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BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

"Earshot"

written by

Jane Espenson

WRITER'S SECOND DRAFT

Feb. 8, 1999

TEASER

FADE IN:

1

PARK - NIGHT

1

BUFFY RUNS, flat out, as if chased. Then she STUMBLES and falls. Stepping into frame next to her: two not-human feet and the tip of a tail. Trouble. But she smiles.

BUFFY

You demons just can't resist a run-and-stumble, can you?

Buffy ROLLS suddenly and SWEEPS the demon's feet from under it. It hits the ground next to Buffy. She manages to lift a kris (wavy-bladed knife) from its scabbard before the two of them regain their feet. They face each other, braced to fight. Buffy gets her first good look at its face now: horned, lumpy, scabby, and worst of all, mouthless.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Wow. A face even a mother could hate.

Then, before she can use her new blade, another player enters the scene. A SECOND DEMON, identical to the first, steps out of the bushes behind the first one. The first demon does not turn around or acknowledge the one behind him in any way. The rear-most demon pulls his knife. Buffy isn't alarmed -- she's shielded by the closer demon. The second demon THROWS his knife at the back of his double's head. Without looking, the first demon DUCKS and the knife sails over him, right at Buffy. In one fast move, Buffy grabs the knife out of the air and charges the closer demon. It goes down and she presses the twin knives to its chest, just below its scabby, oozing throat.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Say "Uncle". Oops. No mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Buffy STABS it with the two blades. It slumps dead. Buffy looks to take on the other one, but it's gone. She goes to the dead demon and pulls out one of the knives. The back of her hand brushes the demon. A SMEAR OF THICK LIQUID glistens on Buffy's skin. Eerily, it starts to GLOW. Buffy straightens her clothes, brushes off dirt, unaware, as the glowing liquid SOAKS INTO her skin, leaving no trace.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

2 SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING (DAY 2)

2

Buffy and WILLOW walk toward the library. The hall is full of posters and banners: "Go Razorbacks!" and "Future 1999 Division Champs!".

WILLOW
Scabby Demon got away?

BUFFY
Scabby Demon number two got away.
Scabby Demon one, big check in the
"Slay" column.

WILLOW
I don't like this "no mouth" thing.
It's disquieting.

BUFFY
Well, no mouth means no teeth,
(realizing)
unless they have them somewhere
else...

Two tall, athletic boys walk through the hall: basketball players. One of them is PERCY, Willow's tutoring project. The other is HOGAN MARTIN. He's clearly a star, not just athletic, but charismatic and good-looking.

STUDENT
Whoo! Good game, Hogan!

HOGAN
Thanks, man. Wish us luck tonight.

PERCY
We're gonna stomp 'em!

Percy sees Willow and stops, his macho front dropping away. Hogan stops too, smiling politely.

PERCY (CONT'D)
Willow. Hi. I did what you said
and I've been typing up my class
notes at night. They're easier to
read and I get a nice review of the
day's material. You can check if
you want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's fumbling with his backpack.

WILLOW

That's okay, Percy. I'm sure they're fine. You're doing very well.

Percy beams and blushes with the praise. Hogan leans in toward Buffy and Willow.

HOGAN

Hi. Hogan Martin.

WILLOW

Willow and Buffy. And we know who you are. You're kind of a famous guy around here. The Miracle Worker.

BUFFY

I heard you have an amazing jump shot... plus, you know, with the making the blind to see...

HOGAN

It's embarrassing, isn't it? The truth is I've just been blessed with more than my share of good luck. It'll all equal out when I lose my hair at twenty-five.

From down the hall:

STUDENT

Hey! It's Hogan! C'mon over here, man!

Hogan shoots the girls one last killer smile and moves away.

WILLOW

(charmed)

Wow. Smooth with a capital sm.

BUFFY

(not so charmed)

Yep, smooth. Surprised his clothes don't just slide right off.

PERCY

You're coming to the game tonight, Willow, aren't you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLOW

Of course! My best student's in it.

PERCY

And I'll be there too!

Percy lopes off after Hogan. Buffy and Willow continue toward the library.

BUFFY

You're going to the game? I didn't think you watched basketball.

WILLOW

I didn't either. But I've really been getting into it, and now we're in the championship and it's so exciting! It's too bad you're patrolling 'cause we're all going, Xander and Oz. Everybody.

Willow exits into the library.

BUFFY

Right. Everybody who isn't currently Buffy.

As Buffy follows Willow, she SCRATCHES the back of her hand where the demon-slime was.

3 LIBRARY - MINUTES LATER

3

Buffy, Willow, XANDER, OZ and GILES. A meeting in progress.

OZ

I'm confused.

BUFFY

Me too. Mayor. Graduation Day. I can match these words with their definitions. But this Ascension thing?

WILLOW

Yeah, what's going to happen?

GILES

Well, I am still relatively certain it will occur at some time this graduation day...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Which is more than I can say for my graduating.

GILES

...and I have eliminated a further six possibilities. It is not the ritual flaying of the demon Azorath, nor the... the--

(off their looks)

I don't know what's going to happen.

WESLEY hurries in.

WESLEY

Terribly sorry. I was detained. Official council business. Giles, you were talking?

Buffy scratches her hand... the spot is getting red and raw.

GILES

I was just filling everyone in on my progress regarding researching the Ascension.

WESLEY

Oh? And what took up the rest of the minute?

GILES

(very humble)

Touche. My work is, after all, unofficial, and my sources are limited. I'm sure, however, with the resources of the council behind you, that you have something to add. We're all ears.

Giles sits down with the others, and makes a show of staring at Wesley with intent interest.

WESLEY

Well, I... I am pleased to state with certainty that the demon Azorath will not be involved in--

Everyone is getting up, collecting their books.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY (CONT'D)
 (calling after)
 I'm sure we'll find out more soon.
 Buffy, Xander, Willow, Oz exit.

GILES
 (scornful; to Wesley)
 The demon Azorath.

4 HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

4

They walk away from the library.

XANDER
 You know what we should do next
 week? Go to the movies again. All
 of us.

OZ
 That was cool.

BUFFY
 We didn't go to the movies.
 (then)
 Oh. That other 'we'.

WILLOW
 You were out Slaying with Faith.

XANDER
 You wouldn't have liked it anyway.
 Lots of violence.

BUFFY
 Right, while me and Faith were
 baking cookies with gentle woodland
 creatures.

She scratches her hand again.

BUFFY (CONT'D)
 Look, guys, you go ahead, okay?

She turns back toward the library.

5 GILES' OFFICE

5

Buffy is studying her irritated hand while Giles looks
 through his books.

GILES
 You touched one of the demons.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

A "good touch," not a "bad touch."
Anyway, it's been itching like
crazy. No big. Just another
problem for the good people at
Lubriderm, right?

GILES

These are the demons in question?

He shows her a drawing of the two from the Teaser.

BUFFY

In the disgusting flesh.

GILES

Hmm.

BUFFY

What?

GILES

Oh, it says that they can infect a
host--

BUFFY

Infect? Infect?... Infect?

GILES

Infect a host with "an aspect of
the demon." That's all it says. I
say, that's rather terse, isn't it?

BUFFY

I'm going to get an aspect of them?
Like, a part of them?

GILES

Of course, there are many other
explanations for your hand. A new
fabric softener can cause
irritation. But just in case, I'd
advise you not to try to track the
one that got away. Let's minimize
your exposure.

Buffy is staring at the picture. These demons have no
appealing aspects.

BUFFY

A part of the demon. I hope it's
not the outside part.

6

FOUNTAIN COURT

6

Pep rally. CORDELIA is one of the cheerleaders. They're doing little routines and chants in honor of each of the players on the team. Buffy, Willow, Xander and Oz look on from the crowd.

CHEERLEADERS

H-O-G-A-N. IT'S HOGAN! GO HOGAN!

The cheerleaders wave their pompoms around the star player. He waves. The crowd YELLS and APPLAUDS.

BUFFY

Is it just me or is this really lame?

OZ

I don't know. Usually I enjoy lameness, and this is leaving me cold.

Oz starts idly flipping through the school newspaper, "The Sunnydale High Sentinel." The headline: "GRADES ARE MEANINGLESS". Buffy absently runs a hand over her hair.

OZ (CONT'D)

Huh.

WILLOW

What huh?

OZ

Editorial in the school paper. Calls the pep rally a place for "pseudo-prostitutes to provoke men into a sexual frenzy, which, when thwarted, results in pointless athletic competition".

They all watch the cheerleaders bounce.

CHEERLEADERS

GET THE BALL AND STUFF IT! STUFF IT!

XANDER

And, what? He thinks that's a negative?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OZ

The paper's been interesting lately.

WILLOW

Yeah. The bitter editorials plus there's always the obits.

Buffy runs her hand over her hair again. Willow gently nudges her over to the edge of the crowd where they can talk.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Buffy? What are you doing?

BUFFY

Nothing.

(then, an admission)

Checking for horns.

WILLOW

Oh, Buffy. You know, I don't even think Giles is right about this. Your hand is better, right? And he's totally burnt, dealing with Faith and this Ascension thing. Between you and me, he's not doing his best work.

BUFFY

Yeah. I guess.

She touches her hair again.

BACK BY THE CHEERLEADERS

Xander and Oz watch the cheerleaders.

CHEERLEADERS

T-O-M. IT'S TOM! GO TOM!

XANDER

They're really very good.

OZ

No misspellings.

XANDER

You know, Oz, I look at all this beauty. All these... healthy young women and I wonder why I even wasted my time with Cordelia.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER (CONT'D)

Look at her, she's no better
looking than the rest of them.

OZ

None of them are really my--

XANDER

Oh my god. He's looking at her.

Oz turns and sees Wesley standing at the edge of the crowd,
watching the rally.

XANDER (CONT'D)

He's got his filthy adult Pierce
Brosnan-y eyeballs all over my
Cordy.

OZ

You're a complex man, aren't you?

BACK BY WILLOW AND BUFFY

Buffy is pouring out her heart to Willow... a close moment
between good friends.

BUFFY

It's just... It's just I'm scared,
Will. Something could happen to me
and I, I can't stop it. I could
change. Not just how I look,
but... I could be someone that's
not me anymore.

WILLOW

Yay! Whoo-hoo!

(then)

Sorry. They spelled Percy. I had
to show support. He's needy. But
I heard you. Really. And I
understand. I would be frightened
too. But--

The rally is breaking up. The opportunity for private talk
is over. Xander and Oz join the girls.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

We'll talk more later.

BUFFY

Yeah. Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WILLOW
 (to Xander)
 Looking forward to the game?

XANDER
 (not listening)
 My conflicting emotions are tearing
 me in two.

WILLOW
 Well, I think it's going to be
 good.
 (then, remembering)
 Sorry, Buffy.

BUFFY
 That's okay. Patrolling is fun
 too.

7 PARK

7

Buffy patrols alone, carrying her Slayer bag. No fun. She sighs and rubs at her hand. She takes a mirror out of her bag, looks at her face.

BUFFY
 Well, still got a mouth.

ANGLE: THE MIRROR

Positioned so Buffy could see someone standing behind her. There's nothing there. She turns and finds herself facing ANGEL. She jumps.

ANGEL
 Sorry.

BUFFY
 It's okay. I didn't see you so I
 should've known you were there.
 What are you doing here?

ANGEL
 It's a dangerous time. You know,
 with Faith...

BUFFY
 Yeah. Faith... She, well...
 Faith. What can you say about her?

She waits, but Angel says nothing about her:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGEL

I just want to make sure you're okay. That you're safe.

Buffy looks searchingly at Angel.

BUFFY

And the fact that you're right here. Does that mean Faith's around? Are you keeping me safe by tracking me or by tracking her?

ANGEL

I'm tracking you.
(beat)
Something's bothering you.

They sit on a park bench.

BUFFY

Oh, lots of things.

Will Angel bring up Faith now? No. Buffy sighs.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

The most recent is this demon. Two, actually. Ooky-looking with extra ook. Well, I kind of... got one of them on me, and now I might get a big case of the bumpies or a tail or something.

ANGEL

"An aspect of the demon."

BUFFY

You know the drill.

ANGEL

By rumor. But that doesn't mean anything. Sometimes demons exaggerate their power.

BUFFY

Demon-hype. Or maybe not. But, hey, I spend all my time here in the dark anyway. Not like I'd be at a game or out with friends or something where people'd see me and my new demon-part.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Buffy stands up and walks. Angel follows, takes her by the arm. She stops.

ANGEL

I won't let anything hurt you if I can help it.

They're drawn together, almost into a hug. But Buffy pulls back.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

And Buffy, I don't care even if you do get a part of a demon.

BUFFY

Before you commit to that, I think it was a boy demon.

8

LOUNGE - MORNING (DAY 3)

8

Willow, Xander and Oz are on their feet, rehashing last night's game.

WILLOW

Could you believe it? Right at the buzzer! Three points for the win!

XANDER

And the girls in the stand go crazy! Hugging friends and strangers alike!

OZ

It was like the end of an Adam Sandler movie when everything works out. You don't think it's going to get to you, and then...

WILLOW

I've never seen anyone jump like Hogan Martin. They should call him "The Jumper."

XANDER

Or a name that isn't an article of women's clothing.

WILLOW

Shush.

They all quiet down as Buffy enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Ooh. Quietness. We either lost the game or we won and you don't want me to feel bad.

Cordelia enters and talks with some friends of hers nearby.

WILLOW

Yeah, well, it wasn't really a good game.

XANDER

Yeah. Tall hoop, but then, tall guys, so what's the point.

OZ

I think the coach went home at half-time.

Cordy must have been listening, because she's all over this.

CORDELIA

Are you guys crazy? It was an incredible game! I've never cheered so hard in my life. I've still got knee-marks on my back.

(off their looks)

From the pyramid.

And she gives up. She moves across the room to her friends.

WILLOW

(to Buffy)

Yeah, well. I still bet patrolling was way better. Because, wow, important.

BUFFY

I thought I saw a four-legged demon. But it was a dog.

OZ

(interested)

A weredog?

BUFFY

Regular.

XANDER

Tough luck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY

Yeah.

Xander is looking over at Cordy.

XANDER (V.O.)

Wesley just better not look at her again.

BUFFY

Xander?

XANDER

What?

BUFFY

You're mad at Wesley?

XANDER

Well, um, kind of. I mean, don't you think it's wrong-- How'd you know that?

BUFFY

Didn't you... I... I don't know.

XANDER

Huh. I guess you read my mind.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

9 HALLWAY - MORNING (STILL DAY 3)

9

Buffy walks slowly toward the library. Teachers and other students pass her. A NERDY BOY walks by.

NERD (V.O.)

And when I'm a software jillionaire
and you're all working at Arby's,
who's the loser then?

He's gone. A HARASSED LOOKING GIRL goes by.

HARASSED GIRL (V.O.)

Maybe I'll take French, I said. How
hard can it be? French babies
learn it. Idiot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As that statement is just fading, over the top of it, another starts:

BAGGY-PANTS GUY (V.O.)
It looks cool, but I swear, some
day my pants are gonna fall right
off.

She looks over, sees a group of BAGGY-TROUSERED GUYS lounging by a locker. One of them hitches up his pants uncomfortably. Buffy stifles a laugh.

CUTE GUY (V.O.)
Pretty girl. Really beautiful
girl.

She looks around and sees a CUTE GUY glancing at her. Pleased, she slows her walk even farther.

CUTE GUY (CONT'D; V.O.)
She has the sweetest face I ever
saw.

Buffy is almost at a dead stop, near the guy. She tosses a smile at him.

CUTE GUY
She's so hot. Boy, if I had a
chance I'd...

ANGLE ON: BUFFY

Reacting to what is clearly the filthiest ending the above sentence could possibly have. She hurries away, past ANOTHER GUY. He looks at her and she reacts to his, even filthier, thought. She passes MORE BOYS -- each having thoughts more shocking than the last. She hurries, arms crossed protectively over her body. She ducks her head and almost runs into MR. BEACH, a teacher.

MR. BEACH
(pleasantly)
Whoa there. You watch where you're
going now.

BUFFY
Sorry, Mr. Beach. I will.

As he leaves...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. BEACH (V.O.)
Students. If we could just get rid
of all the students...

LARRY walks by, fast, looking tough and angry like he's
heading to beat someone up. Freshmen duck out of his way.

LARRY (V.O.)
Man, I gotta pee.

10

LIBRARY

10

Buffy follows Giles around as he selects and pulls books.

BUFFY
Is this the thing? The aspect-
thing? Because, I've got to say,
it's better than a tail. I mean,
it's hard enough getting jeans that
fit right anyway...

GILES
Buffy. Slow down. I'm not even
convinced that you're experiencing
genuine mind-reading. Most likely,
you're projecting...

BUFFY
When I came in, a minute ago, you
thought, "Look at those shoes. If
the fashion magazines told her to,
she'd wear cats strapped to her
feet."

Giles stares at her, stunned.

GILES
I... that...

BUFFY
And by the way, cat-shoes? I mean,
what is that?

GILES (V.O.)
Of course. 'Aspect of the demon'.
The demons are telepathic. That's
why they don't need mouths. I
should have known.

Just before his voice-over is done, Giles starts speaking:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

Of course. The demons are telepathic.

BUFFY

I know. You just told me. That's why they don't need mouths. And you should have known.

GILES

I... this is astounding.

BUFFY

It was happening in the hall. Principal Snyder has "Walk Like an Egyptian" stuck in his head. And the boys in this school are seriously disturbed. It was strange, but, Giles, it's like this whole secret world is open to me. Think what I can do.

GILES

It would be useful. You can anticipate an opponent's moves, turn their plans against them...

BUFFY

Oh, better than that.

CLOSE ON BUFFY:

BUFFY (CONT'D)

1951!

PULL BACK TO REVEAL WE ARE IN:

11

CLASSROOM

11

The history teacher, MS. MURRAY, faces the class. Buffy, Willow and Xander are in the class, along with NANCY and FREDDY and others.

MS. MURRAY

(surprised)

Buffy. Right. Very good.

Willow and Xander look at Buffy with surprise. So does NANCY, a competitive girl.

NANCY (V.O.)

I knew that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Nancy frowns at Buffy. Buffy looks at her innocently.

MS. MURRAY

So here we have a book, set in the post-war period, but with a main character who doesn't reflect optimism about the future. In fact, Holden Caulfield dwells repeatedly and obsessively on his past...

Under the end of Ms. Murray's speech, we hear:

MS. MURRAY (V.O.)

Fear of change, of passage to another stage of life, fear of death.

BUFFY

Fear of death! Fear of change! Um... something about passages to stages of life.

Everyone looks at her.

WILLOW (V.O.)

(surprised)

Buffy read the book.

(more surprised)

Buffy understood the book.

XANDER (V.O.)

When did she study? Was I supposed to study? Ms. Murray's kind of hot.

NANCY (V.O.)

I was going to say fear of death. I hate her.

Buffy looks sweetly at Nancy.

MS. MURRAY

And when Holden does think about the future, how does he see it?

Nancy jumps in fast, before Buffy can talk:

NANCY

He's afraid he'll turn into a different kind of person.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MS. MURRAY

Uh... good, Nancy.

Nancy smirks.

FREDDY (V.O.)

Look at them, scrambling for the teacher's praise like pigeons for old bread crusts.

Buffy looks around... sees FREDDY, dressed in black, slumped in his desk with a dark and brooding look.

BUFFY

(whispered to Willow)

Who's that guy?

WILLOW

Freddy Munson. He writes those editorials for the school paper. He's sardonic.

MS. MURRAY

So, what do you think Salinger was trying to say through this character?

Buffy listens intently as she speaks, translating the teacher's thoughts into her words...

BUFFY

He was making a point about... about growing up without... older people to guide us... and how the children end up trying to guide each other. Like... Phoebe and Holden. And... and... like Holden sees himself, when he talks about being the catcher in the rye.

Everyone stares at Buffy.

MS. MURRAY/WILLOW/XANDER/NANC

(raggedly overlapping)

Whoa.

MS. MURRAY

Buffy. Really. Very well said. Amazing. I said something a lot like that in my thesis.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUFFY

Thanks. I really liked this book...

(looks at cover)

The Catcher in the Rye.

MS. MURRAY

Okay, well, now let's talk about the character's view of sex and intimacy. He seems scared, as if sex has the power to cause this change in himself that frightens him. And yet he finds himself tempted...

Buffy's smile fades, as she's reminded of another part of her life.

12 MANSION - DAY

12

Angel, sleepy-eyed and tousled, opens the door. Buffy is there. He flinches at the indirect sunlight and steps back.

BUFFY

Hi. Sorry about the daytime. I just ducked out of school and that's when they have it.

Buffy enters and sits on the sofa while Angel lights a candle -- even in the middle of the day, the place is dark.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

You look good. I mean, I saw you last night, but sometimes things change real quick. I mean, really quickly. Listen to me, I'm talking like Faith.

Buffy concentrates, trying to hear Angel's thoughts.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Not that she was so bad to have around. Before the evil. I think she was hurting a lot. Some people, protective-type people, might be drawn to that, I guess.

She listens... nothing.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

The thing about Faith--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Angel looks Buffy right in the eyes, and...

ANGEL (V.O.)

You can't get into my mind.

BUFFY

How did you--? And why not?

ANGEL

It's like the mirror. The thoughts are there, but they create no reflection in you.

(then)

You got your "aspect of the demon."

BUFFY

Yeah. Giles doesn't know how long it's going to last, but it's okay. A little headachy, but...

ANGEL

You don't have to play games with me, Buffy. Ever.

BUFFY

Well, you're not exactly Joe Here's What I'm Thinking.

ANGEL

So ask me.

BUFFY

Oh. But that would make sense.

ANGEL

What do you want to know about? Faith? How I felt kissing her? Pretending to have no soul? Watching you suffer?

BUFFY

Well, since you want to talk about those things...

ANGEL

I hated hurting you. Having to hurt you cut me deeper than I've ever been cut. To the heart. More than I can stand.

Buffy is moved. She rests her head on his shoulder, just for a moment... not quite a hug, but a tiny step forward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY

Thank you. Um... and the Faith part of the question? I mean, I guess I'd understand... she's got this whole "bad girl" thing going on...

ANGEL

Kissing her meant nothing. I don't want a bad girl. I've done that before. I've lived a long time, Buffy, and I'm past that. I've been with lots of bad girls. Lots and lots of bad girls--

BUFFY

Oh, this honesty stuff is fun.

ANGEL

Next time, just ask.

BUFFY

Okay.

ANGEL

And Buffy, be careful with this gift. A lot of things that seem good and strong and powerful... they can be painful.

BUFFY

Like, say, immortality?

ANGEL

Exactly. I'm dying to get rid of that.

BUFFY

Funny.

ANGEL

(intensely)
I'm a funny guy.

13

LIBRARY

13

The whole group: Buffy, Willow, Xander, Oz, Cordy, Giles and Wesley. Trying to absorb new info.

XANDER

She can read our minds? Our every impulse and fantasy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Every one.

XANDER (V.O.)

Oh god.

CORDELIA (V.O.)

I don't see what this has to do
with me.

CORDELIA

I don't see what this has to do
with me.

WILLOW

Well, I think it's good. Right? I
mean, you enjoy your other Slayer
powers.

BUFFY

Yeah! It'll be fun. Did you see
Nancy Doyle's face in English
class?

WILLOW (V.O.)

She's hardly even human any more.
How can I be her friend now? She
doesn't need me.

BUFFY

No, I need you! I do.

CORDELIA

Okay, who are you talking to?
Because you are just so creepy
right now.

OZ (V.O.)

I am my thoughts. If they exist in
her, Buffy contains everything that
is me and she becomes me. I cease
to exist.

OZ

Huh.

XANDER (V.O.)

What am I going to do? I think
about sex all the time. Sex. Help.
Four times five is thirty. Five
times six is thirty-two...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER (CONT'D)

Naked girls. Naked woman. Naked
Buffy. Oh, stop me.

BUFFY

Xander, is that all you think
about?

XANDER

Actually...? Bye.

Almost running, Xander exits.

WESLEY

Xander has just illustrated
something. Chances are, you're all
going to find yourself thinking
whatever you least want Buffy to
hear. It's a matter, of course, of
mental discipline...

Under his speech we hear:

WESLEY (V.O.)

Look at Cordelia. No! Don't look
at Cordelia! She's a student! Oh,
I am bad. A bad, bad man.

Buffy looks at Wesley. He knows he's caught.

WESLEY

Excuse me.

Wesley exits to the office. Giles watches Buffy interact
with her friends.

WILLOW

What's it like, Buffy?

BUFFY

Oh, Will, it's... weird. And
please, don't think I don't need
you, because I really want to share
this. It's... like all these doors
opening into all these little
worlds and I can just walk in.

As Buffy talks, she starts to hear, underneath:

WILLOW (V.O.)

She knows so much. She knows what
Oz is thinking. I never know that.
Before long she'll know him better
than I do...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BUFFY
Willow... don't think that.

WILLOW
I can't help it!

OZ (V.O.)
No one else exists either. Buffy is all of us. And, I wonder if she knows that sex-thinking isn't just a Xander thing.

WILLOW
I'm sorry, Buffy. I just can't...

OZ
Yeah, and I should...

They exit. And Buffy's alone with Giles and Cordy.

BUFFY
Well, I guess I won't write that book "Win Friends Through Telepathy."

CORDELIA
Please, like you were going to write a book.

BUFFY
(to Giles)
I guess they're just afraid I'm going to hurt them.

GILES
No. They're afraid they're going to hurt you. Any careless or petty thought could injure you. And, Buffy, everyone has petty thoughts. They left to save you from that, and yet you resent them for leaving.

BUFFY
That's not what I'm doing!

GILES
(pointedly)
Oh. Then I'm sorry I offended you. They were only my thoughts.

Giles exits into his office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CORDELIA (V.O.)

Her so-called friends sure dumped
her in a hurry.

CORDELIA

Your so-called friends sure dumped
you in a hurry.

BUFFY

They just need time to adjust.

CORDELIA (V.O.)

Whatever. I wonder when I can go.

CORDELIA

Whatever. Can I go?

Wesley sticks his head out from Giles' office.

WESLEY

Can you hear me thinking in here? I
could go out in the hall.

BUFFY

(to Cordelia)

You know what? You stay. I'll go.
I'm getting a headache.

Buffy exits alone.

14

HALLWAY

14

Buffy walks from the library toward the cafeteria. Among others heading to the cafeteria: Mr. Beach, Freddy, Nancy. The hallway is full of people doing completely ordinary things. Some look happy. Most look blank. Buffy hears overlapping thoughts. It's impossible to pair the thoughts with their owners... it's as if the thoughts are in the air.

VOICES (V.O.)

She is so hot. I swear I will
scream from boredom. No one's ever
going to love me. What if I never
get breasts? I can't believe the
test is today. Get rid of the
students, it's that easy. What if
I'm the last virgin in the world?

Buffy's face reflects the building confusion and pain. She rubs her forehead, and actually stumbles as she walks.

15 GILES' OFFICE

15

Giles and Wesley, surrounded by open volumes. Giles finds something.

GILES

Here. It's happened before. A man in Ecuador. He acquired the telepathy.

WESLEY

Really? That far south?

GILES

That's not the point, you berk. We're trying to figure out what's going to happen.

WESLEY

So what happened to him?

GILES

(reading ahead)

Well, he... couldn't handle it. He ended up in an institution.

16 CAFETERIA

16

Buffy stands a little unsteadily in line as the LUNCH LADY plops unappetizing food onto students' plates. In the b.g. are Nancy, Freddy, Mr. Beach, Hogan and Larry, among others.

VOICES (V.O.)

(overlapping)

I hate my body. He is so cute I can't even look at him. Am I normal? When am I ever going to need to know algebra?

JONATHAN approaches the Lunch Lady.

JONATHAN

Ma'am? Yesterday, I left my retainer on my tray...

LUNCH LADY

(pointing)

Lost and found.

As Jonathan heads for a cardboard box in the b.g., the Lunch Lady loads up Buffy's tray.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICES (V.O.)

They're all just like rats in a maze. Look at everyone, they think this matters. If I stand in just the right place I can sort of see into the armhole of her top.

Buffy moves automatically down the line to get her dessert.

VOICES (CONT'D; V.O.)

He has the cutest butt. If I'm not valedictorian I'm going to die. I want her, I can't have her, I hate her.

And:

JONATHAN (V.O.)

Ew. This isn't my retainer.

Buffy, dazed, walks toward a table. Willow, Xander, and Oz are in the b.g. now, but Buffy's oblivious. It's impossible to pick out any one thought anymore... it's cacophony. Buffy sways. Then the cacophony fades. All the noise of the room fades away, and one voice sounds alone. It's whispery, harsh and distorted. It could be male or female, and it's definitely crazy.

KILLER

This time tomorrow, I kill you all.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

17 CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

17

Buffy stands in the middle of the room, holding her tray, looking around. People move and talk, but we can't hear them. Silence. Buffy sways and drops her tray. It lands silently. Food spatters. Then the normal sounds of the cafeteria fade back up, now including the normal applause and hooting that follows a dropped tray. Buffy reaches out, grabs the nearest arm, swings a student around, face-to-face.

STUDENT

Hey!

STUDENT (V.O.)

She's gone nuts.

Buffy lets them go, grabs someone else.

ANOTHER STUDENT (V.O.)

It's Buffy Summers. I'm so dead.

Buffy spins, grabs Jonathan.

JONATHAN (V.O.)

(dreamy)

She's strong and she smells good.

He smiles, revealing an ill-fitting retainer. And then it's a building chorus again:

VOICES (V.O.)

(overlapping)

I hate being here. I bet she's done it lots of times. He's such a show-off. Everyone's staring at my hair. I hate him. Didn't she wear that skirt yesterday?

The sound gets LOUDER. It BUILDS BACK UP to unintelligible noise. Buffy pushes Jonathan away, but keeps turning in place, searching with her eyes.

BUFFY'S POV OF ROOM (360 DEGREES)

Faces, most staring back at her, swim in front of her. Xander, Oz and Willow are looking at her with concern.

ANGLE ON: BUFFY

A Steadicam shot circling her as she spins and the noise continues to get LOUDER. Her eyes close and she DROPS TO THE FLOOR. She's out cold.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

18 SKY - BUFFY'S POV

18

A ring of concerned faces: Giles, Willow, Oz, Xander. Cordelia's there too, but less concerned.

WILLOW/OZ/GILES/XANDER/CORDY (V.O.)
(overlapping)
I think she's waking up./She's
okay./ Thank goodness./Her eyes
are opening./I'm cold.

19 TRIANGLE

19

Buffy sits up with Giles' help.

GILES
Are you all right?

CORDELIA
I told them not to move you. They
probably severed your spinal cord.

BUFFY
I'm okay.

GILES
Buffy--

BUFFY
Really, I am. Listen. There's a
killer in the cafeteria.

XANDER
I've been saying for years that the
lunch lady's going to do us all in
with that mulligan stew. I mean,
what the hell is a mulligan?

BUFFY
Someone was thinking it. "This
time tomorrow, I kill you all." I
have to find them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

You didn't recognize the voice?

BUFFY

No. I don't know. It was all...
crazy. Like it was so full of...
anger and pain, it was hardly
human.

She gets up and starts walking toward the school. As she gets closer to the building, the CACOPHONY starts building in her head. She stumbles. Giles catches her, steers her farther away. The noise fades.

GILES

You can't.

BUFFY

I have to find them.

OZ

Are you sure they meant it?

XANDER

Yeah. I mean, who hasn't just idly
thought about taking out the whole
place with a semi-automatic?

(off their looks)

I said idly.

BUFFY

I know the difference. He, she,
whoever, they meant it. They're
going to do it.

WILLOW/OZ/GILES/XANDER/CORDY (V.O.)

(overlapping)

How horrible./Who could it be?/She
looks so tired./I bet it was
Hogan./I'm not getting any warmer.

BUFFY

Shut up!

Her friends recoil. Buffy holds her head.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I just mean... stop
thinking so loud... or so much...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GILES

You have to go home, Buffy. I'll take you home.

BUFFY

Yeah, okay. But, you guys, you have to do this. Go back in there, make a list, everyone in the cafeteria. Find them before lunch tomorrow!

WILLOW

We'll do it, Buffy. A list of all the students.

BUFFY

Nancy was there. She's scary. Teachers too. Mr. Beach thought something about getting rid of us...

GILES

(to Buffy)

Come on.

Willow leads the others back to the school as Buffy and Giles walk slowly toward his car parked at the edge of the triangle. She leans on his arm slightly.

BUFFY

I can't shut it out, Giles. I mean, it's like this... invasion of my head -- strangers walking around in there. Look at this, I can't even be around people. Not that they're clamoring to be near me now anyway. Even you.

GILES

I'm sorry, Buffy. It's hard for all of us. But Wesley and I are looking for a way to help.

BUFFY

I'm going to be okay, aren't I? You know, even if you can't get rid of it?

GILES

You'll be fine. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GILES (V.O.)

If it doesn't go away, you will go insane.

Buffy stops and stares at him.

20

LIBRARY - LATE

20

Giles addresses Willow, Xander, Oz and Cordelia.

GILES

You all heard what Buffy said. You have a killer to find.

XANDER

Technically, until tomorrow, it's just a person with killer hopes and dreams--

GILES

Xander. This is serious. Students bring guns to school. They kill their classmates. It's terrible and it happens. It's going to happen here if we don't stop it.

OZ

Anyone else missing a nice straightforward vampire?

Cordelia raises her hand.

WILLOW

We have a list of the people in the cafeteria. I'll do some computer work, match it against the FBI mass-murderer profiles. We can rule some people out. It's a place to start.

GILES

Good. And I'm sorry, but I'm afraid you four are on your own with this. Wesley and I are going to look for a way to help Buffy.

CORDELIA

You better, because she really looked like crap.

21

BUFFY'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

21

Joyce is tucking Buffy into bed. Buffy is pale and shaky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOYCE
There. You look better already.

BUFFY
Thanks Mom--

Joyce exits into the hall.

JOYCE (O.S.)
I'm just getting you another
pillow.

Joyce is back with the pillow.

BUFFY
I don't really need--

Joyce is out again.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Just getting another blanket!

BUFFY
Mom!

Joyce is back with the blanket.

JOYCE
How about some soup? Chicken and
stars?

BUFFY
Mom. Stop it. Come sit with me.

JOYCE
Well... I've got... laundry...

BUFFY
Why are you...

Buffy gasps.

BUFFY (CONT'D)
You had sex with Giles. You had
sex with Giles!

Joyce is heading for the door.

JOYCE
It was the candy! We were
teenagers!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY
On the hood of a police car?!

JOYCE
I'll be downstairs! Feel better!

Joyce exits.

BUFFY
(called after)
Twice?!

22 LIBRARY - LATE

22

Willow has her computer set up on the table. With Xander, Oz and Cordy looking on, she takes a list out of the printer.

WILLOW
Okay. I've taken our list and narrowed it to a dozen strong suspects.

She hands out papers to Xander, Oz and Cordy.

WILLOW (CONT'D)
These are your personalized assignments.

XANDER
Oh, I was hoping there'd be assignments.

CORDELIA
I want to be in Wesley's group.

XANDER
You have no shame.

CORDELIA
Oh, like shame is something to be proud of.

WILLOW
Be quiet! Sorry, but this is important. Talk to everyone on your list. Use the sample questions. We've got less than a day to crack our killer like a rotten egg.

They head out...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLOW (CONT'D)
 (called after)
 Oh! Write neatly and label your
 worksheets!

23

LIBRARY - LATE

23

Jonathan, utterly confused, sits in the darkened room at the
 table facing a desk lamp.

WILLOW
 (sweetly)
 Okay. These are just a few
 questions for the yearbook.

JONATHAN
 Okay.

She stands up and turns the lamp head toward him. He pulls
 back and squints into the light. The scene becomes a reprise
 of the interrogation in "Go Fish".

WILLOW
 Fantasies are fun, aren't they
 Jonathan?

JONATHAN
 I guess.

WILLOW
 We all have fantasies where we're
 powerful and respected. Where
 people pay attention to us.

JONATHAN
 Maybe.

WILLOW
 But sometimes the fantasy isn't
 enough, is it, Jonathan? Sometimes
 you have to make it so people don't
 ignore you. Make them pay
 attention. You know what I'm
 talking about, don't you?

JONATHAN
 You want me to pay attention?

24

HALLWAY

24

Oz is talking with Hogan, the basketball star, who practices
 jump shots with an imaginary ball. Oz holds his "worksheet".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOGAN

This is for the yearbook?

OZ

You bet. "Personality profiles".

HOGAN

Can you ask it again?

OZ

Do you ever feel that you've created a false persona for yourself of the guy who does everything right, and how much of a strain does that put on you to maintain it?

HOGAN

Huh. Wow. I guess... moderate strain? Is that a good answer? I want to get this right.

OZ

Uh-huh.

Oz checks something off on his list.

25

CLASSROOM

25

Mr. Beach is erasing the blackboard in an empty room. Cordelia enters.

CORDELIA

Hi, Mr. Beach. I was just wondering if you were planning on killing a bunch of people tomorrow? Oh, it's for the yearbook.

26

FOUNTAIN COURT

26

Xander addresses three cute girls.

XANDER

Okay. And of those of you who indicated you don't have access to firearms, how many are free tomorrow night? Wait, better make that tonight.

27 SCHOOL NEWSPAPER OFFICE

27

Oz enters. No one there. Oz looks at the framed front pages on the walls. Headlines include: "TEACHERS FAIL COMPETENCY EXAM," "SCHOOL DEATH TOLL SETS RECORD," "DEPRESSION LINKED TO SCHOOL," "APATHY ON THE RISE, NO ONE CARES," and "DROP-OUTS FIND HAPPINESS". Oz exits.

ANGLE ON: FREDDY

hiding under the desk.

28 LIBRARY - NIGHT

28

Giles and Wesley, surrounded by books and magick supplies, including a vial of liquid. They look rumpled and tired.

WESLEY

Well, I really don't see that it's going to be so very difficult.

GILES

You don't? Well then, let me count the ways. One, we don't know that this potion will cure her. Two, it may already be too late. And three, who, exactly, is going to go get the secret ingredient, the still-warm heart of the other demon? Pureed.

WESLEY

You just aren't happy 'til you find the black cloud.

29 BUFFY'S ROOM - NIGHT

29

Buffy stands at the window, looking out.

PAN across some typical Sunnydale houses. Over the first house:

WIFE (V.O.)

Look at him smiling, like he thinks I don't know about her...

This overlaps with:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUSBAND (V.O.)

She doesn't know a thing. I can't
believe I'm getting away with this.

This overlaps with thoughts from the next house:

MAN (V.O.)

I should've just quit. No job's
worth that crap.

And over the third house:

WOMAN (V.O.)

One more drink. That'll do it.
Just one more and I can sleep...

Buffy shudders. She closes the window, the curtain, but now:

MAN (V.O.)

Twenty years with that company.

WIFE (V.O.)

Does he think I can't smell her
perfume?

WOMAN (V.O.)

It's just a little drink.

MAN (V.O.)

He shouldn't even be the boss.

WOMAN (V.O.)

The bottle's almost empty anyway...

Buffy curls up on the bed, pulls the pillow over her head.

30

PARK - NIGHT

30

The surviving mouthless demon is flung backwards into frame -- airborne for far longer than a human assault could ever accomplish. Angel, in vamp face, bounds in after him, pressing his advantage. The demon fights back with a series of hard punches that snap Angel's head back. But, on the last punch, Angel side-steps, and grabs the demon's arm, and throws the demon to the ground. Angel flings himself onto the demon, pinning it... But the demon flips Angel off him. Angel is still finding his feet when the demon is on him... catching him brutally in the head with big sweeping kicks. Angel staggers back, shaking his head to clear it. But the demon is gone. Angel looks up at the still-dark sky, worried.

31 BUFFY'S ROOM - MORNING (DAY 4) 31

The room is dark. Buffy is on the bed, twisting and mumbling. Joyce is in a chair, wrapped in a blanket -- she has clearly been sitting up all night. She gets up and wearily crosses to the window and parts the curtains. She squints out at the early morning light.

32 LIBRARY - MORNING 32

Willow holds her list and talks to Nancy.

NANCY

Do I often imagine classmates are spying on me or otherwise acting suspiciously?

WILLOW

Right.

NANCY

Not 'til just now.

33 HALLWAY 33

Freddy walks down the hall, turns a corner and sees: Oz, knocking at the door of the school newspaper office.

OZ

Freddy? You there?

Freddy ducks back, out of sight. Oz gives up, and walks past where Freddy is hiding. Freddy runs off the other way.

34 LOUNGE 34

Xander and Larry are in the lounge.

LARRY

What? Talk louder, dude.

XANDER

(discreetly)

I'm just saying it's got to be frustrating. Having this secret? You gotta be kind of filling up with resentment, unexpressed rage waiting to burst out. Today at lunch.

CONTINUED:

LARRY
 (loudly)
 What secret? Being gay?

XANDER
 Shhh!

LARRY
 Man, I'm out. I'm so out I got my
 grandma fixing me up with guys.

XANDER
 Oh. That's... nice?

LARRY
 But it sounds like you're having a
 rough time with it.

XANDER
 Again, may I suggest shhh?

LARRY
 Look, just do it.

Freddy hurries through the hallway next to the lounge, making
 his escape from Oz. Larry spots him.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 (to Xander)
 Look there. That weird Freddy
 Munson guy who does the school
 paper?

XANDER
 He's gay?

LARRY
 No, dude, but I bet he'd put in,
 like, a coming-out announcement for
 you. Something tasteful.

35 BUFFY'S ROOM - MORNING

35

Buffy is still curled on the bed, hands clamped over her
 ears, every muscle tense and tortured. Joyce and Giles look
 in on her from the doorway. Buffy MOANS.

JOYCE
 I can't stand this. I keep
 wondering if I'm hurting her, with
 my thoughts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GILES

You're not. Not anymore. She
can't pick one thought out of
the... din.

JOYCE

Giles... is she still Buffy?
Inside?

GILES

I think so--

He's interrupted by the DOORBELL, followed by urgent
KNOCKING.

36

FOYER

36

Joyce runs down the stairs, Giles following. She opens the
front door. Wesley is there. He steps aside, allows a
shrouded figure in. Smoke curls off the blanket. The figure
beneath shrugs off the coverings... it's Angel. He holds the
vial. Now the liquid inside GLOWS.

ANGEL

I got it.

37

LIBRARY

37

Willow, Xander, Oz and Cordy compare results. The table is
covered with their scattered lists, and a copy of the school
paper. Headline: TEAM WINS SENSELESS CONTEST.

WILLOW

He's the only one we couldn't find?

OZ

Yeah. Freddy Munson.

CORDELIA

The newspaper guy? But we can't
figure out it's him without the
worksheet, right?

Xander has picked up the copy of the paper.

XANDER

Uh... we do have this, people.
Today's editorial titled, "Big Game
Dwarfed by Inevitability of Death."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CORDELIA
Does he mention the cheerleaders?
Because we were on.

38 BUFFY'S ROOM

38

Angel is alone with Buffy. He tries to lift her into a sitting position on the bed. She fights him, weakly.

BUFFY
No. No!

ANGEL
I'm going to help you.

Buffy opens her eyes.

BUFFY
Who?

She doesn't know him. That hurts. He holds the glowing vial of liquid to Buffy's mouth, forces some into her. Then he settles her in the bed and kisses her lightly on the lips. But as he stands up, she gasps and CONVULSES. He grabs her, holds her, trying to control her flailing limbs.

ANGEL
Giles!

39 FOUNTAIN COURT

39

Students hang a new banner: "1999 CHAMPS!" Larry crosses through. Hogan entertains cheerleaders by spinning a basketball on his finger. Mr. Beach and Nancy sit on benches, reading. Jonathan, carrying a case, exits into a door at the base of the school bell tower.

40 TOWER

40

Jonathan enters and glances out over the edge of the tower. He opens the case. He reaches in and removes two parts of a rifle. He starts to assemble it...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

41 BUFFY'S ROOM

41

Angel kneels beside the motionless Buffy, holding her hand. Joyce and Giles stand nearby. Buffy opens her eyes.

JOYCE

Thank God.

ANGEL

Buffy?

She looks at him. Absolutely blank. Until...

BUFFY

Angel?

ANGEL

Are you all right? Do you hear thoughts?

BUFFY

No... I'm okay. Or... I will be.

Giles smiles, relieved.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Did you find the killer?

42 SCHOOL NEWSPAPER OFFICE

42

Freddy sits at his desk, writing. The door opens. Willow, Xander, Oz and Cordy enter. Freddy starts to stand up, then drops back into his chair -- caught.

FREDDY

Okay, Oz. You got me. What are your friends going to do? Hold me down?

WILLOW

You better believe it, Buster. You can't threaten a big murder without getting us pretty darn ticked.

FREDDY

Murder? What murder? You're not here about the review?

OZ

The review?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Freddy hands a paper to Oz.

FREDDY
Last Thursday.

OZ
(reading)
" 'Dingoes Ate My Baby' play their
instruments as if they had plump
Polish sausages taped to their
fingers... "

FREDDY
Sorry, man.

OZ
No. It's fair.

XANDER
Hey, Freddy, if you happen to get a
tasteful announcement about me from
Larry--

WILLOW
Xander. We have to figure this
out.

CORDELIA
Oh, we have no shot. The killer
could be anyone.

Cordy perches on the edge of the desk and starts idly opening
and reading the mail from the in-box.

WILLOW
We can do it. We have seventeen
minutes.

BUFFY (O.S.)
My watch says sixteen.

Buffy is standing in the doorway. There is general
excitement:

WILLOW
Buffy!

XANDER
You're okay!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BUFFY

More or less. Okay. Here's the new plan. We try to get Snyder to evacuate the school and just hope our bad guy isn't waiting outside with--

CORDELIA

(reading)

"By this time tomorrow, you'll all know what I've done."

Slowly, everyone turns and stares at Cordy.

CLOSE ON: CORDELIA

CORDELIA (CONT'D)

"...I'm sure you understand that I had to do it, and that although death is never easy, it is the only way."

She tosses the letter aside.

CORDELIA (CONT'D)

God, doesn't anyone write in to praise the cheerleaders? We are so unsung.

Willow scrambles for the discarded letter.

WILLOW

Signed... Jonathan. Ooh. I had him in my grasp, the slippery weasel.

BUFFY

Okay. Split up. Find Jonathan.

43 CLASSROOM 43

Xander looks in, flinging the door open on the run. The room's empty. He moves on.

44 HALLWAY 44

Oz runs down the hall.

OZ

Jonathan?

45 LIBRARY 45

Willow runs in, looks around, heads up into the stacks.

WILLOW

Jonathan? Are you in here?

46 LOUNGE 46

Cordy sees someone from the back. Is it Jonathan? She spins him around, her hand cocked back to punch. It isn't. She pushes the terrified boy away and grabs another one...

47 FOUNTAIN COURT 47

Buffy pushes her way through the between-class crowd. She looks around frantically. She looks up and sees the glint of sunlight off metal, a gun muzzle in the tower! She runs up the exterior staircase. Nancy, in the courtyard, watches Buffy run. Buffy reaches the second level. She JUMPS up, grabs the eaves and, using super-human Slayer strength and dexterity, she FLIPS herself over onto the roof.

NANCY

I could have done that.

48 TOWER 48

Jonathan is struggling with the rifle, trying to chamber a round. The muzzle protrudes over the edge of the tower.

49 ROOF 49

Buffy runs on the roof. She reaches the edge of the tower and JUMPS, CRASHING through into the tower.

50 TOWER 50

Buffy LANDS, ROLLS right into the line of fire of the rifle.

JONATHAN

Stay away! Don't try and stop me!

BUFFY

Okay Jonathan. Not trying. Not stopping. Just enjoying the view. Hey, City Hall.

JONATHAN

I have to do this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

You have to? Okay. Tell me why you have to.

JONATHAN

Because it hurts. And this will make it stop.

BUFFY

How does it hurt?

JONATHAN

Everyone hates me.

BUFFY

Well, I don't think this is going to make you Mister Popular Boy.

JONATHAN

You're not helping!

He waves the rifle recklessly.

BUFFY

Sorry. Sorry. Look, I don't think people don't like you.

JONATHAN

They don't. I get it. I don't like me either. I mean, when you're alone at night, you're alone with Buffy Summers. But I have to be alone with me. You don't know what it's like.

BUFFY

I know what it's like to doubt yourself. And to feel excluded or... scared or mad.

JONATHAN

Are you trying to cheer me up? Because--

BUFFY

Don't cheer up. Those are terrible things to feel. But here's the deal. Every single person in this school feels all those things sometimes. Actually, a lot of the time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JONATHAN

Not like me.

BUFFY

Exactly like you. And they feel them so much, that they almost never have time to look at you and judge you.

JONATHAN

They don't hate me?

BUFFY

No way. They're too busy being scared, just like you. And even if they did, what do you care what other people think? Because, believe me, most of it's pretty dumb.

Jonathan loosens his grip on the rifle. Buffy reaches over and takes it from him, gently. She starts to unload it.

JONATHAN

Well, I have noticed the dumbness around here...

BUFFY

Right. And even if it bugs us, that's just one of those rare things that you can't fix with a rifle.

She puts an arm around Jonathan, starts to lead him out...

JONATHAN

I just thought...

BUFFY

I know. But it doesn't help anything to hurt people.

JONATHAN

I'd never hurt people.

Buffy stops in her tracks.

BUFFY

You'd never...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JONATHAN

I was going to shoot myself. What did you think?

51 CAFETERIA

51

As Xander walks into the cafeteria, a few other early customers start drifting in. He walks over toward the kitchen. He looks up at the menu board.

XANDER

Ooh. Jell-O.

He peeks in the trays at the counter... there's veggies, there's stew... but the Jell-O tray is empty. He looks into the kitchen. A BIG TRAY OF SHIMMERING JELL-O sits on the counter. Xander exits into the...

52 KITCHEN

52

Xander heads right for the Jell-O. He's just scooping out a big wobbly spoonful when he glances to one side and sees the Lunch Lady, pouring powder from an enormous container marked "RAT POISON" into the mulligan stew. They stand there for a second and stare at each other. Boy with Jell-O. Woman with rat poison. Both caught. Finally it occurs to both of them that the thing she was caught doing was worse than what he was caught doing. She lunges for Xander and he bolts out into the cafeteria.

53 CAFETERIA

53

By now the place is filling with people. Some of them have already loaded their trays with stew.

XANDER

Rat poison! Rat poison!

Everyone stares at him. At one table, diners are already dipping their utensils into the stew. Xander OVERTURNS the table. Stew flies!

XANDER (CONT'D)

Drop your spoons! Step away from the spoons!

The Lunch Lady SCREAMS out of the kitchen, holding a huge CLEAVER and lunging for Xander. He yelps and runs, his feet slipping in the spilled stew. He falls. The Lunch Lady is closing in on him when Buffy steps right in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUFFY

Let's not.

LUNCH LADY

But he ruined it! Look at them!
They are rats. They consume and
consume and give nothing back. They
throw their food and stomp on the
milk cartons and put their fingers
in the ketchup. Let them die like
the vermin they are!

BUFFY

Maybe next week.

The Lunch Lady lunges at her with the cleaver. Buffy knocks it aside with her bare hand, hitting the flat of the blade. The woman strikes again and Buffy kicks-and-punches, knocking the Lunch Lady backwards and then connecting with the cleaver,... KNOCKING it free... it arcs through the air and lands, embedded in the floor between Xander's knees.

BUFFY (CONT'D)

Someone call the cops and the
janitor.

54

SCHOOL - MORNING (DAY 5)

54

Students stream toward the school. Among them, Willow and Buffy, carrying books.

WILLOW

So you're feeling better about
Angel.

BUFFY

Yeah. I mean, we talked, and he
ripped the heart out of a demon and
fed it to me, and later we talked
some more.

WILLOW

See, that's how it should work.

Giles falls into step with them.

GILES

Good morning.

WILLOW

Hi, Giles. Oh, I should get to the
yearbook office.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLOW (CONT'D)

I'm going to give them the murderer questionnaires. They really are good reading.

They ad lib good-byes as Willow heads off, and Buffy and Giles walk on together. Jonathan, walking nearby, waves at Buffy. She waves back.

GILES

He looks like he's doing well.

BUFFY

Yeah, he's getting help, but not from the school counselor which is good 'cause I happen to know that man has way inappropriate thoughts about Marge Simpson.

GILES

Hmm. Say, do you think you're feeling fit enough for some training after school?

BUFFY

Sure. If you're not too busy. You know, shelving, cross-indexing, HAVING SEX WITH MY MOTHER!

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW

CONTINUED: