

# Hell's Gate

Season One - Episode Fifteen

"Mystery Date"

Written By  
Tyler Moody

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

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - NIGHT

As we fade in, we hear voices arguing. MIKE and LON sit across the counter from each other, in the middle of a heated fight. Totally unprecedented, right?

MIKE  
(mid-sentence)  
...pretend it never happened!

LON  
I think it's for the best!

MIKE  
We're supposed to, what? Forget about it? "Oh, no, we weren't locked in the vault. We never kissed. We didn't have three of the most mind-numbing quickies in recorded history!"

Lon looks around to make sure no one is listening.

LON  
Look! It's not that I didn't... enjoy it. But for the sake of the team...

MIKE  
(throws his hands up)  
The team! Oh, well, if it's for the team! Why didn't you just say so. The team has already taken over the rest of my life-- why not my love life as well?

Lon gets up and turns his back to Mike.

LON  
Can't you just think rationally about this?

MIKE  
I'm irrational now?

LON  
It would complicate things on a massive scale!

MIKE

(beat)  
Fine.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(angry)  
But don't pretend for a minute--  
for a damn minute-- that this is  
for "the team." It's all about you  
getting what you want.

Lon turns around to confront Mike about this, but Mike raises  
a hand to stop him.

MIKE (CONT'D)

And that's fine. That's what things  
are usually about anyway. But if  
you were gonna do this, were gonna  
flake out and back off... you never  
should have kissed me in the first  
place.

Mike gets up and heads to the stairs. He stops and looks at  
Lon's dejected face.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Don't pretend to be all upset about  
it. You got exactly what you want.  
You should be glad.

Mike EXITS up the stairs. Lon sits back at the counter,  
holding his head in his hands.

LON

(sadly)  
Oh, yes. Very glad.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

FRANK and CORRINE are sitting across from each other in the  
apartment, Corrine on the couch and Frank on a chair.

FRANK

You have to consider it.

CORRINE

No. It's impossible.

FRANK

How long have you known us? And  
you're still going to use words  
like impossible?

Corrine traces her neck with a finger, thinking.

CORRINE

It's just such a horrible thought,  
Frank. Jon? Responsible for  
everything that's been happening?

FRANK

We know that MacroWare is the  
source of all these random,  
inexplicable portal fluctuations.  
Jon Bates is in charge of  
MacroWare. It makes sense.

Corrine shakes her head.

CORRINE

Listen, Frank. I know Jon. He's a  
good guy. Why would he need to  
create these portals, summon these  
monsters?

FRANK

(beat; tentative)

I... that's a good question. I  
mean, I'm not saying it's  
definitely him, Cor, but--

CORRINE

Do not call me that.

FRANK

(grinning)

Right. But I just don't want to  
leave stuff like that to chance.  
You know?

CORRINE

Yeah.

(nodding)

I'll try to find something out,  
Frank. I don't think I will. But  
I'll try.

Corrine stands up and heads to the door. Frank stands up, as well.

CORRINE (CONT'D)

Bye, Frank.

FRANK

See ya around.

She leaves, and he pulls the door closed behind him. On the heavy THUNK of the door closing, we:

BLACK OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. WACKY TED'S RECORD STORE - DAY

VI is backing out of the store, a small plastic bag in one hand. She's talking over her shoulder to someone inside the store.

VI

All right, Ted, I'll check that out.

She reaches the door and opens it with her free hand. When she's OUT ON THE STREET, she turns around, literally bumping into RICK.

VI (CONT'D)

Oh! Sorry!

RICK

Oh, that's cool--  
(excited)  
Vi! Hey!

VI

I didn't mean to, uh, run into you...

RICK

I know, it's cool.

They look away from each other for an embarrassed beat.

VI

(oblivious)

I was just talking to Ted when I was leaving, because he thinks I'm in love with him, I don't know why, I winked at him once when he said something funny...

RICK

(interrupting)  
Vi, seriously--

VI

But I didn't think anything about that, and he went and took it all the wrong way, and now things are awkward, and every time I go in there he's flirting with me and it's really distracting and I'm sorry.

Rick smiles and shakes his head gently.

VI (CONT'D)

What?

RICK

You just did a whole thing all by yourself.

VI

Oh. Sorry. Again.

Rick puts his hand on Vi's shoulder. She looks at the hand and blushes.

RICK

It's fine, Vi!  
(laughs)  
You apologize more than any girl I've ever met.

VI

Sorr-- I mean, uh... really?

RICK

Yeah. It's actually kind of cute.

VI

(embarrassed)  
Oh.

RICK

(tentative)  
Hey, uh, Vi?

VI

Yeah?

RICK

You wanna go out? Sometime?

VI

(long beat; then, deadpan)  
Yes.

RICK  
Well, I've gotten more enthusiastic reactions before.

VI  
(still deadpan)  
I'm afraid if I show too much emotion I might explode. And get all over your clothes. You probably wouldn't want to date me if I'd exploded on your nice jacket.

RICK  
Also, you know, if you exploded, you'd be... exploded.

VI  
Exactly.

RICK  
(laughs)  
So tomorrow night? I'll call you?

VI  
That would be lovely.

Rick looks at Vi's blank face for just one more second, CRACKS UP, and walks off. Vi closes her eyes and counts to three under her breath, then reopens her eyes.

VI (CONT'D)  
(nearly squealing)  
Oh my God! Oh my God!

She takes out her cell phone, presses a speed-dial button, and hits call. She lifts the phone to her ear and begins to walk down the street.

VI (CONT'D)  
Tamsin? Tamsin Tamsin Tamsin! Guess what!

CUT TO:

INT. MACROWARE OFFICES - DAY

Corrine stands outside Jon Bates's office.

CORRINE  
(whispering)  
The things I do...

She knocks on the door.

JON (O.S.)

Come in.

Corrine turns the doorknob and steps inside the office.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - DAY

Mike sits at a table, textbook open, copying down information to a notebook. The sound of FEET ON THE STAIRS causes him to look up. It's Lon. Rolling his eyes, Mike turns back to his book, shifting over in his chair slightly so he doesn't even have to see Lon peripherally.

LON

Um, hello, Mike...

MIKE

Oh, sorry, I need to know up front:  
If we have a conversation now, are  
we gonna pretend that it didn't  
happen later?

LON

(annoyed)

Can we just... you are impossible.

MIKE

Hey, you know, just pretend like  
I'm not impossible. Seems to work  
well for you.

Lon leans his forehead against the diner wall. This presents an interesting scene when Frank enters from the kitchen: Mike, with his back turned to Lon, folded up in a booth; and Lon, pressed against the wall like an elementary school student who's been sent to the corner. He shakes his head.

FRANK

It's always something new.

Startled, Lon jumps.

LON

Ah, Frank, I was just checking the  
tiles for grout.

FRANK

Grout.

LON

Indeed, grout.

FRANK

You were checking my tiles for the stuff they put in between tiles to hold them together.

LON

Uh... is that what grout is?

FRANK

Mmhmm.

LON

So I probably should have found some.

FRANK

I'm thinking.

Lon pats the wall, it apparently having met with his approval and really hit it off.

LON

That's a... a fine job whoever grouted this wall did.

From his booth, Mike LAUGHS arrogantly.

LON (CONT'D)

May I help you, over there?!

MIKE

Not even if I played you an instructional video.

LON

Oh, very clever, you monstrous little tosser!

As Mike prepares a witty retort, Frank slips away, heading for the stairs.

FRANK

...the hell is my nephew?

CUT TO:

INT. JON BATES'S OFFICE - DAY

Corrine sits in a chair across a desk from JON BATES, CEO of MacroWare. He's dressed informally, his hands placed on the table in a specifically non-threatening manner. He's clearly read every self-help book on effective managing.

JON  
You wanted to talk?

CORRINE  
Yeah-- er, yes.

Jon the usually confident woman suspiciously.

JON  
(beat)  
Go ahead.

CORRINE  
Right, right. Uh. Yeah.  
(mumbling)  
Is your company involved in the  
bringing about of an apocalypse?

JON  
What?

CORRINE  
(out loud)  
Oh, I was just wondering how the  
new O.S. launch is coming along?  
Release date still firm? I know  
it's close, but we could push it  
back if we needed to.

JON  
(laughing)  
Corrine, no. It's fine.  
Everything's coming along exactly  
how it's supposed to. Right on  
schedule, I suppose is the cliché.

Corrine fakes a smile.

CORRINE  
Well, good. Good. I was just  
checking in. You know how I worry.

JON  
(with a smirk)  
Oh, yeah, I think of Corrine  
Dubois, I think "concerned mother  
figure."

Corrine actually laughs this time.

CORRINE  
Oh, Jon, I like to think I have a  
very healthy motherly air. Just,  
you know, suppressed.  
(MORE)

CORRINE (CONT'D)

A woman in my position can't afford to show too much emotion. Well, I mean, you know how that is.

Jon turns to look out the set-in window of his office. The look on his face is wistful, almost regretful.

JON

Yeah. I do.

Uncomfortable with her boss's introspection, Corrine shifts, crossing her legs and spreading her hands on Jon's desk.

CORRINE

Uh, Jon...

JON

Yeah?

Corrine gulps. Here it goes.

CORRINE

That isn't really what I wanted to ask you.

JON

Oh? What was it then?

Off Corrine, biting her bottom lip:

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - NIGHT

Frank comes out of the kitchen once again. Mike is still sitting in his booth studying.

FRANK

(to himself)

Where the Hell...

He cups his hands around his mouth.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Tyler!!

Mike looks up, annoyed as Frank rounds the corner and heads for Tyler's room located behind the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - TYLER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

CU on the interior side of the door. Someone KNOCKS loudly from the other side.

FRANK (O.S.)  
Hey!

TYLER (O.S.)  
What?

Frank opens the door and enters, and we follow, PANNING AROUND FRANK to reveal TYLER and CALLIE sitting on beanbags on the floor. He has his arm around her. They're watching something on TV. Frank stands behind them, arms crossed.

FRANK  
I've been looking for you.

TYLER  
(without turning)  
You found me.

FRANK  
The diner's dirty.

TYLER  
How can you tell?

FRANK  
Ha-hah. Come on, I need someone to help me clean up, and everyone else is either busy, gone, or... I dunno, weird.

Callie turns around, finger pressed to her lips.

CALLIE  
Shh! Things are happening on the television.

FRANK  
What, exactly, are you watching that's so fascinating?

Tyler waves his hand vaguely at the screen.

TYLER  
Battlestar Galactica. Spaceships. Robots. Religion. Not your kind of thing.

Frank, however, has locked on to the screen.

FRANK

Wait a minute-- is that hot blonde really making out with a nerdy British guy?

TYLER

I've tried to get Lon to watch for pointers, but he always scowls and storms off.

Frank slowly moves across the room, reaching Tyler's bed and sitting down on it.

FRANK

She reminds me of this broad Carla, I used to know.  
(wistfully)  
Tried to kill me a time or two, but man... what a looker.

Callie and Tyler exchange a glance and then look back to the TV.

FRANK (CONT'D)

So what's the deal with this show?

TYLER

Well, it just finished its run last week, and we're in mourning, 'cause it's great.

CALLIE

So we're re-watching it. Kind of a celebration.

FRANK

Huh. Catch me up to speed.

Tyler and Callie turn to each other again, eyebrows raised.

CUT TO:

INT. JON BATES'S OFFICE - DAY

As before.

CORRINE

I was just wondering, Jon, if, uh...

JON

Corrine, not to, you know, not that I don't value what you're saying but I do have some work I need to--

CORRINE  
(quickly)  
You want to go to dinner some time?

JON  
(surprised)  
Um.  
(beat)  
Wow. Sure.

CORRINE  
Really?

JON  
(smiling broadly)  
Yeah. It'll be fun.

CORRINE  
Oh. Good! So, are you free  
tomorrow?

JON  
(laughs)  
In a hurry?

CORRINE  
I just don't believe in the  
ridiculous "gotta wait three days  
to call him back" thing you read  
about.

Jon nods, impressed.

JON  
Okay. Tomorrow sounds good.

CORRINE  
I'll call you about details.

JON  
Right.

Corrine stands. Jon stands. Corrine reaches out for Jon's hand. He assumes it's a romantic gesture, but when he extends his own, she shakes it, like they just finalized a merger (hur hur hur) and turns sharply, walking out of the room.

Jon looks to the door with a confused expression on his face.

JON (CONT'D)  
Okay.

CUT TO:

INT. MACROWARE OFFICES - CONTINUOUS

Corrine leans against the door to the office, head back.

An annoyed look crosses her face for a beat. As it turns to a worried expression we:

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

It's not a terribly busy night for the tavern. There are a few empty tables, vacant chairs at the bar. In a corner of the dining area sit Corrine and Jon together at a small table.

JON

...and it was at that point I decided I'd better get out of the crazy man's taxi.

Corrine LAUGHS, genuinely this time, and traces her neck with the back of a finger.

CORRINE

What did you do next?

JON

Oh, well, you know, I tried to get him to pull over, but he wasn't listening, he just kept muttering under his breath, so I...

CORRINE

Yeah?

JON

I... sort of... opened the door and jumped into the street.

For a moment, silence. Then Corrine LAUGHS HYSTERICALLY.

JON (CONT'D)

Didn't think it was that funny...

CORRINE

No, the--  
(gasping for breath)  
The-- oh, god...

She can't talk, she's laughing too hard. So instead she just points to her head.

JON

Okay, I don't know what's happening.

Still laughing, she jabs her finger at her head to emphasize.

JON (CONT'D)

The-- what?-- the image is funny?

Corrine SNAPS her fingers and nods. She takes a couple DEEP BREATHS to calm down.

CORRINE

Okay. Okay. Okay. I'm good now.  
Sorry.

(giggles; stops herself)

Sorry. Thinking of Jon Bates, the distinguished, refined, wealthy owner of the largest software company in the world is too much.

JON

I'm not a demi-god.

CORRINE

You didn't feel a little bit ridiculous?

JON

Well...of course I did.

He LAUGHS this time, and Corrine has a relapse.

JON (CONT'D)

But I had to make a decision-- my dignity or my life, you know?

Corrine nods.

JON (CONT'D)

Now I'm monopolizing. Let's talk about you. It's been so long since we...

The two share an awkward glance.

JON (CONT'D)

I feel like I barely know you anymore. What have you been doing in your spare time?

Subconsciously, Corrine's hand drifts to the cross she wears around her neck.

CORRINE

Oh, you know me... I like to read...

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - NIGHT

Frank stands at the back of the diner, at the microwave. Mike is sitting in the same booth he was sitting in, still studying. TAMSIN enters the diner, to the jingling of bells, and Frank turns to face her.

TAMSIN  
Knock knock!

FRANK  
Hey, Tamsin, what's up?

TAMSIN  
Bored at home. Nothing on TV. Vi's on a date, so we can't do anything fun.

FRANK  
Well, I don't think you'll enjoy yourself anymore here. Tyler and I are watching DVD's in his room--

Tamsin raises her eyebrow at this.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
A man can't bond with his nephew?

Tamsin continues to eye Frank.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Okay. Billie had to leave. Alpha team stuff.

Tamsin smiles knowingly and nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
And Princess Crybaby and Sleeps-With-Men there--  
(jerks his head at Mike)  
Are having some sort of a... well, business as usual for them, actually.

TAMSIN  
Oh, really?

This catches Mike's attention. He looks up ready to defend himself.

MIKE  
Hey! It's not my fault your brother is a spineless coward!

Tamsin studies Mike for a moment and turns to Frank.

TAMSIN

What's going on with--

But he throws up his hands to interrupt her.

FRANK

No. Uh-uh. I just came down here to make some popcorn.

He motions towards the microwave. Tamsin shrugs and sits down at the counter. Lon comes down the stairs, sees his sister.

LON

Tamsin! Hello, what are you doing here?

MIKE

Oh, so she's actually here? We're not gonna pretend she's not?

Tamsin gives Mike a puzzled look and turns to Lon. She mouths "What's going on?"

LON

I-- I have no idea.

The microwave BEEPS. Frank digs around in the cabinet for something to put the popcorn in, finally finding a large, transparent bowl. He opens the microwave and pours the bag of popcorn into the bowl, eating a piece as he does.

FRANK

Eh. Needs salt.

Lon points to the far end of the counter.

LON

Over there by the napkins.

Frank nods and reaches over, grabbing it. He examines the salt shaker.

FRANK

Vi put too many rice grains in this.

MIKE

Well, hey, maybe if the salt pretends real hard the rice will magically go away!

Lon tries his best to conceal his anger, whereas Frank raises his eyebrow at Mike as he salts the popcorn.

FRANK

No, I don't think that'd work.

Not to be outdone, Lon half-turns to Mike.

LON

Perhaps Vi just thought it was better to play it safe, to make sure not to endanger the safety of... the salt as a whole, instead of just thinking about one or two grains.

He raises his hands defensively, a guilty look on his face.

LON (CONT'D)

Just, you know, could be.

Frank is too busy salting the popcorn to have any kind of clue what's going on. But Tamsin has caught a scent.

TAMSIN

Are you two okay?

MIKE

I think Lon is the best judge of whether the two of us are okay. If we're not he can always pretend like we are. After all, anything is possible in Imagination Land!

TAMSIN

Imagination-- what?

Frustrated, Lon crosses his arms.

LON

You know, I read in the paper this morning that that show Tyler keeps going on about, Life on Mars, got cancelled. Probably because the network realized that, although it may have been a very good show...

Mike rolls his eyes. Tamsin looks confused.

LON (CONT'D)

...it just wasn't going to work, and it was bringing down the greater good.

(MORE)

LON (CONT'D)

I wish more people could make  
mature decisions like that.

Mike stands up, pissed.

MIKE

You know, I was going to eat the  
last donut in the case over there,  
but then I thought, "No", I'd  
better not, because any minute now  
a starving man could come in and if  
only that donut were around, he'd  
not starve to death, but I ate it,  
so he's dead. You know. Maybe  
that's possible. So I'm not going  
to risk actually eating the donut.  
Never mind that I'd really enjoy  
it. Because something bad might  
could happen.

Frank is single-mindedly devoted to this popcorn issue.

FRANK

Salt's fine now, but where the  
Hell's the butter?

Lon takes a step towards Mike, but still doesn't quite look  
at him.

LON

Perhaps some things aren't quite  
worth the risk!

MIKE

Perhaps some people need to get  
over their paranoid fears, take a  
damn chance, and do something with  
their lives!

TAMSIN

This sounds a lot...

Mike heads for the stairs, but Lon's not quite done.

LON

Maybe there are some fears in this  
life that should never be eaten!

MIKE

I don't think you have any clue  
what you're talking about!

LON  
 (shouting)  
 Well, I...agree with you!

MIKE  
 Fine then!

He storms up the stairs. Lon violently SLAMS his hands on the counter. A beat later he winces and blows on them.

LON  
 Ooh.

TAMSIN  
 What the hell just...  
 (to herself)  
 Did they...no. No. No no no. Of  
 course not, no. No.

She nods and smiles, cocking her eyebrow as she entertains the delicious thought. Her smile fades slightly, but she shakes her head to get the thought out.

TAMSIN (CONT'D)  
 No.

CUT TO:

INT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Vi and Rick are also having dinner at the tavern, across the room from Jon and Corrine.

RICK  
 (laughing)  
 I still can't believe that guy  
 carded you at the door.

VI  
 It's not funny! It happens all the  
 time, people think I'm like  
 seventeen.

RICK  
 It's kinda cute, actually.

Vi, embarrassed now, rubs her hands together and fumbles for words.

VI  
 Oh...uh...th- thanks, um, you're  
 cute too.  
 (quickly)  
 (MORE)

VI (CONT'D)

No, I mean, you're not-- well, you are, look at you, but that wasn't what I meant, what I meant was--

She GIGGLES a little, a nervous habit, and COUGHS to clear her throat.

VI (CONT'D)

Sometimes talking is no.

Rick smiles, amused and entertained.

RICK

I don't think you give yourself enough credit.

VI

R-really?

RICK

Yeah. I don't understand what it is about you, but I see you with your friends, and you're really cool and super confident. But as soon as you're around me, you freak out. Am I gross? Do I have B.O.? What?

Vi shakes her head.

VI

I just... I want you to think... I want to impress you.

RICK

Impress me?

(laughs)

Vi, did you ever think you've already impressed me? Why would I have asked you out if you didn't constantly impress me? Everything you do, Vi...

Embarrassed, he trails off, realizing he's said too much. Vi's smiling from his speech. She reaches out and takes his hand.

VI

I impress you?

Rick's cheeks blush red.

RICK

Pretty much constantly.

He squeezes her hand and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - TYLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tyler and Callie are seated as before. Frank enters the room, a bowl full of popcorn in one hand, a six-pack in the other.

FRANK

Popcorn and booze. DVD food. What'd I miss?

CALLIE

The one you call Chubby Engineer Guy gave a speech to a union.

TYLER

And the Commander sent Baldie down to the colony.

(beat)

You need to get better at names, dammit.

Frank sits down on the bed and passes the couple some bottles.

FRANK

There are like six hundred characters on this show. There are twelve main actors and half of those play like three guys. I'm old, I have other stuff to remember.

He takes a drink of his beer, swallows, and frowns at the bottle.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Like never to buy this brand again.

CALLIE

Shh! The Commander and Punk Son are having a moment.

FRANK

They're always having moments. All they have is moments.

TYLER

I think fathers and sons should have more honest talks like that.

FRANK

Well, that's because you're a product of the sissified system we got now. With my father, the best you could hope for was a nod of acknowledgement at the dinner table... and that you were quick enough to duck when he threw the plate at your head.

Tyler frowns.

CALLIE

What about your mother? Did she try to make up for it? Spoil you a little extra?

Tyler and Frank share a look and LAUGH.

FRANK

My mom? Who do you think taught me how to drink?

TYLER

Taught us both how to drink.

Callie takes this in.

CALLIE

Tyler, sweetie, I love you. But if we have kids, your grandmother will never, ever babysit.

Frank smirks and cracks open another beer as we:

CUT TO:

INT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

It's much LATER. Corrine and Jon sit at their table, smiling, empty plates in front of them.

JON

That was good.

CORRINE

Yeah.

JON

I've missed this.

Corrine smiles warmly at him.

CORRINE  
 (sincerely)  
 Me too.

Jon smiles back and glances at his watch.

JON  
 Oh, God, I didn't realize it was  
 that late.

Corrine checks her watch now and looks back up, shocked.

CORRINE  
 Damn. I'd better get home.

The two stand up and head for the door.

JON  
 I'll walk you there.

CORRINE  
 (with a sly smile)  
 You better.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Corrine and Jon walk across the street. Neither of them notice the five dark shadows creeping up behind them, until it's too late. The FOOTSTEPS in a puddle of rainwater alert the couple to their presence. Corrine and Jon turn around to be greeted by FIVE VAMPIRES, all vamped up and ready for a fight.

CORRINE  
 (flatly)  
 Great.

VAMP #1  
 Well, well, well, boys. Looks like  
 the flys done walked into our  
 parlour.

As the five vampires leer over Corrine and a confused Jon, we

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Two of the five vampires have Jon restrained, while the other three try to kill Corrine. She ducks Vampire #1's PUNCH, grabs the arms, and TOSSES him over her head.

JON  
What the hell?

Vamps #2 and #3 decide that the single-man approach is for suckers (hur hur hur) and jump Corrine at once. They land PUNCHES and KICKS, but with her Slayer ability they have little impact. However, her own punches are equally ineffective, since the vamps have more room to maneuver.

The vamps holding Jon are getting antsy.

VAMP #4  
Can't we just eat him now?

VAMP #5  
No. Let's let him watch. It's aaaaalways more fun when they watch.

JON  
Who are you guys?

Vamp #4 leans down and bares his teeth at Jon.

VAMP #4  
Your friendly neighborhood...  
murderers.

He pauses a beat for effect. Then:

VAMP #5  
Dude? Really?

VAMP #4  
What?

VAMP #5  
That wasn't... that movie came out like almost a decade ago, and no one cares anymore, and that wasn't even that clever anyway.

VAMP #4  
He's gonna be dead in half an hour!

VAMP #5

Dude still deserves better death-taunts.

Jon's look of complete and utter confusion would be funny if it weren't so tragic.

Meanwhile, the vamps have Corrine backed into a corner. And unfortunately for her, unlike a cat, that's not her best space.

VAMP #1

Look, honey, ain't nothin' personal, but this is lights out for you.

Corrine screws up her face in determination.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. CHUCKY'S TAVERN - CONTINUOUS.

Rick helps Vi put on her coat as they exit the restaurant.

RICK

I don't know, I thought it was charming.

VI

He stared down my blouse the entire time!

RICK

So did I.

Vi playfully swats him on the arm as they exit the tavern and step out onto the street. When they're out, they stand in front of each other, not a little awkwardly.

RICK (CONT'D)

So, uh, you want me to walk you--

He's interrupted by the sound of GARBAGE CANS CRASHING on the ground. Then a SCREAM. He and Vi immediately turn towards the source of the sound.

VI

What was that?

RICK

I don't know...

He rushes off towards it, Vi following right behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Vi and Rick rush into the alley where Corrine and Jon are being attacked. Vi instantly recognizes the vamps for what they are and charges forward.

VI  
Corrine?!

CORRINE  
(fending off vamp,  
casually)  
Oh. Hi, Vi. What's up?

VI  
Just coming to your rescue. Normal  
day.

Vi pulls Vamp #2 away from Corrine and SLAMS him against a wall.

CORRINE  
Much obliged.

Rick has now caught up to Vi-- can't beat that Slayer speed-- and grabs Vamp #3 from behind.

RICK  
Who are these guys?!

VI  
Well...

But she's spared having to answer because Vamp #3 reaches over his own shoulder and TOSSES Rick like a sack of potatoes across the alley. Rick hits the ground, GROANS, and passes out.

VI (CONT'D)  
Oh, baby...

CORRINE  
He'll probably be fine.

VI  
"Probably" tends to be where I get  
screwed, though.

Vamp #2 makes a fatal mistake-- he jumps across the width of the alley to Vi, but she's prepared.

She rolls out of the way, sweeps his leg, and when he's down, pulls a stake out of her purse. She JABS it into the prone vamp and he DUSTS. Vamp #1 avoids learning from his friend's mistake, jumping at Corrine.

But Corrine grabs him in mid-air and performs a weird-ass wrestling-style flapjack move, guiding him down neck-first to an open dumpster. Vi grabs the lid and slams it with enough force to decapitate the vampire, and another one DUSTS.

VAMP #3

'S cool. Take ya both myself.

He raises his fist to punch Corrine, but Vi flips her the stake and she casually jams it through his ribcage. POOF.

CORRINE

A bit anti-climactic, really.

Vamps #4 and #5 are still restraining Jon, having apparently forgotten the fight for their lives.

VAMP #5

See? That. That right there? That's how you do a little line. None of this retarded Spider-Man noise.

JON

What in the hell is happening?!

CORRINE

Just gimme a minute, Jon!

She HURLS the stake javelin-style at Vamp #4, who promptly DISINTEGRATES in a puff of..vampire dust.

Vamp #5 tosses Jon to the ground and turns tail to run, but Vi ain't havin' it. She scoops the stake off the ground and tosses it in the same manner as Corrine, tagging and destroying the vampire.

VI

Just as good.

CORRINE

Technique was a bit sloppy.

VI

Youthful experimentation. Wouldn't expect someone of your advanced age to understand.

While the two are chatting, Jon hauls himself up and limps over to Corrine.

JON  
 (annoyed)  
 Care to explain to me what that  
 was?

Corrine and Vi give each other the Oh, Crap look.

CORRINE  
 Look, I'll take him home, I'll fix  
 it. Are you two gonna be okay?

VI  
 Yeah. I just hope they didn't hurt  
 Rick too bad.  
 (beat)  
 Or hurt his pretty face. God,  
 that'd a shame...

Vi crosses the alley to Rick, pulls him up off the ground,  
 and carries him off. Jon and Corrine face each other, alone  
 now. Jon does not look happy.

CORRINE  
 Okay. Jon, I know this is going to  
 sound crazy. Just...let me finish,  
 okay?

She draws in a deep breath.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - LATER

Vi and Rick pace through the city. Rick tenderly feels the  
 side of his head, wincing in pain.

RICK  
 Sorry I couldn't help out more.

VI  
 Don't worry about it. They were  
 very big.

RICK  
 What gang were they, again? I  
 didn't recognize any colors.

Vi averts her gaze.

VI  
 Oh, uh, yeah, I'm not sure...  
 things happened so fast.

RICK  
How did you manage to get away?

VI  
Well, you know, Jon Bates? Tyler's boss? You saw him.

RICK  
Right, yeah, two of those gangbangers had him.

VI  
Yeah. He broke free and kicked ass.

Rick grins.

RICK  
Wow. Didn't think computer nerds could pull those moves.

VI  
I think we were all impressed.

RICK  
Hmmm.

They walk into the camera, forcing a

BLACK OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. FRANK'S DINER - NIGHT

The diner is empty now, except for Mike. He was studying, but now he's fallen asleep, head on his textbook, pencil still in hand. For a beat, that's what we rest on: Mike's sleeping head. Then, FOOTSTEPS. Lon has entered from the kitchen. He takes note of Mike. His face softens.

LON  
Oh...

Tentatively, Lon crosses the room. He gently reaches out, sliding the book out from under Mike's head. Laying his head on the table, Lon slides Mike's arm around his own shoulders and moves to pick him up, presumably to carry him to Mike's bedroom. But Mike STIRS.

MIKE  
What's goin' on?

Lon lets Mike slump back into the booth.

LON  
You fell asleep.

MIKE  
And, what? As long as I'm sleeping,  
it's okay to touch me?

Lon rolls his eyes.

LON  
I was taking you to your bedroom.

His neck sore, Mike places his hand on it and rolls his head to work out the cramp.

MIKE  
That was a bit forward of you,  
wasn't it?

LON  
(annoyed)  
You can't be serious, can you? Not  
even for a moment. You have some  
sort of, of, bloody disorder that  
presents itself as a complete  
inability to take anything  
seriously.

Mike sighs and straightens up in the booth.

MIKE  
(coolly)  
You wanna talk? Then sit down.

Lon nods and slides into the booth opposite Mike.

LON  
I want you to understand my  
decision.

MIKE  
I don't.

LON  
I know.

Mike, tired, runs his hands through his hair.

MIKE  
Then explain it to me. And don't  
talk to me about "the good of the  
team," Lon. Please. Just...tell me  
why.

Lon closes his eyes, screws up his courage, and nods.

LON  
 All right. Um. I enjoyed... kissing  
 you, Mike.  
 (bashfully)  
 And, you know... the rest.

Mike grins.

MIKE  
 Trust me, I know you enjoyed it.  
 You were pretty vocal.

LON  
 (flushed)  
 Er, yes. Well. Like I was saying. I  
 enjoyed it. And I do have feelings  
 for you. Very deep feel...  
 (trails off; beat)  
 But that's the problem.

MIKE  
 Problem?

LON  
 Yes. We can't... we work in a  
 highly dangerous situation. Day  
 after day you and I stand side by  
 side, fighting the worst things  
 imaginable.

This is going in the exact direction Mike wanted it not to,  
 and Mike's face shows it.

LON (CONT'D)  
 And I know this isn't what you  
 wanted to hear, but it's the truth.  
 If we were to become... involved, I  
 may not be able to separate my  
 feelings for you from what was the  
 most sensible thing to do. I  
 couldn't trust my own decisions,  
 Mike. I care about you too much to  
 be able to...

Lon derails that train of thought.

LON (CONT'D)  
 There's nothing I want to do more  
 than to wake up tomorrow morning  
 with you lying next to me.

Mike's face softens.

LON (CONT'D)

But were that to happen, I know that I would do anything it took to make sure you were there the next morning, as well. And if to make that possible, I had to decide between your life and saving the world...

He can't meet Mike's eyes now, which is a shame, because Mike looks quite impressed. Mike reaches across the table and takes Lon's hand.

MIKE

Okay.

Lon looks to Mike.

LON

What?

MIKE

I understand.

LON

You do?

MIKE

Yeah. And maybe, one day, when this is all over, you and I can...

Lon smiles.

LON

I would like that.

They stay there, frozen, in one of those great moments people rarely get. Hands intertwined, eyes locked, sharing smiles. But like every great moment, it eventually stops being the present and becomes the past.

MIKE

I should... I should probably go to bed.

LON

Yes, er, I'll just head home, then. Sleep. Rest, you know.

MIKE

Right.

They both stand up. For a moment it appears they're about to hug, but instead they break off and walk past each other, Mike heading up the stairs, Lon heading out the door.

The diner is empty now.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Corrine and Jon are still standing there. Jon is pacing back and forth in a small line, nervous, freaked out, angry.

JON  
So you kill vampires.

CORRINE  
Yeah. Sometimes.

JON  
Sometimes?

CORRINE  
Well, they aren't always vampires. You know, demons, mutant squid, animated artwork, possessed college girls.

JON  
What are you--

He stops, waves his hands as if to wipe his words from the air.

JON (CONT'D)  
No, no, I can't know.

CORRINE  
Look, Jon, I know it's a lot to take in, but there's something I have to explain.

JON  
What? Explain? What else could you possibly explain to me? You've just told me that this town's astronomically high missing persons rate is because blood-sucking folk tales live in alleyways and eat passers-by.

Corrine shrugs.

CORRINE

Basically.

JON

(laughs hysterically)

Okay. Okay. I'm game, go ahead.  
Explain to me this new thing. This  
thing that's going to more weird  
than vampires and squid.

Corrine bites her bottom lip, pausing just a moment before  
she dives in.

CORRINE

The people I work with have figured  
out that some of the paranormal  
activities occurring in Heaven's  
Gate are directly related to  
MacroWare's new OS.

Jon can't believe ewhat he's hearing.

CORRINE (CONT'D)

That's why I came in to your office  
today. To confront you about it. We  
suspect-- they suspect-- you have  
something to do with it. But I  
couldn't do it. Not there. That's  
why I asked you out. I was going to  
use this date to pump you for  
information.

She pauses for a breath, but Jon jumps in.

JON

(angry)

So you're using me.

CORRINE

No, Jon, no, when we were in  
Chucky's, it was just like we used  
to be and I realized--

JON

Yeah, you know what? I'm really not  
interested. Corrine, you... I don't  
even know what I'm supposed to do  
now! You think I'm the Vampire  
King? What the Hell?! You've worked  
for me for years! We were involved  
for, Christ sake! And all this time  
you've been plotting to, to spy on  
me?

CORRINE  
(pleading)  
No! Jon! It's not like that! I  
didn't even know--

But he's not interested. He's already turned away, and begins walking down the alley.

JON  
There aren't a lot of people I can trust, Corrine. They all want to use me for my ideas. But I always thought-- I always thought --that you were one of the good ones.  
(hollow chuckle)  
's what I get for trusting people.

CORRINE  
Jon, wait!

Jon walks out of the alley and turns the corner. Corrine rushes forward a few steps, but stops short.

CORRINE (CONT'D)  
God dammit!

She kicks the dumpster in frustration. The metal BUCKLES.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. ROUNDHOUSE - NIGHT

Vi and Rick stand outside Rick's business, facing each other. The music has died down indicating that closing time is near.

RICK  
I just feel bad, is all.

VI  
Well, stop! You tried to help, and that's good enough.

RICK  
Ooh. "Tried." Ouch.

Vi grabs Rick's arm.

VI  
Oh, no, I didn't mean it like that!

RICK  
(laughs)  
You know, it's too easy, sometimes.

Vi studies his face for a second. Then she too grins and slaps his arm playfully.

VI  
You're a jerk!

RICK  
It was funny!

VI  
To you.

RICK  
I think if you were an outside observer you could appreciate it.

Rick takes a step closer to Vi.

VI  
Sweet-talker.

Rick reaches out and grabs Vi's hand.

RICK

Look. I promise, next time we get into a fight with a street gang I will deliver a might of ass-kicking. I know some martial arts, you know.

VI

I'll hold you to that.

The couple smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Jon walks alone, hands in pockets, dejected.

CORRINE (O.S.)

Jon!

He stops, turns. Corrine is running up behind him. When she catches up, she stops and makes a show of acting as if she's out of breath, like a normal person.

JON

What?

CORRINE

I wanted to--

JON

Apologize for using me?

CORRINE

Yeah.

JON

Lying to me.

CORRINE

Yeah.

JON

Thinking that I was going to be the cause of... Armageddon?

CORRINE

No.

JON

Telling-- wait, what?

Corrine SIGHS.

CORRINE

I'm not sorry about that. It's definitely something about your company that's causing the problems, Jon. And logically, it had to be you.

Jon begins to say something but Corrine raises her hands quickly to stop him.

CORRINE (CONT'D)

Now, maybe I was wrong about that. But you can't fault me for drawing a natural conclusion. With a job like mine-- well, with a second job like mine-- you learn to be paranoid.

Jon shakes his head and starts walking away, but Corrine spins him around.

CORRINE (CONT'D)

But I am sorry for the rest of it! For misleading you, all of it. I do like you, Jon. I really do. I would have asked you out for real if it hand't been for this, and--

But Jon, having had enough, grabs her shoulders roughly.

JON

Shut up.

Corrine's face goes from regret to shock.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - MIKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike lays on his bed, shirtless, in the dark. He should be trying to sleep, but he just can't. With a groan, he turns on his side.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR interrupts his "rest."

MIKE

What the...

He swings his legs out of bed, shakes his sleeping foot, and crosses the room.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Who is it?

LON (O.S.)  
Er, me. Lon.

Confused, Mike opens the door.

MIKE  
Lon, it's after midnight. What are you doing here?

LON  
You left the diner door unlocked.

MIKE  
Okay, well, that didn't really answer the question, huh?

Lon rubs his face with his hand.

LON  
Mike, I--

MIKE  
You wanna come inside?

Lon nods. Mike sweeps his arm into the room, like a butler. Lon crosses the threshold and turns on the lights, revealing the disheveled filthiness that is Mike's bedroom. Clothes lay strewn about the floor, empty soda cans and pizza boxes cover the work desk, and a pair of underwear adorns the TV like a tiny hat.

LON  
Classy.

MIKE  
I don't come to your house and judge your decor.

Mike sits on the bed. Lon sighs and begins to speak, but Mike pats the bed beside him.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Why so formal? Have a seat.

Reluctantly, Lon sits on the bed. His face screams, "What is there living underneath the mattress that's going to eat my toes?"

LON  
Mike, I... I'm not going to lie. I've been-- on the way home, and when I got there, I was thinking about you.

Mike turns to look at Lon.

MIKE  
Oh?

LON  
Yes.

MIKE  
What exactly were you thinking?

Lon spends just a moment too long examining Mike's bare chest.

LON  
Yes... what? Sorry.

Mike grins.

LON (CONT'D)  
I was thinking that... even though  
it's risky... we're both adults.

MIKE  
True.

LON  
And if the two of us want to... and  
we understand the position we're in--  
- I mean, you know, not-- you know  
what I mean-- then there's no  
reason we can't.

MIKE  
(beat)  
Can't? Can't what?

LON  
Have a... you know.

MIKE  
Pizza?

A look from Mike tells Lon that either Mike genuinely doesn't know, or he's going to make Lon say it.

LON  
Lord. Why we can't be together!

On goes Mike's smirky half-grin.

MIKE  
You're sure?

LON

Yes.

MIKE

We're not gonna pretend like this conversation never happened?

LON

Well...

Mike throws his hands up.

MIKE

"Well!" There's always something, huh?

LON

It's exactly like I said earlier! It will change things! Not just between us but between everyone. We couldn't... we shouldn't tell the others about it. Not yet. Not even Tyler.

Mike contemplates this for a beat.

MIKE

A secret relationship?

LON

Yes.

MIKE

Can't tell anyone.

LON

Correct.

MIKE

(frowning)

We'll have to sneak around behind everyone's backs. Every time we hook up there's be a chance we'll get caught.

Seeing Mike's expression, Lon frowns also. Mike's frown turns into a seductive smile.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Sounds hot.

Lon grins back. He opens his mouth to reply but Mike stops him from speaking by pushing him down onto the bed, climbing on top of him, and kissing him as hard as he can.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROUNDHOUSE - NIGHT

As before, Vi and Rick still holding hands.

RICK  
So, thanks for walking me home.

VI  
Ain't no thing.

RICK  
Well, I appreciate having a protector from the terrible gangs, anyway.

VI  
That's me. Guardian angel.

RICK  
Heh.  
(beat)  
Yeah.

He hesitantly slides his hand up to her cheek. Slowly he leans in...and they kiss.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

As before.

JON  
Just shut up for a second, okay?

CORRINE  
O.. kay...

JON  
You should have asked me out a long, long time ago, Corrine.

CORRINE  
What?

Jon pulls Corrine's body to him and kisses her, deeply and firmly. Corrine is shocked for a beat, but then melts into Jon as we:

FADE TO:

EXT. MACROWARE OFFICES - LATER

Establishing shot. "All Along the Watchtower," the Bear McCreary arrangement fades up into the scene.

CUT TO:

INT. MACROWARE OFFICES - JON BATES'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jon sits at his desk. The clock on the wall reads 1:13 AM. He looks tired, but happy after his date with Corrine. A knock on the door snaps him out of his trance.

JON

Yeah.

MITCH enters the room.

JON (CONT'D)

Hey. Thanks for coming, Mitch. I really needed to talk to you.

MITCH

No problem, Jon. I get a call at one AM from my best friend, I come right over.

(beat)

Why are we here, though?

JON

(shrugs)

I think better here. Always have.

Mitch nods and sits down in the chair across the desk from Jon.

MITCH

What's wrong?

JON

Before I tell you, this is just between us, right? I don't want to hear it later around the water cooler.

Mitch's face turns serious. He nods.

MITCH

Of course, Jon. Just between us.

Jon nods back and collects his thoughts for a beat.

JON

Something's... weird around here.  
That's what I came here to think  
about.

MITCH

What are you talking about?

JON

I went out with Corrine tonight.

MITCH

(shocked)

Really? Wow! What possessed you  
open that can of worms again? I  
mean, sure, she's chilled out a lot  
in the past few months, but given  
you two's history--

Jon waves his hands to dismiss that train of thought.

JON

Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know, but  
that's not the point.

MITCH

What is?

JON

She said something to me. It-- you  
ever notice how weird stuff happens  
around this town?

MITCH

(nodding)

Yeah. I guess.

JON

Uh-huh, well, Corrine thinks-- she  
thinks that some of it has  
something to do with MacroWare.

MITCH

(laughs, unbelieving)

What?

JON

It sounded weird to me at first,  
too.

(MORE)

JON (CONT'D)

But apparently, there's some sort of code and a pattern of weirdness happening. It's all centered around this building.

MITCH

That doesn't make any sense.

JON

I know.

Jon stands up.

JON (CONT'D)

But it got me thinking about it. We've all seen it. Stuff we can't explain, strange murders, remains of... something that looks like no animal we've ever seen. It actually does make a kind of sense, if you think about it.

Mitch smiles in the way you do to placate the crazy.

MITCH

So... your company is the root of all evil?

JON

I don't know. But I do know that Corrine told me something terrible is going to happen. And it's going to happen on the same day we launch the big OS beta test.

This is too much-- Mitch stands as well now.

MITCH

And you seriously buying this, load of crap?

JON

(nodding)  
I think so.

MITCH

(shrugging)  
Okay. I'll play along. Who-- or what-- is causing this, this "event," then?

JON

I don't know.

MITCH  
 (rolling his eyes)  
 Oh, well, that's--

JON  
 But it has to be someone... someone high up in the company. It's too complicated, the information involved would be too secret for a low-level programmer to have access to.

MITCH  
 Well, there are a lot of high-ups here, Jon. Helen, Vickers, that Reilly guy--

JON  
 (shaking his head)  
 No.

MITCH  
 No what?

Jon turns away from Mitch. We can see both their faces reflected in Jon's glass windows.

JON  
 Only a select few have access to all the data involved, it could only be a select few. Corrine, myself...

Jon's pondering expression turns to one of shocked surprise. He turns toward Mitch.

JON (CONT'D)  
 ...you!

Mitch gives Jon an lop-sided smile. He shrugs innocently.

MITCH  
 Me.

Mitch SPINS on his heel, facing Jon full on. Jon GASPS: Mitch's eyes are GLOWING RED as we:

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR