

Hell Met by Twilight1/7

Summary Spike's behaviour chip no longer functions and slowly but surely he is going mad. He decides on a plan to finally rid himself of Giles and the 'scooby' gang, all except one...

Spike sat in the depth of the shadows, feeling the anxiety of the occupants of the trench. Smokes passed from man to man, each one looked the same and smelt the same. Grey on grey, feet sliding on liquid mud, and Hell knew what else!

It was important to remember whom he sought, a single man, who held the key to his destiny with a distant descendant.

Bombing and gunfire spat to a silence and the men in the trench readied at the flimsy ladders. Whistles blew and they launched over the top eager to be out of the mud and slime; to land on the mud and wire, as the enemy cut down the first ranks.

Spike jerked and shuddered, the hot blood on his face unfamiliar after the weeks of cold rain. His fingers gripped the stolen greatcoat round his slim frame and he ventured out into the cold twilight.

The stars hid in silent shame as the moon struggled to rise above the gloom of the battlefield. The mournful cries of the wounded assaulted Spike's ears. He searched; his eagle eyes picking out the heat vapour from live bodies and the silver caste of the dead.

He saw his brethren gathering at the battles edge, scavengers all. He stood straight and tall, striding out over the field, over English and German shattered bone and blood; declaring to all that this carnage was his to pillage. The ragged band of vampires melted into the night and Spike resumed his search...

##

Willow's hair fell over Spike's head and he jumped, looking into her eyes and saw the gentle amusement there.

"Spike, you've been asleep. Everyone's had drinks; I've made you some chocolate. "

She handed him the steaming mug and he thanked her. Sleep? He shouldn't have slept! They needed him...didn't they? What were they researching?

Giles' spectacles dangled from the corner of his mouth, as he followed the text of an ancient tome with his forefinger, tapping it every so often and nodding sagely. "Willow, this prophecy is to do with your family. Your ancestors were protected by a "guardian angel. " Your great-grandfather survived a gunshot to the head in World War 1... and your grandfather escaped from a gas chamber in World War 2. Not only that, a great many other German Jews escaped with him, on a train." Giles sounded astonished. He looked up at Spike to see the vampire smiling in silent satisfaction.

Giles didn't like that smile; something about the blond made his staking fist ache.

Spike's eyes closed again in sleep and soon the sound of soft purring accompanied the

research.

##

Someone crawled toward him from the English camp. He lifted the frail body from the slippery ground and filled his lungs with the scent of the man, the right man.

He shifted the body in an easy lift and set off for the German lines. The flash of the shot caught his eye and he moved his hand to protect his precious burden. The bullet glanced through his hand and lodged in the soldier's skull.

Spike flew over the ground, hurdling the barbed wire and mines of the battlefield and slithered into the trench that bore a tattered Red Cross symbol. After hammering on the makeshift door, Spike left the man at the threshold when he heard footsteps from the other side. He whirled away from the door and leapt up to the field once more. The moon had risen in the night sky and Spike presented a perfect target. He was shot and fell head first into the cold grey mud.

##

He heard voices. Male and female. Giles and Willow? He roused himself and hoped his head wouldn't fall from his shoulders. The needles of pain concentrated at the back of his head and he realised his fangs were drawn over his lips in hunger. They were too close...warm blood hummed a slice away from his canines and he salivated.

"Spike! When did you last feed?" Giles barked the question.

A question, that meant he had to think. Feed, he needed blood. Hot, rich and calming.

"Willow..." he whispered.

End of part 1

Hell Met by Twilight 2/7

Summary Spike's chip is inactive and he is remembering his past life when he protected the Rosenberg family.

Hot, steaming blood on his lips. Snarling his pleasure, Spike closed his fangs over the rim of the cup; it broke and he stared blankly at his chest as the red pool of life spread and cooled on his skin. His head rolled back and he smiled.

Oh, to bathe in blood again!

##

Poland, October 1943

Silent people filled the truck. Spike could hardly detect individual heartbeats. All followed the same rhythm, a funeral dirge for a doomed race. He studied each face searching for the forebear of his mate. One man from the farthest corner of the cattle truck locked his gaze and all other's faded. The man was old with a scar on his forehead. Spike inclined his

head and smiled a greeting.

The old man spoke with those nearest to him and the agitated talk spread through the truck until silence fell and all eyes turned to look at Spike. He smiled and lifted his index finger to his lips. The atmosphere had changed in the truck. The people in this truck had a protector.

##

"Spike? Do you want some more?" Willow asked, anxiously.

Spike blinked, he was alone with Willow in the kitchen. "Yes, please... I'm sorry I broke the cup. I've not had money to buy blood." She glanced nervously over her shoulder. He heard her heart rate increase and smiled. Would she offer?

"Spike, how long is it since you've had human blood?" Willow's white teeth caught her lip with the boldness of her question.

Spike sighed. "A long time." He hung his head to disguise his grin; she's going to offer... suddenly her wrist appeared under his chin.

He jerked his head away and snarled. "No!" She hadn't shocked him by what she'd done. He had shouted to stop his fangs from puncturing her and blowing his cover.

Willow's small hand cupped his chin and forced him to face her. "It's alright Spike, I want you to do it. You won't be hurting me."

He shook his head. "It will hurt you, Willow, I don't think I can bite you without it hurting anymore. I'm out of practice. Thank you Willow...But no. Get me some butchers blood, that's good enough for the likes of me."

She turned to leave then hesitated at the knife block. She grabbed a sharp knife and drew it over her wrist, wincing in pain as the drops of blood fell staining the floor. Spike flew to her side and caught her before she fell from blood loss. She lifted her hand weakly to his lips and he fought briefly before applying his mouth to her wound.

The strong coppery sweetness of her blood had not changed down the centuries. Willow's practice of magic had enhanced its maturity. He tasted the ancient lineage and knew he'd chosen well. His arm closed around her shoulders, lifting Willow up to stand beside him. He opened his eyes and looked into her face. The delicate bloom to her cheek echoed the soft rose of her lips, parted in ecstasy to show her even teeth that Spike longed to feel clamped on his throat in blood driven madness.

Spike slid his cool fingers beneath her blouse at her collarbone and caressed his mark.

Willow sighed and moaned, moving her hand to the back of his head to force his mouth closer onto the wound.

Spike groaned and felt his fangs descend and he nibbled at her flesh. He licked the wound closed and raised his head. His human face showed no malice though his golden eyes glowed, as once more he knew the thrum of living Rosenberg blood in his veins.

Willow gasped as he captured her wrists behind her back, holding her close to him he bared the shoulder where his mark nestled and scraped his fangs over the raised pale skin.

Spike's lips were silken against her shoulder, his fangs like silver needles raising the heat in her body to dangerous heights. He spoke and his voice was liquid honey. "Who gave you this mark, my lovely?"

"You did." Willow sighed.

"Who protects you?" Spike murmured.

"You do." Willow whispered. "You always have."

"I always will." He passed his palm over her eyes and released her hands. Willow stood still in his thrall while he cleaned the floor of blood.

##

Sobibor, October 14th 1943

The locks were drawn and as the truck doors flew open, the cool night air ruffled the refugees' meagre clothing. Soldiers drew them out of the truck and marched them over the frostbitten ground to the low brick building in the distance. Someone broke from the crowd, despite Spike's barked order to stay within the group. A rifle butt smashed down on the back of Spike's head. Gunfire spat and found the fleeing man.

Spike woke to many anxious faces looking at him. He snarled and the crowd backed off. He leapt to his feet and took in the thick walls, and pipes at ceiling height.

The "showers" rained down invisible noxious death, and expunged the "ethnic." But not today...

The vampire prowled round the perimeter of their death cell, his amber eyes trained on the pipes' poison path. At last, he had traced the line to the end and rerouted the gas pipe so it vented to the outside. They were safe.

Spike pounded out the stonework at the end of the building and made a hole large enough for their escape. For the first time, there was an edge of excitement in the gathering. Spike became immune to the whispered thanks, as the last of the Jews, his first saved, was the last to exit.

##

The prisoners joyfully clambered aboard the train. The rabbi, on the footplate felt sure the Lord would forgive this one violation of the Sabbath.

Spike stood like a dark sentinel against the brightening sky, he could not go with them on the rest of their journey, but was sure that he had saved the Rosenberg line from extinction.

##

Giles spoke to him. "Spike... You're in the prophecy too." The awed Watcher continued. "You saved the Rosenberg family, countless times. How can I thank you? Willow is alive because of your deeds. I...I didn't know how much she meant to me. But now-" He shook his head. "Thank you seems such a tiny word."

Spike studied his unexpected rival for Red's affections. He decided to kill Giles and blame it on Angelus. His head tilted to one side as if listening to an internal voice. Drusilla wouldn't stand for that. Well, kill her first, because she was going to kill the Slayer, but the Slayer wouldn't like a dead Watcher so kill her as well. Kill them all and bathe in their blood. Like he did after the train left from Sobibor.

Spike remembered hot, steaming blood on and in his body, dripping from his lips and fangs.

"Thank you is enough, Watcher." And then he smiled.

End of part 2

Hell Met by Twilight 3/7

Summary Spike's chip is not functioning and he is planning the bloody death of the Scoobies, just as he always threatened.

Spike walked beside Willow in the darkness. Now that he had no interference from his chip the night revealed itself to him in all its diamond velvet glory. He felt the owls' wing beat above him and the leaf crawlers beneath his feet. Scents and sounds of the humans that passed near issued an irresistible invitation to his fangs. He spun round off the path and indulged in a carefree cartwheel.

Willow stood transfixed on the path. Spike looked happier than she'd ever known him. She smiled and left the path to tread on the soft bladed turf that surrounded the university.

Spike turned on the spot with his arms outstretched and laughed breathily. He felt alive tonight... He had found his love through generations of searching and now had only to find and destroy his old flame.

"My Spike has found a treasure."

He stopped dead in his tracks at the familiar east end lilting voice.

"Dru!" He breathed. He fixed his gaze on Drusilla and sent out warning tentacles to Willow to stay still and quiet.

The ageless vampire-seer drifted closer to Spike, her fragile form belied her strength. She was within biting distance before her mind caught up with her body.

"Oooh, Spike's tic-tock is gone!" She laughed a brittle, shattered laugh and slithered around his body. Her fingers threaded through his hair and she cackled again. "What larks! What japes you have planned for them all, my lover..." She slowly backed away, shaking her head. "What of me? What of poor dark Drusilla?" She moaned.

Willow took a step closer to better hear their conversation.

Dru screamed at Spike. "Kill the Slayer? Daddy shall hear of this!" Then she pouted, licking his throat and then nipped with razor fangs. "Spike, you wouldn't kill your mummy."

Spike shoved her away and watched as his mad, dark demoness drunkenly licked her lips. He glanced at Willow and decided.

"I won't let you kill Buffy!" Spike shouted and launched himself at Dru. He held her arms fast to her sides and drained her. Her body jerked against his as he absorbed all her memories and the unseen, untold terrors at Angelus' hands. Now he knew why he disliked the poof so much! She sighed against him and collapsed like a deflating helium balloon. Spike hoisted her up holding her wrists in a steel grip; he spread her arms wide and threw her up into a nearby tree where a jagged, stout branch pierced her heart. Her ashes rained down on him like dirty snow, staining his streaming tears red and grey.

An orphan of the night, Spike sank to the ground and raised his vampire visage to the star-dusted night sky.

Willow knelt behind him and enfolded him with comforting arms.

He sighed and patted her warm hands, thanking her for the unspoken words of comfort. He dragged himself to his feet and walked her the rest of the way home.

##

"Then Spike threw her up into the tree and killed her..."

Spike stared at the wood floor of the Magic Shop as Willow told the tale of Drusilla's second death. He heard all manner of voices in his head now that Drusilla had gone. Perhaps he had drained her voices from her as well as her blood.

Spike fancied he saw Angelus in the corner of the room salivating over his human friends. He glanced in Xander's direction; yes plump and warm oozing hot, hard life.

How could they ignore most of what surrounded them? The night and the creeping death that surrounded the Hellmouth, it was a giant blood red flame to the Vampire race.

Spike's gilded glare rested on Giles and he saw doubt for the first time since the discovery of the Rosenberg prophecies. Doubt, quickly disguised as an interested gaze. Alarm raged through his vampire mind. Discovered, uncovered and laid bare his plot to bleed Sunnydale dry. He shifted his gaze to Xander who chatted and interacted with Willow so innocently, his pounding pulse still sped blood south to an ever-hopeful erection.

Spike smiled and raised his head as Willow finished her story and came to stand next to him; she grasped his hand and raised it high in a victory salute. "Ladies and gentlemen I give you Spike the Vampire Slayer!"

There was polite applause which, pointedly, Buffy did not join in.

Spike looked embarrassed. His demon raged at the civilised noise and almost broke free

of Spike's self-imposed constraint. He twitched occasionally with the effort of his act. He turned his head and saw Giles looking concerned. He growled beneath human hearing and crystal artefacts resonated and fractured.

"Spike, you've removed another threat to the Slayer and Sunnydale. We owe you our thanks." Giles said this with less sincerity than last time. He began to be suspicious of Spike's motives. He and Drusilla had stayed together for a long time. Spike wouldn't switch his allegiance so easily unless he had a good reason. It warranted more research. He couldn't use Willow; she wouldn't hear a bad word said of Spike. Xander, he would ask Xander to help him.

##

Angel stopped fighting. He turned away from his foe and walked purposefully into the night. He cleared the alley and then started to run. Something disturbing had happened in Sunnydale. Someone had killed what was his. Drusilla, the dark, sparkling jewel in his "scourge of Europe" crown was dust. He had felt her passing. He threw down his sabre and stamped on the blade. No warrior of light was he until the slayer of his dark child lay, hung, drawn, and quartered at his feet.

End of part 3

Hell Met by Twilight 4/7

Summary Spike has killed Drusilla; Angelus is on his way to avenge her death.

Spike flew over the gravestones, the night filling his senses. He had found and destroyed every vampire nest that did not accept him as their new Master. He had fed heavily that night; the purloined blood of several minor vampire families now lay in his undead veins. Their thoughts and desires pounded through his brain. He ran to escape them.

He ran toward Angelus whom he saw in his mind's eye, stalking Drusilla's killer.

He halted in the centre of the graveyard and saw Buffy battling with some of his newly acquired minions. They were not bad fighters he mused... However, Murphy's Law demanded their inevitable destruction.

Spike grinned and leapt over the Slayer, his duster swirled around her head blinding her. He landed softly and then lightning fast avoided her up-swept stake. He kept his face human as he broke her wrist savouring her shocked gasp and the sight of bone glistening through the flesh of her arm. He brought the splintered end of the bone to his lips and worried at it with his fangs. Buffy screamed and the acrid scent of ammonia filled his nostrils. Spike smiled as he wrenched Buffy's shoulder out of its socket.

She fell to her knees, barely breathing, and cast a pleading look up at Spike.

Spike stooped to hold her useless hand delicately and then pressed her knuckles to his lips in a courtly kiss. "Goodnight sweet Slayer..." He uttered viciously.

His other hand punched into her chest and parted her rib cage. He curled his fingers round her frantically beating heart.

Buffy stared down at his hand in her body, her blood spilling over his wrist like a waterfall...Her eyes blinked twice as Spike slowly withdrew his hand holding her heart. She fell away. Blood vessels seeped sluggishly trying to find a chamber to fill.

Spike drained the heart of the fear-filled vintage Slayer blood, using an artery like a straw. He squeezed the last drop from the redundant organ and then discarded it over his left shoulder.

##

Angelus roared. Another life sped away from him, this time on heavenly wings. "Buffy..." He gasped mournfully. He turned and ran swiftly past the brightly lit shops and pulsing humanity to where his love lay bleeding. He needed to bid her farewell before the night claimed her forever.

##

Spike pounded on Willow's door.

She opened it and saw Spike's distressed tear-stained face and blood soaked clothes. "Spike... What's happened? "

"It's Buffy, she needs help Willow. Can you come?"

Willow nodded, grabbing her coat. She deadlocked the door and followed Spike to the graveyard.

##

Giles replenished Xander's coffee cup; books surrounded them on three sides.

Xander nodded his thanks and swallowed a gulp quickly. He slapped the text with his hand. "Found it!"

Giles read over Xander's shoulder and felt cold dread grip his heart. The passage told of a Victorian vampire, who had spared a victim, to harvest her descendant and thus rule the living and undead world.

"Spike! " Giles gasped, "My God, he's not preventing the prophecy! He IS the prophecy; he's making it happen. " Giles sank bonelessly to his sofa.

"Giles...G Man! He killed Drusilla, what if she didn't want to kill Buffy, but saw that he wanted to..."

The haunted look of desperation on the Watcher's face turned to one of grim determination. "Not while I draw breath! C'mon!"

##

Hushed darkness shrouded the graveyard as Angelus crossed its boundary. No breath of wind stirred the stark, brittle tree branches it was as if the World mourned.

His vision blurred as he saw her frail figure lying empty and broken on the hallowed earth. Her name caught in his throat as he fought past the soul-sized boulder of despair in his heart. He took a step nearer and her unspoilt face filled his vision.

A little way off he saw an oval organ and wept as he realised what it was. He knelt and cradled her heart carefully, in his palm, the last traces of warmth leached into his body and he howled into the night.

His voice came back to him, echoed from the many mausoleums. He clamped a hand over his mouth and his fangs sliced his fingers. To announce the Slayer's death would be to condemn Sunnydale to an endless nightmare existence. He shuffled forward and held Buffy in a lover's embrace for a final time.

He didn't hear his child and Willow approach...

Spike marched up to Angelus and shoved him away from Buffy. Willow stared as the lifeless body of the Slayer fell to the ground.

Angel held Buffy's heart in his hand...

Angel had blood on his lips...

Angelus!

Willow screamed. Her scream brought Xander and Giles running into view in time to see the final battle between Spike and his Sire.

Angelus launched himself at Spike. His anger and sorrow fuelled his lunge and he didn't expect Spike's stake. He hung frozen, inches from his child's face. The stake hadn't struck true but it was still painful.

Spike pasted a gleeful smile on his face. "I killed them both... I'll kill them all" He whispered harshly in Angel's ear.

"Giles will stop you..." Angel glared at Spike, then gasped as the stake was withdrawn and found its target.

"He can try..." Spike announced to the dusty face that lingered for precious seconds before falling to the earth over Buffy's cold corpse.

End of part 4

Hell Met by Twilight 5/7

summary Giles and his sanity have parted company.

Giles stumbled forward onto the blood-smeared grass. His eyes glided over Buffy's body. His lips pursed tightly against his grief which tore at his heart and belly with relentless

claws.

Angel's ash covered her, the final imprint of his last tender caress spiralled away heavenward on a midnight scented breeze.

Angel didn't kill Buffy.

Angel loved her...

Dark and distant shadows of a long forgotten text floated through Giles' brain. Magic and chaos leadened his intellect and he surrendered to that which could help him the most.

The spell settled around Spike. Giles' head snapped up and locked eyes with the unsuspecting creature of the night. He saw the damaged chip flickering dangerously in the Vampire's Aura.

##

The chapel was silent. No hymns sung, no sermon spoken. Giles and Xander sat like statues in the front pew. Willow sat at the back with a nervous, furtive Spike.

The funeral director handed the urn containing Buffy's ashes to Giles.

Xander ran his hand over the softly gleaming bronze and managed a croaking whisper. "Same colour as her hair..."

Giles nodded and rose stiffly. His gaze never wavered as he walked from the chapel.

Xander followed him with rounded, sorrowful shoulders.

##

Giles and his sanity had parted company...

"I've had a dream... I can stop him Xander. "

Xander looked into Giles' hollow eyes and saw vengeance coiled there like a cold, dark snake. Xander had also had a dream; that he would die by Giles' hand. He trusted Giles with his life, trusted him to stop Spike. The needle stung in the crook of his elbow... "Tell me again why you need blood..." Xander hissed and swallowed the small pain.

"I need the blood ash Xander. I need the strength of those that Spike has betrayed, and those he will b-betray. I-in the dream I had, you d-died. " He hesitated at the young man's expression of disbelief. " Xander, I think I'm g-going mad. Don't have much time. Please forgive me..." Giles' eyes focussed for the last time on Xander's with love as the young man nodded.

Giles' eyes were once more bright with menace; his pupils glittered like jet reflecting fire.

Xander shuddered as the needle withdrew and Giles' forefinger pressed a pad of lint to the wound.

Giles casually tossed his glasses aside and ripped his sleeve cuff up to his elbow. He depressed the plunger, delivering Xander's' blood into his vein. "Some for me..." he murmured softly, turning to the heated crucible, "...and some for the gods." He injected the last into the hollow stone on the burner. The blood bubbled to the red stain left by his own earlier. Giles breathed in the smoke then turned off the flame.

"...cool and scrape off the residue," he whispered to himself, smiling.

Giles stepped carefully to his kitchen and started to make a brew.

"Tea? " He called softly. Xander nodded and lowered himself into Giles' sofa. His dream played repeatedly in his mind. He rather expected to have a spectacular death, living on a Hellmouth and all. If his death were a movie, he'd most likely want to see it.

"My Best Friend Ate My Brain."

##

After tea and biscuits Giles resumed his task. He scraped the blood ash from the crucible and added a teaspoon of both Buffy's and Angels' ashes. He'd found a quantity of Angel's ash in one of Buffy's jacket pockets. The spell was almost complete...

Spike had betrayed one more Vampire. One that could help them the most... Drusilla. To get Drusilla's ash, he needed Willow.

End of part 5

Hell Met by Twilight 6/7

Summary In which Willow is informed of "the plan" to engineer Spike's demise and Giles performs "brain surgery" on the wrong man.

She saw them at the gathering dawn, holding hands they drifted wreathed in a rainbow glow. Her friends, Buffy and Angel. She was afraid to greet them in case they should flee, or evaporate like an unfulfilled wish.

They took up a vigil at the foot-board of her bed; Spike was in the basement hiding from the sun.

"Willow, don't be afraid. We're here to warn you..." Angel began. He stopped when he saw her terrified look. He looked on her with pity and Buffy took over.

"Spike's chip isn't working Wills, he killed me..." Buffy jumped abruptly at the noise of the front door being thrown open.

"Willow!" Xander's voice called. Buffy tried to move out of the way before Xander dashed into Willow's room. Buffy gasped at his pale, grizzled face and dishevelled appearance.

Willow shook her head and finally woke from her spirit fogged sleep. "Hey, Wills,

message from Giles, he needs Drusilla's ashes quick! Where's the Bleached Leech? "

"Ummm, he ...he's downstairs. Why does Giles need her ashes? He's not going to do anything silly is he?"

Willow's innocent question had Xander on the verge of revealing their plan for vengeance. He pursed his lips and lied to his life-long friend. "He just needs it for research Wills, nothing more. He just figured some ash might have caught in..."He swallowed the name as if it were venom, "Spike's coat pockets. Can you go look for me?"

##

Spike rested in the basement, he could feel the heat through the walls. His blood pounded in his head making his body tremble with the power of all the vampires he'd eaten. Drusilla and her death dwelt in his nightmares. He regarded his dark goddess with new respect. How had she dealt with madness for over a century?

Voices filtered down through the floors above until he could hear them with crystal clarity. The Watcher had found a solution! What the Watcher researched, he remembered destroying before the ink dried. He had burned the books as Angelus feasted on the author. Angelus had delighted in the irony of Spike's task; a former poet destroying a fellow authors work.

His master...Master no more Spike chided himself. Angelus was dead, bathing in the brimstone he deserved!

Spike knew he would have to be devious; he could deceive Willow but not the Watcher. He smiled in his sleep showing sharp white fangs over his silken sensual lips. His eyelids closed to amber slits as deadly light lasered through the room, a crumb of plaster had fallen from a web and a facet of sunlight hit the far wall. The shaft of light danced with particles. He scowled as he remembered his mother telling him that fairies lived in sunbeams.

##

Giles greeted Xander at his apartment door. "Did you get it?" Xander held out the small plastic bag toward his fevered friend. Giles snatched the bag of grey powder from Xander's grasp and strode to the makeshift cauldron in the centre of the living room.

Xander closed the door and looked round the room. The walls were bare, all Giles' books were gone, but where? He had no time to pack. Xander wandered over to the desk and his eyes fell upon a delicate hourglass holding a reddish grey substance. He moved to pick it up.

"Don't." Giles stayed his hand. "Have you made your peace, Xander?" Giles asked quietly as he carefully filled the upper half of the hourglass with the last minute measure of ash. He sealed the glass magically and then assembled the stand. It was a most elegant, delicate and precise instrument of annihilation. Giles caught a glimpse of Xander's puzzled expression at his recent question. "Do you die in the

faith Xander? I need all the help I can get! I want to know I can count on you when I use this..." He held up the small hourglass, not much bigger than an egg timer.

"Yes, you can always count on me. Dead or alive I'm your man!" Xander smiled bravely.

Giles' eyes brimmed with tears. "Thank you. Now..." He sniffed back his tears. "Pizza... I've got your favourite."

Xander grinned, not sure whether he could eat pizza now at the hour of his death, but... To hell with it, the condemned man ate a hearty meal and so to food!

##

"Willow?" Spike's voice singsonged. "Willow, listen to my voice, love..." Spike's eyes looked deeply into her own and she felt her will deserting her. Spike muttered quietly to her about what she must do when she invited Xander to visit.

The lost generations of her family urged her to listen to "their saviour". Her years of living on the Hellmouth warned against monsters with silken voices suggesting unspeakable acts. She listened to both...

##

Angel paced restlessly. "Pity I'm a ghost!" He glared at his whispering child.

Spike's face twitched as the chip wound down giving its host weakening shocks; like a stopwatch counting down.

Buffy paced in the opposite direction. Suddenly another vampire appeared in front of her. She threw out her arm to stop Angel dead in his tracks.

"Drusilla..." Angel spoke her name with awe.

She approached them dressed in a long black robe and nuns wimple. "Hello, m'dears." She smiled at them both. She jerked her head back toward Spike. "Williams' using m'words I see."

"What do you want Drusilla?" Buffy spat the question at the new spectre.

"Ere to help, I am. Watcher's done a spell." She giggled. "I'm going to help save the world." She exchanged a smug look with them both.

Buffy, leapt up and punched the air. "Yes! Go Giles!!!!"

##

Xander answered the phone whilst holding a slice of cheese dripping pizza in his other hand.

"Hi Wills, you want me to come over now? Why what's the matter? Of course... One knight in shining armour coming up, see you soon."

Giles studied Xander as he hung up the phone. He swallowed the last piece of food in his mouth and it hit his stomach like cold poison. He stood up and handed Xander his coat. "It's cold out, be careful Xander..." He squeezed the young man's shoulder briefly and wished him God's speed.

The door closed and he sat down to await the end alone.

##

Xander ran to Willow's place. It was dusk with infant stars barely winking in the evening sky. Spike stopped him mid-pace. They looked at each other for a precious moment. It was as if they exchanged places, then both attacked with a roar of outrage.

Tearing claws and teeth then pallid flesh and weakening sinews spelt Xander's defeat reflected in amber eyes.

Spike heaved an unconscious Xander upright and walked him to Willow's door.

Willow opened the door and saw Xander holding an unconscious Spike.

"Hey, Wills, your Leech boyfriend attacked me!" Spike looked amused as Willow's shocked face took in the illusion he'd created. "Where do you want him?"

She gasped and pointed at a wooden chair in the corner. "We'd better tie him to it, do you have any rope?"

Spike knew that he must convince Willow that he was tied to the chair. He started using his name a lot. Then when Giles arrived after Willow had called him she would reinforce the illusion in the Watcher. Giles was not easy to trick, especially if he suspected that someone he mistrusted was deceiving him. He trusted Willow.

Giles arrived shortly after the call. Willow embraced him with tears in her eyes. He hugged her, stroking her back comfortingly.

"Spike's in here, Giles. Xander said we ought to tie Spike to the chair, because he might escape. I still can't believe that Spike is behind an apocalyptic scheme. Spike has helped my family for generations..."

"Where's Xander Willow?" Giles asked. He looked round the living room taking in Spike's bound form on the wooden chair. His eyes were shut, but his head still jerked up at the mention of Xander. Giles took a couple of paces to the vampire just as Xander came from the kitchen with a bowl of popcorn in his hands. He raised his hand in greeting to Giles.

Giles placed a brown leather Gladstone bag on the floor by the chair legs. He opened it and retrieved a rubber ball gag. He forced the ball into the vampire's mouth. Spike's eyes opened wide and he thrashed about on the seat, unable to break his bonds or utter an intelligible sound.

Willow lunged forward at the barbarous act but was restrained by Xander, his face

a mask. "But Xander, I love him..." That only made him grip her arms harder.

Giles looked over at Willow and extracted a hammer and chisel from his bag. They clinked together and Willow struggled further. Spike breathed heavily from the chair, and began to shake his head violently when Giles straightened with his instruments in his hands. Giles held Spike's jaw steady and glared into the ice blue eyes with insane glee.

"Now, I'll prove that chip's gone haywire, eh Spike?" He said through gritted teeth. "You," He yanked the blond hair to right and left, manoeuvring the head into the right position. "However, will barely survive the proof!" He glanced over at Xander to see him plunging his hand into the popcorn and smiling at him encouragingly.

Spike, looked up at Giles with tear filled eyes, his face pouring with sweat, a tiny rivulet of blood-tinged spittle ran from the corner of his mouth, as resigned to his fate, he bent his head for the first blow...

Willow shut her eyes at the first dull crack.

The second and third fractured the skull and Giles warmed to his work.

After the first blow Spike's body had jerked spasmodically, by the third he sat limp as his body betrayed him. His dead eyes rested, unfocussed on the picture of the Scooby gang in happier times.

Giles put aside his tools and plunged his fingers into the grey pulp of the brain; his expression grew puzzled when he couldn't find what he looked for. He began to delve more deeply, and then changed direction suddenly spattering brain on his face and some matter slid over his lips, his mouth became slack as his search became more frantic. His breathing increased and he almost cried out when no brain remained and his mouth closed on a morsel of cranial flesh.

He stepped back and blinked, his fingers dripped with blood. He found no chip... He stared at the bound body and at the discarded brown-haired scalp.

"Xander!"

Willow's terrified scream jolted Giles from his torpor and he sank to his knees amongst the blood and brain and wept for his slaughtered son.

End of part 6

Hell Met by Twilight 7/7

Summary Giles is released from the 'hospital' into Spikes care the spell to send Spike to hell is under way but there may be a last minute hitch

Spike stroked Willow's forehead. She slept an unnatural sedated sleep. The doctor left her in his care after he mentioned their engagement. He smiled as he soothed

away the frown that creased her forehead and bent his head, to rest his fangs on her slender extended neck. So tempting, he felt the chip vibrating dangerously and thought about using Giles' tools to rid himself of the annoying electronic gnat.

##

Xander stared at Spike with murder in his eyes. Angel and Buffy waited patiently for Willow to begin to dream. With the first flutter of her eyes, Xander strode to her body and took her hand. He yanked her astral body out of its flesh cocoon as instructed by Giles.

"Xander! " Willow protested. Peeling her hand away from his, "You could kill someone ... like... that..." She finished lamely, looking at her friends she'd thought she'd lost. Her tears refused to come, but she knew they understood the deep sorrow she felt.

Drusilla wafted in with a pout. " Owwwwaaa, you started without me! Naughty daddy and Slayer." Her eyes lit on Xander and glowed with pride, "My brave deer-eyed boy! Is the hunt a foot?"

Xander stared blankly at Drusilla's strange appearance, Willow stared too, and then suddenly she smiled. "It's going to be alright, isn't it? Giles has a plan..."

Xander exchanged looks with Angel, Drusilla and Buffy, and then he smiled and nodded. "Yep, he has a plan. May take a while to complete, but, he has a plan. "

##

The attendant flipped open the spy hole in the thick steel door. The patient was in the same position as the last time he checked, twelve hours ago, at the beginning of his shift. Strange! This man had been his old High School's Librarian! What would make him snap and brutally murder an ex-student? All the staff in the hospital had their theories; his own pet favourite was the victim was an ex-lover.

Giles concentrated on the grains as they ran through the timer in his hands. Counting the seconds to the Apocalypse. He'd masked its presence from the orderlies easily enough. Two hundred turns before Spike's return, then his trial would begin.

Turn. Thank Xander.

Turn. Thank Buffy.

Turn. Thank Angel

Turn. Thank Drusilla.

Turn. Thank Willow. He blinked heavily and tears streamed down his grizzled face.

The shadows lengthened in his cell, finally a moment before the two hundredth turn, the light blazed on signifying sunset and Spike stepped in through his open

cell door.

Spike leaned his leather clad shoulder on the cold wall and lit his cigarette. He inhaled and shivered at the zing of nicotine hitting his long dead nerves. He exhaled through his fangs. He watched Giles watching him. "Gave you a chance Watcher. You could've stopped, an' then the whelp'd still be here, swiggin' soda an' stuffin' pizza..." He looked at Giles accusingly, then smirked and turned his left shoulder to the wall. He stared through the high, small, barred window. "S' full moon old man. You gonna stay 'ere and 'owl? Or come wiv me? "

Turn.

Turn.

Turn.

Spike got impatient... He flicked the cigarette butt into a far-off web and watched as the Spider sizzled. "Hey! " He watched a faint movement in Giles' trouser pocket. "Didn't come 'ere to watch you play pocket billiards! You comin' or not?"

Giles' expression, lit by moonlight, had taken on a demonic quality which gave Spike pause. "I'll come..." His voice had a hollow, otherworldly timbre in the small room, as if his mind were as scrambled as Xander's brain.

##

Willow opened the door when she sensed Spike approach. She remembered everything from her astral dream, but the sight of Giles took her aback. His gaunt face showed little emotion as he entered the rented apartment.

"Willow, " Spike inclined his head slightly, "Would you get our guest some tea?" Willow disappeared into the kitchen after first uttering an audio enhancing spell so she could overhear their conversation.

"Watcher... I've protected her family for generations! It's time I got payback; all I want to do is rule the world. Eat, drink and be merry... Now, tell me, what's wrong with that? "

Turn.

Turn.

Turn.

"Everything. You, in charge? The world would end. I will stop you." Giles' sombre voice tolled true in the silent moonlit night.

Spike's gaze zeroed onto the Watcher's pocket, the almost clockwork motion of Giles' fingers through the cloth. Spike hissed in irritation. Giles regarded him languidly.

The kettle shrilled and he blinked as Willow bustled in with the tray, it seemed he

saw her in colours for the first time. Her hair was long and rich mahogany; she flicked her fingers carelessly through it as she set the tray on the table. Her skirt was long, bias-cut and aubergine; her moss-coloured, multi-layered gossamer top hugged her swelling bosom. She straightened from her task and gazed at Giles. Her eyes showed no fear only a willingness to do whatever it took to rid the planet of Spike.

Giles' eyes gleamed softly with gratitude. Xander got the message through!

"Thanks love," Spike murmured affectionately, patting her bottom as he came to pour the tea. Giles' eyes blazed. "Ooh, Watcher, can't tell you how you frighten me..." Spike chortled.

Giles forced himself to relax and counted the last ten turns of his timepiece.

##

"Ready?" Angel asked. Xander and Drusilla nodded in unison, they made an unlikely pair of allies. Buffy stood apart from the group thinking how many times she had failed to kill Spike simply because of a few ounces of government hardware. "Buffy?" Angel's softened voice called her from her regrets.

"Yes, ready. I hope Giles can last!"

Angel smiled. "Giles is tough, Buffy, he'll last."

##

He swallowed the last sip of his tea and revolved the timepiece for the hundred and ninety-seventh time. His fingers cramped and complained after hours of the constant activity.

Giles didn't see Spike until too late. The cup crashed to the ground as spike dragged his hand from his pocket.

The precious timepiece skittered along the floor to land inches from Willow's feet.

Spike held the Watcher's wrist in an iron grip and squeezed until bone snapped through the sinews. Giles screamed in terror and rabbit-punched Spike's stomach with several gut blasting blows. The pressure released and Giles barely had time to draw breath before Spike kicked his knees shattering both kneecaps.

Spike swooped down on the Watcher and covered him as a vulture would cover a fresh kill. As the darkness surrounded him Giles announced to Willow: "Three more turns!"

Spike's head swivelled on his shoulders and stopped his advance on his weakened victim. His amber eyes focussed on the small brass hourglass, that contained oddly coloured sand. He saw Willow bend to retrieve it and smiled. She placed the glass on the table and turned it, the ash flowed quickly through the neck and into the lower bulb.

Spike snarled and took a step toward her... His feet were swept from under him and he landed with a satisfying thud. His surprised gaze fixed on the Watcher, who stood on shattered knees to fight him. Spike sprang to his feet with a roar and landed jabs and punches too numerous to count on the sagging Watcher.

The sound of the second turn of the hourglass stopped him; he glanced back and tried to ignore the kernel of fear that split open in his chest. Giles' linked fists jolted Spike's chin back making him briefly see stars.

Giles staggered after delivering the blow and cast a weary glance over to the table and saw how long he had on this Earth. Spike's face in front of him made his head jerk back, an iron hand grasped his throat and throttled the breath from his lungs.

"Now Watcher, " Spike hissed through torn lips, "You see how it is to turn..." He lifted Giles up and flipped him over. Then followed, seconds after, locking his fangs in Giles' relaxed neck.

He felt the unnatural pull, and strangely, his cock responded. The sensation was the same as someone drawing on it. His hasty breath brought his demise closer; he pushed against Spike with a desperate strength and managed to dislodge him as the hourglass turned for the final time.

He slithered to the table leg and hauled himself painfully to his knees. They didn't hurt anymore. His heart pumped as slow as a funeral dirge; his fingers grasped the hourglass as the last few grains trickled past the waist in the glass. He smiled with pale lips and flung the carefully crafted object at Spike's feet.

A roar greeted the rising wall of a legion of behemoth, led by four familiar faces all bent on Spike's destruction.

Faced with overwhelming odds, Spike backed away a step and glared arrogantly at his enemies, who overcame him quickly. He bellowed above the seething river of righteousness that bore him away. "Pity poor, pale, Willow!"

##

He shuddered awake. Pain greeted him in his first breath. Heart beating rapidly and precious moisture wasted in sweat leaked from every pore. He blinked, why was he awake? Then he saw her, Willow, pure and pale with vivid fern green eyes. She held a cool wet cloth in her hands to clean the crusted blood from his mouth... blood! He jolted away from her and held out his uninjured hand. "No! Willow, leave me...He made me, " he swallowed his sorrow, "drink..." Willow knelt up toward his face and bathed the blood away from a cut on his chin, "No, Giles he didn't. He wanted you dead." She smiled so sadly that it made Giles' heart skip a beat... She held out the water bottle for him and he drank deeply from it.

She rose gracefully to her feet and walked to the window. "It's almost daybreak. "

Fear gripped Giles; he turned toward the window and saw Willow's pale hand reach round the curtain to pull it back. "Willow!" He shouted and immediately regretted it, she turned toward him and the faintest rose of dawn glowed on her cheek. "Come away, come to me darling, please! I need you Willow..." He croaked

desperately. She took a faltering step away and then another until finally she collapsed in a tearful heap by his side. He crooked an arm awkwardly round her and felt her cry bitter, relieved and anguished tears. He kissed her cool head and she sank closer to him.

After all their trials they deserved this little respite before the challenge that lay ahead. A Watcher and Vampiress living on a Hellmouth, oh how Watcher tongues would wag!

The End