

Buffy

the Vampire Slayer

#01 CAMP SUNNYDALE

The town of Sunnydale is gone. Thousands of girls all across the globe are now Slayers. And the Hellmouth is sealed. One question remains: what are you gonna do?

Written by Allycat



Sure, a lot of people spent a good portion of the summer of 2003 in Camp Sunnydale, but it was far from a summer camp. Somewhere in the desert near where little over a month earlier had stood a town with a population of well over thirty thousand, now stood a village of white tents that one would more commonly expect to see in Africa, then in the US. Still, the emergency centre, as it was called, stood there and served its purpose. It housed scientists who were trying to figure out how in hell an entire town could be swallowed up by the ground. It offered shelter to the people of the town, who for the first time in seven years had displayed a hint of common sense and had evacuated well before the disaster. That too, was something scientists were working on; why did all the people of Sunnydale leave their town a week before it was devoured from beneath to go camping in the desert together? Of course, not everyone had gone camping a week or so before the earthquake (which is how the truth behind the event was covered up). The people who did not like camping much had booked up all rooms in all the motels in the immediate and not-so immediate area. Some others had sought out family or friends in the area. But by far the most interesting group of people had not evacuated the town of Sunnydale at all.

All the white tents were set up in a half circle around a few bigger ones and one canvas monstrosity that could serve as a lifetime supply for the average struggling painter. The big central tent lay next to the road up which cars came and went in one direction. The road was blocked in the other direction, because of a fairly oversized pothole, formerly known as the town of Sunnydale. The other side of the road was also filled with tents, but these were coloured dark green and occasionally you could find one covered with camo-netting. The army was there officially there to secure the area, but given how much fancy-looking electronic stuff they'd taken with them, suspicion was aroused amongst those in the camp. Over the course, the poor citizens of Sunnydale did not have much else in the way of entertainment, so speculating what the Army was one of the less unpleasant ways of killing time. Some fantastic rumour even circulated that the Army had had some kind of secret underground facility in their beloved town, where some experiment had gone horribly wrong. Most dismissed it as nonsensical though. They of course did not know that it was actually true, but not quite the reason that Sunnydale was no more.

Only a few people in the camp knew exactly what that reason was, but they kept their lips sealed, lest anyone find out they had something to do with it. One of these people was making her way from her tent at the edge of the camp, all the way through the narrow spaces in between the other tents, most of which had already been abandoned, to centre of the camp. She was on her way to the registration desk, where she could finally check out her and her friends from this (place nearby a) hellhole. Because it was fairly early in the morning, the lines at the registration desk were fairly short. How different had it been a week before. The big rush to leave had been then, because federal support to redistribute the homeless survivors had kicked in and most insurance companies had begun paying out. Not everyone was as lucky as to have been offered housing immediately. The girl who was standing in line and whose turn was just about to come, for instance, had not found a suitable new home in one of the first batches. She and her friends had decided that they would just wait a little longer. Sure, they wanted to get out of there fast, but the longer they waited the more choice they had in finding a new home, until finally they had decided on one a day earlier.

“Next please,” said the slightly obese lady behind the desk, as she corrected her glasses. Quickly, Buffy stepped up to the desk, “Hi, I.. err... wanted to report that I’m leaving,” she said nervously. “I see. Have you filled out all the forms?” the lady said sternly without taking her eyes off the computer screen in front of her. Buffy fumbled with her bag, took out a stack of papers, and handed them over. The lady finally looked up at her. She corrected her glasses with one hand as she took the papers with the other hand. “I need to check these of course; it’ll take a minute.” She began reading the papers and typed up some of the data off it on the computer. It took her a little more than a minute and Buffy looked around anxiously. The medium-sized administration tent had a couple more desks like these with lines in front of them. There were some other desks without lines in front of them, behind which people were typing away furiously, but Buffy did not know what they were for. In the back of the tent was a collection of photocopiers, faxes, and some other unidentified printing objects. And naturally, there was a technician working on one of the copier, which was broken, Buffy concluded, as it was spitting out paper continually.

A polite cough brought Buffy’s attention back to the desk she was standing in front of. “Alright, everything seems to be in order. But just to confirm, you’re full name is?” asked the lady. “Buffy Anne Summers.” “And you are the legal guardian of Dawn Catherin Summers?” “Yeah, she’s my sis-” “And you’ll be living with Alexander LaVelle Harris?” “Uh-huh.” “Alright then, last question, where are you moving?” “Edmonsville, California,” Buffy responded promptly and the woman’s face lit up a little. “How nice, I have a niece who lives out there; the weather’s especially nice this time of year,” she said, before handing over a stack of papers to Buffy. “You’ll need to fill out those forms and send them in once you’ve moved in; all the instructions are in there.” “Thank y-.” “Next please,” continued the woman behind the desk and she had already turned her attention back to her computer as the next man in line pushed past Buffy rudely.

A couple of minutes later Buffy had made her way from the administration tent to the dining hall, which again took the shape of a big white tent. She looked around, searching for her friends. Most of the tables were empty; it was still early. She saw Dawn and Xander sitting in the far corner and made her way over there through rows of wooden tables. As she walked up to them, Dawn noticed her, “So, how did it go?” “Pretty good, we’re officially free to go now... I think,” Buffy turned to Xander and handed him over the papers, “But these are the instructions for what we still have to do. Could you please go over them?” “Yeah, sure. No problem.” “Okay, so how soon can we go? I can’t wait to get out of here,” Dawn asked impatiently. Buffy sat down by a plate the others had gotten for her and stared down at the indefinable greenish goo that took up most of the space on it, “What is this stuff anyway?” “Buffy,” Dawn tried to get her attention again, “hello?” The Slayer poked the green stuff to make sure it wasn’t a slime demon. No reaction. It still could be a slime demon, but at least it was a dead one. Finally, she turned to Dawn, “I don’t know; ask Xander.” Dawn turned to Xander, but he was reading the papers Buffy had just brought him. Dawn decided not to ask and simply sighed. “I’m not a hundred percent sure, but we should be able to pick up the keys to our new home at the Edmonsville city hall in...” he turned the page, “two days.” Both Dawn and Buffy’s faces lit up. “Of course, we could always just pack up our bags and start driving; stay in a motel or something instead of staying here another night.” “You sure that’s

wise?” Buffy asked him “I mean financially?” “I wouldn’t worry about that if I were you. What we’re getting paid between you and me in insurance and federal support, should last us more than a while, provided we’re not going to play host to anymore Slayer slumber parties in the future.”

“Well, just one would be okay, right?” Dawn, Xander, and Buffy turned around to see Kennedy, accompanied by Willow. They put a tray with sandwiches they’d just gotten down in front of the others. “Dig in,” Willow invited them. “How’d you?” asked Dawn, with a half-stuffed mouth. “They don’t serve sandwiches and cereal until eight, because that’s when the new deliveries get in. That’s why nobody ever goes for breakfast any earlier.” And is if she were using the magic she was so adept at, people started to flock into the dining hall to get breakfast. “Looks like we beat the rush,” remarked the newly-called Slayer standing next to Willow, “how about you Buffy? You managed to do the same?” “Yeah, tell them the good news Xander.” “Well, ladies, it looks like we’re leaving. Everything’s all settled, we can get the key to the house in two days, but we figured we’d go up there now and just stay in a motel until then. ‘Cause I don’t know about you, but I’m kind of getting tired of this place.” “Well, there are some benefits to sharing a tent with this one,” Kennedy said, while glancing at Willow and grinning slyly. Buffy stood up immediately and pulled down up too, “maybe, but we so don’t need to know that, right Dawn?” She grabbed a sandwich and before Dawn had a chance to protest, she’d shoved it in her little sister’s mouth. She grabbed one for herself and let the others know that her and Dawn would be packing. Then she sunk her teeth in it and left with Dawn. “If you want,” started Xander, “you can tell me all about it.”

As Xander was getting the evil eye from Willow and Kennedy, Dawn and Buffy were making their way across the terrain again, from the dining hall back to their own tent. “I’ve got to say, I’m excited about living on the beach, aren’t you?” Dawn started, but she didn’t offer Buffy the opportunity to respond, “Living on the beach will be great I bet. It’s too bad I have to start my senior year of High School in a different town though, but then again, going to a High School that’s not on the Hellmouth might be a nice change of pace.” As they reached the end of the camp Dawn tattered on about all those wonderful new challenges ahead, but Buffy wasn’t listening instead something caught her eye. In the distance out in the desert she saw a woman standing a few feet away from the barbed wire fences the military had put around the crater. “You go ahead, Dawn, I’ll be right there.” She said, as Dawn took a turn into the row their tent was in. Buffy made way for the girl in the desert. She was a young woman in her mid twenties, who couldn’t be much older than Buffy. She was also about as tall, but with long brown hair. Just as Buffy was about to speak to her she noticed something else moving further away, behind the barbed wire fence, inside the crater. Buffy hurried over to a pile of big rocks to hide for cover and watched on as the scene unfolded. The short male figure was climbing out of the pit. His shirt was torn and he looked sweaty and dirty. He had half long brown hair and was holding on for dear life to a package he had wrapped in a piece of cloth. The woman seemed to be waiting for him and she quickly approached the fence as he came closer.

“Don’t get too close,” the man said with a slight Texan accent, “or they’ll see you,” and he pointed up at the cameras atop some of the poles of the fence. “Be careful,” she warned

him, as he approached the fence. "Don't worry, I got this," and seemingly without efforts he jumps over the ten-foot tall fence. He walks over to her and kisses her. She puts her arm around him, "Are you okay? Did you get it?" "A little bruised maybe; I'll be fine. The important thing is I got it," he responded and the couple started walking back in the direction of the camp. "Can I see it?" "I suppose maybe a little peek wouldn't hurt," he said and he held the piece of cloth out in front of her. Carefully the woman folded it open and looked at the object held in it. Buffy tried to see what it was, but it was simply too far and she couldn't make it out. Buffy got up a little to get a better look, but since the eyes of the couple were now in her general direction, she couldn't reach out over the rocks too much. She she had no choice but to duck back behind them, as the two walked on. As they passed the rock formation, Buffy circled around it in the other direction, so they wouldn't see her. When they disappeared into the camp, Buffy got out from behind the rocks and ran back to the camp, but it was already too late, the two couldn't be found. Buffy ran through several rows of tents, but she couldn't find them. They could've gone into any of them and there were too many to check them all. Disappointed, she got back to their own tent, where Dawn was waiting for her to help pack up what little stuff they had.

"You didn't start packing yet?" Buffy inquired as she noticed her sibling sitting in front of their tent idly. "If I had, would you have been back so soon?" asked Dawn sharply, Buffy looked at her quizzingly, being naively oblivious to her sister's low opinion of her. "I thought so," said Dawn as she stood up and crawled into their tent. Buffy followed her into what had been their home for the past few weeks and as Dawn started neatly folding all the clothes on the right side of the tent, Buffy began doing the same to the clothes on the left side. Halfway through folding one of her favourite tank tops, Buffy suddenly noticed that the shirt Dawn was folding definitely didn't come from her side of the tent. Quickly, Buffy grabbed it away from her sister and put it back on her own "to fold" stack. "Hey, I was folding that," Dawn protested, "give it back." "Mine," Buffy let out, and she put the top she'd just folded in her bag. "No, it's not." "Yes... It is." "No... It's not." "Look, I got it the first week we were here; Faith gave it to me when she left and you know that." "Well... maybe... but you're too old to be seen walking in something like that anyway." "Thank you very much," Buffy grumbled, "but I like this shirt." "Don't you think it's kinda... you-know." "What's wrong with it?" "I dunno... it's just so... Faith? I mean do you really want to make the same kind of impression as she does on the poor people of Edmonsville?" "Maybe not, but then again, I'd rather it's me who leaves that kind of impression than you; so nice try, but you're not getting it." Dawn sighed and got back to packing grudgingly.

In silence the sisters continue to work their way through the clothes that they'd been given during their stay in the emergency camp. Most of them were more horrible to look at than the various monsters Buffy had faced in the last seven years of her tenure as a Vampire Slayer; others were more fashionable, but those were mostly clothes they'd gotten from their friends as they'd left. Giles had been the first to leave. In fact, he'd left almost immediately after the wounded were taken care of and Andrew had run along much to the Watcher's displeasure. Most of the new Slayers still had families to go to, so their numbers in the camp decimated within a week. Of course, there were those who had spent their lives with Watchers, most of whom had been slain. With nowhere to go, most of these turned to Buffy and to a lesser extent Faith, for guidance. Buffy had been as much at a loss for ideas as they had, for she too had lost nearly everything. She no longer had a Watcher either, Giles would

always be there for her, of course, but it would not be the same. And she did not have a home to return to, or even a home town with familiar faces. All she had were her friends, but although home is where the heart is, Buffy had not been able to stop feeling like home should also be where you're able to thud down on the couch after a long day of work (or night as was the case in her position.) The Slayer in all her wisdom though, had decided to leave out the last part in her speech, and so it was that most of the girls decided that wherever they go, they should try to stick together. Those bravest new Slayers who had felt alive for the first time in their exhilarating fight against the First' army couldn't wait to jump at the chance to close another Hellmouth, or at least be near one; thus about half of the Slayers left decided to move to Cleveland en masse in their quest for adrenaline and vampire dust. Left were mostly the younger ones who did not feel quite as secure about their new powers. It was Willow's luminous idea to send them to England, so that they might study their powers with Giles, much like she had done. It only took about weeks to arrange the transfer of all the girls, as Giles pulled all the strings the Council still had that weren't destroyed. In the midst of all those goodbyes Faith said hers; she had decided to take Robin Wood up on his offer to drive to the east coast and as soon as he had gotten them a Mustang they left.

It was thus that Buffy, Dawn, Willow, Xander, and Kennedy found themselves to be the last ones left. The reason it had taken them so long had been Buffy's inability to answer one question. "What are we gonna do now?" Buffy didn't respond. "Hey," Dawn nudged her sister, "What are we gonna do now? You still haven't told me." Buffy who had been lost in her thoughts for a moment snapped out of it. She looked at Dawn thoughtfully, like teachers do when they hope or think that their students can answer the question themselves. "I mean... I know we're moving to Edmonsville, and I'll be finishing High School there, Willow and Kennedy are enrolling in UCEV, and Xander will probably get a job of some sort... but what about you?" "What about me?" Buffy asked. Dawn gave her sister an anticipatory look, although she knew it to be relatively futile. Buffy had become as adept at avoiding this question as she was at avoiding a pair of fangs. Still, Dawn felt it was time to press the issue; Buffy would not be able to avoid the future forever. "C'mon Buffy, let's not let this elephant turn into a mammoth." Buffy remained silent. "Look, at least talk to me," Dawn asked. "I just don't know, okay? I don't know how I feel, and I don't know what I think and what I want... and for the first time in a long time, that's okay. For the first time in a long time, nobody is going to get hurt, nobody's gonna die, if I don't make up my mind. So, please, just let me not make up my mind yet." "But, don't you want to have some kind of a plan?" "No. No, I really don't. Not outside the bare minimum. I know I'll have a place to live. And I know you're taken care of, but that's all I need to know and all I want to know. I just want to be free for a while. I know it may seem strange, but I hope you understand." Buffy looked at Dawn not as her sister, who depended on her, but as her friend, whose support the Slayer needed. Dawn remained quiet and mulled over what Buffy just said, "I think I do," she finally said, "It's just... .. No, it's nothing, never mind. I get it." Dawn wanted to be able to look to Buffy for guidance as her example, but she knew that was a selfish thought. Though she felt Buffy had cut started to cut her lose, the fear of having to stand on her own two feet did not overwhelm her as much as the joy of it, or as much as the pride she felt of being seen as an equal by her sister. "You know no matter what," started Buffy, but Dawn interrupted her by hugging her. "I love you too, Buffy."

Around noon that afternoon, Buffy, Xander, and Dawn found themselves standing on the side of the road, enjoying the warm June weather. They had put their bags down in the sand and were standing around waiting for the special bus service to take them away from Camp Sunnydale, back into civilisation. Willow and Kennedy were not there yet, but Xander had explained they wanted to give their tent a proper send-off, so they might be running a little late. After standing there working on their tan for about twenty minutes they saw the bus coming down the road in the distance. More people who were leaving had gathered around them, but Willow and Kennedy still hadn't joined them yet. A couple of minutes later, after the bus driver had checked in with the administration, he opened the hatches to the luggage hold. As the Scoobies queued up to put their bags away, Buffy looked around if she could see the witch and her lover yet, but no such luck. Buffy wanted to turn back around to join the conversation between her sister and her best friend, which seemed to be hilarious, judging from the pain in her ear, Dawn's incessant laughter was causing her, when she spotted a kissing couple. They were not Willow and Kennedy, but still they managed to grab Buffy's attention; it was the man she had seen in the desert earlier coming out of the canyon and his girlfriend. They'd filed into the line a couple of places behind her. They stopped kissing and were now whispering to each other, Buffy wished she could hear them, but they were too far away, and the other people in the line were all talking too.

As the Slayer tried (and failed) to read the lips of the suspicious duo, her sister nudged her. They'd reached the luggage hold and could now get rid of their bags and board the bus. Walking past the rest of the line back to the bus, Buffy tried to catch the conversation of the mysterious couple, but they'd already stopped talking. As Buffy passed them, she had the distinct feeling they were watching her, but when she turned around they were facing the other way. Feeling a little uncomfortable Buffy walked on and boarded the bus right behind her friends. Dawn sought out a seat near the window in the back of the bus. Xander sat down next to an older lady in front of Dawn and Buffy sat down next to her sister. "I do hope Willow and Kennedy get here soon," Dawn said. "I'm sure they'll get her on time," responded Xander as he turned around, "What's wrong Buffy?" He noticed Buffy staring at a couple that had just entered the bus and was getting seated on the other side of the bus in the front. "Something the matter with those two?" he asked. "Yeah, but I'm not sure what yet." Xander turned around to get a better look at them, but then he noticed another couple entering the bus. "Hey there they are." Dawn and Buffy looked up and saw that Willow and Kennedy had finally made it.

Their two friends quickly found themselves two seats as the driver was starting his engine and they were finally getting ready to leave Camp Sunnydale. Willow quickly snuck over to her friends before the bus started moving. "Hey guys, sorry we were late, but we made it." "Barely, but it's good that you're here, Buffy was just telling us about her suspicions," Xander remarked jokingly. "What do you mean suspicions?" responded Willow and she continued, "You and I both know that what she thinks happened, happened." "How would you know?" asked a puzzled Xander. "I was there, wasn't I?" Both Xander and Willow were now confused beyond the point where they could find their ways out of the metaphorical mazes that were called their brains, so Buffy decided to help him out. "Willow, Xander was talking about my suspicions about a couple of our fellow travellers, not your..." she glanced at Dawn, who obviously understood everything perfectly fine, "private affairs."

“Oh, right,” Willow remarked slightly embarrassed. The bus started to move. “I better get back to my seat,” said their witch friend and she walked back to Kennedy.

The ride was long and boring. Willow and Kennedy had fallen asleep as soon as the bus had started driving, Dawn was reading a book, and Xander was listening the older lady sitting next to him telling him about all the cats she used to have. Buffy tried looking outside, but the desert surrounding them offered little in terms of interesting view. Buffy noticed one funny looking cactus, all five minutes she'd been staring outside. They passed a sign which read “Santa Barbara 15 Miles,” Buffy sighed and, having nothing better to do, she started listening in to the conversation between Xander and the old woman. The lady explained to him how many of her cats had strangely started disappearing a couple of weeks before the big accident that had swallowed their hometown. “Of course,” she noted, “it wasn't the first time my kitties were taken from me. I've been the target of a lot of cat-thieves you know,” she complained. “Oh really,” exclaimed Xander curiously. “Yes,” the woman assured him, “I'll tell you. I never caught them, but cat thieves have been active in Sunnydale. I would see these strange figures skulking around on the street near my house at night. One guy with bleach blonde hair and a dark leather jacket, a most terrifying look he had, and another funny looking man with some kind of weird skin condition. They were always looking at me and my cats. I'm sure they were the ones stealing them.” Buffy tuned out of the conversation immediately at the mention of Spike. She had tried not to think about him, but she couldn't help but catch her thoughts going in his general direction, wherever that may be, every once in a while. Even though the thought of Spike reminded her of the pain she felt from his death, she had to smile at the lady's perfectly nailed description of the culprit in the case of her stolen kittens.

With her thoughts drifting off, Buffy decided to close her eyes for a second. Those seconds turned into almost forty-five minutes, as tents aren't designed to sleep in for weeks on end and thus Buffy had been feeling rather tired the whole time they'd been in the camp. Of course, she did have a rather exhausting fight right before their stay there, which did not help. When they hit a bump in the road though, Buffy woke up from a pleasant dream to find herself stuck in the nightmare of driving in a bus through the desert in the summer on midday. She looked out through the window and saw that they were still in the desert. “Aren't we there yet?” she asked her sister, who was appropriately reading “On The Road”. She looked up from her book, apparently not minding the interruption. “No, it's taking forever. The driver must be an old lady or something.” At the mention of the term “old lady” Xander turned around and put his finger to his lip to signal Dawn to be quiet. The woman next to him was snoring softly much to Xander relief and he obviously wanted to keep it that way. “I'm sure it won't be long now,” he said quietly.

Buffy looked outside to see if she could see civilisation closing in on them yet. But no such luck, she did however see a funny looking cactus; a familiar funny looking cactus. “Wait a minute,” she exclaimed, and after receiving the evil eye from Xander, she continued with a little less volume, “that can't be right, before I went to sleep... I saw the exact same cactus.” “You must've been dreaming Buffy,” Xander said, thinking he had the only logical explanation, though he should've known that in the world they lived in the logical

explanation was usually the least likely one, “besides, all cactuses look alike.” “What if I told you there’s a sign coming up saying Santa Barbara 15 miles,” Buffy responded and Xander looked at her as if she were nuts. “Then I’d say you’re nuts... no way it is still 15 miles, that would mean we’ve hardly moved.” “Err Xander, there’s a sign coming up.” Dawn remarked after staring outside. The three friends kept quiet in anticipation of the sign that would tell them how much longer they would have to remain seated in the sauna on wheels. They passed the sign. “Santa Barbara 15 Miles,” Dawn read out loud to the others. They looked at each other confused. “Okay, maybe you’re not so nuts, maybe this situation is kinda nuts,” Xander confessed. “Kind of nuts?” Dawn asked, “This is as nuts the CBS headquarters after the cancel a fan-favourite show; that’s how nuts this is,” and she turned to Buffy, “Do you think something supernatural is up?” “Well, I am a supernatural trouble-magnet, so we might as well work on the assumption,” the Slayer responded. “I’ll go wake Willow and Kennedy,” said Xander, but as he was about to get up, Buffy held him back. “Don’t, they deserve their rest, let’s try to figure this out for ourselves first. I think we should go and check in with the driver. See if he’s noticed anything strange.”

And thus, Buffy and Xander got up out their seats and walked through the aisle in the middle of the bus to the front, passing Willow and Kennedy who were still fast asleep and unaware of the trouble they’d gotten into. Dawn remained seated and kept watch, looking outside to see if anything else strange was happening. The driver was a middle aged man with a bit of a belly, and a big brown moustache hanging menacingly above his upper lip, that made his countenance look rather grim, which fit well with his overall grouchy disposition. Buffy and Xander carefully approached him. He noticed them in his rear-view mirror. “Yes, I know we’re not going as fast as you might like; yes, I’m going as fast as I’m allowed; and no, I don’t know when we’ll get there.” “Have you noticed anything strange today?” Xander asked the straightforward question. “No, I haven’t. You really should get back to your seat.” “Have you driven this bus before, on this route?” Buffy enquired. “Yeah, sure, I’ve been doing it off and on for the last two weeks.” “And how long does it normally take you?” “Normally it takes me forty minutes,” the driver answered, “but this time it’s just taking a little bit longer.” “Haven’t you noticed we’ve already passed this place before?” The driver seemed to be in doubt for a minute, but then resolutely denied it. “Course not, everything looks the same in the desert...” he waited a second, “besides, I’ve driven over this road so many times, I can’t remember what I passed when.” Buffy realised that the driver had noticed too that they were driving along the same piece of the road they had driven on earlier, but he was too afraid of having lost his mind to admit it. Buffy decided that she would play on his fear. “You know you look a bit pale,” she remarked, upon which he immediately checked out how he looked in his mirror, “are you drinking enough water? You should, cause otherwise, you might end up dehydrated with this weather.” The driver contemplated what she said for a minute and then concluded that he wasn’t going insane after all, he was just dehydrated. So, he figured he would stop the bus for a minute or so to get some water in him, maybe stretch his legs, and take a leak. Then afterwards he would get back behind the wheel and they’d be in Santa Barbara in no time.

And so he did, after Buffy and Xander had taken their places again, the bus slowed down and stopped at the side of the road. The driver announced that he would be taking a short break and that his passengers were free to step outside if they wanted, but that they shouldn’t wonder too far from the bus. Many of the passengers flocked outside, as did

Xander, Buffy and Dawn. Willow and Kennedy were still fast asleep and their friends decided not to wake them, unless they really had to. Outside most of the people took the opportunity to walk around a bit close to the bus. Some of the men went further into the desert to relieve their bladders of some unwanted tension. Buffy, Dawn, and Xander walked a bit further behind the bus, away from the group, so they could talk uninterrupted. Dawn decided she would ask the obvious question, "Okay, so what's going on?" The question remained unanswered as Buffy and Xander let their brains mull it over to no avail. Whatever was happening, they had no idea what it was. "Anybody?" Dawn tried, "The prize for the correct answer is a one-way trip to Edmonsville, CA!" "Maybe some kind of magical spell made the road turn into a circle?" Buffy tried. "No, the road was straight," Xander knew, "Maybe the distance is just really 30 miles and some jokesters put two signs saying 15 on the road?" he suggested, although he knew that was very unlikely and his theory didn't account for the fact that they had passed the same cactus twice. The others too realised that couldn't be it, so they didn't respond and just kept thinking. "We're being teleported back," Dawn suddenly said. The others looked up in surprise. "Just when you woke up we hit a bump in the road. Well we have hit one a couple of times before that... every fifteen minutes or so. I think that's when we were pulled back from how far we had gotten to a point earlier on the road." The others looked in proud amazement at Dawn who had cooked up a pretty reasonable sounding theory. "Maybe something doesn't want us to leave Sunnydale," Dawn suggested.

Just as the three of them were about to ponder the possibility, they were interrupted by the mysterious couple Buffy had spotted earlier. They came walking around the back of the bus, seeking a little privacy like the Scoobies. When they saw the three friends standing there, they obviously decided that the place wasn't for them and wanted to walk away. "Excuse us," the man said with his slight Texas accent. "Wait a minute," said Buffy, "it's you. You're the reason we can't get out of here. You and whatever you got from that crater is keeping us here." Xander and Dawn quickly rallied behind the Slayer as they realised her accusations could very well hold some if not all of the truth. "Look, I don't know what you're talking about. Must be the sun's getting to you," the man joked. He turned around and wanted to walk away but Buffy grabbed him by the arm, "Not so fast." Without much effort he pulled away from her. Buffy tried to grab him again, but he pushed her aside. Buffy was getting really angry now. The kind of strength the man had wasn't natural, it could possibly even rival her own. She decided to go for it in a punch first, ask questions later fashion. She swung at him, but the man effortlessly jumped up a couple of feet and landed on the bus. Buffy took a sprint to the bus and used the speed she had gathered to quickly climb onto the roof as well. The man wasn't expecting her to have come up onto the bus, so he had his back turned to Buffy. Luckily for him, his girlfriend was not as naive and she was quick to warn him, "Lindsey, look out," she yelled and thus she saved the former lawyer's face from becoming the site where Buffy's fist crash landed. Instead the swing missed him by a hair. "Okay, if you don't play nice with the Slayer, playtime's over for you," said Xander as he walked to Eve to make sure she wouldn't interfere again. "The Slayer?"

Buffy tried with all her might to hit Lindsey, but the upgrade the lawyer had gotten proved effective, even in battle against a Slayer. Buffy swung with her left, with her right, and left again, but Lindsey managed to block all the attacks. He tried to kick but Buffy's speed exceeded his. Buffy noticed that she was faster, if only a little and decided to explore

her opponent's weakness. Quickly, moving from the left flank to the right and back again Buffy bombarded her opponent with a barrage of punches and kicks, most of which were blocked, but some of which hit her opponent. It wasn't much, but she was doing damage and she figured she would be able to keep this up longer than Lindsey would. Lindsey figured the same thing and realised he had to do something sooner rather than later to put the fight in his favour again. Suddenly, as Buffy prepared to punch again, Lindsey dove down and sled underneath Buffy between her legs. He pulled her leg as he slid down under her. Meanwhile, in the bus, two lazy lesbian lovers were getting rudely awakened from their pleasant dreams by loud banging on the roof. Lindsey quickly got up and rushed over to Buffy, who was still down, he began kicking her. Buffy had no way to defend herself from the tiny Texan. She tried to get up, but the non-stop kicking prevented her from doing so. Finally, she had a brilliant idea and she let herself roll off the bus. The fall banged her up a little, but her adversary lost his upper hand for a minute. Lindsey jumped off the bus near Buffy. As she was getting up, he prepared to kick her down again, but then got tapped on the shoulder. He turned around and got hit smack in the face by Kennedy.

"Wait, don't" yelled Eve, as she came speeding to the side of Lindsey, who was recovering on the ground. Xander followed her, with Dawn right behind him, "You guys may want to lay off the hitting people." "They're not the enemy," Dawn added. "Right, if they're not..." Buffy started to ask, but Eve interrupted her, "This is," she said and she took a small plainly decorated jewellery box out of her purse. Buffy looked at Xander and Dawn, searching for an reason as to why she should trust the woman. "Just explain again, what you told us," Xander encouraged her. "This box, it contains magic. It belonged to us... before Sunnydale was destroyed. We came back here to dig it up. Somehow whatever force sealed up the Hellmouth also bound this box to its location," she explained, "It can't move get to far away, or it gets pulled back again." Lindsey had gotten back up by now, "That's what we think has been happening to the bus," he added. Buffy looked at Willow, "What do you think, Will?" The witch put her left hand over the box and closed her eyes and felt the magic invisibly radiating from the box. "I don't know about the box, but whatever's inside is strong in magic. The lock on the box is also magical, but not that strong. And it definitely seems to be bound to the Hellmouth." She opened her eyes again and retracted her hand. "Story checks out," she confirmed. "You think you can help them, maybe get this show on the road," the Slayer asked as she nodded at the bus. "Sure, I'll have the box open in no time, you can just take whatever is in it," Willow answered. "No!!" protested Eve and Lindsey simultaneously. The others looked at them with a fair amount of suspicion. "It's just," started Eve, but she seemed lost at something to tell them. "What's inside," continued Lindsey, "is can be dangerous. We don't want it release it yet; not here. We were the ones who put it in the box, we even put the magical lock on it, so nobody would accidentally open it." Buffy looked at them with even more suspicion; she felt like something was off, but she just couldn't put her finger on it.

"Can you remove the binding?" asked Eve. "I don't think so, it's pretty strong," Willow answered and after a moment's deliberation, she continued, "I can maybe change it though." "What do you mean?" "Well, the end of the binding that's on the box seems pretty solid, but the other end... not so much. I could move it from the crater of the Hellmouth to something else." "Something we could carry with us?" Lindsey suggested. "I wish," said Willow and she explained, "The crater still has residual energy pulsating from it. I'll need

something that has the same thing; I can't just put it on a watch or something like that." "Take me," Eve exclaimed. "Excuse me?" Kennedy intruded. "I mean," continued Eve, "I'm a living being... surely that accounts for something?" "I guess I could." "No," said Lindsey, "bind it to me." Eve looked at him and wanted to comment, but he beat her to it. "Relax honey, I got this." "Okay, you sure you're ready?" Willow asked. She closed her eyes and held her arms out to Lindsey's chest. "Willow," Buffy interrupted, "a word, please?" Buffy dragged her friend off and the other Scoobies quickly followed and gathered in a circle. "You aren't really going to help them, are you?" Buffy asked, "Am I the only one who thinks that's a bad idea?" "No," Kennedy replied, "I think my Slayer-sense is tingling too... or maybe that's just a bad itch." "Well," Xander said, "I don't see why not. We're not going to get out of here otherwise, unless you want to leave them and their box here in the desert?" "Where's the harm in helping?" Dawn asked out loud. "Hello, the guy tried to beat me up!" "Well, you kind of attacked him first," Xander reminded her. "Well," Buffy thought a second about her next complaint, "how about his strength? He can't be human!" "Oh," said Willow, "but he is. I hate to let you down Buffy, but I didn't detect anything strange on him." Buffy looked bummed as she knew she was fresh out of logical arguments not to help the couple. So, the five of them walked back to Lindsey and Eve and Willow began her ritual again. It only took half a minute for the witch to change the binding to Lindsey. The ritual was accompanied by a very disappointing lightshow for Willow's standards, a little bit of glowing blue on Lindsey and the box' part that was over before it began. "There, all done," Willow finally said, as she opened her eyes again and the soft blue glow around the box and the lawyer faded away.

After whole-heartedly thanking the Scoobies for all they had done, Lindsey and Eve boarded the bus again, with their precious box of which the unknown nature of the content still troubled Buffy. The Scoobies shortly after boarded the bus too and before long they were on the road again. This time the bus actually moved across the Santa Ynez Valley toward the coast. This time, the bus actually arrived in Santa Barbara, where the Scoobies once again were thanked by the couple, after which they said their goodbyes. Buffy and her friends got on the next bus going South, but they still had to wait a few minutes before it would leave. Xander took a seat next to Dawn and Willow and Kennedy took the bench behind them. Buffy sat by herself by the window and stared outside. She was suddenly overcome by a sense of melancholia. Sunnydale was no more. It was gone, but only now that she had finally left the site, did the realisation of this finally hit her. As the bus slowly began moving, she felt sad for leaving Sunnydale, but also glad to be able to move on to a new place, a new start. She looked outside at some of the other passengers at the station, like her, they were all moving in one way or another; moving, in constant change, the way the world was meant.

But then she spotted Lindsey and Eve standing still. They stood there in a corner, Eve holding up the box. Lindsey held his hands over it and it started to glow green and slowly the lid opened. The content was supposed to be dangerous, that's why they had said they locked it, but now they were opening it all the same. It was too far away for Buffy to recognize it, but what Lindsey took out of the box was the amulet Spike had worn when he sealed up the Hellmouth. "Not only did that witch help us get the amulet, she also installed an extra security, that ensures that Spike never gets too far away from me as long as he's a ghost," Lindsey said, and he put the amulet around Eve's neck.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

#01 Camp Sunnydale

Written by Allycat

Inspired by the original script "Just A Girl" by Allycat.

With regular characters based on the likeness of:

- Sarah Michelle Gellar (Buffy)
- Iyari Limon (Kennedy)
- Nicholas Brendon (Xander)
- Michelle Trachtenberg (Dawn)
- And Alyson Hannigan as Willow Rosenberg.

Also with characters based on the likeness of:

- Christian Kane (Lindsey)
- Sarah Thompson (Eve)

This story was produced as part of the on-going Buffy the Vampire Slayer series for VirtualSlayer, created by Allycat, produced by Allycat.

The *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* television shows and all their characters were created by Joss Whedon and belong to him, Mutant Enemy, Sandollar Television, Kuzui Enterprises, and 20th Century Fox Television.

All original characters, plot elements, settings, etc belong to VirtualSlayer and the writer.

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