

**Buffy The Vampire Slayer**

**Season 8**

**Once And For All**

Episode 6

"All The Tomorrows"

TEASER

INT. CRYPT - DAY

BUFFY is holding several sheets of paper with scribblings on them. She's reading them over.

DOC is standing nearby. He's no longer tied to a chair or gagged. He is now chained to the wall by each of his limbs, with just enough room to work. There is blood splattered on the wall behind him.

BUFFY  
(reading)  
This is it?

DOC  
It's... What I have.

BUFFY  
What does that mean?

DOC  
It means, I don't have access to my documents. I don't have the tools I need.

BUFFY  
So what you're saying is that I should let you go back to wherever you came from and get those documents? Is that what you need to make this work?

Buffy puts the papers down and walks to Doc. She grabs him by the neck and slams him against the wall.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
You've had a month. You've been over those documents a thousand times.

DOC  
(being a smart-ass)  
My memory isn't what it used to be.

Buffy lets go of Doc and starts to walk away from him. Doc is getting a little annoyed by now and SLINGS HIS TONGUE TOWARD HER.

Buffy turns and grabs it before Doc can realize it. She slowly starts to walk back toward Doc. He RETRACTS HIS TONGUE accordingly, though she is still holding the end.

BUFFY  
Your memory is fine. Frankly, I've had just about enough stalling.

As Buffy reaches Doc, she pulls a knife with her free hand and uses it to pin Doc's tongue to the wall.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

And I've had enough back-talk.

(beat)

I'm not going to tell you that I will let you live if you help me. I'm not going to bargain for your life. The decision you have to make is how slowly and how painfully you want to die.

Buffy pulls the knife back out, allowing Doc to reclaim his tongue.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Are you going to cooperate?

Doc doesn't respond.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a yes.

(beat)

You have one day.

Buffy turns and walks out of the crypt.

As Doc watches her go, his anger begins to boil over once again. This soon gives way to fear.

He yanks on his chains, but no matter how he pulls at them, he is stuck.

EXT. KINGMAN'S BLUFF - NIGHT

Kingman's Bluff is in the process of becoming the site of a wedding. Not an overly large, super expensive wedding, but a wedding.

Buffy walks up to the bluff, joining WILLOW, XANDER, DAWN and GILES. There is a cooler sitting nearby.

BUFFY

I'm late. Sorry.

XANDER

No worries. It's all good.

As Buffy joins them, she looks around.

BUFFY

Should they leave this stuff here overnight?

XANDER

As long as we're not charged, I don't care where they leave it.

DAWN

That's the spirit!

WILLOW

And speaking of spirits... Giles?

GILES

Hmm?

WILLOW

Let's get this bachelor-slash-bachelorette party started.

GILES

Oh. Right.

Giles opens the cooler and pulls out a bottle of champagne and enough glasses for each of them. He and Xander work at opening the bottle and pouring champagne.

BUFFY

You know, I saw this coming.

WILLOW

Us getting married?

BUFFY

Yeah. Way back when I first met you guys. Then other stuff happened and I stopped seeing it coming, but it still makes sense, y'know?

(beat)

Does that make sense?

WILLOW

I get the gist.

Xander hands Buffy and Willow their glasses. Giles hands one to Dawn.

BUFFY

Hey! Is she old enough to drink?

DAWN

I'm old enough-ish.

(beat)

It's a special occasion!

BUFFY

Fine. One sip.

DAWN

Please. Like I'm not drinking all the time at school anyway?

Buffy and Willow look at Dawn questioningly.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Fine. I don't normally drink. But I could if I wanted to.

Giles and Xander take their glasses and set the bottle down.

GILES  
I'd like to make a toast if it's not  
too... sappy.

BUFFY  
Sap away.

GILES  
Okay...

Giles reaches into his jacket and pulls out a piece of paper.  
Buffy looks to Dawn.

BUFFY  
Oh my God, he wrote it down.

DAWN  
That's so cute!

WILLOW  
Leave him alone. I want my toast.

Giles raises his glass.

GILES  
When I first met the two of you, you  
were sixteen years old. High school  
students. Honestly, more than a little  
annoying at times.

Xander and Willow smile as Xander puts his free arm around  
her.

GILES (CONT'D)  
You were an unexpected part of the  
job that I'd been sent to perform.

Giles puts the paper away.

GILES (CONT'D)  
But as I've watched the two of you  
grow into the adults that you are  
today, you became something more to  
me. Willow and- much as I loathe to  
admit- Xander, you have become my  
family. So, when I watch you exchange  
vows tomorrow, I won't simply be  
watching another pair of friends  
getting married. In my mind, and in  
my heart, you are so much more. You  
have been like my own children.  
(beat)  
So... Cheers.

BUFFY  
Cheers.

Everyone takes their sip of champagne. Buffy and Dawn both wince and shake their heads.

BUFFY/DAWN

Blech!

They look at each other, and both decide to put their glasses down.

Willow then gives Giles a big hug.

XANDER

(to Giles)

I like you so much better than my real father.

(beat)

Can I call you Dad?

GILES

No.

BUFFY

If they're both like your children, isn't this whole wedding thing a little weird?

GILES

Shall we wait and see how I mock your speech tomorrow?

BUFFY

I have to make a speech?

DAWN

It is customary.

WILLOW

Everyone huddle together, I want a picture.

Willow pulls a digital camera out of her bag as the others get closer together.

Willow sets the camera on a nearby box, and sets the timer. She rushes back to the group as they pose.

The camera flashes.

FADE OUT:

END OF TEASER

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Dawn is sitting next to Ryan's bed, staring at his food tray. RYAN is still in pretty bad shape. He isn't going anywhere soon.

DAWN

Did your food tray just move?

RYAN

I don't think so.

DAWN

Seriously, I could have sworn I just saw that little cover thing move like an inch.

RYAN

I didn't see it.

DAWN

Okay. Just don't eat anything they feed you here. From now on, I'm bringing all of your meals.

RYAN

That might be hard tonight.

DAWN

Why?

RYAN

Does the word "wedding" ring any bells?

DAWN

Oh! Yeah, but I'm still coming by to check up on you.

RYAN

You don't have to. I'm fine.

DAWN

You're not fine. You're all broken and stuff.

RYAN

Which is what they have nurses for. And doctors.

DAWN

If any one of those people were good at their job, they wouldn't let you eat whatever's on that food tray.

RYAN  
I didn't see the tray move.

DAWN  
It so moved.

RYAN  
If you say so.  
(beat)  
Hey, what time is it?

Dawn looks at her watch?

DAWN  
Almost ten.

She looks back to a clock which hangs on the wall.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
Which is also what that clock says.

RYAN  
That clock has said that it's almost  
ten since I got here.  
(then)  
Shouldn't you be getting ready for  
the wedding? Hair. Makeup. Other  
girlie stuff.

DAWN  
I have priorities. None of us have  
ever really been girlie girls like  
that.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Two massage tables are set up in the living room. Buffy and Willow are laying on them as TWO MEN massage them.

Both girls have some sort of green masks on their faces, which we can see through the holes in the massage tables. They also have curlers in their hair.

A THIRD MAN walks into the room from the kitchen, holding a can of soda.

THIRD MAN  
I think your fridge is broken. This  
soda's warm.

WILLOW  
I just put some in a little while  
ago. Try digging in back.

The man nods and walks off.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

(to Buffy)

This is relaxing.

BUFFY

I'm glad you like it.

WILLOW

It's also a little strange. Are you sure you checked these guys out before you had them come over?

(then, whispered)

They could be murderers for all we know.

BUFFY

Okay, for starters, if I can hear you, they can hear you. Don't worry about them. Their website looked very professional.

WILLOW

They're not hookers, are they? I don't want any funny business.

BUFFY

They're not hookers. Relax.

WILLOW

Okay. Sorry. I didn't mean to call you guys hookers.

FIRST MAN

It's cool.

WILLOW

I'm relaxing now.

(extended beat)

How did you afford this? You don't have an income.

BUFFY

Giles lent me the money. Now, shh!

Dawn walks into the house and sees everything going on in the living room. She freezes, taking it all in.

DAWN

What's going on in here?

BUFFY

Wedding present for Willow.

DAWN

Since when do we do stuff like this?

BUFFY  
It's not like Willow's ever gotten  
married before.

DAWN  
You could have told me about it.

BUFFY  
Consider yourself told.

Buffy leans up so that she can talk to her masseuse.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
(to the masseuse)  
Go get your friend. He can work on  
Dawn.

As her masseuse walks toward the kitchen, Buffy sits up.

Dawn smiles and sets her bag down.

DAWN  
I've never had one of these before...  
They're not hookers, are they?

Buffy looks at a clock.

BUFFY  
Is it really that late? We have to  
go. We have hair and makeup and all  
that other stuff to do.

Buffy stands up.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
Willow, get up!

DAWN  
But, what about my massage?

BUFFY  
No time. We need to go.

As Willow gets up, the two masseuses come in from the kitchen.  
Dawn looks at hers and pouts.

Buffy walks past Dawn, on her way up the stairs. Dawn watches  
her go.

DAWN  
I want curlers.

INT. DINER - DAY

Xander and Giles are sitting at a table in the diner. Each  
has a cup of coffee in front of them.

XANDER

So, what time do you think we should get ready?

GILES

The wedding is at five?

Xander nods.

GILES (CONT'D)

It might take a while.

(beat)

Maybe head over there around four.

XANDER

Cool.

They fall silent. Xander starts to look around.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Where are my pancakes?

(then)

Oh! We should go see a movie.

GILES

You would think there would be more to do.

XANDER

Yeah, but there's really not. Last time I did this, I got all dressed and ready really early. Then I spent the next few hours standing around.

GILES

Hmm.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - DAWN'S ROOM - DAY

Buffy is putting on some simple sweats, getting ready to go out. Her face has been washed by now.

Dawn walks into the room.

DAWN

You could have told me there were massages.

BUFFY

I only called this morning. Do you know how much it cost to get them out here today?

(beat)

Well, how much it cost Giles. I'm not actually paying.

DAWN

You still could have told me.

BUFFY

And you would have ditched your hospitalized boyfriend to hang around here?

DAWN

Okay, fine. I wouldn't have.

BUFFY

And you get first dibs on hair and makeup. I'm gonna have to meet you guys there.

DAWN

What? Why?

BUFFY

I have a few things to take care of. You can get Willow to the bluff, right?

DAWN

Yeah.

BUFFY

Don't forget the dresses. And the ring. And--

DAWN

I'm the maid of honor Buffy. I know my job.

BUFFY

I know. I just want to make sure this goes smoothly. Everything has to be perfect.

DAWN

It will be.

Dawn sits down on her bed, watching Buffy get ready. She grows concerned.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Why are you obsessing all the sudden?

BUFFY

What?

DAWN

The last few days, you've been acting all strange. What's going on?

Buffy stops and looks at Dawn. After a moment, she goes to the door and closes it.

BUFFY

I just need this to be perfect. I need us all to be together and happy for one day.

DAWN

(worried)

Why?

(beat)

You can't leave. Not again.

BUFFY

Dawnie, I have to.

DAWN

But everyone's together. We're happy.

BUFFY

I know. But I still have work to do.

DAWN

We can do it together.

BUFFY

I can't drag everyone around with me. You guys deserve a life. Willow and Xander are getting married. Giles has a life... I'm sure. You have school and Dad and...

DAWN

Forget it. Forget all of it. I want to go with you. I can't take losing you again.

Buffy hesitates.

BUFFY

I have to take care of some things. Can you make sure Willow's all set?

DAWN

(beat)

Yeah.

Buffy opens the door and starts to walk out.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Buffy...

Buffy turns around, but Dawn doesn't say anything.

BUFFY

I have to go. I'll see you later.

Buffy walks out of the room, leaving Dawn alone.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/FOYER - DAY

The living room has been cleaned up, and Willow stands alone in the room.

Buffy comes down the stairs. Willow smiles when she sees her.

WILLOW

Hey. The guys are all gone. I couldn't remember their names, so I just kept calling them Jim, Bob, and Joe. It was probably really insulting to them, but it was kinda funny to me, and I tipped them a whole bunch anyway, so I think it's okay.

BUFFY

I guess you had to be there.

(beat)

I have to take off for a while. I'll meet up with you guys in a bit.

WILLOW

Where are you going? We're on a very strict schedule here.

BUFFY

I know. Don't worry.

Buffy heads for the door.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I'll be there in time for everything.

WILLOW

You better be.

By now, Buffy is gone. Willow's not sure what to make of it, but she has other thoughts on her mind, so she moves on.

INT. CRYPT - DAY

Buffy walks into the crypt and to the back wall. She still has the curlers in her hair.

BUFFY

Do you have it?

Doc looks up at her from his chair.

DOC

I've written everything you need.

Buffy sees a stack of papers on the floor and picks them up.

BUFFY

This is it?

DOC

It is all that I have.

Buffy is growing annoyed as she looks over the papers.

BUFFY

There's nothing on these pages.

DOC

Really? How odd.

Doc stands up and walks to Buffy. He looks her in the eyes.

DOC (CONT'D)

Do you really think that you would have it in you? Do you think you would be able to kill your own sister?

BUFFY

I'll do what I have to do.

DOC

It sounds more simple than it would be. See, this won't be a matter of simply killing her. No.

(beat)

For this to work, you would have to take away her ability to think for herself. You would have to rob her of her humanity before you bleed her. Take away her thoughts. Her will. Your sister would be humiliated. She would die a blithering shell of who she once was. In order for this to work, you would have to torture her.

Buffy stares Doc down without flinching. Doc raises his chained hand.

DOC (CONT'D)

It's a lot harder when it's someone you love.

Buffy takes a step closer to Doc. Doc smiles.

DOC (CONT'D)

Do you think I care if you kill me? I've had no reason to live for nearly six years now. Do you really think that chaining me to a wall and beating me actually hurts me? The only thing that hurts me now is waking up each day in a world without hope.

Buffy pulls a knife.

BUFFY

Then you have nothing to worry about.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. WILLOW'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

The dressing room is really more of a tent, set up at Kingman's Bluff, so Willow can get ready in private. It's large enough to fit several people, chairs and a table for food. It also has a makeup table with a mirror, and a full length mirror next to it.

Willow is sitting at the makeup table, looking into the mirror. Her hair and makeup are both done. She looks beautiful.

Dawn walks into the room, also looking beautiful and ready to go. She smiles at Willow.

DAWN

I still can't get over how beautiful you look.

WILLOW

For the price I paid, I better. Is anyone here yet?

DAWN

Some. The early, early birds.

WILLOW

My parents?

DAWN

Got here a few minutes ago. Your mother was on her way in here, but I think she stopped to have a cigarette.

WILLOW

My mother doesn't smoke.

DAWN

She does now. Don't worry. Me and Buffy have everything covered.

(beat)

Do you need anything? Food? Water? Some sort of pre-wedding jitter suppressor?

WILLOW

Y'know, I'm actually not that nervous. It's weird, right?

DAWN

It's just meant to be.

(beat)

I should go find your mother.

WILLOW

Yeah. And don't let Xander's parents near anything with alcohol in it.

DAWN

We're on it. See ya in a few.

Dawn turns to walk out.

WILLOW

Dawn...

Dawn stops and turns. Willow grabs her digital camera off of the table.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Picture with my maid of honor?

Dawn smiles and walks back to Willow. They get close together and Willow holds her camera out and snaps a picture.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Thanks.

DAWN

E-mail that one to me.

WILLOW

I will.

DAWN

Okay. I'll be back.

Willow nods and Dawn walks out of the tent. Willow turns back to the mirror and looks into it.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

You look beautiful.

Willow smiles and turns.

WILLOW

Thanks.

When she finishes her turn, Willow sees TARA sitting in one of the other chairs.

INT. XANDER'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Xander's room is a lot like Willow's. The major difference is that instead of a makeup table, there's a TV, which Xander is watching.

Buffy is sitting behind Xander, dressed and ready to go for the wedding.

BUFFY

Isn't this the part where you're supposed to be freaking out?

Xander shrugs.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

So you're not freaking out?

Xander shakes his head.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

So I'm not going to have to kick your ass at any point today?

Xander shrugs.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Do you still know how to speak.

XANDER

Yup.

BUFFY

Xander, look at me.

Xander turns. Buffy looks him in the eyes. She takes a moment to read his expression. She then smiles.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Okay. I'm going to check on other things. Be here when I get back.

XANDER

Will do.

Buffy starts to walk out.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Buff?

She turns and looks back.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Keep my parents away from the booze.

BUFFY

I know, I know. Geez, you act like I've never done this before.

Buffy walks out, leaving Xander alone.

Once he's alone, he turns back to the TV.

DIFFERENT FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Nice shoes.

Xander takes a moment, and then turns off the TV. He turns around and finds ANYA standing behind him.

ANYA

Are you sure your feet won't get all blistery when you run away like a scared little Frenchman?

Xander doesn't seem at all surprised to see her.

XANDER

I'm not running.

ANYA

Really? Well, I guess there's a first time for everything.

XANDER

It's good to see you too.

INT. WILLOW'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Willow looks at Tara through the mirror.

WILLOW

I'm not really sure what to say.

TARA

You love him?

WILLOW

I do.

TARA

Then there's nothing to say.

WILLOW

But I shouldn't be happy. Not after what happened with you.

TARA

You don't believe that.

WILLOW

There's so much I want to say to you. So many things that I want to apologize for.

TARA

Shh... None of that matters anymore. The only thing that matters is that you're happy. That's all I ever wanted for you.

Tara gets up and walks to Willow. She starts to fix a spot on Willow's hair that isn't quite right.

TARA (CONT'D)

You have so much to look forward to.  
You can't keep looking back.

WILLOW

I don't know how to not look back.

TARA

Try.

WILLOW

But it's so hard. How do I let go of  
everything that's happened?

TARA

If you don't, you'll have more regrets  
than you do now. You don't want that,  
do you?

WILLOW

No.  
(beat)  
Tara?

TARA

Hmm?

WILLOW

I'm scared.

TARA

I know.

WILLOW

What if it happens again?

TARA

It could.

WILLOW

I can't go through that again. I  
can't lose someone else.

TARA

You're strong. The strongest person  
I know.

WILLOW

I'm not anymore. I lost it.

TARA

You lost your crutch, not your  
strength. Who you are is what makes  
you strong. You haven't lost that.

WILLOW

I miss having you here.

TARA  
I'm always here.

INT. XANDER'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

ANYA  
I mean, what the hell, Harris? What makes her so much better than me? Why aren't you running?

XANDER  
It's just different. It has nothing to do with you.

ANYA  
Oh, so your running away from our wedding had nothing to do with me?

XANDER  
No. I mean, yes.  
(beat)  
Would you please stop bringing that up?

ANYA  
She doesn't have better hair than me. It's far too red, and completely unnatural looking.

XANDER  
Anya...

ANYA  
She isn't prettier. My breasts are far more perky.

XANDER  
Anya...

ANYA  
She isn't smarter. I could teach her a thing or two about--

XANDER  
Anya!

ANYA  
What?

XANDER  
It isn't about any of that.

Anya starts to tear up.

ANYA  
Then why couldn't you love me?

Xander stands and goes to Anya. He puts his hands on her shoulders.

XANDER

I did love you. I still do.

ANYA

Obviously not enough. And I just don't get it. I tried so hard. I cooked and I cleaned up after you and I brought in a somewhat impressive amount of money. I gave you everything that I had to give, and it wasn't enough.

XANDER

You were perfect. And I did love you. And you did not clean up after me.

ANYA

Is that why?

XANDER

What? No.  
(beat)  
It just wasn't right.

ANYA

That's it? That's all the explanation you have?

XANDER

What else can I say?

ANYA

I don't know, but I certainly don't find that comforting. It'd be different if I had a flaw of some kind. Then I could understand why things had to be like this. Why you had to marry Willow and why I needed to be sliced in half by an evil blind monk. As it stands this just sucks for no good reason.

Xander puts his arms around her.

XANDER

I'm sorry.

EXT. KINGMAN'S BLUFF - DAY

Buffy walks up to SHEILA ROSENBERG, who is standing near one of the decorator's trucks.

BUFFY

Mrs. Rosenberg, hi.

Sheila looks over at Buffy and gives her polite smile.

SHEILA

Hello, Buffy.

BUFFY

Hey, you remembered.

SHEILA

Hmm?

BUFFY

Oh, it's just... my name... Nevermind.  
So, how is the mother of the bride  
holding up?

Sheila reaches into her purse for a pack of cigarettes, but can only find an empty pack.

SHEILA

I'm fine. Just fine, thanks. Do you  
smoke?

BUFFY

Sorry.

SHEILA

Me neither, usually. I guess it's  
just stress.

BUFFY

Yeah.

(beat)

Look, I don't know if this is helpful  
or not, but I know Willow pretty  
well. I've known her a long time,  
and I've also known Xander a long  
time. If I didn't think Xander was  
good enough for Willow, I wouldn't  
let them get married. Seriously. I  
could really really stop them if I  
wanted to.

Sheila fakes another smile.

SHEILA

Thank you. I guess you just can't  
know how this feels until your  
daughter gets married.

BUFFY

Daughter?

SHEILA

Didn't you... I could have sworn you  
had a child.

BUFFY

Sister. I have a little sister. No babies here.

SHEILA

Oh...

BUFFY

I really should go check on things.

Buffy starts to walk away, but stops herself. She thinks for a moment and then turns around.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Okay, normally I wouldn't say this, but I don't see it having much impact on my life, so what the hell.

(beat)

I've known Willow for ten years, and I've barely even met you. I've been her best friend for ten years and until today, you didn't even know my name. You've taken zero interest in her life up until this point, so don't stand there and mope about the fact that you think she's marrying the wrong person. Because she's not. She's marrying the one person who has always- always- been there for her. You're upset that she's marrying him because you've always seen Xander as being beneath you. Not quite up to your standards because of where he comes from or whatever. Well, get over it. Because frankly, when it comes to Willow's upbringing, I've seen better.

Buffy now turns and walks away, leaving Sheila alone and stunned.

As Buffy walks away, Dawn joins her. They continue to walk.

DAWN

Did I just see you yelling at Willow's mother?

BUFFY

Am I not supposed to do that?

DAWN

Not really.

BUFFY

Oops.

DAWN

So, do you have your speech written yet?

BUFFY

Why do I keep forgetting about that?

DAWN

Buffy!

BUFFY

Don't worry. I'm good with making speeches on the spot. Do you not remember my daily speeches when all of those potential Slayers were in the house?

DAWN

Well, I'm glad you're so comfy with the improv. I, on the other hand, am freaking out. I've had it written for a week and I'm still all nervous about it. Who gives speeches anyway? It's weird, right?

They reach the area where the wedding is to be held and Buffy sits in one of the guest chairs. Dawn sits near her.

BUFFY

You'll do fine. Look...

Buffy unwraps a string of beads that she has around her wrist. She wraps them around Dawn's wrist now.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

These are supposed to help you control your emotions. Y'know, focus your inner energies or whatever. I got them off a friend about a year ago.

DAWN

Because a good Slayer shouldn't be prone to violent outbursts?

BUFFY

It was more about the friend than the beads. Just take them and use them. I think they really work.

Dawn looks down at the beads.

DAWN

Plus, they look cool with my fancy dress.

(beat)

Thanks.

INT. WILLOW'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Tara is looking at Willow's digital camera.

TARA  
They've gotten smaller.

WILLOW  
A little.

Willow stands up.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Hey, we should take a picture. Mark  
the occasion.

Tara puts the camera down.

TARA  
It wouldn't work. I'm not really  
here, remember?

WILLOW  
Oh.  
(beat)  
So, what's it like? The other side,  
I mean.

TARA  
I wish I could tell you. There's a  
lot that I want to say about  
everything that's happened. Everything  
that's going to happen.

WILLOW  
Why can't you?

TARA  
It just doesn't work that way.

INT. XANDER'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Xander and Anya are both sitting down now.

ANYA  
And there's this big light. Only  
it's not a light. It's more of a  
cloud. And there's this voice, but  
it's not really a voice. And it's  
all calm and peaceful.

(beat)  
You remember that song that Buffy  
sang when you summoned that musical  
demon that killed a bunch of people  
that we never mentioned again? It's  
a lot like what she said, only with  
less whining.

XANDER

Wow. It sounds... confusing.

ANYA

It's not. It's just difficult to explain. You'll see it eventually.

XANDER

Yeah.

They fall silent for a moment.

ANYA

It'll happen, you know?

XANDER

What will?

ANYA

You'll forget me. You'll marry Willow and she'll pop out a litter of little fake lesbian witches and you'll forget all about me.

XANDER

That won't happen.

ANYA

Yes, it will. It's the reason why I very rarely exacted vengeance on the ex-boyfriend that a woman broke up with six years earlier. It's how these things work.

XANDER

Not this thing. I couldn't forget you, Ahn. You're too important.

ANYA

Please. We were together for three years and you didn't remember my birthday once.

Xander gives her a "huh?" look.

XANDER

Anya, you were a thousand years old. You didn't even remember your birthday.

ANYA

Oh. Blame it on me.

XANDER

Is it just me, or have you gone insane since you died?

Xander takes a moment, and then looks Anya in the eyes.

XANDER (CONT'D)  
 Believe me when I tell you, I will  
 never forget you. You're the person  
 who taught me how to love.

Anya tears up again.

ANYA  
 I am?

Xander nods. Anya is about to say something, but stops. She looks toward the door.

ANYA (CONT'D)  
 I have to go.

She looks back to Xander and stands up. He stands too.

XANDER  
 You can't stay for the wedding?

ANYA  
 I can't.

He goes to her and hugs her tightly. She takes this in as much as she can.

XANDER  
 I'll always love you, Ahn.

ANYA  
 Me too.

Xander closes his eyes as he continues to hug her. When he opens them again, Anya is gone.

As Xander stands, deep in thought, Giles walks in. He looks at Xander's expression.

GILES  
 Are you alright?

XANDER  
 Yeah.

INT. WILLOW'S DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Willow and Tara are sitting, having a nice conversation.

WILLOW  
 Can I ask you something?

TARA  
 Sure. I don't know if I can answer  
 it, but I'll try.

WILLOW  
 That dolls-eye crystal you gave me...

TARA

You don't understand. There's no reason why you should.

WILLOW

How did you get it? How did you know?

TARA

Someday, I'll tell you.

WILLOW

But not today.

Tara just smiles.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

This whole post-death visitation thing is a little cryptic, don't you think?

TARA

We could try talking about normal things. That might make it easier.

WILLOW

It won't be easy. Because I know that in a few minutes you'll have to leave again, and you'll be gone forever.

TARA

Not forever. We'll see each other again. Don't worry.

WILLOW

Not until I'm dead, which isn't usually something a person looks forward to.

TARA

It'll be a blink of an eye. You have so much life left to live. You have a family to start. You have lives to change.

WILLOW

I'm not sure I know how.

TARA

You do. I've seen the things you'll do with your life. The things that you and Xander will do together.

WILLOW

I'm sorry.

TARA

Don't be.

WILLOW

But I am. For the spells, and the way I treated you...

TARA

None of that is important now. What is important is that you are getting married to a great man.

(beat)

What also matters is that you're not getting married to that Kennedy girl. 'Cause then I might have some issues.

Willow smiles. Tara looks back toward the door. When she looks to Willow again, Willow's smile falls. She knows what's coming.

WILLOW

Don't. Please don't.

TARA

I wish I didn't have to.

Willow and Tara stand up. Willow goes to Tara and gives her a hug.

TARA (CONT'D)

It's okay.

Tara starts to tear up. Willow closes her eyes tightly, trying to hold onto this.

Willow opens her eyes. Tara is no longer with her.

Willow sits back down, taking a moment. After a moment, Sheila walks through the door. She sees Willow looking down at the ground.

SHEILA

Willow?

Willow looks up at her mother. Sheila hesitates for a moment and then walks toward Willow. When she reaches her, Willow doesn't say anything. She just takes Sheila's hand and holds it.

After a moment, Sheila puts her other hand over Willow's. She doesn't say anything. She is just being there for her daughter.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. KINGMAN'S BLUFF - DAY

As SOFT MUSIC plays, Willow and Xander exchange vows. We can't hear what they're saying, but who hasn't seen enough TV weddings to get the gist?

As the music continues, we see other images from the ceremony:

Buffy handing Willow's ring to Xander.

Xander sliding the ring onto Willow's finger.

Willow sliding Xander's ring onto his finger.

Giles watching from his seat in the crowd like a proud papa.

Dawn standing near Willow with a silly grin on her face.

Buffy watching the ceremony with a smile, and then looking downward as her thoughts move on to other matters.

The crowd clapping.

Willow and Xander kissing.

INT. THE BRONZE - NIGHT

The SOFT MUSIC TURNS TO ROCK as a party rages on. Though several of the older people look a little thrown by the music and some of the decorating choices the new owners have made, the atmosphere is still light and fun.

The look of the Bronze is not entirely unlike the redesigned, post-Olaf Bronze. Though there are far more decorations which would lend themselves to a gay disco club rather than a rock-ish club.

On the dance floor, Xander and Dawn are getting their dance on.

Buffy, Willow and Giles are watching them from one of the tables. Willow has her digital camera out, and she's snapping pictures.

BUFFY

So, I'm guessing you and Xander  
skipped the dance classes?

WILLOW

How can you improve upon perfection?

Buffy wants to respond, and starts to, but nothing comes out. She looks to Giles.

BUFFY  
I have no response to that. Can you help me out here?

GILES  
I think it looks quite fun.

BUFFY  
Traitor.

Xander and Dawn make their way to the table, out of breath.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
Are you guys tired already?

XANDER  
Old. Far, far too old for this.

BUFFY  
You're 26.

XANDER  
Your point?

A WAITRESS comes to the table.

WAITRESS  
Can I take your orders?

BUFFY  
I want coffee. And a croissant.

WILLOW  
Ooh, flaky goodness. Two please.

GILES  
Tea.

XANDER  
Coffee. Iced preferably.

DAWN  
Same, but with mocha.

The waitress looks at them as though they are from mars.

WAITRESS  
You realize that we have alcohol here, right?

BUFFY  
What's your point?

The waitress walks away, still puzzled.

XANDER  
Coffee at the Bronze. What could be better?

DAWN

I think it's called The Electric Horseman now.

BUFFY

Are they allowed to do that? Use the name like that... isn't that some sort of copyright infringement?

(beat)

Because of the movie.

WILLOW

I... guess so? I don't know. As long as we're renting the place, it's the Bronze.

Xander turns and looks around the place. He takes it all in.

XANDER

It's just like old times, isn't it? The place even feels kinda the same, except for the kinda scary animated neon signs near the ceiling.

Everyone looks upward at the signs, which are off-screen and we cannot see.

As they look, everyone tilts their head ever so slightly. Then they all jump back at the same time. Buffy puts her hand over Dawn's eyes. Everyone but Buffy quickly looks away.

DAWN

Buffy, I'm in my 20's.

BUFFY

Nobody should have to see that.

(beat)

And yet I can't look away.

Buffy shakes herself out of her daze and looks away.

WILLOW

Okay, Buffy and Dawn, move together. I want a picture of the sisters.

Buffy and Dawn get closer, putting their arms around each other and smiling for the camera.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Say cheese.

BUFFY

No.

Willow snaps the picture. She looks at it on the camera's screen.

WILLOW

It's a good one. Y'know what would have made it better?

BUFFY

Hmm?

WILLOW

Sayin' cheese for the old married lady.

Willow looks to Xander.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

How weird does that sound?

XANDER

Sounds good to me.

He kisses her on the forehead. Just as he does this ANOTHER SONG STARTS. Willow holds a hand out to Giles.

WILLOW

Okay, I want a dance.

GILES

With me?

WILLOW

Yes, with you. C'mon.

GILES

I really...

WILLOW

You have to. It's a rule that people have to do whatever I say today. You can look it up in the rule book, but it'd just be wasting time. 'Cause it's there.

GILES

Fine. But I assure you, I will neither bump, nor grind, not shake my "groove thing".

Buffy and Willow exchange kinda grossed out looks.

WILLOW

Let's go.

Willow pulls Giles away from the table.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

And please never ever use any of those terms ever again. Thanks.

As Willow and Giles walk off, Buffy grabs Willow's camera and snaps a picture of them.

Xander watches Willow and Giles for a moment, and then turns toward the bar.

XANDER

Oh, man. My Dad's hitting the bar again.

BUFFY

Want me to...?

XANDER

Nah. I got this one.

Xander walks off, leaving Buffy and Dawn alone. Buffy looks down at the digital camera, her mind wandering. Dawn notices this.

DAWN

Whatcha thinking?

BUFFY

I'm thinking that two hundred dollars is still a lot of money for something so drop-able.

DAWN

Is that all?

Buffy looks at Dawn.

BUFFY

I'm thinking how nice all of this is. Being together. Knowing that it won't last.

DAWN

It could.

BUFFY

I think Willow and Xander might get tired of a house full of guests.

DAWN

So we just go our separate ways?

Buffy looks down again.

BUFFY

Something like that. I guess.

(then, smiling)

But this is a party. Right now, we're all here and it's all good.

DAWN

Yeah.

BUFFY

Wanna dance?

DAWN

I do.

Buffy takes Dawn's hand and they walk toward the dance floor where they join Willow and Giles. The three girls are having a fun time with their goofy dancing. Giles has absolutely no idea what he's doing.

INT. THE BRONZE - LATER

The room is quiet now, and most of the guests are seated, with glasses of champagne in their hands.

Dawn is on the stage, standing in front of the microphone, looking very nervous. She smiles.

DAWN

Umm... Hi. I'm Dawn Summers and I'm an alcoholic.

Dead silence.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Okay, bad joke. Sorry. Umm...

(beat)

You know, I have this written down.

She reaches into her shoe and pulls out a folded piece of paper. After unfolding it, she begins to read.

DAWN (CONT'D)

I've known Willow and Xander for almost as long as I can remember. It seems strange, since I didn't meet them until I was ten. I should remember more before that. The thing is, I can't remember a time when they weren't in my life.

(beat)

They started out as my sister's friends when we moved here to Sunnydale. Back then, I would just buzz around them and annoy them. Or they'd babysit while my mother was at work, and Buffy was at the library. Studying. For school.

Dawn puts the paper down and looks into the crowd.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Anyway, after a while, they became more than just Buffy's friends. After a while, I realized that they weren't annoyed to have me around.

(MORE)

DAWN (CONT'D)

I realized that as time passed, they became my friends too. I don't think that fully registered in my head until my mother died. At first, I couldn't stand how alone I felt. Even with Buffy there, it seemed like I didn't have any family left in the world. And then I saw how our friends came to support us. I saw how they cared about us and loved us. They took care of us, because they are our family. That is who Willow and Xander are. They are two of the most caring people I know. They would give everything they have in this world just to make one person a little bit better off. Whether they're a close friend, or a complete stranger, it doesn't even matter.

(beat)

So today when I was watching them get married, and I saw how happy they were, I couldn't imagine anything more beautiful or just. You guys deserve this. You deserve the future.

She raises her glass. Everyone does the same.

DAWN (CONT'D)

So may you have it. To tonight, tomorrow and all of the tomorrows that follow.

Everyone takes a sip of their drinks.

Dawn starts to walk off of the stage. As she leaves, she passes Buffy, who is on her way up. She stops Buffy, and whispers in her ear.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Just fake sip. You don't have to actually drink.

Buffy nods and continues to walk to the microphone. Dawn sits at the table with Willow, Xander and Giles. Willow and Xander smile to her. Giles puts his hand on her shoulder.

Buffy reaches the microphone and stands there for a moment, looking out at the crowd. She smiles.

BUFFY

Damn. That's what I was gonna say.

(beat)

Umm...

(MORE)

BUFFY (CONT'D)

(beat)

Okay, so let's go back to when I first moved to Sunnydale and talk about the two kids I met at school. One of them was this way shy computer geek who kinda dressed like my grandmother. The other was this completely uncoordinated goofball who had a crush on me and, like, zero clue what was sitting right under his nose. By then, they'd already known each other for a decade. Even though we were all pretty much inseparable, Xander and Willow were like bats. Communicating in this language that none of us could hear or understand.

(beat)

Back in LA, I was part of the popular crowd. A cheerleader. I had a ton of people surrounding me at all times, hanging on my every word. Even with all of those people, I didn't really understand what it was to have friends until I met you guys. I didn't know what it was to have people that you could always count on, and who would always be there for you. You have always been there for me, and for all of your other friends. But more than that, you have always been there for each other. I can't even imagine one of you in my life without the other. You're like warm apple pie and vanilla ice cream. It sounds like a clash the first time you hear about it, but once you've given it a chance, nothing else seems as perfect together.

Buffy looks down into the crowd, looking Willow and Xander in the eyes.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Like Dawn said, you guys deserve the future. I promise you, I will kill each and every *thing* that stands between you and your 75th anniversary.

While everyone else in the crowd thinks this last part is a little strange, Willow and Xander can't help but feel the warmth and love.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

(raising her glass)

To you guys.

The MUSIC RISES as we are treated to a montage of photographs from the reception...

An image of Xander and Willow cutting their cake.

An image of Xander smearing cake on Willow's face.

An image of a caked up Willow holding a the cake knife to Xander, threatening him.

An image of the happy couple dancing together.

An image of Buffy, Giles and Dawn smiling for the camera.

An image of Buffy throwing a fake punch into Giles' hand as they pretend to go about their Slayer training.

An image of Giles in a chair, holding an ice pack in his hand.

An image of Buffy, Willow and Dawn, all gussied up.

An image of Xander and Giles, also gussied.

An image of Buffy, Willow and Dawn doing a Charlie's Angels pose.

An image of Buffy and Dawn with their arms around each other.

And finally, an image of the entire Scooby Gang, posing for a group shot.

INT. THE BRONZE - LATER

The MUSIC ENDS. Most of the guests have gone home. Buffy, Willow, Xander, Dawn and Giles are sitting at a table, kicking back.

BUFFY

All in all, I'd say that today went well.

XANDER

Mission accomplished.

WILLOW

I think we should do this every year. Y'know, wherever we are in life, just take the one day out and party like it's 1999.

XANDER

That would be the year of the big giant snake shindig.

WILLOW

Okay, then we'll party like it's 2007.

XANDER

That works.

WILLOW

What do you guys say?

GILES

I'll have to check my calendar, but I'm pretty sure I can make it.

WILLOW

(to Buffy and Dawn)

What about you guys?

Dawn looks to Buffy, waiting for her to respond first. She doesn't.

DAWN

We wouldn't miss it for the world.

(beat)

Well, maybe for the world. Depends on what kind of deal we can get for the world.

WILLOW

Cool. Party at our place, one year from today. You guys bring the chips.

DAWN

Done.

Dawn grabs Giles' arm and turns it so she can see his watch.

DAWN (CONT'D)

It's getting late.

XANDER

Is that code for "let's get the hell out of here?"

DAWN

Yup. I wanna sneak in and see Ryan if I can.

GILES

I'll give you a ride.

BUFFY

Yeah, I'll come.

WILLOW

I'd offer to go, but we have packing to do.

XANDER

Sunny beaches and fruity drinks await us. One of the perks of getting hitched.

Everyone starts to get up and prepare to leave. Buffy walks around to Willow and gives her a big hug.

BUFFY  
I love you guys.

WILLOW  
You too.

Buffy goes to Xander and hugs him.

BUFFY  
Love you.

XANDER  
Sorry. I'm a married man.

Dawn hugs Willow.

WILLOW  
We probably won't see you guys until tomorrow.

DAWN  
Yeah. Hey...

WILLOW  
Hmm?

DAWN  
Congratulations.

Dawn goes to Xander.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
Oh, if 14-year-old me saw this day in a crystal ball, she'd be having a fit right about now.

She hugs Xander.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
I love you guys.

XANDER  
Have fun at the hospital. You kids don't stay out too late.

Xander puts his arm around Giles.

XANDER (CONT'D)  
We grownups have to keep such a close eye on kids these days.

GILES  
Welcome to my world.

Willow walks around to Giles who gives her a kiss on the cheek.

GILES (CONT'D)  
You were beautiful today. I couldn't be prouder.

WILLOW  
That means more than you know.

Giles gives Xander a hug.

GILES  
You did good.

XANDER  
Thanks.

GILES  
If you hurt her, I'll hurt you.

XANDER  
If I hurt her, you won't have to.

As Buffy, Dawn and Giles start to head out, Willow and Xander wave to them.

WILLOW  
Bye, guys.

XANDER  
See ya later.

Once Buffy, Dawn and Giles are gone, Willow and Xander are alone. Xander holds out his hand.

XANDER (CONT'D)  
One last dance?

Willow takes his hand.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Dawn walks into Ryan's hospital room, and quietly walks to his bed to see if he's awake. When he sees her, he smiles.

RYAN  
Hey.

DAWN  
You're up.

RYAN  
Yeah. Every time I try to get comfortable, something either pops or cracks.

DAWN

Okay, ouch.

RYAN

How are you in here? I thought visiting hours were over.

DAWN

We've gotten into morgues, crypts, museums... you name it. A hospital room is nothing.

RYAN

I'm glad you came.

DAWN

Me too. Buffy and Giles are coming in a couple minutes. They were my distraction.

RYAN

How did the wedding go?

DAWN

Good. No Hellmouths opened, no demons spawned. It's actually kinda unusual for us.

RYAN

So it all went off with a hitch then.

DAWN

Without a-- Okay, I get it now. It's still not funny, but I get it.

RYAN

Hey. Grab onto my hand, would you? I'd normally take your hand myself, but that could be painful.

Dawn takes Ryan's hand.

DAWN

How's that?

RYAN

First time I haven't felt the pain all day. You look good.

DAWN

Thanks.

(beat)

So, what did you do today?

RYAN

Watched TV. Same channel all day since I couldn't reach the remote. I managed to call my sister though.

DAWN  
Really? What'd she say?

RYAN  
She's flying out tomorrow.

DAWN  
That's good.

RYAN  
I told her I was attacked outside the Army recruitment center by a couple of war protesters. I don't think she appreciated the irony.

DAWN  
That's just a little bit mean.

RYAN  
Think I should have told her the truth? That a vampire threw me into a tree like a rag doll?

DAWN  
You could sugarcoat it.  
(beat)  
Somehow. I'm sure. Maybe blame it on a car accident.

RYAN  
My car's fine. Plus, this way she gets to feel a little guilty.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Buffy and Giles are walking toward Ryan's room. Before they reach it, Buffy grabs onto Giles arm and stops him. She looks around to make sure nobody is listening.

GILES  
Buffy?

BUFFY  
I need to ask you something.

GILES  
Is something wrong?

BUFFY  
Not really. I just need a favor.  
(beat)  
After we leave here, I'm going to take out a demon camp.

GILES  
You need help?

BUFFY

Not in the way you're thinking. This is a pretty big camp. I'm pretty sure they know about us. They might know where Willow and Xander live. They might know that Ryan's in the hospital. I'm going to take most of them out, but if a couple of them aren't home when I get there, they might come after my friends. Even I can't be everywhere at once.

GILES

What do you want me to do?

BUFFY

I think the camp is mostly vampire. That means the house should be safe. I want to get Dawn back there before I go. But Ryan's still stuck here and I need someone to watch him for me. Someone I trust.

GILES

Of course.

BUFFY

So you'll do it?

GILES

Are you sure you don't need help?

BUFFY

It's pretty standard stuff for me these days. I can handle it. I just need to know that everyone I care about is safe.

GILES

I'll stay as long as you want me to.

BUFFY

Thanks.

Giles turns and is about to walk into the hospital room, but Buffy stops him again. She turns him around and hugs him.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I don't know what I would do without you.

Giles hugs her back. He knows that something is wrong, but he doesn't say anything.

Finally, Buffy lets Giles go and he walks into the hospital room. Buffy hesitates, taking a deep breath. After a moment, she puts on a fake smile and follows him in.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Buffy and Giles are sitting in the hospital room by now.  
Dawn is still by Ryan's side.

BUFFY

By the way, if anyone asks, Giles is  
your dad and I'm Kristy.

DAWN

Kirsty.

BUFFY

Whatever. The nurses don't know that.

DAWN

Who am I?

BUFFY

You're you.

RYAN

Umm... Kirsty is coming tomorrow.

BUFFY

Oh.

(beat)

See, so it's a good thing I told  
them my name was Kristy. We can say  
we're twins.

DAWN

Funny.

Ryan yawns.

RYAN

Sorry... and, ouch.

DAWN

Are you tired?

RYAN

A little. I guess bone mending takes  
a lot out of you.

DAWN

We should go.

RYAN

You don't have to.

DAWN

No, it's okay. You sleep.

Dawn leans down and kisses Ryan.

RYAN  
Thanks for coming.

DAWN  
Anytime. Call me if you need anything.

RYAN  
I will.

Dawn starts to walk away. She looks back and waves one more time. Ryan waves back.

Buffy and Giles follow.

BUFFY  
Get well.

RYAN  
Thanks.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Dawn walks out of the room. Buffy and Giles soon follow. Once the door is closed, Buffy looks to Giles.

GILES  
I'll be in the waiting area.

Giles walks in the direction opposite the direction Buffy and Dawn are headed.

DAWN  
Why is Giles going to the waiting area?

BUFFY  
I asked him to.

DAWN  
Why?

BUFFY  
Because you and I have other plans.  
I'll explain when we get there.

Buffy starts to walk down the hallway. Dawn follows.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Buffy leads the way through the woods, now carrying her Scythe in one hand and a stake in the other. Her face is expressionless.

Dawn is behind her, struggling to keep up.

DAWN

Y'know, I could think of about a thousand better outfits to be wearing if we're going to be hiking through the woods.

BUFFY

We're almost there.

DAWN

Where? You still haven't told me where we're going.

Buffy slows down enough to let Dawn catch up to her.

BUFFY

You said you wanted to come with me.

DAWN

I do. I just expected to be wearing sneakers or something.

BUFFY

That can come later. Right now, I want to show you what you'd be signing up for. What my life really is.

DAWN

Where are we going?

BUFFY

Down.

Buffy starts walking faster again. Once again, Dawn struggles to keep up.

DAWN

Oh.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Xander is packing his bag while Willow sits on the bed, printing pictures from her digital camera. Both are in normal clothes now.

XANDER

Your packing technique looks a lot like your sitting technique.

WILLOW

I'll get there. I just want to print up some picture for everyone before we take off.

XANDER

Fine, but if you have nothing to wear on our honeymoon, don't blame me.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

Buffy and Dawn now walk down the same tunnel that Drusilla and Hewitt once took to reach the local demon camp.

BUFFY

This is how demons do things now.  
Large groups, hidden away where they  
think I won't find them.

DAWN

I guess it doesn't work too well.

BUFFY

Not really.

DAWN

So, how many demons are we expecting?

They reach the end of the tunnel and stand in the flickering glow of the fire below. Dawn looks out over all of the demons. Her eyes widen.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Holy cow, that's a lot of demons.  
You're going to fight them all?

BUFFY

That's how it usually goes.

Dawn looks at Buffy, and then back to the demons.

DAWN

I don't understand. Buffy, why did  
you bring me here?

Buffy's eyes fill with tears. She looks down at the demons, not at Dawn.

BUFFY

I needed your focus to be on the  
demons.

Buffy looks up at Dawn. Dawn is very confused right now.

DAWN

What are you talking about?

BUFFY

The Key. Opening a portal. I was  
going to...  
(beat)  
But I can't. I couldn't...

DAWN

I know. You could never do something  
like--

BUFFY  
I couldn't figure out how.

DAWN  
Oh.

Buffy turns and takes a few steps back into the tunnel, out of the sight of demons. Dawn follows her.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
Buffy, wait.

Dawn grabs Buffy's arm and forces Buffy to look at her.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
Talk to me. What were you going to do?  
(beat)  
Buffy?

BUFFY  
Just before I came back, I found out about this plan. They were going to use you to unleash Hell on Earth. So many demons that I couldn't even hope of killing them all. I knew I had to come back. I knew I had to stop them.  
(beat)  
What I found out was that it could work both ways. I could use the Key to open a portal that would pull demons out of this world instead of letting them in. And I was going to do it. I was going to kill you. I meant to kill you.

Dawn takes a moment to let this sink in. She looks back toward the glow of the demon camp.

DAWN  
The e-mail from the monks said that I had the power.  
(beat)  
They were talking about my will. You needed me to be okay with all of this in order to make it work.

Buffy looks to Dawn, wondering why she's telling her this despite the fact that Buffy just threatened to kill her. She then thinks back.

BUFFY  
They were going to drug you.  
(beat)  
Why didn't I think of that?

Dawn takes a deep breath, not believing everything that is happening. Buffy sits down on the ground, numb. She places her Scythe and stake beside her.

DAWN  
How many demons?

BUFFY  
What?

DAWN  
How many demons did you plan on taking out?

Buffy hesitates. She's not sure she wants to answer.

BUFFY  
Every demon within a hundred miles.  
The Hellmouth. All of it.

Dawn takes a moment to let this sink in. She sits next to Buffy. Both stare off into space.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Xander finishes packing and puts his bag on the floor.

XANDER  
Done. That makes one of us. Oh, what a long and restful night's sleep I shall have with no more work ahead of me.

Willow is too busy looking through printed photos to listen to him. She's smiling at them.

WILLOW  
It was a good day.

XANDER  
I liked it.

WILLOW  
Here's Dawn dancing with Giles.

Willow shows Xander the picture.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
I guess it would have been more fun for her if Ryan were there.

At that thought, Willow pauses. She wants to ask a question, but isn't sure that she should. Finally, she goes for it.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Y'know what I've been wondering?  
(MORE)

WILLOW (CONT'D)

And I don't mean to make Buffy out to be a bad guy or anything, but... You don't think she let her protectiveness for Dawn get in the way of her protecting Ryan, do you?

XANDER

Meaning?

WILLOW

Meaning three vampires attacking an uber-Slayer shouldn't even be a big deal, right?

Xander hasn't thought of that before. He's suddenly getting rather curious.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Giles is sitting in one of the chairs, thinking. Finally, a thought occurs to him. The same thought that Willow just had.

He gets up and starts to walk out of the hospital.

INT. DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

DAWN

It feels different, doesn't it?

BUFFY

What?

DAWN

The air. I don't know... Everything just feels different on nights like this. When big things happen. Do you feel it?

Buffy looks up at the sky. She takes a deep breath.

BUFFY

I do.

DAWN

It gives me the creeps. I felt it on the Night of Morel Divineh too.

(beat)

When Willow went all baddie. It's always the big nights.

Buffy looks down.

BUFFY

I noticed it the night I killed Angel. It was like the air was dead.

(MORE)

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Everything was so surreal. Like it wasn't really happening.

DAWN

But it was.

BUFFY

Yeah.

(beat)

After that, I couldn't stand it. I came back to reality and I hated myself. I kept wondering if there was something else that I could have done.

DAWN

But there wasn't. You did what you had to do.

BUFFY

It doesn't make it any easier though.

Dawn looks Buffy in the eyes. She takes a deep breath.

DAWN

You're the Slayer, Buffy. Sometimes that means that you have to make the decisions that nobody else could. Sometimes you have to make the sacrifices that nobody else could.

(beat)

You have to save the world.

BUFFY

Dawn, I--

DAWN

Do you remember when we were kids, and Mom and Dad used to take us ice skating? I always sucked at it, so you'd have to hold my hand the entire time.

BUFFY

I remember.

DAWN

You made me feel safe.

(beat)

You once told me that the hardest thing about this world was to live in it. I say we make it a little easier.

Dawn stands up.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Let's do this.

BUFFY

What?

Buffy stands.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Dawn, no. You don't have to.

DAWN

It's okay. I think this is what I was meant to do. My whole life, I've just wanted to have a purpose. I just wanted to mean something to this world. I've wanted to be like you. I think this is my chance.

(beat)

I don't know if you're going back after this, but if you ever see the others, tell them I love them. Tell them that I'm doing this for them.

(beat)

And tell Merrill to swing away.

Buffy can't help but laugh at this "Signs" reference, despite the moment. She reaches out and takes Dawn's hand.

BUFFY

You're better than me. You've always been better.

Dawn doesn't respond. She can't.

After a moment, she gives Buffy a nod. Buffy picks up the Scythe and her stake.

After taking a deep breath, Buffy takes off running down the tunnel. Dawn watches her go, swallowing hard.

INT. THE CAVERN/DARK TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

HUNDREDS OF DEMONS are in the cavern, same as before. Perhaps more than before. They range from large and hairy, to small and squirmy. There's even a rather LARGE TENTACLED DEMON crawling up the wall in the background.

As the demons part, we see Buffy standing amongst them. They haven't yet realized that she is there.

TWO LARGE HAIRY DEMONS see Buffy and charge toward her, one raising an axe as he charges. Buffy throws the Scythe at the empty-handed demon. It hits him in the chest, taking him down. Buffy then turns her attention to the second demon, still coming at her with the axe.

Buffy grabs his arm with her free hand and twists it. The axe drops.

Buffy catches the axe mid-drop, swings it, and kills the demon before he knows what is happening. He drops to the ground.

The rest of the demons in the cavern now realize that Buffy is there with them. They look at her and start to move toward her. She stands before them, an axe in one hand and a stake in the other, waiting for them to attack.

Finally, they all attack at once.

In SLOW MOTION, we see Buffy face her enemies. As they move super slowly, Buffy actually moves at close to normal speed for us. She weaves her way between demons, chopping, stabbing, jumping, flipping. She throws the axe, hitting the tentacled demon and causing it to fall to the floor. She then grabs her Scythe and continues the battle.

ANGLE ON : DAWN

Standing at the opening to the cavern, looking down at Buffy's battle.

Dawn looks at the ground and sees a piece of broken glass with a sharp point to it. She picks it up and looks at it for a moment. She looks at the wrist which has the beads wrapped around it, and then pricks her index finger on that hand with the glass, just enough to draw blood.

She turns her back to the battle, holds out her bleeding hand, dropping the glass and closing her eyes. A tear rolls down her cheek.

ANGLE ON : BUFFY

Still fighting. Killing demons left and right.

ANGLE ON : DAWN

In front of Dawn, a PORTAL BEGINS TO OPEN. It isn't what you would expect. It isn't a bright, swirling vortex. It is merely a black void, ripping into the air in front of Dawn.

Dawn's head shoots back.

ANGLE ON : BUFFY

As she fights the demons, they suddenly stop attacking her.

Buffy stands in the middle of this swarm of demons, waiting for one of them to attack, but they don't move. Something is happening to them.

Suddenly, the DEMONS TURN INTO BALLS OF LIGHT, and shoot away from Buffy, toward Dawn.

ANGLE ON : DAWN

She turns around and opens her eyes just in time to be hit by a RUSH OF ENERGY.

The energy shoots through her, into the void behind her.

ANGLE ON : BUFFY

Looking up, watching Dawn. Tears fill her eyes.

EXT. CALIFORNIA - OPTICAL - NIGHT

From high in the air, we can see a ring of energy surrounding Sunnydale for about 100 miles.

Suddenly, the ring closes with a BOOM.

INT. THE CAVERN/DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

Energy continues to rush through Dawn, into the portal behind her. Finally, it ends. Dawn looks down to Buffy and smiles despite the fact that she is out of breath.

DAWN

I can make it bigger.

BUFFY

Dawnie...

Dawn looks Buffy in the eyes. After a moment, Dawn's eyes begin to crackle with GREEN ENERGY.

Suddenly, a BURST OF GREEN ENERGY shoots from Dawn, like flash from a camera.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar is full of DEMONS, with only a FEW HUMANS.

As the FLASH OF GREEN fills the bar, about A THIRD OF THE DEMONS VANISH.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Near a cave opening, a SMALL GROUP OF DEMONS has made their camp. With the FLASH, THEY DISAPPEAR.

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A LARGE GROUP OF DEMONS have made this warehouse their home.

The standard GREEN FLASH, and HALF OF THE DEMONS VANISH.

EXT. SNOWY MOUNTAINTOP - DAY

SEVERAL SNOW DEMONS are gathered around a campfire. The GREEN FLASH TAKES TWO of these demons.

EXT. EARTH - OPTICAL

The green energy spreads over the entire globe like a shockwave. After covering the globe, the energy reverses itself and begins to move back toward Sunnydale.

INT. THE CAVERN/DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

The cavern falls silent. You could hear a pin drop.

Buffy and Dawn lock eyes. Buffy's with tears. Dawn with a smile.

Suddenly, a MASSIVE FLOW OF GREEN ENERGY blows a hole in the top of the cavern, and strikes Dawn. It flows through her, into the void behind her. It continues for several seconds, getting stronger and stronger until finally, Dawn is hard to see through the energy.

As the energy flows, EVERYTHING SLOWS DOWN.

Buffy watches from below as the last of the energy flows through Dawn. As this last bit of energy rushes over her, the VOID BEGINS TO CLOSE.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Willow and Xander rush down the stairs, toward the front door.

INT. THE CAVERN/DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

As the void closes, HANDS and TENTACLES REACH FROM IT, as though demons are trying to claw their way back from this hell dimension. Some of these tentacles wrap themselves around Dawn, pulling her toward the void.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Giles runs toward his car, stopping when he realizes that he has no place to drive. He falls to his knees.

INT. THE CAVERN/DARK TUNNEL - NIGHT

As Dawn is pulled into the void, her BODY TURNS TO ENERGY, and the tentacles fall away from it.

The last bit we see of Dawn is her hand as it enters the void. THE VOID CLOSES BEHIND HER.

Buffy stands alone in the cavern. She lets her weapons drop from her hands, causing an ECHO which fills the cavern.

She drops to her knees.

WILLOW (V.O.)

Eventually, the winds of time roll in  
and our youthful passtimes are  
replaced by the realities of  
adulthood...

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

We PAN ACROSS the collection of photos that Willow had printed and left on her bed. Finally, we reach the group photo from the wedding reception. The picture now shows only Buffy, Willow, Xander and Giles. Dawn is not in the picture. She is no longer in any of the pictures.

WILLOW (V.O.)

It happens to all of us, whether we  
wish it upon ourselves or attempt to  
hold it back. Eventually the demons  
that we faced growing up are replaced  
by the less literal- though equally  
frightening- demons of time and age...

INT. VIDEO STORE - NIGHT

Back in Bear River, Ryan is closing up the video store for the night. As he turns the sign from "Open" to "Closed", he looks out on the night sky.

WILLOW (V.O.)

(beat)

As we look back on our past, we fondly  
remember those times and the friends  
that we shared them with. We know  
that no other relationships that we  
forge will ever be quite the same  
and whether those people have left  
this world completely, or have simply  
moved on to parts unknown we will  
never forget them. They will forever  
be a part of us.

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Willow, Xander and Giles are standing in the dining room, drinking cups of coffee and laughing. Still coming off the buzz of the wedding.

WILLOW (V.O.)

(beat)

It's been a while since I've had to  
whiddle a piece of wood into the  
form of a stake. For the first time  
in it's existance, the town of  
Sunnydale is starting to look pretty  
calm...

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Still PANNING ACROSS the collection of photos.

WILLOW (V.O.)

As I stand on my front porch, watching  
the neighborhood children play as  
the sun sets behind them, I no longer  
have to worry about what lurks behind  
the nearby bush...

INT. WILLOW AND XANDER'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

We PAN ACROSS the room, from the door, toward the bed.

WILLOW (O.S.)

The nights are quiet here, which is  
how I know that she's still out there  
fighting the good fight...

Finally, we see Willow in bed, reading from a stack of papers.  
She is about eight months pregnant now.

Xander stands near the open window, looking out as he listens  
to Willow read.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I'm not sure if I'll ever see her  
again, but as I watch the sun set on  
the horizon, my thoughts are always  
on one person...

ANGLE ON : THE PAPERS

As Willow finishes reading, she puts the last page down,  
typing side down, and flips the papers over.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Buffy. The vampire slayer.

The title page is now showing on this stack of papers. It  
reads : "BUFFY, THE VAMPIRE SLAYER... A NOVEL BY XANDER  
HARRIS"

Xander turns around and looks at Willow to see her reaction.  
She looks back at him with tears in her eyes.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END