FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

The camera pans from the light in the sky to WILLOW, sitting on a bench, reading from a book. She looks transfixed, that is until XANDER takes a seat next to her, NUDGING her.

WILLOW
These books Giles left are just... useless.

XANDER
Uh, Will... I’ve been through that one already.

She SHOOTS him a look, then closes it, dropping it down on the bench.

XANDER (CONT’D)
Maybe Dawn’s having more luck.

WILLOW
She does seem quite the Watcher-wannabe.

XANDER
Well, she’s good at it.

WILLOW
(sighs)
It’s just, Emmily showed Buffy a vision of what it was like back then and that’s what it could be like right now, unless we find something on what’s going on.

(beat)
It’s just so exhausting.

BUFFY (O.S)
(muffled)
Yeah. I’m getting that!
3 ANGLE: WILLOW

Turns to see Buffy fighting with a big blue-ish demon, with tentacles. It’s obvious they’ve been wrestling for some time now.

XANDER
You wants some help with that?

The demon gets Buffy in a headlock and she struggles to break free, her eyes dart to the axe leaning against the wall.

BUFFY
Weapon... now... please.

Xander lazily moves to it. He picks it up and THROWS it to Buffy, who manages to LEAP up into the air, breaking loose of the demon’s grip, and grabs the axe. She lands on her feet, turning to face it.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
Loser.

She SWINGS it, decapitating the demon. The camera looks up at Buffy and then Willow and Xander as they come into frame. They wait for a moment.

WILLOW
He’s not a "poof-y" demon, is he?

BUFFY
Don’t think so. We’ll have to bury him.

XANDER
And the fun keeps on coming.

The trio return to the bench, with books stacked up and papers lying about everywhere.

BUFFY
So we’ve still got nothing on the new evil-a-brewing?

WILLOW
No. A big fat nothing.

XANDER
Makes ya kinda wish Angel was still around. He was old enough to remember a lot of nasties.

(MORE)

(Continued)
XANDER (CONT’D)
   (beat)
   You know, with him being one.

Buffy lowers her eyes to the ground.

BUFFY
   I don’t think we can really trust
   Angel at the moment.

XANDER
   Why, cos he’s boss of an evil law
   firm that is planning its very own
   apocalypse and could destroy us all?

He doesn’t continue.

WILLOW
   (to Buffy)
   So what are you gonna do if he
   wants to contact you or... something?

BUFFY
   Until we know for sure that he
   hasn’t been turned to the dark
   side, we’ll do whatever it takes to
   put him off track.

A beat.

WILLOW
   Ice cream?

BUFFY
   Oh yeah!

XANDER
   Give it to me.

Willow pulls out a tub of ice cream and three spoons. They
all begin to dig in as the camera slowly pulls away.

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BASEMENT

Dark and dusky, just as it always is. We are facing the
wall, where a rectangle is still visible from when Xander
drew it on. We just stare at that for a moment until
suddenly --

A FLASH of red crackling energy runs along the lines of
chalk, creating what looks like a portal.

(CONTINUED)
4 CONTINUED:

And as it begins to grow stronger - it dissipates. On this we...

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER
FADE IN:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

The streets are busy with eager shoppers and people on their way to places we have no way of knowing. Amongst the crowds are DAWN and JODY, strolling along the sidewalk.

JODY
What about him?

Dawn turns to see a young, good looking guy walk past them. She shrugs.

DAWN
Not bad.

JODY
Not bad? Dawn, you’re way too picky. Just grab a guy and... grab his...

DAWN
Okay, enough.

They share a smile.

DAWN (CONT’D)
I’m just not in the guy mood at the moment, you know? It’s like I’m a non-guy-magnet. Or, they’re not the magnets... and I’m not metal...

(beat)
Or I could come up with a better analogy if you gave me more time.

JODY
I get it. I do. But you don’t wanna be alone forever, Dawn. I’ve been there and it’s not good for the soul.

DAWN
I’m not alone.

JODY
Right. You got family.

DAWN
And friends. And a whole lot of --

She stops, seeing something up ahead. Jody doesn’t see it though, and looks puzzled.

(CONTINUED)
7 CONTINUED:

JODY
What is it?

DAWN
Anyas.

They continue forward until they come to ANYA, staring ahead through a shop window at a bridal dress. She doesn’t turn to Dawn and Jody or even notice their existence at all, she just stares at the dress.

DAWN (CONT’D)
Anyas?

Anyas slowly comes out of her gaze and turns to Dawn. It takes a while for her to regain herself but she does, forcing a smile.

ANYA
Whoa. Must have drifted off there.

DAWN
Yeah. Are you okay?

ANYA
Absolutely... yes, yes. I’m fine. Great even. Top of the world.
(beat)
You?

DAWN
(wigged)
Same.

ANYA
Great. Great. Good.
(sees Jody)
Oh, it’s the gay boy.

DAWN
Yeah, we don’t actually call him that.

JODY
We like to call me Jody. It’s a whole thing where my parents gave me a name and we tend to use that.

Anyas doesn’t respond, just looks at him with an inquisitive expression.

(CONTINUED)
DAWN
So you’re not with Xander? I mean, I would have thought you’d be getting in as much quality time as you could now that you’re solid.

ANYA
(distracted)
Things aren’t always what they seem.

A long beat.

ANYA (CONT’D)
I have to go... away... now.

She walks off down the sidewalk, leaving Dawn and Jody staring after her.

JODY
That was weird.

DAWN
Yeah...
(beat)
We’d better get those books.

JODY
Right. Now, you’re gonna have to run me through this whole thing again cos I’m not getting the basics.

DAWN
In a nutshell? Before humans, there were demons, we call them the Old Ones. They ruled the world, blah blah, and were pushed back as man came to take it over.
(beat)
Since we moved to Cleveland we’ve been getting a lot of strange things happen cos, well we do all live on a Hellmouth, but Giles seems to think one of the Old Ones is trying to make its return.
(beat)
And that would be a bad thing. So we have to find out which one it is, how it plans to return, and how we can stop it before we’re all killed.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

JODY
Right.
(beat)
But I’m still not clear on the Hellmouth thing.

DAWN
Just walk.

She ushers him forward with a roll of the eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE – LOUNGE

The door opens to reveal Buffy stepping through. She sets down the axe by the wall and continues through to the lounge where she’s startled to see JACKSON.

BUFFY
Hey, I didn’t know you would be --

She stops, seeing something wrong. She goes to him, noticing his troubled expression.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
What is it?

JACKSON
I don’t know. I can... feel something. Buffy... I don’t feel right.

BUFFY
Are you sick?

JACKSON
No.
(beat)
It was you.

She tilts her head, unsure of what he’s talking about. She moves him to the sofa and they both take a seat.

BUFFY
What was me?

JACKSON
You did this. When we made love, you woke something inside of me.

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
I did...

JACKSON
I saw it, when I touched you. I saw what you saw.

(beat)
The world when The Source ruled over. Or at least, that part of the world. Fire. That’s all there was. Immense, consuming fire.

(beat)
We can’t let that happen again, Buffy. We have to stop what’s coming.

BUFFY
We will. We always do.

(beat)
And you saw what Emmily showed me?
How is that possible?

JACKSON
I don’t know.

(beat)
Kinda creepy, huh?

BUFFY
I guess we’re connected.

Jackson turns to her with a faint smile. He takes hold of her hand and keeps it in his.

JACKSON
Everything’s been a little crazy lately and I haven’t been able to talk to you the way I’ve wanted.

BUFFY
I know. We’ll get around to it. We really need to get on the research wagon though.

JACKSON
Already there.

He points to a stack of books and she smiles.

BUFFY
Ever feel like you’re getting way too old, way too soon?

(CONTINUED)
The research does put a dampener on the evening.

(beat)
You’ve got everyone working on this, right? I mean, Giles is back in England digging up stuff, and the rest of the gang is all reading and researching?

BUFFY
Yeah.

JACKSON
Okay.

He STANDS, dropping his book.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
I’m gonna go.

BUFFY
What? You’re leaving me?

JACKSON
Meet me back at my place in an hour or two, okay?

BUFFY
What are you planning?

JACKSON
Just do it, okay?

BUFFY
Okay.

Jackson leans in and kisses her on the cheek. He holds in that position for a moment, then heads out of the door. Buffy looks on after him and sighs.

ANDREW (O.S)
He’s so romantic.

Buffy turns to see Andrew leaning in the other doorway. He’s staring after Jackson, muttering to himself.

BUFFY
It’s you.

He quickly snaps out of his daze and smiles, carrying in a pile of books.

(CONTINUED)
ANDREW
I got bored up in my room all by myself and I heard voices so...

BUFFY
You found anything? Or, just a mention of this Source?

ANDREW
I found something but it was spelt the different kind of sauce... and I think the page was from a cooking book.

BUFFY
(sighs)
We can’t let this thing free.

ANDREW
We won’t. We’ll always stop it, right?

Buffy runs her fingers through her hair and rubs her eyes, tired, exhausted.

BUFFY
I can’t wait for this thing to attack. We have to stop it at the beginning, before anymore lives are lost.

ANDREW
Okay, I get it. We’ll stop, we’ll party, we’ll do a little dance of the tribal kind and then... we’ll feast.

Buffy looks at him with a "what the hell are you talking about" expression.

ANDREW (CONT’D)
And now I’m gonna research.

He dives back into his book as Buffy turns to the window, gazing out into the daylight, thinking things over.

CUT TO:

INT. MAGIC STORE

Willow and Xander push the door open and walk into the old and dusky shop. They look around at all the exotic pieces, ingredients, skulls.

(Continued)
Willow is like a kid in a toy shop, gleefully bouncing from one display to another.

Xander looks at a bottle of yellow fluid, pulls the cork out and takes a sniff.

XANDER
Hey, what’s this?

Willow moves to him and reads the label, which is in Latin. She smiles.

WILLOW
Yak’s urine.

XANDER
Oh dear God!

He puts it back and wipes his nose. He follows Willow to the books section of the shop where they see someone else browsing. She is FIONA DELUCA, a pretty and young girl.

XANDER (CONT’D)
Why urine?

WILLOW
Don’t be a wuss, Xander.

Fiona notices Willow and edges closer, curious.

FIONA
You’re her.

WILLOW
Huh? Hi. Huh?

FIONA
You’re Willow, aren’t you?

WILLOW
Yeah. Do I know you?

FIONA
No, God no. There’s no reason you would, but you...

She searches in her pocket and pulls out an amulet. She passes it to Willow, who’s looking real wigged.

(CONTINUED)
FIONA (CONT’D)
I offer you this as a gift. You don’t need to keep it of course, you’re beyond gifts.

WILLOW
No. Liking gifts but... who are you?

FIONA
My name is Fiona and I practice the arts.

WILLOW
(enthused)
You do?

XANDER
Oh boy.

FIONA
I’m nowhere near as gifted as you but we can try. We can follow. That’s what I do, I follow, and I pray to you.

XANDER
You what now?

WILLOW
Pray? To me?

FIONA
Yes. You are beyond the normal limits, beyond mortals. You are with them now.

WILLOW
Oh, right, I’m with them. (beat) Who them?

FIONA
The higher ones. (beat) You are a Goddess.

A long beat.

(CONTINUED)
XANDER
(to Willow)
I’m not bowing.

CUT TO:

INT. SHAW RESIDENCE - BEDROOM

The lights are off, the only thing making this room nothing but darkness are candles scattered around everywhere. Jackson places the last one down and looks around at his creation.

He’s pleased with it and begins to turn but is stopped by a shadow crossing the wall. He steps back, knowing this kind of thing can only lead to badness and clichés of horror movies.

His eyes scan the room and sees a couple of newly carved stakes sitting on the table by his bed. He moves to it, never keeping his eyes on the same place for more than one second. His hands reach out to take the stake, then he SPINS on his heels to face --

EMMILY

She looks up at him with those big blue eyes but nothing about this is cute. She’s in serious mode and he knows it.

JACKSON
What is it?

EMMILY
You’re not ready.

JACKSON
For what?

She turns around and goes to the mirror but there’s no reflection of herself.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
You’re not really here, are you?

She shakes her head with a faint smile.

EMMILY
Astral projection. Another gift.

(beat)
If only they would grant immortality.
That way I wouldn’t be...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
EMMILY (CONT’D)
that doesn’t matter. It’s how it is.
For thousands of years there’s always been an Oracle. One being who would be born to be a vessel of information, to help the champions.

JACKSON
So why are you only now coming to Buffy?

EMMILY
You must understand that not too long ago, she wasn’t considered their top priority. She had never really proved herself. But things have changed. She is special to them, to the Powers That Be.

(beat)
And you are special to her.

JACKSON
Okay. I get it. What is happening to me?

EMMILY
You were chosen thousands of years ago in a time when your existence was predicted. That ring is yours.

Jackson looks down at the ring on his finger, the one Giles had brought back from England.

JACKSON
The ring of the Guardian.

EMMILY
(smiles)
That’s what you are. But you need to be ready to do whatever it takes to fulfill your destiny.

JACKSON
How do I do that?

EMMILY
They become weary that she will not perform. In her absence, you will be the one.

(_CONTINUED)
JACKSON
Emmily, you have to tell me more.
You have to --

EMMILY
(panicked)
I have to go.

JACKSON
What is it? What’s wrong?

EMMILY
Nothing for you to worry about. It all is as it is supposed to be.
(beat)
Have faith in yourself. Soon you’ll wake.

Emmily’s form begins to fade into the background. Jackson stares in disbelief, dropping the stake. His eyes peer down to the ring.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE – BEDROOM

Buffy is checking herself out in the mirror, applying some makeup, when someone KNOCKS on the door.

BUFFY
Come in.

The door opens and Dawn walks in, with some more books. She sets them down on Buffy’s bed.

DAWN
We got them from the library so the betting is, they’re not exactly that helpful, but we can try.

BUFFY
Yeah.

There’s an atmosphere of awkwardness between the two sisters and Buffy finally caves.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
Dawn, I’m sorry.

(CONTINUED)
DAWN
No. I am. Well, I’m not but you shouldn’t be sorry. Not your fault you’re in love with the guy that tried to hurt me.

Buffy moves closer to Dawn.

BUFFY
It’s not...
   (beat)
I would do anything for you. You know that, right?

DAWN
It’s okay. Really. I guess the adult way of thinking is really starting to set in.

BUFFY
You’re quite the woman.

DAWN
Besides, there’s bigger things to think about. Like the complete destruction of the world.

BUFFY
Yeah.

She turns back to the mirror.

DAWN
Are you going out?

BUFFY
Just... over to Jackson’s.

DAWN
Oh. Right.
   (beat)
So you get everyone on this research gig, then you bail to have super-sex with your now special boyfriend?

BUFFY
And we’re back with the bitterness.

(CONTINUED)
DAWN
He’s been given the title of Guardian, sure. But did you ever stop to think that maybe that’s not a good thing? What exactly is he the Guardian of anyway?

BUFFY
Dawn, don’t do this.

DAWN
(angry)
You’re a fool for trusting him. God knows you’ll pay for it.

BUFFY
What’s that supposed to mean?

Dawn stops dead in her tracks, turning to face Buffy. She raises a brow, unsure.

DAWN
Just leave me alone. I have some work to do.

She EXITS. Buffy looks real pissed. She looks back to the mirror, then heads out the door.

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - LOUNGE

Andrew and Jody are engrossed in their books, sitting on the sofa together. Their attention is turned to Buffy coming down the stairs.

ANDREW
Wow.

JODY
Check out the hott mama!

Andrew nudges him.

JODY (CONT’D)
Well dude, look at her.

Buffy turns to them.

BUFFY
I’m going out. I won’t be gone long. When Xander and Willow get back, tell them to get started on the research.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANDREW
Okay, but where are you going?

She doesn’t answer him. She leaves the house, almost SLAMMING the door on purpose as she does. Andrew turns to Jody.

ANDREW (CONT’D)
So, you wanna play D&D online?

JODY
And again with the geekiness.

ANDREW
I’m just --

He stops. Both of them look to the door leading down the basement as a noise emanates from it.

JODY
What was that?

ANDREW
Uh... nothing?

JODY
I hope so.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BASEMENT

The red energy withdraws from the room and crackles of what looks to be electricity dissipate into thin air. The camera follows a trail of blackish liquid until we come to a figure --

JEREKOV
His eyes glow and eerie red as he checks himself over, his cloak still intact.

JEREKOV
Free at last.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
The door is already ajar and Buffy slowly pushes it open. She closes it behind her and turns to see candles lighting the way. She smiles softly, then proceeds up the stairs.

Buffy comes through, now holding a rose that had been left for her. She begins to talk --

BUFFY
If I’d have known we were being more romantic here I would have --

She stops, seeing Jackson motionless on the bed. She edges closer to him.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
Jackson?
(worried)
Jackson are you...?

She quickly rushes forward and checks his pulse. She looks for any wounds but there are none. Then --

JACKSON
(shouts)
It’s inside me!

He SPRINGS forward but Buffy is there to catch him. She looks as shocked as he is, wiping the sweat from his forehead.

BUFFY
Jackson?

JACKSON
Whoa, I must have fallen asleep or something... God that was a horrible dream.

BUFFY
What was it?

JACKSON
(thinks)
Uh... I can’t really remember. But it felt like I was being... violated.

BUFFY
So much for the romantic evening, huh?

(CONTINUED)
JACKSON
No. It was just a dream, Buffy. Let's not read too much into it.

BUFFY
Dreams normally mean something. Or at least, they do if your us.

JACKSON
Us?

BUFFY
People who are... different.

JACKSON
I'm not different. I'm just called something I don't understand. I'm not anything special.

Buffy lifts her hand and strokes his face, a smile forming on her tired face.

BUFFY
You are to me.

Jackson's hand reaches up and takes hers in his. He moves in to kiss her on the neck and she lets him. Both their hands are interlocked, lowering themselves down their sides as he massages her flesh with his tongue.

They fall back and the kissing becomes more intense. Buffy's hands reach for his shirt, ripping it off his back, clawing her nails into his skin.

ANGLE: BUFFY

Staring up at the ceiling as Jackson kisses her neck. She can see something forming, a darkness. Then Jackson is in her face, looking down at her as he VAMPS OUT. He lunges for her neck and BITES her, feeding off of her.

She doesn't cry out, she can't move. The darkness above is enveloping them both. Jackson lets Buffy slip through his arms, her motionless body lying limp on the bed. He turns to a figure emerging.

EMMILY
(haunting voice)
Look inside. Fulfill your destiny.

(CONTINUED)
Jackson’s eyes WIDEN as he turns back to Buffy and sees her body turn to ash. He SCREAMS --

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SHAW RESIDENCE - BEDROOM

Jackson LUNGEES himself forward in a startled panic.

JACKSON
It’s inside me!

Buffy catches him from falling off the bed and looks as shocked as he is.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
Is this real?

BUFFY
Yeah.

He grabs her hand and looks her in the eyes, a serious tone coming over him.

JACKSON
Something’s happening to me, Buffy. I’m seeing things, hearing things. It’s like I’m being shown something and I don’t know what it is.

BUFFY
Don’t fight it. Whatever it is, don’t fight it. Go with it.

JACKSON
What if it’s telling me to do something bad?

BUFFY
What are you...?

JACKSON
Emmily came to me... I think. Everything’s a little fuzzy now. She told me I was chosen thousands of years ago, that my existence was predicted. She told me you were special to the Powers That Be and that I was special to you.

BUFFY
She wasn’t lying then.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACKSON
She told me to look inside, fulfill
my destiny... I don’t know, Buffy.
Things are like Tina Turner’s hair
in my head.

Buffy forces a smile, stroking his cheek.

BUFFY
We’ll figure it out. I promise.

JACKSON
I know. I trust you.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - LOUNGE

Jody and Andrew are reading through the books, as before.
Dawn is sitting in the armchair, doing the same. The front
deroor opens and in walks Willow and Xander, who are in mid-conversation.

XANDER
I’m telling you, Will, she was
checking you out.

WILLOW
Yeah, right, and that whole thing
she was talking about was just one
big hit on, right?

XANDER
Hey, don’t ask me how the lesbian
mind works.

Willow playfully hits him on the arm.

DAWN
What’s going on guys?

XANDER
Willow’s a Goddess.

WILLOW
I’m not a... okay I am.

ANDREW
Frickin’ mashed potatoes!

DAWN
You’re a what?

(CONTINUED)
WILLOW
It’s no big deal, I just had a follower approach me and give me a gift. I’m not sure what it is really.

Willow pulls out the amulet and hands it to Dawn, who inspects it carefully.

WILLOW (CONT’D)
See what you can find out?

DAWN
As always.

Dawn heads on upstairs with a couple of books under her arms. Xander hangs his coat up and looks around.

XANDER
Where’s Buffy?

ANDREW
She went out. She wouldn’t tell me where but I have a sneaky suspicion she’s with Jackson.

XANDER
Why?

ANDREW
Because I heard him invite her over there earlier.

XANDER
That’s a great power you’ve got there, Andy.

ANDREW
I know.

Willow rubs her eyes and heads to the armchair, taking a seat. Xander picks up a book and reads the title.

XANDER
"Dissection of the Cause: reasons and motives of demon awakenings."

WILLOW
There’s a thousand other books like that. Better get stuck in.

(CONTINUED)
22  CONTINUED:  (2)

XANDER
What about Kennedy? Shouldn’t we wait for her until we get stuck into the whole researching?

WILLOW
She’ll be at work all night.

XANDER
Right, okay. I’ve got my reading cap on. All systems go.

The gang get stuck into their books as darkness begins to fall.

CUT TO:

23  INT. SHAW RESIDENCE - LOUNGE

Jackson is sitting in the armchair, with Buffy sitting on his lap in a sideways fashion. They are both reading their books in the most unusual way possible.

JACKSON
Did you know in the K’C’Lai Tribe, their Guardian has the power to destroy all the oceans in the world.

BUFFY
Huh.

JACKSON
You think I could do something like that?

BUFFY
Lets not try it.

JACKSON
I must be evil.

Buffy turns to him, confused.

BUFFY
You’re crazy.

JACKSON
I’m serious. Buffy, we’ve been through almost all these books and in each one, there’s a reference to a Guardian.

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
Doesn’t mean you though, there are a lot of Guardians in a lot of other demon religion and --

JACKSON
Each one we’ve read about has been evil. What are the chances I’m not?

BUFFY
Because I’m here, with you.

JACKSON
Don’t you fall the evil ones?

BUFFY
It’s not untrue... but I know you’re not. There’s something about you, something I’m drawn to, and I can’t put my finger on it but it’s not evil. It’s beautiful.

JACKSON
You’re quite the speech machine.

BUFFY
You think that’s bad? Should have heard me last year. Nothing but long winded speeches all the --

JACKSON
(shouts)
Buffy!

She looks at him, his eyes gone a crystal blue. Something catches her eye, the ring, GLOWING. She looks spooked, but is THROWN off of him by an unseen force, that also THROWS Jackson against the wall.

Buffy rushes to his side.

BUFFY
Are you alright?

JACKSON
Something’s wrong.

BUFFY
Not arguing with you there.

(CONTINUED)
23 CONTINUED: (2)

JACKSON
No. I saw something.
(beat)
Someone dying.

BUFFY
Who?

JACKSON
I can’t remember.

CUT TO:

24 INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Anya walks through the front door and quietly closes it behind her, noticing that everyone in there is asleep. She looks to the stairs to see Dawn coming down, all dressed to go out.

DAWN
Hey, Anya. Haven’t seen much of you today.

ANYA
No. No, I’ve been, around.

Dawn accepts this but seems too distracted to care. She opens the front door.

DAWN
I’ll see you later.

ANYA
Yeah. Whatever.

The door closes. Anya stares at Xander sleeping in the armchair, then looks at everyone there. A somber look grazes her face as she turns and continues into the...

25 INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN

Anya closes the door behind her and leans against it, facing the window and the darkness outside. She looks down at her hands and the BURN SCARS.

ANYA (CONT’D)
What is this?

She moves to the work surface and pulls out a knife. She eyes it, the blade reflecting the light.

(CONTINUED)
Slowly she begins to move it down to her arm, pressing it against the skin, almost cutting --

XANDER

Anya?

Anya quickly drops the knife and turns, covering it from his view. She forces a weak smile.

ANYA
Hi. Nice to see you, again. Up and awake.

XANDER
Are you okay?

ANYA
Peachy.

(beat)
I’ve just been... doing things.

XANDER
I get that. It must be amazing to be able to do loads of things you haven’t been able to do before. Like, you can go down a slide without falling through it... or you can eat things and drink things... you can have sex again.

(beat)
Bet you feel like you’re the luckiest former demon in the world.

Anya stares at him, an uncomfortable silence. She turns away from him.

ANYA
(lies)
That’s exactly how I feel.

XANDER
Speaking of, do you wanna maybe go upstairs and... you know?

Anya looks down at herself, at the scar on her hand. She closes her eyes.

ANYA
I’ll meet you up there.

XANDER
Okay.

(CONTINUED)
He turns and rushes through the door, whistling as he does so, oblivious to Anya’s pain. She pulls out the knife again but this time sets it back in the drawer.

ANYA
(somber)
I’m the luckiest former demon in the world.

Her hands come up to cover her eyes as she quietly begins to weep and she is so consumed in her emotions, that she doesn’t see Jerekov appearing from behind her, expressing a sinister grin.

CUT TO:

INT. SHAW RESIDENCE - LOUNGE

Jackson is pacing the room, Buffy is standing nearby, watching him.

JACKSON
I can’t do this anymore. I have to know what’s going on.

BUFFY
We’re trying, Jackson. Just sit down and --

JACKSON
No. I’m becoming more irrational, it’s like I’m slipping away. I won’t go. I won’t do that. There’s nothing I can’t stop. There’s nothing I can’t --

He stops, looking down at the ring. He brings it up to his eyes as Buffy helplessly listens to his rant.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
I know this, I do. It’s in my mind somewhere but it’s not, cos it’s not my mind. It’s something else, something different. Merging. Conflicting.
(beat)
Destroying.

BUFFY
Jackson. What are you --

(CONTINUED)
JACKSON
(angry)
Don’t you dare interrupt. I am above you.

Buffy steps back, shocked. Jackson looks himself over in a confused way.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
Infestation. This is what this is. We can’t win like this. It was all put in motion thousands of years ago and I can’t stop it.

BUFFY
What can’t you stop?

JACKSON
(beat)
I don’t know. Buffy, I don’t know what’s happening to me.

BUFFY
Try to concentrate on what you saw.

JACKSON
Someone dying... someone... I don’t know who it was.
(beat)
Your house. There.

BUFFY
I have to get there.

JACKSON
I’m coming with.

BUFFY
You’re not up to it.

JACKSON
I am. I have to be there. Buffy, I can help you.

BUFFY
(hesitates)
Okay. First sign of trouble, you get whoever you see to safety.

JACKSON
Always prepared.
She smiles at him, then they both EXIT the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN

The full moon is shining, glimmering on the streets below as a small amount of rain begins to trickle down on the path. Dawn carries on through, wrapping her coat around her some more.

DAWN

Just what I need.

She comes to an alleyway and heads down it. She pulls out a small necklace, with a glowing PEARL on the end of it. It is shining a line if front of her and she follows it.

Coming to a stop, she notices a door. She pushes it open. Takes a look around before entering.

INT. TUNNELS

Dawn finds herself in cave-like tunnels. She looks around, extremely cautious, but continues through, the pendant shining the way.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN

Anya is wiping a stray tear from her cheek, readying herself to turn around and go upstairs but as she does turn --

JEREKOV

I never realized just how beautiful you actually are.

ANYA

Who are... oh, it’s you. You’re him.

JEREKOV

I’m free.

ANYA

Oh.

(realizing)

Oh. One of the most powerful mortals to walk the Earth is free from the dimension the white hats put him in. Right. Great.

(CONTINUED)
JEREKOV
All because of you. I must thank you for that.

ANYA
Me? Why me?

JEREKOV
You instructed your lover to seek me out, to make you mortal again. And in return, I got something I needed.

ANYA
And you needed freedom.

JEREKOV
(laughs)
No, I got out because you never closed the portal correctly. First mistake.

ANYA
And the second?

JEREKOV
Letting him trade his soul for your mortality.

ANYA
Xander didn’t trade his soul.

JEREKOV
He said he would give his life for yours. His soul is his life. I have that now.

ANYA
You can’t do that. It’s not fair.

JEREKOV
The funniest thing? I get his soul, and I get to kill everyone here... so it makes his little expedition kind of pointless, doesn’t it?

ANYA
So, you’re gonna kill me?

Jerekov nods, a malicious grin forming.
ANYA (CONT’D)
Well let me just say something first.

JEREKOV
(thinks)
Go ahead. I don’t have a problem with final last words.

ANYA
Good. Because, firstly...

Anya suddenly SCREAMS out to anyone who will listen. Jerekov stares at her, curious.

JEREKOV
Is that it?

ANYA
Okay, wait.

She SCREAMS again but this time Jerekov lunges for her, grabbing her by the neck and pinning her against the kitchen work top. He smiles as his hand presses against her chest, a light beginning to form.

JEREKOV
Nighty night, sweetness.

As Anya’s eyes FLICKER, we...

BLACK OUT.
FADE IN:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

As before. Anya is struggling with Jerekov but he suddenly PUSHED away from her. We turn to see Xander lying on top of him. He turns back to Anya.

XANDER
Get out of here!

ANYA
Xander, wait --

Xander turns back to see Jerekov has disappeared. He STANDS, looking spooked.

XANDER
Who’s the Houdini?

ANYA
You’ve forgotten already?

Xander thinks for a moment.

XANDER
That was the warlock?

The doors open to reveal Willow, Andrew, and Jody all rush through brandishing weapons.

ANDREW
(shouts)
We’re here to save you!

The three of them stop, looking around, only seeing Anya and Xander.

ANDREW (CONT’D)
Or not.

Suddenly the door SWINGS open again and in come Buffy and Jackson, each prepared for a battle. They see what the other three saw -- nothing.

BUFFY
Is everyone okay?

WILLOW
We heard Anya scream and...

(CONTINUED)
Xander looks at them all, realizing he’d have to tell them all the truth. His eyes move to Anya, who is look equally bleak.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVERNS

Dawn exits the tunnels and comes into some prehistoric looking caves. She shrugs, expecting nothing less. In the middle of the rocky area is a fire. She nears it.

VOICE (O.S)
You come in search of truth.

Dawn stops in her tracks, looking around, but there’s nothing.

DAWN
I do.

VOICE (O.S)
You are but a girl. What do you expect from us?

DAWN
Exactly what I seek.

A beat.

DAWN (CONT’D)
The others, they’re too consumed in their lives to look for the flaws. Something’s going on and I need to find out what.

VOICE (O.S)
The balance has tipped.

DAWN
Yeah. The spell Willow did, that’s what it is, right? When she gave all those girls their power.

VOICE (O.S)
It was the witch. And now The Source will act upon the advantage.

DAWN
So it really is coming.

VOICE (O.S)
No, child. It is already here.
Dawn takes a moment to consume the information. She pulls out the amulet Willow gave to her.

DAWN
I looked this up. It is of great importance to some.

VOICE (O.S)
True. The D’hora Amulet was once the greatest creation of the demons. But now its energy wavers.

DAWN
Because it has been put in the hands of the mortals.
(beat)
I will give you this back. But only if you tell me more.

A beat.

VOICE (O.S)
We have a deal.
(beat)
What do you want to know?

DAWN
Tell me about Jackson Shaw.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - DINING ROOM

The gang are sitting around the table, all looking at Xander and Anya. There’s a long silence before --

JODY
(to Anya)
And you knew about the dangers?

ANYA
I didn’t know he would try to take Xander’s soul.

XANDER
Yay?

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
Great. So, we have an amazingly powerful warlock out there somewhere who will try to take Xander’s soul and in the process wants to kills us all too.

ANYA
I didn’t know that would happen. I just wanted to be... human again.

WILLOW
I can’t believe you summoned that kinda power. Magic’s dangerous. Hello, turned me evil.

ANYA
I keep saying, I didn’t know --

WILLOW
I wasn’t talking to you.

She turns to Xander, who gets it. He lowers his gaze, looking ashamed of himself.

BUFFY
Doesn’t matter how he got here, we have to get him back. I mean, those wiccans put him in that dimension for a reason, right?

ANYA
Because they feared his power.
(beat)
And he was a bit evil.

BUFFY
Willow, you think you can put him back?

WILLOW
I’ll try. I’ll need some help though.

ANDREW
Enter Andrew.

WILLOW
Fine. That’ll do.

Willow and Andrew stand, head towards the door but stop to hear the final piece of the objective. Buffy turns to Jackson.
BUFFY
Are you sure you saw someone dying in this house?

JACKSON
I’m not sure of much, Buffy.

XANDER
Wait. You’re getting premonitions now?

JACKSON
Apparently so.

Buffy looks around and GRABS the Scythe off the wall.

BUFFY
We can’t leave the house. We have to all stick together.
(beat)
Where’s Dawn?

XANDER
She...

ANYA
She went out. I saw her earlier.

BUFFY
(rolls eyes)
I can’t look for her and protect everyone here.

JACKSON
I’ll find her.
(to Willow)
You can do one of those locator spells, right?

WILLOW
Yeah but...

JACKSON
What?

WILLOW
Well, it’s just... I mean...

(CONTINUED)
ANYA
What she means is: Last time you were alone with Dawn, you tried to break every bone in her body. Which doesn’t exactly fill us with happy thoughts.
(beat)
Or some of us anyway.

JACKSON
I won’t harm her... I was... I won’t.

BUFFY
I know.
(to Willow)
Find her.

Willow nods.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVES
Dawn is standing still, almost motionless, contemplating what she has been told. She looks down at the amulet in her hands and throws it in the fire.

VOICE (O.S)
You must leave now.

DAWN
But I... I don’t believe you. How could that be right?

VOICE (O.S)
It is how it is.

DAWN
I can’t watch that happen. I won’t.

VOICE (O.S)
You cannot stop it, child. By hearing this you have already altered the progress of events.

DAWN
So what now?

VOICE (O.S)
Now, you leave.

(Continued)
Dawn’s expression is a painting of shock. But she doesn’t argue. She turns on her heels and heads back to the tunnels in which she came.

INT. TUNNELS

She continues through the damp tunnels, her concentration lost in what she has heard.

EMMILY (V.O)
I’m sorry about your life, how it’s been, how it’ll end. It wasn’t supposed to be this way.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BASEMENT - LATER

Willow is holding a book open in front of the rectangle on the wall. Andrew is sprinkling some kind of dust around it. Buffy, Xander, Anya, and Jody all come down the steps.

BUFFY
How long now?

WILLOW
I don’t know. Closing a portal is as hard as opening one and... I don’t know how much it’s going to take.

ANYA
Well you have to do it.

WILLOW
Yeah, I figured that one out all by myself.

BUFFY
(sighs)
Well, looks like Mr Warlock isn’t coming back tonight so I guess we’ve got enough time to --

JEREKOV (O.S)
Think again, Slayer.

ANGLE: BUFFY

Turns to see Jerekov appear from the shadows. She rolls her eyes with another sigh.
BUFFY
Why did I have to say that?

JEREKOV
You can't protect the boy. He is my property now.

XANDER
Me? But you were so nice last time we met.

(beat)
Okay so you made me choose between my life and my girlfriend’s but still, not the grand schemer of evil.

JEREKOV
Foolish children. Playing your games. You think you know love. You think that’s love in your blood? Each and every one of you is tainted.

ANYA
Leave us alone, Jerekov, or we’ll put you back in that dimension.

(beat)
Well, we’re going to anyway so you might as well back down now.

JEREKOV
Ah, yes. The witch.

He turns to Willow, who steps back, a little nervous in his presence.

JEREKOV (CONT’D)
You have power.

(beat)
I have more.

He throws Willow against the wall with a crackling red energy. Andrew rushes to her, heaped in the corner. Buffy is suddenly in his face.

BUFFY
Wanna see mine?

She takes a swing at him, Scythe in hand, and wallop him across the face. He jerks back, then turns to her, impressed.

JEREKOV
Not enough.

(CONTINUED)
Buffy FLIES back, landing right next to Willow, but she doesn’t stay down. She JUMPS to her feet and CHARGES at him, impaling the spiked end of the Scythe in his leg. He ROARS in pain. She takes this moment to swing round and kick him in the back, sending him CRASHING to the ground.

BUFFY
You want more?

She bring the Scythe down and lands it into his back. She doesn’t pull it out, just looks to the others with a smile.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
Guess we don’t need to open that portal after all. He was easier to kill than I thought.

XANDER
Uh... Buffy...

BUFFY
Yeah?

Xander motions for her to look behind and she does, seeing Jerekov holding the axe -- angry.

JEREKOV
Bring it, bitch.

He THROWS the Scythe down as Buffy charges him again. He knocks her back with ease. Buffy, on lying the ground, turns to Willow.

BUFFY
Get it open!

Willow nods and starts chanting as Andrew cautiously sprinkles the dust again. Buffy ROLLS and rushes the warlock once again.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN

The place is a big contrast to what it was earlier. When night falls, the people scatter. Dawn walks through the streets, not paying any attention to anything around her.

As she crosses the road we see a car pull up and Jackson hops out. He sees her immediately.

(CONTINUED)
39 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
(calls)
Dawn.

No response. She continues across the road and doesn’t see the headlights flash on her body.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
(shouts)
Dawn!

40 ANGLE: JACKSON

He heads towards her but a car KNOCKS her into the air. She almost does a somersault, then comes CRASHING down to the ground. Jackson stops, his eyes widening in fear.

He rushes to her side, his hands crawling along her wrist, searching for a pulse.

JACKSON (CONT’D)
Oh, God, no. No... Dawn, get up...
Dawn, please...
(shouts)
Somebody call an ambulance!

The camera zooms out on Jackson frantically trying to revive her as a crowd of people, who have come from nowhere at all, start to gather.

CUT TO:

41 INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - BASEMENT

Buffy SMASHES into the wall and slumps down, a groan escaping her lips. Jerekov comes towards her with a menacing form. He GRABS her by the throat and pins her against the wall.

JEREKOV
You have power, it is true, but you do not understand its source.

BUFFY
(muffled)
A little help here people!

Xander comes to her aid but Jerekov uses his other hand to send him FLYING through the air.

(CONTINUED)
JEREKOV
You challenge me with children, killers, and weak mortals.
(beat)
I was once a God to mortals.

BUFFY
Yeah?

She kicks him in the GROIN. He winces in pain as she spin-kicks him back.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
I’ve fought a God. She lost. And you know what? You’re gonna lose to.

She goes to him but he uses magic to push her body to the ceiling, sticking it in place.

JEREKOV
I do not lose. I will have his soul.
(beat)
We have deal for pity’s sake!

He heads towards Xander but is suddenly JUMPED by Anya. She WRAPS her arms around his neck, refusing to let go. He tries to shake her off but she clings with determination.

ANYA
You can’t have his soul!
(beat)
Not when you haven’t even given me mine!

Jerekov finally throws her off and she FALLS to the ground. He looks down at her.

JEREKOV
You have a soul. It’s just too buried beneath to be found.

Xander’s eyes dart to Anya as her pain has finally come out. He starts towards her but Jerekov snaps his body round and pushes Xander back with a hell of a lot of force.

JEREKOV (CONT’D)
Yours, is mine.

His hand presses against Xander’s chest but suddenly a ray of RED LIGHT attaches itself to the warlock.

(CONTINUED)
He turns to see the portal has been opened and is sucking him in.

JEREKOV (CONT’D)
No. This isn’t how it’s supposed to go.

ANDREW
Deal with it.

As he and Willow step back, the portal sucks Jerekov back in and closes behind him, the rectangle erasing itself from the wall. Buffy comes CRASHING back down from the ceiling.

Xander looks to Anya, who is lying on the ground, wallowing in her own misery.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN:

INT. CLEVELAND HOSPITAL - DAWN’S ROOM - MORNING

Dawn is lying motionless in the hospital bed, her eyes open, and transfixed on Jackson, who is sleeping in the armchair beside her. The door opens and Buffy walks in, with two cups of coffee.

BUFFY
You’re awake.

DAWN
(groggy)
Just.

BUFFY
Quite a ride you had last night.

DAWN
I wouldn’t call it a ride.

Buffy leaves a cup next to Jackson and sits with Dawn on the bed, taking her hand.

BUFFY
What were you doing?

DAWN
Last night? I went to the seek the truth, about everything, about what is going on here.

BUFFY
How did you know where to go?

DAWN
I’m research girl, it’s what I do. I came across a passage on these beings that could give us information but I couldn’t go without a trade.

BUFFY
(concerned)
What did you give them?

(CONTINUED)
DAWN
The pendant Willow got from one of the girls who follows her magic. It used to be a conductor of power, it would channel a being’s essence and amplify it but it’s been dormant too long. They can’t do anything with it.

BUFFY
Quite the knowledge girl.

DAWN
Like I said, it’s what I do.

BUFFY
So what did they tell you?

DAWN
(shakes her head)
I don’t remember. It’s like... that part of my brain has been wiped.

BUFFY
You and Jackson finally have something in common then.

Dawn turns to the sleeping Jackson with an icy stare. Buffy catches it.

BUFFY (CONT’D)
He saved your life.

DAWN
No... he didn’t. He was just there to get someone to call an ambulance.

BUFFY
You’re wrong.
(beat)
It’s called CPR, Dawnie. I guess it works best on us Summers girls.

DAWN
He did that?

BUFFY
(nods)
He’s not a bad guy.

Dawn looks at Jackson once again, confused. She turns back to see Buffy stand.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:  (2)

DAWN
Where are you going?

BUFFY
I’m gonna see when we can get you
out of here. I’ll be right back.

She exits. Dawn eyes the man next to her.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - ANDREW’S ROOM

Jody is sitting on the windowsill, staring out into the
light of day. Andrew comes in with two ice creams.

ANDREW
You okay?

JODY
Yeah. I’m cool.
(beat)
It’s just... wow.

What?

ANDREW
I don’t get it. How you guys can
keep doing this stuff.

ANDREW
It’s what we do.
(beat)
Buffy once told me it was all about
the fight, and whether you’re ready
to give your life for it, cos in
the end that’s what it could come
down to.
(beat)
Are you ready to jump in?

JODY
I am. I really, really am. But how
can you keep this so hidden? People
should know about it, people should
know what you fight for, how you
fight... how you save them.

(CONTINUED)
ANDREW
That’s what I used to think. But you grow to understand that it’s not about recognition or... it’s about the fight. Everything is about the fight.
(beat)
As much as we say we do it because we have to, it’s not. We do it because we can, and we help.

JODY
It’s like you’re super heroes or something.

Andrew forms a smile.

ANDREW
We’re not the heroes. Buffy, Willow, Xander... they are.
(beat)
I’m not a hero.

Jody raises his hand to touch Andrew’s face.

JODY
Your my hero.

Andrew’s face lights up like a flash of light. He takes comfort in Jody’s words and on them, we...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDORS

Buffy walks aimlessly through the corridors, thinking everything over. She stops, seeing Jackson exit Dawn’s room. She heads towards him.

BUFFY
You’re awake.

JACKSON
Looks that way.

BUFFY
You okay?

JACKSON
Yeah. (beat)
What did the Doctors say?

(CONTINUED)
BUFFY
She’s gonna be fine. Minor injuries. She’s gonna be all right, thanks to you.

JACKSON
Right time, right place.

BUFFY
I think she forgives you for trying to kill her before.

JACKSON
Always a bonus.

They exchange a smile as background music begins to play. Nelly Furtado’s "Try". Buffy takes him by the hands.

BUFFY
You saved her. I don’t know what I would have done if I’d have lost her.

JACKSON
Hey, I saved the world, remember? This is nothing.

BUFFY
This...
   (beat)
Is everything.

They lean in for the kiss.

FADE TO:

INT. SUMMERS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN

Anya is standing, gazing out of the window [it’s like a theme!], with the background music carrying through to this scene. Xander enters, comes up behind her and takes her hands.

XANDER
I love you.

ANYA
I love you too.

XANDER
We’ll get through this. You know that right?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ANYA
I do... I just wish I felt it.

She turns around to him, her eyes weepy.

ANYA (CONT’D)
I don’t know how to feel.

XANDER
It doesn’t matter. Cos I’m gonna be right here with you, forever.

ANYA
Promise?

XANDER
Always.

Xander wraps his arms around her, holding her in her moment of weakness.

ANYA
We should go.

XANDER
In a minute.

He doesn’t let go of her, keeping her in his arms, for always and forever.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN’S ROOM

Dawn is still in the bed, staring up at the ceiling. She’s as motionless as she would be if she had died. The music comes out from the background and it’s all we hear now, the words ringing through, taking over the scene.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN’S ROOM - LATER

Buffy and Jackson are sitting beside Dawn, looking through magazines. Every so often, Dawn looks to Jackson, and they share a look of sincerity.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN’S ROOM - LATER

Almost as before, but Jackson and Buffy have switched sides. The door opens. Willow and KENNEDY walk in, brandishing a couple of balloons saying: "GET WELL SOON."
Willow and Buffy are acting out the fight with Jerekov to the amused Dawn, Jackson, and Kennedy. The door opens to reveal Xander, Anya, Andrew, and Jody. They stand for a moment, then all walk in.

CLOSE ON: DAWN

She sees everyone around her, her friends, her family. Xander and Willow are playing "rock, paper, scissors," with Xander always being "scissors" of course. And every so often he shakes his hand, almost getting a cramp. Jackson is showing Andrew and Jody one his home made stakes, to which Kennedy scoffs at, showing him one of hers... which is way better.

Dawn turns to see Buffy by her side, holding her hand. She smiles at her sister and Dawn returns it.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAWN’S ROOM - NIGHT

Dawn and Buffy are now alone. Buffy kisses the sleeping Dawn on the forehead and goes to the door. She takes one lasting look back, then softly closes it behind her.

The camera returns to Dawn’s peaceful expression as she loses herself in slumber land. Then --

Her eyes SUDDENLY SHOOT open, cutting the music off. The camera stays on those widened eyes, then, at a paced speed, zooms in on her, right into her pupils.

BLACK OUT.