

(to lackeys)

How does Buffie look girls?

FRANCI

Fantastically awesome.

GIGI

As if you could be anything else.

BUFFIE

Good. Here he comes.

CLOSE ON TABBY

Tabby sees whom she's talking to and her face lights up as  
well. Like a lovesick school girl. Love hearts float over  
her head as she gazes in awe.

TABBY (V.O.)

(gasps)

It is them. And it's him.

TABBY'S POV: Students part the hallway ways for a trio of  
upperclassmen. All dressed in special uniforms. They are  
towing a recently DISCIPLINED STUDENT who is crying and  
pleading. The trio continue moving through the halls, with  
an authoritative presence.

TABBY (V.O.)

The Peer Monitoring Committee of  
Lex Andria Academy. The PMC. In  
charge of helping enforce the rules  
of the Academy to their fellow  
peers.

(CONTINUED)

Tabby focuses on the lead boy in the middle. Tall, handsome and walks with a princely debonair. This is LEONALDO PROSPEROS (17). His smooth face is chiseled to perfection. His dark hair is pulled back into a ponytail with sideburns. His eyes are simultaneously both intense and relaxed.

Leonardo is the model of his exclusive black uniform, studded with golden buttons and expensive cuff links on his sleeves, with his own yellow flower in his front jacket pocket.

TABBY (V.O.)

And there's their leader. Leonardo Prosperos. He's everything a student should be. And everything I wish I was. Respectful, classy, dedicated, and intelligent. He's completely nonpareil. The best student in the whole academy.

Other girls in the hallway are swooned as well as Leonardo passes them.

BUFFIE

He's so refined and sophisticated. Everything about him screams perfection.

Behind Leonardo are his PMC comrades, PRAIG (17) and CEREZA (16). Both are just as disciplined and intense looking as Leonardo. Cereza has short spiky red hair with two short pigtails in the back. Praig has a short crew cut that doesn't go with his big face.

Buffie walks to Leonardo and stops him in his tracks. She flirtatiously rubs his jacket.

BUFFIE

Hi-ya Leo. You're looking particularly classy today. Have you done something new with your hair?

Tabby watches Buffie's shameful display with utter disgust.

TABBY (V.O.)

She's such an ignorant trollop. Has she no shame? Referring to him as Leo. And what the hell kind of greeting is "hi-ya"? Can't she see they are trying to do their job?

PRAIG

Step back please Miss LaChic. We are on official PMC business.

BUFFIE

Oh. Well don't let me stay in your way. I'll see you later at lunch, Leo.

She blows him a kiss and gets out of their way. Leonaldo does not show any acknowledgment one way or the other. He does glance at Tabby as he walks past, which doesn't go unnoticed by Tabby and she blushes. The surrounding students in the hall gather round and watch the PMC drag the disciplined student away.

DISCIPLINED STUDENT

This is so unfair.

PRAIG

You will have to take it up with the Headmistress.

STUDENTS

Wow. The PMC never patrols the grounds at this time unless it's for disciplinary action./ Looks like that poor kid is in big trouble now. I feel sorry for him./ I bet they're taking him to the Headmistress.

BUFFIE

(to her Lackeys)

Did you see the way he looked when he let me touch his chest? He so wants me.

FRANCI & GIGI

(in unison)

Of course. You two together would be super hot.

BUFFIE

I can just imagine how beautiful our children will be. Let's go. Buh-Bye T.T.

Buffie takes off. Tabby watches her with scorn.

TABBY (V.O.)

(grunts)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TABBY (V.O.) (cont'd)  
As if someone with the esteem of  
Leonardo would ever be involved  
intimately with someone like her.  
(pause)  
And then again he'd never have  
anything to do with someone like me  
period.

She stares down, looking sad as she thinks about that.

CAMERA'S POV: Shows a clear close up shot of Tabby's face.  
As she looks up the camera CLICKS and FLASHES capturing her  
face.

Tabby sees the photographer. He is WAKER BORDEN(15). Short  
and shy, his social skills are nowhere near as developed as  
his photography. He is one of the few boys who wears his  
jacket all the way buttoned. He also wears his camera around  
his neck.

TABBY  
Hey you. I warned you about doing  
that.

Waker takes off down the hall. Tabby rushes after him.

TABBY  
Come back here.

She chases him down the hall. Waker looks back for a moment,  
sees Tabby gaining on him, he faces forward and bumps into  
Lotte and he falls to the ground. Lotte grabs him by the arm  
and twists it into a hammerlock position. Waker winces in  
pain.

LOTTE  
Hold it right there.

WAKER  
H-hey. Let me go. You're twisting  
my arm.

Tabby comes up to them.

LOTTE  
Hey Tabby. I saw you chasing this  
little boy and I caught him for  
you. What's going on? Why are you  
chasing him? Does someone have a  
little crush?

TABBY

Shut up Lotte.

(to Waker)

Now, why are you taking so many pictures of me. You've been doing this for weeks now.

INT./EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN LEX ANDRIA - FLASHBACK

A SERIES OF SHOTS shows Tabby in the CAMERA LENS POV getting her picture taken by Waker.

--Tabby steps outside carrying her books and CLICK!

--Tabby studies in the library. She looks up from her book and CLICK! Tabby threatens to toss the book at him.

TABBY (V.O.)

...Everywhere I turn I see you holding that camera and stealing pictures of me. Then you just run off and disappear.

--Tabby closes her locker, turns around and CLICK!

--Tabby is resting at her spot in the courtyard several feet away. The camera ZOOMS IN on her face and CLICK! Tabby sees him and waves her fist at him.

BACK TO PRESENT

Waker says nothing as he shyly hangs his head down. He can't even bring himself to look her in the eyes.

TABBY (CONT'D)

So what's the big idea? Tell me or I'll report you to the PMC and have your camera confiscated as evidence.

WAKER

No, wait. Please --

TABBY

Then spill it.

Tabby gets in Waker's face and he finally looks at her. Tears seem to be welling up in his eyes.

WAKER (V.O)

...I didn't mean any harm. You're just so pretty and beautiful. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WAKER (V.O) (cont'd)  
*look just her. You remind me of her  
so much, I just can't help myself.*

Tabby looks at him surprised, and a bit flattered. She releases the camera.

TABBY  
What's your name and class?

WAKER  
W-Waker. First year. Please don't report me. I don't want to get in trouble.

TABBY  
The next time you want to take my picture, ask my permission first. It's rude to catch a lady off guard like that. So cut it out.

WAKER  
Yes, ma'am. I'm sorry.

TABBY  
You can let him go Lotte.

Lotte releases Waker's arm and he takes off down the hall. Tabby watches him go.

TABBY (V.O.)  
Awkward. Does that boy really think I'm that beautiful? And just who do I look like? Wait. I don't care about that kind of stuff. But, still --

Lotte SLAPS Tabby HARD on the back and breaks her thoughts. Tabby cries out and rubs her back.

LOTTE  
Hey, what was all that about?

TABBY  
Nothing. Never mind.

LOTTE  
Aw. You never tell me anything.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Tabby sits by the window and stares outside. She looks around to her other classmates.

TABBY (V.O.)

I don't know what's been happening to me lately. One day, all of a sudden, I started hearing these random voices in my head. I thought I was hallucinating or going insane. Finally, I figured out that I was actually hearing other people's thoughts. At first I couldn't believe it. A part of me still can't. I don't know how to trigger it or what makes it work.

Tabby looks at one of her male peers. He is struggling with the work in front of him.

*STRUGGLING STUDENT (V.O.)*

*... I'm never gonna figure this out. I'm gonna fail and get kicked out of the Academy. My parents are gonna kill me.*

Tabby turns to their heavyset INSTRUCTOR who is reading at his desk. He is not paying any attention to the class.

*INSTRUCTOR (V.O.)*

*... I wonder what I'm gonna eat when I get home tonight. Then I wonder what I'm gonna eat for dinner.*

TABBY (V.O.)

So far, it doesn't work for everybody. Like Dane. Of course he's hardly ever around anyway. And then there's Lotte --

Tabby looks around to Lotte who is sleeping on her desk.

TABBY (V.O.)

I wonder why I haven't been able to get into her head. I'm pretty sure there's plenty of room in there. Maybe it's because she's just so weird to begin with that I wouldn't be able handle what other craziness goes on in that loony brain. Sometimes I wish I had more people

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TABBY (V.O.) (cont'd)  
I could confide in. Especially  
about this, but who in their right  
mind would believe me. Certainly  
not Lotte. She'd try to throw me a  
parade. Any normal person would  
look at me like I was nuts and turn  
me into a bigger social misfit.

Tabby leans back and stares into space.

EXT. HILL - DAY (DAY DREAM)

Tabby envisions Leonaldo standing alone atop a hill, staring  
at the sunset on the horizon, the wind blowing his pony  
tail.

TABBY (V.O.)  
It sucks that I can't read  
Leonaldo's thoughts either. I bet  
he doesn't think about the silly or  
superficial. He's so down to earth  
and real. I admire him so much. If  
only I could get to know him more.  
Maybe actually become associates.

We move in close to Leonaldo and he slowly turns toward us.  
His dark eyes are intense and soulful.

LEONALDO  
Hello, Miss Tempo.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Tabby jolts out of it and stands up out of her seat. She  
looks around and nobody has noticed or cares. Tabby composes  
herself and sits back down.

TABBY (V.O.)  
Sometimes, it is good to be a  
nobody.

EXT. ROAD TO LEX ANDRIA - DAY

In the distance, we see a MOTORCYCLE speeding through the  
streets. As it comes closer we recognize that the rider is  
the same one from the alley in San Bartletown. He is still  
wearing the duster, the torn jeans, and the helmet with a  
bullet hole in the front. His headlight is still busted and  
shattered. He speeds up down the road and he quickly  
approaches the large gates of Lex Andria Academy.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LEX ANDRIA - DAY

The motorcycle pulls up into the parking lot and the rider parks it. He gets off and removes his helmet. We only see the back of his head, with short dark and dirty hair. A stained headband is wrapped around his head. He faces the Academy building.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Students are seated at tables eating lunch from their trays. Tabby is in the lunch line with Lotte behind her. Lotte looks indecisive about what she wants. Tabby looks around and sees Leonaldo and the PMC sitting at their personal lunch table that surveys the entire cafeteria.

TABBY'S POV: She looks directly at Leonaldo who is reading a book.

CLOSE ON LEONALDO

He raises his eyes and he looks directly at us, i.e. DIRECTLY AT TABBY, and he grins slightly when he spies her spying him.

TABBY: She spins away from him and bumps into another male student, spilling her tray and food.

STUDENT

Damn it. What's wrong with you  
Tempo? You made me spill soup all  
over my uniform.

TABBY

Sorry it was an accident.

*STUDENT (V.O.)*

*... Yeah I bet it was coming from a  
born accident like you. What a  
loser.*

The student walks off. Tabby looks ready to pound him. She bends down to try and clean it up. Lotte comes over peels a banana and and takes a large bite.

LOTTE

(as she chews)  
You should have let that jerk have  
it Tabby.

(CONTINUED)

TABBY

He's not worth it.

LOTTE

What's with you today? You seem all flustered.

TABBY

No, I'm not. And why are you eating that banana. You haven't paid for it yet.

LOTTE

Well, I'm going to. It's not like I'm going to get in trouble or anything.

LEONALDO (O.S.)

I beg to differ.

Lotte jumps. She turns around and sees Leonaldo standing behind her, arms folded, calm and composed, as if out of thin air. She spits out the banana into her hand.

LEONALDO (CONT'D)

That could be construed as stealing from school property and is a very serious offense, Miss Neur--

LOTTE

Oh. No need to go around saying last names. I'll go pay for this right away. I won't eat another bite until I do.

Lotte darts to the cash register. Tabby looks up from the ground and stares up at Leonaldo. He looks down at her and extends his hand.

LEONALDO

Do not bother yourself, Miss Tempo. We have staff for that sort of thing.

Tabby takes his hand and he helps her to his feet.

TABBY

(timid)

Well, it was my fault. I figured it was my responsibility to clean it.

(CONTINUED)

LEONALDO  
How commendable.

TABBY  
You did not come all this way just to tell me that did you?

TABBY (V.O.)  
Please say you just wanted to talk to me.

LEONALDO  
No. Actually, I came to speak with you about another matter.

Tabby tries to hide her excitement --

LEONALDO (CONT'D)  
Your brother. Dane.

Tabby's face drops for a brief second. She immediately replaces her smile back.

TABBY  
Oh. Why would you want to talk to me about him?

LEONALDO  
As you know, his most recent suspension was due to an instigation of a physical altercation against me.

TABBY  
(embarrassed)  
Yes, I remember.

TABBY (V.O.)  
... Damn it. Dane. Hot-headed jackass.

LEONALDO  
Fortunately, his misguided rage and unskilled combat technique did not allow him to land a single blow. It was sadly a disappointing affair.

TABBY (V.O.)  
What's wrong with me? He is talking down at my brother and not only do I agree with him I can't stop staring into his eyes. Oh. Why can't I read his thoughts?

(CONTINUED)

LEONALDO

His suspension was lifted yesterday. I expect that he will crawl out from whatever rock he has been hiding under and return back to school sooner or later. I also expect that he will want to finish what he started, though I cannot promise my restraint from hurting him -- again. I hope that you will not think too badly of me for it.

TABBY (V.O.)

How could I ever think badly of you?

TABBY

Dane is a big boy. He can make his own decisions and take care of himself.

LEONALDO

I appreciate your indulgence, Miss Tempo. Do enjoy the rest of your lunch period.

Leonaldo walks off and Tabby stares as he goes. A bald-headed custodian, AQUIHIRO, comes up with his mop and bucket. He looks to be in his mid-50's, built like a tank with a gruff voice.

Even in uniform, he looks like a disgruntled derelict. Yet he somehow manages to always sport a creepy smile, the kind that frightens the hell out of young kids. He sneaks up beside Tabby, briefly startling her.

AQUIHIRO

What do we have here? A spill in the lunch line?

TABBY

(uneasy)

Yes sir, Mr. Aquihiro. It was my fault. I'm sorry.

AQUIHIRO

(sighs)

It seems my job is never done in this school. Just when I was about to go on my break.

Aquihiro comes up to Tabby's face and displays his creepy smile.

(CONTINUED)

AQUIHIRO (CONT'D)

Oh well. I don't mind that I have to clean after such a pretty girl like you. Miss Tempo.

The sound of her name coning from him and that smile makes Tabby become revolted and she rushes away from him.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The Rider marches through the corridor.

RIDER'S POV: Students see him as part the hallways. They gaze at him with a mixture of awe and respect.

STUDENTS

Oh man. It is him./ I thought he wasn't coming back./ Boy, he looks pissed./ I wonder where he's headed.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Tabby sits at her table with her new tray of food and Lotte sneaks up from behind, surprising her.

LOTTE

So. What did you and Lee talk about?

TABBY

None of your business. And don't refer to him as Lee.

LOTTE

Oh come on. Don't be such a gossip hog.

TABBY

There is no gossip. It was nothing really. Leave it alone.

LOTTE

You're so mean sometimes. Luckily, I still love you anyways.

TABBY

Yeah right. Some luck.

The cafeteria doors are kicked open with force. The conversations stop instantly and everyone looks at the doors.

(CONTINUED)

The Rider slowly enters. Leonaldo moves his attention from his book to the Rider.

The students have all stopped eating and just stare at him. Among them are Buffie, Franci, and Gigi.

The Rider walks into the middle of the cafeteria and looks around. We finally get a full look at his face. He is indeed a young man with stubble on his chin and cheeks. A band-aid covers a fresh wound on his left eyebrow.

STUDENTS

(murmuring)

It's Dane. He's back./ I can't believe it./ Look at him./ he's gotten like ten times more bad ass since he left./ Uh-oh you know who he's here for./ This can be both good and bad.

Indeed, the Rider from San Bartletown is **the** DANE TEMPO (17). Cool, cocky, and a total bad ass. He does a quick scan of the cafeteria until he finds Leonaldo, already on his way to meet him. And we finally hear Dane's voice clearly...

DANE

Right on time. huh.

Leonaldo walks to the center of the cafeteria and stands across from Dane. Praig and Cereza are behind him. Tabby and Lotte observe all this from their at the side.

SPLIT SCREEN: Dane and Leonaldo glare razor sharp holes into the others eyes. Both look intense but eerily calm. The tension is off the charts.

CLOSE ON TABBY: She watches on concerned for both boys. She shifts between both Dane and Leonaldo.

Leonaldo and Dane continue their gaze of each other. Dane cracks his neck.

LEONALDO

Welcome back. Dane Tempo.

DANE

I didn't expect all the Punk M.C's to welcome me back. But I did expect to find you, so I can finish what I started...

(purposely mispronouncing)

...Leon-Aldo Prosperos.

(CONTINUED)

LEONALDO

So predictable. And so foolish.

All the students watch with stunned excitement, on the edge of their seats, excited with anticipation.

All except for Tabby. She slumps down in her seat. If there was any other place she'd rather be...

TABBY (V.O.)

...No. No. This is so bad. The boy  
I look up to and my only family.  
About to fight like cats and dogs.  
Again. And I'm stuck in the middle?  
Why does this have to happen to me?

Dane narrows his eyes and grins. Leonaldo remains calm and betrays a small smirk. They size each other up, waiting for the other one to make their move. Thus, the dance of the duel begins.

And we FREEZE on these two bitter rivals ready to collide.

SUPER: TO BE CONTINUED.

FADE OUT.

The End.