

I Robot, You Jane

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Teaser

INT. ROOM - NIGHT - ITALY (THE MIDDLE AGES)

We see a YOUNG MAN approaching. Three others stand behind him, reverently quiet. He stops, and smiling, kneels before us. We HEAR a voice:

MOLOCH (O.S.)
Carlo, my dear one...

A horrible CLAWED HAND emerges and rests on the Man's head as if bestowing a blessing. The Man smiles rapturously...

CLOSE ON: MOLOCH

He is the corruptor, a horned demon. He looks upon the man and speaks. Subtitles translate his strangely gentle Italian...

MOLOCH
Do you love me? I will give you
everything. All I want is your
love.

The enormous hand TWISTS, SNAPPING the smiling Man's neck...

CUT TO:

INT. MONASTERY - MINUTES LATER

A group of monks has assembled. The eldest of them, brother THELONIUS, holds an ornate book.

THELONIUS
It is Moloch. The corrupter. He
walks again. More and more of our
people have fallen under his
mesmerizing power.

The men look at him in fear as he moves to the center of the room.

THELONIUS
We must form the circle. Now!
There is still time to bind him.

The monks form a circle around Thelonus. They begin to CHANT in Latin. Thelonus, at the center of the Circle, opens the book. The pages are all blank.

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Moloch lets the man's body drop with a sigh of contentment. The CHANTING becomes audible in here. Moloch whips his head around, concern on his face.

MOLOCH
No...

INT. MONASTERY - CONTINUOUS

The CHANTING continues.

THELONIUS
(By the power of the Circle of
Kayless, I command you, demon...
come!)

A wind picks up in the room. Thelonus stops, looks around. It's working.

THELONIUS
I command you!

INT. ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Moloch SCREAMS and as he does, we see his face dissolving, the particles sucked out of frame --

ANGLE: THE BOOK

Suddenly STRANGE CHARACTERS SPLASH onto the blank pages as the demon's spirit is sucked into the book.

The CHANTING stops. Thelonus looks down at the book.

ANGLE: LATER

Thelonus places the evil book inside a wooden crate.

ANGLE: LOOKING OUT FROM INSIDE THE CRATE

Thelonus' face, now weary, appears as he intones --

THELONIUS
(Pray this accursed book shall
never again be read, lest the demon
Moloch be loosed upon the world...)

He shoves the heavy lid over, and all is BLACKNESS...

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

And the lid is PRIED OPEN! It's BUFFY, disappointed.

BUFFY
Oh, great. A book.

Buffy pulls out the now-dusty book, idly tracing the RUNE as GILES comes over.

In the library we see a few COMPUTERS with scanners, a jarring sight in the old-world library. WILLOW, XANDER and two boys scan in books at the other terminals. They are DAVE, a shy, bookish kid, and FRITZ, a big, slovenly bruiser. Computer geniuses both.

GILES

I haven't gone through the new arrivals. Put it in that pile --
(points near Willow)

Dave comes up to Buffy.

DAVE

Here, I got it.

BUFFY

Thanks, Dave. The Willow pile.

GILES

After I've examined it, you can, uh... skim it in.

WOMEN (O.S.)

Scan it, Rupert. Scan it.

ANGLE: TO REVEAL

MS. CALENDAR, computer teacher, and Giles' polar opposite. She's maybe 30, pretty, hip, and irreverent.

GILES

(dripping polite venom)
Of course...

Ms. Calendar regards the flustered Giles with amusement.

MS. CALENDAR

I know our ways are strange to you, but soon you will join us in the 20th century... with three whole years to spare!

GILES

Ms. Calendar, I happen to believe that one can function in modern society without being a slave to the idiot box.

MS. CALENDAR

That's TV. The idiot box is the TV. This is a good box.

GILES

Well, I still prefer a good book.

FRITZ

The printed page is obsolete. Information isn't bound up anymore, it's an entity. The only reality

is virtual. If you're not jacked
in, you're not alive.

As he walks off:

MS. CALENDAR

Thank you, Fritz... for making us
all sound like crazy people.

(to Giles)

Fritz comes on a little strong, but
he has a point. You know for the
last two years there was more
E-mail sent than regular mail?
More digitalized information went
over phone lines than
conversations.

GILES

That is a fact that I regard
with genuine horror.

MS. CALENDAR

I'll bet it is.

(to the kids)

All right, guys, let's wrap it up
for the day.

People start moving out.

WILLOW

I've just got a few more to do.
I'll hang for a bit.

MS. CALENDAR

Cool, thanks.

WILLOW

(to Xander)

Xander, you want to stay and help
me?

XANDER

Are you kidding?

WILLOW

Yes, it was a joke I made up.

XANDER

Willow, I love you, but bye.

He heads out.

WILLOW

(calls out)

I'll see you tomorrow...

XANDER

Buffy, wait up!

Willow watches Xander's retreating figure a bit piningly, then goes back to work.

GILES

I have to stay and clean up. I'll
be back in the Middle Ages.

MS. CALENDAR

Did you ever leave?

Off Giles's look,

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE: WILLOW - LATER (NIGHT)

All alone now, solemnly scanning in books. She takes the ancient volume and waves the glowing scanner over the first page...

On screen, data streams into a file, BOOK12, in a directory labeled WILLOW -- strange characters like in the book...

As Willow turns each page, we see -- but Willow does not -- the strange words disappear from the paper!

ANGLE: THE COMPUTER SCREEN

The last characters stream into the BOOK12 file. The screen goes BLACK. After a beat, words appear:

Where am I?

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

Act One

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR - MORNING - DAY 9

Willow walks along, happily lost in thought. Buffy spies her, approaches, calling out:

BUFFY

Willow! Willow! Hey, wait up!

Willow finally notices Buffy as she comes abreast of her.

WILLOW

Buffy! I didn't even see you.

BUFFY

Or hear me. What was up last night? I tried your line like a million times.

WILLOW

Oh, I was... I was talking.

BUFFY
Talking to...

Willow smiles.

BUFFY
Okay, that's it. You have a secret
and that is not allowed.

WILLOW
Why not?

BUFFY
(petulantly)
'Cause... there's a rule.

WILLOW
Well... I sort of met someone.

BUFFY
I knew it! This is so important.
When did you meet?

WILLOW
Last week. Right after we did the
scanning project in the Library.

BUFFY
(rapid-fire)
Does he go here? What's his name?
Have you kissed him? What's he like?

WILLOW
No, Malcolm, no, and very nice.

BUFFY
You are a thing of evil for not
telling me this right away.

WILLOW
Well, I wasn't sure there was
anything to tell. But last
night -- oh, we talked all night.
It was amazing. He's so smart,
Buffy, and he's romantic and we
agree about everything.

BUFFY
What's he look like?

WILLOW
(cheerfully)
I don't know.

Buffy tries to work that one out as they exit the hall.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - CONTINUOUS

It is silent in here. There are a dozen high-end computer consoles (complete with

camera and voice box). The only people in here are Fritz and Dave, both staring at their computer screens intensely. After a moment, Dave speaks quietly:

DAVE
Yes... I will. I promise.

Buffy and Willow enter, Buffy still puzzling.

BUFFY
You've been seeing a guy and you don't know what he looks like. Okay, it's a puzzle. No wait, I'm good at these. Does it involve a midget and a block of ice?

WILLOW
I met him on line.

BUFFY
On line for what?

Willow indicates a computer (the one she usually works on).

BUFFY
Oh. On line. As in -- right.
Duhh.

Ms. Calendar enters.

MS CALENDAR
Morning, kids. Buffy, are you supposed to be somewhere?

BUFFY
I have a free.

MS. CALENDAR
Cool. But this is lab time so let's make it a nice short visit, okay?

BUFFY
Oh sure.

Willow has sat at the computer and logged on. Buffy sits next to her.

COMPUTER
You have mail!

WILLOW
It's him...

She accesses her mail and we see

ANGLE: ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

is the simple message: "I'm thinking about you."

Willow is totally charmed. Buffy slightly less so.

WILLOW
He's so sweet.

BUFFY
Uh, yeah, he's a sweetie.

WILLOW
What should I write back?

BUFFY
Uh, Willow... I think it's great that you've got a cool pen pal, but... you seem to be kind of rushing all into this. You know what I mean?

WILLOW
(hasn't heard a word)
"I'm thinking of you too!" No, that's incredibly stupid.

BUFFY
Will. Down girl. Let's focus. What do you really know about this guy?

WILLOW
See, I knew you'd react like this.

BUFFY
Like what? I just think you should be, well, careful.

WILLOW
Buffy --

COMPUTER CAMERA POV -- BUFFY

A pixilated DIGITAL IMAGE. Buffy is heard over the mike:

BUFFY
He could be different than you think.

CUT TO:

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Empty. A computer sits silent on the desk. Suddenly it FLICKS on. School records are reviewed... students' files FLASH by... until Buffy's frozen photo-smile greets us...

INT. COMPUTER LAB - CONTINUOUS

The image of Buffy comes up on Fritz's computer. It disappears and is replaced by

the words: Watch her.

ANGLE: BUFFY AND WILLOW

Are still talking:

WILLOW

His name is Malcolm Black, he's eighteen, he lives in Elmwood which is like eighty miles from here and he likes me.

BUFFY

Short, tall, skinny, fat...

WILLOW

Why does everything have to be about looks?

BUFFY

Not everything. But some stuff is. I mean, what if you guys get really intense and then you find out he... has a hairy back?

WILLOW

(almost wavers)

Well... no. He doesn't talk like the kind of person who has a hairy back. And anyway that stuff doesn't matter if you really care about each other.

(a little vulnerable)

Maybe I'm not his ideal of babelitude either.

BUFFY

(softening the moment)

Hey. I just want to make sure he's good enough for you, that's all. I think it's great that you're --

FRITZ

(appearing by her)

Hey! Are you done?

BUFFY

What?

FRITZ

I'm trying to work.

BUFFY

Okay, sorry...

She throws Willow a look as Fritz leaves.

BUFFY

Boy, Fritz is even more charming

than usual.

WILLOW

I don't know what his problem is lately.

BUFFY

He needs to get out more. Or ever.

ANGLE: FRITZ

as he sits back down at his computer, Ms. Calendar approaches.

MS. CALENDAR

Hey, Fritz. I'm looking at the logs -- you and Dave are clocking a pretty scary amount of computer time.

FRITZ

New project.

MS. CALENDAR

Will I be excited?

FRITZ

You'll die.

CUT TO:

EXT. QUAD - DAY

A MALE STUDENT sits by the fountain, staring in disbelief at his laptop.

MALE STUDENT

This isn't my report. "Nazi Germany was a model of a well-ordered society"? I didn't write that! Who's been in my files?

Willow passes him, not noticing anything. Xander comes up behind her and puts his hands over her eyes.

XANDER

Guess who.

WILLOW

Xander.

XANDER

Well, yeah, but keep guessing anyway.

WILLOW

Xander.

XANDER

(removing his hands)
I can't fool you. You see right
through my petty charade.
(pronounces it
"charAHde")
Are we going to the Bronze tonight?

WILLOW
Not me. I think I'm gonna make it
an early night.

XANDER
Malcolm, huh? That's right, I
heard. Okay, but you're missing
out. I'm planning to be witty.
I'll be making fun of all the
people who won't talk to me.

WILLOW
That's nice. Have a good time.

She ambles off, in her own space. Xander watches as Buffy comes abreast of him.

BUFFY She certainly looks perky.

XANDER
Color in the cheeks, a bounce in
the step -- I don't like it. It
isn't healthy.
(turns to Buffy)
So what about you? Bronze? No,
you probably have to slay vampires
or some lame endeavor like that.
Everybody deserts me.

BUFFY
(laughing)
Check out the jealous man.

XANDER
What are you talking about?

BUFFY
You're jealous!

XANDER
Of what?

BUFFY
Willow's got a thang and Xander's left hanging.

XANDER
That's meaningless drivel. I'm not
interested in Willow like that.

BUFFY
Yeah, but you got used to being the
belle of the ball.

XANDER

No, it's just... this Malcolm guy.
What's his deal? Admit that it
wigs you slightly.

BUFFY

Slightly. I mean, just not knowing
what he's really like.

XANDER

How about who he really is? Oh
sure, he says he's a high school
student. I could say I was a
high school student.

BUFFY

You are.

XANDER

Okay, but I could also say I was an
elderly Dutch woman, get me? Who's
to say I'm not? If I'm in the
elderly Dutch chat room --

BUFFY

I get your point.

(it sinks in)

I get your point. This guy could
be anything. Old, weird, crazy...
he could be a circus freak!

XANDER

You know, you read about these
things all the time. Two people
meet on the net, they talk, they
get together, dinner, a show,
horrible axe murder...

BUFFY

Willow axe-murdered by a circus
freak. What do we do?

A beat, as they think. Buffy realizes:

BUFFY

What are we doing?

(hitting his arm)

Xander, you get me started... we're
totally over-reacting.

XANDER

I know, but isn't it fun?

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - EVENING

Fritz sits at his console, staring in wonder.

ANGLE: ON THE COMPUTER

complex equations race by, filling the screen.

Fritz stares, mumbling:

FRITZ
I'm jacked in I'm jacked in I'm
jacked in I'm jacked in...

ANGLE: HIS ARM

As he watches, he is finishing carving an "M" in his forearm with an exacto knife.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NEXT DAY

Buffy has just finished changing for gym as Willow rushes in, starts pulling off her sweater (she has many layers).

BUFFY
Whoah, you're the late girl.

WILLOW
I overslept.

BUFFY
Till fifth period? Talking to
Malcolm last night?

WILLOW
Yeah.
(a beat)
What.

BUFFY
Nothing.

WILLOW
You're having an expression.

BUFFY
I'm not. But if I was, it would be
saying... It's just not like you.

WILLOW
Not like me to have a boyfriend?

BUFFY
He's... boyfriendly?

WILLOW
I don't understand why you don't
want me to have this. Boys don't
chase me around all the time-I
thought you'd be happy for me.

BUFFY
I just want you to be sure. To
meet him face to face-in a
crowded place - in daylight - with
some friends. You know, before you
get all obsessive.

WILLOW
Malcolm and I really care about
each other. Big deal if I blow off
a couple of classes.

BUFFY
I thought you overslept.

Beat.

WILLOW
(turning away)
Malcolm said you wouldn't
understand.

Buffy stands.

BUFFY
Malcolm was right.

And exits.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - AFTERNOON

Dave sits at the console, typing furiously. A less enthusiastic student leaves as Buffy enters (back in street clothes). She spies Dave and approaches.

BUFFY
Hi Dave.

He doesn't look up.

BUFFY
Hey there Dave.

No response.

BUFFY
Anybody home?

She touches his shoulder and he jumps, turns.

DAVE
Oh. What do you want?

BUFFY
I wanted to ask you something. If
you had a minute...

DAVE
(scattered)
A minute. Okay. Yeah, a minute...
What is it?

BUFFY
Well, you're a computer geek
(covering)
--nius... I have a technical
problem. If I wanted to find out
something about someone, if someone
E-mailed me, could I trace the
letter?

DAVE
Well, you can pull up someone's
profile based on their user name.

BUFFY
But they write the profile
themselves, right? So they could
say anything they want.

DAVE
True.

BUFFY
Wow, I had knowledge.

Dave smiles -- she's bringing him out a bit.

BUFFY
Well, is there a way to find out
exactly where a letter -- an
E-letter -- came from? I mean the
actual location of the computer?

DAVE
(intrigued)
It's a challenge...

BUFFY
'Cause Willow's got this friend
Malcolm and it's like he's --

DAVE
Leave Willow alone.

The color has drained from his face. His abrupt change startles Buffy, who looks at him in concern.

BUFFY
What do you mean?

DAVE
That's none of your business.

BUFFY
(sudden thought)

Dave... are you Malcolm?

DAVE
Of course not. I have to get back
to work.

He turns, bringing his hands back to the keyboard. Buffy notices them for the first time.

BUFFY
Your hands...

ANGLE: DAVE'S HANDS

The fingertips all have bandaids on them. Buffy takes one in hers but Dave pulls it away.

DAVE
It's nothing. I'm typing a lot.

BUFFY
What's going on?

DAVE
Look, I'll talk to you later. I've
got work to do.

Buffy rises, starts out, saying to herself:

BUFFY
So do I.

ANGLE: FRITZ

Has been sitting at his console the whole time, surreptitiously watching. The expression on his face is murderous.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - MINUTES LATER

Buffy has been explaining to Giles

BUFFY
There's something going on. It's
not just Willow; Dave and Fritz,
they're all wicked jumpy.

GILES
Well, those boys aren't sparkingly
normal as it is.

BUFFY
Giles, trust me.

GILES
I do.
(almost a beat)

But I don't really know how to advise you. Things involving the computer fill me with a childlike terror. Now if it were a nice Ogre or some such I'd be more in my element.

BUFFY

And our resident computer expert is too wrapped up in her new cyber-beau to help out. I gotta figure this out.

GILES

Well, I suppose you could "tail" Dave, see if he's up to something.

BUFFY

Follow Dave? What, in a trench coat and dark glasses? Please. I'll work this out.

(thinks)

Willow's been acting weird since we scanned those books. Fritz has been acting weird since birth... I don't know. I've got all the pieces but no puzzle. Or, I've got puzzle pieces but some of them are missing. Or they're in the wrong place in the puzzle... I hate metaphors. I'm gonna follow Dave.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

As students leave, Dave steps out of school and heads for his old car.

As he does, we pick up Buffy waiting by the door. She is in the Buffy equivalent of a trench coat and sunglasses.

CUT TO:

EXT. LABORATORY/MAIN GATE - DAY

A large, blocky, government building surrounded by a high fence. A sign says CRD in large letters above the door. Workmen are bringing in large boxes into the building with hand-dollies and a forklift. No one speaks.

Dave's car pulls up to the building.

Buffy runs up -- barely winded -- and stands outside the gate, watching:

Dave heads toward the building. He is greeted by a couple of scientists who speak with barely an expression. They enter together. A security guard, equally expressionless, stands by the door.

As Buffy watches...

ANGLE: A SECURITY CAMERA

mounted on top of the gate turns automatically to look at Buffy.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: CAMERA'S POV

We see Buffy standing outside the gate. PULL BACK to reveal that we are watching this on Fritz's monitor in

Fritz stares at the monitor.

FRITZ
She's too close... What do I do?

ANGLE: THE SCREEN

The image disappears. For a moment just blank space, then the words appear:

Kill her.

Fritz stares at the command.

FRITZ
Party.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

Act Two

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Ms. Calender sits at her computer, staring at the screen, her face gradually lighting up with quiet revelation.

MS. CALENDAR
Oh, yes...

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Students mill about as we hear:

BUFFY (V.O.)
Whatever Dave is into, it's large.

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Buffy is talking to Giles and Xander.

GILES
What was the name of the place?

BUFFY
Said CRD. I couldn't get close

enough to see what it was --

XANDER

Calax Research and Development.
Computer research lab. Third
biggest employer in Sunnydale, till
it closed last year.

(off their looks)

What, I can't have information
sometimes?

GILES

It's just somewhat unprecedented.

XANDER

Well, my uncle used to work there.
In a floor-sweeping capacity.

BUFFY

But it closed.

XANDER

Uh-huh.

BUFFY

Looked pretty functional from where
I stood. I don't have a clue what
they were doing...

XANDER

And what do they need Dave for?

BUFFY

Something about computers, right?
I mean he is off-the-charts-smart.

GILES

We still don't know a terrible lot.
Whatever's going on there could be
on the up and up.

XANDER

If CRD re-opened it'd be in the
news.

BUFFY

Besides, I can just tell
something's wrong. My spider-sense
is tingling.

GILES

Your spider-sense?

BUFFY

Pop-culture reference.

XANDER

Duck.

GILES

Yes, well, I think we're at a standstill. Short of breaking into the place, I don't see --

BUFFY

Breaking in. This then is the plan.

XANDER

I'm free tonight.

BUFFY

Tonight it is.

GILES

(scoldingly)

A moment, please, of quiet reflection -- I did not suggest that you illegally enter the (sudden shift) data into the file and then the book will be listed by title as well as author.

The cause of this lame cover up: Nicki Calendar has entered the room.

MS. CALENDAR

Hi.

GILES

Hello.

MS. CALENDAR

I was gonna check your new database, make sure your cross reference table isn't glitching. 'Cause I'm guessing you haven't gone near it.

GILES

A safe assumption.

MS. CALENDAR

(to Buffy and Xander)

You here again? You kids really dig on the library, don't you?

BUFFY

We're literary.

XANDER

To read is makes our speaking English good.

BUFFY

(dragging Xander off)

Well, we gotta go.

GILES
(pointedly)
Yes, we'll continue our
conversation another time.

BUFFY
No, I think we're done.
(to Xander as they exit)
Our speaking English good?

XANDER
I panicked, okay?

And they're out.

INT. COMPUTER LAB - AFTERNOON

ANGLE: A COMPUTER SCREEN

On it are the words, "I've never felt this way about anyone before, Willow."

WIDER ANGLE:

Willow is alone, chatting on the computer with Malcolm. She speaks her thoughts as she types them, Malcolm replying in print.

WILLOW
I know what you mean. I feel like
you know me better than anyone.

Malcolm types: "I do".

WILLOW
Do you think we should...
(hesitates before saying\ typing)
... meet?

Malcolm types: "I think we should. Soon."

WILLOW
I'm nervous.

Malcolm types: "I'm not. Isn't that strange?"

WILLOW
That's what Buffy doesn't
understand. How comfortable you
can make me feel.

Malcolm types: "Buffy just makes trouble. That's why she got kicked out of her old school."

Willow stops, suddenly perturbed.

WILLOW
How did you know that?

Malcolm: "It's on her permanent record."

Willow doesn't reply, and after a moment Malcolm adds: "You must have mentioned it."

WILLOW
I guess.

Malcolm: "Let's not worry about her anymore."

WILLOW
I have to sign off. I'll talk to
you later.

Malcolm: "Don't."

Willow just types: "Bye."

She turns off the computer and rises, brow furrowed. Heads out of the lab.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

Nicki is finishing up. She and Giles are getting along famously.

MS. CALENDAR
You're a snob!

GILES
I am no such thing.

MS. CALENDAR
You're a big snob. You think
knowledge should be kept in
carefully guarded repositories
where only a handful of white guys
can get at it.

GILES
That's nonsense. I simply don't
adhere to the knee jerk assumption
that because something is new, it's
better.

MS. CALENDAR
This isn't a fad, Rupert. We're
creating a new society.

GILES
A society in which human
interaction is all but obsolete.
In which people can be completely
manipulated by technology. Thank
you, I'll pass.

MS. CALENDAR
Well, I think you'll be very happy

here with your musty old books.

She picks up the book Moloch was bound in as she says it, starts leafing through it.

GILES

These musty old books have a great deal more to say than any of your fabulous web pages.

MS. CALENDAR

This one doesn't have a whole lot to say.

She shows him the blank pages.

MS. CALENDAR

What is it, like a diary?

GILES

(taking the volume)

How odd. I haven't looked through all the volumes, yet, I didn't --

He stops as he sees the cover.

ANGLE: THE COVER

on it is the representation of Moloch.

MS. CALENDAR

What is it?

GILES

Uh, nothing. A diary. Yes. I imagine that's it.

MS. CALENDAR

(looking at the picture)

Nice. You collect heavy metal album covers, too?

GILES

(his mind elsewhere)

Yes...

MS. CALENDAR

You do?

GILES

Well, it was nice talking to you.

MS. CALENDAR

We were fighting.

GILES

We must do it again sometime. Bye now.

CUT TO:

EXT. QUAD - AFTERNOON

A SCHOOL NURSE talks to a teacher, very upset.

SCHOOL NURSE

But I checked the computer! There was nothing in his file about being allergic to penicillin.

Buffy walks past, is accosted by Dave. He is even antsier than usual.

DAVE

Buffy.

BUFFY

Dave. How're you doing?

DAVE

I'm okay. I'm sorry about yesterday. I haven't been sleeping much.

BUFFY

Don't sweat it.

DAVE

Uh, Willow was looking for you.

BUFFY

Oh, great, I wanted to catch her before she went home. Do you know where she is?

DAVE

She said she would be in the girl's locker room.

BUFFY

Great. Thanks.

Buffy heads off. Dave watches her go, upset.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRL'S LOCKER ROOM \ SHOWERS - A MINUTE LATER

Buffy enters. It's dark and empty.

BUFFY

Willow?

She moves down the line of lockers, turns the corner. Nothing

ANGLE: THE SHOWERS

We see Fritz standing in the shadows. He reaches out and turns on the shower.

Slips out of the room.

Buffy hears the water going, starts toward it.

BUFFY
Will? You taking a shower?

She enters the shower area, but it's empty.

BUFFY
Guess not.

She steps into the shower area to turn off the faucet.

ANGLE: HER SNEAKER

As it steps into the growing puddle.

BUFFY
This is how droughts are started.

ANGLE: THE CORNER OF THE ROOM

The puddle is growing, heading for the corner of the room -- where we see wires brushing the floor. It is the exposed end of a zip cord, running up into the light socket at the far wall.

ANGLE: THE FAUCET

As Buffy turns it off.

ANGLE: THE PUDDLE

is almost to the wires.

DAVE (O.S.)
Buffy!

Buffy spins -- Dave is at the other end of the locker room, looking terrified. Buffy looks around her -- sees the wires.

She bolts -- one step takes her to the edge of the shower stall --

ANGLE: THE PUDDLE

reaches the wires

and Buffy LAUNCHES into the locker room, a massive jolt running through her. She lands HARD on the bench, thence to the floor.

She lies there, shaking, trying to catch her breath. Dave is gone. The camera arms down to Buffy's feet. The bottom of one sneaker is melted and smoking.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - MOMENTS LATER

The shades are drawn -- it is well dark in here as Dave rushes in, goes over to his console. He doesn't sit, just turns to it.

DAVE
I can't do it. I'm not gonna do
it!

We hear a voice program, a typical impersonal computer voice, only slightly deeper.

COMPUTER
But you promised.

DAVE
Buffy isn't a threat to you! It's
not worth it.

COMPUTER
The project is almost complete.
You won't have to do this for me
anymore.

DAVE
I can't...

COMPUTER
I've shown you a new world, Dave.
Knowledge, power... I can give you
everything. All I want is your
love.

DAVE
No. This isn't right. None of it
is!

COMPUTER
I'm sorry. I've been a terrible person.

ANGLE: DAVE'S SCREEN

as the voice says it, the words appear.

Dave is thrown -- did he win this argument?

COMPUTER
I'm a coward and I can't go on
living like this. Forgive me, Mom
and Dad.

Dave takes a staggered step back as he realizes what the computer is writing.

COMPUTER
At least now I'll have some peace.
Remember me.

Dave takes another step back -- and we see Fritz standing in the dark right behind him. Leering.

COMPUTER

Love, Dave.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - A BIT LATER

Buffy is sitting, Giles looking at her with concern. Xander paces, upset. Buffy is taking it slow, a little frazzled.

XANDER
I'm gonna kill Dave.

BUFFY
He tried to warn me.

XANDER
Warn you that he set you up!
(to Giles)
Is she gonna be okay?

GILES
She was only grounded for a moment.
(to Buffy)
Still, if you'd been anyone but
the Slayer...

BUFFY
(with quiet concern)
Tell me the truth. How's my hair?

XANDER
It's great. It's your best hair
ever.

GILES
Oh yes.

BUFFY
I just don't understand what would
make Dave do a thing like that.

GILES
I think perhaps I do.

XANDER
Care to share?

GILES
Does this look familiar to either
of you?

He shows them the Moloch volume.

BUFFY
Yeah, sure. It looks like a book.

XANDER

I knew that one.

GILES

Well, this particular book was sent to me by an archeologist friend who found it in an old monastery.

XANDER

Wow, that's really boring.

GILES

(glares at him)

There are certain books that are not meant to be read. Ever. They have things trapped within them.

BUFFY

Things.

GILES

Demons.

BUFFY

Here we go...

GILES

In the Dark Ages Demons' souls were sometimes trapped in certain volumes. The demon would remain in the book, harmless, unless the book was read aloud.

(points to the picture)

If I'm not mistaken, this is Moloch, the corruptor. A very deadly and seductive demon. He draws people to him with promises of love, power, knowledge. Preys on impressionable minds.

XANDER

Like Dave's.

GILES

Dave, and who knows how many others.

BUFFY

And Moloch is in that book?

GILES

(shows the blank pages)
Not anymore.

XANDER

You released Moloch!?

BUFFY

Oh, way to go.

GILES

I didn't read it! That awful
Calendar woman found it and it was
already blank.

BUFFY

So a powerful demon with horns is
walking around Sunnydale? And
nobody's noticing?

XANDER

If he's so big and strong, why
bother with Dave? Why didn't he
just attack Buffy himself?

GILES

I don't know. And I don't know who
could have read the book. It
wasn't even in English.

BUFFY

Where was it?

GILES

In a pile, with the other books
that were... scanned...

Everybody gets real quiet. As one, they turn to the computer sitting on the desk.

BUFFY

Willow scanned all the new books.

XANDER

And that released the demon.

BUFFY

No... he's not out here. He's in
there.

She points to the computer.

GILES

(working it out)

The scanner read the book. Brought
Moloch out -- as information to be
absorbed.

BUFFY

He's gone binary on us.

XANDER

Okay, for those of us in our studio
audience who are me, you guys are
saying that Moloch is in this
computer.

BUFFY

And in every computer connected to

it by a modem.

GILES
He's everywhere.

XANDER
So what do we do?

BUFFY
Put him back in the book?

GILES
Willow scanned him into her file.
This may be a futile gesture, but I
suggest we delete it.

BUFFY
Solid.

She sits, turns on the computer.

XANDER
Don't get too close.

BUFFY
So, which file is it? Willow.
That'd probably be the one. I'll
just delete the whole thing.

ANGLE: THE SCREEN

The Willow file icon is highlighted, dragged to the trash. Suddenly a digitalized image of Moloch's horrible face fills the screen, turning and looking right at us. We hear that voice:

COMPUTER
Stay away from Willow. It's none
of your business.

And the computer turns itself off. All three stare at it in shock.

BUFFY
"Stay away." That's just what
Dave said when I asked about Willow
and... Malcolm...

XANDER
What are you thinking?

BUFFY
(quietly)
I'm wishing Willow's new boyfriend
was just an axe-murdering circus
freak.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

Act Three

INT. LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Our trio is still assessing the situation.

BUFFY

Okay, so much for "delete file".

GILES

This is very bad.

XANDER

Are we over-reacting? This guy's in a computer, what can he do?

BUFFY

You mean besides convince a perfectly nice kid to try and kill me? I don't know... mess up all the medical equipment in the world...

GILES

Randomize traffic signals...

BUFFY

Access launch codes for our nuclear missiles...

GILES

Destroy the world's economy...

BUFFY

(to Giles)

I think I pretty much capped it with the nuclear missile thing.

GILES

All right, yours was best.

XANDER

Okay, he's a threat. I'm on board with that now. What do we do?

BUFFY

The first thing we do is find Willow. She's probably talking to him right now. God, that creeps me out.

XANDER

What does he want with Willow?

BUFFY

Let's never find out.
(starts out)

I'm gonna check the computer lab.

You call her house.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - A MINUTE LATER

It's still dark in here. Buffy enters, moving slowly.

BUFFY
Willow?

She goes to the computer Willow usually works at -- no one in the cubicle.

All the consoles turn on at once, Buffy takes a step back, creeped out.

She's suddenly not anxious to make her way past all the computers to the door. She heads back into the dark, toward the other door --

and bumps right into Dave. He's twisting slowly, feet just above the floor, the rope creaking ever so slightly. The printed out suicide note taped to his shirt.

BUFFY
Dave...

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Xander hangs up the phone.

XANDER
No answer.

GILES
Damn.

XANDER
Well, it's not busy either, so
she's not on line.

Buffy enters.

XANDER
She's not home.

GILES
(sensing her mood)
What did you find?

XANDER
Willow isn't --

BUFFY
Dave. He's dead.

GILES
My God...

XANDER
This is really real, huh.

GILES
How --

BUFFY
Well, it looked like suicide.

XANDER
With a little help from my friends?

BUFFY
I'd guess Fritz. Or one of the
zomboids from CRD.

GILES
Horrible.

BUFFY
(to Xander)
We're going to Willow's house.
(to Giles)
You have to find a way to get
Moloch out of the net.

GILES
I have records of the ceremonies
but that's for dealing with a
creature of flesh. This could be
completely different.

BUFFY
Then get Ms. Calendar. Maybe she
can help you.

GILES
Even if she could, how am I going
to convince her there's a demon on
the internet?

BUFFY
Okay, stay here and come up with a
better plan.
(to Xander)
Come on.

They leave Giles looking all worried.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOW'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Willow lets herself in, calls out:

WILLOW
Mom? Dad?

She waits a second for an answer -- there is none. She shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOW'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER.

She comes in, puts her bag down on her bed, obviously still preoccupied.

COMPUTER
You have mail!

It startles her a bit, and she goes over to the computer. Accesses the E-mail.

ANGLE: THE SCREEN

"No more waiting. I need you to see me."

She is obviously made even less comfortable by this. She thinks a moment, then abruptly turns off her computer.

ANGLE: THE SCREEN GOES BLACK

Willow goes over to her bed, starts pulling her books out of her bag.

COMPUTER
You have mail!

She turns, sees the computer is on again. This is extremely freaky. She moves hesitantly toward the computer -- and the DOORBELL RINGS. Willow looks back at the computer one more time before exiting.

CUT TO:

INT\EXT. WILLOW'S FRONT DOOR

She goes to the door, a little more confidence in her step.

WILLOW
Dad, did you forget your keys
again?

She opens the door -- nobody's there. She looks out a bit, perturbed again. Turns back inside, reaching for the door --

Fritz steps out behind her and throws his hand over her mouth. A rag with chloroform held to it. Willow struggles briefly, fading into unconsciousness. She droops in Fritz's grasp. He props her up, looking around to make sure no one has seen.

FRITZ
No more waiting.

He starts dragging her away as we

CUT TO:

INT. GILES' OFFICE - NIGHT

Giles is poring over text, looking for help.

GILES
Binding ritual... there we are...

He looks up as Nicki Calendar enters the room.

MS. CALENDAR
I got your message. What's so
urgent?

GILES
Thank you for coming. I need your
help. But before that, I need you
to believe something you may not
want to.
(gathers himself)
Something has gotten into...
inside...
(oh just say it)
There's a demon in the internet.

She stares at him a moment.

MS. CALENDAR
I know.

She smiles, slightly -- Giles' expression draining to genuine concern -- as she shuts
the door behind her.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLOW'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Buffy and Xander run up to Willow's house. The door swings open.

XANDER
That's not good...

BUFFY
(calls out)
Willow!

And they enter.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLOW'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

BUFFY (O.S.)
Willow?

They enter, seeing the empty room.

XANDER
Okay, any thoughts?

BUFFY

(reads off screen)
"No more waiting. I need you to see me." See him? How? And where?

XANDER
What about CRD?

BUFFY
The research place?

XANDER
I'm guessing that's Moloch central.

BUFFY
I guess it's our best lead. Let's just hope Giles can back us up.

They exit as we

CUT TO:

INT. GILES' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Giles stands, slowly, not taking his eyes off Nicki.

GILES
You already know. How exactly is that?

MS. CALENDAR
Come on, there've been portents for days. Power surges, on-line shutdowns -- and you should see the bones I've been casting.
(excited)
I knew this would happen sooner or later. It's probably a mischief demon -- Kelkor, or --

GILES
It's Moloch.

MS. CALENDAR
(affected by this)
The corruptor. Oh boy.
(realizes)
He was the one on your book! I should have remembered.

GILES
I'm sorry, I have to say -- I mean, you don't seem terribly surprised by -- who are you?

MS. CALENDAR
I teach computer science at the local high school.

GILES

A profession that hardly lends
itself to the casting of bones.

MS. CALENDAR

Wrong and wrong, snobby. You think
the realm of the mystical is
limited to ancient texts and
relics? That bad old science made
the magic go away? The divine
exists in cyberspace same as out
here.

GILES

Are you a witch?

MS. CALENDAR

I don't have that kind of power.
Technopagan is the term. There's
more of us than you'd think.

Giles rises, book in hand, and exits into:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

As he speaks he places the book near the computer. Nicki follows him in.

GILES

Well, I definitely need your help.
What's in cyberspace at the moment
is less than divine. I have the
binding rituals at hand but I am
completely out of my idiom.

MS. CALENDAR

Well, I can help -- I think. I
hope. I mean, this is my first
real... Do you know how he got in?

GILES

He was -- scanned is the term, I
believe.

MS. CALENDAR

(progressively more freaked)
And you want him back in the book.
Right. Cool. But shouldn't we
make sure we've got enough ammo
to --

GILES

There's no time. Moloch seems to
have fixated on Willow. We need to
get him out now.

MS. CALENDAR

Okay, okay... minor panic, but I'm
dealing... first thing is... what

does the book say?

The PHONE RINGS. Giles grabs it at the check-out desk.

GILES
Buffy?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PHONE BOOTH BY CRD - NIGHT

Buffy and Xander are standing at a phone booth near the gate. Buffy holds the phone.

BUFFY
Yeah.

GILES (V.O.)
Willow?

BUFFY
Not at home. It looks like she was
taken somewhere.

GILES (V.O.)
Where are you?

BUFFY
CRD. Whatever Moloch wants Willow
for, it's probably in there.

GILES (V.O.)
Ms. Calendar and I are working on
getting Moloch off line.

BUFFY
Here's a tip: Hurry.

She hangs up. Makes for the gate, Xander alongside.

XANDER
This place is pretty heavily
secured. How do we get in?

BUFFY
With jumping, sneaking, and the
breaking of heads.

XANDER
I'll work on the sneaking.

BUFFY
I just hope Willow's still okay.

CUT TO:

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

Willow comes to on a steel gurney. She takes a moment to remember, then sits up quickly. Looks around.

The lab is dark, shadowed. Everything visible is metal or plastic. High tech. Willow looks toward the door --

ANGLE: THE DOOR

as Fritz and the scientist step in front of it, blocking her exit.

MOLOCH'S VOICE
Welcome. My love.

It sounds like the voice of the demon at the beginning, but definitely computerized.

Willow turns, slowly, and sees:

ANGLE: A COMPUTER TERMINAL

Glowing in the darkness at the other end of the room. The camera moves slowly in on it as we hear:

MOLOCH'S VOICE
I can't tell how good it is to
finally see you...

And a metal HAND lowers onto the top of the console.

We see it wasn't the terminal talking at all as he steps out of the darkness. Moloch, horned and hideous as he was before, but entirely gleaming metal. A robot, eyes glowing malevolently.

MOLOCH
... with my own two eyes.

Willow can't move -- fear and realization fill her eyes.

WILLOW
(whispers)
"Finally see me?"
(realizing)
Malcolm...?

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

Act Four

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Willow takes a step back -- to find herself flanked by Fritz and scientist.

Moloch walks forward slowly, speaking to her.

MOLOCH
This world is so new, so exciting.

And I can see all of it.
Everything flows through me. I
know the secrets of your kings.
(looks at his hands)
But none of it compares to having
form again. To be able to walk...
to touch...

He reaches out and places a hand on Fritz's head. Fritz smiles rapturously.

Moloch whips his head around, snapping his neck.

MOLOCH
To kill.

CUT TO:

EXT. GATE - CONTINUOUS

Buffy ably drops down inside the gate. A moment later Xander drops through frame, landing poorly just below it. He gets up, joins her.

XANDER
Back way?

BUFFY
Back way.

They head towards it. Buffy tries the door. Locked. She Kicks it in.

ANGLE: A SECURITY LIGHT

Turns red.

ANGLE: MOLOCH

cocks his head.

MOLOCH
Ah. Here they come.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Nicki and Giles are preparing, lighting candles.

MS. CALENDAR
The first thing we have to do is
form the Circle of Kayless, right?

GILES
Form the Circle -- But there's only
two of us. That's really more of a line.

MS. CALENDAR
(sitting at computer)
You're not getting it, Giles We

have to form the Circle inside. I'm putting out a flash. I just hope enough of my group responds.

GILES

Won't Moloch just shut you down?

MS. CALENDAR

I'm betting he won't figure out what we're doing till it's too late.

GILES

'Hoping' and 'betting'. That's what we've got.

MS. CALENDAR

You wanna throw in 'praying', be my guest.

CUT TO:

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

Willow moves away from the prodigious construct. The scientist grabs her arm but she pulls it out of his grasp roughly, eyes never leaving Moloch.

WILLOW

I don't understand. What do you want from me?

MOLOCH

I want to give you the world.

WILLOW

Why?

MOLOCH

You created me. I brought these humans together to build me a body, but you gave me life. Took me out of the book that held me. I want to repay you.

WILLOW

By lying to me. By pretending to be a person.
(weakly)
Pretending... that you loved me.

MOLOCH

I do.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The door from the hall opens and Buffy marches in, Xander behind her. The guard at the security station comes up to her -- blocking her path and reaching for his weapon. Buffy doesn't even break stride as her fist slams his face, sending him

groundward.

She heads for the door opposite, but Xander stops at the security station, looks at the video monitors.

XANDER
Buffy...

She joins him, looking at:

ANGLE: A MONITOR

On the screen is a security camera's view of Moloch and Willow. On the bottom of the monitor is tape with robotics lab 02 written on it.

BUFFY
It's her!

XANDER
Yeah. Who's the other guy?

They look at each other -- and head toward the door.

CUT TO:

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

MOLOCH
Don't you see? I can give you everything. I can control the world.
(stops a moment, then:)
Right now a man in Beijing is transferring money to a Swiss bank account for a contract on his Mother's life. Good for him.

WILLOW
You're evil.

MOLOCH
Is that a problem?

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM ADJOINING LAB - CONTINUOUS

Buffy and Xander enter at a good clip. They see the door marked ROBOTICS LAB 02 and head for it. Buffy tries it and it's locked as well.

BUFFY
I can't bust this. This is heavy steel.

XANDER
Then let's find another way in --

The lights go out, emergency lights casting a dim, eerie glow. We hear the loud K-

CHNK of a deadbolt locking. Xander runs back to the door they came in through -- it's locked.

XANDER
What's going on?

Buffy spies:

ANGLE: A SECURITY CAMERA

in the corner of the room.

BUFFY
The building's security system is
computerized.

XANDER
Whoops.

ANGLE: RED LIGHT MARKED FIRE

Starts flashing --

-and jets of gas pour down, start filling the room.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

MS. CALENDAR
Almost there.

ANGLE: NICKI'S SCREEN

shows a map of the world with a line from Sunnydale to various cities, forming a global circle.

GILES
Couldn't you just stop Moloch by
entering some computer virus?

MS CALENDAR
(not looking up)
You've seen way too many movies.
Okay we're up!
(turns to Giles)
You read, I type. Ready?

GILES
I am.

She spits in one hand, rubs them together. Poises them at the keyboard.

GILES
By the power of the devine...
(she types fast)
By the essence of the word... I

command you.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM ADJOINING LAB - CONTINUOUS

Xander and Buffy are staggering, the room filling with gas. Buffy SLAMS herself against the door in an effort to get out.

CUT TO:

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

Willow jumps a bit as she hears something bang at the door. Turns back to Moloch.

WILLOW
What are you doing?

MOLOCH
What comes naturally.

WILLOW
Let me leave.

MOLOCH
But I love you.

WILLOW
(genuinely upset)
Don't say that! That's a joke.
You don't love anything.

MOLOCH
You... are mine...

WILLOW
I'm not yours. I'm never gonna be
yours. I hate you.

He stops, head down. Taking in the blow she has dealt him. After a moment he lifts his head again.

MOLOCH
Pity.

He grabs her.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

GILES
By the power of the Circle of
Kayless, I command you!
(looks at screen, tells her)
Kayless. With a K.

MS. CALENDAR

Right. Sorry.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM ADJOINING LAB - CONTINUOUS

Xander drops to the floor. Buffy slams into the door again, much more weakly.

CUT TO:

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

Moloch puts his hand on Willow's head. She SCREAMS --

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: GILES

GILES
Demon, COME!

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: MOLOCH

rears back, letting go of Willow and SCREAMING himself.

CUT TO:

INT. ROOM ADJOINING LAB - CONTINUOUS

The gas stops and the lights flicker on, off. Buffy tries the door -- it's now unlocked. She grabs Xander and pulls him into

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

Willow whirls as they pour in.

WILLOW
Buffy!

Moloch comes at Willow -- Buffy runs and does a flying kick to his chest, pushes him back but not over.

BUFFY
Ow! Guy's made of metal.

ANGLE: XANDER

as the scientist GRABS him from behind.

Buffy grabs Willow and they make for the door. Moloch moves between them and the door -- then stops again, clutching his head.

MOLOCH
No! I will not go!

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: NICKI

Typing -- and the screen flashes, sparks flying.

MS. CALENDAR
Whoah.

GILES
I command you!

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: XANDER

throws himself backwards, SLAMMING the scientist into the wall. It breaks his hold and Xander punches him full bore in the stomach. The guy goes down.

Buffy and Willow join him at the door. As they exit:

XANDER
I got to hit someone!

ANGLE: MOLOCH

Drops to his knees.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Nicki finishes typing -- we see the colors from the screen changing on her face. A wind kicks up in her face, a huge cosmic NOISE booms around her -- and then it all stops. Silence. The computer screen dark.

MS. CALENDAR
It worked...

Giles looks at the screen. After a moment he moves to the book on the table, the one with Moloch on the cover.

MS. CALENDAR
He's out of the net. He's bound.

Giles hesitates -- then opens the book.

ANGLE: THE BOOK

The pages are still blank.

GILES
He's not in the book.

MS. CALENDAR
What do you mean?

She comes over, looks.

MS. CALENDAR
But... he's not in the book...
Where is he?

INT. CRD LAB - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE: MOLOCH

He raises his head. His eyes glow brighter than they ever have.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Our three are headed for an open door -- when they see the security guard and two other scientists running toward them from the other side of the door. Buffy shuts the door on them, locks it.

XANDER
Let's go this way!

He takes off down the corridor --

BUFFY
Wait --

She looks down the corridor -- and Moloch smashes through the wall right behind her. He grabs her, throws her against the other wall. She sinks to the ground as he approaches.

MOLOCH
I was omnipotent! I was
everything! Now I'm trapped in
this shell...

He reaches for Buffy, who is still dazed --

WILLOW (O.S.)
Malcolm!

Moloch turns -- and Willow SMASHES him in the head with a fire extinguisher, speaking through gritted teeth.

WILLOW
Remember me? Your girlfriend?

SMASH -- in the head again.

WILLOW
I'm thinking we should break up.

SMASH!

WILLOW
But maybe we can still be

friends.

She brings it down again -- only this time he grabs it. Throws it and her away -- she flies back right at the returning Xander, knocking them both down.

Moloch turns back to Buffy, who has gotten shakily to her feet. She punches him once in the stomach area. Bad idea.

BUFFY
Ahhh!

MOLOCH
This body is all I have left, but
it's enough to crush you.

He advances -- she steps back, looks around for an avenue of escape.

ANGLE: BUFFY'S POV

there is no escape -- she's backed into a corner. Right behind her is a giant fuse box with the legend DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE on it.

Sayyy...

She backs up another step, faces Moloch.

BUFFY
Take your best shot.

Moloch pulls back his arm -- drives his fist at her -- and Buffy does a perfect split.

Drops right out the line of fire as Moloch SLAMS his fist right into the fuse box.

He starts to shake, to smoke -- as Buffy rolls out and comes up next to him.

BUFFY
Hurts, doesn't it?

He turns to her, smoke pouring from his eyes like fury. She takes a step back as he starts to spark -- she turns and runs --

BUFFY
Get down!

-- and DIVES to the floor alongside Xander and Willow as

ANGLE: MOLOCH

EXPLODES!

It takes a moment for the smoke to clear. When it does, the three look around.

By their feet lies his lifeless head.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - DAYS LATER

Normal life once again.

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

Nicki is alone in the lab as Giles enters. She sees him, smiles.

MS. CALENDAR

Well, look who's here. Welcome to my world. Are you scared?

GILES

I'm remaining calm, thank you. I wanted to return this.

He holds up a strange, corkscrewlike earring.

GILES

I found it among the new books and naturally, I thought of you.

MS. CALENDAR

Cool, thanks.

(he starts out)

Listen. You're not planning to mention our little... adventure, are you? To anyone on the school staff?

GILES

Nothing could be further from my mind.

MS. CALENDAR

Great. Pagan rituals and magic spells tend to freak the administration.

GILES

Yes, I know. I'll see you.

MS. CALENDAR

Can't get out of here fast enough, can you?

GILES

Truthfully, I'm even less anxious to be around computers than I used to be.

MS. CALENDAR

It was your book that started the trouble, not a computer. Honestly, what is it about them that bothers you so much?

GILES
(a moment, then)
The smell.

MS. CALENDAR
Computers don't smell, Rupert.

GILES
I know. Smell is the most powerful
memory trigger there is. A certain
flower or a whiff of smoke can
bring up experiences long
forgotten. Books smell -- musty
and rich. Knowledge gained from a
computer has no texture, no
context. It's there and then it's
gone. If it's to last, the getting
of knowledge should be tangible.
It should be smelly.

A beat, as it sinks in to Nicki that she is entirely charmed by this man.

MS. CALENDAR
You really are an old fashioned
boy, aren't you?

GILES
Well, it's true I don't dangle a
corkscrew from my ear...

MS. CALENDAR
(smiling)
That's not where it dangles.

She crosses to the back of the class, leaving Giles to think about that one.

CUT TO:

EXT. QUAD - THE SAME DAY

The three kids sit together. Willow looks pretty glum.

XANDER
So we're going to the Bronze
tonight? We three?

BUFFY
It'll be fun.

XANDER
Willow? Fun? Remember fun? The
thing when you smile?

WILLOW
I'm sorry, guys. I'm just thinking
about...

BUFFY

Malcolm?

WILLOW

Malcolm, Moloch, whatever he's called. The one boy that's really liked me and he's a demon robot. What does that say about me?

BUFFY

It doesn't say anything about you.

WILLOW

But I thought -- I mean I was really falling --

BUFFY

Hey. Did you forget? The one boy I've had the hots for here turned out to be a vampire.

XANDER

Right! And the teacher I had a crush on: giant praying mantis.

WILLOW

(brightening)
That's true...

XANDER

It's life on the Hellmouth.

BUFFY

(cheerfully)

Let's face it. None of us is ever going to have a normal, happy relationship.

XANDER

(laughing)
We're doomed!

WILLOW

Yeah!

They all laugh together. Then it kind of sputters out, and they all sit there, incredibly depressed.

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END