

**Buffy The Vampire Slayer**

**Season 8**

Episode 14

"Open Doors"

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - BUFFY'S ROOM - DAY

BUFFY is sitting on her bed, putting on a shoe. DAWN walks into the room, already dressed.

BUFFY

Hey.

DAWN

You got in pretty late last night.

BUFFY

Yeah. I'd have been home way sooner, but the drive from Seattle to here is pretty long. It's like Dad's allergic to being remotely nearby.

DAWN

Did you guys do anything fun?

BUFFY

We went to lunch, and dinner, and he finally got tickets to an actual ice show. It was good to finally get a chance to just talk.

(proudly)

And with only a few awkward moments, might I add.

When Buffy finishes putting on her shoes, she remains on the bed, in order to talk to Dawn.

DAWN

I'm glad you guys are working things out.

BUFFY

Actually, so am I.

(beat)

So, anything happen here last night?

Dawn sits on her own bed, facing Buffy.

DAWN

I didn't talk to Willow or Xander about their night yet, but I did kinda have a close encounter of the snake-like demon kind.

BUFFY

You weren't hurt, were you?

DAWN

No. Nothing like that, but it was... weird.

BUFFY

What kind of weird.?

DAWN

The demons were all over town. I saw them in the school, and on Main Street... I can't even tell how many there might have been. Anyway, I got all set up to actually fight them, and when I went back out, they were gone.

BUFFY

You were gonna fight that many demons by yourself?

Dawn hesitates.

DAWN

Yup. Just me.

BUFFY

That's stupid.

DAWN

Can we focus on the point here? They just went away. Isn't that weird?

BUFFY

I guess. Do you know what they were?

DAWN

Yeah, I looked them up. They're seeker demons. Summoned by pretty much anyone who wants to, and sent to find pretty much whatever anyone wants to find.

(beat)

Kinda like that big snake thing that Glory sent after me, but with legs and clothes.

BUFFY

So, we should figure out what they want, and if they got it.

DAWN

Probably.

BUFFY

Then let's.

Buffy stands up and walks out of the room. Dawn follows.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Buffy and Dawn walk down the stairs. As they get to the bottom, Buffy sees WILLOW sitting on the couch, with her legs pulled close to her chest, and wrapped in a blanket. She is holding her necklace tight in her hand as she sits like this.

Buffy turns to Dawn.

BUFFY

Hey, why don't you go get some  
breakfast before we get to work.  
I'll be right in.

Dawn is about to say no, but sees Willow. She just nods and walks off.

Buffy walks to the couch and sits next to Willow. Willow is deep in thought, and looks like she hasn't slept at all.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Hey, Will. You okay?

Willow looks at Buffy and forces a weak smile.

WILLOW

Fine. You?

BUFFY

Also fine. But my fine doesn't have  
me staring off into space. Did you  
sleep last night?

WILLOW

A little. I just have a lot on my  
mind.

BUFFY

Anything I can help with?

Willow thinks about it.

WILLOW

I don't think so.

BUFFY

Just tell me, and I can be there for  
you. I need to know if this is a big  
waffle breakfast kind of upset, or  
if I should pull out the big guns  
and get the super chocolate chunk  
ice cream.

WILLOW

I'm not hungry.

BUFFY

Okay, now I know it's bad.

Willow looks at Buffy, and decides to fill her in. She motions toward a pencil on the coffee table.

WILLOW

See the pencil?

Buffy looks.

BUFFY

This is about a pencil?

WILLOW

It's not about the pencil.

(beat)

It's about me trying to float the pencil since four o'clock, and not being able to.

Buffy's confused.

BUFFY

What? You could float that pencil in your sleep. You've done it before. Remember last year, with the rose that almost went through your bedroom wall?

WILLOW

That was then.

(beat)

I've lost it, Buffy. I can't even float a pencil anymore. It's just gone.

Buffy thinks for a second.

BUFFY

Okay, so we'll figure this out. We'll make you better.

Willow's eyes slowly drift to meet Buffy's. Buffy can tell that this isn't all about Willow's magic.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

There's something else.

Willow nods.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

What?

WILLOW

I kinda slept with Xander.

Buffy's eyes widen.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF TEASER

## ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Where we left off. Willow is reacting to Buffy's look by wincing as though very guilty of something.

BUFFY

You what?

(beat)

I mean, I know what you what. You...  
how?

Her eyes widen and she quickly holds up a hand.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Wait. Don't answer that one either.

(beat)

You're gay.

WILLOW

I know.

BUFFY

I don't mean to tell you how to do your own job here, but gay people don't sleep with Xander. Well, I mean a gay guy might, but... Why does my mind keep going to very bad places?

WILLOW

Are you freaked out?

BUFFY

No, Will. I'm not freaked out, Will.

WILLOW

You're freaked out.

BUFFY

Will, I told you, I'm not freaked out.

WILLOW

Then why do you keep saying my name like that?

BUFFY

Like what, Wi--

Buffy catches herself this time. She calms herself down.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I'm confused.

WILLOW

Yeah.

Buffy gets under the cover with Willow and brings her legs up close to her chest. Both of them stare into space, trying to process this.

Dawn walks back into the room, smiling.

DAWN

Hey, I'm making French toast. Anybody want some?

Buffy and Willow don't even hear her.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Oookay.

Confused, she heads upstairs.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Dawn gets to the top of the stairs, just as XANDER is coming out of the bathroom. He doesn't seem that weirded out.

DAWN

Mornin'.

XANDER

Hey.

DAWN

So, I'm making French toast. You want?

XANDER

Normal, or with weird stuff inside?

DAWN

All out of weird stuff, so just normal.

XANDER

Cool. Count me in.

(then)

Hey, have you seen Willow?

DAWN

She's downstairs with Buffy.

XANDER

Ah.

They start to walk back down the stairs.





Xander goes and sits at the table. Dawn continues to work on breakfast for a few seconds, and then looks over at Xander. She sees that his mind is somewhere else.

DAWN  
Xander, are you okay?

XANDER  
Fine.

DAWN  
You don't seem fine.  
(beat)  
You can tell me if something's wrong,  
y'know.

Xander is silent for a moment, and then he looks at her.

XANDER  
Okay.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Buffy and Willow are still on the couch. Willow's still clutching her necklace. They sit in silence for a few seconds.

The SOUND OF GLASS BREAKING is heard, from the kitchen.

BUFFY  
Dawn knows.

Willow winces a little more.

Buffy looks at Willow.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
So, how did it happen?  
(beat)  
And I mean that in the least porny  
way possible.

WILLOW  
We had a pretty strange night. With Kennedy holding us hostage, and then my magic went ploohie. It just kinda happened.

BUFFY  
Wait. Kennedy held you hostage?

WILLOW  
Only for a little while. It's not an issue anymore... Except for the amulet of Morel Divineh thing. She wants it.

BUFFY

So, Kennedy held you hostage, looking for the amulet that I dreamed about, Dawn ran into a swarm of seeker demons, your magic went wonky, and you slept with Xander? All in one night?

WILLOW

I mentioned that it was pretty strange, right?

BUFFY

I should never leave any of you guys alone ever again.

Willow sighs.

WILLOW

My head feels all throbby.

BUFFY

I can see why.

(beat)

What do you plan to do?

WILLOW

(beat)

I don't know. Everything's all weird now. I mean, Xander's neat and everything, but there is that whole gay thing that I don't think I should ignore either. It's like I'm suddenly torn between two different lives and neither one of them is making much sense.

BUFFY

You know that whatever you decide, I'm here for you, right?

WILLOW

Thanks.

Willow stands up.

BUFFY

Where you going?

WILLOW

Brush teeth and shower. I feel bad mentally, so I figure that I should at least try to smell better physically.

BUFFY

Good plan.

Willow goes upstairs.

Buffy sits by herself, pondering.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
 So, do I take care of Dawn's demons,  
 Willow's magic, or Kennedy's amulet  
 first?

She thinks for a moment, and then reaches under the couch.  
 She pulls out the Scythe and looks it over.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
 First things first. Get this thing  
 someplace a whole lot safer.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

On the stove, the French toast is burning and smoking. Dawn  
 is paying it no attention, as she is busy standing over  
 Xander.

DAWN  
 How?  
 (beat)  
 Why?

XANDER  
 It just happened. I mean, for a while,  
 things have been kinda different  
 with us, I guess.

DAWN  
 Since when have things been different?  
 I haven't noticed anything, and I  
 usually notice these things.

XANDER  
 There was a... We kinda had a moment,  
 back when Buffy was in Vegas. It led  
 to an awkward period that now looks  
 like happy bonding time compared to  
 how this feels.

Dawn's still confused by all of this, but she tries to be  
 comforting. It's obvious that she has no idea what to say.

DAWN  
 I think it's just weird right now  
 because of... Well, she's gay.  
 (beat)  
 It'll calm down. It has to, right?

XANDER  
 Here's hoping.

Dawn goes to Xander and sits next to him.

DAWN

So, what's the situation from your side?

XANDER

What do you mean?

DAWN

I mean, you slept with Willow, and it wasn't just something that happened suddenly.

(beat)

Do you love her?

XANDER

Well, yeah. I mean, we all love Willow. Who wouldn't? Sure, she kinda pushed it when she did the whole evil thing, but I think we're moving past that now, and--

DAWN

Xander.

XANDER

Hmm?

DAWN

Do you love her?

He pauses, and thinks about the question.

XANDER

When we were kids, she'd always want to play house. You know, she'd be the mom and I'd be the dad that had to be bribed with a Chocolate Hurricane bar in order to be the dad. She'd be at the plastic stove, pretending to make plastic pancakes, and when we sat down to pretend we were eating, we'd make grownup small talk about our imaginary lives with our important jobs.

DAWN

She still makes plastic pancakes, y'know?

XANDER

Only now, I don't want to pretend.

Dawn smiles. Behind her, the French toast bursts into flames. Smelling something, she looks back and sees them.

DAWN

Oh!

She rushes to put out the fire. Xander rests his head on the table.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - WEAPON ROOM - DAY

Buffy opens the doorway to the room, and steps into it, holding onto the Scythe. She stands for a moment, just looking at the room, and at the Scythe in her hands.

The room is a lot cleaner than before. The dust has been taken care of, and the weapons have been polished.

Xander walks up behind her. He looks at the room.

XANDER

You did a pretty good job cleaning this place up.

(beat)

It's kinda like you were meant to find this house.

She looks at him, and then back to the room. She wants to mention his situation, but senses that he's looking to get his mind off of it.

BUFFY

It was built for a Slayer.

XANDER

So, you're planning to keep the Scythe in here?

BUFFY

Seems fitting, don't you think?

XANDER

Yeah. 'Sides, keeping it under the couch was starting to scratch the floor.

Buffy holds the Scythe up, to better look at it.

BUFFY

I still can't get over how beautiful it is. The work that went into making it. The energy that I can feel coming off of it. But there's one thing that I still can't make sense of.

XANDER

What's that?

BUFFY

This is a Slayer's weapon. Holding it unlocks something inside, and makes us both more powerful.

She turns to Xander.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

So, what the hell was Caleb gonna do with it? To him, it's pretty much an ax with a pointy stick at the end.

XANDER

I find that it's a lot easier not to dwell on some of the things that went down last year. They can tend to lead to headaches.

Buffy steps forward, to the empty sword stand in the middle of the room.

BUFFY

Whatever his deal was, it doesn't matter. The Scythe is where it belongs now. It's like this place was made to hold it.

She gently places the Scythe on the sword stand, and stands back to admire it.

Suddenly, the sword stand tips over under the weight of the Scythe. It falls to the floor.

Buffy and Xander look down at the broken stand and the Scythe.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Or not.

XANDER

I can fix that for you.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Willow is in the shower, just standing under the water, letting it wash over her. Her mind is once again somewhere else.

Finally, she pulls herself back to reality, and turns off the shower. She grabs her towel and begins to dry off as she steps out of the shower.

As she dries off, she looks up at the mirror and gasps.

REVEAL THE MIRROR. It has the words "YOU NEED ME" written on it, in blood.

Willow goes to the mirror and examines it. As she raises a hand to touch the writing, she notices something.

Her finger is bleeding.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE



## ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Buffy, Willow and Xander are standing in front of the mirror. Buffy and Xander are just looking at it for the first time. Willow (in her robe) is really uncomfortable with the situation.

BUFFY  
How did this happen?

WILLOW  
I'm not sure. I just got out of the shower and it was there.

As Willow says that, she gestures with her hand. Xander sees the blood on it.

XANDER  
Oh, God. You're bleeding.

He grabs a towel and wraps it around her hand.

WILLOW  
I'm fine. It's not bleeding anymore.

BUFFY  
You did this?

WILLOW  
No.  
(then)  
I don't know. I don't remember doing it.

BUFFY  
Wait, I don't get this. The writing-

WILLOW  
Which isn't in my handwriting.

BUFFY  
-Which isn't in your handwriting, says "You need me". What is that supposed to mean? You need you for what?

(beat)  
I mean, besides the usual things that people need themselves for.

Willow can't answer the question. She's on the verge of breaking down. Xander sees this, and puts an arm around her.

XANDER

We'll figure this out.

For a moment, Willow is comforted by Xander, but then she gets a guilty look on her face and pulls away. Xander can't help but feel a little hurt by this.

WILLOW

Figure what out? My lack of magic?  
The writing on the wall? How 'bout  
the fact that my whole entire life  
is a big pile of mess, and every  
time I think I can't handle anything  
else, it just gets more and more  
messed up?

BUFFY

Will...

WILLOW

I can't take anymore.

Willow looks at the ground, trying not to break into tears. Xander puts a hand on her shoulder.

XANDER

We'll get through this.

WILLOW

We?

Willow looks back up at Xander, with an angry look on her face.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

How do you think you're gonna help  
me? What can you do?

XANDER

I don't know.

WILLOW

Wow. That's a lot. So glad you're on  
my team here, Xand.

BUFFY

Willow, stop it.

WILLOW

Everyone keeps telling me that they'll  
help me through this, but you're all  
worthless to me right now. You can't  
do a damn thing to help me.

Willow walks out of the bathroom. Buffy looks at Xander.

BUFFY

What was that?

Xander doesn't know what's happening, but he feels the need to make excuses for her.

XANDER

She's just upset.

BUFFY

No. Something isn't right.

Buffy walks out of the bathroom, going after Willow. Xander follows.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Willow comes down the stairs, still angry. Buffy and Xander soon follow.

BUFFY

Willow, stop.

Willow goes to the bookcase, and starts looking at the few mystical reference books that they have.

WILLOW

This is crap. This is all crap.

Willow grabs the books and throws them across the room.

BUFFY

Calm down.

Buffy tries to grab Willow, but Willow looks at her with her angry face.

WILLOW

Get. Your hands. Off of me.

BUFFY

What's happening to you?

WILLOW

Now!

As Willow says that, BLACKNESS FILLS HER EYES like clouds gathering before a storm. Buffy's eyes widen.

Suddenly, BUFFY IS THROWN across the room, almost hitting Xander as she crashes into the wall and hits the floor.

Xander bends down to see if Buffy's okay.

Willow looks at herself, feeling power. She smiles.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Looks like the ol' spark ain't so  
gone after all.

After checking Buffy, Xander looks back up to Willow.

XANDER  
Will, look at yourself. Look at what  
you're doing.

WILLOW  
(smiles)  
Neat, isn't it?

Xander helps Buffy to her feet. Both of them are a little  
freaked.

XANDER  
It's happening again.

BUFFY  
The magick is getting to her.

WILLOW  
It's like I can... finally... breath  
again.

As she says that, Willow starts to struggle with her words.  
She suddenly drops to her knees. HER EYES RETURN TO NORMAL.

Now freaked out by herself, Willow looks up at Buffy and  
Xander.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Oh, God.

BUFFY  
Willow?

WILLOW  
Buffy, I didn't mean it. I didn't  
mean... I don't know what's happening  
to me. I can't control it.

Still a little wary, Buffy walks to Willow. She gets on the  
floor with her, and holds her as Willow starts to cry.

Buffy looks up at Xander, concerned.

INT. ALFRED P. VANCE HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Dawn is sitting at the lunch table with SHELLY, as she did  
in the last episode. This time, Shelly is actually eating  
instead of reading.

SHELLY  
So, we're cool then?

DAWN

Yeah. I overreacted.

SHELLY

Good. 'Cause it kinda sucks to be fighting.

DAWN

Agreed. Let's try not to do that anymore.

Shelly smiles.

SHELLY

So, I tried calling last night. Nobody answered.

DAWN

Yeah. We were out. Busy people, we are.

SHELLY

Ah. Do anything exciting?

DAWN

Not really. Just the usual stuff.

Dawn checks her watch.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Didn't Ryan say he'd be here by now?

SHELLY

He's always late for lunch.

Dawn nods in agreement. After thinking for a second, she leans a little closer to Shelly and speaks in a low voice.

DAWN

Can I ask you something?

SHELLY

Sure.

DAWN

I kinda get the feeling that Ryan's not telling me something.

Shelly looks down at her drink.

SHELLY

Like what?

DAWN

I don't know. I was hoping you could tell me.

Shelly hesitates.

SHELLY  
I don't think I sh-- Ryan!

Dawn turns and sees RYAN on the other side of the cafeteria. He's walking their way.

DAWN  
(to Shelly)  
We'll talk later.

ANGLE ON: RYAN

As Ryan gets closer to the table, he smiles at Dawn. He doesn't notice JENNA walking toward him, and the two narrowly avoid bumping into each other.

JENNA  
Watch it.

RYAN  
Sorry.  
(then)  
Hey. Jenna.

Jenna stops and looks back at Ryan, a little thrown.

JENNA  
Huh?

RYAN  
You wanna sit with us?

Jenna isn't sure how to react. She looks at the table, and Dawn. Dawn smiles and nods her head. Shelly just looks confused.

Jenna hesitates.

JENNA  
I don't think so.

RYAN  
C'mon. You can't sit alone forever.

JENNA  
Actually, I was kinda hoping I could.

RYAN  
Seriously. One day won't kill you.  
If you don't like it, you never have  
to speak to us again.

Jenna thinks about it. Finally, she gives in.

JENNA

Fine. I'll get my lunch.

RYAN

Cool. I'll meet you over there.

Ryan continues on to the table, as Jenna goes to get her lunch.

When Ryan sits next to Dawn, she smiles at him.

DAWN

That was nice.

RYAN

I was just thinking about it, and you were right. We really never did give her a chance.

SHELLY

And the fact that you're trying to run the bases with Jenna's sympathizer has nothing to do with this turn of events?

RYAN

No.

(then)

Well, maybe a little. But that doesn't mean it's still not true. She does deserve a chance.

SHELLY

Fine, but if the girl starts breaking our bones, don't say I didn't warn you.

Jenna arrives at the table and sits down. There's an awkward pause. Nobody has anything to say in this unusual situation. Finally, Dawn speaks up.

DAWN

So... Jenna. What's up?

JENNA

(beat)

Not much.

There's more silence. Ryan thinks hard for something to say.

RYAN

So, did you guys hear about all the break-ins last night?

Dawn and Jenna share a look.

DAWN

Break-ins?

RYAN

Yeah. A bunch of them, all over town. Nothing was taken though, which is weird.

DAWN

Do they know who did it?

RYAN

Nope. Security cameras didn't pick anything up.

SHELLY

Weird.

RYAN

They got into the video store. I just can't believe they didn't take anything from there. I even counted the candy bars on the snack rack. The only thing missing is Grace Harton, and she skips town every few weeks anyway.

DAWN

Grace Harton?

SHELLY

We have biology with her.

DAWN

Oh.

Dawn looks at Jenna, who is keeping quiet. Jenna looks down at her food.

INT. ALFRED P. VANCE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Dawn walks out of the cafeteria and starts to walk down the hall. Jenna rushes after her, catching up.

JENNA

How can you do that?

DAWN

I know. Kissing in public is gross to other people. We're trying to cut back on it.

JENNA

Not that.

DAWN

Then what?



JENNA

Stay so cool about the fact that the girl is dead. How can you live in this entirely different world?

DAWN

Oh. I guess you just get used to it.

JENNA

So, you stop caring?

DAWN

Not stop. It's more like learning to handle it.

(beat)

And we don't know for sure that she's dead.

JENNA

We heard a scream.

DAWN

That doesn't mean anything. She could have run.

JENNA

Whatever. I just don't know if I'm cut out for this life.

DAWN

You are. It's exactly what you were cut out for, or else you wouldn't be what you are.

JENNA

A freak?

DAWN

A Slayer.

JENNA

What's the difference?

DAWN

Maybe you'll see it more once you understand it more.

(beat)

We still on for tonight?

JENNA

Yeah.

DAWN

Good. It's time to see what you're capable of.

JENNA

If you say so. Just don't expect me next week. My brother has to go to the hospital in Seattle, and my parents always make me go even though I don't do anything.

They get to Dawn's locker and she starts to open it.

DAWN

If you don't wanna go, why not get out of it?

JENNA

Easier said than done. I think my parents expect me to off myself or something, so they don't want me being alone too much.

DAWN

That sucks.

JENNA

I guess. It's not really their fault though.

Dawn doesn't know how to react to that.

JENNA (CONT'D)

I guess I'll see ya later.

DAWN

See ya.

Jenna starts to walk away. Dawn thinks about the situation, feeling bad for Jenna.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Willow is still in her robe, sitting in one of the chairs. Xander walks into the room, with a steaming mug. He puts it down next to her.

XANDER

I thought you might need this.

Willow looks over.

WILLOW

Tea?

XANDER

Only if you like your tea hot chocolaty. I could get tea though.

WILLOW

No. This is better. More comforting.

XANDER

I wasn't sure if you wanted  
marshmallows, so...

Xander pulls a napkin out of his shirt pocket and unfolds it. There's a handful of tiny marshmallows in there. Willow smiles.

WILLOW

Pile 'em on.

Xander puts them into the drink for her, and then sits back. There's an awkward silence that seems to carry on forever.

Finally, Xander speaks.

XANDER

Buffy's still on the phone. I think  
Giles is having another fight with  
the new head Council guy.

Willow just nods. She has no response to that.

More awkward silence falls upon them. Willow eventually takes a sip of her hot chocolate.

WILLOW

(re: the hot chocolate)  
Good.

Xander smiles, but it soon fades. Back to weirdness.

Willow gets a guilty look on her face.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I didn't mean it, y'know?

XANDER

Mean what?

WILLOW

What I said. About you being worthless  
to me.

XANDER

That? Already forgotten.

Willow accepts the reply with a nod. She tries to put the topic behind them, but she can't.

WILLOW

'Cause I really don't know what I'd  
do without you.

(awkward beat)  
And Buffy and Dawn.

XANDER

Right. All of us. Equally.

WILLOW

(beat)

Yeah.

More silence. Even more awkward.

Willow begins to fiddle with her necklace, nervously.

Finally, Xander can't take any more of this.

XANDER

Y'know what? I'm sorry. This is really not the time to be talking about this issue, seeing as how you might flay me or something, but I can't ignore it anymore.

(beat)

We slept together. There, I said it.

He waits for a response. She doesn't respond.

XANDER (CONT'D)

You're free to respond to that whenever you want.

WILLOW

I don't know how.

XANDER

Talk to me, Will. Tell me what you're thinking. Was it a mistake? If it was a mistake, we'll deal with that, but don't just ignore the fact that it happened.

(beat)

Was it a mistake?

WILLOW

No.

(then)

I don't know. I can't even process all of the information right now. Incase you haven't noticed, you're not exactly my type these days.

XANDER

So, what do we do?

WILLOW

I don't know. It's like everything in my head is telling me to run and hide, or try to escape this, but then I can't.

(MORE)

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I try to tell myself that it was a mistake, but then it doesn't feel like a mistake.

(beat)

You're Xander. You're the guy that I've always wanted.

XANDER

So, what's the problem? The way I see it, we're both free at the moment. We're not cheating on anyone this time.

Willow looks down.

WILLOW

It's more complicated than that.

XANDER

Why does it have to be?

WILLOW

It just is.

Xander can't think of a response to that.

They once again fall into awkward silence.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Buffy is sitting on the table, waiting to be taken off of hold.

BUFFY

(chanting to herself)

Don't play that song again. Don't play that song again.

(beat)

I swear, if the next song is that same stupid song, I'll-- Son of a bitch.

She takes the phone away from her ear, tempted to hang up. Finally, she accepts her grim fate and puts the phone to her ear again.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Stupid Spice Girls.

Suddenly, she perks up.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Giles?

(beat)

Did you find anything out?

(MORE)

BUFFY (CONT'D)

(beat)  
 Well, what did they say?  
 (beat)  
 How long?  
 (beat)  
 That's too long, Giles. Willow's in  
 pain here. How am I supposed to-- I  
 know.  
 (beat)  
 I know.  
 (beat)  
 Just let me know when they get back  
 to you.  
 (beat)  
 Bye.

She hangs up the phone, closes her eyes and takes a deep,  
 calming breath.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

(under her breath)  
 Great.

She puts the phone down, and walks out of the dining room.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Buffy walks into the still-silent living room. Xander looks  
 up at her from his seat.

XANDER

Anything?

BUFFY

Not yet. Giles put in a call to the  
 coven, but it'll take a while before  
 they get back to him.

XANDER

So, what do we do until then?

BUFFY

I guess we don't have a choice. All  
 we can do is wait.

XANDER

That's the worst plan ever.

BUFFY

Tell it to the witches.

Buffy looks to Willow, who is looking at the floor in front  
 of her.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

Willow smiles.

WILLOW  
They won't be able to help her.

BUFFY  
Don't talk like that. They'll find  
an answer to all of th-- Did you  
just say "her"?

Willow looks up at Buffy, still smiling. Buffy's eyes widen.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
Willow, fight this.

WILLOW  
Willow's not much of a fighter. She  
tends to excel in the geek areas.

Willow gets to her feet. When she does, it's not quite  
natural. It seems almost as though she floats out of the  
chair.

Xander stands up. Willow looks at him.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Sit, boy.

She waves a hand at him. He drops back to his chair.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
That a boy. Remind me to give you a  
snack later.

BUFFY  
What are you?

Willow looks at Buffy.

WILLOW  
How many times do I have to tell you  
people this?

WILLOW'S ROBE MORPHS INTO NORMAL CLOTHES (far more stylish  
and sexy than the clothes she's been wearing).

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
I'm the magick.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Buffy flies through the air, crashing into the bookcase. As she tries to pull herself back up, she looks at Willow.

BUFFY

I really wish you'd stop doing that.

WILLOW

Oh, but it's so much fun.

(smiles)

Can I do it again?

XANDER

Willow, fight this.

WILLOW

(mockingly)

"Willow, fight this". Yeah, 'cause this is a **Star Trek** episode. Any minute now, Willow's sure to use her super strong will power to gain control of her body.

XANDER

She's stronger than you.

WILLOW

I am her, remember?

BUFFY

No, you're not. I don't know what you are, but you're not Willow.

WILLOW

You're right. I'm better than Willow. Until I came along, Willow was a pathetic little bookworm that got pushed around by everyone. I made her strong. I made her powerful.

XANDER

Also, just a smidge on the psycho side.

Willow waves a hand at Xander.

WILLOW

(in Rumanian)

înceta!

(translation)

Stop!



A BALL OF LIGHT shoots from her hand, hitting Xander in the chest. He's knocked to the ground, shaking uncontrollably.

BUFFY  
What did you do?

Willow turns back to Buffy. For a moment, Willow's face softens.

WILLOW  
(in Rumanian)  
Ajuta.  
(translation)  
Help.

Willow closes her eyes and takes a deep breath, as though gathering her strength. Finally, she opens them again.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Wow, that's annoying.  
(beat)  
Musta been something I ate.

BUFFY  
Why are you doing this?

WILLOW  
Mostly, because I can. Sometimes though...

Willow SHOOTS A LIGHTNING BOLT FROM HER HAND, hitting Buffy. Buffy hits the wall and drops to the ground, unconscious.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
I just do it 'cause it's fun.

Once Buffy's out, Willow turns to Xander. He's still on the ground, shaking. She walk to him, and looks down at him. He's very nervous about this situation.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Look at the big man.

She bends down and pokes at him. He can't defend himself at all.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
You're all shaky.

XANDER  
W--Will... S--Stop this.

WILLOW  
S-sure thing. A-Any minute now.

She smiles at him and stands back up.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I just can't believe she slept with you. I mean...

She looks at him and winces.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

You? You're not even worth beating to a bloody pulp.

She turns and starts to walk away.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Gone now.

The front door opens for her. She walks out. Once she's gone, it closes again.

Xander is left on the floor, still unable to stop shaking.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Willow walks down the street, looking around for something to do. She's bored out of her mind.

As she passes a newspaper machine, she taps it lightly and continues walking. Moments later, it BURSTS INTO FLAMES. She doesn't even turn to admire her work.

Just when she thinks this day couldn't get more boring, she spots something.

WILLOW'S POV

KENNEDY walks out of the hardware store with a bag in hand, and starts walking in the opposite direction.

Willow smiles and starts to follow her.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dawn walks into the house and drops her backpack next to the door.

DAWN

Hello? Anyone...

She spots the mess in the living room, noting that the bookcase is once again torn up.

DAWN (CONT'D)

(re: the bookcase)

Again?

She walks into the room, and finally sees Xander on the floor. He's shaking less, but still out of it.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Xander!

She starts to go to him, but he puts up a hand.

XANDER

H--Help Buffy.

Dawn didn't see Buffy. Xander nods in Buffy's direction, causing Dawn to turn. She finally sees Buffy (still unconscious) and rushes to her.

DAWN

Oh, my God.

She feels Buffy's neck for a pulse. She quickly finds one, and then turns back to Xander.

DAWN (CONT'D)

What happened?

XANDER

Willow.

DAWN

(confused)

Where is she? Is she okay?

XANDER

She did this.

Dawn's even more confused now.

DAWN

Willow did this to you guys?

XANDER

Something's wrong with her. There's something inside her.

Dawn tries to figure this all out. Finally, she turns back to Buffy.

DAWN

We'll deal with Willow later. Right now, we need to wake Buffy up.

She slaps Buffy lightly on the cheek.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Buffy? Buffy, c'mon. Wake up.

Buffy doesn't respond.

XANDER

Smelling salt. It's in the first aid kit.

DAWN

Right.

Dawn rushes into the kitchen.

EXT. WOODED ROAD - DAY

Nobody else is around. Kennedy walks down the road by herself, dangling the bag by her side.

WILLOW (O.S.)

(whispered)

Kennedy.

Kennedy stops and turns. She doesn't see anyone, so she shrugs off the whisper and continues walking.

WILLOW (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(whispered again)

Kennedy.

This time, she's sure she heard it. Kennedy stops walking again.

KENNEDY

What are you, and what do you want?

REVEAL Willow, standing behind her.

WILLOW

And here I thought you'd be happy to see me.

Kennedy turns and is a little surprised to see Willow standing face to face with her.

KENNEDY

Willow? What are you doing here?

WILLOW

Can't a girl look up an old friend?

KENNEDY

I didn't think we were on such good terms after last night.

WILLOW

I'm sure we all wish we could just forget that last night ever happened.

Kennedy senses something different in Willow's voice.

KENNEDY

Are you okay?

WILLOW

Peachy. Little bored though.

Kennedy doesn't respond.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

What's in the bag?

KENNEDY

Couple of good knives. Got word of a few demons that could use some killing.

WILLOW

Didn't think you'd be much for the slaying these days.

KENNEDY

Someone's gotta fight the baddies, right?

WILLOW

Well, yeah. It's just not usually the other baddies. We're supposed to be all cool and not caring about those petty little things.

There's not one part of that comment that Kennedy doesn't feel the need to respond to, but she's too thrown at the moment.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I was kinda hoping we could have some fun.

KENNEDY

Fun?

WILLOW

Y'know... I'm sure there's something we could do.

(smiles)

Wanna blow stuff up?

KENNEDY

Okay, now I know something's wrong. Maybe we should call someone.

WILLOW

Like who? Buffy? I'm sure she'd be thrilled to see you.

(beat)

C'mon. I'm just tired of being so stuffy all the time. I wanna have fun.

Kennedy's a little wary of this, but she finally gives in.

KENNEDY

Sure. What'd you have in mind?

Willow smiles.

WILLOW  
Know anything that needs flaying?

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Buffy's on the couch by now. Dawn is standing over her. Xander is sitting in a chair, with an ice pack to his head. He's doing much better.

Buffy finally starts to wake up. Dawn smiles.

DAWN  
Buffy?

BUFFY  
(groggy)  
Dawn?

Buffy suddenly jumps up.

BUFFY (CONT'D)  
Willow!

DAWN  
Calm down. She's not here.

BUFFY  
Where'd she go? We have to help her.

DAWN  
We will, but we have to figure this out first.  
(beat)  
Now, let's just start at the beginning, and figure this out. Tell me exactly what happened.

Buffy calms herself and sits back down, trying to think about this.

BUFFY  
The first time she freaked out, we were in the bathroom.

DAWN  
Looking at the bloody message?

BUFFY  
Yeah. Then she freaked out and came down here. Then she was normal. Then she freaked out. Then she... Wait.

Buffy tries to remember something.

DAWN

What?

BUFFY

She said something to me. It was in another language, but it looked like it was the real Willow talking to me.

DAWN

What did she say?

BUFFY

I can't remember.

Buffy gets annoyed with herself.

DAWN

Think. What did it sound like?

BUFFY

Judo? But it wasn't "judo". It was something else.

Buffy thinks harder for a second, and then finally gets it.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Ajuto.

DAWN

Y'mean, "ajuta"?

BUFFY

Yeah, that's it.

(beat)

I think.

XANDER

What does it mean?

DAWN

It's Rumanian. I'm not sure on the exact translation, but I think it's something like "help".

BUFFY

Help?

(beat)

She was asking for help.

XANDER

Why would Willow be talking in Rumanian?

DAWN

I guess that's the question.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Willow and Kennedy make their way through the woods. Kennedy is holding onto a knife. Her guard is up.

Willow is walking calmly, enjoying the view.

WILLOW

Why are we out here again?

KENNEDY

I hear there's a nest of demons not far from here. I thought we might kill them.

WILLOW

Sounds fun.

KENNEDY

If we could find them, maybe.

WILLOW

Not a problem.

Willow holds a hand up. A BALL OF LIGHT forms just above her hand. She smiles.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Take us to the demon nest.

The ball takes off, leading the way through the woods.

Kennedy smiles.

KENNEDY

Remind me to talk to you about that spell later.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CAVE - DAY

Willow's ball-o-light leads them here, and VANISHES.

Willow and Kennedy stop behind a grouping of trees and watch the mouth of the cave.

ANGLE ON: THE CAVE

A DEMON (same breed as the snake demons from "Hostage") is guarding the cave.

WILLOW

Snake demon.

KENNEDY

You have a problem with snakes?



WILLOW  
Aside from the taste?  
(beat)  
Just glad it's not a frog demon.

KENNEDY  
The place is probably full of them.  
We should be careful.

Willow smiles and walks away from Kennedy, toward the cave.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)  
Or not.

Kennedy follows Willow.

As they near the cave, the demon goes into attack mode. It starts to walk toward Willow, fangs showing. Willow doesn't flinch at all.

HER EYES TURN BLACK.

WILLOW  
Burn.

With that word alone, the DEMON BURSTS INTO FLAMES, and drops, dead.

Willow turns to Kennedy, smiling.

WILLOW (CONT'D)  
Fun.

KENNEDY  
Glad you liked it, 'cause there's a whole lot more where he came from.

Kennedy nods toward the cave opening. TWENTY MORE DEMONS exit the cave, swarming around the two women.

Willow grins.

WILLOW  
Now that's a lot of demons.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CAVE - DAY

The demons are still circling around Willow and Kennedy. Kennedy is a little uncomfortable with the situation. Willow's cool as a cucumber.

KENNEDY

Told you we should have been more careful.

WILLOW

Relax. It's only a few demons. I can make them bubble and pop in a few seconds.

KENNEDY

And yet we're still talking about it.

One of the demons stops and looks Willow up and down. Willow does the same to him.

Finally, he opens his mouth, and reveals his fangs. Willow smiles at him.

He quickly snaps at her, as though to bite her, but she holds up a hand, stopping him mid-snap. He's frozen there.

Willow leans in close to his ear (or where his ear would be, if he had one) and whispers into it.

WILLOW

(in Latin)

Putesco.

(translation)

Rot.

Suddenly, the demon begins to shake. Blood drips from it's eyes. BOILS FORM on it's face. It drops to the ground, and DECAYS INTO A PILE OF DIRT.

KENNEDY

That was kinda cool.

WILLOW

I try.

KENNEDY

Still have the rest to deal with though.

WILLOW

Oh yeah.

Around them, the rest of the demons are getting angry. They could all attack at any moment.

KENNEDY  
Got a plan for this.

WILLOW  
Gimme a sec.

KENNEDY  
That's about all we have.

Willow looks straight up into the air, with her solid black eyes.

Around her, a FORCEFIELD FORMS, and begins to expand. As it touches the demons, THEY DISINTEGRATE.

Willow's nose begins to bleed.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)  
Are you okay?

Willow doesn't answer her. Sweat is starting to form on her face, and her expression shows that she's struggling for this power.

Eight or so of the demons are caught by the forcefield and die easily before Willow drops to her knees, out of breath. HER EYES RETURN TO NORMAL. She hunches over, in pain. THE FORCEFIELD IS GONE.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)  
Willow?

Kennedy would help her, but there's a bigger problem. The rest of the demons are very angry.

All at once, they attack.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Buffy is pacing back and forth as Dawn sits at the computer, studying the screen. Xander is in a nearby chair, still a little weak.

BUFFY  
Explain this to me.

DAWN  
I told you, I think it goes back to the spell that restored Angel's soul.

BUFFY  
That was, like... a lot of years ago.

DAWN

Which explains a lot, when you think about it.

(beat)

Willow used herself as a vessel. She must have opened some kind of gateway inside of herself, and a piece of something got stuck there. Think about it. Willow's not a natural witch, but she still has all of that power.

(beat)

And a habit of referring to herself in the third person when she's using it.

XANDER

A piece of what kind of something?

DAWN

I'm not sure. A spirit maybe. Whatever it is, it's powerful.

BUFFY

So, this... Everything that's happened to Willow has been because of a mystical hitchhiker?

DAWN

Something like that. I guess Willow's been repressing it for a while, which explains why she's been off her magick game.

There's a pause as Buffy takes in this information.

XANDER

How do we get rid of it?

DAWN

I'm still looking into that. This isn't your run of the mill exorcism here. Willow opened the door and let this thing in. It might be hard to get rid of.

BUFFY

Keep on it. We have to figure this out fast.

XANDER

And then we have to find her. She who can literally be anywhere she wants to be.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CAVE - DAY

The demons are attacking. Willow is still on the ground, crying. Kennedy is doing her best to keep the demons back, but she's having a hard time of doing it.

She kicks one of them in the face, and grabs another, throwing it into yet another. Even with all of this fighting, she's making little progress.

She pulls her knife and manages to stab one of the demons through the heart, killing it. As she pulls the knife back out, she's grabbed from behind and thrown into a tree.

Once she's out of the way, three demons jump onto Willow.

KENNEDY

Willow!

Kennedy fights to get back to Willow, but there are too many demons. She struggles as hard as she can, but she's not getting there fast enough.

Willow can be heard crying and screaming, but we can't see her with the demons on top of her.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)

No!

The demons on top of Willow are hitting her. Suddenly, there is a HISSING sound. One of the demons snaps toward Willow, biting her.

The demons on top of her calm down. They take steps back, revealing a bloody Willow, still on her knees, with a bite on her shoulder. She's getting groggy, and finally drops to the ground, unable to move.

The demons move closer to Willow.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)

Willow!

Though there are demons attacking Kennedy, she finally manages to get them off of her. She kicks one of the demons away from Willow, grabs another one, and throws that demon into the last demon that is attacking Willow.

As she does this, the rest of the demons are getting closer to her. She looks back at them.

KENNEDY (CONT'D)

We have to get out of here.

She grabs Willow's arm and pulls Willow up just as a demon gets close to her.

She picks that demon up by the neck with her free hand, and tosses him back at the rest of the demons, causing enough of a pause in their attack for her to take off with Willow.

About five of the demons follow her in their usual, slow, slick way. The rest of the demons head back into the cave.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Buffy is standing at the stove, stirring a boiling pot.

Dawn walks into the kitchen from the backyard, holding a big handful of herbs. She goes to the stove, and tosses them into the pot.

DAWN

I think that's all of the herbs we need.

BUFFY

I think that's all the herbs we have. Are we sure this'll work?

DAWN

No. This is some powerful stuff we're mixing up here, but Willow's powerful too. We can only hope that this'll work.

BUFFY

And if it doesn't?

Dawn gives Buffy a troubled look.

DAWN

These herbs don't exist anywhere else.

BUFFY

Then I guess this better work.

Dawn takes a nervous breath, and stirs the mixture.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Xander is sitting in the dining room, alone. His mind is a million miles away, wondering where Willow is and worrying about her.

He sits like this for a while, in silence, helpless.

Suddenly, the front door bursts open and Kennedy rushes into the room, still holding Willow up.

Xander jumps out of his seat and looks at them, both bloody and beaten.

XANDER

What did you do to her?

Buffy and Dawn rush in from the kitchen. Without a pause, Buffy gets into fight mode, and starts to rush Kennedy.

KENNEDY

Wait.

With Buffy's fist inches from Kennedy's face, she stops.

BUFFY

Give me one reason why I shouldn't make your nose shatter into a hundred little pieces.

KENNEDY

I didn't do this to her. She came to me.

XANDER

And why would we believe that?

KENNEDY

Because I'm assuming you've seen her acting strange all day.

BUFFY

If you didn't do this, what did?

KENNEDY

Demons. Snake-ish demons that like to travel in large groups. I know this because they're following us.

DAWN

The seeker demons I saw last night.

KENNEDY

We found their nest. There were too many of them.

Buffy grabs Willow away from Kennedy.

BUFFY

We have her now. Get out.

Buffy brings Willow into the living room. The others follow.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Buffy puts Willow on the couch. Xander goes to her, grabbing a blanket off of the chair and covering her.

Buffy turns back to Kennedy, who is still standing in the entrance to the room.

BUFFY

What part of "get out" don't you understand?

KENNEDY

Just tell me what's wrong with her.

BUFFY

What do you care? You left, remember? And the holding her hostage wasn't winning you points either.

KENNEDY

I just want--

BUFFY

Get. Out. Or I'll get you out, and I promise there'll be all kinds of fun sound effects to go along with that beating.

Kennedy hesitates, but finally starts to back down. She knows this isn't the time for fighting.

Buffy and Dawn turn their attention to Willow.

KENNEDY

Fine.

Kennedy turns and is about to walk out the front door when she comes face to face with one of the demons. Four more of them stand behind him.

Her eyes widen as the demon snaps at her, trying to bite her. She narrowly avoids his bite, and knees him in the gut.

Buffy looks up and sees the demons.

BUFFY

Son of a bitch.

She rushes toward the door, just as the rest of the demons are pushing their way in.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Dawn, weapons. Now!

As Buffy starts fighting the demons, along side Kennedy, Dawn rushes up the stairs.

Buffy grabs on of the demon arms, and snaps it. Without even looking away from the first demon, she kicks a second one, sending it into the wall before it can get into the house.



INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - WEAPON ROOM - DAY

Dawn rushes into the room and looks around, trying to decide what to grab.

DAWN  
Weapons. Weapons.

Finally, she grabs the Scythe off of the table, and a crossbow from the wall. She rushes back out of the room.

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dawn rushes back down the stairs, and finds Buffy and Kennedy still fighting with four demons. One of the demons has broken away from them and is moving toward Willow and Xander.

DAWN  
Xander!

Dawn quickly aims and shoots the crossbow, hitting the demon in the back. It falls over, just shy of the couch.

BUFFY  
Dawn, I could really use the weapon now.

Dawn gets to the bottom of the stairs and hands the Scythe off to Buffy.

Kennedy looks at Dawn as she struggles to fight her own demons.

KENNEDY  
Crossbow would be good.

DAWN  
Only got one.

Dawn uses the crossbow to push one of the demons away from Buffy, giving Buffy enough time to take a swing with the Scythe, killing another demon.

The demon that Dawn hit quickly recovers and comes after her, knocking her to the ground.

Buffy stakes this demon with the end of the Scythe, then swings around and decapitates one of the demons that Kennedy is fighting.

Finally able to focus on one demon, Kennedy manages to grab it's head and twist it, snapping it's neck. The demon drops, dead.

All of them catch their breaths. Buffy helps Dawn up.

BUFFY  
Nice shot with the crossbow.

DAWN  
Thanks.

KENNEDY  
(to Dawn)  
You could have gotten me killed back there.

DAWN  
Yeah, I guess that's true.

Dawn turns back to Willow and Xander and heads over to them.

DAWN (CONT'D)  
How's she doing?

XANDER  
Still not moving.

DAWN  
The poison should wear off in a while.

Buffy is staring at Kennedy, who is listening to the status report on Willow. After she hears it, Kennedy turns back to Buffy, but can't help but stare at the Scythe.

BUFFY  
Everything that's happened, and you still can't take your eyes off of it.

KENNEDY  
Do you really want to get into this now?

BUFFY  
No, I don't. Which is why you're leaving.

Buffy turns away from Kennedy and walks toward Willow.

Kennedy pauses for a moment, and then walks out the front door.

ANGLE ON : WILLOW

Still unable to move. Her eyes go from panic mode to very angry mode. THEY TURN BLACK.

XANDER  
Dawn?

DAWN  
Yeah.

Dawn runs into the kitchen.

BUFFY

At least this'll all be over soon.

XANDER

Yeah.

(beat)

I'm a confused person though. On the one hand, I hate seeing her like this. Y'know, all paralyzed and stuff. On the other hand, I don't think my bumps could handle any more bruises.

BUFFY

Let's try not to over think this one.

Dawn comes back into the room with a mug full of steaming liquid.

DAWN

Hold her up.

Xander picks up Willow's head so that Dawn can have her drink from the cup.

Dawn sits on the table near Willow. She dips her finger into the liquid, and pulls it back out. We can see from this that the liquid is thick and dark. She can't help but make an "eew" face.

BUFFY

You sure you know what you're doing?

DAWN

I think so. I just hope it works.

Dawn makes two marks with the liquid, under Willow's eyes. She takes a deep breath and closes her eyes, focusing hard.

DAWN (CONT'D)

With my breath, I cast you from this vessel. With my word, I command you to depart.

Willow starts to breath heavily. Her nose, and eyes begin to bleed.

DAWN (CONT'D)

Not dead, nor of the living, I invoke you, spirit, to return to the interregnum. Leave this place.

Dawn opens her eyes, and pours the contents of the cup into Willow's mouth. Willow drinks deeply, as though she were dying of thirst and this were the only water on the planet.

As the liquid drips down her chin, Willow begins to shake. Not in the same way that Xander shook. More like a cold person, less like a shocked person.

THERE'S MOVEMENT UNDER HER SKIN, as though there were worms inside of her.

Her EYES SWIRL WITH ENERGY.

Xander and Buffy share a look of concern.

BUFFY  
Is it working?

DAWN  
It's up to Willow now.

Around the room, every lightbulb POPS. Buffy, Xander and Dawn jump at the sudden loud noises.

The front door slams shut. The lamp on the table next to the couch BEGINS TO FLOAT. Buffy's eyes widen as she realizes that it's an antique. She quickly grabs it and puts it on the floor.

The marks under Willow's eyes begin to SIZZLE and SMOKE. By this point, the girl just looks like hell.

XANDER  
It's hurting her. We have to stop this.

BUFFY  
We can't.

XANDER  
We can't just sit here.

DAWN  
This is a lot of power we're dealing with. We just have to wait.

XANDER  
It's killing her.

DAWN  
So is whatever's inside her.

Xander hates this, but he knows Dawn's right. He looks away, unable to watch anymore.

Willow begins to cry, and rolls onto her side, still shaking. She lets out a pain filled moan.

Xander can't take it anymore. He stands up and walks away from the couch.

## INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A lot of time has passed. Candles are lighting the room now, as all of the bulbs have been popped.

Xander is sitting near Willow, holding her hand. Willow is on her back, still with black eyes. The blood from her nose and eyes has dried. The marks under her eyes are red. Her lips are dry and cracking. Each breath is a painful struggle.

Buffy and Dawn come into the room, from the kitchen. Dawn is carrying mugs of coffee. Buffy has a bag of cookies. They set them on the table. Buffy puts a hand on Xander's shoulder, knowing that this is hard for him. She sits on the floor next to Willow, and brushes her hair out of her face.

Dawn picks up a mug of coffee, and just stares at it. She finds that she's not very thirsty, so she just sets it back down.

DAWN

Maybe I did something wrong.

BUFFY

No. This had to be done. It should have been done a long time ago.

Suddenly, Willow starts to shake violently.

XANDER

What's happening.

Buffy and Dawn back away a little. Xander keeps hold of Willow's hand and stays next to her. Her EYES RETURN TO NORMAL, but soon begin to GLOW WITH A YELLOW LIGHT.

A jolt of YELLOW ENERGY bursts from Willow's entire body, pulling her from, and dropping her back onto the couch harshly.

The ENERGY DISSIPATES, leaving Willow on the couch, asleep. For the first time in hours, she looks peaceful.

Buffy, Xander and Dawn can't take their eyes off of her. Finally, Dawn breathes a sigh of relief.

DAWN

It's over.

She looks to Buffy, who looks back with a proud look in her eyes. Dawn pulled it off. Buffy looks up and takes a deep, relieved breath.

## INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - WILLOW'S ROOM - DAY

Willow is sitting on her bed. She's cleaned herself up, but still doesn't look great.

In her hands, she's holding her necklace, which she's taken off and is staring at.

Xander walks into her doorway. Willow doesn't look away from her necklace. After a long beat, she speaks softly. Her voice tells us that she's been crying.

WILLOW

After Kennedy took off, I was so angry. I couldn't even stand the thought of her.

(beat)

But I think that part of it was me hating what I did, not what she did. I wasn't hurt that she was gone, I was disgusted by what I did to avoid everything else in my life.

She grips her necklace harder.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

It's confusing. I can't tell what's real about my life anymore and what's not. Like the curtain's gone and I'm just an old man with a giant holographic head.

Xander steps into the room, and sits next to her.

XANDER

The things you did... It wasn't you.

WILLOW

I think it kinda was. I mean, it's what I wanted. The power. The attitude. I was somebody.

XANDER

And now you're suddenly an empty void in space?

WILLOW

That thing- whatever was inside of me- it was how I got the power, but I was still pushing for it. I did things that I can't believe I did. I used people... But it was still me. A part of me.

Willow holds up the necklace.

ANGLE ON : THE NECKLACE

The necklace that she's been holding onto is made of two golden hearts, intertwining, and a small, shiny crystal dangling in the center.

XANDER

What is that?

WILLOW

It's all I have left of Tara.  
Something she gave me.

(beat)

I used her too. From the day I met her, I could feel her power. And the way I treated her... I'm not sure what was real and what was just my need to get as much as I could from her.

Willow starts to tear up.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

But it feels real. And I keep thinking that was... What we did. I keep thinking that if I feel that way about you, then maybe I couldn't have felt that way about her, and I don't want that.

(beat)

But then I can't help feeling like you and me finally have something that I always wanted, and that feels real too. I mean, with Kennedy I was safe. I didn't feel this way. But with you, it's like I'm gonna hurt Tara because this thing I'm feeling is supposed to be hers.

XANDER

Nobody's making you choose.

(beat)

Do you think that Tara would want you to feel like this? Like you had to stay alone forever?

Willow doesn't answer.

XANDER (CONT'D)

I might be saying this for my own selfish reasons, I'm not really sure, but it seems to me that Tara would want you to be happy. She wouldn't want you to feel guilty about moving on.

(beat)

I love you, Willow. It took me a long time to realize it, but I do. And, I'm not gonna rush you, or make you do something you don't want to do, but I'm not gonna let you feel bad about not feeling bad enough.

(MORE)

XANDER (CONT'D)

It's not fair to you. The only question you need to ask yourself is, what do you feel right now? What's real right now? Because this is you. There's no mystical weirdness in you anymore. No more excuses. What you feel and think is all you have to go by now.

Willow thinks about it for a long beat. Finally she looks at him. There's a lot she wants to say to him, but the words aren't coming.

She hesitates, and finally lets go of her necklace with one hand. She moves the hand over, and takes Xander's.

She smiles, weakly. He smiles back, at her lame attempt at a smile.

And there they sit.

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF SHOW