

ANGEL

"Wanted"

by

Lee A. Chrimes

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ALLEY BEHIND HYPERION. NIGHT. 1

We see the same, rain-soaked back alley we left Angel in previously, but there's no sign of the Fang Gang. In fact, there's no sign of anybody - not the Wolfram & Hart Failsafe armies nor any unfortunate victims.

As we pan along, we pick up two small shapes shuffling through the dumpsters in the alley, and as we push in these are revealed as MARY and KURT - two young homeless kids, their faces and clothes grimy as they search the bins for food. Mary looks up and down the alley nervously as Kurt dives into the nearest, one hand holding the lid.

MARY

Come on, Kurt, don't be too long.

KURT

Hey, does it look like I want to be in here? I may be homeless, but I ain't about to start livin' in a bin just yet!

MARY

I heard noises. Fighting. I don't wanna stay here.

KURT

Relax, I'll just be a minute, then I'll- aha! Jackpot.

Kurt re-emerges from the bin clutching two brown fast food bags. He dangles them out towards Mary, laughing as he holds them just out of reach.

KURT (cont'd)

Nobody ever finishes these things!
This ought to keep us going, till
we-

Kurt freezes, his face draining of colour as he spots something behind Mary. She's too busy trying to get the bags, and doesn't notice Kurt's face as she finally grabs one and opens it up.

A shadow falls across her as she starts to munch on a two-day old burger, but it takes her a few moments to notice. She slowly looks up...

... and standing over her is a huge and terrifying DEMON, fifty per cent muscle, fifty per cent teeth, drooling as it gazes down at the meal in front of it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kurt and Mary are frozen to the spot as the demon pads forward, its breathing the only sound heard over the heavy rain, until it is just inches from the kids.

It starts to hunch up to pounce, but its eyes suddenly bulge, and it utters a strange, high-pitched SQUEAL.

Just as suddenly, the monster starts to pitch forward, and Mary dives out of the way with a YELP as the beast slams face first onto the wet pavement, a metal pole sticking out of its back.

This reveals SPIKE, bruised and bloody and short of breath, but the saviour of the day. Behind him, we can dimly make out dozens of shapes rushing back and forth, and hear the sounds of fierce battle.

SPIKE

Well? What the heck are you two
little buggers waiting for? Leg it!

Kurt falls down out of the dumpster, and he and Mary scamper off, back down the alley.

Spike sighs and steps up to the demon, wrenching the bloody pole free from its back with a grunt.

He turns back round to face the melee a few feet away. We can dimly see the lithe form of ILLYRIA as she hurls one demon bodily into a crowd of several more, knocking them all to the ground.

Spike grins and takes a step forward, pausing when he hears the sound of huge wings FLAPPING overhead.

He looks up, and through the rain and clouds overhead, we can't fail to see the shape of the DRAGON fly overhead, shrieking its battle cry as it circles the alley.

It arcs sharply down towards us, but something about its trajectory seems wrong - it's heading straight towards one of the tall buildings in front of us.

Spike spots this and takes a few steps backwards.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Oh, bloody hell...

He turns and runs as the Dragon reaches terminal velocity, and with a deafening CRASH it piles face first into the building, demolishing it in an instant and showering the alley with bricks and rubble.

Like a downed plane, the dragon's momentum keeps it piling towards us, turfing up masonry and concrete before it finally slows to a halt.

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CONTINUED: (2)

Amidst a pile of dust and rubble, Spike picks himself up, coughing as he staggers back towards the body of the now very dead dragon.

More rubble heaped around the dragon shifts, and as we watch a section of it gives way and cascades down into the street, revealing the dusty, bloodied but unbowed form of ANGEL.

As Spike looks on incredulously, Angel yanks a huge broadsword free from the side of the dragon's head and hops down into the alleyway, landing a few feet away from Spike. Spike looks from Angel, to the dragon, and then back. Angel opens his mouth to speak, but Spike points a warning finger at him.

SPIKE (cont'd)
Don't say it, don't say a word!
Don't you bloody dare!

Angel turns to the other end of the alley, and we can see there are still plenty more things down there that need taking care of.

ANGEL
There's still work to do.

Angel walks towards us and into the camera, forcing a:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2

EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

2

And we're straight into the thick of the battle as Angel and Spike race into scene. Illyria, yelling with uncontrolled fury, slams her fists into demon soldiers left and right, knocking them to the ground and into each other. She wrenches the necks of any who fall too close.

One hand clutching the wound on his side and his shirt soaked with blood, GUNN swings his axe around him, keeping the hordes at bay until he gets an opening, burying the axe head into another demon.

Angel barges two demons to the ground and comes up swinging, his sword blade clashing as he spars with two lean, black-suited assassins who attack him.

Spike trades punches with two feral vampires, cackling as he fells one of them and knees the second in the groin.

After a few moment's fighting, Angel and Spike find themselves back to back, a crowd of soldiers either side.

SPIKE

Just like old times, eh, mate?

ANGEL

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

SPIKE

May not be a world for much longer,
the way this is going!

ANGEL

Never liked the place much anyway...

They both push forward, away from each other, scattering their attackers and charging off screen.

We're with Illyria as she ducks under one demon's sword swings, finally grabbing her opponent's arm and pulling it free from its socket.

As the demon howls and drops, Illyria looks at the arm with a grin - but she hasn't spotted the second swordsman creeping up behind her...

GUNN (O.S.)

Illyria!

Illyria spins and sees the demon at last, its sword already halfway to her head. She's got nowhere to go, no time to dodge.

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CONTINUED:

CLANG! Gunn's axe streaks into frame, blocking the sword. Gunn tries to push the demon away, managing a small grin.

GUNN (cont'd)
Gotta watch your back, I can't
always be here to save ya!

Illyria nods once and kicks out, catching the demon in the gut. It doubles over and falls away.

ILLYRIA
Timely.

GUNN
Hey, just doing what I-

Gunn stiffens up, and then with a sigh pitches forwards into Illyria's arms. An arrow shaft is lodged between his shoulder blades, and Illyria gasps as the two of them clatter to the floor.

ILLYRIA
Charles!!

Gunn blinks, his eyes distant. He looks towards Illyria and grins.

GUNN
You called me Charles...

ILLYRIA
I... I didn't... I don't...

GUNN
It's okay... see ya... Fred...

With a last sigh, Gunn falls still. Illyria doesn't know what to do, looking around frantically, the feelings raging inside her still totally alien to her, and just as fresh as when Wes died in her arms.

She looks up as two demon soldiers stand over her. They chuckle, twirling their weapons round.

SOLDIER #1
Aww... did we kill your boyfriend?

Illyria slowly gets up, her face cold and emotionless. As the soldiers start to chuckle and ready their swords, she remains still, but as the first two blades lash out towards her, her hands dart out and grab them both, and with one twist she slices the blades back round into their owners.

As the demons gurgle and crumple, Illyria strides imperiously onwards, another death to avenge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As she walks into the camera, we dissolve to:

3

EXT. STREET. LATER.

3

Bodies of demon soldiers litter the street before us, with rubble heaped where buildings used to stand and fires raging away despite the tumultuous rain.

We start to pan slowly across the bodies, armour broken and weapons discarded.

We pan across further and see the side of the huge dragon we saw previously, one eye scorched out and the second dull and vacant.

As we stay on it for a moment, a pair of hands reach into frame, lock round one of its teeth, and with a WRENCH pull the tooth free.

We pull back to see Illyria, cut, bruised and bloody, turning her prize over in her hands.

SPIKE (O.S.)

I think it's dead, luv, doing dental work on it isn't going to make it any more dead.

ILLYRIA

This beast fought well. I wish to make a trophy to commemorate its final battle.

SPIKE (O.S.)

Yeah, well, you do that...

We pan back to pick up SPIKE, sitting in a doorway which doesn't have a building behind it, the glow from his cigarette lighting up his battered features.

SPIKE (cont'd)

... I'm perfectly happy leaving it where it is right now, if it's all the same to you.

(calls to his right)

How about you?

We pan up through the alley and make out Angel standing with his back to us, hands on hips, looking like Hell but still in one piece, the frown in place.

ANGEL

It's not over yet.

There is a ROAR from off camera, and Angel looks towards something we can't see.

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CONTINUED:

We cut to see another horde of demon soldiers approaching us, weapons glinting in the moonlight as their footsteps rumble down towards us.

Angel leans down, retrieves his sword from the body of a warrior demon next to him and patiently cleans the blood from it. He starts to walk towards us, past Spike and Illyria, who watch him go.

SPIKE

Now what?

ANGEL

Time for Round Two.

Angel stands and watches the approaching army as Spike flicks his cigarette away and stands, turning to Illyria.

SPIKE

Still pissed off about Wes and Gunn?

Illyria doesn't answer - her cold stare says it all.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Good. Time to work on your anger management then!

We close in on the trio as the sounds of the approaching army grow in volume, Angel still looking defiant.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Now remember, the object of this exercise is to not get killed again. We all clear on that?

ANGEL

Spike?

SPIKE

Yes?

ANGEL

Shut up.

Angel raises his sword and strides towards the camera, and from that we cut to:

4

EXT. STREET. LATER.

4

Pursued by a hail of rocks, flaming arrows and anything else sharp and aerodynamic, Angel, Spike and Illyria hustle into frame, taking refuge against a wall.

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CONTINUED:

SPIKE

Bloody hell! They just don't stop coming, do they?

ANGEL

You'd think we'd have at least slowed them down by now...

SPIKE

You were the one yelling 'fall back!' like we're in a sodding war film or something!

ILLYRIA

I am not satisfied. I want to carry on killing! I want to feel the hearts of my enemies beat as I crush the life out of them..

SPIKE

Plenty of targets, Blue, but I don't think a direct offensive is the best strategy at the moment!

ANGEL

We can't keep fighting them, they'll tear the whole city apart!

SPIKE

And then us, in that order. Any bright ideas?

ANGEL

Well, standing and fighting sure didn't work out how I planned..

He flinches as an arrow THUDS into the dumpster, inches from his head. An off camera cry of 'There they are!' is followed by the sound of many pairs of feet running.

ANGEL (cont'd)

We can't stay here..

Angel breaks cover and runs off screen. Spike starts to follow, but as Illyria stands and faces the approaching hordes, Spike's arm reaches back in to drag her away.

5

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT. NIGHT.

5

Pushing on through the rain, the team run into a small industrial estate, old warehouses all around them. Angel heads for the closest one, shoulder barges a door down and ushers the others inside.

6

INT. OLD WAREHOUSE. NIGHT.

6

As the trio step inside, Spike looks round for something to brace the door with, settling for a large crate that he heaves into place.

Stepping back and into the shadows, we can hear the army outside march past, snarls and grunts in amongst the shouts and commands.

ILLYRIA

Why are we hiding? We should be-

ANGEL

Quiet!

SPIKE

New objective, pet. We hide, regroup and then work out a new way of running away.

ANGEL

Spike!

Spike rolls his eyes and mimes zipping his mouth up. Shadows pass by outside, their silhouettes falling across Angel as he watches.

After a few moments, the crowd heads away, and Angel breathes a sigh of relief.

ANGEL (cont'd)

Okay, good, I think we lost them for now. Now, let's start thinking about-

SPIKE

Have you gone stark raving bonkers? We don't sit and think at a time like this! We just get our breath back, then get back out there. Right?

Angel glares back at Spike, clearly not in the mood to put any of his orders up for debate tonight.

ANGEL

We lost two good people tonight. I'm tired, my whole body hurts, I think I've still got an arrowhead stuck in my chest, and I just want to sit down and think for five seconds before I decide what to do next!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Angel starts to walk away, Spike and Illyria stay for a beat before Spike sighs and taps Illyria on the shoulder.

SPIKE
Come on. Follow the leader.

ILLYRIA
(insulted)
I acknowledge no-one as my leader!

Spike throws her a tired look.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)
(hesitant)
But... on this occasion, I will make
an exception.

SPIKE
Oh, be still my unbeating heart.

Spike follows Angel, and after a moment so does Illyria.

7 EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

7

Angel and company are back outside, heading towards the city centre. We can hear some kind of commotion up ahead, and Angel tenses as he hears what sound like screams.

SPIKE
Doesn't sound like much has
changed...

ILLYRIA
The creatures have reached the
city.

With a worried look, Angel starts running.

8 EXT. CITY CENTRE. NIGHT.

8

Angel runs into frame, out from an alley and into a central part of the city, but screeches to a halt. His jaw drops as we push in close.

ANGEL
No...

We get our first view of the city - and Los Angeles is in flames. The demon army are rampaging through the streets, hacking down any terrified civilian in their path, tearing down shop fronts, overturning cars, smashing windows and generally taking the city apart.

SPIKE
Bloody hell...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ILLYRIA

This city is lost. We must leave.

ANGEL

What? No! We can't leave, we have to fight them, maybe we can-

SPIKE

Maybe we can what? Angel, open your eyes, LA is officially bugged! We've got even less chance of holding these things back now, they're going to loot this Hammer Horror of a city in the time it takes us to kill a dozen of them!

Angel looks lost, his eyes flicking between targets as he tries to decide what to do next. He grits his teeth and takes a step forward.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Now hang on a minute... Angel, we can't help! Even I can see this is too big for just the three of us.

ANGEL

What are we gonna do, Spike? Huh? Sit back and watch? Or die trying?

A beat. Spike lowers his head - he knows Angel's right. Spike nods, slowly, and looks to Illyria.

SPIKE

How about it, Blue, fancy one last tango?

ILLYRIA

If I am to fall, then let it be in the heat of battle. That is the only fitting way for an Old One to truly meet their end.

SPIKE

(sarcastic)

Oh good, I'm so glad you feel the same way.

Angel charges to the attack, crashing into three demons assaulting a young woman, and Spike and Illyria join him, the trio soon at the centre of a horde of monsters, eager to get a piece of the heroes.

Lost in the fight, Angel cuts down a dozen soldiers but a dozen more take their place, and he starts taking hits. Bad ones, as various blades slice into him, leaving his outfit torn and his skin bloody.

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CONTINUED: (2)

A warlock several feet away readies a huge fireball, and hurls it towards the champions. It hits with a huge EXPLOSION, throwing Angel, Spike and Illyria three separate ways, along with several unfortunate demons.

Angel blasts through the brick wall of a building.

9 INT. RUINED BUILDING. NIGHT. 9

Angel rolls to a stop amidst the rubble, dazed. He tries to stand but is too weak, collapsing back to the floor.

We pull back to see a figure watching him.

10 EXT. CITY CENTRE. NIGHT. 10

Spike skids to a halt across the rain-soaked road, shaking his head to clear it and standing again.

We pan in a circle around him, taking in the monsters plucking screaming people from apartment blocks, the fires raging out of control and the demons destroying everything and everyone in sight.

SPIKE

I think we can safely say we're doomed.

He turns as a pack of demon warriors gather in front of him, chuckling and twirling their swords. Spike grins.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Hello, come to have a go, have we?

Spike fights back with everything he's got.

11 INT. RUINED BUILDING. NIGHT. 11

Angel pushes himself upright again, the battle outside filtering into the empty room he's in. He blinks and shakes the dust free, still seeing stars.

VOICE (O.S.)

I tried to tell you this would happen, didn't I?

Angel looks up - and we see the figure at last as he steps into the light. It's HOLLAND MANNERS.

MANNERS

All those years ago, when I told you about Hell on Earth...

(chuckles)

I never thought you of all people would finally make it happen!

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CONTINUED:

ANGEL

Manners?

MANNERS

Technically. Your vampire ex-girlfriend may have taken care of my mortal body, but as I'm sure you know by now, Wolfram & Hart contracts stretch far beyond this plane of existence.

ANGEL

What- what do-

MANNERS

What do I want? I'm here to offer you a choice, Angel. A get out of jail free card that'll end all this admittedly inspiring suffering outside.

ANGEL

I don't understand...

MANNERS

It's simple, my boy. To reverse this, to take away the Failsafe armies and restore your beloved Los Angeles to its former glory, you only need to do one thing.

(smiles)

Admit that you've lost.

From Angel's confused look, we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT ONE**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

12 INT. RUINED BUILDING. NIGHT. 12

Back on Angel, looking up at Holland Manners in disbelief.

ANGEL

I have to what?

MANNERS

That's the deal. You admit that you lost, that for all your bravado and attempt to fight back, you couldn't defeat us, and we make it all go away. You can go back to doing whatever it is you do, and nobody is any the wiser.

ANGEL

And then what?

MANNERS

Then? After that, it's up to you what you do next. I'm sure you're quite used to feeling guilty for everything you've ever done, so I'm sure one more little thing won't matter all that much.

Angel stands and looks out through the hole in the wall he created. The city is still in disarray, police helicopters circling overhead as we hear monsters HOWL.

ANGEL

And if I say no?

MANNERS

We raze this city to the ground.

ANGEL

(beat)

You're bluffing.

Angel throws Manners a defiant look, but he just laughs.

MANNERS

We have plenty more men to throw at you, Angel. Legions and legions of them. You've already lost two of your warriors tonight, betrayed a third and let the fourth go his separate way. Are you really going to let us take your last two as well?

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CONTINUED:

We are treated to brief cutaways to Spike, nearly buried beneath a horde of soldiers, and Illyria, beaten to and fro between two packs of jeering demons.

MANNERS (cont'd)

If you admit that you lost, everything returns to normal. The monsters go back into the closet, everyone they killed will be unharmed and unable to remember a thing. Except for you and your team. Oh, I'm sorry, I should have mentioned that earlier. You see, they'll know exactly what you've done. It's up to you how you deal with that. And that's our offer.

Angel looks to Manners and then back to the street, torn between two impossible choices. Finally, he marches boldly up to Manners.

ANGEL

If I say yes, if I say I lost, if I accept that this time, you beat me... will I get Wes and Gunn back?

MANNERS

(smiles; shakes head)

No. Time resets to the present moment. Your friends will still be dead. Those are the conditions. Do you accept?

A long beat as Angel glances outside again.

We're given brief shots of Illyria screaming in pain as two huge demons take an arm each and start to pull, and Spike as several swords are driven into him.

Back to Angel. Manners steps alongside him.

MANNERS (cont'd)

Oh, and there is one more condition, while I remember...

Angel shoots a dark look at the ghost.

MANNERS (cont'd)

You have to sacrifice one final member of your team.

ANGEL

No deal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANNERS

Angel, think for a moment! You've lost everybody but the one vampire you hate more than yourself, and an unspeakably ancient force of evil that hollowed out and devoured the soul of one of your closest friends. Are you trying to tell me you wouldn't give up one of their lives to save millions more?

Angel steps right up to Manners' face, but the deceased executive just smiles benignly back at him.

ANGEL

No deal, Manners. You've taken enough from me. I'd rather die defending this world from you than give you the satisfaction of taking one more damn thing away from me!

MANNERS

As you wish. Any time you change your mind... well, you know where we are.

A SCREAM off camera makes Angel turn round, and when he looks back, Manners is gone. Angel is alone in the building. With a last glance around, he picks up his sword and climbs back out through his entrance hole in the wall.

13

EXT. SHOPPING MALL. NIGHT.

13

Spike and Illyria hobble into frame, Spike wincing as he yanks a dagger free from his shin.

ILLYRIA

Where is Angel? I did not see where he went.

SPIKE

Me either, but it'd be asking too much to hope they got him..

Illyria looks off screen, from where they entered.

ILLYRIA

More are coming.

SPIKE

Let's not give them a fresh target, then! See if that's open.

Spike points towards the glittering glass façade of the shopping mall before them, and the two head towards it.

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CONTINUED:

Illyria tries the push bar handle of the main door, but it's locked. She pushes again, harder, and with a CLUNK the door gives way, allowing them access.

14

INT. SHOPPING MALL. NIGHT.

14

Spike flops down onto a bench before a silent fountain as Illyria looks round, her ancient eyes trying to take in the gaudiness of a modern shopping centre.

ILLYRIA

What is this place?

SPIKE

It'd be quicker if I just gave you a copy of 'Dawn Of The Dead' to watch...

ILLYRIA

So many colours and words... but all clashing, no sense of uniformity or hierarchy... all squabbling for your attention...

SPIKE

It's called 'the American way.'

Spike gets painfully to his feet and stands beside her.

SPIKE (cont'd)

We can natter about corporate culture later, right now, we need to find some new weapons, and then we-

VOICE (O.S.)

Don't move, vampire!!

SPIKE

(exasperated)

Oh, great...

Spike turns round, and we pull back to see a group of men and women have surrounded the duo, with home-made spears, swords and stakes all trained on them. Illyria starts to step towards them but Spike holds her back.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Look, whoever you are, now really isn't a good time for us...

One man steps forward from the group - this is TAYLOR, their leader. A tall, well-built man with neatly cropped hair and goatee, he aims a stake at Spike's chest.

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CONTINUED:

TAYLOR

Keep your damn mouth shut!

ILLYRIA

These beings are insignificant!
Spike, destroy them.

SPIKE

You what?

TAYLOR

What did she say? She say 'destroy
them'?

SPIKE

(quickly)

Ignore her, she's foreign. Listen,
I don't know who you guys are, or
what you want, but we have a
serious situation at the moment,
and-

TAYLOR

You have a situation? This just in,
pal - LA's getting torn a new one
by an army of mass murdering
demons, and no matter how many of
them we kill, more keep coming!

A beat. A girl steps forward, petite and pretty with long,
blonde hair - this is SONIA.

SONIA

Hey, are you... are you Spike?

SPIKE

That's me, and this blue-haired
Sisters Of Mercy reject is Illyria.
Your turn.

TAYLOR

I'm Taylor, this here is Sonia, and
the others you see are what's left
of the only thing standing between
that army out there and this city.

SONIA

We're people who know what's living
beneath our streets, and trying to
do something about it.

TAYLOR

We've been noticing a lot of
increased activity just lately, and
then earlier tonight, boom!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TAYLOR(cont'd)

The Circle of the Black Thorn goes down and all hell kicks off.

SPIKE

You know about the Circle?

TAYLOR

Yeah, and I also know that until recently, your boss Angel was part of it. Care to explain why that doesn't make you part of that heap of scum outside?

Spike chuckles and reaches into his jacket for a cigarette. When this action makes two of the gang jut their weapons towards him, he frowns and carefully produces the cigarette packet and lighter, calmly lighting one up and blowing the smoke towards them.

SPIKE

Seeing as we're on the subject of those Black Thorn gits, did you happen to know that you're looking at the people who took them down?

(beat; looks at Illyria)

Or what's left of them, anyway.

(beat; frowns)

I'm sorry, why are we discussing this? We need to work out a way to get rid of those demons you so expertly observed marching around outside! Last time I checked, they only numbered, oh, a few thousand or so, so if you don't mind, we have work to do.

Spike starts to step forward but Taylor gets in his face.

SPIKE (cont'd)

No offence, but we've encountered groups like yours before, and they've tended not to last very long. What makes you guys any different?

SONIA

Funding.

SPIKE

Funding?

TAYLOR

Yeah. We have plenty of influential people who appreciate our services, and we get a healthy bank balance to keep us in bullets and holy water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SPIKE

Oh God, please don't tell me you're
on Wolfram & Hart's payroll...

There is a ripple of laughter from the vigilantes.

SONIA

Are you kidding? We'd have to sell
our souls before we'd go work for
that place!

A beat, before Illyria steps up into Sonia's face, examining
her curiously. Taylor's team tense up as Illyria studies her.

ILLYRIA

This one has seen much pain... and
much combat.

(turns to Spike)

She will fight well alongside us.

SONIA

Excuse me?

SPIKE

Illyria, we don't-

VOICE (O.S.)

Taylor!

Taylor takes a few steps backwards as one of his female
soldiers bounds in, a scout from outside the mall.

SCOUT

They're into the city now. There's
too many of them for us to stop,
they're getting into the buildings
and killing everyone in their way!

TAYLOR

You sure we can't contain them?

SCOUT

It's Hell on Earth out there, boss!
We're getting torn to pieces and I
don't know how much longer we can
hold out!

Taylor nods, then turns to Spike.

TAYLOR

Looks like our luck just ran out.
If you have anywhere to go, I
suggest you head there now. The sun
should be up in a few hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Taylor and his crew start to walk away. Illyria steps up to Spike, looking puzzled.

ILLYRIA

What are you doing? I question your logic in not following these humans. They seem to be able to handle themselves in combat.

SPIKE

Not now, Blue.

ILLYRIA

You dare to contradict me? After the suffering I have dealt our enemies this night, you would dismiss me as-

SPIKE

I said, not now! Robin Hood and his band of Merry bleedin' Men over there can go get themselves killed all by themselves, I'm not getting suckered into trying to save them as well!

Illyria opens her mouth to reply but takes in Spike's dark look as he thinks, deciding to drop it.

ILLYRIA

Then what would you have us do?

Spike looks thoughtfully at his cigarette, then grins.

15

INT. EMPTY BAR. NIGHT.

15

Spike reaches across the counter of the deserted bar and grabs a bottle of Jack Daniel's, snapping the cap off against the bar and taking a swig from it.

ILLYRIA

Wesley drank much of that poison. Is there some benefit to it that I do not understand?

In answer, Spike holds the bottle out towards her. Illyria lifts it, studies it for a moment, then knocks it back. She doesn't react for a moment, then coughs violently, almost doubling over as Spike laughs.

SPIKE

That's Jack for you. Bit of a kick for the first timers!

Illyria wipes her mouth and studies the bottle for a moment before slamming it back down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ILLYRIA

I want another.

Spike chuckles and rubs his sore joints.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)

What are we to do now?

SPIKE

Search me, I was hoping you had a plan or something.

ILLYRIA

Beyond resting and healing my wounds, I have no plans. Except... drinking more of this poison is strangely appealing to me.

SPIKE

Getting a taste for it, are we?

Illyria knocks her second shot back. No cough this time.

ILLYRIA

It is not unpleasant to me. Like you.

SPIKE

(sarcastic)

I'm honoured, your Highness.

(sighs)

Short answer is, we go back out there and do what we can against the hordes of nasties trucking round, but I get the feeling this could be a long one. After that, I guess we should try to track Angel down. Wouldn't hurt to see if we can still get into Wolfram & Hart, either.

ILLYRIA

Is it wise to return there?

SPIKE

Probably not. Which is why it's most likely the best thing we should do.

Spike takes another swig from the bottle and passes it to Illyria. He turns to go, but turns back when he realises Illyria is draining the rest of the bottle in one long gulp.

Finishing, she shudders and throws the bottle over her shoulder, where it SMASHES off screen.

16

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BAR. NIGHT.

16

Spike heads outside followed by Illyria, who is not looking at all steady. Distant noises of fighting and shouts of terror can be heard.

ILLYRIA

My head spins... my stomach feels ready to flip over and my vision is blurry... what is happening?

SPIKE

It's called 'being pissed.' It's a wonderful feeling for now, make the most of it! No doubt you'll be pounding me in time to your headache when you wake up tomorrow. The bright side is that when we get into our next fight, your body won't notice being hit so much..

They walk on, passing an alley entrance - not noticing a pair of yellow eyes glittering in the darkness.

ILLYRIA

Do humans always do this to themselves? Consume this poison to make themselves sick?

Spike fumbles for another cigarette, lighting it with some difficulty against the rain.

SPIKE

It has its benefits. Look at it this way - are any of the parts that were hurting you earlier still hurting?

Illyria experimentally prods a few parts of herself.

ILLYRIA

They feel... numb.

SPIKE

Sorted. It's only temporary, but it does the trick. Should set us up nicely for Round Three!

Illyria presses a hand against her heart.

ILLYRIA

There is still much pain here... the grief is like a dagger, twisting through my heart, all the way down to my gut.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ILLYRIA(cont'd)

The poison has not taken any of that away. Should I drink more?

SPIKE

I think we've had quiet enough for-

Spike freezes as a low, guttural GROWL sounds off screen. Midway through lighting another cigarette, he slowly looks towards the source of the noise.

Standing seven feet tall, a bulky DEMON faces the two of them, hunched forwards, its head covered with tentacles that spill down like dreadlocks, huge talons on its hands. Its breath mists in the cold air as it watches.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Ah...

Spike closes his eyes and curses, as we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT TWO**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

17 EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

17

SMACK! Spike flies into frame and hits a wall before us, sliding dazed to the floor.

We see Illyria doing her best to fight off the demon facing her, throwing punches and kicks that seem to have little effect. She grunts as a punch knocks the wind out of her, then another hit sends her to the ground.

Spike picks himself up, still groggy from the booze he's taken in, trying to focus.

SPIKE

Alright, alright... I can see we're going to have a problem here, so why don't we all just-

POW! Another slap from the demon's mighty fist throws Spike to the floor. He lands in a heap beside Illyria.

ILLYRIA

Spike... I cannot fight! My head is muddled... my limbs do not respond...

SPIKE

Trust me, you'll feel a whole lot worse if you don't get back up again!

Spike tries to stand but the demon grabs him, lifting him off the ground. The demon holds Spike close to its tentacled head, studying the vampire, sizing him up.

With a sudden SCREECH, the creature rears up and drops Spike. Whirling round, we see that Taylor and two of his men have come to the rescue, a spear already protruding from the demon's back.

TAYLOR

Go for the legs! Knock it to the ground!

One of the men fires a set of bolas from a launcher that rapidly wrap round the demon's thick legs, and with a ROAR it crashes to the floor.

Taylor is there in an instant, plunging a sword down into the demon's head, and with a last gasp it falls silent.

Spike looks up, still dazed, as Taylor offers him a hand and helps him to his feet. The other two pick up Illyria.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAYLOR (cont'd)
Good job we were in the area, huh?

SPIKE
Yeah... thanks, mate.

TAYLOR
I'm not your 'mate,' freak. I'm
doing my job.

SPIKE
Well, on behalf of you doing your
job... thanks, mate.

TAYLOR
Don't get cocky, vampire. I see you
round here again, I won't be
helping you out.

Illyria shrugs the two men away and stands by Spike.

ILLYRIA
Their insolence will be their
damnation! Let us shred-

SPIKE
Easy, pet. They're only human.

Spike gives Taylor his best insolent smirk, and with a grunt,
Taylor and his men walk away.

ILLYRIA
You would let them walk away after
they disdain us? Their arrogant,
insolent stares make me want to
tear their eyes from their sockets
and force them down into their
throats!

Spike chuckles as Illyria suddenly doesn't look too good.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)
It turns my stomach... to see...

She suddenly pales and retches, bracing herself against the
building wall nearby as she vomits. Spike laughs.

SPIKE
Oh, how the mighty are fallen!

From Spike's laughter and Illyria's heaves, we:

18

INT. WOLFRAM & HART - CEO'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

18

We're inside Angel's old office, the whole building showing
no signs of damage from the Failsafe activation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The high-backed leather chair faces away from us, but as we push in closer it starts to turn round - and reveals JAMES KITRIDGE, a handsome young man with brown hair, out cold and slumped in the chair, dressed in a snappy suit.

His eyes flicker as he comes round, blinking as he tries to work out where he is. He looks confused as all heck.

KITRIDGE

What the-

MANNERS (O.S.)

Hello, Mr. Kitridge.

Kitridge looks up - and we see Holland Manners' ghost standing before us, warm smile in place.

KITRIDGE

What's going on? One second, I was sitting in my office, next thing..

(beat)

Isn't this the LA branch?

MANNERS

Absolutely correct. My apologies for the unorthodox manner of your arrival, I'm assured that the teleportation spell that brought you here will have no lasting effects.

Manners walks over to Kitridge's desk.

KITRIDGE

So why have I been brought over here? Was my work in Memphis not meeting the Senior Partners' expectations?

MANNERS

Far from it, which is precisely why they asked me to draft you in over here. We have... a situation in Los Angeles at the moment, James, and the Partners wanted you personally to oversee the branch in these difficult times.

KITRIDGE

Difficult how? It's not like...

Kitridge turns in his chair and looks out across the LA skyline at last...

... and we see that the rampaging demon army is quickly taking the fight to the entire city.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Columns of smoke rise from the streets, large chunks of the city are blacked out, another flickering as the power grid fails, and the sky is filled with police and news helicopters, searchlights piercing the tempest below.

Kitridge rises and walks up to the glass, in shock at what he's seeing. Manners walks to his side.

KITRIDGE (cont'd)

What... what happened?

MANNERS

Angel.

Kitridge looks round - every Wolfram & Hart employee knows that name by now.

KITRIDGE

I thought we'd given him this branch?

MANNERS

Our plans for Angel have followed the predictions almost to the letter, although tonight's escapades have lasted a little longer than we expected. We still have much work to do with Angel, past his attempt to destroy the Circle of the Black Thorn, and much further than our current conversation.

KITRIDGE

Attempt? You mean-

MANNERS

(grins)

You thought he could remove an organisation as powerful as the Black Thorn in one night, with a handful of fights? You've still got a lot to learn, my dear boy.

KITRIDGE

So why am I here?

MANNERS

We're offering you the position of CEO of the Wolfram & Hart Los Angeles division. All of its resources and facilities will be at your disposal. We want you to take the Angel case.

A beat as Kitridge looks back out towards the flaming city, then back at Manners. He nods once.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KITRIDGE

It would be an honour, sir. What do I have to do to accept your offer?

Manners holds out one hand, and with a small FLASH of red light, a contract appears, which Manners lays on the table, taking a pen from inside his jacket.

He knows the score by now, and pricks the end of his thumb with the pen.

We close on the contract as he signs his name, 'James Kitridge,' on the dotted line.

Kitridge hands the contract back to Manners, who smiles as he folds it up and tucks it away.

KITRIDGE (cont'd)

And after we close the Angel case?

MANNERS

That's all in the small print, James. We have plenty of things for you to do for us. You're this company's most promising talent, and I intend to see you fulfil that potential.

KITRIDGE

I won't let you down, sir.

MANNERS

I know.

Manners grins and strides towards the open office doors, pausing as he starts to close them to take one last look.

The newly-appointed CEO is still staring out through the office windows, turning and calling out to Manners.

KITRIDGE

Uh, sir?

MANNERS

Yes?

KITRIDGE

Is LA going to be like this for good now, or are we...

MANNERS

It's in hand, Kitridge. We're sure Angel will accept the proposal we made him to turn the meter back to zero, so to speak.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Manners closes the doors and leaves Kitridge to his thoughts. He sits back down, and after a moment's thought picks up the phone and dials a number.

KITRIDGE

Susan? Guess where I'm sitting.

He smiles broadly.

19

EXT. DRAINED CANAL. NIGHT.

19

Spike is busy fighting two VAMPIRES, as Illyria throws a third one around in the background. They're just outside a water inlet in a drained canal pipe, the three vamps seeming to have been dragged out of their home inside the inlet by the two warriors.

SPIKE

That's right, boys, come on! These sorts of fights I can handle!

ILLYRIA

Spike?

Spike turns - Illyria holds up the battered body of her vamp, its arms and legs twisted at awkward angles.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)

My opponent is broken..

SPIKE

Good for you.

(ducks a punch)

Why not try giving me a hand now?

Illyria drops the vamp and strides over to the two fighting Spike, punching her hand clean through the chest of one of them and watching as he dusts around her.

Spike kicks his vamp's legs out from under him and is ready with a stake, dusting him with a cackle.

SPIKE (cont'd)

That's better! I needed that, after the night we've had. Nothing like a good fight after a few beers!

ILLYRIA

I am weary now. I need to rest.

SPIKE

You and me both, luv.

Spike looks upwards - the sky is starting to lighten as the morning rolls in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPIKE (cont'd)
 Sun's up soon. I'll find us
 somewhere to hide out for the day,
 then tomorrow night we can go
 looking for-

TAYLOR (O.S.)
 A vampire killing vampires? Why, I
 guess I been and seen 'bout
 everything...

Spike turns - Taylor and five of his men and women stand at
 the lip of the canal pipe, looking down at Spike and Illyria
 below. Spike straightens up.

SPIKE
 Well, look who it isn't. Captain
 Pugwash and his fearless pirate
 crew.

TAYLOR
 We can trade insults later. You
 need a place to stay during the
 day, right?

SPIKE
 (suspicious)
 Yeah...

TAYLOR
 So, we've got a place. You may be
 the enemy in all but name, but
 you're both good in a fight, and
 I'm gonna need all the hands I can
 if I'm gonna be able to save this
 city.

SPIKE
 Why the sudden change of heart?
 Last time we met, you made it
 pretty clear you'd try and kill us
 if we bumped into each other again.
 (beat)
 And you'll notice how I said 'try.'

TAYLOR
 (rolls eyes)
 You gonna sit down there and bitch
 at me, or you gonna come with us?

Spike considers his options for a beat.

SPIKE
 I'd rather not, to be honest.
 Chances are, it's a trap.
 (sighs)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SPIKE(cont'd)

But let's face it, tonight couldn't
get much worse, could it?

ILLYRIA

I do not trust this man, Spike. In
my day, we used to say-

Spike holds up a hand to interrupt her.

SPIKE

Can we save the flashbacks for
later? In the words of the song,
I'm tired and I want to go to bed,
so let's see what kind of a fine
mess we've gone and gotten us into
this time..

Spike starts to climb up out of the pipe, and as Illyria
watches him, we cut to:

20

INT. TAYLOR'S BASE. NIGHT.

20

Spike and Illyria are led into the main operations room by
Taylor, who collects several printouts of information from
round the room before heading over.

TAYLOR

There's a room out back where you
two can clean yourselves up. After
that, report back here so we can
lay down some ground rules. I'm
sure you can appreciate I don't
want an apocalypse magnet like
yourself running round here
unsupervised.

SPIKE

Wouldn't dream of it!

Taylor walks away, keeping one suspicious eye on Spike as
Sonia heads over with three towels.

SONIA

Don't mind him. He's just a little
wary of... uh...

SPIKE

You can say 'vampires,' luv, we're
a bit too long in the tooth to let
people offend us by now.

Sonia watches Illyria curiously as she slowly dries her hair,
the blue-eyed demon staring straight back.

ILLYRIA

Why does this one keep looking at
me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPIKE

(smirks)

She's probably wondering what you use to do your hair.

Illyria gives Spike a confused look before handing him her towel. He wipes the blood from his cuts off his face and hands all three back to Sonia.

SPIKE

Thanks, pet.

Sonia walks away as Spike turns to Illyria.

SPIKE

Alright then, I think I've done enough planning for one night. Your turn to answer the eternal question 'now what?'

ILLYRIA

I... don't know.

SPIKE

Well, that's a first! The great and almighty Old One doesn't have a battle plan? Not even a vague plan 'b' we can be working on?

ILLYRIA

My head sings with the voices of a thousand victories... but they are empty ghosts, mocking me as I stand here...

Illyria looks down at her hands, covered with blood.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)

Many foes have tasted my wrath and vengeance, and yet... I feel hollow.

SPIKE

I'm sure Fred felt the same way when you burrowed your way inside her like a hungry rodent, Blue.

ILLYRIA

This shell fills me with emotions I should not possess. I feel... sorrow. Guilt. Sadness. Fear. Fear! What place does fear have in my life, except for when I am the one who is causing it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SPIKE

So let's do something about it then, your worshipness! Because God knows I'm only playing along with Roddy Piper out there long enough for us to recharge and get back out there!

ILLYRIA

There is little more we can do for now. We should stay here and rest. We will fight better if we take a few hours to recover.

SPIKE

Out the frying pan, into the bloody fire! First, we're knee deep in demon guts, trying not to get ourselves chopped up by eight thousand different sword blades, then we're sitting cosily inside the base of a bunch of vigilantes who look like they'd stake us soon as look at us!

ILLYRIA

It is what I want. If you wish to question my judgement, then-

SPIKE

You're bloody right I want to question your flamin' judgement!

(beat)

But in the absence of a better plan... looks like we'll have to go along with it. For now.

(off Taylor)

But he so much as blinks at me funny once, I'll rip his lungs out and make a boat out of them.

Taylor looks up from across the room and scowls at Spike.

TAYLOR

If you reckon you can, you're welcome to try, punk!

A beat as Spike and Taylor face off, before Spike chuckles and relaxes.

SPIKE

I like him. Some big brass balls on that one!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TAYLOR

Are you gonna behave? Or do you want to take your chances back outside?

SPIKE

Oh, we're just peachy, mate.

TAYLOR

Good.

Taylor picks up an already blood-stained axe as a group of his men stand and start to file out of the room.

TAYLOR (cont'd)

I'm heading back topside, we'll meet back here in an hour and start seeing what we can do with you two. You'll find an empty room halfway down the corridor you can use for now. And if I come back and find you've done anything except sit in there and shut up. I'll have your heads on sticks outside as a warning to others.

Taylor turns his back on them, and Illyria quietly turns and exits the room. With an insolent smirk at the departing Taylor, Spike turns and leaves.

21 INT. TAYLOR'S BASE - CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

21

Spike catches up to Illyria as they walk along.

SPIKE

Alright. What are you really up to?

ILLYRIA

I do not understand..

SPIKE

Come off it. The Illyria I know and despise would never willingly let a jumped up Guardian Angel like that Taylor wanker push her around and tell her what to do! So what are we actually doing here?

ILLYRIA

I have told you. We are resting, and then we continue our fight.

She walks on, as Spike grins, the penny dropping at last.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPIKE

Oh, I get it! You've got Fred's voice rattling round that neon-tipped cranium of yours, wailing bloody murder at having watched two men who loved her die in the same night, and you just don't know what to do with it, do you?

ILLYRIA

Spike?

SPIKE

Yes?

ILLYRIA

Shut up.

Illyria steps into the room they were heading for, leaving an open-mouthed Spike standing there.

22

INT. TAYLOR'S BASE - EMPTY ROOM. NIGHT.

22

Spike enters and flops down one of the several mattresses lying on the floor, where we see Illyria sitting with his back to him a few mattresses away.

SPIKE (O.S.)

I'm sure there's some master plan unfurling upstairs in your Royal blue rinsed noggin, so until you see your way towards telling me what it is, I'm going to get some kip and hope I don't wake up with a stake in me chest.

Spike lies back and closes his eyes.

We move to the other side of the room and pan across to bring Illyria into frame - and she's crying. For this one moment, she looks like a vulnerable, scared little girl, emotions crashing around inside her head and no way for her to make any sense out of them.

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT THREE**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

23 EXT. LA SKYLINE. MORNING. 23

Time lapse photography as the sun rises and the clouds race across the sky.

24 INT. TAYLOR'S BASE - EMPTY ROOM. MORNING. 24

We see Spike is still asleep and Illyria hasn't moved from her sitting position on the mattress, but now there is a small TV set in the room which she watches.

Spike suddenly jolts to life with a snort and looks round, blinking as he gathers his thoughts.

SPIKE

Blimey... weird dream.

(to Illyria)

Any news?

ILLYRIA

(listless)

The girl brought us this a few hours ago. I could not sleep, so she said it would help occupy my mind.

Spike fumbles inside his jacket for a cigarette, but he only has one left. He reaches for his lighter, but it's out of gas, and after a few muttered curses, he throws it away. He walks over to get a better view of the TV.

TV NEWSREADER

... as the riots continue to rage out of control in downtown Los Angeles, police have joined forces with state troopers, the army and in some areas the National Guard, declaring the entire city to be off-limits until the insurgence can be stopped.

SPIKE

(sarcastic grin)

I'd hate to be stuck in LA at the moment then...

Spike looks at Illyria - and sees the tell-tale signs of her puffy eyes and the trails of tears down her cheeks. She glances up at him and turns her head away quickly.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Have you been crying?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ILLYRIA

It is nothing, my eyes, they... they sting, and I-

Spike bursts out laughing.

SPIKE

Oh, that is bloody priceless! I never thought I'd live to see the day when-

In an instant, Illyria is on her feet, her hand around Spike's throat as she SLAMS him against the wall. Spike carries on laughing, her fury completing the irony.

ILLYRIA

Insignificant undead insect! Either you cease your derision this second, or I'll-

SPIKE

Or you'll what? Kill me?

There is a long pause, then as her anger fades Illyria releases Spike and steps back.

SPIKE (cont'd)

That's right. Just us two now, petal. Wherever Angel's gotten to, we'll have to worry about him later.

(beat)

Not that I will be worrying, mind...

SONIA (O.S.)

Uh, guys?

They turn to see Sonia has stuck her head back into the room. With a last look at Spike, Illyria sits back down.

SPIKE

Something we can help you with?

SONIA

Taylor's squad got back a few minutes ago. He's made a sweep of the city and is going to make a general announcement about it. I, uh, thought you might want to hear it.

SPIKE

Cheers.

Sonia nods and leaves. Spike looks down at Illyria, who is staring blankly at the TV again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SPIKE (cont'd)

Come on, you. We don't need to stay here much longer. Didn't mean to stay here this long at all, but I think our bodies made an executive decision to shut us down for a few hours...

Spike heads for the doorway and exits.

25

INT. TAYLOR'S BASE. MORNING.

25

There are about thirty people crowded into the operations room as Spike and Illyria enter, and several noticeably shuffle back as the two of them walk in.

Spike waggles his eyebrows impishly at one of them as Taylor's voice calls our attention to the front of the room.

TAYLOR

(grim expression)

Okay, people, here's the score. LA is in trouble. The city limits have been barricaded off by everything from Marines and battle tanks to helicopter gunships, and the police have sectioned off as much of the city centre as they could. We're in one of the dead zones. Up top, there are still hundreds, maybe thousands of those demons marching around. They've ransacked everything they could lay their hands on and set fire to whatever wasn't nailed down.

VOICE FROM CROWD

How many dead?

TAYLOR

Lots.

2ND VOICE

'Lots?' What does that mean?

SPIKE

It means we're up to our eyeballs in the brown stuff, mate!

Everyone turns to look at Spike, who shrugs.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Just stating the obvious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAYLOR

As far as we can tell, any attempt to fight the armies has just left a heap of dead cops and marines, so we can count out getting reinforcements any time soon. I want teams to patrol topside in regular shifts, we have to push these things back any way we can until some help rolls in.

SPIKE

What if it doesn't?

TAYLOR

Excuse me?

SPIKE

You heard. What if nobody comes? What if the rest of the country decides to leave LA to the things that go bump, and they build a big wall round us?

TAYLOR

You got a better idea? I half expected to find you out there, snacking on any stragglers.

SPIKE

Oh, that's precious, that is. Keep it up, mate, you might stand a chance of hurting my feelings if you try hard enough.

SONIA

(to Spike)

What would you do?

SPIKE

Me? I'd do what I'd always do in this kind of situation. I'd head for the root of the problem and pop it like a teenager's zit.

Taylor raises an eyebrow as Spike just grins.

26

EXT. WOLFRAM & HART OFFICES. MORNING.

26

The streets outside the law firm are deserted, but we can see several squads of demon soldiers marching round the perimeter, keeping the building under close guard.

27

INT. W&H - KITRIDGE'S OFFICE. MORNING.

27

Kitridge sips a mug of steaming coffee as he reads through a report. There are several overstuffed manilla folders across his desk, the Angel case to date.

He looks up as KIRSTEN, his PA, walks in. She's young and quietly attractive with long, auburn hair. She carries a large box stuffed full of similar folders.

KIRSTEN

Here's the next batch, Mr. Kitridge.

KITRIDGE

Next batch of what?

KIRSTEN

Folders for the Angel case! It's taken a while to get them all back out of storage.

Kitridge huffs and leans back in his leather chair as she plonks the box down on his desk.

KITRIDGE

Guess I should've read that small print Mr. Manners mentioned, huh?

KIRSTEN

I took a peek once. It scared me.

Kitridge turns his chair round to look outside, and sees the now-familiar plumes of smoke rising from the city.

KITRIDGE

How are things outside?

KIRSTEN

Same as last night, sir. The army have annexed the downtown area, but our armies are holding back for now.

MANNERS (O.S.)

And that's where they'll stay! The Partners want them there just long enough to force Angel to swallow his pride and agree to our terms.

With a courteous nod to Manners, and a flash of a smile to Kitridge, Kirsten turns and exits. Manners watches her go with a wink at Kitridge as the doors are closed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANNERS (cont'd)
Perk of the job, eh? Flew her in
from the Washington branch
especially.

KITRIDGE
I'm honoured, sir. Married, but
honoured.

Manners laughs heartily as he picks up a folder.

MANNERS
(off folders)
Not something you can catch up on
in one day, is it?

KITRIDGE
There's certainly a lot to take in!
It keeps mentioning an ex-employee
here, a Lindsey McDonald?

Manners' look darkens at the mention of the name.

KITRIDGE (cont'd)
Is there any way I could talk to
him at all? I think he'd be a big
help in getting me up to speed.

MANNERS
Lindsey is... temporarily
unavailable.

Manners closes the folder and puts it back with the others,
taking a different-coloured one from the top of the box and
opening it in front of Kitridge.

MANNERS (cont'd)
There's something else we'd like
you to work on for now. A
retrieval.

KITRIDGE
(reading file)
Are you sure, sir? This seems a
little...
(glances out window)
Well, not wanting to sound
disrespectful, but a little
insignificant while all that's
going on outside.

MANNERS
We're just waiting for Angel. We
can't locate him at the moment, but
he's out there, somewhere.
Brooding, most likely.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANNERS(cont'd)

But he'll come round. He cares too much about this world to sacrifice it in the name of his pride. And if we don't hear from him by tonight, well... we'll have a bargaining chip by then. Or we'll just go and burn down a few more apartment blocks.

Manners grins and walks off camera, leaving Kitridge to study the new file in front of him.

28

EXT. CITY STREET. MORNING.

28

Safe in the shadow of a high-rise across the street, Angel makes his way along the deserted street towards a line of phone booths. He still carries a sword in one hand, and without the benefit of a night's proper rest looks in as bad a state as when we left him.

He lifts the receiver of the first phone and grimaces as he realises it's dead. He tries two more before he finds one that works, but after checking his pockets finds he has no change.

He turns and SLAMS his sword handle off the next booth, catching a handful of quarters from the cascade that spills from the broken machine.

Dialling a number, he checks up and down the street as he waits for an answer.

ANGEL

Oh, uh, hi, uh, hola, senora. Uh, I'm trying to contact Nina Ash? She should be staying there because I... yes, yes, uh, si, I know, because I booked the room and flight myself.

(beat; listens)

She checked out already? Oh. When did she leave?

Angel is absorbed in the call and doesn't notice a SHADOW creeping up on him from behind.

ANGEL (cont'd)

Last night? So that'd mean...

(checks watch)

What's the time there?

SMASH! Angel ducks reflexively as a huge CLUB bashes into the phone booth, missing his head by inches.

He leaps clear and turns to face his attacker - a burly DEMON, growling as it tugs its club free. Behind it, we can see a pack of demon soldiers rushing up the street towards us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGEL (cont'd)
 Hey! That was...
 (punches demon)
 ... an important...
 (and again)
 ... phone call!

Angel RAMS his sword into the demon's chest, and with a GROAN it expires. Angel tries to pull his sword free but can't, and the approaching soldiers are now only moments away.

ANGEL (cont'd)
 (mutters)
 Perfect...

Abandoning his sword, Angel has to run from superior odds for the time being. We close on the phone booth as the demons run past, and we can just make out the voice on the other end over the sounds of a fight off screen.

VOICE FROM PHONE
 Ola? Ola, senor! Ola?

And we cut from that to:

29 EXT. AIRPORT. MORNING. 29

We're looking at the front of the main terminal, but this isn't one of LA's main airports, and as the building's doors slide open we see a disgruntled looking NINA walk out, dragging a suitcase on wheels behind her.

A taxi pulls up to the kerb, and she gets inside.

30 INT. TAXICAB. MORNING. 30

Nina slides across the cab's back seat as we see the boot close and the driver walk round to get back in.

DRIVER
 Where to, Miss?

NINA
 Downtown. You know the Wolfram & Hart offices?

DRIVER
 Oh yeah, the big law firm?

NINA
 Take me to one block away, I need to make a call first to check on something before I go there. Couldn't get through on the usual number for some reason, either the lines are down or something's up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRIVER
(as the cab pulls away)
You haven't heard?

NINA
Heard what?

DRIVER
Big outbreak of trouble overnight,
riots or something. Started round
the old Hyperion Hotel, spread to
most of the downtown area. Police
and National Guard have got the
city blocked off for a few miles in
each direction!

NINA
Oh, my God! Do they have any idea
what happened?

DRIVER
Not yet, they're trying to figure
it out before it gets any worse.
Roads have been crazy with people
fleeing the area.

Nina looks shocked as this sinks in.

NINA
Guess that explains why my flight
got diverted..

DRIVER
You flown in alone?

NINA
Huh? Oh, no, my sister and niece
are still at the airport. I have a...
a friend to go meet first.

DRIVER
Ah, right. His name wouldn't be
Angel, would it?

NINA
Yeah, it-
(tenses up)
Wait, how did you-

The driver ignores her, reaching out for his CB radio as Nina starts to look increasingly worried.

DRIVER
(into radio)
Dragnet to base. Target acquired.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

As Nina starts to twig that something's wrong, gas starts to fill the rear compartment of the cab.

Nina shouts and bangs her fists against the screen separating her from the driver, but it's no good - in moments, she's out cold, sprawled across the back seat.

The driver checks over his shoulder that she's out, then thumbs his radio again.

DRIVER (cont'd)
Proceeding to home base, over.

He drives on.

31 INT. KITRIDGE'S OFFICE. MORNING.

31

Kitridge is busily typing away at a laptop when here's a knock on his door, and Kirsten pokes her head inside.

KIRSTEN
James? Just to let you know, the driver's reported in. We've acquired the target and she'll be here in half an hour.

KITRIDGE
Excellent. He can get past the barricades okay, I take it?

KIRSTEN
It's all under control, sir.

She leaves, and Kitridge goes back to his work.

Looking over his shoulder, we pan across his desk, past the many Angel case folders, before stopping at the one Manners gave him.

Prominently on top of it is a glossy photo of Nina, and as we take that in, Kitridge closes up the file and tucks it away in one of his desk drawers.

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW