

Buffy

the Vampire Slayer

#02 A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME, PART 1

Edmonsville Saga

Buffy and her friends have made it to Edmonsville and finally get to move into their new home, but is there maybe something wrong with the picture-perfect house? (Part 1 of 2)

Written by Allycat



Edmonsville, CA. The sun was rising in the East, coming up over the mountains, and it's ever golden rays shone through the half lowered curtains of room five of the Onofre Bluff Motel. The light slowly crawled over the floor, up the legs of the bed, onto the sheets in the direction of the face of a certain sleeping Slayer, until it finally gently woke her up. What a wonderful feeling is what Buffy thought as she sat up in her single bed. She looked over to her left and saw that her sister was still asleep. Buffy stretched and got up and got a bathrobe and put on a pair of comfy shoes. She slowly opened the door of their motel room so as not to wake her sister with the screeching door and quietly snuck out. The sun hit her with its full strength as she walked onto the porch. For a moment, the Slayer closed her eyes and enjoyed the early morning sunshine. "Nice hairdo." Buffy recognised the familiar voice of Xander Harris and she turned around. "Bad case of morning hair?" she asked. "Let's just say that even during full moon Oz doesn't have anything on you," he said jokingly and offered her a cup of coffee, "I saw you standing over here so I figured I'd grab you one too. I'm not sure if it's actually coffee though." "Thanks." Buffy took the lukewarm cup and held it close to her face, to be able to smell it. "I'm sure I've once slew a demon whose blood looked just like this," she sniffed the cup and made a disgusted face, "and smelled like this too." Xander smelled his cup too and his face made an even worse expression. He took Buffy's cup back and together with his own put it in the trash can. "Well, it was worth a try."

She had still been too sleepy to realise it, so only now, did Buffy notice that Xander was already fully dressed. "You're up early," she remarked, "What've you been up to?" A big smug grin appeared on Xander's face and he swelled up with pride. He didn't say anything for a second to build some anticipation in his friend. Buffy was curious, but did not yet have the energy to muster up the required enthusiasm to humour Xander. Still, he decided to show her what he had. Slowly he put his hand in his pocket and took something out. It was a small object and he held it in his closed fist, which he raised slightly. He opened his hand and in front of a baffled Buffy, he dangled the keys to their new home. Buffy let out an extremely girly shriek and jumped into Xander's arms excitedly. She hugged him tightly as he staggered back and gasped for air. As soon as she noticed, she let go and tried to tame her excitement. "I thought we couldn't go in yet?" she asked confused. "Well, I went down to city hall, had a little talk, used my manly charms, found out they'd already taken care of everything and were about to dispatch someone to tell us anyway and got handed over the key. We should hurry up though," he warned her, "the realtor is gonna meet us there in an hour for a little tour, before we move in."

Excited about the prospect of finally having their own house again, the two friends parted. Buffy went back into her room and started telling the news to her half-asleep sister, who didn't fully share Buffy's excitement, until she realised she wasn't being rudely awoken for nothing. Xander meanwhile, went to Willow and Kennedy's room to wake up his friends. Within the hour all the women had showered, done their hair, gotten dressed, and on top of that had packed their bags. Xander checked them out of the motel and got the rental car. The others got in the car and after driving for twelve minutes their small black sedan turned into Pacific Drive. The street was wide and with palm trees on both sides in the grass that separated the road from the pavement. Beyond the pavement on both sides lay average-sized family homes in a typical Spanish Colonial style. Creamy white stucco walls and red roofs buildings were hid away between palm trees, already bathing in light. The cars in the driveways and those parked on the side of the road were mostly minivans, so the Scoobies

knew they were in a real family neighbourhood. Xander was looking at the numbers on the houses and knew that they were slowly getting closer to number 918.

Finally, they reached the house that they would be living in from now on. As it was coming up on their right, all the passengers in the car pressed their faces to the window to get the best possible view of the house. They immediately saw that it was a single story, with a low pitched roof the top of which was cut off and was flat. It was made with red terracotta shingles. The walls were plastered the same way most of the other houses were. There was a 6 feet tall grey wall around the yard that prevented them from looking at the side of the house or into the backyard. From what they could see, the garden had a lot of trees, mostly palms, and the front yard at least had quite a number of big plants and few smaller ones. They could only see one long wall with a number of small windows with wooden frames and diagonal bars of a dark coloured metal in glass. Xander pulled up near the mailbox. They could now see more of the front side. A path paved with red bricks led up to a little square near the front door, which was hidden from sight by some of the bigger plants around the square. Another path led from that square to the driveway. An expensive looking sports car had taken the space in the driveway in front of the wooden garage door. Must be the realtors is what Xander thought as he turned down the engine. He and the women stepped out the car and looked at the house. For a minute, they just stood there in a row, Xander, Willow, Kennedy, Buffy, and Dawn, looking at the place with a whole range of mixed emotions. A small cloud was blocking the sun, which had reached full power by now, and as soon as the cloud moved away, it shone with all its might at the modest dwelling place and the Scoobies couldn't feel anything other than sheer awe and excitement.

As the Scoobies stood there looking out at the place, the front door opened and a slick looking blond man with small round glasses in a neat black suit approached them. Xander was the first to notice him and he stepped forward to meet the realtor. "Ah, mister Summers," the realtor said with a voice that had a pitch that was just a little too high for comfort, "it's so good to meet you." He shook Xander's hand and then looked at the women confused. "And who of these ladies might your wife be?" Xander retracted his hand from the sweaty palm. "Actually, I'm mister Harris, and none of these ladies is my wife. We do have a Summers for you though, if you'd like?" He nodded at Buffy, who put out her hand and shook the realtors. "Buffy Summers, nice to meet you," she said and she signalled to Xander with a single look, what he already knew; sweaty palms are icky. "Well, let's not beat around the bush... let's walk around it," he joked as he looked in the direction of the front door, the path to which was adorned on both sides by big bushes. "I'm sure you're very excited," he started as he began walking, "to see your new house."

The Scoobies walked up to the front door which was made of the same wood as the frames of the windows were and also had the steel bars in the glass that was in the door's upper half. The realtor slowly opened the front door and the Scoobies peeped into the foyer. They walked into the small rectangular room and immediately noticed that across from the front door was a big arch which led to the large living room. Another thing they immediately noticed was the floor. It was made with reddish brown terracotta tiles and in between those tiles there were smaller blue tiles that made up a strange intricate pattern. The walls were

the same as on the outside, but with wooden skirting at the top and bottom. Next to the door was another window looking out over the street. On both sides there were little corridors leading to a door. The corridor on the right was a little wider than the one on the left. First the realtor showed them the toilet, which was reached through a door in the left corridor. The entire floor of the toilet had blue tiles. On one side was the toilet on the other were two cupboards with a little sink on it and two big mirrors hanging above them.

After viewing the smallest room in the house in turns, they walked on to the door at the end of the little corridor which led to the garage. The garage was big and mostly empty. The front side had the big wooden garage door and the other walls were covered with windows. There were a washing machine and a dryer already installed. On the right of the door the backside of a fireplace and a chimney could be seen. These were not plastered but built with regular red brick. The Scoobies commented on the room with appreciation. This new house did not have a basement, but if they kept a car in the driveway, they could use the garage for the same purpose. Next up, the realtor led them through the foyer again, to the door on the other side. It led through an L-shaped hall with no windows in it. A little hatch in the ceiling led to the space beneath the roof, explained the realtor, which was not big enough to be used as a room or anything, but could possibly be used as extra storage space and also offered them access to the roof through another hatch. On the right side of the first leg of the L were two doors, and opposite the door they came through, on the other leg, there was a third door. The first door led to a rectangular room of comfortable size with three windows, two looking out over the street and one looking at the square near the front door. The realtor had understood that there would be three people living in the house and he suggested that this be one of the bedrooms.

Next up was the bathroom. Like the toilet, its floor had smaller blue tiles. The same kind of cupboards were placed against one of the walls with two sinks and again mirrors covering the entire wall. On the opposite side of the room were a shower cabin and a simple-looking bath tub. The realtor explained that though it looked simple, the bath was in fact quite a luxurious model that just had a kind of retro-look to it. The wall opposite the door had two more small windows of the same kind they'd encountered before. The next room was another bedroom the same size as the first, this time it was on a corner and two sides had windows; the short side had two small windows looking at the street and the long side had two larger ones looking at the small piece of garden at the side of the house. The last bedroom was again of equal size and only had two windows on the side opposite the door. The group looked around for a second, but it was pretty much the same as the rooms they'd seen before. Again the floor was adorned with the little blue tiles that forming a strange pattern. Since it was more or less the same as the two bedrooms they'd seen before, safe for the positions of the windows and the door it didn't take them long to look at. They quickly moved on through the door at the end of the leg of the L.

They walked out the hall and into the kitchen. On the right of them they found the counter along the wall in a U-shape. On the wall that didn't have the counter was one arch leading to the dining room, which was again opposite another arch leading to the living room, so they could look ahead into it and see the fire place. Next to the arch was a big refrigerator and next to that was a glass double-door that led out to a small veranda. The counters were wooden and had a blue tile pattern as the countertop. There were a trash compactor, a

dishwasher, a sink, and a stove built in. Two small windows on the short side and two large windows on the long side offered views of the garden on the side and in the back. Xander immediately began to inspect the kitchen appliances to check whether they were of good quality and luckily they turned out to be. Dawn and Buffy meanwhile, were more concerned with the fridge being spacious enough; once again it turned out the Scoobies were in luck, because it was pretty big on the inside, even though I didn't look like much on the outside. There was even a smoke alarm mounted on the wall above the stove.

Content with their new kitchen, the group walked into the dining room. It was a long rectangular room that would be ideal for a long and narrow dining table. There was little in the way of natural light. Apart from the light that came from the kitchen and the living room through the arches, there was one big window that looked out over the veranda, but because there were plants in front of the window and the veranda was a fairly small, it was one of the darker rooms of the house. Finally, they reached the living room. It was large and spacious, or at least seemed so because it was largely empty, except for the fireplace. The fireplace was on the wall opposite the arch that lead to the dining area and kitchen on the left side. It was small and decorated with small tiles blue, orange-y red, and white. Next to the arch there was another big door leading out to the veranda across from the one from the kitchen. The wall that bordered the garden was filled with a lot of big windows so the room was quite light. In the middle of that wall was another big glass door that led outside. In the centre of the room was a small wooden pillar, painted blue. All the blue tile patterns on the floor ended at the foot of it. All the Scoobies thought it was pretty hideous. Xander walked over to the pillar and inspected it, surprised at the small size. "This is a pretty small pillar to be supported the whole roof," he said to the realtor. "Oh, it doesn't support anything; it's just here for decoration purposes," his response was. Xander looked at Buffy, who nodded at him. And right there and then it was decided that the pillar would be removed.

Lastly the group entered the garden through a small wooden door at the side of the living room on the same wall as the fireplace. They followed the path back to the part of the yard that lay behind the centre of the living room. There was a small square which the realtor explained was used by the previous owners as their barbeque area. Given the favourable weather conditions in the area, Xander suggested they should probably do the same. Next they briefly visited the veranda behind the dining room. It was fairly small but it did feature a beautiful little fountain that was built against the wall. They walked around the garden on their own for a bit, but found it to be quite boring. There were a lot of plants, ranging from big bushes to small bushes and palm trees and some big rock formations; some smaller trees bearing fruits drew the attention of Dawn, but could not keep it too long though. They were quickly done looking around and the realtor lead them back around the garage over a path, past a fence, to the front of the house again. He handed over the floor plans and went over some more technical details with Xander, which the rest of the Scoobies did not care much about; they were too busy discussing who would get what room. Finally the realtor said his goodbyes, gave them a business card in case they would ever get tired of the house and sped off in his expensive sports car. That was that. They now had a house. Content, but still feeling a little weird the group walked up to the front door. With a lot of grand gestures Xander produced the keys to the house and dramatically put them in the lock and turned his hand around. With a click the door unlocked and slowly it swung open

inwards. Welcome to my new home, is what Xander, Buffy, and Dawn thought and one by one they stepped in.

The next couple of hours were marked by a hectic driving up and down to various furniture and home-depot shops in the Edmonsville area. While Willow drove around taking Buffy and Dawn to the stores to pick out new furniture. Xander with the help of Kennedy put everything they took home together. And before long, the bedrooms, Buffy had taken the one near the kitchen, Dawn the one near the front door and Xander automatically had gotten the one in the corner, were filled with cupboard, dressers, desks, chairs, and beds. Slowly but surely the living room also started to fill up with other assorted materials from simple plants, to lamps, to television sets, to couches. The latter having been delivered by a van from the store Buffy and Dawn had bought it at; because there was no way three big couches would fit into their rental car. The two sisters also brought home a lot of smaller materials such as picture frames, kitchen utensils, and some tools for Xander. The day went by with a sort of general chaos about it, because they had so many things to buy. Basically, none of them possessed anything anymore. Everything, from the plates they ate from, to the clothes they wore, to the many of the weapons that had saved their lives countless times had been lost in the destruction of Sunnydale, and now they had to start collecting everything again. Of course, they would concentrate on the bare essentials first, but still the amount of stuff they needed seemed almost too much to even begin gathering. Come closing time of the shops at the end of the day though, Buffy and Dawn felt a little different about it. When they returned home from their last shopping trip of the day and saw how nicely the boxes full of new stuff had piled up in the living room both of them felt a little better about the work still ahead.

Tired from a whole day of buying things with someone else's money, which is what spending the insurance money felt like to Buffy, she sat down on the newly installed big grey three-seat couch. Dawn lay down on another one and soon Kennedy and Xander came from another room to join them. Kennedy asked the question that was on everybody's minds "So, what's for dinner?" Having worked as hard as they had nobody really felt like cooking; not to mention that they still didn't have all the necessary tools. Thus Xander proposed, "We could just go out for something to eat." Tired, everyone more or less nodded in agreement, but Buffy stood up fiercely and rejected his offer. "No," she said, "this is our first night in this house; I think we have to eat here." Nobody really felt up to an argument and they did all see Buffy's point, and so it was decided that they would stay in. Foreseeing the next obvious question of who would cook what might lead to a debate everybody was much too tired for, Willow volunteered her services as a driver once more, "How about take-out? That counts right? How about I get us some Chinese food?" Her proposal was met with as much enthusiasm as her tired friends could muster. Kennedy got up from her position on the couch next to Xander. "I'll come with you," she said and Willow took everyone's orders after which the couple left the house.

For about ten minutes the actual residents of the house lay in silence resting, after which Xander finally got up first. Buffy followed his example and together they set the brand-new table with brand-new plates, brand-new forks, knives, spoons and glasses. When

they were finished Dawn got up too, thus having avoided the need to helping them. “We really have to do something about this pillar,” Xander said as he walked over to the ugly wooden thing. “Can’t you just saw it out or something?” Dawn asked. Xander walked over to the floor plans and unfolded them. Together they looked at them. The plans were a bit strange, as they included detailed plans for the exact placement of the blue tiles; additionally the plan had a lot of text written on it in, but that was all in Spanish so they were clueless as to what it said. This all made the plans hard to read, but Xander’s experience in construction was enough to be able to judge that the realtor had been right; it was not a support pillar. “We’re going to need more than a saw I guess, but at least we can take it out,” he told Dawn, “No problem.” “Okay,” said Buffy from behind them and Dawn and Xander turned around just in time to see that Buffy who had gotten the Scythe from her room took a swing at the pillar. The wood splintered as it was hit by the magical weapon of the Slayer, which cut through the whole pillar without any difficulties. However, the splintering wood did release a small cloud of blue gas. Buffy duck down and saw the gas evaporate in the air above her. “That can’t be healthy,” she concluded, “good thing I didn’t breathe any of that.” Dawn turned to Xander “What was that?” “Beats me,” he said in all honesty, as he helped Buffy up and took her Scythe away, “but from now on, you might wanna leave this kinda stuff to me okay?”

Less than one and a half hour later all the Scoobies were getting ready to go to sleep; Buffy and Dawn in their own new rooms and Xander on the couch, as he had given his room to Kennedy and Willow. They were all very tired from a hard day’s work and as soon as they’d finished the much appreciated food Willow had brought, all any of them could only think about anymore was sleep. Buffy had initially protested when Xander gave up his room, because she believed he should be the one to spend the first night there, but her friend had insisted; that was just how he was. Buffy was the first to retreat to her room. It was still relatively empty compared to some of the other rooms as most of the furniture, except for the bed, had not been put together yet. It was no big deal because she did not have many belongings that she needed storage space for. That would come in time. For now the only thing she took into the room with her were the few clothes she had, a stake, and the Scythe. After Buffy, Dawn was the second to close the door of her bedroom and check in for a good night’s rest. Dawn’s room was already more fully furnished than Buffy’s room and she’d already put up the first two posters which made the room look almost as if someone were living in it. Dawn still did not feel very at home yet though; it would take more than mere posters to accomplish that. Xander and his two lady friends spoke a little more after the Summers sisters had gone to bed, but not for much longer than fifteen minutes. Kennedy and Willow shared Xander’s bed, which he had optimistically insisted should be very big. After cleaning up a little in the living room, Xander was the last of the Scoobies to close his eyes. And once he did, the strangest thing happened. The little blue tiles on the floors of all the rooms began to glow softly and the strange pattern in which they had been lain illuminated briefly after which everything became dark again.

Half an hour later the clock struck midnight and with it the first day in their new home came to an end. Everyone in the house was fast asleep and everything was quiet. Buffy lay in her bed on her back with her eyes closed, but in her head she was walking around through the house. It was as empty as they had first encountered it. She walked through the foyer into the hallway and was on her way to her own room, because even in her dream she felt sleepy. When she opened the door to her room she heard someone behind her giggle. It sounded like the giggle of a young girl. So, when Buffy turned around she was not surprised to see a seven year old Hispanic girl in a pretty blue dress with a big bowtie in her long black hair standing right in front of her. Buffy kneeled down to reach the little girl's face height because she wanted to talk to her, but the girl turned around and ran away. Buffy decided to follow her. The girl left open the door to the foyer, so Buffy ventured into it. She stopped in front of the arch that led to the living room and saw that the little girl was standing near an older man with a small black moustache, also a Hispanic. The man was working on the pillar that stood in the middle of the room. He was putting on decorations, which judging by how the rest of the room looked must have been the finishing touch, because the rest of the house looked as if it had just been constructed. Everything looked brand new, and there were tools lying around everywhere. The only difference was that the strange blue tile pattern was absent. Buffy looked at the floor carefully and she noticed that there were tiles that looked slightly lighter in colour and that made up a pattern similar to what they had in their house, but she was not positive that it was the same. The man and the girl began speaking to each other, but Buffy couldn't understand what they were saying to each other. The unknown foreign words they used had a lulling effect on the Slayer and she sunk into a deeper state of sleep as the man and the girl and the house faded away around here to make place for a cheese.

In the room next to Buffy, Kennedy lay asleep in Xander's bed. The arm of her lover was around her waist and the two lay very close next to each other. But in her head Kennedy was standing in the hallway outside the room watching a little Hispanic run away from her. Kennedy instinctively followed the girl although she also really wanted to sleep. In the living room she saw the girl talk to a man, who was apparently her father. Kennedy knew Spanish, which the language the two were speaking resembled somewhat but Kennedy also recognised that some words were completely foreign to her. She could only make out some of the things the parent and child were saying to each other. She could clearly distinguish the words father, and finished. The girl was asking if something was finished. Either that or she was asking if it was safe, Kennedy was not sure. Suddenly, the two of them stopped talking and looked right at Kennedy, or rather through her. Kennedy somehow knew they were looking at something behind her. So she turned around and she saw that the door was slowly opening. She couldn't see clearly who or what was behind the door, but it was dark and looked menacing. Suddenly, the door swung fully open. Kennedy woke up. She realised she was sweating. She concluded that she had just had a nightmare. Relieved though still a bit shaken, she got up to carefully so as not to wake up her sleeping girlfriend, to get something to drink. And so she headed for the kitchen.

Two rooms separate from Xander's room, which now only Willow occupied, Dawn lay asleep peacefully. Her thoughts had long drifted off to dream land, where Dawn was surrounded by many a-teenage boy's handsome faces. Until all of a sudden all those faces had began to shift into one face and that one face had turned from a handsome teenager into a middle aged Hispanic working-class man with a small black moustache sitting comfortable atop his upper-lip. The man, Dawn realised, was in the middle of their living room working on the pillar that just this afternoon, Buffy had planted her axe in. As she was looking at him a cute little girl came in, who began talking to the man. Dawn's mouth fell open almost instantly as she recognised the language the two spoke; or at least, one of the languages. Dawn heard some words that vaguely sounded like Spanish to her, but the words she could identify positively were from an obscure Aztec demon language she had once studied a bit to find out more about the Scythe when her sister had obtained it. Dawn didn't speak the language herself, or understood it for that matter, but she did recognise a couple of words. Time, safe, and demon, was what she could make out. Suddenly, she noticed a shadow falling over the foyer through the window in the front-door. A big and terrifying thing stood before the door. The two people noticed it too and anxiously started at the door that was opening slowly. The piercing eyes of a most terrifying demon stared right at Dawn. She could not look at anything but its eyes; so much so in fact that the rest around her faded away and nothing remained but the eyes. Dawn tried to shake it loose and after rolling around in her bed for a minute, the eyes had finally disappeared and Dawn could return to more peaceful dreams.

Meanwhile Xander, who had relieved to find that the couches offered excellent sleeping opportunities, was using one such opportunity. Initially, the comfortable couch had occupied the part of his brain that catered to his dreaming needs. Unfortunately it had quickly there after moved not to the expected all-girl slumber party pillow fights, but to a strange scene taking place in the very living room he was sleeping in. It was not exactly the same though, there were tools all around, the blue tiles were missing, and that blasted pillar was still there, Xander noticed. He saw two people in the middle of the room looking at the front door and he turned to look at what was there, but a sudden sound from the kitchen prevented him from. He woke up and saw that a light was on in the kitchen. Quickly he jumped to his feet and snuck toward the lit room. For a second he thought it might be burglars trying to profit from the fact that they had not yet gotten round to properly configuring the alarm system, but much to his relieve, it was only Kennedy. "Up so late, or so early," he yawned, "I can't tell." "I think it's the first," she grumbled as she poured herself a glass of milk, "couldn't sleep. Had a nightmare." She noticed Xander's worried look. "Don't sweat it; it's no big deal." Xander had gotten himself a glass too and Kennedy handed him the milk carton as the both of them walked into the living room. They sat down on his bed and both drank their milk quietly. When Kennedy was done she stood up again and said with dry sarcasm, "Yeah, that was fun. We should do it again sometimes." Xander smiled. He took her glass and his own, which he had also emptied by now, and the milk carton. "We sure should," he said, "don't worry, I'll put this away." And so he walked out the living room through the arch to the dining room on his way to the kitchen, while Kennedy turned around and walked back through the arch to the foyer, through the foyer, through the door, through the hallway to the door that lead to Xander's room. Half asleep she opened and closed it quietly. To her surprise however, she found herself not in the bedroom she had expected to

end up in. Instead she found herself in Buffy's room. She could have sworn she opened the right door, but the house was still new to her, so she dismissed her error and snuck out backwards to see if she wouldn't wake Buffy. When she closed the door and turned around however, she wasn't back in the hallway, but she now found herself in the garage. She pinched herself. Maybe it was a little too hard; she found out, a bit painfully, that she was not sleeping. She opened the door she had come out of again. This time it led not to Buffy's room, nor to the foyer as it should have, but to the bathroom. Confused and a little scared she stepped into it. As she did the door slammed shut behind her, she turned around and opened it and now she was even more confused as the door in the bathroom, led straight back to the bathroom.

To be concluded in Buffy the Vampire Slayer #03 A House is Not a Home, Part 2.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

#02 A House is not a Home, Part 1

Written by Allycat

With regular characters based on the likeness of:

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

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.

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