



THE VAMPYR PENTATEUCHTM AND OTHER STORIES

*a collection of post-episode fictions based on
Buffy the Vampire Slayer season five*

written by
The Resident Vampyr[®]



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PREFACE

The Vampyr Pentateuch

The Vampyr Pentateuch is five-part alternate universe series that I created starting with *Against One*, a story that happened after Buffy's break-up with Riley in season 5.

The Vampyr Pentateuch were written before all the revelations, the twists, and turns in Buffyverse story arch, and this is how I envisioned it at the time I wrote this fiction.

I write immediately after each episode, I don't read spoilers nor early bird reviews, therefore, all my fan fictions are pure speculations.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer characters are properties of its creator
Joss Whedon and the powers that be.

Buffy & Spike are played by actors

Sarah Michelle Gellar and James Marsters, respectively.

All lyrics used are properties of their respected composers.

Thank you for inspiring even the more twisted & tortured of soul,
that made this fiction possible.

The Vampyr Pentateuch & Other Stories is written by The Resident Vampyr.



TITLES

The Vampyr Pentateuch

AGAINST ONE ♦ After a crippling break-up with Riley, Buffy must face her inner demons before the new year.

STRONGER THAN DESIRE ♦ Buffy reveals to Dawn her true identity while Spike helps Dawn from being kidnapped by Glory's minion Dreg.

GLORIOUS ♦ Buffy, Spike and the rest of the Scoobies must find a way to rescue Dawn from the hands of Glory.

SWEETNESS FOLLOWS ♦ An unusual rise of vampire population threatens the town of Sunnydale that could leave Spike dusted.

NO MORE ♦ Drusilla heads back to Sunnydale after a disfiguring encounter with Angel, and seek out Spike to once and for all settle their undying connection.

Title: Against One

Synopsis: After a crippling break-up with Riley, Buffy must face her inner demons before the new year. Read how she and the rest of Sunnydale fight Buffy's greatest enemy --- herself.

Note: This short story is based on Buffy the Vampire Slayer post 'Into the Woods' episode.

Date: Friday, 22 December, 2000 : 06:31:13 AM

Written by: † [The Resident Vampyr](#) © 2000.

Characters: Buffy † Xander † Willow † Riley † Anya † Dawn † Tara † Joyce † Ben † Giles † Spike

Key Summary:

Ben summons a new demon that could put a stop to Glory's quest for *The Key*. Buffy's having a disturbing dream about Riley and Spike. She mainly blames herself for the break-up but cannot admit that she and Riley had it coming, which is why she subconsciously blames Spike instead.

She basically stays away from her friends and focused on being a Slayer and a protector of Dawn as she searches a way to protect her sister. A startling revelation about Dawn and her connection with the Dagon Sphere. The story ends with Buffy and Spike coming to terms with their relationship and sharing an explosive New Year.

p a r t o n e

Buffy brushed her hair as she looked in the mirror. She was getting ready to start the new semester at Sunnydale University. She had already missed a week's worth of class following the illness of her mother, and now that everything had settled down she was ready to face her studies. Except for one thing. She noticed the picture of Riley that was wedged in the frame of the mirror and immediately flashed back to her desperate attempt to get Riley in time to give him a reason to stay. Maybe she had just needed to make sure that what she felt for him was true, that he was 'the one' for her. She gave another look at the picture when...

"Buffy..."

Buffy jumped. She turned away from the mirror and saw Riley standing in the doorway.

"Riley..."

Her heart leapt with surprise and shock. A million thoughts raced through her head. Riley? How could he be here? She saw the helicopter leave and him in it.

Buffy gasped. She sat bolt upright in her bed. She was only dreaming.

p a r t t w o

Ben stood inside a chalk circle on the floor of his apartment. He was in the middle of doing a summoning spell for a demon that feeds on anger. He sighed as he wondered about the effectiveness of doing this to prevent his twin sister Glory from furthering her quest of "The Key".

He had decided that he couldn't stand it anymore. He tried to lead a normal life but Glory was constantly interfering. Being the more stable of the two, he tried to make sense out of her. He had even suggested a spell to her so that she won't have those damn headaches anymore. But no, she had to have things her way. I'm the older one, one the one who'll decide what's best, she often said in their arguments.

He couldn't really blame Glory. She's the unlucky one who got this "evil twin syndrome". She was the wrong side of the coin, as they say. The Mr. Hyde of Dr. Jeckyll. And in their case, Ben really is the Dr. Jeckyll, as he works as an intern at the Sunnydale hospital. From what he has seen, this is a town he believes will soon run out of normal citizens if he doesn't take action.

His first attempt, the Queller demon, didn't work out the way he wanted. Now the Wraith demon was his last chance.

Ben opened the small vial where the Wraith demon resided as smoke until summoned. Candles encircled him, 13 of them, as he began to chant.

"Namah, venala vepar maymon, I summon. Ashema-deva calls you."

"Maborym, horvendile, naberius... into the dark I call you."

"Kesh, vepar all--"

Before he said the final phrases of the incantation his pager started beeping loudly; an emergency at the hospital. Always frequent in Sunnydale, they had increased with the appearance of his sister.

"Oh, shit!" was all he could say as he immediately grabbed the vial and placed it in his pocket. He blew the candles out and ran out the door. Unknown to him, the Wraith demon fizzled into being among the candles.

Buffy walked down the corridor of Sunnydale University. She remembered every last detail of her dream. Riley standing in the door of her bedroom. Smiling at her. She was in such a daze that she didn't notice as two people approached her.

"Hi, Buffy!"

She gasped, startled again. Willow and Tara smiled at her.

"Guys..." Buffy said.

"Buffy, how are you? We haven't seen you over the weekend? How's your mom?" asked Willow.

"Mom is fine. I'm going to take her home today. I asked Giles if we could take his car."

"That's great!" said Willow.

"Uhm, Buffy, are you going to the New Year's party at the Stevenson hall tomorrow night? It's for those who aren't going home for the holidays... like us." Tara said happily.

"... and Tara & I are gonna celebrate our first ..." Willow trailed as Buffy cuts her off.

"Congratulations! You know what, I'm really busy this week, with my mom, school. Plus not to mention Dawn and patrolling and stuff. But I do want to be there," Buffy deftly avoided any more talk about relationships.

"Ok... we understand," said Willow somewhat disappointed.

She gave a hurried glance to Willow and Tara, "Um, I have really have to go, still have to drop by Giles'." Buffy turned to go, but thought better of it.

"Happy anniversary..." she hugged them and left hurriedly.

On her way out the hall, Buffy bumped into a student who literally ran over her. He was having an argument with another boy about something. He seemed very angry, almost bordering on rabid. Buffy looked at the student with curiosity. He had the oddest color eyes she had ever seen. They seemed to constantly change color.

"Hey," said the student to Buffy, getting in her face. "What are you lookin' at?" He seemed totally freaked out. Buffy just stared at him for a moment, and walked away. She had no desire to deal with this; she had more important things to do.

"Hey, I'm talking to you!" said the unruly student, attempting a lunge at Buffy. His friends grabbed him by both arms and tried unsuccessfully to pacify him. Buffy briefly looked over her shoulder at them and hurriedly left.

Buffy, Dawn and Giles arrived at the hospital 5 minutes late for Joyce's scheduled release, but she was nevertheless glad to see them. As they packed her things, Buffy tried to concentrate on the task at hand, but her mind kept flickering back to the angry student.

"Take care Joyce, don't hesitate to call if you need anything," reminded her doctor as they exited the lobby.

"Thank you," said Joyce as they left the building.

Ben opened his locker and placed the vial he had used earlier on the shelf. He closed the door and walked out into the hall, almost walking right into Buffy.

"Hi, Ben." said Buffy.

"Buffy. How are you? I heard that Joyce had a successful operation. How is she feeling?" asked Ben.

"She's great. We're taking her home today. I just wanted to thank you for the help when she was first rushed in here," said Buffy.

"No problem. It's part of the job," Ben replied.

They said their good-byes and good health, and Buffy walked outside to join her family and Giles.

Giles watched the ambulance pull up to the emergency room as he waited outside for Buffy. The paramedic yanked open the back doors and helped the stretcher down. The person on it was shaking violently as he was rushed inside. Giles didn't know, but it was the same student that Buffy had had an encounter with at school, only now his body was almost skeletal, with hair as white as silver and eyes as black as night.

p a r t t h r e e

Spike was in a run-down factory talking to 2 vampires.

"What are you doing here Spike?" said one of them.

"Listen mate, I just wanna know who operates this blood sucking gig that you have you goin' here?"

"What's it to you? Gonna bring along your Slayer friend to torch this place? Forget it Spike, this one stays. Besides, you already had your revenge on the soldier boy, what else do you want from us?" asked the other vamp.

Buffy moved imperceptibly in the shadows behind the vampires. None of them knew she was there; she had followed Spike quietly. Patrolling had been slow when she saw him skulking along, in what seemed like a hurry to get to his destination.

"Enough talk, either you tell me or ..." said Spike.

"Or what? Gonna show the Slayer how good it is to be bitten? Just like what you did with the other human? You have a way of twisting the truth Spike. It's not gonna work with us!" said the first vampire.

"What truth?" asked Buffy, stepping out from the shadows.

Spike turned around and saw Buffy standing there with a grave expression, waiting for an answer. The other vampires instantly abandoned the place when they saw Buffy.

"What truth?" she repeated.

Spike just stared at her, not answering. She took a threatening step forward.

"Ok, you got me," Spike said, holding up his hands, "I only told you about your soldier's boy extra-curricular activities because I wanted to get back at him for putting this bloody chip in my head! Are you satisfied?" shouted Spike.

"You son of a b--"

Buffy jerked awake, gasping for breath.

Buffy rose early the next morning after her disturbing dream about Spike.

"Is it the real reason why he told me about Riley? Wait 'til I get my hands on him...I'm so gonna kill him!" thought Buffy.

"The sooner I get this out of my system the better. I have more important things to do..." she kept telling herself.

Her mind lingered on her dreams for awhile until she convinced herself not to give too much thought to what happened with Riley... but Spike, now that was another matter.

She shook her head. Dawn. She had to focus her energy on finding a way to protect Dawn from Glory. She grabbed her bag to head out of the house when it hit her. The Dagon Sphere.

Xander, Anya, Willow and Tara spoke quietly amongst themselves at a table in The Magic Box. No one had told Giles about Riley leaving yet, they were wondering which one of them would have the guts to ask Buffy about how she was doing with Riley's departure.

As soon as Buffy walked in the door, they perked up with forced cheeriness.

"Hi Buffy!" said Xander.

"Hey guys." She immediately looked for Giles. "Giles here?"

"In the back" Willow replied. "Um, Buffy... I know you don't wanna talk about it... but..."

"You're right, I don't wanna talk about it..." said Buffy, exasperated. Willow gave her a slightly hurt look.

"Look, I'm...I just ..." Buffy tried to retract her curt words but didn't get to finish.

"Buffy!" Giles called from the back.

Buffy turned around, glad to hear a different tone. She went over to Giles and found him reading from an ancient-looking manuscript.

"Giles, remember the orb that I gave you? You said that it has some sort of power to protect?" Buffy asked.

"Why yes, that's exactly what I wanted to talk to you about," Giles said as he showed her a drawing similar to the orb.

"It says here not only does it have the power to protect and repel That Which Cannot Be Named - which we know is Glory - but it also has the power to destroy her by trapping her inside the Dagon Sphere. But first, one should open the gates that lead to it..." mused Giles.

Giles looked up at Buffy. "How do we open the gate?" he pondered.

"Dawn..." said Buffy.

p a r t f o u r

"Giles, I came here because I want to borrow the Dagon Sphere for awhile because it's a protective device, and at the moment Dawn needs protection. But after reading this we know for a fact that it belongs to Dawn. Or at least she the main part in destroying Glory" said Buffy.

"Clearly that makes sense, but don't you think you ought to tell her first about who or what she is? Besides, we're not sure how she can help since she doesn't know that she is the key," Giles reminded Buffy.

"I know, she'll totally freak out. But we need to destroy Glory now! The sooner she's destroyed, the better I'll feel about..." she cut off her sentence.

Giles noticed Buffy's agitation, he instead said "I'll read more about this. We have to plan how to tell this to Dawn and rest of the group because we need all the help we can get. But for now, we cannot tell anyone any of this. It may very well jeopardize everything. I suggest that you do what you have to do. Spend some time with your mom, or Riley for that matter."

Buffy winced at the words, but couldn't bring herself to explain about Riley to Giles right now. It was just too much to deal with.

As she was leaving, Buffy asked Willow if she could have the de-invite spell for Spike.

"Sure," said Willow "but we're talking about Spike right? The one with a chip in the head?"

"The one and only," said Buffy with a grim look on her face.

Buffy landed a nasty uppercut to the blond vampire's jaw. He tried to punch her back, but she blocked it deftly. So it wasn't Spike, she thought to herself. It was still a good substitute to unleash her anger on. A right-handed blow from Buffy sent the vampire flying through the air. He got up and tried to fight back, but Buffy landed blow after blow, incapacitating it. Deciding it had had enough, it tried to run away, only to be kicked in the head by Buffy.

At the other end of the cemetery, the Wraith demon searched for its next victim. The fighting in the horizon slowly caught its attention.

Buffy spent the next few moments punching and kicking the vampire, moving further and further into the cemetery, until it couldn't fight anymore. She pulled out a stake and drove it through the vamp's heart, watching dispassionately as it turned to dust at her feet.

"You should've given it a chance to fight back," said Spike casually.

"Spike!" Buffy jumped, still holding the stake in right hand. "What the hell are you doing here?"

"I know you don't wanna hear an explanation, but you happen to be in front of my abode," said Spike in a calm voice.

Buffy looked sideways. It was indeed his crypt. She must have been more involved in fighting the vamp than she thought - she had no idea she had moved this far. "You think you can just get away with it, huh?"

"No," said Spike, knowing that she was talking about the incident that happened 4 days ago, "...in fact I thought things over and you're right..."

Buffy gave him a startled look.

"...For once," he added sheepishly. "But and I already talked about it with your blood-giving boy and I think he handled it pretty well, I might add," he continued.

"You just don't get it, do you? You think you can just walk into somebody's life and turn it upside down?" accused Buffy.

Spike didn't answer, confused as to what Buffy is talking about.

"You planned it all along didn't you? You twisted things so that he would fall for it, I would fall for it! I have enough problems of my own Spike, I don't want another one!" screamed Buffy.

"What this now?" Spike stopped short. "He told you about..." he grimaced. He couldn't believe Riley had told Buffy how he felt. "What does he want from me? It's not even his problem!" he said, irritated.

"It is my problem! It - " Buffy realized what she's saying and snapped her mouth shut, fury blazing from her eyes.

"What is it Slayer? You and the boy still fighting, are you? There's too much anger in your voice. You're not - " Spike was interrupted.

"I'm warning you Spike, stay away from me and stay out of my life! Don't make me do things you'll regret." warned Buffy ominously as she stalked away.

"The Slayer I used to know, you've somehow... changed..." sensed Spike.

The Wraith demon followed Buffy.

p a r t f i v e

Giles was closing up shop with Xander's help and Anya was making the final computations of the day's earnings at The Magic Box when Willow and Tara walked in.

"Hey, you guys are back!" said Anya.

"How was the par-tay? Seems a little short." Xander said jokingly.

"Yeah, the "par-tay" didn't last long. The organizer didn't show up." said Willow.

"He died," Tara added. "Actually, they said he was taken ill all of a sudden and was rushed to the hospital," she continued.

"But the weird thing is, they said Jimbo went into a frenzy before collapsing. And that he suddenly looked so thin," Willow said thoughtfully.

"Anya-thin?" asked Xander. Anya shot him the evil eye.

"No, more like Ally McBeal thin," said Willow.

"Yikes," said Xander, wrinkling his nose. "That's freaky enough on a girl."

"So we thought we'd check it out here. Who knows, this might be another one of those demons," said Tara. "Hey, more like this kind of thin!" Tara grabbed the newspaper lying on the table.

They all gathered around to read the Sunnydale News headline: A NEW BREED OF PLAGUE HITS SUNNYDALE. It showed a picture of the hospital victim, the unrecognizable Jimbo.

While the gang was evaluating the newspaper story, Giles peered over their shoulders and remembered the manuscript he'd been reading to Buffy this morning. He quickly got the papers out and showed them the sketch of the Wraith demon.

Giles read the description, "The Wraith demon. A ethereal physical manifestation of tortured souls from the planes of hell. These shades are driven by an intense hatred, which can change shape according to their next victim. Contact with a Wraith can quickly drain one's life force," The Scoobies looked at each other.

"It feeds on anger?" asked Xander.

"I wonder who'll be the next victim?" asked Anya.

A pause, then Giles said "Buffy..."

p a r t s i x

Buffy quietly hid the Dagon Sphere in Dawn's room. Her sister was downstairs watching television, and Buffy hadn't yet figured out how to tell her about being the Key.

She walked into the living room and began preparing for the de-invite spell. She looked at Dawn on the sofa and reminded her not to stay up late.

"I'll just finish watching this then I'm off to bed," assured Dawn.

"Ok, be good," said Buffy.

"Are you doing spells tonight? What for?" inquired Dawn.

"For keeping vampires out of our house..." said Buffy as she headed into the kitchen.

Dawn nodded, acknowledging that she caused one vampire to enter their house. Oh boy, does I learned her lesson after that night, Dawn thought.

Back in the Magic shop Willow tugged at her sleeve anxiously. "What should we do?" she asked.

Giles grabbed a couple of weapons from Buffy's trunk and handed some of them to Xander. He grabbed his car keys and said "Willow, Tara, look for a spell that could reverse this thing. Xander, you come with me."

"Anya," Giles said.

"I know, I'll stay and help with the spell," said Anya, disappointed.

"No, come with us. You're a former demon, you might know more about this thing," said Giles.

The Wraith demon stood in front of the Summers house. It sensed the disturbance in Buffy as it molded itself into her image.

"Buffy!" shouted Spike, rushing to talk to her.

The Wraith demon didn't notice Spike. Instead it proceeded to enter the front door without bothering to open it. It disappeared and reappeared on the other side.

"What the--" said Spike, shocked by what he saw.

Buffy stood in her room with four candles placed to form a circle. She knelt inside it and started chanting a spell that would, in short order, keep Spike out of her house. She couldn't believe she had actually let him inside in the first place. And him, being there in her bedroom four nights ago? She shouldn't have followed him into that vamp nest. How could she have trusted him? But she did. Now she was determined to do something about it.

The Wraith demon went straight up the stairs, passing the family room where Dawn sat watching television, and proceeded to Buffy's room.

Spike opened the front door with the intention of walking in. Instead, he bounced back hard and landed on the front porch.

"Bloody hell!" he grunted, instantly coming to the correct conclusion about why he couldn't enter. She can't do this, not right now, he thought.

"Buffy!" he shouted again. Dawn approached the wide open door to find Spike attempting to force his way in.

"Who are you? And why is the door open?" asked Dawn.

"A friend. I want to talk to Buffy." said Spike impatiently.

Dawn looks at the open door, then at Spike warily. "Wait here, I'll see if she's available," replied Dawn reluctantly while closing the door.

Spike held the door open. "There's no time for that! Let me in!" demanded Spike.

"Sorry buster, but I don't know you. You might be a vampire for all I know."

Spike gave her an exasperated look. "Look, Buffy knows me, even Joyce knows me."

"Oh yeah? How come I don't?"

"Because you're a --. Listen, something is wrong with Buffy and I need to talk to her."

"Hey, I got into trouble by letting in strangers. I'm not gonna call her unless you tell me your name!" said Dawn.

"Spike!" called Giles from the driveway. He had arrived with Anya and Xander. "What are you doing here?" he added.

"Playing nanny to Buffy's kid sister, that's what!" said Spike sarcastically.

"Well, we don't have time for that. Buffy's in danger," said Xander as Giles and Anya passed by.

"Now you're telling me. Hey, what about me?" said Spike.

Giles turned to Dawn, ignoring Spike. "Dawn, where's Buffy?"

"She's in her room, doing some spell and stuff," she replied.

"I hope we're not too late," said Giles, worried about what was happening to Buffy. They rushed to Buffy's room leaving Dawn to deal with Spike.

Joyce was awakened by the noises downstairs and went out to the hall to see what was happening. She saw Giles, Xander and Anya go into Buffy's room. Joyce followed them in.

"Buffy?" said Joyce as she looked at her daughter. Buffy stared back at them with fury in her eyes. She was possessed by the Wraith demon.

p a r t s e v e n

Buffy stood frozen in the middle of her room, looking straight ahead while the Wraith demon slowly drained her.

"What's happening?!!!" shrieked a worried Joyce.

Giles took a hold of Joyce to prevent her from coming any closer. "We need to find out how to fight this thing."

Back in The Magic Box Willow and Tara were looking hurriedly for spells that could stop the Wraith demon.

"Here, look at this!" said Tara.

Willow read, "Wraiths often inhabit the darkest dungeons or prisons, having been drawn there by the imprint of pain and suffering, or summoned and bound by powerful mages..."

"...it can pass through solid objects, and energy-reliant mortals may not only be drained of health but also left defenseless unless..." Willow continued to the next page of the manuscript.

"... Unless it is sheathed in a powerful energy shield, and so long as the victim or keeper of this shield can maintain concentration over this magical buffer..." Willow finished reading.

"What does it mean?" asked Tara. They looked at each other.

"Buffy needs to fight for herself... she needs to fight her inner demons to ward off the evil spirits that taken her hostage..." revealed Anya; realizing that's what she did to become human.

"Buffy, it's Xander. I know what happened between you and Riley. Don't blame yourself. It's not your fault."

"She needs more than that. She needs to release her anger..." added Spike as he stepped from the background. "Buffy, I know you can hear me. It's not your fault..!" admitting that he had a role in her break-up with Riley. "If you're gonna blame someone, blame me!"

"Honey, baby, we love you sweetheart. Please don't this to yourself!" pleaded Joyce.

Dawn, who was terrified at the prospect of life without her sister, quietly closed her eyes and said "We need you."

Suddenly the Dagon Sphere in the adjoining bedroom lit up.

Slowly, the demon that possessed Buffy vanished into thin air. Buffy looked around, blinked at the familiar faces, then collapsed.

Family and friends gathered at The Magic Box on New Year's Eve. They decided to have a joint celebration for Joyce's successful operation and for the New Year. Everyone was dressed up, handing out gifts and wine. Giles dressed up as a silly "Merlin" once again, Joyce was in a 60's outfit. Xander had on serious priest costume, and Anya as the flying nun. Dawn wore a little orphan Annie dress, and Willow and Tara had on matching costumes as well. Only Buffy was not in costume. She explained it away by saying she hadn't had time to think about it what she would wear.

Joyce expressed how happy she was with a toast. "I'd like to give a toast for everybody who stayed and took care of me during my operation. I'd like to thank my two daughters for being there for me. I couldn't ask for more. I'm proud of you two." Joyce kissed both Dawn and Buffy.

"Here. here..!" said everybody.

Giles also lifted his glass and said "Here's to The Magic Box, may it still bring in customers 'til the next year, thanks to all of you especially to Anya, who've been a big help."

Everybody cheered. It was Willow's turn, "I'd like to make a toast for everybody, for accepting Tara into our lives and letting her be a part of our family, and to Tara for letting us be a part of hers." Tara and Willow embraced.

"And to Xander, for admitting that he does not only likes me as a partner," Anya winked "but also admitting that he loves me for who I am." Anya and Xander kissed.

Everybody applauded. Buffy looked down and reflected on what Anya said.

"Hey, everybody, it's almost midnight!" shouted Anya.

Everyone gathered around the table for the countdown except Buffy, who slipped outside to watch the fireworks.

Alone on New Year's Eve, Buffy shook her head. She missed Riley. Of course she had her family and friends, but still, it's not the same. This was the second time this had happened to her. First Angel, now...

"Hey..." said Spike who was in front of the in the Magic Shop hiding in the shadows.

Buffy turned around. She was surprised to discover that somehow the anger that she felt for him had disappeared. For now anyway. She can't imagine not loathing him anytime soon.

"Hey..." Buffy said softly. She didn't ask what he was doing there. Somehow she knew.

"15 ... 14 ... 13..." The countdown inside continued.

"Look, if it makes any difference..." said Spike as he approached her.

"No, Spike. I don't blame you any more than I blame Riley. Or me, for that matter."

"12... 11 ... 10..."

Spike listened.

"9... 8 ... 7 ..."

Buffy turned away to look at the night sky. The stars were shining brightly. Her thoughts wandered what could she have done differently.

Am I better off with him? Did I really let go of what could be the love of my life, or is this just one of those relationships whose memory will fade over time?

All these thoughts were running through her head as she turned back to look at Spike.

"I have a feeling...me and Riley...we... we weren't strong enough..." trailed Buffy.

"6... 5 ... 4 ..."

Buffy didn't finish her sentence, but Spike knew what she meant.

"3... 2 ... 1 ..."

"Happy New Year...!!!" shouted everybody inside the shop. Tara and Willow embraced, Xander and Anya kissed, Giles and Joyce hugged with Dawn.

Back outside the Magic Box, Buffy and Spike watched the fireworks explode.

Spike looked at Buffy. A beat. "Happy New Year, Slayer."

Buffy looked at Spike. A beat. "Happy New Year, Spike."

There was long pause then as they locked eyes. At the same moment, they resumed staring at the fireworks.

e n d

Title: STRONGER THAN DESIRE

Synopsis: Buffy reveals to Dawn her true identity while Spike helps Dawn from being kidnapped by Glory's minion Dreg. Also in this episode, Dawn learns about Spike's intentions for her sister; as Buffy and Spike searches for Glory's mansion.

Note: This short story is the second of 5 on a series of fiction called 'the Vampyr Pentateuch' starting with 'Against One'. Based on S5 BtVS plot before all the hoopla, twists, and turns...this is how I envisioned it at the time I wrote this fic :)

Date: Wednesday, 27 December, 2000 : 09:20:07 PM

Characters: Buffy † Xander † Willow † Anya † Dawn † Tara † Glory † Ben † Dreg † Giles † Spike

p a r t o n e

Inside Glory's mansion she and her brother, Ben, sat staring at each other. Their servant, Dreg, watched closely.

"Tell me dear brother. Do you know anything about the last demon that was summoned in Sunnydale?"

Ben looked away and didn't say anything. He knew he couldn't lie to Glory. And it's wrong, dead wrong to think that he could just take away a life, even if it's as evil as Glory. He looked back at her. Glory was his sister, no matter what. Maybe she will agree to the spell if it's just temporary. Yes, the spell that could cure her headaches.

"Okay, if that's how you wanna play it, I will forget everything that has happened these past few weeks." Glory got up from her seat and started pacing the room. "I'm your sister and I plan to keep it that way...unless you do something that's absolutely stupid again."

See, she's not that bad after all, she's willing to forget everything. But in return for what? Ben thought.

"Since you're fairly good at summoning demons and you have a gift for spells, I want you to do me a favor by sharing your talent with our good boy Dreg here who voluntarily placed himself in a position of finding the key for me. Dreg looked at Ben and nodded his head slowly

"Why don't you do the spell yourself?" asked Ben.

"I did! Don't you remember, you blind moron!" her head was spinning again from a headache. "That damned little snake failed me! Now, if you could do that to Dreg, maybe we're home free! And maybe I won't have this splitting headache!"

Ben realized that finding the key and opening the door was not the answer. But what if Glory's right. What if it's the only way to fix her head. They've been searching for that energy for almost their entire lives. They stumbled upon it once, yet they always seemed to fail to get a hold of it.

"So, what about it?" asked Glory, wickedly rubbing her hands together.

p a r t t w o

Buffy was searching for the Dagon Sphere she had left in Dawn's room last night right before she performed the de-invited spell for Spike. She was on hiatus from the Scooby Gang, and had been for weeks now. She purposely avoided them at the Magic Box, and even at school.

The Scoobies noticed the change in Buffy ever since she was possessed by the Wraith demon and right after her break-up with Riley. Her temper always got the better of her, and her bubbly effervescence was gone. They asked her on several occasions if she needed help with patrolling, but she always declined. Being her friends, they understood that Buffy needed time and space to process what she was feeling. She'd been through a lot lately, and even though it wasn't an excuse for avoiding them, they still supported her no matter what.

Right now, she was determined to find out where the Dagon Sphere was. She remembered placing it under Dawn's bed, but it wasn't there anymore.

"Are you looking for this?" asked Dawn, who was standing behind her holding the Sphere.

"Yes. I misplaced it the other day," Buffy answered defensively. "I thought I placed it in my bag but it probably rolled out," Buffy mentally groaned.

What kind of excuse was that? she thought. She attempted to grab the orb from Dawn's hands.

"Uh-uh, not unless you tell me what it is," teased Dawn.

"Don't be such pain in the ass Dawn." Buffy reached out and took it away from her. "This is not something you can play with."

"So, what is it?" asked Dawn.

"Where did you find it?" demanded Buffy.

"I asked you first," Dawn replied, getting a sharp look from her sister. She realized that Buffy would not tolerate anymore protesting from her. "Ok, I was sleeping last night and I thought I heard something moving under my bed. I looked under and there it was," Dawn explained "So, what is it?"

"It's called the Dagon Sphere." Buffy finally told her. "It's used as a protection from certain evil."

"Evil? Like the demon that attacked you?"

Buffy suddenly realized that the Dagon Sphere must have caused the destruction of the Wraith demon. She looked at Dawn and put the pieces together. Buffy said, "Where were you when that evil demon attacked me?"

"In your room, I-I was...praying that you be saved from that-- that-- thing," said Dawn, a bit frightened as she remembered how the demon started draining Buffy away. It had been the most frightening moment of her life. Dawn started to get teary-eyed.

"I'm sorry if I upset you," Buffy said, wanting so much to tell Dawn about being the key and her connection with the demon's destruction. "Dawn, I have to tell you something."

Dawn looked at Buffy, worried.

"Promise me you'll be brave enough to hear what I have to say, okay?"

Dawn nodded.

p a r t t h r e e

Xander and Anya were sitting in a corner at The Bronze as Willow and Tara walked up to them. They had just come from the dance floor.

"Didn't Buffy say she would come by around this time?" asked Willow.

"I believed she said that, only I don't think she meant it," said Xander bluntly.

"Why do you say that?" asked Willow.

"I mean, if she really wanted to be here, she'd have shown up an hour ago. And since my hunch is correct, you owe me ten bucks," said Xander showing his hand to Willow, ready to accept his reward.

"I'm serious," Willow insisted, a worried expression crossing her face. "Do you think she's still mooning over Riley?"

"I don't think so," said Anya brightly. "See, if my boyfriend was cheating with a whore, a vampire whore no less, I'd be out of that relationship in a second. No wonder she trashed that vamp nest."

She placed her hands on Xander's knee. "But luckily, I have my sweetie here, who couldn't care less for vampires."

"Yeah, I have to agree, I only like my women...demon-like," Xander cuddled Anya.

"Maybe Buffy just needs a little more time by herself," considered Tara.

"And she's probably out patrolling and stuff," said Willow.

"And patrolling without us lately," added Xander, reminding them all of how long it had been since they had helped Buffy.

"We should give Buffy a break, she just needs to get that slayer instinct all pumped back up again, maybe a few kills," said Anya. "And it wouldn't hurt if she had a new man in her life," she stopped, then added "Actually, if I were Buffy, I'd look for a more mature man, someone who would understand my true nature, someone like..."

Spike stood in front of Buffy's house, not smoking, but wanting to. He hadn't seen or talked to her in a couple of days now. He tried to follow her during one of her patrols but she was too stealthy for him. He wondered if it was part of the predatory nature of a slayer that she had developed. He knew that some of them were more of a hunter and a killer than just a slayer and a protector. He thought about paying Buffy a visit in her bedroom and telling her something, anything.

He just wanted to see her.

I'd loose one of my body parts for sure, maybe two, if I get in there without a good reason, but I gotta do something, before I lose the privilege of entering her house. Which he had, Spike thought, after Buffy used that de-invite spell on him during the Wraith demon debacle.

But now everything was back to normal, and he could enter Buffy's house once again thanks to her kid sister.

Dawn was visibly upset and speechless after hearing explanation of her origins.

She, wasn't real? Not a part of this family? But an energy? A thing?

She had doubts about what strangers are told her about not belonging to this world, but not this. Not some...thing! Buffy faced Dawn as they sat on the bed, and waited for her to say something. Instead, Dawn got up and walked away from her.

"Dawn..." said Buffy, standing up.

"I want to be alone please," said Dawn, on the verge of tears. She turned her face towards the window.

"Dawn, we need to talk about this. It's not as bad as you think."

"And mom, does she know about it, about me?" asked Dawn, still facing the window.

Buffy let out a sigh, "Yes, she knows. But she doesn't know the details."

"The details?" Dawn's voice shook. She turned around to face Buffy, full of mixed emotions. "The details that I'm not her daughter? Or the details that I'm a thing?!"

"Look, I know you're freaked out, but we need to figure out how to stop this demon that's after you," Buffy had to convince Dawn that this was the right thing to concentrate on now. "I need to protect you, but I also need to know how to stop Glory," Buffy considered. "Dawn, you're still my sister, mom is still your mom. It doesn't change anything. It doesn't mean that you're not part of our lives."

"And how do you figure that? You don't even know how I play out in this whole thing?" Dawn protested.

"Dawn."

"Please leave," pleaded Dawn.

Buffy tried to reach out to her. "Da---"

"J-Just leave..." Dawn said without looking at her. She couldn't look at her, not now, or anytime soon for that matter. She needed to be alone.

Buffy left the room closing the door behind her, Dagon Sphere in hand. She understood what Dawn was going through, not knowing where you stand, and not knowing where to belong. She had a similar crisis when she found out she was the Slayer, back when....

When I was just a baby, I clearly remember mom singing me those lullabies, Dawn recalled. But why is it that I can't I remember being a keeper of the gate? What am I supposed to do? I don't even know how that Dagon Sphere works? An idea entered Dawn's mind. Maybe Giles knows....

Dawn opened her window and quietly slipped out. She headed to the Magic Box to look for Giles, who would hopefully be able to explain this whole thing to her. Not far away, a shadow followed her.

p a r t f o u r

Dawn walked through the dark night and hugged herself to keep warm. It was overcast, making the sky look charcoal gray. There were no stars visible whatsoever, only a soft moonlight that hid in the trees. Dawn stopped. She thought she heard something rustling in the bushes to her left.

She turned around. Nothing.

She stood very still as her heart fluttered in her chest. She had lived in Sunnydale long enough to know that things really did go bump in the night. She turned around and began to trace her path back home.

After a couple of steps, she heard it again. Only this time it was a few feet closer. She stopped, but before she could turn around to see, a demon attacked her.

It was Dreg. Dawn screamed, but it was quickly muffled by a large hand over her mouth. She broke away and tried to run but Dreg was much faster than her. He caught her, throwing a sack over her head, and dragged her back towards the mansion.

Thump! Something hit Dreg on the back. He fell hard.

With her now free hands, Dawn ripped the sack off her head and turned to see who had rescued her. She couldn't quite recognize the dark figure in the shadows. He seemed familiar to her though. In fact, she might be able to tell who it was, if only he would step into the moonlight.

"Are you okay?" the shadowy figure asked.

"Uh-" Dawn gasped as he moved in closer. "You're -" Dawn started to say, but was interrupted.

Dreg was on his feet, lunging at Dawn.

Spike stepped forward and grabbed him around the neck. He held him until the other demon could hardly breathe.

"Pu--leee-z--" gasped Dreg.

Spike choked him even harder, then slowly released him. He wasn't sure why he did that, maybe it had to do with Dawn being there and not wanting her to witness him kill a demon. Or was he going soft? He wasn't entirely sure what it was, but he decided to let go of the demon. With one hand on his neck trying to breathe, Dreg ran off.

"You're a -" Dawn was still recovering from the attack. Spike eyed her, making sure she was alright.

"Spike. We've met," he said cautiously.

"You saved me," Dawn didn't know how to react. He's the vampire who tried to get into their house, a vampire, an enemy, she thought, and yet he saved her.

Spike pursed his lips agreeably, "I've been known to help a certain Summers every once in a while."

"Buffy..." Dawn replied, thinking how Buffy would react if she knew what had happened and why she left the house in the middle of the night to look for answers.

"Yeah, that sweet young slay--" Spike suddenly stopped.

Dawn looked at him questioningly.

"What I meant to say was, that crummy big sister of yours," he changed his tone of voice.

"Are you going to bite me?" Dawn asked warily, not trusting the vampire in front of her.

Spike chuckled, "I do recall telling you that I am a friend of your sister, but I may have forgotten to add that I'm a vampire without a bite. Satisfied?"

"By the way," Spike changed the topic. "Shouldn't you be at home with your family instead of walking around here in the middle of the night, by yourself?"

"You're right. I shouldn't be here talking to some stranger and getting kidnapped by another," Dawn said, finally deciding that this was not a good idea.

Buffy was on the phone talking to Giles, who was in his apartment getting ready for bed. She told him how she revealed to Dawn the truth about her being the key.

Giles was surprised that Buffy decided to tell her this soon, with no answers to their questions yet. He was still not finished reading through the manuscripts about the Dagon Sphere, or the Key, or with his research about Glory.

He had been so busy lately with the shop. He needed help with the research, true, but he wasn't ready to tell Willow and the rest of the Scoobies about this. They needed more time, but time was not on their side.

"Buffy, do you know what this means?" asked Giles.

"I know," said Buffy. "And I'll be responsible for the consequences. I'll talk to her as soon as she's ready, but right now, we need to know where Glory is and what her plans are."

Dreg came rushing inside Glory's mansion to tell her that he traced the key to a hideout. In fact, he had almost taken a hold of her, if it hadn't been for a pesky vampire.

"A pesky vampire, eh?" said Glory curiously.

"A nasty one too, but I think he lost the power to kill. He didn't even try finish me off," said Dreg.

"Well, I will...if you don't bring the key here tonight!" warned Glory.

"Yes, I want the key. How I would love to get a hold of that key and open the doors of hell..."

p a r t f i v e

Spike decided to ensure Dawn's safety by walking back to her house with her. Dawn didn't really feel like she had a choice in the matter. Buffy would definitely kill her if she found out that somebody tried to abduct her.

It was a good long walk from the park, and Dawn decided that a conversation with Spike wouldn't hurt. *Besides, he's Buffy's friend, right?*

"So, how did you and Buffy meet?" started Dawn.

Spike thought that it wouldn't hurt either to have a conversation with the sister of his current object of affection. In fact, it would be to his advantage to know more about Buffy. What better way to get it first hand than from her sister?

Spike smiled.

"Let me see, it was three years ago that I met her. She was dancing gracefully... with her long, blonde hair... those expressive eyes, and those arms..."

Spike remembered fondly his first encounter with Buffy. She asked him who he was and his only response was to meet him on a Saturday so that he could kill her. Yes, kill her, the ultimate trophy, kill yet another slayer.

Only this time, a different kind. A special kind.

He'd never met a Slayer like her before. Full of passion, aggressiveness and darkness that was equal to his.

The truce with Buffy two years ago was the turning point in their relationship. It didn't cross his mind at the time that they could work together as allies, and never imagined that it could turn into something more, something greater.

Somehow his hatred for her had evolved into something stronger...stronger than obsession, stronger than desire.

He still doesn't fully understand what Angel meant when he said "...to kill this girl, you have to love her..." All he knows right now is that he loves her and he doesn't want to kill her.

"You mean to say, you've fought all these years, yet you haven't killed her and she never killed you?" asked Dawn "No offense," she quickly added.

"Well, yeah," said Spike. Quite true in fact.

"That's weird. I've never heard such a thing, well except if you're-- " Dawn paused. "Or you two...um," Dawn was getting an idea.

"Well, I haven't given her any reasons to kill me, have I?" Spike changed the direction of the conversation. *I am not going to give out every single detail of my love life*, he thought.

"Actually, that's not true. I have, on a lot of occasions," he considered.

"Maybe, she sees you as a harmless thing...an object... a key..." Dawn's train of thought seemed to be lost.

Dreg lurked in the background and followed the Key and the vampire. Glory had kicked him out of the mansion and warned him not to come back unless the Key was with him.

He would do anything for Glory, he had served their family for centuries and this was his chance to prove himself to his master; that he was not only a slave but someone who should be treated with respect and dignity, and maybe even more.

He followed them as they approached the Summers' home.

p a r t s i x

It had been hours since she had heard anything from Dawn's room. Maybe she's gone to sleep, Buffy thought. She decided to patrol for the night while she worked on resolving this thing with her sister.

I'll probably stumble into something while patrolling, maybe find Glory's hide out.

Buffy knocked on the door outside of Dawn's room. No answer.

She's probably sleeping, Buffy thought. She was about to open the door when she heard noise at the front porch.

Dawn was scaling the front wall of their house towards her opened window as Spike watched. He was about to leave when Buffy opened the front door.

"Spike!"

Spike looked as if he'd been caught red-handed with his hand in the cookie jar.

"Before you say anything, I didn't come to steal any of your stuff in your basement or your room, or....um..." Spike babbled, unsure why he was so flustered.

Buffy stared coldly, waiting for him to finish.

"Look, I came here for a visit," Spike started over. "I-I just wanna know how you are. You got me worried on New Year's, you know?"

Seeing her expressionless face, he changed the topic. "Did you know that there is a demon out loose that's been preying on small kids?" He looked up at Dawn's window to see if she'd already climbed inside.

Buffy noticed his glance and looked in the same direction, curious as to what Spike was looking at. She saw Dawn's window, dimly lit from one of her bedroom lights. She looked back at Spike and decided that this might be a harmless visit after all.

"Is there anything else?" asked Buffy.

Spike shook his head. He noticed that Buffy was dressed for going on patrol.

"Ok, a demon. How did you know about this?" asked Buffy.

"Story travel fast for us vampires, you know that. If you want, I can show you where," he was pretty proud of himself.

"Fine." Buffy said quietly.

Dawn finally reached her open window and started to climb in. She closed it after her and saw her sister with her vampire friend in the front yard. She could hardly hear what they were saying, but it looked as though they are getting along.

Well, almost.

He seemed to be diverting her attention to himself, but her sister looked unconvinced. There was something else she noticed. Spike looked concerned and worried as he spoke with her sister. His glances towards Buffy were almost pleading.

She'd seen this expression many times, being a fan of such teen-oriented shows like *Dawson's Creek* and *Roswell* and other angst-filled teen shows.

Anyways, she had seen enough to know what his body language was saying, and *actions speak louder than words*, Dawn thought.

Then Spike looked Dawn's way, checking to see if she was already inside. Dawn hid behind the curtains when Buffy looked up as well. After a moment or two, Dawn watched Buffy and Spike leave. She was glad that he didn't seem to have mentioned anything about her being outside that night. She kind of liked this vampire guy already, she smiled to herself.

Dawn turned away from the window after making sure Buffy and the vampire already left. She was about to change into pajamas and get ready to sleep when something from behind grabbed her and covered her mouth. She couldn't even scream.

p a r t s e v e n

Buffy and Spike carefully searched the park where Spike had seen the demon. Buffy couldn't believe she followed him again in search of a demon that could be just a figment of his imagination.

"Are you sure this is the right place?" asked Buffy.

"Yes. I'm pretty sure this is the spot." Spike knew that this was indeed the place where he saw the demon that dragged Dawn.

"And you know this because?" trailed Buffy.

"Because...I was here, I saw him attack some kid."

"Some kid that's walking alone at night, in the middle of nowhere," said Buffy. It was more of a statement than a question.

"Well, um, yeah," Spike didn't want to say exactly what happened because that meant ratting out Dawn.

"And you did nothing?"

"No, I helped the kid, and I scared the hell out of the demon," said Spike, unable to keep the pride out of his voice.

"You helped the kid, out of the goodness of your heart, but you didn't kill the demon. Is that right?" Buffy asked, unconvinced.

"That's what happened," Spike nodded affirmatively.

This is getting nowhere, thought Buffy. "Let's assume what you're telling me is correct. What happened after that?"

"Well, I left."

"You left," Buffy repeated his answer. "You mean to tell me that after saving a kid's life from a demon, whom you allowed to get away, because you're not the kind of a person who enjoys killing demons for fun, that you just walked away?"

"If you put it that way, yeah," agreed Spike.

"Uh-huh, and you actually think I'm going to believe that crap? You could've done better than that Spike," Buffy was exasperated.

"Wait! Do you think I'm lying to you? Tell me, how many times did I lie to you in--" Spike stopped himself short. *His mistake, he'd always been bad right? Maybe, but not recently*, he thought. "--in the...in the couple of weeks that I've been helping you?"

"N-never," reflected Buffy. "But perhaps you have some ulterior motive for bringing me here."

Spike held his hands palm up in a gesture of innocence, "No motives on my part. Pfft. I just wanted to help you, Buffy," said Spike seriously.

Buffy looked at him, and was startled to realize that he was telling the truth. She looked around once more but was convinced there wasn't anything to investigate.

She decided to leave. "Look, I'm out of here."

She turned on her heel and left, failing to notice the huge mansion up the hill from the park, right behind her. Spike was left standing alone, facing a huge wall a few meters in front of him. He looked up, but he could not see what was up there.

"Bugger," Spike sighed and walked away.

Up in the park, a huge mansion stands. Glory's mansion.

Inside, Glory was wearing a bright plum colored dress that she picked up earlier that day. It was a new favorite. She was talking to her twin brother Ben, excitedly telling him that Dreg has a good news to share.

Dreg had been waiting for this moment. This time he captured the one true thing that his master was searching for.

"My lady, I present to you," Dreg made it short and simple. "The Key."

He dragged a fully chained Dawn into the room.

Ben took one look and inhaled sharply as he recognized her as the Buffy's sister. He couldn't believe that Dawn was the Key. He had always thought that it was an energy and not a human being.

Dawn was past crying at this point, she was just making little sniffing noises. Glory approached her.

"So, we finally meet," said Glory wickedly. "Again."

Sheer terror overtook Dawn, for she had no idea what would happen next.

t o b e c o n t i n u e d

Title: Glorious

Synopsis: Buffy, Spike and the rest of the Scoobies must find a way to rescue Dawn from the hands of Glory. This short story focuses on the destruction of Glory, Dawn's discovery of her powers and her encouraging news to Spike about Buffy's feelings.

Date: Wednesday, 30 December, 2000 : 03:05:27 PM

Lyrics: All the way to heaven by Melissa Etheridge

Characters: Buffy † Xander † Willow † Anya † Dawn † Tara † Glory † Ben † Joyce † Dreg † Giles † Spike

p a r t o n e

In the middle of Glory's mansion, she and Ben were having a discussion about their captive. Dawn recognized Ben from the hospital and she can't believe that he and Glory were related. If only she'd pay more attention to Buffy and the Dagon Sphere, she could have prevented this from happening.

"I'm telling you, she isn't what we're looking for..!" said Ben, convinced that the key should be an energy not a kid.

"The eyes have a way of fooling the mind my dear brother... its true nature doesn't!" stated Glory flatly. "Besides, what do we have to lose?"

"I-I know her..."

"Hmm... that makes it more interesting..." Glory grinned.

"Your holiness," interrupted Dreg. "The gateway is now awaiting for your blessings..."

Dreg bowed as Glory passes, Ben reluctantly followed. Not far behind, Dreg moved Dawn to the other room as well.

"I'm telling you, if anything happens to me, you'll be sorry! My sister will kick your ass!"

"Is that right?" Glory laughed. She turned to Dawn, "And who might your sister be? Xena?"

"Her name is Buffy, and she's the Slayer!"

"The Slayer..." Glory was no longer smiling.

p a r t t w o

It's late morning when a small light passes through Buffy's window. She had been asleep for almost 7 hours now. She has been dreaming that she and Dawn were fighting a terrible *beast* that resembles a mutation of a horned goat and a Yeti with a face of a serpent, a symbol of the foulest forms of hell. It suddenly came out of the dark and attacked them.

Dawn had no time to trap it inside a giant orb, as it jumped towards them; so close that Buffy could hear its heartbeat. The beast staked Dawn with its sharp claws and dragged her into the darkness.

Dawn was gone.

Buffy was awakened by a continuous tapping in her windows, a branch swaying restlessly in the gusty winds outside. It was a Saturday and Buffy was supposed to confer with Giles about her sister and what to do next.

She walked in the hallway quietly passing Joyce's room and proceeded directly to Dawn's room to check if everything fine with her.

"Dawn..." Buffy knocked once. "It's me."

She opened the door. No Dawn in sight. *She's probably downstairs*, she thought. As Buffy was about to leave the room, she noticed that Dawn's window was opened, her curtains flying everywhere.

Why didn't she close the window? She's letting all the cold air in. Cold air...perhaps there might be a storm approaching? Buffy thought.

She carefully hold down the window handle... when...

From Buffy's view outside the window, a gloomy sky was transmuting from royal blue to deep purple. Staggered winds blowing from the east. A flicker of light and a faint tremor can be heard from afar.

"What the hell?.." said Buffy perplexed.

Glory and Ben went into a bigger room, a Great Hall that occupies the east end of the mansion. It was lighted with several candles along the entrance way, the pillars, and four prominent ones in the middle of the marbled floors plus several on the glass shrine located at the corner.

Within the perimeter of the four candles, a sprinkled blood fresh from sacrifices prepared by Dreg. Dawn, under heavy chains was tied in one of the pillars.

"In here, we will open the gate of all gates. The door that would bring us the dominion over the evils of hell. Good work Dreg," said Glory.

"So, what are we waiting for? Get that key and get it over with!" said Glory impatiently.

"We are waiting for you, my lady, to start the *ceremonial ritual*."

Glory laughed, "What am I thinking?... Of course, we need to have a door for the key to open...!" She laughed once again and then faced Dawn, "Take a note missy, I won't be doing this again! So you better pay attention!"

Dawn cried out. "How many times do I have to tell you, I don't know anything about this key stuff.. I am not the key..!"

"We'll soon find out..." said Glory, coldly.

The entire Sunnydale under a heavy dark clouds that's been building up east of center. Giles wakes up from his sleep. He had been awoken by a mist of cold air that seeped under his glass window.

He was reading the manuscript late last night in search for the one who owns The Holy Name. Desperate to get an answer, he cross-referenced somewhere about a great beast and the final stages of it's release from the gateway, "*...Known for its thundering light bolts coming from the east. Powerful winds sweeping across the western kingdoms. The heavens will be clothe in black and the stars will fail to shine its light. And million lords of hell stands, a breathe away before the beast ... waiting for its release...*" it read.

This was a crucial time for them, especially now that Buffy already told Dawn about her identity.

If only they can find a way to locate Glory, Giles thought as he put on his eyeglasses to see what time is it. *8:45:32 a.m.. He's late! But this can't be, it's still dark outside.*

He looked outside again then opened the television for news.

The local weather man appeared on the tube. "...cording to the local weather satellite, there is indeed no sign, I repeat, no sign of any major thunderstorm along or within the Sunnydale area of responsibility. Let us turn our attention to the national weather bureau to know more about this strange phenomenal..."

Giles hurriedly picked up the manuscripts inside his study desk and opened it in the bookmark page, he looked outside and whispered.

"The Wrath of the Heavens..."

p a r t t h r e e

Summer's home. Joyce was worried about Dawn like any mother would be. She knows that it had something to do with her daughter being The Key, but she doesn't know exactly what. Buffy was making her way out of the house after making a phone call to Giles, when she approached her mom to assure her that everything will be alright.

"Mom, I know this is hard for you but I'll do whatever I can to bring Dawn back," comforted Buffy, still troubled by her dreams.

"Don't I get to come? She is my daughter after all..."

"Mom, you'll be safer here and I think it's best to stay and wait if there's any call."

"Okay..." Joyce said. "Buffy, take care," she kissed her.

"I will," said Buffy as she hurriedly left to look for Giles at the Magic Shop.

Ben slipped out of Glory's mansion. He decided to warn Buffy and her mom about Glory's plan. This was the hardest decision he'd ever make, turn against his sister Glory. But what can he do, he doesn't have any choice. It was either this or destroy the entire humanity. Never did he think that she will go over the limitations of her power.

"Don't tell me what I should and shouldn't do!" screamed Glory. That was one of their conversation before he decided to bail out. They were having a heated argument about opening the door and she using Dawn, no matter what.

"Listen you little prick, you can either open this door or suffer the consequences!" Glory screamed at Dawn.

Dawn didn't flinch not even once.

"Maybe she needs a little encouragement from her sister.... or her mother," suggested Dreg.

No...! Not mom...! thought Dawn, terrified.

Ben knocked impatiently at the front door of the Summers' residence. Joyce opened the door, surprised to see Dr. Ben in front of her house.

"Dr. Ben, I didn't expect to see you here?" said Joyce surprised.

"I'm sorry to trouble you, but I have an important thing to tell yo--"

"Is there's something wrong with my findings at the hospital?" asked Joyce.

"No, not exactly. Hum, is Buffy here?"

"What is this about?"

"Mrs. Summers. I have some information about your daughter..."

Buffy arrived at the Magic Shop, still breathing hard because of running. The Scoobies gathered around the table looking for a spell to locate Dawn and a spell that could help them destroy Glory.

"Guys, I need your help." It was the first time Buffy mentioned those words for sometime now. True, she never asked them for help lately because she's been avoiding them at the most. Fear for being too close too much, then ignoring them most of the time. It wa not a path that she would like to take again any time soon, but this case involved her sister, the one she sworn to protect.

"We came as soon as we heard," said Xander.

Buffy smiled. She needed to get help, that she admit, in any way or form.

"I'm sorry if we--I--- have been secretive to all of you lately. It's just that with everything happening all at the same time, I didn't have the chance to process everything," Buffy started.

She recounted how she came upon the knowledge that Dawn was not the person they think she is, about her connection to the Dagon Sphere and how she can help destroy Glory... only if they could find her first.

"I'm worried that Glory have her..." said Buffy.

"I agree with Buffy," said Giles. "All these things we're experiencing in Sunnydale, the rise of mentally unstable cases, the weather changes and everything only points to one thing..."

Everybody agreed with Giles theories. What they have to do now was find Dawn and prevent any plans of Glory's. Willow, Tara and Anya went through the pages of the Book of Antiquity to find pre-dated spells or summons that could help destroy Glory. Giles asked Buffy when was the last time she saw her sister and maybe, they could go from there.

"After I talked to her, she stayed in her room. I went back to my room with the Dagon Sphere and let her think about it over night. Then I decided to patrol," recounted Buffy.

"Then Spike came along..." Buffy stopped, she looked worried.

p a r t f o u r

"Thank you for your time, Mrs. Summers," said Ben as he walked out of the house headed to the Magic Shop to look for Buffy.

Joyce closed the door. She can't believe Ben should travel all the way here just to have a small talk with her daughter. Joyce opened the television to know more about what was happening about the weather, which seemed to be getting worse by the minute.

A few minutes later, there was a hurried knock on the their front door. She wondered who could this be.

Ben perhaps... forgot to say something else?

Joyce opened the door and gasped.

Dreg standing in front of the door.

Spike was in his crypt, sitting in his chair looking at Buffy's pictures, remembering how his conversation with Dawn went.

It's amazing how perceptive that little brat is, he thought.

He almost spilled his guts out to Buffy's sister. He hoped he was doing Buffy a favor by keeping her sister's "little secret". It was a nice plan, working his way up to Buffy's heart, first with her mom, now with her sister.

Then it entered his mind how he and Buffy had been fighting all these years, and never killed each other. Maybe perhaps in the beginning, he was just so fascinated with this Slayer that it's almost a sin to kill her.

But he found out later that it was beyond fascination, Dru said it all, "You're covered with her"

And now, what did she mean by that?

It took him a couple of months to discover its meaning that lead him back to Sunnydale to test if it was indeed true. He pondered for a moment then goes back on how he wished Buffy would return his feelings. Perhaps just a little hint that she remotely like him.

What about the time at the Bronze, a year ago? Buffy's pretty much hot and heavy for him that night. It even made an impression on him, he thought and smiled mischievously.

"What a woman..." Spike sighed. Holding Buffy's picture as he rub his thumb in her cheeks.

There's a loud banging on the door. Spike hurriedly throws the pictures under his chair. The door opened with Buffy on sight and Xander not far behind.

"You know, I'm getting a doze of sleep over here so, it would be nice if you knock before crashing my door," said Spike sarcastically. He looked up at Buffy and noticed that she's carrying a deadly pole arm.

"Well, well...going hunting today, eh?" said Spike pretty impressed. "You're not gonna use that to me, right?" He also noticed Xander loaded with a massive double-bladed ax.

"Spike, we don't have time for banter."

"Ok Buffy, so what do I owe this visit? Not that I mind, believe me, but do you need to bring along a bodyguard?" referring to Xander.

"Oh, don't mind me, I'm just here to assist Buffy in case she needs help staking an annoying vampire," replied Xander.

"Better watch your tongue, bird brain..." warned Spike.

Buffy looked at Xander as if saying, stop it.

Xander obliged like a good dog. Instead, he walked around Spike's chair. He sees a small piece of paper on the floor, under the chair and curiously examine it.

Buffy faced Spike.

"Spike, I want you to tell me why were you at my house last night, and this time I want details," demanded Buffy.

"Uh, a friendly visit... why?"

"Will you cut the crap?!" said Buffy impatiently. "You were looking at Dawn's window, remember? Why is that?"

Spike, careful of his words said, "I was just checking... you know, that's what vampires do."

"Checking huh? Well, look at we have here... check this out Buffy!" said Xander as he pulled out a couple of pictures under his chair.

Buffy and Spike looked at what Xander was holding.

"Hey!" Spike shouted. "Get your bloody hands off my stuff!" He tried to get out of his chair but Buffy hold him down with her hand.

"What is it?" asked Buffy anxiously.

Xander showed the pictures of Buffy, "It seems that our vampire friend here has a bedtime hobby."

Buffy gave an inquiring look at Spike. Trying to figure out what the hell are her pictures doing beside his chair. It must be the same pictures he'd stolen from her basement a couple of weeks ago. *What is he thinking?*

"It's not what you think! I-I can explain," Spike muttered. The tension between them was rising.

"I'd like to hear how you'd get out of this one..." Xander chuckled. "Spike, Spike... hehehe, you're in deep trouble man...I'd like to help you out, but you're gonna deal with this one yourself. You know, I suggest a-

"Shut up Xander!" said Spike and Buffy simultaneously, then they looked at each other.

Xander made a gesture of him zipping his mouth shut and throwing out the key, he went out of the crypt to let the two settle the argument themselves.

Buffy let Spike go and stepped backwards. She was trying to make sense out of the situation. Does she really wants to hear Spike's explanation? She knows where this is going and she doesn't think she can handle it right now. She didn't say anything.

Spike stand up, feeling embarrassed. He didn't want anybody to see those pictures especially by an insipid like Xander. He gathered himself and looked sideways to where Xander left the pictures, then to Buffy.

He decided to reveal the intention behind the pictures, about Dawn, about last night's visit, as well as the other visits he'd made. Settle the score, once and for all. But before he could say anything, Buffy interrupted him.

"Dawn's missing..."

p a r t f i v e

Ben was headed to the Magic Shop to look for Buffy and tell her about Dawn. Giles, Willow, Tara and Anya were searching the Book of Antiquity where powerful spells against an evil atrocities can be found, a spell that could somehow weaken the enemy as well as defeat it.

"How about a vengeance curse? asked Anya. "I can easily do that, I'll just call upon the souls of past victims and they can manifest their energies to Buffy," she added.

"We've already done that Anya...sort of..." said Giles quietly. "Besides, I don't think it'll be nice to summon past Slayers again."

"Just sayin'..." replied Anya.

"How about a combination of decrepify spell and confuse curse?" suggested Tara.

"It says here, it will tap into the spirit realm, channeling bitter and mischievous spirits into the minds of the enemy. The enemy is bombarded with the gibbering of the dead, which indistinguishable from their own thoughts, urge them to strike randomly and ineffectively."

"A massive overdrive of human thoughts..." trailed Giles.

Tara continued reading, "The discordant wailing of these spirits builds to a crescendo, eventually driving the enemy mad and can be easily dispatched back to the hells from whence they spawned."

"It will buy Buffy some time to beat Glory the hell up!" said Anya.

Willow explained to Giles and Anya about the entry that she and Tara found in the manuscript about the orb. "It says ...unless it is sheathed in a powerful energy shield and so long as the keeper of this shield can maintain concentration over this magical buffer..., so what if the Dagon Sphere is the magical buffer and Dawn is the keeper?"

"Absolutely plausible," agreed Giles. "Now all we have to do is get this orb to Dawn and let her concentrate in creating an energy shield against Glory, while Buffy beats the hell out of her!" Giles never imagined he'd use the same words that of Anya's. "And the four of us perform the spell."

"But for how long can Dawn hold up Glory in that energy shield. She's pretty strong, isn't she?" asked Anya.

"That's why we need all the help we can get," said Giles.

Ben entered the shop and faced with a surprised group.

Buffy, Xander and Spike approached the park where Buffy and Spike used to be the day before. Buffy decided to bring him along after literally begging her to do so. Besides, he said he noticed something up the wall, which might be a clue, when they investigated the scene the night before.

The weather was turning to be unpleasant as hours passed. The sky which was originally in the shade of deep purple now shifts to nocturnal purple to almost black. The tremor was beginning to gain intensity and the wind encircles the horizon.

"I didn't finish off the bastard..." said Spike almost a whisper, he was carrying his crossbow on his left shoulder and a quiver full of bolts on the other. He was thinking how he didn't kill that bloody demon last night when he had a chance.

"Buffy! Look!" Xander pointing towards the end of the park.

The sky seemed to have blood red smears within the perimeter of the park. It was almost dark but nevertheless, you can see it.

The three of them looked up at the center of it all.

"I think I know where your sister is..." said Spike.

p a r t s i x

Glory was looking for his brother Ben. He doesn't want to miss this fun. It's the moment they've been waiting for. To once again rule over the depths of hell and of the high lands, Glory thought. She was taunting Dawn to be a good girl and open the gateway.

"This door is useless unless you do something!" Glory visibly enraged at the non-responsive Dawn.

"Ok, you wanna play? I can play. In fact, I have a better idea," Glory continued, "How about having somebody else join our little game?"

Glory signaled Dreg to bring over Joyce. "Look who came over to see us play??"

Buffy, Xander and Spike were in the inner cloister of Glory's mansion, in search of Dawn. Spike was listening to the faint conversation a few rooms ahead of them. He can sense that the enemy was at the great hall; he signaled Buffy the way.

"Do you think we should at least have a plan?" asked Xander.

Buffy agreed. "You're right. I'll take down Glory, Spike can take the demon and you can free up Dawn. Any questions?"

"You're on, honey," Spike didn't finish what he was saying, he's savoring the idea of crushing that bloody demon in his hands. He wore his game face on.

"Works for me," agreed Xander. A simple task, but pivotal nevertheless; unawares that Joyce, too, was held captive by Glory.

Back in the park, Ben, Willow, Tara, and Anya entered the mansion, with Giles not far behind. They already planned their move. Willow, Tara, Anya and Ben will do the spells. Giles will free up Dawn and hand over the orb and give her instructions. They immediately approached the outer cloister then the inner cloister. They gathered near the great hall and started to perform the spell.

At the Great Hall, Joyce was heavily chained in a pillar opposite Dawn. Dawn already opened the gateway by placing her hand against it.

It glowed in deep red.

Dawn let go.

Strong winds filled the room as the candles blew out one by one. It became violent and unbearable as it slowly opened. A thousand voices can be heard deep within the pitch black gateway. Dreg grabbed Dawn and tied her in the opposite pillar.

"Surely, this is a great scene for a finale, don't you agree?" Glory talking to Joyce. The entire family is here, all we need is the Slayer..!"

"Be careful of what you wish for..." said Buffy, with Spike and Xander standing behind her. "You might just get it!"

Glory pushed Joyce aside. "I didn't expect you'd be here so soon? Didn't you learn anything from the last time?"

"Oh yes I did learn something," said Buffy giving her a sour look. "I learned that I should have kicked your ass sooner!...Bitch!"

Buffy and Glory faced each other, without breaking eye contact. Spike moved to where Dreg was, ready for a showdown. Xander carefully walked towards Dawn.

"The Slayer, I haven't had a fight with one of your kind for a long time now. Well, if you count our first encounter as a fight... I call it more of a child's play," Glory taunted Buffy. "Do you really think bringing your groupies will help?"

"At least they're not lap dogs," said Buffy, referring to Dreg.

Buffy immediately thrust her pole arm against Glory's face.

Glory docked.

"Hey, watch the face! Don't you know that I am beautiful?" sneered Glory.

"Not by my standards..." Buffy snapped. She sent a flying kick across Glory's face.

Glory grimaced. "You're not only a bitch, but a stupid one too!"

It's her turn to kick Buffy's head.

Buffy didn't even flinch, she hurled the pole arm towards Glory but misses. "Stupid is, what stupid does," Buffy said to herself.

Spike stood face to face against Dreg, who held tight to his staff. He knocked out Spike's crossbow in a single swing.

"You don't need carry-ons," screeched Dreg.

Spike, without any weapon, slammed his fist across Dreg's face which began to spurt blood. "I made a mistake, should've killed you the first time around."

Dreg swung his staff one more time across Spike's chest. Same spot where he was staked weeks earlier. He gave a painful cry. He grabbed the staff and whirled Dreg around and hurled him a good few feet against a pillar where Joyce was tied.

Xander rushed over Dawn then sees Joyce tied in a heavy chains in the opposite pillar. Giles ran towards Dawn, instructed Xander to help Joyce instead.

Giles, using his own two-handed sword freed Dawn in a matter of minutes. They moved to a slightly secure place near the entrance way, for him to give Dawn instructions about forming an energy shield that could trap Glory temporarily. Giles handed Dawn the orb and she started concentrating.

Xander eluded Spike and Dreg's fight along the pillars. He grabbed the double-bladed ax he was carrying and assured Joyce that he knows what he was doing before hitting her chains once, twice.

Xander was not only worried that he may not free Joyce at all, but he was also worried that they may accidentally hit by Spike and Dreg, who were exchanging blows nearby.

"I'm getting tired mate. You need to go!" Spike got a hold of his crossbow and struck Dreg between his eyes.

Dreg instantly began lying insensible. Spike helped Xander release Joyce and was soon headed to where Dawn was.

Buffy threw some more punches before Glory grabbed her in the throat and slammed her against the marble table, head first. Buffy felt a bit disoriented from the massive blow.

"Have a head ache?" asked Glory, a bit bored. "Bet I could help." Glory take a hold of Buffy's head, started to drain her mentally.

p a r t s e v e n

"No!!!!!!!" Spike rushed to Buffy and grabbed Glory by the neck and whirled her aside.

"Are you alright?" he asked the Slayer, visibly concerned while he checked her head. Buffy nodded.

Glory immediately got up and ran towards Spike. The spell casted by the Scoobies doesn't seem to weaken her the least.

"You're the pesky little vampire, aren't you? Do you know it's not polite to interrupt somebody when she's talking?" gnarled Glory.

She grabbed him in the shoulder and delivered a heavy blow across his back. Afterwards, she threw him away like a rag doll in the glass shrine.

Spike fell in terrible pain.

Dawn succeeded in creating the energy field in a shape of a sphere in front of the gateway.

Glory walked towards Buffy, this time with the intention to kill the Slayer once and for all.

"Where were we? Ah, yes... the Slayer. You know what? I'm getting bored. It's nice meeting you anyways..." said Glory laughing. She walked directly to the shield, trapping her. "What the hell--???!!!" she said screaming.

Glory twisted, kicked and puffed to get out. She managed to get one arm out. It's only a matter of minutes before she finally gets herself out.

Ben quietly slipped inside the Great Hall. He never imagine the destruction that her sister caused. He was always been branded a weakling especially by his sister. But not anymore.

Ben pushed the sphere into the gateway, with him in it. He asked her sister, "What is the price of glory?" Then before they vanished into the darkness, he answered "...Sacrifice."

Dawn ran towards the gateway and placed her hands against it to lock the door.

Dawn ran over to Buffy. They embraced. Joyce approached her two daughters, crying.

"Buffy! Dawn! are you two alright?" cried Joyce.

Buffy nodded. She has blood smeared in her forehead. Dawn was crying, terrible shaken by what had happened. She held tight to Joyce for comfort. Xander and Giles looked on, as Tara, Willow, Anya, all gathered together.

Among the broken glasses from the shrine, Spike gathered himself. He heard footsteps approached him, he slowly looked up and saw Buffy holding out her hand.

Without trusting himself to speak, he took her hand.

p a r t e i g h t

It was five days later, when Buffy and her friends went to the Bronze to celebrate. Dawn and Xander were dancing lively. Tara, Willow, Anya, and Buffy were in the couch talking about Dawn. Buffy was sporting a small bandage in her forehead.

*I really like you baby, I
Forget about all my friends
Do you think I could persuade you?*

"Now that the big bad is gone. Do you think Dawn will still hang-out with you?" asked Willow.

"Yeah, why not? I mean, she's been placed here with a purpose right? And even if that purpose have been served, I wouldn't mind if she still stick with us."

Buffy see Dawn having a fun time dancing, she smiled. "As far as I'm concerned, she's still my sister."

*I really like you baby, I
I wanna see you baby
I really like you baby, I*

"You're lucky to have her Buffy," said Tara.

"And we're happy to baby-sit her, Xander and I," said Anya. She looked at them happily while they danced.

Buffy's pretty much satisfied with everything right now. She's glad to have friends that she can count on anytime. Plus her mom and Dawn was now safe from the big bad. *What else could she ask for?*, thought Buffy.

Xander and Dawn finished their dance and joined them. Xander, exhausted from the dance sat beside Anya. Dawn excused herself.

"Having fun?" Anya asked Xander.

"Am I?" he smiled as he sipped a cold drink. The music changed to slow.

Anya tugged Xander. "Come on, it's our turn..."

"Huh??" said Xander in disbelief. He can say no to that, they went back to the dancefloor.

Willow and Tara decided to dance as well, and asked Buffy if she wants to join them.

"No, go ahead," Buffy replied. "I'll be fine."

Dawn bumped into a newly entered Spike, who did not noticed her. She tapped his shoulder. Spike turned to his left, no one was there, then to his right. He whirled around, looking for that someone who just tapped his shoulder.

"Hey!" said Dawn, a bit bubbly.

"There you are," surprised to see this annoying little brat in the Bronze at this hour. He gave her the look to ask how'd she doing. "Uhm, is your sister around?" asked Spike.

"I know you'll ask that," Dawn smiled.

"Huh?" said Spike, surprised.

"She's right over there," Dawn pointed. "I told her about you..." she winked and left.

Spike can't believe what this kid was saying. He looked to where Buffy was seated. She's gone. So was Dawn.

He sighed. As he was about to turn around, Buffy's in front of him.

*All the way to heaven...
is Heaven...*

"Hey!" called out Buffy.

She's looking mighty pretty tonight, Spike thought. "Buffy!"

A moment of uneasiness passed them. Then both said in unison,
"I wanted to -"
"About the -"

It happened again, them saying things at the same time. They smiled in embarrassment.

"Go on," said Spike

"No, you first," replied Buffy.

*All the way to heaven...
is Heaven...
caught between the spirit and the dust*

"About the pictures..." started Spike.

"Don't worry about it. You can have it," said Buffy candidly.

"And, I don't like 'em anyways," Buffy continued. "Besides, I owe you one ... for saving Dawn."

And more than, she said to herself. Spike helped her more than once and she can't deny it. The least she can do was to let him have his fun.

Well, that was a relief... I thought she'd be upset about it, thought Spike. *But what about what Dawn told her about me? What is that all about?*

*I wanna loose all your demons and go...
I wanna tear all your chains, coz I know...*

"Your sister, she didn't say anything else, did she?" asked Spike.

"No," said Buffy "Is there anything else I should know about?" she asked, curious to know what he meant.

Spike looked at her thoughtfully. "Nah...you wouldn't be interested." Then turned elsewhere in the dancefloor. He sees Willow and Tara, Xander and Anya slow dancing.

He had a crazy thought.

Spike glanced at Buffy, who was looking at her friends buried in her own thoughts. He wanted to say something but reconsidered. Instead he continued watching the dancing silhouettes and enjoyed the night.

*All the way to heaven...
is Heaven...
deep inside your heart
All the way to heaven...all the way...*

Somewhere in the dark corner, Riley watched them in the shadows.

*All the way to heaven...
All the way to heaven...all the way...*

t o b e c o n t i n u e d

Title: Sweetness Follows

Synopsis: The world is a vampire. An unusual rise of vampire population threatens the town of Sunnydale that could leave Spike dusted. Riley returns to Sunnydale to give his relationship with Buffy another chance and her dilemma of getting back with him or moving forward.

Note: I wrote this fanfic before all the hooplas, the twists, and turns in Buffyverse.

Date: Monday, 09 January, 2001 : 02:42:12 PM

Characters: Buffy † Xander † Willow † Riley † Harmony † Giles † Spike

p a r t o n e

Buffy and the Scoobies were on patrol at the Sunnydale graveyard. It was the first time they patrolled in more than a couple of weeks. Buffy agreed that they can come with her but she reminded them to keep precautionary measures at all times. Times have changed drastically in Sunnydale. More and more unwanted demons and monsters converged in this town, causing a lot of civilian casualties.

The danger became more apparent during Glory's short reign over Sunnydale. That came to a stop when Buffy, Dawn and the Scoobies successfully defeated and destroyed the newest big bad, of course with the help of an unexpected ally - Ben.

But what about a bleached pest that also lent a helping hand? As much as Buffy doesn't want to admit it, Spike indeed helped them during those troubled times and even when she least expect it. Although at the moment, the area seemed quiet and no vampires anywhere on sight to slay, she could never be too careful about it.

Speaking of vampires, *where in Sunnydale is Spike?*, Buffy thought. It was not as if she missed his annoying little antics, but it kind of *unusual* for him not to be around.

"Okay guys, we've covered all the northern sector of this town. Anybody wants to split up?" suggested Buffy.

The Scoobies looked at each other as if to say, they're really not interested since it was way past midnight and they needed to take a break for the night.

"In fact, I think we'd better go home now since there are no vampires around to stake," said Willow. "What d'you say?" she referred to Buffy.

"I dunno, I got this strange feeling that something will happen tonight. I mean, there's gotta be something... somewhere!" said Buffy, a bit frustrated.

Somewhere on the farthest part of Sunnydale, almost outside of town, 6 friends walking home from a party. Lots of dancing, smoking, and drinking from where they've come from. Chandler, one of the more high spirited member of the pack, accidentally forgot to put gas on his car and you guessed it right, they were stranded.

The boys - Chandler, Ross, and Joey volunteered to get gas from the nearest town, Sunnydale, and promised to be back as soon as possible. The girls - Rachel, Monica, and Phoebe, insisted that they come along too. They wouldn't be caught *dead* waiting for them in the middle of the road, in a car, without gas.

They reached the town after walking for about 30 minutes. By now, some of them were sober enough to notice the 6 figures ahead of them. They can't really see what they looked like, but they did seem to be pretty pale, have very long faces, and had a bumpy forehead. Although they may be a bit odd, the six friends were glad to see that somebody was still up this late to ask for directions.

Joey, being the smartest and the bravest, volunteered himself to ask for the nearest service station. "Hey man, I know it's kinda late but, do you know where we can find the nearest gas station?"

The leader of the pack just looked at him and smiled, showing his long, pointed teeth. "It's your lucky night..."

Joey didn't hear the rest of the sentence, he collapsed on the road while his other friends screamed in horror.

One by one, the lurid figures moved forward and surrounded the remaining five preys to feast on.

p a r t t w o

Buffy and Willow was in school, walking along the corridors to go to their next class. They're talking about their plans for the coming long weekend. Willow suggested that they go to this really cool spot somewhere outside Sunnydale where you can find an assortment of spells, gems and potions, and other witches' stuffs. She added it was some sort of a Wicca convention, but they can look for slayer weaponry as well.

"Or we can hang out at Merrick's Venue and meet some boys. According to Anya, it's a good place to start," Willow winked at Buffy.

It was not exactly *her* looking for a male companion, she had Tara. It was for Buffy. She knew her best friend needed to have some fun once in a while, being all busy with the patrolling and school, plus it was a long weekend.

"Come on, Buffy, what do you say? It'll be a girls night out!" said Willow excitedly.

Buffy, not much of a social person these days, said she'll think about it. She couldn't imagine herself dating anybody at the moment or even the thought of going out to meet *boys*. She was just not ready to take another step into the love realm again. And if she did, it'll be with *somebody* who will be there for

her and understands her, not walk away from her. Someone strong enough to fight for their love until the very end.

They entered the classroom together and sat on their respective seats. The teacher, Professor Wick was making a statement about how they, the students, see themselves in years to come. *Will they become professionals, assholes, or professional assholes?* said Mr. Wick. Everybody laughed. Buffy included.

"It's funny for now, but when you think about it, I guarantee all of you will not be laughing for long," added Professor Wick. "So what about it, any volunteers?" he looked around waiting for answers. "Yes, Mr. Neil."

A young student said he sees himself as an entrepreneur and take over his family's business.

The professor agreed, "But are you doing this because you want it? Is it just because you're obliged to do it? Or you're just fascinated by the fact that you will be your own boss?" he asked.

"Well, if you put it that way... I'm not sure. I mean, I want to do it, yeah..." *Or so it seems*, said the student.

"Do you have other interests other than what you're molded to be? Say, being a poet, or a musician, or even a teacher?" addressed the professor to the entire class.

Some of them nodded their heads.

"See, that's what I meant. What drives you to succeed in your chosen field. What motivates you to become what you are?"

"This however, may be true to some of you. Others may just want a simple life, a normal life." The professor paused. "It may not be very easy at times, but life finds a way to true happiness and success in life."

Buffy felt compelled with what Professor Wick was saying. She had had experiences that was beyond normal, in fact most of it are supernatural. She had destroyed and came face to face with all kinds of monsters, demons, and vampires. And true, she wants a normal life.

Just before the class ended, Professor Wick made the topic an assignment. "Since we have a long weekend coming Friday, I would like everyone to prepare a 2-page essay, no less than 1000 words on what or where do you think you will be 5 years from now. Just think about it and be prepared to submit it next week."

A sounding disappointment from the students can be heard after that announcement. A long weekend and they'll be spending it doing essay reports.

As for Buffy, more important things came into mind. *Will she ever experience a normal life, five years from now? Will she ever see the light of day, five years from now..?*

Meanwhile, back at Spike's crypt, he and Harmony were in "bed". Spike was not in the mood right now for Harmony's little game. She was plainly stupid and unworthy of his attention. If it hadn't for his physical needs, he wouldn't even bother spending time with her. Not that it's all-important to him, but he was still an unbreathing being that needs satisfaction in his unlife. If the one he adores cannot give it to him, he will find it in somebody else.

Now, how will that sound to the girl of his dreams if she found out that sex is just a casual thing for him? Spike thought. *Is this object of his affection really affecting him this bad that he can't function normally whenever he thinks of her?*

"No! Not if I can help it." Spike shook his head.

"What's wrong, little *Spikey* needs some tuning up?" asked Harmony.

Spike shot an evil glance at her. "None of your concern, cupcakes..." he said coldly.

Spike was clearly irritated with her. He doesn't know why he still put up with a half-wit like her. He stood up, grabbed a cigarette and walked to his chair.

"I have great news for you, my blondie bear," started Harmony. "I met a couple of newly sired vampires down at Merrick's Venue. They said they belong to a much higher network of vampires but I didn't bother to ask since I don't really care, not that I want to join them or something. Anyway, they all have funny names like Chandler and Phoebe... and they looked so familiar to me... well, except for that Ross guy. I wonder where I've seen them..."

Spike, barely listening to what she has to say, sat on his chair and pulled out his zeppo to light the cigarette that was in his mouth. He was thinking his next move to Buffy.

Will he continue following her around like a nut case, just a bystander waiting for an opportunity for her to notice him? Or will he finally open up his feelings and prove to her that he is worthy of her affection, that he can be almost human if he wanted to, that he has indeed changed?

He decided not to light the cigarette anymore.

"... And you know what? They're willing to do *our* little mission in life!" beamed Harmony.

Spike, still buried in his own thoughts, instinctively caught the last part of Harmony's story. "Mission? What mission?" asked Spike.

"Don't you remember anymore?" she said. "The death of the Slayer!"

Harmony concerned for her boy toy not remembering. "Spikey, we'd better think of a way to get that chip out of your head before it clouds your mind. You're starting to worry me, baby."

Pfft. Mission? Hah! That mission is long gone honey. I have a different mission in my unlife now. Spike troubled on where this mission thing was heading.

"What? You made a deal with some, low-life vampires to do your dirty job? I-I mean, our plan and you didn't even tell me first?"

"Well yeah, didn't we agree that I'm the one who's supposed to kill her? I figured... there's this new bunch of blood sucking vamps in town, and you being so *busy* and all... with --- stuffs."

Harmony slowly moved towards the end of the bed, close enough to where Spike was sitting. "That's what *you* want right? Have the Slayer killed?"

"Uh-You figured," he chuckled. "Yeah, right. And when did you start figuring out what I want?!"

"Well, is it or isn't it what you want?!" demanded Harmony.

Spike just stared at her. He knew what he wanted.

He wanted Buffy.

With him.

Alive.

p a r t t h r e e

Buffy dropped by at the Magic Box to talk to Giles about the truth on her mortality. No known slayer ever lived past their 25th year. She was worried that she will ultimately follow that path, if they haven't found out any secret knowledge or information that can help her extend her life. She reflected this in relation with an essay report at school and it's been bothering her for sometime now.

This past year, she and Giles still haven't found a way to explore her true origin, her dark side, which according to a powerful vampire, existed in her. And if her slayer instinct was correct, her dark nature will prevent her early demise.

"Maybe we're looking at it at the wrong angle, Buffy," said Giles. "I agree that your dark side, being a hunter and a killer, oh, I don't even want to use that word, believe me..." he interrupted, "...will help you prepare for future challenges. But we're missing the point here, what if it's not the only thing that counts?" asked Giles.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Didn't Spike said to you that you're asking the wrong questions? That it's not how past slayers died, it's *why* they died."

Buffy's train of thought shifted from their discussion to a more personal level.

"I guess *he's* right. I mean, I thought about it and I'm glad I have you guys, my family and friends," Buffy said proudly. "I don't need anything else....*anyone*. I have what I need."

But that's not exactly true. Deep down, Buffy held into a dream where she can have a normal life, a family of her own, a pink house with the white picket fences, a husband to come home to.

"Giles, where do you see myself five years from now?" she asked.

"Buffy."

Buffy, startled by someone calling her. She had been daydreaming about that beautiful pink house and the rose garden in the backyard. She didn't realize that she was still at the Magic Box preparing to patrol that night.

It was Xander who called her.

"Are we going to patrol tonight? 'Cause Anya and I have plans, and... we sorta -" Xander explained.

Buffy didn't let him finish, she just said it's okay since she'd been patrolling solo before. And besides, there were no new threat in Sunnydale anyways.

Somewhere in southern mausoleum, a group of vampires gathered themselves to plot an attack to a certain peroxide vampire. The newly sired ones were there as well, with a different agenda. They told them about a vampire named Harmony who wanted the Slayer killed. They agreed.

But that wasn't the case anymore, said the speaker of the rest of the vampires. Their hatred for the one formerly known as William was greater than their intentions of killing the Slayer.

Amidst the group was a dark figure hidden in its shadows. The only thing visible to this figure was its long hands and an *amulet* hanging from its neck. They regarded this figure as their leader, being the oldest of them all. It had been listening for awhile now on how they would proceed with the plan.

They had had enough of the one who can't bite; first killing off one of their kind, then leading the Slayer in their hideout and the next thing they knew, their vamp nest was torched and their business ruined. Not to mention his new found allegiance with the Slayer.

"You can do whatever you want with the girl..." it finally spoken. "But I want him delivered untouched..." said the figure amongst them.

It had such a faint voice, almost whispering.

p a r t f o u r

Buffy decided to patrol at the east sector not farther from their house, having not able to go there lately. The weather had a nice blend of warmth and a bit of a chill, just enough for a good walk.

She noticed that there was a commotion a few meters away from her. It looked like a group of vampires ganging on a *helpless* creature. She ran towards the middle of it and saw Spike surrounded by nine vampires. He successively beaten one of them when another vampire approached from his back.

"Watch out!!!" shouted Buffy. She delivered a kick across its face that sent it flying. Spike saw what she did to the vampire and smiled. "Glad you can make it, luv."

Buffy acknowledged Spike. Two more vampires approached them, this time they got dusted in a matter of seconds. The remaining ones scrambled to their feet, avoiding further confrontation. One of them shouted, "This is not the end Spike...Slayer!"

"Tell you new buddies, that I'm not afraid of them!" Spike shouted back.

"Why am I not surprised to see you being mobbed by your own kind?" said Buffy, facing up to him after saving his ass.

"Hmp.. they are just jealous because I have you by my side," replied Spike in a cocky smile. "Don't worry, they won't be back."

"And how do you know that?" asked Buffy, waiting for an answer.

"They wouldn't exactly want to be fertilizers in the future would they?" he said sarcastically. "Besides, this is not about me, it's about you."

Spike dodged her question. It was not true and he knew it. It was about him.

Just before Buffy saw him fighting the vampires, they warned him something about being a traitor and revenge for trashing their nests operation.

"What are you saying?" said Buffy, confused.

"Look Buffy, I heard somewhere that there's a gang of vampires that's out to get you. I just want you to know that if you need help, you can count on me," he said sincerely.

Buffy didn't say anything but she appreciates the warning though. She decided to leave since there was not much to do out there anymore. Spike getting no response from her again, called out.

"Buffy!"

"What now Spike?" she said while walking back home.

"A-Are you doing something else tonight?" asked Spike. Walking as fast as he could to catch up with Buffy.

"Why?" asked Buffy. She doesn't like the tone of his voice. She walked faster.

"M-Maybe, we could hangout for a while at t-The Bronze or somewhere..." unsure if what he said was correct. He had been planning to ask her out for days and when the time comes, he felt very nervous. "They have great Buffalo wings and this new onion thing, it's delicious!" he continued.

Buffy stopped walking and looked at him. "Are you asking me out?" she said.

"Well," he considered. "If you like to put it that way... yeah." He swallowed. *Say yes, oh please, say yes,* he thought.

Buffy gave him a suspicious look and continued walking, only this time it's faster.

"It-It's just a way of me saying that I'm glad you showed up back there and save my ass from those bloody bastards!" he maneuvered his approach.

Buffy ignored him and continued her way. After a minute or two she said, "Thanks, but no thanks."

"At least let me walk with you." Spike following her, "In case, they jumped in on me again."

"I thought you said they were after me, not you?" said Buffy.

"Well, okay. They were after me too... sodding bastards..." he replied.

They reached her house in a matter of minutes. Buffy stopped at the porch and faced Spike. "You're a vampire Spike. You've killed many of your kind and I don't mean to sound enthusiastic about it, but you can handle those thugs. So, I don't think you need me."

Buffy entered her house.

Spike, left standing outside her house, whispered to himself, "On the contrary my dear, I *do* need you."

Buffy closed the door behind her.

What could Spike be thinking by asking her out? As a thank you gesture from saving him? Is he turning human or something? This is a scary thing, Buffy thought.

Something majorly weird is going on with Spike. Him acting like a normal person?...duh! If this is normal, I don't wanna know what isn't anymore. She approached the still-lighted kitchen and was surprised to see her mom with a visitor.

"Riley..." Buffy gasped.

p a r t f i v e

Buffy had such a disturbing evening last night after fighting vampires that attacked Spike which apparently were after her as well, and a visit from someone that she least expected.

Riley wanted to talk to her about the couple of months that he was away and the true nature of his visit. He didn't expect her to be ready to face him last night with such short notice, so he invited her to have dinner with him and talk.

She was sitting in the cafeteria with Willow and Tara sharing what had happened the night before. She badly needed advice from her friends on what to do next.

"What are you gonna tell him?" asked Willow.

The worse part was, she doesn't know what to tell him. She herself was confused with her feelings.

Is she glad that he's back or does she merely want the idea of him back?, Buffy thought.

Absence does make the heart grow fonder, but that was not the case here. Part of her was happy and excited about his return, however, so many things have happened in the past couple of months and somehow she managed to move forward with her life, little by little, without him by her side.

"I don't know..." said Buffy.

Buffy and Riley sat in a private corner of the Bronze. Riley started the conversation by explaining what happened to him in Belize. The operation was in total chaos from the very beginning. The place was contaminated with monsters who made their dwelling in the forests of Central Belize.

These monsters have the keen ability to regenerate themselves over a prolonged period of time, surpassing their life expectancy by almost twice their lifetime. Considering these findings, his team made it crucial to annihilate these monsters without hesitation.

It was destroy or be destroyed. Riley didn't like the idea of merciless killings, he guessed he never had that edge ever since. It made him to reconsider his motivation in joining the team and finally decided to abandon the mission and get back to his former life and search for the one true thing that made him complete.

"And that's why I am here Buffy," said Riley. "All the while I was in Belize, all I keep thinking about is you." He held her hands into his. "I want us back together again, Buffy. And this time for good."

Buffy remained speechless.

Is this the second chance she's been waiting for to have a normal life, a normal relationship with a normal person? The pink house with the rose garden in the backyard?

She remembered how she'd given Riley everything she had, everything she was, body and soul. Yes, she remembered Riley...

"Riley," she said softly. "I can't give you a straight answer tonight, you know that. There were so many things that happened while you were gone and I don't think I can sum it all up in one conversation; the things I've learned, the things I've shared with those close to me. It'll take some time to get used to it again, do you understand what I'm saying?"

"I understand," he said quietly.

p a r t s i x

Riley walked Buffy back to her house. Once or twice Riley talked about memories they once had like the first time they dated. Buffy smiled upon the mention of the *cheese*. They arrived at her front gate and said goodnight to each other.

"I had a great time..." said Buffy.

"I'm glad you did. Do you want to go out sometime again, maybe tomorrow?" asked Riley persuasively.

"Sorry, I can't. I have to finish this paper," said Buffy indifferently.

"That's okay." said Riley. "Probably, next week then?"

"Yeah, probably..." she said.

Riley leaned forward and kissed her. It was a small gentle kiss. Buffy looked at him trying to remember how it felt when they were still together. He said goodnight and walked off.

Buffy approached their front porch and opened the door. She stopped. She thought she heard footsteps from the side of their house.

Spike was standing in the shadows. It was as if he has been there for sometime now judging from the way he looked, tired and frustrated. He wanted to see Buffy, which by now was a pretty common routine of his.

"So, you're back into each other arms again, eh?" said Spike irritated.

"How long have you been standing there?"

"Almost 2 hours now, I thought I can patrol with you tonight. But then again, you already made your *rounds* with whitebread over there," he said pointing his lips to Riley.

"Are you spying on me now? For your information, Riley and I are friends. And I don't think I need to patrol elsewhere when there is one in front of me that needs staking," said Buffy sarcastically.

"Friends huh? We're *friends*, but I don't see us going out, much less kiss," said Spike, acting like a jealous lover.

Buffy can't believe what she was hearing. She was totally amazed how Spike gets in her nerves almost instantly, without even trying. Here she was, just came from a nice dinner out, and here was an obnoxious vampire who seemed determined to meddle with her personal life.

"And who said we're friends...?" said Buffy, wanting to prove him wrong. "By the way, why are you suddenly being so twitchy?"

"I'm just curious why you seemed to be so okay that he's back, after leaving you so that he can satisfy his macho stunt. After all you've been through with him, not understanding what you are, not knowing what you need... and you're still considering a relationship with him?" Spike said, almost reading how Buffy felt.

"And what exactly do you mean by that?" she asked.

"It means, there are others -- other *man* who deserves you more than him. Somebody who can appreciate you and love you for who you are," he said impatiently.

"And who are you to talk about relationships, huh? Tell me, when was the last time you experienced true love? Drusilla? Harmony?"

Spike didn't answer. He didn't need to.

"That's what I thought..." she said quietly.

"Go home Spike..."

Buffy entered her house.

p a r t s e v e n

Spike walked back to his crypt. He had random thoughts about what happened at the Summer's house just now. *Buffy said it right. Who am I to tell her what love is, when clearly she doesn't think I am capable of it*, he thought.

He certainly doesn't care for a twit like Harmony. He loved syphilis more than her!

His mind drifted to Drusilla. He was a poncy poet when she met him. A poet in love with a girl who doesn't even know he existed; much like what he was in most of his relationships. He owe Drusilla for awakening the passion hidden inside him. He was devoted to her almost like a goddess. She was his sire, his companion for his unlife, until she left him for a disgusting demon. Right about the same time when he realized that *maybe* Drusilla was not his true love after all.

Maybe he haven't found his true love... until now.

A sudden crash came falling to his head.

Spike fell down.

Buffy was having trouble sleeping. She was tired, confused, and still have to finish the essay assignment given by her professor at school. Buffy opened her radio and listened to the music playing. She took a pen and paper out of her desk drawer and started outlining her essay. *How do I see myself 5 years from now?*, she wrote.

Buffy paused.

She stared at the blank paper then started to write.



listen here, my sister and my brother



what did you think, when you lost another



oh, sweetness follows

She remembered asking Giles if she can move past her 25th year and live longer. "To move on, you have to let go of something in yourself that's been holding you," he said.



I used to wonder, why did you bother



to distance from one, into the other



oh, sweetness follows

She remembered Riley. The way he held her hands in his. His proposal to renew their relationship. His gentle kiss on her lips. She remembered Riley...



it's these little things, that can pull you under



live your life, filled with joy and laughter



oh, sweetness follows

She remembered being a slayer, her dreams of a normal life, her mom, the first slayer, the Bronze, her friends, a rose garden in the backyard, Angel, the vampire nest, Dracula, school, Dawn, The Magic shop, the white picket fences, the pink house, Spike.

Buffy stopped. A strange feeling overcomes her.

"Spike..."

Spike was unconscious in his bed, sporting a small gash in his head. A hand, belonging to a dark figure laying beside him, traveled from his forehead to his cheeks touching it softly, while its other hand remain holding an *amulet* hanging from its neck.

A faint, shrill voice sang in an inordinate lullaby that resonate throughout the crypt.

Dru smiled.

t o b e c o n c l u d e d

Title: No More

Synopsis: A Buffy & Spike fiction. Drusilla heads back to Sunnydale after a disfiguring encounter with Angel, and seek out Spike to once and for all settle their undying connection. Buffy and Spike confronts their feelings for each other in the fifth and final installment of The Vampyr Pentateuch.

Rating: G

Date: Wednesday, 19 January, 2001 : 06:25:40 PM

Music/Lyrics: I Will Love you by Fisher.

Characters: Buffy † Xander † Willow † Angel † Cordelia † Riley † Anya † Tara † Joyce † Dawn † Harmony † Drusilla † Giles † Spike

p a r t o n e

Buffy laid asleep after finishing her essay report due for submission. She titled her essay "Into the Future", an insight of what and where she will be 5 years from now. Earlier that night, various memories flew in her mind while she was writing that report. Thoughts on her early life as a slayer, her encounters with the supernatural, her past relationship with Angel, her friends, foes, her family, her relationship with Riley, and a dream of a normal life.

After working on the paper for a couple of hours, she closed her eyes and began dreaming. Buffy found herself waking to a new day in a room she had never been to before.

It was a wallpaper covered room with huge windows draped with soft, silk curtains that sways excitedly as a mild wind blew from an evidently bright and charming outdoors. A smell of fresh flowers raked inside the bedroom and a burst of birds chirping can be heard from afar.

She walked towards the window and looked at the clear blue skies outside. There was a rustle out the backyard as if there had been a jostling activities taking place.

Buffy walked towards a dresser and found a small handwritten note on top of a small box. She read the piece of note that said "happy birthday my love". It was obviously written by someone dear to her. *It's my birthday!*, she thought and neatly placed the note aside. She picked up the small box and carefully opened it and found a locket-necklace shaped as a heart with engravings "*know in thy heart, thou art mine*". She excitedly tried the necklace on and she stepped out of the room and look for the person whom this gift came from.

Buffy heard someone talking downstairs, a child's voice and a male voice. She slowly went to look for the voices, when a small hand grabbed her skirt and said "Mummy!"

Buffy looked down. It was a small child barely five, dressed in a white overalls. The child had a blonde coifed hair, radiant eyes, and captivating smile. Buffy had never seen anyone so beautiful in her life. A virtual replica of herself when she was still a kid, and more. Buffy got down on her knees and hugged the child and kissed her.

"Oh my baby..." she said happily.

"Mummy, come see daddy," said the little girl and dragged her towards the living room. A streamer which read, "HAPPY BIRTHDAY BUFFY" jazzed up the room. Her mom, Dawn, Giles, Willow, Xander, Tara, Anya were there to greet her. Soon, one by one the guests started to go to the rose-laden garden outside. The little girl let go of Buffy's hand and went to get *someone*.

In the corner, a voice greeted her. Buffy looked to see who it was.

It was Angel, holding another child who looked exactly like her little girl, only this time it was a little boy. "Mummy!" the little boy cried as it ran to her.

Buffy can't believe her eyes, she and Angel...and kids.

p a r t t w o

"Happy Birthday Buffy," Angel smiled.

"Angel, honey. Can you get--" interrupted Cordelia. "Oh, Buffy! Happy Birthday!" she kissed her on the cheek.

Buffy was surprised to see Cordelia in the midst of her dreams and shocked to see that she was pregnant. Obviously, she and Angel were a couple. Buffy gave an inquiring look at both of them.

"Great kids!" said Angel. "Looks like they got it from their father."

"Aren't they adorable?" said Cordelia. "Twins. A boy and a girl. 'Guess you and the husband are very proud of them," she smiled broadly.

"Yeah, me and --- their daddy, are very happy," Buffy anxiously said, still cannot believe what was happening. *Angel and Cordelia? When did that happen? I think I missed a memo*, she thought.

Angel and Cordelia went to join the rest of the guests in the porch. Buffy followed them with a stare. She was surprised, yes. But nothing more than that. She didn't feel any remorse or anger, only lingering surprise.

One of the children let go of Buffy's hand and ran behind her. "Daddy!"

Buffy's attention suddenly shifted from Angel & Cordelia to the person behind her. Her heart beat faster. She didn't have time to turn and see who it was since he swiftly covered Buffy's eyes from behind and gave her a kiss in her neck.

It was the most passionate kiss she felt for a long, long time. Buffy didn't even care that she doesn't know the identity of this person whom her children called "Daddy". It's as if time stood still for them. After all, whoever he was, *he couldn't have been that bad, right?* Buffy thought; her heart still beating faster.

After a few moments, he whispered lovingly, "Happy Birthday luv...". Buffy recognized that voice.

She turned around to face him, hands no longer covering her eyes. She gasped.

"Spike..."

Spike was slightly awoken by somebody sitting beside him. He looked up and saw a blurry image of Drusilla. He blinked once, twice, then murmured, "Slayer..."

p a r t t h r e e

Buffy, Willow and Tara was in the school campus sitting under a tree, discussing the essay report that they submitted to Professor Wick. Buffy wrote about what she, as a normal individual, hoped will be 5 years into the future. A successful career, a family, a healthy relationship, among others. Indeed she's blessed with having everything she wanted in life and could never asked for more. But unlike any normal person, Buffy had a knowledge that someday her dreams will not come true as recorded in Slayer history.

No known slayer live past her 25th year. She'd always accepted it without second thoughts, no matter what sacrifices comes with it.

She ended her essay by writing "Nothing is more important, nothing is greater than fulfilling my destiny. And if that means sacrificing a normal life, so be it."

"I know that this is hard on you Buffy," said Willow. "I know, I will be, if I knew what's to come. But you shouldn't give up hope. It's what makes us strong."

Tara, who's optimistic about it assured her, "Life always finds a way, Buffy..."

Spike, now fully conscious, was surprised to see the cloaked figure beside him. He jumped from his bed and to his feet. He later recognized that it was Drusilla. He was surprised by her sudden appearance in Sunnydale, much less inside his crypt.

"Dru...!" he said. "What are you doing here?"

Drusilla slowly approached him.

"How long was I unconscious?" Spike still collecting his thoughts. He touched his right temple and felt that he had been hit in the head. The wound was still fresh.

Drusilla, without uttering a word, lifted the cloak that's been hiding her face and most of her arms. A still burnt-skin was visible in her face, her hands showed several scars from a horrifying encounter with Angel in Los Angeles. Most of her body parts was clearly disfigured as he looked from a distance.

"What happened?" he said, disturbed by her appearance.

"Angel... Angel did this to me..." she echoed.

Buffy went to see Riley at the Bronze that evening. She told him that she already decided about their relationship and its future. She began with a simple writing assignment at school. Buffy said, the essay opened her eyes to what she must be and what she must do to move on with her life. And that's what she's doing --- moving on with her life. Buffy explained to him that he mustn't think that she's doing this to hurt him nor does she want her decision to affect their friendship.

"I know that it will be impossible for us to share a single moment without ending up to what I basically am, a Slayer. And I don't want to go through that again, not being able to be there for you and you not being able to understand," she carefully chose her words.

"But Buffy, this time it's different..." said Riley.

"I know. But life is hard enough without the pressures of slayerhood. I don't wanna be someone that I'm not. And I'm not sure anymore if I'll be able to share that part of my life with you," Buffy explained.

"I understand," Riley sighed.

"I kinda figured it out somehow... before I asked you about us getting back together. I kinda hope that everything will be okay this time around, but I guess... I was wrong," Riley hesitated, he considered his and Buffy's feelings.

"You're right Buffy, it's time to move on. I just wished it turned out differently," he paused.

"So, are you okay?" Buffy asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine," Riley smiled and seemed relief.

"What are your plans now?"

"I guess, I'll be leaving Sunnydale soon. I heard Los Angeles is a good place to start."

Buffy smiled. Los Angeles was indeed a good place to start anew.

"Riley, thank you."

"No Buffy, *thank you*."

They embraced.

He was about to leave, when he remembered something.

"You know what?" he chuckled. "I can't help mentioning this," he hesitated, "...but I thought all the while this is about a persistent vampire, but I guess I was wrong."

"Riley, Angel is just a friend, you know that," said Buffy, wondering why he mentioned Angel.

"Yeah I know, but I'm not talking about Angel..." he replied.

Buffy stared at him, confused.

Spike asked Drusilla what transpired in Los Angeles, what exactly did Angel do to her. She told him everything in detail with what happened with her and Darla. Spike examined her burn marks but he also noticed that she also recovered enormously from that attack except for a few scars.

"And you came here because..." Spike asked dryly.

"Mummy wants Angel to suffer for what he did to us! And we want you to join me and Darla..." cried Drusilla.

"You want me to help?" Spike seemed uninterested.

So many things happened with his unlife after she left him two years ago. As much as Spike wanted to join her in their vengeance dream team, he has more important things to do in Sunnydale. He knew Drusilla will not come to him if it weren't important, but things have changed between them. He, for one, was incapacitated to kill.

"You must have forgotten Dru, that I have this little *inconvenience* in my nuggin'..." Spike explained. "Oh yeah, I don't think you know, since you don't bloody care for me anyway!" he said angrily.

After a moment or two, he calmly said, "Anyways, what's in it for me? Beside the fact that I got to kill your sire?" Spike was visually directing his anger and frustration on her, the chip, and Angel. But Drusilla sensed otherwise.

"You haven't got rid of the girl, have you Spike?" she said.

"I don't know what you're talking about," he said trying to hide his emotions.

"Her power over you is much greater than before... you're drowning in her."

Dru looked at him with interest, "You're ... in love with the Slayer..."

p a r t f o u r

Buffy, Giles, and Scoobies in a meeting at the Magic Box because of the unprecedented rise of vampire population in Sunnydale. It was documented in several local news that strange attacks were reported throughout Sunnydale. Hospitals are receiving more and more cases of unexplained neck bites on its patients, sudden fear of light, and blood loss. Majority of those patients disappeared within a few hours of admission and never to be seen again.

Giles showed Buffy and the Scoobies the pattern of vampire attacks within the last few weeks. It started with a bunch of certain individuals fascinated with Vampiroidism and indulged themselves with a daily trip to a vampire nest for blood sucking. Next were numerous police reports of missing persons within the town limits, the latest of which were a group of out-of-towners.

Giles presented the facts. "Ideas anyone?" he looked across the table at everybody, including Buffy, who was in deep thoughts.

"I don't really think I've known much these last few weeks since I'm kinda busy with work here at the shop," said Anya.

"I agree with you Anya," replied Xander. "You might consider not thinking much about money and more about people," he sniffed.

"Okay, you two. Are you guys having a spat?" said Willow.

"No," said Anya, "It's just our way of expressing ourselves...verbally."

"Yeah, Anya and I thought that it could add spice to our relationship," Xander agreed. "You know, banter brings out our inner frustrations, and we see to it that it gets satisfied at the end of the day."

Willow gave them a dissatisfied grin.

Giles interrupted their conversation. "Does anybody had any suspicions about these sudden vampire explosion?"

"I have," said Buffy, staring intently at the newspaper.

Everybody looked at her.

Buffy's expressionless, "Spike warned me about a gang of vampires that's after me...*us*," her eyes narrowed. Buffy quickly placed her hand across her temple and drew a deep breath.

"Buffy, are you all right?" asked Giles worried.

She looked at Giles. "I never did take him seriously..."

Inside a mausoleum near the edge of the cemetery, a plan to attack the Slayer were being ensued by a vampire that leads the group. They still wanted to get rid of the bleached vampire but he's currently under the protection of their head sire.

"Sooner or later, Spike will go out and stray away from Drusilla," it spoke. "Then we will get our chance."

A boisterous agreement can be heard inside the mausoleum. "In the meantime, let us focus our attention to *the one* who made our unlives miserable..."

Everyone turned their attention to Harmony. "Tonight, we will deliver the Slayer..." it said. Harmony made a semi-evil grin.

Back to the crypt, Spike continually denied everything that Drusilla had said. "That's simply untrue..."

"Tell me baby, will you still love her if I told you that after tonight, she won't be thinking of you anymore?"

"What are you talking about?" Spike furiously asked.

"Somebody's getting killed tonight, Spike..." said Dru giddily. "Will you help me now, my love?"

"You are one sick bitch!" said Spike shaking his head.

"Goody!" Drusilla yelled, taking Spike's answer as a yes. She danced merrily across his crypt.

Seeing that Drusilla was serious, Spike decided to leave the crypt and find Buffy to warn her.

"Spike, you do *want* her to live longer don't you..?"

Harmony was on her way to Spike's crypt to tell him that the plan will be carried-out soon. She entered the crypt.

"Spike, our friends are now on their way to kill the Slayer. Isn't that exciting? It won't be long until -" she noticed the figure behind her.

"Who are you? Spikey, who's this creepy old witch?"

"Her name is Drusilla," he answered.

"Oh, Dorkus..!" Harmony looked at Drusilla from head to toe.

"Shut-up Harmony!" said Spike.

Drusilla glared at her. "You are an insignificant factor in this plot. Why don't you leave us alone?"

"Hey, I'm important to this story! I'm the one to kill the Slayer." Harmony proudly said. "Besides, this is our love nest. You're the one who should leave!"

"Harm..." warned Spike.

"You are one annoying little bint. Spike, why don't you send her away before I break her neck?" said Drusilla bored with Harmony.

"Hey, watch your mouth, y-you barbecued has been! You have no control over here, this is our turf. Why don't you go back where you came from?!" Harmony said challenging her.

"Sweetie, I don't like her face. Send her away..." Harmony said to Spike.

"For the last time Harmony, shut your bloody face or I will personally break your neck!" Spike said angrily.

"Fine! I had it with you!" said Harmony, obviously pissed off. "Go back to your loony Dorkus! Just don't come running back to me after she dumps you again..!"

Harmony left.

"Now Dru, what's this all about the Slayer living longer?" he asked.

p a r t f i v e

Buffy decided to have a talk with Spike to know more about this attack and to confront him about her recent discovery about his *feelings for her*. She tried to remember when this whole thing started. Buffy somewhat knew of Spike's feelings for her during the time when he told her about the two Slayers and how they were only *dancing*.

Spike tried to kiss her that night in the alley, but her seething emotions recognized that as a threat. That same evening, he even attempted to shoot her; only it didn't matter much to her for she felt she *did* have that death wish.

Buffy had flashes about encounters following that day and even before that; Spike hiding by the stalker tree and the unexplained cigarette butts beside it, Spike stealing her pictures and holding out his hand during the queller demon, his revelation to Riley, his numerous attempts to please her, and him asking her out only a few days ago.

And lately, she had been having random thoughts of him, not to mention the strange dreams of Spike and the kids. *What the hell did those dreams meant?* she thought.

Buffy wanted to know, she *needed* to know.

Drusilla never gave Spike a straight answer even after he literally threatened her. Spike was now extremely impatient with her.

"Dru, I want some answers," demanded Spike.

Drusilla, unfazed with his threats, coyly tempted him about her secret... only if he comes back with her to Los Angeles and help fight Angel.

"You know you want to, lover..." she giggled.

Spike pinned her against the wall, his hand close to her neck. "Dru, I may have this chip in my head, but it doesn't mean I can't hurt you. Now, tell me... what is it?" he asked impatiently.

Drusilla refused to answer him but knowing that he'll never let her get away with it, she revealed its identity but not its location. She mentioned that the only thing that kept her alive after Angel literally torched her and Darla was an *amulet* she acquired while living in South America which said to have healing powers, and whoever have possession of it will certainly means long life.

Spike searched for her neck but didn't find any amulet. He asked her again where the amulet was but to no avail. Spike was on the verge of crushing her neck when finally, Drusilla said that she left the amulet with Darla. Spike let her go and hurriedly left to find Buffy.

Buffy was walking along the edge of the cemetery walls when she found herself faced with a number of vampires ahead of her. She stopped and examined that they are slowly gathering around her. More vampires started to circle her from the back. She didn't have any weapons with her except for a single stake that she's been keeping with her at all times, but nevertheless Buffy was not the least intimidated.

The leader of the pack was the first to speak, "We meet again, Slayer..."

p a r t s i x

Two vampires approached Buffy simultaneous with a couple more at her back. Buffy readied herself to attack. Not far from where she was, Spike shouted to its leader, "Hey, nobody touches the Slayer!... but me!"

Spike walked pass the vampires who gathered around Buffy. He joined her in the center of the crowd and said "Hi Buffy..."

Buffy gave her a confused, angry look but he instead turned to its leader and acknowledged him.

"Now, now. Look mate, you don't want the Slayer to be angry, do you?" Spike asked, but nobody seemed to care on what he had to say. "Why don't you boys and girls gather yourselves up and let's call it the night?" he smirked.

The mob dismissed him and stared intently at both him and Buffy. "We're here to feast on the Slayer Spike, and now that you're here... we might as well include you in the menu!"

Spike and Buffy looked at each other, and without further notice, they faced their enemies and started to fight. Buffy kicked the first vampire from her back and sent it flying. Another one rushed to her and threw in a punch but missed. Spike grabbed the two vampires closed to him and slammed their heads together. He then punched one in front of him that sent it hitting the ground.

"There's too many of them Buffy, if ever we don't get out of this, I just want you to know that... that..."

"Spike," Buffy cut him off, "We will make it!"

"I know I can count on your power bit," he grinned.

More vampires surrounded them. Someone at Buffy's back grabbed her throat and throws her against the cemetery wall. Buffy fell. Spike, who similarly got punched in the face stumbled right in front of her.

"Are you okay, Buffy?" he asked, obviously concerned.

Buffy got up and grabbed her stake. She delivered a massive kick in the stomach to another vampire approaching her and put a stake in it.

"Spike, I know I doubted you most of the time and didn't listen much. I was wrong to do that..."

Surprised with what she said, Spike inadvertently got slammed by another vicious vampire. He turned and spin kicked it right in its stomach. He punched the next vampire then another and threw it towards Buffy who staked it.

"I always knew you are quite a hard sell," he winked at her.

"Spike, look out!" Buffy shouted. A vampire leaped behind Spike but he blocked it successfully. He grabbed its head and slammed it against the wall leaving it unconscious. Buffy in turn, staked it immediately.

Spike saw Drusilla from a distance, apparently observing them, but he was busy fighting vampires that he didn't pay attention. Amidst the fighting, Spike suddenly remembered the amulet. He wanted to go after her but he and Buffy are still faced with hoards of vampires.

Drusilla saw how Spike and Buffy fight together like clockwork. Drusilla sensed that she already lost Spike to the Slayer for good, and decided to leave town and join Darla in Los Angeles to fight Angel.

Buffy finished off another vampire when she mentioned Riley.

"Riley left today!" she informed Spike while crashing the chest of another enemy.

Again, he was distracted and was struck by a vampire in his back. He faced his opponent, kicked its stomach, sending it to its knees. He then break the vampire's neck.

"Tell me, what did you tell Riley?"

Buffy staked the last vampire she's fighting. She faced Spike who was still fighting one last vampire on sight. It took him a couple of punches before shattering its face and redirecting it to Buffy for a stake.

"Huh?" he replied, facing Buffy.

"Tell me the truth Spike," she demanded.

"The truth?" he asked. "The truth is... I'm just... I- okay, I admit it! I have a *thing* for you! Satisfied?"

Buffy in an akimbo, looked intently at him, she was not even smiling. She drew her stake again and plunged the vampire ahead.

Spike shouted, "Bloody hell..!"

p a r t s e v e n

A vampire ready to strike Spike at the back, exploded.

"Pft!!! I thought you were gonna...stake me..!" he complained.

"No Spike, if I were stake you, I shouldn't have done it years ago," Buffy said seriously.

Spike smiled. He felt embarrassed that he had to admit his feelings in an awkward situation. It could've sounded better, not him screaming and such.

What's more, she had to find out about it through Riley, *that sodding bastard!*, he thought. But he had to admit it to himself that words were his enemy at this moment, *I admit it, I have a thing for you?* that was not the most convincing confession of love by any standards.

It's now or never. He'd better come up with a better line, he thought. Up to this moment, there was no clear evidence that she felt anything remotely for him. But this could be a start.

"Look, I know I've been hard on you eventhough you helped me on several occasions," Buffy said as honestly as possible, "and I know I'm not the best person to say this, but I appreciate all the help and I shouldn't have judged you in the first place."

"Buffy, I've discovered something..." Spike started to speak.

Bloody hell! Not exactly the words he wanted to say, but a good misdirection on his part, since he doesn't want to look like a fool. Again.

He wanted to take his time, calm her down after this sudden revelation. Any abrupt confession of one's feelings might ruin his chances all together. He started to talk about a knowledge that he learned from Drusilla.

"...something that could extend a Slayer's life, your life." He said excitedly.

Not clearly listening to Spike, Buffy continued without wanting to stop, "I mean, I've always labeled you as an enemy... even though I know you're not bad anymore. A-And as much as I want you," she paused. "t-to---to---. All I'm saying is..."

Spike suddenly realized what was going on. He stepped closer and nervously held her shoulders. "Buffy... do you know what *this* means?" he asked.

"It means..." Buffy stopped.

There was sorrow in her eyes as she spoke. "It means ... that you're still a vampire ... and I'm still a slayer," she said nervously. "And that's all we can ever be. Nothing more."

Yet, the moment he touched her, Buffy felt an electricity that she never felt in a long time. She felt magic in his touch as she looked at him, confused and alarmed. Her heart leaped.

*Soon my body is dust
Soon my soul is no more
I will love you, love you*

They both fell silent.

Spike knew what she meant. Nothing more can come between them. He never expected that a start of something good could end up so quickly.

There was this little dream that he had about him and Buffy and what could have been. He, taking care of her and she, showing him how to be loved again. What happens now, he didn't know. *Take his chances and still pursue her? Get the hell out of Sunnydale and follow Dru? Seek an amulet?*

Finally, Spike decided not to force himself to Buffy, instead he will find a way to gain her respect and hopefully her love. He slowly lifted his hands away from her and started to step backwards. He has a new mission in his unlife, to pursue the thing that could help Buffy prolong her life. The mere idea that he could at least do something for her savored in his thoughts.

"I have to go..." Spike said quietly and turned to walk away.

*Soon the sun starts to cry
And the moon turns to rust
I will love you, love you*

"Spike..?!" Buffy called out.

There was something in his voice and Buffy recognized it. She had a feeling that this was the last time they will see each other.

"You're leaving..???"

Silence has broken. The thought of him leaving made her upset.

Spike turned back with hope in his eyes after hearing what Buffy had just said. It was not mere words, it was the way she called out to him. He knew there was something more beyond her words than she was willing to admit.

Spike walked towards her and looked at her in his usual sideways glance; softly touching her long hair starting from the corner of her right eyebrow, feeling, caressing her cheeks and to her soft lips. He dreamt this moment ever since he can remember.

Buffy knew they can never belong, yet she doesn't want him to stop. Instead, she gazed deep into his blue eyes and looked for answers.

*But I need to know
Will you stay for all time
Forever and today*

As much as he wished this moment never ends, he realized that there was no such thing as forever, and that this was the right time. He gave her a little smile.

"You will be all right, Slayer... I promise."

They both knew at that moment, things will never be the same between them. Trusting that his feelings for her was strong enough even if he's gone, Spike gently kissed her in the forehead which seemed to last for eternity.

*And I'll give my heart
Till the end of all time
Forever and today*

Time stood still for Buffy and Spike. She held his hand in hers as long as she can until Spike finally let go. He took one final look at her, trying to memorize every detail of how this moment came to pass ... and then for a second or two, Spike ran off. He doesn't know where his journey will lead him... but as long as there is hope for him and Buffy, he will definitely live in that dream.

*And i need to know
Will you stay for all time
Forever and today*

Buffy, now alone, remembered the dream she had the night before. A necklace engraved with words of love. "...Know in your heart, you are mine..." she whispered softly.

*Then I'll give my heart
Till the end of all time
Forever and today*

She didn't go back to her house at once, instead Buffy finds herself inside Spike's crypt. She remembered the first time he went to this crypt, she was looking for answers. Answers for what, she cannot recall. All she knew was that everytime she went to visit him, she gets a kick of punching Spike's nose. Buffy smiled.

*Till the storms fill my eyes
And we touch the last time*

She approached the single chair in the middle of the room, Spike's chair, she sat for a moment, imagining how it was to live in an old and dank place with no one to talk to. Well, there was the TV for one. *Pfft. He loves to watch television*, Buffy thought, as she accidentally stepped into something.

She reached out for it under Spike's chair. It's... a doll... a doll of her..? Buffy came to a full realization of how much she meant to him, but now she can only guess how this beginning could end.

*I will love you, love you
I will love you, love you
I will love you, love you*

"To love that well which thou must leave ere long" - Shakespeare.

t h e e n d.