

ANGEL WORLD: S1 E3:
FULL KAY JACKET

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FADE IN:

EXT. CALSIN CITY LIMITS - 3 AM

A coach bus bearing the CNSF emblem drives down a road in an open field away from the brightly-lit city of Calsin.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY BUS

The bus is packed with CNSF RECRUITS, some of whom we will come to know. Many are asleep, but Nate stares out the window, wide awake.

Nate leans further against the wall and his eyes begin to shut.

JUD (V.O.)

Nate...

Nate jolts awake and looks around; instead of Jud beside him, it's just HENRY HANS (human, male, 25), using his phone.

HENRY

How can any of you sleep right now?
You do realize what we're in for?

FLASHBACK:

INT. CNSF RECRUITMENT OFFICE - MORNING

Nate and Ash are in the same positions in the same waiting room as the end of the last episode. Nate reads paperwork while Ash talks.

ASH

Anyone can become an Angel wing,
but Combat Angel Wings are actual
soldiers.

NATE

Says here; *requirements; complete
basic CNSF training with high
marks, complete Combat Wing
training with high marks.*

ASH

Yeah, so you wanna put on armor and
fight with me, you gotta impress
your drill instructor, and your
Angel Wing trainer.

Beat.

NATE
I already know I can fight. I just
have to show them.

END FLASHBACK

INT. KALASH ACADEMY BUS - SAME

Nate leans over.

NATE
What are you reading?

Close On: The cover of the book depicts Angel Wing armor and
the title reads *Learning to Fly; Becoming A Combat Angel*

Henry shoves Nate's face back.

HENRY
Gah!

Nate swats Henry's hand away instinctively, and Henry jumps
up into the aisle.

The whole bus looks at Henry.

HENRY (CONT'D)
(Points to phone)
Laying a hand on another recruit is
a dischargeable offense!

Beat.

The noise of a car driving past in the opposite direction and
spinning out.

REVEAL: THE BUS DRIVER jolts awake at the wheel.

EXT. CALSIN CITY LIMITS - SAME

The bus, having drifted into the oncoming lane, corrects
course.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY BUS

Henry falls into another seat and luggage flies around as the
bus swerves and the passengers shout.

INSERT: flashes of the train attack from Nate's POV.

Nate flinches until the commotion dies down.

BUS DRIVER
Hah! Who said army bus drivers
don't get to kill anyone?
(beat)
Nobody report me.

Henry quickly finds an empty seat while Nate clutches his head.

NATE
Calm down, calm down.

ASH (V.O.)
Most people barely survive basic
training.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - FRONT GATE - NIGHT

NATE'S POV: A DRILL SERGEANT (Female) yells in Nate's face.

DRILL SERGEANT 1
I said feet on the markers!

Nate and the other recruits from the bus stand outside the large gates of the wall surrounding Kalash Academy. They're lined up in rows, feet on footprints on the ground.

Four different Drill Sergeants circle around them, shouting.

Nate is dazed and can barely stand up, but tries his best to obey the commands shouted at him.

DRILL SERGEANT 1 (CONT'D)
Feet on the footprints! Arms at
your side. Head looking forwards!

When Nate complies, Drill Sergeant 1 moves onto shouting at another Recruit. When Nate's eyes follow Drill Sergeant 1, though, Drill Sergeant 2 passes by.

DRILL SERGEANT 2
Eyes forward! Have we not made
ourselves clear?

NATE
Uh, no!

DRILL SERGEANT 2
Mouth closed! You do not speak! Be
silent!

CUT TO:

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - FRONT GATE - MOMENTS LATER

Nate is one of several Recruits whose limbs shake as Drill
Sergeant 1 stands in front of them.

DRILL SERGEANT 1
By walking these gates, you take
the first steps towards becoming a
part of the Calsin National
Sustainment Force! The ultimate
guardian and workforce.

PAN UP:

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY

Sun rises over the large combination of a military school and
a boot camp, with all the barracks, large buildings and
obstacle courses that would entail.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - RECEPTION ROOM - MINUTES LATER

The Recruits stand in rows in a large room, all holding their
luggage over their heads. The Drill Sergeants continue
shouting around them.

Nate's tired arms wobble, unable to keep his heavy luggage
aloft.

DRILL SERGEANT 1 (V.O.)
From now on, you will obey any
command from your drill sergeant,
and speak only when spoken to.

Nate looks with an envious eye at BUCK (Human, Male, 22,
muscular) who only has to hold a tiny bag.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - COURTYARD - LATER

Nate stands at attention in a group of roughly twenty
recruits, including Buck and Henry and a few others we'll
meet along the way.

Drill Sergeant WELLRUSH (Female, human, 40s) walks between them.

DRILL SERGEANT 1 (V.O.)
We will make women and men out of you!

WELLRUSH
Alright, ladies and gentlemen. I am drill Sergeant Wellrush, and you will refer to me as such.
(To Recruit)
Do you understand?

RECRUIT
Yes, Such!

Beat.

WELLRUSH
Some of you may have heard; recent decisions by the pencil pushers will make your experience here slightly different from your fathers'. You will train with members of the opposite sex. Your assignment will be identical, your results or lack thereof, only time will tell. I am also no longer-
(Sneezes in Henry's face)
Allowed to physically harm you. Nor am I allowed to call any of you spineless, crap-headed, traitorous, unfunny, unsanitary... recruits, any names.
(To Nate)
Mr. Fires. The hero on the train. Tell me, son. Why are you here? We all saw you get made an Angel Wing on TV?

Nate looks surprised and shifts his eyes, and Wellrush responds by grabbing his chin.

WELLRUSH (CONT'D)
Eyes forward, recruit! I want an answer! Yes or no? That was not an yes or no question, but I will not apologize. Why have you graced us peons with your presence?

NATE

Uh... I wanted to learn to become a
Combat Angel Wing, wear the armor
and--

WELLRUSH

--And what do you need to move onto
Combat Wing training?

NATE

Uh, to get high ranks in basic.

WELLRUSH

Uh, to get high ranks in basic,
drill sergeant! Ranks only I give
to the best in each class. Son, do
you think fighting gunmen once,
which the men I trained do every
day, impresses me? Means I will
give you any ranks you do not
painstakingly earn?

NATE

No, drill sergeant.

WELLRUSH

So you'll do what I say, when I say
it?

NATE

Yes, drill sergeant!

WELLRUSH

Son, I wish I shared your optimism.
Ten push-ups, now.

Nate stammers, looking around, then drops and begins pushing
up.

WELLRUSH (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry, would those be
easier in fancy armor?

(To group)

You heard him, recruits. The best
of you gets to go to Combat Wing
training. So don't let me catch you
slacking off!

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - HEADMASTER OFFICE - SAME

A small, but very well-decorated military office atop one of
the Academy's larger buildings.

Through the window, Nate is visible doing push-ups, but inside, BEATRIX BARRISTER (Human, Female, 58, intelligent) sits at the desk, and Kate Sparks sits across from her.

KATE

So, what's this about?

BARRISTER

Not until Ash gets here.

Kate checks her phone.

KATE

Yep, then it'll be a happy Angel class reunion. Well, minus someone.

Ash enters and gives a happy salute.

ASH

Colonel Barrist...

Ash's voice and smile fades when she looks at Kate.

ASH (CONT'D)

Hey, Kate.

(Sits down)

Alright, so we all knew Tempest in training. Are we forming a trauma group, or...

KATE

More like an intervention. Or do you swear you can stop getting your ass kicked by Tempest any time?

ASH

I won that fight. I saved a senior Angel and everyone in that building. What would you have--

BARRISTER

--Both of you, quiet. You're licensed Angels now, act like it. I called you here because our friends at Military and Counter Intelligence are putting together a task force to fight Hellstorm, and... well, they didn't ask for you, but I know you could both contribute.

Beat.

ASH

That'd be interesting, but I feel
I'm right where I'm needed.

KATE

You're right.

ASH

Say what?

KATE

You're assessment of reality is
accurate. A street Angel is all
you've ever wanted to be; joining
the MCI would be a misallocation of
resources, even if we weren't sure
your feelings for Tempest would
compromise you.

ASH

Compromise... Are you trying to
bait me into fighting you? Yeah,
everyone in this room is a
professional Angel.

KATE

I'm being genuine. Colonel, I too,
respectfully decline, I still want
to stay here and train Angel Wings.

Ash's face goes cold.

ASH

You do what here?

BARRISTER

Alright. But there's still the
question of if Tempest is as eager
to bury her past.

ASH

(To Kate)

You said you were staying here to
teach.

KATE

Yes. Teach combative Angel Wings.

BARRISTER

Kate, Ash recently chose an
enlisted man--

KATE

(Looking at Ash)

-- I know. Nathan Fires. I read the file. If he does well enough in Basic, I'll train him to be a Combat Wing.

Ash and Kate stare each other in the eye.

ASH

And you'll be real fair teacher; not fail him to screw me over?

KATE

I'll train him to act professionally.

BARRISTER

Kate has passed every test and course to be a trainer. I'm sure you'll be proud of the Angel Wing she makes. A-assuming she decides to pass Mr. Fires, and... look, there's still the question of whether Tempest might come after us or the Academy.

ASH

Even if Tempest isn't caught... or dead by next week, she won't come after either of you. She probably only called the meeting because her higher-ups ordered her too to save face after we halved the body-count on the subway. She didn't even stick around to talk, just turned a guy into a monster and ran.

KATE

So... nothing to fear?

Ash stands up.

ASH

No. And colonel, if you'll dismiss me, I have to return to actual Angel work.

INT. GYM - MORNING

In a public gym almost exclusively populated by women, River Fires runs on a treadmill, listening to calming music on her phone.

Her phone's screen changes to show a call from an unknown number, and she quickly taps to answer it.

NATE (V.O.)
(Shouting)
I have arrived at Kalash Academy
safely!

The shock of Nate's shouting causes River to trip and fall off the treadmill.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - MAIN BARRACKS - LATER

CNSF barracks are slightly better furnished than military ones, but only slightly. Sgt. Wellrush's class of recruits is lined up at the phones built into the walls. Nate is at the phone, and Wellrush next to him.

The noises of River crashing come over the phone.

NATE
River? River, are you--

Wellrush points to the writing next to the phone.

WELLRUSH
--Stick to the script!

NATE
I think she's hurt!

Wellrush grabs the phone.

WELLRUSH
She won't be the only one! Now give
her comforting assurance!

NATE
(Reading card)
Uh, I've arrived at Kalash Academy
safely, please do not call this--

WELLRUSH
--Times up! Move, move!

Wellrush ushers Nate away from the phone, towards the rest of the recruits who have already made their call, and now unpack their bags by bunkbeds.

Nate runs over next to Buck Macintosh and sets down his bag, panting.

Nate unpacks, but keeps looking up at Wellrush whenever Wellrush yells at a Recruit on the phone.

Nate looks at Buck, who sweats as he takes out a few Calsin fruits from his small bag, setting them apart from his clothes.

Buck looks between Wellrush and his fruits.

NATE
Don't do it, man.

BUCK
Huh?

Buck speaks with a very noticeable country accent, but a subdued voice.

NATE
She'll smell it on your breath, or something, and kick your ass.

BUCK
I know.

Buck sets his fruits aside.

BUCK (CONT'D)
They're just fresh harvested, and ma don't like us wasting.

Nate looks at Wellrush.

NATE
Other angry women we have to worry about.
(Beat, extends hand)
Nate.

BUCK
(shakes hand)
Buck Macintosh.

NATE
You from the Swayne countryside?

BUCK
Yup.

NATE
Farmer?

BUCK

Yup.

(Beat)

Should have stayed.

WELLRUSH

Move! Move!

Nate looks up as the last Recruit finishes their call, and Wellrush runs over to the bunks with them.

NATE

Worked in a factory. Thought it might be like a farm but--

WELLRUSH

(To Nate)

--Hey! Recruit! Are you deaf, and illiterate?

Nate stands at attention.

NATE

Uh--

WELLRUSH

--Anytime you want a heart to heart with your dear mommy, or gossip about girls with your pal here, or get treated anything special for saving your own hide once...

(To room)

You quit! And make room for those who can follow basic instructions!

Nate and Buck exchange tired and scared looks.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - ADMIN BUILDING - HALLWAYS - SAME

Ash and Kate walk through the Admin building's hallways, then stairwell, in a Sorkin-style walk-and-talk.

ASH

So you're gonna teach him to hate me because we didn't get along in training?

KATE

I took an oath to train the next generation of Angel Wings to the best--

Ash turns a corner and approaches a large window.

ASH
--Petty, vindictive and useless.
You really are a teacher.

Ash tries to open the window, but its locked, so she heads for the stairwell, but Kate blocks her path.

KATE
And how unbiased were you in
dealing with Tempest?

Beat.

ASH
I did not let her escape. You've
got no clue how much harder than
training real deal is.

Ash forcefully pushes past Kate, who follows.

KATE
--I don't mean recently... not
entirely. After what you've seen
now, are you willing to admit
Tempest was guilty--

Ash spins around to point at Kate.

ASH
--Tempest did nothing wrong that
day! You weren't there. You have no
idea how chaotic--

KATE
--Oh, now you're defending her?

Beat.

Ash turns around and continues.

ASH
There's no excusing what she's done
now. But I don't care what you, or
the court martial says; the Tempest
I knew in training was a good
soldier who wouldn't blow away
civilians--

KATE
--Say that on your livestream and
you'll lose every follower.

Ash takes out and uses her phone.

ASH

Tune in anytime you want to see a
Angel save people.

The exit through the doors.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - ADMIN BUILDING - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

As they exit, as turns around and floats off the ground.

ASH

My Angel Wing's just a good guy
going through some stuff. He might
quit during basic and he'll
certainly quit if you try to turn
him into your little Phantom of the
Livestream to get revenge for
sucking in training. Plus, I can
fire him. So do what I'm doing, and
move on.

Kate clenches her fists and eyes in frustration, making
electricity spark from her eyes, and Ash flies away.

INT. HELLSTORM SAFEHOUSE - 1 PM

A small, dark basement room converted into living quarters.
Tempest paces around the room in front of a laptop set up for
a video call with an unknown, faceless user.

TEMPEST

Give stupid orders, get bad
results.

CALLER (COMPUTER)

Watch your tone, girl. Don't forget
who's been keeping you safe since
prison. And would you turn on a
damn light? You're not scaring--

TEMPEST

--The only light in the room is on!
How many high-school dropout
Hellstorm recruits does it take to
change a lightbulb?

CALLER (COMPUTER)

Will you--

TEMPEST

--Point is, I'm your best asset in Calsin, and both of us will be happy if you don't misallocate me on stunts like taking heroes hostage.

CALLER (COMPUTER)

I promise, we'll use you for exactly what Hellstorm needs done.

TEMPEST

Very assuring. When can I move?

CALLER (COMPUTER)

They should reduce the intensity of their searches in the next few days. Then we'll send you to meet your new cell. These won't be college dropouts, many are Angels like you. Calsin wants heroes in times of crisis. When we send them villains, they'll know they're in a hole, not a tunnel.

Tempest smiles.

TEMPEST

I like it. But when the Rockaran army arrives to fill that hole in, I still want the biggest house and most slaves.

CALLER (COMPUTER)

We won't forget our forces' vanguards.

EXT. FARM - DAY - DREAM

A Nate and Jud pick same fruits Buck off two different trees in a warmly-lit orchard.

Nate looks between his half-empty cart of fruits, and Jud's full one with dismay.

Nate looks around to the other trees in the orchard. Each recruit in his class picks fruits off one, and each has a fuller cart than him.

A gunshot rings out, and Nate falls down bleeding.

NATE'S POV: Nate lies on his back and looks at the blood on his hands while the peaceful ambiance of the farm turns to gunshots and screaming.

Jud and Tempest stand over Nate while Ash floats above them.

TEMPEST
So easy to kill.

JUD
It's okay, bro. Stick with it...

Jud turns into Shunter Jud.

SHUNTER-JUD
And you'll see me again.

Shunter-Jud lets out a terrible cry.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - MAIN BARRACKS - DAWN

Shunter-Jud scream become Sgt. Wellrush's shouting as Nate wakes up in his bunk.

WELLRUSH
Rise and shine, people! Get up!

In his confusion, Nate rolls and falls off the top bunk onto the floor.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - COURTYARD - 6 AM

Nate and Buck's class of recruits stands assembled in two lines facing each other as the sun begins to crest the horizon. Nate and Buck stand next to each other while Wellrush paces between the lines.

WELLRUSH
The Calsin National Sustainment
Force is a body of work, and no
work, not fighting, not building,
not growing crops, is done alone.
As such, look at the recruit
directly across from you.

Nate's eyes lock with Henry directly across from him, and their expressions show neither is enthused at where this is going.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - FIELD - 6:30 AM

In a large, open field, the class of recruits works in groups of two, running bags of bricks that take two people to carry from one side of the field to the other.

WELLRUSH (V.O.)
That person is your battle-buddy.
You are responsible for them, and
they are responsible for you.

Nate and Henry get a quarter of the way across the field before the fatigued Henry slows down.

HENRY
Stop, stop, I'll drop it!

With an annoyed look, Nate stops, and Henry sets his side of the bag down.

WELLRUSH
(Over loudspeaker)
Clock's ticking, people!

Henry starts taking bricks out of the bag.

NATE
You kidding me? It's not that
heavy.

HENRY
You want high marks? Here!

Henry hands his end of the lightened bag to Nate, then picks up two bricks in his hands and runs for the other end.

NATE
Hey!

Nate lugs the bag after Henry.

Nate stops Henry when Henry tries to run back.

NATE (CONT'D)
We do this--

HENRY
(Swats hand away)
--Back off, statue!

A beat, as Nate looks at Henry with a surprised, but angry expression that tells us "statue" is a racial slur.

Henry quickly composes himself after the outburst, and moves past Nate.

HENRY (CONT'D)
You're stronger, I'm faster. Do
your job.

CUT TO:

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - FIELD - 6:40

Nate and Henry stand by a pile of bricks significantly smaller than those around them while Wellrush yells at them.

WELLRUSH
Nobody made you come here! Nobody
made you become best friends! I
told you to move bricks!
(picks up brick)
They are not that heavy!

Henry gives Nate an evil look, to which Nate gives a surprised, then angry one.

WELLRUSH (CONT'D)
(Spraying spit)
Look at me when I'm talking to you!

Wellrush sprays spit in Nate's face.

EXT. GRANDOR - SKIES - 10 AM

Ash floats above one of Grandor's poorer neighborhood, holding her phone in front of her.

ASH
Alright, thanks to
Shadynineteencamm and
(flexes)
These bad girls, no traffic jams on
the one-oh-one today. Now, for the
next sixty seconds, I want you all
posting what--
(phone beeps)
Ooh! Hold that thought! You'll see
why in under a minute.

Ash straps her phone into its pouch on her chest and zooms across the sky, towards the ground.

EXT. GRANDOR - BACK-ALLEY PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Three car thieves smash windows on cars in a back-alley lot. DOLL and KENNY smash and grab while JIMBA keeps lookout.

Ash drops down from the sky, giving them all a start.

ASH
Either there's a whole lot of
irresponsible parents and pet
owners in this hood, or--

Jimba fires on Ash while Doll and Kenny run with their look bags.

ASH (CONT'D)
Yeah, though so.

Ash draws her pistol and kneecaps Jimba with two shots.

When Jimba falls, Ash dashes over and kicks away the thief's gun, then turns to Doll and Kenny.

ASH (CONT'D)
Pop-poll in the chat. You like it
when they fight...

Ash rockets towards Doll and Kenny, about to collide with the former when BRICK WEST (Male, Human, 40s, Superman with a broadsword in almost every way) drops down in front of them.

ASH (CONT'D)
Whoa!

Ash flips over and skids to a halt on her shoes while Kenny and Doll also stop.

ASH (CONT'D)
Brick?

Broken glass from the parking lot flies up off the ground and surrounds Doll and Kenny.

BRICK WEST
Look at the mess you girls made.

Two pairs of zip-ties fly off Brick's belt up to Kenny and Doll.

Ash salutes Brick.

ASH
It's an honor, sir.

BRICK WEST
Honor's mine. But our work here
isn't done.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANDOR - BACK ALLEY PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Brick uses his telekinesis to float Jimba into the back of an ambulance and close the doors.

ASH
(into phone)
This is the man I fangirl about. I
freely admit I copy his style--

BRICK WEST
(Into phone)
--Hey, everyone. This was only
possible because someone with a
phone like you reported a crime you
saw.

Ash beams as Brick talks to her followers.

BRICK WEST (CONT'D)
But now, Ash and I need to talk,
Angel to Angel.

Brick looks at the still smiling Ash for a beat.

ASH
Oh! Right. Don't touch that browser
tab!
(kills feed)
What is it? Lay it on me.

BRICK WEST
Ashley, I make it my business to
meet every Angel that graduates
Kalash. I don't mean to gatekeep,
meeting people like you; who save a
train full of people from a rogue
Angel on your first day; you remind
me why I'm fighting.
(beat, becomes somber)
Incidents like the train, though...
I find they change how you look at
being an Angel.

ASH
Oh, well, yeah, it was pretty
tough.

BRICK WEST

But you're back out here, stopping
car thieves... car burglars?
Already? That boy you said was
enlisting to be your Combat wing,
how is he?

ASH

Oh, Nate? He's at basic. I mean,
he's tough, but I'm not gonna hold
it against him if he quits.

Beat.

Brick takes Ash's hand.

BRICK WEST

Miss Dashell, I knew a woman named
Lucia Todais once--

ASH

--Yeah, I remember. I was so sorry
when you broke up, but you gotta do
you.

BRICK WEST

I think this was a time where
"doing me" didn't go so well.

ASH

She said she wanted to split.

BRICK WEST

Of course she did. How could she
complain that I was spending too
much time on patrol... whole nights
spent listening to the police
scanner waiting to hear about a
monster attack, or a burglary, or a
fender bender or couch that needed
moving. What right did she have to
object to me rushing out the door
to save the day... whenever we were
having an argument.

(beat)

The work we do, big and small, it
makes a difference, but it's no
substitute for anything else you
need in your life. Time,
counseling... people who know the
real you, and might not make it in
life with out you.

ASH

I'm-- yeah, there are people who
depend on me.

BRICK WEST

People you've met in person?

Beat.

ASH

Well, there's my dad. And, well,
Nate's not my guyfriend or
anything, and he can be a dick, but
his heart's in the right place...
for now.

BRICK WEST

Then embrace him in your life.

Ash floats off the ground.

ASH

I do this to save people like him.
I won't let my enemies turn him
into a monster.

BRICK WEST

Alright. But--

ASH

--I know.

Ash flies away.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - RECEPTION AREA

Nate, holding his bag stands in line to talk to a CLERK with
a small group of Recruits who look as ragged as he does.

The door opens behind the line, and Nate turns around to see
Buck enter and join the line.

Nate looks confused.

Nate comes up to the CLERK.

CLERK

Resignation?

NATE

Any other reason we'd be here day
one?

CLERK
Name?

NATE
Nathan Fires.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - KATE'S ROOM - SAME

A small, one-person dorm room messy with books, science kits, and posters of a fictional periodic-table and scientific diagrams.

Kate is on her computer at her desk when her phone buzzes.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - RECEPTION ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Nate and Buck sit in chairs next to each other, filling out paperwork.

NATE
You're quitting?

BUCK
Yup.

Beat.

NATE
You gonna go back to Swayne?

BUCK
Yup.

Beat.

NATE
Why?

BUCK
It's home.

NATE
No, why are you, the fittest guy
here, quitting?

Buck looks up with surprise and confusion.

BUCK
I- I don't like it here.

NATE

I've... I've never really liked anywhere I worked. Takes a few months to settle in... having a friend always helped. I liked using the power suit at my old job, but no way that's happening here. You, though? You'd totally make Angel Wing.

BUCK

Really? I- uh, you're a hero.

KATE (O.S.)

I thought so, too.

Kate snatches the paperwork from his hands.

NATE

Hey!

Nate looks at the Angel emblem on Kate's clothing as stands up.

KATE

Nathan Fires, I tagged your name in the system to alert me if you tried to resign.

Nate and Buck stare at Kate.

KATE (CONT'D)

(flustered)

Oh, no, nothing... stalky like that. I'm Kate Sparks, and you're going to be one of the first Angel Wings I'd train.

NATE

I'm sorry to disappoint you, but I was an idiot for signing up. He's* your best bet.

Kate sizes Buck up. Both blush slightly.

KATE

Well, your drill sergeant will recommend anyone he thinks is competent.

Seeing that Nate looks unimpressed, Kate grabs his arm and pulls him along with super-strength.

KATE (CONT'D)
Let's talk outside.

NATE
Hey!

Buck jumps up, but then hesitates.

BUCK
Uh, ma'am...

KATE
I just want us to talk in private.
Hear me out.

Beat.

NATE
Fine. But you can't make us stay.

Nate and Kate walk out.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Kate and Nate exit the building doors.

KATE
I know who you are and what you did
for Calsin.

NATE
Yeah, wel--

KATE
I trained with Ash and Tempest. And
with no powers or training, you
defied a woman who routinely beat
other Angel, then you signed on to
be a Combat Wing. I don't know you,
but I know you're brave and
committed.

NATE
Tell that to Wellrush.

KATE
If I can see the potential in you,
I'm sure your drill sergeant does,
too. For now, she's just doing
what's been proven to create the
best soldiers by psychologically
breaking you down before building
you back up.

Beat. Nate looks surprised, then embarrassed.

NATE

Okay, say you're right and I could make Combat Wing; I don't want to. I only fought before because Tempest was trying to kill me and my friend, and I only signed on afterwards cause I was pissed.

KATE

Um, okay... emotions come and go. But I still think you'd make a good Angel Wing- I promise- well, I'll employ the psychological conditioning necessary, but if you stay on it'll get a lot better and I'll do whatever I can to train you to fight and outthink your opponents in powered armor.

NATE

Those opponents are monsters and psychos with powers. I don't--

KATE

(sparks hands)

--Do you know what it feels like to have the power they do? To beat them, and know you don't have to be afraid of anyone in this world?

Insert: A flash of Nate killing Shunter-Jud.

NATE

Yeah, I know. I mean, what kid doesn't want to grow up to be an Angel? But I won't survive here. I only survived in the factory cause of Jud, and he's gone now. And instead, I've got a 'battle-buddy'--

KATE

--Completely stupid term.

NATE

It's like the name you come up with brainstorming names, then immediately go, 'we're not calling that.'

KATE

Agreed.

NATE

My battle-buddy calls me a statue,
and that pisses me off, and I'm not
gonna burden the Force or Ash--

KATE

--He called you what?

NATE

A statue. Its...

KATE

I know it's a slur. Your battle-
buddy's supposed to be someone
you'd die for. You can- you should
request a new one. Somebody who
could help you survive this.

Beat.

NATE

That's an option?

KATE

We don't go advertising it, and you
don't get to choose your new one,
but a squamate can volunteer.

(beat)

And what you said about burdening
Ash, well... You probably picked up
that her powers could make her
devastatingly effective, but she's
a little...

NATE

Narcissistic?

KATE

I honestly thought her powers would
end up wasted. But she said she'd
never need Angel Wings, but she
accepted you. At this early point
in her career, you could help
ground her. She needs an influence
outside of her followers if she's
going to make a proper Angel and
not just a social media trend.

Beat.

INT. KALASH ACADEMY - RECEPTION ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Buck walks towards the desk with his paperwork, about to put it in a receiving basket.

NATE (O.S.)

Hold it!

Buck sets his paper in the basket then turns around to see Nate having run in.

NATE (CONT'D)

Damn.

Buck looks back at the basket with regret.

The Clerk, not looking up from her computer, rolls her eyes and takes Bucks paper out of the basket.

Nate approaches Buck.

NATE (CONT'D)

Buck, I... well, I just got this whole spiel that I don't think I can sum up in a few sentences. What if we were battle buddies?

(on Buck's unsure face)

I can fight, you're strong. We'll both make Angel Wings, and even if we don't, having someone you can depend on can get you through almost any bad first few days.

Beat.

Buck smiles.

EXT. KALASH ACADEMY - OBSTACLE COURSE - DAY

Nate's Recruit class stands under a row of elevated pulleys, each duo of battle buddies fastening a bench to a pulley.

Nate and Buck finish the riggings second in their class. Buck runs over to the rope and pulls while Nate remains put.

Buck pulls the rope, and Nate is slowly lifted on the bench.

The two smile at each other as Nate's body relaxes as the feeling of being lifted.

WELLRUSH

Don't get too cocky, boy. You're hauling him up next.

NATE

Understood, drill sergeant.

From off the obstacle course, Kate watches with a smile.

Ash drops down next to her.

KATE

Gaah! Ash! Wh- it's against regulations for you to see recruits in training.

ASH

Interact with, not see. I checked. Angel eyes and flight make it pretty hard not to see anything. And speaking of rules, is this what you do all day? Ogle the sweaty boys as they crawl through the mud?

KATE

Umm, no, it's not like that. I'm actually researching my first lesson plans...

Kate moves to leave, but Ash cuts her off.

ASH

And what is this "it" we're referring to? You said he wasn't anything special.

KATE

Hold on--

ASH

--You're gonna be the one to train him to use his armor. And you're gonna train him right, no egghead bullshit or revenge crap, because he's got his personal, sexy complaint department now.

Beat.

KATE

Is that a threat?

ASH

Yeah. To report you for abusing powers for a stupid grudge.

KATE

Ash, no, you can't report--

ASH

--Then just do things by the book.
You loves those, right?

Ash flies away.