

# **Buffy - The Vampire Slayer**

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## Chapter 1

# Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

### 1.1 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

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## 1.2 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Welcome To The Hellmouth, Part 1 [#1]

Sixteen-year-old Buffy Summers has moved to Sunnydale from L.A., hoping to leave Buffy's troubled past behind. But Sunnydale High librarian Rupert Giles knows who Buffy is: she is the Slayer, the one girl in all the world with the strength and skill to hunt and kill vampires. He knows about her past because he is her new Watcher -- the person whose destiny it is to train and guide Slayers on their path. Buffy quickly makes two friends: the shy, bookish Willow, and the goofy but lovable Xander, who is instantly attracted to Buffy.

When a student is found dead in a locker -- with bite marks on his neck and completely drained of his blood -- Giles enlists Buffy's help. She resists, trying to get out of the slaying game for good, but Giles insists that a crucial mystical upheaval is about to occur. Unbeknownst to them, a bewildered Xander overhears their conversation -- Buffy's secret is out. Later, in a dark, eerie chamber, we see a vampire who seems to be confirming Giles' prophecy. The vampire, Luke, kneels in front of a pool of blood and says, "The sleeper will awaken. And the world will bleed."

On her way to the Bronze, Sunnydale's hippest (and only) club, Buffy is followed by a handsome, mysterious stranger. He tells her she must be ready for the Harvest, and gives her a small cross. Giles meets her at the Bronze and she tells him about the encounter. Giles convinces her to use her power, and wants her to try to sense if there are any vampires in the room. She does sense one and finds him talking to Willow, but the two have walked away. Trying to catch him unawares, she grabs a makeshift stake, turns a corner and attacks... Cordelia, the snootiest girl in school, who already thought Buffy was a loser for hanging with Willow, and now thinks she's certifiable. We see Jesse, Xander's buddy, chatting with a girl we saw in vampire garb earlier, but who now appears as a normal student, Darla. Back to the pool of blood, something breaks through the surface and rises: the demonic Master Vampire. He is hungry and weak, and asks Luke to bring him something young.

Outside the Bronze, Buffy enlists Xander's help in finding Willow, who's already been lead to a mausoleum by the vampire. Willow's happy to find Jesse there, until she sees that Darla has already bit him in the neck. Buffy and Xander enter, and Buffy promptly kills the vampire boy. Now Willow is finally in on the secret. While Darla tries to attack Buffy, Xander and Willow lead a weakened Jesse out. Luke joins the battle and throws Buffy across the room. As he tries to bite her in the neck, he burns his hand on her cross, giving her a chance to escape. She finds her friends struggling with several vampires. Buffy impales one and the others flee. Meanwhile, Jesse has been taken to the Master, who hears about Buffy. By her strength, he can tell that she's the Slayer. The Master knows that Buffy will come looking for Jesse, and then she will be his.

Giles enlists Willow to check the internet for more information about the Harvest, while Buffy decides to go look for Jesse. At the mausoleum, she runs into the stranger again, whose name is Angel. He warns that the Harvest will be that night. Then Buffy is shocked to find Xander has followed her. They find Jesse, who tries to lead them out, until he turns to face them and they discover he's become a vampire. More vampires surround and chase them, but they manage to escape to the street through a grating. The Master is furious that the Slayer has escaped. But he allows Luke to feed from him as a way of

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gaining strength for himself. He dabs some of his blood on Luke's forehead and paints a three-pointed star.

Willow's research explains that on the night of the Harvest, the Master Vampire can draw power from one of his minions while it feeds and then can break through from their reality to ours. The minion is called the Vessel, and bears the symbol we saw painted on Luke. Xander guesses the vampires will converge on the Bronze, since it's always filled with young people. That night, a newly confident Jesse strides into the Bronze and hits on Cordelia, who actually allows the former loser to dance with her. Soon, a gang of vampires takes over the club, with Luke at the helm. By the time Buffy, Giles, Xander and Willow get there, the suckfest is in full swing, with the Master gaining strength from each victim. Buffy manages to kill a few other vampires, then Jesse winds up impaling himself on a stake a frightened Xander was holding. Buffy breaks a large window, trying to make Luke think the streetlight is daylight, which will destroy him. He buys it for a second, and she takes advantage of his confusion by driving a stake through his back. Now the Master is too weak to break through to the other side, and Sunnydale has been spared.

### 1.3 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Welcome To The Hellmouth, Part 2 [#2]

See - Welcome To The Hellmouth, Part 1 [#1]

### 1.4 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Witch [#3]

Buffy, in an attempt to bring some normalcy into her complicated life, decides to try out for cheerleader. When she goes to the big tryout, she meets a quiet girl named Amy. As one girl auditions, she gets more and more into her routine, and suddenly her hands begin to smoke. Buffy knocks her to the ground and puts the girl's smoking hands out. Amy tells Buffy that her mother was a cheerleading star and she feels pressure to make the squad. When Amy leaves, Willow says it's a lot more than pressure -- she thinks Amy's mum is a tyrant. Neither Amy nor Buffy is chosen as part of the regular squad -- both are alternates. Amy is distraught when she is only chosen to be third alternate -- with Buffy as first alternate.

In a spooky attic with a cauldron, someone is casting spells with dolls. The next day, snooty Cordelia Chase, who has made cheerleader, is temporarily blinded while taking her driving test. Giles thinks Amy's a witch, but the only way to prove it is to form a potion and pour it on her -- if her skin turns blue, she is a witch. Buffy, Xander and Willow join forces to test this theory in chemistry class, and Giles is proven correct. Then another cheerleader has a mysterious accident, and when Amy reacts to it with horror, it makes Buffy doubt whether Amy realizes what she's doing. Amy comes home in a huff to find her mother on the couch watching TV. She tells her mother to write her history report. We see that Amy is holding an ID bracelet which Xander gave Buffy for good luck at the cheerleading tryouts -- Buffy will be

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Amy's next victim.

As first alternate, Buffy is now on the cheerleading squad, and starts acting strangely during practice. When she tosses another cheerleader across the room, it's time for the next alternate to come in -- Amy. Buffy suddenly becomes weak, and Giles says the only way to keep her from dying is to get Amy's spell book. Willow and Xander stay at school to keep an eye on Amy. Giles and Buffy force their way into Amy's house, and Buffy discovers that the woman they're speaking to is not really Amy's mother but Amy herself. The mother switched their bodies so she could relive her glory days as a cheerleader. Giles finds the spell book, and they all troop off to school, where "Amy" is getting ready to cheer. As Giles chants, "Amy" becomes weaker as the transformation begins. "Amy" charges out of the gym to find Buffy and kill her. Just as she's about to get her, the transformation is complete. "Amy" is now the real Amy, and the mother goes berserk. She starts to cast an evil spell on Buffy, but Buffy deflects it with a mirror and sends it back to the mother, who disappears. Everything seems to be back to normal, until we catch a glimpse of the mother's cheerleader trophy in a school display case. Its eyes are moving...

## 1.5 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Teachers Pet [#4]

Buffy's kindly biology teacher, Dr. Gregory, is attacked after class by a giant praying mantis, but as far as the students know, their teacher is just missing. The mysterious Angel appears at the Bronze that night to warn Buffy about a pending attack. His arm looks as if it was cut by a tiger's claw. The next day, Dr. Gregory's class is being taught by a substitute teacher -- the comely Miss Natalie French, who drives Xander ga-ga. She tells the class about the science fair, and asks for volunteers to help her create a model of a praying mantis egg sacks -- after school. As expected, Xander's hand shoots up, as does football heartthrob Blaynes and every other boy in the class. Miss French decides that Blayne can be her assistant that afternoon, and Xander the next. Later in the cafeteria, Cordelia opens the fridge to discover Dr. Gregory's headless body. Buffy speculates that Angel's warning and his unusual wound have something to do with Dr. Gregory's gruesome murder, so she stakes out the park. She sees a vampire with one arm that has three sharp claws where the hand should be. The creature approaches Miss French, who is walking by with grocery bags, but instead of pouncing on her, he sniffs her and runs away in terror.

Buffy catches the teacher turning her head around -- all the way around. Buffy finally figures it out: Miss French is a praying mantis! Following her lead, Giles tries to get in touch with a friend in England who's an expert in the field -- the only catch being that the man is institutionalized. Meanwhile, hacker par excellence Willow has found that Blayne's mother has reported him missing. Since it's Xander's turn to work with Miss French this afternoon, Buffy warns him, but he thinks Buffy is just jealous. Miss French gives Xander a drink as soon as he shows up. As he's getting woozy, he thinks he hears someone calling, but she ignores it. She takes his hand, and her arm turns into a praying mantis foreleg. He promptly passes out, and he is dragged away by Miss French. When he comes to, he finds himself in a cage in Miss French's cellar, with Blayne in an adjoining cage. Surrounded by headless bodies in cages, he calls to Miss French, who is now completely converted to her

giant-mantis form.

After talking to his strait-jacketed friend, Giles confirms there is a creature called a She-Mantis, who lures male virgins to her nest. An extremely powerful foe, it was the She-Mantis who put Giles friend into his deranged condition. Buffy suggests that Giles record some bat sonar from the video library -- playing that for the She-Mantis will disrupt her nervous system. Exhausting other methods, Buffy decides to enlist Claw Guy to help her sniff out the She-Mantis. Going from door to door, he finally winces when they reach the correct house. Turning on her, he tries to attack Buffy, who promptly kills him with a fence slat. Buffy enters the basement and uses a few blasts of the insecticide to send her scurrying off, then plays the bat sonar. The tape has the desired effect on the crazed insect, enabling Buffy to hack it to death with a machete. We think this is the end of the She-Mantis until we catch a glimpse of the inside of Dr. Gregory's classroom closet, where a glistening egg sack is stirring at the bottom.

## 1.6 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Never Kill A Boy On The First Date [#5]

In the middle of a late-night sparring session at the cemetery, Buffy and Giles discover a ring with a mysterious engraving in it. The scene shifts to the Master Vampire's lair, where the Master explains that the Anointed One -- the Master's greatest warrior and the Slayer's greatest foe is due to rise from the ashes of five dead. The next day, Buffy is asked out by a handsome, poetry-loving classmate named Owen who she is smitten with. Buffy's good mood is spoiled by Giles, who's connected the engraving in the ring to a violent prophecy which is about to be fulfilled... that night. Buffy very reluctantly joins Giles at the cemetery, but nothing happens there. Meanwhile, an airport van crashes and although the five passengers -- including a burly, tattooed man who's been ranting incoherently -- survive the wreck, they die when the van is overtaken by vampires.

The next day, Owen and Buffy decide to try again, much to Giles' (and a very jealous Xander's) chagrin.

As Buffy prepares for her date, Giles comes over with the news: five people were killed the night before, just as the prophecy described, and one of them -- the tattooed man -- was wanted for murder. This leads Giles to believe that he is the Anointed one. Buffy insists on going on to the Bronze with Owen, but Willow and Xander agree to go along with Giles to the Sunnydale Funeral Home so he can check the bodies for clues. Giles is greeted by vampires, and though Willow and Xander try to help him, they realize this is Buffy's domain. They run off to the Bronze to fetch her, but she's already hooked up with Owen. Unable to blurt out their news, they merrily suggest to Buffy a jaunt to the funeral home.

Once they get there, they're shocked to find Owen has followed them. As Buffy looks around for clues, the tattooed man -- now a vampire -- arises from a gurney and tears the place apart. Buffy kicks him, knocking him on a gurney, which hits the cremation oven and slides him right in. The next day, Owen is pumped up about the previous nights adventures and cant wait for the next date. Realizing she almost got him killed, Buffy reluctantly gives him the "let's be friends" speech. Giles commends her on her maturity, and reminds her

that she did prevent a disaster. But all is not resolved. We see the Master in his lair, welcoming the Anointed one: it is an eight-year-old boy from the van accident, who smiles to reveal a mouth full of fangs.

## 1.7 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Pack [#6]

The students of Sunnydale High school are spending the afternoon at the zoo. Besides the standard zoo animals, this facility has a special new hyena exhibit, marked "Positively No Admittance." This piques the interest of Sunnydale's obnoxious cool crowd, who have already had their fun tormenting Buffy and a shy, bookish student named Lance. After grabbing poor Lance's notebook, they enter the forbidden hyena house, forcing him to follow. Xander, worried about his timid classmate, decides to come to his rescue. As they wait for Xander, Buffy and Willow meet an eccentric zookeeper, who claims the hyenas can understand human speech -- they learn people's names, call out to them, and then eat them. Meanwhile, the crowd in the hyena house starts to get rough with Lance, but suddenly their eyes start flashing yellow -- apparently, they've stepped into a mystical circle on the floor and a transformation has taken place. We see the eyes of one student who never meant to be there, and they're flashing yellow, too. It's Xander.

Back at school, Principal Flutie proudly introduces the students to Herbert, the Sunnydale Razorbacks' new mascot. Not quite as menacing as the team's namesake, Herbert is actually a little pig. Xander elicits a strange reaction from Herbert when the two exchange a glance. Since returning from the zoo trip, he is more confident, more aggressive, and generally not the same old Xander. His love-sick puppy stares have turned to animal leers -- he has even taken to sniffing Buffy.

Willow brings the news to Buffy and Giles that Herbert is dead-- the pint-sized porker has been eaten by the hyena-possessed students. Buffy tries to confront Xander, but he becomes even more aggressive and pounces on her. They scuffle for a while, but Buffy finally decks him, and locks him into a steel book-return cage. When it is discovered that the pack is responsible for Herbert's demise, Principal Flutie is up in arms. He summons the group to his office to reprimand them, but doesn't get the chance.

The news horrifies everyone -- Principle Flutie has been eaten! The "official" story is that a pack of wild dogs did it, but Buffy, Willow and Giles know the truth. Since Xander was with Buffy when the incident occurred, she is relieved that he was not involved. Giles has figured out that in order to restore order, the spirits of the hyenas must be taken from the students and put back into the animals. While Buffy and Giles go to the zoo, Willow offers to watch over Xander. The zookeeper, well-versed in these matters, offers to help with the "transformation," and says that all the students must return to the mystical circle in the hyena cage. But one member of their pack is missing -- Xander -- and Buffy and Giles realize, to their horror, that they will seek him out, leaving Willow vulnerable to their attack. When they do just that, Xander breaks free from the cage, but Willow hides. They escape the school grounds and Buffy leads them all to the zoo.

While everything seems to be going according to schedule, it turns out that the zookeeper's plan is to absorb all the hyenas spirits himself. He does, and

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grabs Willow in order to perform a predatory act which is part of the ritual. Xander, back to his old self, reacts to seeing his friend in jeopardy and dives on the zookeeper, freeing Willow. When the zookeeper goes after Buffy, she hurls him into the hyena cage, where he is promptly devoured.

## 1.8 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Angel [#7]

On her way home from the Bronze, Buffy encounters three vampires, who've been sent to avenge the death of one of the Master's minions. Just as they're about to attack her, Angel appears and they begin to fight. Angel and Buffy manage to make it safely to her house, where she repairs the wound he got in the scuffle. He spends the night in her bedroom, sleeping next to her bed. The next day at school, Giles identifies Buffy's attackers as warrior vampires, and steps up her training in case a more serious melee takes place. Later that day, Buffy and Angel share a passionate kiss, but then to her horror, she sees that he is a vampire!

Angel meets up with Darla, who was his lover and partner in crime hundreds of years earlier. She chastises him for spending time with the slayer. Meanwhile, Giles identifies Angel as a 240-year-old vampire who came to America 80 years ago, living alone and never killing again. Darla, anxious to do Buffy in, goes to her house and pretends to be a student planning to study with her. Buffy's mother, Joyce, lets her in and Darla promptly bites her in the neck. Angel enters the house and tells Darla to let Joyce go. Darla passes Joyce to him and he is tempted to bite her, but doesn't. When Buffy enters, she sees Angel holding her mother and, assuming he is the one who bit Joyce, she tosses him out the window. This finally gives her the impetus to kill him, and she meets him at the Bronze with a crossbow. He explains that he did many heinous deeds over the course of his lifetime, but his soul has been restored and he is now haunted by them. Darla finds them together and tries to shoot Buffy. Angel impales Darla from behind and she turns to dust. When the Master finds out that Darla, his favourite, has been slain, he goes berserk, but the Anointed One comforts him.

Back at the Bronze, Angel and Buffy agree that despite their strong feelings for each other, it's not realistic for them to pursue any kind of relationship. They kiss goodbye and when Buffy walks away, the imprint of her cross has been seared into Angel's chest.

## 1.9 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

I Robot, You Jane [#8]

In the Middle Ages, a young man approaches a horned demon, who smiles at him and then breaks his neck. Later, a group of monks, outraged by the deed, chant in Latin, open a book and the demon is sucked into it -- its pages now filled.

Back in the library, Buffy opens a crate and finds the long forgotten book. Along with Xander and Willow, the school's two computer experts are helping scan books: Fritz, a menacing looking bruiser, and Dave, a geekier kid. Also

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present is Miss Calendar, the computer science teacher, who rides Giles about his fear of technology. As Willow scans the ancient book, the characters disappear from its pages. When she looks away, words appear on the screen: "Where am I?"

A week later, Willow tells Buffy about Malcolm, a boy she's having an on-line romance with. Buffy, worried about her naive friend enlists Dave's help to try to find out more about Malcolm. Dave tells Buffy to leave Willow alone. Meanwhile, Miss Calendar stumbles upon the ancient book and asks Giles about its blank pages. When Giles notices the horned demon on the cover, he suspects trouble. Dave gets Buffy to look for Willow in the girls' locker room but when she gets there, Fritz has rigged up some wires in the shower to try to electrocute her. A puddle reaches the exposed wires and Buffy is sent flying into the locker room -- the soles of her shoes smouldering. A shaken Dave tells the computer he can't kill Buffy. Angry at his disrespect, it types up a suicide note for him.

Back in the library, Giles explains to Buffy and Xander that in the Dark Ages, the souls of demons were sometimes trapped in certain volumes, where they remained harmless until the pages were read aloud. When Willow scanned them, the demon, Moloch, was unleashed into the computer, and how had access to any computer in the world. Moloch preys on impressionable minds, which makes both Fritz and Dave vulnerable to his power. Buffy tries to delete Willow's files, hoping to "delete" Moloch along with them, but Moloch appears on the screen warning Buffy to stay away from Willow.

Looking for Willow in the computer lab, she finds Dave's body hanging, with the suicide note pinned to it. Fritz goes to Willow's house, chloroforms her and brings her to a mysterious warehouse where Dave had been spotted earlier.

A desperate Giles asks Miss Calendar for help and discovers she has extensive knowledge of the mystical realm. She helps him repeat the spell the monks had chanted while she links up a configuration of different computers around the world.

Meanwhile, Buffy and Xander try to save Willow at the warehouse. By the time they arrive, Moloch has left the computer and appears as a robotic incarnation of the horned demon that was back in the Dark Ages. He breaks Fritz' neck and is about to break Willow's when the spell takes hold, immobilizing him. Injured, but fighting, he lunges at Buffy, but she ducks and he punches a high-voltage junction box and is electrocuted to death.

## 1.10 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Puppet Show [#9]

Giles has been roped into supervising Sunnydale's talent show. When Buffy, Xander and Willow stop by to tease him about it, the new principal punishes them by insisting they come up with an act.

One of the dancers in the show is found dead, with her heart removed. The last person she was seen talking to was Morgan, a strange, awkward student who is a ventriloquist in the talent show with his dummy, Sid. When Buffy tries to question Morgan, he gets nervous and rubs his head. Sid seems to have a mind of his own, and Morgan talks to him as if he were real. Still suspicious,

Buffy goes to check out Morgan's locker, but finds only the empty puppet case. When Buffy goes to sleep that night, Sid is outside her window. She feels him enter the room but when she screams and turns on the light, he's gone.

The next day, Giles tells Buffy, Xander and Willow about a brotherhood of demons who need human organs to maintain their humanity. Although this sounds like Morgan may have killed the dancer for her heart, these demons have super strength, while Morgan has been growing weaker. Willow discovers a book which says that dolls and mannequins are capable of becoming human by harvesting organs. Buffy, looking for Morgan in the prop room, finds him dead, with his brain removed. A light rig suddenly comes crashing down on her, and Sid is next to her with a kitchen knife. They have each mistaken the other for a demon. Sid explains that he was a human, but then was cursed, and he thinks the demon who cursed him is in the talent show. If he can kill that demon, he'll be free. Backstage at the talent show, Morgan's brain falls from the catwalk -- apparently the demon has rejected it. Willow researches Morgan's records and finds out that he had brain cancer. This means the demon is still going to be looking for a healthy, intelligent brain.

We find Giles in the auditorium, innocently helping Marc, a student performing a magic act in the talent show. Marc convinces Giles to fill in for his assistant and lie down in a guillotine. Just as Giles realizes he's about to get his brains removed, Buffy runs in to save him. Marc changes into a demon, and Sid finally stabs him in the heart. Now that the demon is dead, the animated Sid turns back into a normal puppet. Suddenly, the curtain opens as a stunned audience attending the talent show looks at the dumbfounded gang on stage.

## 1.11 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Nightmares [#10]

Buffy has a nightmare about being attacked by the Master. Later in class, a student opens his book and spiders emerge and attack him, while a young boy stands outside the classroom window. In his lair, the Master explains to the Anointed One that fear is the most powerful force in the world, and changes are about to take place.

Buffy, Willow and Xander question the spider boy, who says he's had recurring nightmares about such attacks. Later in class, Buffy finds out there is a test she's totally unprepared for. As soon as she starts writing, she glances at the clock and sees almost the entire hour is up. Again, the boy appears. Later, a girl goes into the school basement and is attacked by a huge Ugly Man. Questioned in the hospital, she's able to provide one clue: the attacker said the words "Lucky Nineteen."

Xander enters a class to find everyone staring at them -- he's only wearing boxer shorts. Buffy finds a newspaper picture of the boy who keeps appearing. The article says he's in a coma after falling down the steps after a little league game. Buffy notices his uniform number: 19. Giles says even though the boy's in the hospital, perhaps Buffy has been seeing his astral body, which can travel through time and space. Buffy's father picks her up at school and explains he left home because Buffy caused so much trouble and was a disappointment to him. He leaves Buffy in shock -- and the boy appears again. Willow and Xander talk to Giles, who explains that their nightmares have been

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coming true, leaving everyone vulnerable to all sorts of danger. Buffy finally confronts the boy, who explains that Ugly Man wants to kill him. Suddenly, the Ugly Man appears and starts to attack Buffy, who is no match for him.

Giles warns Xander and Willow that Buffy's nightmares could be fatal, and they must find her. Willow's attempt leads her into her own nightmare: she is onstage in an opera for which she is woefully unprepared. Xander's search leads him to yet another nightmare: a clown he feared from childhood chases him with a knife. Buffy and the boy manage to escape Ugly Man by literally jumping from school during the day into a cemetery at night. The Master appears and shoves Buffy into an open grave. Willow, Xander and Giles need to find Buffy -- unless Billy is awoken, all reality will become nightmares within hours. They notice a cemetery -- in darkness -- is across the street, and go to investigate. Seeing Buffy's headstone, Giles laments not protecting her better, until Buffy emerges -- as a vampire. Giles says it's reversible, if only Billy could wake up. They go to the hospital and Ugly Man appears again. Buffy manages to attack him. She asks the little boy to finish the job -- he walks up to him and peels something off his face. Buffy returns to normal, and the real little boy awakens from his coma. His little league coach enters and is shocked to find the boy awake. Buffy confronts him about beating up the boy for losing a game -- when he tries to flee, Xander grabs him. Buffy's dad shows up after school and cheerfully greets her -- another happy ending at the Hellmouth.

## 1.12 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Out Of Sight, Out Of Mind [#11]

As the Spring Fling dance nears, Cordelia's new boyfriend is mysteriously beaten up at school -- by a baseball bat with no one attached to it. The attacker leaves a cryptic message on the locker, which leads Buffy to believe it wasn't an ordinary monster. Giles suggests it might be an invisible creature or a ghost.

Another attack finds Cordelia's friend Harmony flying backwards down a flight of stairs, with no apparent outside force. After hearing a girl's voice, Buffy pursues the invisible attacker to no avail. Buffy enlists Willow's help in trying to get a list of missing kids -- perhaps this invisible girl is one of them. Meanwhile, Angel appears at the library and says he's worried about Buffy -- he knows that something big is about to happen but he doesn't know what.

Shock of shocks -- Cordelia is elected the May Queen for the school dance. Buffy is convinced Cordelia is the link between the two mysterious attacks. She finds a girl in Willow's printout, Marcie Ross, who she thinks might be the one. Marcie was in the band, and the invisible girl keeps hiding in the ceiling above the band room. Buffy follows her there to find a nest of sorts where the invisible girls has been hiding. Another attack occurs: Cordelia's teacher is almost suffocated.

Further investigation reveals that Marcie was in everyone's classes, but no one seems to even remember that she existed. Giles says she simply became invisible because she was perceived that way -- it's all due to physics, helped along by living above a Hellmouth. Marcie's goal seems to be to destroy Cordelia, who is already wiggled out by the attacks on people close to her.

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Cordelia's coronation as May Queen that evening would be the perfect place for Marcie to attack, but Cordelia is none too thrilled about being used as bait. As Cordelia gets ready at school for the dance, Marcie yanks her up through the ceiling. Meanwhile, Giles, Willow and Xander hear some haunting music and try to follow it, hoping to find Marcie. The trio is led to the boiler room where they are overcome by gas fumes. Marcie anaesthetizes both Buffy and Cordelia, brings them to the Bronze and ties them up. Marcie, armed with an arsenal of creepy surgical instruments, explains to Cordelia that she intends to give her a face no one will ever forget. She slices Cordelia's cheek, but Buffy manages to free herself and a scuffle ensues. Buffy finally knocks Marcie out, just as a pair of FBI agents arrive to take Marcie away. Angel saves the unconscious gang in the boiler room, but Giles tells Buffy it was a janitor -- he doesn't want to remind Buffy of her lost love. Cordelia acts grateful to the gang, but becomes her normal obnoxious self when her newly-healed boyfriend and her cooler-than-thou friends show up.

## 1.13 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Prophecy Girl [#12]

At the Bronze, Xander rehearses asking Buffy out to the prom by trying his speech out on lovesick Willow. Meanwhile, Buffy is having a closer call than usual with her vampire attackers. Giles reads a frightening prophecy about the Master and the Slayer, and an earthquake hits Sunnydale.

Buffy tells Giles about her attack, and lets him know that she's starting to get scared. When Xander finally gets the nerve to ask her out, she turns him down, saying she doesn't think of him "that way" and doesn't want to spoil their friendship. In the library, Giles and Ms. Calendar discuss the prophecy: the earthquake, along with several strange occurrences in Sunnydale, seem to confirm that the apocalypse is near. Buffy overhears Giles telling Angel, "Tomorrow she'll face the Master and she will die." Buffy freaks out and tells Giles she wants to quit. More signs of the end appear: a roomful of students, including Cordelia's new beau, are found dead at school, totally unnerving Willow, who discovers their bodies. Buffy decides that even though she's afraid, only she can try to save the world by facing the Master. She goes out with a crossbow, and the Anointed One leads her to the Master. Meanwhile, Xander enlists Angel's help in trying to protect Buffy.

The Master bites Buffy, and she drops into a puddle. This allows him to break through to the "other side." Xander and Angel find Buffy, and Xander is able to revive her using CPR. Meanwhile, Cordelia, Willow and Ms. Calendar find themselves driving through a sea of vampires in the streets. They try to escape to the library, but the undead follow them. As they try to fight them off, a huge, horrific monster comes up through the floor and attacks them. Buffy makes it back to the school and fights the Master on the roof. She throws him through the roof window and he falls through, getting impaled on the way down. He disintegrates, and the monster and the vampires disappear with him.

"We saved the world. I say we party," exclaims Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

## 1.14 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

When She Was Bad [#13]

After spending the summer with her dad in L.A., Buffy returns to Sunnydale, well, very unsunny. It seems her prom night massacre of the Master -- during which she died and came back to life -- gave her more of a wiggins than she admitted at the time. And to make matters worse, the Master is not quite as dead as everyone had hoped. His minions assemble with the Anointed One and plan to try to bring the Master back. This can be done by assembling those who were with him when he died -- Willow, Cordelia, Giles, and Ms. Calendar, the computer teacher who Giles is stuck on. Angel warns Buffy about the Anointed One's powers, but she ignores him. Besides being rude to Angel and nasty to Cordelia, she is cold to Willow and Xander. She even tries to make Angel jealous by dancing seductively with poor Xander, who buys her act. Xander finally tells Buffy off when the vampires beat him up and start assembling the foursome they need for their mission. Buffy rescues Willow, Cordelia, Giles and Ms. Calendar, who are hung upside down and about to be killed. In order to finish off the Master, Buffy crushes his bones. After this final act, Buffy is purged of her fear and anger and starts sobbing as Angel holds her. The next day at school, she apologizes to Giles for behaving so badly, and is mortified when she realizes how rotten she's been to her friends. But once she gets to class, Xander and Willow are quick to forgive her, and the Three Musketeers -- or is it the Three Stooges? -- are together again.

## 1.15 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Some Assembly Required [#14]

The body of a dead cheerleader is dug up from the cemetery, and Buffy the Vampire Slayer is officially back in the saddle. Cordelia accidentally stumbles upon a bunch of body parts in a dumpster, and the parts add up to three people -- the dead cheerleader and her two friends who were killed in the same car accident -- only some of the parts are missing. Giles suspects zombie activity, and clues lead to Chris -- a science whiz who's been quiet and withdrawn since his brother Daryl's death. We discover Chris, with his buddy Eric, has been secretly assembling a woman from these body parts for Daryl, so he won't have to be alone through eternity. The only part they don't have yet is a head -- the cheerleader's heads are unusable because the formaldehyde used to preserve dead bodies causes rapid deterioration of brain cells. There are currently three live head donors being considered: Buffy, Willow and Cordelia. Daryl votes for Cordelia, but Chris doesn't want to kill anyone, and Daryl becomes enraged. Meanwhile, Giles is courting Ms. Calendar, and their first official date is to the school's football game. That night, Eric decides to kill Cordelia, since Chris can't bring himself to do the deed, but Buffy arrives just in time to save her. As Buffy struggles with Daryl, a can of gasoline spills. A fire starts and Xander, who has arrived to help, pushes Cordelia to safety. Chris, seeing his headless fiancée is about to perish in the fire, throws himself on top of her and pledges his undying love. Angel and Buffy finally talk things out -- he admits he was jealous of her attention to Xander, and he feels left out of her life since he can only be with her at night. They walk off together as we see Daryl's tombstone.

## 1.16 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

School Hard [#15]

The leaves are changing colour, the air is cooler, it must be time for... the Night of St. Vigius. Once again Buffy's life is in danger as the Master's minions seek to gain extra power by killing Buffy during a sacred holiday. But Buffy's mind is not on slaying. She and Sheila, a perpetually bad student, have been threatened with expulsion by Principal Snyder. The only chance they have of staying in school is to help organize Parent Teacher Night.

While Buffy plans this evening, a new demon is in town -- Spike, a 200-year-old vampire who has actually killed two slayers over the past century. Giles urges Buffy to take this challenge seriously, but she is preoccupied with her school project and trying to cover for the never-present Sheila.

When Parent Teacher Night arrives, Buffy unsuccessfully tries to keep her mother away from Principal Snyder. But things become a bit more serious when Spike and some other vampires crash the event. The faculty, and Buffy's mum, think these are just some gang kids on angel dust. Buffy convinces her mother to stay hidden while she faces the vampires. Giles tries to help Buffy, whose biggest worry is about her mother's safety. No-show Sheila finally arrives and -- surprise! -- she's a vampire too. Angel tries to help by pretending he's on Spike's side and offering up Xander's neck for a snack. Spike isn't fooled and becomes enraged. Buffy continues to battle Spike until her mum's maternal instincts overtake her fear and she whacks Spike with an axe. Spike flees. Much to Buffy's relief, Mum is not angry about Principal Snyder's assessment-- she's proud that Buffy is so resourceful and thoughtful of others in a crisis.

When Spike returns to the lair without having killed Buffy, the Anointed One is angry. Spike throws the child into a cage and raises it up to the light. Suddenly the cage is empty and we see only a puff of smoke, as Spike and his main squeeze Drusilla go off to watch TV.

## 1.17 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Inca Mummy Girl [#16]

Sunnydale High is boasting a new cultural exchange program --students from other countries being hosted by local families, and a celebration of culture's dance is being plan. Everything is swell until Xander finds out that Buffy's student is a guy. At a school museum trip, a 500-year-old mummy, holding a cursed seal which serves as a warning to any who wake her, is on exhibit. When everyone leaves, dimwitted student Rodney tries to take the seal. It breaks, and the mummy arises, grabs him, kisses him and mummifies him. When Rodney turns up missing, Buffy, Giles, Xander and Willow go to the museum to look for clues and find him mummified, and a man with a knife jumps out at them. Giles tries to decipher what's left of the seal, but they are ancient pictograms.

Buffy's exchange student arrives at the bus station, only to meet the same fate as Rodney. From this latest kiss, the 500-year-old mummy transforms into Empada, a beautiful Peruvian teenage girl who pretends to be the exchange student. Xander goes gaga over her and Giles asks her to help him decipher the seal. She says the picture of a man with a knife represents a bodyguard. As

Xander hangs out with Empada, the knife guy shows up again, looking for the rest of the seal. Empada, shaken, tells Giles to destroy it, but Giles wants to go back to the museum to find the missing parts. Knife guy returns in the ladies' room, and Empada finally kisses and mummifies him, too. Xander takes Empada to the school dance, and Buffy discovers the real exchange student's mummified corpse in her trunk. She and Giles realize Empada's the mummy. It seems she was in a similar situation to Buffy's -- she was chosen to defend her people, and was killed at 16. Meanwhile, things are getting hot and heavy at the dance with Xander and Empada, but she is starting to turn back into a mummy. She must kiss someone quickly or it will be too late. She runs away from Xander and goes to the museum to try to break the seal that Giles is about to restore. Buffy saves Giles before Empada kisses him, but gets thrown into the tomb. When Willow tries to help, Xander intervenes and offers his own life instead. Buffy escapes from the tomb just in time to pull the now-mummified Empada off of Xander, and the poor guy's dance partner breaks into pieces.

## 1.18 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Reptile Boy [#17]

A young woman is chased to a cemetery by a bunch of men wearing monk's robes. But Buffy and her merry band are unaware of this, and are delighted about the recent lull of activity on the Hellmouth. Giles frets about this, telling Buffy she shouldn't get lax about her training, but Buffy is ready to let her hair down a little. Meanwhile, Cordelia is dating a fraternity man, Richard -- intrigued mostly by his wealth and society connections. When smarmy Richard comes to pick her up at school, his sweet frat brother, Tom, charms Buffy. But Buffy doesn't want to go to their frat party. As far as she's concerned, she's "seeing" Angel -- if only in the dark. When Buffy tries to get Angel to go out with her, he says their difference in age is a problem, as well as the fact that his demon side tends to take over when he becomes passionate. Dejected, she decides to join Cordelia at the frat party, which requires lying to ever-vigilant Giles about her evening's activities.

Buffy and Cordelia are both drugged at the party and chained in the basement with the young woman from the cemetery. Back at school, a broken, bloody bracelet Buffy found at the cemetery is traced by Willow and Giles to the woman who had been chased. Willow's hacking skills lead to more info -- a year earlier to the day, three other women disappeared and were never found. They go to the frat party with Angel and Xander just as the three women are about to be offered up as a sacrifice to Machida, a snake-like demon who arises every year and is worshipped by the frat boys. Buffy manages to break loose and a scuffle ensues. Tom, who turns out to be way wicked, is about to cut Buffy's throat, but she grabs the sword and defeats Machida. Cordelia, messy but undaunted, chides Tom as he is led away with a typically pithy remark: "You're going to jail for fifteen thousand years!" Giles forgives Buffy for her lie, and Angel shows up at the Bronze and asks Buffy out for coffee. She grins and takes a rain check, as any self-respecting slayer would, and all is well again at the unpredictable Hellmouth.

## 1.19 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

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Halloween [#18]

It's time for Buffy and Angel's first actual date and she's late -- she's been off slaying, while, unbeknownst to her, an undead bystander has video-taped her actions for Spike to study. But other matters need attending to -- Buffy, Willow and Xander have been shanghaied into being trick-or-treat chaperones for Halloween. Buffy's disappointed, as this is the one night she has heard on which the undead like to chill, and she was looking forward to doing nothing. Buffy and Willow realize they know very little about Angel's personal life, and decide to steal Giles' watcher journals. They stumble upon a picture of a beautiful noblewoman from 1775 -- when Angel was 18 -- and Buffy feels extremely inadequate. While costume shopping, Buffy finds a dress just like the one the noblewoman wore. Xander decides to wear army fatigues, and Willow goes for a cheesy ghost costume. Meanwhile, Spike is off watching the video of Buffy and his girlfriend Drusilla predicts Buffy will become weak on Halloween from some new outside force -- the costume salesman, who we see chanting to a statue by candlelight.

On Halloween, Willow dresses like a hoochie mama. Buffy is delighted, but Willow chickens out and is a ghost once again. While Buffy the noblewoman, Willow the ghost, and Xander the soldier are out with their little trick-or-treaters, things start changing, thanks to our chanting costumer, and the three become the characters they were pretending to be. Now that Buffy is no longer the slayer, Spike goes to kill Buffy. Giles figures out that the costume shop is somehow involved, and discovers the chanter -- who is actually an old friend, Ethan. Ethan threatens to reveal secrets about Giles to Sunnydale, but Giles decks him and demands to know how to break the spell. As Giles shatters the statue, as instructed by Ethan, Spike is just about to kill Buffy. In the nick of time, she returns to being Buffy the Vampire Slayer and pummels Spike, who runs off. Once they're finally alone, Buffy tells Angel she dressed like that to please him, but he admits he hated those noblewomen -- he wanted someone exciting and interesting. They make out at last -- who said the undead don't like to have fun on Halloween? The next day, Giles returns to Ethan's store, which is bare except for a note which says, "Be seeing you."

## 1.20 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Lie To Me [#19]

At the cemetery, Buffy spies Angel talking to a strange girl -- who we recognize as Drusilla, the evil Spike's spaced-out paramour. The next day at school, Buffy runs into an old friend, Billy Fordham. "Ford" has transferred to Sunnydale from their old school (from which Buffy was suspended). Later at the Bronze, Ford admits that he knows she's the slayer. We see him enter a building which is crawling with ghoulish people and find out he is plotting something with them.

Angel, who's gotten a bad vibe from Ford, enlists Willow's help in investigating the kid on the Internet. Meanwhile, Buffy and Ford encounter some vampires on school grounds, and as she runs off to slay one, Ford tells a girl vampire he'll spare her if she'll give him information. When Buffy returns, he pretends that he killed the girl. Even though Willow doesn't find any incriminating evidence against Ford, Angel's still sure he's bad news, and he, Willow and Xander go to Ford's hangout. It seems all these creepy kids are

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not really undead, but just vampire wannabes. Concerned that the vampires have come to Sunnydale High, Buffy beeps Giles, who's out on a date with Miss Calendar. They all meet at the library, and Buffy spots a picture of Drusilla in Giles' book. Suddenly, a girl vampire runs in, grabs the book and flees -- the vampire Ford said he killed. Back at Spike's lair, Ford enters and offers His Evilness a deal -- if he'll turn Ford into a vampire, Ford will give him Buffy.

Angel finally warns Buffy about Ford. When she confronts him about Dru, he reluctantly reveals that he was responsible for her death -- he had been obsessed with her, and he tortured and killed her. Buffy finally trusts Angel, and agrees to go out with Ford to set him up. When she goes to his hangout he and his friends lock her in. She tries to explain to them that becoming a vampire doesn't mean living eternally, but Ford takes her aside and confides that he has only 6 months to live, and this is the best alternative to death he can find.

At sunset, Spike, Dru and company bust in and start ravaging the group. Buffy grabs Dru and tells Spike she'll kill his girl unless everyone is released. The wannabes are released and Buffy escapes, but leaves Ford inside to the death he prayed for.

As Buffy and Giles chat at the cemetery, Ford pops out of his grave and she slays him as if swatting a fly and goes back to her conversation.

## 1.21 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Dark Age [#20]

A man tries to get into the library to see Giles but is killed by a female demon. After killing him, she turns into a puddle of green goo. At school, Giles tells Buffy to meet him later at the hospital for a blood delivery, which attracts vampires. Back at the library, a detective is waiting for Giles --the dead man had Giles' address on him. Giles identifies the body as an old friend from London. The body has a tattoo on it, which Giles says he can't identify. Shaken, Giles doesn't meet Buffy at the hospital, and she battles the vampires alone until Angel shows up. When Buffy goes to Giles' house to see what happened, he's dishevelled and sends her away. He calls another friend in London and finds out that she's dead, too. As he rolls up his sleeves, we see he has the same tattoo as his friend. Meanwhile, the dead friend, Phillip, comes back to life in the morgue, his eyes flashing, and escapes.

Saturday, Willow, Xander, and Cordelia meet with Jenny Calendar -- Giles' girlfriend -- for a computer class. Buffy shows up to express her concern about Giles' behaviour. Cordelia mentions the police visit to the library, which slipped her Cordelia-centred mind. In the library, Buffy finds Ethan, the costume shop owner and Giles old friend who tried to kill her on Halloween. As she calls Giles, Ethan mentions the "Mark of Eyghon." Giles says she's in danger, and the dead Phillip enters. A panicked Giles shows up and, after a scuffle which leaves Jenny unconscious, Phillip turns into the green goo. Some of it gets on Jenny and when she comes to, she seems normal but we see her eyes flash. Research freak Willow discovers the "Mark of Eyghon" in a book: Eyghon possesses the body of a dead or unconscious host. They figure out that he's jumped from Phillip's body to Jenny's. Possessed Jenny, looking and

sounding like a demon, tries to seduce Giles. When Buffy comes to the rescue, Jenny jumps out the window. Giles explains to Buffy that he ran with a bad crowd when he was young, and they used Eyghon as a temporary high -- directing him in and out of each others' bodies. But one friend died, then later the girl who killed Phillip, and now it seems the rest of the group will die, too. Buffy goes to the deserted costume shop to try to help Ethan but he knocks her out, ties her up and tattoos her. He pours acid on his own tattoo so that Eyghon will take Buffy instead of him. Jenny enters, a full-tilt demon, and Buffy breaks free. Angel enters suddenly and chokes Jenny: the spirit leaves her body and enters Angel's, since he's really dead (Willow's plan: you go, girl!) It passes through Angel, and Jenny's back to normal, but Ethan escapes.

## 1.22 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

What's My Line?, Part 1 [#21]

It's Career Week at Sunnydale High for everyone but Buffy -- her fate as the Slayer has already been sealed. While Buffy is bummed, Spike seeks out a cure for Drusilla by having a transcriber go through a book stolen from Giles. They realize the book is in code, and through tarot cards, they can figure out what to do. While at the cemetery, Buffy enters a mausoleum and sees the transcriber and another vampire -- she's able to kill the vampire, but the transcriber eludes her. When she returns home, Angel is waiting for her and warns her of trouble. She's still upset about Career Day, and reveals her secret childhood obsession with ice skater Dorothy Hamill.

Giles worries about the missing vampire and what was taken from the mausoleum. We see Spike with a coffin pillow adorned with a cross -- part of the cure. He knows if Buffy keeps interrupting, he'll never get the key to curing Drusilla, so he decides to summon bounty hunters -- the most savage of killers. Giles chastises Buffy as they examine the mausoleum together and Giles finds the name "duLac" -- he was the author of the stolen book Spike has; a book of evil spells written in archaic Latin. They realize the cross has been stolen from his crypt, and it is the tool which will allow Spike to wreak havoc -- Giles says he must decipher the book first in order to save them. Meanwhile, we strangers start hitting town and doing their damage-- one is a door-to-door cosmetic salesman, one is an evil-looking guy, and one is a beautiful woman.

Buffy blows off the deciphering session to go skate with Angel, but Evil Guy is already there. Angel tries to save her but she's able to cut the guy's throat with her skate blade. Angel wigs when he sees the guy's ring -- Giles identifies it as the symbol of the Order of Teraka -- the deadly assassins. These are not the ordinary vamps; they'll stop at nothing to kill everything in their paths. Buffy freaks and goes to Angel's house while Angel goes to a local bar, trolling for information about the bounty hunters. The beautiful woman arrives and attacks Angel, locking him in a cage where he'll be vulnerable to deadly sunlight within hours. While working with the transcriber, Spike has finally found the answer to curing Drusilla. As Xander and Cordelia go looking for Buffy at her house, Cordelia lets the cosmetics salesman in. Back at Angel's house, the beautiful woman tries to kill Buffy with an axe, identifying herself as Kendra, The Vampire Slayer...

Buffy freaks as Kendra identifies herself as the Slayer. They realize that Kendra was summoned as the new Slayer when Buffy died -- temporarily drowned, that is. Kendra, too, knows that evil is coming. Near death at daybreak, Angel



is dragged from the cell by the guy from the bar -- he dumps him in a sewer and turns him over to Spike and Drusilla. When the new moon comes that night, they will perform the ritual they figured out from the transcriber and Angel will die.

Giles seems to be bonding with Kendra, making Buffy feel left out. Now that there's a spare slayer, Buffy considers giving up the business. At Buffy's house, Cordelia chats merrily with the cosmetics guy until she realizes he has bugs crawling all over him. He turns into a huge pile of them, sending Cordelia and Xander into hiding, and they fight over what to do. In the heat of the argument, they kiss passionately (?!). They manage to escape and speed off in Cordy's car. At Sunnydale High, Willow chats with Oz, her male computer nerd counterpart, about their similar Career Fair paths. A police woman supervising the fair suddenly opens fire on Buffy and accidentally shoots Oz, but Kendra comes to Buffy's rescue. When the gang assembles in the library, Giles announces he's figured out the ritual: Angel will die that night. Buffy and Kendra go to the bar to try to get help finding Angel, but Kendra bails, convinced that Angel is evil. Meanwhile, Drusilla is having a field day with her ex-tormentor Angel, dousing him with holy water and watching him writhe in pain. The Bar Guy leads Buffy to the church, which is filled with evil Tenaka bounty hunters. Buffy watches in horror as Drusilla holds onto the tied-up Angel, sapping his power. As the policewoman assassin goes to shoot Buffy, Kendra enters to save her. Willow, Xander, Cordelia and Giles burst in and help, too. Xander and Cordelia wait for Bug Guy to, well, bug out, then they pour glue all over him and stomp on the helpless creatures. Buffy releases Angel, but Spike sets the room on fire and grabs Dru. Before they're able to escape, Buffy hurls something at them and sends them crashing into a huge organ, squooshing them both. The charm-free Kendra leaves town, and Buffy is the Number One Slayer once again. But all is not well. Emerging from the rubble in the church is Drusilla, now fully vamped out and strong enough to carry the injured Spike to safety. She's back, and she's bad.

## 1.23 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

What's My Line?, Part 2 [#22]

See - What's My Line?, Part 1 [#21]

## 1.24 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Ted [#23]

Buffy's mum Joyce's new beau, Ted seems too good to be true. He cooks and he's a computer specialist -- making him an instant hit with both Xander and Willow. At school, Giles awkwardly chats with Jenny Calendar, but she says his concern about her well-being (since she's recovered from being a demon) is getting on her nerves. Ted continues to charm the gang, until he talks to Buffy alone at the mini-golf course and reveals a decidedly dark side. Buffy puts on her Angela Lansbury hat and checks out Ted's place of business. She finds out from a co-worker that he's engaged. She asks Joyce and Ted at dinner if this is true, and Ted denies it -- but he's certainly hoping to ask Joyce to marry him if all goes well. Buffy leaves and returns through her window as

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usual, only to find Ted snooping through her things. He sees her slayer journal, and threatens to show it to Joyce if Buffy doesn't toe the line. She talks back to him, and he pummels her. A fight ensues and one of her blows knocks him down the steps -- killing him.

Buffy goes to school in a daze -- she's never killed someone who wasn't already undead. Knowing Buffy wouldn't have tangled with someone just because he was dating her mum, Xander, Willow and Cordelia try to figure out what Ted was up to. Xander's extremely concerned, but suddenly says, "Don't sweat it." This is a big, honking clue to Willow, and she realizes what's caused Xander's change of attitude -- he's eating one of Ted's homebaked cookies. Analyzation shows the cookies contain a tranquillizer. Then Cordelia investigates further and finds out Ted has had four wives. Meanwhile, at the cemetery, Jenny apologizes to Giles for being short with him, but their warm fuzzy moment is interrupted by a vampire who attacks Giles. Jenny tries to shoot the demon with Giles' crossbow, but hits Giles by accident. Giles removes the bow and kills the demon. Buffy discovers the dead Ted in her room, looking remarkably healthy. She stabs him with a nail file and discovers he's a robot. Xander, Willow and Cordelia continue their sleuthing and stumble upon what's left of Ted's ex-wives in his closet. Back at the Buffy's, Ted approaches Joyce, who is freaked to see him, then glad to see him, then completely wigged when he starts short-circuiting and revealing his intent to dominate her. Buffy whacks him with a frying pan, exposing his robot face and killing him (although on this show you never know...). At school, it's just another ordinary post-slaying day at Sunnydale, until the gang discover Giles and Jenny making out.

## 1.25 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Bad Eggs [#24]

Buffy runs into a cowboy vampire at the mall, then returns to her mum Joyce, who is becoming increasingly annoyed about her daughter's lack of responsibility. The next day at school in health class, the students are asked to take care of an egg as if it were a baby, to teach them how much responsibility it takes to be a parent. Giles warns Buffy about the vamp she ran into -- he and his brother, the Gorches, are cowboy vampires, but he's not sure why they've been drawn to Sunnydale at this time. But Buffy's head is not into slaying or egg-raising these days -- she's ever more into the dreamy Angel, and her nights at the cemetery have become nothing more than make-out sessions with her undead man. When Buffy returns from her non-productive investigation of the Gorches, she finds her egg baby shaking -- she's wigged. A gross scorpion-like slimy creature bursts from it and attacks her, but she manages to stab it to death. She calls Willow to let her know what's happened, but Willow says her own egg baby is fine, and there's nothing to worry about. But we see that Willow is lying, because her own egg is indeed broken apart, and she has a spaced-out look on her face. When Joyce enters Buffy's room and finds her fully dressed, she thinks she's getting ready to sneak out and grounds her.

The next day at school, Willow gathers the gang for a monster autopsy. But she and Cordelia, whose egg has also spawned a creature, wind up decking Buffy and Xander and dragging them into a broom closet. Then, Willow, Cordy and a bunch of other students and teachers head zombie-like to the basement with shovels and axes. Even Joyce winds up getting possessed, when she comes to school to

fetch her grounded daughter and instead finds a spaced-out Giles, who throws one of the creatures onto her.

When Buffy and Xander come to, they find a book which explains what's going on. There is a creature in the basement called a bazor, whose offspring attach themselves to human hosts and take control of their motor functions. They follow a possessed student to the basement and discover Willow, Cordy, Giles, Joyce, and a bunch of others harvesting eggs from a gigantic slimy parasite. As Buffy looks for a weapon big enough to toast this mama bazor, the Gorch brothers show up. One of the bazor's tentacles drags Buffy under the floor, and suddenly all the babies fall off of their human hosts, who then fall to the ground. Somehow Buffy emerges victorious and the Gorches know they've met their match. The newly-unzombied Giles stumbles for an explanation for what's happened to everyone, and tells the student body there'd been a gas leak. Once Joyce gets her bearing, Buffy is more grounded than ever. She's not allowed to leave her room, but that doesn't stop her from making out with Angel, who she kisses from her window as he is perched outside.

## 1.26 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Surprise [#25]

Buffy's nightmare about Drusilla killing Angel gives her a major wiggins. She tells Angel about it, afraid that Drusilla might still be alive, but he thinks there's nothing to worry about. They kiss a lot. That morning at school, Buffy is all swoony about Angel, and Willow encourages her to move their relationship to the next level. Willow works up the nerve to talk to Oz, the guitar-playing cybernerd who's been mooning over her, and he asks her out for the following night -- where he'll be her date for Buffy's surprise 17th birthday bash. When Buffy tells Giles and Jenny Calendar about her dream, Giles says it's possible that Drusilla is alive, and to be on alert. Sure enough, we see Spike and Dru at the factory. Spike is scarred and in a wheelchair but as evil as ever. Dru is planning a party, too, but it's a safe bet there'll be no chips and dip at this one.

A strange man approaches Jenny in class -- it is her uncle, and we discover she is actually a gypsy whose entire family was killed by Angel when he was the superevil Angelus. The uncle says it's not fair for Angel to have any happiness, so it's Jenny's duty to keep Buffy away from him. Jenny offers to take Buffy to meet Giles off campus, and they discover some vamps making trouble -- one of whom is the transcriber who once worked for Spike. As Buffy and one of the vamps scuffle, they go flying through the window of the Bronze where the surprise party awaits. Newcomer Oz is startled to see Buffy slay one of them, and now he's officially part of the gang. They open the box the vamps were carrying, and it contains an arm which reaches out and chokes Buffy. Angel explains there was a creature called The Judge who destroyed everyone who was righteous. He was finally dismembered by an army, but his parts still exist, and reassembling him would bring on Armageddon. Angel says he must take that arm to the other side of the world, and must leave by boat immediately. Buffy joins him at the dock to say goodbye, and he gives her a claddagh ring as a token of his love. As they say goodbye, the vamps are back and the arm is stolen.

Dru's party is in full swing, and The Judge is the main attraction. His first conquest is the transcriber, who he ignites with just a touch. When Buffy and

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Angel go to the factory to see if they can find any more parts, they see it's too late, and The Judge spots them. They escape to Angel's pad, where he finally tells her he loves her. They make love and go to sleep. An undressed Angel awakens with a start and runs outside, suddenly fully dressed in black, and collapses. He calls Buffy's name but she stays asleep.

## 1.27 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Innocence [#26]

Buffy awakens to find Angel gone. Angel is in the street, still calling her name. A woman stops to see if he's in trouble, and he slays her. He's Angelus again. Meanwhile, the gang at school, who pulled an all-nighter trying to track down The Judge's parts, are worried about Buffy. She shows up and tells them what they just figured out -- The Judge is already assembled. Angel returns to the factory, and The Judge can't kill him, which confirms that he's pure evil once again.

Xander and Cordelia's secret smooching is witnessed by Willow, who's completely crushed. Buffy finally finds Angel in his apartment, but he's distant, snotty and generally obnoxious. She is devastated. Jenny's uncle says that if Angel experiences one moment of true happiness, his soul will be taken and Angelus will return. This freaks out Jenny, who realizes that many people will die. As Willow and Xander try to make up, Angel appears at school and asks Willow to approach him. Jenny shows up with a cross and Angel grabs Willow, trying to bite her. Buffy enters and he kisses her, then shoves her and leaves. Giles says some event must have triggered this transformation, but Buffy won't say, leaving Willow to figure out that they must have made love. Buffy goes home and sobs. She dreams of her special night with Angel, then of a funeral where Jenny is in black. She busts into Jenny's class, demanding to know what she knows. Jenny admits she's a watcher sent to keep Angel from happiness, so he'd pay for what he did. Buffy tells her to restore his curse to make him human again. Xander decides that even though no forged weapon could kill The Judge, that was way before today's technology, so he sneaks in an army base (using what he learned when he became a soldier on Halloween). Buffy, Giles and Jenny discover her uncle's body-- Angel killed him. The Judge, who was weak from all those years of not killing, is finally ready to take over the world. The gang wonders where he'll find the crowds he wants, since the Bronze is closed, and Oz suggests the movies at the mall. The Judge is there, preparing to vaporize everyone. Wielding the biggest, baddest gun imaginable, Buffy shoots The Judge. He's toast -- well, at least dismembered again -- and the crowd is saved. But Angel still wants to kill Buffy. She doesn't have the heart to slay him, but gives him a wicked kick in the groin, which knocks him to the floor. Giles warns Buffy that Angel is sure to keep pursuing her in his new evil incarnation, but he doesn't scold her for what happened. She and her mum have a belated birthday celebration, but Buffy doesn't even want to make a wish on her candle, and just forlonly puts her head on her mum's shoulder and watches a romantic old movie.

## 1.28 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

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Phases [#27]

Willow meets up with Oz in front of one of the school's trophy cases. He has been checking out the moving eyes in one of the cheerleading statues, the same one in which Amy's mother, the witch, is trapped. They discuss their date the previous night, before Willow spots Buffy and walks outside with her. Willow is worried because Oz hasn't tried to kiss her yet, although she is happy that he is being so nice and respectful. Later that night, Xander and Cordelia make out in her car, which is parked in the woods. Without warning, the hairy arm of a werewolf breaks through the roof of the car. Cordy throws the car in reverse then brakes, sending the werewolf tumbling off of the car. They then drive out as fast as they can. The next morning, Xander tells Giles that they encountered a werewolf. Giles is quite excited, for he has never personally dealt with a werewolf case before. In gym, the class is studying self-defence. Xander's latent jealousy of Oz's relationship with Willow is becoming more and more obvious. Buffy tries to pretend she's a normal girl, but when Larry grabs her behind during a throw session, Buffy flips him over her shoulder and onto the mat. Back at the library, Giles has learned that a werewolf goes on the prowl on the night of the full moon and the two nights surrounding it, making that a total of three nights in every month.

Later that night, one of Buffy's classmates, Theresa, is walking home alone when she bumps into Angel, who offers to walk her home. Meanwhile, Buffy and Giles investigate Lover's Lane in the woods, hoping to find the werewolf and bring it back alive, for it is still a human twenty-eight days out of the month. Buffy gets trapped in a net that lifts her to the top of the trees. As she calls for help from Giles, a poacher named Cain appears with a shotgun. After realizing that his catch is not a werewolf, he cuts the net down, and Giles helps Buffy out. Cain explains that he hunts werewolves to make money. He then asks them if they know where else the teenagers might hang out, since werewolves are attracted to sexual heat. Buffy feigns ignorance, so Cain leaves and goes off on his own. Buffy and Giles then drive towards the Bronze, which fits Cain's description perfectly. As they arrive there, dozens of frightened teens evacuate the Bronze, for the werewolf has already arrived. Buffy runs inside by herself and pulls a chain out of her backpack. She tries to tie up the werewolf, but it breaks free of the chain and escapes. While Buffy and Giles deal with Cain, who is upset that she tried to capture it instead of kill it, the werewolf wanders down the alleys when it discovers Theresa's body. There are two bite marks on its neck, and all the blood has been drained from its body. The werewolf looks up and sees Angel. The two growl at each other, but do not attack. Angel eventually backs off and disappears.

Early next morning before sunrise, Buffy and Giles hear on the radio that Theresa was found dead, and her murder may be linked to the werewolf. They now have only night left before the werewolf goes into remission for the remainder of the month. As the sun rises, the werewolf slowly transforms back to human form while it is sleeping. Once all the hair fades away to reveal flesh, we see that the werewolf is Oz. After waking up and realizing that he is naked in the woods, Oz suspects that he may be the werewolf. He goes home and calls his aunt. Oz asks her about his cousin Jordy, who bit him recently. Apparently, his aunt knows that Jordy is a werewolf, and since he bit Oz, the curse has been passed along. Oz goes to school that day in a daze, and he is horrified to learn that he may have killed Theresa the previous night. Xander suspects that Larry may be the werewolf, so he leaves to question him in the locker room. Willow invites Oz to help her do some research later that night, but Oz

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refuses and runs off, leaving Willow upset over his apparent change of heart. In the locker room, Xander confronts Larry in the locker room. Xander tells him that he knows the secret that Larry has been hiding, only to find out that Larry's secret is his homosexuality. Misunderstanding Xander's words, Larry now believes that Xander is also gay, but assures him that their secret is safe between them. Feeling relieved and better about himself, Larry thanks Xander and walks off.

Realizing that the police reports never mentioned anything about Theresa being mauled, Buffy and Xander visit the funeral home and inspect Theresa's body. Sure enough, they find two bite marks on her neck, signifying death by vampire. While Buffy signs the guestbook, Theresa suddenly gets up behind her, only now her face is that of a vampire. In the middle of their fight, Theresa throws Buffy off guard by saying that Angel sent her. Luckily, Xander is able to stake her through the back before she can take advantage of Buffy's disoriented state. After being helped up, Buffy embraces Xander for a short while, expressing her fear of Angel's relentlessness. She then realizes her position, gathers herself together, and leaves, with Xander following behind. Elsewhere, Oz knows that he must not be able to leave the house that night, so brings out a box of chains and shackles. Before he can lock himself up, Willow knocks on the door. She is obviously upset by his decision to stay home and do nothing by himself instead of spending the time with her. Oz tries to warn her of the danger, but it is too late, for his transformation has already begun. Willow screams and runs out of the house, while the werewolf chases her down the block and into the woods. Before he can attack Willow, a different scent catches the werewolf's nose, so he leaves Willow alone. She runs off to the library, where Giles is loading up a tranquillizer gun. Willow tells Giles and Buffy that Oz is the werewolf, so they rush out to the woods. Buffy kicks the shotgun out of Cain's hand just before he pulls the trigger. After knocking Cain down, Buffy fights the werewolf, which prevents Giles from getting a clean shot. Buffy is then knocked into Giles and Willow. As the werewolf charges them, Willow grabs the tranquillizer gun and shoots him, causing him to stumble back and collapse. As Cain gets up, Buffy bends his gun with her bare hands, then orders him to leave.

The next day, Oz tells Willow that he'll be fine, as long as he locks himself up around the full moon every month. To his surprise, Willow is still interested in continuing their relationship. As she leaves, Willow kisses Oz for the first time.

## 1.29 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Bewitched, Bothered And Bewildered [#28]

The night before Valentine's Day, Xander shows Buffy his V-Day gift for Cordy: a necklace with a heart-shaped pendant. After cracking a few jokes, Buffy assures Xander that Cordy will love his gift. She then slays a vampire which rises from its grave, and they continue on with their conversation.

The next morning, Harmony and her friends are shunning Cordy from their discussion groups. They mock Cordy for dating Xander, whom they perceive to be one of the biggest losers in Sunnydale. Elsewhere, Amy asks Willow and Buffy if they plan on attending the V-Day party at the Bronze later that night. Willow is going to see Oz play in the band, while Buffy plans on staying home. As everyone leaves and hands in their assignment, Xander notices that Amy does

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not have a paper to turn in. To his surprise, he watches as Amy stares at Miss Beakman, the teacher. Miss Beakman then reaches out her hand, as if she is taking Amy's paper which doesn't even exist. Amy then turns and leaves. Xander catches up with Buffy and Willow, telling them that he suspects Amy of messing around with witchcraft. Buffy and Willow remind him that it was Amy's mother, Catherine, who was the witch, and that Amy would never fool around with it. Giles spots Buffy and approaches her. Jenny Calendar sees them and walks over, but Giles brushes her off, saying that he and Buffy are busy at the moment. In the library, Giles warns Buffy that Angel has a long past of committing horrid acts on Valentine's Day. He refuses to tell Buffy any specifics, however, but he does suggest that she be careful. Meanwhile, in the factory, Spike and Angel give Drusilla their V-Day gifts. Spike gives her a necklace, while Angel gives her a freshly torn-out heart.

That night, Buffy receives a box of roses, which were left at her doorstep. Buffy opens the box and finds a card with only one word written on it: "Soon". At the Bronze, Xander sees Cordy and walks over to give her his gift. After admiring the necklace for a moment, Cordy breaks up with him. Xander is righteously furious, and it only gets worse for him the next day, as everyone in school seems to know that they broke up. Xander then notices Amy walking around, so he runs over and tells her that he knows she's practising witchcraft. With the upper hand, Xander strikes a deal with Amy: help him cast a love spell on Cordy, and nobody will have to know that she's a witch. After arguing the idea for a while, Amy concedes and tells Xander that she needs a personal item of Cordelia's. Xander finds Cordy near her locker and demands that she return the necklace he gave her. Cordy says it's in her locker, but when she opens it, she hides behind the locker door so she can remove the necklace from her neck without Xander seeing. Meanwhile, Buffy walks into the library and shows Giles the "Soon" card. Buffy demands that Giles tell her everything she needs to know about Angel and Valentine's Day, so Giles sits her down and proceeds to read various anecdotes from his books.

In a darkened room, Amy and Xander perform the spell that should cause Cordy to fall in love with him. However, Xander soon finds out that the spell had no effect on Cordy. He walks into the library where Buffy is still listening to Giles read his books. Buffy consoles Xander, then suggests that they spend some time together that night. Buffy's suggestions get increasingly lurid, but before they get too close, Amy walks in and tells Xander that she needs to have a word with him. Outside in the hall, Amy tells Xander that the spell didn't work. Xander could care less know, seeing how his dreams of Buffy and himself are finally being fulfilled. However, Amy then suggests that they spend some time together later that night, without the spells and other witchcraft. Xander grows suspicious, and his fears are confirmed when another girl approaches and asks him to accompany her that night. Xander realizes that the spell actually worked. However, instead of affecting Cordy, it zapped every other girl in Sunnydale. Xander goes home to avoid everybody, only to find Willow waiting for him in his bed. Willow wants to him to take her right there in his bed, and when things get a little too steamy between them, Xander pushes her off and runs off.

The next day, every single girl in the school ogles Xander as he walks down the hall. He quickly enters the library and tells Giles everything that's going on. Before Giles can process the information, Jenny walks in and tells Giles that they need to talk. However, her attention quickly shifts to Xander, proving that the spell affected not only the girls, but every single female in town. Giles gets between the two and berates Xander for causing all this to happen. He then leaves Xander in the library, dragging Jenny along with him.

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After they leave, Xander tries to barricade the entrance to the library, but Buffy simply walks in, wearing nothing but a raincoat. She seductively asks Xander to undress her, but he can't, for he knows that what Buffy is doing is not out of attraction for him, but simply a result of the spell. Just then, Amy arrives and tells Buffy to leave. Instead, Buffy punches her to the floor. Angered, Amy gets up and casts a spell on Buffy, turning her into the small rat. Giles and Jenny return just then. While Xander and Giles try to catch the rat, Oz walks into the library and punches Xander for whatever he did to depress Willow. While Xander assures Oz that nothing happened, the rat escapes through the partly-opened library door. Realizing that the rat is gone, Giles commands Xander and Oz to find the rat while he tries to get Amy to reverse the spells. Giles soon determines that Amy must have made a mistake in the casting that caused Cordy to be protected by the spell instead of affected by it.

In the hallway, Xander notices a fight breaking out. To his horror, he sees a mob of girls beating on Cordy. The mob is angry at Cordy for breaking Xander's heart. Rushing in through the love-crazed girls, Xander pulls Cordy out of the pack and runs away with her. They run outside, only to find Willow and dozens of other girls. Willow is wielding an axe, for she would rather see Xander dead than with Cordy. While the mobs of girls battle each other, Xander and Cordy escape through the commotion and end up at Buffy's house. Joyce lets them in and, after sending Cordy upstairs to get some bandages, starts seducing Xander. Cordy is sickened by this, so she pushes Joyce outside. Joyce punches through the door window and struggles to unlock the door, so Xander and Cordy run upstairs and hide in Buffy's room. Thinking they're safe, Angel suddenly arrives and pulls Xander through the window and throws him to the ground below. Before Angel can kill him, Drusilla arrives and protects Xander. While Angel leaves, Dru offers immortal life to Xander. Before she can sink his teeth into his neck, the mob of girls finally track them down. They pull Xander away from Dru and pile up on top of Xander. Cordy runs out and pulls Xander out from the pile before quickly running back inside. All the girls chase them into the house. That is, everyone except Dru. Angel reminds her that she can't get in without an invitation. Xander and Cordy run into the basement and lock themselves in there. Meanwhile, Oz tracks the rat into the school basement. The rat is first menaced by a cat, then approaches a mouse trap. Upstairs, Giles and Amy perform the reversal spells. They first reverse the spell on Buffy, causing her to transform back to her human self. She quickly realizes that she is completely naked, so she asks Oz to find her some clothes. While Giles and Amy work on reversing the love spell, the mob of girls break open the basement door. Xander and Cordy run downstairs, but there's nowhere to go. Soon, all the girls gang up on top of them. Finally, Giles and Amy complete the reversal spell, and everybody returns to normal. All the girls look around, completely confused as to what's going on. Cordy makes up an excuse that they had just finished a scavenger hunt.

The next day, Buffy thanks Xander for not taking advantage of her the previous day. It seems that everybody retained their memory of what occurred during the run of the spell. Xander then bumps into Harmony, who is walking with Cordy and the rest of their friends. After Harmony mocks Xander, Cordy has had enough. She rips on Harmony and tells everybody that she can date whoever she wants to date. Cordy then walks over to Xander and takes his hand. Cordy is horrified by what she's just done, but Xander comforts her, and the two of them walk off, together again.



## 1.30 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Passion [#29]

Buffy wakes up in the morning to discover a piece of paper sitting on her pillow. She unfolds it to discover a sketch of her face while she was sleeping. Buffy knows that Angel must have been in her bedroom during her sleep. At the library, Buffy pleads to Giles that he find a spell that would reverse the invitation into her home. Buffy and Giles then stop by Jenny Calendar's computer class to meet Willow, who has just been assigned by Jenny to fill in as class teacher the next day for the first few minutes. As Buffy and Willow leave, Jenny does her best to apologize to Giles, who insists that Buffy is the one who deserves the apology. Jenny also gives Giles a book that she has been reading since Angel lost his soul.

That night, Buffy tells her mother during dinner that Angel has been sort of stalking her lately. Buffy asks Joyce to never invite him into the house. Later, Buffy talks to Willow over the phone. During their conversation, Willow notices an envelope on her bed. She opens it and discovers that all the fish from her aquarium have been removed and strung along a wire, which she slowly pulls out of the envelope. Willow quickly retreats to Buffy's house to spend the night.

At the factory the next morning, Spike grows increasingly tired of Angel's presence. Their argument is interrupted by Drusilla, who falls onto the table in pain, for she senses something going on that may endanger them. What she senses is Jenny's visit to the local craft shop. Jenny purchases an Orb of Thesulah which she needs to restore Angel's soul. The shopkeeper warns her that the transliteration annals have been lost for many years, but Jenny tells him that she's working on a computer program that could translate the text.

The next morning, Giles gives Jenny's book to Buffy and points out the revoking spell that he just found. Buffy and Willow first help Cordy perform the steps on her car. The three of them then perform the spell in Willow's house. While there, Cordy notices a piece of paper left on Willow's bed. Willow unfolds it, then hands it to Buffy. It is a sketch of Joyce, asleep and completely unaware of Angel's presence. Buffy and Willow race to her house to perform the spell. Joyce soon pulls into the driveway, where Angel waits for her to get out of the car. Angel pleads with Joyce to help him get Buffy back, and he eventually mentions the night they made love. Joyce finally unlocks the front door and enters the house. Angel tries to follow her in, but a force holds him back. He then sees Buffy and Willow coming down the steps, and the door is promptly slammed in front of him. Back in Jenny's classroom, Giles walks in. She tells him that she may have some good news, so Giles invites her to stop by his house later. Meanwhile, Drusilla visits the shopkeeper after hours and asks him what he's been up to with Jenny Calendar.

Jenny finally completes her program. She saves the translated text on a floppy disk which she removes from the disk drive. As she prints out the text, she notices that Angel is sitting in the classroom. He destroys the Orb of Thesula, her computer, and the print-out. Angel then chases Jenny through the school halls before finally catching her in front of the second floor window. In a single instant, Angel snaps Jenny's neck, then drops her to the floor.

Meanwhile, Giles stops by Buffy's house to pick up Jenny's book so he can perform the revoking spell at his house. Upstairs, Joyce talks with Buffy

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about her irresponsibility. When Giles gets home, he hears opera music playing and finds a rose on his door. He enters and finds chilled wine, glasses, and a note that simply reads "Upstairs". He follows a path of roses up the staircase, but what he finds is everything but romantic. Jenny's dead body lies in his bed, and Giles drops the glasses and wine to the floor. Giles stares blankly ahead as the coroners take Jenny's body out of the house. The cops then ask Giles to come with them to the police station to answer a few questions. Giles asks if he could first use the phone. As the phone rings at Buffy's house, Angel watches from outside, through the windows. He watches Buffy's face as she gives the phone, then slowly collapses against the wall behind her. Willow immediately bursts into tears, and Joyce runs in to console her. After a while of recovery, Xander and Cordy arrive to give Buffy and Willow a lift to Giles' house. At this very moment, Giles stuffs his weapons into a duffel bag and takes off for the factory. Buffy and the others arrive too late, but they know where he's headed. At the factory, Giles throws a flame bomb into the middle of the floor, setting it ablaze. Before Angel can run, an arrow pins him against a post behind him. As he pulls it out, Giles ignites a club in the flames and proceeds to beat Angel repetitively with it. Finally, Angel grabs Giles by the neck and picks him up, but Buffy arrives just in time to take over the fight. Their battle carries on to the catwalk above, but before Buffy can finish Angel off, he reminds her of Giles, who remains collapsed by the rapidly spreading flames. He then throws Buffy over the rail, but she lands on her feet and rescues Giles, thus allowing to Angel to escape once again. Outside, Giles is furious at Buffy for interfering in his fight, but she punches him and tells him to never leave her alone.

Another day, another morning, Giles and Buffy stand over Jenny's grave. Buffy has finally realized that she is ready to finish Angel. In the computer classroom, Willow takes over as substitute teacher until the new teacher can arrive. As she arranges Jenny's desk, she unknowingly drops a disk through a crack between the desk and a file cabinet. There the disk lies, the key to Angel's restoration.

## 1.31 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Killed By Death [#30]

The flu has been spreading around Sunnydale High, and Buffy's one of the unlucky souls who's got it. While on a routine patrol through the cemetery, Buffy runs into Xander, Willow, and Cordelia. Before she can get them to go home, Angel appears and attacks Cordy. Buffy fends him off, but the flu has made her too weak to fight him effectively. Angel nearly bites Buffy when the others come to her aid and thwart him back with their crosses. After Angel leaves, Buffy collapses and lies on the ground, unconscious.

The gang brings Buffy to the emergency room of Sunnydale General. Giles and Joyce soon arrive, and they wait for Buffy to be moved to another room so they could see her. On the way to room, Buffy realizes that she's going to be there awhile, so she tries to get out, screaming that she has to kill the vampires. Dr. Wilkinson injects a tranquillizer to calm her down. Soon, Buffy is asleep in her new room while the others wait outside in the hall. Joyce tells everyone that Buffy has been afraid of hospitals ever since she saw her cousin Celia die in a hospital when they were both very young. The group goes home while Xander stays behind to protect Buffy in case Angel shows up. That night, Buffy is still overcome with her fever when she notices a young boy standing

in her doorway. As the boy walks away, Buffy sees a tall, demonic man following the boy. He is dressed in black clothes and a black hat, and his fingers are long and pointed. Buffy gets out of her bed to follow them, but she soon finds herself in a flashback to a time when she was much younger, walking down a similar hospital hallway. As her young self walks into a room and approaches the bed curtains, Buffy wakes up, realizing that she was just dreaming. She then gets out of bed and walks down the hall. She stops outside of a door from which a body of a recently diseased girl is being wheeled out of. Buffy eavesdrops on Dr. Wilkinson talking with another doctor, Dr. Stanley Backer. Dr. Wilkinson is arguing about some kind of experimental procedure that Dr. Backer has been performing on the children. Buffy then notices two children standing before her. One of them is the same boy she saw earlier, who tells her that Death is coming for them, and that he can't be seen by grownups. Elsewhere, Angel walks into the hospital, holding some flowers for Buffy. Xander blocks his path and challenges him to a fight, but Angel simply points out Xander's apparent jealousy of Angel for getting to Buffy first. Angel then turns around and leaves.

The next morning, Buffy's fever has gone down, and the gang pays her a visit. Buffy tells them about the apparent demon she saw walking the halls, the one that grownups can't see, but also notes that she may have just been delusional from her fever. She also tells them about the girl who died and Dr. Backer's experiments. Giles and Willow return to the library to do some research while Xander and Cordy snoop around the hospital for more info. They find nothing, so Xander decides to stay behind and watch after Buffy. Cordy is upset with him for his obvious attraction that he still holds for Buffy, but she later returns with donuts and coffee to keep Xander company. In the meantime, Giles and Willow concoct a theory that the kids think they're seeing Death, but they're really seeing Dr. Backer. Willow researches his background, but can't find much to convict him of anything. Later that night, Buffy sneaks out of her room again. She heads for the children's ward, where Dr. Backer is preparing to inject a sleeping girl with an unknown solution. He then hears something, but it is too late, for an invisible force attacks the doctor, slashing away at his body. The young boy, Ryan, wakes up and watches in horror as Dr. Backer is slashed to death by the demon. Buffy looks in and sees Dr. Backer being attacked, but she can't see the attacker. His lifeless body is then thrown out of the room, and before Buffy can reach it, she is knocked back by the unseen force. She lies against the wall, unconscious, while Dr. Backer's body is dragged down the hall and out of sight.

The next morning, Buffy tells the gang that Backer is no longer their suspect, then shows them a drawing that Ryan made of the demon. Joyce arrives and tells Buffy that she's been cleared to go home, but Buffy makes up an excuse that she's still not feeling well so she can stay in the hospital and fight the demon. Willow stays to help Buffy investigate Dr. Backer's office for clues as to why he was killed, while Xander elects to stand guard at the hospital. This leaves Giles to reluctantly work with Cordy in the library. In Dr. Backer's office, Willow finds a log proving that Backer was inoculating the kids with the same virus they were infected with in an attempt to raise their temperature and burn out their fever. According to the log, the process was starting to work, so Backer really was helping the children all along. At the library, Cordy notices that a picture on the cover of a book resembles the picture that Ryan drew. She calls Buffy and tells them that the name of the demon is Der Kindestod. Giles then tells Buffy that Kindestod kills its victims by sitting on top of them and pinning them on their backs. It then sucks the life out of them somehow. Buffy suddenly has another flashback to her earlier years. The younger Buffy walks into the room and opens the

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curtains, only to see Celia screaming with her hands in front of her, as if she is trying to push some invisible object off of her. Buffy realizes that her cousin Celia was killed by Kindestod. After hanging up the phone, Buffy realizes that the only time she was able to see the Kindestod was when she was still under the effects of her fever. Willow and Buffy sneak into Backer's office again. Buffy opens the refrigerator and removes a test tube that contains the same virus strain that Backer was using in his experiments. Willow dilutes it with water before Buffy drinks it. Sick again, Buffy stumbles to the children's ward with Willow's help. However, all the children are no longer in their room. Buffy then sees Kindestod walking around inside the room, then entering a door labelled "Basement Access". The door is locked, so Buffy needs to find another way to the basement. Dr. Wilkinson walks into the hallway and tries to get Buffy back to her room, but Buffy pushes her away, and she and Willow run for it. Two security guards stop them, but Willow throws an imaginary fit to divert the guards while Buffy slips by. She finds Xander, and the two of them head down to the basement. They find Ryan pinned to the floor by Kindestod, while the rest of the children sit together screaming. Buffy fights Kindestod while Xander moves the others to safety. Before Kindestod can drain Buffy of her life force, she grabs his head with both hands and snaps his neck, killing him instantly.

The next morning, Buffy is back in the comfort of her own bedroom. Xander and Willow are also there, keeping her company while she recovers from her fever again. Joyce brings Buffy a letter that just arrived in the mail. It's from Ryan, and Buffy opens it to find a drawing of Buffy standing victoriously over the body of Kindestod, it's neck cracked open and blood spurting out.

## 1.32 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

I Only Have Eyes For You [#31]

A night at the Bronze does nothing to improve the Slayer's morale, as Willow notices when she sees Buffy reject a guy. Willow tries to help her friend out, but Buffy opts to stop by the school and see if Giles has any work for her to do. Unbeknownst to her, a boy is fighting with a girl in the school hallway. He holds up a gun, and the girl tries to leave the scene. The boy then shouts, "Don't walk away from me, bitch!" Buffy arrives at the school just in time to stop the boy from shooting the girl. Buffy knocks the gun out of his hand, and the boy soon returns to his senses. While he and the girl try to figure out what just happened, the school janitor points out that the gun is nowhere to be seen.

The next morning, Principal Snyder calls Buffy to his office to let her know that he'll be keeping an eye on her. After he leaves the office for a minute, a book mysteriously falls out of the bookshelf. Buffy picks it up, noticing that it's a yearbook from the Sunnydale Class of '55. Meanwhile, Giles stops by the computer classroom, where Willow is still serving as the substitute teacher. She tells Giles about some of the files and pagan websites she found on the computer, then gives him a rose quartz that once belonged to Jenny. Elsewhere, Buffy has a dream in one of her classes that she's in the year 1955. She watches on as one of the students approaches the teacher. They start to hold hands when someone else interrupts them. Just then, Buffy wakes up from her dream and notices the teacher writing "Don't walk away from me, bitch" on the chalkboard. He doesn't even notice it until the students start laughing. In the hallway, Buffy tells Xander what happened. When they reach

his locker, a rotted arm reaches out of it and grabs Xander, trying to pull him in. Buffy helps him loose, and the creature disappears. When Giles finds out about this, he deduces that this is some form of paranormal activity.

Later that night, one of the teachers, Ms. Frank, passes by George the janitor on her way home. Suddenly, they begin to re-enact the same conversation that the boy and girl held the night before. While this goes on, Giles is working in his office when he hears a female voice call to him. He believes that it is Jenny's voice. When he walks out to investigate, he sees George and Ms. Frank outside. Before Giles can do anything, the gun goes off, sending Ms. Frank over the edge and onto the steps below. George tries to flee the scene, but Giles tackles him. After the gun is knocked out of George's hands, it suddenly vanishes into thin air. George has no idea what just happened, so Giles fills him in.

The next day, Giles tells the others that he believes the ghost is Jenny. They don't see how the pieces fit, but Giles remains set in his belief. In the computer classroom, Willow looks up any previous shooting victims in the school. She finds a record from 1955, when a student shot his teacher, then himself. Buffy recognizes the faces from her dream, so she grabs a 1955 yearbook and looks them up. The boy was James Stanley, and his teacher was Grace Newman. Buffy determines that they were having an affair. However, Buffy feels no remorse for James's fate, for she feels he deserved whatever punishment there was after shooting Grace. In the cafeteria, Cordy complains about the upcoming Sadie Hawkins dance when another paranormal event occurs. This time, all of the food transforms into snakes, sending the entire school population into panic. One of the snake bites Cordy's cheek before she swats it away. After they evacuate the school, a team is sent in to clean out the snakes. Principal Snyder talks with his friend on the police force, Bob. Snyder knows that they're on a Hellmouth, but Bob demands Snyder to control the situation, otherwise the mayor would have to get involved. That night, Willow sets up a plan to exorcise the spirit from the school. To do so, Buffy, Xander, Cordelia, and herself need to chant from different locations in the school at midnight, forming what is called a Mangus Tripod. Buffy elects to take the centre position, since that is where the most danger would likely occur. After they split up in the school, Willow runs into Giles by the library. He is trying to contact Jenny's spirit, so Willow leaves him alone. As midnight approaches, Buffy sees a vision of James dancing with Grace in the band room. Cordelia inspects her wound in the bathroom mirror, then watches in horror as the whole side of her face turns red and swollen. Willow is suddenly pulled into the floor by an arm, but she is saved by Giles. Buffy watches as James's face is replaced by a rotted skull, which tells her to get out. The clock finally strikes twelve, so the group does the chant simultaneously. However, it doesn't work like it's supposed to. A swarm of wasps invades the hallways, and everybody makes a mad dash for the exit. They run to the street, then turn around to witness the swarm surround the entire school.

At Buffy's house, Giles deduces that it is James spirit which is haunting Sunnydale High. He is apparently trying to seek forgiveness from Grace, but that can never happen since she dies before she can possibly forgive him. So, he is doomed to repeat this scenario over and over again. While they try to figure out a solution, Buffy hears a male voice call to her. Without telling the others, she sneaks off to the school. The wasps part to allow her access, and she walks right in. Inside, Buffy meets Angel, who has come to finish things off. However, James spirit possesses Buffy, and she begins to act out the scenario. Confused for a moment, Angel approaches and is suddenly possessed by Grace's spirit. It all plays out the same way, only this time,

Grace (in Angel's body) gets up after being shot and falling onto the steps below. In the band room, James (in Buffy's body) prepares to shoot himself, when Grace stops him. She forgives him, and they share one last kiss before their souls finally cross over, leaving Buffy and Angel in an embrace, kissing like they once did in the past. When Angel realizes what he is doing, he pushes her off and escapes.

Back at the Summers home, Buffy realizes that James never meant to shoot Grace. Apparently, Buffy and James had more in common than she realized, for they were both tormented by guilt. Meanwhile, at their new home in an abandoned garden, Angel tries to cleanse himself from the vile kiss he shared with his enemy. He takes Dru out with him to find some blood, leaving Spike alone. After they leave, Spike rises from his wheelchair and kicks it on its side, knowing that the time for his comeback is nearer than anyone else thinks.

### 1.33 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Go Fish [#32]

The beach is the site for the victory party of the Sunnydale High swim team, and everyone's celebrating except Buffy. One of the team members, Cameron, approaches the lonely Slayer and keeps her company. Another team member, Dodd, mocks Jonathan in front of everybody, so Buffy steps in to stop the foolishness. Dodd and fellow member Gage then leave the party and walk along the shore. Suddenly, Dodd disappears without Gage even noticing. He smells a strong odour coming from somewhere, so he decides to return to the party. He doesn't hear Dodd quietly scream in agony, nor does he notice the scaly creature walking away from Dodd's remains.

The next morning, Principal Snyder stops by the computer classroom to talk to Willow about one of her students, Gage. He is currently getting an "F" in the class, and Snyder encourages her to work his grade into a passing one. Meanwhile, Cameron gives a Buffy a ride to school, then tries to put the moves on her. She retaliates by busting his nose on the steering wheel. Principal Snyder sees this and calls the two of them to Nurse Greenliegh's office. The swim team coach, Marin, meets them there, and they discuss their chances for winning the state title. In the library, Buffy learns that Dodd's insides were eaten from some mysterious creature, leaving only his skin behind. Hours later, Xander takes a study break and heads to the vending machine. He bumps into Cameron, who is on his way to the cafeteria. Cam notices a foul smell when he enters the cafeteria, and a horrific scream follows soon after. Xander follows the sound, but he's too late, for all that remains of Cameron is his skin on the cafeteria floor. Xander then turns around and encounters the scaly creature that most likely killed Cameron.

Later, Xander explains to Giles and Cordy that the creature got away before he could get a good look at it. Without Cameron gone, Giles determines the pattern of the killing is connected to the swim team ranks. Dodd and Cameron were the first and second best swimmers on the team, respectively. Since Gage is the third best, he would most likely be the creature's next target. Buffy decides to keep an eye on Gage, while Willow interrogates Jonathan, who has tried out for the team several times but never made it on. All Willow learns is that Jonathan peed in the pool. Later that night, Gage confronts Buffy about her spying on him. She tries to come up with a good excuse, then simply

tells Gage what's really going on. He doesn't buy it, so he turns and walks out. Outside, he meets Angel, who promptly sinks his teeth into Gage's neck, hoping to turn him into a demon. Buffy arrives on the scene just in time to witness Angel suddenly withdrawing his fangs from Gage's neck and spitting the blood out. He tosses Gage's weakened body at Buffy and makes his escape, all the while spitting out the blood in disgust. Gage believes Buffy now, so he asks her to walk him home.

At swim practice the next day, Buffy tells Willow and Cordy about Angel's distaste for Gage's blood. She believes that Gage may have been taking steroids, which might have turned Angel off. Willow then considers the possibility that the steroids might be what's attracting the creature. They then find out that Xander has joined the swim team. The position was open due to the recent deaths, so Xander took it as an opportunity to spy on Gage when Buffy couldn't. After spending some time in the steam room, Xander gets dressed and meets Buffy outside of the locker room, telling her that Gage is still inside. She soon hears Gage screaming and runs inside, where she sees the creature standing in front of Gage. She gets between the two of them, but something's wrong with Gage. To her horror, Buffy watches as Gage tears away his own skin in agony before emerging as the same type of creature standing behind her. Gage's former skin drops to the floor, and he quickly attacks Buffy. The two of them are too much for Buffy, and when her guard drops, one of them bite into her arm. Coach Marin arrives to pull Buffy out of danger, and the two creatures escape through a hole in the floor. Buffy and Giles question Coach Marin, but he denies any knowledge of substance abuse in his team. They can't figure out what's going on, so Buffy assigns Xander to learn more about the team's drug use while she and Willow talk to Nurse Greenliegh. However, Nurse Greenliegh is already being led to her doom by Coach Marin, who won't listen to her pleas to stop the experiments. He drops her into the sewer below, where the fish creatures quickly feed on her.

In the steam room, Xander learns from one of the other members that the steroids are in the steam itself. This means that Xander has been exposed to the same substance that transformed Dodd, Cameron, and Gage. He tells the others that he's already been in the steam room three times, so Buffy talks to Coach Marin. Eventually, he tells her about Russian experiments with fish DNA on their Olympic swimmers. He then draws a gun and orders Buffy to drop into the sewer so his boys could satisfy their "other needs". After dropping down, Buffy sees the chewed-up remains of Nurse Greenliegh floating in the murky water. Upstairs by the pool, Cordy mistakes a newly-emerged fish creature for Xander. She expresses her sorrow for his fate, but Xander shows up again, just in time to save her from the creature's attack. They return to the library, where Giles has locked up the remaining members of the swim team. Xander then goes to see Coach Marin, and they engage in a struggle over the gun. Down below, Buffy fends off the creatures until they finally surround her from all angles. Xander knocks Coach Marin down and extends his arm through the hole for Buffy. She leaps up, grabs Xander's hand, and is pulled to safety. Coach Marin gets up for one last strike, but Buffy is ready this time. She sweeps him off his feet, sending Marin into the sewer with his swimmers. They converge on him, leaving Coach Marin with nothing to do but scream. Later, Xander tells the others that he has to get a blood transfusion along with the rest of the team, hoping that will prevent them from changing. As they speak, the fish creatures swim out into the ocean, against the current.

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## 1.34 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Becoming, Part 1 [#33]

Galway, 1753 -- On his last day as a mortal human, the man who will become Angelus encounters a beautiful, blonde woman on the streets at night. Her name is Darla, and she seduces him closer to her. She sinks her fangs into his neck, then uses her nails to make an incision on her chest, just above her breasts. Immediately, Darla pulls the man's mouth onto her bleeding cut, turning the man into a demon of the night.

Sunnydale, Present -- Angel watches Buffy from afar as she battles a pair of vampires. She orders one of them to take a message to Angel, saying that she's taking the offensive. The vampire doesn't comply, so Buffy finishes him off. The next day, Giles pays a visit to the museum, where a newly-discovered stone artifact has been discovered. It is a few feet taller than Giles, and it contains some form of text on the side. Giles asks the man in charge, Doug Perren, if they attempted to open it yet, but Doug didn't notice the crack running down the side of the stone until Giles pointed it out. Giles then asks Doug to refrain from opening it until he can decipher the text. At school, Buffy declares to her friends for the umpteenth time that she's ready to face Angel, despite the fact that final exams are approaching. Willow offers to tutor Buffy in chemistry during one of their free periods.

London, 1860 -- Before she became a demon, Drusilla was a young Catholic woman who only wanted to follow the right path in life. She enters a church and steps into the confessional booth, failing to notice one of the priest's arms reaching out in desperation before being pulled back in. Drusilla does not realize that Angelus has just murdered the priest and is now acting in his place behind the confessional screen. After Drusilla tells him of her problem with her visions of the future, Angelus torments her by claiming that she is a child of the devil. Drusilla does not want this to be true, and pleads for help. Finally, Angelus lets her go with a request for Hail Mary's and an act of contrition.

Sunnydale, Present -- Drusilla, Spike, and Angelus read about the museum's new artifact in the newspaper. Angelus knows what it is immediately. Back in Sunnydale High, Buffy hopelessly tries to solve a chemistry problem when she accidentally drops her pencil. It rolls off into the desk and falls on the floor, right next to Ms. Calendar's disk which has remained there ever since the night of her murder. Buffy pulls the disk out and hands it to Willow, and pops it into the disk drive to check out its contents. What they find is Jenny's final project: the curse for the restoration of Angel's soul. Meanwhile, Dru, Angel, and several other vamps go to the museum to retrieve the stone, killing Doug Perren in the process.

Rumanian Woods, 1898 -- The dead body of a gypsy girl lays stretched out on the ground next to a fire, while an elder gypsy woman chants the curse of restoration. Glowing beneath her is an Orb of Thesulah. While she chants the curse, Angelus flees through the woods, trying to escape the scene of the crime, for he is the one responsible for the girl's death. The elder woman completes the curse, and Angelus is stopped in his tracks. He falls to his knees, and his eyes glow as his soul returns to his body for the first time in over a century. A gypsy man steps out of the woods and explains to Angel that he is being punished for the countless murders he has committed.

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Sunnydale, Present -- Buffy and Willow show Giles a printout of the restoration curse. Giles claims that the curse would require a great knowledge of the black arts, and Willow feels that she's up to the challenge. While everyone talks of Angel's salvation, only Xander is upset, for he feels that Angel must pay for his murders with his life. Xander gets into an argument with Giles over Jenny's last wish before telling Buffy that she's willing to forget all about the murders in order to get her beloved Angel back. Elsewhere, Angel tells Spike the story of a demon named Acatlha. This demon possesses the power to literally swallow the Earth into Hell, but he was stopped by a knight centuries ago. His body turned to stone with the sword still embedded in it, then was concealed in the stone tomb and buried deep beneath the ground. With that, two vampires open the tomb, revealing the body of Acatlha inside. Only someone worthy can remove the sword from Acatlha's body, freeing him to reign terror on the world. Later that night, Buffy finds the claddagh ring that Angel gave to her before he lost his soul. She goes outside for a walk and encounters Kendra, who has returned to take care of another dark force in Sunnydale. At the library, Kendra shows them a valuable weapon that she brought with her. It is a sword that was blessed by the same knight who stopped Acatlha. If Angel succeeds in reviving the demon, it may be their only chance to stop it. Buffy asks Willow to perform the curse as soon as possible, but they need an Orb of Thesulah first. Luckily, Giles already has one in his office.

Manhattan, 1996 -- Angel stumbles through the streets of Manhattan, living like a bum ever since he regained his soul. He is approached by another demon named Whistler who says he too is on the good side. Whistler offers Angel a chance to pick himself up from this foul life and become someone important in the world. But first, Angel has to see something before he can make his decision.

Los Angeles, 1996 -- A car with windows painted black parks outside of Hemery High, and Angel rolls the window down just enough to see what he came there for: the Chosen One. He observes Buffy's first meeting with a Watcher, then follows her to the cemetery where she first learns the truth about vampires and her destiny in life. Angel also follows Buffy to her home, where her mother is upset because Buffy got home late. Buffy goes to the bathroom and listens to her parents arguing with each other. Having seen enough, Angel asks Whistler to help him to a better life, teach him to become somebody.

Sunnydale, Present -- A human sacrifice is brought before Angelus, who promptly feeds on his blood, making sure to spread some on the palm of his right hand. Angelus then approaches the body of Acatlha, reciting the incantations for the ritual of his revival. Angelus grabs the sword and pulls it with all his might, but he fails. Spike is amused at Angelus's failure, and Dru is very upset. Angelus then swears that they will turn to an old friend, and then succeed.

The next day, Buffy and the others take one of their final exams, unaware that a concealed vampire is walking down the hallway toward their classroom. The vampire steps into the room, and smoke begins to rise from her body as the rays of sunlight hit it. She warns Buffy that more will die if she does not meet Angel that night. As she finishes the message, her body disintegrates. Buffy tells Willow to perform the curse, leaving Kendra behind to stand guard. Buffy finds Angel at the cemetery, and they begin to fight. Meanwhile, a group of vampires invades the library during the restoration ritual. Back at the cemetery, Buffy realizes that her fight with Angel is merely a diversionary tactic, so she turns and runs towards the school as fast as she can. While

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Kendra battles one of the vampires, another one pushes a bookshelf over, crushing Willow underneath. Xander fights another one, but it brutally breaks his right arm before he can shake him off. After Kendra slays a vamp, she attacks another that has knocked out Giles. As they surround her, Cordelia escapes from the library, while Willow lays unconscious under the bookshelf. Drusilla then enters and takes on Kendra one-on-one. Kendra is no match for Dru, who defends all of her attacks before hypnotizing the Slayer into an immobile trance. Dru then slashes a cut in Kendra's neck with her nails. Kendra falls to the ground as blood pours out of her neck. Taking Giles with them, the vampires leave the library only moments before Buffy bursts into the school hallways. She finally makes it to the library, but it is too late. She runs over to Kendra's fallen body, but there's nothing she can do. Suddenly, the police arrive to see Buffy over the body of a dead woman. One of them aims a gun at Buffy, ordering her to freeze. Buffy's disastrous night has just gotten worse.

## 1.35 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Becoming, Part 2 [#34]

Two police officers rush into the library. From the looks of things, they believe that Buffy has just murdered Kendra. They take her outside, where Principal Snyder arrives with several more cops. Before one of them can cuff her, Buffy knocks the guy down and flees the scene. After disguising herself in a coat and black cap, Buffy goes to the hospital and runs into Xander, who is now wearing a cast on his right forearm. They go to Willow's room, where she lies motionless in a coma. Cordelia arrives, and Buffy learns that Giles was neither with her or in the hospital. Giles has been taken to the vampire's mansion hideout, where Angel hopes to force the necessary info concerning the ritual out of the Watcher. Meanwhile, Joyce learns from the police that her daughter is suspected of murder and that she's a fugitive from the law. Buffy goes to Giles apartment to see if he's there, but instead meets Whistler, who has been waiting inside. He tells Buffy that Angel was destined to stop Acathla, not revive him. However, Buffy's relationship with Angel changed all that. Buffy leaves before Whistler can tell her how to stop the demon. Outside, a patrolling officer recognizes Buffy and orders her to freeze. Suddenly, Spike arrives and beats the cop into unconsciousness. He wants Buffy's help in stopping Angel so he can have Drusilla back the way she used to be, in exchange for his leaving town with Dru and never returning. After some hesitation, Buffy decides to take him back to her house so they can plan their attack. They get there just as Joyce is pulling into their driveway. As Buffy tries to make up an excuse for Spike's presence, a vampire that has been spying on them attacks. Right in front of Joyce's eyes, Buffy stakes the vampire spy, turning him to dust. Realizing what she has to do, Buffy confesses to her mother that she is a vampire slayer.

At the hospital, Xander pleads to Willow for her to wake up. She finally snaps out of her coma just as Xander says that he loves her. The first word out of her mouth is Oz's name, who arrives to greet her back to consciousness. Meanwhile, Giles refuses to divulge the information that Angel needs to properly perform the ritual, so more torture ensues. Back at the Summers home, Buffy and Spike agree to work together, but only on the conditions that Dru can leave with Spike, and that Giles survives. After Spike leaves, Joyce begs her daughter to explain everything that's going on. Buffy tells her mum that there's no time to explain it all, which infuriates Joyce. Joyce doesn't want

her daughter to be in charge of saving the world, to which Buffy responds that she never wanted the duty in the first place. Joyce tries to restrain her daughter from leaving the house, but Buffy pushes her back against the kitchen counter. Joyce tells Buffy to never come back should she walk out the door, but Buffy leaves anyway.

At the hospital, Willow tells the others that she is going to try the curse again. Buffy returns to the library to retrieve the sword that Kendra brought. Principal Snyder finds her there and promptly expels her due to all the trouble she's been involved in. After Buffy leaves, Snyder calls someone to tell the Mayor that he has good news. Meanwhile, Drusilla tricks Giles by making herself look and sound like Jenny Calendar in his eyes. Giles says that Angel's blood is the key to the awakening ritual. Homeless and expelled, Buffy has only one path to follow now. She returns to Giles apartment and asks Whistler how to use the sword. He tells her that only Angel's blood can open and close the vortex to Hell. With one blow, both Angelus and the demon Acatlha would be sent back to Hell, and the vortex would be closed.

Xander catches up with Buffy on her way to the mansion. She tells him to concentrate on freeing Giles and escaping. Xander does not inform Buffy that Willow is attempting the curse again. Inside the mansion, Angel slices his hand and approaches the sword in Acatlha's chest. Suddenly, the ritual is interrupted by Buffy's arrival. Angel doesn't even notice Spike rising out of his wheelchair from behind. While Spike brutally beats Angel to the floor, Buffy takes one of the other vampires in the room. During this battle, Xander unties Giles and gets him safely outside. Spike doesn't get too many hits off before an enraged Drusilla jumps into the fray, tackling Spike. While they fight, Angel manages to get back up and run to Acatlha. Just as Buffy drives a stake through the vampire's heart, Angel grabs the sword with his bloody hand and finally pulls it out. Swords in hand, Buffy and Angel engage in a sword duel. Elsewhere, Willow, Cordy, and Oz perform the curse of restoration. Suddenly, Willow loses control of her actions and seemingly becomes possessed by some spirit. Cordy and Oz watch in fright as Willow performs the curse herself in perfect Latin. Spike subdues Drusilla and takes her with him as he escapes from the mansion in his car. After the long duel, Buffy finally backs Angel up against Acatlha. Just as she is about to deliver the final blow, Willow completes the curse, restoring Angel's soul to his body. Buffy lowers her sword as she realizes the change, and the two lovers are finally reunited. However, it is too late, for Acatlha is now awake. Buffy looks over Angel's shoulder and sees Acatlha's mouth creating a vortex to Hell. Angel has no idea what is going on, so all that Buffy can do is give her lover one last kiss before driving the sword through his stomach, thus releasing the blood needed to close the vortex and send the two demons back to Hell. Shocked, Angel reaches out towards Buffy with his right hand, but nothing can be done now. Buffy watches as the vortex closes around Angel, leaving the demon Acatlha as nothing more than a silent statue once again.

Buffy goes home and packs up her belongings without Joyce ever knowing she had returned. When Joyce enters the room, she finds a farewell letter from her daughter left on the bed. At Sunnydale High, nobody knows what happened to Buffy and Angel. Some believe that Buffy had to kill Angel before the curse was completed, while others believe that Angel has been restored and they were taking time off to be alone together. Unbeknownst to them, Buffy is standing far away by one of the trees, giving her school and her friends one last look before hopping on a bus. The bus heads out of Sunnydale, and Buffy faces an unknown future.

## 1.36 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Anne [#35]

Sunnydale Cemetery. Evening. A body once known as Andrew Hoelich rises from its grave, ready for a new life as a creature of the night. Standing in his way is not the Slayer, but rather her closest friends: Willow, Xander, and Oz. Unfortunately, without the powers that make Buffy special, the three friends are unable to kill the vampire before it can escape into the night. Afterwards, the group prepares themselves for the new school season, which begins the very next day. They also wonder if and when Buffy will return to Sunnydale after her unannounced absence since saving the world from the Acatlha threat. What they don't know is that Buffy is currently living alone in an apartment in downtown Los Angeles. Buffy's dreams are haunted by Angel, reminding of her of what she had to do in order to stop Acatlha.

The next morning, Willow learns that Oz flunked his senior year and needs to repeat it, Xander and Cordelia's anticipated reunion has no sparks whatsoever, and Giles gets the latest in a long line of leads concerning Buffy's possible location. Meanwhile, Buffy is working as a waitress in a diner, under the alias of Anne. During work, she serves a romantic couple of runaways. The girl's name is Lily, while the guy's is Rickie. They both have each other's name tattooed to their forearms. When Lily recognizes the waitress, Buffy denies any familiarity with the girl. At one point, Rickie says to Lily the exact same words that Buffy heard from Angel in one of her dreams. The next day, on the way to work, Buffy passes by an old homeless woman who repeatedly says, "I'm no one." Back in Sunnydale, Giles pays Joyce Summers a visit to inform her that his latest search turned up empty-handed. Joyce expresses her resentment toward Giles, blaming him for Buffy's distance from her own mother.

On her way home from work, Buffy runs into Lily again. Lily gets Buffy's attention by calling her by her real name, then reminds Buffy that she once went by the name of Chantarelle and was involved in a vampire-worshipping cult. Buffy explains that Anne is really her middle name. During their conversation, an old man rudely bumps the both of them aside as he walks towards the street. When asked if he's okay, the old man turns to them and says, "I'm no one." With that, he walks into the middle of the street, then stops in the path of an oncoming car. Buffy dashes into the street and pushes him aside just in time, but not before the car collides and sends her slamming into the pavement. A few locals offer to help her and call an ambulance, but Buffy quickly leaves the scene without even a limp. On the way, Buffy meets a relatively clean-cut man. His name is Ken, and he's handing out flyers for a shelter called the Family Home. Meanwhile, in the Bronze, Xander chats with Willow and Oz about their failure at vampire slaying. Seeing Cordelia enter the Bronze with a few of her friends, Xander hatches a plan to use her as bait.

The next day, Lily visits Buffy at work and tells her that Rickie's been missing for a while. Buffy reluctantly agrees to help, and they first visit the local blood bank where Lily and Rickie often donated in order to make some money. According to the doctor, Rickie hasn't been there in the last few days, so Buffy and Lily agree to split up and meet up later at Buffy's apartment. During a search in an abandoned building, Buffy finds a dead old man with a bottle of Drain Cleaner next to his head. Since the bottle is empty, the old man must have killed himself with it. However, that's not the most disturbing thing: Buffy notices a familiar tattoo on the man's forearm. It says "Lily",

which means that this dead old man was Rickie. Back at her apartment, Lily cannot believe the news. She blames Buffy for bringing along some evil from Sunnydale, causing her boyfriend's untimely death. Lily exits the apartment and meets Ken, who tells her that Rickie is alive and staying at the Family Home. Relieved, Lily follows Ken to the shelter. Determined to get to the bottom of things, Buffy breaks into the blood bank after closing hours and finds Rickie's personal file. Alarmed by the word "Candidate" stamped in it, Buffy questions the doctor, who has just arrived on the scene. Buffy gets the info that leads her to the Family Home, where she finds Lily alone with Ken in a room. Before Buffy can find out what's going on, Lily is pulled into the floor through a strange black pool. Buffy struggles with Ken before they both fall into the pool. On the other side of it, they crash down hard on the floor. While Buffy takes care of Lily, Ken removes his mask to reveal the face of a demon underneath. He calls the guards, and Buffy grabs Lily and tries to escape. As the guards give chase, Buffy and Lily run into an enormous factory room. Hundreds of missing runaways work slave labour, while the demonic guards watch them, whips in hand. Ken and the guards catch up to them. With a swift swing of his club, Ken knocks Buffy unconscious.

Back in Sunnydale, Xander, Willow, and Oz try to dust the vampire again, this time with Cordelia as bait. While everyone assumes their hiding positions, Xander and Cordelia argue over what they did or didn't do during the summer. Their fight is interrupted by a scream, for the vamp has snuck up behind Willow and attacked her first. Oz runs in to the rescue, but the vamp quickly knocks him to the ground. Xander tries to drive his stake into the vampire's chest, but they get their arms locked up, preventing Xander from thrusting the stake any further. Cordelia charges the vampire from behind, and all three of them fall to the ground. The vampire lands into the stake, and immediately explodes into dust. This causes Cordelia to fall into Xander's arms. They finally give in to their desires and kiss right then and there.

Buffy regains consciousness inside a prison cell. Lily, who's sitting inside the same cell, believes they're in Hell. Buffy denies this, but that becomes irrelevant as Ken explains their situation. Apparently, they are in some alternate dimension outside of Earth, and time passes differently here. According to Ken, one day on Earth equals one hundred years in this dimension. Buffy puts the pieces together and realizes that the disoriented old people she saw on the street must have been former slaves in this dimension, including Rickie. Buffy, Lily, and several other runaways are then led into a room. A demon guard tells them that they no longer have any individual identities. He then asks a boy to identify himself. When the boy responds with his own name, the guard beats him with a club. Lily's next, and her answer is "no one". A few more slaves respond in the same manner. The guard then asks Buffy. Instead of giving the expected answer, Buffy finally comes to terms with who she is and responds with her true identity, that of the Slayer. With that, Buffy proceeds to fight and subdue the guards in the room. After telling Lily to lead the others to the exit, Buffy runs out into the middle of the factory and battles an endless number of demon guards. One after the other, Buffy defeats them, until Ken grabs Lily and threatens to slice her throat with a knife for Buffy's disobedience. Surprisingly, Lily pushes Ken off the balcony while his back is turned, enabling Buffy to fight off the guards holding her and climb to safety. At the exit, they encounter a heavy gate which Buffy uses all of her strength to lift. Just as she's about to escape herself, Ken tackles her. As he does so, Buffy is knocked towards the outside of the gate, which comes crashing down on Ken's legs. Buffy then takes Ken's club and smashes it onto his skull. After Buffy, Lily, and the other runaways climb through the black pool, it seals itself.

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Deciding it's time to go back home, Buffy gives her apartment and her job to Lily. Buffy is confident that Lily can take care of herself from now on. Before Buffy leaves, Lily asks her if she can use Buffy's middle name, Anne, as her own. Buffy agrees and leaves. Back in Sunnydale, Buffy knocks on the door to her home. After Joyce opens it, they stand there, completely speechless. Finally, they embrace. For Giles and the rest of the Sunnydale, the Slayer has returned. For Joyce Summers, someone more important is finally home: her only daughter.

## 1.37 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Dead Man's Party [#36]

After unpacking the last of her belongings, Buffy stops by her mum's bedroom to announce that she's heading outside. Joyce hangs up a Nigerian mask that she got from a friend at her art gallery, then hesitantly gives her daughter permission to go find her friends. Later, in a dark alley, Buffy notices a shadowy figure roaming the alleys. Suspicious, she follows him and accidentally draws his attention by stepping on an aluminium can. The figure spins around and thrusts a stake at her, which Buffy easily blocks. As she grabs the stake out of the man's hands and turns it towards him, she realizes that it's Xander. Before either of them can say much, a vampire appears and attacks the both of them. During the struggle, Buffy hears Cordelia's voice on a walkie-talkie attached to Xander's waist. Soon enough, Cordy, Willow, and Oz arrive on the scene, all decked out with stakes and crosses. Buffy is surprised to see her friends work as a team to get the vampire off of Buffy. One by one, though, they are knocked to the ground by the powerful vampire. Finally, Buffy jumps in and finishes the job, reducing the vampire to a pile of dust. After Buffy greets her bewildered friends, they head over to Giles' apartment. The Watcher is emotionally overcome with joy from seeing his Slayer safe and sound, although he doesn't fully express it until he's alone in his kitchen. In the living room, Buffy avoids discussion topics relating to what she did over the summer. She then makes plans with Willow to meet somewhere the next afternoon.

The next day, Joyce and Buffy visit Principal Snyder in his office. Despite Joyce's protests, Snyder refuses to readmit Buffy back into the school. Afterwards, Joyce drops Buffy off at a coffee shop where she plans to meet Willow. However, Willow never shows up. Buffy heads home, and as she heads towards her front door, a woman steps out. She introduces herself as Pat, a friend of Joyce's at the book club. Inside, Joyce tells Buffy that she invited Giles and her friends over to dinner the following evening. Buffy goes into the basement to get their fancy company plates. There, she finds a stray cat that has been dead for a while. Buffy and Joyce bury it outside. Later that night, after both Buffy and Joyce have fallen asleep, the eyeholes of the mask in Joyce's bedroom begin to glow. As they do so, the stray cat works its way out of the ground as if it had never died.

Overnight, Buffy dreams that she is walking around the Sunnydale High campus. Nobody else is there, except for Angel. She then wakes up and heads to the kitchen. The stray cat re-enters the Summers home, shocking both Buffy and Joyce. Giles arrives shortly with a cage to capture the cat and bring it back to the library for further study. After finding the cat in Joyce's bedroom, he notices the Nigerian mask on her wall. He then informs Buffy that she is no

longer allowed on school grounds. At the library, Giles studies his demonology text while the rest of the Slayerettes make plans for the dinner that evening. By the end of their discussion, the intimate dinner has become a full-blown party, complete with pot luck snacks and Oz's band. During the discussion, Giles carelessly flips past a page without looking at it. On this page is a picture of the same mask hanging in Joyce's bedroom.

That evening, Pat comes over to visit Joyce. Merely moments after Buffy shuts the door, Oz's band, *Dingoes Ate My Baby*, arrives. Buffy was not notified in advance that they had planned a huge party, but that's exactly what she gets before long. After wading through dozens of people she's never even met before, Buffy finds Willow near the band. Buffy pulls her over to a quieter area and asks Willow if she's been avoiding her. Willow denies this, then immediately leaves Buffy alone and heads back to where the band is playing. On her way upstairs, Buffy briefly talks to Xander and Cordelia, who are lost in their own world of nonstop smoochies. Buffy then stops outside the kitchen, where Joyce and Pat are talking about having Buffy back home. Buffy overhears her mum talking about how much more difficult it is now that Buffy's home. Unable to take much more animosity from her closest friends and family, Buffy goes up to her bedroom and starts packing her bag again. Meanwhile, Giles finally finds what he's been looking for in his texts: the picture of the Nigerian mask. Horrified by what he reads, he calls the Summers home, but one of the partygoers answers the phone, and the music is too loud for him to fully understand what Giles is saying. Giles gives up and drives towards Buffy's home. On the way, he accidentally hits a man in the middle of the road. Upon getting out and inspecting the body, Giles realizes that this man died long before he ever wandered onto the road. The corpse grabs Giles and shoves him against the car. Giles watches in horror as he sees several more zombies appearing from the shadows. All over town, corpses arise from crime scenes, hospital beds, and even their graves, all with one destination in mind: the Summers household. Giles finally fends off the zombies and gets back in his car.

Willow finds Buffy packing her bag in her bedroom. Not long after they argue over Buffy's decision to run away, Joyce enters the bedroom. Her reaction to seeing Buffy's packed bag is much more heated. Buffy tries to get out of the house, but Joyce stops her right in the middle of the main floor. As everybody gathers around and watches, Joyce drops all her restraints and angrily chews out Buffy for what she did (and didn't do) over the summer. Buffy tries to defend herself, but Xander joins in and offers his own cold remarks. Just as it seems that everybody is against Buffy and her whole world is caving in, the zombies invade the household. They quickly and brutally attack and kill several of the guests, while everybody else runs for their lives. Many try to keep the doors and windows blocked off, while others just panic in general. One of the zombies grabs Pat and drags her off down a hallway. While Buffy, Joyce, Xander, and Willow run upstairs, Oz and Cordelia hide in a downstairs closet. Upstairs, Joyce finds Pat lying flat on the floor. They help her to her feet and into Joyce's bedroom. While the group tries to keep the zombies from forcing the door open, Willow checks Pat's pulse and realizes that she's already dead.

Several moments later, Oz and Cordelia step out of the closet and notice that all of the zombies are now upstairs. They run into Giles, who has just arrived. He explains that the mask contains the power of the zombie demon named Ovu Mobani, or Evil Eye. All the zombies are after it, and whoever puts it on will become the demon. Upstairs, nobody notices Pat as she suddenly gets up. Surprised to see that her friend is alive, Joyce runs over, only to be

knocked to the floor by the zombie Pat. As Joyce and Xander look on, Pat puts the mask on, which immediately moulds to her face. Pat begins to speak, except it isn't her voice anymore. It is the voice of the demon Ovu Mobani, and the zombies that were previously trying to get into the room are now paralysed with fear by Mobani's presence. Buffy tries to attack the demon, but it turns its head and flashes a brilliantly white light which stuns Buffy. Unable to move, Buffy takes the powerful blow of the demon hard. The demon then stuns Willow and moves in for the kill, but not before Buffy recovers and pushes Mobani through the second story window, along with herself. After they crash onto her backyard, Buffy tries to avoid the demon's gaze by covering her eyes. Giles tells Oz to warn Buffy that attacking its eyes is the only way to defeat Mobani. Oz runs out and immediately falls victim to Mobani's stun flash. Buffy uses this moment to her advantage and thrusts a shovel directly into the demon's eyes. It cries out in horror, then vanishes, along with all of the other zombies. After everybody regroups inside, nobody can bring themselves to spite Buffy any longer, as she finally embraces Willow after so long.

The next day, Giles visits Principal Snyder's office and threatens to contact state officials if Buffy isn't readmitted. When Snyder doesn't believe his threat, Giles applies a little brute force to get his message across. Later, Buffy and Willow meet at the coffee shop. Willow discusses her experiments with witchcraft. They understand what each other has been feeling during the past few months, and like the true friends that they are, accept it.

## 1.38 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Faith, Hope & Trick [#37]

A limo pulls into the drive-thru at Sunnydale's Happy Burger restaurant. Inside the limo are not your ordinary customers, but rather vampires in search of the Slayer. One of them has cloven hooves in place of hands. On the way to their new hideout, one the vamps, Mr. Trick, picks up a diet soda... and the drive-thru employee himself. Later that night, Buffy dreams that she is dancing with Angel in the Bronze. During their dance, Buffy's claddagh ring slips off her finger and falls to the floor. Angel picks it up and clutches it in his hand, so tightly that blood starts to pour from his fist. As Buffy watches in horror, more blood seeps from Angel's chest in the exact same spot that she drive the sword through months ago.

The next morning, Principal Snyder finally re-admits Buffy into Sunnydale High, due to orders from the school board itself. Buffy needs to follow a few conditions, one of which being her ability to pass make-up exams for all the classes she missed last school year. A student again, Buffy visits the library with Willow, where they find a variety of spell ingredients on the counter. Giles tells Buffy that he needs to perform a binding spell on Acatla to make sure the demon remains dormant. In order for the spell to work, Giles needs to know the exact details of how Buffy defeated Acatla and Angel. Buffy lays out the basics, leaving out the part where Angel's soul was restored. Later that night at the Bronze, Buffy turns down a dance offer from Scott Hope, a fellow student who's had his eyes on Buffy for a while. Cordelia points out an interesting couple on the dance floor.

As Buffy watches them dance, she begins to suspect that the guy may be a vampire on the prowl. As they head out of the Bronze, Buffy and her friends follow them out. Sure enough, the guy is a vampire. What does take the group

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by surprise is the girl's handling of the situation. Instead of screaming and trying to run for her life, the girl proceeds to beat the crap out of the vampire, stopping momentarily to greet Buffy by name and introduce herself as Faith. This new Slayer then takes the stake out of Buffy's hand and finishes off the vamp before heading back inside. While the group listens to Faith's wild stories, Cordelia finally puts the pieces together and realizes that Faith was called forth in response to Kendra's death. Faith is unlike Buffy, but she's different than Kendra also. Kendra was always uptight and on the defensive, while Faith is much looser and a little wild. During their conversation, Faith informs Buffy that her Watcher is currently at an annual retreat. Unaware of this Watchers' retreat, Buffy takes Faith to the library to meet Giles, who apparently has never been invited to any of the retreats. Buffy invites Faith to dinner at her place. While Buffy takes one of her make-up exams, Xander and Willow give Faith a tour of their school, pointing out all the hot spots where they brushed with death. Elsewhere, in an abandoned building, Mr. Trick explains to Kakistos how they could stay in Sunnydale and still operate around the globe, thanks to the internet. Kakistos has no interest in these matters. His only goal is to kill Faith, who caused the huge scar running over his right eye.

At the Summers home, Joyce is as impressed with Faith as the rest of Buffy's friends are, if not more so. Buffy excuses herself from the dining table to talk with her mum in the kitchen. Joyce suggests to Buffy that Faith could take over her duties as the Slayer, but Buffy reminds her that it's her job until she dies. Joyce is not happy to hear this, but she's slowly learning to accept it. After dinner, Buffy and Faith patrol for vampires. During their patrol, they get into an argument over Buffy's attitude towards Faith and the apparent fact that she's holding something in. Suddenly, several vampires attack the two Slayers. During the fight, Faith loses control on one vampire and repeatedly pummels it without even thinking of finishing the job with a stake. This leaves Buffy at the mercy of the other two vampires, who have her pinned to the ground. As one of them moves in for the kill, he mentions a name: Kakistos. Buffy succeeds in breaking their hold and killing one of them, while the other gets away. She then pulls Faith off of the brutally beaten vampire and dusts it with her stake. It seems Buffy isn't the only one with personal problems.

Buffy tells Giles about Faith's actions the next morning at school. She also tells Giles what the vampire said to her, and Giles immediately recognizes the name Kakistos. It's Greek for "the worst of the worst". Kakistos is a vampire who is so old that his hands have turned into cloven hooves. While Giles gets on the phone to contact Faith's Watcher at the retreat, Buffy runs into Scott in the hallway. He makes one last stab at trying to get Buffy out on a date. Charmed by his efforts, Buffy finally accepts. Scott then hands Buffy a box, saying it's a gift to represent their friendship. Buffy opens it and finds a claddagh ring inside, exactly like the one Angel gave to her that night on the docks. Overcome with emotion, Buffy drops the ring. As it hits the floor in the exact same fashion that it did in her dream, Buffy backs out of her date with Scott. Giles arrives and tries to help her, but Buffy insists she's okay. Giles then reveals that Faith's Watcher is not at the retreat -- Faith's Watcher is dead.

Buffy tracks down Faith to a sleazy motel. Buffy informs her that Kakistos is in town, which causes a look of fear and dread to wash over Faith's face. She immediately starts packing and starts to head out. Buffy stops her by mentioning her Watcher, who was killed by Kakistos. They hear a knock on the door, and Faith opens it. They are greeted by Kakistos, Mr. Trick, and a few

of their cohort vampires. Buffy shuts the door and escapes out the back with Faith. The vampires chase them into a building. Seemingly safe for now, Faith explains that she witnessed Kakistos murdering her Watcher. Just then, Faith notices a couple of dead bodies on the floor. Buffy realizes that they didn't escape the vampires, but were instead driven into the building on purpose. As the vampires start to converge on them, Buffy and Faith run into the middle of the floor. Buffy takes on several vampires while Faith goes one-on-one with Kakistos. Paralysed with fear, Faith can't fight back while Kakistos grabs her by the neck and repeatedly strikes her in the face. Buffy runs over to help, while Mr. Trick and a female vampire decide to abandon their master and head out into town on their own. Kakistos' body is so strong that Buffy's stake has no effect on him. Faith takes a cue from Kakistos' mockery and picks up a huge pointed beam. Before Kakistos can realize what she's doing, Faith drives it straight through his heart, causing Kakistos to crumble into dust.

The next day, the Watcher's council approves Giles' request to watch over both Buffy and Faith until a new Watcher can be assigned to her. Unable to keep her secret any longer, Buffy tells Giles and Willow the whole truth about what happened that night in the mansion. She explains that Willow's attempt at the restoration spell worked, and Angel was cured before Buffy drove the sword through him and sent him to Hell. After she heads out, Giles tells Willow that there never was a binding spell to perform on Acatla. He made the whole thing up so that Buffy would finally vent out whatever's been eating at her from the inside all this time. In the hallway, Buffy finds Scott and revives their plans for their weekend date.

Later that night, Buffy revisits the mansion where Angel, Spike, and Dru once stayed. Back at the scene where Buffy kissed Angel for the last time, she places the claddagh ring on the floor and bids her final farewell to Angel. After she leaves, the floor of the mansion begins to rumble. A bright light appears in the air, and the naked body of a man falls out from it and onto the floor. He lies there, afraid and shivering. It's Angel, who has returned from Hell... somehow.

## 1.39 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Beauty And The Beasts [#38]

It's Oz's time of the month, which means he has to spend three consecutive nights locked in the book cage of the library while someone watches over him. After Xander comes in to relieve Willow of her post, he lies down on the table and falls asleep. At the cemetery, Buffy patrols for vampires with Faith. Neither of them are close enough to the woods to detect a chase, which ends brutally for a boy named Jeff Orkin.

The next morning, Buffy, Willow, and Oz meet up with Scott and two of his friends: Pete and Debbie. Oz offers his old biology notes to Debbie, so they plan to meet up later. Buffy then heads off for her required therapy appointment with the counsellor while Willow and Oz go to the library. To both Oz and Willow's dismay, Giles and Xander inform them of the murder that occurred the previous night. The fact that Xander slept through most of the night and the window inside the caged area is open does not bode well for Oz. Meanwhile, Buffy meets her counsellor, Mr. Platt. While she's hesitant to discuss the full details of her reasons for running away, Buffy does come to respect Mr. Platt's helpful manner. After school, Buffy meets the others in

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the library and learns that Oz may have killed someone while he was a werewolf. Giles tells Willow, Xander, and Cordelia to go to the morgue and inspect Jeff's corpse, while Buffy must be on the look-out for the killer if it isn't Oz. He'll have Faith watch over Oz that night. At the morgue, Willow collects evidence which clearly indicates that Jeff was mauled by a savage animal. She then passes out due to the realization that Oz is the most likely suspect. Outside, Buffy encounters someone running wild through the woods. To her surprise, that someone is Angel. However, he's not exactly in his right mind, and he immediately attacks Buffy. They fight for a while before Buffy finally knocks him out. She then takes him to Spike and Dru's mansion, where she uses some of Dru's old chains to lock Angel up and keep him from escaping out into the woods. Unable to communicate with Angel, Buffy notices the burnt pattern on the floor that indicates the spot where Angel landed at the end of his return trip from Hell. Unable to spend the rest of the night at home, Buffy goes to the library and takes over for Faith.

Giles finds Buffy asleep in one of the library chairs the next morning. He notices the books she's been reading, which deal with demon dimensions and Acatlha. After Buffy wakes up, she asks Giles if Angel could ever return from Hell, and if so, what would he be like. Buffy would rather not tell Giles right away that she found Angel. While Giles doubts the possibility of Angel's return, he goes on to say that because time moves much faster in the other dimension, Angel would have been trapped there for an incredibly long time. After so many years of torture, he couldn't possibly be the same person mentally that he once was. Later, at lunchtime, Buffy joins Scott, Pete, and Debbie at their table. Unable to straighten out her feelings, Buffy leaves shortly and goes to the mansion. As soon as she rests a hand on Angel's shoulder, he goes berserk. Shaken by how much he's changed, Buffy heads back to Sunnydale High. Inside, Buffy goes to Mr. Platt's office and confesses that she truly needs help with all that's going on in her life. Unfortunately, she won't get any help from Mr. Platt, whom she soon discovers has been murdered, most likely by the same attacker that killed Jeff Orkin. After school, Pete pulls Debbie into the maintenance room to make out for a while. Inside, he notices that a jar once containing a glowing green formula is now virtually empty. Debbie tries to deny doing anything with it, but she soon admits that she got rid of it in order to help Pete get better. However, Pete convulses and transforms into a hideous, monstrous form of himself, proving to Debbie that he doesn't need the formula anymore. During this phase, Pete strikes Debbie in the face, knocking her to the ground. Pete then regains control of himself and changes back to his normal self before joining Debbie on the floor. Despite being struck by her boyfriend turned monster, Debbie has no problem excusing Pete's actions. Afterwards, Debbie meets Oz by the fountain to get his biology notes. Noticing the bruise on her eye, Oz stops Debbie from leaving right away by lightly grabbing her shoulder and asking if she's okay. From a distance, Pete watches this whole conversation.

With evidence indicating that Mr. Platt was killed during the day, Oz is off the hook. In the library, the group draws a connection between the two victims and Debbie. Oz tells the others about Debbie's bruised eye, which doesn't quite follow with the suddenness of Mr. Platt's death. This leads them to suspect Pete, both for the two murders and for striking Debbie. While Oz locks himself in the cage for the third and final night of the month, Buffy and Willow confront Debbie. Unfortunately, Debbie refuses to help them stop Pete. During the conversation, Angel breaks his chains free of the mansion wall and escapes. Buffy and Willow have no idea that Pete is in the library at that very moment, ready to kill Oz for touching Debbie. Pete changes into his monster form and rips the door off the cage.

After throwing Oz around the library for a little while, the sun finally sets and the moon shines, allowing Oz to turn the tables on Pete. In his werewolf form, Oz is an even match for Pete's ferocity. The sounds of their battle alerts the others to the library. Buffy tries to knock them out with the dart gun, but shoots Giles instead when Debbie pushes the gun off to the side just as Buffy pulls the trigger. While the tranquillizer dart takes Giles out of the action, Oz and Pete break apart and escape into the school hallways. Willow and Faith take down Oz with the dart gun. Buffy chases Pete to the maintenance room, where she finds Debbie dead on the floor, murdered by Pete. Another fight ensues. Just as it appears that Buffy's about to lose the fight, Angel arrives and kills Pete. To Buffy's surprise, Angel manages to say her name before falling to his knees and embracing her.

The next day, Buffy can't find the words to console Scott, who lost two of his best friends without ever knowing the truth about what really happened.

Later that night, Buffy watches Angel as he sleeps on the floor of the mansion. He constantly flinches and trembles, apparently suffering from nightmares of his time in Hell.

## 1.40 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Homecoming [#39]

With Homecoming approaching, Cordelia plans to start her campaign for the title of Homecoming queen, while the rest of the gang debates on their mode of transportation to the dance. Buffy, however, is still distracted by Angel's recent return, so she takes off for the mansion shortly after Scott asks her to the dance. At the mansion, Buffy assures Angel that nobody else knows that he's back. To Angel's dismay, Buffy also tells him that she's currently seeing another guy. Unfortunately, that statement doesn't hold true for much longer, for Scott dumps Buffy the very next morning. He explains that the down and depressed Buffy he knows now is not the same Buffy he knew before they started dating. After Scott leaves, Buffy wanders around outside of the school alone... and completely unaware of the two German men who are watching her from inside a van. Using state-of-the-art equipment, they transmit their visual to a lavish mansion, where an old man receives the signal and shows the image of Buffy to his boss: Mr. Trick.

At City Hall, Mayor Richard Wilkins III learns from his deputy mayor that two German brothers with impressive criminal records have recently been spotted in Sunnydale. Their names are Frederick and Hans Gruenshtahler, and they're the same two men who have been spying on Buffy. The Mayor isn't too worried about this. In fact, he's more concerned with cleanliness and personal hygiene, which he displays by closely inspecting his deputy mayor's hands. Meanwhile, at Sunnydale High, the senior class gets its pictures taken in the lounge for their fourth and final high school yearbook. Buffy's a no-show, so Cordelia heads to the library to tell her about the photo session. Before she can enter the library, Cordy is distracted by her Homecoming queen campaign priorities and completely forgets to inform Buffy. Inside the library, Buffy and Faith plan to attend the dance together since Scott is no longer in the picture.

The next day, Buffy asks one of her favourite teachers from the previous school year, Ms. Moran, to write her a recommendation to give to Principal Snyder. Buffy needs the recommendation to fulfil one of the conditions set by

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Snyder for her readmittance. However, Ms. Moran can't even remember Buffy's name, let alone anything about her to merit a written recommendation. Buffy's woes increase at lunch when she learns from Xander and the others that she missed the yearbook photo session. Upset with Cordy's irresponsibility, Buffy approaches the Homecoming queen candidate and speaks her mind. Naturally, Cordy retaliates with her own special brand of verbal abuse. This motivates Buffy to compete with Cordy and run for Homecoming queen herself. Later that night, Mr. Trick assembles a promising group of hunters at his mansion for an event called Slayerfest '98. Included in this group of hunters: Frawley, a human hunter with a rifle and a set of bear traps; Lyle and Candy Gorch, two recently-married vampires; Frederick and Hans Gruenshtahler, the German brothers who have been tracking Buffy's every move; and Kulak, a yellow-skinned demon who keeps jagged blades inside his forearms. Mr. Trick hopes this Slayerfest will see the end of both Buffy and Faith. Meanwhile, at the Rosenberg residence, Xander helps Willow pick out a dress for the dance while he tries on the tuxedo he'll be wearing. Initially, they discuss their relationships with Cordelia and Oz. However, after Willow puts on her best dress and Xander completes his attire, the only thing on their minds is each other. While Xander gives Willow a brief lesson on dancing, the two best friends lose themselves in the moment and share a kiss. That moment is quickly interrupted when they both realize what they've done, both to themselves and their significant others.

The next morning, Buffy learns that she'll be campaigning alone, since all of her friends have already committed to helping Cordy. Buffy and Cordy kick their Homecoming queen campaigns into full gear, hoping to outdo each other in the race for the title. While Buffy convinces Willow to give her a little help, Frederick and Hans listen in on their conversation. They pay particular attention to Buffy's announcement that the limo will pick up Faith first, Buffy second, and the rest of the group afterwards. Later in the day, Buffy learns that Cordy has been paying some of the students money to get their votes. This leads to another argument between the two candidates, only this one ends on a much harsher note. Distraught, Willow tells Xander that their brief tryst must be partly responsible for the current feud between Buffy and Cordelia. Eventually, Xander and Willow's conversation turns to the bigger problem at hand: what are they themselves going to do now. Later that night, the limo stops at the Summers home to pick up Buffy as planned. Buffy is surprised to find Cordy inside instead of Faith. According to a note written by the gang, Buffy and Cordy will be taking the limo to the dance alone so that they may work out their differences before the crowning of the Homecoming queen. Included with the note are a couple of corsages. The limo's destination is not the dance, however, but rather the nearby woods. Buffy and Cordy step out of the limo and notice a monitor and VCR set up on a table, along with a sign that informs them to play the tape. Buffy and Cordy watch a recording of Mr. Trick, who welcomes Buffy and Faith to Slayerfest '98. Apparently, they expected Faith to be in Cordy's place. Before Cordy can clear up the confusion, the monitor explodes, and the hunt begins. The first hunter they run into is Frawley, who Buffy immobilizes by knocking him into one of his own traps. Unable to free his leg, Frawley informs Buffy and Cordy of the rest of the hunter group. While Buffy and Cordy take refuge inside a cabin, Xander and Willow find themselves guilty and ashamed at the dance, even after Giles commends them on their effort to resolve the feud between Buffy and Cordy. In the cabin, Cordy finds a telephone which Buffy uses to call Giles at the library. Buffy explains to Cordy that she's running for Homecoming queen because she wants a high school memory that doesn't involve her job as the Slayer. Suddenly, Kulak bursts into the cabin and attacks Buffy. During their battle, Frederick and Hans approach the cabin.

They are being navigated by the old man, who is tracking Buffy and Cordy with his computer system back at the mansion. The German brothers fire an explosive device into the cabin, which causes Buffy to stop her battle with Kulak and escape with Cordy. Kulak fails in his attempt to get out of the cabin, and he is killed in the explosion. Buffy and Cordy get up from the ground and head back to the library, unaware that Lyle and Candy Gorch have knocked out Giles and are waiting for them to arrive.

While Buffy and Cordy head to the library, a pair of police officers arrive at Mr. Trick's mansion and escort him away, against his will. At the library, Buffy fights with Candy Gorch before dusting her. Enraged, Lyle moves in to attack, but Cordy stops him short and launches into an impressive speech that scares Lyle into taking off. After Giles regains consciousness, he points out that he wasn't aware of the group buying corsages for Buffy and Cordy. Buffy notices small electronic devices in the corsages, which the old man must have been using to track their movements. They hear the German brothers in the hallway, so Buffy binds the bugs together with a bundle of wet toilet paper. After leading one of the brothers into a classroom, she throws the mass of toilet paper onto his back. The old man gives the other brother the coordinates, and both Frederick and Hans proceed to shoot each other dead. Meanwhile, the two police officers bring Mr. Trick to City Hall, where Mayor Wilkins introduces himself. He reveals that he's quite aware that Mr. Trick is a vampire, and he wants his help in eliminating the "rebellious element" from Sunnydale. Mr. Trick realizes that the Mayor is referring to the Slayers. At the dance, Buffy and Cordy finally arrive, only to learn that neither of them is the new Homecoming queen, for the other two candidates win the election in a tie.

## 1.41 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Band Candy [#40]

Buffy's S.A.T. is coming up, so Giles helps her study for it at the cemetery while waiting for any vampires to rise from their graves. At City Hall, Mayor Wilkins enlists Mr. Trick's aid for an upcoming tribute to a demon. Mr. Trick just so happens to know a man who can help them.

The next morning, Principal Snyder enlists students to sell candy in order to raise money for Sunnydale High's marching band, and Buffy and the gang are at the top of Snyder's recruitment list. After Buffy convinces her mother to buy some candy, she revives their long-standing debate over whether or not she can get a license and start driving. Joyce remains uncomfortable with the notion of her daughter behind a steering wheel. Buffy then heads off for the library, telling her mother that she has some more training to do with Giles. Joyce is not pleased with how much time Buffy has to spend working with Giles. At the library, Buffy trains briefly with Giles before leaving early, explaining to him that her mum wants her home early. Buffy then visits Angel at the mansion, bringing along a container of blood from the butcher shop. When Buffy finally goes home, she is surprised to find both her mum and her Watcher waiting for her in the foyer. They both have figured out that Buffy lied to them in order to go someplace else, although Joyce suspects that place was the Bronze. Unhappy with the way she's being treated, Buffy expresses how she can't fulfil both of their demands for the amount of time they want to spend with her. After Buffy goes to her room, Giles and Joyce relax on the couch, curiously

eating one candy bar after another. Elsewhere, these same candy bars are being packaged in a factory. Overlooking the whole process is none other than Giles' old rival, Ethan Rayne.

Buffy, Cordy, Xander, Willow, and several other students sit in study hall on Friday, waiting for their supervisor to arrive. The staff member assigned to study hall this day happens to be Giles, who is uncharacteristically late. While the students wait, Xander and Willow engage in a forbidden game of footsie under their table, apparently still hung up over each other after their kiss on Homecoming week. Principal Snyder talks one of the teacher, Ms. Barton, into filling in for Giles. Buffy is both surprised and dismayed to learn that Giles never showed up, but she and the rest of the students are even more surprised when Ms. Barton speaks to them loosely and freely, going so far as to refer to their principal as "Commandant Snyder". After school, Buffy goes to Giles' apartment to find out where he was, but that soon becomes irrelevant when she notices that her mother is there as well. Giles explains that he and Joyce have been working out a schedule to make it easier for Buffy to spend enough time with the both of them. Joyce then stuns her daughter by handing her the keys to her jeep, telling Buffy to drive herself home. After Buffy grabs the keys and leaves, Giles lights up a cigarette, dropping the charade that he and Joyce were putting on for Buffy when she arrived just now. Not one to pass up on an opportunity like this, Buffy picks up Willow in the jeep and drives off to the Bronze, displaying a horrific driving ability along the way. At the Bronze, Buffy and Willow immediately notice the vast number of adults present, which is unusual for any given night at the Bronze. Even stranger is that all of the adults are acting like rowdy teenagers, including Principal Snyder, who acts like he's just one of the Scooby Gang. While Buffy and Willow try to decipher this phenomenon, Giles and Joyce drink, smoke, and listen to old LP's before heading out into town. Giles and Joyce stroll by the store windows, one of which showcases a coat that catches Joyce's eye. Giles breaks into the window and steals the coat for the new "girl" in his life. A cop tries to stop them, but Giles makes short work of the cop and takes his gun before leaving the scene with Joyce. Back at the Bronze, Buffy decides that they need to get out and find some answers. As Buffy, Willow, and Oz leave the Bronze and get into the jeep, Snyder follows them into the car. Since time is definitely an issue, Buffy lets him tag along. Meanwhile, adults all over town are acting like teenagers, just like the people at the Bronze. Two guys even get into a drag race, and one of them smashes into Buffy's jeep. After everyone gets out of the car, one man runs by and steals Snyder's candy bar. Buffy realizes that there must be something wrong with the candy. Buffy instructs Willow and Oz to get Xander and Cordelia and head to the library, while she and Snyder drive to the candy bar factory.

Buffy and Snyder arrive at the factory, where a huge mob of adults are gathered around the entrance to get more candy bars. On her way to the entrance, Buffy is distracted by the sight of Giles kissing Joyce right in front of her eyes. Unable to deal with them at this moment, Buffy knocks out the workers and enters the factory, with Giles, Joyce, and Snyder following closely behind. Inside, Buffy finds Ethan, who wastes no time in running away. He tries to lose them in the maze of candy bar boxes, but Buffy eventually finds him. Back at the library, the rest of the gang tries to find some useful information, but they can't do much without a good lead. Buffy learns from Ethan that his job was mainly to divert the adults from the main objective, which is to pay tribute to a demon named Lurconis. Oz and Willow discover that Lurconis feeds on babies. Unbeknownst to any of them, a group of vampires walk into the hospital nursery and steal four of the infants there. Buffy and the others are too late in getting to the hospital. However, Giles is able to

recall that Lurconis means "glutton", and that they should be able to find him in the sewers. They go down into the sewer tunnels and find the babies, along with Mr. Trick, the other four vampires, and the Mayor. As soon as Buffy and Giles arrive, Mayor Wilkinson immediately flees the scene. While Buffy fights the vampires, Giles and Joyce move the babies out of harm's way. During the battle, Buffy throws one of the vampires into a large pool. A large rumbling soon follows, and Lurconis, a huge serpentine creature, emerges from an opening next to the pool and devours the hapless vampire. Mr. Trick challenges the Slayer to a fight, but her Watcher intervenes and attempts to take on the vampire. Mr. Trick easily tosses Giles into the pool and escapes. With Lurconis coming back for seconds, Buffy detaches a fuel line and ignites the open end on one of the torches that the vampires set up, creating a giant blowtorch. As Lurconis emerges from the opening once again, Buffy roasts the demon, sending it back into its dwelling. Afterwards, Mayor Wilkinson expresses his disappointment in Mr. Trick's failure, warning him not to make the same mistakes again.

The following Monday morning, all the adults in Sunnydale are back to normal. Buffy laments to Giles after school about the disaster that was her S.A.T. They meet up with Joyce by the jeep, which is still wrecked. Buffy is relieved that she was able to stop Giles and Joyce before they went a little too far with their carefree romance... or so she believes.

## 1.42 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Revelations [#41]

After *Dingoes Ate My Baby* finishes its set during a particularly crowded night at the Bronze, Oz joins Willow, Xander, and Cordelia at their table. Hoping to divert attention away from her and Xander's uneasiness around each other, Willow brings up the topic of Buffy acting differently as of late. Cordy suggests that Buffy might have found a new man. Buffy stops by briefly before heading off with Faith towards the cemetery for a rendezvous with Giles. In no time, Buffy and Faith are battling two newly-risen vampires while their Watcher observes. After successfully vanquishing the vampires, a woman arrives on the scene. She criticizes Buffy and Faith's performance, then identifies herself as Mrs. Gwendolyn Post -- Faith's new Watcher.

Upon returning to the library, Gwendolyn Post informs Giles, Buffy, and Faith that she has been sent by the Watchers' Council to serve as Faith's Watcher, as well as report back to the Council about the situation in Sunnydale with Giles and Buffy. In addition, Gwendolyn has information regarding a demon named Lagos, who has come to Sunnydale in search of a deadly weapon called the Glove of Myhnegon. It's apparent from the start that Gwendolyn doesn't have a great deal of respect for Giles' abilities, as she mocks both his resources and his efficiency. After Faith leaves with her newly appointed Watcher, Buffy goes to the mansion for her own training session with Angel. In the heat of the moment, they nearly kiss before Buffy pulls back at the last second. As she leaves, Buffy casually mentions Lagos' name, which brings a look of concern to Angel's face.

Back at the library, Giles' frustration steadily grows due to his difficulty in finding any relevant information on Lagos. He vents that frustration on Xander, demanding that he either help with the research or leave. Xander joins an exhausted Willow in the search through the books, and they settle down



behind one of the stacks. One thing leads to another, and Willow is soon madly kissing Xander. Completely lost in their passion, neither of them realizes that Giles is merely a few feet away. His voice breaks them out of their spell and brings them to their feet. Luckily, the librarian is too focused on the book in his hands to notice what Willow and Xander were doing. Giles tells them that he discovered the possible location of the Glove of Myhnegon: inside the Von Hauptman family crypt in Restfield Cemetery. Xander immediately volunteers to go to the cemetery and check out the crypt. Meanwhile, Buffy and Faith decide to call it a night and postpone the rest of their patrol through the numerous cemeteries of Sunnydale. While Buffy heads home to sleep, Faith passes through Shady Hill Cemetery, where she finds the demon Lagos rummaging through a tomb. Faith engages the demon, but she quickly ends up on her back with the wind knocked out of her. She can only watch as Lagos gives up his search through the tomb and walks away. Finding the glove is the only thing on Lagos' mind. Over at Restfield Cemetery, Xander arrives at the Von Hauptman crypt just in time to see somebody walking out of the entrance. To his surprise, Xander recognizes the person as Angel, who is carrying a wrapped object in his hands. Without being noticed, Xander follows Angel back to the Crawford Street mansion and witnesses yet another surprise through the window: Buffy, with her arms wrapped around Angel... kissing him. After Xander leaves, Buffy and Angel break their kiss and regain control of themselves. Angel brings Buffy over to the object which he took from the crypt, then unwraps it to reveal the Glove of Myhnegon. Angel stops Buffy from touching it, warning her that the glove cannot be removed once you put it on. At Giles' apartment, Gwendolyn Post relaxes while Giles locates an illustration of the Glove of Myhnegon in one of his books.

As they take a tea break, Xander bursts in with an urgent announcement concerning Buffy for Giles' ears only.

Buffy enters the library the next morning with good news about the glove, only to find Giles and all of her friends sitting around the table with serious looks on their faces. After she sits down, Giles tells her that her secret about Angel is officially out in the open. Buffy tries to defend her stance, emphasizing the fact that Angel is no longer the uncontrollable murderer that he became after his fateful "moment of happiness". However, her friends refuse to accept Buffy's excuses, especially Xander. Fed up with his accusations, Buffy grabs Xander by the arm and questions his motives for wanting Angel dead. Giles stops the debate and sends everybody back to class before things get out of hand. Buffy follows her Watcher into his office and reassures him that Angel got the glove before Lagos could find it. Giles, however, doesn't want to hear any more of Buffy's excuses. He reminds her of how Angel tortured him months ago. Giles then acknowledges the fact that Buffy was wrong to keep Angel's return a secret from her Watcher, and she has gravely disrespected him by doing so. Meanwhile, Gwendolyn pays a visit to Faith's place. While assuring Faith that her intentions are pure, Gwendolyn alludes to Giles' secret meeting with Buffy and her friends. Faith is not pleased to be left out of that equation. Back at Sunnydale High, Buffy finds Willow at her locker and asks if everything's all right between them. Preoccupied with her own secret, Willow does not hesitate to pardon Buffy for keeping Angel's return under wraps. Buffy then tells her friend that she plans to wait in front of the Von Hauptman crypt and kill Lagos when he arrives.

Later that night, Faith finds Xander at the Bronze, shooting pool by himself. Xander fills Faith in on the news that Angel's back in town, the Glove of Myhnegon is in his possession, and Buffy has no problems with any of this. Faith decides to kill Angel, and Xander is eager to tag along. As they head

towards the library, Gwendolyn enters Giles' office and finds out that the Glove of Myhnegon has been found and is currently in the mansion on Crawford Street. Giles then surprises her with a spell he discovered that can destroy the glove. The spell creates a living flame, which can incinerate the Glove of Myhnegon. After Giles turns around, Gwendolyn picks up a statue and bashes him in the head twice, sending him to the floor, unconscious and bleeding. At Restfield Cemetery, Willow is about to divulge her secret to Buffy about her new relationship with Xander when Lagos suddenly appears. After a rough fight, Buffy grabs the axe from Lagos' back and uses it to chop his head off. As they head back to the library, Faith and Xander arrive to collect a few weapons from the armoury in the bookcase. On their way out, Xander hears a moan coming from Giles' office. He finds Giles on the floor, quickly losing a lot of blood. Faith believes Angel did this, but Xander points out the lack of bite marks. Faith doesn't care about that detail, and she leaves for the mansion while Xander calls for an ambulance.

Aware of the method for destroying the glove, Angel completes the spell for the living flame. He then turns around to see that Gwendolyn Post has entered the room. She concocts a lie to convince Angel that the living flame can strengthen the glove if the spell was miscast. As Angel turns his back to her, Gwendolyn picks up a shovel and strikes the back of the vampire's head, knocking him to the floor. Meanwhile, Buffy and Willow arrive at the library, where paramedics are in the process of bringing Giles out to the ambulance. Before he is taken away, Giles tells Buffy that she must destroy the glove with living flame. Xander tells Buffy that Faith is already on her way to the mansion, convinced that Angel needs to die. Buffy tells Willow to find the spell for the living flame, then dashes towards the mansion, where Gwendolyn is trying to open the locked chest which contains the glove. Back at the library, Xander and Willow finish the preparations for the spell and head to the mansion. Before Gwendolyn can open the chest, Angel hops to his feet, his face morphed to its vampire state. Gwendolyn breaks the shovel handle in half and tries to stake Angel, but he easily knocks the weapon away and throws Gwendolyn into the wall. As he moves in to grab her, Faith arrives and sees her new Watcher about to be murdered by a vampire. Faith overwhelms Angel and is about to finish the job when Buffy arrives and stops the stake's descent. Buffy tries to convince Faith that Angel is not the enemy, but Gwendolyn urges her Slayer to do her job. Faith and Buffy begin to fight each other.

Their battle takes them crashing through a window and into one of the outside courtyards. Xander and Willow arrive in the midst of the fight. Xander tries to stop them, but Faith tosses him aside and continues the fight. Using the Slayers' distraction to her advantage, Gwendolyn opens the chest and pulls out the glove and knocks Willow to the floor with it, then puts on the Glove of Myhnegon, which latches itself to her arm. As she raises the glove above her head and chants in Gaelic, thunder begins to rumble over the mansion. The loud thunder stops Buffy and Faith, and they turn their attention towards Gwendolyn. As they watch on, Gwendolyn screams a command which causes lightning to strike the glove from the sky, then fly out from the glove towards its target. Buffy and Faith dodge the blast, but just barely. As Willow gets up from the floor, Gwendolyn turns and fires a lightning bolt in her direction. Angel runs in and pushes Willow out of the way of the bolt. Faith runs around the room to draw her fire away from Buffy, who picks up a shard of the broken window and throws it at Gwendolyn's gloved arm. The glass cuts right through her arm, causing it to fall to the floor by Gwendolyn's feet. The dismemberment causes the glove to fire again, but since it is now beneath her, the lightning flies down from the sky and strikes Gwendolyn, burning her into oblivion.

The next morning, Oz, Willow, Xander, and Cordy talk in the lounge about Buffy and Angel, as well as destroying the Glove of Myhnegon with the living flame. Xander concedes that having Angel around again will be fine as long as Buffy doesn't repeat the same mistakes that led to the lifting of the curse. Buffy arrives and makes peace with Xander. Giles then walks into the lounge and tells the group that Gwendolyn Post was kicked out by the Watchers' Council a couple years ago. After school, Buffy visits Faith's place. She tells Faith to not worry about trusting her, but Faith still feels betrayed and is not in the mood for conversation. As Buffy turns to leave, Faith begins to tell her something, but decides to keep it to herself for now.

## 1.43 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Lovers Walk [#42]

Buffy Summers surprises her friends with her S.A.T. scores, which are a combined total of 1430. While everybody is fairly excited by this news, Buffy herself is more concerned with the fact that she may have to consider her future more seriously. Later that night, a car runs over the welcome sign at Sunnydale's city limits. Completely drunk, a familiar figure tumbles out of the driver's side door: Spike. Spike heads to the burnt-out factory where he originally stayed with Drusilla before Giles' invasion forced them to leave. Spike laments over his recent break-up with Dru as he smashes one of her old dolls.

The next morning, Xander convinces Cordelia to join Oz and Willow on a double date at the bowling alley. Xander notices that Cordy has taped pictures of herself and Xander, along with Oz and Willow, to the inside of her locker door. After confirming the plans, Oz follows Willow to her locker and gives her a pez dispenser with a witch's head on it as an impromptu gift. Overcome with guilt, Willow confronts Xander outside and tries to convince him that the double date is a bad idea. In the library, Giles admires Buffy's S.A.T. scores while he finishes packing for a retreat at Breaker's Woods. Buffy mentions her mother's enthusiasm and encouragement to apply to major colleges across the country. Giles agrees that Buffy should take advantage of this opportunity, while Faith could keep an eye on Sunnydale. Elsewhere, the deputy mayor informs Mayor Wilkins that Spike is back in town. Mayor Wilkins agrees with his suggestion that they get Mr. Trick to send a vampire committee to take care of Spike. Later, after school, Buffy and Joyce discuss college plans. Joyce continuously mentions out-of-state universities. Meanwhile, Spike goes to the Crawford Street mansion and spies on Angel, who is reading a book inside. Still drunk, Spike passes out on the floor of the garden.

As the sun rises the next morning, Spike is abruptly woken up by the sight and pain of his burning hand, which has been ignited by the sunlight. He goes to a local magic shop in search of a curse to cast on Angel. Spike hides as Willow enters. He looks on as Willow buys a few ingredients for a de-lusting spell, which she hopes will put an end to her affair with Xander. After Willow leaves, Spike feeds on the shopkeeper and formulates a new plan to get what he wants. At the mansion, Angel tells Buffy that she should look into college. This causes Buffy to leave early. Later that night, Xander finds Willow working on some sort of experiment in the science lab. While they wait for Cordelia and Oz to meet them there for the double date, Xander realizes that Willow is actually performing a spell. She tells him about the nature of the

spell, and Xander is not pleased with Willow's preferred method of dealing with their situation. Suddenly, Spike appears to kidnap Willow. While Xander fights Spike, Willow attempts to hit the vampire with a heavy object. Spike grabs it out of Willow's hands and strikes Xander directly in the head, knocking him out. Willow and Xander are then brought to the factory and locked in the basement. While Xander lays on a bed, unconscious and bloody, Spike demands Willow to perform a love spell that will bring Drusilla back to him. Willow tells Spike that she still needs a few additional ingredients and the right spell book. Back at Sunnydale High, Cordy and Oz barge into the library where Buffy is training. Worried about Xander and Willow's absence, they take Buffy to the science lab and show her the aftermath of the fight. Buffy sends them to find Giles at his retreat while she goes back to the library to properly equip herself for the search. Before Buffy can enter the bookcage, the phone rings. It's Joyce, and as Buffy listens, Spike enters the Summers' home. As soon as Buffy hears the familiar voice, she drops the phone and runs home as fast as she can.

Joyce makes a couple cups of coffee while Spike tells her his sob story about what happened between himself and Drusilla. Outside, Angel approaches the house. He sees Spike sitting at the kitchen counter with Joyce and tries to run into the house, but can't do so without an invitation. Joyce is terrified to see Angel again, unaware that the real enemy is standing right behind her. Distracted, Spike doesn't even notice Buffy's entrance as she grabs him from behind and pins him to the counter. Joyce watches in confusion while Buffy invites Angel into the house to help with Spike. Spike tells them what he's done with Willow and Xander, but he doesn't say where they are. Buffy and Angel reluctantly agree to help Spike get what he needs for the love spell in exchange for her friends' safety. Meanwhile, Oz picks up Willow's scent, so he cancels the drive to Breaker's Woods and tries to find Willow and Xander instead. Cordelia is not too comfortable with the fact that Oz still has a few latent werewolf abilities even when it's not that time of the month. Buffy and Angel follow Spike to the magic shop to get the ingredients. While there, Spike mocks Buffy and Angel's attempt to be nothing more than friends. Spike insists that they will forever be in love with each other, just like he is with Dru. At the factory, Xander finally comes to and learns from Willow everything that's happened. Realizing that their situation is seemingly hopeless, Xander and Willow lay on the bed and kiss, unaware of the fact that Oz and Cordelia have just arrived to rescue them. Nobody can believe what they're seeing, and Cordy takes it the hardest. As she runs back up the stairs, one of the deteriorated steps crumbles. Cordy falls through the hole to the hard floor below. When Xander looks down through the hole, he sees that Cordy is impaled on a steel rod, which is sticking up from her torso.

After gathering all of the ingredients, Spike, Buffy, and Angel run into a large group of vampires outside of the magic shop. One of the group's head vampires, Lenny, is not too pleased with Spike's return to Sunnydale. A huge battle erupts on the street. Outnumbered, the three retreat into the magic shop and seal off the entrances. They miss one of the doors in the back, which is soon opened by the invading vampires. As the battle spills into the magic shop, Spike drives a stake through Lenny's heart, reducing him to dust. More vampires bust through the window, but they are quickly thwarted off by the vials of holy water thrown by Buffy and Angel. Spike is thoroughly satisfied with the emotional rush from the battle, and decides to forget about the love spell and win Drusilla back by being his old self. Spike tells them that Willow and Xander are at the factory, then leaves. Meanwhile, at the factory, Xander climbs down to the injured Cordelia while Oz leaves to get help. Luckily, none of Cordy's organs were punctured by the rod, but her distress

over Xander's betrayal is beyond repair. While Buffy comforts Willow about the whole situation, Xander tries his own luck at the hospital where Cordy is recovering. He brings her flowers and tries to apologize, but Cordy simply tells Xander to stay away. Later, Buffy goes to the mansion and tells Angel that she won't visit him anymore. Buffy can't get out of her mind what Spike said about the two of them, so she decides to break off her contact with Angel. While everybody sombrely reflects to themselves about what happened during the past few days, a jubilant Spike leaves Sunnydale once again.

## 1.44 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Wish [#43]

Ridding Sunnydale of one slimy demon provides little distraction for Buffy, Xander, and Willow, who are still coping with the aftermath of their relationship woes. Cordy is taking it the hardest, ignoring the vast amount of answering machine messages left by Xander while burning all the pictures of her ex-boyfriend.

The next morning, Willow tries once again to patch up her relationship with Oz. Unfortunately, he needs some space and time to make any decisions on the matter. Cordelia arrives at school dressed to kill, but she soon learns that all of her old friends still have no respect for her, even after Xander Harris has left the picture. Harmony introduces Cordy to Anya, a new girl in town, before harshly insulting her former best friend. Anya takes an immediate interest in Cordy's personal troubles. Later that night, Cordy and Anya go to the Bronze, where Xander is also in attendance, along with Buffy and Willow. After getting up to fetch a few drinks, Buffy notices Cordy abruptly exiting, so she follows her into the alley. Before Buffy can get Cordelia to open up and vent her problems, a vampire intervenes. The ensuing fight sends Cordy into a nearby pile of trash. With the last straw exposed, Cordelia identifies Buffy as the source of all of her troubles. As she explains to Anya the next day, none of the bad things in Cordy's life would have ever happened if Buffy never came to Sunnydale. Anya removes her necklace and places it around Cordy's neck. Cordy declares her wish that Buffy never made that fateful trip. At this point, Anya reveals herself to be not quite human and says, "Done." A bright light flashes, and suddenly the Sunnydale High campus is much less crowded than it was a moment ago. Cordelia quickly realizes that Anya must have granted her wish. However, this new version of Sunnydale is not as ideal as she imagined it would be. There's a city curfew that coincides with sunset. The Bronze is no longer the place to be at night. And Xander and Willow, as Harmony tells her, are dead.

Night falls as Cordelia wanders the deserted streets of Sunnydale. She encounters Xander and tells him that they have to get Buffy. Willow arrives, and Cordy learns that they are now vampires. Before Xander can kill her, a familiar van pulls up to the scene of the inevitable crime. Giles gets out, warding Xander and Willow off with a cross. Behind him, Oz sits in the driver's seat with a crossbow aimed at the vamps. Larry and a girl named Nancy get out of the van and pull Cordy to safety. Giles gets back inside, and the van takes off. Cordelia is brought to the library, which serves as the main base for the resistance against the vampires. Meanwhile, Xander and Willow return to the Bronze, which is now the headquarters for The Master and his minions. The Master orders Xander and Willow to kill Cordelia before she can contact the Slayer and interfere with his latest scheme. Back at the library,

Cordy finally comes to and tells Giles about her wish and that they need Buffy. Unfortunately, neither of them realize that Xander and Willow have infiltrated the library. Locked inside the bookcage, Giles can only hopelessly watch as Xander and Willow sink their fangs into Cordelia, draining her of all of her blood. After the vampires leave, Giles uses an axe from his weapons cabinet to bust open the cage. Larry and Oz arrive, informing Giles that Nancy is now dead. As they pick up Cordy's lifeless body to bring to the incinerator, Giles notices her necklace and removes it.

The next morning, Willow plays around with Angel, who the Master has locked up in the basement of the Bronze as punishment. At the library, Giles discovers through his books that the necklace represents Anyanka, the "Patron Saint of Scorned Women". He realizes that Anyanka must have granted a wish that Cordy made which resulted in the world they're living in right now. Giles calls Buffy's Watcher in Cleveland and leaves a message. While driving down the streets later that night, Giles sees some vampires packing a group of humans into the back of a truck. He wards them off with the cross, enabling the humans to escape. However, he is knocked down from behind. Before the vampires can finish him, another challenger enters the fray. Giles watches the vampires face defeat at the hands of this newcomer, then realizes that this new girl is the one and only Buffy Summers. After taking her back to his apartment, Giles informs her of what he's learned concerning Anyanka. In order to reverse all of her wishes and render her powerless, Anyanka's powercentre must be destroyed. Buffy is clearly uninterested in this, and is more concerned with taking out the Master.

Buffy goes to the Bronze, which is now deserted. In the basement, she finds Angel locked up behind bars. While she doesn't recognize him, Angel knows exactly who she is from all the time he spent secretly observing her in Los Angeles. Angel leads Buffy to a factory where the Master has unveiled a machine that will revolutionize the lifestyle of vampires everywhere. This device can drain a person's body of all of its blood and dispense it into glasses and cups in mere seconds. Buffy and Angel step in to put a stop to the festivities. While Buffy fights the vampires head-on, Angel frees the human prisoners. In the course of the battle, Angel, Xander, and Willow are dusted. While Buffy continues to fight, Giles summons Anyanka and identifies her glowing necklace as her powercentre. As he rips it from her neck and prepares to smash it, the Master overpowers Buffy and snaps her neck, fulfilling the prophecy in the Pergamum Codex in this reality as well. Giles smashes the necklace, and suddenly Cordelia is standing in front of Anya again. Anya realizes that she is no longer able to grant Cordy's wish. As Cordy walks off, she passes by Buffy, Xander, and Willow, who are still alive and well.

## 1.45 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Amends [#44]

As Christmas draws near, Angel begins to relive in his dreams the numerous murders he has committed. One of his victims was a young man named Daniel, whom Angel killed in Dublin in 1818. Unable to stay in bed any longer, Angel ventures out onto the streets of Sunnydale and runs into Buffy, who's doing some last-minute Christmas shopping. Angel's attention is soon diverted from Buffy to a familiar face in the distance. Impossible as it may seem, Angel recognizes this person as Daniel, the same man he killed 180 years ago.

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After Buffy tells her friends about her encounter with Angel the next day at school, Oz finally decides to give Willow a second chance at their relationship. Later that night, Buffy and Joyce shop for a Christmas tree. While looking around, Joyce suggests that Buffy invite Faith to their place on Christmas Eve. Buffy notices a small group of dead trees that the salesman can't explain. At the motel, Faith turns down Buffy's invitation, explaining that she already has plans to attend a party. Meanwhile, Angel shows up at Giles' doorstep in need of help. Giles invites him in, but not before he grabs a crossbow to protect himself with. Angel wants to find out how and why he returned to Earth, but he is soon distracted by the presence of Jenny Calendar in the apartment. She is invisible to Giles, which adds to his confusion when Angel suddenly runs out the door. Back at the mansion, Angel dreams about another moment in time when he took the life of a servant named Margaret. After drinking her blood, Angel looks up to see Buffy watching the whole event. Angel suddenly wakes up... as does Buffy.

Inside the mansion, Angel is haunted by Jenny, Daniel, Margaret, and visions of his many other victims. Buffy, meanwhile, tells Giles that she shared Angel's dream the previous night. They decide to do some research in hopes of discovering the reason for Angel's return to Earth. Xander and Willow show up shortly to aid in the research. After a while, both Buffy and Angel fall asleep and share another dream in which they make love in Buffy's bedroom. Their romantic moment is interrupted by the vision of a man with no eyes. Before Buffy can figure out what's going on, Angel bites into Buffy's neck, effectively waking both of them up from their slumbers. Angel listens to Jenny as she tries to convince him that losing his soul with Buffy again and killing her will bring him the peace he desires. Giles shows an illustration of three men with no eyes to Buffy, who recognizes the face from her most recent dream. Called the Bringers, or Harbingers, these high priests can summon The First. As Giles explains, The First is the name given to Absolute Evil. Since it is not a physical being, Buffy cannot fight it. Buffy and Xander visit Willy's bar, hoping to get some information on the whereabouts of the Bringers. All they learn is that the Bringers might be underground. Xander decides that they should go home and enjoy Christmas Eve before resuming their search.

With her parents out of town for the evening, Willow invites Oz over to her home to watch a few movies. When Oz arrives, he soon realizes that Willow has made a small change of plans. Willow tells him that she's ready to sleep with him, but Oz knows that she's only doing this as an extreme means of redemption. He turns down Willow's offer, preferring to spend the night in a simpler way, like kissing on the couch. Meanwhile, Faith shows up at the Summers' front porch. Explaining that she thought twice about the party, Faith gives a couple gifts to Buffy and Joyce. While Faith settles in, Buffy goes upstairs to her bedroom to fetch their presents. She is surprised to find Angel in her bedroom. However, he's a little out of it at this point, staring longingly at her neck. Jenny stands behind Buffy, urging Angel to take the final plunge, both symbolically and literally. Angel can't go through with it, and he dives through Buffy's window. Back at the mansion, Angel tells Jenny that he will end his own life, using the deadly rays of the sun to do the deed. After entrusting Faith with her mother's safety, Buffy goes to Giles' apartment in an attempt to find out where the Bringers are. One of Giles' books contains a passage that indicates the inability of life to grow above or below the Bringers. This leads Buffy back to the suspicious group of dead trees she noticed a while ago. Using an axe, Buffy breaks open a hole in the ground that she immediately enters. Underground, Buffy finds the Bringers and makes short work of them with the axe. However, Buffy isn't prepared to see the figure of Jenny Calendar standing before her. Buffy listens as the vision

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of Jenny speaks for The First, boasting its legendary might. Buffy has no time to entertain The First, which tells her that Angel will die by sunrise. Buffy runs back to the mansion to find Angel, but he is no longer there. She finally locates him at the top of a hill which overlooks Sunnydale. Buffy tries to get Angel indoors before sunrise, but Angel won't budge. He tells her that he can't go on living, knowing that his very existence presents a threat to the woman he loves so dearly. Buffy refuses to agree, expressing her love for Angel and the self-hatred that goes along with it. Their stand-off is unexpectedly interrupted by several flakes of snow falling from the sky. Soon enough, a steady snowfall envelops Sunnydale for the first time ever, preventing the sun's rays from reaching the ground below and ending Angel's life. Nobody can explain it, but that doesn't matter to Buffy and Angel. Some higher power, whomever or whatever it may be, has given Angel yet another lease on life... on Christmas, no less.

## 1.46 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Gingerbread [#45]

On a typical night of patrol and slaying, Buffy's routine is unexpectedly interrupted by the arrival of her mother. Joyce feels that it's time to get a better understanding of her daughter's world by watching Buffy in action. Almost as soon as Joyce arrives, a vampire enters the scene. After Buffy chases him into the thick of the woods, Joyce discovers the bodies of two dead children, one boy and one girl, at a nearby playground. A strange symbol has been enscribed in the palms of their hands. While the police investigate the crime scene, Buffy tries to console her distraught mother.

Buffy tells Giles about the murdered children in the library the next morning. She sketches the symbol she noticed on their palms and shows it to Giles, who believes it implies the handiwork of a cult. Buffy cannot believe that humans are responsible for this as opposed to demons. At lunch, nobody notices Joyce walking into the cafeteria and straight to the gang's table. Buffy excuses herself and takes her mum into the hallway. Joyce tells her daughter that she's organized a meeting at City Hall for that night to discuss the murder. Dozens of parents attend, including Sheila Rosenberg, Willow's mother. Willow can't believe she's there, considering the fact that they barely communicate with each other. After the Mayor delivers a textbook speech to the crowd, he invites Joyce to the stand to lead them in a moment of silence. Instead, Joyce proposes a call to action, declaring an end to the city's silence concerning the ubiquitous dangers that plague Sunnydale. Later that night, Willow, Amy, and their friend Michael gather together to explore their world of the black arts. On the floor beneath them is the very same symbol that appeared on the two dead children.

At school the next morning, a group of students harass Michael by his locker, stating their belief that witches were responsible for the children's murder. Amy tries to fend them off, but it's Buffy who gets them to back off. Giles finds Buffy and tells her that witches may in fact be the prime suspects. The book that Giles needs to research this further was checked out by Willow, so he asks Buffy to get it for him. Buffy finds Xander sitting in the lounge, who points out Willow's stuff.

As she picks up the book, Buffy notices the symbol drawn on Willow's notebook. She asks Willow to explain it, but their conversation is cut short by the

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sudden commotion in the hallways. Under Principal Snyder's supervision, the local police inspect each and every locker, looking for any signs of materials pertaining to witchcraft. After Amy is escorted to the office, Willow tells Buffy that the symbol is for a protection spell that she wanted to cast for Buffy's upcoming birthday. In other words, the symbol and what it stands for are completely harmless. At that moment, the cops open Willow's locker and ask her to come with them. Buffy runs to the library and discovers a similar scene. As the cops pack up all of Giles' books concerning the supernatural, Buffy tells him about the misleading symbol.

Later that night, Buffy argues with her mother, who is the founder of MOO (Mothers Opposed to the Occult). Buffy insists that this matter be dealt with by the Slayer. However, Joyce doesn't believe that Buffy's work is making Sunnydale any better. After Buffy takes off, the two deceased children appear in the kitchen... very much alive. Joyce listens to them intently as they beg her to make their murderers suffer. Meanwhile, Sheila grounds Willow for getting into trouble at school. She orders her daughter to stay in her room for the rest of the night.

At the park, Angel finds Buffy standing by the scene of the crime, which is now decorated with flowers, candles, and pictures of the children from a time when they were still alive. Buffy has not forgotten her mother's criticism of the Slayer's effectiveness. Angel reassures Buffy that her destiny is not in vain. During their conversation, Angel inadvertently alerts Buffy to a mystery concerning the two children. She heads to the library and finds Giles, Xander, and Oz trying to find any useful information on the internet. Buffy shares her realization that nobody seems to know anything about the two children, including their names or where they came from, and yet their pictures were somehow available for use in MOO's campaign. Oz sends an instant message to Willow, who then begins to search the web for any files or articles relating to the two children. Apparently, the dead bodies of these same two children have been repeatedly discovered once every fifty years, dating all the way back to 1649. The oldest article identifies them as Hans and Greta Strauss. Unfortunately, Sheila cuts off Willow's computer access at this moment, forcing Giles and the gang to figure the rest out on their own. Giles recalls a theory that many fairy tales are based on actual accounts of the supernatural. Buffy fills in the blanks, recalling the story of Hansel and Gretel, who must have been based on Hans and Greta. Suddenly, Michael bursts into the library and tells everybody that he was attacked by his own family. He also informs them that Amy was taken from her home. Xander and Oz head towards Willow's house while Buffy and Giles race back to the Summers home to warn everybody. Back at the Rosenberg's, Willow answers the knocking at her door and finds her mother... along with a group of angry parents who want nothing but her death. Meanwhile, Buffy and Giles interrupt another MOO meeting. As they take Joyce into the foyer to speak with her alone, the rest of the group sneak up from behind and knock Giles unconscious. Joyce does the same to Buffy with the help of some chloroform.

Buffy, Willow, and Amy are tied to large stakes in City Hall, ready to be burned for the crimes they've been accused of. Willow and Amy unsuccessfully struggle with their restraints, while Buffy remains unconscious. Meanwhile, Xander and Oz burst into Willow's room, which was left a total mess in the wake of the angry parents. As they leave for City Hall, Giles is awoken by an impatient Cordelia, who came to the house to find out what was going on. They hurry to Giles' car and speed towards City Hall. During the drive, Giles has Cordy mix together the ingredients for a spell while he tries to recall the incantation from memory. Back at City Hall, Buffy finally regains

consciousness and realizes the situation she's in. Joyce refuses to listen to her daughter's pleas. Amy escapes danger by transforming herself into a rat and bolting out of the room, but Willow and Buffy are still moments away from a fiery death. Just as the fire is about to engulf Buffy and Willow, Giles and Cordy burst into the room. While Cordy extinguishes the fire, Giles casts the spell on the two children, who then combine and change into the true form of a tall, hideous demon. As the parents realize the deception and try to escape, Xander and Oz approach the scene via a ventilation shaft above the ceiling. Without the help of the parents, the demon attempts to kill Buffy and Willow directly and charges them. Buffy breaks the stake she's been tied to in half and leans forward -- just in time to impale the demon. The silence that follows is soon interrupted by the sight and sound of Xander and Oz falling down through a weak spot in the ceiling and crashing down onto the floor.

A while after their near-death experience, Buffy and Willow discuss Sheila Rosenberg's convenient memory loss concerning the demon, just like the way Joyce Summers' memory used to operate before learning that her daughter was the Slayer. Willow then makes another attempt at restoring the Amy rat to human form. Unfortunately, Willow is going to need a little more practice before she can pull this one off.

## 1.47 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Helpless [#46]

After a training session in the mansion, Buffy and Angel get a little too close for comfort. With her eighteenth birthday almost upon her, Buffy is anxiously awaiting to spend some time with her father at an ice show. Later, at the library, Giles leads Buffy through a study of vibratory stones. Despite being a little fidgety, Buffy manages to concentrate on one of the stones. Afterwards, Buffy battles with a vampire in the park. Just as she is about to deliver the final blow, something surges through Buffy's body, and she suddenly finds herself powerless. The vampire quickly takes the upper hand, knocking her to the ground and turning the wooden stake on the Slayer herself. Buffy panics, but she is still able to stun the vampire with a headbutt and push him off of her. She grabs the stake and aims it straight up as the vampire leaps onto her. In an instant, the vampire is nothing but dust.

Giles enters the library the next morning to find Buffy practising her aim with throwing knives. As the random placing of the knives on and around the target shows, the Slayer is not herself. Giles ensures Buffy that she'll be okay. Outside, Buffy downplays her friends' enthusiasm over the upcoming birthday, suggesting that a party may not be the greatest of ideas, given her tainted history with such social gatherings. Later that night, Buffy notices a birthday balloon floating in her kitchen with what appear to be an envelope and tickets attached to the string. As Joyce informs her that Hank won't be able to free up enough time to take her to the ice show, Buffy folds up the envelope without even opening it. Meanwhile, three men are hard at work inside an old, abandoned boarding house. One of the men, Quentin Travers, looks on as his two associates, Blair and Hobson, work on laying bricks in several of the doorways. At the library, Buffy tries to indirectly ask Giles to take her to the ice show, but he is more interested in making her study the vibratory stones. After Buffy finally gives up her futile effort, Giles instructs her to concentrate on the fault inside the large blue stone. As Buffy stares at it, she suddenly loses all touch with the outside world. Giles checks to make sure

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Buffy's in a trance, then takes an injection kit out of his bag. He injects a strange, green fluid into Buffy's arm. After he finishes the task and puts away the kit, Giles waves his hand in front of the fault, breaking Buffy's trance. Unaware of what just happened, Buffy decides to call it a night and leaves Giles alone in the library.

Outside of school the next morning, Buffy notices a guy harassing Cordelia. Buffy walks up to the guy and grabs him by the arm. However, she suddenly realizes that she doesn't have enough strength to do anything to the guy, who casually shoves her to the ground with that one arm. Buffy finds Giles in the hallway and tells him about her disturbing loss of strength. Giles doesn't show a great deal of concern, although he definitely knows why Buffy is going through this. Giles speaks with Quentin at the boarding house, voicing his disagreement with the Watcher Council's insistence on subjecting Buffy to the Cruciamentum. The Cruciamentum is a test which all Slayers must endure when they reach the age of eighteen in order to prove their instinctual skills and resourcefulness. To do so, the Slayer must survive an encounter with a vicious vampire while trapped inside a small space. In this case, Buffy must defeat an insane vampire, Zackary Kralik, in the confines of this boarding house. After Giles leaves, a loud, painful scream emanates from Kralik's coffin. Blair and Hobson open the coffin and give Kralik his pills. Giles returns to the library, where Buffy, Willow, Xander, and Oz try to find any relevant info in the books that might explain her loss of power. While Buffy continues to search for answers, Kralik's screaming keeps Blair and Hobson from getting any rest. While Hobson takes a break, Blair opens the coffin to learn that Kralik wants more pills. As Blair goes to the kitchen to fill the glass with water, Kralik screams to cover up the sound of his straitjackets ripping at the seams. Kralik then tricks Blair into stepping close to the coffin and grabs him by the throat with his freed arm before sinking his fangs into his neck. At the mansion, Angel gives a book of poetry to Buffy for her birthday. Unfortunately, Buffy is distracted by her power loss to fully appreciate Angel's gift. Buffy fears that she may have lost what made her special. Angel consoles her by confessing that he watched her long before she moved to Sunnydale, admitting that he lived her then every bit as much as he does now. Meanwhile, Blair rises in front of Kralik as a newly-turned vampire. He picks up an axe and frees Kralik from his restraints.

Giles stops by the boarding house to check in on things, but nobody seems to be around. After noticing blood on the stairway railing, Giles grabs a make-shift stake and opens Kralik's tomb. Finding it empty, Giles goes to the kitchen and discovers Hobson's dead corpse. Overcome by the grotesque sight and smell, Giles runs out of the house. He needs to find Buffy, who is walking the streets alone. She runs into Kralik, who grabs her jacket. Unable to fight him as she normally would, Buffy turns and runs for her life. She tries to climb over, then under a fence. Blair shows up and tries to pull her back, but Buffy escapes and runs out into the middle of the street. Giles arrives just in time, and Buffy jumps into his car. Back at the library, Giles tells the whole truth to Buffy, showing her the syringe filled with an organic compound of muscle relaxants and adrenal suppressers. He informs her that the effects of the compound will wear off in a few days, but Buffy is too furious to care about that right now. Giles goes on to tell her that he just invalidated the test by telling her about it ahead of time. Unfortunately, Buffy refuses to listen or forgive him. As soon as Cordelia walks into the library to do some research for a paper, Buffy asks her for a ride home. While Cordelia drives Buffy home, Joyce hears a noise on her front porch. She goes out and sees Buffy's jacket draped over a figure. Assuming it's Buffy, she bends down towards the covered figure. However, it's not Buffy at all, but really Kralik.

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When Buffy arrives home, she finds a polaroid of her mother and Kralik. She packs a large amount of her slaying supplies into her bag and heads towards the mansion.

Tied to a chair and gagged, Joyce can do nothing but watch as Kralik takes countless polaroids of her while rambling about his hatred for mothers. Buffy walks in through the main entrance of the boarding house and looks around. As she realizes that all of the other exits have been sealed by bricks, Blair locks the main entrance, trapping the Slayer inside. Meanwhile, Quentin visits Giles at the library and tells him that the Cruciamentum has begun. Giles informs him that he disclosed all of the information concerning the test, but none of that matters right now. He leaves Quentin in the library and races towards the boarding house. Buffy encounters Kralik and tries to take him out with her crossbow, but it's no use. He chases Buffy through the house. She takes refuge inside a dark room. When she turns the light on, Buffy sees that the walls are completely plastered with photos of her helpless mother. She runs out of the room, and Kralik finally traps her in the hallway. Buffy attempts to ward him off with a cross, but Kralik is so insane that he actually enjoys the pain it causes. Before he can bite into her neck, Kralik is suddenly seized by his painful need to take his pills. He fishes the medicine bottle out of his pocket. Spotting an opportunity, Buffy grabs the bottle out of his hands and dives through a laundry chute. Landing in the basement, Buffy finds Joyce on the chair. When Kralik reaches the basement, Buffy tries to flee the scene with his pills. He rips the bottle out of her hands and quickly grabs the nearby glass of water. After swallowing the pills with the water, Kralik suddenly notices a burning sensation inside himself. Buffy holds out an empty bottle of Holy Water. The blessed water soon disintegrates Kralik. As Buffy works on freeing Joyce from the chair, both Giles and Blair crash into the basement. Giles finishes the vampire off, then leaves with Joyce and Buffy.

In the library, Quentin commends Buffy on her successful passing of the test. However, he has bad news for Giles. Since he has demonstrated a relationship with Buffy that the Council has deemed too close, like the way a father loves his daughter, Giles is relieved of his duties as Buffy's Watcher. Quentin then tells Buffy that she will be assigned a new Watcher soon. Struck by this revelation of how much Giles cares for her, Buffy calmly allows him to tend to her wounds. Back at home, Buffy's friends try to make sense of Giles' being fired... especially Willow, who almost refuses to believe the mere possibility of Giles losing his job.

## 1.48 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Zeppo [#47]

Combining their unique talents and efforts, Giles, Willow, Faith, and Buffy defeat a group of hideous, female demons. Xander, however, can only pick himself up from the ground and commend his partners on a job well done. The others agree that Xander should not be risking his life by constantly involving himself in the battles. Of course, Xander just doesn't want to be left out of the fun.

Outside of school the next morning, Xander accidentally upsets Jack O'Toole, the local psychopath. After successfully escaping the wrath of Jack, Xander runs into Cordelia. She delights in pointing out Xander's insignificance,

seeing how all of his friends possess one special quality that makes them fit in. Xander, on the other hand, has nothing to warrant his involvement in the Slayer circle. Inside the library, Giles unloads some bad news on Buffy. Apparently, the demons they fought the previous night belong to an Apocalypse cult called the Sisterhood of Jhe. They intend to reopen the Hellmouth, and there's no telling how soon that event will occur. As for Xander, his main problem concerns finding a special "thing" to help him fit in. The only "thing" that Xander can come up with is a car, which he procures from his Uncle Roary. Unfortunately, this brings little joy to Buffy and Willow, who are preoccupied with the Sisterhood of Jhe's plan. Xander offers to help -- which only leads him to the local bakery to pick up some doughnuts. Outside the shop, a beautiful woman by the name of Lysette admires Xander's car. Dumbfounded by his luck, Xander offers to give her a ride. Their impromptu date soon becomes an abyss of boredom for Xander, who learns that Lysette's one and only interest is cars. When Angel enters the Bronze, Xander immediately showers him with warm greetings, desperately in need of an escape from his personal hell. Angel doesn't have time to help Xander, for he's more intent on finding Buffy and warning her about the upcoming danger. Buffy and Willow, meanwhile, come up empty-handed in the research department. Unable to find anybody on the Watcher Council willing to listen to him, Giles heads to the cemetery to contact the spirit guides for any help. Buffy goes to Willy's bar later, only to find the place trashed and the bartender bleeding on the floor. Willy warns Buffy that the Hellmouth will be opened before sunrise.

Upon leaving the Bronze, Xander has another run-in with Jack. This time, he carelessly crashes his car into another, from which Jack O'Toole emerges. Just before Jack ends Xander's all-too-short life with a really big knife, a police officer shows up. Instead of turning Jack in, Xander tells the cop that everything's fine. Impressed by this surprising turn of events, Jack invites Xander to hang out with him and his friends. Back in his car, Xander drives Jack and Lysette to the cemetery where they're supposed to meet up with Jack's friends. Unbeknownst to Xander and Lysette, Jack's friends have a slight case of death. Lysette screams and runs for her life after Jack uses a ritual to raise one of his friends, Bob, from his grave. While Jack raises two more guys, Xander spots Giles, who was unable to get any answers from the spirit guides. Xander offers his help again, but Giles advises him to stay out of it. Xander's new "friends" appoint him as their designated driver, then have him drive them to the hardware store. While they break in and loot the place, Xander sees Willow emerging from a magic shop with a bag full of ingredients. Once again, he asks if the gang needs any help, but Willow doesn't tell him what he wants to hear. After she leaves, Jack and his friends decide to initiate Xander into their group. However, the sole requirement for initiation is Xander's death. Xander argues that Jack isn't dead, who then proves him wrong by revealing the bullet holes in his abdomen. Fed up with this party, Xander makes a run for it, eluding the zombies quickly enough to get back in his car and speed away. After a short drive, Xander sees Faith battling another Sisterhood of Jhe member. Flooring the gas pedal, Xander rams his car into the demon, then takes off with Faith. They take refuge in her motel room, where Xander discovers that his night isn't over by a long shot. The victory-less battle has left Faith all worked up, and the only thing that can relax her is a physical encounter of a completely different kind. After shedding their clothes, Faith does the deed with Xander in bed... then kicks him out of the place as soon as they finish.

Xander notices that the bags left in the back seat of his car contain ingredients for a bomb. He speeds back to the hardware store to Jack and the zombie gang, but they're are long gone. Unsure of what to do next, he seeks

out Buffy for help. Xander finds her at the mansion with Angel. Their heated discussion forces Xander to leave them alone and take care of matters by himself. Meanwhile, Willow relocates werewolf Oz, who broke out of his cage earlier and had to be tranquillized, to a safer part of the school. She then returns to the library to help Giles prepare a binding spell which might take care of the Hellmouth demon. Neither of them are aware of the four zombies in the boiler room beneath them. Jack's gang puts the finishing touches on the bomb and leaves. Xander sees them walking down the street. Needing answers fast, he pulls up between them and grabs one of the zombies before hitting the gas. He learns that the bomb is in the boiler room of Sunnydale High. Before Xander can get the info he needs to disarm the bomb, the zombie's head connects with a mailbox and instantaneously departs from its body. Xander reaches the school and runs inside, completely unaware that the rest of his friends are in a life-and-death battle with the Hellmouth demon in the library... again. The zombies pursue Xander, who succeeds in taking them out one by one. In the boiler room, Xander encounters a knife-wielding Jack, while the bomb timer reads two minutes and counting. Xander dares Jack to let the bomb explode and permanently end his days as one of the walking dead. Jack's not ready to give up his lifestyle just yet, so he disarms the bomb. After Xander leaves the boiler room, Jack has a fatal encounter with werewolf Oz.

The next morning, Buffy, Willow, and Giles look back on their epic battle, while Oz tries to figure out why he's so full. Cordelia makes her usual fun of Xander, but he now has a better outlook on his role in the grand scheme of things.

## 1.49 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Bad Girls [#48]

During a typical night of patrolling and slaying vampires, Buffy and Faith encounter a not-so-typical vampire wielding a pair of swords. They successfully reduce the vamp to dust, but Buffy and Faith soon realize that the two swords are nowhere to be seen. The swords have, in fact, been brought to Mayor Wilkins' office by Mr. Trick. After looking them over, Mayor reminds Mr. Trick and his deputy mayor, Allan Finch, of the upcoming dedication and the hundred days which will ultimately lead to the ascension.

The next morning, in the school lounge, Willow proudly shows her early admittance packets from several big-name universities to her friends. After hanging around for a bit, Buffy goes to the library, where she meets her new Watcher, Wesley Wyndam-Pryce. When asked about the previous night's patrol, Buffy describes the vampire packing the two swords. Wesley scans through his books and quickly locates some information on a fifteenth-century duellist cult called El Eliminati. They once worked for Balthazar, an ancient demon, before he was apparently killed. In order to explain their current presence in Sunnydale, Wesley theorizes that they may be looking for an amulet that has been hidden in the Gleaves family crypt. Just then, Faith arrives, meets Wesley, then immediately turns and leaves. After Buffy catches up with her, Faith tells her that they don't have to follow their new Watcher's orders. Later that night, Buffy searches through the tombs inside the Gleaves crypt. Just as she locates the amulet, she hears several voices approaching from outside. As Buffy hides in one of the other tombs, the Eliminati vampires enter the crypt and take the amulet. After they leave, Buffy gets out of the tomb and is shocked by Faith's unexpected arrival. They go after the vampires,

following them underground. In the course of the battle, one of the vampires attempts to drown Buffy in a pool of water. Thinking he has succeeded, he releases his grip, giving Buffy all the opportunity she needs to spring back to her feet and take the amulet back from the vampires.

The next day in the library, Wesley inspects the amulet while Buffy heads to her chemistry class to take a test. The chemistry teacher, Mrs. Taggart, leaves her students alone in the classroom, expecting them to follow the honour system. Faith appears outside one of the windows and draws a heart with a stake piercing it, signalling Buffy's early departure. Willow and Xander try to keep their friend from leaving, but Buffy is gone in no time. Faith leads Buffy to a vampire nest, where they give the sleeping demons a rather rude wake-up call. Spirits high, Buffy and Faith head to the Bronze afterwards and tear up the dance floor. Angel arrives and pulls Buffy aside to warn her that Balthazar is still alive. When Wesley appears on the scene, Buffy takes the amulet from him and gives it to Angel for safe keeping. Later, at an abandoned warehouse, the Eliminati vampires listen to their master, Balthazar, who is a horrendously bloated demon sitting in a pool of water. Upset with one of his minions, Balthazar uses telekinesis to draw the vampire's helpless body closer. Balthazar then crushes the vampire's skull with his own two hands. Balthazar gives orders to his head minion, Vincent. Outside, Buffy and Faith spy on the gathering. In need of weaponry, Faith spots a hunting equipment shop that's closed for the night. Buffy follows as Faith breaks into the shop and proceeds to destroy some display cases containing weapons. Taking Faith's lead, Buffy obtains a dagger for herself. However, their shoplifting spree is cut short by a pair of cops with guns drawn. During the drive back to the police station, Faith talks Buffy into helping her kick the cage into the driver and his partner, causing the car to crash and enable their escape.

The next morning, Buffy checks the newspaper to see if her run-in with the law is mentioned anywhere. Meanwhile, Mayor Wilkins is attacked by Vincent in his own office. After Mr. Trick knocks the vampire out cold, Mayor Wilkins wonders how the vampire slipped past security. Instead of having the vampire killed, Mayor Wilkins orders Mr. Trick to lock him up. Later, Willow is disappointed to learn that Buffy's schedule doesn't include her. Faith arrives shortly to pick up Buffy, leaving Willow alone. At Giles' office, Wesley criticizes the former Watcher for his job performance with Buffy. Their argument doesn't go very far before Giles notices the sudden presence of several vampires outside the office. Elsewhere, Buffy and Faith head to the warehouse to take out Balthazar and his minions. On the way, they encounter several vampires and dust them, one by one. When a hand reaches out and grabs Buffy, Faith throws the guy against a dumpster and drives her stake towards his heart. Buffy realizes that this is no vampire, but it's too late as Faith's stake plunges into the heart of Deputy Mayor Allan Finch. Within seconds, Finch is dead. Deciding to flee from the scene, Faith and Buffy split up. Buffy runs into Angel, who notices the blood on her hands. They head towards the warehouse, where Giles and Wesley have been brought before the demon Balthazar. Wesley attempts to save his own neck by offering the man who has the amulet to Balthazar. Before any more information can be spilled, Angel and Buffy arrive and battle the vampires. Frustrated, Balthazar uses his telekinesis to bring Angel into his own hands. Thinking quick, Buffy spots a lamp hovering above the pool. She sends it falling into the water, electrocuting the obese demon. With his last breath, Balthazar warns Buffy that a greater enemy's ascension is at hand. While Buffy and the others puzzle over the meaning of Balthazar's dying words, Mayor Wilkins performs the dedication ritual in his office. After completing it, he orders Mr. Trick to release Vincent from his cage. Once

freed, Vincent takes the sword and cleaves the mayor's head into two halves. Vincent then watches in shock as Mayor Wilkins' head reforms itself. Mr. Trick takes his cue and drives a stake into Vincent's heart. Mayor Wilkins is now invincible, and he will remain so for the hundred days leading to his ascension.

Buffy visits Faith's motel room the next morning to discuss their crime. Disturbed by Faith's apparent lack of guilt, Buffy tries to convince her that the victim's body will be found eventually. Faith tells Buffy that she returned to the scene of the crime and dumped the body.

## 1.50 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Consequences [#49]

Buffy has a nightmare in which she tries to escape the murky water while the murdered Finch pulls her down by the ankle. Finally reaching the surface, Buffy sees Faith, who immediately pushes her fellow Slayer back underwater. After waking up, Buffy wanders down to the family room, where her mother is watching a news report about the discovery of Finch's body.

At the library, Wesley orders Buffy and Faith to investigate Finch's murder. During their discussion, Cordelia enters the library to check out some books for an assignment. She takes an immediate interest in Wesley, who doesn't realize how old she really is until Giles and the others fill him in. After heading out, Buffy tries to convince Faith into coming clean and confessing their crime. Faith reminds Buffy that they were both involved, so if she goes down, she's taking Buffy with her. Buffy then spots Willow and tries to talk to her. However, Willow is still stung by Buffy's recent behaviour. Meanwhile, Mayor Wilkins shreds all of Finch's files that contain anything related to their dirty work. Mr. Trick listens as Mayor Wilkins wonders if Allan Finch was conspiring against him somehow.

Later that night, Buffy and Faith sneak into Finch's office at City Hall to see if they can find any info that might explain why he was in the alley that night. They notice that almost all of his files are gone, which leads Buffy to believe that a cover-up may be in the works. Just as they're heading out, Mayor Wilkins and Mr. Trick enter the building on the opposite end of the hallway. Seeing them together, Buffy and Faith duck back into Finch's office, waiting for the Mayor and Mr. Trick to pass by before running for the exit. Outside, Buffy expresses her concern over Faith's apparently guilt-free conscience. She doesn't believe that Faith is perfectly okay with murdering a man, but Faith says otherwise. Faith believes that their nightly deeds as Slayers should put them above the law.

When Buffy returns home, she is greeted by her mother and Detective Stein, who has come to ask her a few questions about the night of the murder. Buffy lies and pleads ignorance to everything related to the murder. Detective Stein leaves and visits Faith at her motel room, where he gets a similar story. Meanwhile, Buffy tells Willow the truth about everything that happened. Willow advises Buffy to go to Giles. When Buffy arrives at the library, she finds out that Faith has gotten there first and pinned the murder on Buffy. Buffy tries to convince Giles otherwise, but he sends her to his office to deal with her later. After Faith goes home, Giles assures Buffy that he's aware of Faith's lies. While Giles tells Buffy that he has no intentions of involving the



Watcher's Council in this matter, Wesley overhears the whole conversation from outside the office. Soon afterwards, he calls the Council in Britain to alert them of the crime.

The next morning, Buffy talks with Xander, Willow, and Giles about what they should do with Faith. Feeling he has a special connection with Faith ever since the night they slept together, Xander volunteers to talk to her.

In no time, Buffy, Willow, and Giles figure out what happened between the two of them. While Xander heads towards Faith's motel room, Willow cries over the revelation that her first love has had sex with another girl. At the motel room, Xander tries to help Faith see that what she did was wrong.

With no intentions of hearing any more of this, Faith shoves Xander onto the bed and jumps on top of him. Unlike last time, however, Faith's desires are much deadlier. She wraps her hands around Xander's neck and tries to squeeze the life out of him. Before she can kill him, Faith is distracted by a sound at her doorway. She turns her head just in time to see Angel swing a bat right into her face. Later, Faith regains consciousness in the mansion. Noticing that she's all chained up, Faith tries to come on to Angel. He leaves her there alone momentarily while he goes to talk with Buffy in another room. Angel believes that Faith is more dangerous than ever, now that she's experienced murder by her own hands. After Buffy leaves to patrol, Angel returns to the main chamber to talk to Faith. He tells her how he can relate to her sinful desires. Unfortunately, Faith has no interest in his attempts to help her. Suddenly, Wesley and several other men crash into the mansion. The men subdue Angel while Wesley unlocks Faith's chains. Immediately after unlocking the last chain, Wesley restrains Faith with his own cuffs, informing the Slayer that she will be brought to Britain to face the Council. In the truck, Faith tricks one of the men into getting closer. She then beats him to the ground and threatens to snap his neck unless Wesley frees her from the restraints. Wesley follows her orders. As soon as she's freed, Faith knocks Wesley to the floor and jumps out the back of the truck.

Buffy returns to the mansion to find Faith gone and Angel immobilized on the floor. Shortly, Giles, Xander, and Willow arrive at the mansion. When they try to formulate a plan to save Faith, Willow interrupts with her own objection to the idea of saving a guilty murderer who has just tried to kill Xander. At that moment, a bruised Wesley arrives at the mansion and tells them that Faith has escaped. Having an idea of where she might be, Buffy goes to the docks. Sure enough, Faith is on one of the boats, ready to flee the country. Buffy tries one last time to turn Faith around and get help. They argue again, but this debate is cut short by a surprise ambush. Mr. Trick and several of his vampire cohorts knock Buffy to the ground with a large crate. With Buffy down for the moment, Faith attempts to fight the vampires by herself. As Buffy recovers, Mr. Trick takes advantage of her weakened state to try and kill her once and for all. After dusting the last of the vampire henchmen, Faith sees Mr. Trick about to bite into Buffy's neck. Quickly, Faith rushes over and stakes Mr. Trick's heart from behind, bringing him to a dusty end.

At the library, Buffy talks to Giles about Faith's heroic act. They believe that there may still be hope for Faith. Little do they know that Faith plans on exploring her newly expanded horizons. Mayor Wilkins gets a visit from Faith at his office. With Mr. Trick out of the picture, Faith wants the available job. Intrigued, Mayor Wilkins lets her into the office, shutting the door behind her.

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## 1.51 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Doppelgangeland [#50]

Fed up with life as a mortal, Anyanka begs a demon named D'Hoffryn to create a temporal fold that would allow her to retrieve her powercentre -- the necklace she wore around her neck -- before it was destroyed. D'Hoffryn has no interest in helping Anyanka and would rather see her live out the rest of her life as a mortal. Anyanka pledges to find someone who will help her.

Outside of Sunnydale High, Willow hones her pencil-floating skills while Buffy prepares for a traditional Slayer evaluation which Wesley is conducting. Later, Willow is called to Principal Snyder's office, where another student named Percy West is also waiting. Percy is one of the star members of Sunnydale High's basketball team who just so happens to be having trouble in history class. Principal Snyder orders Willow to tutor Percy. Afterwards, Willow and Buffy go to the library. While Willow heeds Giles' request to try to access the Mayor's computer files, Faith returns with Wesley from the physical portion of the tests. Faith takes note of Willow's computer search, and she later reports it to Mayor Wilkins himself during a tour of Faith's new apartment. Decker out with nearly everything she could ever want, the apartment leaves Faith absolutely giddy. Back at Sunnydale High, Willow learns that Oz and his band just returned from an out-of-town gig. Willow tells Oz that she may have wanted to go. Oz replies with the expectation that Willow wouldn't have wanted to miss a school day. Spotting Percy, Willow tries to arrange a meeting time for their tutor session. However, Percy has a different game plan which involves Willow doing all of the work for him. The last straw for Willow comes when Buffy comments on her reliability. Tired of being the goody-two-shoes of the group, Willow stalks off by herself. She runs into Anyanka, who introduces herself as Anya, a friend of Cordelia's. Willow's mood takes a turn for the lighter when Anya asks for her help in performing a spell to create a temporal fold. Anya explains that she wants to retrieve a lost necklace which was a family heirloom. When Willow and Anya perform the spell, Willow sees visions of the alternate universe that Cordelia visited when she told Anya that she wished Buffy had never come to Sunnydale. Something goes wrong in the course of the spell. Instead of pulling the necklace out of the alternate universe, the vampire Willow is transported out just moments before Oz could dust her on the jagged wood. While Anya futilely searches for the necklace, Willow leaves her alone to try and figure out what she just saw.

Elsewhere, the Willow from the alternate reality awakens. After night falls, she ventures out onto the streets of Sunnydale. Quickly realizing the vast differences surrounding her, Alterna-Willow heads to the Bronze. There, she draws stares from everybody in attendance, including Percy West.

Provoked by Percy's arrogance, Alterna-Willow shoves him over the pool table, then grabs him by the throat and tightens her grip. Xander pulls Percy away before noticing Willow's radical make-over. Thinking he's the Xander of her reality, Alterna-Willow pulls him into her arms, running her hands all over his body. It doesn't take long for her to realize that Xander is still a living, breathing human. Buffy arrives and can't believe her eyes when she sees Willow. When Alterna-Willow recognizes Buffy as the Slayer who staked her beloved Xander, she turns and heads for the Bronze's exit. Buffy tries to stop her, but Willow spins around with vamp face on. She then takes off, leaving Xander and Buffy horrified and speechless. Outside the Bronze, Alterna-Willow encounters two of Mayor Wilkins' vampire henchmen, one of whom is named

Alfonse. With the help of a little sadistic brutality, Alterna-Willow convinces the vampires to work for her and restore chaos to Sunnydale.

Giles gets the word on Willow's untimely death from Buffy and Xander. During their lament over the loss of their friend, the Willow of their reality enters the library. Simultaneously confused and happy, Buffy, Xander, and Giles embrace Willow, who by this point is simply confused. While they tell Willow about her evil twin, Angel enters the Bronze in search of Buffy. As he talks to Oz, Alterna-Willow and her newly-hired cohorts invade the Bronze. After Angel leaves to get Buffy, Alterna-Willow kills and drinks from one of the customers. Oz tries to make sense of what's going on, but Alterna-Willow only remembers him as one of the human rebels from her reality. Anya clears up everything for the lost vampire, telling her that the Willow of this reality is the only one who can bring her back to where she belongs. Meanwhile, Angel reaches the library and walks right up to Buffy, Xander, and Giles. He doesn't notice Willow standing in the corner as he tells the gang that their friend is dead. Willow makes her presence known, sending Angel into the pits of confusion as well. Realizing they have to stop whatever's about to go down at the Bronze, the group leaves the library. Willow, however, is reluctant to kill her alter ego. Remembering the tranquillizer gun, Willow tells the others to go ahead while she heads back into the library. Before she can get the gun, Willow encounters her mirror image, who has sneaked into the library unnoticed. Intrigued by the idea of occupying a world with her double, Alterna-Willow gets uncomfortably cosy with Willow, who retaliates with a cross. Alterna-Willow knocks her over the counter. When the vampire circles around the counter, she is greeted by a tranquillizer dart right in the stomach. Buffy and the gang return and lock Alterna-Willow inside the bookcase. Buffy then comes up with a plan to take care of the vampires in the Bronze.

Disguised in the outfit of her other self, Willow prepares to infiltrate the Bronze and trick the vampires into walking outside, one by one, and getting staked by her friends waiting outside. As Willow enters the Bronze, Alterna-Willow wakes up in her prison. While she notices her own change of clothes, Cordelia enters the library. Alterna-Willow tries to talk her into opening the cage, but Cordy opts to use this opportunity to talk about the secret affair with Xander. After an eternity of rambling, Cordy finally opens the cage. Hungry for blood, Alterna-Willow chases Cordy through the halls before cornering her in a restroom. Before the vampire can close in for the kill, Wesley appears and fends her off with a cross and holy water. Thwarted, Alterna-Willow turns around and leaves. Meanwhile, Anya and Alfonse eventually see through Willow's charade. Willow screams, signalling the others to storm into the Bronze and battle the remaining vampires inside. During the fight, Alterna-Willow arrives and pins Willow on the stage. After dusting Alfonse, Buffy leaps onto the stage and drives a pool cue towards the vampire's heart. Willow screams for Buffy to stop, and the Slayer is able to halt her weapon's descent.

After all of the customers evacuate the Bronze, Alterna-Willow and Anya prepare for another temporal fold. Buffy does not agree with the idea of returning a demon to its own reality where it can kill again. Willow responds by saying that she simply can't kill her. Before Willow sits down to perform the ritual, she says her goodbyes to Alterna-Willow, who says hers in a much more touchy-feely way. Afterwards, Alterna-Willow is returned to the alternate reality... only to be grabbed by Oz and dusted on the jagged wood. The next day, Willow contemplates living up to her good girl reputation and never going out for fun again. When Percy appears with the history paper completely typed

out, Willow decides otherwise.

## 1.52 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Enemies [#51]

After a rather uncomfortable time at the movie theatre, Angel and Buffy remind themselves that they can still love each other completely without going all the way. Their kiss is interrupted by the arrival of Faith, who has been cleared by the Council to resume her Slayer duties. Buffy leaves Angel to join Faith on a nightly patrol around town. In one of the cemeteries, they encounter a demon who offers to sell them the Books of Ascension for the price of \$5,000. He mentions the Mayor's interest in the books, which motivates Buffy to stop Faith from killing the demon. Buffy wants to know more about these books and why the Mayor would want them. After Buffy heads home, Faith reports to the Mayor about the demon and his offer. Mayor Wilkins orders Faith to hunt down the demon, kill him, and retrieve the Books of Ascension.

In the library the next morning, Buffy tells Wesley and the others about the previous night's patrol. Following a tip from Willow, Giles locates a passage in one of his texts that refers to the Ascension. On the supposed day of a previous Ascension, an entire town was apparently wiped out. Cordelia enters the library and indirectly asks Wesley out for dinner later that week. Meanwhile, Faith tracks the demon all the way to the apartment where he's been staying. She attempts to kill the demon with one stab of her knife, but the demon doesn't give up so easily. After a rough struggle, the demon finally dies, leaving his blood on Faith's hands. Faith stares at her hands for a moment, visibly shaken. She then collects the books and leaves. Later that night, Faith visits Angel at the mansion.

She shows him her hands which are still stained with the demon's blood. Angel listens as Faith expresses her dismay over possibly losing control. Angel embraces her for comfort, leading Faith to try to initiate a kiss. Angel backs off, reminding Faith that his heart belongs to Buffy. As Faith leaves, she gives Angel a small kiss on the cheek. This kiss is witnessed by Buffy, whose arrival at the mansion goes unnoticed. At City Hall, Faith tells Mayor Wilkins that she failed in her plan to give Angel the moment of true happiness required to lift his soul. The Mayor decides to take another course of action.

The next day, Wesley instructs Buffy to take Faith and find the demon. Xander arrives with the demon's address, which he obtained by bribing Willy the bartender. Buffy is reluctant to bring Faith along, who soon shows up and is filled in on their orders. Buffy and Faith enter the demon's apartment and find his dead body on the floor. During their assessment of the scene, Buffy senses something wrong about Faith's behaviour. Meanwhile, Mayor Wilkins summons a shrouded man to his office for a special job, one that involves the removal of one's soul. Back at Sunnydale High, Buffy tells Willow what she saw at the mansion between Angel and Faith. Willow assures Buffy that she has nothing to worry about, for Angel would never fall for Faith's moves. Little do they know that Faith is at the mansion at this very moment, putting the moves on Angel once again. When he places his hands on Faith's shoulders to let her know that everything will be okay, she douses a dark liquid onto the centre of Angel's chest. The shrouded man suddenly appears out of nowhere and casts a spell that surrounds Angel in a field of energy. Once Angel falls to the floor, the shrouded man disappears. When Angel gets back up, he's in full

vamp-face, hungry for Faith's kiss. After they part lips, Angel knocks Faith to the floor. He thanks her for turning him back into the evil Angelus. Faith whips out her stake and forces Angel to listen to her. When he finally agrees, Faith leads him to the Mayor's office... but not until after they kiss again on the floor.

At the library, Willow notifies Wesley, Giles, and the others that her computer searches for the Mayor's files have turned up as dead ends. Oz suggests researching the Mayor at the Hall of Records. While Wesley, Willow, Oz, and Cordelia head to the Hall of Records, Xander decides to patrol the streets for any further information. Buffy, in the meantime, heads back home to prepare for an investigation of Mayor Wilkins' office.

At the office, the Mayor has a hard time getting Angel's undivided attention. Angel tries to kill Mayor Wilkins with a letter opener. However, the Mayor reveals his invulnerability to the vampire. Mayor Wilkins then orders Angel and Faith to take care of the other Slayer in town. On their way to Buffy's house, Angel and Faith see Xander walking down the street towards them. Xander tries to find out where they've been, but the only response he gets is a right hook from Angel's fist. As Xander falls to the pavement, unconscious, Angel and Faith continue walking without missing a step. Joyce lets both of them into the house. Upstairs, Angel and Faith tell Buffy that they have the Books of Ascension at the mansion, and they want Buffy to be with them when they deliver the books to Giles.

At the Hall of Records, the gang locates an old photograph of Mayor Wilkins that was taken a century ago. As Wesley realizes that Mayor Wilkins must be over a hundred years old, Xander arrives to tell them about the return of Angel's bad self. Wesley suggests that they inform Giles, but Xander's news of Faith's involvement leads them to look for Buffy immediately. Buffy follows Angel and Faith to the mansion. Once there, Angel reveals his recent change in personality to Buffy. Attempting to escape, Buffy finds her exit blocked by Faith. Angel knocks Buffy out cold, then ties her up in chains. When Buffy comes to, Faith explains her reasons for taking the path she's taken. Faith couldn't tolerate being in Buffy's shadow ever since she arrived in Sunnydale. The popular belief that Buffy is superior to Faith has driven the new Slayer to where she is today. Buffy taunts Faith by claiming that she can stop the Mayor's Ascension. Faith laughs this off, telling them that the Ascension cannot be stopped and will take place, as planned, on Graduation Day. With this information out in the open, Angel drops the evil Angelus act, while Buffy drops the chains that were supposedly restraining her. When Faith realizes that it was all a set-up, she shoves Angel to the side and attacks Buffy. Wesley, Xander, and the rest of the gang arrive just in time to see Angel falling towards them. As Angel and Xander go down, Buffy and Faith battle to a stand-still, with a knife held up to each others throat. Faith calls Buffy's bluff, then runs out of the mansion.

Mayor Wilkins comforts Faith at her new apartment by reminding her that once the Ascension takes place, her broken friendship with Buffy and the others will be irrelevant. At the library, Giles thanks the shrouded man for participating in the scheme to expose Faith and the Mayor's plans.

The shrouded man announces that his debt to Giles has been paid. After the shrouded man disappears into thin air, Giles informs everyone that he introduced the shrouded man to his wife -- thus, the debt. While Wesley and the others discuss the newly-learned information concerning the Ascension and its date, Buffy reminds Xander that Angel was only acting when he punched him.

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However, Buffy doesn't seem so sure of her own words.

Later, Buffy visits Angel at the mansion. He assures Buffy that he never meant to take the act so far as to hurt her. Disturbed by the harsh reminder of what Angel could become again, Buffy insists that they put their relationship on hold for a while.

## 1.53 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Earshot [#52]

On a routine night of patrolling, Buffy encounters a pair of mouthless demons. While she kills one of them on a table at the park, the other demon manages to flee the scene. As she leaves, Buffy fails to notice the dead demon's blood on her hand, which quickly absorbs into her skin.

The next morning, after learning from Willow that everybody will be attending the basketball game later that night, Buffy decides to check out the itch on her hand that's been bugging her all day. In the library, Giles finds an article on the demon that Buffy killed. In it, he learns that physical contact with the demons can cause an infection, in the form of an assimilation of one of the demon's traits. Later that night during the game, Buffy patrols the streets of Sunnydale by herself. She bumps into Angel, whom she has been distant from ever since the trick they played on Faith.

While talking to her friends the next day in the lounge, Buffy inadvertently hears Xander's own thoughts. On the way to the library, she realizes that she can hear what each student is thinking. At the library, Giles concludes that the demons must have communicated telepathically if they had no mouths. Buffy uses her newfound trait to impress her teacher in English class. During the class, Buffy hears some grim thoughts coming from Freddy Iverson, one of the writers for the school newspaper. After class, Buffy visits Angel at the mansion and tries to learn what's going on inside his head. However, Angel informs Buffy that her power can't work on a vampire's mind. He then tries to assure Buffy that he was never tempted by Faith during the entire ordeal that revealed her affiliation with the Mayor.

Buffy returns to the library, where her friends have just learned of the Slayer's new ability. Disturbed and intimidated by this sudden intrusion into their privacy, Xander, Willow, and the others find it tough to be around Buffy. In the hallways, Buffy starts to realize the true downside to her mind-reading ability, for the abundance of thoughts coming from all directions proves to be overwhelming. In the cafeteria, a mental declaration to murder all of the students the next day is heard by Buffy. She tries to identify the source of the thought, but the overflow of thoughts causes her to pass out.

Outside, Buffy regains consciousness and tells the others about the murder plan she discovered. While Buffy goes home to rest, the gang tries to locate the suspect. They try to interrogate all of the prime suspects, but Oz has trouble tracking down Freddy. Meanwhile, Giles and Wesley learn that Buffy needs to consume the heart of the second demon in order to be cured of her mind-reading power. With the Slayer out of action, Giles turns to Angel for help. After hunting down the demon over the course of the night, Angel finally succeeds in obtaining its heart. He brings it to the Summers' home and feeds it to Buffy. Eventually, Buffy wakes up and discovers that she can no longer

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read anybody's mind.

Back at the school, Xander, Willow, Cordelia, and Oz corner Freddy in the newspaper office. Upon learning that he has nothing to do with the murder plot, Cordelia finds an announcement on the desk from Jonathan that apparently admits to the planned killing. Buffy arrives at the newspaper office just in time to help the gang search for Jonathan. While Xander gets distracted by some tasty treats in the cafeteria, Buffy runs out into the courtyard, where she spots Jonathan assembling a rifle at the top of the clock tower. Running out of time, Buffy takes the shortest route possible to the roof. Just as Jonathan attaches the final piece, Buffy crashes into the room. Aiming at rifle at Buffy, Jonathan tries to prevent her from getting in the way of his plan. He tells her how fed up he is with how everybody treats and thinks of him. Buffy responds by telling Jonathan that everybody has their own pain, regardless of how good their lives may seem on the outside. When Jonathan finally hands over the rifle, he shocks Buffy by telling her that he intended to kill himself, not the other students.

Inside the cafeteria, Xander witnesses the lunch lady pouring rat poison into a large pot in the kitchen. He runs out and warns everybody about the lethal lunch special. Xander trips and falls to the floor, giving the lunch lady enough time to tower over him with a large butcher knife in her hand. Luckily, Buffy arrives on the scene and puts the lunch lady down for the count. Willow learns from Buffy that things are going better with Angel, now that some uncertainties about his feelings for Buffy are no longer an issue. After meeting up with Giles, Buffy shocks him by revealing her awareness of his escapades with Joyce while under the influence of the mind-altering candy.

## 1.54 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Choices [#53]

Mayor Wilkins needs a favor, and to get Faith to do it for him, he gives her a gift - a beautiful new dagger. He tells her that a package is arriving tomorrow night from South America that is crucial to his ascension, and he wants Faith to pick it up for him. Faith dutifully heads to the airport, where a propeller plane lands in the misty night. A courier steps forth, but before he can deliver the package, Faith shoots him through the back with an arrow. She then gets into a limousine with the vamp-lackey who brought her there and drives off.

Buffy and Angel, meanwhile, are busy slaying a couple of vampires. After they've finished them off, Buffy laments to Angel that she feels she's in a rut. She's beginning to realize that her future with Angel is going to have some limitations. Another limitation she's thinking about is her college choice. Though she's gotten into Northwestern, which makes her mother very excited, she knows she still has obligations in Sunnydale, and doesn't know if she'll be able to go away to college. Willow is also contemplating her college choices, as she has recently received acceptance letters from Oxford, Yale, MIT and Harvard, among others. Xander is thinking about hitting the road, a la Jack Kerouac. Cordelia, as usual, has some snide comments for them all.

Buffy finally decides she wants to leave Sunnydale, and goes to Wesley to tell him. Wesley tells her she can't leave Sunnydale, especially with Faith gone bad and the Mayor's ascension coming up. Buffy asks him if she could go if she

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can stop the ascension, which would mean Wesley and Giles would only have to take care of the run-of-the-mill stuff, and she could take care of the major stuff when she came home on breaks. Wesley and Giles consider the possibility, but tell Buffy that to consider it seriously, Buffy would have to stop the Mayor's ascension. She suggests taking the fight to them - taking the offensive rather than just waiting for it to happen to them. They all agree that it's a good idea, and Buffy heads off to find out what Faith and the Mayor are up to. She heads to City Hall, where she spies Faith bringing a big box inside.

The Mayor is quite excited to see the box. He has the box taken to a room upstairs and secured. Outside, Buffy stops the limo that has just dropped Faith off, smashes through the driver's-side window and yanks the driver through it. She asks him about the box.

When she returns to the Library, Buffy tells everyone that the box is the Box of Gavroc. It houses demonic energy, and the Mayor needs to devour its contents before Ascension Day. Xander, Willow, Buffy, Giles and Wesley devise a plan to get the box, and start to work.

To get to the box, they will need a potion to break the shield that protects it. Willow researches a formula, and Xander and Oz concoct the potion. With the potion in hand, Buffy, Willow and Angel climb to the top of City Hall, just above the room where the box lies. Opening the skylight, they peer down at the box below. Willow recites a spell, then sprinkles the potion down onto the box. The protective shield dissolves. Angel then straps Buffy in a harness and lowers her through the skylight and down to the box. When she grabs the box, an alarm goes off - and as Angel tries to pull Buffy back up, the harness gets stuck. Two of the Mayor's vamp-lackeys respond to the alarm and rush into the room. Since the harness is still stuck, Angel drops down into the room to join Buffy in fighting the two vamp-lackeys. After an extended fight, Angel and Buffy knock down the vamps and run out of the room. Racing out of City Hall, they jump behind a bush to hide. When a van pulls up in front of City Hall and then speeds away, the vamps chase after it, thinking Buffy and Angel are inside.

The vamps return to City Hall empty-handed, and Mayor Wilkins is not happy to find that the box is stolen. But while he's lost the box, he's gained something - Faith has captured Willow.

Back at the library, the gang tries to figure out what to do about the box - and Willow. Xander proposes an assault to get her back. Buffy suggests they can trade the box back to the Mayor in exchange for Willow. Wesley doesn't think that's a good idea; he argues that thousands of lives are at stake, and that Willow's one life is not worth more. He argues that they must destroy the box and stop the ascension, and find another way to get Willow back. Buffy, who is quite upset, says there is no other way. Oz helps make the group's decision when he slams a pot against the wall. He doesn't say anything. He doesn't have to. They will make the trade.

Back at City Hall, Willow is trapped, and looking for a way out. One of the Mayor's vamp-henchmen comes in, and menacingly readies to take a bite of her. Willow floats a pencil behind him, and before he can bite, she uses the pencil to slay the vampire. She then escapes from her shackles, and begins to roam City Hall. Wandering into the Mayor's office, she finds the Books of the Ascension in his closet and begins to read. She's so engrossed in the books she doesn't even notice Faith walking into the room. Faith is ready to kill

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her. Willow buys herself some time by talking to Faith about the choices she's made to give up being a slayer, and that those choices have left her alone, but she can still come back to their side if she wants. Mayor Wilkins then walks in the room, interrupting the conversation. He's received an interesting phone call...

A meeting has been arranged for the school cafeteria. The Mayor brings Willow, and Wesley, Giles, Angel, Oz, Xander and Buffy bring the box to make an exchange. Before the exchange is completed, Principal Snyder breaks in on the meeting, with two policemen in tow. One of the policemen, examining the box, opens it - and a giant spider jumps out and gnaws on his face. After snacking on the policeman, it scampers away - and lands on the Mayor's face. Faith wrestles it off him, and since he's impervious to harm, he quickly heals. Principal Snyder doesn't quite know what to make of all of it. Buffy runs over and shuts the box, but not before another of the spiders can escape. One of them lands on her back, and she falls backwards to crush it. Spying another one along the wall, Faith kills it with her dagger.

After the exchange, back at the library, Giles asks Willow what she can remember from the books. Willow says she can't remember much - it was a little wordy for her - then with a grin pulls out a few pages she managed to tear from the book. Though they now know more about the Ascension, the Mayor has the Box of Gavroc again, which means they are basically back where they started.

Buffy is still thinking about dealing with the Mayor, but her future is weighing heavy in her mind as well. She tells Willow that she feels she'll never get out of Sunnydale. Willow, though, says that might not be so bad - she's decided to stay at home and go to UC-Sunnydale, and so they'll be able to stay together as friends. Willow explains that she realized she wants to fight evil, and help people, and she feels she can do that best in Sunnydale, which is why she wants to stay. It's a good fight they're fighting, and she wants to keep fighting it.

## 1.55 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Prom [#54]

Buffy wakes up to find herself beside Angel, on his bed in the mansion. Exhausted after a night of patrolling, she apparently crashed at Angel's instead of returning home. Before getting up, Buffy reminds Angel that the Senior Prom is quickly approaching. Back at Sunnydale High, Xander is approached by Anya, who has not yet regained her powers. Confused by the wealth of human emotions inside her, Anya asks Xander to be her date to the Prom. Aware of his situation and general lack of alternatives, Xander accepts.

While he tells the rest of the gang about this recent development, Joyce pays a visit to the mansion. Angel listens as Joyce tells him about the reality of his relationship with her daughter. Deep down, Angel knows that what Joyce wants is also what needs to be done. Back at the library, Giles futilely tries to keep everyone's mind focused on the Mayor's Ascension plans. However, all Buffy and her friends can think about right now is the upcoming Prom.

Elsewhere, a boy inserts a videotape into a VCR for the viewing pleasure of his "pet", a demon beast locked in a cage that goes berserk as the tape begins

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to play. Later that night, Angel has a nightmare that begins pleasantly with a wedding between himself and Buffy. After they are wed, they head down the aisle and step out into the sunlight. Angel then watches in horror as Buffy ignites into flames. He can do nothing as the fire consumes her completely. After Angel wakes up, he joins Buffy on a nightly patrol. While tracking down a vampire in the sewers, Angel admits to Buffy that he can't maintain their relationship, knowing what it will mean for her future. Buffy refuses to believe what he is saying, but Angel makes it clear that he doesn't want her to spend the rest of her life with him. As it slowly sinks in, Angel announces his decision to leave Sunnydale after the threat of the Mayor's Ascension has been eliminated. Later, Buffy tells Willow everything that happened. Although they both understand and agree with Angel's intentions, Buffy lets her tears flow instead of hiding her grief.

Noticing Cordelia checking out a dress once again in one of the shops, Xander enters the store and pries into the matter. He soon learns that Cordy works there. Cordy's family is now broke as a result of her father committing tax fraud for a number of years. Cordy's verbal outburst is interrupted by the sudden intrusion of the demon beast into the store. Xander tries to fight it, but the beast tosses Xander aside and mauls a well-dressed boy to death. As soon as its job is done, the beast looks at the remaining customers before quickly exiting the store. At the library, Xander and the others review the store's security video of the event. Cordy makes an observation that the demon beast was seemingly interested in the tuxedoed boy only. During the beast's exit, Oz spots a boy standing outside of the store with what looks like a remote control of some sort. Using the Sunnydale High yearbook, the gang identifies the boy as Tucker Wells. Upon figuring out that Tucker's plan is to set the demon beast -- which Wesley identifies as a hell hound -- loose on the students at the Senior Prom, Buffy vows to take care of this matter personally and ensure a safe and happy Prom for all.

While everyone splits up to investigate, Buffy goes to a butcher shop since the hell hound eats brains. She gets Tucker's address from one of the employees. Buffy then notices that Angel is also there, buying a supply of blood for himself. Angel tries to talk to her, but Buffy opts to focus her attention on Tucker and his hell hound. She returns to the library and tells the others that it's all in her hands now. After the gang leaves to get ready for the Prom, a concerned Giles wonders what's gotten into Buffy. She tells him about Angel's plans to leave her and Sunnydale.

As she clocks out for the night, Cordy finds out that Xander helped pay off the dress she was hoping to wear to the dance. At the Prom, Xander painfully listens to Anya's countless stories of male persecution, while Wesley assists Giles in his chaperone duties. Cordy enters in her dress, which draws Wesley to her in an instant. Arm in arm, they meet up with Xander and Anya. Cordy subtly thanks Xander for his generosity. Meanwhile, Buffy breaks into Tucker's house and encounters him in the basement. After subduing him, Buffy notices the stacks of teen flicks -- some horror, some not -- on top of a nearby VCR. Tucker then surprises Buffy by revealing three empty cages in an adjoining room. Buffy races back to the school to stop the three hell hounds from completing their mission. One by one, she kills them off, taking out the last one in front of a bewildered student.

With the hell hounds taken care of, Buffy finally arrives at the dance to join her friends. Later that evening, during the presentation of the class awards, Jonathan addresses Buffy in response to an overwhelming number of write-in votes for a new category. Buffy listens in pleasant surprise as Jonathan

states the senior class' appreciation for her life-saving deeds over the course of the past three years. Named the Class Protector, Buffy steps up to the stage to receive her reward while the entire class applauds. After the awards ceremony, Angel arrives in a tux for one last dance with Buffy. In each other's arms, they enjoy what little time they have left before the Mayor's Ascension arrives at last.

## 1.56 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Graduation Day, Part 1 [#55]

Graduation Day has finally arrived, and everybody has a different perspective on it. Cordelia's concerned about the color of their graduation gowns, Buffy doesn't quite get the whole graduation deal, and Xander, who woke up with a bad feeling in his gut, fears he won't survive Graduation Day. He's found out that Mayor Wilkins will be their commencement speaker.

Faith isn't concerned about graduation, but she does have an interest in college. She pays a visit to Professor Worth, a professor at the college. The Mayor wants him dead, and Faith handles the job.

While enduring his final classes, Xander mentions the Ascension to classmate Anya, and her ears perk up. She knows about it, and Xander brings her to the library, where Buffy, Giles and Wesley are trying to figure out why the Mayor killed Professor Worth. Xander announces to them that Anya not only knows something about the Ascension & she's the only living person who's been to one.

She tells them that about 800 years ago, in the Koskov Valleys above the Urals, there was a sorcerer there who achieved Ascension. He became the embodiment of the demon Lohesh, and she was there to witness it. Lohesh, a four-winged soul killer, decimated the village within hours & only a small handful of people survived. Anya explains that an Ascension means that a human being becomes pure demon. She tells them that all the demons that walk the earth are tainted, or human hybrids like vampires, but that a pure demon is different. She doesn't think this sounds like Lohesh, though, because the rituals are all different. Just as she says this, the Mayor bursts into the library.

The Mayor begins to talk about how powerful he'll be once the Ascension happens. Buffy makes a remark, and the Mayor responds by saying when the Ascension comes, he'll eat her. Giles, incensed by this, stabs the Mayor with his fencing foil. Of course, this doesn't affect the Mayor, who merely pulls the blade from his chest and walks away, grinning about his commencement address.

With the graduation ceremonies fast approaching, everyone's getting nervous. Anya, who has seen what an Ascension is like, plans to skip town, though Xander tries to get her to stay and help. She proposes to him that he could leave with her, and tries to persuade him to come, but he's committed to staying to help his friends, and declines. Buffy is also anxious, and tries to convince her mom to leave town, saying she won't be able to concentrate on stopping the Mayor if she has to worry about her mom. She doesn't want to leave, but Buffy finally convinces her. Willow, who is researching in the hopes of finding a spell to stop the Ascension, is nervous, too. To help her

relax some, Oz plants a passionate kiss on her. Soon they are making love. As they lie together afterwards, they both agree that everything feels different now.

At Professor Worth's apartment, Buffy is investigating, trying to find some information that may be helpful, and Angel comes to help her out. They gather a box of documents, and prepare to take it to Giles. Outside the professor's apartment, Buffy and Angel talk about their relationship, and Buffy expresses her frustration. Suddenly an arrow pierces Angel through the back. We see that Faith has shot the arrow. When Buffy tries to help Angel up, he collapses; he's sweating, burning up. The arrow is poisoned, he tells her. In a panic, Buffy rushes Angel back to the library.

At the library, Giles and Wesley are discussing why the professor's research was of interest to the Mayor. He was doing research in old lava beds near a dormant volcano, and he found a large carcass buried underneath by an eruption. In his paper, Professor Worth suggests that the carcass may be some heretofore-undiscovered dinosaur. Giles thinks that perhaps it could also be a demon, which would explain why the Mayor would want to keep this kind of information secret. If the carcass was a demon, then it means that the demon can be killed, which would mean that the mayor is only impervious to harm until the Ascension. Once he's in demon form, he could be killed.

Buffy brings Angel back to the library for help tended. Willow is summoned to figure out what was on the arrow Faith shot Angel with. Wesley contacts the Council to see if they can help, but he returns to tell Buffy that they said they wouldn't help. It's not Council policy to cure vampires. Buffy is defiant, but Wesley explains that they're talking about laws that are older than civilization. Buffy says she doesn't care how old the laws are. She's talking about watching her lover die. The Council's orders, Wesley reminds her, are to concentrate on the Ascension. Buffy says she doesn't think she's going to be taking any more orders, from Wesley or the Council, and tells Wesley that she's not working for them anymore. Wesley pleads with her, arguing that Faith poisoned Angel to distract Buffy, and now the strategy is working. Buffy replies that she has a strategy of her own, and Wesley is not in it. This is mutiny, Wesley cries. Buffy says she likes to think of it as her graduation.

Willow, meanwhile, has figured out what the poison is. Its Latin name translates to "killer of the dead." Oz finds that the only cure for it is to drain the blood of a slayer. Buffy has an idea. She'll get Faith's blood, and she'll kill her first if she has to. No more playing around, she says. She's ready to take on Faith to the death. Opening the closet in the library, she removes a dagger. It's the one the Mayor gave Faith, the one Faith used to kill one of the creatures from the Box of Gavroc in the cafeteria when the box was exchanged for Willow. She takes it with her. Oz and Willow figure out where Faith's apartment is, and Buffy heads there for the confrontation.

The Mayor, meanwhile, is busy preparing for the Ascension by performing the Ritual of Gavroc. Sitting at his desk in his office, he gleefully devours the creatures from the Box of Gavroc, feeling stronger with each one he eats.

Buffy arrives at Faith's apartment, and the battle soon begins. The furious fight leads them crashing through the window of Faith's apartment and onto a lower roof below. When they land, Buffy slaps handcuffs onto Faith's wrist. The other cuff is already attached to her own wrist. The fight continues between the two handcuffed slayers until Faith breaks the cuffs apart. Buffy

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staggers back, and pulls out Faith's dagger. They tangle some more, and the fight moves toward the edge of the roof. As they peer over the ledge, Buffy stabs Faith. Faith, stumbling, steps on to the ledge, leans back and says goodbye, falling back into a passing truck. Buffy rushes to the ledge, but she's too late. The truck, with Faith, and her slayer's blood which Buffy needs to save Angel, is driving away.

## 1.57 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Graduation Day, Part 2 [#56]

After the climactic battle on the roof of Faith's apartment building, Buffy stands alone with the knife that may have killed Faith. As the reality of not being able to use Faith's blood as a cure for Angel sets in, Buffy has a moment of painfully quiet introspection, then leaves, having made her decision internally. Just as Buffy descends the escape ladder, the Mayor and one of his goons search the apartment looking for Faith. The apartment is in a shambles, and although the Mayor tries to convince himself that Faith will prevail in the fight, his fear is written all over his face.

Back at the library, Xander and Giles research how to defeat the Mayor in demon form when Cordelia barges in demanding an explanation of why Wesley has decided to leave the country. After Giles explains that Wesley is no longer Buffy's watcher, Xander manages to convince Cordy to join in the fight against the Mayor.

Meanwhile, Willow cares for Angel back at his hideout, but things don't look so good for Angel. When he wakes up from a troubled sleep, he mistakes Willow for Buffy. When the real Buffy shows up, she asks Willow and Oz to leave so that she can be alone with Angel. When they leave, she explains to Angel that the only way for him to survive is to drink her blood. Angel emphatically resists, but after Buffy physically induces his vampire side to come out, he sinks his fangs into her neck and drains her near to death. When Angel comes to and realizes what he has done, he rushes Buffy to the hospital and demands that the doctors treat her immediately.

In the next room, the Mayor grieves over Faith, who lies in a coma. When a doctor comes in announcing another girl with 'severe blood loss' in the other room, he puts two and two together. He walks very calmly over to Buffy and tries to suffocate her, but Angel comes to the rescue. The Mayor warns Angel that at Graduation he will do much worse to Buffy, then storms out. Just as the Mayor exits, Giles, Xander, Oz and Willow meet Angel in the hall. Seeing that Angel's health has been restored, they question Buffy's condition and Angel's sudden recovery, and soon learn that Buffy's blood was the cure for Angel's ailments. While both Giles and Xander both strongly disapprove of Angel's actions, they know they must focus on the Ascension.

In a strange and surreal dream, Faith is alive and well, and gives Buffy some valuable advice: 'human weakness' is the key to defeating the Mayor. Questioning whether Faith's mind or her own mind is creating this fantasy, she drifts out of her sleep and wakes up in the hospital. She wanders over to Faith's bed and gives her an apologetic kiss, then meets the gang in the waiting room. Startled to see her up so soon, they are even more startled when she says that she is 'ready for war.'

At the library, Buffy goes over her plan with Giles, Angel, Xander, Willow, Oz and Cordelia. Wesley unexpectedly walks in, and before Buffy and the gang can ostracize him, he explains that he has not come back representing the council; he is back to help. Meanwhile, the Mayor plans his assault with his vampire goons. The vamps are told to hold the people in the area so that the Mayor can feed on them once the ascension is complete.

Back at the school, the gang goes to work rounding up students to help with the battle. Willow grabs Percy and Xander rounds up Harmony while Wesley and Cordelia share a hilariously awkward romantic good-bye in the library. In another sort of good-bye, Angel tells Buffy that if they survive the Ascension, he will not say good-bye, he will simply leave.

The big day finally arrives, and the students file in wearing their crimson caps and gowns. Anxiety and fear paint the faces of Buffy and the gang while Principal Snyder gives his usual condescending banter, then introduces Mayor Wilkins as the honored guest speaker. The Mayor begins his speech about graduation, ascension and change, but before he can finish, the ascension begins.

The moon eclipses the sun, bringing darkness over the ceremony. And before a stunned crowd, the Mayor morphs into a giant, twenty-foot dinosaur with a vicious set of teeth and a ravenous appetite. But amid the ensuing chaos, the student body is ready. Led by Buffy and a courageous Xander, the students rip off their gowns to reveal an arsenal of weapons. They bombard the demon and his vampire minions with flame-throwers, rifles, arrows, spears and swords. In the melee, the demon dips down and grabs Principal Snyder between his jaws, and devours him. Buffy sees her chance, and orders the class to retreat. Now one on one with the Mayor, she taunts him with the knife that pierced Faith, and leads him on a chase through the high school. The chase ends in the library, which is rigged with explosives. All the Mayor can say is "Oh, gosh!" as he and the halls of Sunnydale High are blown back into hell.

In the aftermath, Giles congratulates Buffy on the victory, and presents her diploma that he pulled from the wreckage. As Giles leaves to check on the injured Wesley, Buffy spots Angel standing at a distance. They exchange a long, painful look, but before Buffy can approach Angel to say good-bye, he walks away and disappears into the smoky haze. Later that night, Buffy, Xander, Willow, Oz and Cordelia take a moment to reflect on the fact that they have not only survived the battle, but they have survived high school.

## 1.58 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Freshman [#57]

Trying to adjust to the rigors of college life proves to be harder than Buffy imagined. She moves into a dorm, must contend with a less-than-stable roommate and the complexities of dating college men. On campus, Willow is overly enthused about college life and her ongoing romance with Oz, and Xander unexpectedly returns from his self-discovery adventure. Elsewhere, Giles seems to be enjoying his life away from being a librarian and a Watcher.

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## 1.59 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Living Conditions [#58]

Dorm life proves to be quite an adjustment for Buffy when her roommate drives her crazy with her idiosyncrasies even invading Buffy's dreams and the gang must come together to find away to get her to move out. Away from the dorm, Buffy meets Parker Finch, a handsome older classman who is the first guy Buffy has been attracted to since her break-up with Angel.

## 1.60 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Harsh Light Of Day [#59]

The underworld version of Sid Vicious, Spike, returns to Sunnydale in search of the vampire version of the Holy Grail, a mythical relic that supposedly engenders the wearer with unimaginable powers, and it's up to Buffy to stop him. Meanwhile, Buffy is distracted by dating issues as she deals with her feelings for a new boy who happens to not be a blood-sucking vampire, but is equally as difficult to understand. Xander has romance issues of his own when his prom date from last spring, Anya, can't get the X-man out of her mind.

## 1.61 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Fear Itself [#60]

Buffy reluctantly agrees to join Willow, Oz and Xander at a Halloween party where they stumble into a real-life house of horrors masquerading as an innocuous fraternity. Meanwhile, Giles is called upon to help out the college crowd when all he wants is to get into the spirit of the holiday.

## 1.62 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Beer Bad [#61]

When Buffy is befriended by a group of upperclassmen who convince her to drown her sorrows with them, bartender Xander becomes suspicious when Buffy and her new friends return to their primordial roots. Back at The Bronze, Willow is aware of Oz's attention being turned to a new performer, the sexual and charismatic Veruca.

## 1.63 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

Wild At Heart [#62]

Buffy does her best to console Willow when Oz is undeniably drawn to another woman, Veruca. Even after it is discovered that his attraction stems from the

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fact that she is also a werewolf, his powerful primitive instincts may be too innate to ignore.

## 1.64 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

The Initiative [#63]

Unbeknownst to Buffy and the gang, Spike is captured by a commando squad for The Initiative, a mysterious underground laboratory beneath the streets of U.C. Sunnydale. Meanwhile, Buffy's Psych T.A., Riley, has a major slayer crush and turns to Willow for advice on ways to woo.

## 1.65 Buffy - The Vampire Slayer (Help)

Buffy - The Vampire Slayer

You don't need any help for this.

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