EXT - BARREN / SNOWY LANDSCAPE - DUSK (INTRO)

Swirls of snow obscure the rocky formations of a mountain ridge. A bleak and barren landscape moves under us. In the distance a half-dozen figures zigzag through the snow.

Five ragged men attack a young girl, SINTEL, who brandishes a spiked spear. She spins and parries, whips around and knocks a man into the snow. Panting, she grabs his weapon - a double-bladed staff.

Someone slashes at her leg and Sintel twists in pain, roaring. Sintel lashes out venomously. Before long all five bandits lie motionless at her feet.

Sintel staggers forward, breathing hard. Her face betrays her exhaustion; she limps on into the biting cold.

SHAMAN (V.O.)
You’re lucky to be alive. Many strong men have fallen to the gatekeepers.

Finally she collapses into the snow, her eyes shut tight.

BLACK.

SHAMAN (V.O.) (cont’d)
Here, take a sip.

INT - DARK SHAMAN’S HUT - DUSK (INTRO)

Blinking through watery eyes, SINTEL sips the steaming broth from a copper dish. The wrinkled face of a SHAMAN examines her from the shadows.

SHAMAN
What brings you to the edge of the world?

Sintel stares into the broth numbly.

SINTEL
I am searching for someone I love.

SHAMAN
A sibling, perhaps? A lover?

SINTEL
(looking up)
A dragon.

SLAM CUT to BLACK.