

**BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER**

"The Caretaker"

by  
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1

INT. CIRCLE - GRAND LIBRARY. DAY.

1

A huge, fierce looking PORTAL, a black window into the abyss, storm winds howling and trails of white lightning streaking away from it towards us.

A large wooden desk is dragged into view, its legs scraping across the floor of the spacious, wood-panelled room we're inside, the winds rushing into the vortex sucking the unfortunate desk away.

With a final CRACK of splintering wood, the body of the desk is ripped away from the legs, hurtling down into the vortex and disappearing into the blackness beyond, the papers and books on its surface scattering into the abyss and vanishing from view.

WILLOW (O.S.)

Um, okay, Tattles, that was a great idea, in theory, but why don't we try something a little different?

WILLOW is stood watching the portal with little TATTLES next to her, the brown-haired girl pouting as she studies the storm before her.

WILLOW (cont'd)

So, you said this started going all 'Beyond The Black Hole' after I left just now?

TATTLES

Yup. You'd gone back to your friends, and then there was this big noise, like 'cerr-rak!' and then next thing, big stormy whirlpool, right there, where the books on animals used to be.

WILLOW

And so since then, you've been-

TALEDRAW (O.S.)

Throwing things into it to see where they go.

Willow looks down - TALEDRAW has joined them, his notebook open as he squats on the library floor to start sketching the vortex.

WILLOW

Uh, right... so, what happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Tattles shrugs, and Taledraw ignores her and carries on drawing. An increasingly exasperated Willow rubs her hands through her hair as she tries to focus.

WILLOW (cont'd)

Alright, Willow, look at the facts, let's get CSI on this thing. There was a black cloud that was full of bad mojo, now there's a big hole leading to gosh knows where. Right. Possible causes. Gateway between dimensions?

TATTLES

Could be. We see a lot of them.

WILLOW

Is the fabric of wherever this place is springing a leak?

TATTLES

No, Trinkets'd be running around shouting if there was anything wrong.

(beat)

Do we get a present if we work out what it is before you do?

WILLOW

Um, that depends. Maybe I'll make up a pop quiz for you guys or something, you know, to keep you on your-

FLASH! There's an instant of white glare and Willow drops to her knees, clutching the side of her head in pain.

She stands, eyes jet black and face straining with exertion, as we cut to:

2

EXT. HELL DIMENSION. NIGHT.

2

A rocky outcrop, darkness and stars all round but the distant flicker of flames from a river of cooling lava running beneath us. Howls of distant creatures blow across to us as a large HAND reaches into frame.

Reaching one finger out, its gnarled fingernail like a dagger, it SLICES a straight line through the air, and like a flap of skin the night sky falls away, revealing what looks like a graveyard on the other side of the 'window.'

We pull back but can't make out the figure doing the slicing, only seeing that it is something tall, shrouded in black as it reaches up, carefully pulling at the tear in the sky, opening it enough to step through.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With one last glance around at the twisted landscape behind him, the figure steps forward, disappearing through the hole in the air.

3

INT. CIRCLE - GRAND LIBRARY. DAY.

3

Willow's head snaps back as we cut back to her, and she reels backwards, falling to the floor as Tattles jumps back out of the way. Taledraw looks up for a beat, then goes back to his drawing.

TATTLES

Teach? Are you okay?

WILLOW

I'm... I'm not sure...

TATTLES

What did you see?

WILLOW

Something... something old and powerful, and it was making a path... a doorway between two worlds, so it could get to...

Willow's face drops as she realises where the demon she saw was heading for.

WILLOW (cont'd)

Oh no... I've got to tell Buffy, right now! Uh, guys, why don't you, uh, watch this until I get back, and, uh, don't throw anything else into it!

Willow dashes out of frame, leaving Tattles and Taledraw to peer quizzically at the portal.

After a few beats, Tattles turns to Taledraw and nudges him to get his attention.

TATTLES

Do you think she saw it?

TALEDRAW

She saw this.

Taledraw shows Tattles his drawing - and she pales, visibly shaking.

TATTLES

(scared)

Oh, no... him...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Taledraw nods sagely and goes back to his sketch as Tattles pouts and bites her lip, staring back into the whirling black hole in the wall.

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF TEASER**

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4

INT. CHARLESTON &amp; SMITHE - BUFFY'S OFFICE. DAY.

4

BUFFY is at her desk, talking to a client, an acne-ridden teenager called LYLE. She tries to look sympathetic, but her eyes keep spreading to the nasty outbreak of spots he's suffering with.

LYLE

So then, my mom tells me, 'Lyle, your father and I just feel like we're wasting all this therapy money on you, because all you ever seem to do when you come home is talk about your therapi-'

Lyle pauses, and Buffy realises she was staring at his spots. She shakes her head and tries to focus.

LYLE (cont'd)

(looks at his feet)

It's okay. I know I don't look too good at the moment. Maybe that's why I can't talk to my mom and dad, you know? They just seem to look straight through me all the time..

Willow, looking somewhat out of breath, opens the door to the office, which is several feet behind Lyle so he doesn't notice.

She waves a hello to Buffy before noticing Lyle, and a look of worry crosses her face as she realises she's interrupted a session.

LYLE (cont'd)

... maybe they're disappointed with the way I look, like they wanted a son who carried on the family looks, without all... these things to worry about...

Buffy nods her head towards her client, and with a nod, Willow closes the door again, just as Lyle looks up.

Buffy is still staring off towards where Willow was standing, and double takes when she sees Lyle looking at her.

BUFFY

Sorry, Lyle, I saw, uh, something outside the window. What did you just say?

Lyle smiles as though a major revelation has just hit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LYLE

That's it! You're absolutely right, Miss Summers, nobody's going to pay any attention to me if I spend all my time worrying about how I look... I've got to take action!

Lyle stands, and Buffy leans back, a little alarmed.

LYLE (cont'd)

No more hiding in the background, I'm going to take the world on and make them listen to me!

He grabs Buffy's hand and shakes it vigorously.

LYLE (cont'd)

Thank you so much, Miss Summers, you've shown me the way to go!

Lyle leaves the office, and as the door closes Willow pops back inside. Buffy looks baffled.

BUFFY

Alright, what just happened?

WILLOW

I think you just helped that guy.

BUFFY

I did?

WILLOW

Hey, go with what works, that's what Xander always says. 'Course, he's usually talking about power tools, but I think it's an interchangeable metaphor...

Buffy raises an eyebrow - Willow is clearly off colour, and she motions for her to take a seat, which Willow does, flopping down into the chair and taking a deep breath.

BUFFY

What are you doing here?

Willow looks up, that familiar look of concern on her face.

WILLOW

I saw something today, Buffy, something pretty nasty. I had a vision while I was in the Library, and I-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY

Library? Are we talking a normal people's library, or...

WILLOW

Yeah, up in the Circle. Remember that 'problem' we mentioned that I've been trying to find out about? Well, I saw this big old demon cutting itself a path out of this hell dimension it was stuck in, stepping through into a world that looked a heck of a lot like ours.

BUFFY

Are you sure it was ours?

WILLOW

Well, at first, no, then I realised that not many other dimensions have cemeteries with signs that say 'Welcome to Cleveland Central Crematorium' over them.

Buffy's alert now - she's already standing and heading for her jacket hanging up by the door.

BUFFY

Okay, we'll call Giles on the way, then we can meet back at mine and-

She pauses, one arm half into her jacket.

WILLOW

What is it?

BUFFY

I can't leave yet, I've got another client showing up any minute, and I think Mr. Kane's already getting suspicious about me ducking out of so many sessions.

WILLOW

No problem, I'll be Damage Limitation Girl and get the gang together. You stay, be all professional and stuff.

BUFFY

Thanks, Will.

Willow gets up and heads back for the door, pausing as she opens it to call back over to Buffy.

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CONTINUED: (3)

WILLOW

Hey, didn't I hear somebody mention Jackson's name as I was on the way in? Are you, like, counselling him now or something?

BUFFY

Huh? Oh, no, he's seeing someone else on this floor. I figured it was kinda unethical for me to see him, what with everything that happened.

WILLOW

(almost disappointed)

Oh, okay. Well, you know, gotta scoot. Have fun.

Willow heads back outside, and as Buffy settles back down at her desk, we cut to:

5

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - FRONT ROOM. DAY.

5

GILES walks out of the kitchen and into the front room, reading a copy of 'Fortean Times' magazine as he munches on a sandwich. He doesn't notice Willow walk quietly into the room behind him.

WILLOW

Hey, Giles.

Giles YELPS in surprise and jumps a mile, smashing his sandwich plate on the floor. He turns round and places a hand on his chest to steady his beating heart.

GILES

Willow! My word... how long have you been standing there?

WILLOW

Uh, about two seconds?

GILES

Is everything alright?

WILLOW

Oh, yeah, it was, but then I had this vision, and it seemed kinda bad, so here I am.

(beat)

And I am, of course, making a huge, huge understatement when I say 'kinda' bad here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

(sits down)

A vision? What did you see?

WILLOW

The usual, big ugly demon tearing its way into our world, although the vision cut out all the ensuing death, mayhem and murder parts. Which is good, because I never like those all that much.

GILES

Have you informed Buffy?

WILLOW

Yeah, I popped in on the way over.

GILES

Well, that's a start at least. I trust Buffy will be back from work as soon as she can?

WILLOW

She said she had an important client so I left her to it. Didn't want to get her kicked out of work, you know.

GILES

Good. In the meantime, I'll call Marie back from her shopping trip and then you'd better describe what you saw to us as clearly as possible, so we can start to build up a picture of what we're dealing with, so to speak.

Giles retrieves a note pad and pencil from the pile next to his research texts stacked up in the kitchen.

6

INT. CHARLESTON & SMITHE - CHERIE'S OFFICE. DAY.

6

CHERIE HEWISON watches Jackson carefully. He's looking around the room, scratching the back of his head as though searching for the right words. She's a thirtysomething counsellor, long blonde hair and a disarming smile.

JACKSON

You see, the thing is...

(beat; sighs)

I don't know what I'm supposed to say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHERIE

Me either. That's why I get the desk and you get the chair.

JACKSON

I mean, I'm supposed to be here to talk through my 'unprofessional' attitude recently, why I've been acting so weirdly about the cases we've been getting. And from what I've told you already, you know by now it's because of what I know about the world now. I never realised how it'd open my eyes - I spent most of this year around Buffy and her friends, seeing the world they way they do, and now I'm back with... well, normal people again, I can't help but be amazed at how they just ignore so many things, like they don't want what they can't explain to be true...

Jackson pauses - he realises he's possibly saying a bit more than he ought to. Cherie waits a beat before leaning forward to talk to him.

CHERIE

This Buffy Summers girl, her world seems extraordinary to you, doesn't it? Like there's things going on there that just don't exist in the real world?

JACKSON

(bitter laugh)  
You have no idea.

CHERIE

Well, I'd like to get an idea, Jackson, that's the only way we're going to get anywhere. You were sent to me because your fellow officers and superiors have expressed concern about your recent actions, that you've been erratic, moody and unpredictable, and here we are, our first session, and I can already pinpoint the cause of your altered state, as it were.

JACKSON

(bitterly)  
Welcome to my world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHERIE

Do you think reconciling your differences with Buffy would help you regain your old professional attitude?

JACKSON

I'd like to think so, but deep down... I'm not so sure. I think there were things said and done by both of us that kinda burned the bridges. And then set fire to the forests so there wouldn't be any wood to make any more bridges after that.

Cherie stares thoughtfully at Jackson, who shuffles in his seat, clearly not enjoying the way this is going. Cherie glances up at the clock on the wall.

JACKSON (cont'd)

Is that it?

CHERIE

(smiles)

When the state pays for your sessions, they tend to feel shorter than most. We can pick this up again next time.

JACKSON

Sounds like a plan.

Jackson stands, shakes Cherie's hand and makes his way out of the office.

7

INT. CHARLESTON &amp; SMITHE - CORRIDOR. DAY.

7

Jackson leaves Cherie's office and bumps straight into Buffy, who is pulling on her jacket and hurrying off. They take a moment to compose themselves, managing awkward nods.

JACKSON

Got somewhere you need to be?

BUFFY

Huh? Oh, no, I just...

(beat; sighs)

Yeah, Willow came by earlier, said there was something bad coming into town, we're gonna go check it out.

JACKSON

Oh. Right. Need a hand?

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CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Jackson...

JACKSON

(quickly)

No, okay, I get it. Still too soon.  
That's cool. All part of the  
process.

BUFFY

It's not that, it's just-

JACKSON

Buffy, it's okay. Really.

Jackson gets up and walks out, pausing in the doorway.

JACKSON (cont'd)

(cold)

I'll see you next week, Miss  
Summers.

He leaves and closes the door. Buffy sighs, rubbing her eyes  
with one hand. It's been a long day.

8

EXT. ABANDONED RAILWAY STATION. DAY.

8

Buffy and Willow walk down the platform of an empty railway  
station, a disused part of the Cleveland mainline. The  
waiting area windows and doors are boarded up, and the place  
is filthy with litter.

Buffy tries to weave through the rubbish as Willow, minus her  
cloak, scans the tracks and surrounding buildings.

BUFFY

Why are we here, Will? I thought  
you said you saw this thing over by  
the cemetery?

WILLOW

I did, but it's moved since then,  
and the trail lead here. I think  
it's looking for something.

BUFFY

All it's going to find round here  
are old newspapers and- oh good,  
rats.

Buffy raises one foot to let a fat brown rat waddle past,  
grimacing as she does so.

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CONTINUED:

BUFFY (cont'd)

You know, I don't think it matters how many demons, monsters and whatever else I see, one single rat and it's still gross out city.

WILLOW

Yeah, I guess we don't scare that easily any-

WHUMP! The girls YELL out in alarm as a large, full waste bin topples over next to them, spilling its contents on the floor. Buffy spots something moving in the shadows on the other side of the bins and darts off after it.

9 INT. STATION - TERMINAL BUILDING. DAY.

9

Buffy runs into frame inside the dimly lit old main terminal of the station, which is as dusty and dirty as the platform outside.

She hears footsteps coming from a set of steps leading down further into the station and heads after them.

10 INT. STATION - BASEMENT. DAY.

10

Buffy creeps down into the basement - light filters in from the terminal, but she can't see far in the gloom.

She takes a few cautious steps forward, into the open plan floor which has three corridors branching off from it, before stopping, hands on hips.

BUFFY

Alright, listen. I know you're down here, and I've had a real long day, so can we skip the creeping through the darkness bit and get straight to the big entrance?

(beat)

Well?

Footsteps echo out again - something is heading towards her, beyond a set of double swing doors ahead of us.

Buffy tenses up.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Good. Nice to have some cooperation for once. Now then, let's start with-

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As the music builds, we shift down into slow motion as the doors swing open, and the CARETAKER strides out from the shadows - it's the demon we saw earlier, eyes and lips sewn shut, standing almost seven feet tall, thinly built but obviously powerful, its confident strides bringing it up towards Buffy.

Buffy's eyes widen as she takes in the demon for the first time, picking up on it's thick, sinewy black skin which seems to double as some kind of body armour. Her fists are already up defensively.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
Okay... Giant demonic undertaker. No problem...

Her words can't hide her nerves as the huge demon strides up to a few feet away from her, then stands and looks down at her quizzically.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
What? You waiting for me to make a snappy comeback? Well, I kinda noticed that you can't speak, so that tends to take all the fun out of-

The Caretaker just keeps on walking, past Buffy and out of the basement. She turns, surprised, and blinks.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
Hey!

11 INT. STATION - TERMINAL. DAY.

11

The Caretaker is heading up the steps and back into the station proper, not giving Buffy a second glance as she dashes up the steps after him.

She gets close enough to reach out and lay a hand on his arm, but without breaking stride, he swings one arm round and SWATS her away, and Buffy is sent hurtling through the air to crash in a heap several feet away.

Dazed, she tries to stand as the Caretaker disappears off screen, but fails, slumping unconscious to the floor, and from that, the scene FADES TO BLACK.

12 INT. STATION - TERMINAL. LATER.

12

We FADE UP to see Willow kneeling down by Buffy, trying to wake her up. Buffy groans and pushes herself upright.

WILLOW  
(concerned)  
Buffy, are you alright?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLOW(cont'd)

I went looking for you, but then I got kinda lost, and... never mind. What happened? Did you see the bad guy?

BUFFY

Yep. Wasn't an amazingly successful encounter, hence the whole 'heap on the floor' thing.

Willow helps Buffy up, dusting her clothes down. Buffy holds the side of her sore head and winces.

WILLOW

Did you get into a fight with it?

BUFFY

Less of a fight, more of an insect repellent. He put the smackdown on me without even blinking.

(beat)

Not that he can blink, of course...

WILLOW

Let's get you back home, maybe Giles turned something up by now. Did you get a good look at him at least?

BUFFY

Oh, yeah. Real good.

The two girls start to head back out of the station.

**BLACK OUT:****END OF ACT ONE**

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CONTINUED: (2)

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13

INT. TAMMAZEL'S BAR. NIGHT.

13

A moderately sized downtown bar, frequented largely by a variety of species of demon, the centrepiece being the blueskinned TAMMAZEL standing behind the bar, dishtowel slung over one shoulder.

The bar doors SLAM open as Buffy heads inside. The clientele noticeably shuffle away from her, and Tammazel rolls her eyes as Buffy hops up onto a bar stool.

TAMMAZEL

Now what? What, you thought nailing my hand to my bar last week wasn't 'bad' enough for you?

BUFFY

New bad guy in town. Figured you'd know something about it, seeing as you're a bad guy too.

TAMMAZEL

Bad girl, if we're going to be so gender specific, and no, I don't know of anything new in town. So are you going to turn around and march your blonde little fleshy body out of my bar and stop scaring my customers, or am I going to have to call my security demons over? And believe me, they keep this place very secure.

Buffy quickly reaches across the counter and grabs Tammazel by one of her horns, pulling the protesting demon down to her eye level, still sitting calmly.

BUFFY

Let me try this again, because you obviously didn't hear me the first time: New bad guy in town, so start talking.

TAMMAZEL

Ow, ow! Okay, okay!

Buffy releases the horn and Tammazel stands, rubbing it and wincing. Buffy scowls at her, impatient.

BUFFY

Now, Tammazel!

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CONTINUED:

TAMMAZEL

(scowls)

Nobody knows much about it, seems like it wandered in here from one of the many wonderful Hell dimensions out there.

BUFFY

What does it want?

TAMMAZEL

Beats me. All I can tell you is that it's powerful, got a lot of my regulars pretty spooked.

BUFFY

Yeah, I get the powerful part. Got the bruises to show for it.

TAMMAZEL

You've seen it?

BUFFY

Briefly, yeah. I'm trying to find out some more about what I'm dealing with for the next time I see it.

TAMMAZEL

The next time you see it, here's some free advice - run.

Buffy gets up and walks out of the bar. There is an audible sigh of relief from the assembled demons, and Tammazel gets back to cleaning some glasses.

TAMMAZEL (cont'd)

(mutters)

Just don't expect to get very far...

14 INT. CLEVELAND PD - JACKSON'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

14

Jackson is on the phone, scribbling details down in a notepad. DAN enters his office, and hangs back while Jackson finishes his call.

JACKSON

Okay... right, yes, I've got that. 2214 East Field Avenue. Thanks. He hangs up, and Dan takes the seat opposite him.

DAN

So how'd it go?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACKSON

How did what go?

DAN

You know, your first counselling session? Am I gonna get the old Jackson back, or are you still doing your best to gradually transform into Agent Mulder?

JACKSON

It went fine.

DAN

Just 'fine'?

JACKSON

Dan, I can't really talk too much about it, you know? Let's change the subject.

DAN

Okay, your call. Glad to hear you're taking my advice for once. Who was on the phone?

JACKSON

Dispatch. Apparently some tramps found a few bodies down by an abandoned part of the Cleveland mainline, I said I'd go check it out. Want to fly wingman?

DAN

Lead on.

The two cops stand and head for the door, but Jackson pauses, thinks of something and jogs back to his desk. The drawer slides open to reveal Jackson's stash of crosses, stakes and holy water.

He scoops up a stake and slips it deftly up his jacket sleeve. Jackson leaves the office. Dan raises an eyebrow at him.

DAN (cont'd)

Forget something?

JACKSON

My wallet. Let's go.

With a suspicious look after his colleague, Dan follows Jackson out.

15

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN. NIGHT.

15

Buffy, XANDER and ANDREW are on one side of the kitchen table, Giles and MARIE on the other. Several books are spread out across the surface, with a sketch from Willow on top of them. Xander hands Buffy a glass of water.

XANDER

So, beyond the whole being big and strong, what else did you find out about this guy?

BUFFY

Really not that much. Tammazel didn't seem to know anything, but knowing her, she's probably either lying or too scared by it to tell me the truth.

MARIE

From your description and what Willow left us with, we've managed to narrow this down to three possibilities.

BUFFY

Larry, Moe and Curly?

GILES

Ah, no, it's either an ancient demon known as Locasha, said to have the power to 'bend entire realities to its will,' and who is also said to 'bring about an Apocalypse by causing the sky to fall upon the Earth.'

XANDER

Oh. Good. Because, you know, we just don't get enough of those round here.

BUFFY

And behind door number two?

MARIE

Um, we have Krym'teac, another ancient demon, and another who wants to bring about an Apocalypse, this one with the ability to influence the motions of the seas, and who may have been behind the Biblical Deluge.

Buffy cranes over to look at the less-than-appealing images of horrific demons on the books.

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CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Cleveland does get kind of dry this time of year... who else?

ANDREW

And the last choice, is, um, a demon of unknown origins who's gone by several names over the years, but last time he was seen in our dimension, he was known as the Caretaker, but it, uh, doesn't really say why.

XANDER

We're fighting a demonic janitor? I mean, I know old man Compton at Cleveland High has that creepy lazy eye, but...

Xander realises everyone is staring at him. He coughs once and holds up a hand to show he'll be quiet.

BUFFY

The thing I faced off to looked more like an Undertaker than a Caretaker. Do we have any kinds of physical descriptions? The main thing I couldn't help but notice about it was that its eyes and lips were sewn up.

MARIE

We'll keep at this, perhaps we can cross reference with something else and narrow the search down further. In the meantime, it may be an idea for you to run some patrols, see if you can find anything out from other parts of the local demonic community.

BUFFY

Great. Another night spent bar hopping, only without the advantage of alcohol to take all those demons out of focus...

ANDREW

Um, maybe Jackson can help? I mean, he is a detective after all, maybe he's heard something?

BUFFY

I'm not sure I-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GILES

(interrupts)

It's still a little too soon to get Jackson involved with our activities again, Andrew. Besides, his position is a lot more complicated now he's back in gainful employment. We must be careful not to jeopardise that.

BUFFY

(sarcastic)

Yeah, I'd hate for anyone's social life to go down the pan because of slaying...

Giles starts to reply, but with a smirk to Xander, Buffy stands and leaves, walking into the camera.

16

EXT. ABANDONED STATION - PLATFORM. NIGHT.

16

Dan and Jackson duck under a line of police tape as they head onto the platform, which now has several uniform cops and a forensics officer, busy marking out chalk outlines around three bodies lying on the platform.

Jackson approaches the nearest cop, OFFICER GRIFFIN, as the forensics guy, MCALPINE, starts taking some photos.

JACKSON

What've we got, Griffin?

GRIFFIN

Three bodies, looks like they were brought here and then killed. No money's been taken, may have been some kind of ritual thing.

DAN

Oh, great, Jackson's speciality.

Jackson shoots a glare at Dan, who chuckles.

DAN (cont'd)

Sorry, man. Couldn't resist.

MCALPINE

Boy, is this ever a peach!

JACKSON

Excuse me?

McAlpine turns over one of the bodies to show Jackson and Dan the wounds on its stomach. Dan recoils, one hand over his mouth as the nausea hits him, Jackson just looks on coolly - he's seen worse by now.

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CONTINUED:

MCALPINE

As you can see from the toothlike serrations along this wound, it's as though the attacker ate their way through this poor guy. Heh, must have quite a jaw!

JACKSON

Yeah, bet he brushes twice a day, too. Look, McAlpine, can we start looking at facts? What do we know about who or what killed these guys?

MCALPINE

I can tell you one thing - they won't wait long until they attack again. See the way the flesh has torn from the force of the blows here and here? These guys were in a hurry. I'd keep a few extra cars on the streets if I were you.

JACKSON

Check. Dan?

Dan waves a hand to say 'not now,' still hunched over a few feet away as he fights off his queasiness. Jackson chuckles and turns back to McAlpine.

JACKSON (cont'd)

Okay, good work. I'm going to go take a look around, see what I can find. You got an extra pair of gloves?

McAlpine hands Jackson a pair of latex gloves, which he pulls on as he heads down into the terminal building.

17

INT. STATION - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

17

Torch on to cut through the gloom, Jackson walks down into the basement, scanning the darkened floorspace until he stops on one section of the floor.

Looking up from the floor as Jackson walks closer and kneels down, we can also see what appears to be a lizard scale lying on the ground. Jackson lifts it up to examine it, nodding as his suspicions are confirmed.

Jackson sweeps round the inside of the basement a few more times with the torch before walking back up the stairs and out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We stay on the basement for a few beats, before a low GROWL is heard, and a pair of green eyes glint out at us from within the shadows. Three more sets of eyes join the first, then we cut to:

18

INT. NO MAN'S LAND. NIGHT.

18

To the tune of "Starcrossed" by Ash, Andrew and Xander step into the club, packed as always, and make their way towards the bar. Andrew looks distinctly uncomfortable, but Xander orders up two beers, rubbing his hands together in anticipation.

ANDREW

Um, Xander, I know the fake ID I used got me in here and everything, but, um, I'm really not very comfortable being here, with all these...

Three hot girls wander past, and as Xander's eyes stray to check them out, Andrew sighs and rolls his eyes.

XANDER

Relax, young Skywalker. This is as much for me as it is for you. This little soiree just happens to be the first time Anya's let me out of her sight for a minute since she told me she was pregnant, so I thought I'd kill two demons with one crossbow and get you out of the house too.

ANDREW

Why? I mean, I'm not really into, you know, drinking, so what-

Andrew pauses as two bottles of beer are plonked down on the bar in front of him. Xander takes a gulp from his, while Andrew just picks his up and tries not to look any more guilty than he already does.

XANDER

Andrew, it doesn't take a Cosmopolitan subscription to tell you're missing Jody. And that's understandable, you know, we all liked the guy, and we've noticed he hasn't been around all that much lately, so I came up with this ingenious plan to get to the bottom of the story.

ANDREW

Get me drunk?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Well, start by appealing to your sense of masculine brotherhood, and if that failed, yes, get you good and drunk and then ask you. So what's the story? Did you guys break up?

ANDREW

I'm... I'm really not sure. It's kind of awkward.

XANDER

That just makes you part of the team. Difficult love lives come with the territory, I'm afraid!

Andrew manages a hopeful smile.

19

INT. CIRCLE - LIBRARY. DAY.

19

Willow walks along one of the many floors of the Circle's immense library, swerving around floating books drifting between the shelves, one hand passing across the books as she searches for something. She pauses, frowning.

WILLOW

(closes eyes)

*Ricerca libri il demone.*

Willow blinks out of view, reappearing on a different level of the library. With a satisfied smile, she spots the book she was after straight away, and with a flourish of her hand it floats away from the shelf, opening out and hovering in the air before her.

Willow retrieves the drawing she made of the Caretaker, holding it out in the air before the book.

The book SNAPS shut, taking the paper from her hand, and then its pages start to turn as it searches for something matching Willow's picture.

It stops on one section and opens out again, and Willow leans in for a closer look. Her expression darkens as she reads.

WILLOW (cont'd)

Oh, boy...

We can see the illustration in the book - a tall, well built demon with thick, black body armour, and it matches Willow's rough sketch.

WILLOW (cont'd)

Well, that's our bad guy...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Willow takes another look down at the book, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

END OF ACT TWO

( CONTINUED )

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

20 EXT. CLEVELAND - STREET. NIGHT. 20

Buffy walks down one of the city streets, eyes alert for any signs of trouble as she patrols. She passes a sign pointing towards the old railway station, and she turns down and heads towards it.

21 EXT. STATION - APPROACH. NIGHT. 21

Buffy walks up towards the front of the station, freezing as she spots something up ahead. A trio of DEMONS, short and scaly, are gathered round a makeshift fire burning inside a waste bin.

Their hands are raised in the air, and they appear to be chanting. Buffy paces stealthily forward, trying to listen in.

DEMON #1

O great one, hear our pleas.

DEMON #2

We have offered you the sacrifices  
you command, entreat us with your  
divine and unholy presence.

DEMON #3

(beat)

Is he here yet?

DEMON #1

Marko!

DEMON #3

What? I'm cold out here, man, I  
wanna get inside already!

DEMON #2

You don't just summon up an ancient  
demon warrior by snapping your  
fingers, Marko. You have to follow  
the rituals, otherwise-

BUFFY (O.S.)

Otherwise, you could get in all  
sorts of trouble.

The demons turn and see Buffy, the first groaning loudly.

DEMON #1

Oh, great, the Slayer! How's that  
gonna look when he shows up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Buffy walks casually up to them, the demons backing away but still trying to look tough. It's not really working.

BUFFY

So! What you guys up to? Killing any more homeless guys?

DEMON #2

You can't comprehend the power of what you're up against, Slayer. He'll peel the flesh from your bones and make a monument out of what's left of you!

BUFFY

Not really all that big on modern art. Why don't you guys start by telling me who or what you're working for, then we can skip straight to the part where I kick your asses and I can get out of here.

DEMON #3

The Caretaker will finish you once and for all, Slayer! He...

Demon #3 looks at his colleagues, who are glaring at him - he's just given the game away.

DEMON #3 (cont'd)

Oops...

BUFFY

'Caretaker,' huh? We have a winner! Thanks.

DEMON #1

(to Demon #3)

You are so dead...

DEMON #2

Enough already! Let's just kill her!

The demons jump to the attack. Buffy's ready for the first, grabbing his arm and spinning him round, sending him crashing headfirst into the flaming bin.

Demons #2 and #3 attack from either side, but Buffy ducks and dodges their clumsy punches, kicking one to the ground and punching the other twice.

He stumbles backwards, collapsing to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEMON #1  
 (clutching wounded head)  
 No... no! You're ruining everything!  
 We were supposed to have it all  
 ready for when he returned...

BUFFY  
 Guess you'd better call the  
 restaurant and tell them they can  
 open up that booking, huh?

SMACK! She knocks him out cold with one roundhouse punch.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
 Oh, come on! That was funny...

THWACK! Demon #2 clonks Buffy across the shoulders with a  
 stray two by four, and she hits the deck. Demon #3 grabs her  
 and drags her to her feet, but before the other demon can hit  
 her again, Buffy flips up and over, leaving Demon #3 to take  
 the hit from the plank.

He drops to the ground, and Buffy punches forward, her fist  
 shattering through the two by four and straight into the face  
 of the last demon.

He sinks to the ground, and Buffy takes a moment to catch her  
 breath.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
 Thanks, boys, I'm glad we had this  
 little talk. Now, let's see which  
 one of you feels like talking  
 first. Maybe it's-

She pauses as a GROWL rumbles out from behind her. Buffy  
 slowly turns round.

Several more demons like the ones currently out cold on the  
 floor around her are advancing slowly out of the shadows,  
 grinning mouths full of fangs. Buffy groans.

BUFFY (cont'd)  
 Silly me, I forgot. It's never that  
 easy.

22

INT. NO MAN'S LAND. NIGHT.

22

Andrew and Xander are at a table just off the dance floor, a  
 heap of empty beer bottles in front of them. Andrew seems  
 much more drunk than Xander.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW

And then, and then he says, he says to me, he goes, 'Andrew,' he says, 'Andrew... Andrew, I think you need to decide what it is you want.'

XANDER

He said that?

ANDREW

He said that. He said, 'Andrew, you're obviously not sure about a lot of things, so... so you need to work out what it is you want.'

XANDER

Wow. That's pretty deep.

ANDREW

(swigs beer)

I know.

XANDER

So what is it?

ANDREW

Huh?

XANDER

What is it you want? 'Cause, you know, that is kind of why we're having this conversation.

ANDREW

Oh. Yeah, right. Um... I don't know.

XANDER

Not helping.

ANDREW

I know, I know, it's just... I'm pretty sure I want to be with Jody, and that's that, but there's just this little part of me that... that feels maybe it's not meant to be, you know?

XANDER

The scars I still have from my aborted first wedding agree with you.

ANDREW

Maybe it's...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Andrew drifts off, lost in thought. Xander can feel a revelation on the way, so he motions for Andrew to continue.

XANDER

It's...

ANDREW

Maybe I'm not meant to be happy.  
You know, because of what I did.

XANDER

What, you mean Jonathan?

ANDREW

Yeah, precisely. Maybe, maybe it's  
that helping save the world was a  
start, but, I haven't done enough  
yet.

XANDER

If that theory is true, then Buffy  
must have been Hitler, Stalin and  
Mussolini in a past life, given her  
happiness to defeated Apocalypse  
ratio. Andrew, that kind of  
thinking isn't going to do you any  
good. Any believe me, I know all  
about not thinking.

(beat)

Wait, that wasn't right, what I  
meant was-

GIRL (O.S.)

Uh, pardon me-

The boys look up - a stunningly beautiful red-haired GIRL is  
standing by them, flashing a dazzling smile.

Andrew squints as he tries to focus his drunken eyes, while  
Xander just stares, struck dumb by her looks.

GIRL (cont'd)

Sorry to disturb you both, but, uh...

(chuckles)

This is kind of embarrassing, but  
I'm wondering if I could ask a  
favour.

XANDER

(loudly)

Anything!

(beat)

Um, I mean, yeah, sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GIRL

Well, see, my ex boyfriend is over there, and I kinda want to make him a bit jealous. It's a long story. So, um... do you guys mind if I sit with you for a minute?

XANDER

(smiling)

That sounds gr-

ANDREW

Sorry, I'm gay and he's engaged. The girls' smile drops and she stands.

GIRL

Oh, right. Sorry. Uh, my mistake. Thanks anyway.

She walks away - Xander watches her go then turns on Andrew.

XANDER

Okay. Now. While hat was undoubtedly the right thing to do, and for the I thank you, on behalf of my testosterone I also have to ask what the hell did you do that for?

ANDREW

Hey! I thought we were still talking about me...

XANDER

(sighs)

You're right. I'm sorry. You were saying?

ANDREW

I was saying that- Andrew locks up - he's spotted someone off camera. Xander follows his gaze.

Walking into the club is JODY, with his new guy friend in tow. He waves a few hellos as the pair make their way to the bar. Andrew seethes quietly as Xander shakes his head and pats him on the back.

XANDER

It does get easier, trust me. It can often take several years, but it will get easier.

ANDREW

You'd better be right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Andrew, eyes still locked on Jody, finishes his beer, slams the empty down on the table and belches loudly.

XANDER  
Want another hit?

ANDREW  
(still glaring)  
That would be lovely, thank you.

Xander gets up and heads for the bar.

23

EXT. STATION. NIGHT.

23

With the THWACK of a punch landing, a battered-looking Buffy staggers back into frame, trying to get her guard up but failing against the onslaught of the half-dozen demons attacking her.

She KICKS one to the ground, but takes a few more hits herself, stumbling over a pile of empty boxes and clattering to the ground.

She yelps as one of the demons lands on her, pinning her to the ground, hissing as it snaps its jaws at her. She struggles, trying to push him off, when with a soft THUD and a howl of pain from the demon, it jumps off her.

Buffy quickly scrabbles to her feet. Wrenching his axe out of the back of the demon just bothering Buffy is Jackson. He takes up a fighting stance as the five remaining creatures circle him.

BUFFY  
Jackson!

JACKSON  
(salutes)  
Ma'am.

BUFFY  
What are you doing here?

JACKSON  
My job!

Jackson swings the axe at the demons who jump back, staying out of range.

BUFFY  
Hey! Is that my axe?

JACKSON  
You left it round my place a while back, I figured I could borrow it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Well, that's just ru-

SLAM! She doesn't finish her sentence as one of the demons jumps her. She's pushed back against a wall, her hands trying to hold its powerful jaws from closing round her neck.

BUFFY (cont'd)

(pissed)

Alright, that's it!

She brings her knee up into its groin, and the demon lets out a high pitched WHINE of pain as it drops to the floor.

Snatching up a broken halogen light from a bin next to her, she smashes part of it away against the wall to form a makeshift sword.

JACKSON

Okay, this is about as far as my plan got...

BUFFY

Relax, I got it.

With a shout, Buffy charges forward and KICKS one demon down, slicing her weapon across the chest of another and using its flat side to knock another one down.

Jackson stands back and watches, amazed as always.

JACKSON

(smiles; quietly)

That's my girl...

24

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN. NIGHT.

24

Giles is just brewing himself a cup of tea when Willow races back into the room, bumping into him as she skids to a halt.

Giles is startled again, spilling his cup across the counter. He sighs as Willow starts tugging at his sleeve urgently.

WILLOW

Giles, where's Buffy?

GILES

She's out on patrol. Willow, is there any way you can give me some kind of warning before you come rushing in? I have to get these tea bags imported, and they're not cheap!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLOW

Giles, I found out some more stuff about our bad guy.

GILES

You identified it?

WILLOW

Let's just say I'm using a better library card now. Giles, this thing attracts demons. Lots of demons. They're drawn to the power it gives off, they tend to work almost like an insect colony or something, guarding it with their lives and making sacrifices for it.

GILES

(catching up)

The murders at the railway station?

WILLOW

I think Buffy's walking right into a really, really big problem, we need to get down there, now!

GILES

Agreed. Xander and Andrew are incommunicado for the evening, so we'll have to suffice as backup. Come on, we'd better get moving.

The duo bustle out of the kitchen.

25

EXT. STATION - PLATFORM. NIGHT.

25

Catching their breath as they survey the deceased demons around them, Buffy and Jackson look over to the doors leading through to the main terminal.

BUFFY

You don't need to keep showing up, you know. This has always been my fight, I don't need a chaperone, or a-

JACKSON

A Guardian?

Buffy sighs and rubs her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Jackson, we still don't even know what that means, and even when we do, I don't think stalking me and getting yourself killed is going to be in the job description!

JACKSON

Buffy, don't drop me like this. You showed me this life, what you have to deal with every day, and you can't just expect me to walk away from it! As long as I know what kinds of things are waiting out there, you're damn sure I'm gonna do what I can to help out. With or without your permission.

Buffy stares back at him - this isn't an argument she needs right now. Backing down for the sake of efficiency, she sighs and raises her hands.

BUFFY

Okay, fine. Time to see what they're keeping down there.

JACKSON

(sarcastic)

You sure you want me to come too?

BUFFY

(beat; sighs)

Yeah. Backup is good.

JACKSON

Glad to hear it.

Buffy leads, pushing the double doors open as the two of them walk through. As the doors close, there is a PULSE of blue energy, and the doors start to ice over, as though caught in an Arctic wind.

A moment later, Willow and Giles materialise, Willow rushing over to the doors as a giddy looking Giles tries to regain his balance.

Willow touches the door but snaps her hand back, burned by the ice.

GILES

What is it? Is Buffy inside?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLOW

Yeah, I can just about sense her,  
but I can't get through this door,  
something's sealed it magically.  
She's on her own.

From Willow's troubled look, we:

**BLACK OUT:**

**END OF ACT THREE**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

26

INT. STATION - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

26

Buffy and Jackson walk carefully forward, Jackson retrieving his torch and using it to sweep the gloom. Buffy takes the axe off him as Jackson draws his gun.

Buffy flinches at the sight of it, and Jackson holsters it again.

JACKSON

Sorry, I should have-

BUFFY

Jackson, don't. Okay? Please, just...  
just don't.

There's a distant CLANG from up ahead, and Buffy jogs forward to investigate.

BUFFY (O.S.) (cont'd)

Hey, come take a look at this.

Crudely fashioned out of scavenged metals and materials, there is a makeshift shrine propped against one wall. Three small bronze jars filled with blood sit on a shelf mid way up, and the whole thing looks like a dresser mirror set, without the glass.

Various trinkets and charms are attached to it, and a small incense burner glows at the top of the piece. Buffy wrinkles her nose at the strong smell.

JACKSON

What is it? Looks like a budget  
version of that golden bull from  
The Ten Commandments.

BUFFY

Must be some kind of shrine to  
whatever those demons are working  
for. My guess is, same guy that I  
ran into earlier. How come your  
police guys missed this?

JACKSON

Their attention to detail leaves a  
lot to be desired sometimes. That,  
and the fact that it's been moved,  
look.

Jackson shines his torch on the floor - and there are scratch marks showing where the shrine was pushed out of sight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Unseen by either of them, the Caretaker starts to pace silently out from the darkness behind them.

BUFFY

Well, at least we know we're on the trail now. I don't know whether our guy is still down here or not, so we'd better be ca-

SMACK! One swing of the Caretaker's arm knocks Buffy sideways, and she skids to a halt several feet away. Jackson's eyes pop as he looks up at the imposing demon before him.

His mouth drops open, and as he shines the torch up into the Caretaker's face, we see a close up of the stitched-up eyes and mouth.

The Caretaker cocks its head to the side, then with another swing bats Jackson backwards, hurtling with a crash into the shrine.

It falls over, pinning him to the ground. The Caretaker starts to walk away when Buffy's voice rings out.

BUFFY (O.S.) (cont'd)

Hey! Von Doom, or whatever!

The Caretaker turns - and BAM! Buffy creams him with a rotten old wooden door she's hefted up, the wood splintering as it connects.

The Caretaker leans back with the blow, but quickly stands tall again, unaffected. Buffy GULPS. POW! Buffy flies back through the air, smacking into some rusty pipes and hitting the floor in a cloud of dust.

She coughs as she tries to stand, but a huge hand grabs her by the neck, lifting her several feet into the air. Her legs dangle as the Caretaker lifts her to its eye level, regarding her curiously.

BUFFY (cont'd)

(fighting for breath)

I think you dropped a stitch...

She KICKS the Caretaker in the chest, but it shrugs off the blow. She kicks again and again, having no effect.

Looking extremely worried now, Buffy braces herself for another hit, but the demon instead just drops her to the ground.

She shakes her head clear as the tall monster starts to walk away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY (cont'd)

Oh no, not this time!

She runs up behind it and jumps into the air, wrapping her arms round its neck and trying to wrestle it to the ground.

The demon carries on walking, casually brushing Buffy away as though she were an insect. She hits the floor again, the wind knocked out of her, pushing herself up to her feet again.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Great. Perfect. An invincible seven foot tall demon. Just what I needed.

The Caretaker reaches the swing doors leading to the terminal, but as it places its hand on them they start to smoke, and we quickly see that these doors are magically frozen shut too.

The Caretaker pushes at the doors for a few moments before giving up and stepping back, ugly red ice burns on its hands.

27 EXT. CIRCLE - FIELD. DAY.

27

We're up in the Circle, in a field just outside the village where the rest of the buildings are. Tattles, eyes squeezed shut in concentration, clenches her fists together as Taledraw watches.

TALEDRAW

Come on, sis, you can do it!

Tattles opens her eyes and huffs with petulant frustration.

TATTLES

I can't, he's too strong!

TALEDRAW

This is how I drew it, come on! Try harder!

TATTLES

I am trying harder!

She closes her eyes, takes a deep breath and clenches her fists together again.

28 INT. STATION - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

28

The Caretaker starts to kick at the double doors, shards of ice splintering away with each impact of its mighty boots, before a laundry basket careens into it at high speed, and the Caretaker is briefly knocked off balance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Okay, you don't want to fight?  
Tough. Looks like neither of us are  
going anywhere fast, so let's get  
this over with.

(fists up)

I've had a long day, and the chance  
to let off a little steam on you is  
just what I need.

The Caretaker walks over, and once he's close enough Buffy  
lets fly with a flurry of punches and kicks, spinning round  
as she throws everything she's got at it.

Step by step, it's forced backwards, the rain of blows Buffy  
barrages it with hit after hit. She's forced it back against  
a wall when she pauses to take a breath.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Alright, good, now we're getting  
somewh-

SLAM! The Caretaker sends Buffy flying with another punch,  
and this time she slides to a halt next to the still-pinned  
Jackson, out cold.

JACKSON

Buffy? Buffy!

The Caretaker walks past, casting a glance down at Jackson  
but not stopping once it reaches the doors, it rears back and  
punches out with both fists at once, smashing the ice into  
fragments and blowing both doors off their hinges.

29 EXT. CIRCLE - FIELD. DAY.

29

Tattles lets out a gasp as her eyes open, and with a scowl  
Taledraw starts to scribble over a page in his book. Tattles  
looks guiltily at him.

TATTLES

Sorry. I did my best...

TALEDRAW

Now I have to draw a new picture.  
Teach isn't going to like this!

Tattles sits down on the grass, palms against her cheeks,  
pouting for all she's worth.

30 EXT. STATION - PLATFORM. NIGHT.

30

Willow jumps back as the ice over the double doors SHATTERS,  
and with a glance back at Giles she pushes them aside and  
races inside.

31 INT. STATION - BASEMENT. NIGHT.

31

Jackson is still trying to shove the shrine off him when Willow and Giles rush into the scene.

JACKSON  
Uh, little help?

WILLOW  
Lift!

With a wave of her arm, the shrine flies up and away from Jackson, clattering to the ground several feet away. Giles lifts Buffy up, cradling her carefully.

GILES  
What on earth happened?

JACKSON  
Big, tough demon. Buffy did what she could but it just knocked her cold and strolled out of here like it owned the place.

WILLOW  
Yeah, that's what I wanted to warn her about, it's almost impervious to physical attacks. I... I thought I'd be back in time...

GILES  
No time to worry about that now, we need to get Buffy home and get these wounds cleaned and dressed.

Giles heads off screen as Willow helps Jackson up.

JACKSON  
Thanks. I did what I could, but I let my work get on top of me a bit.

WILLOW  
It's okay, I'm sure you did what you could. Uh, I'd love to stay, but, you know, gotta dash.

JACKSON  
Yeah, you go do your thing. I'm cool.

With a nod, Willow races after Giles and Buffy, leaving Jackson on his own in the basement.

He picks up his now broken torch, and with a sigh tucks it into his jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACKSON (cont'd)  
Another successful mission... yeah,  
right.

He dusts himself off and heads back outside.

32 INT. NO MAN'S LAND. NIGHT. 32

Xander, one finger in his ear, is shouting into the payphone, one eye on Andrew a few feet away.

XANDER  
No, no, I'm not too drunk at all,  
honey.

ANYA  
(filtered; through phone)  
You'd better not be, Xander Harris!

33 INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE. NIGHT. 33

ANYA is pacing up and down inside their living room, cordless phone in hand.

ANYA  
I'm very fragile and emotional  
right now, and I will be for the  
next few months! I can't spend all  
night worrying about what you may  
be getting up to away from me, out  
there in places with music, and  
alcohol, and girls... Oh, God, I wish  
I wasn't pregnant!

34 INT. NO MAN'S LAND. NIGHT. 34

Xander smiles as Anya stresses via the phone line.

XANDER  
Don't worry, An, there'll be plenty  
of time for this later on. Anyway,  
tonight was more for Andrew's  
benefit, and I think I got some  
good out of him.

ANYA  
Is he still missing his gay friend?

XANDER  
Yeah, he's holding up, but I think  
relationships in general are a new  
concept for him.

ANYA  
I know how he feels...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

(smiles)

I love you, Anya.

ANYA

And I love you too, I guess.

XANDER

I can't wait to marry you properly  
this time!

ANYA

You'd better, I spent a long time  
thinking up suitable punishments  
for you in case you tried to run  
out on me again. Are you going to  
show up drunk and amorous soon?

XANDER

Yeah, I'll get Andrew in a taxi  
then walk back.

ANYA

Okay, see you soon. And don't talk  
to any strange women. Or men!

XANDER

(grins; shakes head)

Bye, honey.

Xander hangs up and heads back over to Andrew.

XANDER (cont'd)

You ready to split?

ANDREW

(very drunk)

I think... I think I would like that  
a lot.

XANDER

Come on, let's go. I'm glad I got a  
chance to talk to you like this,  
Andrew, I hope it helped you too.

ANDREW

You know... I think it did. Uh, but  
Xander?

XANDER

Yeah?

ANDREW

I think I need to be sick too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

No problem. Toilets are that way.

Andrew nods, then quickly dashes off screen as Xander chuckles, finishing off his drink.

35

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BUFFY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

35

Buffy is recovering in her bed, a cold flannel across her temples as Willow sits next to her, wringing her hands.

WILLOW

I should have been there sooner, I could've told you about that thing, I should've-

BUFFY

Will! Can you stop that already? You're giving my headache a headache...

WILLOW

I just don't understand it, I thought I had plenty of time, but I was way too late! What did I do wrong?

BUFFY

You've got more important things to worry about now, Will, don't worry about it. I'm not dead, so anything else is a plus, Right?

Willow manages a weak smile, but can't hide how guilty she feels about letting Buffy down. The moment is relieved as Giles walks in with a glass of water.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Oh goody, more water. I can almost hear my bruises fading.

GILES

Sarcasm aside, you were lucky this evening. This Caretaker creature is obviously very powerful, we'll need to make sure we have a better strategy next time we face it.

BUFFY

I'm not sure how long that'll be either, he seemed like he had some pace important to be, and I don't think it had anything to do with those demons who were trying to worship him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

Yes, I did find it odd that he paid  
so little attention to them and  
their shrine.

WILLOW

Well, wherever he is, let's hope  
it's somewhere far away for now,  
right?

Buffy smiles and sips her water.

36

EXT. CIRCLE - FIELDS. DAY.

36

We're looking at the jungle village complex from a distance,  
just close enough to make out Tattles and Taledraw  
disappearing inside the great hall.

We stay on the fields for a moment, ambient sounds from the  
waterfall and jungle wildlife filtering over to us, before  
there is a sound like the tearing of a large sheet of paper,  
and the air before us seems to be torn away from the other  
side as a portal opens before us, just like the one the  
Caretaker used to enter Cleveland.

The tear gets large enough to see the Caretaker on the other  
side, inside some kind of darkened building.

It tries to reach a hand through the gateway and into the  
Circle's dimension, but there is a FLASH like electricity,  
and it withdraws its hand.

We draw in close as the demon starts to grin, obviously  
satisfied with its progress as it carefully closes up the  
gateway an inch at a time.

Once the tear is sealed up again, we:

**BLACK OUT:****END OF SHOW**