

Fate  
1x01 "Lucky me"

by

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Based on characters and ideas created by Joss Whedon

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## ACT I

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

The train's mechanical heartbeat thumps along the tracks. It rumbles along in the shadow of a mountain as the day ends.

COMPARTMENT CAR

There are only two passengers.

DEVON PAYNE, mid-twenties, a melancholy beauty hidden from neck to toe in black, stares out the window.

Opposite her, SAMUEL ZABUTO, African, in his late fifties and ill-suited to his stuffy tweed suit, snorts in his sleep.

Beside him on the seat is a waterproof leather SATCHEL - not quite closed - and a BROCHURE sticking out that reads "The Mystical Portends Symposium".

Samuel twitches and turns, knocking his satchel off the seat. The angry THUMP as the heavy bag hits the floor STARTLES Samuel awake. He blinks under the sickly lights of the compartment.

It takes him a moment to recognise his surroundings and that he is not alone. He self-consciously smiles and looks down at himself, presumably for drool. He sees his bag and quickly crouches off the seat to scoop the entrails of his possessions back into the bag.

SAMUEL

Apologies.

Devon gives a cursory glance at the scrolls, books, and parchments that are scattered over the floor. Many are written in strange, impossible to read text. Samuel glances up worriedly, as if sensing her gaze, but her attention is back out the window.

Everything back in order, Samuel closes his bag and sits back on the chair. He tucks the bag back under his arm and settles back into the monotony of travel.

A SCREAM ends the silence.

Samuel is startled by the unexpected sound. He looks at Devon; she has not reacted at all. He frowns. Did he imagine it?

He is almost prepared for the next SCREAM.

This time Devon reacts and turns to the door, but doesn't appear particularly worried or concerned. Samuel darts his eyes at the door. He takes a deep breath as though making some significant decision.

SAMUEL

I suppose it is neither wise  
nor safe to venture into the  
unknown.

Another SCREAM. That decides it for Samuel.

He reaches for an ornate walking CANE against the wall of the compartment. He gets to his feet and straps his satchel around his shoulder. He gives Devon a shaky smile.

SAMUEL

Please lock the door behind me,  
miss. One can never be too  
sure what's on the other side.

He steps forward and cautiously opens the compartment door. He pokes his head out for a moment, checks that the coast is clear then steps out. He shuts the door behind him.

Devon watches him through the glazed glass. He is a fuzzy outline hovering between two directions. He chooses the left side and heads slowly away.

CORRIDOR

Samuel takes a deep breath. He grips the cane in both hands, and crab-walks down the corridor. His satchel bounces against the other closed doors as he moves along. There are WHIMPERS and WHISPERS in the compartments, and even the shape of someone running forward to lock their door with a loud CLICK.

He hears a CRASH ahead.

Craning his head around the end of the passage he moves to the entrance of the next train car.

He peers through the glass separating the two sections. He can see tables covered with white, pressed linen and splendidly decked with glasses and cutlery - The Dining Cart.

THWAP

A GIRL with long brown hair goes flying into one of the tables, flinging glass and condiments around her wake.

Samuel blinks in surprise, perhaps even in recognition, and rushes forward.

DINING CAR

DAWN SUMMERS, 18, rolls off the table.

DAWN  
 (getting up)  
 Ow. Ow. Ow. Okay, you're a  
 little stronger than a vampire.

She faces a SAVORTE demon. It is stout and pudgy, wrinkled, with a puppy dog eyes and long slightly clawed fingers. A hairless bull dog in a uniform. It GROWLS, showing off its gnarly, uneven, but impressive teeth.

DAWN  
 (shudders at its  
 grossness)  
 Urgh. Bad doggy. Stay.

A WHIMPER in the corner takes her attention to--

A FAMILY huddled behind a table, cuddling each other, quite scared. There's some other PASSENGERS similarly hidden. Dawn is the only one doing anything about the demon in their midst.

Knowing she's the it girl, she steels herself against the demon as it charges. It lofts her up and shakes her roughly. She pushes against it with all her might, sending it closer to the door--

Samuel pushes the door open, konking the demon on the head. Dawn leaps back out of the way as it loses its grip.

Samuel swings in with his cane, clobbering it until it goes down.

DAWN  
 (to the passengers)  
 Out! That way.

She stands aside as the passengers scabble from their places and rush past Samuel and Dawn in a panic. Some just step right on the demon, who makes an unconscious grunt each time. Dawn regards Samuel.

DAWN

Thanks.

SAMUEL

You're most welcome. I'm happy  
I could be useful.

(looks down the  
corridor)

Is that your handiwork?

Dawn looks at another felled SAVORTE, also out cold.

DAWN

(grimaces)

Yeah. I broke my large punch.

Samuel stares in confusion at a SHATTERED PIECE OF  
STATIONERY - a paper punch - on the floor.

SAMUEL

Might I inquire-

DAWN

Uh. Maybe later?

She points at the other end of the dining compartment.

Two more SAVORTES enter. One holds SOMETHING HIDDEN in his  
hand that GLOWS on the side facing Dawn. Seeing their  
comrades out cold and the two humans gawking at them, both  
demons snarl and advance down the narrow passageway.

Samuel readies the cane for battle. Dawn looks helplessly  
around for a weapon. She grabs a steak knife from a nearby  
table. It seems flimsy compared to the demon claws looming  
down the passageway. It's the best she's got.

Dawn and Samuel both take deep breaths at the same time.  
Here they come. Wait for it--

The demons stop cold.

Their expressions and frustrated growls indicate it wasn't a  
voluntary action.

The two humans glance toward each other, unsure.

Dawn sees her hair move in front of her. It's moving as  
though being blown forward by wind. Baffling.

The demons share similar looks of bafflement before--

And UNSEEN FORCE lifts and SLAMS them into the walls of the  
compartment.

They hit the ground and stop moving.

Dawn and Samuel slowly crane their heads around to look behind them, almost expecting something scary.

Devon stands by the open door with her palms open. She lowers her hands and waits; watching the Savortes.

One of the Savortes starts to get up.

Devon flicks her eyes at it and makes subtle gestures with her fingers and hand.

The demon's body FOLLOWS the small movements.

It crashes against the roof - wall - roof - floor - wall - floor -

And finally lies still.

DAWN

Cool.

The other demon gets up, really pissed.

Devon raises her arms, ready to repel it--

A LARGE CLAW grabs her shoulder from behind.

The biggest, meanest Savorte out of the bunch (let's call him WALLY) stares her down; its growl is low and right behind Devon's ear. In its other hand, there is a distinct GLOW - an orb - identical to the one seen in the other demon's hand earlier.

DEVON  
(flatly)

Great.

WHOMP

She sails through the air-

-past Dawn and Samuel who duck as she passes-

-and lands on a dining table halfway down the car.

She falls right off the other side into the cushioned booth.

Dawn and Samuel gawk at Wally. This is not someone you want to tangle with without a hefty axe or rocket-launcher.

They share a look.

Nu uh.

Start backing away from Wally, and rushing toward the smaller one at the other end of the car. They'd have better odds with it.

Wally tromps down the passageway after them.

Not fast enough to outrun it, they turn and make their stand. Ready for the worst.

Wally ignores them and swipes them out of the way.

They are briefly insulted until the other Savorte TACKLES them both out of frame.

DEVON

Barely conscious.

Wally reaches down to grab her by the neck. It lifts her right out of the booth, making to drag her down the passageway. Devon's eyes are unfocused, she blinks dazedly and takes useless swipes at her captor.

PFFFITTT

Wally abruptly stops walking.

PFFFITTT

Wally's eyes roll.

PFFFITTT

Wally gargles sickly, lurches and falls.

On top of Devon.

DEVON  
(mumbles from beneath  
the demon)

Ow.

ON WALLY

Three crossbow bolts stick out of his back.

Devon pushes vainly against the body.

Finally someone seems to take pity on her predicament, and pulls the demon from her, dumping it to the side.

A HAND reaches out to help her. She pushes it away and gets up by herself. Even glares at the person offering assistance.

JASON

I see you're once again in  
your usual rosy element, Dev.

JASON MANDRAKE, mid-twenties, oozing every type of appeal, reloads his crossbow. He motions over his toy.

JASON

Good thing I had her back with  
me in the cargo hold.

Devon ignores him and looks down the passageway.

Dawn and Samuel are comically thumping the remaining demon into unconsciousness. That taken care of, she turns her head to the other door to check, giving Jason a dirty look as she looks past him.

JASON

I don't know why you're evil-  
eyeing me. This has gotta be  
your fault.

Devon stops looking around and glares straight-faced at him.

DEVON

My fault?

He kicks around Wally without looking up.

JASON

Well yeah.  
(air quote)  
Demon magnet.

DEVON

Really? What's in the cargo  
hold? It has to be big and  
nasty if you're not using your  
private jet.

Jason smirks, hearing something else in her accusation.

JASON

Of course it's big Dev. It  
always is.

She grits her teeth.

JASON  
 (cont.)  
 But it's nothing a bunch of  
 mercenary attack dogs would want.

Dawn and Samuel approach, their demon taken care of. They seem wary to intrude on the private spat. Jason doesn't seem to notice their approach, but-

JASON  
 (friendly)  
 I'm Jason. How ya doing?

Samuel tries to react quickly to the sudden inclusion into the conversation.

SAMUEL  
 Samuel Zabuto. Pleased to meet  
 you.

DAWN  
 (flustered and  
 crushing a little)  
 Dawn. I'm Dawn. Oh and you are?  
 Uhm you're Jason. Right. You  
 told me that already. So...  
 you know each other?

Devon looks over Wally, finally crouching to search it.

JASON  
 Yeah. That's my little Devon  
 Payne...

Samuel reacts to the name. He looks surprised and regards Devon seriously.

JASON  
 (cont.)  
 In the ass. Don't worry, she's  
 always this charming. It's  
 endearing. Apparently. It's  
 what I've been told by a group  
 of Trekkies who worship both  
 the ice-cold logic of the  
 vulcans and refreshingly  
 violent death stares of the  
 Klingons.

Devon stands up. She holds a brightly glowing blue sphere.

SAMUEL

Amazing.

(approaches)

Is that an orb of Sylantia?

DEVON

Looks like.

SAMUEL

May I?

Devon nods and hands him the orb. It immediately dulls with only the faintest of glows.

SAMUEL

(eyes on the orb)

Natural telekinetic?

DEVON

So I've been told.

(shrugs)

Tweed suit. Hybrid accent. Bag of tricks. You're a Watcher.

SAMUEL

(surprised but pleased)

Indeed.

DAWN

Far out. My sister is a Slayer. Heard of her? Buffy Summers?

SAMUEL

Of course. Our paths have not crossed directly, but I once dealt with--

JASON

Whoa whoa. This is lovely. Chit-chat is always nice on a long dull trip. But what is that?

(points at orb)

And why does fugly down there have it?

SAMUEL

Aah yes.

(teacher mode)

An orb of Sylantia is used to detect objects with great mystical energies associated with them.

Jason raises an eyebrow and holds a hand out for the orb. Samuel hands it over and smiles as it becomes completely dull.

JASON

Guess it doesn't like me. Still, sounds useful. Sign me up for one on my next trip.

SAMUEL

(chuckles)

I'm afraid these are a bit out of the league of mortal men. Only someone very powerful can control and program this to find something deeply hidden.

DAWN

Define hidden?

Jason goes to hand the orb to Dawn, she steps back quickly and waves it away with a smile. Jason thinks nothing of it, but Samuel notices. Dawn looks back at him, full attention on her question.

SAMUEL

Objects of great power are usually concealed by spells or have their own natural defenses. These orbs can peel away those barriers. It allows a powerful spell-caster to generalise, localise and then finally pinpoint the location. It takes decades to build the mental capacity to control one.

Devon searches another demon. Jason moves closer to Devon to see what she's doing.

JASON

I've never pegged Savortes as particularly bright. Someone else usually tells them what to do and how to do it.

SAMUEL

Once the orb has found what the spell-caster wants, I suppose anyone can get a reading if the orb is close enough to the hidden object. Oh...

Samuel trails off as he sees what Devon has in her hand. She has found another orb. It is also GLOWS BRIGHT BLUE. Shrugging, she hands this one to Samuel too. Something else has caught her attention - she tilts her head to the side.

SAMUEL  
(whispers)  
More than one.

DAWN  
What? What does that mean?

SAMUEL  
Sylantian orbs are very rare.  
More than one points to someone  
incredibly--

JASON  
Persistent.

SAMUEL  
Determined.

DEVON  
And we're probably about to  
meet them.

JASON  
Now how the hell do you know  
that?

Devon somberly stares through the glass doors toward the front of the train.

DEVON  
I have a feeling.

JASON  
Oh great.  
(glances at the  
others)  
Get ready.

Dawn shrugs at Samuel. They have no idea what Jason means.

The mother of all BANGS comes from the front of the train.

The car JERKS violently. Everyone falls forward; Samuel and Dawn into some booths. Devon hits the wall next to the door, Jason follows, dropping his crossbow and sandwiching her in between.

DISTANT SCREAMS cry out from both ends of the train.

The LIGHTS FLICKER then cut out.

Metal GRINDS loudly. The compartment lurches to the side.

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT

The train is tipping off the tracks; derailing. The train cars are bent at odd angles to each other.

INT. DINING CAR

The light in the room is getting brighter. Eerie, ethereal, almost like the moon was in the train.

Dawn and Samuel hold onto their seats for dear life; in pain and expecting the worst. They breathe loudly with the effort.

Jason holds onto Devon and the side wall, keeping her in place.

She moves her palms up the wall, lightly, a caress as though it were something she loves. There is the palpable feeling that this is something significant.

Her EYES TURN TO WHITE.

The screeching stops. Dawn is slammed back against the back of the booth, as the car jerks upright.

EXT. TRAIN

The train labours, but seems to be PULLING ITSELF BACK ONTO THE TRACK.

INT. DINING CAR

Everything has stopped moving. CREAKS and GROANS emit from the strained joints of the train. The lights flicker back on.

Devon's eyes RETURN TO THEIR USUAL COLOUR abruptly.

Jason notices this and grabs her as she COLLAPSES.

Dawn and Samuel gingerly sit upright, looking around at the chaos.

EXT. TRAIN

The train has stopped, completely upright and on the rails.

There are LARGE GOUGES in the ground where the train ploughed through it.

Smoke pours out of areas that appear damaged. Some of the cars still seem crooked.

INT. DINING CAR

Dawn gets to her feet. She turns and helps Samuel out of the booth he has been awkwardly jammed into.

Jason carries Devon to a booth and props her up. He looks her over, but she has no external wounds apart from the scratches she gained from the earlier tussle with Wally. He gets up and looks around.

Whatever was on the tables is now scattered around the compartment. The unconscious demons have been battered up some more.

DAWN  
Did she do that?

JASON  
You mean stop us from becoming  
track pancakes?

He shrugs and scouts around to retrieve his crossbow.

JASON  
This wasn't exactly a friendly  
accident. I'm gonna take a  
look around, see if more of  
the dog-boys are around.

SAMUEL  
I'd like to come with you. I  
suspect the cause of the  
derailment was supernatural in  
origin.

Jason shrugs - it's Samuel's decision - but both he and Samuel fix their eyes on Devon. Dawn guesses what they're thinking.

DAWN  
(faux drama)  
Boy, I sure am beat. I'll just  
sit here and protect the damsel  
in no distress while you go do  
manly things.

Jason seems to suspect the validity of that statement.

DAWN  
Hey! Sister of Slayer.  
(grabs butter knife)  
I've faced a few apocali in my  
day you know.

JASON

Okay. But watch your back.  
Stranger things happen around  
her.

He takes a SHEATHED HUNTING KNIFE out his jacket and tosses it to Dawn. She takes it out of its cover, impressed.

DAWN

Remind me to travel with you  
more often.

He smiles and heads out the door.

EXT. TRAIN

The two men head up to the front of the train. The passengers stream out of the exits and mill about in a dazed panic. They get in the way mostly, but move quickly enough out the way when they notice Jason's weapon of choice.

As they near the front of the train, both men get ready. Glancing at each other first, they round the corner to the front of the train-

And find no one.

The front of the train has been flattened. It looks like the Hulk took a whack at it. The metal is buckled, the front window completely smashed, the underbelly warped and protruding. This train is going nowhere ever again.

Jason climbs up the side and looks in the compartment window.

A PORTER helps the DRIVER stumble away from the sparking train controls.

DRIVER

(spaced out)

I don't know. I don't know.

Jason jumps down and reaches inside his pocket. He pulls out a CELL-PHONE and dials.

INT. DINING CAR

Devon sits up slowly. Dawn is seated beside her.

DAWN

Hey. You okay?

DEVON

Never better.

She lifts her hand to her head, squeezes her eyes shut against the pain, swallows it and fixes a blank expression on her face.

DAWN

So. Thanks.

Devon looks up, raising her eyebrows in question.

DAWN

For saving our lives. You must be an A-class witch.

DEVON

I'm not a witch. I don't borrow power.

DAWN

(ain't gonna argue)

Uh. Okay.

(looks around)

So Jason and Samuel went to see if it was safe to leave...

Dawn watches as Devon bends over. Dawn isn't entirely sure why until Devon sits up again, holding an orb she retrieved from the floor. She brings it up quite near to Dawn. The sphere glows WHITE. Dawn realises what it means for her.

Devon brings the sphere closer to herself and it changes to the same bright blue as before.

Dawn isn't sure what to make of it or Devon. Can she trust her?

DEVON

I don't think we can wait for Jason.

DAWN

Why not?

DEVON

Because I have perpetual case of bad timing.

Dawn follows the direction of Devon's gaze. There are a few more Savortes standing at the door; in front of them, a DEMON of a different species stares at the orb.

This demon is more human, built like Conan with a fierce leather uniform to match. There is an emblem etched into the outfit. It resembles THREE CLAW MARKS.

Dawn looks down at the knife Jason gave her. It is wholly inadequate for the size of the enemy.

DAWN

Nu-uh.

(holds out a hand for  
Devon)

Can you walk?

Devon shakily pulls herself to her feet.

DEVON

I think I can run like a girl  
if I need to.

They both back up the corridor, not taking their eyes off the demons who move toward them down the narrow passage.

CONAN DEMON

Get the Key!

DAWN

Run like a girl now!

Devon tosses the orb at them, braining one of them. The girls race away, pushing open the door to the next compartment. The demons charge behind them.

EXT. TRAIN

Jason searches along the tracks. Samuel crouches down. He has found some SHINY POWDER on the ground. He puts a finger to it and it comes away looking like glitter.

He regards it for a few moments. Jason snaps his phone shut and approaches Samuel.

SAMUEL

You'd think someone lecturing  
on signs and portends would  
have seen this coming.

(stands)

Demons do not usually attack  
people this openly.

JASON

That's demons for ya. Whacky.  
Help's on the way, but it might  
take a while to get here.  
Before it does, I wanna make  
sure those Savortes are not a  
problem.

SAMUEL

How do you know the species?

JASON

Met a few. They're good for hired thuggery and not much else. Maybe the people they work for did this.

SAMUEL

If their masters were here, they don't seem to be now.

JASON

That's the first thing I get answers for when we're out of here. I don't like variables.

DAWN (OS)

(scream)

No!

Light FLASHES.

Jason takes off running toward the sound, back down to the other end of the train. Samuel follows as fast as he is able.

He huffs and puffs but is far behind-

JASON

Slides to the ground next to a figure lying in the shadows. He reaches out and lifts her face.

Blood drips down Dawn's forehead.

DAWN

She's gone.

FADE OUT.

ACT II

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Jason helps Dawn up. Samuel sits on the train steps, out of breath. His bag is next to his feet.

JASON

Gone. Dead?

DAWN

No. They thought she was-  
(changes course)  
-thought she was connected to something called The Key. One of them had something that made a portal and they took her through.

Jason takes out a handkerchief from within his jacket and dabs at Dawn's wound.

JASON

Key of what?

DAWN

(elusive)  
I don't know. Just The Key.

JASON

Okay. It's okay. She'll be fine.

Dawn reaches out and stops Jason's hand; she holds it still.

DAWN

She won't be fine. She was hurt and they think she's something she's not.

JASON

People always think she's something she's not.

She lets go of his hand and gets up. He holds her elbow and helps her. He hands her his handkerchief and she dabs at her head.

DAWN

The called her the Key. It means there's a door. An opening. A portal. A very bad thing.

(off his look)

Why aren't you freaking out?

JASON

Look I know her.

(rephrases)

As well as anyone can know her. In the two years I've known her, she's been mistaken for a war goddess, kidnapped by a looney cult of vampires because she has weird blood, and had her arm broken by a dragon. A dragon! And you know what I've learned through all this?

Samuel is intrigued too and gets up to join them. He secures his bag around his shoulder.

JASON

(cont.)

She's Murphy's law with a four-leaf clover. One minute, she's life's favorite play-toy; the next, she hits the jackpot. It's like the universe collects a pocketful of cosmic coincidences designed to save her from whatever crap it puts her through this week.

DAWN

And by coincidence you mean meeting the sister of a Slayer who's already encountered the kind of trouble a portal brings?

SAMUEL

And a former Watcher who dabbles in interpreting cosmic coincidences?

DAWN

And a dashing hero who just happens to have a crossbow on hand? On the same train, at the same time, just as these demons are looking for something? What are the odds?

JASON

Okay. Fine. It's fate. Whatever. Overlooking the obvious, how are we supposed to help her? We don't know where she is or even how to get there. I didn't bring along my handy pocket portal maker, and as much as you claim to know about portals I doubt you can make one either.

Dawn looks away.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

I might be able to help with that.

NADYA, early twenties, is the opposite of Devon. She does not hide behind her clothes or dark colors. She is bright, colourful and beams a megawatt smile.

Jason is at first surprised, but once that fades, he looks her over more thoroughly. He gets away with it because she is doing the same to him.

SAMUEL

Hello. You are?

NADYA

Nadya. I'm sorry. I saw the portal open and then overheard what you were saying. Those monsters took someone?

Dawn immediately grabs onto the help offered; she's almost frantically hoping it's real.

DAWN

Yeah. I don't know how much time she has. They're going to hurt her.

JASON

We don't know that. We're not really sure why they need her.

DAWN

It's blood. It's always blood. Portals, the bad ones, the ones that tear worlds apart, need blood. People kill for that power. Die for it. Mostly people you love.

Her emotions and raw and heavy. Jason and Samuel can't help but take her seriously. Samuel nods.

SAMUEL

Acathla.

Dawn blinks.

SAMUEL

(smiles sadly)

I too have lost someone to the power and influence a portal wields. Blood starts it. Blood stops it. We will not lose another to this.

(to Nadya)

You said you could help.

NADYA

It's still recent. I think I can do it...

Nadya reaches out with hands, she feels around as though searching through the dark. Her hands still, she squeezes her eyes shut, and when she reopens them, they are BLACK.

DAWN

(whispers to Samuel)

Oh. I know this. Now that's a witch.

A PORTAL OPENS in front of them.

Nadya's eyes return to their normal color. She wobbles a little and Jason grabs her elbow to steady her. Jason is impressed and doesn't take his eyes off her: she's hot and useful. Bargain.

JASON

That is some power you have.

Dawn gets it: typical guy. She rolls her eyes. The couple don't even know she and Samuel are there.

NADYA

(ego stroked)

It's not really mine. I simply reopened theirs.

JASON

I can't do it, so still  
impressed.

(remembering he has a  
mission)

I'd better Clark Kent it and  
rescue the damsel.

NADYA

(playful smile)

You'll need me.

(off his look)

I'll have to reopen it on the  
other side so you can get back.

JASON

You are handy to have around.  
Off we go to Oz, Dorothy, to  
rescue the tin woman.

He steps through the portal with his crossbow ready, followed  
by Nadya.

Dawn throws her hands in the air.

DAWN

What are we? Untrained  
civilians? I don't think so!

She starts forward and notices Samuel is beside her.

DAWN

You don't have to come with me.  
I am over the age of consent,  
so I'm making this stupid,  
dangerous choice knowing the  
full painful consequences.  
Nobody needs to protect me  
anymore and I know it's not  
really a Watcher's place to  
rush off into the unknown and  
get themselves killed.

She grimaces as she knows that's exactly what she's doing.

SAMUEL

You're right. It isn't.  
(smiles)

After you.

She smiles at him, a little confused, but realises it's his  
choice as much as hers. They head towards the portal together.

SAMUEL

This isn't how I planned my  
journey.

DAWN

It never is.

INT. UNKNOWN MOUNTAINS, CAVERN - NIGHT

Devon lies on a stone table carved out of the ground. The cavern is huge. The roof opens out into the stars. There are a number of pillars around her. Each has an object on it.

These are KEYS. Things that will become very important.

They are as different to actual keys as they are old: an amulet, crystals, silver figures, gold statues, all small enough to be lifted easily by one hand.

Devon wakes and takes in her surroundings and her condition. She cranes her head and sees that her legs and hands are shackled to the table.

She hears CHANTING from somewhere outside of the cavern. It echoes off the dome-like walls. She lifts her hands and stares at the manacles, concentrating.

The manacles FALL OPEN.

She sits up and similarly regards the shackles on her legs. They too drop open after a moment.

Freed, she climbs off the table and properly at the cavern around her. There are two openings out of there. One seems to be the source of the chanting. She makes toward the other.

Her hand brushes one of the keys. The air next to it makes a MUTED SOUND like a stone dropping into a lake of tar. She stops and regards the key. It's silver and looks like a lumpy mold of metal.

She reaches tentatively toward it. As she makes contact-

A PORTAL OPENS. It's unstable. Wobbly and warping.

Deep in thought, she gives a 360 degree look-over at the other keys, thinking.

PASSAGE

Jason leads with his crossbow. Nadya walks closely behind him.

Dawn catches up, holding the knife.

Jason jumps a little before he recognises that it's her and not a bad guy. He isn't surprised to see Samuel with his ever-present bag.

Without saying a word, he leads on.

They come to a gap in the passage wall and duck behind it. They peer over. Below them, is a chamber similar to the one Devon is in.

Dozens of demons are chanting. A DEMONIC HUMANOID CLERIC stands in front of the crowd, SPEAKING IN A GARBLED MYSTICAL LANGUAGE.

JASON

(low)

Anyone have a demon tongue for dummies book?

SAMUEL

(translates)

In the name of Melarna, goddess of our worlds, we offer the blood of innocence.

CHAMBER

The leader takes an urn and pours dark red liquid into a blue flame. The flame leaps higher.

SAMUEL (O.S.)

We bring you the sacred keys to open your prison. Come forth. Quench your hunger on this world. Grow beyond the stars and bless those who bow at your deserving feet.

PASSAGE

Dawn looks away.

DAWN

Great. Another hell god yadda yadda.

(double-takes)

Did he say keys? Plural?

SAMUEL

Yes.

DAWN

Strike me down with this idea,  
but maybe we should find these  
keys and put a stop to whatever  
these guys are up to.

(slightly panicked)

Hell gods and portals are never  
a good combination. One of the  
times my sister died was by  
portal.

(staves off the  
question Jason was  
about to ask)

Just trust me on this.

(steel gaze; she means  
it)

I won't let someone else go  
through that. Not again.

DEVON (O.S.)

I took care of it.

Everyone JUMPS as she ducks next to them.

JASON

Can people stop sneaking up on  
me today? So where are they?

DEVON

Don't know. Don't care. They're  
gone.

She exchanges a look with Dawn, who nods, obviously relieved.

JASON

Great.

(rubs his hands)

Let's get out of here.

He moves back the way they came, but stops abruptly.

JASON

Or not.

They are surrounded by a WALL OF SAVORTE DEMONS. Jason  
doesn't take his eyes off them.

JASON

Nadya, another portal would be  
nice.

NADYA

I can only open the existing one. We need to get back to where we came in.

JASON

Doesn't look like an option.

DEVON

This way.

She goes toward a corridor. Dawn follows instantly.

The demons rush forward. Jason fires a volley of arrows and runs backward. Nadya and Samuel go as quickly as they can down the corridor after Dawn and Devon.

CAVERN

The three ladies make it to the cavern first. The pillars are empty.

DEVON

Will this do?

NADYA

Yes. Where does it go?

DEVON

Does it matter?

The demons give a WAR CRY.

Nadya waves randomly. The PORTAL REOPENS, still unstable. Nadya moves to enter. Devon grabs her arm.

DEVON

Wait.

Devon reaches for Dawn's arm. Samuel runs in.

DEVON

(to Samuel)

Take her hand.

Samuel takes Dawn's other hand.

Jason races into the cavern. He's out of bolts, demons are hot on his trail.

DEVON

Grab hold.

Jason doesn't stop running, just uses his momentum to push everyone through the portal.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

They land on a sand dune and roll down. Jason scrambles to his feet first, looks up at where the portal was and waits tensely.

DEVON  
They can't follow us.

She shakes sand from herself. The others do the same as they get their bearings.

DEVON  
(cont.)  
It was an unstable portal.

Nadya nods as she realises.

SAMUEL  
(of course)  
Aaah. They'd be unwise to follow.  
(off Jason and Dawn's confused looks)  
We maintained contact so that we wouldn't be separated over different worlds or geographical areas.  
(looking around)  
Now. I wonder where here is.

Jason pulls out his cell phone and stares at the face.

JASON  
No signal. So much for full worldwide coverage.

He places his cell phone back in his pocket. He lifts his sleeve and looks at his watch.

JASON  
No north? Where the hell are we?

Devon starts walking with the sun to her back.

DEVON  
Somewhere else.

Jason stares at her, mumbles to himself, tosses his useless crossbow to the ground and follows. Nadya falls into step beside him, striking up a conversation.

DAWN  
(to Samuel)  
Do you have any idea what's  
going on?

He adjusts the strap of his bag.

SAMUEL  
None at all.

DAWN  
Good. I don't want to be the  
only one.

EXT. DESERT - DAY, LATER

A heat wave shivers across the landscape as the five walk.

Jason has taken off his jacket, it lies across Samuel's bag which Jason is now carrying. His shirt is tied around his head like a turban; he wears a vest underneath.

Dawn and Samuel have done the same with their outer shirts. Nadya uses Samuel's jacket as a shawl over her head to give her shade. Devon is still swathed from head to toe in black. She walks further ahead of the others. Dawn watches, a little saddened.

DAWN  
(to Jason)  
Is she always so...

JASON  
Stubborn? Unsociable? Stupid?

DAWN  
I was going to say alone.

He considers.

JASON  
I met her doing some work for  
this guy. He tried to get close  
too, but she just, I don't  
know. She doesn't deal well  
with people.

DAWN  
That's sad.

JASON  
You're just going to be kicked  
in the snout if you try.

DAWN

Well, then I get kicked. I  
learned a long time ago that  
everyone needs a second chance.

Dawn walks faster.

Nadya sighs loudly so that Samuel hears her.

NADYA

I think the symposium must be  
over by now.

SAMUEL

(giddy)

Oh. Were you going there too?  
I was to be a speaker there,  
you know.

NADYA

I knew I recognised you from  
the programme.

SAMUEL

It wasn't a very flattering  
picture.

NADYA

So you read the signs?

SAMUEL

I did. Once. I mainly teach  
others who have the gift or  
the desire to attain it now.

NADYA

That must be difficult.  
Something so imprecise.

SAMUEL

Yes. The signs to see what is  
and what can be are often  
very... deceptive.

Nadya nods in understanding.

DAWN

Catches up to Devon. They are well out of earshot range of  
the others.

DAWN

Hey.

DEVON

Hey.

DAWN

Look I know this might become a bad habit, but I wanted to thank you. Again.

DEVON

For stranding us in the Sahara?

DAWN

No. For not turning me in. You knew. You knew they wanted me, but you let them... why didn't you tell them it was me? Most people who just met me would have.

DEVON

They wouldn't have believed me.

DAWN

I guess.

They lapse into silence.

DAWN

Do you often get mistaken for keys?

DEVON

People often mistake me for someone I'm not, but this is the first time anyone has accused me of being an inanimate object.

DAWN

Oh yeah, inanimate.  
(chuckles humorlessly)  
Now there's a story to tell.

Dawn looks around the empty landscape for something to say.

DAWN

Sooo... Jason. How do you know him? Is there some sparkage going on there?

DEVON

You watch too much TV.

DAWN

My sister says that too. Boy,  
is she going to be pissed that  
I got myself lost in a desert.

DEVON

Lucky you. We won't be lost  
for long.

DAWN

Lucky me? Why's that?

DEVON

Them.

She points to the side. On the top of a sand dune, an ARMY  
OF WARRIOR-LIKE BUG DEMONS stare down. They start to growl.

The others catch up to Dawn and Devon and notices what they  
have paused for. The travellers gape at the demon army as  
they surge down the dune.

Nadya throws her hands up; eyes BLACK.

The demons hit an INVISIBLE WALL.

DAWN

Do we have a plan?

JASON

Stand here and die.

DAWN

I don't like that plan.

SAMUEL

I concur.

JASON

(to Nadya)

Portal, magic tricks, anything?

NADYA

(straining)

There are no portals near here  
and this is the best I can do.

JASON

(next solution)

Samuel. You got anything in  
this bag?

Samuel shakes his head and wide-eyes the growing number of  
demons bashing and hacking into the barrier.

More stream over the dunes like a dark river of locusts. The barrier is contracting into a tight circle surrounding them. Each time a demon bangs against the barrier Nadya seems more and more strained.

The circular barrier SHRINKS as she loses energy.

NADYA  
(under pressure)  
There's too many of them. I  
can't hold it much longer.

JASON  
(off-hand)  
Think I can negotiate?

He shakes his head at himself, dismissing the idea.

JASON  
(to Devon)  
Okay, can you just do that  
thing you do where good things  
happen right before the bad  
things do?

DEVON  
If I could, do you think I'd  
be here with you?

JASON  
Are you still bitter over that  
urn incident last year?

DEVON  
This is the time to have that  
conversation?

NADYA  
People please. Help or shut up.

Jason and Devon shut their mouths. Devon steps back.

CRUNCH

She bends down and picks up the lumpy key she touched earlier.

DAWN  
What's that?

DEVON  
It's one of the keys. Last  
time I touched it, it opened  
the portal. But it's not  
working now.

JASON

Why not?

DEVON

How am I supposed to know?  
Maybe I used it all up.

JASON

Give it here.

He grabs for it, but she pulls it away.

JASON

Let me try.

DEVON

No, you'll break it.

NADYA

Children!

Nadya impatiently approaches them and touches it. Nothing happens. Growing angry, Nadya's eyes turn black again and she grits her teeth. Dawn watches intently, waiting, hoping, for something to happen.

An UNSTABLE PORTAL finally opens.

NADYA'S BARRIER COLLAPSES

The demons give a huge ROAR and CHARGE.

Jason grabs Devon and Nadya by the hands. Dawn and Samuel do the same and keep contact with the others.

They jump--

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Nadya, Dawn and Samuel hit grass. Jason plunges into a river. There are TWO SETS OF SPLASHES.

It is raining.

DAWN

(rolling over)

Oh that smarts.

Jason swims to shore and clambers up with some difficulty.

He dumps Samuel's bag onto the shoreline.

He takes stock of their situation, then whips his head around sharply.

JASON

Where's Devon?

Before the others can answer, he runs down the shore and dives back into the river.

Dawn and Samuel run back and forth along the water's edge, with Nadya trying to see from a higher vantage point.

DAWN

Devon! Devon!

Jason surfaces and takes another deep breath. He looks around the dark waters, sees nothing, dives down.

Dawn kneels at the edge, peering into the water.

Jason comes up again, this time holding Devon.

He drags her to the shore.

Samuel helps him hoist Devon out of the water and up away from the water.

They lay her on the grass. The rain is still chucking down.

Samuel kneels down beside her and checks over her.

SAMUEL

She isn't breathing.

Jason wastes no time. He starts CPR.

Dawn hops from heel to heel, wringing her hands and hugging herself for lack of anything to do.

Samuel keeps his full attention on Devon as Jason pumps her chest and breaths for her.

JASON

Come on damnit.

He breathes once more for her.

With a splutter, she turns her head to the side and starts coughing up water.

Jason breathes out deeply.

JASON

Geeze Dev. Never heard of swimming?

She stares into the water.

DEVON

Heard of it.

Crises averted everyone takes in their surroundings. Samuel helps Devon to her feet. She's really shaky.

JASON

Wonder where we are this time.

SAMUEL

England.

They look up the river and in the distance they see BIG BEN.

DAWN

Well that was a waste of a  
plane ticket. Come on. I know  
where we can crash.

INT. MANOR - NIGHT

There is a knock on the door. A HAND reaches to open it.

A soaking Dawn smiles widely from the other side. Behind her, a muddy and bedraggled Jason and Devon, and less muddy Samuel and Nadya squeeze under what little shelter the wall provides. Dawn gives a little wave.

DAWN

Hi Giles.

RUPERT GILES, late fifties, peers out from behind his glasses at the motley, drenched crew.

DAWN

(in a rush)

Okay, so I know you're thinking  
that you put me on the plane  
for college two days ago, but  
I can explain why I'm back so  
soon. Really. But...

(brightly)

Mind if we raid your kitchen  
and steal all your clothes first?

Giles sighs and steps aside.

FADE OUT.

ACT III

FADE IN:

INT. GUEST WING, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dawn and Nadya come out of a bedroom wearing a different set of clothes.

DAWN

I'm just glad the other Slayers left some of their clothes here. I'd never fit into my sister's clothes.

JASON (O.S.)

Just get someone around to the train. The university wanted that artifact a couple of weeks ago. Yes. I know I was gonna meet the professor in person, but I never figured on a eight-hour joyride across dimensions.

Dawn and Nadya peer into a doorway. They smile at each other.

GUEST BEDROOM

Jason cradles the phone on his shoulder. He's shirtless and holds up two ghastly shirts, most obviously belonging to Giles.

JASON

Yes, money would be good. No, I don't feel like waiting for the jet. Just get me on the first available flight tomorrow morning.

(grimaces)

Coach? Of course not. Get me on the second available flight.

He tosses one shirt on the bed and puts the other on.

HALLWAY

Dawn scrunches up her face.

DAWN

He's probably an ass, but mmmmm.  
What an ass.

NADYA  
I'm going to have to agree  
with you.

They giggle and head downstairs.

GUEST BEDROOM

Jason buttons up the shirt.

JASON  
So have you found me another  
hunt?

(listens)  
Oh come on. What about that  
English guy in LA? He always  
wants something interesting.

(off the call)  
The world's mystical community  
did not just up and vanish in  
the past year. Someone wants  
something. They always do.  
Just make sure I'm the one who  
gets it for them.

INT. SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Flames crackle in the old fireplace. The room is tastefully decorated in the most boring colors known to man. The couches are very cosy though. Bookcases line the walls beside certificates and paintings, but just outside of the door, weapons hang on the hallway wall.

Devon sits close to the fire, very pale. She is dressed in what could be Giles' clothes or some other male occupant of the house, not feminine. The shirt is buttoned up the the neck. She huddles under a blanket.

Giles holds the lumpy key.

GILES  
How many were there?

DEVON  
Thirteen in total. All arranged  
in a circle around me.

GILES  
And you scattered them all  
through an unstable portal?

DEVON  
Seemed like a good idea at the  
time.

GILES

No doubt it was the best idea and probably saved the rest of the world some trouble. I'll research this one and hope it will lead to answers and information on this entity they were worshipping. Melarna. It doesn't ring a bell.

SAMUEL

I do not recognise it either.

GILES

I want to get started as soon as possible. Anything involving the Key is dangerous. With your help Mister Zabuto?

SAMUEL

Of course. Call me Samuel. Only my students call me Mister Zabuto now.

GILES

I always wanted to meet you while you were on the Council. You were considered our foremost expert at interpreting mystical signs. It was a great loss when you left.

SAMUEL

It was my time to choose a different path.

Devon stifles a yawn. Giles notices.

GILES

The guest room is properly warmed for you now, if you would like to-

She nods curtly and stands; taking the blanket with her. She doesn't hang around for long.

Giles regards Samuel with a shared sadness.

GILES

I am not mistaken in who she is, am I?

SAMUEL

I do not believe you are. It is both fascinating and disturbing that we have met her now.

GILES

The name change explains why no surviving members of the council knows she's still alive. I suspect contingencies would have been put in place.

SAMUEL

They only found Bastion's body and possessions. No trace of her. It seemed a reasonable assumption she was lost too.

(considering)

Well, perhaps not so reasonable.

Giles frowns, remembering something.

GILES

His diaries were sent to me when Dawn's sister began questioning her Slayer heritage. I recall something...

(gets up and walks to a book shelf, looking at the spines)

I only found out he was dead then. So many of us are now. Each day brings a new responsibility and not enough of us to shepherd them.

SAMUEL

(answers the unspoken question)

I would not be averse to joining the council again. I feel that despite the Slayers' efforts, the tide has not yet turned.

GILES

(looking up sharply)

You have seen this in the signs?

SAMUEL

No. I have tried not to read signs relating to Slayers in years. But, this resurfacing of Bastion Payne's charge has reminded me of signs I did see once. I fear events put in motion years ago may not have travelled their full course.

Giles pulls out some books and heads back to his seat.

GILES

When did he die? She seems older than she should be, but I didn't think it was that long ago.

SAMUEL

Let's see. It was a vampire attack the year after your Slayer was called.

Samuel takes a long sip of his drink; something has stirred.

GILES

I'm sorry about Kendra. I feel responsible-

SAMUEL

Don't be. It is the nature of Slayers to die. And the curse of Watchers to mourn them.

Samuel lifts a glass from a side table and drinks.

SAMUEL

I am less afraid for for the Slayers now, and more for the one they call the Key. It is Dawn, isn't it?

Giles is not surprised he knows.

SAMUEL

She spoke of hell gods and portals. No hell god I know of would lower themselves to fight a Slayer. I suppose Dawn is not truly the Slayer's sister?

GILES

She is. For all intents and purposes. Dawn was given human form and memories by monks of the order of Dagon. She is connected to her sister, in blood at least. She was fourteen and already had more powerful enemies than her sister had ever faced.

(admitting)

The Key's power is terrifying and I thought, hoped, the threat to it was over. We fought to ensure that. Her sister and I wanted her to remain young.

SAMUEL

The fate of the world is invested in the young.

GILES

The world is doomed.

They each take a drink.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dawn and Nadya sit at the kitchen table. They dip their spoons into a variety of warm dishes and eat.

NADYA

My mother is a sorceress. I've always wanted to be like her, but I don't think I'll ever be that powerful. She could have opened her own portal.

DAWN

We wouldn't have made it without your help today. One of my friends was the most powerful witch in Sunnydale and I don't even think she could open a portal. Sure there was this spinning room, headache trick, but that was only after-

(catches herself)

Portals are really difficult.

NADYA

Getting here wasn't so difficult. The key has some sort of dimensional reset. All I needed to do was give it power and it did the rest. The problem is making sure it's stable. I piggy backed on a stable one to the cave, but those last two...

(shakes her head;  
annoyed with herself)

I wish I had more experience with them.

DAWN

But what's the diff? We got back here, didn't we?

NADYA

Stable portals don't require contact between travellers to lead them to the same place. They can also be directed.

DAWN

How?

NADYA

If you have control over them, you can go anywhere you chose. Some beings are able to travel time and some can even find people or things without knowing where they are.

DAWN

You seem to know a lot about them.

NADYA

Portals fascinate me. It's the eternal idea of escape.

Dawn nods in understanding, perhaps empathy.

NADYA

I want to harness them, but power like that takes centuries to learn.

(the prospect seems  
grim)

So what were you doing on the train?

DAWN

My first attempt at independence.  
It ended well. huh? I was on  
my way to my sparkly new  
college. It was gonna be great.  
Nowhere near my dad. Nowhere  
near a Hellmouth. And  
definitely nowhere near my  
sister. She's on this uber-  
motivation trip. I think she  
wants to be a teacher or make  
self-help tapes.

JASON (O.S.)

Is she hot?

He reaches over, grabs a spoon and scoops some food from  
Dawn's bowl.

DAWN

Hey! Go find your own pudding.

JASON

Now where's the fun in that?

He sits down.

JASON

Where are the others?

DAWN

Sitting through there, being  
boring. Adult talk.

JASON

Talking and Devon. Two very  
foreign concepts.

DAWN

How'd you two meet anyways?

JASON

Long, confusing story involving  
an Englishman.

He dismisses the beginnings of the tale and pigs out. The  
girls just stare at him.

JASON

Okay. So I hunt relics-

DAWN

(how cool)

A male Lara Croft.

JASON

Doesn't anyone remember Indiana Jones?

DAWN

Did he come out before the Playstation?

She and Nadya laugh.

DAWN

Okay, so you're a relic hunter and Devon is?

JASON

Trouble. Wherever she goes, danger beats her to it. I don't even know how we teamed up. She was just there. Seems to be her talent. I was after an urn and she was handy at getting past all the magical defenses. If she wasn't so damned unlucky to be around, that would have been the easiest grab of my life.

NADYA

I wonder why she was on the train.

JASON

She's a drifter. The train was probably just another way to go nowhere slowly. What about you? Were you going to or running from?

NADYA

Running toward actually.

JASON

Somewhere pleasant I hope.  
 (has a thought and  
 tones the charm down)  
 Or was it someone? Someone special.

NADYA

(eyes roam over him)  
 I'm still deciding on that.

They smile at each other. Dawn snorts into her food. Jason and Nadya look away from each other.

NADYA

Have you ever wanted to find  
your own place in the world?  
To know there's a place where  
you can step out of the shadows  
and prove that you are great  
and not simply a random  
accident of birth.

(flustered)

It sounds silly, I know.

JASON

No it's not.

(speaking with his  
eyes)

But um.... are you sure you're  
not great already?

They lapse back into silence, but shoot small glances at  
each other and pretend to be interested in their food.

DAWN

Aaaww you smoothie.

It breaks the silence. They all laugh and talk.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

A row of black clothes hang on a wire across the bath. Devon  
reaches over and takes the vest.

She pulls the vest on. It covers her modesty, but not the  
silvery WELTS that travel across her back. There are two  
sets of BITES on her neck. She reaches for another layer of  
clothes to hide her scars.

There is a KNOCK at the bathroom door.

DEVON

In a minute.

She looks in the mirror, adjusts her clothes, making sure  
none of her wounds show.

CORRIDOR

Giles bobs uncomfortably on the other side of the door as  
Devon exits the bathroom.

GILES

(low)

Sorry. I wanted to talk to you.  
Without the others.

He motions for her to come with him. She nods.

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY

Dawn stares at the key. It sits on the mantelpiece, and though it is nothing special, Dawn seems compelled toward it. Her fingers reach out, oh so slowly, to touch it. Something, perhaps a trick of the light, makes the smallest glimmer appear on the key's matte surface. Dawn's fingers are so close she could almost touch the light-

Giles shuts the doors behind him and Devon as they enter. Dawn jumps, and turns around quickly, almost as though she feels guilty.

DAWN  
See! Here bright and early  
like you told me to be.

Giles makes a gesture, and Dawn and Devon choose their seats. He sits in front of them both.

GILES  
(to Devon)  
I'm sure I don't need to tell  
you that Dawn is the Key.

Devon nods.

GILES  
(cont.)  
But what I do need to tell you  
is that I don't think it is a  
coincidence you two have met,  
now, when someone has gone to  
a great deal of effort to find  
the thirteen keys of Mammitu.

DAWN  
Wait! I'm a key of say-wha-tu?

GILES  
Mammitu. An ancient goddess of  
destiny. It is believed-

DAWN  
And we're only finding this  
out now?

GILES

Dawn, everything we know about your history, we've learned from a crazy hell goddess and some unforthcoming Knights of Byzantium who would rather stick a skewer in me than exchange history notes. Besides, you are not one of them.

He stands up and fetches the key.

GILES

But you are a part of their greater puzzle.

Giles places the key on the table in front of them as he sits down. Dawn's eyes can not help but be drawn to it. On the table beside it are a few BOOKS. One of them is open, it is a handwritten journal.

DAWN

(subdued)

Do I have a name? A fancy one?

(increasingly louder)

One that means the universe hasn't finished playing with my life?

GILES

Mammitu's doorway or a Master Key. The text is incomplete.

(drifting off)

I wish I knew the source of his research.

DAWN

I thought I was done. You know. Just Dawn. I was hoping...

GILES

I'm sorry.

Dawn nods in understanding and puts on her happy face.

DAWN

Hey, it's not all bad news. Not only am I a key, I'm a door too. Do you think in some other ancient cult I'm a knocker or one of those tiny little windows?

She shakes her head, finding it all funny.

DAWN

Right. So someone is after me again. What are we going to do about it?

(points at Devon)

And why's her?

GILES

(to Devon)

Do you recognise this book?

DEVON

(takes a long look)

Bastion Payne's diary.

GILES

Are you aware of what the Council used to call you?

Devon says nothing.

GILES

I imagine he didn't tell you. He wanted you to have a normal life, though I don't think you've ever had that. It didn't matter how many mystical tests we ran, the results were always nothing more than ordinary. But you sitting in front of me, once again proves how extraordinary we believed you to be. Bastion believed in it so much, he scoured the world looking for the answers.

(gently)

Perhaps even a way to spare you.

Devon doesn't really react, but Dawn watches her with a level of empathy.

GILES

Here.

He turns the diary around so the girls can look at it. It shows a sketch of the thirteen keys arranged exactly how they were around Devon, but in the centre, there isn't a person, but indistinct lines representing a ball of light. Around it, worshippers bow down.

DEVON

(whispers)

He knew about this.

GILES

Not specifically. His specific interest was you. Bastion's text contradicts a lot of what is written about this particular deity--

DAWN

Get to the point Giles.

GILES

Mammitu had many names. Many gods do. After the dimensions were forged, she was taken against her will to the underworld. Her brothers, utterly distraught, found a way to travel there by harnessing energy and creating Mammitu's doorway.

Dawn frowns and stares at her fingers. Devon is clearly bored. Giles is oblivious and rambles on.

GILES

But once they found her, she was already deep into her new calling. A fair and just shepherd of souls. Accepting this, her eldest brother gave her the stones of destiny before they left the dimension. She was now the keeper of fate. The brother's name was Dagon.

DAWN

The monks who made me.

DEVON

Sorry. What do dead gods have to do with me?

Giles lifts the journal. Devon sits up, following the old book with her eyes as though it was a treasure.

GILES

I'll let Bastion explain.

(reading)

This crypt reveals to me a forgotten promise made by a benevolent goddess.

(MORE)

GILES (CONT'D)

I believe it to be Mammita,  
the Akkadian goddess of destiny  
and judgment. She alone chose  
no sides when the good and  
evil powers of the world  
divided and became enemies.  
While the higher powers wield  
mankind in an endless battle  
to see which side will  
ultimately win, Mammita made  
this promise...

Both Dawn and Devon lean forward expectantly. Giles turns the page.

GILES

(cont.)

As there exists evil, so shall  
there be good to fight it. As  
there exists good, so shall  
there be evil to claw at it.

Giles looks up for a moment at Devon. There is sympathy there.

GILES

Hated and restricted by the  
other powers, Mammitu can only  
use a vessel, a living tool, a  
finger of fate, to set in  
motion this balance. I believe  
this to be my beloved charge,  
Margaret.

Dawn frowns. Giles stops reading.

GILES

That was his last entry. If he  
had discovered more-

DEVON

It would have been ripped from  
his throat.

Devon's anger is subtle but potent. Dawn unconsciously reaches her hand out to Devon, but thinks better of it and she straightens and looks at Giles; ready to do what she has to.

DAWN

Okay, so we're both Fate's  
bitches. What do we have to do?

GILES

Recover the keys. They were tracked down once and will be again. Mister Zabuto believes he can find a ritual to destroy them.

(to Dawn)

I believe they were designed to control you, or rather, the power you possess. This seems the safer option.

DEVON

I scattered them over a dozen dimensions. How will we find them?

GILES

Dawn.

DAWN

Me?

GILES

You are connected to these keys. It is a natural link that should allow you to find them before the enemy. I'll call Buffy-

DAWN

No!

(off his look)

Do you think I want to spend the rest of my life having Buffy clean up my messes? I'm eighteen and apparently a pretty good metal detector. I'll do this myself.

(looks at Devon;  
unsure)

But with your help, if that's okay? I can't stop trains from derailing with my mind.

DEVON

(shrugs)

Okay.

Despite the lackluster response, Dawn still smiles at her. She appreciates it.

GILES  
You're still taking some back-  
up. Perhaps Rona or Giselle?

DAWN  
(working up some  
steam)  
Giles-

The DOORBELL rings.

GILES  
That should be one of them now.

He opens the study doors and goes through them.

DAWN  
You sure you don't want to try  
and escape this horrible fate?  
I know I can be pushy. Family  
trait.

DEVON  
If there's one thing I've  
learned about my life, it's to  
just go where it leads me.  
It's less painful that way.

DAWN  
I'm sorry. That must be a sucky  
way to live.

DEVON  
It's all I know.

ROARRRRR

Giles sails past the open doors and crashes to the floor.

Dawn stands, eyes wide open. Devon remains sitting, unaffected.

DAWN  
So this is your life?

Four SAVORTES crowd the doorway, led by Conan Demon.

Devon finally stands and nods. Dawn smiles ruefully.

DAWN  
It's really a lot like mine.

FADE OUT.

ACT IV

FADE IN:

INT. MANOR, RECEPTION HALL - DAY

Jason and Samuel run down the stairs. They see Savortes streaming in. Both are back in their original gear. Samuel even has his bag.

JASON

How the hell did they find us?

Giles struggles to his feet. Jason leaps over the railings in front of Giles. He grabs a sword from one of the display racks on the wall and skillfully fences off a Savorte before it can take a swipe at Giles.

GILES

Thank you.

JASON

(cocky and self-assured)

It's all in the wrist.

Giles winces as something happens to Jason off-screen.

GILES

(winces)

Are you all right?

Jason doesn't answer, but gets up off the floor. Deadly serious.

He thwacks at a demon in front of him. American street-fight style. The demon drops when it takes a sword hilt to the head. Jason lumbers over it, looking for his next fight.

Samuel lines up with Giles, walking stick once again at the ready. The two veterans fight side by side as more demons rush them.

GILES

I fear we are outnumbered.

SAMUEL

I fear you are right.

## SITTING ROOM

The Savortes are kept back by Devon's telekinetics.

Various projectiles ZOOM toward each demon, knocking a couple out without doing any real damage.

DAWN  
 (looking around)  
 Trust this to be the one room  
 in the house Giles has no  
 weapons in.

A couple more demons enter. They manage a good growl or two before they are invisibly thrown from the room. The door slams behind them.

DAWN  
 (rhetorical)  
 How many of these things are  
 there?

DEVON  
 Enough.

The doors crash open. Two Savortes return, this time with a couple of vamped-up HELL BEASTS held by chain leashes. The demons now feel like they have the upper hand.

DAWN  
 (moan)  
 I hate it when they smile.

The leashes are unhooked. The hell creatures leap in opposite directions. They land on either side of Dawn and Devon, clinging to the roof.

## RECEPTION HALL

Jason hits the ground and slides along the floor, he twists and brings his sword up and stabs a Savorte before it can impale him with a blade. Back on his feet, Jason fends off Conan's sword, then kicks him out of the way so that he can defend himself from another Savorte.

Conan falls over a dead Savorte and lands through the open front door.

Staring down at him are three YOUNG WOMEN.

## DOORWAY

The three girls stand in hero pose. They take in the scene then each brings out their weapons with deadly ease.

Slayers.

SITTING ROOM

The beasts leap. Devon's EYES TURN WHITE. Papers and objects move in a whirlwind of motion.

Everything STILLs when she gets knocked sideways by a blurring shape.

Devon whips her head up, stares at one of the blurs whizzing across the wall of room, brings her hand up and jerks her fingers. A beast falls to the floor in normal time, stumbles to its feet, blurs off again.

Dawn sidles closer to Devon, with her head darting around the room, trying to pinpoint the speeding shapes.

She YELPS as both blurs push past her and land on Devon.

Devon pushes up with her hands.

The beasts rebound up to the roof-

-grab hold, get their bearings-

-jump back down.

Dawn can't help against these creatures. She looks around for something else, and sees-

A SAVORTE Reaching for the key on the table.

Devon, twisting under a hell beast, sees this too.

DEVON

Dawn!

Devon points at the key.

It shoots from the Savorte's grip and straight into Dawn's open hand.

DAWN

holds the key. Stares deeply into it.

The rest of the world fades from her view.

Her HEARTBEAT is the only sound in her ears.

Her lips part. Her breathing speeds up.

WHOOSH

Sound and sight returns to her in a speedy fast-motion picture slide.

Dawn ducks as a couch whizzes past her, slamming into a hell beast, and knocking it out.

Jason is PUSHED into the room by a Slayer who rushes away immediately.

JASON

Forceful. I like that in a- hey!

Devon telekinetically rips his sword from his hand and throws it at a moving shape. The hell beast unblurs and slams against the wall, impaled by the sword. The remaining Savortes converge on Devon as one. They stop when a RUMBLE shakes the room.

Dawn turns around and looks behind her. Jason scans the room too.

A TINY CIRCLE OF LIGHT FORMS in front of Dawn, suspended midair.

She watches it GROW, enthralled. It spirals and expands exponentially, seeming to rip and spin through the fabric of reality. It forms a writhing, yet stable circle. A PERFECT PORTAL.

Devon uses the surprise appearance of the portal to throw the demons from the room. She now turns to the portal too. Giles, Nadya and Samuel are forced into the room. The doors are PULLED shut behind them. With a CLICK of the key, the Slayers have locked everyone in.

JASON

Welcome to the party.

They stand beside him and gawk at the portal. Its light fills the room, giving them all a blue glow.

DEVON

Time to go.

DAWN

What! Now?

GILES

(steps forward)

Yes now.

Dawn opens her mouth, but shuts it. It is what she has to do.

GILES

Buffy may murder me if you  
don't make it back in one piece,  
but she'll be proud of you.  
What you do here today matters.  
You're making the world a safer  
place and no Slayer or Watcher  
could wish for more.

DAWN

I can't leave you like this.

GILES

Back-up is here with more on  
the way. I'll be fine. If  
anything, this proves that  
time is short and the enemy is  
swift.

(looking at Devon)

You two must keep ahead of  
them. We don't know what they  
want with the keys.

DAWN

But how will we know-

GILES

It won't be safe for you to  
come back here.

(holds her shoulders  
gently)

I'll try and discover who they  
are, maybe try to slow them  
down. But I think in matters  
regarding the keys, you'll  
both be on your own.

His eyes are pained; he wishes it wasn't the case.

He shifts his eyes to Devon. She nods; making a silent  
promise to him.

SAMUEL

Perhaps, if the moon can not  
set on the mountain, the  
mountain can give a part of  
itself to the moon.

He steps forward and speaks to both Devon and Dawn equally.

JASON

(lost)

There is no part of that that  
made sense.

SAMUEL

I may be old...

(lifts his bag)

...and my bag is worn, but I will give my knowledge where I can. If you will have me?

Dawn, so relieved, rushes to hug him. He keeps his hands to himself, unsure of the correct protocol.

GILES

(chuckling)

I believe that means yes.

Samuel looks over her head. Giles mouths a thank you to him.

Jason stands to the side, he looks between the girls and the sounds behind the door. He stares at his sword; almost twitchy with it.

NADYA

Aren't you going with?

JASON

I'm thinking. I'm thinking.

NADYA

Hmm. Think faster.

Nadya steps forward to Dawn and Devon.

NADYA

I said I wanted to be a part of something great. Whatever you're doing, I have a feeling that it's where I'm meant to be.

Jason opens his mouth. Nadya looks back at him quizzically. He shuts his chomper and considers.

JASON

Question. This little quest of yours, would there by any chance be any, uh, treasure along the way?

DAWN

I thought you were rich?

JASON

(shrugs)

I am.

(to Devon)

Do we have to touch for this one?

Devon shakes her head and walks through the portal. Jason holds out an arm for Nadya and they both follow. Samuel bows his head at Giles and also leaves, leaving Dawn behind with Giles.

Dawn hugs him.

DAWN  
I will make it back in one  
piece. I promise.

GILES  
Trust your instincts.

He lifts up her hand, which is still holding the key,

GILES  
Don't lose any of these.

Dawn steps back, nods, smiles through moist eyes; turns and runs through the portal.

GILES  
Good luck.

He watches as the portal closes; sad.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Dawn stops.

The others stand ahead of her on the cusp of the hill. She walks up to meet them; doesn't utter a word as she sees what they are looking at.

Below them lies a vast valley. The skeletons of trees reach up to a black and orange night. Far ahead in the distance, dominating everything around it. Two large statues reach up to the sky. The faces of the statues are twisted and evil.

This is a dead demon world.

The group stand together. Dawn in the front.

DAWN  
Buffy will be so jealous.

FADE OUT.

END.