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BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

"Pangs"

Season 4 - Episode 8

Jane Espenson

TEASER

1 WOODS - NIGHT

1

BUFFY fights KIP, a young chatty vampire guy. As they fight he spits out: "Slayer. Things were good before you got here. This campus was ours. You've ruined everything." Buffy: "And they say one person can't make a difference." She stakes him. Job done, but Buffy seems unsatisfied... she looks around, as if sensing something else...

From the shadows, ANGEL watches, unseen.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

2 CAMPUS - DAY

2

A ground-breaking ceremony for the new "CULTURAL PARTNERSHIP CENTER." A dais is set up overlooking the new site. A ceremony is underway and the CURATOR talks about the great American Melting Pot... how our culture is stronger for being forged from contributions of peoples from all over the world. How very appropriate that the building is being dedicated so close to Thanksgiving.

Buffy, WILLOW and ANYA watch the ceremony with varying degrees of interest. Anya is preoccupied because XANDER is here in the service of his latest job: he's working construction on the new building... they'll start work when the ceremony is over. Anya: "Look at him in his construction outfit. I think it's very manly. I'm imagining having sex with him."

Buffy and Willow are talking about Thanksgiving, which is only two days away. Buffy can't wait. Sure, Mom has gone to Aunt Pauline's, but Buffy is going to create Thanksgiving with her friends and she's going to get it just right... all the little touches and rituals that bring back memories of how things used to be. Willow isn't interested. Her family doesn't do Thanksgiving -- her mom doesn't feel it's right to celebrate the incipient destruction of America's indigenous peoples. Buffy agrees that it's sad...

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she longs for the days when she thought early America was all about maize and sharing and Pocahontas. And that's why her Thanksgiving is going to be so great... it will take them all back to an innocent time in their lives when when that all seemed true. Buffy gets Willow to commit to being a part of Buffy's Thanksgiving.

The Curator is just winding up his speech and he steps forward to turn over a ritual spadeful of dirt. After he's done, Xander and two other guys step forward to do some real digging. They start to dig and... BOOM... a six-foot chunk of earth collapses in on itself. Xander and two other construction guys fall! Xander finds himself thrown into...

3 OLD MISSION CHAMBER 3

A buried chamber. Adobe walls, a large crucifix... it's an old Spanish mission. Xander, a little bruised and shaken, picks himself up and looks around.

4 CAMPUS BY BUFFY'S DORM - NIGHT 4

Angel looks up at Buffy's lighted window.

5 DORM HALLWAY / BUFFY AND WILLOW'S ROOM 5

The hall is busy with students loading up and heading home for Thanksgiving. Midterms are over and spirits are high. In their room, Buffy and Willow are talking about what happened earlier today. Xander is okay and everyone is excited about having found part of the old Santa Soledad Mission. Buffy seems overly excited about it, and Willow detects that the enthusiasm is forced. Buffy walks to window and looks out. She admits that she's not really feeling the high spirits that everyone else is... she can't shake this weird feeling of missing something that she used to have. Willow says she knows what Buffy's feeling -- it's all the uncertainty about still not knowing who these strange commandos are, and what they had to do with Spike, and why he couldn't bite Willow. Buffy says Willow's making it way too complicated. Buffy knows just what she needs: turkey and trimmin's and the good sleepy feeling afterward when you're full of tryptophan and the comforts of home.

6 WOODS - NIGHT 6

SPIKE trudges through the woods, wrapped in a tattered blanket, shivering and wretched. He hears something behind him and he stumbles into a panicked run. After a beat, three uniformed COMMANDOS pass through. Their faces are smeared with camouflaging greasepaint, but they are unmasked and they are RILEY, FORREST and GRAHAM. They talk about Spike... they know he's nearby, that they're closing in.

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The hostile can't feed, it must be getting weak. They'll get it soon. They better, or Maggie'll be mad, and when she's mad, there is no scarier woman on the planet than her.

7 XANDER'S BASEMENT - MORNING

7

Anya storms in, angry... Xander's supposed to be at work right now. She went over there to watch him dig and stuff and he wasn't there. Xander, looking terrible, is in the middle of getting dressed. He tries to explain that he's going now. He called in sick, but the boss just called and said two other guys did too, and he needs Xander to come in. Anya finally takes a good look at Xander. "I inflicted a lot of horrible diseases on men when I was an avenging demon, and you look like you have all of them." As he keeps trying to put on clothes, she keeps pulling them back off and steering him back into bed. She says she's pretty sure he's dying. Maybe he can infect her and they'll die together. That's romantic, right? The work crew will be fine without him.

8 SITE OF NEW CULTURAL CENTER

8

A shot of the site of the collapse. Planks have been laid over the collapse itself. The camera closes in on the planks, under which lies...

9 OLD MISSION CHAMBER - DAY

9

Under the covering of the planks, it's dark down here. Until an eerie glowing vaporous miasma forms. It swirls, threatening to take some form, then seeps up through the gaps between the planks, leaving the chamber dark again.

10 OLD CULTURAL CENTER - DAY

10

The Curator, alone, in a dim back room filled with native Californian artifacts. He ends a phone call: "... just hoping there's not going to be any construction delays... we really need the new place...". He ends the call and starts cataloging items. He doesn't notice when the glowing vapor swirls into the room. The vapor touches an item on display -- it's labelled "CHUMASH STONE WEAPON," and it looks like a sharp stone chisel, a brutal instrument for close combat. The weapon lifts into the air, and a HAND FORMS around it. PAN UP the hand to REVEAL NUNASHUSH, a Chumash warrior. The Curator turns, sees him, eyes going wide. Nunashush brings the stone weapon up, fast and hard, stabbing the man in the neck. He falls, dead.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 OLD CULTURAL CENTER - NIGHT

11

Buffy and Willow make their way into the crime scene, now abandoned by the police. They talk about the murder as Buffy scopes out the room. The victim was missing an ear. Willow speculates: is it an ear-harvesting demon? Is it a witch who needed a human ear for a spell? Was it a Van Gogh fixated suicide? Buffy cuts her off. She has noted the missing item from the display, tries to read the identifying card in the dark: Some kind of masher? Willow brings the flashlight closer... it's a Chumash weapon.

12 GILES' APARTMENT

12

Buffy is reporting the discovery to Giles. And as long as she's there, she's making sure he's got everything they'll need for Thanksgiving. She thinks he should use the office as the dining room, not try to set up something in here, and he can't make a fuss about the canned cranberry sauce -- it just has to be that way. Giles says maybe they should go back to plan A, having this at Buffy's house -- he knows they're only having it here because it will force him to do the cleaning up. Buffy says innocently that his oven is bigger. Giles doesn't buy it.

Giles stops Buffy from going into the office and setting the table right now. He says it'll be fine and he sends her off, promising he'll do some research on ear-stealing and Chumash weaponry. Buffy exits.

Angel steps in from the office. Giles says it was hard not to tell Buffy he was here. Angel says it has to be this way. Things have changed, and they can't ever be like they were... he doesn't want to remind her of all that. He's protecting her from all the old feelings... she's in danger right now and she can't afford to be distracted. In fact, Angel is pretty sure Doyle's vision must have had something to do with this murder and that it's all hooked to the old Mission somehow. Maybe some demon was trapped by the quake that swallowed the mission, or some spirit is angry that the ground-breaking disturbed its rest. He tells Giles that he should contact Father Gabriel, a local priest. He knows all about the Mission history, and his great uncle was even a friar there... he'd know about any demons associated with the building. Giles thanks Angel, but before Angel leaves, Giles says he thinks Angel is protecting himself from pain as much as he's protecting Buffy. Angel says he's not protected from the pain at all -- watching her like this and not going to her -- being a spectator just outside her life is the most painful thing he can imagine.

13 ALLEY - NIGHT

13

Spike peers through a dusty window into a dilapidated building. Inside, a small nest of vampires is just settling down with a dazed human victim. An older vampire is about to bite into the quivering neck. Then he pauses and holds the whimpering young man out toward a younger vampire, who bites gratefully. A heart-warming domestic scene. Spike watches, his breath frosting the glass of the window, a picture of perfect misery and longing.

14 SUNNYDALE STREET - NIGHT

14

Buffy and Willow are setting out for a quick night-before-Thanksgiving shopping trip. Buffy can't find some last item or ingredient... something to make it perfect... and I'm getting a little obsessive-compulsive about this, aren't I, Willow? Willow: "Well... not compulsive." They talk about the investigation... Giles wants Buffy to go talk to some priest, Father Gabriel -- she has an appointment with him later tonight. (??)

Riley spots the girls and crosses the street to say hi. Willow, seeing a good opportunity to let Buffy and Riley talk alone, pretends she saw something just around the corner: "Was that a dollar bill?" She ducks around the corner... and SLAMS into someone. Angel: "Ow!" Willow is stunned to find him lurking. He tells her to keep quiet and explains that he's helping Buffy -- that she's in danger, but she can't know he's here. Willow promises to help in any way she can. Angel: "So... um... who's this guy?"

Buffy invites Riley to join her and her friends for Thanksgiving dinner tomorrow night. He says he can't, that he's heading home to Iowa to spend the holiday with his folks and his brothers on the farm... he describes the perfect Thanksgiving. It's great to have a home, a place to return to where things don't change and you're always welcome.

15 HARMONY'S LAIR

15

Harmony is listing for Spike all the reasons she's not letting him come back. He tries to seduce her into letting him stay. But she's had it. There's no sanctuary for him here.

16 CHURCH COURTYARD - NIGHT

16

Buffy arrives to talk to Father Gabriel -- she walks into the courtyard calling his name. She finds the priest, dead, hanged, dangling from an archway.

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Nunashush stands beside the body, severing the ear from the man with a brutal stroke of his weapon. Buffy pulls him away from the body. He holds her at bay with his stone weapon and tells her a little bit about his grievances... his people imprisoned, infected with diseases, accused of theft, killed in battle, no more Chumash. When he attacks Buffy, he calls her by a Chumash word, and she fights back -- she's getting the upper hand when he vanishes from her grasp... a flock of birds takes off from where he stood. Buffy stands alone and empty-handed beside the dead priest.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

17

GILES' APARTMENT - DAY

17

Buffy, Giles, Willow, Xander, Anya. It's Thanksgiving Day and there's lots to do -- the turkey has failed to thaw and we're way behind schedule.

Also, we have to learn about the Chumash Indians -- there have been two murders and Buffy is tired of getting there too late... she wants to know who the next victim's gonna be before it happens. Willow finds an explanation for the flock of birds -- Chumash shamans were supposed to be able to transform themselves into animals. Maybe this is the ghost of a shaman. Buffy says she feels like it's bigger than that... the way this guy talked, she feels like he's the spirit of all the Chumash, a whole nation. Too bad things aren't the they used to be where there were good guys and bad guys and we were always the good guys. It was wrong, but it was simple.

By now we also realize now that Xander's illness is part of the revenge... he's got a magical combo of smallpox and malaria and syphilis and he's not happy about it -- we're looking for a cure. Xander watches a Cowboys-Redskins game on TV.

In the middle of this there's also a big disagreement about cooking technique. Thus, there are lots of open books, some with spells, some with recipes... humorous mix-ups!

Suddenly, Buffy realizes something is missing. She thought she had brought her Mom's centerpiece from home: a little PILGRIM COUPLE MADE OUT OF CORN-HUSKS, but she realizes now she only has the little Pilgrim man. Where's the woman? She's going home to get it. Willow and Giles try to stop her... they feel that this might be a bigger danger than she's anticipating (they know from Angel just how bad this could be), but Buffy insists. She opens the door...

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A COYOTE flashes by.

Buffy turns back to tell the others about the strange dog and when she turns back...

SPIKE is standing in the doorway, looking very menacing. Spike "Help me. Let me in." He begs them to ask him in -- he needs the invite. Conflicted, Buffy looks at him... what should she do?

18

GILES' APARTMENT - LATER

18

Spike slumps on the couch in Giles' apartment... surrounded by the whole group, all holding stakes and braced for a fight. We discuss what to do with him. Buffy knows the commandos were after him and she wonders if he has some useful info. Willow: "The poor Native American you want to kill. But the Vampire who tried to kill me, him you want to play 20 questions with!" Spike, seeing some hope, plays up how helpful he can be. He demonstrates how he's not a threat to them by trying to bite Giles.

Xander: "Is anyone else concerned about the fact that I have syphilis?"

Buffy and Willow have segued into a fight about the Indian. Buffy says it's a killer, she has to slay. Willow says we can't slay this spirit... we built a country on genocide, the right thing to do CANNOT be to kill one more. Spike says kill and be proud -- the stronger culture won, oppression is the road to progress. Well done! And am I crazy or is there a wounded turkey in here, 'cause I'm smelling something good...

Anya looks up from a book -- she has found a clue to who the next victim might be. The first step in Chumash warfare is contact with the opponent's leader. The Indian is looking for the leader. Buffy: "The Dean."

It makes sense -- at least it's a place to look for the Indian. Buffy sends Willow and Anya to go check out the Dean's Residence. Xander volunteers to go along... he doesn't like the way Spike is eyeing him like the weak antelope in the herd.

19

GILES' APARTMENT

19

As Willow, Xander and Anya leave, we see the COYOTE watching.

DISSOLVE TO:

20 OLD MISSION CHAMBER 20

Nunashush lays weapons on the earthen floor. Bow-and-arrows, stone tools, spears. Then an incantation... glowing mist forms and swirls. The weapons lift into the air and WARRIORS form around them. It's a GHOST ARMY!

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

21 GILES' APARTMENT - NIGHT 21

Buffy, Giles and Spike. Buffy and Giles have tied Spike to a chair. They're not taking any chances that he might not be entirely harmless. Spike whines and complains. Buffy tells him we'll go to the butchers in the morning, get him some blood. Soon, he can have gravy. Spike tells us his opinion of gravy.

The dinner's getting close to done. Buffy surveys the table... almost perfect. The CORN-HUSK PILGRIM MAN serves as the centerpiece. Then... WHOOSH... an ARROW flies in through the window and SKEWERS THE DECORATIVE PILGRIM!

22 DEAN'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT 22

Willow, Xander and Anya walk away from the dean's house. There was nothing wrong there, but his wife gave them pie. They're discussing whether they should stay and stand watch, when ANGEL APPROACHES. Xander and Anya are also told not to tell Buffy that he's here.

Willow updates Angel on what's going on. The Indian is going after a leader. Angel says that to a warrior the leader is the best fighter -- Buffy is the leader. We've got to get back there. Angel organizes a plan: he'll call Buffy and warn her. Xander, Willow and Anya will ride back and help her! Angel breaks a bike rack to provide them with mounts.

23 GILES' APARTMENT 23

The siege is underway! Warriors surround the house and shoot arrows and hurl spears through the windows. Buffy and Giles have taken cover behind the sofa, and they try to work their way to Giles' weapon chest. (btw, the phone has gotten knocked off the hook.) Spike, tied to the chair, is exposed - he is hit with an arrow in his arm (Watch the heart!).

Buffy and Giles' have weapons now... they fight back with crossbows. Buffy is hit in the shoulder with an arrow. She breaks it off and keeps fighting.

31 GILES' APARTMENT 31

Angel, standing at the window, lowers his bow and continues to fight the warriors. He takes a blow to the side of the neck that cuts him, but he keeps fighting.

32 GILES' APARTMENT 32

Buffy continues to fight Nunashush. She grabs his hand, tries to take his weapon -- she reads the look on his face. Buffy: "The weapon. It's important". She works harder to get it away from him. And just as she knocks the weapon from his hand, he MORPHS into a GIANT REAL LIVE BEAR! He towers over her, seeming to fill the apartment.

Spike, now with three arrows protruding from his body, panics in his chair. "You made it a bear! Undo it!"

Buffy fights the bear! It slashes at her with its massive claws. It roars and knocks her across the room.

Buffy scrambles for the dropped Stone weapon. Giles and Xander throw potatoes at the bear, distracting it. Xander to the bear: "You gave me syphilis!!"

Buffy, weapon in hand now, moves in close, within range of the huge paws, and plunges the weapon into the beast's heart. It roars and collapses onto what remains of the dinner. It turns briefly into the Indian man, and then into the mist, which dissipates... gone forever. Spike: "Great. You couldn't kill something that bleeds."

There is a beat of deep regret from our characters who have souls. Then...

Xander: "Hey! I think my syphilis is better!"

33 GILES' APARTMENT 33

Angel stands alone now... the warriors have disappeared. He looks in the window, sees that Buffy is all right. He turns and walks away.

34 GILES' APARTMENT - LATER 34

Everyone lies around the trashed apartment, exhausted, tending their wounds -- looking like a soporific post-dinner family. Spike is still pulling arrow fragments from his body. Giles is preparing plates of potatoes and stuffing. Anya: "So, was this normal for Thanksgiving around here?" Buffy is thinking about her whole Thanksgiving mania, how it all added up to nothing but a big guilt-inducing horror show.

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Xander disagrees... they had a lot of anticipation, a huge fight and now they're all sleepy... it seemed like a normal Thanksgiving to him. Buffy perks up... she threw her first non-family Thanksgiving and everyone survived. Giles comments that that might not have been the case had they actually eaten this turkey... it's fairly raw. Spike perks up, he's interested in raw turkey. There's a beat of self-satisfaction all around, a feeling that although we may pine for the past, what we have right now is pretty good. Anya: Anyway, things don't seem like they change all that fast around here anyway, I mean, today was just like old times with Angel here and everything.

Off Buffy's reaction...

END OF SHOW

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