

FADE IN

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pitch black except for the faint moonlight flowing in from outside. The door opens and BUFFY enters. She tosses a bag aside, her face barely visible until stepping into the light. She's disheveled and clearly upset with red puffy eyes and tear-streaked cheeks. She stares out, lost for a moment then opens a drawer at her desk. She reaches in and pulls out a diary.

BUFFY (V.O.)

Strange. That's all my mind can produce even though I want--no NEED more...just that little bit extra to make sense of what the powers that be have dealt me this time around. Facing the reality of true, physical and spiritual evil is so simple in retrospect, but I'll never figure this out.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

As Buffy and FAITH take on and finish off a couple of VAMPS. They laugh, bump each other playfully and exchange meaningful gazes.

BUFFY (V.O.)

It might take an entire lifetime, short as it may be, to genuinely understand how I could let myself feel so beholden to her presence; so drawn to her form; so sweetly devoured by one look. Nothing has to be said--ever. And I find solace, peace, excitement, fear, and dismay in that.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE

As Buffy and Faith dance, practically inseparable.

BUFFY (V.O.)

The desire to express every emotion I have in my arsenal--more impressive than any battle gear I'll ever possess--yet brandishing a sword and showing it off is so much easier than putting on display what I really feel. Nothing needs to be said, and I'm glad because I don't think I could say it.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Buffy flips through the diary and sits on her bed. She opens to a clean page, but just looks around.

BUFFY (V.O.)
But how could I want to say
anything to HER? Am I asking too
much of my mind and I should look
elsewhere? Can they be objective?
All my life, wondering when the
moment would arrive where I'd know
absolutely nothing--and it scares me.

CUT TO:

INT. FAITH'S ROOM - NIGHT

As Faith gets out of bed and puts on a shirt. The blonde next to her rolls over to reveal ANYA still asleep. Faith walks to the window and looks out with the moonlight on her.

BUFFY (V.O.)
Not for the fact that it's
happened, but WHY. All the
vampires and demons and monsters in
the world and the haunting beast
causing this is a raven disguised
as an angel from heaven--thought
from hell once upon a time until
all that hate and animosity
disappeared. She invaded my heart,
captured my soul...radiating off
her as completely unselfish--and
she probably doesn't even realize
what she's done. How could she?

Faith takes a few deep breaths, but waivers and begins to cry quietly.

END TEASE

ACT ONE

FADE IN

INT. ESPRESSO PUMP - DAY

TITLE: ONE WEEK EARLIER

Buffy and Willow sit with their drinks.

WILLOW
So then she tells me that the skirt
might be a smidgen short.

BUFFY
Kennedy said smidgen?

WILLOW

Actually, she phrased it as "your ass is gonna show anytime you move which would be fine if your ass didn't belong to me". She can be possessive.

BUFFY

I can see why...you've got a fabulous ass.

WILLOW

Thank you. Yours is majorly exceptional too. I've thought about that piece on many...

Willow drifts off once she realizes what she's saying. She blushes.

BUFFY

A lesbian admiring my ass...could there be a better compliment?

(beat)

What was it like? In the beginning with Tara?

WILLOW

You mean the relationship or the transition to a different lifestyle?

BUFFY

Second one.

WILLOW

Why do you want to know?

BUFFY

We've never really talked about it. I personally don't know any other gay people besides Kennedy and I'd rather not talk to her unless absolutely necessary. I'm curious--you always seemed so male-oriented.

WILLOW

You know, I think I've overplayed the whole gay-now hand. I actually find myself attracted to men. Faith is right--take a serious look at Giles and he is pretty yummy.

BUFFY

A sentiment not shared by my tummy.

WILLOW

I was with Oz for a long time. I was in love with him and there would be moments where I was Dorothy stuck in the magical land

of OZ...Kansas so far away and that wouldn't bother me. If I got stuck in OZ forever, I'd be happy. And if he hadn't left, I think we'd still be together.

BUFFY
Really? Even with--

WILLOW
--Tara had perfect timing. Maybe that's fate--I was sinking and she pulled me back up. Falling in love with her was so easy because it felt right. It felt good, just as good as, if not better than Oz.

BUFFY
Doesn't sound so conflicting.

WILLOW
I've been doing the girl-girl thing for a while now. I thought there was something seriously wrong with me then. How could I feel that way for a girl? Why was I feeling these things? Was it her--me--Oz? Were my emotions just screwing with me?

(MORE)

WILLOW (CONT'D)
I had to summon every ounce of strength just to stay sane. Something so beautiful as discovering a new slice of your identity can be so painful and I felt so isolated, so afraid of everything in me and around me...and I didn't want it to be happening, but I couldn't help it. When I let go, faced the music, I ended up sharing my life with a wonderful person and I'll never regret it.

BUFFY
(shakily)
I don't know what to say.

WILLOW
It's okay. Women--men--not much of a difference if you're lucky. I'm attracted to both--I could very well spend the rest of my life with Kennedy, but if not, then, to me, anyone is for the taking. I know some great guys--Xander, Giles, Dino...Dino is the kind of guy I could get behind.

BUFFY
Dino doesn't seem like the kind of
guy who would enjoy THAT.

Willow bursts out laughing and smacks Buffy on the arm.
Buffy joins in.

WILLOW
I'm glad we did this. Voicing
bisexual tendencies is actually
tougher than choosing sides.

BUFFY
I bet it is.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESTFIELD - NIGHT

Faith handles a RED DEMON while Buffy takes on a big BLUE DEMON. Faith struggles while Buffy massacres the Blue Demon. Buffy kicks the Blue Demon and then jams her stake through his face. The Blue Demon drops and Buffy pulls out her stake, pleased with herself.

She turns to watch Faith get hit a few times and then flung into a tree by the Red Demon. Buffy's eyes glaze over and she bumrushes the Red Demon, nailing him with a wave of blows that he can't stop. Buffy unloads on him until she straddles him on the ground and punches him over and over and over again until the Red Demon lies motionless, his face smooched and gooey and almost non-existent. Buffy gets up as Faith approaches.

FAITH
Never thought I'd say it, but
that's excessive.

BUFFY
Deserved it.
(worriedly)
Are you okay? Are you hurt?

FAITH
I'm fine--stunned me, that's all.
How are YOU?

Buffy stares for a moment. She smiles weakly.

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN HOUSE - DAY

DAWN and ELLE sit on the floor writing in notebooks.

DAWN
How's that algebra coming?

ELLE

I figured out what X is:
exasperation. Letters should just
be letters and numbers be numbers--
why try to be something you're not?
Brittney Spears is a singer--she
can't act so the dimwit must stop.

DAWN
Uh, Brittney Spears isn't a singer.
Purveyor of a slutty image--yes;
singer--no freakin' way.

ELLE
Well, I'm done.

DAWN
I finished about 3 minutes ago--
I've been waiting forever for you!

Dawn and Elle exchange notebooks. They look at them.

DAWN
This is totally fab. Thanks.

ELLE
The scoobs were so wrong--you
Summers girls aren't academically
deficient.

DAWN
That's Buffy. She got slayer
power, I got a brain. Rather have
the power.

ELLE
You got plenty--not just physical
strength, but the power to attract
vivacious humans like me.

DAWN
Human. Singular.

ELLE
People might be a little freaked by
you...proving how they're ignorance
is selective. They know
something's up with you, just not
what it is. They're loss.

DAWN
You don't have to keep doing that.
Working on my ego.

ELLE
I don't want you to feel down about
yourself.

DAWN
I don't...as much.

Dawn reaches out and takes Elle's hand in hers.

DAWN

I want you to understand that you mean a lot to me...that I feel special just for spending time with you because of the kind of person you are and not what you say.

Elle's taken aback by that. Her eyes begin to water. Dawn gets on her knees and makes a move downwards. Elle closes her eyes for a long moment before jumping away and on to her feet. That startles Dawn and she falls back

ELLE

(nervously)

I need to go to the bathroom.

Elle rushes up the stairs. Dawn cradles and shakes her head in her hands.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS HOUSE - DAY

Willow, XANDER, and DINO sit around a coffee table reading books. GILES enters with a book of his own.

GILES

Any progress?

XANDER

Nothin'. We got nothin' on top of the first 3 hours of nothin'.

WILLOW

NothinG.

XANDER

What?

WILLOW

Faith has an excuse for not sayinG her endinG G's. You don't.

XANDER

Thank you for that much-needed grammar lesson Miss RosenburG.

DINO

Hey, let's keep our eyes on the page here, continuing the reading that we've been doing for 3 hours as Xander pointed out before the stupidity. We're supposed to read these books thus completing the necessary research. Get with the reading program people and read.

GILES

(to Willow and Xander)
Everything he said. You can learn
from him.

Giles nods. Xander and Willow roll their eyes. Giles
leaves. Dino pulls out a map and lays it out on the table.

WILLOW
My route is the way to go.

XANDER
I still say we should stop at
Disneyland.

DINO
Nuh uh, no way. I will not
associate with any person or
company that associates themselves
with Michael Fat Ass Moore.

WILLOW
For the ninth--and hopefully last--
time, straight beeline for L.A.
with no diversions whatsoever.

DINO
Mine has diversions?

XANDER
A geisha house tends to be an
attention-grabber.

DINO
Like you two wouldn't enjoy that?

Willow and Xander look at each other, then at Dino and bow
their heads in shame.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Buffy and Faith look around the empty place.

BUFFY
This place is you.

FAITH
This place is dull. I ain't dull
so it ain't me.

BUFFY
Sure, it's got issues like no
furniture or paint. Of course,
everything the previous owners had
they took with them. It's called
moving.

FAITH

Mockin' me won't convince me of the allure. What's wrong with the hotel--I got it good there.

BUFFY
Sunnydale is your home now. Hotels are for passersby.

FAITH
Who says I'm stickin' around?
There's a world outside SunnyD.
I've seen it--you should too.

BUFFY
Believe it or not, I like it here.

Faith SCOFFS. Buffy's indignant.

BUFFY
It took a few years, but I know what I have. You have no reason to leave...or is it no reason to stay?
I guess you can screw and slay in any hotspot in America.

FAITH
Never been a complex girl B. I don't need much.

BUFFY
Different from what you want.

FAITH
I know what I want. Do you?

Buffy and Faith stare for a moment. ANYA makes a loud entrance.

ANYA
Absolutely not Faith. The west side is nice, but you are an uptown girl...the wisdom of Billy Joel must be acknowledged, appreciated, and astutely followed.

FAITH
I agree.
(to Anya)
You like my hotel right?

ANYA
The more I go, the more I want to stay.

Faith smirks. Buffy shakes her head, frustrated.

ANYA
So, what are we doing tonight?

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - NIGHT

Xander, Anya, Willow, and Dino are seated.

DINO
I'm gonna make one more plea for
the geisha.

WILLOW
Keep pounding it home, I'll
probably give in eventually.

DINO
Really?

WILLOW
No.

XANDER
Well, I for one am not allowed and
proudly so--forbidden by my
girlfriend.
(to Anya)
Right?

Anya ignores him, fixated on the dancefloor.

XANDER
Girlfriend--Anya--my girlfriend
Anya--Anya, the girl I date and
sleep with...An.

ANYA
They were fighting earlier. How do
you just disregard a fight?

XANDER
We fight all the time and disregard
it soon after.

ANYA
Acute difference. They're not us.

Dino and Willow become thoughtful. They look at each other. Dino nods away and Willow nods in the affirmative. They get up and leave. Anya turns her attention to the dancefloor.

We head over there where Buffy and Faith dance with abandon and virtually no air in between their bodies. Eyes shut, they seem lost in the flow. Buffy rests her arm on Faith's shoulder and opens her eyes. She gazes at Faith intensely. The SOUNDS of the club suddenly drown out, replaced by a deep HEARTBEAT. Buffy and Faith entangle their bodies, Faith opening her eyes nearly thrown back by Buffy's gaze. They continue like that, the only sound a HEARTBEAT that speeds up as time passes. Their faces inch closer and closer, the HEARTBEAT faster and faster. Their faces touch as Faith leans into Buffy's ear to whisper:

FAITH
I'm sorry for earlier Buffy.

BUFFY
Don't be--I'm the one who's sorry.
I just don't want you to leave.

FAITH
No need to apologize for THAT.

Faith pulls back and smiles winningly. Buffy does the same. The HEARTBEAT continues for a few moments until all the SOUNDS of the club return and the SONG ends. Buffy and Faith disengage from each other, slowly and reluctantly.

FAITH
Somethin' you want?

BUFFY
Huh?

FAITH
Drink? Pretzels? Shoppin' spree
at Barney's or whatever?

BUFFY
I'll take one of the first, none of
the second, and a lifetime supply
of third...at your convenience.
I'm going to the bathroom.

FAITH
No prob. Have fun. Don't fall
in--unless you like that kinda thing.

Faith wiggles her eyebrows. Buffy laughs and heads off. We follow Faith to the bar where a DUNCE bumps into her and spills his drink on her.

DUNCE
Sorry.

FAITH
Yeah, that helps. I hate cleanin'.

Faith moves in the direction of the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM

Buffy splashes water on her face. She takes a long look at herself in the mirror before placing her hand on her chest.

BUFFY
What is going on? What is wrong
with me? This is so fucking wrong
and ridiculous. God Buffy,
complicate your life at will by
adding Faith to the mix. You're

not Willow. Why me? Why now when
I'm just starting to not only
regain my life, but mold it into
something I LIKE. Why? Why?
(screaming)
ANSWER ME.

Buffy rubs her face.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - MINUTES LATER

Buffy exits the bathroom and makes her way to the gang.
Dino and Willow are back in there seats. Xander's tired,
probably because of Anya and her haughtiness.

BUFFY
Where's Faith?

WILLOW
On the dancefloor with you...but
obviously not anymore...so, I'm
going to say pass.

XANDER
Maybe she got lost in the crowd,
looking for you?

DINO
Outside for air?

ANYA
Shunning me in favor of you and
those hips.

Xander prays to the ceiling. Buffy frantically scans the
club. She roams the area, no Faith in sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BRONZE - LATER

Buffy shoots out. She takes a few steps one way, then jogs
in the opposite direction. Buffy's breathing hard. She
looks stricken. After surveying the area a couple of times,
Buffy raps her arms around herself, as if cold.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

EXT/INT. FAITH'S ROOM - MORNING

Buffy stops in front of Faith's door with two cups of coffee
with her. She prepares to knock but:

FAITH (OS)

She ain't in.

Buffy spots Faith--wearing the same outfit as the previous night--approaching. Faith pulls out a key and opens the door.

BUFFY
I brought coffee.

INSIDE

Buffy and Faith walk in. Faith shuts the door.

BUFFY
Missed you last night.

FAITH
Yeah, I was feelin' kinda off.
Didn't mean to leave you hangin'
like that...but you had the others.

BUFFY
(hopefully)
I haven't been here long. Did you
step out for a minute before--

FAITH
--Actually, I'm just gettin'
back...see?

Faith points at her outfit. Buffy's defeated.

BUFFY
Oh. Who was it?

FAITH
Really none of your business.

BUFFY
You're right--it isn't. It's your
life and there are some aspects
that I have no standing to be a
part of. What you do is fine as
long as you're fine with it--and
you're okay.

FAITH
Sums it up perfectly. You know B,
I appreciate the caffeine booster,
but I'm pretty tired so I'm gonna
relax and check you out later.

BUFFY
Um--sure--yeah--no problem. Later.

Faith nods. Buffy heads to the door and opens it. She looks back and gives a little wave before quietly exiting. Faith eyes the door for a few moments before sitting on the edge of the bed. She wraps her arms around herself.

CUT TO:

INT. SUNNYDALE HIGH, HALLWAY - DAY

Dawn walks and spots Elle up ahead. She brightens up for a moment before seeing a JOCK conversing with Elle and Elle appearing to enjoy it. The Jock gives Elle a piece of paper and goes off. Dawn approaches Elle who notices.

ELLE
Hey.

DAWN
What was that about?

ELLE
Oh, you know, yet another victim of my lethal charm. We have biology together--he's first-rate.

DAWN
Ken Rickert? The guy who beat up Tommy Stanford for spilling water on his car.

ELLE
Nobody's perfect.

DAWN
You can do better...a ladybug could do better than Rickert.

ELLE
Okay...you know anyone that likes me and would want to be with me...in that cozy kinda way?

Dawn thinks about it. Elle looks at Dawn almost imploringly.

DAWN
Um...there is better, the words just escape me right now. Gotta go. Bye.

ELLE
Have a good one--and keep thinking.

Dawn holds Elle's gaze for a moment before leaving. Elle watches Dawn go and looks at the paper before SIGHING and looking back at Dawn.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMMERS BACKYARD - DAY

Willow and Dino hang out.

DINO
Did you see Buffy today?

WILLOW

She got up early to see Faith--with coffee.

DINO

Early morning coffee after freaking out the night before...I knew there was something about those two.

WILLOW

Explains a WHOLE LOT. I'm not Faith's biggest fan--not by a longshot--but I don't like the way this is going so far, even though in general I'm happy for Buffy.

DINO

Give it time--play itself out.

WILLOW

Should I stay? Skip L.A., in case Buffy needs me?

DINO

From what I heard, unusual relationships are her specialty.

WILLOW

Yeah, but Buffy's not the most emotionally reasonable person.

Buffy walks out of the house and into the yard.

BUFFY

Hey guys...what's up?

WILLOW

Just hanging out. Old-fashioned hanging around in a comfortable, suitably-hangable place.

DINO

We're also figuring out ways to verbally address certain questions with more words than necessary.

BUFFY

I understand with electrifying completeness of epic proportions.

Willow sticks her tongue out at both.

DINO

How's Faith?

BUFFY

I don't know. She was...abrasive and distant.

WILLOW

Probably just moodswings.

BUFFY
Triggered by me.

WILLOW
No reason to go blame yourself.

BUFFY
I uh...just don't know what to do.
This rollercoaster thing we're
doing is bringing me down. The way
she makes me feel...

Buffy trails off. Willow and Dino share a look.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - EVENING

Faith, Xander, and Anya enter and walk around.

FAITH
I'm tellin' ya, this is the kinda
joint whatchamacallit would lounge
around in.

XANDER
Dark, isolated, and seedy are vague
criteria.

ANYA
(to Xander)
Listen to Faith! Faith is the
slayer and demands respect and
right now you are showing ZERO
respect to her. Shame on you.

FAITH
What she said.
(to Anya)
All that complementin' is really
startin' to grow on me.

ANYA
I mean every syllable. Unlike so
many others, I appreciate you in
all your austentacious glory.

XANDER
(angrily; to Faith)
Excuse us.

Xander grabs a PROTESTING Anya and drags her to a private
part of the bar.

ANYA
For the last time Xander, I don't
like it rough.

XANDER

This has to stop. No more.

ANYA
What are you talking about?

XANDER
You fawning over Faith! It's getting to be ridiculous and embarrassing.

ANYA
Oh yeah...I've never stopped being an embarrassment to you, right Xander?

XANDER
Don't twist my words. You are a person that anyone would be proud to know. Not just woman or girlfriend, but PERSON. All the jokes in the world don't exemplify my feelings for you.

ANYA
What is this rambling all about then? You love me, I love you-- quit turning this into as large a nightmare as that stupid purple dinosaur.

XANDER
Do you listen to yourself? Or me?

ANYA
I hear you loud and clear Xander -- you're jealous of my thing for Faith which hit a dead end weeks ago.

XANDER
That's not stopping you from acting like a love-struck high-schooler.

ANYA
A state you know all too well. I've had to live with Buffy and Willow for 3 years knowing your history with them. That's a challenge.

XANDER
And I appreciate you more for it. But I never got anywhere with Buffy--Willow was like a blind man getting sight for a while and then realizing he liked it better before.

ANYA
Like you don't still fantasize about either or both of them.

XANDER
Idle fantasies that mean nothing.

ANYA
Faith is a fantasy, becoming real
only in your jaded imagination.

XANDER
I know a thing or two about letting
feelings get out of control--I
thought this whole Faith-crush
thing was funny and cute at first,
but now...

Xander can't finish the sentence.

ANYA
What? NOW what?

XANDER
Now I trust Faith more to respect
OUR relationship than I do you.

Anya's hit hard by that.

ANYA
I'm not some pixy nympho who can't
keep her mouth shut and her legs
closed.

XANDER
No, you're only human.

Xander stares long and hard at Anya and heads back into the
main area where, as he passes Faith:

XANDER
I'll scope another place--there's
nothing here worth the time.

Xander storms out. Anya joins Faith.

FAITH
Musta been a heartwarmin' discussion.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Buffy chases a GOBLIN GUY through the street. Goblin Guy
turns sharply towards a driveway and runs into a yard with
Buffy hot on his tail. He leaps into the air and cleanly
clears a fence. Buffy follows suit and hops the fence as
fast as possible.

The chase continues through several more backyards and then
ends up back in the street. As the Goblin Guy prepares to
turn for a house, he ducks and rolls at the precise moment
Faith swoops in. Faith misses the Goblin Guy and collides

with Buffy, the latter YELPING. The duo rolls a few feet, coming to rest with Faith on laying on top of Buffy. The Goblin Guy speeds off.

FAITH
Son of a demon bitch.

BUFFY
Good one.

FAITH
Like I meant for this to be the result.

BUFFY
Knowing you, it probably was. Not like you could get me in this situation very often.

FAITH
That's presumin' you know me...don't fuckin' fool yourself. Just keep playin' the vanity card and be the self-absorbed bitch you are now and always have been.

BUFFY
What are you doing here anyway? I thought you were downtown.

FAITH
Got a tip the freak holed up in a basement in this area. Me and An showed a few blocks back and I...

Faith shuts her eyes. Buffy's breathing quickens.

BUFFY
You...gonna finish that thought?

FAITH
Do I have to?

BUFFY
Is that rhetorical?

Silence. Faith's breathing quickens now and her hand snakes its way to Buffy's belly. She scratches lightly causing Buffy to GASP and shuts her eyes. The moment is broken when someone CLEARS THEIR THROAT.

The girls turn their heads to find a disgruntled Anya standing nearby.

ANYA
The least you could've done is catch the bad guy--and make sure I'M safe. The latter especially.

Buffy and Faith look away guiltily.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMMERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Buffy and Faith walk along and up the path to the house.

BUFFY

So Xander stormed out after talking to Anya who coincidentally has a thing for you.

FAITH

Puttin' it in perspective, I'd say it's bad...and my fault.

BUFFY

Blaming YOU for being YOU is pushing it. She can't help it.

FAITH

She?

BUFFY

Anya.

FAITH

Right.

They get to the door. Buffy unlocks and opens it.

INSIDE

Buffy enters as Faith hangs in the doorway.

BUFFY

We keep doing this.

FAITH

What's that?

BUFFY

Us--constantly running hot and cold. I've wanted to start over, clean slate but--

FAITH

--It seems like we keep startin' over again and again and again...

BUFFY

I hate cleaning the house every other week, let alone that damn slate every other day.

FAITH

Sounds frustratin'. Hotel room cleans itself...but I will think about a new place--permanent.

BUFFY
Great.

Silence. They shuffle awkwardly. Faith takes a deep breath.

FAITH
Buffy, I--um...I want you to know I
care about you...and, you know
other stuff like that.

Buffy moves her mouth a few times, somewhat stunned.

BUFFY
(shakily)
Thanks.

FAITH
(down)
Yeah.

Buffy wants to say something else and a downtrodden Faith perks up a little.

BUFFY
You wanna come in for a drink--or
food? Dawn went shopping.

FAITH
That's all right. Not up for THAT.

Buffy nods meekly. Faith hesitates, then leans in and softly kisses Buffy on the cheek. Buffy shivers slightly and Faith slowly moves away.

FAITH
'Night.

BUFFY
(inaudibly)
'Night.

Faith turns and leaves. She looks back as she goes and Buffy takes her time closing the door. Buffy leans back against the door then slides down and SIGHS before covering her face.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

INT. XANDER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Anya sleepily walks out of the bedroom into the living room. Anya wanders aimlessly as she calls out:

ANYA
Xander. Xander, breakfast or some
reasonable facsimile?

Anya takes a good look--no Xander. She plops down on the couch and sadly resigns herself to being alone.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMMERS HOUSE - MORNING

Dino loads bags into the trunk of a car. Willow carries another to the car with Buffy nearby watching.

WILLOW
(to Dino)
Could you help me with this one--
it's extraordinarily heavy.

DINO
No problem

Dino picks the bag up easily and places it in the trunk, bending over marginally.

WILLOW
Really stick it in there.

Dino does and bends over a little more. Willow positions herself directly behind Dino and gives a humping motion causing Buffy's eyes to widen and then choke on heavy laughter. She runs inside. Dino catches what Buffy does and stands straight up, Willow ceasing her activity.

DINO
What's with her?

WILLOW
Stress. She has no concept of the proper way to deal with it. She prefers hysterical running as opposed to drugs.

DINO
Her loss.

WILLOW
You know, I couldn't help but admire your butt. Most people rave about firm and tight--but, there's a notable enjoyability in having some meat to grab onto.

DINO
Well that's--remarkably weird and out-of-the-blue...but considering I don't get complimented on my butt often--or ever--I'll say a grateful thank you.

WILLOW
Pleasure's mine.

DINO
And I totally agree on the body-
meat desirability. I like my women
to have a little on them--not too
much--enough to savor. To me, firm
and lean are vegetarian selections.
It's the meat carriers--

Dino grabs a handful of Willow's ass.

DINO
--That are prime for the carnivores
to devour with every fiber in their
being. That's the stuff.

Willow nods emphatically. She keeps nodding as Dino keeps
his hand on her ass.

WILLOW
It might be time to let go.

DINO
(letting go)
Yeah. Sorry.

WILLOW
Understandable--I know what I've got.

DINO
Could you not tell Kennedy? I
mean, I could take her down
easily...just that, well, hell hath
no fury like a woman scorned...only,
in the 21st century, it's more like
hell hath no fury like a raging
lesbian scorned.

WILLOW
A thesis I serve as living proof of.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Buffy walks out of the kitchen. Xander flies down the
stairs and over to Buffy.

XANDER
You get a visit from Mr. Clean?
That bathroom is as spotless
and shiny as a pirate earring
on a bald guy.

BUFFY
Dawn. I don't know what's gotten
into her but she's doing loads
around the house. I'm not
complaining--less for me to do both
in cleaning and giving her orders.

XANDER

Sure you don't wanna come? You might see Brad Pitt.

BUFFY

You want me to see Brad so I can lure him away from Jennifer thus opening her up for you.

XANDER

Hey! It would be a mega accomplishment to get turned down by her. That's one to write home about...or you guys since my family would laugh at my failure instead of a good-natured chuckle.

BUFFY

Where's Anya?

XANDER

I assume still in bed.

BUFFY

Falling out?

XANDER

No, she's got good balance--hangs on the edge surprising well.

BUFFY

Xander...

XANDER

Used to be that people should worry about MY wandering eye.

BUFFY

Anya's crush?

XANDER

Obsession.

BUFFY

That's overstating it.

XANDER

Now--maybe. But Anya is unwavering and determined and no matter what, this thing she's got for Faith isn't stopping.

BUFFY

I don't believe it can go beyond what it is now--namely, an inconvenience.

XANDER

Used to say the same about Spike.

BUFFY
Faith won't allow it--and Anya has
her sensibilities.

XANDER
Outstanding argument Buff.

BUFFY
Drain every ounce of fun as
possible out of this trip
Xander...and I'll do my best to
keep things on the level.

Xander quietly nods. He turns and walks out.

CUT TO:

INT. SUMMERS BASEMENT - DAY

Buffy and Faith spar as Giles takes notes and Anya watches
from the stairs.

GILES
So the Goblin managed to escape
despite your dual presence?

ANYA
They were busy.

GILES
With...?

Buffy and Faith stop.

BUFFY
Recovering.

GILES
From...?

FAITH
My bad.

GILES
Translated as...?

ANYA
On the verge of engaging in nasty
lesbian sex.

Giles unwittingly breaks his pencil. Buffy and Faith look
everywhere but each other.

GILES
(to Buffy and Faith)
Astoundingly, I have to ask if
there's any validity to that.

BUFFY
No. Absolutely not.

FAITH
Not in No friggin' way would I ever

a million zillion years sex up the Prissy Princess
would I touch her in any way and that chemically-treated
reserved for a man. blondage.

ANYA
LIARS! I can sense the horniness
radiating off you in waves.

GILES
I think that's enough for today.
Anya, assist me with research
materials, will you?

Giles heads to the stairs and takes hold of Anya.

ANYA
And leave them alone? No no no no.
(to Buffy and Faith)
Keep those hands where you both can
see them!

Giles carries Anya out of the basement. Buffy takes an
appraising look at Faith--she's sweating with her hair in
disarray. Buffy's a little flustered.

BUFFY
You have to do something about that.

FAITH
Ain't my fault if Giles wants to
shut her up.

BUFFY
You're right on that one, but I
mean Anya's crush on you. It may
be getting out of hand.

FAITH
Nothin' HAS happened or WILL happen
and not even my sex-drive is that
overwhelmin'.

BUFFY
Fair enough, but that won't stop
her. Anya can be erringly persistent.

FAITH
Whatever.

BUFFY
Hey, this isn't an issue to write
off.

FAITH
What's it to you anyway?

BUFFY
Xander's my friend and I don't want
to see him get hurt.

FAITH
And...?

BUFFY
And I don't care for this flippant
fuck you attitude you're throwing
around.

Faith doesn't respond.

BUFFY
Is it my turn to "AND...?" YOU?

FAITH
No--wasn't what I wanted to hear.

BUFFY
Spell it out for me--those
chemicals must be altering my
brain-waves.

FAITH
Forget it...just stupid wishful
thinkin'.

Buffy and Faith stare at each other for a moment before
Faith breaks it. Dawn comes down.

DAWN
Okay, I cleaned all the bedrooms
and figured since I've got nothing
but time on my hands, I'd clean
this place so get out.

FAITH
Shouldn't you be at the mall or
whatever teenage shit teenagers do?

DAWN
I know you're a skanky bitch Faith,
but seriously, I don't care.

FAITH
Not what I said.

DAWN
Huh...eh.

BUFFY
Dawny, the cleaning has accelerated
to sociopathic, so a break might be
a good idea.

DAWN
I've got nothing better to do.

BUFFY
Go hang with Elle--have a sleepover.

DAWN
She's got better things to do.

BUFFY
Then, I think quality time is a
must in...

CUT TO:

INT. MALL - NIGHT

Buffy and Dawn stroll through.

DAWN
I'm glad we did this.

BUFFY
Wow, second time this week I've
gotten that. Not bad.

DAWN
Don't flatter yourself--won't be
making a habit of these trips.

BUFFY
Of course.
(beat)
Can't you bury the hatchet with
Faith?

DAWN
Replace the word "with" with "in"
and I'll happily follow suit.

BUFFY
This animus is overblown Dawn.

DAWN
Yes because she's changed, she's
good now, blah blah blah and Spike
having a soul makes his raping you
all peachy.

BUFFY
I don't make excuses for that last
thing anymore. What you and most
people are fooled by is the idea
that Faith has changed when she
hasn't.

DAWN
So I can kill her?

Buffy halts them and gets dead serious.

BUFFY
She was good then and she is now--
before it was way too complicated.

DAWN

Yeah, it's so hard displaying your goodness because nobody likes the good guys.

BUFFY

Obviously you don't get it so don't pretend otherwise. She had--HAS--personal demons but no real concept of how to deal with them. The friends and allies she has now are the ones she needed four years ago...I failed her most of all. Faith needs and deserves our support because she is a wonderful and morally good person. If you don't believe her--she won't say it anyway--but believe me when I say it.

DAWN

I've got my own irrational inner demons and I can't give her a pass.
(beat)
Still only sixteen.

The girls continue walking for the escalator.

BUFFY

Mature sixteen.

DAWN

For the record, YOU said mature. Why so passionate defender of all things Faith? Guilt?

BUFFY

That would be courtesy of my irrational inner demons--fortunately, they're quiet on this one. Don't know how to explain it.

DAWN

Okay.

As they reach the down escalator, Dawn spots Elle come out of the ice cream shop on their floor with the Jock. Dawn freezes. Buffy notices Dawn then follows her line of vision to Elle.

BUFFY

She's done well for herself.

DAWN

Yeah.

BUFFY

Gonna say hi?

DAWN

No. Doesn't need me bumpin' into her date.

BUFFY
Dawn...are you okay?

DAWN
Fine. Always fine. Thanks for asking.

BUFFY
Because you can tell me anything.

DAWN
Much appreciated, but my state of fine hasn't changed.

BUFFY
I mean it Dawn.

DAWN
(quietly)
I'll keep that in mind.

BUFFY
Come on...I promised Giles we'd be back for research. Got plenty of sensational-slayer-snooping to do and you can tag along.

Buffy nudges a somber Dawn onto the escalator. As they go down, Elle catches them and is disappointed.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Dawn, Faith, and Giles alertly walk.

DAWN
Buffy's version of "tag along" is SO loaded.

GILES
Dawn, your grumbling protests do not contribute any identifiable positives to this mission.

FAITH
It's no prob G-man...she's got a right to feel that way.

DAWN
Did I ask you to speak on my behalf? My entire self says it can speak on its own so SHUT IT!

GILES
Both of you immature big babies will remain silent.

FAITH

I practically agreed with her.

GILES

She did not agree with your agreement so it's quiet time for you as well.

DAWN

Buffy said I was mature for sixteen.

GILES

Buffy also VOLUNTEERED to team with Anya. What does she know?

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Anya ignores Buffy as they walk.

BUFFY

If there's one thing I do know, it's that Xander loves you and is not jonesing for a three-way with Faith as the guest star.

ANYA

That's two things. Can't even count--what does Faith see in you?

BUFFY

I don't know what you're talking about.

ANYA

Deny deny deny. You are a walking-talking representation of the American government.

BUFFY

Ooh, yeah, I'm a conspiracy in boots.

ANYA

So you admit it.

BUFFY

I admit nothing.

ANYA

You deny yet you admit you have something to deny.

BUFFY

(loudly)

What the fuckity fucking fuck does Xander fucking see in you? What does anyone see in you, you dixie twit?

ANYA

First off, I resent that on numerous massive levels. Second-- language Buffy, my God.

Buffy throws her hands in the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

The whole group meets up.

BUFFY
Anything?

FAITH
Zilch.

DAWN
Nada. You?

BUFFY
Negative.

ANYA
Nil.

GILES
I am giving you all textbooks on how to form COMPLETE SENTENCES!

FAITH
You implyin' somethin' G-man? Hey, that was a complete sentence!

ANYA
(to Faith)
You're amazing.

Many sets of eyes roll. There's a CRASH in the distance. The group runs to where the swings are and a GRUNGE CHICK opens a trap door in the ground. Buffy and Faith race over to her and grab her. She SHRIEKS.

GRUNGE CHICK
Let go. Girls just wanna have fun.

FAITH
Hey B, how 'bout a chorus?

BUFFY
(to Grunge Chick)
Where does this lead to?

GRUNGE CHICK
Why should I tell you?

DAWN
We're four grown girls and a guy in a Sunnydale playground at night.

GRUNGE CHICK
Club--The Underground--exclusive as
hell...well, hell ain't exclusive,
or at least I'm sure it's not,
wouldn't know--

EVERYONE
--SHUT UP!

FAITH
Exclusive? Like, invitation only?

GRUNGE CHICK
Sorta. Depends on who you know--
management's option one.

BUFFY
Demons?

GRUNGE CHICK
Yeah. Been a work in progress for
a few years since the slayer came
to town. Heavy on demons but
humans are more than welcome--not
just as entrees but guests too.

GILES
Does the management team have a
goblin as a member?

GRUNGE CHICK
Define member.

Everyone glances at each other knowingly.

CUT TO:

INT. THE UNDERGROUND - NIGHT

The group led by Grunge Chick enter. There's multiple
levels to the arena-size place. Strobe lighting, pounding
MUSIC, DEMONS mingling and/or scarfing on HUMANS. It's got
an outdoor street-feel, raw energy pulsating throughout.

BUFFY
(shouting; to Grunge Chick)
Where is he?

GRUNGE CHICK
Don't know for sure. My guess...

Grunge Chick points upwards. The group advances. Grunge
Chick goes her own way. The group divides up into the crowd.

We follow Buffy as she wades past figures and ends up at a
staircase. She races up 5 levels to the top and does some
stealth snooping. CREATURES are scattered. Buffy enters a
maze-like hallway where she turns and turns finding only
dead-ends, until...

She finds a door on the ceiling. Buffy looks around and eyes one of the walls. She pulls out a stake. She leaps in the air and uses the butt to drive several large dents in a wall creating a kind of ledge to hold on to. She leaps one more time and grasps the ledge. She swings back and forth a few times and then rockets feet first smashing through the door and lands in another hallway. There's a regular door at the end and Buffy approaches.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The door swoops open and Buffy swaggers in. Goblin Guy is startled out of his seat and so are his colleagues, a POWER VAMP and a gray SUPER DEMON.

BUFFY

Quite an eclectic trio. Shall we?

Buffy gives a taunting hand gesture triggering the Power Vamp and Super Demon to attack simultaneously. Buffy's got them covered as she jumps in the air and does a split into a double-kick sending both demons staggering back. Buffy whips out her stake and fires a strike on the Power Vamp, dusting him. The Super Demon rushes Buffy but she unloads with a series of punches and kicks, beating the crap out of him with rapid fury. She knees the Super Demon in the gut, grabs him, and guns him headfirst into the wall causing a SHATTERING SMOOSH sound. The Super Demon falls dead. Buffy turns to see Goblin Guy smiling admiringly.

GOBLIN GUY

Nice.

BUFFY

Thank you. Getting kudos from the other side is always welcome.

GOBLIN GUY

You're not getting out of here alive.

BUFFY

That's my line. If I had said it, it would've been true.

Goblin Guy turns red and soars through the air to whack Buffy. Buffy hits the wall but gets right back up and goes for Goblin Guy, but he gets out of the way. Goblin Guy jumps on Buffy and lands a few shots before Buffy connects with an elbow to the head and several successive kicks and punches that stun Goblin Guy. There's a vicious exchange of countless blows. Buffy ducks a punch and connects with a devastating uppercut, kick to the head, right cross, another kick to the head, then a knee to the groin area causing Goblin Guy to HOWL.

BUFFY

Allow me to apologize for being so

darn insincere. I won't prolong
the pain.

Buffy wraps an arm around Goblin Guy's neck, runs for the wall, jumps up against it, spins in the air and twists off Goblin Guy's head. The body falls dead.

Buffy punts the head.

BUFFY
When did I become so gruesome?

CUT TO:

INT. THE UNDERGROUND - MOMENTS LATER

MAZE HALLWAY

Buffy hops down into the frame. She cautiously makes her way through the hallway system, encountering no resistance at any turn.

UPPER LEVEL

She makes it out of the hall and finds all the Creatures lying dead. Buffy examines the damage, bloody bodies wall-to-wall. There's no one else around. The fun rages on down below. The MUSIC filtering to the top, the lights a maniacal flashing of red. Buffy walks all the way to one side of the level, then sharply turns around, her eyes capturing Faith across the way. Buffy is stone-still, her face as passive as it can get, willing herself to remain cool and collected. Faith confidently, but leisurely, crosses the level over the deadly mess until she's right up in front of Buffy. The SOUNDS of the club drown out in favor of that ominous HEARTBEAT.

FAITH
Figured you might want some
backup--BUFFY.

BUFFY
Overkill--don't ya think?

FAITH
For you--ain't a fuckin' thing on
the planet that stands a chance.

Buffy manages a jittery smile, her breathing and the HEARTBEAT quickening. Faith brings her hand up and caresses Buffy's cheek. Buffy leans into the touch ever so lightly, her eyelids fluttering. Faith leans in, her eyes filled with uncertainty, Buffy's with fear.

FAITH
Tell me not to--gimme the word and
I won't.

Buffy's trembling...her hand covering Faith's on her face.

Faith continues her descent...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. THE UNDERGROUND - CONTINUOUS

UPPER LEVEL

The HEARTBEAT looms. Faith's lips part as she nears Buffy's.

FAITH
Close your eyes.

BUFFY
No.

FAITH
The fear'll go away.

BUFFY
I don't want it to.

FAITH
Why are you doin' this to us?

BUFFY
We can't do this.

FAITH
I'm yours Buffy--now, it's about
you wantin' me.

BUFFY
I don't.

Faith backs off, shoving Buffy enough to put space between them. The HEARTBEAT disappears and the SOUNDS of the club return.

FAITH
You can't--or won't--let it go.
You won't forgive me. God I wish
you would. I could die right now
fuckin' happy for the first time in
my fucked-up life if you would.

BUFFY
I already forgave you.

FAITH
Not like you did Angel! Or even
fuckin' Spike. Why am I different.

BUFFY
The list is long and colorful...but
those situations and this one are
supremely different.

FAITH

Yeah, I was never a serial-killin',
literal monster who unlive'd to feed
on human beings. All I did was
kill a few people--I didn't want to
and I NEVER wanted to hurt you or
any of your friends and family.
They did! So totally not the
fuckin' same things--you got that
right babe, I ain't nearly as bad
so why am I the one gettin' short-
changed?

BUFFY

Because...!

FAITH

Oh, well, now I'm fine with it--I
mean, "BECAUSE"--winnin' logic at
its best.

BUFFY

Because...that's not the way we
should be.

FAITH

BECAUSE--you don't love me.

BUFFY

That word--horribly overrated.
Love has nothing to do with it.

FAITH

I LOVE YOU! So fuck you it doesn't!

Buffy's stunned. Her eyes water --but not as much as Faith's.

BUFFY

Oh--Faith--no no no...YOU cannot do
this to me.

FAITH

I could say the same to you.

BUFFY

Not another one. Why doesn't
everyone fall in love with me? I'm
not THAT great a catch.

FAITH

Tell me about it.

BUFFY

Hey!

FAITH

You can't deny there's somethin'
there...more than just a slayer
connection. There has to be 'cause
it's so fuckin' powerful it hurts!

BUFFY

What you're describing won't last.

FAITH
How can it when you won't even give
it a fuckin' chance!

BUFFY
Not worth it.

Faith's devastated.

FAITH
Do you even LIKE me?

BUFFY
Of course I do.

FAITH
You gotta have more to say! I
know--you want--you feel...

Faith can't push out another word. She desperately gazes at Buffy who only gives a few tiny shakes of her head. Faith strides up to Buffy and slaps her. Buffy's head snaps away from Faith and she makes no attempt to bring her face back into Faith's view. Faith gears up for another shot, but charges passed instead.

GROUND LEVEL

Giles, Dawn, and Anya convene in a spot near the staircase.

DAWN
Where are they?
ANYA
My money's on--

Giles covers her mouth.

GILES
Wagers of monetary value are
expressly illegal when it comes to
Buffy, Faith, and sexuality. For
the first, last, and only time: NO.

DAWN
Thank you Giles. I've always been
grateful to have you.

Giles nods. Anya tries to wiggle out of his hold. Faith blows down the stairs and right by them. They all see her.

DAWN
(shouting)
Faith.

Faith keeps walking until she's gone.

UPPER LEVEL

Buffy stands alone as lifeless as the dead around her.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUMMERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Dawn and Giles arrive at the house with Elle on the steps waiting. They walk up the path, Dawn turning to Giles:

DAWN
I'll be in soon.

Giles nods and heads up the stairs.

GILES
Miss Dean.

ELLE
(British accent)
Rupert--always a pleasure.

That amuses Giles. He goes inside. Elle stands as Dawn walks up the steps to her.

DAWN
It's late.

ELLE
It's Saturday.

DAWN
Early Sunday morning to be exact.

ELLE
This how it is between us?

DAWN
Clarify that for me.

ELLE
You're playing the avoiding game--
again.

DAWN
Good at it, aren't I?

ELLE
Dawn, we have to talk about this.

DAWN
What is it with everyone and
talking? As if words are the
universe's greatest asset. Give me
a fucking break please with the
talking--we need to talk...do you
wanna talk--I'm here for you--talk
to me--blah fucking blah blah blah.

ELLE
Please don't act so dispassionate.
This isn't easy for me. My life
has never been simple--I can't
imagine ever getting it that way--

but...I know you can feel it.

DAWN
I have no idea what that means.

ELLE
Would've been more convincing with
only a little bit of effort.
(beat)
I can't let myself fall.

DAWN
(shakily)
I have no idea what that means.

ELLE
You're the best friend I've ever
had and I never want that to change.
(beat)
I experience emotions just thinking
about you that shouldn't be
possible for people like us...or
maybe that's the--

DAWN
--Have fun on your date?

Elle looks shattered. Dawn puts up an emotionless front.

ELLE
I don't know--it was my first.

DAWN
Yeah--those are a real toss-up.
Wait for your first kiss--really
messes with your head.

ELLE
(hurtfully)
I'm gonna go home.

DAWN
Need me to walk you?

ELLE
I--uh--need...no. That's all right.
You get a peaceful sleep.

DAWN
Will do.

Elle walks down the stairs and down the path. Dawn watches. Elle turns slightly to wave weakly--Dawn returning it with the same bare enthusiasm. Dawn hesitates before moving for the door. Instead of opening it though, she plops her head on it and SOBS quietly.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUNLIGHT HOTEL - NIGHT

Faith charges towards the hotel, but halts when:

ANYA (OS)
Faith! Faith wait up!

Faith does just that allowing Anya to race up to her.

FAITH
Go home to the fabulous fuck palace
or whatever you call Xander's place.

ANYA
I wanted to make sure you were okay.

FAITH
I am. Thank you. Fuck off please.

ANYA
But I ran the Sunnydale demon-
infested gauntlet alone just to get
here--a feat warranting a reward.

FAITH
Reward? From me? I don't got much
to offer.

ANYA
I don't buy that for a second.

FAITH
You probably know of the one thing
anyone can get--every customer more
than satisfied. Is that what you
want?

Faith moves right up on Anya who relishes the contact, but
tries to stay steeled.

ANYA
After leaving that pit without
telling us, we all assumed
something happened between--

FAITH
--And whatever you're about to say
is bullshit so don't bother finishing.

ANYA
The response my body generates in
your presence is multitudes better
than chocolate. I love Xander.

FAITH
I know.

ANYA
I want to talk.

FAITH
Speak your mind. My job is to blow
it.

ANYA
Such a combination of actions would

be wrong.

FAITH
Don't fucking give a shit anymore.

ANYA
I want to be here for you--to help.

FAITH
More than enough info I need to understand you love Xander and me givin' you a righteous, pussy dam-explooding fuck causes problems galore...but with me, love gets checked at the door--don't need it, don't want it, causes enough fucking problems of its own so it's got zero desirability while your face and tits and ass and legs--and BLONDE hair--are just callin' for me to lavish and worship every inch until you beg me to stop and even then I won't 'cause you'd really want me to keep goin' and goin' to the point where you collapse unconscious and can't even beg another syllable. Help...is heedin' every word of that rant and givin' in to what YOU want.

Anya is spellbound. She pulls Faith in for a ravaging kiss.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Buffy beats the shit out of a BIKER, wailing on him with all she's got. She pulls out a stake and turns him to dust.

Buffy's breathing is labored, her face covered in rage. She SCREAMS at the sky and thrashes garbage cans and crates and anything else she can get a hold of, tearing up the alley, cracking the surrounding walls until she stumbles and hits the ground CRYING.

CUT TO:

INT. FAITH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Faith, in just a shirt with Anya rustling in her nude sleep, walks to the window and looks out, the moonlight illuminating her distraught face.

After a few moments, Faith takes a few deep breaths, but waivers and begins to cry quietly. She clutches her chest desperately for a moment before walking over to a chest of drawers.

Faith opens a drawer, digs through the clothing, and pulls out a diary. She takes the pen attached, opens the diary, and turns to a clean page where she writes:

AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN.

That sets her off, the tears flowing freely and painfully.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Buffy sits on her bed, writing in her diary.

BUFFY (V.O.)

The sinking feeling in the deepest recesses of my heart screams out to be rescued...pleading for one more opportunity at life--make the most out of one last chance at happiness...and freedom. Is it that in all my exhaustive efforts to free myself from the supposed tyranny of being Buffy Summers, I set myself back time and again...simply by TRYING to get what I so longed for? Did I miss the truth with faulty fantasizing about possibilities when the reality was staring me in the face...having appeared in a form I never expected...never imagined in wildest dreams, instead mislabeled as nightmares? Happiness--freedom--LIFE--brought to me BY HER...FOR HER...WITH HER. Oh my Goddess...

Buffy writes in script, the letters created at an excruciating pace...

An "I"--then "L"--then an "O"--then...

Nothing. Buffy's hand won't move. Buffy wills it to finish, but she freaks out, thrashes her head around and throws the pen into the wall.

There's a KNOCK at the door. Buffy's head shoots up and she hides the diary underneath a pillow. The door opens and Dawn peeks in.

DAWN

(whispering)

Buffy? You awake?

BUFFY

Yeah--you need something?

Dawn comes in and places herself on the bed facing Buffy.

DAWN

Thought I'd see if you're okay.

BUFFY

Oh sweetie, thank you and I've got

no complaints to air.

DAWN
You and Faith have it out?

BUFFY
A minor disagreement. Probably
blow over...sometime before I die.

DAWN
Good...good...you know--good and if
YOU ever go looking for an ear
willing to listen, I got two.

BUFFY
I'll remember that. And I love you
all the more for it.

DAWN
I remember what you said in the
mall...which is why I came in here.
(pause)
Sorry, but it's pointless and
stupid and you shouldn't--

BUFFY
--Hey! I meant every word at the
mall--a policy with an eternal
shelf-life. Spill.

DAWN
I'm such a freak. Bad enough no
one can relate to me as it is now,
but...

BUFFY
What is it Dawn? It's all right--I
won't judge you or tell anyone--I
swear you can tell me.

DAWN
The first person I...I
really...what's been happening to
me the last few weeks has just
played on my mind and--and--and my
whole body and I can't control
anything I do or think or feel
and--I--I've been...

Dawn breaks down into a full-blown TEARFEST. Buffy pulls
her in and holds her with compassion and love.

BUFFY
(soothingly)
It's okay Dawn. Let it out.

DAWN
So--I'm so co--con--confu--
confli...Buffy I'm so CONFUSED.

Buffy's eyes shine with shocked understanding.

DAWN

Why am I feeling these things for her? How could she become everything I think and feel and want and need--wanting to be with her every second and do so much that seems wrong but I can't help it...and--and she--she...

Dawn can't continue, her uncontrollable burst of sadness and defeat coming harder and harder. Buffy does her best to calm Dawn down. Buffy holds her tight, and looks thoughtful.

BUFFY (V.O.)

Maybe it's not that difficult to say--or more importantly, FEEL--when you let it out...
(whispering)
I LOVE HER.

As Buffy's eyelids flutter shut...a concerned, yet relieved smile adorning her lips...

FADE OUT