

CHAPTER ONE

The Inca Room

Xander, Buffy and Willow were on the bus. They were going with the rest of their class to a South American exhibition at Sunnydale Museum.

'It's just not fair!' Buffy was saying. 'My mum's invited one of the Cultural Exchange students to stay with us. Some strange South American in my house for two weeks - it's going to be terrible!'

Students from all over the world came to live with the Sunnydale High students for two weeks every year. Perhaps because the teachers couldn't count, they called this time Cultural Exchange Week. Some days, the students went on cultural visits. The first visit was today, to Sunnydale Museum.

'Don't worry,' said Willow. 'Maybe your student'll be really nice.'

'Yeah, it'll be cool!' Xander agreed. 'Cultural Exchange Week is a beautiful mix of different cultures...'

The two girls looked at him. Xander was strange sometimes!

'And Cultural Exchange Week means less school work - even more beautiful!' he thought happily.

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They arrived at the museum and went into the first exhibition room. Cordelia Chase was standing with her friends in a corner. They were laughing and looking at photos. That's mine. His name's Sven. Mmm - he really is the best-looking.'

'Who's that?' Buffy asked.

'That's my exchange student,' Cordelia said. '100% Swedish and 100% good-looking!' She showed Buffy the photo. 'What does yours look like?'

'Umm... I don't know,' answered Buffy. 'Just an ordinary guy.'

Xander held up his hands. 'Wait a minute! It's a guy - not a girl? And he's going to live with you for two weeks? This is a terrible idea!'

'What about "a beautiful mix of different cultures"?' asked Willow with a laugh.

Buffy wasn't listening. She was looking across the room at Rodney Munson, a student in their class. He was standing very close to one of the exhibits.

'What's he doing?' she asked.

They all looked at Rodney. He had big braces on his teeth and he looked a bit scary. He was doing something to the exhibit.

'I'll tell him to stop,' said Willow.

She walked over to him. Rodney liked Willow because she often helped him with his homework. He certainly wasn't the cleverest student in Sunnydale...

'Oh, hi, Willow,' Rodney said. Willow could see a small knife in his hand. He was trying to take gold from one of the South American exhibits!

'Hi!' said Willow. 'Er... You mustn't do that, Rod.'

'Why not?' Rodney laughed. 'Will they tell me to leave school? Oooh, I'm frightened!'

Willow laughed weakly at his 'joke'. She started to answer. But just then their museum guide said, 'Welcome, students! We will now go into the Inca Room.'

The students followed the guide into the dark room. In the centre of the room, there

was a big sarcophagus. The guide walked towards it. 'Five hundred years ago, the Inca people of Peru chose a beautiful teenage girl as their princess.'

Xander and Willow looked into the sarcophagus. The beautiful teenage girl was now a scary mummy. She was holding a kind of gold plate.

'The Incas needed to make a religious sacrifice. They chose their princess as the sacrifice. They put her in a sarcophagus while she was still living. Then they left her for ever.' The guide pointed at the plate. 'This plate is special. It protects the princess. With the plate in the sarcophagus, no one can wake her.'

Xander wasn't very interested. He was thinking about other things.

'So, Buffy, when's your exchange boy arriving?'

'His name is Ampata and I'm meeting him at the bus station tomorrow night.'

'Mmm - Sunnydale Bus Station - exciting!' joked Xander.

'This way, please,' the guide said, and they all followed.

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Rodney waited. First he waited while the other students left the museum. Then he waited for six o'clock, when the museum closed. He was hiding in the Inca Room. It was easy - there were lots of dark corners there.

Later, he came out. It was safe. No one could see him now. A lot of the exhibits were behind glass, but the mummy wasn't. And her gold plate wasn't either.

Rodney wanted that plate. It looked expensive. 'I'll sell it, and then I'll be rich,' he thought.

He reached into the sarcophagus and touched the plate. 'Cool,' he thought. He pulled the plate. It didn't move. He pulled it again, until suddenly it came away in his hand. He fell back and dropped it. The plate broke into lots of pieces.

'Oh no!'

Rodney didn't think about his next move. He didn't have time. Instead, he felt hands around his throat. It was the mummy. And her dead eyes were open.

'That's impossible!' he thought.

The mummy pulled him closer and closer. Rodney tried to shout for help. But the mummy's hands were too strong.

He couldn't speak.

And then, the five-hundred-year-old princess gave the high school student his first and last kiss...

CHAPTER two

Braces and a bus station

The next day in the school library, Buffy was doing her exercises with Giles. She had to do them every day. A Vampire Slayer had to be strong.

Giles was holding a big soft ball. Buffy was hitting it as hard as she could. Xander was watching.

Buffy wanted to go to the World Culture Dance at the Bronze the next evening. But

she was always busy at night. She walked around the streets of Sunnydale and looked for vampires.

'So,' she said to Giles, 'can I go?' She hit the ball very hard with her foot.

Giles almost fell. 'No,' he answered.

'Why not?' Buffy hit it again.

'Because you're the Slayer,' Giles said. 'You're not like other girls. You have a job, an important job. You haven't got time for dances.'

Another hit. 'Blah, blah, blah!' said Buffy. She was angry. It just wasn't fair.

Giles tried again. They often had this kind of conversation. 'Buffy - listen to me. You can't go to the dance. Your exchange student mustn't find out about you. You have to be careful while he's living with you.'

'He's living in the same house as her - he's not living with her,' Xander said quickly. No one seemed to understand the difference except him.

'So I have to go to the dance,' Buffy said. 'Like an ordinary person.' Hit!

'I didn't mean that,' said Giles. He was tired.

Buffy knew that she was winning. 'Come on, Giles!'

She got ready to hit the ball again.

'OK, OK!' Giles said quickly. 'That's enough for today. Go to your dance.'

'Yes!' Buffy smiled. 'I win!'

'And I need a cup of tea and a rest.' Giles walked slowly out of the library.

'Cool!' said Xander. 'We can all go to the dance together.'

'But you're going with Willow,' Buffy said.

'Well, I am going with Willow, but I'm not going with Willow. I'm going with you and Willow. There'll be three of us - that's safe! Without you, we're two.'

'Ah - and two means a date?!' asked Buffy.

'Kind of...' Xander felt uncomfortable. 'Buffy, I love Willow and she's my best friend. But you don't go on a date with your best friend.'

'Hey, guys!'

Willow walked into the library. She looked a bit sad.

'Oh, no!' thought Xander. 'I hope she didn't hear me.'

'Hi, Will!' he said loudly. 'We were just talking about happy things. You, me and Buffy are going to the Culture Dance! Happy!'

Willow didn't look very happy.

'Not happy...?' asked Xander.

'Yes... no!' Willow said. 'Rodney's disappeared.'

Giles walked back in. 'Is there trouble with Mr Munson again?'

'He didn't come home last night. The police are looking for him,' Willow said.

'Was Rodney with us when we left the museum?' asked Buffy. 'I don't remember him on the bus.'

'Maybe he got in trouble at the museum,' said Willow.

Xander laughed. 'Maybe he woke up the mummy!'

Willow laughed too. 'Yeah and she got up from the sarcophagus!'

'And killed him!' Buffy smiled.

Suddenly, they stopped laughing. They were all thinking the same thing. Buffy, Xander, Willow and Giles all ran out of the library. They got into Giles's car and drove to the museum.

When they arrived, the museum was closed. Luckily, Giles knew one of the guides

'someone else interested in boring, dead things,' said Buffy - so they could go in.

They went into the Inca Room. Buffy saw something on the floor next to the sarcophagus. 'Hey, look! It's the plate. Someone's broken it.'

'Has the mummy escaped then?' Willow asked.

Both Buffy and Xander looked in the sarcophagus, but the mummy was still there. Giles looked at the pieces of the plate. 'Interesting,' he said. 'Look at these pictures...'

Suddenly, a big man with a long knife appeared from nowhere. He tried to hit Buffy with the knife. Willow hid behind Giles. Buffy jumped away and was ready for a fight.

The man looked down into the sarcophagus just for a minute. He seemed surprised. Xander jumped onto him. But he fell off as the man ran away.

'Hey, I saved us!' said Xander.

'Come on - let's go!' said Giles. 'He'll probably come back again soon.'

Willow was looking at the mummy again. 'Giles, were the Incas very clever?'

'Yes, very,' he answered.

'Did they have... dentists?'

They all looked into the sarcophagus again. The mummy had braces. Rodney Munson's braces.

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'I think Rodney's body in the sarcophagus surprised the guy with the knife,' said Willow. 'He ran away because of it.'

They were all back in the library.

'Rodney's body looked so... dead,' she continued.

'Yeah - five hundred years dead,' said Xander. 'But why?'

'This mummy was from the Sebacaya area of Peru,' said Giles. He was looking at a piece of the plate. 'The answer will be on the plate. But I'll have to look at all those pictures and translate them. It'll take a long time. But we can start tonight with...'

'Ampata!' said Buffy suddenly. 'I'm late! He's waiting for me at the bus station. I have to go.'

'Buffy - Rodney's dead. How can you think about your exchange student now?' said Xander.

'He doesn't speak much English and he's alone,' said Buffy angrily. And then she had an idea. 'And he's from South America. Maybe he can translate the pictures on the plate.'

'OK,' said Xander. He held up his hands. 'But Willow and I are coming with you.'

Willow looked surprised. 'Why?'

'I don't care - let's go!' said Buffy.

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Ampata Gutierrez was excited. It was his first time in the USA - in California. But where was his exchange host? He looked around the dark, empty bus station. She was already half an hour late.

'Ampata,' a voice said very quietly. He looked around but he couldn't see anyone.

'Ampata,' the voice said again. Ampata looked into the darkness. 'Hello?' Then he saw her.

She was the scariest, most horrible thing in the world. He started to shout as she came nearer. Then she held his throat and kissed him.

And Ampata knew that this was his last visit to the USA, or to anywhere.

CHAPTER THREE

Welcome to our country

Xander didn't like the Sunnydale bus station. He was sure that other people felt the same. It was old, dark and dirty. Ampata was flying into LAX in Los Angeles and then he was catching the bus. 'What a welcome!' Xander thought. 'The world's most horrible airport and the world's worst bus station.'

'Forty minutes late,' said Buffy.

'Maybe he's already here,' said Willow.

'Hmm, maybe,' said Buffy. She called out as they looked around. 'Ampata, Ampata!'

'So, do we have to speak Spanish when we meet him?' asked Xander. 'I don't know any Spanish except doritos!'

'Ampata!' Buffy called again.

'Here,' said a small voice.

A small girl's voice.

Then they saw her - a very beautiful girl with long black hair.

And her eyes... Xander couldn't see her eyes. It was too dark. But he was sure that they were wonderful too.

'Hello,' the girl said. 'I'm Ampata.'

Buffy smiled at her. 'Hi, I'm Buffy Summers. And these are my friends, Xander and Willow. Sorry we're so late.'

Ampata spoke slowly. 'Pleased to meet you.'

Xander spoke slowly too. 'Wel-come to our coun-try.'

Ampata smiled. 'The most beautiful smile in the world,' thought Xander.

'Let's go,' said Willow. 'This place is a bit scary at night.'

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They all got into Xander's mother's car and drove to Buffy's house. Ampata seemed very interested in the houses. Xander couldn't understand it. Were the buildings in Peru very different?

When they arrived, Buffy showed Ampata all the rooms in the house. The last room was the kitchen.

'It is very good,' Ampata said.

'Yeah,' answered Buffy. 'It's got a fridge and a cooker. We like it!'

'Would... you... like... a... drink?' asked Xander slowly.

'Please,' said Ampata. She sat down at the table. Xander sat next to her.

'So,' Willow said, 'you're a girl.'

Ampata smiled her beautiful smile. 'Yes, for many years now.'

'Because we thought a boy was coming,' said Willow. 'And here you are - a girl.'

Buffy gave Ampata some orange juice. 'Have you been to the USA before?'

'Yes - yes, I have.'

'Where... did... you... go?' asked Xander, very slowly again.

'I've been to Atlanta, Boston, New York...'

Willow smiled. 'New York? That's interesting. Did you like it?'

'I don't know. I didn't see much,' Ampata said. 'Your English is very bueno,' Xander said. Ampata smiled again. 'I listen a lot.' 'Well, that's fantastic, because I talk a lot!' And Xander and Ampata laughed together.

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Later that evening, Buffy sat in her bedroom with Ampata. Buffy was a bit worried. How could she slay vampires with Ampata around her all the time?

'Sorry the room is so small,' said Buffy. 'My room at home is a lot smaller than this,' Ampata answered.

'What's your home town like?' asked Buffy.

'Dead! It has... no life.'

Buffy laughed. 'It sounds the same as Sunnydale!'

Ampata looked at her in surprise. 'But you have so much here.'

'Too many vampires and too much work as a Slayer,' thought Buffy to herself.

Ampata was looking at a photo on Buffy's desk. It was Buffy, Willow and Xander.

'What about your friends?' asked Buffy.

'They are...' Ampata stopped speaking.

'Is she trying to find the right words in English?' Buffy thought. 'Or is she hiding something?' Then she felt bad. Ampata was just a girl from another country. Not everyone had dangerous secrets!

'It's only me,' Ampata said finally.

Buffy understood that. Sometimes she felt alone too. She was the only Slayer and sometimes it was difficult.

'It's a bit like that for me,' she said. 'But don't worry. You'll meet lots of people tomorrow.'

'Thank you.' Ampata climbed into bed. 'You must teach me everything about your life. I want to be like you, Buffy - with an ordinary American life.'

'An ordinary life. Yes, I'd like that too...' thought Buffy.

She turned off the bedroom light. 'OK - one ordinary American life starts tomorrow!' she said.

CHAPTER four

Haw to eat a Twinkie

Oz and his friend Devon were busy. Their band, Dingo's Ate My Baby, was playing at the World Culture Dance at the Bronze that night. They had to put all their things in Oz's car. As usual, Oz was doing all the work. Devon was talking to his new girlfriend, Cordelia Chase. 'Let's meet at the Bronze after you've played,' said Cordelia. 'Yeah, cool,' Devon said. 'Is he coming?' They both looked at a very tall blond Swedish guy. He was standing near Cordelia.

'He follows me everywhere,' she said to Devon. She didn't look happy. 'This exchange student thing is terrible. They don't even speak American!'

Cordelia walked off, and Sven followed her. Devon watched his girlfriend. 'Wow! She's fantastic!' he said to Oz.

'Mmm,' Oz said. He wasn't sure. 'Hey, man! You have to get a girlfriend. You play the guitar in a band! Lots of girls would love to go out with you. And there are so many pretty girls in Sunnydale,' his friend said.

Oz didn't answer. He got into the car. 'Come on. Let's go.'

* * *

As usual, Willow and Xander met that morning before school. They were talking about the dance. Everyone had to wear something from another culture.

'I'm wearing something from Iceland,' Willow said. She felt a bit sad. She wanted to go to the dance with Xander. But she knew that he didn't feel the same way.

'What about me?' Xander said. 'Which countries have cool clothes?'

'What about those shorts from Austria - you know, lederhosen?' Willow said. She thought about Xander's legs in shorts.

'No way!' said Xander. 'They look really stupid...!' Suddenly, he stopped talking. Willow looked at him. He was looking ahead and smiling. Ampata and Buffy were there.

'Not Ampata again!' thought Willow. But she also waved and smiled.

* * *

'Are you OK, Ampata?' Buffy asked as they walked into school. Ampata was very quiet.

'There are so many people here,' she said.

Buffy smiled at her. 'Don't worry. You'll soon make friends.'

Just then she saw Xander and Willow. They stopped to say hi. Xander only seemed to see Ampata.

They all walked to their first lesson together. Xander didn't stop talking to Ampata. Willow looked sad.

After the first class, they all went to the library. 'Mr Giles works in the library,' Buffy told Ampata. 'He's a bit strange sometimes. But he'd like to meet you.'

When they arrived, Giles was looking at a piece of the Incan plate.

'Ampata, this is Giles,' said Buffy.

'Hello,' Ampata said.

'Pleased to meet you,' said Giles. He gave her the plate. 'Can you translate this?'

'Giles!' said Buffy. But Ampata didn't seem very surprised. She took the plate.

'Why are you asking me?' she said.

'Well, it's from Peru,' Giles said. 'It's from the sarcophagus of an Incan mummy. We're trying to translate it because...' He stopped suddenly.

Willow helped him. 'Because we're in the archaeology club,' she explained.

'Where are the other pieces?' asked Ampata.

'We don't have them,' said Buffy.

Ampata was looking at it closely.

'What does this picture mean?' Giles pointed to a picture of a man with a knife.

'I'm not sure exactly,' said Ampata. 'But I think this person is a bodyguard.'

'Ah, a bodyguard. So he stays with the mummy at all times?' asked Giles.

'Yes, that's right,' said Ampata. 'Sometimes people try to touch the mummy. He has a knife and he protects her.' She gave the plate back to Giles.

'Well, thank you. That's a good start for our... club.' Giles looked at Buffy.

'Oh, yes, Ampata,' Buffy said quickly. 'I'm sorry. I have to do lots of things for the

archaeology club now. Boring things... Willow, can you stay with Ampata today?'

Willow didn't have time to answer. Xander answered instead. 'I'll stay with her, Buffy. Don't worry, Will - I can do it.'

Ampata smiled. 'Yes, that will be fun.'

They walked out together. Willow watched them. 'He really likes her,' she said sadly. Buffy looked at her friend. What could she say?

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Xander was having a great time. Usually, girls didn't laugh at his jokes. They thought he was a bit strange. But Ampata seemed to enjoy his conversation. They went to Xander's classes together and had lunch in the school cafe.

After school, they sat outside and talked. Xander was telling her about American food.

He took a Twinkie out of his pocket.

'What's that?' Ampata asked.

'This is a lovely all-American cake. And you eat it like this...'

Xander put it all in his mouth. Ampata laughed.

'But now I can't try it!'

Xander couldn't speak. He was still eating the Twinkie. But he took out another Twinkie from his pocket and gave it to Ampata.

She put it in her mouth. Then she started laughing. 'I can't eat it like that!'

'Yes, you can. And if you eat it really quickly, you don't get fat.'

Ampata ate the cake then smiled at him. 'You are strange.'

'Girls often tell me that,' said Xander. 'Then they run away.'

'Well, I like you when you're being strange,' said Ampata. They both laughed again. Suddenly, they stopped laughing. It was the man with the big knife - and he didn't look happy.

'You took the plate!' he shouted angrily. 'Where is it?'

The he tried to hit Xander with his knife. At first Xander held the man's arm back, but the man was very strong.

Then Ampata cried out. The bodyguard - if he really was a bodyguard - looked at Ampata for the first time. 'It is you!' he said.

While he was looking at Ampata, Xander hit him hard. The man fell back.

Xander took Ampata's hand. 'Come on!' And they ran into the school.

CHAPTER five

'I choose life'

Buffy and Willow were sitting in the library. On the table in front of them was the piece of plate and some books. They were looking through the books for pictures like the ones on the plate. But Buffy didn't feel very lucky.

'We've been here for hours, Will!' she said. 'I'm so bored. I prefer slaying vampires to this.'

Willow said nothing. She was looking ahead of her. She didn't seem to hear Buffy.
'Willow? What's wrong?' Buffy asked. 'Is it Xander and Ampata? She's only here for a week, you know.'

'Yeah. And then Xander will fall in love with someone else. And it won't be me,' said Willow sadly.

'Oh, Willow.' Buffy felt very sorry for her friend.

Just then Giles came in. He looked at Buffy's book. 'Fantastic!' he said. 'Good work, Buffy!'

Buffy looked at the book. 'What have I done?'

Giles pointed at one of the pictures on the open page. It was almost the same as the picture on the plate.

'Maybe Rodney's killer is the mummy,' he said.

'Why do you say that?' Willow asked.

'Look,' said Giles. He pointed at the page. 'A mummy can live on the life of another person. It kills people to live.'

'So we have to find the mummy,' said Buffy. 'And we have to stop it. How do we do that?'

Giles started to answer. But just then Xander and Ampata ran in. They both looked frightened. The man with the knife has come back!' said Xander.

Giles made some tea while Xander told the others the story.

'What does this guy want from us?' said Willow.

'I don't know,' said Xander. 'He said, "You took the plate."'

'The plate is clearly a problem,' said Giles. 'Where can we keep it safe?'

'You must destroy it,' said Ampata, 'or someone will die.'

'Someone has already died,' Giles answered.

'What? Did the man with the knife kill someone?' asked Ampata.

'No, not exactly,' said Buffy.

'You're not telling me everything,' said Ampata.

No one said anything. Xander looked at the floor.

Ampata was upset. That plate is dangerous. You must destroy it! Please believe me.' She turned and ran out of the library.

'Ampata!' Xander ran after her.

'Xander!' Willow followed Xander.

'Willow...' Buffy started to say. But then she stopped.

Someone had to help Giles in the library.

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Xander was talking to Ampata outside the library. 'Ampata, listen! You're safe with me.'

Ampata was crying. 'Your archaeology club is dangerous. I don't want that. I just want an ordinary life.'

She walked off. Willow came over to Xander. 'Is she OK?'

'She's just a bit frightened,' he said.

Willow smiled kindly at him. 'Why don't you take her to the dance tonight?' She didn't want to say it. But it was the right thing to do.

Xander looked surprised. 'But I thought...'

'I'll see you there,' said Willow. She smiled again. But inside she wasn't smiling.

Xander smiled back. He was really happy. 'Willow - you are my best friend!'

'I know,' Willow said quietly as Xander ran off after Ampata.

* * *

Giles and Buffy were looking at the piece of plate again.

'I don't understand,' said Buffy. 'Why does the bodyguard want this bit of plate? How is it useful?'

'Maybe he wants to join it to the other bits,' Giles said.

'Do you think he's got the other bits?' asked Buffy. 'We didn't find them all.'

'We had to leave the museum very quickly,' said Giles. 'Perhaps the other pieces are still in the exhibition room somewhere.'

'Why don't we go back there and look?' said Buffy. 'Maybe the bodyguard will come back too.'

'Yes,' agreed Giles. 'And we'll be ready for him. Let's meet there tonight.'

'Oh, Giles - not tonight,' said Buffy. 'I've got plans!'

Giles looked at her. Buffy knew that face.

'OK, OK,' she said. 'No plans.'

* * *

The Incan princess felt a bit better. With Xander, she felt almost safe.

Almost.

She was still frightened of the bodyguard, and of the plate. She couldn't have an ordinary life while the bodyguard was living.

She loved her new life here. It was much better than her life in Peru - 500 years ago. She wanted to make a new start in Sunnydale.

Xander and Ampata were walking through school. 'OK,' said Xander. 'I have something to tell you. And it's a little bit scary.'

The princess looked worried again. 'What is it?'

'Well,' said Xander, 'I really like you. Will you come to the dance with me?'

'Oh!' Ampata smiled. 'That's not scary!'

'Oh, it is, believe me,' said Xander. 'Can I tell you something?' said Ampata. 'I really like you too.'

'Really?!' Xander was surprised. 'Yes, really!' she said with a laugh. 'Wow - that's great!' said Xander. 'I need to go in here,' said Ampata. She pointed to the girls' toilets.

'OK. I'll wait for you,' said Xander. Ampata went in and looked at herself in the mirror. She looked happy. But she also looked a bit ill. 'No,' she thought. 'I've taken two lives already. That's enough.' Then she saw her hands. They looked old. 'It's not fair!' she thought angrily. She didn't want to kill anyone else.

But she didn't want to go back in the sarcophagus. She wanted to live.

Then she saw the bodyguard behind her in the mirror. 'Please don't kill me,' she said. She spoke in a very old language.

The bodyguard spoke in the same language. 'You're already dead. You've been dead for 500 years.'

'But it wasn't fair,' Ampata said. 'I didn't do anything wrong.'

'Rodney Munson didn't do anything wrong. The exchange student from Peru didn't do anything wrong. But you killed them anyway.'

'Please,' said the princess. 'I'm in love.' It was true. She loved Xander. She felt like a real person with him, and not a sacrifice.

The bodyguard came closer. 'You must die. You are the sacrifice. You have no choice.'

He held up his knife. But as he brought it towards her, Ampata caught his arm in her hand. 'Yes, I do,' she said. 'I choose life.' She held his arm behind his back and kissed him. His life became hers. She looked strong and young again.

It only took a few seconds. The princess moved his dead body into one of the toilets. Then she came out. Xander was waiting for her.

She smiled at him. 'Xander - I'd love to go to the dance with you.'

Xander smiled back. He felt very happy. He took her hand and they walked off together.

'Now, finally, I can be happy,' the princess thought.

CHAPTER six

The World Culture Dance

Ampata and Buffy were in Buffy's bedroom. Ampata was almost ready for the dance. In her Peruvian dress she looked like a beautiful Incan princess.

'Buffy, can I borrow some make-up?' she asked.

'Of course,' Buffy said. 'There's some on the desk.'

Ampata saw some bags on the table. 'What's in the bags?'

'Oh, the bus station sent the rest of your things,' Buffy said.

'Oh, yes,' said Ampata, 'I must move them.' 'Don't worry,' Buffy said. 'I can do it.' She looked down at her jeans and T-shirt. 'I'm not going to the dance.' 'Why not?'

'Oh - I have to do some work. Archaeology club work.'

Ampata looked surprised. Buffy smiled at her. 'Don't worry. Xander will be with you.'

'Yes,' Ampata said. 'I like him a lot. He's funny!' She put on some make-up in front of the mirror and turned to Buffy. 'A long time ago I knew someone just like you. You are always thinking of other people.'

Buffy walked over to Ampata's bags. 'Yeah?'

'Yes,' Ampata said slowly. 'This person had to protect her people. No one else could do it.'

As Ampata was talking, Buffy looked in one of her bags. There were boys' clothes in there! What?!

'They chose her from all the girls of her age. She was...'

'Special,' Buffy finished. 'How much did Ampata know?'

'You know the story?' asked Ampata.

'Maybe...' said Buffy.

'She was sixteen like us,' Ampata said. 'She was a sacrifice, and she died. She never really lived her life.'

Just then they heard someone at the door. 'That'll be Xander and Willow,' Buffy said. She ran downstairs and opened the door.

It was Xander - in cowboy clothes.

'It's Clint Eastwood!' Buffy laughed. 'Hey, where's Willow?'
'She's not coming with us,' Xander said. He looked at Buffy's clothes. 'What about you? You don't look ready.'

'I'm not coming,' Buffy said. 'Giles and I are looking for mummies instead.'
Xander started to say something. But just then he saw Ampata. She was walking down the stairs and she looked beautiful.

'Hello, Xander,' she said with a smile.
Xander couldn't speak. 'Ah, yiyuh.'
Buffy laughed. 'I can translate for you, Ampata. He thinks you're beautiful.'
Buffy's mother came in then. 'Ampata, you look wonderful! Buffy, why don't you go too?'

'Oh, I told you, Mum. I've got too much homework,' Buffy said quickly.
Ampata took Xander's hand. 'Well, goodnight then.' 'Be careful,' Xander said to Buffy quietly. 'I will,' she said.

And Xander and Ampata left for the dance.

* * *

Cordelia was wearing something from Hawaii. She thought she looked great. Of course, Hawaii was part of the United States, so it wasn't really another culture. But Cordelia didn't care. She just wanted to wear beach clothes.

As she walked into the Bronze, she saw Willow. Willow was wearing an Eskimo coat. She looked very, very hot! Cordelia didn't understand. Willow was one of the cleverest students at Sunnydale High, but she did really stupid things sometimes.

Cordelia's friend, Gwen, waved at her. 'Hey, where's Sven?'

'I don't know and I don't care,' said Cordelia. 'I'm trying to lose him. He's so boring. He never says anything.'

Just then, Sven appeared. Gwen looked at him. 'He's quite good-looking,' she thought. 'And conversation isn't very important anyway.'

'Hi, Sven,' she smiled. 'Let's get a drink.'

* * *

Willow felt uncomfortable. It was very hot in the Bronze. Maybe her Eskimo clothes weren't a good idea...

Xander and Ampata walked in together. Ampata looked beautiful - and cool.

'Why did I wear these stupid clothes?' Willow thought.

Xander saw her and waved. He and Ampata came over. 'Hi, Will!' he said. 'You look... warm.'

'Err - thanks,' said Willow. 'You guys look great.'

Dingoes Ate My Baby were playing. Xander looked at Ampata.

'Do you... would you...?'

She smiled at him. 'I'd love to dance,' she said.

And Willow was alone again.

* * *

Oz looked at all the high school students. He didn't really like playing love songs but everyone was enjoying this one. He saw a guy in cowboy clothes. He was dancing with a girl in a kind of South American dress. Everyone was looking at them. The girl was really beautiful.

Then Oz saw someone even more beautiful. He couldn't stop looking at her. She was wearing Eskimo clothes. But who was she?

* * *

The princess was very happy. She loved dancing with Xander. Then she looked at her arms. She wanted to cry. They were looking old again.

She had to do something quickly - before Xander saw her arms. She ran off the dance floor and out of the door.

A boy was sitting on the stairs. His name was Jonathan. Ampata smiled at him and touched his hair.

Jonathan was a bit worried. "I thought you were with Xander," he said.

'Not now.' Ampata moved closer.

* * *

Xander was surprised. What was happening? Everything was going so well between him and Ampata, until... Why did she run off like that?

He looked around the room. He had to find her. He couldn't lose her now. He left the main room. 'Ampata! Where are you?' he shouted.

Jonathan heard him. 'I'm going!' he said to Ampata, and he went back to the dance floor.

Xander saw Ampata alone on the stairs.

'Ampata! What's wrong?!' he asked.

Ampata started to cry. 'You're too good for me.'

'What?!' Xander didn't understand. He held her very close. 'Talk to me,' he said.

'I can't,' Ampata answered. She looked into Xander's eyes. Xander looked back at her. He really wanted to kiss Ampata. And he was sure that she wanted the same thing.

They kissed. It was a wonderful kiss.

And then Xander started to feel strange... weak... and he was falling...

CHAPTER seven

One mummy, no make up

Buffy was worried when she heard someone at the door. Maybe it was Willow.

But when she opened the door, Giles was there.

'Good! You're here,' he said and came in.

'Yes. Not with my friends. Not at the dance,' said Buffy. She looked at Giles.

'You're a bit early. I'm not ready to go to the museum yet.'

'Things have changed. We're not going to find the bodyguard at the museum,' said Giles.

'Why not?'

'Because he's in the school toilets - dead. He's a mummy like Rodney.'

Buffy was surprised. 'I don't understand. Did the mummy kill her own bodyguard?'

'I've looked at the pictures on the plate again,' said Giles. 'The bodyguard protects the sarcophagus. With the bodyguard around, the mummy can't escape.'

'So Ampata didn't translate the pictures correctly.'

'Maybe not,' said Giles.

Buffy was thinking. 'When we talk about the plate, Ampata always seems upset. Wait a minute - her bags!'

Buffy ran upstairs to her bedroom. Giles followed her.
'Look at the clothes,' she said to Giles. She pointed at Ampata's bags.
Giles looked through one of them. 'They're all boys' clothes! Why did she bring these?'

Buffy opened Ampata's second bag. There was a horrible kind of mummy smell - and a horrible dead mummy. 'What about this? What girl travels with a mummy and doesn't bring make-up?!'

'Ampata is our mummy!' said Giles.

'And our killer. Giles, she's at the dance with Xander!'

'Let's go! We don't have much time.'

* * *

In the car, Buffy and Giles were both thinking - hard.

'Ampata told us to destroy the plate...' said Buffy.

'Yes,' said Giles. 'The mummy couldn't escape with the plate there. It broke and she was free.'

Suddenly Buffy had an idea. 'Why don't we put the pieces of the plate together? Then she won't be free.'

'Very good,' said Giles. 'I'll go to the museum and look for the other pieces. I'll see you later.'

He stopped the car outside the Bronze, and Buffy ran inside.

She couldn't see Xander or Ampata, but she found Willow.

'Willow - we have to find Xander! Ampata is the mummy!'

'Really?' For a moment, Willow looked very happy - but only for a moment. 'Oh, no - what about Xander?!'

'Where did they go?' asked Buffy.

'They went out that way, I think.'

They left the main room.

* * *

'Are all kisses like this?' Xander thought as Ampata kissed him. He was feeling weaker and weaker. He was starting to fall.

Suddenly, Ampata stopped. 'No, I can't!'

Xander fell onto the floor. Ampata sat down next to him. 'Xander, I'm so sorry,' she said.

Xander wanted to answer. But he couldn't speak.

Ampata stood up. 'Ow!' She touched her head. 'Stop! The plate!'

'Are you ill? What's wrong?' Xander asked, but Ampata ran off.

He lay on the floor. Soon he started to feel a bit stronger.

'Are you OK?'

He looked up. It was Buffy and Willow.

'I think so,' he said. He sat up. 'Wow - that kiss...!'

'Where's Ampata?' Buffy asked.

'I don't know. She went off. She was talking about the plate.'

'The plate! Giles! Come on!' Buffy said.

'What?' Xander stood up slowly. 'I don't understand.'

'He doesn't know,' said Willow.

'We'll tell him on the way there,' said Buffy, and they all hurried out.

* * *

The princess hated the Inca Room at the museum. But she had to go back there. When that stupid boy, Rodney, broke the plate, she was finally free. Free after 500 years. She was never going back to her old life. Now she had Xander. For the first time in her life, she was in love.

As she walked towards the sarcophagus, she heard a voice. She knew that man! It was Giles, the teacher interested in archaeology. He was next to the sarcophagus, and he was reading from one of his books.

She watched him. He was putting pieces of the plate together. The princess felt weaker and weaker.

No! Her arms and legs were looking older and older. She moved towards Giles.

That's it,' he said to himself. 'The last piece!' Ampata took the plate and threw it on the floor. It broke into lots of small pieces. With her other hand, she held

Giles's throat. She moved closer. She wanted to kiss him. She needed to feed.

Just then, a voice came from behind her. 'Leave Giles alone. He's too young for you!'

It was Buffy. She jumped over to Ampata and hit her quickly twice. Ampata was surprised. Clearly, Buffy wasn't an ordinary girl. Ampata dropped Giles's body into the sarcophagus and was ready to fight. Buffy tried to hit her again, but Ampata held her arm back.

'This girl is strong,' she thought to herself. 'I will feed on her.' She tried to kiss her, but Buffy was too quick. She jumped on Ampata's back. Ampata turned and Buffy fell into the sarcophagus. Quickly, Ampata closed it. Good! Giles and Buffy couldn't get out.

But the princess was feeling weak. She had to feed on someone very soon. She turned a corner and saw Willow. She took Willow's throat in her hand. Willow was very frightened.

'Leave her alone!' It was Xander.

Ampata turned. She wanted to cry. 'Xander - Willow is my last sacrifice. After this we can be together.'

'That will never happen,' said Xander.

The princess felt weaker and weaker. 'I must do it,' she said. She moved closer to Willow.

'No!' Xander shouted. He jumped between the two girls. Ampata was now too weak to fight.

Xander looked into the princess's eyes. He was very angry. 'Take my life instead.'

The princess was frightened. She didn't want to kill Xander. But she didn't want to die. She finally had an ordinary life and she couldn't leave it now. Not for Xander. Not for anyone.

She looked at Xander and moved towards him for their

last kiss. Just then, the top of the sarcophagus opened and Buffy jumped towards the princess.

Buffy pulled her away from Xander and threw her across the room. Suddenly Xander was only holding a pair of arms.

Ampata's body crashed heavily to the floor - and then she felt... nothing. It was the end.

* * *

Xander didn't sleep well that night. When Buffy threw Ampata onto the floor, she broke into a thousand pieces. He couldn't forget it.

The next morning, he and Buffy walked to school together. Xander was unusually quiet. Finally he said, 'I'm a really fun guy today, huh?!'

'It's OK,' said Buffy. 'We don't have to talk.'

'I can't believe it, Buffy,' he said sadly. 'I am so unlucky with women.'

'I think Ampata really liked you,' Buffy said. 'It wasn't her fault. She was a young girl. She never really lived. It's difficult when you can't choose your own life. She's like me - I didn't choose to be a Vampire Slayer. And I wasn't very happy about it at first.'

Xander looked at her. 'But you've done the right thing. You've sacrificed your life.'

Buffy smiled. 'I've got my friends. They help me.' Xander smiled back. Anything could happen when you lived on the Hellmouth. They all knew that. But for the moment Buffy and the Slayerettes were safe.

- THE END -

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