

ANGEL

"And Another Thing..."

by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. LA - CITY STREET. MORNING. 1

NINA is staggering down the middle of the road as we fade up on a sunny LA morning, looking dazed.

As we push in closer, we can see she's showing a few bruises - it looks like she was in a fight and didn't exactly come off best!

As a car coasts up behind her and BEEPS its horn to get her out of the way, she stumbles across to the sidewalk, flopping down onto it.

Nina leans forwards, putting her head in her hands as she tries to gather her wits, and after a few moment, a middle-aged black WOMAN lays a hand gently on her shoulder.

Startled, Nina whips her head round, but relaxes when she sees the woman's concerned face.

WOMAN

Are you alright, honey?

NINA

Yeah, I... I think so. I'm not sure.

WOMAN

What happened to you? Looks like you lost an argument with a bar full of heavyweight champs!

Nina starts checking her arms for cuts and bruises.

NINA

(hesitant)

I... I don't know, I think I might have been mugged or something, I can't...

She presses a hand to her temples and rubs them, standing up at last.

NINA (cont'd)

I'd better get back home. My boyfriend's probably worried sick about me by now.

The woman nods, still looking concerned as Nina walks unsteadily out of frame.

The woman then blinks and looks down at her hand curiously.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

As she stares at it, starting to wobble slightly on her feet as though drugged, we hear KITRIDGE begin a voice-over.

KITRIDGE (V.O.)

And the fantastic thing about it is, it's virtually undetectable.

As the woman leans against a streetlight for support, looking dizzy, we cut to:

2 INT. KITRIDGE'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

2

The small, cheap-looking apartment that Kitridge is currently calling home has been tidied up a little since we last saw it, but the main focus is of the couple in the bed - Kitridge, sitting up and looking pretty pleased with himself, one arm round KIRSTEN, cosied up next to him.

KITRIDGE

By the time anyone realises what's going on, it'll be too late. Anyone she makes any kind of physical contact with is going to have the virus passed on to them.

KIRSTEN

And what'll it do after that?

KITRIDGE

(grins)

That, Kirsten, is the fun part.

She smiles and sits up to kiss him, and as they start getting friendly we cut away to:

3 INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. DAY.

3

ANGEL is just leaving his office, a customarily dark look on his face as he hears the front doors open.

Nina steps into the lobby, and a look of relief washes over Angel's face as he hurries over to her, taking in her battered appearance.

ANGEL

Where were you? What happened? I thought you were just going to check on Connor, did something happen? Is he alright?

NINA

(patiently)

I did check on Connor, I'm not sure. I don't know what happened, and yes, he's fine. In order.

(CONTINUED)

Nina sits awkwardly down on one of the lobby's sofas, Angel dashing back into his office and reappearing with a first aid kit moments later.

ANGEL

Were you attacked? Can you remember anything?

NINA

Not really. I remember going to see Connor, then as I was leaving...

(shakes head)

Sorry. I found a nice big bruise on the back of my head that explains where the last few hours went, though.

Angel carefully checks the lump out, handing Nina a small facial wipe which she uses to dab at a cut on her cheek.

As Angel takes his hand away from her head, he suddenly blinks, his eyes hazing over for a second.

NINA (cont'd)

Plus, my wallet's been cleaned out so I think we can put this down as me getting my stupid ass mugged.

Angel shakes hi head as she snaps back to his senses.

ANGEL

You're safe now. And it doesn't look like you got beat up too bad.

Nina throws Angel a look - by her standards, this is too bad! Angel realises his slip and tries to cover.

ANGEL (cont'd)

What I man is, compared to how badly some of us have been hit, then you're just, uh-

NINA

Not helping.

ANGEL

Sorry. Come on, let's get you back upstairs, you need to rest.

Angel stands and helps her to her feet.

They've only taken a few steps towards the staircase before a very familiar voice calls out from over by the doors.

BUFFY (O.S.)
See, Andrew? Like I was telling
you.

Angel and Nina spin round - and there in the hotel doorway
are BUFFY SUMMERS and ANDREW WELLS, Buffy lifting her
sunglasses as she looks in on Angel.

BUFFY (cont'd)
Fallen women just find their way
right to him.

ANGEL
(surprised)
Buffy?

NINA
(quietly)
Buffy...

BUFFY
Hi. I need your help with
something.

Angel looks at a loss for words, and it's from his expression
that we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. MORNING. 4

Angel and Nina are still watching in surprise as Buffy strolls down the steps and into the main part of the lobby, Andrew trailing after her.

ANGEL
What are you doing here?

BUFFY
I'm here for the Keeper.

ANGEL
(darkly)
I told you, we'll handle that now.

BUFFY
And normally, I'd love to let you get on with it, but we have a new problem. Jackson's got worse, and I still think-

ANGEL
You still think the Keeper can save him?
(shakes head)
He lied to you, Buffy. He just wanted to steal your powers.

BUFFY
Yeah, maybe, but Sofia thinks she found a-

NINA
Uh, excuse me?

Angel glances at Nina, still leaning her weight against him. Angel's attention had been locked on Buffy the moment she walked in.

NINA (cont'd)
Not wanting to sound like a non team player or anything, but can I get back to bed before you two start discussing this?

A beat as Angel looks from Nina, to Buffy, then back.

ANGEL
Yeah. Sorry.
(to Buffy)
Wait here.

(CONTINUED)

Angel and Nina head up the stairs, leaving Buffy and Andrew to peer around the interior of the hotel.

BUFFY

So this is the place, huh? I've heard a lot about it, but I've never been here before.

ANDREW

It's um, very well protected. Or at least, it was - I've got this little bracelet that Willow gave me, picks up on any magical auras or fields nearby. I think there were a few over the doorway when we came in, but they've been broken by something.

Buffy's examination starts to take in the signs of battle damage to the hotel from the previous scrap against the Keeper and his security team - missing chunks of plaster, boarded up windows and other signals.

BUFFY

Yeah, or someone.

Buffy's gaze travels back up to the staircase, with Angel and Nina now out of sight.

ANDREW

So, uh... Who was that with Angel?

BUFFY

I don't know. You think it was that Nina girl?

ANDREW

Maybe. She looked kinda...

Andrew trails off, and Buffy motions for him to continue.

BUFFY

Kinda what?

ANDREW

Well, uh, Angel definitely has a type, is all I was going to say.

Buffy frowns, and from that look we cut upstairs to:

Angel is tucking Nina up in the bed. She's exhausted, already struggling to stay awake.

ANGEL

You rest up here. I'll find out what Buffy wants, see if I can help her out.

NINA

(wry)

Yeah, 'course, you go be all friendly with your ex for the second time in as many weeks. I don't mind at all.

Angel sighs and opens his mouth to reply, but Nina presses a finger to his lips to shush him.

NINA (cont'd)

Relax. I'm fine. As long as you're not going to run off with her while I'm stuck up here?

ANGEL

(grins)

Not a chance.

NINA

In that case, help away.

Angel rises, and with a nod to Nina turns and leaves the room. Thoughtful, she watches him go, as we cut across to:

INT. HYPERION - SPIKE'S ROOM. MORNING.

Spike's room is about as messy as Skye's, with a wardrobe half-open full of his clothes, spilling out onto the floor, and other bits of junk scattered around.

The main focus is on the bed, given that Spike isn't alone in there!

As she shifts round, starting to wake up, his eyes fall on the still sleeping form of SKYE, lying next to him.

Spike grins, tracing a finger down the side of her face, and as he gazes down at her we cut back to:

INT. HYPERON - LOBBY. MORNING.

Angel returns to the lobby, Andrew already busy snooping around in the background as Buffy takes a seat on one of the sofas.

ANGEL

Alright, what's up?

BUFFY

Is that Nina?

ANGEL

(beat)

Yeah, that's her.

BUFFY

Oh. I'd say 'she seems nice,' but it was kinda hard to tell with all the bruising. Was she-

ANGEL

(quickly)

Mugged. At least, she thinks so, she can't remember.

(frowns)

Why are you here?

Buffy blinks, taken aback by Angel's sudden coldness towards her.

BUFFY

I'm here to find the Keeper again. Sofia's pretty sure that he can actually save Jackson after all, something to do with an analysis of his energy signature that we stole from Kane's office.

ANGEL

Kane?

BUFFY

My boss. At least, used to be my boss. I haven't been to work for a few weeks and he hasn't called for me. We had a bit of a falling out over the private army he's been keeping to himself.

Angel nods and heads over to his office, holding the door open for her. He glances over to Andrew.

ANGEL

Can we carry on in here?

BUFFY

Sure.

ANGEL

I just don't want everybody listening in.

Andrew looks round, not sure if that remark was aimed at him, and Angel gives him another cold glare as he follows Buffy into his office.

8

INT. HYPERION - ANGEL'S OFFICE. MORNING.

8

Angel pulls out a chair for Buffy to sit.

ANGEL

Here.

As Buffy sits, Angel's hand brushes her shoulder - and Buffy shivers, but looks surprised at herself for it.

ANGEL (cont'd)

(sits down)

So you want to go after the Keeper again?

BUFFY

(distracted)

Uh... what?

ANGEL

(impatient)

I said 'you want to go after the Keeper again?' Come on, Buffy, try to keep up!

BUFFY

(annoyed)

Hey! I just flew all the way out here and then got the bus out to this crummy place without stopping, try and show me a bit of patience!

They both stop, as if they're not certain why they're getting so angry, before Angel starts up again.

ANGEL

Well, anyway, I'm not sure what we can do. We've got our hands full at the moment making sure the Keeper can't get anywhere close to Connor.

BUFFY

He's after Connor?

ANGEL

I think his actual choice of words was stuff like 'destroy,' and 'eliminate,' so, yeah, not wanting to let that happen.

BUFFY

Where is Connor? I always wanted to meet him, so I could see-

(CONTINUED)

ANGEL
(interrupts)
He's safe.

Angel leans back in his chair, staring at Buffy, who scowls back at him.

BUFFY
Alright, point taken! Jeez, what's gotten into you? You're acting like I've just shown up and demanded you donate me a kidney or something!

ANGEL
(mutters)
That's how it feels sometimes...

BUFFY
Excuse me?

ANGEL
You always do this! You always just show up and expect me to drop everything and help you, you never stop to consider that I may have some problems of my own!

BUFFY
(raising voice)
Hey, I never said you didn't! I'm just asking for some help to save somebody I care about!

ANGEL
Did I ask you for help to protect Connor? No! So why should I help you now?

Buffy stands, SLAMMING her hands down on the edge of the desk as she leans forward to yell at Angel.

BUFFY
That's not the point! I can't do this by myself!

ANGEL
Yeah? Coulda fooled me, I saw the Boy Wonder out there in the lobby, maybe he can rustle something up for you!

BUFFY
Andrew's...
(beat)
Giles didn't want me coming here alone, that's all.
(MORE)

BUFFY (cont'd)
 Somebody got into our house the other day, they attacked Xander and kidnapped Hope.

Angel doesn't reply, managing to keep his remarks to himself as Buffy continues.

BUFFY (cont'd)
 I wasn't going to come out here, but Xander told me to. Everyone's out looking at the moment - Shanna, Jody, Giles, Marie - but Max has gone missing too.

ANGEL
 That other Watcher?

BUFFY
 (nods)
 Marie says she attacked him and escaped while they were out one night, but Giles has said the Council are sending some people out to find him. Plus, our friend Amy came over to help us find Willow, but Kane took her, I don't know what for.

Angel rubs his chin thoughtfully, calming down again.

ANGEL
 Sounds like you've got your hands full over there.

BUFFY
 Which is why I need you to help me, and now. I have to be heading back there tonight, I can't stay away any longer than I have to, but if there's a chance to save Jackson, then I need to take it. Something big is coming, Angel, I can't afford to lose another fighter.

Angel stands - he knows exactly how it feels to lose part of your team.

ANGEL
 I don't know what we can do, but we'll figure something out.

BUFFY
 I got nothing. So far, my plan starts at 'Ask Angel,' and then goes off into 'Find Keeper, kick ass, get cure, go home.'

ANGEL

You're sure the Keeper can do anything for Jackson?

BUFFY

I don't know. But it's the only shot I have. He's dying, Angel.

ANGEL

(beat)

Do you love him?

BUFFY

Why should that matter?

ANGEL

I'm not saying it does, it was just a question. Do you love him?

Buffy sighs and turns back towards the door.

BUFFY

This was a mistake. Maybe I'll just go over to Wolfram and Hart myself, and-

Angel leaps out of his chair, getting between Buffy and the office door.

ANGEL

No, no, don't do that. I'll help.

BUFFY

(tetchy)

Are you sure? Because, you know, I'd hate to heap another problem on to you.

ANGEL

It's fine.

The two stare each other out for a beat, before Angel opens the door and motions for Buffy to exit.

ANGEL (cont'd)

Come on. Let's go fetch Spike and Skye, and see if there's something we can do. There may be a way to drain some of the Keeper's power off him, that could be what you need to help Jackson.

BUFFY

How are we going to do that?

ANGEL

Well, we know by now that walking up to him and asking for it will just get us into another long fight, so I was figuring the old fashioned way.

BUFFY

Which is?

ANGEL

We play it by their rules. We find a way to cheat.

Buffy grins, and steps past Angel, back into the lobby.

As they leave the office, we cut upstairs to:

INT. HYPERION - SPIKE'S ROOM. MORNING.

Spike is propped up on one arm, looking down at Skye as she stirs and wakes up. She grins sleepily as she sees him.

SKYE

Uh oh, there's a Spike in my bed...
Somebody call the police!

SPIKE

(grins)
It's a fair cop.

SKYE

(yawns; stretches)
What time is it?

SPIKE

Time little boys and girls like us got out of bed and went and found some breakfast.

SKYE

You mean 'warm some pig's blood up in the microwave'?

SPIKE

(shrugs)
It's not exactly a gourmet breakfast, but it does the trick!

SKYE

Alright. Why don't you go downstairs and get me something, and I'll get five more minutes up here.

SPIKE

Oi! This is my bed, you little urchin, by rights it should be you going and getting the food!

Skye turns round and gives Spike her best puppy dog eyes, and after a beat he chuckles and sits up.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Alright, alright. For the sake of my poor old heartstrings, her majesty can sit tight up where while the loyal servant goes and gets the brekkie.

SKYE

(beams)
Thank you!

SPIKE

One time only offer, mind. Just because we finally managed to get a whole night together uninterrupted, doesn't mean you're getting this specialist treatment every time!

SKYE

(mock surprise)
There are going to be other times?
Oh, my! However will I cope?

Spike smirks, pulling on a pair of jeans and grabbing a shirt from the floor before heading over to the door.

SPIKE

Keep up wisecracks like that, and last night will have been the first and only time for you!

SKYE

(mock distress)
Oh, no! Please, don't take my lover away from me!

Skye bursts into laughter, and with a wry smile and a shake of his head, Spike opens the door.

As it closes shut again, we cut across to:

We're inside a picturesque park, quiet and tranquil, with the distant noise of the nearby roads muffled by the thick trees lining the wide, green fields.

As we pan across the scene, birdsong filtering into the air, we come across something less innocent.

WESLEY and ILLYRIA, although she's in the form of FRED, are lying next to each other on the grass, Wes's clothes forming a makeshift blanket over the two of them.

Wes stirs, blinking as his eyes adjust to the light, and as he sits up, he tries to remember where he is, and why.

He looks down to his side, and his eyes widen as he sees Illyria, or rather Fred's peacefully sleeping form curled up next to him, her long tresses of auburn hair spread all around her.

Wes looks back up - and the memory of exactly what happened last night comes flooding back to him.

He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

WES

Oh, dear...

And from Wes' guilty look, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

11 INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. MORNING.

11

Spike heads down the stairs and into the lobby, pausing and double taking as he spots Buffy and Andrew.

SPIKE
What's going on?

ANGEL
Buffy needs our help. She's-

SPIKE
Don't tell me. She's gone and gotten herself into a right state and only her two favourite ex-boyfriends can do anything about it. Am I right?

A beat as Angel and Buffy exchange glances, and with a scoff, Spike carries on into the lobby, heading past them both and towards the kitchen.

SPIKE (cont'd)
Bloody typical. So what's the crisis this time?

BUFFY
(snaps)
First of all, don't talk to me like I'm six years old, Spike! I'm here to ask you guys for help, not stand around while you try and show off by insulting me!

Spike pauses, staring back at her, surprised by her outburst. As what she just said sinks in, Buffy looks a little surprised as well.

SPIKE
Blimey! Who got out of the wrong side of your bed this morning?

BUFFY
It's not important, I just-

SPIKE
Alright, sweetheart, fair do's. What's up?

BUFFY
(beat; sighs)
I need to find the Keeper.

(CONTINUED)

SPIKE

Glutton for punishment?

BUFFY

(irritated)

No, I think he's got the answer I need to save Jackson, but I think we all know by now he's not going to give it up willingly.

SPIKE

So what are we suggesting?

BUFFY

We find some way to do to him what he did to me, suck out some of his powers and hope it gives us some kind of cure.

SPIKE

And where are we going to find anybody who can do that kind of sucking around here?

Spike pauses as the innuendo in his line catches up with him, but before he can say anything else, Angel steps up to him and lays a hand on his shoulder.

Spike blinks, shaking his head briefly, looking disorientated all of a sudden.

ANGEL

I think we know just the guy. His name's Taylor, he works with us.

Spike looks at Angel's hand, then with a petulant shrug, shakes it off his shoulder.

SPIKE

Watch where you're putting your hands, you big ponce.

ANGEL

(getting angry)

Hey, now's not the time to start acting like-

SPIKE

Acting like what? That I'm perfectly fine with Goldilocks here showing up whenever she bloody feels like it? We've got enough problems of our own, mate, or did you happen to miss the fight the other day?

ANDREW

Um, yeah, I was going to ask about that, because I wanted to know how-

SPIKE

Be quiet!

Andrew shuts up, doing his best to shuffle out of sight as an increasingly aggravated looking Spike turns his attention back to Buffy.

SPIKE (cont'd)

And another thing, when am I going to get any kind of proper welcome off you, eh?

BUFFY

'Proper'? What do you mean?

SPIKE

Okay, starter for ten. Try to think back to what was going on last time we met. Rays of sunlight? Hordes of vampires? Me going up in flames? Is any of this sounding even vaguely familiar?

BUFFY

(frowns)

Of course it is, but what am I-

SPIKE

(angry)

You could have said 'Thanks, Spike, for destroying the Hellmouth, sacrificing yourself and saving the bloody day!' Not 'Oh, hello, Spike, now help me fight this bad guy who's come to kill me!'

BUFFY

(protests)

I didn't know what to say! When I found out you were alive again, yeah, I thought I should come and see you, but then I had this little problem where a demon possessed my sister! Maybe you heard about that?

SPIKE

Like I didn't have my own problems! I was a ghost for nearly two bloody months, so even if you had bothered to phone me, I wouldn't have been able to pick up and hear you!

(MORE)

SPIKE (cont'd)
 Maybe if you'd put as much effort
 into fighting that demon as you did
 holding grudges, we wouldn't all be
 so-

THUD! Angel SHOVES Spike backwards, anger blazing in his eyes.

ANGEL
 That's enough!

SPIKE
 Not bloody likely, I'm just getting
 started with her, she-

ANGEL
 I said, that's enough!

Angel SHOVES Spike again.

Spike blinks, then rears back and PUNCHES Angel in the jaw.

Stunned, Angel shakes his head, then as it registers that Spike actually dared to just hit him, Angel's pride takes over and he lunges for him, the two vampires clicking into their GAME FACES as they struggle.

BUFFY
 (incredulous)
 What the hell are you two doing? We
 don't have time for this!

Angel and Spike SLAM into the reception desk, grabbing each other by the shirt lapels as they continue to fight.

SPIKE
 He's had this coming!

ANGEL
 And I've had enough of putting up
 with you every damn day!

SPIKE
 Ooh, what's the matter, pride
 taking a dent now, is it?

BUFFY
 (furious)
 Stop it, both of you!

Buffy wades into the fight as the two vampires grapple, until a stray, flailing arm of Angel's HITS her, and she staggers backwards.

Spike and Angel stop in an instant, their eyes locked on Buffy as she recovers.

Buffy looks more shocked about being hit than in any pain, pressing a hand to the side of her face as she glares, open-mouthed, back at the two of them.

ANGEL

Buffy, I-

CRACK! Angel is floored by a huge left hook from Buffy, and he crashes to the floor.

Spike erupts into laughter, but Buffy turns on him next, and the blazing anger in her eyes quickly has Spike backing away defensively.

SPIKE

Er, hang on a minute, what did I say to-

POW! Buffy hits Spike as hard as she can, and he stumbles backwards, careening into the weapons display cabinet and SHATTERING the glass windows.

As Spike tries to get back to his feet, we hear running footsteps from off screen, and soon after both Skye and Nina appear on the first floor balcony, Skye still pulling her clothes on.

NINA

What the hell is going on down there?

The girls take in the scene, both taking off down the stairs.

As Buffy, looking like she doesn't know what's going on, backs away, Nina rushes to Angel and Skye to Spike, the girls helping their men back to their feet.

BUFFY

I- I'm sorry, I didn't-

NINA

What's wrong with you? Why are you three fighting?

BUFFY

I don't know, things just gout out of-

NINA

Oh, yeah?

Nina breaks away from Angel and marches towards Buffy, grabbing her and starting to shake her as she yells into her face.

NINA (cont'd)

Maybe we don't want you and your problems here! You ever think of that? Showing up and screwing everything up?

SKYE

Woah, Nina, chill out!

Skye hurries over and tries to pull Nina away - but as she touches Nina, Skye experiences the same moment of dizziness that we've seen happen to the others.

Nina continues to shout at Buffy as Skye tries to regain her balance.

NINA

Do you know what you are to me? Do you know what your name makes me think of?

Buffy is recovering now, not quite ready to hit Nina back yet but rapidly getting there.

BUFFY

No, why don't you tell me?

NINA

It makes me see how I'll always be second best! How I'll never be as important to him as you are!

Nina points towards Angel, who is rubbing his jaw as he marches over, vamp face now thankfully gone again.

ANGEL

Nina, that's enough! Let her go!

Nina throws a dark glare at Angel, then **SHOVES** Buffy away from her before turning her fury on Angel.

NINA

Why don't you just come out and say it? We both know that's the score here - difference is, I've learned to live with it, to accept it! You won't even do that for yourself!

ANGEL

That's now how it-

NINA

Like hell it isn't!

BUFFY

Hey! Look, Nina, we don't even know each other, so don't go saying things like-

NINA

Oh, give it a rest, will you? All both of these two goons ever think about is you, and we both know it!

Nina points to Angel and Spike this time, prompting an angry glare from Skye.

SPIKE

Don't drag me into this!

NINA

Why not? You were the next guy she shacked up with after Angel, right?

SPIKE

(floundering)

Well, yeah, but, I mean, you can't-

NINA

So doesn't that prove my point?

(to Skye)

Face it, Skye - we're always going to be 'the other woman' with these two.

Skye is silent. She looks to Spike to give him chance to try and dig his way out of this.

SKYE

Well?

Spike opens and shuts his mouth, trying to think of what to say, but after a few beats of failing to confirm or deny anything, Skye turns and marches away from him, tears already filling her eyes.

SPIKE

Skye, wait!

As she runs back upstairs, Spike chases after her, the two soon disappearing off screen.

Angel turns angrily to Nina.

ANGEL

Are you happy now? You see what you've done?

Nina turns to glare at Buffy again.

11 CONTINUED: (7)

11

NINA

Oh, yeah. I see exactly where the problem is.

As Buffy stares back at Nina, not knowing whether to yell, scream or start punching, we cut to:

12 INT. KITRIDGE'S APARTMENT. MORNING.

12

Kirsten walks in from the small, scruffy kitchen with two mugs of coffee.

She heads over to Kitridge, who is sitting on the edge of the bed, a large steel briefcase open before him. Inside the case is a bulky piece of surveillance equipment, and from that lead a pair of headphones, which Kitridge wears.

He chuckles and takes the 'phones off one ear as Kirsten passes him the mug.

KITRIDGE

I'm almost sorry I couldn't get a camera in there as well for this - this is absolute gold! Luckily, the bug in Nina's t-shirt is picking up everything just fine. I can't believe my luck in having Buffy Summers show up as well!

KIRSTEN

So what's going on? You said you were expecting to see them at each other's throats - what did you do them, exactly?

The various soundwave displays on the equipment flicker away as Kitridge turns to her.

KITRIDGE

You remember that one vial I asked you to get from the science division? That compound with the unpronounceable Latin title?

KIRSTEN

Yeah, took me long enough to find it! What is it?

KITRIDGE

I heard some of the lab boys talking about it a while back, they said they'd gotten the idea from the movie '28 Days Later.'

Kitridge sips his coffee, chuckling again as he listens in on another barrage of angry shouting from the Hyperion.

(CONTINUED)

KITRIDGE (cont'd)

It's a unique semi-magical virus, transferrable through any kind of physical contact, that gets into the target's system and accentuates every negative thought process rattling round their brain, heightening the angry and violent responses, and basically turning the victim into a one-man protest march.

KIRSTEN

(beat)

It's a virus that makes people get really pissed off?

Kitridge nods, sipping his coffee again.

KIRSTEN (cont'd)

But what's it going to achieve? I mean, isn't this just a little petty?

KITRIDGE

Not at all. I want them all at each other's throats because when we execute the next stage of our plan, it's going to end up tearing that team apart. Angel's nothing without his friends, and this should help take care of that quite neatly.

Kirsten shakes her head and smiles.

KIRSTEN

You are one mean bastard, James.

KITRIDGE

What can I say? Necessity is the mother of invention.

He leans over to kiss her, and as they embrace we cut to:

Wesley is getting dressed as best he can, having to leave his jacket and trousers as they're still covering up the sleeping Illyria, who is still using Fred's body.

The park is still empty as far as we can tell, but we can hear people's distant voices. The two of them had better get moving soon, before somebody finds them.

Wes gently shakes Illyria awake. She yawns and turns to him, smiling as she sees him and reaching up to touch him.

FRED

Morning.

WES

Yes, it is. We should get moving.

FRED

(frowns)

Can't we have five more minutes?

WES

We could, but chances are somebody's going to find us any second, and I don't fancy explaining to the police what we were doing out here.

(glances down)

Especially if you're still *sans* clothing...

Illyria looks down at herself, her naked body covered by the rest of Wes' clothes, and she sits up, wrapping his jacket protectively round herself.

ILLYRIA

I thought you would-

WES

Illyria, we really do need to get moving. I'm not sure yet how your ability to create the appearance of human clothes works, but if you could be a dear and make it happen, I'd feel much less exposed.

(beat)

No pun intended.

Wes stands, taking his trousers from a sour-faced Illyria as she closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.

Wes turns to look - and her terracotta jumpsuit starts to materialise, flowing like a liquid from Illyria's hands, up to her arms, and in moments its covered her whole body.

She stands, still with Fred's face, but dressed now as Illyria once more. With a gesture, her jumpsuit morphs itself into something more Fred-like - a plain summer dress and blouse. She turns to Wes.

ILLYRIA

Is this suitable?

WES

Perfect. Thank you.

13 CONTINUED: (2)

ILLYRIA

(hesitant)

The act we performed last night,
was it-

WES

Something we can discuss later.
Come on.

Wes takes one of her hands, and the duo head off towards the
treeline, out of sight.

As they leave our view, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

14 INT. SEWER TUNNELS. MORNING.

14

We're back down in LA's sewer system, picking up SONIA as she stalks into frame, peering left and right as she reaches a T-junction.

She chooses left, and as she turns the corner and walks on through the wide, circular tunnel, TAYLOR appears behind her, walking along far more casually.

TAYLOR

Alright, Sonia, we've been doing this for long enough now. If Connor was down here, we'd have found him by now!

SONIA

He's here somewhere, Taylor, I just know it!

TAYLOR

Where, then? We've been over these sections three times, we haven't missed anything! Wherever Angel's stashed the kid, it's not somewhere us mere mortals can get to in a hurry. Now will you give it up so we can go back and get some rest?

SONIA

No!

Sonia turns round and marches back up to Taylor.

SONIA (cont'd)

I have to know he's all right, and I'm not stopping looking until I find him. If you want to go back to the hotel, then go ahead. I'm staying.

Sonia turns away and walks on, and after a beat Taylor SIGHS and jogs to catch up with her.

TAYLOR

Alright, alright, one more hour, then I'm done. Okay?

SONIA

Fine.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

The duo turn into a darker section of the tunnels, and as they break out their flashlights and start to pace into the gloom, we cut back to:

15 INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. DAY.

15

Nobody notices Andrew as he sneaks carefully into Angel's office, silently closing the door after him.

Buffy, Angel and Nina are in a true Mexican standoff, Nina pacing up and down as Buffy and Angel throw awkward glances at each other.

NINA

What I don't get is, what makes her so much more special?

BUFFY

'Special'?

NINA

Why do they always want to go back to you, no matter how badly you hurt them, no matter how many things went wrong?

BUFFY

I-

ANGEL

Nina, this isn't the time for-

NINA

So when is? When will be a good time to address the fact that you still love her?

Angel freezes, looking from Nina to Buffy and back.

ANGEL

But-

NINA

(snaps)

Look, spare me the attempts to deny it, alright? I've had enough of them in my time with you already. Angel, we've got something really great, but as long as she's still around, it's never going to be good enough, is it?

ANGEL

You know it's not as simple as that.

(CONTINUED)

NINA

Oh? Then explain to me how you can sleep with me and not lose your soul, yet the first time you hopped into the sack with Buffy, you started murdering people again? Was it that good?

BUFFY

(shocked; to Angel)
You told her about that?

ANGEL

(guiltily)
Yeah.

BUFFY

(darkly)
Well, maybe we should-

NINA

Forget it! Just go and do whatever it is you came here to ask, and then go!

BUFFY

(angry)
Hey, just because you're obviously a bad girlfriend, don't take it out on-

SLAM! Buffy doesn't get chance to finish her sentence, as a snarling Nina POUNCES on her, pinning her to the floor.

Buffy's eyes widen in shock as Nina seems to grow a pair of huge FANGS, starting to GROWL like a cornered dog as she presses down on Buffy.

ANGEL

Nina! No! Don't do this!

Angel tries to drag Nina away, but she just turns and BITES him, sinking her new fangs deep into his leg.

Angel howls in pain and staggers backwards, and as Nina turns back to Buffy, blood on her lips, her eyes start to cloud over and darken.

Fur starts to sprout from the backs of Nina's hands, tufts of it bursting out across her face.

BUFFY

Oh, my God...

15 CONTINUED: (2)

15

Nina tilts her head back and HOWLS - she's starting to change into her werewolf side for the first time in a long time, and nothing is going to stop the transformation now!

Angel gets to his feet, clutching his injured leg, and manages to grab Nina, yanking her up and away from Buffy.

Halfway through her change now, with her hands becoming more like huge, clawed paws, Nina SWIPES at Angel, slicing into his chest.

He still hangs onto her, her kicking legs managing to catch the recovering Buffy.

We cut away from the degenerating fight scene into:

16 INT. HYPERION - ANGEL'S OFFICE. DAY.

16

Andrew, listening in on the melee outside, searches Angel's office for a phone, spotting the one on the desk and racing over.

He dials in a number, fidgeting nervously as he waits for them to answer.

GILES

(filtered; through phone)
Hello?

ANDREW

Um, Giles? It's Andrew.

GILES

Is everything alright? Where's Buffy?

ANDREW

Yeah, about that - something's going very wrong over here, and I was kinda hoping you could help me with it.

GILES

'Wrong' in what way?

There's a loud CRASH from outside, followed by a HOWL that could only come from a fully transformed werewolf.

ANDREW

(timid)
Um... every way, I think.

We cut from Andrew's tense expression over to:

17 INT. SEWER TUNNELS. DAY.

17

Back down in the depths with Sonia and Taylor, still having no luck as they search for Connor. They walk past us, taking a right turn and disappearing from view.

Moments later, two new arrivals walk onto the scene, a pair of rough-looking guys by the name of GRIMY and CHUBBS. Grimy is reading from a map via a small penlight, with Chubbs standing anxiously behind him.

CHUBBS
Is it round here?

GRIMY
Not yet, a few more turns and we're there.

CHUBBS
Come on, how much longer? This place stinks!

GRIMY
Of course this place stinks, you idiot, we're in the sewers! Now shut up and follow me.

Following the map, Grimy heads onwards, off screen, with Chubbs close behind.

As they leave, we pan back across to the right to see Sonia lean back over, looking down the tunnel she just left.

SONIA
Did you hear something?

Taylor joins her, sweeping his flashlight through the darkness.

TAYLOR
Nope.
(checks watch)
Alright, Sonia, your hour's up. I'm heading back to-

As Taylor looks up, Sonia is already on her way, walking back down the tunnel in the direction we just saw Grimy and Chubbs heading.

Taylor glances over his shoulder, presumably towards a way out, then back over to Sonia.

With a sigh, he starts to follow her, as we cut to:

18

EXT. PARK. DAY.

18

Wesley and Illyria, still in Fred's form, walk along a quiet promenade of the park, Illyria sweeping her hands along the flowers lining the path as Wes walks with his head down, deep in thought.

Illyria glances at him a few times before finally breaking the silence.

ILLYRIA

You have hardly spoken since we awoke. Is something displeasing you?

WES

(distracted)
Hmm?

ILLYRIA

Was it... Were things not as you had expected?

Wes pauses, a faint smile on his lips.

WES

To say I'd 'expected' anything that's happened the past few weeks would be a pretty big fib. Last night in particular!

ILLYRIA

I just felt that-

WES

You were just doing what comes naturally, as I believe an old song goes.

ILLYRIA

Is this a common impulse in humans?

WES

Of course! It's how we survive as a species.

ILLYRIA

Interesting... But is it ever just for enjoyment?

WES

More and more these days, it seems...

(CONTINUED)

They walk on in silence for a few moments before Illyria stops, obviously struggling to phrase something. Wes turns to her and waits for her to speak.

ILLYRIA

I do not... I do not understand why
I felt that way.

WES

I think it's pretty obvious by now
that Fred's consciousness is a
bigger part of your 'shell' than
any of us realised. Her thought
processes have been leaking into
your own since you took over, and
now it looks like things are
finally starting to balance out.

ILLYRIA

What does that make me now? Some
kind of hybrid?

Wes walks up to her, and after a moment takes one of her hands. Illyria looks confused, but allows Wes to hold it.

WES

It makes you very special, that's
for sure. I'll admit now, I was...
surprised by what happened between
us. But I think I can tell that you
weren't doing it all just for me.
Some part of you wanted to, as
well.

Illyria looks away, but Wes reaches out and places a finger under her chin, turning her back to face him.

WES (cont'd)

This, for example. As recently as a
few months ago, you'd have broken
my arm for daring to touch you like
this. And now? Now, here we are.
The archetypal morning after.

ILLYRIA

I almost feel... guilty?

Wes chuckles, and Illyria frowns at him.

ILLYRIA (cont'd)

(cross)

That is not a matter for humour!

WES

Actually, I think that's one of the most human things I've ever heard you say. If there was a way to enjoy sex without guilt creeping into the equation, this planet would be in a much better state, I think!

Wes turns and walks away, still grinning to himself, and after a moment Illyria hurries to catch up with him.

19 INT. SEWER TUNNELS. DAY.

19

Grimy and Chubbs have almost reached the grate concealing Connor's hideout, and with a nod from Grimy, Chubbs draws a long nightstick from his jacket.

Chubbs taps his nightstick on the grate, grinning.

CHUBBS

Room service!

No answer. Grimy steps forward, shining his torch down into the narrow tunnel beyond the grate.

GRIMY

Come on out of there, kid. We know you're down there.

No answer again. Grimy nods to Chubbs, who reaches forward and WRENCHES the grate free, dropping it on the tunnel floor.

GRIMY (cont'd)

Connor Riley! Get your ass out here now, kid, save us all a long wait.

Silence.

Then, with a SHOUT, CONNOR bursts out of the tunnel, barging into Grimy and Chubbs and knocking them both to the floor.

Connor looks round, trying to work out where to head for next, but Chubbs is on his feet first, CRACKING the nightstick across the back of Connor's head.

Stunned, he drops to his knees, and Chubbs is quick to grab him, hoist him over his shoulder and start to jog off screen, the recovering Grimy close by.

Moments later, Sonia and Taylor round the corner, Sonia swinging her flashlight beam up and down the tunnel.

SONIA

I heard something, I know I did!

(CONTINUED)

TAYLOR

You've been down here too long, kid. I think it's definitely time we went back up top. Besides, it's been a while now, maybe Angel'll tell you where to find him if you ask him nicely this time?

Sonia turns to Taylor, scowling.

SONIA

'Nicely'?

TAYLOR

(raises hands)
Just a suggestion.

Sonia turns to scan the tunnel again, but this time she spots the hole in the wall, and the discarded grate, partially hidden by the running water underfoot.

Sonia walks over, shining her flashlight down into the tunnel, as Taylor joins her.

TAYLOR (cont'd)

What's this?

SONIA

(penny drops)
Oh, no...

TAYLOR

Wait, wait - this was Angel's 'safe house'? A hole in a sewer wall?

Sonia points - and we can see that the tunnel leads into a small room, just barely visible thanks to the duo's combined torchlight, with others branching off it.

TAYLOR (cont'd)

You think he was here?

SONIA

I think he was here. Emphasis on the 'was.'

(turns to Taylor)
We need to find Angel. Now.

Sonia turns and starts to race away, back the way she came, and as Taylor starts to hurry after her, we cut to:

Spike is banging on the door to Skye's room, glancing over his shoulder as he hears more noise echoing up from the lobby.

SPIKE

Skye, come on! Open the door!
Sounds like there's a bloody circus
on the loose downstairs, we need to
go and check it out!

Silence. Spike grunts with annoyance and BANGS on the door again.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Skye, we can talk about this later!
Get your arse out here before
whatever's going on down there
spills out into the street!

We cut from Spike in the corridor to:

21 INT. HYPERION - SKYE'S ROOM. DAY. 21

Panning across from the doorway, we move across Skye's messy room until we find the girl herself, huddled in one corner of the room, clutching a pillow protectively to her.

She's sobbing, her mascara stained and running down her cheeks as she cries, continuing to ignore Spike's insistent pounding at the door, as we cut back down to:

22 INT. HYPERION - ANGEL'S OFFICE. DAY. 22

Andrew is still on the phone, with more shouts, crashes, yells and howls coming from the lobby outside.

ANDREW

Um, yeah, I've got it with me.
Should I check-

Andrew lifts his left hand out of his pocket, showing the bracelet he mentioned earlier - which is literally SMOKING! Andrew's eyes bulge, and he quickly stuffs his hand back into his pocket.

ANDREW (cont'd)

(quickly)

Definitely some kind of strong
magic at work. What can I do? Is
there some kind of dispel I can
use, or maybe...

(beat; listens)

Uh-huh. Okay. I'll try.

Andrew glances back over to the office door, and we cut to:

23

INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. DAY.

23

The lobby is an absolute mess, with the reception desk and its contents cracked and splintered, the sofas torn and stuffing spilling out across the lobby floor, and the weapons cabinet reduced to a heap of firewood.

In the middle of all this are Angel and Buffy, the snarling, fully transformed werewolf form of Nina snarling and growling between them.

Buffy and Angel circle Nina carefully, her wild and feral eyes glaring back at them. Buffy doesn't take her eyes off Nina as she speaks to Angel.

BUFFY

So, when did you plan on telling me about the whole 'I married a werewolf' side of things?

ANGEL

If you hadn't shown up here, this wouldn't have happened!

BUFFY

Alright, I've had enough of you blaming me for-

Nina LUNGES forward, slamming into Buffy and pinning her to the floor. Buffy manages to get her hands under Nina's jaws in time to stop them closing on her neck, but she's fighting a losing battle.

Angel tries to throw Nina off her, but Nina's too much for him to move, despite his efforts.

Nina's open jaws drip saliva down onto Buffy, and they slowly start to close in on her...

ANDREW (O.S.)

(shouts)

Rabbia vattenne!

There is a FLASH of light, and suddenly, everyone stops.

Nina, still growling, starts to slowly back away from Buffy, who picks herself up off the floor as Nina begins to slink towards one corner of the room.

Angel blinks, looking round the lobby as though seeing it for the first time, his jaw dropping at the devastation before him.

ANGEL

What the hell...

(CONTINUED)

Buffy checks a series of cuts and scratches on her face and arms, looking across at Angel - and then they both turn to Andrew, standing in the doorway to Angel's office.

He grins meekly at them both, the phone receiver still in his hand. He lifts it to his ear.

ANDREW

Uh, Giles? I think that worked.
Thanks.

Andrew puts the phone back down and tries to look as natural as possible.

ANDREW (cont'd)

So, er... how's everyone feeling
now?

Angel and Buffy look across to each other again, and from their bewildered stares, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

24 INT. HYPERION - LOBBY. DAY. 24

Buffy, Angel, Nina and Andrew are sat around the thoroughly trashed lobby. Everyone but Andrew is bandaged up, various bruises, gashes, cuts and scratches all on display.

Nobody is looking at anybody else - Buffy and Nina in particular can't seem to bring themselves to make eye contact.

After several beats of silence, a fidgeting Andrew finally speaks up.

ANDREW

Uh, so anyway, apparently whatever it was that had gotten into you all was something magical after all, but, um, now that I managed to cast that dispel on the hotel, I think it's all, you know... gone.

Angel looks briefly up to Andrew and nods.

ANGEL

Thanks.

Angel looks across to Nina. She meets his gaze for a second and then looks sharply away. He tries to look at Buffy and gets the same result.

With a weary sigh, Angel stands.

ANGEL (cont'd)

Now where the hell are Wes and Illyria?

Andrew looks round, then shrugs, and we cut to:

25 EXT. LA - CITY STREET. DAY. 25

Wes and Illyria, still as Fred, are walking quietly along one of the city's streets, making their way back to the hotel.

WES

I think we may be in a little trouble when we get back.

ILLYRIA

Why do you say that?

(CONTINUED)

WES

Well, not to put too fine a point on things, but we did sneak away from Angel when he needed us to help him out. I daresay he'll be less than pleased about that.

ILLYRIA

Should we tell him that we-

WES

(interrupts)

No. I think we can both agree this is something to keep to ourselves for the time being.

ILLYRIA

(looks away)

You are ashamed of me.

WES

No, not at all, it's just-

ILLYRIA

You are afraid of what the others will think?

Wes pauses, and his look lets Illyria know it may help if she didn't interrupt him this time.

WES

While your attempts to second guess me could almost be considered endearing, they're not exactly being very constructive. I was going to say that things are obviously still very complicated, and that's one thing Angel needs as little of as possible right now, with the Keeper still gunning for Connor.

ILLYRIA

Then we shall redouble our efforts.

WES

That's the spirit.

They walk on for a few beats, Illyria looking like she wants to say something.

WES (cont'd)

Yes?

ILLYRIA

Would you... I mean, would you consider, maybe-

WES

Letting it happen again?

Illyria looks to him - then slowly, nods, as if scared to admit the thought to herself.

WES (cont'd)

Right now, I don't know. Let's wait and see.

(beat)

I don't think it was a mistake, if that's what you're getting at.

ILLYRIA

You do not?

WES

I'm not saying it wasn't odd, but at the same time, it was... comforting. Like having a bit of something I wanted for a change.

Illyria looks into Wes' eyes, then manages a smile that's a hundred per cent Fred. Wes grins back, and the two walk on in silence, before we cut to:

Only Buffy and Angel are still here. They sit in silence for a moment.

ANGEL

Look, about what happened-

BUFFY

It's okay. I understand... I think.

ANGEL

Andrew said he's done a few small warding spells just to be sure, but he's pretty positive that whatever was causing us all to act like that is long gone.

BUFFY

I'd say it cleared the air, but...

She trails off. They both know a lot of things were said in anger that should have remained unsaid.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Look, if we're going to do anything about the Keeper, we need to do it now. I've got a flight booked back in two hours, and I promised myself I'd go back on time, whether I had anything to help Jackson or not.

ANGEL

Okay. I'll grab Spike, and we can-

MANNERS (O.S.)

Oh, that won't be necessary.

Angel leaps to his feet - and striding calmly across the debris-strewn lobby is HOLLAND MANNERS.

Buffy reaches for a nearby sword, scattered on the floor near the remains of the display cabinet, but Angel holds out a hand to stop her.

ANGEL

It's alright. He can't do anything.

BUFFY

(wary)
Who is he?

ANGEL

He's just a-

MANNERS

Ghost. My name's Holland Manners, I work for the local branch of Wolfram and Hart. I'm incorporeal, so there won't be any need for unnecessarily violent behaviour.

(beat)

And besides, I can see you've already been letting out a little frustration so far this evening!

Manners raises an eyebrow as he surveys the lobby.

ANGEL

What do you want here, Manners?

MANNERS

Actually, it's Buffy I'm here to talk to. It's about her little quest, her pilgrimage all the way out here to try and find a cure for her lover, all the way back home in sunny Cleveland.

BUFFY
You know something?

MANNERS
I certainly do.

Buffy takes a few steps towards Manners, bold and defiant.

BUFFY
Than let's hear it. 'Cause I've had
a hell of a day so far, and I'm not
in the mood to-

MANNERS
There is no cure.

Buffy's face drops for a beat, then she shakes her head.

BUFFY
No. You're lying. You know I'm on
to you and the Keeper, and you're
here to-

MANNERS
(firmly)
There is no cure.

Buffy stares back at Manners for a long beat.

MANNERS (cont'd)
I've been able to learn that you're
here based on the reports you stole
from Irwin Kane's offices, am I
right?

BUFFY
How did you-

MANNERS
(grins)
We have more eyes and ears than
you'll ever know, Miss Summers.
Suffice to say, the analysis you
based your trip out here on was
wrong. The Keeper has many powers,
but healing your boyfriend isn't
one of them. If you want to try and
steal his powers somehow, you're
welcome to do so, but I know you
have a plane to catch, so...

Manners lets it hang. Angel steps forward, reaching out to
place a hand on Buffy's shoulder - then stopping himself, as
though he isn't sure if he should touch her.

ANGEL

Don't listen to him, Buffy. We can be out of here in two minutes, that gives us plenty of time to-

BUFFY

He's not lying.

Angel looks from Buffy to Manners, then back.

ANGEL

You don't know that, he-

MANNERS

I'm afraid she does know it, Angel. She knew this was a false hope before she stepped on that plane her Watcher so thoughtfully provided for her. Having the new Council's Head Watcher as your own personal guardian must bring in plenty of benefits!

We can hear the hotel's fax machine, somewhere on the floor after the earlier fight, starting to buzz as it prints an incoming fax.

MANNERS (cont'd)

I think you'll find that's the correct analysis of the Keeper's energy signatures. If you want to have your boffins check it over, you'll see that your-

ANGEL

(angrily)

Manners, shut up. She's not going to buy into your lies.

BUFFY

(emotional)

He's right...

Manners grins at Buffy, then with a nod to Angel he turns and starts to walk away.

ANGEL

Hey, wait! You're not just going to listen to him and believe it, are you? This is what they do! They mess with people, they lie, they deceive, they-

Angel stops as he sees Buffy is suddenly close to tears. He looks up and sees Manners walking blithely out of the front doors, before turning back to Buffy.

(CONTINUED)

BUFFY

I just didn't want to believe it...
I didn't want to think there was
nothing I could do... And I left
them!

She turns to Angel, tears starting to roll down her cheeks.

BUFFY (cont'd)

I left all my friends when they
needed me! Somebody's got Xander's
baby, and I let him talk me into
flying out here! And for what? A
hunch? Guesswork?

Buffy breaks down, and Angel instinctively pulls her close to
him, wrapping his arms tightly round her as she sobs into his
chest.

ANGEL

Ssh. It's alright.

We pull back a little from Angel, still holding the sobbing
Buffy tightly, to see that Nina is watching them both from
the first floor balcony.

With a look on her face somewhere between jealous anger and
heartbroken longing, she turns and walks silently away.

INT. HYPERION - SKYE'S ROOM. DAY.

Back inside Skye's room, the door is suddenly flung open, and
Spike marches inside.

Skye hasn't moved from the side of the bed, hiding in the
shadows cast by the afternoon sun.

Spike stops, a few feet away from the bed, when he sees that
with all the windows' blinds up, he can't safely reach Skye
on the far side of the room.

SPIKE

Nice touch. Trying to keep the big
bad wolf at bay?

SKYE

Spike, go away.

SPIKE

No chance. I'm not moving until you
come over and talk to me. What are
you so upset about, anyway? Did I
do something wrong?

SKYE

(cold)

You know what you did.

Spike waits for her to elaborate, but when Skye stays silent, Spike sighs and finds a safe spot of the room to stand in, away from the encroaching sunlight.

SPIKE

Funny, I could've sworn I didn't!
Listen, I've had over a hundred
years of girls playing games with
me, and I've got even less patience
with it now than I did then!

SKYE

Do you still love her?

SPIKE

Still love who?

SKYE

Don't play innocent, Spike. It
doesn't suit you. I'm talking about
Buffy, and you know it.

Spike pauses, fumbling in his jeans for a cigarette as he plans his answer.

SPIKE

It's complicated.

SKYE

(scoffs)

I'll bet.

SPIKE

What do you want me to say? I'm
with you now, aren't I? We've spent
the past few months doing our merry
little dance, we finally get what
we want, but all it takes is my ex
showing up to send everything back
to zero?

Skye stands at last, sitting on the edge of her bed, her back still turned to Spike.

SKYE

So this was all just a day's work
for you, was it? Pop some
starstruck young Slayer's cherry,
then drop everything when the love
of your life walks back through the
doors?

SPIKE

Don't you think you're overreacting
just a little bit?

(beat)

Hang on, 'pop your cherry'? You
mean you were-

SKYE

A virgin, yes. Until this morning.
And there's really nothing better
for building up a girl's confidence
then seeing the guy she just chose
to give herself to tripping over
his words when asked if he still
loves his last girlfriend.

Spike knows there's going to be no way he can talk himself
out of this. He waits in silence for a beat, smoking, then
walks over to the door.

SKYE (cont'd)

Yeah, walk out. It seems to be
something you're good at.

SPIKE

(tetchy)

For your information, I was just
going to leave you to it for a bit
until everything settles down! Do
you even know or care about what
was going on earlier? Why we were
all at each other's throats?

Skye shifts round a little to stare at him.

SPIKE (cont'd)

Some spell or other, we all zapped
each other with it like pass the
bleedin' parcel. It's sorted out
now, though, but it explains why
the lobby looks like it had a
werewolf running loose in it.

(beat)

Because it did.

SKYE

Nina? Is she-

SPIKE

She's fine. She's probably having a
similar conversation with Angel to
the one we're having right now.

Skye turns away from Spike again, and he gets the point. He
pauses in the doorway.

SPIKE (cont'd)
For what it's worth, yes, I do
still love her.

SKYE
(sarcastic)
Glad you finally came out and said
it.

SPIKE
But that doesn't mean I can't ever
love somebody else.

He starts to pull the door closed.

SPIKE (cont'd)
Think about that.

He shuts the door, leaving Skye to her thoughts. Sadly, it
doesn't take long for those thoughts to start her crying
again, and she sinks back down into the shadows beside her
bed, as we cut downstairs to:

Buffy has her bag, and so does Andrew, the two standing by
the doors. Angel watches her from the foot of the stairs.

ANGEL
Call me when you get back, okay?

BUFFY
(nods)
Sure.

ANGEL
And I'll keep looking for something
to help.

BUFFY
I know you will.
(beat)
Thank you.

Angel smiles, and Buffy stares up into his eyes for a long
beat.

She moves closer to him...

... and Angel moves the rest of the way.

They kiss. Just for a few moments, but it's enough. For now,
at least.

They break away, and Buffy smiles up at him.

Without another word, she turns and steps out through the doors. Andrew manages a wave as he follows her out.

Angel turns back round, still smiling, and heads back into his office.

He Hasn't seen Nina, standing on the balcony overhead, glaring down at him. She saw the whole thing. From her look of utter hurt and betrayal, we cut to:

29 INT. KITRIDGE'S APARTMENT. DAY.

29

James takes off the earphones and shuts the briefcase containing the surveillance equipment, settling back on the bed with a smug grin.

The TV is on in the background with some trashy late afternoon talk show, as there is a KNOCK at the door.

James gets up and opens it to reveal Kirsten, who holds up a plastic bag full of takeaway food boxes.

KIRSTEN

I figured while you're living in this end of town, you may as well eat from this part of town. Found this neat little Chinese place just round the corner.

She heads inside, laying the bag down on the bedside table, before turning to embrace Kitridge, who kisses her warmly.

KITRIDGE

You're here early, you're not sneaking away from work early just for me, are you?

KIRSTEN

Manners went out to make a 'house call' or something, gave me the afternoon off.

Kitridge glances at the surveillance briefcase and grins - he heard every word of the house call in question!

KIRSTEN (cont'd)

And besides, it takes me twice as long to get here with all the doubling back and stuff you make me do!

KITRIDGE

It's just a precaution. I don't want Manners knowing where I am just yet.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KITRIDGE (cont'd)
 He won't be looking too hard for
 me, admittedly, but just in case.

Kirsten kisses him again and then scoops up the bag, heading into the kitchen. Kitridge sits back down on the bed as we hear plates clinking coming from the kitchen.

KIRSTEN (O.S.)
 You seem in a good mood, did
 everything go to plan today?

KITRIDGE
 So far, yes, I'm just waiting on
 one more phone call.

As if on cue, Kitridge's cell phone RINGS. He scoops it up and answers.

KITRIDGE (cont'd)
 James Kitridge.
 (beat; listens)
 Uh huh, sorry to hear that, but did
 you get him at least?
 (listens; grins)
 Excellent job. I'll be over to see
 you soon, keep him secure till
 then.

Kitridge hangs up as Kirsten heads back in from the kitchen, two trays of greasy but appetising-looking Chinese food in her hands.

KIRSTEN
 Who was that?

KITRIDGE
 Confirmation of a business
 opportunity.

KIRSTEN
 (rolls eyes)
 You know you don't have to speak
 like you work in that office any
 more, James! What was that call
actually all about?

KITRIDGE
 One of the last stages of the plan.
 I have something that Angel wants,
 but that Manners and the Keeper
 want more.

He leans back, grinning as Kirsten feeds him a stray sweet and sour vegetable.

KITRIDGE (cont'd)
 It's time to make them an offer.

29 CONTINUED: (2)

The two grin at each other, and as they start on their meal,
we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW