

Justice League unlimited

"Cat And Canary"
(Outline)

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"Cat and Canary" (3-11-04)

TEASER

1. ALLEY - NIGHT - LATE

A tough-looking man peeks out from the darkness of an alley. He scans the lightly trafficked streets and soon spots an unmarked truck idling at the curb, headlights off. He waves to the driver, who immediately slips the truck into gear and drives into the alley.

WIDEN as the truck pulls up to a loading dock, where other tough-looking men are waiting for it. They begin to unload big boxes from the back of the truck.

PAN UP to the roof of one of the buildings bordering the alley. We can see little except unlit shapes and silhouettes -- and then one of them moves. It's a person's darkened face, right in the foreground. And it's only when the person speaks into a communicator that we realize it's a woman.

"Wildcat, it's Black Canary," she whispers. "They're here. So where are you?" There's no answer. "Wildcat?"

Finally, she hears a deep, gruff voice, breathing hard:

"I'm a little... (grunts)... busy right now."

"You all right?" Canary whispers. "You need any help?"

CUT TO a closeup of WILDCAT -- so close, we can't even tell where he is... just that it's a well-lit area, and somebody's throwing punches at him. And of course, he's punching back. Between swings, he says, "When have I ever (grunts) needed help? I'll be there in (grunt) a few minutes."

Black Canary is not sympathetic: "That's what you said last time. And the time before. I'm going to take care of this myself."

Wildcat tries to say something, but Black Canary has already disconnected -- and the distraction allows his unseen opponent to get in another punch.

2. INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE - A MOMENT LATER

The tough guys are taking big boxes off the truck -- all but one of the men, who sits in a corner with his eyes glued to the screen of a laptop. The leader of the thugs now notices him and tells him to help.

"Just a sec," the man replies, "it's almost over."

"What is?"

"Pay-per-view webcast. Cost me an arm and a leg."

"I don't care what it cost you. If we don't get those guns off--"

"Hey, relax. The last one only went one round, okay?"

Before the leader can respond, Black Canary crashes into the warehouse. A skilled martial artist, she makes quick work of the thugs. (And as they fight, we INTERCUT brief glimpses of the fight that's on the computer screen -- but the glimpses are so fast and close, we can't identify the participants.)

Just when it looks like BC's taken down the last of the crooks, several more arrive in another truck. And they're heavily armed. But BC uses her incredibly powerful sonic scream to blast the truck into a brick wall. The impact dazes everyone inside the vehicle.

For a moment, nothing can be heard except the female announcer's excited blow-by-blow commentary on the laptop. BC now looks over at its screen -- just in time to see the winner of the cage match raise his hands in victory.

It's Wildcat.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

1. THE WATCHTOWER - EXERCISE ROOM

GREEN ARROW is on a mat by himself, stretching. He's getting ready for a workout.

He's interrupted by a surprisingly friendly -- even flirtatious -- Black Canary: "You know, most people who sell their companies for three billion dollars would just kick back and relax after that."

GA is startled, but also pleased that this woman he's been eyeing for so many weeks has finally noticed him. "I'm not most people. And it was only two-point-seven billion," GA says as he approaches her, adding: "And by the way, we've never been formally introduced."

"Black Canary."

"Green Arrow." As they shake hands, BC asks, "You here for the same reason I am?" GA gives her a curious look. "Sparring," she quickly adds.

"Love to," he replies, and they start to spar.

We've already seen how good BC is, so it's a bit of a surprise that the archer can handle her so well. He even gives her advice between holds. Finally, he maneuvers her into a seemingly inescapable hold. While she's in it, she whispers to him that she needs his help on something.

Something that can't involve the League. Something personal.

"Tell you what," GA says, "You break out of this hold and I'll help you."

"You mean that?" she asks.

"Uh huh."

CUT TO: a wall. No sooner does GA answer her than he's flung into frame, hitting the wall.

As he recovers, BC steps into frame, towering over him. "I hope you're a man of your word," she says.

GA nods meekly, knowing he's been suckered.

2. METROPOLIS - DAY

Black Canary is tearing through traffic on her motorcycle. GA is seated right behind her, holding on for dear life.

As they weave between huge trucks, BC is telling GA that the fights Wildcat is involved in are unsanctioned events of dubious legality... human cockfights that often involve super-powered villains. The only rule is to fight until one of the combatants is incapacitated.

"Why is he doing it?" GA asks.

BC shakes her head, uncertain. "He just likes to fight. He's been doing it so long, he can't stop."

"Well, he's sure in the right League," GA quips.

"No, this is too much," BC replies, "even for the League."

"Have you confronted him?" GA asks.

"He denies everything."

"Denial," GA mutters, then he gives BC a long, questioning look and asks, "He really means a lot to you, doesn't he?"

"You have no idea."

"I'm starting to," GA replies glumly, feeling more suckered than ever.

4. THE ARENA - DAY

The place is set up like a speakeasy: a nightclub in front and a door at the back that leads to a subterranean arena. In her announcer's booth/office, ROULETTE is counting cash when Wildcat steps in. She's startled. Starts to make excuses for not having paid him yet.

Wildcat holds up his hand, stopping her. He doesn't care about the money. Never did. He's come to tell her he's not going to fight any more.

Roulette's surprised. Why would he want to stop? He's doing so well.

"It's interfering with my work," Wildcat says, a little uncertainly.

"What work?" Roulette snaps. "Are you talking about the Justice League? They don't appreciate you. You can't fly, you don't have a ring. This is the only place left where someone like you can still show what they're made--"

"Shut up!" Wildcat shouts, and Roulette immediately backs off and changes her tack. She tells him she understands, and she respects his decision. It's just that..." she trails off.

"What?" Wildcat asks.

"The Atomic Skull. He's back in town. Wants a shot at you. But I'll tell him you quit. Don't worry about it."

Wildcat gives her a long look. It's as if Roulette has put an ice cold beer in front of a recovering alcoholic... on a hundred degree day.

5. A PARKING LOT - DAY

A sleazy ticket scalper is doing business in the back of an Escalade SUV. BC -- now Dinah -- is with him, but is having a hard time getting him to admit that he even knows about the cage fights. She eventually charms him into giving her the details... and the price: \$10,000.

As soon as she hears the figure, she opens the door and calls out, "Ollie!"

Ollie is standing nearby, with Dinah's motorcycle. He walks over to her and she tells him she needs ten grand. His face falls. "Now I get it. This is why you came on to me like that. My money."

"Nooooo!" Dinah says quickly. "I picked you because you're a great fighter--"

"But you're better," Ollie replies.

"True, but I also picked you because... okay, it was because you're rich."

"Crass!" the scalper exclaims, taking the words out of Ollie's mouth. And then the scalper gets back to business: "And by the way, if you're both going, it's twenty thousand."

Dinah looks uncertainly at Ollie. "Man of your word?" she asks. Ollie nods, too pissed off to speak.

6. NIGHT - THE NIGHTCLUB

Grousing, Ollie arrives with Dinah at the nightclub that fronts for the arena. They have to show their tickets to a phalanx of big bouncers before they can get into the club, and once they're in, they're escorted to a back room, which opens on a corridor that leads down to the arena. As

they go, they hear some of the other fightgoers talking about Wildcat, and about how much they're betting on him. When one of the other fightgoers recognizes Ollie, Ollie turns away. This is attention he doesn't want.

The corridor eventually opens on the arena's seating area. But instead of taking their seats along with the others, Ollie and Dinah duck away.

6a. A CORRIDOR

They start down some winding tunnels. But Dinah stops and silently points to a surveillance camera at a corner; Ollie pulls his collapsible bow out of the lining of his jacket, along with an arrow. Fires the arrow at the camera. Disables it. Then they move onward.

7. WILDCAT'S DRESSING ROOM

Wildcat is alone, shadow boxing, when Dinah and Ollie enter. "What is this?" he barks, surprised.

"Call it... an intervention," Dinah says.

"You think I have a problem?"

"Yes."

"That's funny, you didn't think I had a problem when I trained you. The League didn't think I had a problem when they asked me to join. I was Wildcat, the guy who fights.

And I still am." A beat, then, quietly, he adds: "That's all I am."

"Don't you see?" Dinah says, "It's out of control now. It's an addiction."

"I can stop any time I want. But it'll be my decision, not yours," Wildcat growls, jabbing his finger at Dinah.

Ollie's finally had enough. Doesn't like to see Dinah treated this way. Tells Wildcat to stop it. Or else.

Before Wildcat can respond, Dinah blows up... at Ollie. Telling him to mind his own business, she pulls him out of Wildcat's dressing room.

7. THE CORRIDOR - A MOMENT LATER

"That's it for me," Ollie says, "I'm done with this."

"You gave your word," Dinah says.

"No, you took it from me. Under false pretenses."

"Whaaat?"

"You know what I'm talking about," Ollie says angrily, "All that flirting you did with me."

"Why do you assume that was fake?" she asks.

Ollie is taken aback for a moment, but then he presses onward, a little less certain than before: "Wh... What is he to you, anyway? You sure seem to care about him a lot."

"Did you think...? Oh boy... He trained me. Trained a lot of us in the League. Kept an eye on us when we starting out. Kept us from making stupid mistakes. I owe him..."

Ollie is starting to get it... and starting to become hopeful again. He tries to finish Dinah's thought: "...So now... Wildcat's old, and you don't want to see his career end with him being thrown out of the League?"

"Or getting killed," she adds gravely.

"Or killing somebody," Ollie says. "We really should bring the League into this."

"No. We go with our backup plan. You still owe me, Mister," Dinah says firmly.

Ollie sighs and looks around. All he sees is empty corridor. "There's no place to change," he says.

"We do it right here," Dinah replies, turning around and starting to undress. But then she looks over her shoulder at Ollie, who's staring at her. "It's usually done back-to-back," she says.

"Oh, right. Forgot."

8. THE RING

Roulette steps into the ring, ready to introduce the next fight -- but suddenly a teargas arrow soars overhead.

As the gas swirls down into the crowd, GA shouts to them from a balcony: show's over, folks. Forever.

A couple of Roulette's bouncers rush GA from behind, but Black Canary comes in from out of nowhere, knocking them away. As she fights, she notices GA whip out an assortment of arrows and name each as he fires it at Roulette's thugs: "net," "stun-arrow," "knock-out gas," etc.

Between punches, she asks if he could possibly have anything stupider in that quiver. In response, he whips out a boxing glove arrow and fires it at the Atomic Skull.

Meanwhile, Wildcat has come out of his dressing room and is surveying the brawl. He sees that BC's about to be overwhelmed by bouncers. He dives in, knocks the thugs away from BC, then demands to know what's going on.

"We're taking down this place, 'Cat. You better decide whose side you're on."

He decides...and steps aside, letting the angry thugs and supervillains encircle Black Canary and Green Arrow.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

1. THE ARENA - A SECOND LATER

GA and Black Canary are still surrounded. BC apologizes to GA for getting him into this mess, but GA tells her to forget the apology and just do that scream thing of hers.

"I got a better idea," she whispers, and she then calls out to Roulette, offering to fight Wildcat. In the cage, right now. If she wins, he has to stop fighting. If she loses, she'll never say another word about the cage matches.

Wildcat ignores the challenge, but dollar signs nearly erupt out of Roulette's eyes. She grabs a mic, tells the crowd to simmer down, everything's going to be all right. In fact, everything's going to be fantastic -- because Wildcat is going to fight Black Canary right here, after a short intermission. Place your bets! CUT TO:

2. WILDCAT'S DRESSING ROOM

Roulette is watching as Wildcat paces. He tells her he doesn't want to fight his friend. The great thing about these cage matches has always been that his only opponents were supervillains, but now...

Roulette cuts him off: "You know that if I let Black Canary walk out of here, she'll go straight to the cops. And that would be the end of my income AND your fun. So either you fight her or she dies. And if you lose -- either deliberately or legit -- I'll never let you back in the cage again."

Wildcat slams his fist into a wall.

3. BLACK CANARY'S DRESSING ROOM

GA's with BC. He tells her that challenging Wildcat was an ingenious way of stopping the brawl, but what's her real plan? "Do we fight our way out? With your scream and my arrows, we could--"

BC stops him, saying, "If we get away, it won't solve the problem. He'll just keep fighting."

"But what if you go out there tonight and he doesn't back down?"

"Then I fight him. And beat him," she says.

"Or, he kills you. Not everyone's as easy to beat as I was."

"I'm not going to think about that," Black Canary says, "and I don't want you to think about trying to escape; this is one jam your stupid arrows won't get us out of."

"Oh, I don't know about that," GA replies, and he now points one of his arrowheads at her. It sprays knockout gas.

A moment after Black Canary collapses, Roulette enters. Her jaw drops. GA tells her not to worry. She's still going to have her main event.

4. THE CAGE - A LITTLE LATER

Wildcat is waiting for his opponent. He's more than a little surprised to see that it's GA. WC tells Roulette he doesn't want to fight GA, but GA quickly starts taunting him: is he afraid? Does he only fight women?

WC takes a swing at GA and the fight's on. GA gets the worst of it, right from the start.

INTERCUT Black Canary awakening and struggling to make it to the cage.

When she finally gets there, she tries to stop the fight, but Roulette's goons won't let her. She shouts to GA: "What do you think you're doing?" "Teaching him a lesson," GA replies. But just then, Wildcat hurls GA across the cage, slamming him hard into the fence. He doesn't get up.

A still-furious WC goes over to him and taps him with his boot, goading him to get up. No response. WC bends down, touches GA's chest. Nothing.

Wildcat backs away, stunned. But the crowd loves it. And their cheers make Wildcat feel even worse.

Black Canary runs to Wildcat and rips into him. This is where his addiction to violence has led, she screams. Wildcat lowers his head, ashamed.

Roulette now approaches Wildcat, excitedly telling him that he has taken the fights to a whole new level. Next week's fight should clear millions!

"Count me out," Wildcat says simply.

5. THE ARENA - MOMENTS LATER

The place has mostly emptied out, and Black Canary is with GA's seemingly lifeless body, which has been left inside the cage. She's tearful, speaking in hushed tones. And she's conflicted. She's mad at GA for not letting her face Wildcat; incredibly guilty for having gotten him into this in the first place; and flattered that in the end, he was willing to sacrifice himself for her.

Suddenly GA's eyes flutter open and focus on her. Canary's jaw drops. GA haltingly explains: "It was another stupid arrow," he says, showing her a high tech arrowhead

in his palm, "It's a Stunner. Stops the heart for a coupla minutes."

BC finally catches her breath: "The lesson... You wanted him to see what it would feel like to actually kill--"

GA nods, then asks, "Did it work?" Suddenly a shadow falls on them. Wildcat's.

"It worked," he says quietly.

6. THE WATCHTOWER - MUCH LATER

Wildcat is walking with Black Canary. He's apologizing for everything he's put her through. It's all going to be okay from now on, he says. The shock brought him back to his senses. But Black Canary doesn't look convinced. She's leading him to a door.

"What's this?" he asks as BC starts to open the door for him. "I know how it is with addictions," she answers, "you can't stop it by yourself."

We now see beyond the door, into a small, comfortable room, where J'onn sits, waiting. Across from him is an empty chair.

Wildcat gives Black Canary a long look. "You think fighting's hard, it's nothing compared to this," he says,

and then he enters the room. BC closes the door behind him.

As soon as she does, she hears GA's voice: "Hey."

She turns to him, and says, "He's not the only one who needs to be apologizing. You feeling okay?"

"Fine. Ready to head back to the gym, in fact. Join me?"

BC's not really in the mood, considering what she has just gone through with Wildcat. But GA now repeats something she said to him in the ring, when she thought he was dead. Something about how much she owed him.

It wins her over. As they walk off screen, he mentions that he's learned some new moves. "Great," she says, "and have you been working on your martial arts, too?"

As their voices fade, we HOLD ON the door of the counseling room.

THE END