

THE CHRONICLE

"Bring Me The Head Of Tucker Burns"

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"Bring Me The Head Of Tucker Burns"

TEASER

FADE IN

1

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

1

A Convenience Store is the only lit storefront. A city sign over the street in front of the store reads "METERS ENFORCED 24 HOURS A DAY."

A METER MAID (OFFICER RICE, portly, late forties: a pepper pot with a mean streak) stands over a car parked by an expired meter, ticking out a citation on her computer. A MAN runs up to the car:

MAN

Wait! Wait! Don't do it!
(off Officer Rice's look)
I just went in to get more
change...oh come on, it's midnight,
there's no one out here.

OFFICER RICE

I'm here.

MAN

Cut me some slack. What do you say?

A smile almost forms on Officer Rice's face, then:

OFFICER RICE

Sorry. I already put your plate
number in the computer.

MAN

Oh. No. Please, you can take it
back. I know you can take it back.

Officer Rice pushes a button on her hand-held computer with a flourish. A citation spits out from the printer slot:

OFFICER RICE

No. I can't.

MAN

You people. You secretly enjoy
this.

OFFICER RICE

No, not secretly.

(CONTINUED)

Rice hands over the citation. The man snatches it:

OFFICER RICE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Have a nice night.

The Man harumphs into his car and speeds away. As Officer Rice chuckles and moves on to another meter.

INTERCUT WITH

E.C.U. OF A PUMPKIN-ORANGE MOTORCYCLE HELMET

Aimed at the camera to show off the Jack O' Lantern eyes and mouth painted on the top. The BIKER wearing the helmet turns up his head to reveal the blacked-out visor on his helmet.

OFFICER RICE

Prints out another ticket...puts it on another windshield.

THE BIKER

Slips on a black leather glove. The bulbous gas tank of his motorcycle is emblazoned with the word "GUNPOWDER" written in flaming letters.

The Biker kick-starts his road rocket with the KLANG of a spurred, steel-toed boot hitting a pedal

ROAR!

The bike kicks into high gear.

Officer Rice turns toward the motorcycle as it turns a corner. The Biker spins his bike to a stop.

The two face off, pepper-pot law enforcement officer and badass-mofo bat out of Hell Biker.

As the Biker REVS his engine repeatedly, the menacing GROWL growing LOUDER AND LOUDER...

ANGLE ON THE CONVENIENCE STORE

An ASIAN SHOPKEEPER peeks his head out the front window, curious...

THE BIKER

Guns the engine. The bike SCREAMS down the dark street.

THE BIKER UNSHEATHES A LARGE, JAGGED SWORD!

(CONTINUED)

Officer Rice's eyes turn into chafing dishes.

She turns and runs...the bike gets closer...closer...the sword arcs into the air as the Biker overtakes her and...

SLASH!

A gout of blood splatters across the Convenience Store window. The Asian Shopkeeper recoils in terror.

THE BIKER

Idles before the slain body of Officer Rice and puts her head into a saddlebag when:

BANG!

A bullet impacts against his shoulder with a puff of dust:
The Biker looks up to see the Asian Shopkeeper, standing in front of his store, wielding a .44 Magnum!

The Asian Shopkeeper fires again. This time, the bullet nicks the Biker's helmet, knocking it off to reveal that -

- the Biker has no HEAD!

The Asian Shopkeeper SCREAMS. Drops his gun. The Biker picks up his helmet, revs the engine...

...and pops a wheelie as he barrels out of the alley!

The Asian shopkeeper looks on in horror. Before him, a parking meter flashes a single word:

EXPIRED.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

2 EXT. DARK STREET - DAY 2

Reporters surround the crime scene before the Convenience Store. The voice of a DETECTIVE (GARIBALDI) is heard O.S.

GARIBALDI (O.S.)

This may be the same killer who decapitated a young man last night. We have matching motorcycle tire marks at each crime scene...

REVEAL a Headless outline: a second, smaller, head-shaped outline surrounds a pool of blood near the body.

FIND Garibaldi (30's) a good-looking *NYPD BLUE* type, talking to our lovely, recurring NY Times reporter, KRISTEN MARTIN.

GARIBALDI (CONT'D) (cont'd)

...and we haven't found the head for this body either.

KRISTEN

Detective Garibaldi, is there a pattern to how the murderer is selecting his victims?

GARIBALDI

Too early to tell. We're pooling our resources with the FBI and ViCAP - if there's a pattern, we'll find it.

FIND Tucker and Wes, standing way, way in the back of the line behind all the major media outlets.

TUCKER

I don't know why Donald insisted on us being here. This is a totally mainstream news scene. Since when does The Chronicle follow all the other papers to a story?

WES

Don't sweat it. If there's a World Chronicle angle to this story, we're gonna get it and all these fine upstanding citizens are gonna miss it. We ain't looking for the same thing.

(CONTINUED)

TUCKER

I hope so, because someone sighted an invisible subway car on the G line and I really wanted to investigate...now that's page one of the World Chronicle.

WES

How do you spot an invisible subway car anyway?

The sound of a man SCREAMING in *Chinese* fills the alley: the Asian Shopkeeper, escorted to a cop car by a pair of UNIFORMS.

Wes lifts a video camera and films the ranting man as he is put in the car. Tucker feels a hand on his shoulder:

KRISTEN (O.S.)

Let me guess...alien head hunters?

Tucker looks at Kristen and turns the tables on her with a completely straight face:

TUCKER

Nah...LBJ kicked all the alien head hunters off the planet after they got Jayne Mansfield. Bad scene.

KRISTEN

Cute.

TUCKER

So what's your theory of the crime?

KRISTEN

Two decapitations, a man in his twenties and a fifty year old Meter Maid...might as well be alien head hunters for all I know.

TUCKER

That's all you know? Looked to me like you and Detective Squarejaw were getting along swimmingly.

KRISTEN

Do I detect a note of envy?

TUCKER

Always.

KRISTEN

I dunno, Tucker. Serial killers are the hind end of journalism. There's never any leads, the cops deliberately misinform you and all you can do is wait until the killer strikes again.

TUCKER

Which may be tonight. You got anything on the victim?

KRISTEN

We sharing leads again?

TUCKER

I'm guessing you don't have anything then.
(off her look)
'Cause when you do you usually can't wait to tell, and out of all these vultures you know I'm the one who's not gonna steal your angle.

Kristen looks at Tucker, smiles, then:

KRISTEN

Zip. No family, next of kin, nothing. Just like last night's victim, these people were blanks.

TUCKER

OK. If I get anything on my end, I'll let you know.

KRISTEN

You ever think back in J-school you and me would be covering the same deranged head-chopping killer?

TUCKER

Will the wonders ever start?

KRISTEN

Maybe we can commiserate sometime over a drink?

TUCKER

You know I love to see you slum.

Kristen smiles and sashays away. As Tucker watches her go:

(CONTINUED)

WES

There's a nut out there lopping off
people's heads and you're trolling
for dates.

(offers a high-five)

You the man.

3 INT. THE CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - DAY

3

Tucker and Wes each take a donut from an open box on Grace's
desk as she pounces on her word processor:

GRACE

If you two don't get anything on
this Head Hunter, I know who's
getting the front page this
week...I just got a juicy exclusive
with a scientist who claims he's
cloning the Rat Pack.

WES

Even Sammy?

GRACE

Everyone except Joey Bishop. He
says they'll be hatched and ready
to do Vegas by the end of the year.

(beat)

How's your beat?

TUCKER

Like the mosh pit at Woodstock.
Every journalist in the tri-state
area's trampled over every lead.
The only thing anyone knows is a
meter maid got it last night and a
guy from the DMV two nights ago.

As Wes lifts up his video camera and plays back his tape:

WES

And everyone in this city's a
suspect: who wouldn't want to ice a
Meter Maid and a DMV clerk?

TUCKER

Maybe that's our World Chronicle
angle on this story...

WES

What? "Meter Maid Massacre?"

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

"Decapitator Decimates DMV?"

TUCKER

I guess...otherwise our headline's gonna be no different than the Times. We need to talk to Donald.

RUBY

(walking by)

You're not going to be talking to Donald anytime soon, he had to jump on an Aeroflot flight to the Cosmodrome in Star City, Russia.

TUCKER

Why?

As Ruby speaks, the phone rings, Grace picks it up:

RUBY

The MIR retrofit team kept pestering him day and night, he finally decided it was best to go over there than to be tied up on the phone for hours on end.

TUCKER

MIR retrofit? That thing crashed into the sea, everybody knows that.

RUBY

That's what they WANT you to think.

Grace holds the phone toward Tucker as Ruby ambles away:

GRACE

Hey, Tucker, Vera says there's a hot lead for you on line 4.

Tucker picks up the phone, turns away somewhat furtively:

TUCKER

Hello...oh hi...

WES

Hot lead?

GRACE

You know the kind...five foot six, blond, pouty nose, Donna Karan suit, New York Times ID card.

WES

Oooh...Tuck B. on the love line...

GRACE

I think he's putting on his
"girlfriend voice," listen to him -
(imitating Tucker's
"smooth" phone voice)
"Hi Kristen...I think you're cute
too...I like your pouty nose..."

TUCKER

(hanging up)

Grow up, people. Kristen has a very
important lead and she wants my
opinion. I'll be back in an hour.

(beat)

And the nose is "pert" not "pouty."

As Tucker walks away:

WES

Yo, Tuck B. I'll just stay behind
and keep working our story, OK?
Don't worry about me. I'll just
wait for you to get back.
Excellent. Jim Dandy...

(to Grace)

...anyone here speak Chinese?

4 VIDEO TAPE IMAGE: EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

4

The Shopkeeper shouts in *Chinese* as the cops lead him to the
car. Over the tape, the voice of an Asian-American World
Chronicle intern named CHRISTY (20's).

CHRISTY (O.S.)

OK, can you rewind that?

5 INT. THE CHRONICLE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

5

Grace and Wes watch on the flat-screen along with Christy:

WES

You understand him?

CHRISTY

It's a good thing he's screaming. I
can't understand a word of Chinese
unless someone's shouting it at the
top of their lungs.

(off the looks)

It's how my parents communicate.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

I could say the same about English.

Wes hits play. Christy translates the Shopkeeper's words:

CHRISTY

"There was no head under the helmet...the man had no head. Why won't you people believe me? Why?" Damn. I've heard my parents say the next couple of words, and they're pretty nasty.

WES

I think we got it. Thanks Christy.

CHRISTY

(exiting)

You don't have to thank me. You just have to lend me your Japanese *Phantom Menace* Laser Disc. Bye!

GRACE

The Headless Biker?

Off Wes, getting an idea:

6 INT. THE ARCHIVES - DAY

6

FOLLOW a container down the pneumatic tube. It lands with a POP. Wes opens it to REVEAL a wood cut depicting the Headless Horseman, rearing his horse by a jagged, evil-looking tree:

WES

I knew that Elementary school education didn't go to waste. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, and I'm kicking it Old School here -

GRACE

Old School?

WES

Washington Irving instead of Walt Disney and the *Beetlejuice* guy. The Headless Horseman was the spirit of a Hessian who got his head whacked off by a cannonball -

GRACE

Hessian?

(CONTINUED)

WES

German mercenaries. Fought against the U.S. of A. in the Revolution. The Horseman came out at night near the tree where he died, cursed to haunt the land until he found his head. Now, I know what you're thinking: it's impossible. Germans making war and all that, but here's something even more bizarre:

Wes points to a screen: a map of the world comes to life:

WES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

There's tons of Headless Horseman legends around the world: the spirit of a carriage thief in Bohemia, an Australian cattle robber, the spirit of a southern-fried cowboy-murdering bandit in Texas, a cajun-style highway stick-up man in Louisiana...they even have one in Cleveland.

GRACE

And all of them are cursed to terrify the countryside until they find their heads?

WES

Sort of. Mostly the headless spirits keep doing whatever they did before they got their heads snipped. Robbing, killing, causing cattle stampedes -

GRACE

So according to this legend, if someone slapped my block off I'd be cursed to write tabloid stories for all eternity until I found my missing head?

WES

Many people believe this legend explains the Reagan Era.

GRACE

I guess it wouldn't be the first time a spirit lost a body part and came back for it. Remember that disembodied hand we chased all the way down the Holland Tunnel?

(CONTINUED)

WES

Don't get me started. I hate going to Jersey.

GRACE

We oughta figure out who's spirit this is and what he did when he was alive: search the police records, see if any murderers were decapitated in the area before the Head Hunter killings began.

Grace pulls the keyboard over, starts typing with intent.

WES

Yo, G. Aren't you forgetting something? This is Tucker's story.

GRACE

So lets give him a call. If we break a new angle on this, he's more than welcome to share the byline.

6A INT. BAR - NIGHT

6A

Tucker enters, talking on his cell phone. He finds Kristen sitting at the bar, also on her cell phone. The two nod at each other.

KRISTEN

...and I'll be happy to follow up on it but not like this -

Tucker sits next to her as the two continue on their phones:

TUCKER

No, it's not ridiculous, but the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow isn't the first angle I'd investigate.

KRISTEN

(into her phone)
- and I'll grill him if and when it becomes a necessity, I just don't think now is the time, OK? Fine, I'll call you later.

TUCKER

(into his phone)
I don't mind if you two look into it, I'm just saying, if you find anything out on it, I do expect you to let me know, OK?

Both click off simultaneously, put their phones on the bar, take a deep breath, look at each other.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTEN

My photographer wants to stake out Detective Garibaldi's house so we can be first to the scene of the crime if there's another murder.

TUCKER

My photographer wants me to...well, let's just say he's got a plan all of his own.

(beat)

I guess this means we're commiserating.

KRISTEN

Not yet.

Kristen reaches over and turns off Tucker's cell phone.

KRISTEN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I never mix cell phones and martinis.

Tucker then reaches forward and clicks off her phone.

TUCKER

I was just about to say the same thing.

6B INT. THE ARCHIVES - NIGHT

6B

A newspaper story fills a display: "**HELL'S ANGEL DECAPITATED IN HELL'S KITCHEN.**" Wes reads, Grace dials her cell phone.

WES

We couldn't have written it better. A Hell's Angel accidentally decapitated within a two mile radius of the killings. Says here he's survived by a brother, runs a motorcycle shop.

GRACE

If it really is this guy's spirit, all we'd have to do is find his head and give it back. We might get an exclusive, and put his eternal soul to rest or something like that...dammit...

(off Wes's look)

...Tucker must have turned off his cell phone, he's still not answering.

(CONTINUED)

WES

Don't underestimate the power of a
pouty nose.

As the two head out:

7 INT. BAR - NIGHT

7

A BARTENDER puts down two martinis, takes two empties away.

TUCKER

...I think it had to have been that
time you scooped me for the
sorority escort service story.

KRISTEN

No, really? That's when you started
hating me in school?

TUCKER

Pretty much.

KRISTEN

That's really sad. That was barely
the beginning of our first year.

TUCKER

I'm terrible. But you did scoop me,
and I hate it when you scoop me.

KRISTEN

You got used to it.

TUCKER

Ok...enough about me, what about
you? When did you start hating me?

KRISTEN

Oh, I didn't have to start. I think
I hated you from the moment I first
laid eyes on you.

TUCKER

Must be why you're drinking with me
instead of changing the world over
at the New York Times.

KRISTEN

Girl's gotta take a break from
paying her dues.

TUCKER

Is that what you're doing here?

(CONTINUED)

Kristen leans in on Tucker, dangerously close:

KRISTEN
What about you? You must have spent
a lot of time thinking about how
little you liked me.

Their lips move closer and closer:

TUCKER
Hours out of every day.

And then Kristen's pager GOES OFF.

TUCKER (cont'd)
I thought we weren't mixing cell
phones with martinis.

Kristen looks at the readout:

KRISTEN
This is a pager.
(beat)
I'm sorry, I gotta call my copy
editor.

TUCKER
Paying your dues?

KRISTEN
A girl's gotta do what a girl's
gotta do. You mind waiting a sec?

TUCKER
I think I could find it in my heart
to wait.

Kristen grabs her cell phone, turns to go. She then turns
back and plants an earth-shaking lip-lock on Mr. Burns.

His knees still weak, Tucker watches Kristen go as the
bartender passes by, then, to the Bartender:

TUCKER (CONT'D) (cont'd)
We really hate each other.

8 OMITTED 8

9 INT. THE FLAMING HOG MOTORCYCLE SHOP - NIGHT 9

Wes and Grace interview NITRO (late 30's), a leathery Biker
type who sits behind the counter, looking at a printout of
the newspaper story previously seen on Pig Boy's computer:

(CONTINUED)

NITRO
That's him. My brother Clarence.

WES
Clarence?

NITRO
His nickname was "Hellboy," me,
they call me Nitro.

GRACE
Hellboy. Huh? Nice guy?

NITRO
Hell no. Clarence was a mean Marine
hardcore killin' machine. Got
dishonorably discharged after
Panama. He drank a bunch of jackass
juice in this Managua dive and
tried to single-handedly
assassinate Noriega with an M-60
7.62 millimeter machine gun he
ripped off a Huey. It was a bad rap
too. The only reason they booted
him is he already had so many
reprimands for excessive force.
Clarence spent the rest of his life
working as a bounty hunter.

WES
A bounty hunter?

Wes and Grace exchange looks.

NITRO
Clarence. He was a gambler, a
whoremonger, and a drunk...God I
loved him.

GRACE
What can you tell us about the
night he died?

NITRO
He got hopped up on grain punch and
rode out to single-handedly kill
this guy who owed him money.

WES
I'm sensing a pattern.

NITRO

I went to try and stop him...I saw him speeding into that construction area. I guess he missed the open subway grate. Last thing I saw was his chopper heading into the hole...too bad his noggin didn't clear the rim.

Wes looks past Nitro to a picture on the wall: it shows Nitro and Clarence, who holds a bright orange helmet with a Halloween pumpkin design on top.

WES

Is that him back there?

NITRO

Yeah, he loved that Halloween helmet. Scared the children.

GRACE

Yeah, Nitro, listen, was Clarence - uh, Hellboy's...head ever found?

NITRO

We cremated it with his body and scattered the ashes in the alley where he died. I was blasting Foghat out my boombox all the time. That's how he'd have wanted it.

10 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

10

The PT Cruiser, pulls in behind a dumpster. Wes and Grace step out and find a large grate imbedded in the pavement:

GRACE

This must be it...the place where Clarence underwent neck reduction.

WES

The Headless Biker always kills at midnight, if the legends are right, he'll be showing up down there any minute now.

(beat)

Sure you want to go in?

GRACE

To get his picture? Yes. What are you so worried about?

(CONTINUED)

WES
Angry cracker spirit riding a
Chopper cutting off people's heads?
What do you want, a road map?

11 INT. SUBWAY SERVICE CONDUIT - NIGHT 11

Wes and Grace walk down the tunnel-like enclosure. Street light and sounds come in from overhead grates.

WES
(looking at his watch)
Headless Biker countdown, T-Minus
fifteen seconds. How about we take
some cover?

GRACE
What if he shows up in some other
part of the tunnel and we miss him?

- a great whirlwind of smoke forms in the service tunnel. The unholy ECHO of a MOTORCYCLE ENGINE FROM HELL fills the space.

WES
Wanna hide now?

GRACE
Sure.

Wes and Grace duck into a niche, getting out of sight...

...as The Headless Biker SCREAMS out from the eye of the storm, popping a wheelie as he ROARS past Wes and Grace in search of fresh blood!

Wes and Grace rush out of hiding:

GRACE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Come on!

12 EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT 12

The Biker tears ass down the street. The PT Cruiser follows, its best speed no match for a Biker on a street rocket.

GRACE (V.O.)
...I know this line is for
emergencies, but I think a guy on a
hog, heading into the city, and
carrying a big sword to chop
someone's head off qualifies!

13 INT. PT CRUISER - CONTINUOUS 13

Wes white-knuckles the wheel, desperately trying to keep up,
Grace is on the phone with the Police -

GRACE

...no I don't want a referral to
your mental illness hotline,
Serpico, we're chasing the guy down
the street for God's sake!

THROUGH THE PT CRUISER WINDSHIELD

The Headless Biker keeps pulling away.

RESUME

As Grace clicks off her phone:

GRACE (cont'd)

The cops aren't buying it...you
gotta catch up, step on it!

WES

Yo, Hannibal, this ain't the A-Team
truck and I ain't Mr. T. OK? This
guy's an experienced rider on a
tricked-out street rocket...oh, and
he's a Demon from Hell!

GRACE

(looking ahead)

Oh my god! Stop the car!

14 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT 14

The PT Cruiser SKIDS to a halt. The shadow of the Headless
Biker and his VICTIM can be seen on the building façade:

VICTIM'S VOICE (O.S.)

NO PLEASE NO!

CHING! THUD!

The sword strikes: the victim's body falls.

Grace and Wes get out of the PT Cruiser and GASP:

REVERSE ANGLE ON THE HEADLESS BIKER

Turning toward Wes and Grace as he puts the severed head into
his bag. The Biker REVS his chopper:

(CONTINUED)

- and the shadow looming over Wes and Grace grows larger and larger as the Headless Biker brandishes his sword.

Wes and Grace back up against the wall as the Headless Biker gets closer and closer, cutting them off from their car.

The Headless Biker raises his sword....

...Wes and Grace wince...

...and the Headless Biker SWISHES the cutlass back into its scabbard in a single, smooth motion before SCREAMING off into the night!

As Wes and Grace try to recover:

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

15 INT. CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - DAY 15

Grace and Wes barrel in and through the bullpen. The two are in a state of heightened activity: wired. FIND Tucker, rushing up to the two:

TUCKER
Guys! Where have you been?

GRACE
Tracking down the Headless Biker... chasing him to the scene of a murder...yelling at the cops, who apparently have better things to do than stopping someone from getting killed!

TUCKER
Whoa...your hunch panned out? You spotted him?

WES
And he didn't even notice us. Just rode right by and went and iced an IRS tax auditor.

TUCKER
Did you get any pictures?

WES
Hey. Wes Freewald don't do snuff.

TUCKER
Wait a minute, wait a minute - why didn't you call me? You were supposed to call me -

GRACE
(holds out her hand)
Your cell phone.

TUCKER
(hands it over)
What about it?

Grace turns the phone on.

WES
Mr. Burns, you have fifteen messages.

(CONTINUED)

Grace hands back the phone.

GRACE
Where were you?

TUCKER
I had a couple of drinks and - well that's not important right now. Did just get back from the crime scene?

GRACE
We were the ones who made the anonymous 911 call. Apparently, the cops only believe you when there's a Headless IRS guy on the ground.

TUCKER
IRS guy, Meter Maid, DMV Guy: I'm not the only one seeing the pattern here, right?

GRACE
You must be, because the head monkey on the case, this Detective Garibaldi guy is still saying the killings are random...but they can't be, because the Biker used to be a bounty hunter.

WES
That's why he didn't kill us when he saw us, he's not gunning for us because we don't have a price on our heads. See what I am saying?

TUCKER
Uh, no.

WES
Get on the bus, Tuck B. It's the curse of the Headless Headless Horseman. He's acting just like the Hessian.

TUCKER
Hessian?

GRACE
Only he's not a Hessian, he's a bounty hunter. Which means there's got to be a hit list he's following, and it's on us to figure out who's next.

(CONTINUED)

TUCKER

But there's thousands of annoying bureaucrats working in this city.

GRACE

So, we gotta thin the herd and fast. This could take all day...maybe all night. We gotta get cracking.

Grace ducks into the door to the corridor. Wes is about to follow, notices that Tucker is not moving with them:

WES

You coming, Tuck B?

Tucker stops. Thinks. Wes takes a step back to face him.

TUCKER

Does the fact that I can't understand a word you two just said mean you're pretty deep into the story?

WES

Oh, it's deep all right.

TUCKER

Then it's really Grace's story now. I couldn't just poach in on her -

WES

Who are you, and what have you done with Tucker Burns? I'm serious, if this is some kind of pod people thing, I'm cracking skulls.

Tucker pauses uncomfortably, then:

TUCKER

I'm cooking dinner for Kristen.

WES

Are you smoking crack?

TUCKER

No...it's just that two nights ago I saw Kristen at that crime scene and there was just something about her... I had a feeling that's pretty much been gone since Shawna broke up with me.

(CONTINUED)

WES

And this feeling is making you want to cook instead of chasing down a head-chopping redneck with your buddy Wes?

TUCKER

Wes. In the last three months I've had my body stolen by an old geezer with a brain transplant machine, got pied half to death by a killer clown, and was almost turned into Filet-O-Fish by a pissed-off divorcee from the lost empire of Atlantis -

WES

You say all that like it's a bad thing.

TUCKER

It's not. I know there's always going to be another man-eating monster around the corner. I can't say the same thing about finding someone I can be happy with.

Wes regards Tucker, then holds out a high-five. Tucker reciprocates, and Wes steps out the door. Tucker then turns, finds himself face to face with Ruby.

RUBY

Tucker...I just had a vision, and you're not gonna like it.

TUCKER

What is it?

RUBY

It's you, all alone...taking the wrong turn into a very dark place.

TUCKER

Wouldn't be the first time. Sometimes wrong turns work out OK.

As Tucker leaves Ruby behind...

Wes and Grace are working at a fever pitch.

GRACE

Midnight's gonna hit and we're still gonna be in here tapping away. Could there be less in common between these three victims?

WES

Other than society hates them all?

GRACE

I don't care if these people are pests, there's got to be some reason they all have a price on their heads, and I'm not going to bed tonight knowing we might have saved the next one...wait a second...wait a second...Oh-kay...I just stepped into the fifth ring of weird.

On Grace's display screen are pictures of the driver's licenses of the three victims.

WES

What? They all look like Billie Jean King in their DMV pictures, who doesn't?

GRACE

Look at the numbers. Victim one, DMV Clerk, RGB3456, victim 2, Meter Maid RGB3457, victim 3, tax auditor, RGB3458...

WES

All the victims are in annoying professions and their driver licence numbers line up? How does that happen?

GRACE

One of the victims worked for the DMV, maybe they all know each other...or they're in witness protection or something.

WES

We need to find RGB3459 before the Headless Biker does

GRACE

Can Rosetta hack into the DMV?

(CONTINUED)

WES

You crazy? This bad boy might decipher alien languages, but nobody screws with the DMV. This situation requires a little human engineering.

17 INT. THE CHRONICLE - WAITING AREA - LATER 17

Grace and Wes watch as Vera talks into her headset. Although Vera's voice is full of passion and smoldering lust, she calmly files her fingernails while she performs.

VERA

Oooh baby...yeah big boy...that's exactly how I want it...

Vera looks at Wes and Grace, rolls her eyes.

VERA (cont'd)

...you are such a MAN...OH! OH! OH!
(clicks off)
I never knew having an ex-boyfriend at the DMV would come in handy.

GRACE

We don't have a lot of time.

VERA

You'll have a fax in minutes.

18 INT. KRISTEN'S BROWNSTONE APARTMENT - NIGHT 18

An apron-wearing Tucker cooks, Kristen watches.

TUCKER

I'd have offered to cook at my place, but I didn't want to share the space.

KRISTEN

With Wes?

TUCKER

And Chewbacca, and Doctor Who, and Captain Kirk, and some blue guy called "Grand Admiral Thrawn." The place looks like a Toys'R'Us exploded.

KRISTEN

You haven't answered my question.

(CONTINUED)

TUCKER

It was my grandfather. He was a reporter for *Stars and Stripes*.
(showing her his watch)
I still wear his watch on special occasions. He died in Korea when my mom was a kid...one day I was rummaging through our attic and I found a box full of his old articles. The last thing he wrote before he died was a personal essay about how he'd close his eyes every night and imagine walking through his house to tuck his daughter into bed. When I read it, I could hear his voice. After that, I didn't want to be anything other than a journalist.

KRISTEN

That makes me feel like the most shallow person alive. You know who made me want to be a journalist? Clark Kent.

Tucker looks at her, then breaks out into laughter.

KRISTEN (cont'd)

See what I mean?

TUCKER

I'm sorry. It's just that I expected George Orwell or H.L. Mencken...or Lois Lane.

KRISTEN

Why do all men think women want to be Lois Lane? Bitch on wheels...and don't get me started on Supergirl, what kind of a little tart flies in a miniskirt?

19 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

19

A place that seems to be rotting from the inside out. Wes insistently hits the knocker on an apartment door.

WES

I know you're in there, I can hear you watching reruns of "Suddenly Susan". Open up right now!

20 INT. DICK BLANSTON'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

20

DICK BLANSTON opens the door: a middle-aged man in a short-sleeved shirt and tie, he has bags under the eyes, nicotine stains on the fingers, and a cigarette between yellowing teeth. Grace and Wes push their way in:

WES
Dick Blanston?

BLANSTON
Who wants to know?

GRACE
You're a cable guy, right?

BLANSTON
Yeah, I work for the cable company,
what do you want? It's midnight for
cryin' out loud.

GRACE
And you're an inch away from having
something in common with Marie
Antoinette.

BLANSTON
Excuse me?

GRACE
We need to talk to you about the
Head Hunter murders. If you know
something about how they are going
down, you'd better say something
now, your life might just depend on
it.

BLANSTON
Whatever you're selling, I'm not
buying.

WES
Yo, cable guy, the killer's
chopping off the heads of people
who make everyone's life a Hell,
DMV Clerk, Meter maid, Tax Auditor:
doesn't that make you even a little
bit nervous?

BLANSTON
Listen rastaman, I don't care what
kinda ganja you've been smoking,
but I have no -

(CONTINUED)

Before Blanston can continue a ROAR sounds off from outside -
the Headless Biker comes CRASHING through Blanston's window!

BLANSTON (CONT'D)
Holy mother of -

Trying to avoid the incoming Headless Biker, Wes and Grace
grab Blanston, then fall back and take cover. The Headless
Biker spins to a halt before them.

Wes scrambles to his feet, to pull Grace and Blanston out the
door when he looks up to see the Headless Biker, who reaches
into his scabbard and...

SNAP-CHING!

...pulls out his demonic-looking sword and points it toward
Blanston! Wes and Grace step between Blanston and the sword.

As they stand off against the angry spirit...

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

21 INT. KRISTEN'S BROWNSTONE APARTMENT - NIGHT 21

FIND Tucker and Kristen, getting hot and heavy, inching to the couch. Tucker is still holding a glass of wine. They tumble down without disengaging. Tucker's wine glass spills. Kristen yelps, jumps back, wine all over her shirt.

TUCKER
Oh...I'm so sorry I -

KRISTEN
Do that on purpose?

Tucker reaches for a napkin, hands it over:

TUCKER
You wouldn't be kissing me if I
were the kind of guy who would.

Kristen kisses him again, stands.

KRISTEN
Be right back.

TUCKER
Slip into something more
comfortable?

KRISTEN
You don't mind, do you?

TUCKER
Actually, I beg you.

Kristen smiles, then BEEP. Kristen reaches over to a shelf:

TUCKER (CONT'D)
Don't tell me that's your Copy
Editor again -

KRISTEN
Police scanner. A girl's best
friend.

Kristen hustles to the shelf, pulls out the scanner, and turns up the volume:

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
The cops reserved this frequency
for the Head Hunter case:

(CONTINUED)

SCANNER VOICE (FILTERED)
....repeat the suspect has been
spotted heading downtown on Stanton
Street possibly pursuing a
potential victim in a red PT
Cruiser...

TUCKER
...red PT Cruiser?
(whipping out his cell
phone)
Aw hell.

Kristen explodes into action as she speaks, racing to the
closet, pulling out her overcoat, grabbing a tape recorder:

KRISTEN
What are you doing? Get your stuff,
we could be first on the scene!

Tucker dials, puts the phone to his ear:

TUCKER
Wes, are you OK?

SMASH CUT TO:

22 INT. PT CRUISER - CONTINUOUS 22

Wes is stepping on it with extreme prejudice. Grace hangs on
for dear life. Blanstion is nowhere to be seen:

WES
(into the phone)
I'm pretty stinking far from OK,
Tuck B.! I've had him on my six
since Brooklyn!

Blanstion pops up from the back:

BLANSTION
Are we there yet?

Wes violently puts Blanstion's head back out of sight:

WES
You want to lose that ugly thing?

GRACE
Stay down, Dick!

TUCKER
Wes...what's going on?

(CONTINUED)

WES

I can outrun him to the Chronicle.
I'm thinking he can't ride that
bike down the elevator shaft to the
Archives so we'll be safe!

TUCKER

I'll meet you there.

Grace looks up from holding Blanston down:

GRACE

Eyes on the road! Eyes on the road!

Wes looks ahead and reacts: as he wrenches the wheel -

END INTERCUT

Tucker hears a terrible SCREECHING SOUND and pulls the phone
from his ear. Tucker turns to Kristen, juiced:

TUCKER

Wes and Grace are on the story,
already, they know where the guy's
going!

KRISTEN

What?

TUCKER

The Headless - Head Hunter - do you
want an exclusive or do you want to
spend the night chasing radio
chatter on your scanner? Come on!

As Tucker pulls Kristen out of the apartment:

23 INT. THE CHRONICLE - WAITING AREA - NIGHT 23

Dead-of-night empty. Vera and Ruby close up by reception:

RUBY

One thing I hate about filling in
for the Big Guy is having to keep
his hours.

VERA

Tell me about it. Walking out to my
car all alone is an experiment in
terror.

Ruby reaches into her purse, pulls out her canister of mace.

(CONTINUED)

RUBY
Don't you have one of these?

Vera looks at the mace, then reaches into her purse and expertly unfurls a butterfly knife.

VERA
I have an ex-boyfriend in the Mossad. Taught me some moves.

Before Ruby can reply, Wes and Grace rush in through the front doors, pulling a very annoyed Blanston along:

WES
Get out of here! Run! Run!

Vera and Ruby look back, then tear ass out of there...
...and then the place starts to tremble...the sound of a ROARING MOTORCYCLE fills the Bullpen -

RUBY
Sweet mother of Deepak Chopra -
...and The Headless Biker rides his massive motorcycle through the doors!

The Headless Biker spins to a halt, sees Wes and Grace getting away through a door in the back of the bullpen, then guns the engine!

The Headless Biker whips up a whirlwind of loose paper in his wake as he gives chase through the bullpen and into:

24 INT. THE CHRONICLE - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 24

...and race to the elevator, pulling Blanston along.

The Biker rides into the corridor. Wes opens the elevator door and tosses Blanston in -

25 INT. THE ARCHIVES - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS 25

Wes gets in, Grace pushes the "door close" button.

The door closes...slowly...the Headless Biker gets there, heaves his massive sword...

...and SLAMS it between the closing doors of the elevator!

Everybody recoils. The Biker tries to lever the door open with his weapon.

Wes lunges forward and hits the RUN button on the elevator.

The elevator descends. The sword travels all the way up the seam between the double doors, then vanishes as the elevator gets away.

Wes and Grace heave a sigh of relief. Blanston lights a cigarette.

26 EXT. THE CHRONICLE - NIGHT 26

Tucker and an annoyed Kristen get out of her parked car:

KRISTEN

You know what this reminds me of?
That time you were going to show me
the secret room where you people
keep the real alien stuff and -

TUCKER

I told you that was a set up.

KRISTEN

I like you Tucker, I really do, but
if we're gonna work out, we're
really gonna have to keep our
business separate from our -

TUCKER

Wes said the Headless Biker would -

KRISTEN

There is no Headless Biker, we're
dealing with a dangerous psychopath
here.

(Beat)

I'm ready to respect you and your
career, i really am, but you can't
drag me into these horror movie
fantasies and expect me to -

And then the front doors of the Chronicle building fly open to reveal the Headless Biker!

Tucker and Kristen look at each other, then SCREAM!

The ROAR of the Headless Biker's motorcycle overtakes all other sounds as he guns the engine and aims for Tucker!

HEADLESS BIKER'S P.O.V.

(CONTINUED)

Speeding toward Tucker, who has no time to hide before a:

CUT TO BLACK:

27 INT. THE ARCHIVES - ELEVATOR - NIGHT 27

Blanston drops a cigarette to the elevator floor. He takes out his pack and offers them around.

BLANSTON
Lungdart?

WES AND GRACE
No!

BLANSTON
Get some manners, will you? Holing up in this elevator with you two slackers isn't exactly my idea of a night on the town.

GRACE
Listen, Dick, if it weren't for us having a three hundred foot elevator shaft protected by a heavy steel door, your head would be in a saddlebag.

The elevator phone RINGS. Grace picks it up:

GRACE (cont'd)
Yeah?

BLANSTON
You two really think I buy this load of manure, don't you?

WES
So you have sword-wielding bikers come after you all the time?

Grace hangs up the phone.

GRACE
That was Vera. The coast is clear. We're going up.

Grace pushes a button as Blanston lights up a new cigarette:

28 INT. THE CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - NIGHT 28

Wes, Grace and Blanston enter to meet Ruby, who hugs Wes and Grace. Blanston flicks his cigarette butt to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

RUBY

Thank god you're OK...we got a serious problem here -

Before Grace can answer, Ruby points to a desk in the bullpen, where Vera offers a cold pack to a shaken, seriously freaked-out Kristen:

GRACE

What the - Kristen, what are you doing here?

KRISTEN

(putting the cold pack on her head)

He took Tucker. He just came out the front of the building and knocked me down, and when I came to this was all he left behind.

Kristen points to a bundle on the desk:

WES

Tucker's jacket?

Wes opens the jacket, it appears to have been torn by a sword. On the fabric are written the words "**BRING BLANSTON TO THE TUNNEL BEFORE DAWN - IT'S HIS HEAD OR YOUR FRIEND'S.**"

Wes and Grace react to the sight: this is definitely not where they expected this case to go.

RUBY

The words are written in blood.

GRACE

This isn't right. This is not Tucker's jacket.

RUBY

Damned straight it is, and it's like a psychic Chernobyl...if the visions I'm getting are right, Tucker's in a seriously dark place right now.

KRISTEN

What visions? He's in a seriously dark place because he's been kidnapped by a dangerous serial killer! Why hasn't anybody picked up the phone and called the cops?

(CONTINUED)

GRACE

We've been calling them since we found the Headless Biker's lair, they don't want to believe us.

KRISTEN

It's not a Headless Biker, it's a psychopath and we have the evidence to prove it -

Kristen goes for the telephone, Grace puts her hand over the receiver, stopping her:

GRACE

And what we need is a plan. We're gonna have to use Dick here as bait.

BLANSTON

OK, before anyone gets misty. Adios, farewell, *auf wiedersehen* and sayonara. I'm going home and packing a bag for Bora-Bora.

Wes grabs Blanston, pushes him against a wall:

WES

Listen cancerstick, you owe us your life. You will help us figure out a way to get our friend back.

Blanston, shakes himself off and pulls out a new Lungdart.

BLANSTON

For those of you who missed it the first eighty times, here's the recap - I'm just a cable guy! I don't know a damned thing about some head chopping perv on a bike!

GRACE

Did somebody smack you with the density stick? The Headless Biker is not picking his victims at random. There is some kind of a pattern at work here, and you're going to sit over there with the case file until you come up with some information we can use -

Grace pulls the cigarette from his mouth and stomps it out.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (CONT'D)
- and if you light up again I will
tar your lungs manually!

Grace motions to Ruby and Vera, who take Blanston away:

KRISTEN
Guys...I don't know what you found,
who that guy is, or even how the
Head Hunter got here but -

WES
Hear us out, Kristen. Last night we
found the Biker's hideout at a
subway service tunnel on Stanton
street.

GRACE
We found that all the victim's DMV
numbers are in sequence. Blanston
was next - the reason there hasn't
been a murder tonight is we got to
him before the Headless Biker.

KRISTEN
There is going to be a murder, and
it's going to be Tucker. I'm not
gonna let that happen!

With that, Kristen storms out of the office, Grace and Wes
exchange glances, then follow - as they exit:

29 INT. THE CHRONICLE - BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS 29

Blanston looks out through the glass on the door at Grace and
Wes following Kristen. He smiles a strange, crooked smile,
then hits the case file.

Blanston looks through the case file with an intensity
heretofore unseen in the character: the pages seem to be
flowing before him with incredible speed.

He spots the picture of Hellboy, holding the pumpkin helmet -
the article about Hellboy's decapitation - Wes's woodcut of
the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

He finally stops at a Post-It with the address for the
Flaming Hog's Head Motorcycle Shop.

30 EXT. THE CHRONICLE - NIGHT 30

Kristen bursts out through the doors and heads for her car.
Grace and Wes follow:

(CONTINUED)

GRACE
What are you doing?

KRISTEN
Tucker's life is in danger and I'm not letting you handle it like a tabloid circus.

GRACE
Do you actually believe the cops are going to buy that a pissed-off headless spirit is ransoming your boyfriend for a cable guy? You go to them with that, you're gonna get a crash course on what it really feels like to be a tabloid journalist.

(beat)
Kristen, I'm responsible for what happened here tonight, I broke this story and got us all involved - I'm going to do what's right for Tucker.

KRISTEN
I'm sure you mean well, but I'm not letting you gamble with his life. I know the detective on this case. I'm getting Tucker back.

As Kristen gets into her car:

31 INT. THE CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS 31

After making sure the coast is clear, Blanston steps out of the breakroom, Wes and Grace's case file under his arm.

He makes his way toward a side door.

RUBY (O.S.)
Excuse me! What are you doing?

Ruby rushes up and grabs his arm:

RUBY (cont'd)
Where are you going with that file?

BLANSTON
Let me go!

Ruby and Blanston struggle for a moment. A more formidable opponent that Blanston bargained for, Ruby gets him down off

(CONTINUED)

the window...until Blanston looks her in the eye and Ruby gets a psychic flash from him:

RUBY

My god, who are you? What are you?

...and for a moment, Ruby sees that she is not struggling against a human being. Blanston's eyes change into a flaming pair of demonic orbs, his face becomes distorted, and a hideous demonic symbol appears on his forehead: a branding, still sizzling with the smoky stench of burning flesh.

RESUME

As Ruby SCREAMS, still trying to hold Blanston, who violently shoves her away.

VERA (O.S.)

What's going on? Ruby!

Vera rushes to Ruby's aid: she comes to just in time to see Blanston as he finally gets out through the window.

Off the freaked-out looks on Vera and Ruby's face:

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

32 INT. THE ARCHIVES - NIGHT

32

Ruby sits. Grace paces. Wes taps on a keyboard.

GRACE

Tucker dies at dawn, are you sure this is what we need to be doing?

WES

I'm not chasing a guy who could open a can of paranormal whup-ass on me without a little more info.

GRACE

(to Ruby)

Are you sure Blanston was a demon?

RUBY

Honey, I've seen some freakish and deformed things in my time. When I touched that man, I had a vision of his real self, and unless Blanston suddenly developed a really bad case of acne, he was definitely a demon from Hell.

WES

I'm calling up a d-base of demonic symbols, shout out when you see the thing from Blanston's forehead.

As a series of demonic symbols scroll onto the screen:

RUBY

It's like playing the satanic version of Match Game.

GRACE

We have a database of demonic symbols but we can't hack the DMV.

WES

Let it go, Grace.

RUBY

Hold the presses, that's it.

ON SCREEN is the symbol: a snake, coiled into a circle, eating its own tail, surrounding the Roman numerals VII/IX.

(CONTINUED)

WES

Aw...this is serious nasty. That's a prison branding. Eighth circle of hell, ninth *Bolgia*: the place where the devil imprisons all the sowers of discord and makes them walk around with their guts hanging out of their split-open bellies.

Wes, Grace and Ruby exchange glances as the truth sinks in.

GRACE

Dick, the chain-smoking cable guy, is an escaped convict from hell's penitentiary?

RUBY

A sower of discord. I can see why he'd be hiding out as a cable guy.

WES

Or a meter maid, or DMV guy, or tax auditor. This explains a lot.

GRACE

Like the sequential DMV numbers: these guys escape from hell, one of them gets a job at the DMV, gets them all new identities.

RUBY

An underground railroad from hell.

GRACE

That's why the Headless Biker's after them. He used to be a bounty hunter when he was alive, now he's doing it from beyond the grave.

WES

And if we don't help him get Blanston, Tucker's a skidmark.

The telephone then rings: Wes taps the speakerphone.

WES (cont'd)

Yo.

INTERCUT WITH

32A INT. THE CHRONICLE - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

32A

Where Vera talks back from her station:

(CONTINUED)

VERA

I just got a call for you from some
guy named Nitro. Says he got
attacked at his bike shop.

GRACE

Why's he calling us?

VERA

Cause the guy who attacked him left
your case file behind.

Wes and Grace exchange glances, then book out of there:

33 INT. THE FLAMING HOG MOTORCYCLE SHOP - NIGHT 33

A shambles: the bikes and parts that once carefully lined the
floor are now scattered. A bandaged Nitro tells his tale.

NITRO

I never told anyone...but he knew
my secret...and then he took it
away. I didn't want to give it to
him, but he beat it out of me.

WES

What was it, Nitro?

NITRO

My brother's head...he took my
brother's head.

GRACE

You had it all along?

Nitro bows his head. Wes and Grace look to one another,
trying to figure out the ramifications of Nitro's revelation:

34 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE - NIGHT 34

A female DESK SERGEANT tries to cope with the large number of
fake informants and people confessing to be the Headless
Biker. A MAN WITH A PLASTIC SWORD fights his way up:

PLASTIC SWORDSMAN

I am the Head Hunter, and I'm here
to confess. I chop off heads to
protest whale splitting!

DESK SERGEANT

Sir, would you please get away from
my desk? We're busy people here -

(CONTINUED)

A second FAKE HEAD HUNTER approaches the desk:

FAKE HEAD HUNTER

No, I'm the Head Hunter, I chop off heads for peace in the Middle East!

PLASTIC SWORDSMAN

No, I'm the Head Hunter!

As the Desk Sergeant buries her head in her hands, FIND Detective Garibaldi, trying not to spill the coffee in his styrofoam cup, as he walks toward a worried Kristen:

GARIBALDI

Kristen Martin?

KRISTEN

Detective. I've been waiting for hours. I have serious information that could break this case for you -

GARIBALDI

So does every one of these nut-jobs. The only reason you've waited hours and not days is I know you from the Times. What have you got?

KRISTEN

This comes from a protected source, but I know where the head Hunter's gonna be at dawn. He has a hostage.

GARIBALDI

I need more than that. I'm not just sending out a team on your say so.

KRISTEN

There's a detail you haven't released to the press. All the victims have sequential driver's license numbers.

GARIBALDI

Haven't released it to the press? Hell, we haven't even checked out their DMV numbers ourselves.

(sips his coffee, then:)

You sit. I'm gonna make some calls.

Garibaldi steps away. Off Kristen, as she checks her watch:

35 INT. THE FLAMING HOG MOTORCYCLE SHOP - NIGHT

35

NITRO

Clarence was kind of a morbid guy,
one night the two of us got wasted -

WES

I'm definitely sensing a pattern.

NITRO

- Clarence said when he died, the
way he'd like to be remembered
would be for someone to use his
skull for a hood ornament. So when
he got his block knocked off, I
figured it was fate, or karma, or
that other thing...I've been saving
up to buy a big bad voodoo Caddy to
stick his head on.

WES

How did Blanston know you had it?

NITRO

He used your file to find me...and
when he was beating my skull
against the counter, he told me
he'd been to hell and back and that
he knew his own kind. He said that
there could be no Headless Horseman
without a missing head. Beats the
hell out of me what he meant.

GRACE

Nitro. Your brother's the Head
Hunter. He's won't stop killing
'til he gets his head back.

Nitro stops to think about this, then:

NITRO

Cool.

WES

My guess is Blanston's is going to
trade the head for his freedom...
and he knows exactly where and when
your brother's gonna show up next.

GRACE

And so do we.

36 INT. SUBWAY SERVICE CONDUIT - NIGHT

36

Darker and scarier than before. A long shadow looms over the tunnel floor. Blanston. Carrying a bleached white skull. Blanston passes a niche. Wes steps out into the light behind Blanston and hurls himself into him with a mighty HOWL.

The two men tussle fiercely, but Blanston cracks Wes across the face with the skull. Wes falls to the floor, reeling.

BLANSTON

That was it? Jumping me was your plan to save your friend?

Clutching his aching ribs, Wes rolls over to face Blanston.

WES

Something like that.

BLANSTON

You suck.

As Blanston gloats, Grace rushes into the light behind him, without missing a beat, Blanston turns and ducks, rolling her over his back and onto the floor. Grace lands next to Wes.

BLANSTON (cont'd)

I've been to hell, I can take care of myself in a fight. So back off!

WES

Tucker didn't do a thing to you, he doesn't deserve to die.

BLANSTON

First you jump me, now you beg me. You're pathetic. You show up, save my life and even point me in the right direction to find the bounty hunter's head...Hell, I wasn't even nice to you.

(beat)

It's because of suckers like you that I love the kind of work I do.

A great ROAR fills the conduit, followed by a cloud of smoke. The Headless Biker enters the conduit through the smoke, stops before Blanston, who holds up the skull into the light:

BLANSTON (cont'd)

I have something for you! Your head for my freedom, what do you say?

(CONTINUED)

GRACE
Don't do it, Blanston!

The Headless Biker REVS his bike in response and holds out his hand. Blanston looks back at Wes and Grace, smiles.

BLANSTON
Free at last...free at last...

Blanston tosses the skull over. The Biker catches it. Blanston LAUGHS...until the Headless Biker lifts his faceplate...

...to REVEAL Nitro!

BLANSTON (cont'd)
What are you doing here?

NITRO
You mess with Hellboy, you get the Nitro!

Before Blanston can reply, a maelstrom of smoke invades the place. Blanston turns around in time to find himself caught in the headlight of:

THE REAL HEADLESS BIKER

Slowly, malevolently riding his bike into the Tunnel with a terrifying GROWL.

The Headless Biker draws his sword and points it sideways against the wall as he approaches: producing an ominous shower of sparks.

Blanston tries to back off, but as the Headless Biker bears down, the last thing Blanston sees is...

...Wes, leaning on the Tunnel wall:

WES
Yo, Blanston. That was my plan.

The Headless Biker REVS his engine...the mighty chopper now speeds toward Blanston -

BLANSTON
No...please...no -

KLANG!

Wes and Grace react as Blanston's body falls before them! The Headless Biker then stops before his brother.

(CONTINUED)

NITRO
Hi Clarence.

WES
(stepping up)
Give us our friend back. We did our
part, of the deal. Now give him up.

The Headless Biker holds out one hand and REVS his bike with
the other, as if asking for his head back.

NITRO
You want this?

The Headless Biker REVS again in response.

GRACE
Wait a minute, Nitro. Don't give
him the head yet.
(to the Biker)
We brought you Blanstons, now give
us back our friend.

The Headless Biker REVS again. Another burst of smoke erupts
from the end of the conduit. Grace sees Tucker walking out
from the smoke. Grace and Wes run to their friend. As Grace
wraps her arms around Tucker:

TUCKER
What happened? Where was I?

WES
Long story, bro. Long story.

TUCKER
What the hell -

The three turn toward Nitro, who holds his hand out toward
his brother. Clarence reaches forward and takes his skull.
For a moment, the two brothers are reunited, a touching...and
morbid scene:

NITRO
I love you MAN!

The Headless Biker takes off his helmet, puts on the skull,
then puts the helmet on over it before turning his bike
around and SCREAMING back into the maelstrom!

Nitro putters up to the Gang. The sound of police sirens is
now filling the place.

NITRO (cont'd)
That was intense.

GRACE
Cops are coming. I don't think we
want to be seen here.

NITRO
Hey, good thinking.
(then, getting emotional)
You know, I really appreciate how
you've helped me get closure on
this...if you ever want a deal on a
motorcycle -

WES
Yeah, yeah. We'll call you.

NITRO
Excellent.
(revving his bike)
WHOOOO-EEEE! Hellboy lives!

And with that, Nitro races away...as The Gang turns to go:

37 EXT. STREET BY THE SUBWAY SERVICE CONDUIT - DAY 37

A body bag is taken off the scene and into a Coroner's van.
Kristen watches, a distraught expression on her face.
Garibaldi approaches:

GARIBALDI
I wish I'd believed you sooner...
all we found down there is a
decapitated body. No ID yet.

KRISTEN
Was there anyone else down there?

GARIBALDI
Just the victim.

Kristen bows her head, reeling with the possibility that
Tucker may be gone.

KRISTEN
Oh no...Tucker...

GARIBALDI
Did you know the victim, Kristen?

Kristen turns away from Garibaldi, trying to fight off the
shock and grief. Garibaldi follows:

(CONTINUED)

GARIBALDI (cont'd)
Is there something you need to tell me?

KRISTEN
No...I've told you everything I know.

Garibaldi looks at the obviously stricken Kristen, then:

GARIBALDI
I know this might not be the best time, but... You are the first journalist at the scene, is there anything you need me to tell you...you know, for the record?

KRISTEN
No. I don't think I want to cover this story anymore.

Kristen looks away, close to tears, then looks up and sees something just beyond the crime scene:

WES'S PT CRUISER

And Wes and Grace, leading Tucker inside. Tucker sees Kristen. He smiles. She takes a step toward them - Tucker holds out his hand, mouthing the word "LATER."

Kristen lights up as the PT Cruiser rolls away. She then reaches into her purse, pulls out a tape recorder:

KRISTEN (cont'd)
Detective...how about that interview?

As Kristen goes about the task of getting her exclusive:

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

FADE IN

38 INT. KRISTEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

38

Kristen and Tucker sit across the dinner table. She reads the World Chronicle. The article reads: "HEADLESS BIKER GOES BACK TO HELL." Tucker reads the New York Times, that headline reads: "HEAD HUNTER CLAIMS FOURTH VICTIM."

TUCKER

Scooped again.
(off her look)
Too bad the Chronicle got it right.

KRISTEN

How would you know? You're the one with "amnesia."

TUCKER

Are you still denying what you saw?

KRISTEN

I'm not denying anything. Grace and Wes did some seriously off-the-wall detective work that paid off...and then she took those facts and wrote a completely off-the-wall story.

TUCKER

If her story's so wrong, how come the Headless Biker hasn't killed since then?

Kristen changes the topic, wraps her arms around Tucker:

KRISTEN

I'm just happy to have you back.

TUCKER

You're never going to believe me about my work, are you?

KRISTEN

Doesn't make me less happy to have you back.

TUCKER

Except that in your mind I'm always going to be a delusional guy living in a fantasy world, writing for a fraudulent newspaper.

(CONTINUED)

KRISTEN
Sure...but you clearly think the
same of me.

Tucker thinks for a second:

TUCKER
You think you can live with that?

KRISTEN
I think we're finally even.

Tucker levels a quizzical glance at her. She reaches across
the table, pulls him over to her and kisses him passionately.
Tucker comes up for air:

TUCKER
I can live with that.

The two fall deeper into their kiss, and off their chairs and
out of frame.

Off this romantic moment...

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF EPISODE