

Chapter One

Demon bars. Always the place to shake out some useful information. The door swung open hard and banged against the wall. The chatter inside stopped cold and a dozen concerned faces glared at her. Drinks dropped hard onto tables. They all wondered who she was looking for. Who she was hunting tonight. Buffy slowly sauntered through the open doorway making eye contact with each and every demon.

Sutramas demon ugh. God they smell. What is that thing? Is that a tube? A hose? What is it for anyway? Suppose I could ask...

She turned and walked up to the bar. They now all realized it was not their time. Not tonight. Tonight she was hunting someone else or something else.

“Big ugly hairy blue thing...you seen it?” she asked the bartender.

He twitched nervously, rubbing his hands up and down his thighs. “Hairy? No. Ugly? Where do you think you are sweet cheeks?” he said.

She lunged fast like a cat discerning the danger of prey. She punched him dead on in the face. He stumbled back taking down a row of glass bottles with him. They smashed in a rhythm on the floor. Crash bang crackle. The sound of it was so familiar to her. Just days before she heard glass like that shatter. She heard the crumbling, the rumble of plaster and wood caving in around her. Around them. She shook her head to snap out of it.

“Tell me!” she demanded.

“Ok ok, geez gimme a second here.” He choked out. A small drop of blood slid from his nose. It was like a dinner bell and the patrons sniffed the scent in eagerly. *Human bartender in a demon bar. Was this guy mental?*

“Earlier tonight this real nasty lookin’ demon came in. All prickly hair and covered in a bluish slime crap. Looked like something out of the friggin blue lagoon ya know.” He said with a slight chuckle.

Her eyes cracked cold and dark.. Arms crossed in front of her. He knew humor would not make this any easier. Her glare told him he had better continue spilling it or else.

Spilling? Damn! What was in those bottles? What spilled? It smelled like pee? Ugh! Yak urine maybe?

“What was he looking for?” she asked him.

“Spike.” He said. “He, it, whatever said Spike owed it something. Something about some pendant. I didn’t get the whole deal. Kinda in a hurry.”

Spike? Why does it have to be Spike? Why would it want Spike? Want. Need. Wanting Spike. The crumble of the walls. Her ass against the cold cement. Her back arched as he made her feel whole again. STOP IT SUMMERS! What are you doing?

“What did you tell him?” she yelled.

“Nothing nothing sweet thing. I haven’t seen Spike around here in a while. He must be into other things.” He said waiving his hands in front of himself protectively.

Into other things?

“He was gonna take a look see around the cemetery that’s all. Really. That’s it.” He pleaded with every word. He could feel the eyes of his patrons on him. *How dare he tell the Slayer anything. Was no place sacred?*

Buffy turned and stomped out of the bar. A vamp and something with three orange horns diving out of her path. She slammed the door hard. She heard the hinges crack and splinter. No time to fight here tonight. She had to find Spike.

So, this demon is heading towards the cemetery. The one place she did not want to go. The one place she ached to go. The one place...she looked up. Without realizing it she had already made it to the cemetery. There about 100 yards ahead stood Spike’s crypt. Even though it was cold dark and damp, it seemed so inviting.

You have to invite me in Slayer.

I will never let you in Spike.

The door of his crypt moaned as she pushed it open. Hesitating for a second, afraid to enter, listening for any sound.

Nothing. Silence. Like death.

She slowly stepped inside. Glass of blood on the table, not drank. The comfy chair. She placed her hand on the seat and it was still warm. *He is here somewhere, but where?*

She slowly moved stealthy peaking around every corner and then she heard a soft sound. Like a low whisper or a sigh. She followed it. There he was sitting on the floor beside the bed.

Why did it have to be beside the bed?

His face was in his hands. The soft whisper was a whimper, almost tears.

Without lifting his head he breathed out “Buffy, am I a man or am I only evil?”

She walked slowly towards him and knelt down. He looked up. His eyes were red and swollen like ripe red cherries. His lips were full and his skin damp. He purred painfully and nearly silently in his breathing.

“What happened?” she asked him.

“I thought that you would finally see me luv. Finally got it in here” he said.

He taps his finger hard against his temple until it burned red like his eyes. She grabbed his hand instinctively and pulled it away. She shook free afraid of the touch.

“What are you talking about Spike?” she said with a tone he knew too well.

The look on his face turned to a sense of shock. Is it possible she didn't even remember the other night? She did everything she could to stay away until now.

Why was she here? Why now?

“Spike” she snapped. “What happened?”

“Buffy, do you believe our dreams can be visions or that they can change things? Make things right?” he asked.

Thinking of all her experiences with the first Slayer and all the demons that haunt her sleep nightly, she knew they could. She knew too well how dreams can chase you like a monster in the woods. No matter how far you run, they know the darkness better.

“I dreamed of you. I think. The taste of your skin, the smell of you, the flesh...” he said.

“Get to the point Spike.” She snapped.

“I dreamed that you loved me pet. Not despised me. And I remembered something from a long time ago. A story about a way to make your dreams real. So, I thought...” He said.

“Spike what did you do?” she said with increasing anger in her voice.

It never should have happened. I never should have let him touch me that way. Why did I? Why did I give in? Why does he always have to smell so good? Is there even a shower here?

“There is this pendant. The amulet of Urotheaum. You wear it when you sleep and what you dream is supposed to become real. And I always dream of you luv. Kissing you, touching you, being inside of you.” He said and reached up to touch her face.

She smacks it away.

“Did you get some kind of magick mojo going Spike? Is that what the other night was all about?” she said.

Ahhh...an excuse. A reason. Maybe he had her under some kind of mind control.

“No Buffy no. I got the amulet last night. I stole it off a Corthog demon. They are nasty lil’ buggers but can’t fight worth a bother. I wore it when I slept. Thought it’d make things better. Make things right.” he said.

“Right how?” she said. Her heart raced. She was sure he could feel the blood pulsing in her veins. The throbbing. She knew he could sense it mixed with rage and passion.

“Just make you see luv. Make you understand. Make you realize how you feel...” He put his face back into his hands muffling the last of the words. “But it all went wrong.”

The whisper. The sigh. She took his hand and moved it away from his face. They locked eyes and for a moment everything else vanished and they were back in that house. The walls closing in on them but not caring. The rhythmic hum of their bodies slapping together. The feeling of life breathing into her lungs. She ached for it and swallowed it like a dying man in the desert. Craving. Hands and the soft curves of his flesh. The deep agonizing breaths that escaped their lips.

God I want you Spike.

She almost didn’t care what he did. She almost wanted to kiss him right there on the floor in the middle of finding out about the mess he had made. Almost.

“Spike. Xander called me. He found a girl tonight that was attacked. She said the demon was really big and covered in hair and bluey icky mucus stuff. Willow is still a wreck and he can’t find anything on this thing alone. Does it have anything to do with you?” she said.

“Yes Buffy.” He looked deep into her. “I dreamed you loved me, but even dreaming I knew you couldn’t. What you loved. It wasn’t you. It was just how you play me. You play me Buffy, all the time. I got angry.” he said.

“What did you do Spike, tell me.” she said.

“I dreamed that you loved me and that you loathed me. The loathing I know. I understand the loathing. It has rules. It makes sense. Bollocks Buffy. I dreamed there were two of you. One perfect, like you are and one of disgust. The one in your gut.” he said.

“And that uber-hairy blue thing?” she questioned.

“It’s you luv. The part of you that hates yourself for being with me. The part that stings a bit. A different you, all evil. Buffy, that thing IS you. And I made it real.”

Just then a loud crash echoed against the walls of the crypt. The door swung open and a low growl resonated off the concrete.

“It’s the part of you that would stake me. The part that hates both of us for what happened. The part that will do anything to just make it stop.”

Buffy stood up. This made no sense. A part of her DID hate Spike, but a part of her...didn’t.

The growling grew louder. Buffy turned around and there stood the demon. The one that Spike dreamed of. The one he said was part of her. When she looked at it, she knew. It had not come there to kill Spike or to get the pendant back. It had not come on some sort of demon agenda. It had come to end all this. End them. It was her it hated. She felt all the anger and rage she felt after she awoke the morning after the house seething from it. She felt the disgust, the fear, and the loneliness all at once in front of her. She was staring at everything disgusting and wrong that came back with her. And it wanted it all to end. It wanted them both dead.

Chapter Two

A long hairy blue arm reached towards her. Slime dripped down in a thin wet disgusting strand.

“Damn, don’t ANY demons bathe around here?” Buffy said jokingly as she turned to face it “no offense, but you are really stink-tastic”

Buffy jumped up in the air with no notice, kicking her right leg out and propelling the demon 10 feet back out through the crypt door.

“Buffy” Spike screamed, lifting his head from his tear soaked hands.

“Kinda busy here” Buffy snapped.

She picked up a large concrete gargoyle and hurled it right at the demon’s head. A pool of blue mucus goo oozed out all over the ground.

“Yucky” Buffy squirmed.

The demon lay dead or at least very close across the entrance way. She turned back around to check on Spike, who still sat motionless next to the bed.

“Are you ok?” she asked him.

“Buffy, you can’t hurt it luv. It’s as strong inside as you, as your hate,” he said.

“I don’t HATE. Just because you say that thing is me or parts of me (ick), doesn’t mean it is” Buffy snapped as she turned away. “I’ll get Giles and Wil on it. You must have just conjured up some uber-icky slime demon thing by mistake.”

She turned back towards Spike, arms folded in front of her. His face was red. Tears ran like rivers down his swollen cheeks. Buffy reached her hand out to him with a scoff.

“Get up”, she said.

Spike looked up. His eyes glassy like mirrors in a foggy bathroom. The tears swirled within them and it almost hypnotized Buffy.

You haven’t even begun to hurt me.

Afraid to give me the chance?

She froze. Staring into his eyes. She could see the two of them as the house crumbled around, the feel of cold cement beneath her back, the feel of skin sliding along eager skin. How she still hungered for him.

“Pull anytime pet” Spike said.

Buffy was shocked out of her daydream and saw they Spike’s hand now held her own. He was looking for her to pull him up off the floor as her outstretched hand asked.

“Sorry. Sorry” she said as she lifted him off the ground. “Mr. Tall blue and icky must have knocked the wind out of me”.

They stood they not moving for a few seconds, their hands touching until Buffy realized. She jerked her hand away forcefully.

“So, you’re ok then?” she asked Spike.

“I’ll live” he said “or well, you know, the undead kind” he said with a smirk reaching out and stroking her hair “but I can be pretty lively goldilocks”.

With not a split second of notice, Buffy’s fist hit him right between the eyes.

“Buggers Slayer!” he yelled in pain “I thought you wanted to cheer me up”.

“Cheer you up YES, get you up NO” she yelled back.

“I need to go get Giles and Willow. We need to figure out what this thing is” Buffy said turning to walk towards the door to the cemetery outside.

“Buffy” Spike called out.

She stopped in her tracks, her back to him.

“About the other night...and the spell” he said.

“There WAS no other night Spike. It was a mistake. A moment of stupidity. It’s over,” Buffy said, trying to keep a cold straight face.

She could almost see Spike’s expression drop behind her.

“I’ve lived over a hundred years luv.” He said. His voice choking up with more tears. “You’ve died and come back twice for God’s sake. Over is a hard word to use when you consider what we’ve been through”

“We haven’t BEEN through anything” Buffy retorted turning around, arms folded again confrontationally.

“Well, I’ve been through a couple things.” Spike smirked “several times if memory serves”.

Buffy raised her fist to hit him again. Her caught her arm mid-punch and haled her wrist tightly. They froze locked onto each other. Still. Silent for a moment. Suddenly the distance between them shrank. Their lips were only millimeters apart. Spike felt Buffy’s breath exhale onto his face.

“I can’t,” she whimpered.

“Can’t isn’t a word you know luv” Spike responded.

His lips grazed her softly. Her skin tingled and goose bumps rose on her arms.

“Giles” Buffy whispered.

“Bollocks Slayer. At least fantasize about someone remotely attractive” Spike said.

Her eyes blinked. She focused on Spike’s stare.

“NO, I need to see Giles. Find out about the demon. Chain him up, just in case he is still alive. We may need him.” She pushed Spike back.

Ending the touching moment and walked over to the door. She grabbed the handle and swung it open hard.

“Aaahhh” Spike screamed as sunlight burst in through the doorway. He dived out of the way as the rays. He heard his skin sizzle for an instant. The cracking egg of sun.

“When, how, when did it become morning?” Buffy questioned.

She wondered just how long she had been there. Just how long she stared into those eyes.

“Later then?” Spike asked.

Buffy forced out a small nod and disappeared out into the cemetery.

“Leave me to clean up the mess,” he said sauntering towards the large lump of bluey demon.

“You have a bigger mess to clean up William” he heard as the demon’s head slowly rose. “This was just the introduction.” The demon laughed.