

The Harvest

(October 22, 1996)

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Teaser

NOTE: THIS EPISODE WILL OPEN WITH A RECAP OF THE LAST, ENDING WITH LUKE PINNING BUFFY IN THE TOMB.

FADE IN:

INT. MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

LUKE bears down on BUFFY, fangs bared. She struggles, but he's got her pinned. He rips open her shirt a bit to get at her throat. Grabs her - and SCREAMS.

He jumps back, SMOKE curling out of his hand.

ANGLE: BUFFY'S NECK

The cross Angel gave her has slipped out of an inside pocket.

Buffy takes the moment and KICKS with both legs, sends Luke flying back out of the tomb. She jumps up herself and before he can recover, she RUNS out of there.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - CONTINUOUS

As fast as she can -- stumbling a bit and breathing hard from the beating she took -- Buffy books through the graveyard. As she reaches the trees on the edge of it, she looks back at the Mausoleum.

Nobody's coming.

She hears WILLOW SCREAM.

WILLOW

No! Nooo! Get -- off --

Buffy runs to the sound of the voice -- comes to find:

ANGLE: WILLOW

on the ground, struggling with a vampire.

The vampire has Willow pinned, is going in for the neck -- then he looks up, hearing something.

Buffy's foot **whips** into his face, sending him flying way back.

He lands hard on his back and scrambles away, holding his nose.

Buffy is all business now, looking around her in quiet fury. Her senses alert.

She hears a CRACK, some SCUFFING on the ground. Takes off, leaving Willow wide-eyed and freaked. After a moment, she rises and follows.

ANGLE: XANDER

is unconscious, being dragged away by two other vampires. They hear something behind them, turn slowly around.

It's Willow, stumbling out from behind a tree. She looks extremely unthreatening.

They turn back and Buffy is right in front of them. She takes them both out with one punch. They fly back, then scramble to their feet.

Buffy grabs a branch, snaps it off the tree. She comes at them with this makeshift stake -- nails one in the chest.

The other flees.

Willow runs up to XANDER, cradles his head. He is just coming to.

WILLOW

Xander, are you okay?

XANDER

Man... something hit me...

Buffy is still looking around, unsatisfied.

BUFFY

Where's Jesse?

WILLOW

I don't know -- they surrounded us -- he was really weak...

XANDER

That girl grabbed him. Took off.

BUFFY

Which way?

XANDER

I don't know.

Buffy looks into the night. The camera CIRCLES her as she looks around. There is nothing to see.

BUFFY

(quietly)

Jesse...

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

Act One

INT. THE LIBRARY - MORNING

We open on a Globe. As we hear GILES begin to SPEAK, we PAN over to Xander and Willow, sitting in the middle of the library. Neither of them appears to have slept since last night.

GILES (O.S.)

This world is older than any of you know, and contrary to popular mythology, it did not begin as a paradise. For untold eons, Demons walked the earth; made it their home... their Hell.

Still we PAN, to find Giles on the upper level, standing at the railing. His expression is as grave as theirs.

GILES

In time they lost their purchase on this reality, and the way was made for the mortal animals. For Man. What remains of the Old Ones are vestiges: Certain magicks, certain creatures...

BUFFY

And vampires...

She emerges from Giles' office, wrapping a bandage around her forearm. Xander rises, agitated.

XANDER

Okay, this is where I have a problem, see, because we're now talking about vampires. We're having a talk with vampires in it.

WILLOW

Oooh... I need to sit down.

BUFFY

You are sitting down.

WILLOW

Oh. Good for me.

XANDER

So vampires are demons?

GILES

The books tell that the last Demon to leave this reality fed off a human, mixed their blood. He was a human form possessed -- infected -- by the Demon's soul. He bit another, and another... and so they walk the earth, feeding. Killing some, mixing their blood with others to make more of their kind. Waiting for the animals to die out,

and the Old Ones to return.

CUT TO:

INT. A TUNNEL - MORNING

Not that you could see whether it was morning or night in this place -- it remains as dark and humid as the earth that swallowed it.

JESSE is being dragged through the tunnel by Luke, DARLA, by his side. Jesse is still staggering into consciousness, and the more he awakens, the less he likes it.

He looks about in fear at the two inhuman faces, at the end of the tunnel they are dragging him through. It seems to be an old cracked pipe, and it ends at:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Coming out of the pipe, the threesome makes its way down a pile of rocks to the floor of the wrecked church.

Jesse looks about, wonder tingeing the edges of his fear. He is stood before the altar, before the pool of blood.

From the darkness, something moves. Emerges.

THE MASTER regards his servants, his total authority obvious to all. He looks at Jesse.

THE MASTER

Is this for me?

LUKE

An offering, Master.

DARLA

He's a good one. His blood is pure.

THE MASTER

(quietly -- almost innocuously)

You've tasted it.

Darla starts back a step, afraid.

THE MASTER

(smiling)

I'm your faithful dog. You bring me scraps.

DARLA

I didn't mean to --

THE MASTER I've waited. For three score years I have waited.

While you come and go I have been stuck here,

(voice rising)

here, in a house of worship. My ascension is almost at hand. Pray that when it comes... I'm in a better mood.

DARLA

Master, forgive me. We had more offerings but there was trouble. A girl.

LUKE

There was a girl. She fought well, and she knew of our breed. It's possible that she may be...

The Master turns to him.

THE MASTER

A Slayer?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

XANDER

And that would be a what?

GILES

As long as there have been vampires, there has been the Slayer. One girl in all the world --

BUFFY

He loves doing this part.

GILES

(speeding up)

All right: They hunt vampires, one Slayer dies, the next is called, Buffy is the Slayer, don't tell anyone. I think that's all the vampire information you need.

XANDER

Except for one thing. How do you kill them?

BUFFY

You don't. I do.

XANDER

Well, Jesse --

BUFFY

Jesse's my responsibility. I let him get taken.

XANDER

That's not true.

WILLOW

If you hadn't showed up, they would have... taken us too... Does anybody mind if I pass out.

BUFFY

Breathe...

WILLOW

Breathe.

BUFFY

Breathe.

(to Giles)

This big guy, Luke, he talked about an offering to the Master. I don't know who or what, but if they weren't just feeding, Jesse may still be alive. I'm gonna find him.

WILLOW

This is probably the dumb question, but shouldn't we call the police?

GILES

Do you think they'd believe us?

WILLOW

We don't have to say vampires. We could say there was... a bad man.

BUFFY

They couldn't handle it if they did come. They'd only show up with guns.

GILES

(to Buffy)

You've no idea where they took Jesse?

BUFFY

I looked around, but... soon as they got clear of the woods they could have just (indicating flight) --whoom.

XANDER

They can **fly**?

BUFFY

They can drive.

XANDER

Oh.

WILLOW

I don't remember hearing a car...

GILES

Well, let's take an enormous intuitive leap and say they went underground.

BUFFY

Vampires really jam on sewer systems. You can get

anywhere in town without catching any rays. I didn't see any access around there, though.

XANDER

Well, there's electrical tunnels. They run under the whole town.

GILES

If we had a diagnostic of the tunnel system, it might indicate a meeting place. I suppose we could go to the building commission --

BUFFY

We so don't have time.

WILLOW

Uh, guys? There may be another way.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

THE MASTER

A Slayer... Have you any proof?

LUKE

Only that she fought me and yet lives.

THE MASTER

Very nearly proof enough. I can't remember the last time that happened.

LUKE

1843, in Madrid. And the bastard caught me sleeping.

THE MASTER

She mustn't be allowed to interfere with the Harvest.

LUKE

I would never let that happen.

THE MASTER

You needn't worry. I believe she'll come to us. We have something that she wants. If she is a Slayer, and this boy lives, she'll try to save him.

Luke goes up to Jesse, smiling.

LUKE

I thought you nothing more than a meal, boy. Congratulations. You've just been upgraded to "bait".

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: A MAP OF THE ELECTRICAL TUNNELS

On a computer screen.

BUFFY (O.S.)
There it is.

WIDE ANGLE:

Willow sits at the computer, everyone else gathered around her.

WILLOW
This runs under the graveyard.

XANDER
I don't see any access.

GILES
So all the city plans are just open to the
public?

WILLOW
Uh, well, in a way. I sort of stumbled onto them
when I accidentally... decrypted the city
council's security system.

XANDER
(still focused on the screen)
Someone's been naughty...

BUFFY
There's nothing here. This is useless!

GILES
I think you should ease up on yourself.

BUFFY
You're the one who told me I wasn't prepared
enough. Understatement. I thought I was on top of
it, and then that Monster Luke came out of
nowhere --

She stops. Pauses.

XANDER
What?

BUFFY
(working it out)
He didn't come out of nowhere. He came from
behind me. I was facing the entrance. He came
from behind me and he didn't follow me out.

(looks at them)
The access to the tunnels is in the mausoleum.

GILES
Are you sure?

BUFFY
The girl must have doubled back with Jesse after
I got out. God, I'm so mentally challenged!

XANDER
So, what's the plan? We saddle up, right?

BUFFY
There's no 'we'. Okay? I'm the Slayer, and you're
not.

XANDER
I knew you were gonna throw that in my face.

BUFFY
Xander, this is deeply dangerous.

XANDER
I'm inadequate. That's fine. I'm less than a man.

WILLOW
Buffy, I'm not anxious to go into a dark place
full of monsters, but I do want to help. I need
to.

GILES
Then help me. I've been researching this Harvest
affair. Seems to be some sort of pre-ordained
massacre. Rivers of blood, Hell on earth... Quite
charmless. I am fuzzy on the details, however,
and it may be that you can wrest some information
from that dread machine.
(off their uncomprehending looks)
That was a bit British, wasn't it?

BUFFY
Welcome to the new world.

GILES
(translates to Willow)
I want you to go on the Net.

WILLOW
Oh! Yeah. Sure. I can do that.

BUFFY
Then I'm out of here.
(to Xander and Willow)

If Jesse's alive, I'll bring him back.

GILES

Do I have to tell you to be careful?

Buffy looks at him a moment. Then she's out.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

Buffy heads toward a gate that stands open. She is about to go through it when FLUTIE appears right behind her.

MR. FLUTIE

And where do we think we're going?

BUFFY

We? I? Me?

MR. FLUTIE We're not leaving school grounds, are we?

BUFFY

No! I'm just ... admiring the fence. This is quality fencework.

MR. FLUTIE

Because if we were leaving school grounds on our second day at a new school after being kicked out of our old school for delinquent behavior -- do you see where I'm going with this?

BUFFY

(it comes to her:)

Mr. Giles!

MR. FLUTIE

What?

BUFFY

He asked me to get a book for him. From the store 'cause I have a free period and I'm a big reader did it mention that on my transcripts?

MR. FLUTIE

Mr. Giles.

BUFFY

Ask him.

Mr. Flutie shuts and locks the gate, saying:

MR. FLUTIE

Well, maybe that's how they do things in Britain, they've got that royal family and all kinds of problems. But here at Sunnydale nobody leaves

campus while school's in session. Are we clear?

BUFFY
We're clear.

MR. FLUTIE
That's the Buffy Summers I want in my school. The
sensible girl, with her feet on the ground.

He smiles, leaves.

ANGLE: BUFFY'S FEET

Standing before the fence. After a bit they jump up, leave the frame. A moment
later we see her land on the other side, take off running.

CUT TO:

INT. MAUSOLEUM - CONTINUOUS

But for the light from the doorway, it's just as dark in here as it was last night.
Buffy makes her way cautiously, looking about her. She senses a lurking
presence, but the shadows give up nothing.

She reaches the iron door on the other side. Tries it. It's locked. She stops, letting
out a long breath.

BUFFY
(not looking around)
I don't suppose you've got a key on you?

ANGEL steps from the shadows, a smile in his eyes.

ANGEL
They really don't like me dropping in.

BUFFY
Why not?

ANGEL
They really don't like me.

BUFFY
(sarcastically)
How could that possibly be?

ANGEL
I knew you'd figure out this entryway sooner
or later. Actually, I thought it was gonna be a
little sooner.

BUFFY
I'm sorry you had to wait. Look, if you're gonna
be popping up with this cryptic wise man act on a
regular basis, can you at least tell me your

name?

ANGEL
Angel.

BUFFY
Angel.
(offhand)
It's a pretty name.

ANGEL
Don't go down there.

BUFFY
Deal with my going.

ANGEL
You shouldn't be putting yourself at risk.
Tonight is the Harvest. Unless you can prevent it,
the Master walks.

BUFFY
If this Harvest thing is such a suckfest, why
don't you stop it?

ANGEL
Because I'm afraid.

The unashamed openness of the statement catches her a bit off guard. She looks at him a moment.

She KICKS the door open.

ANGEL
They'll be expecting you.

BUFFY
I've got a friend down there -- or, a potential
friend.
(joking)
Do you know what it's like to have a friend?

He doesn't answer.

BUFFY
(gently)
That wasn't supposed to be a stumper.

ANGEL
When you hit the tunnels, head east, toward the
school. That's where you're likely to find them.

BUFFY
You gonna wish me luck?

He says nothing. She looks at him a moment more, then heads into the darkness.

He stands there, not moving. Quiet concern on his face.

ANGEL
(softly)
Good luck.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

Act Two

INT. TUNNELS - DAY

They are dark, forbidding, and they run in all directions.

Buffy climbs down a ladder, drops into them. She looks about her, taking it in.

ANGLE: A RAT

Scurries by her foot.

Buffy doesn't flinch. She starts down a tunnel, moving slowly. The dark enveloping her.

She turns a corner, slowly. Nothing. Starts down it.

She hears something and spins, sneaks up and looks down another tunnel.

ANGLE: DOWN THE OTHER TUNNEL

Shadows. Noise. Nothing solid.

She pulls her head back and he's **right behind her!**

XANDER
Did you see anything?

BUFFY
Xander! What are you doing here?

XANDER
Something stupid. I followed you. I couldn't just sit around not doing anything.

BUFFY
I understand. Now go away.

XANDER
Jesse's my bud, okay? If I can help him, then that's what I gotta do.

A beat, as she accepts this.

XANDER
Besides, it's this or Chem class.

They make their way through the dark.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Giles has his arcane volumes out, is consulting them. After some digging, he finds something interesting. He looks closely at one passage, translating to himself from the Latin.

GILES
"For they will gather, and be gathered. All that
is theirs shall be his... From the Vessel pours
life." Pours life...

ANGLE: AN ENGRAVING

A bestial fellow holds his hand out, commanding a throng of villagers, all of whom are bleeding. Below, in what might be Hell, a demon glows with power.

Upon the bestial one's forehead, a crude symbol has been drawn, a star with three points.

He looks over at another passage.

GILES
(reads)
"On the night of the crescent moon, the first
past the solstice, it will come." Of course.
(he looks up)
Tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER CLASS - DAY

Everyone is working, alone and in groups, devising programs. CORDELIA and HARMONY struggle mightily with theirs.

CORDELIA
No! It's suppose to find the syntax and match it.
Or, wait...

HARMONY
(typing slowly)
Are we going to the Bronze tonight?

CORDELIA
No, we're going to the other cool place in
Sunnydale.

Harmony looks at her inquisitively.

CORDELIA
Of course we're going to the Bronze! Friday

night, no cover. But you should have been there
last night.

HARMONY
(re: program)
I think we did this part wrong.

CORDELIA
Why do we have to devise these programs? Isn't
that what nerds are for?
(quietly)
What did **she** do?

Harmony cranes over to look at:

ANGLE: WILLOW

Sitting next to them, but in her own world. She is bringing things up on the Net,
typing intently, scrolling, searching...

HARMONY
Uh, she's doing something else.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - LATER

Buffy and Xander turn a corner, ready for anything.

Nothing. They keep walking, alert. Xander picks up the conversation they were in:

XANDER
Okay, so: crosses, garlic, stake through the
heart.

BUFFY
That'll get it done.

XANDER
Cool. Of course, I don't actually have any of
those things.

BUFFY
(hands him a cross)
Good thinking.

XANDER
Well, the part of my brain that would tell me to
bring that stuff is still busy telling me not to
come down here. I brought this, though.

He produces a flashlight, turns it on.

BUFFY
Turn that off!

XANDER
(he does)
Okay, okay. So, what else?

BUFFY
What else what?

XANDER
For Vampire Slayage.

?

XANDER
(a little weakly)
So you've done some beheading in your time.

BUFFY
Oh, yeah. There was this one time, I was pinned
down by this vampire, he played left tackle for
the varsity -- I mean, before he was... well
anyway he's got one of those really thick necks
and all I've got is a little Exacto knife --
(off Xander's gape)
You're not loving this story.

XANDER
Actually, I find it oddly comforting.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER CLASS - DAY

Willow is busily bringing up relevant data from the Net, her brow furrowed in concentration. At the next terminal, Cordelia is struggling with a program while holding court.

CORDELIA
Okay, and then "Pattern Run" right? Or "Go To
End". That's it.

HARMONY
Maybe... I think...

CORDELIA
Well, what does the book say?
(as Harmony looks it up)
So anyway, I come out of the bathroom and she
comes running at me with a stick, screaming, "I'm
gonna kill you! I'm gonna kill you!" I swear.

GUY
(leaning in)
Who?

CORDELIA

Buffy.

HARMONY
The new girl.

GUY
What's her deal?

CORDELIA
She's crazed!

HARMONY
Did you hear about her old school? Booted.

CORDELIA
I exhibit no surprise.

GUY
Why was she kicked out?

CORDELIA
'Cause she's a psycho-loony.

WILLOW
No, she's not.

Silence, as Cordelia registers the concept that Willow just contradicted her.

CORDELIA
What?

WILLOW
She's not a psycho. You don't even know her.

CORDELIA
Excuse me? Who gave you permission to exist? Do I
horn in on your private discussions? No. Why?
Because you're boring.

Willow looks down, hurt. She stands and takes some pages that have come up on the printer. The girls turn back to their project.

HARMONY
There. I think the program's done.

CORDELIA
Finally, the nightmare ends. Now how do we save
it?

WILLOW
(as she exits)
"Deliver."

CORDELIA
(staring at the screen)

Deliver -- where is that -- Oh!

ANGLE: A KEY

Marked "DEL". Cordelia hits it.

Long pause, the two girls staring at the screen, their smiles about to melt into perplexity as we

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - LATER

Buffy and Xander are still making their way through the dark. The banter quotient has plummeted -- they're both fairly tense.

Buffy looks around, brow furrowed.

BUFFY
They're close

XANDER
How can you tell?

BUFFY
No rats.

Xander doesn't love that information, but he says nothing. Still they progress, until:

XANDER
Over there. What's that?

He indicates a small, dark side-chamber. Nothing can be seen past the first few inches.

They come up to it. Xander pulls out his flashlight, shines it.

ANGLE: IN THE CHAMBER

A beam of light finds a body, lying face down. It looks like

XANDER
Jesse!

BUFFY
Oh, no...

She starts forward, Xander keeping the light on her. Goes over to the body, reaches out --

and Jesse JUMPS UP, brandishing a pipe. He's about to slam her with it when Xander calls out:

XANDER
Jesse!

JESSE
(stops, amazed)
Xander?

He drops the pipe and the two friends hug. Xander pulls away, looking him over.

XANDER
Jesse, man, are you okay?

JESSE
I'm not okay on an epic scale. We gotta get out
of here!

He indicates his leg -- he's been chained to the wall.

XANDER
It's cool! Buffy's a superhero!

The superhero frowns at the chain, feels it.

BUFFY
(to Jesse)
Hold on.

She takes the pipe he dropped and SMASHES the look on his shackles. It's not a quiet operation.

XANDER
You think anybody heard that?

ANGLE: A TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

A few black shapes move in the shadows, hearing it.

ANGLE: BUFFY AND THE OTHERS

They start out.

JESSE
They knew you were gonna come. They said that I -
I was the bait...

XANDER
Oh, now you tell us.

JESSE
I've seen their leader.

The look in his eyes describes their leader in detail.

Buffy leads the two boys back through the tunnel. She stops.

Shadows move at the other end.

BUFFY

Oops.

JESSE
Oh, no, no...

BUFFY
Do you know another way out?

JESSE
I don't, uh, maybe?

XANDER
Come on.

They truck out the other way.

CUT TO:

INT. A JUNCTION OF TUNNELS - A SECOND LATER

They come into this one, moving at a good clip. Try one avenue --

Eyes gleam in the dark. Whispered LAUGHS drift at us.

They turn back, pause at a fork.

JESSE
Wait, wait. They brought me through here! There's
a way up. I hope.

They take off.

CUT TO:

INT. A SUBTERRANEAN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They run in, vampires approaching slowly behind them. Look around, horror growing on their faces.

There is no door. There is no exit. Buffy and Xander look about them, frantically.

BUFFY
I don't think this is the way out.

She goes back to the doorway they came in, listens for the approaching vampires.

XANDER
We can't fight our way back through those
things... what do we do?

JESSE
I've got an idea...

And the CAMERA PANS over to Jesse standing right behind Xander. His visage grotesque, his smile icy. He's a vampire.

JESSE
You can die.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
Act Three

INT. A SUBTERRANEAN ROOM - TWO SECONDS LATER

Xander backs away from Jesse. Buffy looks from him to the entrance, not sure what to do.

ANGLE: THE ENTRANCE

We HEAR approaching vampires, see shadows begin to move, thrown on the outer wall by figures down the hall.

XANDER
Jesse... Man, I'm sorry...

JESSE
Sorry? I feel good, Xander. I feel strong.

Buffy grabs the door, tries to close it. But it's tick metal, rusted open.

JESSE
I'm connected, man. To everything. I can hear the worms in the earth.

XANDER
Well, that's a plus.

JESSE
I know what the Master wants. I'll serve his purpose. That means you die. And I feed.

BUFFY
Xander! The cross!

Xander holds it up -- and Jesse stops coming toward him. The smiles leaves his face.

Buffy continues trying to shut the door -- it's beginning to budge. But coming down the hall are:

ANGLE: THE VAMPIRES

Making their way down the hall to the door. They most slowly, grinning -- sure of victory.

XANDER
Jesse. Man, we're buds. Can't you remember?

JESSE
You're like a shadow to me now.

Xander moves forward, cross in hand.

XANDER
Then get out of my face.

Jesse stumbles back, pissed. Xander backs him toward the door.

Buffy continues to strain. The vampires approach.

Jesse lashes out, knocks the cross from Xander's grasp. He grins -- and then Buffy grabs him from behind and HURLS him out of the room, knocking vampires over like bowling pins.

BUFFY
Help me!

Xander snaps out of his shock and comes to the door with her. With both their backs to it, they slam it shut --

--an arm SHOOTS in, grasping for them. Buffy opens the door slightly and slams it again till the arm withdraws. She bolts the door, breathing heavily.

XANDER
I can't believe it... we were too late.

A resounding THUD shudders the door. The vampires are gonna break it down.

BUFFY
We need to get out of here.

XANDER
There is no out of here!

Another THUD and the door begins to buckle on its hinges. Buffy looks around -- there is some junk lying around. She throws it out of the way to see if there is a doorway behind it. No joy.

Xander also looks around. He spies:

ANGLE: AN AIR VENT

We can see just a hint of an air vent's grating behind a metal sheet. It's high up in the shadows.

XANDER
What's that?

Buffy sees it too. She throws a box down, steps on it to reach the vent. Pulls away the metal sheet, revealing the grate. It's big enough to climb through.

She begins trying to pry the grate open with her bare hands.

Another THUD. Xander looks from Buffy to the door.

Buffy pulls, behind a corner.

The door comes off its hinges enough for a vampire to put his fingers through, grip it.

Buffy RIPS the grating loose, throws it aside.

BUFFY
Come on!

And a vampire SHOOTS out of the air vent at her, grabbing her head.

The door comes out enough for a vampire to get its face in.

Buffy pulls the vampire all the way out of the vent, throws it to the floor. Jumps down on top of it.

BUFFY
(to Xander)
Go!

He runs by, climbs on the box as Buffy sinks a stake into the vampire's back. He sticks the flashlight in:

ANGLE: IN THE AIR VENT

Nothing. Clear.

He crawls in, starts worming his way down it.

ANGLE: THE DOOR

Breaks down. Vampires pile in.

Buffy jumps up and pulls herself into the air vent.

CUT TO:

INT. AIR VENT - CONTINUOUS

The two of them crawl along in the dark, the vampires at their heels.

They come to a wider space, with a ladder going up. Sunlight can be seen through the grating at the very top.

XANDER
Up?

BUFFY
UP!

He starts climbing, Buffy right behind him.

He gets to the top and opens the grating, climbs into:

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

It's deserted as Xander rolls out, reaches in to help Buffy up. She is almost out when

ANGLE: A HAND

grabs her ankle, starts pulling her back down.

She pulls up, bringing the hand up into the sunlight. It begins to SMOKE -- we hear a SHRIEK and it is withdrawn.

Buffy rolls out, slams the grating shut.

For a moment both of them just lie there, catching their breath.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Giles is still pouring over his notes when Willow enters. He looks up, hoping to see

GILES
Buffy?

WILLOW
It's just me. So there's no word?

GILES
Not as of yet.

WILLOW
Well, I'm sure they're... great.

GILES
Did you find anything of interest?

She sits, shows him copied articles as she talks.

WILLOW
I think maybe. I looked through the old papers, around the time of that big earthquake back in '37. And for several months before it, there was a rash of murders.

GILES
Great! I mean, not great in a good way... Go on.

WILLOW
They sound like the kind you were looking for. Throats, blood. Months, and not even a clue.

GILES
It's all coming together. I rather wish it weren't.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

We see a candle being lit, the last of a row. Darla steps back from it, the taper in her hand glowing softly.

As she does, another vampire does the same on the opposite wall. They are at the back of the church, staring ahead. The rows of candles run up to the altar, where the Master stands waiting.

CHANTING can be heard, a low, primal whisper.

Luke steps forward, pulling off his shirt. He steps forward, kneels before the Master. The Master holds out his hand. Luke leans forward and kisses it. The Master turn him open palm up and Luke kisses that as well. Gently, Luke takes the Master's wrist in his hand, brings his lips to that as well.

And bites it.

The Master winces, shuts his eyes. Luke feeds for a few moments, the rears his head back with holy pain.

THE MASTER

My blood runs with yours. My soul is your
province.

LUKE

My body is your instrument.

The Master takes a drop of blood from his wrist, dabs it on Luke's forehead, **painting the three-pointed star**. He speaks to the assembled:

THE MASTER

On this most hallowed night, we are as one. Luke
is the Vessel. Every soul he takes shall feed me.
Their souls will grant me the power to free
myself. Tonight I will walk the Earth... and the
stars themselves will hide.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Buffy and Xander enter, somewhat the worse for their adventure. Willow takes one look at their faces and doesn't have to ask. She does anyway.

WILLOW

Did you find Jesse?

XANDER

Yeah.

WILLOW

Was he dead?

BUFFY

Worse.

She sits heavily.

BUFFY

I'm sorry, Willow. We were too late. And they were waiting for us.

WILLOW

At least you two are okay.

Xander kicks a trash bin in frustration.

XANDER

I don't like vampires. I'm gonna take a stand and say they're not good.

BUFFY

So, Giles, you got anything that can make this day worse?

GILES

How about the end of the world.

BUFFY

I knew I could count on you.

GILES

This is what we know. Some sixty years ago a very old, very powerful vampire came to this shore, and not just to feed.

BUFFY

He came 'cause this town is a mystical whoosit?

GILES

Yes. The Spanish who first settled here called it Boca Del Infierno -- roughly translated: Hellmouth. A sort of portal from this reality to the next. This vampire hoped to open it.

BUFFY

Bring the demons back.

XANDER

End of the world.

WILLOW

But he blew it. Or, I mean, there was an earthquake that swallowed about half the town. And him too -- or at least there were no more vampire-type killings after.

GILES

Opening dimensional portals is tricky business. Odds are he got himself stuck. Like a cork in a

bottle.

XANDER

And this Harvest thing is to get him out?

GILES

It comes once in a century, on this night. A Master can draw power from one of his minions while it feeds. Enough power to break free, and to open the portal. The minion is called the Vessel, and he bears this symbol.

He shows them a sketch of the three-pointed star.

BUFFY

So, I dust anyone sporting this look, and no Harvest.

GILES

Simply put, yes.

BUFFY

Any clue where this little get-together is being held?

GILES

Well, there are a number of possibilities--

XANDER

They're going to the Bronze.

WILLOW

Are you sure?

XANDER

Come on, tasty young morsels all over the place. Anyway, that's where Jesse's gonna be. Trust me.

GILES

Then we need to get there. The sun will be down before long.

They head out toward the door.

BUFFY

I gotta make a stop. Won't take long.

GILES

What for?

BUFFY

Supplies.

CUT TO:

ANGLE: THE SUN

Big and red, sinking low.

INT. BUFFY'S BEDROOM - DUSK

The last rays are streaming in as Buffy enters, starts going through her closet.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Buffy?

Buffy's mom, JOYCE SUMMERS, enters. Buffy keeps going through her clothes, picking out a good slaying outfit.

JOYCE
You're going out?

BUFFY
I have to.

JOYCE
I didn't hear you come in last night.

BUFFY
I was quiet.

JOYCE
It's happening again, isn't it?

Buffy stops, looks at her.

JOYCE
I got a call from your new principal. Says you missed some classes today.

BUFFY
I was... running an errand.

She pulls an old trunk out of her closet. She opens it, starts going through it.

JOYCE
We haven't finished unpacking and I'm getting calls from your principal.

BUFFY
Mom, I promise you, it's not gonna be like before. But I have to go.

JOYCE
No.

BUFFY
Mom...

Buffy looks at the window, at the growing dark.

JOYCE
The tapes all say I should get used to saying it.
No.

BUFFY
This is important.

JOYCE
I know. You have to go out or it'll be the end of
the world. Everything is life or death when
you're a sixteen year old girl.

BUFFY
Mom, I don't have time to talk about it--

JOYCE
You've got all night, Buffy. You're not going
anywhere. Now you can stay up here and sulk if
you want. I won't hold it against you. But if you
want to come down, I'll make us some dinner.

Joyce leaves, closing the door quietly but firmly behind her. After a moment,
Buffy reaches into the truck.

ANGLE: IN THE TRUNK

Girl stuff, memorabilia, Teen Beat magazines.

Buffy reaches in and lifts out the inside -- the trunk has a false bottom. Below it
stakes, crosses, host, garlic, and a widemouthed jar of holy water.

Buffy takes out a particularly deadly looking stake. It fits in her hand like it's part
of it. She stuffs it into a bag, along with a few other items.

She stands, goes to the door. Listens by it.

She gets to the window, opens it. Starts crawling out.

CUT TO:

ANGLE: THE HORIZON

The sun is gone. The sky a deepening blue.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - NIGHT

From the balcony, we look down on a pool game in progress. Tilt up to see
Cordelia holding court at a table.

CORDELIA
Senior boys are the only way to go. They're just
a better class of person. The boys in our grade?
Forget about it. They're children. Like Jesse --
did you see him last night? The way he follows me
around... He's like a little puppy dog: you just
want to put him to sleep. Senior boys have
mystery, they have ... what's the word I'm
searching for? Cars.

A Cordette starts to speak. Cordelia interrupts.

CORDELIA

I'm just not the type to settle. If I go into a clothing store, I always have to have the most expensive thing not because it's **expensive**, but because it **costs** more.

A Cordette starts to speak.

CORDELIA

Hello! Miss Motormouth -- can I get a sentence finished? Oh! I love this song!

She gets up, friends in tow, and heads to the balcony.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

TILT UP on Cordelia, dancing away in the middle of the crowd. She looks great.

ANGLE: AT THE DOOR

Jesse walks in, a new man. A cool, subtle swagger in his step. His eyes go right to Cordelia. He smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

There are a few peoples lounging around outside, but not much activity. Then, a ways off, we see them coming, walking slowly into the half-light.

Eight vampires. Luke in the middle.

None of them saying a word.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

Act Four

INT. THE BRONZE - MOMENTS LATER

Cordelia is still dancing with her friends, having a good time.

Jesse makes his way slowly through the crowd, not towards but around her, his eyes never leaving her. She sees him too -- and for the first time, doesn't look away in disgust. There's something different about him.

A SLOW SONG starts playing, and Cordelia stops dancing, heads off the floor.

He's suddenly standing in her way. Smiling that distant smile.

CORDELIA

What do you want?

It's the old attitude, but she's not fooling anyone.

He takes her hand, starts leading her onto the floor.

CORDELIA

Hey! Hello, caveman-brain! What do you think
you're doing?

He turns back to her, smiles winningly.

JESSE

Shut up.

Brings her to the middle of the floor and starts dancing with her. He holds her,
hardly touching her, moving slowly.

CORDELIA

Just this one dance...

She moves closer to him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: THE DOOR

The BOUNCER is suddenly confronted with the vampire group. Their faces are
mostly in shadow.

BOUNCER

I need ID.

(as they start past him)

Hey! Nobody goes inside until I see --

Luke stands over him. His face inches from the Bouncer's.

LUKE

Get inside.

The Bouncer complies instantly.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - A MOMENT LATER

Once inside, the vampires spread out, each heading for an exit. Two of them stay
behind and close off the front.

Darla heads for the door by the stage that leads backstage. Goes in.

One goes to the bar -- swings over it and stands in front of the door.

One heads upstairs.

And Luke climbs up on stage.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Darla checks that the exit door is secure. Then she goes over to the fuse box, flips a switch.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

The main lights and the music go off. There are GASPS, MURMURS. A voice from the stage calls out:

LUKE

Ladies and gentlemen, there's no cause for alarm.

On stage, a single spot continues to shine. Luke steps into the light. His face is rivetingly awful.

LUKE

Actually, there is cause for alarm. It just won't do any good.

Major GASPS and MURMURS at the sight of him.

ANGLE: THE FRONT DOOR

A couple tries to get out. The vampire standing guard -- his normal face gone -- shakes his head no.

They shrink back from him.

ANGLE: CORDELIA

She stares at the stage, Jesse's hands still on her.

CORDELIA

I thought there wasn't any band tonight.

She looks at Jesse to see his face has changed as well. Starts to struggle but he holds her, pulls her back into the dark under the stairs.

ANGLE: DARLA

re-emerges from backstage. Looks up at Luke on stage.

LUKE

This is a glorious night. It's also the last one
any of you shall ever see.
(beat)

Bring me the first!

One of the vampires pushes the Bouncer up on stage.

BOUNCER

What do you guys want, you want money? Man,
what's wrong with your faces?

Luke grabs him by the scruff on the neck, squeezing any further conversation out of him.

LUKE

Watch me, people!
(to the Bouncer)

Their fear is elixir. It's almost like blood.

As he brings the Bouncer to him and **bites his neck**, sucking the life out of him in huge gulps.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The Master stands, power coursing through him -- visibly. It lights him up.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Luke continues feeding. After a bit he pulls his head back, throws the Bouncer's dead body from him.

LUKE

Next!

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Buffy and the others run up to the front door. She tries it -- it's locked.

BUFFY

It's locked.

GILES

We're too late.

BUFFY

Well, I didn't know I was gonna get grounded!

XANDER

(re: door)

Can you break it down?

BUFFY

Not this thing. You guys try the back entrance.

I'll find my own way.

GILES
Right.
(to Xander and Willow)
Come on.

BUFFY
Guys!

They stop. Buffy hands them her bag of tricks.

INT. THE BRONZE

They are really scared now, seeing corpses (two now) lying before them. There is some screaming, some whimpering.

ANGLE: CORNER UNDER THE STAIRS

Darla is having a face off with Jesse, who holds Cordelia.

JESSE
This one's mine.

DARLA
They are all for the Master.

JESSE
I don't get one?

ANGLE: UPSTAIRS WINDOW BY THE BALCONY

The window opens slowly, an oblivious vampire before it. Buffy slips in.

She looks down at the stage, at Luke.

LUKE
I feel him rising! I need another!

She sees the three-pointed star on his head.

BUFFY
(to herself)
The Vessel...

The vampire turns, hearing this. He grabs Buffy, dragging her up to the middle of the balcony to present her to Luke.

LUKE
Tonight in his ascension. Tonight will be History
at its end! Yours is a glorious sacrifice.
Degradation most holy.
(looking around)
What, no volunteers?

Darla emerges, holding Cordelia.

DARLA

Here's a pretty one.

CORDELIA

Noooo...

Darla drags her toward the stage, hands her over to Luke.

ANGLE: BUFFY

slips out of the vampire's grasp and **THROWS** him off the balcony. He lands **WHAM** on his back right in front of the stage.

Silence.

BUFFY

Oh, I'm sorry. Were you in the middle something.

LUKE

YOU!

BUFFY

You didn't think I'd miss this, did you?

LUKE

(smiles)

I hoped you'd come.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The exit door bursts open, a metal pipe-wielding Giles behind it. He starts in, the other two behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

A vampire comes at Buffy from the side and she grabs him, **THROWS** him into the hookah pit.

He scrambles back up and she **FLIPS herself over backwards**, goes through the hole and lands on top of the pool table. A cue is lying on the table -- she does a hand spring and lands on the floor holding on the cue.

A vampire rushes her from the side --

ANGLE: BUFFY

without looking, she **JAMS** the cue end into his heart. We don't see him -- we just hear the **PLUNGE**. And when Buffy lets go, the cue stays right where it is.

BUFFY

Okay, Vessel-boy. You want blood?

She steps forward just as the cue rises like the arm of a guard gate and we hear the

vampire's body THUD to the floor.

LUKE

I want yours. Only yours.

BUFFY

Then come and get it.

Cordelia, seeing her chance, tries to break free of Luke's grasp. He throws her to one side --

--and Buffy runs, LEAPS at him, slams her fist into his face. This one really hurts, and he stumbles back in pain.

He comes back at her but she ducks, comes back up with a roundhouse kick to the face. Another score.

She ships out her stake, comes at him -- but he blocks. Nails her in the face, and she skids into the corner, badly hurt. The stake falls at his feet.

ANGLE: DOOR TO BACKSTAGE

It bursts open, Xander nearly falling out.

He looks about him -- no vampires in the immediate vicinity -- and beings herding people out.

XANDER

Come on!

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The people rush past Willow and Giles, who push them towards the exit.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Buffy kicks Luke in the chest. He flies back, landing hard. She's about to go in for the kill when she sees.

ANGLE: A VAMPIRE

going for Xander, who's too busy shepherding people out to notice.

Buffy turns to the drum kit and **kicks** the cymbal right off the stand. She catches it in mid air --

--the vampire reaches Xander, grabs him--

--Buffy hurls the cymbal, frisbee style--

--the vampire turns, eyes wide, and **the cymbal flies straight at his neck--**

As he hears the SLICE, his eyes follow the trajectory of the liberated head.

XANDER
(softly)
Heads up...

ANGLE: BUFFY

barely has time to turn before Luke GRABS her from behind, lifting her up in a crushing bear hug.

ANGLE: XANDER

He is going to help Buffy when he hears a SHRIEK, turns and sees:

ANGLE: CORDELIA

is being dragged off into the area below the stairs by Jesse.

He throws her to the ground, kneeling above her. Pinning her.

JESSE
Hold still! You're not helping.

Xander appears behind Jesse, holding a stake. He could plunge it right through the back into the heart, but he hesitates.

XANDER
Jesse, man... don't make me do it.

Jesse looks around, grinning inhumanly.

JESSE
Buddy...

ANGLE: BUFFY

Is failing to get out of Luke's grasp. He squeezes even harder and she begins to lose consciousness.

LUKE
I've always wanted to kill a Slayer...

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

People are still rushing out.

GILES
Come on! We've got to open the front as well!

He heads for the door to the main room and **Darla JUMPS on him**, digging for his throat. His stake is knocked out of his hand as he topples to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Xander takes a step back as Jesse rises, faces him.

XANDER

Jesse, I know there's still a part of you in there.

JESSE

(exasperated)

Okay, let's deal with this. Jesse was an excruciating loser who couldn't get a date with anyone in the sighted community! Look at me now! I'm a new man!

He grabs Xander and HURLS him against the wall. Xander falls in a heap to the cowering Cordelia.

JESSE

See, the old Jesse would have reasoned with you.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Willow frantically digs through Buffy's bag, looking for a weapon. She pulls out the jar of holy water.

Darla continues to struggle with Giles -- has him pinned on the ground.

WILLOW (O.S.)

Get off him!

Darla turns to face Willow and is DOUSED with holy water right in the face.

SCREAMING, she brings her hands to her face, smoke pouring out from between her fingers.

Giles pushes her off him, getting up to face her. But Darla is already stumbling out the exit in smoking agony.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Buffy is limp in Luke's grasp. Head dangling forward.

LUKE

Master, taste of this and be free.

He opens wide, leans in -- and Buffy HEADBUTTS him with the back of her head, sends him staggering back.

BUFFY

How'd it taste?

She is weak, despite her bravado. She grabs the cymbal stand, holds it as a weapon. Looks around her -- and sees:

ANGLE: THE WINDOW

at the back of the stage. It's painted black, one huge pane.

Buffy looks at it, at Luke.

ANGLE: XANDER

Jesse picks him up again, fury etching his demon face.

JESSE

I'm sick of you getting in the way, you know?
Cordelia, she's gonna live forever. You're not.

Xander holds the stake up to Jesse's chest, determined but scared.

JESSE

Oh, right! Put me out of my misery! You don't
have the g--

And a fleeing woman SLAMS into Jesse from behind, driving him onto the stake. He drags himself on a stunned Xander, dying.

And then he's dust. Xander barely has time to react before two more vampires **grab** him.

ANGLE: BUFFY

She swings the cymbal stand at an approaching Luke. He smiles.

LUKE

You forget. Metal can't hurt me.

BUFFY

There's something you forgot about, too.

He hesitates, doubt clouding his face.

BUFFY

Sunrise.

And she takes the stand and **HURLS** it right through the **plate glass window** at the back of the stage -- **SHATTERING** the entire thing.

ANGLE: LUKE

As the warm light STREAMS IN on him, he SCREAMS, raises his hands --

--and stops. Puzzled.

Buffy DRIVES the stake in through his back. He arches forward, in real agony

this time.

BUFFY
It's in about nine hours, moron.

ANGLE: THE BROKEN WINDOW

And Luke realizes the light from the window is merely a streetlight, shining in the darkness.

Luke stumbles forward--

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

And the Master stumbles forward in the exact same position, the bright energy beginning to fade from him. He reaches out, nearly doubled over --

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The last of the energy fades from the master.

THE MASTER
(weakly)
Nooooo....

He falls to his knees, reaches out blindly for support.

What he touches is the wall, once again too strong for him to bend. Fury and despair cross his face as he looks up at it. A scream wells up inside him, and right before it bellows out, we

CUT TO:

INT. THE BRONZE - CONTINUOUS

Xander struggles with the remaining vampires, who hold him, their attention on the stage.

Buffy looks down at the spot where Luke's body was. After a moment, she turns her gaze slowly toward the vampires.

They look at the expression on her face for about 1/8th of a second, then they drop Xander and bolt out of the front door.

ANGLE: THE BACKSTAGE DOOR

Giles and Willow come slowly out, meet Buffy and Xander in the middle of the dance floor.

GILES
I take it it's over.

WILLOW

Did we win?

A moment, as they look about at the carnage that surrounds them. Most of the patrons have fled, though some remain, stunned and silent.

BUFFY

Well, we averted the apocalypse. You gotta give us points for that.

ANGLE: CORDELIA

Sitting right where Jesse left her. Not a word.

XANDER

One thing's for sure. Nothing is ever gonna be the same.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOUNTAIN QUAD - DAY

Everything is exactly the same. We see kids milling about, talking, laughing in the bright sunshine. Pick up Cordelia, walking by with her friends.

CORDELIA

Well, I heard it was rival gangs. Anyway, Buffy totally knew these guys which is too weird. I can't remember anything too well, but I'm telling you, it was a freak show.

GIRL

Oh, I wish I'd been there.

And we leave them, picking up Buffy and the others nearby, crossing the other way. Xander has a look of disbelief on his face.

BUFFY

Well, what exactly were you expecting?

XANDER

I don't know! Something. The dead rose! We should've at least had an assembly.

GILES

People have a tendency to rationalize what they can, and forget what they can't.

BUFFY

Believe me, I've seen it happen.

WILLOW

Well, I'll never forget it. None of it.

GILES

Good. Next time you'll be prepared.

XANDER

Next time?

WILLOW

Next time is why?

GILES

We stopped the master from freeing himself and opening the mouth of Hell. Doesn't mean he'll stop trying. I'd say the fun is just beginning.

WILLOW

More vampires?

GILES

Not just vampires. The next creature we face may be something quite different.

BUFFY

I can hardly wait.

GILES

We're at a center of mystical convergence here. We may in fact stand between the earth and total destruction.

XANDER

Buffy, this isn't good.

BUFFY

Well, I gotta look on the bright side. Maybe I can still get kicked out of school.

She smiles at Giles and starts off, the other two keeping up with her.

XANDER

Hey, that's a plan. 'Cause a lot of schools aren't on Hellmouths.

WILLOW

Maybe you could blow something up. They're really strict about that.

BUFFY

I was aiming for a subtle approach, like excessive not studying.

Giles watches them go, an uneasy smile plastered on his lips.

GILES

The earth is doomed.

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW