

# Hell's Gate

Season One - Episode Eight

"The Atomic Weight of Iodine"

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(Based on characters and situations created  
by Joss Whedon and Mutant Enemy Productions)

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**TEASER**

FADE IN:

INT. COMMAND CENTRAL.

LON types away on one of the computers, all alone. He suddenly SLAMS his fist on the terminal.

LON  
Dammit...

He rubs his face with both hands. FRANK enters.

FRANK  
What's going on?

LON  
I've been trying to locate the source of the anomalous portal activity.

FRANK  
From the data you got on the one James came through?

LON  
Exactly.

FRANK  
Any luck?

LON  
Absolutely zero. It's frustrating, no matter what I try... it's like trying to catch a falling leaf. Even trying seems to make what you're after get further away.

Frank nods.

FRANK  
Well, you should take a break.

LON  
I can't. If indeed some external force is causing these portals to open, portals that the sphere is powerless to control, need I remind you, we must find it. If we don't, we could have demons attacking us right inside this very building.

FRANK

God knows it would be the first time for that.

LON

Ah, yes, sarcasm, always helpful.

Frank puts his hand on Lon's shoulder.

FRANK

Seriously. Come upstairs, have something to eat, a drink or something. Relax for a minute.

(beat)

Consider that an order.

Lon nods reluctantly. They walk together out of the room.

LON

Relax, relax, relax, that's all anyone seems to do round here.

FRANK

It's just, you seem to like work so much we'd feel bad if we took any away from you.

Lon gives Frank a wry smile as we:

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - NIGHT. CONTINUOUS.

Lon and Frank enter the empty diner via the kitchen. Lon sits at the counter. Frank reaches under the counter and pulls out a bottle of liquor and two glasses.

LON

You keep alcohol under the counter?

FRANK

(waving the bottle around)

I didn't pull this out of my ass.

LON

Do you even have a liquor license?

FRANK

Now, see, it's questions like that which get us in trouble

LON

Trouble?

FRANK

Yeah. That's an area where we have to throw around words like "laws" and "criminals" and "the diner shutting down."

LON

So no, then.

FRANK

Tell the man what he's won.

Frank opens the bottle and pours a small amount into each glass. He pushes one over to Lon who looks at it apprehensively.

Frank nods insistently toward Lon's glass. Hesitantly, Lon picks it up. Frank picks his up and clinks it into Lon's. In unison, they down the glasses' contents.

A beat and then both men cough and sputter. While Frank appears to have enjoyed his beverage, Lon makes a disgusted face.

LON

(nodding toward the  
bottle)

Are you sure that didn't come from  
your ass?

Frank chuckles.

There's the sound of FEET ON STAIRS. MIKE enters from the upstairs apartments and sits down at the counter beside Lon.

FRANK

Hey, Mike.

MIKE

Hey.

Lon looks at his watch, then at Mike. He sighs loudly. Mike notices.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(to Lon)

Something wrong, princess?

LON

No, it's just... ten o'clock, is  
all.

MIKE  
I'm sorry. Am I interrupting your  
"special-time"?

LON  
No, no.

They sit uncomfortably for a beat.

LON (CONT'D)  
It's just you were complaining all  
day how you have such a huge test  
tomorrow and yet here you are, at  
ten o'clock at night, not studying,  
just sitting around.

Mike turns on his stool to face Lon. Frank backs away slowly.

MIKE  
For your information, "Dear Abby,"  
I'm taking a break, seeing as how  
I've been at it since we got back  
from excoriating that dragon-thing.

LON  
That was a Pu-Nahb demon, and we  
didn't excoriate it. Excoriation is  
the act of tearing off a thing's  
skin. We disemboweled it.

MIKE  
Which took up valuable study time!

LON  
Combating the forces of evil is  
more important than your dream of  
becoming a bloody artist!

Mike stands up quickly, knocking the stool across the room  
and scuffing the diner floor. Frank winces.

MIKE  
I happen to be a great artist,  
buddy!

LON  
Just because you're good at  
something, doesn't mean it's  
important. But you're too damn  
immature to realize that you have a  
greater purpose than drawing funny  
talking cats for insurance  
companies!

MIKE

You think I'm just a freakin' child! "Oh, yeah, Mikey, you'll be a great artist one day, mmhmm." Patronizing little nancy.

Lon stands up and turns away. He pulls on his coat and heads for the door.

FRANK

Where are you going?

Lon pauses and turns back to face Frank.

LON

You're the one that said I should take a break. Suddenly, I feel in need of a long one.

With a final glare at Mike, Lon EXITS the diner through the front door. There's a beat as the bell over the door jingles and Mike sighs, loosing the tension in his muscles.

FRANK

(beat)

Well, I'm going to bed.

He goes upstairs. Mike sits down and SLAMS his hand down on the counter.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DINER - NIGHT.

Lon is walking across the street, huffing, his arms crossed. As he walks across our field of vision, the camera PANS AWAY to the OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET. A car is parked parallel to the sidewalk.

INT. CAR INTERIOR - CONTINUOUS

An OVER THE SHOULDER shot, of a FIGURE watching Lon. All that can be seen of the person is its right shoulder clad in a coat and its gloved hand on the steering wheel.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE DINER - CONTINUOUS

As Lon turns the corner, the vehicle pulls away from the curb and begins to follow him.

BLACKOUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. CHUCKY'S BAR - NIGHT.

CU on the "Chucky's" marquee on the wall. Though not upscale, the bar is as close to "classy" that one can get in a small town.

The camera PANS right to Lon who is sitting at the bar, nursing a golden-brown drink in a glass. The BARTENDER steps up in front of Lon, wiping the bar down.

BARTENDER

You look like you've had a rough day.

LON

(looking up)  
You could say that.

He downs his shot.

LON (CONT'D)

Another.

The barkeep pours the drink and looks Lon over. He's clearly seen this before.

BARTENDER

Let me guess. Big fight?

LON

Yeah.

BARTENDER

Tough break. Wife? Girlfriend?

LON

(looking up; sputtering)  
What? No! Why would you... why would you think that?

BARTENDER

(shrugs)  
I seen that look on men's faces before. Usually a dame is involved.

Lon has finished this shot and taps his glass. The bartender again fills the shot glass.

LON  
Well, no. It wasn't a "dame". Just  
a... a co-worker.

He takes another shot. He's in a hurry not to be sober  
anymore.

BARTENDER  
You and this "co-worker" close?

LON  
No. We don't-- never really...  
talk, he and I. For some reason  
he's just so... frustrating.

The bartender takes the bottle of drink and sets it down on  
the bar.

BARTENDER  
I gotta go wipe off tables, but if  
you want some more, help yourself.

LON  
I thought you were supposed to--  
(Lon hiccups)  
--cut me off eventually.

The bartender gives a lopsided grin and shrugs.

BARTENDER  
That sort of thing is bad for  
business.

He walks away, leaving Lon to drink, which he does. After a  
moment, a BRUNETTE comes over to Lon. Her shapely body is  
encased in a sexy dress. Short brown hair frames her face  
which, along with a pair of large glasses, partly obscures  
her striking features. She sits down on the stool next to  
him.

BRUNETTE  
Hi.

LON  
Hello.

BRUNETTE  
I heard you talking.

LON  
(looks to where she had  
been sitting)  
From all the way over there?

BRUNETTE  
I've got good hearing. You noticed  
where I was sitting?

LON  
In my line of work you... notice  
things.

BRUNETTE  
(smiling, shifting her  
shoulders)  
I'm sure you do.

She settles in closer to him. A gold locket dangles  
seductively between her ample cleavage which is on full  
display.

BRUNETTE (CONT'D)  
Where does a big... strong... man  
like you hang his whiskey-soaked  
hat?

LON  
Oh, God. I don't even want to  
contemplate going home right now.

BRUNETTE  
(smiling wider)  
Mmmmm. That's good to hear.

LON  
Why's that?

BRUNETTE  
I was hoping maybe you and I could  
hang out a little more. Maybe back  
at my place?

Lon glances down at her cleavage for a quick second and then  
looks off to the side and cocks a flustered half-smile.

LON  
Sure. Yeah. I mean, yes. I would  
like that.

The Brunette grins.

BRUNETTE  
One more drink for the road?

LON  
Sure.

The Brunette motions for the bartender, who has already heard the order and nods, making the drinks. He slides the glasses across the bar to the Brunette, who places her hand over the top of both glasses, palm covering the opening, and hands Lon a glass. They touch their glasses together in a silent toast to fornication and drain the shots.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT.

The Brunette is supporting Lon on her shoulder, showing surprising strength. Lon's slumped, sort of out of it, and acting loopy.

LON (CONT'D)

Do... do I still have a left side?

BRUNETTE

Yes, sweetie.

LON

It's only, I can't feel it.

BRUNETTE

It's there.

LON

You sure?

BRUNETTE

It's dragging along behind us pretty nicely now.

LON

I feel odd.

BRUNETTE

You're pretty drunk.

LON

No, no. I don't get drunk.

He stops moving.

LON (CONT'D)

I-- is everything always this swimmy?

The Brunette takes his hand and pulls him a little further. They've finally reached the Brunette's car, and she unlocks the doors. She puts Lon in the back seat, laid down.

BRUNETTE

It's nothing personal, it's just  
that I don't want you throwing up  
in my car.

She closes the door and leans up against the side of her car. Instantly her demeanor changes. Her stance becomes that of a predator with prey in its sights. In one graceful motion she reaches up and pulls off her brown wig, revealing her true dark blonde hair underneath. She tosses her glasses on the ground and turns so that her face is in the light of a street lamp. It's a familiar face: HESTER the vampire, last seen after the dusting of her vampire lover. She smiles, licks her canine teeth, and gets into the driver's seat of the car.

FADE TO:

EXT. FRANK'S DINER - MORNING

Establishing shot of the diner.

INT. FRANK'S DINER - CONTINUOUS.

Mike sits at the diner table, drinking a cup of coffee. VI sits next to him, TAMSIN at a table a little further away.

MIKE

...and that should pretty much fill  
up my day. What are you gonna do  
after classes?

VI

Oh, you know. I was just gonna go  
out... shopping.

MIKE

Well, have fun-- wait. There's  
nowhere to shop around here.

VI

Is too. Secret places. They don't  
like your kind.

Mike looks at her, one eyebrow raised.

MIKE

They don't like out-of-towners?

VI

(nervous)  
N-no. They're ho-homophobic.

MIKE

(slams his hand on the  
table)

You're going to the Roundhouse to  
flirt with Rick!

VI

Am not!

MIKE

Are too!

VI

How'd you know?

MIKE

You women all speak in code. "Going  
shopping" means you're hunting for  
men, "Secret place" means it's a  
guy I like too, "homophobic" means  
"keep your gay, gay man-hands off  
my slice of Boston Cream Pie!"

VI

Well, yes. But now that you've  
cracked our carefully crafted  
female language, I'm going to have  
to kill you.

MIKE

Bring it.

VI

What? You think you can take me?

MIKE

You weigh like thirty pounds!

VI

But I'm superstrong and much faster  
than you. Slayer. Remember?

Mike spreads his fingers apart, and thin lines of blue  
lightning spread between them.

MIKE

(playful)

Bring it, bitch.

FRANK (O.S)

Ah, the joyful lilting of little  
children.

Frank descends the stairs, stretching his arms over his head. He looks over at Tamsin, who's staring at the table, disinterested. He sits at the booth she's occupying, across from her, and puts his hand on the table.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
How you doing?

TAMSIN  
(blah)  
Fine.

Frank frowns.

FRANK  
You know you can't lie to me,  
Tamsin.

TAMSIN  
(finally looking up)  
He was here, Frank. He was right  
here, I held him!

At the bar, Mike looks down and Vi bites her bottom lip.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)  
For two days he was...

FRANK  
It wasn't him.

TAMSIN  
(seriously)  
He was close enough.  
(beat)  
My face is probably all red... I'm  
going to go to the loo.

She gets up, wiping away the tears which threaten to spill out, and walks upstairs. Frank gets up from the booth and moves around behind the counter to his usual spot.

FRANK  
So, uh, guys... where's Tyler?

VI  
Went to work.

MIKE  
He's a responsible adult with an  
actual job. He had to leave early.

FRANK

(smugly)

Responsible adult. Wonder what that's like?

(just realizing)

And speaking of responsible, where's Lon?

MIKE

(rolling his eyes)

Probably still out moping because the kids at school were mean to him.

VI

What?

MIKE

We had a fight and Lady Di ran off to regain her composure.

FRANK

He should have been back by now, though. He usually likes to get an early start at being pompous.

MIKE

Whatever, dude. He's probably fine. Just too stubborn to share a room with me.

Frank nods and begins cleaning the counter with a rag.

CUT TO:

INT. HESTER'S BEDROOM - DAY.

We are CU on Lon's face-- he takes up our entire view. Lon appears to be sleeping peacefully, and as the scene opens he JERKS AWAKE.

LON

(mumbled; from a dream)

No. Father! I don't want any bloody cheese...

He blinks a few times to clear his eyes.

LON (CONT'D)

Where the hell-- oh, yes. The bar. The woman.

(beat)

A woman!

He smiles a cocky smile. Then he turns his head to the side. ANGLE ON: A pair of high high-heeled shoes on the floor. PAN ACROSS the floor over a black dress, a black lace bra and matching set of panties, and finally a pair of stockings. The camera continues UP THE BEDSIDE TABLE, and Lon finally sees the black wig lying next to a bedside lamp. His smile fades.

LON (CONT'D)

What...?

We finally PULL BACK off the bed to reveal all of Lon-- he's still fully dressed and is handcuffed to the bedposts. Suddenly Lon begins JERKING his arms about, trying to free himself.

LON (CONT'D)

Oh, God! Oh, God!

He strains with his upper body to lift himself up, but can't. His kick wildly, but it does little good. Then the DOOR TO THE ROOM OPENS. Lon turns to face his captor. Hester steps through the doorway. Lon GASPS.

LON (CONT'D)

No...

Hester JUMPS across the room in one leap and lands on the bed. She moves to straddle Lon, and grabs his face with one hand. She leans down close to his face.

HESTER

Mmmm... I've got big plans for you,  
loverboy.

She smiles wickedly and runs her tongue across her lips as Lon turns his face from hers.

BLACKOUT.

**END OF ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. HESTER'S BASEMENT.

Lon has been tied to a wooden chair, hands behind his back, feet bound to the chair legs. There's a chalk circle on the pavement floor in front of him, and around the circle are bowls of various herbs, roots, hair, and a bowl with a few drops of blood in it. At the end of the circle furthest from Lon is a dead lamb. Hester stands across the basement from Lon, staring at him.

LON  
(nodding towards the  
circle)  
What is all this?

HESTER  
You can't figure it out?

LON  
(studying the circle)  
You've got... netherroot. A rare  
form of Father Dominic's Cord. If  
I'm not mistaken that's the last  
surge of blood from a dying heart.  
And a freshly-slaughtered lamb, I  
assume as a symbol for a vessel to  
be filled--  
(his eyes widen)  
A bodiless resurrection?

HESTER  
(smiling)  
Exactly.

LON  
You're trying to bring back your  
mate!

HESTER  
And let me tell you, it'd have been  
a Hell of a lot easier if you and  
your commandos hadn't set that  
house on fire scattering his ashes  
to the winds!

Lon squints his eyes, thinking for a moment.

LON  
 You don't need a human sacrifice  
 for this sort of thing, just some  
 part of the body being restored.  
 Why am I here?

Hester moves closer to Lon, pulling a rolled-up scroll from her pocket and unfurls it under Lon's nose.

HESTER  
 Because I can't read the damn  
 incantation!

Lon looks from the paper up to Hester once. Then twice. Then he BURSTS INTO LAUGHTER. Hester looks on, uncomprehending.

HESTER (CONT'D)  
 What? What's so funny?

LON  
 (gasping for breath)  
 You think--ahaha --that I'm going  
 to help you? Heh heh.

HESTER  
 I'm still lost.

LON  
 What would possibly possess me to  
 assist you in bringing back from  
 Hell a conscience-less murderer?

HESTER  
 (glaring)  
 You'd best do as I say, Brit.

LON  
 Never going to happen.

Hester grins and straightens up.

HESTER  
 And here I was praying you'd say  
 that.

She walks off, leaving Lon, no longer laughing. He looks scared at her last comment.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTRAL - DAY

Frank is standing in front of a computer bank, typing, looking up occasionally to check a spreadsheet taped beside the monitor. He stops typing and rubs his eyes. He checks his watch.

FRANK

Okay...

Frank heads up the stairs into the diner.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - CONTINUOUS

Frank walks to the stairs that lead to the upper apartments.

FRANK (CONT'D (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Mike! Vi!

There's a beat and then the sound of FOOTSTEPS coming down the stairs. Mike is first, dripping wet and wearing a very short pink robe with "Vi" embroidered on the right lapel. Vi follows, dressed in a long bathrobe, with a green mask of face cream covering her visage.

MIKE

What's going on?

Frank can't respond, he's merely staring at the two and their ramshackle appearance.

VI

(beat; waves hand in  
Frank's face)

Uh? Frank?

FRANK

What the hell goes on in this  
house!?

MIKE

There's no school today. Some kind  
of teacher seminar.

VI

So I decided to take a spa day.

FRANK

Okay.

(to Mike)

What's with...

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)  
 (motioning to Mike's  
 attire)  
 ...this?

MIKE  
 I was in the shower! I couldn't  
 find a towel.

Vi takes a nice long look at Mike's legs and grins.

FRANK  
 I just want to know, is it going to  
 become a habit?

MIKE  
 You know, it's growing on me.

He examines his legs.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 Plus the breeze is just... well,  
 gosh, it's just swell.

Frank nods.

FRANK  
 Perfect.

The DOOR to the diner OPENS and Tamsin walks in.

TAMSIN  
 Hey, guys, what's-- oh, and look,  
 no pants.

MIKE  
 I'm trying out a new thing.

FRANK  
 No, no, no. You are not trying out  
 a new thing. No new things. This no-  
 pants... "event" is going to be  
 isolated.

MIKE  
 Hard-ass.

Tamsin looks at Vi.

TAMSIN  
 Spa day?

VI  
 Yes.

TAMSIN  
Done the feet yet?

VI  
I was just getting to them, do you  
wanna come up and help?

TAMSIN  
(as the girls move to the  
stairs)  
Sure. You know, I read this  
magazine the other day, and it said  
if you put--

FRANK  
(shouting)  
Hey!

Tamsin and Vi turn to look at Frank. Mike stops looking at  
his legs and focuses.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Lon's been gone since last night.  
We need to go find him. So you--  
(to Mike)  
go and put on some damn clothes.  
And you--  
(to Vi)  
stop playing Elphaba and get in  
your ass-kicking gear.

Mike and Vi hurry up the stairs, seeing that Frank's slipped  
into commando-mode. Once they're gone, Tamsin gives Frank a  
smirk.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
What?

TAMSIN  
Elphaba? I never fancied you as a  
"Wicked" fan.

FRANK  
(defensively)  
A guy can't have some culture?

Tamsin cocks her eyebrow as we:

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S SUV - DAY.

Frank and Tamsin sit in the front, and now-groomed-and-  
dressed Vi and Mike in the back.

MIKE

What's the plan? Are we just going to drive around this half-horse town and pray real hard that we find a soggy, hung-over Brit lying on the ground?

FRANK

No. I've got a thing here--  
(thumps the dashboard)  
that will lead me right to him.

MIKE

How?

FRANK

There's a tracking device in his car.

MIKE

(bewildered)  
I'm sorry?

Vi and Tamsin don't look shocked.

FRANK

Yeah. Standard, for an operation like this.

MIKE

It's standard to spy on your friends and monitor their moves?

FRANK

Look, kid, don't go all PATRIOT Act on me. I didn't plant a bug on his dashboard and I don't have cameras in his apartment. I just thought knowing where his car was might be useful one day.

(mock surprise)

And what do you know! Lon's lost and this little blinking light is leading us right to him!

Mike leans back in the car, clearly unsatisfied. Frank drives on.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT - DAY.

Frank's SUV pulls up beside Lon's car in the parking lot. Frank parks the car and the team exits the vehicle. Vi peers into the window of the car.

VI

Well, he didn't set up camp.

TAMSIN

Perhaps the bartender wouldn't let him drive home. Let's go check inside.

The gang crosses the parking lot and heads into the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. CHUCKY'S BAR.

At this time of day, the bar's fairly empty. Just one MAN, sitting in the corner, and the Bartender, cleaning a glass. Frank sits down on a stool across from the Bartender, and the rest stand around him.

BARTENDER

(re: Vi)

She twenty-one?

FRANK

Yeah.

BARTENDER

Only, I'll get in trouble if she's not twenty-one and someone finds out.

VI

(to Mike)

Why is it always me? Why not you?

MIKE

People are floored by my maturity. They see you, they think, "Eh, pep squad."

VI

Don't make me slap you.

MIKE

You could, but legally it's a hate crime.

Frank hasn't even turned to look at this exchange.

FRANK

Yeah, look. Did a squirrely,  
depressed British guy come in here  
last night?

BARTENDER

I don't--

TAMSIN

He's also kind of pretentious, uses  
lots of big words.

BARTENDER

(snaps fingers)

Oh, yeah. That guy. Came in here  
whining about how his girlfriend or  
something was mean to him.

MIKE

Whoa, buddy! Not his girlfriend.

The bartender shrugs; what does he care?

FRANK

Do you know where he went when he  
left here?

BARTENDER

(thinks)

Uh, yeah. He got picked up by some  
hot brunette chick.

The gang takes this in. Slowly they turn to look at each  
other. Tamsin steps forward, nudging Frank aside.

TAMSIN

Maybe we described him wrong. Kind  
of lean, whimpy, has an annoying  
voice? Doesn't shut up?

BARTENDER

That's him. This chick was way out  
of his league.

The gang still look unconvinced, but Frank continues.

FRANK

This woman... you know her?

BARTENDER

(shaking his head)

Never seen her before.

TAMSIN  
Are you certain?

BARTENDER  
You kidding me, doll? A broad that  
hot, I'd remember. That rack! Whooh!  
(beat)  
Sorry ma'am.

Tamsin nods. The bartender leans in to Mike.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)  
(quietly; with a sly grin)  
Her caboose was pretty sweet too.

MIKE  
Ah, yeah. Thanks.

BARTENDER  
Good luck finding your friend. I  
gotta get back to work.

The bartender gives the group a wink and walks off. The gang  
circle up.

TAMSIN  
So Lon got lucky.

MIKE  
With a hot brunette with a nice  
rack and sweet caboose.

There's a beat. No-one can quite believe it.

VI  
Fifty bucks says he's dead already.

From their concerned looks, we:

FADE TO BLACK.

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

INT. HESTER'S BASEMENT - DAY.

ANGLE ON: The basement floor. We PAN ALONG the clean concrete floor, finally reaching a trail of RED BLOOD. There's the sound of a KNIFE going back in its LEATHER SHEATH. We follow the blood trail across the floor, UP A LEG, to a MAN'S CHEST, which is absolutely covered in blood. Further up we go, and the man is revealed as Lon. He's got a massive cut across his left eye. His shirt is ripped wide open, and a tic-tac-toe board of cuts is etched into his chest. Other, less-gushy scratches exist all over Lon's face and arms. It's obvious from the gallon or so of blood covering the left side of Lon's head that he's been partially scalped.

Hester steps around Lon, squatting in front of his WHEEZING, PANTING form.

HESTER

It's not that hard, Lonnie. Just read the pretty words on the old, old paper and everything will be over.

LON

(taking deep, pained  
breaths)  
You're not going to let me go.

HESTER

(matter-of-fact)  
Well, no. But I promise you, from the bottom of my admittedly evil heart, I'll make your death painless.  
(holding out the scroll)  
Now what does the incantation say?

LON

(reading the scroll)  
The atomic weight of Iodine is  
126.90.

Hester sighs, rolls up the scroll, and SLAPS Lon. Her long fingernails cut through the flesh of Lon's nose.

HESTER

This is your area, boy! I've been studying you. You know this mystical stuff! You're not a soldier, you're not trained to resist torture.

LON

Yeah.

HESTER

So why are you?

LON

Honestly? It tickles me.

Hester's neutral expression immediately darkens, and she punches Lon with a closed fist. There's a CRACK, and Lon makes a pitiful CRYING sound for a moment, before regaining his composure.

LON (CONT'D)

(between gasps)

I never... really liked that bone... anyway.

When Lon turns back to us, the area around the wound has already begun to purple. Hester grabs Lon by the hair and forces him to look at the scroll again.

HESTER

Read this thing to me, or I'll tear your nose off.

LON

I guess I'll just have to find something else to look down on people from.

Hester does not appreciate self-deprecation. She grabs Lon's nose in her hand and WRENCHES it until it POPS. She lets go, and Lon's nose is clearly broken. Blood pours from him, and he SPITS some of the surge out of his mouth. Hester forces the incantation back in his face.

LON (CONT'D)

(in extreme pain; hard to understand)

Okay. Okay. I'll reab your bloovy spell.

HESTER

(pleased)

Finally.

LON

There once was a mab from Namtuckeh-

-

Another SLAP for Lon.

HESTER

(coolly)

Okay, you limey little prig, if I  
can't make you talk, I'll find  
someone who can.

Hester delivers a SPINNING KICK to Lon's chest, sending the chair he's tied to backwards onto the hard concrete. Lon hits his head with a THUD as Hester walks out of the basement. We linger on him just long enough to see his eyes close as he passes out.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - DAY.

Frank, Mike, Vi, and Tamsin stand outside the hotel, frustrated. TOMMY, the young runaway, is standing with them talking to Frank.

TOMMY

(shaking his head)

I haven't seen him lunch yesterday,  
at the diner.

Frank nods.

FRANK

Well, keep an eye out. It's not  
like him to disappear like this.

TOMMY

You got it, Frank.

Frank smiles warmly at the boy. He gives him a friendly punch in the arm. The team turns to leave.

FRANK

See you later, kid.

(beat)

Oh! Don't forget! Tonight! Steaks!

Tommy smiles broadly and nods.

Frank turns and joins the gang as they walk away. Tommy enters the hotel.

TAMSIN

(to Frank)

You're quite fond of the lad.

Frank nods.

FRANK

He's a good kid. Just needs some guidance.

(beat)

Reminds me a lot of me at that age.

TAMSIN

(intrigued)

Sounds like there's a story there.

FRANK

(looking off)

Yep. But not one you're likely to hear soon.

Tamsin frowns and the gang walk a few more feet in silence.

VI

So. We've searched every hotel in the city.

MIKE

Which, incidentally, means we've searched three hotels.

FRANK

What kind of woman is it that picks up a man in a bar and doesn't take him to a hotel?

VI

A lady?

FRANK

I think it'd be weird. Waking up in a woman's house? What if she wanted to make you breakfast? You'd have to stick around, make small talk.

(shudders)

Eww.

Vi, Tamsin, and Mike give Frank a "You pig" look.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What?

As the three of them walk away, leaving Frank standing alone, he rolls his eyes.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I wish Tyler was here.

CUT TO:

INT. MACROWARE LOBBY - DAY

CU on the elevator doors. We hear a DING as the doors open. TYLER steps off the elevator and turns over his shoulder.

In the elevator stand CHAD and MITCH.

TYLER

Yeah. Lunch tomorrow, Chad, you're buying.

MITCH

Good luck with that.

CHAD

Hey!

The elevator doors close. Tyler chuckles lightly and then continues through the lobby, waving at the secretary. When he reaches the door, the DOORMAN pulls it open and smiles at him. Tyler gives an exaggerated nod.

TYLER

(bad British accent)

Why thank you, Patterson.

DOORMAN

(good-humoured)

My name is still Ronald, Mr. McGann.

CUT TO:

EXT. MACROWARE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Tyler steps through the door and walks through the parking lot. "The Imperial March" starts to play, sounding very polyphonic. It's a CELL PHONE RINGTONE. Tyler digs in his pocket to get his phone, and as he does a car pulls up behind him.

TYLER

Hey?

(beat)

What?

(beat)

No, I'm a--

(beat)

I appreciate that, but I'm--

(beat)

I am quite happy with the size of my penis, thank you!

He slams the phone shut.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Dammit, Mike! Stop putting my phone number on the Internet.

Tyler starts to put the phone in his pocket, but he drops it on the ground. He sighs and kneels down to pick it up, and there's a THWACK. Tyler slumps forward and falls on the ground, revealing a pair of legs, draped in a thick blanket, standing behind him. The owner of the legs drops a baseball bat on the ground, and drags Tyler back towards the car behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S SUV - DAY.

The same configuration as before, but now everyone looks more tired.

FRANK

Does anyone have any ideas?

Everyone takes a minute to think.

VI

Well, let's break it down. I'm a hot woman, and I'm picking Lon up.

TAMSIN

I'm definitely not a woman.

This garners a weird look from Frank and Vi, and a smug grin from Mike.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)

(off their reaction)

I'm inserting myself into the scenario!

FRANK

Of course.

VI

Yeah.

Mike opens his mouth to say something, and just LAUGHS instead.

TAMSIN

(carrying on)

Anyway! I'm not a woman, what am I?

VI

Demon, obviously.

FRANK  
Aren't many demons that can appear  
as a hot brunette.

MIKE  
Vampires.

Everyone else look as if they've been hit in the face with  
the Obvious Stick.

TAMSIN  
Of course.  
(beat)  
Why are vampires always hot?

MIKE  
I think it might be a Dracula  
thing. One of their superpowers.

VI  
Nah. I mean, yeah, Dracula's hot,  
but he didn't pass it on.

MIKE  
(beat)  
There's a Dracula?

VI  
Yeah, but he-- you know what, I'll  
explain it later.

Frank has been thinking through this whole thing, and he only  
now voices his thoughts.

FRANK  
There was no blood in any of the  
alleys near the bar.

MIKE  
So?

FRANK  
Vampires don't like to wait around.  
They see someone in a bar, they'll  
take them outside, eat them right  
there, and throw their empties on  
the ground.

MIKE  
The vampire would have drank all  
the blood, though, right?

FRANK

For all we joke about Lon, he knows how to handle himself. He would have put up a fight.

TAMSIN

So the vampire dragged him off somewhere.

FRANK

Which is weird.

VI

Which means they want something.

The team considers what this could possibly mean.

CUT TO:

INT. HESTER'S BASEMENT - DAY.

Lon is still lying on the floor. The blood on his body is drying, caking his flesh. The door to the basement opens. Hester stands in the doorway.

HESTER

Since you obviously have no regard for your own life and I can't force you to do what I want, maybe I can convince you.

She reaches off-camera, grabs something, and throws it into the basement. It's Tyler, handcuffed, but not beaten. He stumbles across the floor, hitting the far wall, but not falling down.

Hester enters the basement behind him. She grabs Tyler's handcuffs, unlocks one of the cuffs, and lifts him up. She handcuffs him again, this time so that the chain between the cuffs is around a pipe crossing the basement ceiling.

Tyler's arms are forced above his head, and his feet barely touch the ground. Then Hester picks up Lon and points his chair toward Tyler.

HESTER (CONT'D)

You've got an hour. If you haven't agreed to read me my scroll by then, I'm going to kill this little bastard.

(beat)

Enjoy your visit.

She exits the basement and SLAMS the door behind her. Tyler and Lon look at each other.

TYLER

Hey.

LON

Hello.

TYLER

How are you doing?

LON

Been better. How about you? Rough day at the office?

TYLER

Yeah. The copy machine broke, Corrine was PMSing or something, Chad ate my lunch, and then I got hit in the head with a baseball bat, thrown into a car that makes the Pope-Mobile look like KITT, and ended up handcuffed to a pipe in a basement.

(beat)

Even on salary, it just doesn't seem worth it.

Despite the grimness of the situation, Lon LAUGHS.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(nodding toward the door)

Hester?

LON

(surprised)

Yes. How did--

TYLER

Have you met Mike? Gay guy, talks your ear off. Told me all about her and her boyfriend.

Lon strains and gives a light chuckle.

LON

(beat)

She wants to resurrect Silas.

TYLER

She mentioned that. That doesn't seem good to me.

LON

No. I imagine they'll kill us both  
and then lay this town to waste.

TYLER

Don't forget the loads and loads of  
demon-sex they'll have in between.

LON

(disgusted)  
I certainly can't now.

TYLER

She needs you to read the spell?

LON

Yes.

TYLER

You can't do it.

A look of pain crosses Lon's face.

LON

She'll kill you.

TYLER

Either way, man.

LON

(looking down)  
If I don't read it, I know what'll  
happen. If I do read it... we can  
only speculate. And it might buy us  
some time.

Tyler shrugs as best he can.

TYLER

So?

LON

(looks up again, tears in  
his eyes)  
If I refuse to help her, I'm  
killing you!

Off his pained face:

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND CENTRAL - DAY.

Frank and Tamsin are working on separate computer terminals. Mike paces back and forth in the background, and Vi leans against a wall, worried.

VI

(to Mike)

Can't you jump into the magic 8  
ball and get Kat and The Powers  
That Be to tell us where Lon is?

MIKE

They really don't like me to ask  
questions. Mostly they ask  
questions which are supposed to  
lead me to a conclusion but really  
just give me a headache.

(beat)

Damn spirits.

Mike approaches the computer panels and stands between Frank and Tamsin.

MIKE (CONT'D)

How's it going?

FRANK

I really don't know what we're  
doing.

TAMSIN

Yeah, I mean, we've got loads of  
vampire nest data, locations all  
over the city, but with no motive,  
any of them could have grabbed him.

FRANK

We're pretty blind here.

Mike begins pacing again. Suddenly he stops.

MIKE

I know what we can do.

Everyone turns to look at him.

TAMSIN

What?

MIKE

I can do a locator spell. If we get, like, one of Lon's hairs or something, I can use magic to track him down.

FRANK

You can do that?

MIKE

(annoyed)

I just did one a few days ago to find that... ah... chalky demon!

FRANK

Chokva. And I know. I just didn't realize it worked on regular humans.

MIKE

Yeah. You guys don't really have a clue about this mystic stuff, do you?

Vi, Frank and Tamsin share a sad look.

VI

No. Lon does.

After a sombering moment, the team snaps into action.

TAMSIN

So what do you need?

MIKE

Well, like I said, a hair. Or a fingernail clipping. Some part of him.

FRANK

Whelp, I think Tamsin can handle that.

VI

Yeah.

TAMSIN

(peevied)

Fine! I'll just go collect brother-bits.

MIKE  
 Okay, Frank, Vi, you guys are in  
 charge of rounding up mystic herbs  
 and spices.

The gang bustles into action.

CUT TO:

INT. HESTER'S BASEMENT - DAY

As before.

TYLER  
 You can't do it.

LON  
 I'm not going to murder you.

TYLER  
 (desperate)  
 The needs of the many outweigh the  
 needs of the few.

LON  
 (surprised)  
 That's wise. Which philosopher is  
 that?

TYLER  
 (reluctant)  
 Spock... Mr. Spock. Star Trek Two.

Lon can't help but crack a little smile. In the middle of  
 this nice moment, the door opens and Hester steps in.

HESTER  
 Made up your mind yet? I'm getting  
 hungry.

Lon looks from the circle on the floor, to Hester, to Tyler.

LON  
 (slowly)  
 I...

HESTER  
 I guess you need more motivation.

Hester VAMPS OUT and stands behind Tyler. With a flirty wink  
 at Lon, she BITES Tyler's neck. He SCREAMS. Blood pours down  
 his shoulder and shirt. But he catches Lon's eye and spreads  
 his left hand into the Vulcan salute. Lon still can't help  
 but shout out.

LON  
 Okay! Okay! I'll read it! Just let  
 him go...

Hester sighs, disengages from Tyler, and RETRACTS her fangs. She crosses the basement to Lon and holds out the scroll. She wipes blood from her mouth with her sleeve.

HESTER  
 Hop to it, then.

Lon squints at the old paper and begins to read.

LON  
 Vi di dab--

Hester cuts him off.

HESTER  
 Oh! I almost forgot!

Hester runs over to the circle. She reaches for her locket. CU on the locket as she opens it. Inside is an ancient picture of Silas and a lock of hair. Hester takes the lock and drops it into the circle. She moves back over to Lon.

HESTER (CONT'D)  
 Continue.

She holds the parchment back out for him to read. Lon continues.

LON  
 Vi di dabios. Inferinatum.

In the circle, a cloud of dark energy forms. It's faint, but thickening.

LON (CONT'D)  
 Nos via invesauria!

The energy cloud expands and begins to take shape.

LON (CONT'D)  
 Va su! Va su! Va su!

The cloud CRACKLES and takes on human form. With one more thunderous BOOM, the cloud disappears and standing in its place is SILAS, fully corporeal. He raises his arms over his head, stretching, and POPS his shoulders.

SILAS  
 Good evening, everybody!

He opens his mouth and licks his teeth.

BLACKOUT.

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

INT. HESTER'S BASEMENT.

As before. Hester tosses the spell aside. She and Silas run to each other and embrace. They kiss, long and hard. The two love-locked vampires twirl into the basement wall, and Silas slides his hands under Hester's shirt. Her hands go into his pants pockets. Silas breaks their kiss and rests his head against Hester's.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Did you miss me?

HESTER

Every day. You?

SILAS

Babe, I never stopped thinking about you. Never.

Hester jumps up and wraps her legs around Silas's waist. He begins to lift her shirt over her head.

TYLER

I can see this whole thing is about to get real "fleshy", so me and my British amigo will be on our way just as soon as someone sees to the "We're tied up" issue.

LON

Yes, quite.

The vampire couple turn to their captives.

SILAS

You brought me a snack?

HESTER

Seems to have worked out that way.

SILAS

We should probably eat before we play.

HESTER

(pouts)

They'll still be here later!

SILAS

Yeah, but it's best to play it safe.

(MORE)

SILAS (CONT'D)  
Besides, being in a non-corporeal  
limbo really builds one's appetite.

Hester relents, and the vampires turn to their captives;  
Hester goes back to Tyler, presumably to finish what she  
started, and Silas comes up behind Lon, so he and his lover  
can watch each other while they eat.

TYLER  
Told you she'd kill me either way.

LON  
(annoyed)  
You're just like Mike, always have  
to get the last word in.

TYLER  
Well, since these are going to be  
my last words, yeah, I'm a little  
anxious.

Hester rolls her eyes.

HESTER  
(annoyed)  
Usually our food doesn't talk this  
much.

SILAS  
Don't worry about it, baby. All the  
talking will make their blood  
warmer.

LON  
Now look what you've done.

TYLER  
Yeah, yeah, blame it on Tyler. He  
doesn't have superpowers, he can't  
do anything about it.

Hester WHACKS Tyler in the back of the head.

HESTER  
You will shut up while we eat! It's  
very distracting!

TYLER  
Well, I'm sorry!

Suddenly the door to the basement EXPLODES. Frank, Tamsin,  
Vi, and Mike rush in to the basement, ready for battle.

TAMSIN

(to Frank)

Why can't you ever just open a door? Do you always have to kick it in?

FRANK

It looks cool! Plus, it catches the bad guys off guard.

VI

I'm sure this little dialogue hasn't given them enough time to recover or anything.

The team re-focuses.

FRANK

Okay, vamps, let Lon go--  
(realizes who is in the room)  
Tyler? What are you doing here? Are you okay?

TYLER

I'm fine, Frank. Except for the whole hanging from a pipe being fed on my a vampire thing.

MIKE

(re: Silas)

What the hell?! Didn't we kill this one already?

FRANK

That's not fair! The good guys never get to come back from the dead.

VI

That's not true. I happen to know a Slayer--

Silas and Hester have released Lon and Tyler and adopt fighting position.

SILAS

Come on, guys. You're interrupting my "Welcome back to life" party!

HESTER

And I worked so hard to set it up.

LON

She certainly did. Look at these decorations.

Lon nods his head to indicate the summoning circle, where we see the lamb's body is no longer there, presumably consumed in the ritual.

FRANK

Let our friends go.

SILAS

And what? You're gonna let us leave?

FRANK

Well, no. We're gonna kill you either way.

TYLER

There's been a lot of that going around today.

Tired of negotiations and chit-chat, Hester VAMPS OUT again and dives at Vi. The young Slayer catches most of the weight of the attacking vamp, but they fall in a tangled heap to the ground.

Meanwhile, Silas rushes forward, grabbing Mike by his arm and tossing him across the basement. Mike SHOUTS in surprise and rolls across the concrete floor, landing near Tyler.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(looking down)

See if you can get these handcuffs off me.

MIKE

(in pain)

Yeah, I'm fine, thanks for asking.

TYLER

Great! Now about these cuffs.

Across the basement, Silas has engaged Tamsin and Frank and is fighting ably. He counters a punch from Tamsin and uses the momentum to kick Frank in the stomach, staggering him back a step. This allows Silas to direct all his attention on Tamsin. She has drawn a stake from her belt and stabs at him, but with a KICK he sends the weapon scattering from her hand.

SILAS

Oh, no. Not getting caught with that one again.

He grabs Tamsin's arm and in a flash has it bent behind her own back, holding her in front of him like a shield.

SILAS (CONT'D)  
Hester, baby!

Hester is holding Vi on the ground and has her face pressed against the Slayer's neck. As she prepares to bite, Vi KICKS her in the stomach. Hester is thrown off the ground, regaining her footing. Vi jumps at her again, and they grapple until Vi gains the upper hand. She pins Hester to the ground and draws out a stake.

VI  
You'd better stay down.

She raises the stake, and prepares to drop it, but:

SILAS  
Don't you dare, red.

Vi turns. Silas has VAMPED OUT and is holding Tamsin's head to the side, exposing her neck.

SILAS (CONT'D)  
You stab her, and your pretty friend's gonna take her place.

LON  
(nervous)  
Tamsin...

Vi, frustrated, hurls the stake across the room. She gets off Hester, who quickly runs to Silas's side.

SILAS  
There wouldn't happen to be a secret escape route out of this place, would there, darling?

HESTER  
As a matter of fact...

She leads Silas-- still holding Tamsin-- into the corner of the basement. She pulls aside a tarp, revealing a hidden TRAPDOOR.

SILAS  
(smiling at Hester)  
You think of everything!

Hester opens the door and she and Silas descend. As Silas disappears into, presumably, the sewers, he throws Tamsin back up to the others.

They escape, the trapdoor SLAMMING closed behind them. As soon as it does, Vi rushes over to Tamsin.

VI  
Are you okay?

She helps Tamsin off the ground.

TAMSIN  
Yeah. Yeah, I'm fine. Just a bit of damage to my ego.

Mike, meanwhile, is working on Tyler's handcuffs, thin lines of red energy slicing through the chains.

TYLER  
You know, there was a guy at my tenth birthday party who put his handcuffed hands under a cloth, and in ten seconds he'd broken free and cuffed Jessica Randolph's.

MIKE  
Get me a cloth and a scholarship to Magic Camp.

TYLER  
(matter-of-fact)  
They don't teach the handcuff trick at magic camp. They only go up to making every card in the deck the same.

Mike grins at Tyler.

MIKE  
You're a huge loser.

TYLER  
Then why am I getting so much more laid than you are?

Mike GRUNTS in acknowledgement. Finally he's CUT THROUGH Tyler's handcuffs, and they fall to the floor. Tyler rubs his wrists, which are raw and cut.

TYLER (CONT'D)  
(sincere)  
Thanks.

MIKE  
Yeah.

Meanwhile, Frank has crouched down behind Lon. He takes a knife from its place on his belt and cuts through Lon's restraints. Lon tries to stand, but has lost a lot of blood, and can't quite make it on his own. Frank steadies him.

FRANK

What the hell happened to you?

LON

She thought I should resurrect her psychotic boyfriend, I disagreed.

Everyone joins Frank and Lon at the center of the basement to hear the story.

TAMSIN

Lon, are you okay?

She reaches out to touch Lon's cheek, and he winces and flinches away.

LON

Yeah, she just hit me a little. It looks worse than it is.

TYLER

Like hell! You should have seen him! I mean, I only got a little glimpse, but from what I saw, Hester put Lon through the ringer. He's even got burn marks on him!

Everyone takes stock of Lon's injuries, and there is indeed a large burn stripe across Lon's neck.

TAMSIN

Oh, god, your nose!

LON

It's nothing.

TAMSIN

Perhaps, if your name's Owen Wilson!

An awkward moment passes. No-one knows what to say. How do you comfort someone who's gone through what Lon has?

FRANK

We should, uh, we should get you to the hospital.

LON

Yeah. Wait! The resurrection spell.

Lon weakly points to the floor where the spell parchment lays. Frank crosses over and picks it up.

FRANK

Good thinking. We'll put this in the vault.

He motions to put it in his pocket.

LON

No.

Frank pauses.

LON (CONT'D)

It's too dangerous.

FRANK

But it may be of some use--

LON

(firmly)

No.

Seeing Lon's convention, Frank nods. He pulls out a lighter, clicks it, and touches the flame to the corner of the paper. The brittle, ancient paper instantly burst into flames. Frank drops it. It is totally incinerated before it even hits the ground. Lon sighs.

The team heads to the doorway, but Lon stumbles and almost falls. Mike catches him.

MIKE

I got him. You guys pull the car up.

The rest of the team go on. Mike and Lon slowly make their way to the door.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You withstood all that torture?

LON

Indeed.

MIKE

What finally made you crack?

LON

She said she'd kill Tyler if I didn't do what she wanted. I couldn't let myself be responsible for that.

Mike looks shocked.

MIKE  
(emotional)  
I'm really sorry.

LON  
For what?

MIKE  
This whole thing was my fault.

LON  
I don't see how that's--

MIKE  
If I hadn't picked that fight with  
you last night, you wouldn't have  
stormed out and you wouldn't have  
gotten kidnapped.

LON  
It it's not your fault Hester's  
insane. You're not responsible.

MIKE  
Yeah, I am.

They carry on their slow trek in silence.

LON  
So how did you find us?

MIKE  
Oh, you know. A little detective  
work, a little interrogation...  
(quietly)  
A little tracking spell...

LON  
(surprised)  
Oh.

MIKE  
Yeah. It took a little effort, and  
we had to pluck your hairbrush--  
you know, you really need to clean  
that out every now and then.

They've stopped walking now, and are standing in the middle  
of the basement.

LON  
Thank you.

MIKE  
You're welcome.

They regard each other for the moment, reflecting on the things each other has done this day. Lon extends his hand. Mike slowly takes it, and they shake.

LON  
Truce?

MIKE  
(smiling faintly)  
Truce.

Shouldering Lon's weight again, Mike begins to lead the way out of the basement.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
You know, truce or not, I'm probably still going to rag on you some. In case you hadn't noticed, I can be kind of a dick.

They exit.

LON (V.O.)  
(with mock surprise)  
You? No!

BLACKOUT.

**END OF SHOW**