

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

"Ever After"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BEDROOM. MORNING.

1

It's a gorgeous sunny day outside, and as we sweep across from the window to the door, we see a smart black tuxedo hanging on it, still poly wrapped for extra freshness.

Continuing down to the bed, there is XANDER, fast asleep and somewhere far, far away in dreamland.. ..

Until WILLOW sits down on the bed next to him, and gently shakes him to wake him up. Xander stirs and opens his eyes - then YELLS in alarm as he sees Willow.

WILLOW

(startled)

What? What's the matter?

XANDER

Huh? Wha? Oh... Oh, nothing, I was just having this really crazy dream, and then you were the first thing I saw, and it was just... Never mind.

WILLOW

Well, gee, Xander, good to know I'm still scary than most people's dreams!

Willow smirks and playfully hits Xander on the arm as he pushes himself up in the bed. She hands him a coffee.

XANDER

It wasn't that, Will, just that I was reliving the nightmare of last time I tried to get married, and when I saw you, I thought for a horrible second it was all real again... And please tell me that's not the dress you're going to be wearing?

Willow looks down at herself - and she's in a lavender monstrosity of a bridesmaid dress, frills in all the wrong places, the kind of outfit that'd put most wedding planners into anaphylactic shock.

WILLOW

Hey, I know it's not exactly a step up from the Green terror of a few years ago, but still...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Willow looks herself over again, trying to find something positive to point out.

WILLOW (cont'd)
Uh... it has better sleeves, look!

Xander grins and sips his coffee.

XANDER
Dress code aside, I'm just hoping this wedding's going to improve on my previous score of zero in the success stakes. I don't think either me or Anya could handle another one of her ex-vengeance gigs showing up to mess things up!

WILLOW
Now, Xander, you know better than that. Things are all different now - she's got the baby, for one thing, so that's taken a lot of the fight out of her 'cause she's too tired to yell half the time, and besides, Buffy's promised she's not going to let anything get in the way!

Xander tries to look as convinced as Willow does as he sips his drink again and looks over to the window.

XANDER
I wonder what she's up to now... Staying here seemed to be the best way to avoid any kind of jinx, or curse, or hex, or whatever about seeing her too soon, so I just hope to God she hasn't levelled the house by now!

As Willow pats Xander on the arm, we cut to:

2

INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM. MORNING.

2

MARIE walks down the stairs and into the front room of Xander and Anya's place, yawning, still in her dressing gown. She stops short when she sees something before her.

MARIE
Oh, my!

She's seen ANYA - fast asleep on the couch, but already in her wedding dress!

Anya snorts and wakes up, sitting up stiffly - she's five months pregnant by now and it's pretty noticeable.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANYA

Oh, now, don't go acting all surprised on me, I'm just being extra extra careful this time.

MARIE

Anya, it's not even half past eight, you're dressed already?

ANYA

Dressed? What about my hair and makeup? I had to leave something for you to do!

MARIE

(sarcastic)

Oh yes, lucky me.

ANYA

And besides, Willow should be here soon, so the two of you can help me run through my new vows. I'm thinking of starting this time with 'I, Anya Jenkins, am not saying another word until we're actually married, so you, Xander Harris, can't run out on me again.'

Anya smiles, and Marie manages a false smile back, before glancing at the clock and hoping Willow shows up very soon.

ANYA (cont'd)

(sighs happily)

I feel good about today. I feel like nothing on Earth can stop this wedding!

MARIE

Now, Anya, you know that's bad lu-

ANYA

No! There will be no luck involved, this is a luck-free scenario! Xander and I are getting married, and that's that!

As Marie goes to help Anya stand up, we cut to:

3

EXT. CLEVELAND - CITY STREET. MORNING.

3

A BUM sleeps on a bench in the street, with pigeons cooing as they nibble at the leftovers of his leftovers, before a gust of WIND kicks up, and the bum is jolted awake.

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CONTINUED:

He sits up, bleary eyed, trying to find out where the wind is coming from, before a scaly black HAND shoots into frame and grabs him by the throat.

As the choking bum is lifted off the bench and into the air, the hand's owner steps into view - this is GUSTAV, a mean-looking demon, reptilian features and long, dark dreadlocks of hair.

Gustav brings the struggling bum closer, until their faces are inches apart.

GUSTAV
(hisses)
Where is she?

BUM
Wh-wh-where is who?

GUSTAV
Anyanka. Where is she?

BUM
I-I don't-

With a disgruntled SNARL, Gustav throws the Bum away, and he crashes to the floor several feet away. Gustav clenches his fists as we push in on him.

GUSTAV
She is mine.

Off Gustav's determined look, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE. MORNING. 4

The front door opens and in strolls BUFFY, cut and bruised after a hard night's patrolling. Looking completely exhausted, she flops down on the sofa and closes her eyes.

She's been in for about two seconds, before:

WILLOW (O.S.)
There you are!

Buffy groans and opens one eye as Willow bustles into frame. Buffy recoils at the sight of Willow's horrific bridesmaid's dress.

BUFFY
Oh, God, don't say it...

WILLOW
(excited)
It's wedding day! C'mon, Buffy, we have to get you ready!

BUFFY
Do I have to get ready? Can't I just... Not? For an hour, anyway - I've been out all night, Will, I'm exhausted!

WILLOW
You can be tired later, right now, we have work to do!

Willow grabs Buffy's arm and pulls her to her feet.

WILLOW (cont'd)
Alright, missy, march on up those stairs and start making yourself look all pretty and stuff, we've got a long day ahead of us and I don't plan on letting anybody get an easy ride!

Willow starts to push Buffy towards the stairs.

BUFFY
And when did you turn all sergeant major-y?

WILLOW
Huh? Oh, I'm just trying to stay one step ahead of everything. Up and at 'em!

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CONTINUED:

With a final, defeated look, Buffy heads up stairs. We stay with Willow for a moment as her smile fades.

WILLOW (cont'd)
(quietly)
Because I'm damn sure not letting
anything bad happen again...

As Willow walks off screen, we cut to:

5

INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - MORNING.

5

Marie exits the bathroom, freshly showered and with a towel round her hair, bumping into Anya, who is holding a makeup bag the size of a small country.

ANYA
Come on, Marie, busy busy! I have a
lot of things to do and not much
time to do them in, you should be
prepared to sacrifice your own
makeover time so I can look my
best!

Anya shuffles past her and into the bathroom, closing the door behind her.

MARIE
(sarcastic again)
And we wouldn't want you to not
look your best, would we, your
Highness?

The phone RINGS and Marie steps over to a handset built into the wall to answer it.

MARIE (cont'd)
Hello?

GILES
(filtered; through phone)
Marie? Just checking up. How is
everything?

MARIE
Oh, God, Rupert, why didn't anybody
warn me?

We cut from Marie to:

6

INT. GILES' APARTMENT - MORNING.

6

GILES is on his cordless phone, black trousers and white shirt on but still unshaven. He grins.

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CONTINUED:

GILES

You've known Anya for a while now, Marie, I'd have thought you'd know what to expect with her!

MARIE

(filtered; through phone)

Anya as a ghost, no problem. Anya as a human again, also no problem. Anya pregnant? Difficult, but bearable. Anya as a pregnant bride-to-be on her wedding day? I'm starting to wish I was back on assignment in Madagascar again, at least the thiersen demons we were fighting out there let you spend longer than thirty seconds in the bathroom!

Giles chuckles and reaches across to the kitchen counter to flick on the kettle.

GILES

I'm sure she'll calm down. You've been briefed on what happened last time Xander and Anya tried to tie the knot, I presume?

MARIE

Shape-shifting demon coming back to ruin the day for his own vendetta, yes, sounds like I missed a real riot.

GILES

Not just that, don't forget trying to keep the bride and groom's family from each other's throats for the whole day! At least this time we've got a church to ourselves, the extra space should allow us to keep the two factions far enough apart...

There's a KNOCK at the door, and Giles starts to walk over.

GILES (cont'd)

There's someone here, I'd better go. I'll check back in a little later on, alright?

MARIE

Alright, Rupert. Bye.

Giles hangs up and opens the door - and there's MAX, looking like he hasn't slept particularly well. A stern

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CONTINUED: (2)

look crosses Giles' face as he nods for the disgraced ex-Watcher to enter.

GILES

Hello, Max. You'd better come in.

Max heads straight for the sofa, flopping down in one of the chairs. Giles casts a disapproving look down at him.

GILES (cont'd)

I trust you understand why you're here?

MAX

House arrest. Council orders.

(beat)

Your orders, to be precise.

GILES

I made a recommendation to the Council and they approved it, Max, even a Head Watcher has to make some decisions by committee. Until we can set a date for your tribunal regarding your recent actions, you're to stay here under my supervision.

MAX

Giles, I got my Slayer killed and brought a vengeful demon into town that nearly finished off some of your charges, I think we both know what the penalty is going to be.

Giles starts to head for his bedroom.

GILES

Be that as it may, we've got a lot of work to do, not just today, but identifying a weakness for the Caretaker before Buffy faces him again, so I intend to put you to good use for the time being.

MAX

So my immediate punishment is more work? You're a hard task master, Rupert.

Giles pauses in the doorway to his room.

GILES

Flippancy will get you nowhere, Max.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GILES(cont'd)

Now, as you may have observed,
we've all got a wedding today to
attend to. That doesn't mean this
is a day off for you. When I finish
getting ready, there's a list of
books and references I want you to
start working your way through.

MAX

(sighs)

Yes, sir.

Giles steps into his room and closes the door.

Max looks around the apartment until his eyes fall on a pile
of dusty old books heaped up on the kitchen counter. Max
manages a bitter chuckle before we cut to:

7

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BEDROOM. MORNING.

7

Xander is in his shirt and trousers, and sits staring
resolutely at something off screen.

We pull back a little to see it's his old arch nemesis, the
cummerbund, draped over the back of a chair, taunting him to
try and struggle to put it on.

With a sigh, Xander stands, grabs the offending article and
prepares to attach it - just as Buffy barges into the room.

BUFFY

Willow, have you seen my- oh!

She smiles as she sees Xander.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Sorry, forgot you were here.

XANDER

Yeah, I get that a lot.

BUFFY

Need a hand with that?

XANDER

Admittedly, I haven't started my
battle of wits with it yet, but
yes, a hand or two would be nice.
I'm kind of stuck at the Chinese
martial arts psyche out stage of
our relationship.

Xander turns round as Buffy wraps the cummerbund round his
waist and starts to fasten it.

XANDER (cont'd)

Buffy?

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CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Yeah?

XANDER

I've been putting a lot of thought into making sure today runs more smoothly than last time, and I just wanted to check your opinion on a few things.

BUFFY

Shoot.

XANDER

Well, first off, keeping my family and Anya's relatives and friends in separate locations until the last possible second seems to be working a whole lot better - Mom and Dad have been noticeably quiet so far, and I don't think my Uncle Rory's managed to insult anybody's heritage yet.

Xander turns as Buffy finishes the cummerbund, and she hands him his bow tie.

BUFFY

So far, so good! I think the relative distance between those two groups is a key factor of success today. How are things set up at the church?

XANDER

Again, relative distance, no pun intended. Bigger church, more space in case things go ugly again, and we have to rely on your juggling routine.

BUFFY

Sounds very kiff.

XANDER

'Kiff'?

BUFFY

Oh, it's, uh, South African, means 'good' I picked it up from this movie Andrew lent me.

XANDER

Speaking of Andrew, where is the Renfield of our collective?

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CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY

Andrew's on a very special duty today. There wasn't anybody else I could trust with it.

XANDER

What?

(gasps)

Oh no, you didn't give him the ring, did you?

BUFFY

No, Giles has got that, don't worry. No, Andrew's going to be the chauffeur!

XANDER

(beat)

Can he drive?

BUFFY

Technically, yes, better than the rest of us. But he's going to make sure Anya gets here on time. That's the only thing he has to do all day. I don't think even Andrew could screw up the drive from your place to the church!

Xander throws Buffy a look - and she tries to avoid it, knowing full well that there's nothing Andrew can't potentially screw up.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Okay, okay, I just wanted him out of the way, just in case. He's doubling as getaway driver.

XANDER

That much confidence in me, huh?

BUFFY

(grins)

Just covering all the bases.

Buffy finishes his bow tie and steps back to admire her work.

BUFFY (cont'd)

Not bad! A few more runs at this and I reckon you'll have getting married down to a fine art.

XANDER

Har har. Where's Willow?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUFFY
The lion's den.

Xander nods and grins.

XANDER
That's my girl.

As Buffy leaves Xander to finish getting ready, we cut to:

8

INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - BEDROOM. MORNING.

8

Anya sits in a chair before a tall mirror as Marie fixes her hair, curling deftly and adding to the flowing tressles of blonde locks Anya is now sporting.

ANYA
You're very good, I think you should give up on this Watcher thing and become a stylist. My stylist!

MARIE
I would if I could, dear, but 'm afraid being a Watcher's kind of a family tradition. I didn't get much say in the matter.

ANYA
Sure you did! You could have just said 'mother, father - I don't want to be a Watcher. My beautiful friend Anya needs somebody to make sure she's always prettier than everyone around her!'

MARIE
(raises eyebrow)
Subtlety's not really in your vocabulary, is it?

ANYA
(shakes head)
No!

Anya looks down at her belly and rubs it tenderly.

ANYA (cont'd)
Do you have any kids?

MARIE
Me? Goodness, no. Don't have the time for children. And my luck with the opposite sex leaves a lot to be desired - I attract two very specific types of men.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

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MARIE(cont'd)

They're either intelligent,
handsome types who are too
dignified to make a move on me, or
I attract rough and ready men who
know I'm a pushover and just have
some fun with me until they get
bored.

ANYA

You should play to your strengths.
Not everyone can be in love like
Xander and me, after all! It'd take
all the excitement out of things.

MARIE

Yes, quite...

Marie steps back to inspect her work - Anya's hair looks
perfect. As Marie nods, satisfied, we cut to:

9

INT. CATACOMB. MORNING.

9

CRUNCH! Blackness gives way to a fist-sized hole showing us
THE CARETAKER, the sewn-shut demon peering in on us through a
hole in what looks like a brick wall.

From the opposite angle, we can see that the Caretaker is
down in some kind of underground chamber, a flaming torch
jammed into the wall to give him some light as he scoops out
handfuls of dirt and mortar from the wall before him.

After a few beats, he's made a big enough hole to reach his
upper body through the hole, returning a moment later with a
large metal chest in his hands.

The Caretaker sets it down on the floor of the chamber, and
after a few tugs at the handle, finally WRENCHES the lid off
with one mighty heave.

Inside is a single book, which the Caretaker takes out and
lays on top of the chest, popping the seal on its leather
cover and starting to flick through it.

He stops on one section, and we push in on the illustrations
running alongside the arcane text.

It's of a jungle, and a very familiar wooden village on
stilts, and besides that, the three instantly recognisable
figures of Tattles, Taledraw and Trinkets - the Circle!

The Caretaker taps his finger on the illustration - and a
wicked grin crosses his face before we:

BLACK OUT:**END OF ACT ONE**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

10

INT. POLICE STATION. DAY.

10

JACKSON holds his phone in his hand for a moment. He thinks, then sighs and puts it back on the receiver.

He stares at the phone for a beat, before realising DAN is in his office, peering at him with a raised eyebrow.

DAN

Let me guess. You're thinking real hard about calling the Summers chick, but you keep losing the nerve at the last minute?

JACKSON

Not now.

Jackson has something in his hands - a small white card, which he stops fidgeting with and holds up for another look.

It's an invite to Xander and Anya's wedding. A small note in one corner reads 'You don't have to come, but you're welcome if you want to - Buffy.'

Dan reaches over and snatches the invite out of Jackson's hand. Jackson protests for a moment, but settles back down as Dan reads the invite.

DAN

Cute. You gonna go?

JACKSON

Honestly? I don't know. I know she said I was welcome and everything, but...

DAN

But what? Come on, Jackson, you're sounding like a bad soap opera character!

JACKSON

This is a day for Buffy and her friends. I don't think it's right for me to show up and act all happy.

DAN

Uh-huh. So you're just gonna avoid it? Come on, man, this is a lifeline, it's what you've been looking for!

(MORE)

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CONTINUED:

DAN(cont'd)

The two of you have been getting on a little better lately, right?

JACKSON

I guess...

DAN

Exactly! So what's the problem with going today?

JACKSON

Hey, if it was someone's birthday, or even just a night out somewhere, I'd be there. This... This is different. Now's not the time.

Jackson stands and brushes past Dan on the way out, but his partner jogs to keep up with him.

DAN

If not now, then when?

Jackson stops, and Dan stands alongside him.

DAN (cont'd)

This girl is crazy. Even worse, she's affecting your police work. I've got Edna down in Records on my back because you keep missing handing in your paperwork, the Chief's always ragging on me because you're never around when he needs you - damn it, Jackson, will you stop and listen to me?

Jackson pauses and turns to face Dan, clearly not wanting to have this conversation. That doesn't stop Dan, who stands defiantly before him.

JACKSON

What do you want me to say?

DAN

First, I want to know why people shout at me on your behalf, because frankly, it's getting kinda annoying, and second, I want you to go to this damn wedding and just talk to Buffy, even if it's just to wish everyone the best and yadda yadda.

JACKSON

Look, Dan, I know you're trying to help, but do me a favour and stay out of it, okay?

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CONTINUED: (2)

He starts off again, but Dan keeps up.

DAN
I'm your voice of reason, pal.
Ignore me all you want, I'm not
going anywhere!

JACKSON
It's a little more complicated than
that.

DAN
How so?

JACKSON
Do you believe in destiny?

DAN
No. I'll tell you what I do believe
in, though.

JACKSON
Not that damn speech again... Look,
I liked 'Bull Durham' too, but that
speech just bugs me.
(looks at watch)
Anyway, I gotta book.

Jackson walks off.

DAN
(calling out)
Where are you going? Jackson turns
and grins at him.

JACKSON
I think I'm gonna need a tuxedo.

Dan looks pleased and gives Jackson a thumbs up as he leaves
the floor.

11 INT. CAVE. DAY.

11

A GNARLY DEMON (REMAN) is cooking some food. He's short and
stumpy, has a whole Yoda thing going on.

A SHADOW appears in the wall, before Reman is grabbed by
something off camera and THROWN against the wall, landing in
a heap.

He looks up as Gustav steps into frame, and Reman shuffles
away from the rough-looking demon, clearly terrified.

GUSTAV
Hello, Reman. Remember me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REMAN

I-I don't... I don't know anything!

GUSTAV

I'm disappointed, I haven't even asked a question yet and already you're lying to me?

(sinister grin)

What, you think I'd hurt my old friend Reman?

REMAN

Ask me what you want, but I'm telling you, whatever it is, I don't know.

GUSTAV

Alright... Where's Anyanka?

REMAN

(blinks)

Who?

Gustav SNARLS and lunges forward, clamping his hands round Reman's throat. Reman whimpers and tries to get his words out.

REMAN (cont'd)

Anya, Anya! Her name is... Anya!

Gustav lets him go and stands, towering over the diminutive form of Reman.

GUSTAV

Say again?

REMAN

It's her human name, she's one of them now! She became human, then turned back for a while but she was killed, fighting over the Hellmouth in Sunnydale.

GUSTAV

Go on...

REMAN

But something brought her back, only she was still a ghost, until Jerekov got involved...

GUSTAV

(spits)

That time waster! I suppose he tried to trick some poor sap out of their soul again, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REMAN

(nods)

He made Anya human again, and
that's how she's stayed. I hear
she's getting married today, and-

Reman's eyes bulge and Gustav grabs him by the neck again,
lifting him up to eye level.

GUSTAV

She's what?

REMAN

Hey, word on the street, or
whatever - she's carrying some
human male's child, and they're
going to get married later today...
That's all I know, I swear!

Gustav drops him, and Reman heaves for breath as Gustav
strokes his scaly chin thoughtfully.

GUSTAV

That doesn't sound like the Anyanka
I know... She must be under some
kind of spell! Anyanka would never
allow herself to be beholden to any
being, mortal or otherwise!

REMAN

(quietly)

That's love for you...

GUSTAV

(snarls)

Love? You speak of love?

Gustav grins as he picks Reman up by the throat, and Reman
struggles in vain as he stares into the eyes of his attacker.

GUSTAV (cont'd)

(grins)

I think it's time I showed Anyanka
how her kind really love.

We pan over to the wall, and after a brief YELP, a speck of
green GOOP splashes onto the side of the cave wall. Its safe
to say that it is Reman's.

12 INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - FRONT DOOR. MORNING.

12

The doorbell rings, and Anya throws the door open to see
Willow, who waves cheerily.

WILLOW

Hi, Anya, I-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anya grabs Willow and throws her arms round her in a tearful bear hug, and Willow's eyes bulge as the breath is squeezed out of her.

ANYA

Oh, Willow! Everything's going so well this time!

Anya lets her go, and shuts the door as Willow takes a few deep breaths to recover. Willow looks Anya's expensive-looking white dress up and down as Anya sashays across the carpet of the living room.

WILLOW

Look at you! All 'Princess Diaries' and stuff.

ANYA

You think? I was going for 'Moulin Rogue' but without any sluttiness.

(beat)

That reminds me, is Buffy showing up?

WILLOW

Uh, not yet, she wanted to stay and help Xander before she left him with Giles.

ANYA

That's very wise. Giles is old, I'm sure he knows a lot more about this sort of thing than Xander does.

WILLOW

Oh, and the plan to keep your friends and Xander's family far apart? Working like a charm. I think the church is open now so they'll be making their way over, hopefully it'll still be standing when we get there.

Anya nods and smiles grabbing Willow again.

ANYA

I'm getting married!

WILLOW

(smiles)

You sure are!

ANYA

And one day, you'll be where I am...

(thinks)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANYA(cont'd)

Or will you? I don't know, what are the laws on gay marriage in this state?

WILLOW

Uh, I don't-

Anya dismisses the thought and bearhugs Willow again.

ANYA

Never mind! This is my special day, so everyone can forget about their own sad lives and just be happy for me... Right?

WILLOW

Uh... Sure!

Anya lets Willow go, wipes away a happy tear and shuffles back towards the stairs. Willow takes another deep breath as Anya departs.

WILLOW (cont'd)

C'mon, Willow, keep it focused... Only a few more hours to go, then it's all done and you get to relax...

As Willow starts to follow Anya, we cut to:

13

INT. GILES' APARTMENT - DAY.

13

Giles exits his room, fully dressed and ready to go, passing Max, who has the various books Giles left for him open all around him, spread across the sofa.

MAX

Are you off?

GILES

Not just yet, I'm waiting for-

There is a KNOCK at the door.

GILES (cont'd)

Ah, good.

Giles opens the door to reveal Xander, who salutes.

XANDER

Captain Xander 'The Groom' Harris, reporting for duty.

Giles smiles and ushers Xander inside. Xander notices Max and throws a curious look at Giles.

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CONTINUED:

XANDER (cont'd)

(quietly)

Why is he here? Shouldn't you have clapped him in irons and shipped him back to England by now?

GILES

(quietly)

That's not quite how we do things any more, Xander, but... He's my responsibility for now. I thought it best to have him somewhere I can keep an eye on him until his hearing rolls around, and besides, he could still help us with this Caretaker business. Now, to the matter at hand.

Giles takes a small box out of his tuxedo jacket pocket - the ring! He opens it up and passes it to Xander.

GILES (cont'd)

I'm sure you've run through this a thousand times already, so all I'll ask is this. Are you ready?

XANDER

(nods)

I'm ready. Bring on the bride, the groom is at Warp Nine and doesn't look like he's going to stop!

Giles looks a little blank, and Xander pats him on the shoulder.

XANDER (cont'd)

Pop culture.

GILES

Ah...

The duo head for the door, Giles pausing in the doorway to speak to Max.

GILES (cont'd)

I've got my cell phone with me, call me if there are any problems, otherwise we'll be back later on. Understood?

MAX

Understood. Let me know how it goes.

With a last reproachful look, Giles closes the door and leaves Max to his work. Max looks at the books and sighs.

14 INT. CATACOMB. DAY. 14

The Caretaker sits cross-legged in the middle of the chamber we left him in, the book open next to him.

He's drawing an elaborate magic circle in the sand using his long fingers.

15 INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - BEDROOM. DAY. 15

Buffy stands before the tall mirror, her face wrinkled up as she studies the lavender dress she has to wear. Willow comes to stand next to her, words not needed to express the awful sight facing the girls.

After a beat, Marie joins them - and now she's in one of the dresses as well. There's a long moment before Buffy breaks the silence.

BUFFY

Well... At least they're not green.

Anya enters the room behind them, and the girls turn round as one to face her. Anya's hands go to her mouth, and she gasps in delight at them.

ANYA

Oh my God! You three look so perfect, I could just...

Anya suddenly pales, and the girls exchange looks.

ANYA (cont'd)

I'm sorry, I just... I just remembered last time we were all here, only it was with...

Anya turns and races out of the bedroom - and straight into the bathroom. Buffy breaks the silence again.

BUFFY

Well, at least she didn't get any down her dress.

MARIE

You try to see the bright side of everything, don't you?

BUFFY

Today? It's about the only thing getting me through the day.

The girls turn to the mirror, and share a collective sigh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

I'm too bloody old to be a
bridesmaid!

WILLOW

Could be worse.

Buffy looks at Willow, and she tries to think of an answer,
but has to give up and just shrug.

WILLOW (cont'd)

I'm sure it could.

We cut from the girls to:

16

INT. CATACOMB. DAY.

16

The Caretaker has finished his magic circle, and steps back
to admire his work.

With one flick of his foot, he kicks the book closed, and
rubs his hands together - he's got some work to do.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

17 EXT. CHURCH. DAY.

17

A taxi pulls into frame, and Giles and Xander step out. Giles pays the driver and joins Xander, who is looking up at the tall spire of the church.

XANDER

Kind of Freudian, don't you think?
Ever wonder why churches have big
old steeples like that?

GILES

Can't say I'd given it much
thought!

The two head towards the church's main doors. Soft music can be heard drifting out from inside the reception hall.

XANDER

I mean, don't get me wrong, they
have their uses - I can name a
dozen horror movies that would be
kind of stuck for a way to off the
bad guy without a trusty spire to
impale the bad guy on - and didn't
we kill the Master like that?

Giles stops and places a hand on each of Xander's shoulders.

GILES

Xander, your nerves are showing.

XANDER

Yeah, they do that a lot whenever I
get within twenty feet of any
member of my family.

GILES

There's no need to worry.
Everything's been taken care of.

Giles smiles, but this just makes Xander more nervous.

XANDER

Oh, God, you shot them all, didn't
you? Tell me you used
tranquilisers!

Giles doesn't answer, he just carries on into the church.

After a beat, an increasingly panicked Xander follows.

18

INT. CHURCH - RECEPTION HALL. DAY.

18

Head down, Xander walks inside, takes a deep breath and looks up - and his jaw drops. All of his family are there - MR. & MRS. HARRIS, UNCLE RORY, COUSIN CAROL, all milling amongst and chatting happily to Anya's nearest and dearest - various warty, tentacled and goodness knows what other varieties of DEMONS. No arguments, no shouting, no trouble at all.

Xander is stunned. He reaches out to Giles, not taking his eyes off the scene in case it'll disappear if he blinks.

XANDER

Tel me it wasn't a spell. Magic and weddings? Not a good combination. I'm sure there's a perfectly rational reason for all of this, and I'm sure you're about to tell-

GILES

The bar only serves non-alcoholic drinks.

XANDER

(beat)

Yep, sounds good.

Xander straightens his bow tie, a new look of determination in his eyes, before striding confidently forward into the crowd.

Giles watches with pride as Xander mingles, before a familiar face steps into frame, holding a wine glass - everyone's favourite harjek demon, CLEM.

CLEM

Gotta say, Giles, kudos for this so far.

GILES

Ah, hello, Clem, glad you could make it!

They shake hands. Clem sips from the dark liquid in his glass and peers at it as he swills the liquid round his mouth.

CLEM

Non alcoholic wine. Heh, I didn't even know they made that!

GILES

How is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLEM

Tastes just great to me, but I'm not really a connouisseur of these things!

GILES

I trust you've been keeping a careful eye on things, as we discussed?

CLEM

Absolutely. There hasn't been much to watch out for, you know, Mr. Harris complained at first when I told him about the bar situation, but once he actually had a glass in his hand, it's like some kind of reflex kicked in and he became nice as pie! So, when are the girls getting here?

GILES

(checks watch)

Any time soon. Today's gone to plan so far, I just hope we can make it as far as the reception without anything going wrong.

CLEM

Are you kidding me? What could go wrong?

Clem laughs and slaps Giles on the shoulder, before we cut away to:

19

EXT. ALLEYWAY. DAY.

19

Gustav is dragging a dead body down the alley, and once he's safely out of sight of any passing traffic, he starts patting the body down.

The body is another demon, but this one dressed smartly in a shirt, suit and tie, and as Gustav finds a small card in the body's pocket, we see why he was dressed up - he has a wedding invitation!

Gustav grins and tucks the invite away before addressing the deceased demon.

GUSTAV

Thanks for the invitation, Ralkchek - you never did like parties anyway!

Gustav stands and walks off screen.

20

INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM. DAY.

20

Anya paces up and down inside the living room for a few beats until there is the BEEP of a car horn outside.

Anya dashes to the window to see a black car waiting outside, before she yells upstairs.

ANYA

The car's here! Come on, ladies,
jump to it, I want to get married
now!

Buffy, Willow and Marie trudge down the stairs, lining up by the door as they grab their coats, with Anya checking each of them over.

ANYA (cont'd)

Okay, let's see... Willow, your
hair's too red but it'll have to
do. Buffy... Oh, I'm so glad you
didn't dress up to try and show me
up! That means a lot to me.

BUFFY

Anya, I haven't-

ANYA

And Marie! Oh, look at you. Who'd
have thought that putting you in a
nice dress with some actual makeup
would suddenly make you look
pretty?

Anya beams at her, and Marie casts a sideways glance at Buffy, who just shakes her head to say 'don't bother replying.'

ANYA (cont'd)

Alright! Andrew's driving us to the
church, so let's go. A church! I'm
actually getting married in a
church, can you believe it? Me! An
ex-vengeance demon, able to set
foot on consecrated ground!

BUFFY

(sarcastic)

Yeah, how about that...

ANYA

Talk later. Come on!

Anya opens the door and points towards the car, and the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

bridesmaids troop outside. Anya pauses in the doorway for a moment to soak up the glory, before following them.

21 INT. CHURCH - RECEPTION HALL. DAY.

21

Xander stands with his parents, pointing to a demon recording the proceeding on a camera.

XANDER

So you see, mom, Tajley over there's gonna get the whole thing on tape, so we can make some prints from that afterwards and make sure everybody gets in at least one photo!

MRS. HARRIS

Oh, honey, I'm so proud of you! You thought of everything!

MR. HARRIS

Except the booze...

XANDER

Dad!

MR. HARRIS

Alright, alright, just kidding. This stuff's...

Mr. Harris holds up his glass and squints at it before taking another swig.

MR. HARRIS (cont'd)

Actually, this stuff isn't bad. If I close my eyes and concentrate, I can imagine the alcohol as kind of an aftertaste.

XANDER

Okay, glad you approve.

Xander notices Buffy, Willow and Marie filing inside, and detaches himself from his parents to jog over.

XANDER (cont'd)

Hey.

BUFFY

Hey! We're all set, Anya's in the back room, ready for the signal.

XANDER

And the signal's just music, not an explosion or anything, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Xander, will you quit worrying?
Everything's going to be fine!

Xander smiles back and turns to Clem, whispering something into his ear. Clem nods, puts two fingers in his mouth and WHISTLES sharply, getting the hall's attention.

CLEM

Alright, everyone, showtime! Head
inside and take your seats, this
afternoon's entertainment is about
to commence!

The crowd of relatives starts to shuffle obediently towards the church hall proper, and Xander and the girls watch in amazement.

WILLOW

How did you get them to do that?

CLEM

Simple, I promised 'em the bar'd
crack open some wine, some real
wine, if they all behaved
themselves. You'd be amazed at the
power of the suggestion, especially
at family get togethers!

BUFFY

Good work, Clem. Now I remember why
we asked you all the way out here.

CLEM

Eh, no big to see my favourite girl
get hitched!

(to Xander)

She is going to get married this
time, right?

XANDER

(nods)

Absolutely. Nothing's gonna stop us
this time.

Off Xander's determined look, we cut to:

22

INT. CHURCH - BACK ROOM. DAY.

22

Anya is pacing up and down, preparing her speech.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANYA

And so I, Anya Jenkins, take you, Xander Harris, to be my lawfully wedded service provider, providing me with service any time I need it, day or night.

(beat)

No, that's stupid. Okay, I, Anya, take you Xander, anytime I want, or I'm leaving with the baby.

(beat; thinks)

Too harsh. What about-

GUSTAV (O.S.)

I knew I'd find you again.

ANYA

No, that's far too-

Anya freezes and slowly turns round - and there is GUSTAV, stepping into the back room. He grins broadly and steps closer to Anya, who steps back.

ANYA (cont'd)

Gustav? What are you doing here?

GUSTAV

At first, I just wanted to bring you back to me, Anyanka. I'd finally broken free of my realm to come looking for you, after you ran out on me all those years ago...

ANYA

It was six hundred years ago! You still wanted to find me after all that time?

GUSTAV

What can I say, you're one of a kind, Anyanka.

ANYA

Well... I guess I'm flattered... But that's not the point! I'm human now, and pregnant, and about to get married, so you'd better take a hint and get out of here before I set my Xander on you!

Gustav keeps advancing, backing Anya up against the wall. Gustav looks down at Anya's swollen belly and snickers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GUSTAV

There'll have to be a few changes,
of course - I can't say I'm
overjoyed at the prospect of you
raising a human baby, but it will
serve as an excellent first meal
for wedding night...

ANYA

Gustav, I think you need to go.

GUSTAV

I'm not going anywhere without you!
Do you think I crossed umpteen
dimensions just to claw my way into
your world, so you could tell me to
come home again?

ANYA

Well, actually... Yes.

GUSTAV

This world has poisoned your mind,
Anyanka. It's made you more...
human. I can't allow this blasphemy
against your true nature to
continue a moment longer!

Gustav raises a hand to grab Anya's wrist, but they both
freeze as the strains of the Wedding March start to play.
Anya grins smugly at Gustav.

ANYA

Too late, Gustav. That's the
signal. I'm as good as married now,
you'll have to go before Buffy
finds you.

GUSTAV

(grins)

Buffy... Summers? The Slayer?

Anya thinks fast as she realises she may just have given
Gustav a very bad idea. He grins again.

ANYA

Uh... No, Buffy... Jones. Yes, my
friend Buffy Jones. She's tough but
she's certainly not a Slayer.

GUSTAV

Your lying is as feeble as your
attempt to beautify yourself,
Anyanka. If the Slayer is here,
then I owe it to you to prove my
love by killing her!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GUSTAV(cont'd)

When we feast on her heart
together, then you'll see what made
me come back for you.

ANYA

You were hungry?

GUSTAV

I love you!

ANYA

(beat; smiles)

Oh. Really?

(shakes head)

I mean - no! No! Bad Gustav!

Gustav grabs Anya, one arm round her waist and another round
her neck as he hisses into her ear.

GUSTAV

Now let's go meet the guests, shall
we?

As Gustav starts to drag Anya away, we cut to:

23

INT. CHURCH - MAIN HALL. DAY.

23

As the music continues, Buffy and the others start to look
anxiously round for Anya.

Over with Giles, someone slides into the seat next to him,
and as he turns he's shocked to see it's Max, smartly dressed
in the customary tuxedo.

GILES

Max? What are you doing here?
You're meant to be under house
arrest!

MAX

I was, but Marie called after you'd
left, and when I told her I was
staying in, she asked me to come
along.

(smug)

Technically, she outranks me as
well, so it was almost an order!

Max turns, catches Marie's eye and waves at her, and she
waves back - which darkens Giles' look even more.

GILES

This is outrageous, Max, you can't
just stroll out of the house any
time you feel like it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Relax, Giles! What could go wrong
at a wedding?

WHAM! The doors to the back room are kicked open, and with a sigh of relief the assembled guests stand.

The band over in one corner of the room swell the Wedding March back to life, and Buffy and Willow grin at each other.

A beat. Nobody exits the room. The guests start exchanging looks, and Buffy takes a few steps closer to the room - and this is when Gustav and Anya makes their appearance, Gustav pressing his clawed fingers to Anya's throat.

Buffy is immediately on the offensive, throwing her bouquet over her shoulder and dashing towards them.

GUSTAV

Don't come any closer! Any of you
humans take one step nearer, and
I'll gut her like a ripe yeblab
fruit!

Buffy freezes, tensed up, as murmurs of alarm pass through the guests.

MRS. HARRIS

What is it, honey?

MR. HARRIS

Same crap, different day, looks
like. I knew I should've brought my
own booze.

Anya struggles but Gustav's grip is too tight as he positions himself between the guests and the door.

Xander is at Buffy's side, fists clenched.

GUSTAV

Tell them, Anyanka! Tell them what
they need to hear.

ANYA

I... I'm going...

GUSTAV

Say it!!

ANYA

Oh, fine! Everyone... I'm going to
marry Gustav!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A GASP rises up - and Xander grits his teeth, and off his look and Buffy's surprise, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

24 INT. CHURCH - MAIN HALL. DAY.

24

Gustav starts walking slowly up the aisle, past the various family members and friends, one eye on Buffy who is sticking close to him, another on Anya, who he still grips tightly.

GUSTAV

(to Buffy)

You must be the Slayer.

BUFFY

Last time I checked.

GUSTAV

Good, once Anyanka and I are married, we shall fight. Defeating you will be the final seal on our union!

BUFFY

It will? How does that work?

GUSTAV

The heart of a fierce warrior, killed just after the marriage ceremony, is part of the rituals of my kind. You will make a fine tribute to my new bride!

XANDER

Anya, are you alright?

ANYA

I'm fine, Xander, but, uh... I really am going to marry Gustav now, so... You'd better get everyone home! No wedding for us two for them to see...

Anya starts trying to signal madly to Xander with her free hand, but he's too panicked to see it.

BUFFY

Giles, get everyone out of here.

Giles nods and starts to usher everyone out of the way, signalling to Marie, Willow and Max to help do the same.

As the guests start to shuffle out of their pews and away from Gustav, and Buffy keeps a few paces away, we cut to:

25 EXT. CHURCH. DAY. 25

Jackson steps into frame, smoothing his shirt down, snappily dressed in his hastily-rented tuxedo. He takes a deep breath and heads for the church entrance.

26 INT. CHURCH - MAIN HALL. DAY. 26

The minister is still behind his lectern, rooted to the spot and wide-eyed with fear as Gustav and Anya stand before him. Gustav points a scaly finger at the minister.

GUSTAV
You're the one who leads the
ceremony, correct?

MINISTER
Uh, I-I mean, er, yes, yes I am.

GUSTAV
Good! Then you may marry us now.

XANDER
Anya!

Xander huddles closer to Buffy, who's still looking for her opening.

XANDER (cont'd)
(whispers)
Buffy, An was trying to signal
something to me a second ago, but I
couldn't tell what it was.

BUFFY
(whispers)
Relax, Xander, I've got this.

XANDER
You sure? 'cause we look kinda...

Xander looks up at Gustav and Anya as the minister starts fumbling for his Bible.

XANDER (cont'd)
... Screwed.

BUFFY
Okay, here's the plan. When I say
'Now!' You run to the left and grab
Anya. I'll attack Gustav head on,
that ought to distract him so you
can get her to safety. Ready?

XANDER
Ready!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Okay, on three. One, two...

JACKSON (O.S.)

Buffy?

Everyone spins round as Jackson walks into the main hall, handgun out and raised, aiming it at Gustav. Xander jumps up, waving his arms in the air.

JACKSON (cont'd)

Everyone said some guy burst into the wedding, and-

XANDER

Don't shoot, don't shoot! That's my wife up there!

GUSTAV

She's not your wife any more, fleshling! She's-

CRACK! That was the opening Buffy needed. She lays a square punch to Gustav, who staggers back and releases his grip on Anya.

Anya elbows Gustav in the chest as she dashes away. Xander races over, grabs her and scurries to cover with them, as Buffy and Gustav get to their fight on the stage, the minister rushing for safety behind them.

GUSTAV (cont'd)

You've made a big mistake, Slayer, you've interrupted a sacred ceremony!

BUFFY

Really? Cause it kinda looked like you did it first!

GUSTAV

Semantics! I will gorge myself on your entrails for your impudence, whether Anyanka is mine or not!

BUFFY

Careful, I'm told I'm a little stringy.

Gustav ROARS and leaps forward, and he and Buffy start trading blows, the bridesmaid dress slowing Buffy down so Gustav has the advantage.

Jackson races over to the hidden Xander and Anya.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACKSON
Are you two alright?

Anya rubs her neck but nods.

XANDER
We're fine, go help Buffy.

Jackson nods and leaps up, racing out of frame. Xander wraps his arms tightly round Anya.

XANDER (cont'd)
Are you really okay, Anya?

ANYA
I'm fine! Didn't you see my signal?

XANDER
Uh, yeah, but I didn't know what it meant.

Anya rolls her eyes and peers over the top of the pew they're behind to watch the fight.

Buffy is taking a few hits and looks like she's suffering, but Gustav pauses as Jackson steps onto the stage, his gun trained on Gustav.

GUSTAV
A weapon? Hah! Are you too weak to face me hand to hand, mortal?

JACKSON
Weak? No. But I'm smart enough to know where my advantages are.

BUFFY
(breathless)
Jackson, don't-

JACKSON
It's alright, Buffy, I've got him.
Are you okay?

Jackson takes his eyes off Gustav for a second - and that's all the demon needs.

Gustav LUNGES forward, kicks the gun out of Jackson's hands and PUNCHES him with both fists in the chest, sending Jackson flying through the air.

Buffy leaps back into the fight, catching Gustav off guard and raining some good punches in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The second wind doesn't last, and with a SHOVE he knocks Buffy to her feet. She struggles to get up, the dress hampering her.

BUFFY
Stupid... dress!

Gustav grabs hold of Anya again, pulling her towards him with a YELP from her. Xander stands, boldly facing Gustav down as he holds Anya before him like a human shield.

GUSTAV
Alright, so maybe we'll get married another day. But I'm still leaving with her, and there's nothing you can do to stop me!

Xander stares Gustav out, waiting for him to make a move. Gustav grins.

GUSTAV (cont'd)
I feel almost sorry to do this, human, I can see from your eyes how much you love her. Almost as much as I do! It's a shame, but not everyone in love gets to be with their intended. After all-

ANDREW (O.S.)
Did I miss it?

Gustav turns - ANDREW, red-faced and exhausted, has just run into the hall.

ANDREW (cont'd)
I'm sorry, I couldn't find anywhere to park, and then-

Andrew GULPS as he takes in the scene.

With Gustav's attention diverted, Xander glances around him and spots Jackson's gun.

In a flash, he scoops it up and aims it straight at Gustav. Gustav turns back round and snickers as he sees Xander.

GUSTAV
What is it with you humans? Always hiding behind your weapons!

XANDER
(firm)
Let her go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

GUSTAV

Don't be absurd, you'd never shoot
with Anyanka in danger!

ANYA

Xander?

XANDER

It's alright, honey. I've got him.
(to Gustav)
Let her go now, and I'll only shoot
you in the arm.

Buffy has recovered, and watches Xander, not sure about what
to do.

GUSTAV

You don't have the nerv-

BLAM! Gustav coughs once - and then falls, a neat bullet hole
in the place of his right eye.

Anya stays still, shaking as Gustav's dead weight slides away
from her and lands on the floor.

Xander lowers the gun, tosses it on the floor, marches over
to Anya and they embrace.

Buffy smiles with relief, then spots Jackson trying to pull
himself out of the now-broken pew he landed in.

BUFFY

Jackson!

JACKSON

It's fine, I'm okay... A few
splinters in the wrong places, but
otherwise...

Buffy manages a smile as she helps him up. Andrew walks over
as the rest of the guests start to cautiously make their way
back inside.

ANDREW

Wow! Xander, you... You just shot
him!

ANYA

(tearful; smiles)
I know... He did it for me! You
killed that demon, just for me.

XANDER

Did what I had to, An.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Xander turns to the minister, who is watching things from behind the safety of the church altar.

XANDER (cont'd)
Do we still have time to get married?

The minister blinks, then nods. As Xander grins and looks down at Anya, we cut to:

27 INT. CHURCH - MAIN HALL. LATER.

27

Xander and Anya stand before the minister at last, with the wedding guests back in their places. The damage from the fight has been cleared up as best as possible, and Gustav's body is nowhere to be seen.

MINISTER
We are gathered here today to witness the union of these two people in holy-

ANYA
Uh, excuse me?

MINISTER
(blinks)
Yes?

ANYA
Sorry to be such a trouble, but can we skip a bit? We've got a reception booked in twenty minutes, so we need to get things moving.

The minister sighs and throws up his hands.

MINISTER
Okay, fine.
(to Anya)
Do you?

ANYA
Yes.

MINISTER
(to Xander)
And do you?

XANDER
(big smile)
You bet. We'll work out the details later.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MINISTER

Man and wife. Congratulations. Now
kiss the bride and get out of here!

To a burst of APPLAUSE, Xander and Anya finally get that
first married kiss they've waited so long for.

Giles taps Xander on the shoulder to break him out of the
kiss, just long enough to hand him the ring.

Xander opens the box and places the ring on Anya's finger.

XANDER

Well, Anya, I know this wasn't the
wedding you had planned, but-

ANYA

Xander, it was perfect.

A beat, then Xander grins.

XANDER

You're a terrible liar.

ANYA

I can get mad later. Right now, I'm
just happy. Kiss me again!

They wrap their arms round each other and go in for another
kiss, as a now tearful Buffy and Willow look on.

We pull away from the happy couple, down the aisle, past the
cheering relatives, all the way over to Andrew and Jackson,
standing by the entrance to the main hall. Andrew fights back
tear as Jackson dabs a handkerchief to a cut on his head.

ANDREW

It's what I always dreamed they'd
have... A perfect day!

JACKSON

This was perfect?

Andrew throws Jackson a look - by Scooby standards, yes, this
was about as good as it gets.

Jackson nods, and with a last look at Buffy, quietly slips
out of the hall. Buffy glances across from the stage to the
door, but Jackson has already left.

Her smile drops for a moment, before her attention returns to
Xander and Anya. Over with Giles, Max nudges him.

MAX

There you go, see? Told you the
world wouldn't end if I came along.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Giles doesn't answer, but his dark look makes it clear he's not happy with Max. Max, however, looks across to Marie and grins, and she smiles back.

From this (eventually) happy scene, we cut to:

28 INT. CATACOMB. DAY. 28

The Caretaker stands in the middle of the magic circle we saw him drawing, his hands clasped together. There is a high-pitched WHINE, which suddenly drops to a low, bassy THRUM before a portal opens up in the air before the Caretaker.

He cocks his head to one side as he examines it, then reaches one of his long legs out and takes a step through it.

With a FLASH, he disappears.

29 INT. CIRCLE - GRAND LIBRARY. DAY. 29

Inside the huge library building, over by the back wall where the dimensional tear lies, there is a second FLASH before the Caretaker appears on the other side of the wall.

He presses his hands against the blackness, and although it stretches out as he pushes, he can't break through - he can't get into the Library this way.

He pulls his hands back, and both the Caretaker and portal disappear with another FLASH.

30 INT. CATACOMB. DAY. 30

The Caretaker reappears inside the magic circle, but this time he kneels down, locates a section of the diagram and makes a small adjustment to it, scratching his finger through the dirt.

Satisfied, he stands again - a new portal appears, and the Caretaker steps through it as before.

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With a final FLASH, the portal opens up just beyond in the snow-capped jungle that the Circle call their home. The Caretaker steps through it, and into the dimension proper.

Looking around, his sewn-up lips curl upwards into a wicked smile as he realises he's exactly where he needs to be, with the Circle's wooden village a few miles away.

The Caretaker takes a few steps forward, but there's an off screen HISS, and he turns round.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Crashing through the undergrowth towards him is Tattles' pet Snake Demon, its fangs bared as it charges at full speed for the intruder.

The Caretaker cocks his head to the side again - and SMILES.

BLACK OUT:

END OF SHOW