

Buffy

the Vampire Slayer

#03 A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME, PART 2

Edmonsville Saga

Buffy and her friends have moved into their new house, but during the first night, but something seems terribly wrong. After getting a glass of water Kennedy finds out that the doors of the house start to connect to the wrong rooms; what's happening? And what are the Scoobies' strange dreams all about? (Part 2 of 2)

Written by Allycat



Willow was fast asleep and had been for quite a while with her arm now resting on the empty spot that Kennedy had taken up a little earlier. Her sleep was comfortable and deep. But something disturbed it. One minute she was walking through the park listening to the most beautiful song she had ever heard, the next she was in the living room of Buffy and Xander's new house looking at two scared people staring at the front-door. Willow turned around and saw the shape of a menacing looking demon coming through it into the foyer. She was almost instantly ready to do battle, even though it was a dream, but she was abruptly awoken from a dream, because she heard a door slam. She looked to her right and saw that Kennedy was up. Quickly, she got up too, thinking she might as well get a glass of water. Willow too walked through the hall to the kitchen, much like Kennedy had before, and once again someone woke Xander from his sleep. He also joined Willow in the kitchen, although he didn't get something to drink for himself. "You thirsty too?" asked Xander. "No, why would I?" his friend responded. "I dunno; I was just saying. Kennedy came in here about fifteen minutes ago, getting a glass of milk." "Fifteen minutes?" "Yeah, why?" "Hmm, that's weird," Willow said, more to herself than Xander, but seeing his curious expression, she indulged him, "it's weird cause she wasn't in bed just now." "She probably couldn't sleep yet; maybe she went to the bathroom." "Probably... although... she usually falls asleep pretty easy." So, to reassure his friend, Xander walked through the dining- and living room to the foyer to knock on the door of the toilet. There was no answer. He noticed the door was unlocked, so he opened it, but there was no Kennedy there. Willow had joined him by now and it was obvious she was getting worried. Not that there was any real logical reason to be worried, there could be a million perfectly good reasons why Kennedy was neither in bed nor using the toilet, but she just couldn't think of one. And to make things worse, the strange dream from before had left the witch feeling a bit uneasy.

"She's probably in the bathroom then," Xander concluded and said in a way that she knew was supposed to sound reassuring, but revealed to her his own confusion about the situation. The two old friends left the foyer and walked into the narrow hallway. The second door on their right would be it. Carefully Xander opened it. As Willow was behind him, she couldn't see what he saw, but by the look on his face when he looked into the room, something was definitely wrong. Afraid something had happened to Kennedy, Willow pushed him aside and through open the bathroom door. She was equally surprised as Xander to find the bathroom was missing and instead they were looking at the toilet again. "That's not supposed to be there, right?" Xander asked. Willow looked around and was looking at him sternly; it wasn't that she condemned his attempt at a joke, but more that she was seriously worried now. Something was oh so very wrong. She closed the door behind her and opened it again. This time it was the garage they were looking at. She closed the door again. "We better get Buffy up." They hurried to the door that led to Buffy's room. Willow hesitated for a moment but then opened the door. The thing she feared happened; it once again opened into the toilet. She turned around to Xander "We've got to find a way out." Suddenly, the door she had closed behind her swung open to the outside and hit her hard. She tripped and bumped into Xander who fell backwards near the end of the hallway. The door there suddenly opened too and hit Xander hard on his head. They both quickly got up. "Try all the doors," said Willow, "keep trying, but be careful." And so, the two of them began opening the doors in the hallway, which alternately opened into the toilet, the garage, and Xander's bedroom.

Meanwhile, Kennedy found herself locked in in not just one bathroom, but two, and literally identical ones at that too. It didn't matter how many times she opened and closed the door; it would not let her out. It didn't matter which side the door she was on either. She kept coming back to same bathroom. Finally, she had the luminous idea to just climb out the window. She literally ran over as fast as she could, not waiting to get out of there. She couldn't really see through the window, because the other side was too dark; she figured the streetslight must be out. She fumbled with the lock on the window and finally opened it. She was surprised to find she was looking into Dawn's bedroom. Figuring that it was a definite improvement over the bathroom, she climbed through the window into Dawn's room. "Hey Dawn, wake up," she started. Just as she did she heard the bathroom door swing open and Xander yelling he found the bathroom. She turned around and saw Willow looking into the room. The two looked at each other and ran back to the window, but it slammed shut. Dawn, who'd woken up looked confused at the scene that was happening in her room. When both Willow and Kennedy had nearly reached the window the window flew shut. In a panicking fashion, Kennedy tried to open the window, it took her a little while to get it open, but as she had feared the bathroom had disappeared and she was now looking into the kitchen. "What the hell is going on?" Dawn asked, and Kennedy began to explain what she herself barely understood.

In the meantime, Willow was getting more and more distraught. Her and Xander kept opening up doors in the hallway, but they never let to Dawn or Buffy's room or back to the foyer. At one point, half of the doors even began opening up back into the hallway in a different place. And so it happened that Xander went into a door at the end of the hallway leaving Willow behind, and would step into that same hallway. And walking through it, he would end up behind Willow once again. They realised the situation was growing dangerous. If they didn't pay attention for only a second, the doors would swing open and hit them. The house itself was attacking them. "Xander watch out," Willow suddenly yelled as he was about to be squashed by a hatch to the space beneath the roof that was located in the hallway. In another room, Willow's yell roused the original Slayer. She was wide awake immediately, and almost instantly realised there was trouble and grabbed for her Scythe. Buffy quickly ran to the door and opened it, she ran into the next room, which she only realised once she was in it, was Xander's room. Surprised at this unusual turn of event she turned around and saw that the door, which was still open, indeed led back to her own room. "Willow," she yelled.

In the hallway, Willow and Xander were pleasantly surprised to hear the voice of their friend coming from Xander's room, but when they opened the door, they saw an empty bathroom. "Buffy?" they yelled confused. The response they got oddly enough seemed to be coming from the empty room they were staring at. "Willow," Buffy's voice sounded, "are you there?" "I'm here," the witch responded and she looked over her shoulder at Xander, "Xander's here too. We're in the hallway." "I sort of can't get there," Buffy responded sounding very confused about the situation. "We understand what you mean," Willow said, "the doors aren't working. They keep leading to the wrong rooms." Although the idea sounded crazy, Buffy's definition of crazy meant something was more likely than not to occur in her direct surroundings. "The windows took," added Willow remembering seeing Kennedy

crawling through one to get into Dawn's room, which she also added, "Kennedy is with Dawn, but we don't know to get to them." "Isn't there any way out?" Buffy asked from the other room. "No," Willow shouted back, "We're still working on that; I could try a spell, but I really don't know what we're up against, so anything I try could work against us." "I might have an idea," Xander suddenly said to Willow. "Stay there, Buffy," he yelled, "We're coming to get you."

Dawn was thoroughly confused and quit dumfounded by the notion Kennedy raised of what was going on. A house couldn't possibly turn against the occupants, even by their standards this seemed far-out. After Kennedy had explained the situation the two of them were faced with three choices. They could either try to escape to the kitchen through one of the two windows that were supposed to look out over the street, or they could try the window on the side, which led to the garage. Then there was the door, which led to the toilet. The last option was ruled out pretty quickly, because it was just too darn small and neither one of them felt like getting locked in there. "I say we try the garage," said Dawn, "maybe the garage door is a way out?" "That seems unlikely. No, I think that we should go to the kitchen. The arches are not under the influence of whatever's going on here. So we can at least get into the dining room, living room, and foyer. Plenty of room. Plus, we've got food." That last bit proved to be the deciding factor and so Dawn and Kennedy began climbing out the windows in Dawn's room into the windows in the kitchen. It was quite awkward because they were climbing on top the counter. Dawn used her desk to climb onto and went in feet first. Just she was about to climb out the window swung shut and would've decapitated her if she hadn't pulled out just in time. Kennedy meanwhile, went in head first and once she was halfway, the window kept smashing into her lower back. Dawn quickly helped Kennedy pull out.

They switched on the lights and wandered around the kitchen, dining room, and living room, looking for the others. They realised, as they had expected that they were all alone. The big glass doors that lead outside all lead back into the rooms they came from, so escaping outside seemed impossible. "We're stuck," Kennedy quite rightly concluded. "I'm sure Buffy and the others will find us," said Dawn hoping to raise the Slayer's spirit, but it didn't seem Kennedy felt particularly relieved. Of course, the fact that Dawn herself was very much scared at this point didn't help her credibility. "There must be something we can do though; maybe we can start figuring out what's happening here. Or maybe—" Kennedy interrupted her, "Or maybe we can be quiet for a moment," Dawn looked insulted, "Sorry, but sshh." She put her lips to her mouth and then pointed up. Now Dawn noticed it too there was a noise coming from the roof. It was a sort of rumbling. It seemed as if something were moving. Suddenly it stopped. Then even more sudden the roof cracked a bit and part of it came falling down, right above Dawn. Kennedy jumped and grabbed her just as a piece of concrete was about to hit her. The concrete smashed on the floor. "Yeah, I was afraid of that. Can't hold all three of us," said Xander as he poked his head from the hole in the roof. The heads of Buffy and Willow also appeared and they looked surprised and happy to see Kennedy and Dawn were unharmed. The three Scoobies climbed out the small crawling space in the roof and now all five of them were together again. However, they still hadn't solved the problem of what was bothering them.

“So, where did you guys come from?” was the inevitable question and Dawn decided to ask it. “There’s a space in the roof. It’s not much; it’s not an attic or anything, but you can crawl through it. There’s a hatch in the hall that gives you access to it. I figured that maybe just maybe the hatch that leads to the roof would open normally. Then maybe we could have escaped to the roof. It was a long shot,” Xander admitted, “but as you can see, we didn’t make it.” “So, we’re still pretty much trapped by... something?” Kennedy asked. Silent nods confirmed her suspicion. Xander walked over to a stack of papers that lay on top of an empty cardboard box. He unfolded the papers, which contained the floor-plan. “Maybe there’s something here that can help us; maybe there’s another way out, we haven’t thought of?” He said optimistically. Dawn walked over and watched over his shoulder. “I just wish I knew what this text said,” Xander told her, “maybe it’s something we could use.” And he pointed at the text that was written in a language unfamiliar to him. “I think it’s Spanish,” he turned around to Kennedy, “Could you help me with this?” Kennedy walked over and bend over to look at the text, she was surprised by what she found. “This isn’t Spanish. Only part of it is. The other part; I don’t know... but the strange thing is I heard a man and his daughter speaking this language earlier in my nightmare.” All the Scoobies looked up in surprise, each realising they had had the same dream. “A man and a girl, standing by this pillar?” Buffy asked her. Kennedy nodded. Before Buffy could say she had a similar dream, Dawn quickly raised her hand and interjected, “I’ve had it too,” to impress her big sister, but also to be sure she would have her role in the solving of this mystical mystery. Willow and Xander raised their hands too and thus they realised they had all shared the same dream, which was somehow related to the strange writing on the floor plan. Because Dawn had some albeit limited understanding of the language that was mixed with the Spanish, she and Kennedy began translating the writing on the floor plan, and eventually were able to puzzle out roughly what story it related:

“I have been a fool. At the risk of my daughter, my everything, have I sought success, because I thought that way I would be able to provide for them, but all actions have consequences and I should have realised that. Seven years ago, my little girl was only two, I was an unsuccessful architect. I barely understood my profession, made the ugliest houses on the block, and was the laughing stock of my colleagues and competitors. My boss threatened to fire me. I was desperate. I needed to take care of my family. I remembered the stories my father told me of legendary demon-beasts and of the men foolish enough to summon them to get their wishes granted. I became one of those men. I summoned Xchiatlantz. The dark demon-beast that possesses everything it touches. He came in the form of a huge man. He would give me the knowledge I sought but I would have to supply him with a new body. Not right away, but after seven years he would return for it. It was better than nothing. I still would have seven years to watch my daughter grow up and to provide for her; then he would come back and take my body, at least, so I thought. He came back after seven years to claim his new body; my daughter’s. I tried to convince him to take me, but he wouldn’t have it. I asked him for mercy, but he wouldn’t give it. The body he had possessed seven years earlier was beginning to degrade; it couldn’t hold his demonic nature any longer. He

was a week early and I demanded my last week with my daughter. I told him to meet me at the house this floor plan is of. Construction on it was almost done. I remembered the old tales in which the demons could be trapped by luring them into the centre of an area with special symbols written on it. I took out part of the floor of the house and replaced them with special tiles and lay them in the shape of the symbols of the ancients. In the middle I built a big pillar in which I would catch him. I couldn't do it any other way, because if he had seen the symbol of the great Ichtezanl he would have known what I was doing. My daughter and I prepared for him to come and he did. I was putting the final touch on the pillar and he came into the house. He wanted my daughter's body so badly that he was blind to the trap laid for him and when he came into the middle of the symbol of the great Ichtezanl, I spoke the words of ere, that the old men in our family had learned us when we were young. It trapped him in the pillar; my daughter was safe. I'm writing this, not because I expect anyone to be able to read this, but so that the truth behind my shame will always exist as long as the house I built with his knowledge stands."

The Scoobies remained quiet upon hearing the truth behind the mystery that had been plaguing their house. Finally, it was Buffy who spoke first, "So this ki-at-along demon... how do I kill it?" Xander grinned as he was relieved to hear Buffy's trademark optimism, which usually marked the impending painful death of yet another demon. "Well, the story said the demon possesses whatever it touches, so I guess somehow... by destroying that pillar," she looked at the pillar which still stood in the room, although it was half smashed and splinters were sticking out the centre, "you've released it and it infected the house." Everybody nodded in agreement; Willow's words seemed reasonable enough. "But..." Buffy started, but Willow interrupted her. "Yeah, yeah... How do we kill it? ... I know. Basically, we need to draw it out of the house and into a shape we can actually fight and kill. I'm assuming there are no volunteers who are willing to offer up their body for him to take?" She asked jokingly. "Since, none of us know the rituals needed to trap him again..." "Are you saying we can't actually beat him?" Xander asked. "The only way we can fight him is if I pull him out of the walls into the open, in his pure demon form." "Which, I'm guessing is much stronger?" Willow smiled a sly smile and turned to Kennedy, "You up for it baby?" Kennedy nodded, "any time."

As Buffy raised her Scythe and Kennedy struck a fighting pose, Xander and Dawn got behind cover, and Willow prepared herself for a spell. She raised her forearms until they were in a vertical position began mumbling to herself in a strange and foreign sounding language. Slowly but surely her hairs started to become lighter and lighter. Simultaneously, the blue tiles on the floor began to glow too until everything stopped. Willow's hair turned back to its original colour. Curiously the tiles stopped glowing too, but the colour they turned to was the same as the other tiles, although slightly, but only slightly lighter. For a second everything was silent, until with a cracking sound the pillar in the middle of the room broke down and released a blue vapour. It formed a cloud around where the pillar had been and

when it slowly faded, the Scoobies saw the terrifying figure of the Xchiatanz-demon, with its muscular black body and its piercing green eyes. Without hesitation Kennedy launched herself at the demon and planted her foot in its side. The demon staggered, but found his balance again and turned to Kennedy. She tried to hit him, but he blocked and with the immense strength a powerful demon which had been collecting its energies for this occasion for many decades now, he hit her. She was thrown across the room a few feet. Willow rushed to her, but she got up fine on her own. Meanwhile Buffy took a swing at it with her Scythe, but the demon dodged. Buffy swung again and again, but he kept dodging her, although he did have to back up constantly.

Finally, he backed up into Kennedy who started to attack him too. He turned so that he was now fighting Buffy on his right side and Kennedy on his left. The two Slayers were wearing him down. Sooner or later he would slip up and either one of them could put a dent in him and when that happened he would no longer be able to keep up with them. Unfortunately, what they hadn't foreseen in this strategy was that the demon could still move back and forth. And so he did, in the direction of Dawn and Xander. The demon stormed toward them and Buffy and Kennedy sprinted after him to stop him. But luckily, Willow hit him with a ball of energy which knocked him over. Quickly Buffy jumped up and swung her weapon at the Xchiatanz. She only missed by a hair as the creature of the night got up just in time. Kennedy and Buffy both resumed their attacks on the demon and worked him half into a corner. Willow carefully positioned herself across the room from the demon and took aim. If only the two Slayers could keep the demon in that position long enough, she could fire a deadly spell at it. But the risk was too big as the constant fighting moved about too much and the spell she had in mind would be lethal to her friend or lover too. She decided to fire a couple of blank shots of spells that only produced a spectacular lightshow, but did no real damage, hoping it would distract the demon. Her plan worked and as the demon jumped to dodge the harmless spell that now hit Kennedy instead, he lost his balance and fell over, which was just the opportunity that Buffy needed and she planted the pointy end of her Scythe firmly in the evil being's chest. With a hissing sound the demon went up in blue smoke and was gone; they had defeated it.

Dawn and Xander reappeared relieved that the fight they could not contribute to was over. "Makes sense... stick the Slayer in the house that turns out be a prison for a demon." Buffy remarked sarcastically. "You know," started Xander, "for some reason the prospect of having to buy a new car oddly enough does not make me wildly enthusiastic like a normal man; it has instead just become the most terrifying event on my calendar." His comment drew out a few meagre laughs. "Oh c'mon, that was a little funny at least. Since when is a Slay not followed by a laugh?" Buffy yawned, "Since I'm way too tired." The others seemed to be in agreement. And one by one they said their goodbyes and flocked back to their bedrooms, leaving Xander standing there in his pyjama. He sighed and crawled under a blanket too and closed his eyes thinking of what had just passed. The Scoobies had just officially inaugurated their house in a way that best fitted their lifestyle: by kicking a little demon ass, and spilling a little demon blood. Although, Xander was aware, technically the demon never bled, but the symbolism of the sentence just worked better this way. Thinking about the big fight in PJs his mind started to wonder off and Xander fell asleep.

The following days were spent further decorating their house. In no time the rooms of Dawn and Buffy filled up pretty nicely and became cosy places that really felt to them like their little spots. Because Kennedy and Willow still could not get into their new dorm room, they were still staying in Xander's room. He did start to decorate and furnish it a little, but most of the work would have to wait until after they had moved out and his room would really be his room. The kitchen, the dining room, and even the living room also came along great. Much to the Summers' sisters' chagrin the kitchen was too small to put a table in, so they couldn't eat their morning cereals there anymore. Although the dining room was more spacious, the two tended to skip that and move straight to the living room, where they had put up a little counter they could eat at. Xander had insisted on filling the closet under it with booze, so as to create a genuine liquor cabinet and the girls had reluctantly let him. One corner of the room had the three couches in it and a modest television set that Xander tended to clog in order to watch sports in his free time, which since he did not yet have a job was pretty much all the time. Near the fireplace they put two big comfy chairs and they put up giant bookcases against the wall near it. Within no time the cases were filled with the most exotic books about demons, magic, ancient languages, and other assorted research material for the Slayage-business. This was the standard care-package every new field-Watcher carried around, which their high-up friends in England had kindly supplied to the Summers household as well.

The centrepiece of the living room was mounted on the wall above the fireplace. There hung Buffy's Scythe and a huge sword in an X-shape. The sight was really quite awe-inspiring. The other weapons were safely kept in chests throughout the house however. Buffy had one in her room and there was another in corner of the living. Finally, there was one in the garage, which they decided not to use for a car, should Xander ever collect the courage to buy one that was. Instead, they put a washer and a dryer there and used about half of the room as general storage room. The other half was training area for Buffy and Kennedy. They put up a target for crossbow practice, and had punching bag and a simple home-trainer. It wasn't as advanced or spacious as the training area in the Magic Box used to be, but it sure beat sharing the whole backyard with thirty or more girls.

The foyer was quite simple. They put up a coat rack and placed a dresser near the door, but that was supposed to be it. But since the room felt a bit empty, they decided that they needed to put something there. In the end they decided to make a little shrine; something plain and simple, but yet elegant and respectful. A simple wooden table was placed against the wall near the door to the hallway and they put some candles on it. On the wall they hung pictures of their loved ones who had passed away. It became a tribute to the fallen soldiers, who had left lasting impressions on the lives of the Summers girls and their friends: Kendra, Jenny, Joyce, Tara, Anya, Spike, and a picture of all the Potential Slayers gathered in the old Summers' Residence backyard, many of whom had fought and died in the final fight against the First's army. Every time one of the members of the household walked by, they silently acknowledged, if only for a second, the importance of these people in their own lives.

Two weeks after they had moved in, sometime near the end of June 2003, the house finally felt finished. Although they were still to change many little details, Buffy, Dawn, and Xander, but unintentionally also Willow and Kennedy, felt at home in their new place. They

had only just begun exploring the town of Edmonsville, having been too busy inside the house to actually go out into town, but they now had every intention of finding out whether the town Edmonsville on coast of the Pacific Ocean would offer them just as much excitement as the town of Sunnydale had or hopefully... a little less.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

#03 A House is Not a Home, Part 2

Written 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.

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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