

FANTASIE SEGRETE

A Spike/Buffy Reunion



HOLLY DENISE



FANTASIE SEGRETE

SUBMISSION WAS NOT Buffy's thing. Not even a little bit. And yet, here she was, on her back in an unfamiliar room, her arms stretched over her head, her wrists bound by scarves and a blindfold over her eyes. When Willow had mentioned full service, she hadn't expected anything like this. Granted, she also hadn't imagined that she would show up, hand a friendly staff member the certificate that her best friend had practically stapled into her hand, only to find herself on the receiving end of a cheeky, knowing smile. As though the employees had been waiting for her.

This was the sort of seedy establishment that Buffy, just a few days ago, would have sworn didn't actually exist. It reeked of Penthouse fantasy letters and other lurid stories...not that she would know, of course. She just had an overactive imagination and a very good guy friend who was very much over any residual romantic feelings harbored for her. The nature of her friendship with Xander allowed now for conversations she once wouldn't have dreamed of having with him.

Their mutual loss at closing the Hellmouth had similarly forged a bond that no one else could understand. He'd lost Anya; she'd lost Spike. Sometimes they talked for hours about the people they'd lost, throwing back shots and reliving conversations they wished they'd had.

And while she'd never admit it, there were times when Buffy was so damnably jealous over how many good memories that Xander had with Anya that the temptation to smash him over the head with something large and blunt was almost impossible to ignore.

The fact that she had no one to blame but herself for the painful lack of good times with Spike didn't help matters much. Her life, it seemed, was fated to be a series of regrets. And while she knew that the healthy thing to do was forgive herself and move on, she couldn't forget how her hand had burned when she'd laced her fingers through his. How, for that moment, they'd become one in every sense. She'd felt him inside her—flames licking her melting heart as his eyes pulled her into an abyss of love and wonder. Leaving him in that cavern was the hardest thing she'd ever done.

The months in between hadn't been forgiving in the slightest. When she wasn't remembering the few good times, she was sobbing over the many bad. She replayed every conversation they'd ever had, rewriting her lines and tormenting herself over the many ways everything could have gone so differently. One word. One gesture. One crumb. She was drowning slowly in sorrow, and while every day was supposed to be better than the last, she didn't know if she would ever fully recover.

Which was why, she supposed, that Willow and Kennedy thought to gift her with a one-day pass to this haven of sin. She hadn't heard of Fantasie Segrete until the topic had come up at dinner two nights prior. Since then, the name of the establishment had been on everyone's lips, be it friends or strangers. Hell, even Dawn had mentioned it once, talk about all things mortifying.

Buffy's first answer, naturally, had been no. No as in hell no. No way. Huh uh. Next question, please. She wasn't going to spend the most miserable day on the planet in a brothel.

But it wasn't a brothel, or so Willow said. There was no sex involved unless it was at the client's request. Fantasie Segrete catered specifically to making certain fantasies come to life, as was promised in the company name. Buffy had tried to weasel out by explaining that she didn't harbor secret fantasies—her life was now secret-and-fantasy-free. In fact, the only way to fulfill her fantasies was to bring

Spike back. He was her only fantasy, and while Fantasie Segrete *did* promise that every client's fantasy would be fulfilled or their money would be refunded, she didn't think they were talented enough to resurrect vampires who had dusted in service of world saveage.

Dismayed, Willow had tried one last tactic. If nothing else, Fantasie Segrete provided a way to take her mind off things—give her a reprieve from the life she led now. After all, her role as headmaster of some bizarre Hogwarts for Slayers would kill her if she didn't take some time off for herself. And she didn't have to do anything beyond get a massage if that was what she wanted—what she did with her day-pass was entirely up to her.

Buffy had remained rigidly on the fence until Willow mentioned that it would be the first step. The first necessary step. The first step in accepting the gift he'd given her with his sacrifice. In going, she was honoring his memory. And he'd wanted her to live. He'd wanted her to live her life, and that meant, at one point, loving again. And in order to love, she needed to trust someone with her body, whether for a massage or a night of guiltless pleasure with a total stranger. Her choice.

So here she was. Single on Valentine's Day, stretched on a strange bed with scarves tied around her wrists and a blindfold over her eyes. This hadn't been in the brochure. She'd done little more than hand over her day-pass before she'd been escorted to an anonymous room and tied to the bed by the greeting hostess. At first, she'd wondered if the reservation under Rosenberg had screwed with the listing of sexual preference, but the girl had bid her adieu and left her alone.

Alone in a strange room. Tied to a strange bed. And, oh yeah, blindfolded.

Buffy was so going to murder Willow after this was over.

Just as she was going to ignore the persistent voice that kept reminding her that she could get up and walk out whenever she chose. It wasn't as though the bindings around her wrists were tight. And hello, slayer strength much? She'd be out of her faster than an outted politician at a nudie bar if she truly wanted to leave.

In truth, she was curious. And lonely. And while she didn't wasn't

about to stoop to male whores, it would be nice to take a break from her life for a while.

Plus the blindfold would definitely help in the pretending-it's-Spike thing. Not that pretending she was with Spike was the objective. Actually, she figured the point of this whole excursion—lame excuses aside—was to slowly push Spike out of her heart. To make room in her heart for someone new.

Someone normal.

Buffy scoffed. If anything, Spike had shown her that normal wasn't in her wiring. It never had been. Didn't matter how many little slayers she'd unleashed on the world—normal would never suit her.

Not after him.

And perhaps that was better. The memories she had of Spike could last a lifetime. Better to grow old with those than try to fill a void that couldn't be filled. She would accept no substitutes. Her heart belonged to another.

She tensed when she heard the door open, her spider-senses tingling. She'd been told that all rooms were warded to keep humans disguised, that way vampires—clients and staff alike—didn't know who was a potential meal and who wasn't. The idea seemed preposterous. Magic powerful enough to block demon senses? No way, José.

The magic was supposed to work both ways. And she found—to her dismay—that it did. While her spider-senses were indeed tingling, she couldn't get a read on whoever had entered the room. As though no one was there at all.

But someone *was* there. She heard breathing and footsteps and other small, indiscernible noises associated with life. With movement. But she couldn't see a thing. Not a damned thing.

The silence would going to drive her mad. If she couldn't see him, she needed to hear him. Anonymity was nice on paper, but call her old-fashioned—if she was expected to work herself up to a massage, she needed to at least know what her masseur sounded like, especially since it'd be her first massage since Spike had kneaded her sore muscles. Mr. Anonymous couldn't appreciate the significance of that, but she needed a voice to pair with whatever hands touched her.

“Hi,” she said in a bright, false voice. “I’m Buffy.”

There was no response. A rustle of clothing and a grunt—nothing more.

Perhaps there was a no-talking rule. Like the *Pretty Woman* no-kissing rule, only with talking instead. Maybe that's why she'd been blindfolded. Anything that took away from the fantasy was off-limits. The fantasy being someone the client could visualize through whatever they worked toward.

Still, the silence was going to break her, so she tried again with a half-hearted joke. "Don't you hate places like this?"

Nothing but another grunt and more clothing being rustled. She didn't know how comfortable she was with that, but her inner alarm had yet to go off, and she trusted that the wards blocking her spider senses couldn't touch her raw intuition.

"I've never been to...well, here, before," she continued. "God, I'm sure you get this all the time, but I don't really know what I'm doing here."

There was an appreciative snicker at that.

"I mean it," Buffy went on, straining in the direction that snicker had come from. "My friends... Well, a friend got me this lousy day-pass, and long-story-short, I'm here. I'm...with the here. The hereness of being here. On Valentine's Day, of all things pathetic."

Mystery Man grunted again, now behind her if his footsteps were anything to go off. The bed, from what she remembered, had a low headboard, and the posts were obviously only used to tie clients to them. The bed itself stood awkwardly in the middle of the room, as though the movers had been called to lunch in mid-shift. She now understood its practicality. Mystery Man could access her from any angle.

Buffy shifted. She didn't know how she felt about that.

"Y-you'll stop if I want you to, right?"

For pete's sake, she'd been a slayer for the better part of a decade. Turning over control was not her forte, especially to someone she couldn't see, but hearing hesitation in her own voice made her flinch. Buffy Summers did not cower. Buffy Summers did not plead. Buffy Summers did not submit.

Buffy Summers was bound and blindfolded and was about to be touched by a man she didn't know.

Buffy Summers had clearly lost her mind.

"I'll stop," the man said softly, nearly startling her out of her skin. She'd given up hope that he'd actually reply, and the intrusion of his voice was both a welcome distraction and a kick in the gut.

There was something familiar about the voice. Something that had her eyes welling and her heart breaking all over again. He sounded gentle and refined—Spike, had Spike been sent to a boarding school or taken lessons under Professor Higgins. Perhaps she was grasping at straws.

"Do you like working here?" she asked. She wanted to keep him talking. She wanted to revel in the haunting, if not comforting familiarity of his voice.

There was no response.

"Do you have a girlfriend who hates that you work here?"

"No."

Buffy licked her lips. "Do you have a girlfriend who loves that you work here?"

"No."

"See, was that so hard? Eventually, we'll move past monosyllabic words."

It was impossible to tell whether or not he was amused. The damn guy must be working his way toward a vow of silence for all the speaking he didn't do. Buffy exhaled her frustration, taking a mental tally of her options.

"Don't you hate Valentine's Day?" she asked a minute later when said mental tally came up empty. "It's a stupid holiday created by stupid greeting card companies to make singles feel stupid for not being in stupid love."

"Spoken like a true singleton," came the mildly amused reply. God, even his teasing sounded like Spike.

Perhaps this place was on the money, then. Perhaps they really did deal with fantasies and making those fantasies come to life. The blindfold, in that sense, was necessary. It kept the illusion rolling.

"I'm not single. I'm just alone."

“There’s a difference?”

Buffy honestly didn’t know if she’d wanted a reply—she just wanted him to talk. Let that Spike-toned voice roll over her. He was more refined than Spike, but that was fine by her. Did little to ruin the picture forming in her mind. The one in which Spike was the one assessing her, Spike who was behind her, Spike whose fingers were weaving through her hair, tenderly massaging her scalp. It was Spike whose touch was setting her body aflame.

She missed him so much it was hard to breathe. But for now—for this stolen moment—he was with her.

“There’s a big difference,” she retorted. “Single implies that I want someone in my life right now. I don’t.”

“But you don’t like being alone.”

The truth in that statement made her skin itch. “No,” she replied. “I don’t.”

“Classic conundrum, then,” he murmured, trailing his fingers down her cheeks, and god, if that didn’t feel good. It’d been so long since she’d been touched by anyone. And this man, with a voice that sounded so familiar, was giving her mind ample material with which to run wild. Now he had Spike’s face, Spike’s body, and Spike’s magical hands. She could hold on. She could pretend. “You don’t like being alone but you don’t want anyone in your life.”

Buffy bit back a whimper as he drew her hair over her shoulders. “I had someone in my life,” she replied. “He’s gone.”

“Gone?”

“Died.”

“Oh.” He trailed his hands over her collarbone, his fingers oh-so-casually grazing the dip between her breasts. “Sorry.”

Buffy pursed her lips and shivered. There was something in his voice that made her believe he meant it. Perhaps that much was wishful thinking—perhaps she was already so deep in the fantasy that she was with Spike that she was truly blurring the line between fantasy and reality. She didn’t know. All she knew was that she didn’t want this to stop. Not for anything.

“How’d he die?”

She hesitated, then found to her horror that she was wiggling her

hips. But also not to her horror because she didn't want to stop, and thankfully her faux-Spike didn't miss the silent invitation. And yeah, she knew that she should protest, but the knowledge that she could stop this at any time was a powerful aphrodisiac. She wanted Spike back, and for the moment, she had him. He was with her. He was touching her. It'd been so long since she'd been touched—since she'd *wanted* to be touched—and she wasn't doing his memory a disservice because he was the one in the room.

If Willow truly had meant for this to be means of getting over him, she'd be sorely disappointed. Losing Spike once had all but ruined her. To lose him again...

"He died...occupational hazard."

"Soldier?" the man asked, gently stroking the sides of her neck before moving down again, settling his fingers on the first button of her blouse. "Line of duty? That sort of thing?"

"Uh huh."

"Mmm," he replied, undoing the second button, then the third. He plucked at the thin material that guarded her breasts cautiously, then again when she didn't protest. "Sorry to hear that, love."

The term of endearment wrought a gasp from her throat and made her eyes sting. It was Spike's word. Spike's voice speaking Spike's word. And while logic told her that calling women *love* wasn't something singular to her vampire, the pet name only fueled her fantasy. She wanted to weep and laugh at the same time, which was an odd realization to have with her clit throbbing and her panties damp, but she had it anyway. Almost unaware that she was doing it—almost but not quite—Buffy arched her breasts in welcome, shivering hard when he slipped his fingers *just* under the cups of her bra.

"I didn't want to come here," Buffy said softly. "My friends made me."

"You've mentioned that."

"I-it's true."

"I believe you." That didn't stop those wandering hands from dipping deeper into forbidden territory until his fingertips just barely grazed her hard nipples. "Did you love him?"

"Yes." The word came out a half-moan, half-sigh. "God, yes." Then she paused. "Wait...what?"

"Just wondering."

"Why would you wonder about that?"

"I'm making conversation."

"You're asking pretty personal questions."

"I'm touching you in a personal way," he countered, and the words somehow made her burn with lust and shame at the same time. "I'm sorry if the question bothered you."

It did. It did because of what he was doing. What she was letting him do. Still, Buffy somehow found herself shaking her head. "No," she said. "No, it didn't. It just...it caught me off guard." She held her breath until her faux-Spike began massaging her breasts again, and she had to clench her thighs, less she betray herself. "Love was...a touchy subject."

"Oh?" It was probably her imagination, but she could have sworn his voice trembled. "Was it?"

"He...loved me."

"Not hard to imagine."

"But I...I was horrible. I didn't... I told him, before he died, for the first time." Her pussy was on fire and her eyes were swimming with tears; it was, perhaps, the most bizarre sensation she'd ever experienced. Having grief constrict her chest while her body turned molten. "He didn't believe me."

"He didn't?"

She shook her head and choked back a sob. "No."

"Maybe he didn't want you to know that he believed you," faux-Spike suggested. "Maybe he knew that he might not come back from wherever he'd been shipped to and didn't want you in mourning the rest of your life."

"Asshole."

"Oil!"

Buffy bit down on her lower lip so hard she nearly drew blood. Another Spikeism. Another miracle of having every fantasy realized. The things buried so far down that she doubted anyone but Spike could ever fish them out. "I didn't mean you," she said slowly, tugging at her bonds. She cried out in disappointment when her faux-Spike's

hands abandoned her breasts but couldn't help the sigh that came when her wrists were freed. She immediately reached for him but just as quickly found her arms pinned to her sides. "Hey!"

"No touching," he said shortly. "Just enjoy."

"But—"

"No touching, love." The second the reprimand left his lips, his hands were back on her skin, slipping beneath the cups of her bra again. "Why's he an asshole, then?"

"Huh?"

"Well, if you didn't mean me, I can only assume..."

Buffy trembled, a strangled gasp tearing off her lips. "I've...ever since...he died I've been...replaying every conversation. Trying to figure out what I could've...could've done differently."

"Mmm," faux-Spike mused, nimble fingers plucking at her nipples with cool expertise. "You never know how someone's going to react, I suppose."

"No."

"He didn't mean to hurt you, you know." He abandoned her breasts again, making quick work of the rest of her blouse, rendering her near-topless at the hands of a virtual stranger. Then *fully* topless. It should bother her. All of this should bother her. It didn't. "Men never know what to say in situations like that. Point of fact, love, you'd probably be cursing his name even louder if he'd let you know that he believed you."

"Would not."

"Mhmm." He ran his hands along her collarbone, the tips of his fingers barely brushing the tops of her breasts. "Whatever you say."

"He knew me. He knew how I'd react."

There was a soft chuckle as he palmed her breasts, rolling her nipples with his thumbs, and damn if every stroke didn't channel directly to her clit. Buffy clenched her teeth, balled her hands into fists to evade the temptation to touch him. To see if he felt like Spike aside from merely sounding like him—aside from the way he seemed to know her body in the same sinful way that Spike always had.

"Don't mean to burst your bubble, kitten," faux-Spike drawled, the mattress behind her dipping as he climbed over the headboard. "Up,"

he commanded, and she complied, edging upward until her head rested against a cool, washboard chest that felt so familiar that the tears battling her eyes finally pushed through. The blindfold dampened, and while she knew that he had to notice, he didn't make mention of it. Instead, he tugged her even closer—tugged her until her hips were trapped between his strong thighs. Until her back was pressed against his chest, her head cradled at his shoulder. "Men," he continued softly, continuing its play with her breast with his right hand as his left traveled the expanse of her flat stomach, "are lost when it comes to the women they love. For instance..."

She gasped when he undid her jeans, when he dragged the zipper down. Oh god, if he felt inside her, he'd know how wet she was. How easily he'd managed to turn her into a puddle of goo, all the while talking of the man she allegedly loved. The one that had died. The one that her friends wanted her to forget so badly that they'd sent her here.

Again, she reminded herself that she could end this at any time. That she probably should.

Spike.

But her mind was so entrenched in the fantasy that to end it now would be to end things with Spike all over again. Telling him—faux-Spike—things that she'd never gotten to tell Spike. Convincing him—faux-Spike—that she loved Spike made her feel like, somewhere, her Spike heard and believed her. She couldn't stop—not while being caressed as her Spike would have caressed her. She'd denied Spike so much; she wouldn't deny him this. She wouldn't deny *herself* one last time with him.

"There's a woman I love," he murmured, sliding his index finger between her slick pussy lips, "and I hurt her."

"Unnnh..."

"I hurt her in ways I never thought I could." He paused and pulled away from her center, ignoring her whimper of protest. And just like that, the air behind her was cold once more. His weight vanished from the mattress and reappeared at the other end as he made quick work of her shoes and socks. When he paused again, the silence between them thick enough to slice. It rattled her, in those heavy seconds, how hard she could feel his eyes on her. Her mind saw Spike. He was

standing there, staring at her parted lips before raking his gaze over her naked breasts. As though the image were true, and faux-Spike was possessed with the real Spike's legendary impatience, he was moving again. The next thing she knew, her jeans were gone and she was bare on the mattress. A foreign mattress in a foreign room, blindfolded at the mercy of a stranger, wearing nothing but white cotton panties.

"I hurt her when I'd promised myself I never would," faux-Spike continued. That time she was sure she hadn't imagined it—his voice shook. His hands were trembling when they roamed along her thighs. As he seized the sides of her panties and drew them down her legs. "I never meant to. God, and the look on her face..."

"Ohhh..."

"Spread your legs for me, kitten." The speed at which she obeyed should have been embarrassing, but god, she didn't care. She was open and wet, aching to be touched. And when she felt his cheek press against her inner thigh, it was all she could do to keep from sobbing her relief. "That's a good girl."

"I..."

"I tried to fix things," he continued matter-of-factly, again rubbing along her slit. "Bout killed me, but I had to...fix things. And though...I did what I did for her, not because I wanted it, it ended up being a godsend. Made me see things as I never had." He stilled for a second, inhaling sharply. "Christ, but you're wet."

"It's been..." She could give him the count in days since the last time she'd been touched like this. She could, but she didn't want to think of Spike's death. Not when her mind was working so hard to convince her that he wasn't dead at all, rather with her, his head between her thighs. "It's been a long...time..."

"How long?" He spread her pussy lips and flicked his tongue over her clit. "How long has it been, baby?"

"Oh god."

"Tell me."

"Before...uhhh...he died." She bit her lip and thrust herself against his face. "The last...the last night, we..."

"You let him in here?" he demanded, slipping two fingers inside her. "Oh fuck."

“Ohhh...”

“You’re so tight.”

“Told you. Been a while.” She waited, then moaned loudly when he began thrusting his fingers in and out of her, timed well with the laps of his tongue against her swollen clit. “The night before he... Before he...”

“Shipped out?”

“Oh god.”

“You’ve missed having his tongue inside you, haven’t you?” he demanded, his breathing hard and ragged. He rubbed his cheek against her skin, withdrawing his fingers from her. A second later, she heard the unmistakable sound of something being sucked and knew he had them in his mouth. That he was sucking *her* off his own skin. “Your taste...”

“Uhh...”

“A wonder any man could walk away from this sweet pussy.” He trailed his wet fingers up her abdomen until her breasts were in his hands again. He teased her nipples, and she felt his grin at her answering mewl. Fire blazed her blood, pricking her skin with hot sparks of lust as he drew her clit between his teeth, moaning around her wet flesh as though he shared her pleasure. “You taste like honey.”

Buffy whimpered, arching her pussy into his hungry mouth. “More!” she begged. “Oh god, more.”

“Where do you want me? Want me loving your sweet little clit?” He sucked it hard into his mouth again to make his point. “Or do you need my tongue inside you?”

“Oh god. Spike... Oh god, please.”

Distantly, she realized she’d crossed a line—the sort she couldn’t uncross—but she didn’t care. God, she didn’t care.

And apparently, he didn’t mind. “Kitty wants cream,” he decided, abandoning one of her breasts to settle his fingers over her clit as he plunged his tongue inside her. He licked at her insides, drawing as much of her juices into his mouth as possible. He didn’t mind when she thrashed and wailed, when she trapped his face between her thighs. He just lapped at her deeper, rubbing her clit with softness that belied the hungry strokes of his mouth.

“Oh my god! Oh...*god!*”

“Mmm...”

“Spike! Spike... Oh god oh god.” Tears pushed past the blindfold, spilling down her cheeks as she teetered dangerously close to the most volatile orgasm she’d ever experienced. With his tongue thrusting in and out of her pussy, his fingers massaging her clit, she trembled hard and exploded with pleasure, bliss tearing her apart as Spike’s name tumbled off her lips. Colors burst behind a fog of black. At long last, she felt something resembling completion.

It made her insides crash and her head spin. It turned the tears cascading down her cheeks into a flood. Her mystery man remained where he was, licking her pussy with contented purrs that had her spiraling into confusion all over again. And she couldn’t help herself. She shook, she gasped hard, and she sobbed.

“Spike...”

He nuzzled her thigh again. “Slayer,” he murmured. “My Slayer... My Buffy.”

Buffy’s heart stopped. She was sure of it. Either that or she’d just passed out. For long beats, she did nothing but gasp, willing her cruel cruel mind to stop playing tricks on her, to disambiguate what she’d just heard. The refinement in his voice was gone, taking the last of the reminders that he *wasn’t* Spike with it. It couldn’t be real. It couldn’t be that she’d just heard Spike’s voice. *Really* heard Spike’s voice. But tell that to a broken heart and a mind that no longer knew the difference between fantasy and reality. The hope that welled in her chest was so painful it nearly broke her anew.

And still, she couldn’t keep herself from sitting up. From asking the impossible question. “Spike?”

This was the moment when the real world would intrude. Her rented whore would laugh, say he’d earned his tip, and leave her feeling like an idiot.

He didn’t. Instead, she felt the mattress shift with him again, felt the tip of his tongue lightly tap her clit. “Baby, was there ever any doubt?”

Not real. Not real. It can’t be.

“I’m dreaming.” Buffy jerked the blindfold down and shot her eyes

open. It was bright enough to hurt after all the dark, blurring the colors she could make out into meaningless shapes, but only at first.

He was there. Spike was curled around her, meeting her with the endless ocean of his eyes. It was him—him as he existed only in reality, not the faulty lines of fading memory.

“Oh god. Oh my god.” Another wave of tears began raining down her cheeks and her vision blurred all over again. “Is this real? Please let this be real.”

“I’m real, kitten. I’m very real.”

“No...it’s this room. This place. The...fantasy. This is how it works. You’re not...” She shook her head. God, if this was a sick joke—if this was something other than the real thing—she would never recover. “Fantasy—”

“Fantasie Segrete has no power. It’s a myth, baby. It lures tourists and the lonely, and either they see what they want or walk away even emptier than before. It can’t create things like this.” He licked her clit again. “I’m right here.”

She needed more. “Tell me something—”

“A hundred and forty-seven days, and I saved you every night.”

Buffy broke at that. It was real. Spike was really with her. God, he was really with her. Words abandoned her—words were too small for what she felt.

Which was fine, because Spike was still between her thighs, trembling as though he felt every wave. At once, a slightly shy smile crossed his face, as though he just realized he was seeing her too. That they were seeing each other. “Hello, cutie.”

“Oh god.” She reached for him the second that he began prowling up her body, his denim-clad cock sliding across her wet, swollen flesh as he cupped her cheeks. “Spike...”

But she didn’t get a chance to speak. His mouth was on hers the next second, devouring her with that familiar hunger. He swallowed her whole, tongue parting her lips as he ground himself against her pussy, which was still sensitive from an orgasm that still had her skin buzzing. He tasted real—he tasted like Spike, Spike as he so often had. A thousand words pressed against her lips, but she refused to release him to let them fly. Spike was here.

Spike was with her.

"Buffy..." In the end, he was the one who pulled away. Probably for the best—she needed to breathe. "My Buffy..."

"How?"

"Don't know," he replied breathlessly, reaching between them to free his cock from his jeans. Why he hadn't taken off his pants before he started touching her was beyond her understanding, but she didn't stop to ask. Together, they wrestled the offending denim down his legs. "Don't know how it happened."

"You came back?" She reached for his cock only to have him slam her wrist to the mattress. "What—"

"Touch me and I'll come."

The words made her insides sizzle. "Spike—"

"Wanna come inside you. I need your cunt." He kissed her hard, wrapping his own hand around his erection and rubbing himself along her sodden folds. "Oh fuck."

"Yes please."

He took chart down her throat, nibbling a wet path across her skin until he had his mouth around one of her breasts. Then he slipped the head of his cock inside her pussy, paused to lick at her nipple, and slid home so slowly she was certain that her skin would melt off. Every nerve in her body was on fire, and she welcomed the burn. Her life had been so cold without it. Without Spike's eyes burning his soul so far into her that she no longer knew where he ended and she began. It was too much and it wasn't enough all at the same time, and by the time he was balls-deep insides her, she was already rocketing dangerously close to the edge of another orgasm.

"My god," he whimpered, his hands at last finding hers. "Is this real?"

"That's my line."

"I didn't want to believe. God, Buffy, I didn't..." Spike glanced up at that, her heart singing when she was in his eyes again. "I did, though. God help me, I did. I just couldn't be that selfish. I never thought..."

"You didn't believe me," she whimpered. "I love you and you didn't believe me."

The awed light in his eyes was something she would never again

take for granted. Even when he smiled his cocky smile and brushed his sinful lips across hers, sliding his length out of her until only his silky head remained wrapped around her wet flesh. "Silly girl. Do you ever listen?" he asked. "I believe you. I didn't want to. God, do you know how hard you made it? Telling me that when I was...when I was leavin' the world for you to..."

"Spike!"

He growled and slammed into her hard. "I believed you."

"You left me."

"World was ending."

"That's a lame excuse."

"Pretty sure you've used it before. Think we're even now." With a murmur of complaint, he released her hands as his body began rocking against hers. "But I'm here now, love. I'm here."

"Ohhhh..." She gripped his forearms, digging her nails deep enough into his skin to mark him. "How long?" she demanded. "How long?"

"Forever."

"Forever?"

Spike brushed a kiss against her forehead, then rested his brow against her. The cool slip of his cock from her pussy was both too fast and too slow; she needed him hard, but she needed to memorize every detail. She didn't want one precious second to fade. Her mind raced alongside her heart, still lodged somewhere between happiness and fear. He was with her now. He was really with her. His hands were on her body, he was pounding into her, his eyes on hers—she absorbed it all while barely allowing herself to believe any of it was real.

"Forever. Not goin' anywhere," he whispered. "Haven't you...gotten it through your head yet? I love you. Fuck, I love you so much."

"I've been so sad," she whimpered before seizing a hungry, needful kiss from his lips, moaning when he moaned into her. This was something they'd never had. Not once. Throughout the previous year, there had only been one night where they were able to reach each other. He'd held her in his arms and kissed her forehead, and she'd never felt so loved before in all her life. Then the night before the apocalypse, before she'd lost him, they'd started to heal the scars that were still, in many ways, achingly fresh. He'd peppered kisses along her body with

such reverence that the memory made her tremble. He'd whispered a thousand apologies—apologies for wrongs he hadn't committed against her, and those that he had. He hadn't let her apologize for the things *she'd* done wrong. He was sure, even then, even on the cusp of his martyrdom, that while she hadn't behaved like a saint, he'd deserved everything she'd lobbed at him.

But even through that, they hadn't been able to look each other in the eye as they made love. Now they were. Spike was panting needless breaths against her mouth as he thrust inside her, as her pussy clenched and tried so hard to capture him every time he pulled away. She battled his hips with hers, matching his every thrust with a desperation that she barely recognized.

"It was so hard," he murmured. "So bleeding hard to stay away from you."

"You tried?" she gasped, fresh tears stinging her eyes. "Why?"

Spike blinked, pain stretching the lines of his face. "Thought I had to," he gasped, pounding into her with renewed vigor. "Thought it was what's right."

"You didn't..."

"Don't even say it, Buffy." He growled, though, as though she had. "The sodding second I came back, you were my first thought. My *every* thought. I thought I was doing right by you. Staying away. Letting you...letting you live."

"Without you?" she demanded and nipped at his bottom lip hard enough to draw blood. Her skin buzzed and her blood hummed. She danced on the edge of rapture, but she needed to feel him spill inside her before she allowed herself to fall. "Why would I want..."

"Buffy—"

"I love you. I love you."

He kissed her lips with a sweetness that offset the ferocity of his thrusts. "I love you too, kitten," he murmured, slipping a hand between them. "More than you'll ever know."

"I love you." She felt him shift against her brow and kissed those gorgeous ridges without hesitation. "Unnnh..."

"Buffy..." He nudged her clit with his finger, his balls smacking

against her as his cock worked her pussy. "My Slayer...you feel so good. Made for me, you were."

"Never leave me again."

"Never."

That wasn't good enough. He'd left her twice and she wasn't going to let him do it again. Not to get a soul. Not to save the world. Not unless she was with him—not unless it was something they were doing together. He'd always sworn that he belonged to her, and by god, she was going to make good on that promise. Thus, without warning, she lunged for his throat and sank her teeth into his skin, biting down until his blood soaked her tongue.

He wasn't going anywhere. Not again.

"Mine!"

Because he belonged to her.

The roar that pierced the air could have split continents apart. His body beat against her so hard that she saw stars, he answering growl of, "Oh fucking Christ, I'm so yours," deafening her ears. He thrust into her madly as he spilled himself inside her, his fangs lunging for her throat without missing a beat. And the second that he bit into her, her body buzzed and shuddered hard around him, spiraling so deep in pleasure that it'd be a wonder if she ever climbed out again.

"Mine!" he snarled. "You're mine, Buffy. You hear?"

"Oh yes," she agreed, her nerves ringing. "I'm yours."

Awe blanketed his eyes again, and then he was kissing her like a man starved. He told her without words—he told her with everything he had. He told her with his hands as well as he told her with his body. Forever passed before his hips stopping rocking. Before he dragged his mouth away without claiming her in another long, greedy kiss. Before he settled his hands by her head so he could caress her cheeks with his thumbs. He didn't bother asking her if she knew what she'd done, because she did. They remained curled in each other's arms, glistening with sweat and tears. Together.

"I thought you'd want... I don't know what I thought," Spike whispered finally. "I believed you, sweetheart. I believed you when you told me..."

Her brain was still fried with pleasure, but not too fried to stand to attention. She only wanted to have this conversation once, and was, therefore, determined to cover everything. "But how long have you been back?"

Spike didn't meet her eyes. "A while. Not as anythin' more than a ghost, but for a little while." He paused and trembled, pressing his brow to hers. "Bloody stroke of luck that your boy called when he did. Angel'd all but convinced me to not come after you."

Buffy's eyes went wide. "Angel knew? Angel *knew*?"

"Yeah, he knew."

"He knew how much pain I was in and he... Oh my god. I'm going to kill him. I swear—"

"Sweetheart, much as I would love to see you turn that righteous arse into dust, I'd just as soon never touch foot in Los Angeles again." Spike pressed a soft kiss to her lips. "You're mine now, and I don't want him looking at what's mine."

The word made her shiver with pleasure. Spike was with her. In the end, Spike was with her. And if he was willing to let bygones be bygones...well, then obviously he was delirious with post-coital yum and they'd have plenty of time later to discuss how very much Angel was going to get his ass kicked.

"I'm sorry for the set-up," Spike murmured, rolling them onto their sides. "It was all Harris's doing."

"Xander?"

Spike grinned. "He's the one that found me," he replied. "I figure losing the one he loved gave him some perspective. He phoned up your ex with a mind to see if there was a way they could mojo me back from the beyond, and Harmony flapped her trap before Angel could do rot about it."

"Harm?"

"Angel's secretary."

Buffy blinked. Hard. "Wow."

"In so many ways." Spike kissed her softly. "I was on the first bloody plane outta LA the second I had my body back. Xander had Willow work some voodoo on me so that you wouldn't be able to feel that I was in Harris's apartment. And Christ, you wouldn't believe how hard it was, listenin' to you get pissed and—"

"Wait. You were holed up with Xander and not only did he not tell me...you didn't barge out and, I dunno, cart me off to bed? *And* you two didn't kill each other?"

"Hasn't been all that long, kitten. Just a day or so." He kissed her again. "Doesn't mean it wasn't bloody hard, knowin' you were right there and I wasn't, but he wanted it to be your Valentine's Day surprise, and I went along with it. They did everything they could to get you here. I about lost it when I walked through that door."

She flushed, suddenly very aware of how must it have looked to him, seeing her bound and blindfolded on a bed, waiting for someone else? Buffy's chest constricted and she glanced down, only to have her head jerked upward the next second.

"Don't. I know you—"

"I didn't—"

"Buffy, you knew it was me the second I walked through that door. I felt you know it. Maybe not up here..." He caressed her temple before trailing his fingers down her chest, settling over her heart. "But here. You knew it. Baby, I heard you give your mates every feasible excuse not to go through with this. Had I been just anyone, you wouldn't've let me say a word, much less touch you."

Relief flooded her insides, but that wasn't about to make her waste a good pout. "So you decided to use a phony accent and play along?"

He shrugged, grinning. "Set-up like that comes once in a bloody lifetime. And who said the accent was phony?"

Buffy rolled her eyes. "Spike—"

"Oi. I came from a good family." His eyes twinkled. "Didn't mean much after I was sired and wasn't a good man anymore, so I tossed the accent for somethin' a little more...rugged." Spike offered a playful smirk. "Which do you prefer?"

She grinned. "Can't say. I like you both good and...rugged. Plus... that thing you do with your tongue is just evil."

He waved said tongue at her, wagging his eyebrows. And before she could do anything about it, he'd flipped them over, pushing his hard cock deep inside her again. "And you're mine," he whimpered. "You claimed me."

"I claimed you," she agreed, tossing her head back. "Not going anywhere."

Spike nodded, biting at his mark and grinding his hips against hers. "Not goin' anywhere."

"Oh god."

"I'm gonna fuck you till the sun goes down."

That sounded wonderful. After all, she had a day-pass for the room, and there was no sense letting it go to waste. "I'm very okay with that."

She would never tire of the way he looked at her. Never. He burned her so effortlessly, and she would fall asleep in his arms every night, counting her blessings. Never forgetting what she'd nearly lost. What she'd spent precious months of her life without. She would wake up with his taste on her lips. She wouldn't let him go a day without telling him how much she loved him.

Starting now. As he moved within her, running his hands across her skin, looking at her as though she was the one that had fallen from the Heavens and not the other way around, she'd let him know. With tears and laughter, she'd let him know. "I love you. I'll tell you until you get sick of hearing it, but I love you. I'm so sorry it took me so long. So... so sorry..."

Spike smiled and her heart clenched. "Don't cry," he murmured, caressing her lips with his. "It's all right."

"It is?"

"We got here, didn't we? I love you, and you're mine." He shivered at the word, licking the bite mark on her throat again. "You're mine... and you're not going anywhere."

And neither was he. Not anywhere. She had him back now, and he wasn't going anywhere. At last—*finally*—she had the opportunity for a genuine second chance, and she wasn't going to blow it. Spike was with her. He was really with her.

And as long as they lived, she would never take him for granted.