BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

"Still Life"

by
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TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. BUFFY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dark and spooky. Moonlight shoots shadows into the room. We float through the eerie silence out into:

2 INT. BUFFY'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The front door can barely be made out. MUTED VOICES just ahead. Then a window CRASHES. A bevy of SCREAMS. Rush down the hallway to:

3 INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cast in the glow of the television the Slayerettes are mostly in various stages of cringing. XANDER, DAWN, and ANDREW sit on the couch in fearful contortions. BUFFY'S crosslegged on the floor unphased. KENNEDY and WILLOW clutch each other on the recliner. ANYA lingers nearby.

Another flash from the television and Dawn lets out a whimper. Buffy stares hard at the TV, studying.

BUFFY
She'd make a great Slayer.

DAWN
She cut the guy's arm off!

BUFFY
But the precision she did it with. Plus she kinda had to.

DAWN
She cut the guy's arm off!

XANDER
Only before she beheaded him.

DAWN
(small voice)
She cut his head off too?

XANDER
It was kind of an implied off screen thing.

Andrew tilts his head to look at the screen.

ANDREW
The infected don't shamble enough.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

XANDER
I have to agree. Nymphomaniac cheerleaders, they should run fast. But zombies -- shambling's half their charm.

BUFFY
Okay, I just got an insight into your personal life I did not need.

ANYA
I cursed someone once so that his nagging mother-in-law came back as a zombie. Kind of a disappointment. I wish the real ones were more crafty and vicious.

Everyone takes a moment to turn and glare at Anya. Then they all chuck popcorn through her.

BUFFY/XANDER/WILLOW/DAWN/KENNEDY
JINX!

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Moving overhead, ancient oaks, tombs so worn their occupants have been forgotten. The CLINK of shovels. Down through some branches to see: WILLIS, wearing a suit minus jacket with sleeves rolled up and tie thrown over his shoulder.

He's whistling "I've Been Working On the Railroad" while tearing out chunks of earth with his pickax. Similarly dressed yuppie fellows are digging up other graves nearby.

FATHER (O.S.)
Excuse me son.

Willis turns from his work to see an aged old priest standing nearby holding a lantern.

FATHER
What are you boys doing?

Willis steps out of the hole he's part way sunk into. Pickax over his shoulder.

WILLIS
We're digging father.

FATHER
Who told you to dig here? What's going on?
CONTINUED:

WILLIS
So many fascinating questions in this world and Catholics still bother with the simple ones.

Willis drive's his pickax into the priest's forehead who crumples to the ground dead.

Willis jumps back into the shallow hole. Keeps on whistling, keeps on digging.

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER
ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. DINER - MORNING

The bustle of the breakfast crowd, bright and early. Willis walks in like he owns place, dapper well dressed and all dat. He slides into a booth with two of his fellow diggers, THOMAS two pounds short of being an entire offensive line and KYLE, orange haired frazzle who looks like his life consists of one unending caffeine fix. Both are suit and tied as well.

WILLIS
Hello gentleman, everyone sleep cozy?

KYLE
Sleep? Like we sleep.

THOMAS
What's with this required six A.M. breakfast fun? I don't think heavenly father got up this early unless it was to be tortured.

Willis picks up a menu, flips through.

WILLIS
Then consider it your daily suffering for our good work.

THOMAS
I need sleep.

WILLIS
You can sleep when you're dead.

THOMAS
Only if you two let me.

WILLIS
Exactly. How are our new recruits Kyle?

KYLE
Um, they're kind of disoriented, you know, not with the program yet. But, chanting, I've done some chanting and I think they'll come around.

WILLIS
Can we have them on the line by this afternoon?
CONTINUED:

KYLE
Doable doable. Definitely, I think, we can do that.

WILLIS
I want them out in the neighborhoods as soon as possible. You help him Thomas.

THOMAS
(sighs)
You know I hate clocking in the newsies. All that concentration and those gosh darn herbs mess with my allergies.

WILLIS
We each make our sacrifices.

THOMAS
What will you be doing?

WILLIS
Scoping out new meat.

INT. DAWN'S ROOM - MORNING

The alarm clock on her bedstand JANGLES She reaches over and CLICKS it off. Hops out of bed disturbingly perky. She wears pajama pants and a baby T with a rainbow snake on it.

Stretches her arms above her head, the bottom of her T sliding up to reveal her tummy scars in the mirror. She notices and rolls her eyes.

INT. DAWN'S BATHROOM - LATER

The shower's running and steam floats through the room. Her reflection in the mirror is blurred over with condensation. She draws a little flower with her finger.

On her shoulder blades as she pulls her shirt off over her head. Fresh pink scars adorn her back but she doesn't notice.

She steps into the shower and closes the frosted glass door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACKNESS

The locker door opens and we're looking out at Dawn's pretty face.
INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Dawn gathers her books for first period. JODY slides up next to her.

JODY
Hey Dawn, how are you?

DAWN
Feeling like someone spiked my Cheerios with the happy.

JODY
Excellent, what'd you do last night?

DAWN
I saw a penis.

Jody looks more than a bit flummoxed for a few beats.

JODY
Yeah, um, that's well... educational I guess.

DAWN
My sister showed me.

His jaw gesticulates a bit but no sounds come out. Dawn gathers the last of her books and shuts her locker. She leans in and kisses him on the cheek.

DAWN (cont’d)
You're cute when you're confused.

She steps past him and heads down the hall. He turns to watch her go, still struggling to find the words.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Buffy's got her snazzy work suit on. She trudges up a muddy incline in heels. Her Slayerness makes it look almost gracious.

She slips past a rather robust mausoleum to find Willow who stands inside a police tape perimeter amidst a dozen or so empty graves. Each has a open coffin still in the bottom.

BUFFY
Great way to spend a lunch hour.

WILLOW
I'm thinking we should stop watching the news altogether. And cancel the paper. And bury our heads in the sand.

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
These people probably thought they'd be safe underground too. Imagine their surprise to get dug up.

WILLOW
Hmm, I don't feel any bad magicks...

BUFFY
I'm sensing a but.

WILLOW
I don't feel anything, that's the big but. Not the grass or the trees. Nada. It's like everywhere around here someone hit life's mute button.

BUFFY
It is a graveyard. Did you check any of the coffins?

WILLOW
And steal all the fun from the Slayer. Why would I go and do that?

Buffy gives her a "you smarmy vixen" look. Looks at her work clothes, shrugs, then hops down into one of the ditches.

She examines the inside of the coffin. Inside the lid she see two grimy palm prints on the fabric liner.

BUFFY
Welcome to zombie fun time hour.

With one heave Buffy leaps straight up and out of the grave for a perfect ten landing.

BUFFY (cont’d)
Coffin opened from the inside. Thinking it's magic after all. Either that or the occupant had a hundred year hangover.

Willow kneels down at the edge of the grave. She runs her hands through a clump of grass.

WILLOW
This close and I only feel twinges. That's a pretty impressive glamour.

BUFFY
Can you see through it?
WILLOW
Some time and a little fun chanting, I should be able to crack it.

She grabs some of the dirt from the ground. Drops clumps of it back into the hole.

WILLOW (cont’d)
Does it ever strike you as weird, Buffy? Everything we do brings us back to death.

BUFFY
It's far from comforting if that's what you mean.

WILLOW
We're the front lines or sometimes the only lines. Okay, big pressure, freaking myself out. Having the power over life and death. Not quite the reassuring gig you'd expect it to be is it?

BUFFY
I wouldn't know.

Willow makes a little Willow noise.

BUFFY (cont’d)
I protect people sure, save their lives even. I use death. But you can touch life, reach into it and guide it home when it's lost.

WILLOW
When I brought you back I had Xander and Anya and -- We did it together is all.

BUFFY
You can play coy Wicca with the others Will. I'm the Slayer, I know power. We do not walk in this world. We're visitors intruding. I fight and I've died protecting a humanity I can never really be a part of. Because I was Chosen. I've lived through death and the more I see of what you can do, the more I'm convinced you will too.

WILLOW
I won't.
CONTINUED: (3)

BUFFY
We'll see.

Willow's a tad flustered. She plops her butt down into the dirt.

WILLOW
I need to chant.

BUFFY
Okay, speechifying done. You know by now we've probably read all hundred and one twisted things to do with a corpse. Wonder what these are for?

WILLOW
Let's hope a friendly picnic.

INT. JACKSON'S FOYER - DAY

Jackson opens the door to reveal the priest from the teaser. He appears unblemished and now wears a suit like a man in black.

FATHER
Hello son. May I come in?

JACKSON
Sure thing, Father.

The man in black steps inside and Jackson closes the door.

FATHER
Tell me, have you accepted Jesus into your life?

Jackson's face scrunches in confusion.

JACKSON
Father Donovan, you baptized me. You presided over my confirmation.

Father looks at him blankly.

JACKSON (cont’d)
It's Jackson. Don't you remember me? Or my sister?

FATHER
Did you know that Christ came to America?

JACKSON
What happened to you? Where's your collar?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FATHER
These aren't the questions you should be asking, son. Greater things await. Even for someone like you.

JACKSON
Someone like me?

FATHER
A cursed Lamanite who's skin is burned to show his rebellious and violent nature. I offer you a chance for redemption from your wicked heritage.

Jackson's hit pretty hard by Father's comment.

JACKSON
You told me love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Even madness. That helped me.

FATHER
It must have been a different time. I was wrong.

JACKSON
Get out of my house.

FATHER
Son, don't turn your back on God.

JACKSON
I'm only following your example. Get out!

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Buffy's no longer around. Willow sits in the lotus position at the edge of an open grave, her hands folded in her lap. An echoing hum emanates from her.

Willow stares down in the grave. The shadows, dark and deep, begin to separate and take on lighter tones. The hand prints on the inside lid shimmer. She gazes around the graveyard and all the colors are muted shades of grey.

She stands, watches the black and white world she sees. Catches sight of a glimmer of yellow wiggling in the grass nearby. Moves closer to see what looks like a shimmering kite string.

Though there's no wind, it lifts and hovers a few feet off the ground.
CONTINUED:

Willow's eyes follow one end of it to where it touches the grass again. It snakes through tombstones beckoning her to follow. Willow starts moving along the string.

EXT. GRAVEYARD GATES - MOMENTS LATER

She opens the creaking rusty gates and slips through following the yellow string. In places the string hovers, other sections wind across the pavement.

People move along the sidewalk in their day to day business. Each person has a pulsing yellow light within them. She keeps following the string.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

A wide tableau of a run down industrial space. A few dozen men in black sit at long rickety tables. A variety of slurping noises come from them devouring their lunch.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - KITCHEN - DAY

Our three cafe baddies all have their suit jackets off and aprons on. Several huge soup cisterns simmer on the stove. They stand in front of the serving counter.

WILLIS
Pretty good neuron overall.

KYLE
Not enough.
(mumbles, counts on his fingers)
Lunch definitely covered. Dinner, maybe half if we're lucky.

WILLIS
I went all over town to get that much. Ration them.

KYLE
Can't. Indoctrination simple. Maintaining it -- the longer they go, the more they think, the more they think the more they need. They gobble more and more to keep the same pathways active, to let us control them.

Willis steps up, thrusts his finger against Kyle's chest.

WILLIS
Joseph Smith got close. I'll go all the way. We'll fix this.

THOMAS
How?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

WILLIS
I don't know. What are the Baptists doing this evening?

THOMAS
You're not funny.

WILLIS
Am I laughing?

A moment as his words sink in.

WILLIS (cont’d)
You want to spend your life under the yoke...
(points upwards)
...of el goody two shoes, enjoy. But already we've transcended His barriers. We resurrected these people to live the word how it should be.

THOMAS
What about that priest you killed? Last time I checked Catholics are Christians too.

WILLIS
Following an imperfect line of dogma. He could not realize the full truth. Now he's become part of it. We know because we were taught we can become gods if we have the power and perseverance to seize it.

THOMAS
And mass murder.

WILLIS
Sodom, Gomora. Stepping stones. Punishment. He's killed to mold the world to his vision. We can do the same.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Willow stands in front; the yellow string hovering around her feet. The warehouse is rather nondescript and pretty scummy looking, especially in tones of grey she sees.

MAN IN BLACK (O.S.)
Late for lunch. So hungry.

She barely catches a glimpse of him as he rushes past her through the door.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Willow looks at the ground, the yellow string she followed is no longer there. She takes a deep breath and pulls the door open.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS
So, what, we just crash some prayer meeting?

WILLIS
That would do.

KYLE
Mathematically speaking it makes total sense. Big city lots of wrongful just not teaching the right way to God kind of places. Low security no one expecting it; no risk max reward; our shepherdship continues.

The mib from outside walks up and scrapes his hand across the counter.

MAN IN BLACK
Hungry, very hungry.

Willis grabs a bowl and ladles out some nasty look gray soup into it. He walks over and hands it to the mib who eyes it lustily and walks off.

THOMAS
We've scoped out the opposition around here. Which place looks the best.

Willis keeps staring out past the serving counter.

WILLIS
I see a girl.

THOMAS
Focus Willis. You're our heavenly father with the plan remember.

WILLIS
We don't dig up girls.

The other two rush to the counter and look out.

WILLIS (cont’d)
I'll deal with her.
INT. SOUP KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Willow wanders in a daze amidst the crowd. From her perspective the grey world is filled with pulsing light emanating from inside the people eating.

Their lights appear weaker than the people she saw along the street. Yellow chords are wrapped thickly around each person's neck and droop to the ground in long gooey lines. The ethereal strings tangle across the ground everywhere Willow steps. Willow watches the shimmering kite strings begin to sway and move.

WILLIS (O.S.)
Hello miss. What can I do for you?

Willow doesn't look at him at first, she's still studying the strings, following the icky lines of them with her eyes. They seem to converge. She looks up.

Everything shows in Willow's expression. The lines of her face crack, terror unbound. Her eyes shift to the crowd.

Everyone stares at her with their mouths hanging open. Their lips not moving, shrieks fill her head.

CHILDLIKE (V.O.)
Help us!

GROGGY (V.O.)
Stop him...

PATHETIC (V.O.)
He won't let us rest.

MANIC (V.O.)
I can't move! I CAN'T MOVE!

She clamps her hands to her ears.

WILLOW
(her scream echoing both in her mind and out)
XANDER!

She tries to turn but stumbles, smashes her knee hard on the industrial tile floor. Her feet SQUEAK on the tile. She scrambles and bolts out the door.

Willis wears a scowl. Four mibs from the crowd stand around him now.

WILLIS
You want a brain? Taste that one.
CONTINUED:

He points and they tear out the door after Willow.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
CONTINUED: (2)

**ACT TWO**

FADE IN:

18 INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Xander's sprawled out in the arm chair sleeping. His arms hang over the edges, a remote in one hand. He shudders violently awake, the remote CLACKS to the floor.

   XANDER

   Willow?!

He jumps up and looks around catching his bearing.

   XANDER (cont’d)

   Weird dreams.

He wobbles on his feet. Blinks hard and grabs his head.

19 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

SCRAMBLING POV

Silent, only images that are scratched and slightly blurred. Willow's feet hitting the pavement as she runs. Looks behind her to see four men in dark suits chasing her.

20 INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Xander covers his left eye with his hand. He gazes around the room. Everything appears as normal and boring as usual. He covers his right eye and opens his left.

21 EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

SCRAMBLING POV

running, turns a corner. Glimpse of crossed street signs on a pole: Euclid Ave and Knowles St.

22 EXT. BUFFY'S PORCH/STREET - CONTINUOUS

Xander throws the door open and runs out. One hand covers his left eye, the other holds a baseball bat. A thirty-something man in black walks along the sidewalk. Xander rushes past to his car.

   MAN IN BLACK

   Excuse me, may I have a moment?

Xander's in mid-fumble between the bat, his keys, and avoiding vertigo by covering his left eye.

   XANDER

   Sorry, gotta go.

(CONTINUED)
He gets the door open and hops in the car. The mib heads up the walk. Xander tears off.

INT. BUFFY'S FOYER/PORCH – CONTINUOUS

Andrew comes down the stairs to find the front door hanging open.

ANDREW
(calling out)
Global warming! Am I the only one here who respects inside outside boundaries?

He shuts the door but it catches on something before it closes.

MAN IN BLACK (O.S.)
Ow! Okay, that hurt.

Andrew opens the door to find the mib hopping and grabbing his foot.

ANDREW
Welcome, to Casa de Summers. I can say that because I've been to Mexico.

MAN IN BLACK
It's good to travel.

INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

The mib hops over the couch and falls to a sit.

ANDREW
Is there anything I can get you. Tasty beverage, pop tart?

MAN IN BLACK
No, I'm fine thank you.

Andrew walks over, sits in the arm chair.

ANDREW
Soooo, ummmmm, who are you?

MAN IN BLACK
I'm here to tell you how you can be saved.

ANDREW
From what?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MAN IN BLACK
Heavenly father smiles on all his children. Especially on those who have accepted His path. You seem like a very nice man. If I may ask have you found your faith?

ANDREW
I learned to summon demons once but I'm sort of over that now.

MAN IN BLACK
It's unfortunate that we all channel demons at some time. Avarice, lust, egotism. With heavenly father's guidance we can purge these faults in ourselves and be redeemed.

ANDREW
You can give me redemption?

MAN IN BLACK
I can't. Our Lord can. There is no sin so grievous it cannot be forgiven if you ask our Lord in the right way. He was once a humble man like you or I. In another world and place he ascended to a higher state. Became our Lord here. Any one of us through living rightly could do the same.

ANDREW
What do I have to do?

MAN IN BLACK
Love God with all your being. Slay the demons of which you spoke with the sword of His truth?

A KNOCK comes from the door. Andrew doesn't get up at first. KNOCKS again. Andrew goes over:

INT> BUFFY'S FOYER/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Opens the door.

JODY
Hey man, how's it going?

ANDREW
I'm learning about redemption.

JODY
Uh, cool.
INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jody steps on inside. Sees the mib on the couch. The mib smiles and Jody just rolls his eyes.

JODY
Is this for real?

MAN IN BLACK
Come, sit with us. We were having a delightful conversation.

JODY
Yeah, I'm not much for the talking.

He throws his arm around Andrew. Andrew twitches a bit but doesn't shake it off.

JODY (cont’d)
Me and my bud here haven't been straight with the man upstairs for a while now.

MAN IN BLACK
Now is as good a time as any to start.

JODY
Tell me something, what do you think about marriage?

MAN IN BLACK
If a couple truly loves each other they should be joined in His sight.

JODY
Sweet, so will you marry us?

MAN IN BLACK
Excuse me?

JODY
We'd like to get married, right now. Hop to.

The mib stands, stares at Andrew. Andrew shakes Jody's arm off and takes a step away from him.

ANDREW
See, he has this condition, it's kind of like Tourets, only worse.

MAN IN BLACK
If you knowingly continue a life of sin the Lord cannot save you.
CONTINUED:

JODY
Okay, this is the part where my fist will impact every square inch of your body if you don't make with the getting the hell out.

MAN IN BLACK
I'll pray for you both.

JODY
Ditto.

The mib heads out the door, slams it behind himself.

ANDREW
Okay, why did you make him leave?

JODY
Hello, religious freak.

ANDREW
Hello, guy who summoned demons and could be going to hell for it. I did things, I did bad bad things. What if he's right? What if I could be fine without some minor orientation issue?

JODY
What's going on here. (motions his hand indicating the two of them) Whatever the hell it is. It's who we are. Freako's like that guy try to make us ashamed because they can't deal with it. Don't let him mess with your head. The only person who can redeem you is you.

ANDREW
You're so sure of that.

JODY
I pretty much have to be.

INT. BUFFY'S FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Andrew tromps up the stairs. Jody stops following him at the bottom. A DOOR SLAMS somewhere above.

JODY  
(calling up)
So, um, about that thing Dawn saw?
EXT. PARK - DAY

Willow tears across a narrow field and into some brambles and trees. Things catch on her clothes slowing her down but she keeps pushing through.

She looks back, only two mibs are in pursuit now. The forest rolls down an embankment and she runs with it. It's steep and she soon can't control how fast she's barreling down the hill.

She clips a tree and it spins her sending her tumbling down smashing through the brambles. She rolls to a painful stop, looks up. Sees a stream up ahead with a path running next to it.

Hustles to her feet and makes for the path. Runs full out fast as she can. The path and the stream run under a small overpass.

She dives into the shadows underneath, runs for the other side. The silhouettes of two mibs appear up ahead. She skids on her heels to a stop.

Turns back, the two other mibs are there. She's trapped under the bridge. Both sets walk toward her.

WILLOW
Circle of truth and beauty, I call thee, no, that's not right. Circle of truth and beauty, I ask -- No, come on think. Circle...
   (looks one way)
Truth.
   (looks the other)
Ugly.

They're on her. A blonde man in black grabs her by the collar. He head butts her and her nose starts to bleed. He wraps his thumbs around her throat and chokes her.

Willow flails to fight him off. He trips as she squirms and they plummet into the water. He stands back up in the waist deep water and holds her under by the throat.

WILLOW'S POV

Sound is muffled from the water engulfing her. The face of the man killing her is distorted and indiscernible. She gasps but can't find air.

Somewhere above she hears a car SKID to a stop. Her eyes close. The other three watch from the bank, chanting:

MEN IN BLACK
Baptism! Baptism! Baptism!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PLONK! A bat impacts the back of one of their heads. He drops out cold. The other two turn to face Xander. One charges. Xand swings low slamming him in the knee.

The mib crumples. The next one charges. Willow's eyes pop open. Xander, who had both eyes open is thrown off his game. The mib tackles him and the bat skitters away.

Willow bares her teeth. The water around bubbles and scalds. The blonde mib let's go. He backs away shaking his burned hands. Xander grapples on the ground.

He gets an arm free and slams his elbow into the side of the mib's head, knocking him out. Xander pushes him off and gets up.

Blondie backhands Willow across the face. She stumbles but doesn't fall. He slaps again, but deflects off a magic barrier Willow manages to cast in time. The mib hit in the knee is halfway up.

Xander runs over and kicks him in the side knocking him back down. Xand kicks him twice more on the ground to keep him down. Blondie pounds on the barrier. Willow holds her hand up to maintain it but it won't last for long. The more he slams his fists against it the duller it appears.

Xander covers his left eye with one hand, grabs the bat with the other. He makes a mad dash for the stream and leaps into it splashing down behind Blondie. Three solid swings and Blondie's out and falls into the water, floating off with the current.

The barrier gives and Willow falls into Xander's arms. He hefts her out of the water and back to dry land. They catch their breath. Xander kneels by Willow. She lies on the ground. Close on Xander's mystic eye as it sees from:

WILLOW'S POV
looking up at Xander.

DISSOLVE TO:

XANDER'S POV
looking down at Willow, the spell ended.

WILLOW
I screamed your name. I hoped you'd find me.

XANDER
Whatever mojo that scream worked it got me here.
He helps her up and into a hug.

WILLOW
Thanks Xander.

XANDER
I told you practicing that Aquaman lunge as a kid would come in handy. Let's get you home.

29
INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING
Willow's wrapped in a towel on the couch with Kennedy's arm wrapped around her as well. The gang's convened.

WILLOW
They're not just animated corpses.

30
INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS
The whitewash is chipped and the walls themselves sag with the weight of the world. A few mibs appear from shadows along the street. More emerge and they move toward the front doors.

WILLOW (V.O.)
Somehow he brought their souls back and pressed them into their maggot ridden bodies; then used a glamour to hide it.

31
INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS
Dawn kneels at the coffee table.

DAWN
I've read about soul binding rituals. It's not for-dummies magic. Souls naturally want to be free. Controlling them's a toughy. Did you see how he's doing it?

WILLIS
(her voice quavers)
His saliva strangles them. Long gooey strings of it wind back to him. I could hear them, begging their bodies not to do what they did. The strings yanked them along, forced them.

DAWN
Essence chords, I've read about them. I have to find the right book. Hopefully it's not in Aramaic. I suck at Aramaic.
CONTINUED:

She goes to shelves and starts digging.

WILLOW
That's not the worst part.

INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The double doors swing open. Willis strides down the center aisle, big smile.

WILLOW (V.O.)
I saw his face, not his flesh, but his true face. Crooked razorblade teeth in an enormous maw and eyes like black holes.

BUFFY (V.O.)
He's a demon?

WILLOW (V.O.)
No, he's human. That's what makes it worse.

A group of twenty or so people of all ages sit in the pews near the front. Willis strolls up nonchalantly.

WILLIS
Studying the good book I see.

BAPTIST PASTOR
Sit down, join us brother.

WILLIS
Nah, read that one. I prefer the updated version.

He chucks a book at the Pastor's feet. It's the Book of Mormon.

BAPTIST PASTOR
You're a cult.

WILLIS
Well, this cult just hit big time.

Men in black pour in the front doors behind him. They file into the pews and keep walking, snaking back and forth along the wooden benches, getting closer row by row. As they move:

WILLIS (cont’d)
You have something we need.
Misguided faith. We feed off it.
CONTINUED:

**BAPTIST PRIEST**
If you've come to argue theology
we'd be more than happy to oblige
you.

**WILLIS**
No, I haven't come to argue. I've
come to settle it.

He walks back toward the front doors. The men in black
continue snaking forward through the pews.

**WILLIS (cont’d)**
Enjoy your dinner boys. Save me a
wing.

**WILLOW (V.O.)**
I could feel their hunger...

**INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

**WILLOW**
...when they attacked me. They
wanted to open my head and devour
my thoughts.

Kennedy hugs Willow tighter. Dawn's got a few large tomes out
now.

**DAWN**
We'll find a solution, Willow.

**ANYA**
See, Dawnie will read and we'll
follow the instructions and
everything will be solved. Besides,
you can't keep that much expired
life going. Not without taking life
to maintain it.

(off their looks)
What? That's supposed to be
comforting?

**INT. BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS**

The massacre. Willis moves amongst his flock. They tear the
parishioners apart. Father Donovan takes shaky steps up to
the altar. The Baptist Pastor cowers on the ground near it.

**BAPTIST PASTOR**
Though I walk through the shadow of
the valley of death I will not
fear. I will not fear. I will
not...
CONTINUED:

Father Donovan ignores him and stares up at a cross set high in the wall behind the altar. His eyes twitch a little.

He drops to his knees. He looks at his hands like he's not quite sure what to do with them. Trembling ever so slightly, they come together in prayer.

Seeing this the Baptist Pastor crawls across the floor and to a side door. He slips out. Willis notices Father at the altar. He walks up and kicks him over.

WILLIS
What are you doing? Chase him!

Father stands and charges out the same door the Pastor took.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

35 INT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

The Baptist Pastor tears along the sidewalk, his arms flailing, running full out. Father Donovan's gaining.

BAPTIST PASTOR
Help! Help!

Father dive tackles him. They struggle in the grass a moment before Father pins his arms. Father licks his lips.

BAPTIST PASTOR (cont’d)
Please, whatever your sins he will forgive you. He will accept you and he will love you. You need only ask.

Father scrunches his face.

FATHER
Jackson?

His grip lessons and the Baptist Pastor crawls out from underneath him and runs. Father stays kneeling for a moment.

FATHER (cont’d)
Jackson!

He stands up.

36 INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Gang's in full research mode. Dawn sits cross-legged on the carpet surrounded by books. Open tomes cover the coffee table, the floor, three are stacked in her lap. She jumps from book to book with ease, a cross referencing fiend.

DAWN
I have souls over here, death over there, afterlife dimensions in this one, and Tibetan chanting monks in that one.

BUFFY
Huh?

DAWN
Thought it might go somewhere but it turned out to be a dead end.
(beat)
Oh god, I'm becoming Xander.

Willow's clacking away on the laptop.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

WILLOW
Lot's of interesting random theories here. Low on the details or any relevant field experience.

ANDREW
All this research is giving me the runs. Let's watch some TV.

He clicks on the news. A REPORTER stands outside the whitewashed Baptist Church.

REPORTER (V.O.)
A Baptist prayer meeting gone horribly wrong. Over twenty are believed to be dead in what appears to be a cult ritual.

Quick shots of inside: White sheets on top of bodies everywhere, blood soaked through each sheet around the head area.

REPORTER (V.O.) (cont’d)
The victims' heads were bashed open and their brains removed. At this time police have only one lead: a bloody Book of Mormon found at the scene. If anyone has any information regarding this crime please call-

Andrew clicks it back off.

ANDREW
Okay, bad idea.

WILLOW
Didn't I say we should stop watching the news.

Buffy's fuming mad.

BUFFY
That's gross. You... you... Mormons!

WILLOW
That's the why for all the suits. They're on their mission.

ANDREW
One of them came by earlier.
XANDER
A group of Mormons have taken up the necromantic arts and raised a horde of men in black to go out and convert people to their religion?

WILLOW
And they're eating the competition.

XANDER
Here I thought the Jehovah's Witnesses served ultimate evil.

DAWN
Those poor poor people. Buffy puts her hand on Dawn's shoulder.

BUFFY
We'll find who did this Dawnie. Before they eat more churchgoers.

Everyone shares a morose moment of silence. Anya isn't quite with them on it.

ANYA
Everybody look at me. I have a trick.

Anya floats to the center of the room.

ANYA (cont’d)
Watch carefully.

She holds her arms out to either side, wiggles her fingers. A moment and then Anya splits down the middle, half her torso leans one way, and half leans the other way, her body separating along the gash that killed her. Her fingers keep wiggling.

Everyone in the crowd gives a whimper, wince, or "oh my god you freak" noise. With a SLURPING sound Anya comes back together.

ANYA (cont’d)
Been practicing that for days. Got to look at the bright side of being dead.

WILLOW
I'm going to have Kennedy poke my eyes out with her tongue barb now.

KENNEDY
Sorry honey, wearing the blunt.
CONTINUED: (3)

WILLOW
Oh. Bummer.

BUFFY
Any, why would you ever think we wanted to see that?

ANYA
I figured it would lighten the mood. You know cause I'm dead, you're not dead.

BUFFY
People skills still an issue then.

DAWN
Oh my gosh, I think I'm gonna hurl. Oh wait... no, that's me having an idea.

Dawn goes crazy with the book page flipping.

DAWN (cont’d)
Resonance.

She grabs a different book. Flips some more pages.

DAWN (cont’d)
Gateway.

Grabs yet another, flips.

DAWN (cont’d)
Eureka! Soul resonance.

Everyone stares at her not understanding. Willow's lightbulb pops first.

WILLOW
She's a passage point.

DAWN
Halfway here, halfway there.

WILLOW
We can siphon through her.

BUFFY
Okay, girls, dumb it down for the rest of us.

WILLOW
Think of the zombie souls as being held on this plane in one big icky bathtub.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

DAWN
Anya gets to be the drain.

WILLOW
Because of her not-quite-dead
status her soul's in the same place
spiritually with the zombies. So
with Dawn's Watchery help...

DAWN
...and Willow's Wicca woo.

WILLOW
We can turn Anya into a gateway
back to the soul ether.

BUFFY
There's a spell for that?

Dawn and Willow both make faces.

WILLOW
Not really.

DAWN
We'll have to combine a few. A bit
more research. A ritual here.

WILLIS
A ritual there. Mix and match.

DAWN
We can totally make it work.

BUFFY
Then let's do it.

37 INT. JACKSON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jackson works with notebooks and papers piled around him on
the couch. Someone POUNDS on his door. He doesn't break off
right away, checks something on a notebook. They POUND three
more times.

JACKSON
Hold it a sec!

They keep POUNDING. He rushes over and yanks open the door.

JACKSON (cont’d)
What the f-

Father Donovan falls into his arms. Jackson pushes him off to
the stairs.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FATHER
You have to help me son.

JACKSON
Sorry, I might be a little too black for that.

FATHER
I'm dead.

JACKSON
That's an interesting excuse for becoming a racist bastard.

Father clutches Jackson's hand and pulls it to his forehead.

JACKSON (cont’d)
What are you-

Two of his fingers slip through the skin and inside the priest's head. Jackson jumps back and knocks into the door.

Stunned, on his fingertips he sees brownish blood. He looks at the priest's forehead but it appears perfect.

FATHER
They killed me my son, but I'm kept from the kingdom. Even now I feel their call pulling me further away from God. I almost did something horrible tonight. I can't resist much longer.

Jackson's hand starts to shake, clutches into a fist.

JACKSON
What should I do father?

FATHER
Avenge me. Be my guardian. A Mormon named Willis killed me and brought me back. Confused me with spells and sorcery. He's gathered an army and I can tell you where. You must find a way to stop them.
DAWN
Really nifty actually. We combine an enjoining spell with this mojo to talk to the dead. Then we-

WILLOW
Dawnie.

DAWN
Sorry, giddy excitement. It's like a drug. Not that I would know.

WILLOW
What happens we do the spell and Anya become a physical gate to the afterlife attuned to the zombies. Which means she can touch them and they can touch her. She so much as brushes one and kapoof, it's the afterlife express.

ANYA
So I get to be the Buffy. I'll have the punch that knocks the bad guys into oblivion.

WILLOW
I like to see it more as offering them the eternal rest they deserve. But whatever works for you.

ANYA
Can I act all superior too?

BUFFY
Hey!

DAWN
(to Anya)
You could give us some kind of rousing long winded speech.

BUFFY
Right here, in the room right now!

WILLOW
Problem is, the gateway is sort of the temporary kind.

BUFFY
How temporary?

WILLOW
Kind of unpredictable.

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
So we wait until we're in striking distance. Now all we have to do is track them down.

A KNOCK comes from the door.

INT. BUFFY'S FOYER/PORCH - CONTINUOUS

She opens the door to reveal Jackson standing there with crowbar in hand.

JACKSON
You know how to take care of this, right?

BUFFY
Take care of what?

JACKSON
Whatever it is you're fighting. I know where they're gathering. I'm going. You coming?

BUFFY
Uh... sure.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Willis stands atop the robust mausoleum on the hill. The men in black are arrayed around him amidst tombstones and the holes they rose from. Thomas and Kyle stand at the back of the group overseeing.

WILLIS
We have come far. Those who will not hear us will feed our power. Between their deaf ears shall be our strength. His army will not want. We come from all walks of life, all times. He brings us here for one purpose: to make His glory our glory. To show us that His power can be our power.

EXT. GRAVEYARD GATES - NIGHT

The Slayerettes converge. Dawn carries a huge duffel bag packed with their stuff.

BUFFY
Jackson and I will go in and make with the fisticuffs to get them to group around us. Andrew's on artillery.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: BUFFY (cont'd)

When you hear the signal pump Anya
with the mojo and we'll knock 'em
dead, or, um, redead.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Mist spins around the ankles of the Slayer. The ground makes
SOFT SUCKING SOUNDS as she marches in. Jackson keeps pace
behind her. They trudge up the same hill she did earlier.

She finds Willis sitting atop the robust mausoleum with his
pickax next to him. He appears to be alone now.

WILLIS
Interesting. I didn't expect a
blonde. Your redhead friend ran
off so fast I didn't get a chance
to introduce myself. I'm Willis.

BUFFY
I'm Buffy. Hop on down. I think
it's time to bruise my knuckles
with your face.

JACKSON
My crowbar seconds that.

WILLIS
Sounds risky for me. Besides,
there's a nice breeze up here and
it allows me to survey the breadth
of my domain. You want to know the
wonderful thing about power?
(beat)
Not having to do the dirty work.

From one side of the mausoleum a man in black appears, broad
chested with a grimace. Another emerges from the other side,
smaller, sneering. More appear from behind larger
gravestones.

They charge. Jackson slams one in the face with his crowbar.
Buf throws one into two others. Sweeping roundhouse kicks
three more. Jackson checks two to the ground.

Andrew is just down the hill from where the battle has begun.
He's decked out in his cat burglar gear. He wears a utility
belt covered in bulging pouches.

ANDREW
Operation distract and signal to
commence.
(checking his pouches)
M-80s, firecracker strings, roman
candles, ooo sparklers.

He pulls out a Zippo. Finger snap lights it.
CONTINUED:

ANDREW (cont’d)
It's just you and me sweet flame of loud noise.

He starts running up the hill giving out an astoundingly girlish battlecry the whole way.

Back on the hilltop, Buffy and Jackson have been split up by the horde of men in black. Jackson's holding his own with the crowbar taking wide swings to thump as many as he can.

Buffy's grabs a mib by the arm, swings him, hurls him knocking five more down. She leaps into a different group of them. Her feet take out two as she comes in. A flurry of punches as four more surround her.

A massive string of firecrackers lands in the middle of a pack of six men in black. They look at it a moment. Then it RATA TATATS off sending them reeling back.

ANDREW (cont’d)
Ah-ha, taste fourth of July fun!

He chucks a cherry bomb into another group of them.

EXT. GRAVEYARD WALL - CONTINUOUS

A distant BOOM of the fireworks.

XANDER
That's the signal.

Willows sit inside a circle of mystical purple dust laid out on the sidewalk. Kennedy's got a crossbow out. Xander's got his trusty baseball bat. Dawn kneels near another smaller dust circle double checking everything in a large dusty tome.

DAWN
Okay, paint by number is paint by done. Anya, you go in the smaller circle over here.

Any walk into place.

ANYA
Smaller is sometimes better.

XANDER
Hear, hear! Um, never mind.

WILLOW
Okay, interfering with the concentration now.
KENNEDY
You two shut up. Willow, we got your back.

Willow nods but she's definitely nervous. She takes a deep breath. A brick lands on her head knocking her out cold.

Thomas stands on the outer wall holding a shovel. Four more just exhumed men in black stand with him.

THOMAS
Sky's falling.

They jump down on the attack.

Buffy's providing quality Slayer smackdown. But she's being quickly overwhelmed and things are looking more desperate. Mibs are being hurled left and right but more show up to take their place.

Jackson slips in the mud and ass plants. He loses his crowbar in a dirty puddle. Mibs converge on him. He kicks out with his feet trying to keep them at bay.

Andrew's less charging in with fireworks as dropping them behind himself trying to keep the mibs from grabbing him. Willis slips down off the top of the mausoleum pickax in hand.

The horde parts out of his way as he approaches Buffy. The men in black break off her for a moment and he stands before the Slayer.

WILLIS
Don't you adore graveyards? They're so relaxing.

BUFFY
Until nimrods like you start poking holes in the ground.

She charges. An mib's fist lashes out smashing her in the face and breaking her attack. Willis swings the pickax for our Buffster. She sucks her midriff in but not quite fast enough.

A red trail gashes open across her stomach. She falls, tumbling backwards down the hill. Men in black part letting her roll past. A few yards down her back smashes into a tombstone bringing her to an abrupt and painful halt.

Willis follows and a dozen or so of his army group in behind him. Buffy clutches her wound breathing hard. Willis glowers over the fallen Slayer.
CONTINUED:

WILLIS
So this is what you bring? You, a
Lamanite, and a boy who makes scary
noises. Really it's charming.

Willis swings his pickax for her head.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
CONTINUED: (2)

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

45  GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Buffy head ticks and the pickax point pierces the tombstone. It shatters and crumples.

WILLIS
(re: broken tombstone)
Whoever that was, they're nothing. Dead, gone and unremembered. Is that what you want to be? Buffy? I can give you a second chance to be resurrected. You can become part of my power or you can be overwhelmed by it.

Buffy lets out a coughing cackle, blood in her teeth.

BUFFY
Power? You think that's what you have cause you got a bunch of brain dead wannabes goose stepping your line? That doesn't make you powerful, it makes you a fraud in a badly tailored suit.

WILLIS
Says the bleeding girl on the ground.

BUFFY
Kill me. Do whatever you want. It won't make you any less pathetic.

WILLIS
It will provide a nice sense of closure.

He walks away.

WILLIS (cont’d)
Slurp out her skull. She's not worth changing.

46  EXT. GRAVEYARD WALL - CONTINUOUS

Willow lies unconscious in what's left of the spell circle; it's been pretty much trampled in purpley swirls. Xander desperately blocks shovel swings from Thomas. One of the mibs lies nearby, down and out.

Kennedy takes on the other three. Dawn puts herself between a mib and Kennedy. It steps past her like she's not even there. She kicks him in the shin.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

He grabs his leg and looks around, oblivious. Anya shoots through the battle, taking ineffectual swings at the bad guys trying to distract them. Xander's being quickly knocked back by the bulldozer Thomas.

    **XANDER**
    Kennedy, little help here!

Two mibs lunge for Kennedy. She ducks under their attacks and swiftly reloads her crossbow. She shoots the third mib in the chest. He stumbles back.

She drops the crossbow down, catching his neck between the bow and string. A twist of the hip and she chucks him into Thomas. Both of them tumble to the ground.

    **KENNEDY**
    That work.

    **XANDER**
    It'll do.

Xander kneels down by Willow, his back turned for a moment. He brushes his hand across her cheek, shakes her a little.

Thomas chucks the mib off himself with ease. He uses his bulk to check Kennedy to the ground. He steps past her, raises the shovel over his head.

    **ANYA**
    Xander!

She whooshes forward and pushes Xander out of the way. The shovel CLANGS on the ground after passing harmlessly through her. Anya looks at her hands, stunned. She hurls punches at Thomas.

He goes to block one but her fists pass through him. He shrugs and walks right through her after Xander. Dawn clubs him one with a little girlish punch slap. He's almost amused. He pulls his fist back to wham her. Kennedy sweeps his feet out from under him.

But the other three mibs are back up and surround her. One pulls the crossbow bolt from his chest. Slashes at her. Willow's head lolls, groggy but coming too.

    **WILLOW**
    May nothing beyond our coil pass my mortal sight.

Her eyes swim with divine light. Anya fades from view. The men in black engaging them drop to the ground. Their limbs flail like fish out of water.

Thomas props himself back to a stand with his shovel, sees Willow.
He makes a wide arc with the shovel swinging straight for her head. Kennedy catches it dead with her Slayer strength. Willow staggers a bit.

WILLOW (cont’d)
I can't hold this for long.

KENNEDY
Just enough for me to kick this punk's ass.

She drives her elbow into Thomas' sternum. She yanks the shovel from his grip, snaps it in two over her knee. Proceeds to beat the stinking tar out of him with her new found two weapon combo.

Xander grabs hold of Willow and keeps her on her feet.

WILLOW
Get me out of here, Xander!

Xander hefts Willow over his shoulder. Dawn picks up her big tome from the ground. They huff it for the graveyard gates. Kennedy chalks the two shovel pieces away by the battered Thomas. Runs after them.

Anya blinks back into existence. The mibs start getting back up around her.

ANYA
Typical, always leave the dead people behind.

She walks right through the graveyard wall.

Andrew's being edged back by mibs. He's out of ammo.

ANDREW
Nice Mormons. Think of those fireworks as a practical joke. A fiesta of fun to liven up your day. No harm. I mean you guys can just reattach some of your fingers right?

One of them grabs Andrew by the collar.

Jackson has managed to get back up and even has his crowbar a swinging again. He looks pretty torn up though. He slams a mib across the face. Swings the other way. Sparks fly as the bar deflects off Willis' pickax blade. They circle each other.

WILLIS
So, Lamanite.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACKSON
Where's Buffy?

WILLIS
The girl with the silly name is dead. Or well on her way anyway.

JACKSON
I'll kill you.

WILLIS
Your valiant. It's really kind of cute. I could use someone like you. Spread the proper word far and wide and silence the nay-sayers who won't believe. I am his form incarnate.

JACKSON
You think this is what Jesus was?

WILLIS
Jesus resurrected himself to show God's power and offer humanity a second chance. I resurrect humanity and give them that second chance directly.

JACKSON
They're shells filled with your hate. Jesus preached love.

WILLIS
How wonderfully Hallmark. He preached power. Love and suffering were his means. Rome knew this, the Jews knew this. That's why they crucified him. But Jesus won and was remembered. I'm about to do the same.

We're back with Xander as he sets Willow back down. The spell folks have grouped well into the graveyard near the bottom of the hill. Dawn's madly flipping through the book she has.

DAWN
Another spell. Find the page, little mojo. Gotta be something.

WILLOW
There's another way.

Everyone perks up at this.
CONTINUED: (2)

WILLOW (cont’d)
I learned about soul binding when I drained the Magic Box. Way's in which it can be done, what it costs. Dawnie found the friendliest way to send them back. But there are other, less cozy methods.

XANDER
I hate to say it Will, but we're kind of at Defcon one here and the finger's definitely on the button.

ANYA
I wonder if we lose and you all become ghosts if we'll be able to touch each other.

Willow puts her hand on Kennedy's shoulder.

WILLOW
You should help Buffy.

KENNEDY
I need to stay with you.

WILLOW
Case you haven't seen, it's three against a gazillion up there. Xander and Dawn have my back.

Kennedy nods. Gives Willow a quick kiss on the cheek and dashes off. Willow turns to Xander, her jaw tense.

WILLOW (cont’d)
Evil Arthur's generalling the army, but his Merlin's hiding somewhere nearby. I can feel it. We find him and I can make it stop.

Back with Andrew, and a group of mibs have grabbed and lifted him into the air.

ANDREW
Careful with the hands!

Kennedy slams into the mibs with the mother of all flying kicks. They flail at the impact and Andrew's dropped free.

KENNEDY
Where's Buffy?

ANDREW
(points in a seemingly random direction)
Over there maybe?
Kennedy runs off. The men in black she slammed down are already getting back up.

From above, a horde of dark suits and grabbing hands. Amidst them a wisp of blonde hair. We drop down into the melee.

Buffy slams her palm into the back of a mib's elbow making him painfully double jointed. She twists him and drives her knee low at his waist.

With a sickening CRACK his spine gives. She tosses him aside. She's hunched on a pile of mib bodies, a dozen so far. Some of them still twitch under her, most of their limbs broken and useless.

Kennedy hammers through the crowd with the crossbow. Makes it to Buffy. Sees the impressively large pile of carnage.

KENNEDY
Wow!

Buffy slides down the pile.

BUFFY
Kind of makes it a shame they didn't have girls' varsity wrestling.

They go back to back surrounded. Amongst various punches, parries and lunges:

BUFFY (cont'd)
Not that I'm not pleased as punch to see ya. But I expected someone a little deader.

KENNEDY
We kinda hit some static.

BUFFY
Lovely.

KENNEDY
Yeah, I thought it was a hoot too.

BUFFY
We have a plan B then?

KENNEDY
They're working on it.

BUFFY
Well, as long as we're on the verge of being overwhelmed by a army of the dead they should take their time.
Kyle peeks out from behind a grave, watching the hilltop.

XANDER (O.S.)
So...

He whips around at the sound of Xander's voice.

XANDER (cont'd)
Would this be considered a box seat or general assembly?

KYLE
Um, yeah, you see, I was walking by and then you know I got lost and-

XANDER
Stow it.

He pops Kyle in the gut with the tip of the bat. Kyle drops to his knees gurgling. Xander kicks him in the face, knocking him onto his back.

Dawn goes to his arms and sits on his hands, pinning them. Xander grabs his legs. Willow gazes down at his prostrate form. She appears solemn but determined.

WILLOW
I'm sorry. This'll kind of hurt.

KYLE
Hurt not good.

WILLOW
Shoulda thought of that before a raised a zombie army don't ya think?

He struggles but Dawn and Xander have him pinned well.

ANYA
Naughty boys get punished.

Willow kneels down at his chest.

XANDER
Like you said Will, we got your back. No matter what.

She nods. Holds up her hand. Waves of heat move across it and then it glows like molten metal. The roots of her hair darken but the tips remain Willow red.

WILLOW
From the chest of the army's creator I draw a bone.
CONTINUED: (5)

Buffy and Kennedy are still surrounded. Kyle's BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM echoes through the battle.

The fight goes on pause for a moment, the mibs looking around. They part and Willis steps in. He chucks a battered Jackson at their feet.

WILLIS
You forgot your erstwhile friend. Drives a hard bargain, hard to persuade.

Buffy helps Jackson up.

JACKSON
He didn't seem to like "Get bent" as an answer.

BUFFY
Bad guys are picky that way.

Back with Kyle, his suit jacket and shirt are burned through. A bright pink scar adorns his chest just above his stomach. He's unconscious but breathing steady.

Willow's hair is back to normal. She holds what looks like a rib in her hand. One side of it has a particularly nasty serrated edge. She goes to Anya.

WILLOW
A soul fragment inside will let you hold the dagger. You'll see what I saw. Cut the chords he uses to bind them and they'll be free to go or stay as they please.

Anya takes the ribknife from Willow.

ANYA
Neat.

She tears off up the hill.

XANDER
What do we do with this evil missionary?

WILLOW
He paid his price. Dawn's checking out Kyle's grody scar.

DAWN
Plus a healthy portion of interest.

Willow staggers a bit.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (6)

XANDER
Willow, are you...?

WILLOW
Pfft, I'm totally fine. She faints.

Anya reaches the hilltop. She holds the knife in front of her and passes near a group of baddies who have Andrew hefted into the air. The knife jerks in her hand a few times when she runs by them.

The glamour broken, most of the group crumples to the ground, a murder of decayed bodies. Andrew now lies on top of a pile of maggot infested ick.

ANDREW
(pinches his nose)
Ewww, dead people stink.

A couple remain standing, rotting and wholly gruesome but still animated. One of the zombies looks at his hand, watches the bones move through holes in his leathery skin. He looks at the other zombie.

ZOMBIE
(loud rasping whisper)
I'm FREE!

Willis stands inside the tight ring of men in black who have our three heroes surrounded. Holding the knife above her head Anya whooshes through the outer ring into the circle.

BUFFY
Anya, finally!

ANYA
Blame Willow.

KENNEDY
Hey! Screwing up was a group effort.

ANYA
Whatever.

WILLIS
Excuse me, miss. I'm about to kill them. So if you don't mind.

Anya grimaces when she looks at Willis.

ANYA
Willow was right, that is not a face to woo the women.
CONTINUED: (7)

WILLIS
Fine, I'll just have to kill you too.

ANYA
Sorry, first evil already did that. But I do have another neat trick for you.

She swipes the knife the knife one way. A section of the circle collapses with only a few still standing.

ANYA (cont’d)
And they all...

Swipes it another way. More fall, again a couple remain up.

ANYA (cont’d)
...fall down.

She does a little pirouette with her slash. The entire circle collapses. Only a dozen or so are left standing in their full dead glory.

ANYA (cont’d)
Except the ones who are really pissed at you.

Willis eyes anxiously around. He's now staring down a bunch of very angry dead people. He starts backing away.

WILLIS
Can't we discuss this like rational human beings?

ZOMBIE
Brains!

WILLIS
Fair enough.

Willis turns and swings the pickax, knocking one of the zombies behind him aside. He makes a dash for it.

Xander puts his arm around Dawn. They watch Willis at the hilltop scream like a little girl. He's chased by the zombie army.

XANDER
Ah, a lynch mob. Never thought I'd see the day where that was a good.
EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Willis hauls ass out of an alley. He charges across the street and ducks past a corner. He peeks back around the corner to see the zombies surge out from the alley.

They mob into the street, disoriented for a moment. One of their eyes catches him. It points and all the zombies turns to see him.

WILLIS
Fitting I would go out just like Joseph Smith.

He runs. The zombies tear around the corner after him.

EXT. GRAVEYARD GATES - NIGHT

Kennedy holds Willow tight, helping the exhausted Wicca stumble along. Anya walks with Andrew who's now in a muddy and torn commando suit. Xander goes with Dawn and Buffy with Jackson bring up the back.

ANYA
I was amazing wasn't I? You too Andrew, you had some quality crowd control there.

ANDREW
I thought the M-eighties worked quite well but the cherry bombs left me wanting. But yes, I fought quite valiantly this eve. So what should we do with the rest of our night?

WILLOW
(yawning wide)
Wicca girl will be making with the sleepins.

KENNEDY
After all the punching and the dire I just went through; don't think you're getting off that easy, red.

Willow lips Kennedy's ear.

WILLOW
You always make it easy honey.

ANYA
Lesbian sex humor. It's nice. (looks at Xander)
And really frustrating.
CONTINUED:

XANDER
Willow, you can hijack my eyeball later if you want.

Buffy notices Jackson is kind of in his own world.

BUFFY
Watcha thinking?

JACKSON
I just fought an army of the dead. It doesn't really lend to the thinking.

ANDREW
We could watch Army of Darkness.

DAWN
Are there naked guys in that one too?

ANDREW
No, but it has a shotgun and Bruce Campbell. Dear sweet Bruce Campbell.

BUFFY
I've had my fill of dead things for the evening, present company excluded. I'm looking forward to a nice shower, wash the graveyard off me.

JACKSON
Lobotomies. You think they have it to the point where they can figure out what the precise section to remove is?

BUFFY
You sound like you'd never hung with the Slayerettes before. Go home, get some sleep, it will all make sense in the morning.

EXT. JACKSON'S PORCH - NIGHT

Jackson sits on his porch swing. It CREAKS a little but he's too consumed by his thoughts to notice.

Buffy strolls up. She's had her shower, cleaned herself up, changed clothes and looks a sort of rumpled cute.

BUFFY
Hey you.
CONTINUED:

JACKSON
Hi.

BUFFY
Can't sleep either?

JACKSON
Not a wink.

She sits down next to him. He still stares off into space. She leans in and nudges him with her shoulder.

BUFFY
Soooo, figure out which part of your brain to remove yet?

JACKSON
I met a dead person.

BUFFY
A whole bunch in fact.

JACKSON
I knew one in particular.

BUFFY
Who was it?

JACKSON
A priest. He helped me through some rough times when I was younger.

BUFFY
I'm sorry. You want to talk about it?

JACKSON
No, I really think I don't.

BUFFY
Okay.

She gets up to leave.

BUFFY
But it'd be nice to have you here, you know, not talking about it with me.

She smiles and sits back down. Makes a motion like she's zipping her lips. They both lean back and the seat starts to swing a little more.

Tentatively she reaches over and touches the back of his hand. He turns his hand over and their fingers intertwine.
INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dark all around. Xander's crashed out on the couch snoring profusely. Anya kneels by his side watching him. She looks at her hand.

Gingerly she moves it toward his face, braces herself for impact. Her fingers disappear inside his head without stopping. Her shoulders sag and she shakes her head.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW