

1- SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR

2- ALYSON HANNIGAN

3- NICHOLAS BRENDON

6- EMMA CAUFIELD

7- AMBER BENSON

"Title"

by

Your Name

4- ANTHONY STEWART HEAD

5- JAMES MARSTERS

8- MICHELLE TRACHTENBERG

9- SEAN JOHNSON

## Life Serial

Episode opens in the foyer of the Summers house, night. The front door opens and Buffy comes in, holding a paper bucket under her arm. She tosses her keys on the side table.

BUFFY  
(calls)  
Hello?

WILLOW  
Buffy?

Willow's voice comes from the dining room. Buffy turns in that direction.

BUFFY  
Oh. Yep, it's me, and I brought dinner.  
(walks into dining room)  
Deep fried chicken parts. Hope you're...

We see Tara, Giles, **Steven**, and Dawn sitting around the table, and Willow standing with a dish of food in her hands. They're clearly just finishing a meal. Giles holds a half-full wine glass.

BUFFY  
...hungry.  
(disappointed)  
You already ate.

GILES  
No!  
(embarrassed)  
Well, uh, yes, obviously.

**STEVEN**  
**You're a terrible liar.**

DAWN  
Uh, we didn't know when you'd be coming back.

BUFFY  
(shrugs)  
It's okay. More for me.

Buffy puts the bucket of chicken on the table and sits. Willow sits also.

TARA  
I don't know about everybody  
else, but ... I would love some  
chicken.

GILES  
Yes. As would I.

STEVEN  
**Same here.**

DAWN  
I'll take a drumstick.

WILLOW  
I'm a breast girl myself.  
(quietly, to Tara)  
But, then again, you knew that.

Willow and Tara exchange a smile. Giles makes an "ew" face.

**Steven supresses laughter at Giles' expression.**

They pass the bucket of chicken around the table.

DAWN  
(awkwardly)  
So.

BUFFY  
What so?

DAWN  
So ... how was it?  
(nervous)  
Seeing Angel ... him seeing you.  
(Giles stands up)  
Was it weird?

Buffy looks uncomfortable. Dawn, Tara, and Willow look expectantly at her.

BUFFY  
Um ... it was ... intense.

Giles goes to the back of the room to do something at a side table.

WILLOW  
Well, i-if you wanna talk about  
it...

BUFFY

I don't. I-it's ... not important.  
Past. I'd just ... rather keep  
this one to myself, if that's okay.

DAWN

Sure, whatever.

STEVEN

**Not a problem at all, Buffy. We  
totally understand.**

GILES

Buffy, um, there was...  
(sits back down)  
some discussion in, uh, your  
absence a-about, um ... w-what  
you're gonna do now.

Giles has a pile of paper napkins, gives one to Dawn.

GILES

You know, um ... your plans.

BUFFY

Oh, um, I've been giving that a  
lot of thought actually. I think  
I've figured it out, what I  
should do.

WILLOW

(smiling)  
That's good, that's good!

BUFFY

Yeah. I figure, if I hold off  
paying the plumber, I can pay the  
utility bill.  
(Willow and Tara stop smiling)  
And then I can wait to re-shingle  
the roof until we get the refund  
back--

GILES

Um, I meant...  
(Buffy stops)  
...with your life.

BUFFY

Oh. Life plans. Um ... well...

The others continue to watch her.

BUFFY  
I have no idea.

Dawn looks surprised.

BUFFY  
I guess, um ... well, I, I left  
school, you know, when Mom got  
sick, but I always figured I'd go  
back ... and then she...

Buffy trails off. Willow, **Steven** and Giles look sympathetic.

BUFFY  
Um, so I-I was thinking about re-  
enrolling, but I missed the  
registration cutoff. Busy being  
dead and all.

Giles winces.

WILLOW  
Well, if it's too late for late  
registration and too early for  
early, you can always come to  
classes with Tara and me.

TARA  
Right. Y-you can audit for the  
rest of the semester until  
registration.

BUFFY  
(uncertainly)  
Audit. I-I guess I could do that.

Willow and Tara smile tentatively.

BUFFY  
Yeah, that ... sounds like a good  
plan.  
(looks across the table)  
What do you think, Giles?

Giles nods and looks as if he's searching for words.

JONATHAN VOICEOVER  
The Slayer always knows what  
she's doing.

Cut to: exterior driveway, day. Jonathan paces around in front of a one-car garage. The area is fenced in with a garbage cans and other various backyard paraphernalia. Jonathan frowns sternly as he walks and talks.

JONATHAN

Sharp. Decisive. Always with a plan.

(louder)

We're never gonna become the crime lords of Sunnydale with her always one step ahead of us.

WARREN

(OS)

Well, that's why we're throwing these tests at her, seeing which one of us can shake her up the most, maybe find a weakness or two.

Jonathan walks forward.

Warren is on the ground, lying on his back on a rolling platform such as mechanics use when working underneath a car. He rolls out backwards and looks up at Jonathan.

WARREN

She's ready.

We see that he's just emerged from underneath a large black van.

JONATHAN

Sweet. Run me through it.

WARREN

Ah.

Warren gets up, opens the van's side door.

WARREN

We got nine high-resolution surveillance cameras hooked in  
(points)  
super-wide angle, infrared, auto-iris, plus six types of audio matrix monitoring...

Pan across the interior of the van. It's completely filled with electronics equipment on both sides. Also a bean-bag chair or two, and a couple of wheeled computer chairs.

WARREN

that's filtered through a dual quad DVS system, and a...

JONATHAN  
Yeah, yeah, fine, just tell me.  
(They start walking  
around toward the  
front of the van)  
Are you sure with all of this  
stuff that we'll be able to watch  
Buffy without her noticing us?

WARREN  
Absolutely. I mean, she'll never  
even know-

They come around to the other side and find Andrew spray-  
painting a huge Death Star on the side of the van.

WARREN  
W--what the hell is that?

ANDREW  
Death Star, dude! Wicked, huh?

JONATHAN  
(scornfully)  
Thermal exhaust port's \*above\*  
the main port, numb-nuts.

ANDREW  
For your information, I'm using  
the Empire's revised designs from  
Return of the Jedi.

JONATHAN  
That's a flawed design!

WARREN  
Guys!  
(they shut up)  
Okay, the thing is, since we're  
messing with the Slayer, who  
could pummel the three of us into  
a sludgy substance, it might be a  
good idea for us to  
(yelling)  
NOT draw attention to ourselves!

Jonathan nods smugly at Andrew.

ANDREW  
(uncertain)  
I could paint over it if you want.

WARREN

Yeah, well, do that! Because this  
time tomorrow, the games begin.

(Zoom in on his face)

And the Slayer ... will never  
even know what hit her.

Wolf howl. Opening credits.

Special Guest Star Anthony Stewart Head. Guest starring  
Danny Strong, Adam Busch, Tom Lenk, and Amber Benson as Tara.  
Written by David Fury and Jane Espenson, directed by Nick  
Marck.

Act I

Open on the hallways of UC Sunnydale. Various students  
walking around.

BUFFY VOICEOVER

This is gonna be great.

Cut to Buffy and Willow entering a classroom.

BUFFY

I thought it might be a little  
weird being back, I mean, it is  
weird, but like a good kind of  
weird.

Instead of desks the classroom has long tables set up in a  
rectangle. They walk around the perimeter to find empty seats.

WILLOW

There's the teacher, Mike.

Shot of the teacher dressed casually, writing on the  
blackboard the words "Social Construction of..."

WILLOW

You'll like Mike.  
(sits)

BUFFY

You call your teacher Mike? Boy,  
school sure has changed since my  
day.  
(sits)

Mike turns from the blackboard. The final word he wrote was  
"reality."



MIKE

Social Construction of Reality.  
Who can tell me what that is?  
(many students raise  
their hands including Willow)  
Rachel.

RACHEL

A concept involving a couple of  
opposing theories, one stressing  
the externality and independence  
of social reality from individuals.  
(Buffy looks confused)

MIKE

And the flip side?  
(many hands raised)  
Steve?

STEVE

That each individual participates  
fully in the construction of his  
or her own life.

MIKE

Good, and who can expand on that?  
(hands)  
Chuck?

CHUCK

Well, those on the latter side of  
the theoretical divide stress...

BUFFY

(leans toward Willow  
and whispers)  
Will, I'm not following this too  
well.

WILLOW

Oh. The trick is to get in the  
rhythm, kinda go with the flow.  
(raises her hand)

BUFFY

Flow-going would be a lot easier  
if your classmates weren't such  
big brains.

WILLOW  
 (hand still raised)  
 Buffy, that's ridiculous! They  
 are no smarter than you or me.

MIKE  
 (O.S.)  
 Willow.

WILLOW  
 (lowers hand, speaks  
 to Mike)  
 Because social phenomena don't  
 have unproblematic objective  
 existences. They have to be  
 interpreted and given meanings by  
 those who encounter them.  
 (Buffy stares at Willow)

MIKE  
 (O.S.)  
 Nicely put. So, Ruby, does that  
 mean there are countless realities?

WILLOW  
 (notices Buffy's look)  
 What?

Cut to Buffy and Willow walking through the hallways.

WILLOW  
 You're not dumb. Just rusty.

BUFFY  
 Maybe I should ease back in with  
 some non-taxing classes, like,  
 introduction to pies, or maybe  
 advanced walking.

Tara hurries up to join them, **with Steven who is following  
 behind her.**

STEVEN  
 (smiles)  
 Hey, Buffy!

TARA  
 Hey! How'd it go?

WILLOW  
 She did fine! Sociology, not a  
 big fave.

TARA  
She didn't like Mike?

STEVEN  
(smiles)  
Not everyone likes Mike.  
(chuckles)  
Sorry, that's..."not everyone  
wants to be like Mike"

BUFFY  
No, look, it's fine. I just need  
to spend a little more time re-  
acclimating. You know, to get  
back into the swing of things.

A guy bumps Buffy as he walks past them. Close shot of a hand touching her clothing, moving away to reveal a tiny metal object. Cut back to wider shot. Buffy almost falls over but Willow and Tara catch her.

WILLOW  
(yells after the guy)  
Hey! You could at least say  
sorry, rude-o!

TARA  
Everybody's in a hurry.

STEVEN  
(disgusted)  
That's still no excuse.

The girls **and Steven** exchange an annoyed look and continue walking.

Cut to the guy coming around a corner. We see that it's Warren. He looks up and sees a surveillance camera on the ceiling, turns away from it and speaks into the collar of his sweatshirt.

WARREN  
Francis 7, this is Logan 5. I'm  
in position, do you copy?

Cut to interior of the van. A bank of computer screens show various images. Jonathan sits in front of them with a microphone ear-piece headset on. Andrew stands behind him.

JONATHAN  
Yeah, Warren, we copy that. And  
you're up on the monitor.

ANDREW

Hey Warren, this is working great.

The monitors show Warren as he smiles and waves at the camera.

WARREN

Runner is tagged, inhibitor is on.  
Repeat, inhibitor is on. Initiate  
omega pulse sequence.

Cut to exterior of the college campus. The black van sits in a parking spot. Various people walking around.

A small satellite transmitter emerges from the top of the van and swivels, making whirring noises.

Cut to Buffy, **Steven** and Tara walking through the halls together.

TARA

My art appreciation class doesn't  
start for another twenty minutes,  
so we've got some time to kill.  
Um, here.

(takes a large book  
from her bag and gives  
it to Buffy)  
You'll like it, it's very mellow.

Buffy opens the book and looks at a picture of a painting.

**STEVEN**

**That's a nice book.**

Weird buzzing noise, like static on a TV. Buffy frowns, looks up.

TARA

...didn't think she liked my  
cooking  
(we see Tara sitting  
on a bench nearby)  
until I realized that that was  
her yummy face.  
(smiling)  
You know how her nose-

BUFFY

What was that?

TARA

What was what?

BUFFY  
(confused)  
Uh ... that, that noise, wh-what  
was that about, about cooking?  
Whose yummy face?

TARA  
Willow. Wow, you ... really got  
engrossed in that Renaissance  
book.  
(stands up)

BUFFY  
I guess. I ... must have spaced out.

Buffy gives the book back to Tara and goes over to a  
drinking fountain.

TARA  
Oh, I-I do that sometimes. Once,  
Willow and I were watching  
"Spongebob Squarepants"...

Buffy bends toward the fountain to drink. The buzzing noise  
again.

TARA  
(calling)  
Buffy? A-are you coming?

We see Tara **and Steven** all the way down the hall by a set of  
double doors.

TARA  
(calling)  
We're gonna be late for class.

Buffy looks extremely confused and a little angry.

BUFFY  
What the f--

Cut to interior of the van. Warren opens the door from  
outside and quickly climbs in, shutting the door behind him.

WARREN  
(excited)  
Is it working? Is it doing it?

JONATHAN  
Dude, it's doing it.

ANDREW  
And it's wicked cool.

Cut back to inside. Tara walks into a crowded classroom, pauses just inside the door and turns.

Buffy comes running around the corner.

BUFFY  
Tara! Tara!

The classroom doors close in her face. The halls are now empty as all the students have gone to class. Buffy looks around in dismay.

The buzzing noise again. Students begin pouring out of the classrooms into the hallways. Tara walks up behind Buffy.

TARA  
Buffy, where have you been? You missed art class.

BUFFY  
Missed? Uh, Tara, something freaky's going on, it's like I'm-

Buffy looks over at a wall clock. The hands on the clock move quickly. They start at about 11:50 and stop again at about 12:10.

BUFFY  
Look, there! There!  
(pointing)  
Uh, did you see-

She looks around and sees that Tara is gone. The halls are deserted again. Buffy makes a frustrated face.

BUFFY  
Crap!

She runs off.

Cut to Buffy coming out of the building. A lot of students are walking around in various directions. Buffy rushes down the stairs.

BUFFY  
Tara!

We see Tara a little way off, walking away.

BUFFY  
Tara, wait!

Shot of the campus from Buffy's POV. We're in a little courtyard with a grassy lawn. In the middle of the lawn is a stone table with a stone bench circling it. All the people move faster and faster until they're just blurs.

Buffy stands still looking around as the blurs move past her. One of them bumps into her and knocks her down.

The blurs continue to move across the lawn as Buffy starts crawling toward the stone table. Another one hits her and she falls down on her back, groans in pain. She gets to her hands and knees and crawls the rest of the way, crawls under the table. The blurs continue to move by.

Cut to the van. The Geeks are watching Buffy on their monitors and can apparently also hear what she's saying.

BUFFY

That noise. There's something on me.

Cut back to Buffy. She begins examining her clothing. She takes off her sweater.

Cut back to the van. On the monitors, the view swings around to show Buffy's face.

WARREN

Oh no.

ANDREW

Uh-oh.

JONATHAN

She found it.

The image of Buffy tilts from side to side as she looks at her sweater.

Cut back to Buffy. She finds the tiny metal device attached to her sweater and removes it, holds it in the palm of her hand and stares at it in confusion.

Cut back to the van.

ANDREW

Oh, this is bad, this is bad.

JONATHAN

Self-destruct! Self-destruct!

ANDREW

I, I don't know, I-

WARREN

No!

Warren reaches over and flips up the plastic casing that covers a large red button. He puts his finger over it, pauses. On the screen, Buffy reaches out her finger toward the device. Warren pushes the button.

Cut back to Buffy. The device disintegrates in her hand. She looks up.

All the people resume walking at normal speed.

Buffy frowns, gathers up her stuff and comes out from under the table. She stands there looking around, a little scared.

Cut to the van. Warren plops down in a bean-bag chair on the floor.

WARREN

Okay, score me.

Andrew and Jonathan sit in computer chairs above him in "judge" positions.

JONATHAN

Rrrright.

(ponders)

Fifty points for ingenuity,  
another thirty since it involved  
actual contact.

ANDREW

Very smooth, by the way.  
(Warren smiles)

JONATHAN

On the freak-o-meter I'd say she  
was at a six.

WARREN

Oh come, it's an eight, easy!

Jonathan and Andrew lean their heads together to confer. Then pull back to their original postures.

JONATHAN

We'll split the diff, call it a  
seven. Which is good for a  
hundred and forty, giving you a  
grand total of...



ANDREW  
Two hundred and twenty.

WARREN  
(claps triumphantly,  
points at Andrew)  
Beat that!

ANDREW  
Oh, I will.

Cut back to Buffy still standing on the grass looking around in extreme confusion.

ANDREW VOICEOVER  
I will.

Blackout.

Act II

Open on a construction site, day. Pan across various machinery and men in hard-hats.

BUFFY VOICEOVER  
This is gonna be great.

Reveal Buffy and Xander, also wearing hard-hats, walking through the site. They wear toolbelts and Buffy carries a lunchbox. Her hair is in two pigtails.

BUFFY  
Diving into the workforce. Being  
a bread-winner, building things  
with my hands.

XANDER  
Uh, actually, you won't be  
building so much as lifting and  
toting.

BUFFY  
Toting?

XANDER  
It's just a temp gig, Buff. You  
know, unless it tanks. Since  
you're not union, I had to call  
in a few favors to get you on a  
crew.

BUFFY

Well, I appreciate it. Muchly.  
You saved me from having to  
accept Giles' offer to work at  
the Magic Box. I mean, retail?  
Yeee.

(shudders)

I'd rather be dead. Again.

XANDER

(not really listening)

Uh-huh. So, Giles have any  
thoughts about your little fast-  
forward freak-out at school?

BUFFY

No. Oh, well, he implied that  
maybe it was stress-related. Like  
I was imagining it or something.  
I don't know. Maybe. I guess I, I  
... could have been blacking out,  
but ... there was this thing on  
my sweater, you know?

(Xander nods, not  
really listening)

And then it just, blew away, or  
went poof. Maybe it was lint.

(excited)

Maybe it was evil lint.

XANDER

Okay, first tip of the day. When  
I introduce you to Tony the  
foreman? You might wanna leave  
out stuff about blacking out and  
evil lint.

They walk on.

They approach a spot where a couple of guys are standing  
around looking at blueprints.

XANDER

Hey. Tony.

(Tony turns)

This is Buffy. You know, that  
friend I told you about.

BUFFY

(sticks out her hand)

Nice to meet you, Tony.

Tony just scowls at Xander. Buffy pulls her hand back, looks  
around at the other men.

BUFFY

Guys.

The other guys just stare.

TONY

You gotta be kiddin' me. We're a week behind, I got two men out on the DL, and now you want us to baby-sit some little girl?

BUFFY

Uh, excuse me, but I-

TONY

Hang on, Gidget!

(to Xander)

This stinks, Harris. What am I supposed to do with her?

XANDER

Give her a chance. She's stronger than she looks.

Tony just sneers and turns back to the blueprints.

XANDER

That's the spirit!

(aside to Buffy)

Don't mind him, he may seem pig-ignorant, rude, and a little hostile...

(pauses)

Have fun!

(pats Buffy on the shoulder and starts to leave)

BUFFY

Whoa, where are you going?

XANDER

Upstairs. I need to supervise the sheet rock hangers. Don't sweat it! I'll be back to check on you later.

Xander leaves.

TONY

Okay, Danny, finish puttin' in those J-boxes, Vince, Marco, I need you to haul the steel inside.

MARCO

Gee, I don't know, Tone. I don't wanna get in trouble with those affirmative action lawyers, you know what I'm sayin'? Why don't you put, uh, little Britney here on hauling duty?

BUFFY

It's Buffy.

TONY

Okay, princess, you're on it. Try not to break a nail.

The guys laugh nastily. Buffy makes a face, mimicking Tony, and walks toward the pile of large steel girders. One of the other guys, Vince, joins her.

VINCE

Don't worry about it. And don't let them hassle you into doing something stupid and hurting yourself. These beams weigh quite a few hundred pounds.

Buffy picks up a beam easily and puts it on her shoulder.

BUFFY

Which way?

All the men pause to stare. Vince points his thumb toward the half-finished building.

BUFFY

Thanks!

She carries the beam off as Vince stares at the remaining pile in surprise.

Cut to inside the site, later. Someone is welding. Buffy comes in carrying another girder, and addresses another man, Danny, who's crouched over doing something.

BUFFY

So basically I'm just trying to learn everything I can, you know? 'Cause I don't want just a job, you know? I want a career, you know, something I can grow into.

She goes over to Danny who is trying to move a girder. Buffy easily helps him lift it into position.

BUFFY

I mean, I never thought I'd be working in construction ... but when you think about it kinda makes sense-

DANNY

Hey. We get paid by the hour.

(Buffy looks surprised)

You wanna ruin it for the rest of us? Slow down.

He walks off leaving Buffy standing there uncertainly. In the background we see Tony watching.

Cut to: a view of the construction site as seen through binoculars. The lens follows a worker along until we see Buffy in the background. The lens stops and focuses in on her.

WARREN

Ah! Got visual of subject, four o'clock.

We see Warren and Jonathan sitting in the passenger seat of the van, looking out the window. Warren holds the binoculars up to his face.

JONATHAN

That's not four o'clock.

WARREN

(lowers the binocs)

Well, it is if you're facing the front of the van.

JONATHAN

But we're not facing the front of the van, we're facing out that way.

(gestures)

That's twelve, so she's at two o'clock.

WARREN

(annoyed)

Look, she's over there, okay?

JONATHAN

(annoyed)

Okay.

Warren lifts the binocs to look again. Jonathan turns, parts a bead curtain that separates the "cab" of the van from the rear. He peeks through to the back.

We see Andrew sitting on the floor reading a comic.

JONATHAN

You're up.

Andrew tosses the comic down, picks up a set of wooden pipes and begins to play by blowing air across the tops of them.

The music continues as we cut to Buffy approaching a water cooler on the site. She leans over to take a cup.

She hears something and straightens up, looks around in confusion. The music continues and melds into the background music of the scene. Buffy shrugs, turns back to the cooler to fill her cup.

Shot of Buffy from someone else's POV, approaching her. A wrench sits on a nearby stand. The person picks it up and carries it toward Buffy.

She sees the person approaching and stands up too quickly, spilling water on herself.

BUFFY

Ooh! Oh.

It's Tony the foreman.

TONY

Jumpy? What's the matter? I scare ya?

Suddenly Buffy pushes him aside to reveal a green demon behind him. Tony hits the wall as Buffy hits the demon. Buffy takes off her hard-hat and throws it aside as she faces the demon.

Two more demons drop down from above to surround Buffy. They are all green-skinned and wear long trenchcoats.

Buffy kicks one demon, punches the other two, kicks, goes to her knees and sweeps the feet out from under one. She gets in a couple more kicks before one of them grabs her around the waist from behind, dragging her backward. She finally gets loose, holds the demon's arm with one of hers while backhanding it with the other.

The demon tosses her backward, grabs her and pins her against a wall. She kicks it back and another demon takes its place. Buffy punches it a few times, turns and leaps up to grab an overhead bar. Swinging from it, she kicks a demon in front and one behind, does a somersaulting dismount and kicks two demons with both feet. They crash into a partially built wall, bringing it down.

Buffy picks up a shovel from the floor and uses it to hit the other demon a few times. He goes down and she stabs the shovel into him, then drops it.

The demon lies on the floor dead. Then his whole body turns into a pile of goo which evaporates completely, leaving just an oily stain.

The other two demons get up, pushing pieces of wall off them. There are also two men there, scrambling to get away. The demons pursue them.

MEN

No, don't hurt me! Please! Help me!

(etc.)

BUFFY

(OS)

Hey!

The demons turn and see Buffy behind them. They attack her. She punches them both, wraps some wire around one demon's neck and strangles it. It falls to the ground and disintegrates as the previous one did.

Buffy ducks a punch from the other demon, kicks it back against a piece of machinery, picks it up and shoves its head into the machine. She pulls out a cable and the pneumatic machinery begins to compress, crushing the demon's head. The demon also dissolves.

Cut to the van. The Geeks are watching through the window. Jonathan sits in the driver's seat (background), Warren in the passenger seat, and Andrew perched on the dashboard. Andrew has the binoculars.

ANDREW

Oh, man. She took 'em out.

WARREN

Lemme see.

(grabs the binoculars  
and looks)

ANDREW

Okay, give it back now.

WARREN

No, I'm still looking.

ANDREW

No, y-you had your turn, now gimme-

WARREN

No, I'm still-

ANDREW

Gimme-

Andrew grabs for the binoculars and Warren shoves him away. Andrew falls halfway onto Jonathan's lap. His elbow hits the steering wheel and activates the horn, which plays the "Star Wars" theme song.

Cut to the construction site. Buffy hears the honking and peers curiously out of the building. She sees the black van sitting on the street beyond the fence. The "Star Wars" music continues.

Cut back to the van. The geeks yell "Duck!" and all dive for the floor. Andrew jumps through the bead curtain into the back while the other two just lower their heads.

Cut back to the site. Buffy continues looking toward the van as a couple of construction workers approach. We see another guy is pinned under some wreckage.

Cut back to the van. Jonathan and Warren part the bead curtain and glare angrily at Andrew in the back.

ANDREW

(defensive)

Hey. All you said was lose the mural.

The other two make annoyed faces.

Cut back to the site. Two men are helping the third get up. Xander comes running over.

XANDER

Oh my god. Buffy, what ... what happened? How ... Aw, Buffy, I know these guys can be jerks, but was it really necessary-

BUFFY

I didn't do this!

Tony comes around the corner holding a cloth to his bleeding forehead.



TONY

I'll tell you what she did. I came over to tell your friend I was impressed by the job she was doing, liking the way she handles herself, and all of a sudden she goes berserk and attacks me.

BUFFY

(outraged)

Wh - I saved you from the...

She pauses, pulls Xander aside.

BUFFY

The demons! They were these three big apey things!

XANDER

No. No, not here. Not at my job. That's your job.

BUFFY

I can't help where the forces of darkness attack me, Xander.

XANDER

Buffy, would you look at this mess?

(gestures)

Do you have any idea how much it's gonna cost to repair this? And what am I supposed to say to the clients, should I just show them the demon bodies and say it's all their fault?

BUFFY

(pouts)

You can't. They melted.

(sees his reaction)

But ... uh ...

(whines)

There, there are witnesses!

(turns to the other  
members of the crew)

Vince! Vince! You'll tell him, right, how I jumped in and protected you from those ... things?

VINCE

Hey, I don't know what you're talking about. All I know is you were losin' it or something.

(Buffy stares in shock)  
That time of the month, huh?

BUFFY

What?! You were huddled in a corner! Crying! Like a baby!

VINCE

Hey, hey. No way. Me, crying?

Buffy gives Xander an angry look and stalks off past Vince and Tony.

VINCE

You're trippin', sweetie.  
(to Tony)  
What's her problem?

Xander shakes his head, gives the guys a nervous smile and follows Buffy.

Cut to outside the building frame. Buffy and Xander walk along. Buffy has her hard-hat on again.

BUFFY

I didn't imagine this, Xander.

XANDER

I know. I believe you. In fact, I'm starting to think between this attack and the school thing that somebody's messin' with you.

BUFFY

Really? You think they're connected?

XANDER

Well, there's something going on. I think it's worth checking out, and I don't mean later. You need to see Giles and get on it right away. I'd start with ID'ing those demons.

BUFFY

You're firing me, aren't you?

XANDER

Big time. The whole melty thing oughta help narrow it down.

Buffy takes off her hard-hat and gives it to him. Long shot of the two of them from the back.

XANDER

Uh, try sketching them. That always helps, and then maybe, when I get off work I'll help you go through the mug shots.

Blackout.

Act III

Open on exterior shot of the magic shop, day.

BUFFY VOICEOVER

This is gonna be great.

Cut to inside. Buffy and Anya walk through the store together.

BUFFY

You know, I've always been interested in, um, interested in retail.

They descend the stairs and Anya heads toward the counter. In foreground we see Giles carrying a large stack of books toward the round table. **Steven is alphabetizing the books on the shelves.** Buffy approaches Giles. We see that the table is already piled high with a huge number of books.

BUFFY

Uh ... is this all research, or just some kind of stress test for the table?

GILES

(puts books on table,  
picks up a mug)  
I just want to be thorough. This ... time anomaly, and then the, the demon attacks could be completely unrelated events, but if they're not ... you might be in some danger.  
(drinking from mug)

BUFFY

So, situation normal then.

Giles sits down and opens a book. Anya comes over with a three-ring binder.

ANYA  
 (to Buffy)  
 Let's review.  
 (opens binder)  
 Um, you record returns here. Um,  
 these are the slips for special  
 orders, you ship them wherever  
 the customer wants. And, uh,  
 these are the hold slips.

GILES  
 Fill out two hold slips for each  
 item.  
 (gets up and moves away)

ANYA  
 Oh, and uh, be sure to remove the  
 items from the shelf.

As Anya speaks, we zoom in on a shelf behind the table.  
 There are a couple of items on the shelf, the major one  
 being a human skull with a candle in its top.

ANYA  
 (OS)  
 Um, I can illustrate with an  
 amusing story about a crystal.

**Steven looks over at Buffy, smiling in understanding.**

**STEVEN**  
**This is why I only alphabetize**  
**the books. Everything else is**  
**way too confusing.**

We see that there's a tiny camera mounted in one of the  
 skull's eyes.

Cut to the interior of the van. A monitor shows the view  
 from the skull-camera of Anya and Buffy in the store. Giles  
 moves around them and out of frame.

ANYA  
 (on screen)  
 Uh, see, there was this certain  
 customer who wanted to purchase a  
 sapphire. Uh, sapphire ... well  
 ... ding-dong. Right? And so  
 anyway, I...

Pan across the monitors to find Warren yawning in boredom as  
 he watches. He reaches out to turn down the volume.

WARREN

This is so dull I might actually  
have fallen asleep and be  
dreaming you guys.

Andrew slides into view, rolling on his wheeled chair.

ANDREW

Why is the Slayer here anyway?  
She's a student, she's a  
construction worker, and ... now  
she's some kind of ... selling  
stuff person?

WARREN

(shakes head)  
It's like she's completely  
without focus.

(pause)  
Should we check the other  
channels for free cable porn?

Andrew seems to like the idea.

JONATHAN

(OS)  
Guys, I'm ready.

We see Jonathan sitting on the floor. The other guys look  
over, then get out of their chairs and sit on the floor as  
well, forming a triangle. Jonathan's holding a piece of  
paper in one hand and a cigarette lighter in the other.

JONATHAN

I need you to hold hands.

Warren holds out his hand to Andrew, who recoils.

ANDREW

With each other?

WARREN

Well, you know what homophobia  
really means about you, don't you?

Warren picks up a piece of bone and points it at Andrew.

JONATHAN

Stop touching my magic bone!

Warren puts the bone down as he and Andrew burst out giggling.

JONATHAN  
(annoyed)  
Shut up.

The others stop laughing but still look amused.

JONATHAN  
Okay.

Jonathan begins flicking the lighter as he holds the piece of paper over the floor in between them. Warren grabs Andrew's hand. Jonathan gets the lighter lit and sets the paper on fire.

JONATHAN  
Okay, it's in Latin, so don't  
laugh. It's supposed to sound  
like this.

He turns off the lighter and sets it aside, puts the burning paper down, picks up the bone.

Shot from above. We see that there's a triangle drawn in red on the floor, and a bowl in the middle of the triangle, with the burning paper in the bowl. Jonathan waves the bone over it while making gestures with his other hand.

JONATHAN  
Opus orbit est, et ea in medio,  
tempus ad calcem intendit.  
[Approx. translation: "The work  
is a circle, and she is in the  
middle, the time stretches out."]

Clouds of smoke begin to rise from the bowl. Jonathan grins at the other guys.

The smoke engulfs them and they all begin to cough.

Cut to inside the magic shop. Buffy walks along looking bored. Behind her, we can see out the window. We see the van parked across the street with smoke coming out of it as its rear door pops open to release the smoke. Faintly, we can hear the Geeks coughing.

We also see a woman walk past the windows toward the magic shop door. The camera follows her. She opens the door, making the bell above it jingle.

Buffy turns to look as the customer enters. Giles comes up behind Buffy.

GILES  
Buffy, a word in your ear.

The woman closes the door behind her and comes into the store. Buffy turns to Giles.

GILES

While I was running the store, I found it useful to imagine myself back in the library. Um, (removes glasses and begins cleaning them) you know, if you concentrate on service and, and not on making a sale, you're more likely to have a satisfied customer.

Giles nods, examines his glasses.

BUFFY

Guess I'll have to find my own style.

GILES

(not listening)  
Yes, uh, quite, quite, quite.

Giles puts his glasses back on and moves away. Buffy turns away as Anya comes up to her. They both look toward the woman customer.

ANYA

That woman. Go sell her something.

Anya smiles, pats Buffy on the back and walks off.

STEVEN

(disgusted at Anya's attitude)  
Oh, God.

Buffy looks skeptical, begins walking toward the woman.

As she climbs the stairs, a male customer stops her. He's looking at a display of scented candles.

MALE CUSTOMER

Miss? Which candle creates a more, you know, romantic atmosphere?

Buffy picks up a candle, sniffs it, looks at the sticker on the bottom.

BUFFY

Hmm. "Lemon Seduction."

She puts it down, picks up another and sniffs it, makes a face.

BUFFY

Ew!

(looks at sticker)  
"Essence of Slug."  
(puts it down, picks  
up the first candle  
and hands it to the customer)  
Here you go.

MALE CUSTOMER

(smiling)  
Thank you.

Buffy turns away.

BUFFY

(to herself)  
Yeah.  
(walks over to woman)  
May I help you?

FEMALE CUSTOMER

(conspiratorially)  
I need something for a prosperity  
spell. I heard you have it. The  
mummy hand?

BUFFY

Uh, yeah, actually, I saw one  
downstairs. It's kinda hairy,  
though. Maybe it was a daddy hand.

**Steven grins and chuckles to himself.**

She smiles, but the customer doesn't get the joke.

BUFFY

I'll just get it.

She turns and walks to the door leading to the basement,  
opens it.

Cut to basement. Buffy walks around holding a paper bag,  
looking for the mummy hand. She puts the bag down as she  
examines the jars lining the shelves.

BUFFY

(reads)  
'Petrified hamster' ... uch!  
Eyeballs and honey. Dagger of Lex...

She turns and sees the mummy hand sitting atop a wooden crate.



BUFFY

Hmm. Ancient mummy hand.

She reaches out to pick it up but stops when the mummy hand springs to life. It leaps at her and grabs her by the throat. Buffy grabs it by the throat and wrestles with it for a moment, finally pulls it off her and tosses it back onto the crate. She turns, grabs the dagger of Lex from the shelf, stabs it into the back of the mummy hand. The hand continues moving for a moment and then stops. Buffy stares at it, panting slightly.

Cut to above. The woman customer stares in dismay as Buffy holds up the dagger with the mummy hand still impaled on it.

BUFFY

And you get the dagger of Lex for free with it! See the inlaid mother-of-pearl ... underneath the black oozing goo?

FEMALE CUSTOMER

This hand is dead. The power is gone, I'm not giving you money for this!

BUFFY

Oh, it's just playing dead.  
(swats the mummy hand)  
Little scamp.

She gives the woman a hopeful look.

Close shot of the bell above the door. It jingles as the door opens.

Buffy turns around. She no longer holds the dagger and hand. She's back where she was when the customer first entered the store. Giles comes up behind her.

GILES

Buffy, a word in your ear.

The woman customer comes in, shuts the door. Buffy frowns in confusion, turns to Giles.

GILES

Uh, while I was running the store, I found it was useful to, uh...

BUFFY

Huh? What? Huh?

GILES  
 (cleaning glasses)  
 ...imagine myself back in the  
 library, uh, to, uh-

BUFFY  
 We did this just now. Giles,  
 something is happening.

GILES  
 (not listening)  
 Yes, uh, quite right.

Cut to a view of Buffy and Giles on the monitors inside the  
 van.

WARREN  
 Aw, you did it! Dude, she's looping!

The Geek Trio watch the monitors, grinning.

WARREN  
 Wha, uh, what'd you do, enchant  
 the hand thing?

JONATHAN  
 Uh, well, not exactly. I made it  
 so she had to satisfy a customer  
 with a task that resists solving.  
 (stops smiling)  
 Maybe I shoulda done more.

ANDREW  
 Like what?

JONATHAN  
 I don't know.  
 (looks at monitor)  
 Like make her kind of itchy?

On the monitor, Giles walks away as Buffy turns toward the  
 customer and Anya walks up to Buffy.

Cut back to the store.

ANYA  
 Go help the lady who just came in.

BUFFY  
 Wait--

ANYA

Don't worry, don't be nervous. Do what I do, just picture yourself naked.

STEVEN

(grins)

I can do that for you, Buffy.

Buffy makes an "ew" face as Anya pushes her toward the customer. Again the man by the candles stops her.

MALE CUSTOMER

Uh, miss-

BUFFY

Here.

Buffy grabs the lemon candle and gives it to him, continues on her way.

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Hi. I'm looking for something really specific. I heard you carry it.

BUFFY

A mummy hand.

The customer looks quite surprised.

BUFFY

You look like the mummy hand type. Sorry, I can't get that for you.

FEMALE CUSTOMER

I called here twenty minutes ago, and someone said you had one.

BUFFY

Y-yeah, um ... but ... there's a thing happening.

FEMALE CUSTOMER

You have one, and, and I was told I could buy it, and I'm sorry, but I'm really gonna have to hold you to that. I'm not leaving until I get a mummy hand.

BUFFY

(reluctantly)

Okay ... I guess ... I'll have to get it for you.

Cut back to the van. On the screen, Buffy turns away from the customer and heads for the basement.

WARREN

Smart. She's figuring out the game. Satisfy the customer.

(leans forward)

Well, she might just have you beat there, Stretch.

(shoves Jonathan)

JONATHAN

No way. It hasn't even started yet.

ANDREW

I just hope she solves it faster than Data did on the ep of TNG where the Enterprise kept blowing up.

WARREN

Or Mulder, in that X-Files where the bank kept exploding.

ANDREW

Scully wants me so bad.

The others give Andrew skeptical looks.

Cut to the magic shop basement. The mummy hand dances around on the crate tapping its fingers.

Buffy approaches with a knife in one hand and a set of tongs in the other.

The hand pauses, seems to be breathing(?). Buffy comes closer. The hand moves across the crate, climbs up onto a skull.

Buffy prepares to attack it. Suddenly it jumps down from the skull, startling her. It perches on the edge of the crate.

Buffy reaches out with the tongs and grabs.

Cut to above. The woman customer looks into a paper bag with a disgusted expression as Buffy watches. Then the woman looks up at Buffy.

BUFFY

Fingers sold separately.

The woman scowls. Sound of the door jingling.

Cut back to the beginning of the scene again. Buffy turns around to see the woman entering. Buffy sighs in annoyance, starts forward. Anya stops her.

ANYA  
Where are you going?

BUFFY  
(points)  
Lady needs a mummy hand.

ANYA  
What? You haven't even talked to her yet.

BUFFY  
I could explain, but you would just forget it.

ANYA  
I'm worried about you. Um, retail is a, is a fast-paced and exciting world. I mean, this whole day, has it gone by too quickly for you?

BUFFY  
No. No, I don't think that's exactly the problem.

Buffy starts toward the customer again as Giles comes up.

GILES  
Buffy, a word in your ear. Um, if you, uh, think of the store as a, as a library,  
(cleaning glasses)  
it'll help you to, to, uh, concentrate on, on ... service rather than selling.

BUFFY  
Yes. And then I'm going to marry Bob Dole and raise penguins in Guam.

GILES  
(not listening)  
Yes, uh, quite, quite, yes.

Giles puts his glasses back on and turns away. Buffy rolls her eyes, starts toward the customers. She grabs the lemon candle.

MALE CUSTOMER

Miss, I-

Buffy shoves the candle into his hand and continues toward the woman.

BUFFY

Mummy hand, right? You got it, lady.

The female customer looks bemused as Buffy just walks on toward the basement.

Cut to a little later. Buffy pulls at the mummy hand which is trying to strangle the woman customer. She gets it loose, only to have it latch onto the woman's throat again. We see that Buffy is behind the counter by the cash register, with the customer on the other side of the counter. The woman's eyes bulge as the hand strangles her.

Cut to: the bell jingling again.

Buffy turns around, very annoyed. She stalks toward the front, totally ignores the male customer.

MALE CUSTOMER

Miss...

Buffy strides over to the front door, pulls it open with a jingle and steps outside...

...only to emerge in the store again, at the rear. As if she just came in through the back door. Giles, Anya, and the two customers turn to stare at her. Buffy stares back, dismayed.

MALE CUSTOMER

Miss?

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Hi.

Cut to Buffy in the basement with her chin resting on her hand, watching idly as the mummy hand plays with the tongs. The bell jingles and she looks up.

Cut to upstairs. Buffy goes over to the front door and, with a grimace, pulls the bell down, ripping it from the wall. She gives a satisfied smile.

Cut to close-up of the bell, still attached, jingling as the door opens again.

Buffy strides toward the front, passing the male customer as he examines the candles. Buffy grabs the slug-scented candle.

BUFFY

Ya like slug?  
(tosses it to him  
without slowing down)  
Go with slug. She's not gonna  
sleep with you anyway.

Cut to the van. The geeks are still watching.

WARREN

(fake angry voice)  
This mummy hand has ceased to be!  
(on screen we see the  
woman customer shaking  
the mummy hand at Buffy)

ANDREW

It is an ex-mummy hand!

Warren smacks Andrew in the face with a rubber hand.

Cut back to the store. The door opens. Giles comes up to  
Buffy, cleaning his glasses.

GILES

Buffy, a word in your ear.

Buffy grabs Giles's glasses, throws them to the floor and  
stomps on them again and again. Giles watches in surprise.  
The door jingles. Buffy turns, looking a little desperate.

Shot of the woman customer looking at the merchandise.

BUFFY

It's you.  
(runs over to the  
woman, grabs her by  
the front of her jacket)  
You, you're doing this!

FEMALE CUSTOMER

Oh! Oh!

Buffy hustles her toward the door.

Cut to the bell jingling. Buffy stands with Giles, turns  
around toward the door.

Shot of the male customer as the candle hits him in the  
stomach and he doubles over. The bell jingles.

Cut to Buffy standing there with Giles and Anya behind her.  
Buffy sobs in frustration.

Cut to the bell jingling.

Cut to Buffy talking to the woman.

BUFFY  
I know we promised you a mummy  
hand, it's just ...  
(apologetic)  
I-I can't get it for you. Um ...  
(gets an idea)  
There's something wrong with it.  
It's defective.

FEMALE CUSTOMER  
Defective? Are you sure? I -  
there must be something you can do.

BUFFY  
But there's no way to get-

Buffy suddenly stops as she realizes the solution to the problem. A slow smile comes over her face.

BUFFY  
...to get *\*that\** hand. But I can  
special-order one. We can deliver  
it anywhere you want.

FEMALE CUSTOMER  
(smiling happily)  
Really?

Cut to Buffy at the cash register with the customer on the other side of the counter. The cash register rings as Buffy closes the sale.

BUFFY  
(smiling)  
Thank you for shopping at the  
Magic Box.

The woman hands Buffy the special-order slip and leaves.

**Steven walks over to Buffy.**

STEVEN  
(smiles)  
**Congratulations, Buffy. Your  
first sale.**

Cut to the van.

JONATHAN  
Oh ho! Yes!



The Geeks laugh and give each other high-fives.

ANDREW

So ...

(doing calculations on  
a piece of paper)  
Warren had 220 ... and I had that  
bonus for getting her fired...

JONATHAN

But the biggest component has to  
be how long it took to finish.  
Mine took the longest.

ANDREW

Only from a perspective external  
to the time-loops. From Mr.  
Giles' perspective, it was  
shortest of all.

JONATHAN

(disappointed)  
So what do we do?

WARREN

Oh, it's obvious. I mean, it's  
not over.

Cut back to the magic shop. Buffy is finishing up the  
paperwork. Anya and Giles come toward her, smiling.

GILES

Buffy, your first sale!  
(applauds)  
Congratulations.

Buffy smiles. Anya takes the invoice and examines it.

ANYA

You, you didn't charge for delivery.

STEVEN

**So what if she didn't? It was  
her first day. Can't you cut her  
some slack??**

GILES

Oh. Well, your first day, you  
know, these things happen.

ANYA

(smiling)  
Yeah, I'll just take it out of  
your pay.

STEVEN  
(scoffs)  
You better not.

Buffy gives her a sour look.

GILES  
Yes, um, I'm sure B-Buffy would  
understand that.

Buffy walks around Anya to get out from behind the counter.  
She slaps something down on the counter and keeps walking.

BUFFY  
Absolutely.

Close-up on the counter. The thing Buffy put down was her  
name tag. It reads, "Hello! My name is," then a white space  
with "BUFFY" written in it, and then, "Ask me about curses!"

Giles looks at it, looks at Anya. Anya looks toward the door.

Long shot of Buffy going to the front door and opening it.  
Close-up on the bell jingling. Blackout.

Act IV

Open on close shot of Spike looking to his left with a small  
smile. It's dark.

BUFFY  
(OS)  
This is gonna be great.

We see Buffy holding up a shot-glass full of liquor. She  
pours the shot down her throat, swallows it and makes a  
horrible face.

BUFFY  
Blaaah!  
(shakes head)

We see that Buffy and Spike are sitting on a coffin in  
Spike's crypt. Spike lifts his own shot-glass to his mouth  
and slams it down.

BUFFY  
Life is stupid.

SPIKE

I have a dim memory of that, yeah.  
(puts glass down)  
And I didn't figure you were here  
cadging my whiskey 'cause life's  
all full of blood and peaches.

BUFFY

No. There's this thing ...  
someone's doing stuff to me.  
Messing up my life. Except that  
it was kind of pre-messed already.  
You know, with school, and jobs  
... pretty bad even without the  
evil.

SPIKE

So you, uh, just what? Gonna let  
this whoever play you till it  
figures out what kills you?

BUFFY

(shrugs, puts down her glass)  
Giles is working on it.

SPIKE

(laughs)  
Oh, good, 'cause Giles wields the  
mighty force of library books.

BUFFY

You'd do better?

SPIKE

Damn right! I'd hit the demon world.

Buffy has Spike's whiskey flask in her hand. She begins  
refilling the two glasses as Spike brings one leg over the  
coffin so he's straddling it.

SPIKE

Ask questions, throw punches,  
find out what's in the air. Hmm?  
It's fun too.

BUFFY

(slurred)  
It's not my kind of fun.  
(screwing cap back  
onto the flask)

SPIKE

Yeah. It is.

She looks at him.

SPIKE  
(quietly)  
And your life's gonna get a lot  
less confusing when you figure  
that out.

BUFFY  
(slurred)  
You have had \*so\* too much to  
drink at this point, I am cuttin'  
you off.

They both empty their glasses again. Buffy again makes her  
alcohol face.

BUFFY  
Blaaah!  
(shakes head)

Spike watches this with a smile.

SPIKE  
You're not a schoolgirl. You're  
not a shop girl.

Buffy pours from the flask into her glass again, emptying  
the flask.

SPIKE  
You're a creature of the darkness.  
Like me.  
(Buffy looks at him)  
Try on my world. See how good it  
feels.

BUFFY  
Are there drinks in your world?

Spike grins.

Cut to a seedy bar. Loud rock music, people drinking. Pan  
across to the door. Spike enters, followed by Buffy. She  
grimaces.

BUFFY  
Your motorcycle is loud.

BARTENDER  
Sssspike.

We see that the bartender has a forked tongue. Spike nods a greeting to him.

SPIKE  
(counting out money)  
The usual, Dave, and one for the  
lady.  
(to Buffy)  
We're heading for the back room,  
pet.

The bartender has set out two shot glasses and begins to fill them, but Buffy grabs the bottle out of his hand, removes the pour-spout and drinks straight from the bottle. Spike sighs, peels off a few more bills and gives the money to the bartender.

SPIKE  
It's where the real action is.

Spike takes the two shot-glasses and heads toward the back. Buffy follows, making her alcohol face.

Cut to Spike and Buffy entering the back room. Lots of shelves filled with liquor boxes. Sound of voices.

SPIKE  
(to Buffy)  
These lowlives know everything  
happens in this town.

BUFFY  
(too loudly)  
Oh, good. These are the lowlives.

We see four demons sitting around a green-felt-covered table, playing cards. They all turn to look.

SPIKE  
Fine. A little louder.

Spike walks over to the table.

SPIKE  
Boys, what's the game?

We see one demon with many eyes, one with scaly skin and a bunch of tentacles that look like dreadlocks, one with a green face and horns, and one with very loose skin.

GREEN DEMON  
You know the game, Spike. You in?

MANY-EYED DEMON

He kills our kind. Don't let him in.

Spike grabs the many-eyed demon by the front of his jacket, pulls him up out of his chair.

BUFFY

Ooh, ask him if he's heard-

SPIKE

Later.

Spike shoves the demon toward the door, sits down in his seat and picks up his cards.

BUFFY

(disbelieving)

You're gonna play cards?

Spike looks exasperated, gives the demons a fake smile.

SPIKE

I need a moment with my lady.

The demons shrug. Spike gets up, goes to Buffy and puts his hand on her arm to turn her away. She shoves him off, but moves away with him anyway. The demons continue talking in the background.

BUFFY

You wanna play, that's fine. Okay?  
I am sticking to the original  
plan.

(gestures at demons)

Which one do I kill for information?

SPIKE

Listen. These guys talk while  
they play. We'll get more  
information out of their mouths  
than out of gaping holes in their  
corpses.

Buffy frowns, looks from Spike to the demons and back again, finally rolls her eyes in agreement. Spike returns to his seat. Buffy takes a chair a little bit away from the table, removes her jacket and sits with the bottle of whiskey.

SPIKE

I'm in. Everybody okay with that?

LOOSE-SKINNED DEMON

(shrugs)

Ante up.

The three demons all turn to reach under their chairs. Each demon produces a small kitten. They put the kittens in a basket on the table. The kittens mew.

BUFFY  
You play for kittens?!

SPIKE  
So, who's gonna advance me a tiny  
tabby, get me started?

The demons all look away casually.

SPIKE  
Come on, someone's gotta stake me.

BUFFY  
(grinning)  
I'll do it!

Spike turns to give her a look.

BUFFY  
What, you thought I was just  
gonna let that lie there?

She takes a swig from the bottle.

Spike looks like he's having second thoughts about bringing Buffy here.

BUFFY  
(OS)  
Blaaaah!

Cut to the black van moving down the street. It's night, the headlights are on.

Cut to inside. Jonathan sits in the passenger seat and Andrew in the middle while Warren drives.

JONATHAN  
Where're we going?

WARREN  
To Final Jeopardy. Where Buffy's  
the one in jeopardy.

ANDREW  
We are really super-villains now,  
like ... like Dr. No.  
(Jonathan grins)

WARREN

Yeah, back when Bond was Connery,  
and movies were decent.

JONATHAN

(scornful)  
Who remembers Connery? I mean,  
Roger Moore was smooth.

WARREN

You're insane. You're short, and  
you're insane.

ANDREW

I like Timothy Dalton!

Warren smacks Andrew upside the head.

ANDREW

Hey!

WARREN

Don't make me pull over, okay?

Cut to the back room of the bar. Kitten mewing noises  
continue. Spike looks at his cards, grins, puts them down on  
the table. We see that he has a straight, 4-5-6-7-8 of clubs.  
The other demons groan and throw down their cards.

Spike smiles, stands up. We see that the table is now  
covered with kittens. Spike opens the lid of a basket and  
begins trying to put the kittens in the basket.

GREEN DEMON

You're lucky today, Spike.

SPIKE

Got my good-luck charm with me.  
(gestures with a  
kitten toward Buffy,  
who's making her  
alcohol face)

SCALY DEMON

You cleaned us out. No-one's that  
lucky.

LOOSE-SKINNED DEMON

Yeah. I'm starting to think you  
cheat.



SPIKE

(sits)  
Me? I cheat? He's got X-ray  
vision!  
(points to scaly demon)

SCALY DEMON

I'm not using it.

LOOSE-SKINNED DEMON

(stands up angrily)  
\*We\* are not the ones who are  
cheating!

Spike looks at him.

Close shot of the demon's arm. An ace of spades is stuck in the folds of skin. He pulls it free as the others watch.

LOOSE-SKINNED DEMON

I, I had no idea that was there.  
I could have leaned on that days  
ago.

GREEN DEMON

You better go, Spike. Things  
could get ugly.

SCALY DEMON

Got ugly the second he walked in.  
(disgusted)  
Him and his human.

LOOSE-SKINNED DEMON

Her skin's so tight, I don't even  
know how you can look at her.

Spike stands up angrily and confronts the demon. The green demon gets up too.

GREEN DEMON

Leave your winnings and get out.  
(Spike looks at him in surprise)  
We'll forget this whole thing.

SPIKE

Ah, so it's a setup, isn't it?  
Squeeze a few quid outta the vamp.  
Well, I'll tell you what you  
didn't count on.  
(indicates Buffy)  
Me and the bird.

BUFFY

(O.S.)

Blaaaah.

SPIKE

You wanna fight? You face the two  
of us.

BUFFY

What? I'm not getting into a bar  
fight!

(very drunk)

I'll beat 'em up for information,  
great, but not to defend your  
right to gamble for kittens!  
Which, by the way, is stupid  
currency.

GREEN DEMON

They're delicious!  
(other demons nod)

SPIKE

(wheedling)

Come on, Slayer, a big fight's  
just what you need.

BUFFY

Forget it. I'm not playing by  
anyone else's rules any more.

(gets up)

I'm done.

She staggers drunkenly over to the table, opens the basket  
and tips it over, setting the kittens free. All the demons  
yell in protest.

DEMON

Hey, I won those two!

BUFFY

Be free, kittens!

DEMON

They're getting away!

Buffy turns and leaves as the demons frantically try to re-  
capture the kittens. The kittens run around under the table,  
meowing.

Spike hurries off after Buffy.

Cut to the main bar room. Buffy walks quickly through, putting her jacket on. Spike grabs her shoulder, turns her around.

SPIKE

What's wrong, luv?

BUFFY

What's wrong?! You were gonna help me! You, you were gonna beat heads and, and, and fix my life! But you're completely lame!

She gestures wildly with her arm. Her jacket falls down her arm and dangles from one hand. Spike simply listens to her tirade, looking surprised.

BUFFY

Tonight sucks! And, and look at me! Look at, look at stupid Buffy!

(pulls jacket back up her arm)

Too dumb for college, and, and, and freak Buffy, too strong for construction work.

(finishes putting on jacket)  
And, and my job at the magic shop? I was bored to tears even \*before\* the hour that wouldn't end! And the only person I can even stand to be around is a ... neutered vampire who cheats at kitten poker.

SPIKE

(embarrassed)

Oh, you saw the cheating, did you.

BUFFY

Also? I think you're drunk.

She whirls around and storms out of the bar. Spike stands there, makes an expression of extreme frustration.

Cut to the interior of the van, rear. Andrew emerges from the front into the rear, followed by Warren. Jonathan comes last.

WARREN

(to Andrew)

Connery is Bond. He had style.

JONATHAN

Yeah, but Roger Moore was funny.

WARREN

Moonraker? The gondola turns into a hovercraft? It's retarded. Besides, the guy had, like, no edge.

ANDREW

Dalton had edge. In Licence to Kill he was a rogue agent. That's edgy.

(Warren and Jonathan give him looks of disbelief)  
And he was amazing in The Living Daylights.

JONATHAN

Yeah, which was written for Roger Moore, not Timothy Dalton!

WARREN

(annoyed)  
Okay, this is stupid! We're wasting time. End of discussion.

The other two nod and turn to their consoles, begin typing.  
Beat.

WARREN

(very angry)  
I mean, there's a shot of like \*pigeons\*, doing double-takes when the gondola blasted by! Moonraker ... is inexcusable.

The others just look at him.

Cut to Spike coming out of the bar, walking quickly, waving his hands in annoyance. He's looking at the ground, so he nearly bumps into Buffy who's standing on the street, arms crossed, staring at something down the street. Spike sighs and rolls his eyes.

BUFFY

That van.

Spike looks where she's looking. Shot of the black van parked by the sidewalk.

SPIKE

You wanna steal a van, I'm with you, luv, but we have got the motorcycle.

(gestures behind them)

BUFFY  
(shakes head)  
I've seen it before. At the  
construction site.

She takes a couple of steps forward.

Cut to inside the van. Warren is in foreground with his back  
to Andrew in background.

WARREN  
Connery is the only actor of the  
bunch.

ANDREW  
Timothy Dalton should get an  
Oscar and  
(yells)  
beat Sean Connery over the head  
with it!

WARREN  
(grimly)  
Okay, that's it.

Warren spins around, grabs Andrew, gets him in a headlock.  
They struggle.

JONATHAN  
Hey! Stop it! Guys!

Jonathan tries to break them up, looks up at the monitors,  
gasps.

JONATHAN  
Look!

They all look.

The monitors show Buffy walking toward the van.

ANDREW  
Oh, she's coming over here! What  
do we do?

WARREN  
Jonathan, grab your magic bone.

Warren and Andrew burst into giggles again. Jonathan looks  
at them in annoyance.

Cut to outside. Buffy approaches the van, frowning. Spike  
stays where he is several yards back.

Suddenly a large demon comes around the van and growls at Buffy. He has red skin, curved horns and wings, and wears only a loincloth.

DEMON

Rrrah! You have discovered me!  
 (puts hands on hips)  
 But do not try to defeat me, for  
 I have been testing you and I  
 know your weaknesses. Ha ha ha!

The demon suddenly looks over in dismay as the van starts up and begins to drive off.

Buffy goes over to the demon, tries to punch it, but being drunk she misses the first time. She kicks out and gets the demon square in the groin.

DEMON

Ooh! Oh!

The demon doubles over in pain. Buffy falls backward onto her butt.

Spike runs over and helps Buffy up.

BUFFY

I'm okay! I'm fine! Get off me!  
 (Spike makes a "okay,  
 okay" gesture)

DEMON

I am well struck!  
 (voice breaking)  
 I call on the misty portal to my  
 demon dimension, where I will lay  
 my head and gently die.

The demon throws something on the ground which causes a shower of sparks and a cloud of smoke. Then he turns and runs away.

Buffy and Spike cough and wave the smoke away.

BUFFY

He blew up. Did you see that?

SPIKE

(looks around in confusion)  
 Yeah, I saw. He's gone.

BUFFY  
(shrugs)  
Gotta love it, you know.  
(Spike looks at her  
with a smile)  
It makes you feel all powerful.  
(uncertainly)  
Strong.

Beat. She looks a little ill. Spike continues looking at her.

BUFFY  
Kinda sick.

Cut to the van parked on a dark side street. Warren's at the wheel. Andrew in the passenger seat. The demon comes up on the driver's side, panting.

DEMON  
She hurt me all over.

WARREN  
Someone'll see you! Get in the back.

DEMON  
I won't fit.

ANDREW  
Well, do the ... thing.

DEMON  
Oh, right. Let the spell be ended!

The demon shrinks and turns back into Jonathan, holding the loincloth around his waist (as it is now much too big for him). He groans in pain, hobbles over to the back of the van. The other two go through the bead curtain.

Jonathan opens the back door and climbs into the van.

JONATHAN  
Ahh! Ow.

Warren wraps a blanket around Jonathan.

JONATHAN  
(plops into a chair  
still groaning)  
Ohh, next time I do that spell,  
one of you guys has to look like  
the demon.

ANDREW

(awed)  
The Slayer touched you.

JONATHAN

(sourly)  
Yeah, it was sexy the way she touched me real hard with her fists. I only looked big. I actually had the proportional strength of ... uh ... me.

WARREN

Guys, think about this. We took on the Slayer. I mean, we've got all kinds of stuff in the computer now ... speed, strength, reaction time ... we're getting what we need to really become a threat to her. We tested her, faced her ... and we survived.

JONATHAN

Unless I have internal injuries that will eventually kill me.

ANDREW

Oh, of course, but barring that, Warren's right. We did good!

WARREN

(nods)  
The Trio ... versus the Slayer. It's not over.

They all nod and smile.

ANDREW

Plus, look what Warren and me discovered by accident before we drove away!

Andrew jumps up and gets into one of the chairs, fiddling with the equipment. The other two come to look over his shoulder.

JONATHAN

What?

They all stare at the screens.

ANDREW/WARREN/JONATHAN

(unison)  
Free cable porn!



Cut to: interior Summers house, night. Giles stands in the hallway outside the bathroom holding a glass of water. The bathroom door opens and Buffy comes out, walking slowly. Giles gives her the glass.

GILES  
Feel any better?

BUFFY  
I think at one point, I actually  
turned completely inside out.  
(walks into her room)  
But yeah, better.  
(drinks)

GILES  
I'm sorry I didn't, uh, find this  
demon with my research.

BUFFY  
(sits on floor next to  
the bed)  
Aw, it's okay. I-it wasn't much  
of a fight.

She pulls a fringed blanket off the bed, bunches it up and holds it against her middle.

BUFFY  
I got lucky.

She puts her elbow on the bed and rests her forehead on her hand.

BUFFY  
(quietly)  
I'm really screwing up, Giles.

GILES  
What? Come on.  
(sits on the bed)  
You were being tested ...  
sequentially, by some ... unknown  
demon. I don't call that screwing  
up.

BUFFY  
No, it completely is. I let the  
demon set the rules.

GILES

Go easy on yourself, will you? I mean, you don't have to figure the whole thing out at once, you know, job and everything. You're pushing yourself too hard.

BUFFY

The nice people at the phone company? Seem to think it's not hard enough.

GILES

Well, maybe there's something I can do about that.

(takes something from  
his pocket)

This is, um ... I...

It's a folded piece of paper. Giles turns it over and over in his hands, then holds it out to Buffy.

GILES

It's for you.

BUFFY

(takes it)

A check?

She unfolds the check, looks at the amount, looks stunned.

BUFFY

This is, is too much, I can't take it.

GILES

Well, tear it up then.  
(reaches for it)

BUFFY

(snatches it away from him)  
No! I was just being polite.  
(smiles)  
I'm taking the money.

Giles smiles, leans on the bed. Buffy looks at the check again.

BUFFY

This is, this is great. This is more than great.

Giles puts his hand on her shoulder. She looks up at him.

BUFFY  
I don't ... really know how to  
say this ...  
(softly)  
but it's a little like having Mom  
back.

GILES  
In this scenario, I am your mother?

BUFFY  
Wanna be my shiftless absentee  
father?

Giles grins a little, then pulls a serious face.

GILES  
Is there some sort of, um, rakish  
uncle?

BUFFY  
(smiles)  
I'm just saying ...  
(seriously)  
Thank you. So much.

Buffy tries to get up, groans in pain. Giles gets up, helps  
her stand.

BUFFY  
I'm gonna ... show this to Dawn.  
She loves it when things get easy.

She walks to the door, looking at the check. Pauses in the  
doorway, turns back to Giles.

BUFFY  
I just ... wanna tell you ...  
that, um ... this ... makes me  
feel safe. Knowing you're always  
gonna be here.

Giles gives her a smile and a nod. But as soon as Buffy  
turns to leave the room, his smile turns to a worried frown  
and he sighs.

Blackout.

Executive Producers: Joss Whedon and Marti Noxon.