

I'VE NOW SEEN
THE FIRST 4 SEASONS
AND 7 EPISODES OF

Buffy

the vampire slayer

AND
EPISODE 7 SEASON 5
~~TEN~~ TIMES
TWELVE

It's 6:07PM on the 10th of February 2020.

I am about to watch Fool for Love Episode 7 of Season 5 for the twelfth time. Don't ask.

It's been over 7 months since I watched this episode for the first time (and then watched it ten times in a row) and a lot has changed in my life since then.

For one thing, I've actually seen the 5 seasons and 6 episodes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer that precede this episode. It's been tough getting to this point with many moments where I felt I might give up - but with a little help from some friends and a podcast I've finally made it to this point.

I have a lot of feelings about Buffy, and I don't think I'll be able to cover all of them in this zine. But I do want to revisit this episode with the new knowledge I have acquired and talk a little about what Buffy means to me through the lens of this very specific episode.

Oh, also if you're wondering why I'm not watching it for the eleventh time, I just couldn't pass up watching this episode one more time. Also if you haven't read my prequel zine 'I've never seen Buffy the Vampire Slayer until I watched episode 7 season 5 ten times in 17 hours' this won't make a lot of sense.

WATCH 12:

We open with a 'Previously on Buffy the Vampire Slayer' that I honestly feel hurt and betrayed by. In the lead up to this episode in my chronological watch, I was waiting and waiting for Buffy and Spike to kiss, have sex, maybe even date, but I was sorely mistaken. What the hell guys! You can't show Spike's fantasy of kissing Buffy in the previously on as though it really happened and just assume I know better? And then follow it up with a shot of Spike waking up in bed with a blonde beside him? How was I to know that wasn't Buffy at all but actually Harmony (who I wrongly identified as being Spike's sister in my initial watch). Joss, you need to cast people that look less similar from a distance.

(But also do you remember that episode where Buffy and Spike get cursed into wanting to get married? Good times)

Buffy's baby blue sweater and black scarf casually thrown around her neck in the opening scene still annoy me as much as they did the first 11 times. I've seen some truly amazing and atrocious fashion over the past 7 months, but this isn't really either of those - it just offends my practical sensibilities.

How are you meant to fight vampires with an object swinging around your neck like that? I mean, at least she's not wearing the miniskirts and high heeled boots from season 1.

When I first saw the opening credits to season 5 it was like coming home to an old friend. Their choices of what to keep and what to add always amaze me - when I first watched the dream sequence episode at the end of season 4 it was like déjà-vu seeing all the little parts they chose to use in the credits. The part where Spike is posing and being taken photos of is an amazing pick, and still makes absolutely no sense.

Also I still think that Marc Blucas is a really dumb name.

Watching Buffy running away from this vampire with a stomach wound, like she is genuinely is worried for her life makes even less sense to me now, having seen exactly how strong and resourceful this woman is throughout all the seasons. I guess they were trying to lead up to the moment at the end of the episode where Spike says that she has a death wish, but I dunno, it seems a little inconsistent to me. I do like the moment where she says

WATCH 12: CONTINUED

she's not going to go hospital because her mum would get freaked out - I think this has a lot more to do with Buffy being afraid of hospitals! Good to know that she and I have more in common than just being capricorns.

I feel like at this exact moment in time I have completely lost my patience for Riley's shit. He is not super terrible in this episode, but also he's not really doing much in this episode. I just can't fathom why this man who is so obviously intimidated and upset by dating such a powerful woman, doesn't just walk away from their relationship. Once again, Buffy is dating an older man who is no good for her and they refuse to do what's best for Buffy. But, he is only in his late twenties, so I can't be as hard on him as I am on Angel.

Did you know that Christian Kane, the actor that plays Lindsey on Angel (the evil very attractive lawyer), also auditioned for Riley's role?

I think he would have made for a much more interesting Riley, but maybe I'm just desperate for something other than Marc Blucas. Marc Blucas. What a stupid name.

Joyce's line "I'm fine, bordering on chipper and tomorrow planning on being obnoxious" genuinely gives me traumatic flash-backs to watching this 10 times.

It's just so grating and I have no idea why.

Anyway, I love Kristine Sutherland, you're my favourite TV mum. I love how you're always at the gallery and have no time for either your real or fake daughter.

It was almost the end of season 1 before I remembered that Buffy was meant to have a sister (or so I thought from this episode) and it was a weird shock but also a welcome change when Dawn arrived - tick that off my list of things I took at face value from watching one episode in season 5 of Buffy. It's super nice to see them getting on a bit better than in previous episodes!

Anyway, now it's time for Willow, Xander and Anya to go with Riley to the graveyard. The first time I saw this episode I thought that the writing for this part was super over the top and camp, and yeah I still feel that way. This is a gang of tough demon-fightin college age kids, I don't think they wouldn't do any of this uncoordinated shit? Unless we are to believe that they just become more and more incompetent the further away Buffy is.

Also when the hell did Anya become part of the patrol? If anyone's girlfriend should be coming along it's probably Tara. You know, the practicing witch? No wonder she feels useless and not part of the group.

Also, does anyone else think that Xander and Riley have an amazing sexual connection?

I get the vibe that Xander is going through the typical thought pattern "Do I want to be them or do I want to fuck them?" watch the episode and get back to me.

Also Cordelia isn't even in this episode or this season! I miss her so much I've been watching Angel!!

Anyway Buffy is hanging out in Giles' new magic shop researching slayers, and I still absolutely adore Buffy's line 'Gotta love a girl with an anvil'. I'm so happy for Giles that his shop is working out and I really wish he got more support from his friends about his hat and cape get up that he is wearing at the opening.

I'm a huge fan.
Of Giles and the hat.

When I first watched this episode I thought that Giles was Buffy's biological father, and honestly it makes a lot of sense in the context of all the seasons. Buffy does genuinely look to him for so much fatherly approval, just another character in the buffyverse with mild to severe daddy issues. I think it's amazing the growth and work that Buffy has done to be sitting here reading about Slayer history, and really connecting with her book dad on so many levels. If Giles was my book dad I would tell him I loved him every day.

Unrelatedly, I still hate Buffy's outfit in this episode.

And wow! Hey! There's Spike! One of my favourites and also one of the most problematic characters in Buffy!

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WATCH 12: CONTINUED

The way I feel about Spike is so complicated.

Like, I do love his hair and his nail polish and his terrible accent and his style and when he drinks blood out of Giles' 'Kiss the librarian' cup, but also he's so homophobic and sexist and has unhealthy romantic relationships and thinks he's such a bad boy he doesn't need to ask for consent. In this episode he is portrayed to be very sweet but his obsession with Buffy is not sweet, it's unhealthy and secretive. He has these fantasies that he wants to play out, but he doesn't voice any of them or express it to Buffy, he just thinks what he wants is what will happen. SO deluded.

Also I can't believe I was so deluded that I thought they were ex-lovers.

Now it's time for one of the greatest parts of the episode: James Marsters tilting into some wild deep american-south accent to say "I've always been bad", and then cut to 19th century Spike writing terrible poetry.

When I watched this scene ten times I genuinely didn't think I could watch it an eleventh

time, but revisiting it I actually love this so much. I guess now I know all about how Spike has been established up until this point. It must be really amazing for first time viewers to see Spike being bullied by 1880's rich people. I also would rather have a railroad spike through my head than listen to Spike's bloody awful poetry.

This scene also makes me really sad, makes me think about how Spike has been rejected by every family he's ever had: his own society, then his chosen family, the love of his life Drusilla, and now even the 'good guys' - his last resort. Also I love this backstory of Drusilla seeing the potential love of her life in this sobbing man, furiously tearing up poetry. Or maybe she just thought he was real handsome? Also my here's one of my favourite lines: "Oh yes... I mean no! I mean, mother's expecting me."

Back to the graveyard and I'm struck again by how Anya has literally no lines in this whole episode. She is easily my favourite part of season 4 and so far 5, and it is criminal that I didn't even know who she was on my first ten watches! I love how powerful and stereotypically

capricorn she is, and how she doesn't always get what she wants but she'll darn well try. I have funnelled a lot of my missing Cordelia energy into loving Anya.

And now Spike is lighting a match off a pool table in the Bronze. The first time I watched this episode I didn't know what the hell this place was, and by the tenth I had come to the conclusion it was called 'Ronz', based on a weirdly framed shot towards the end of the episode.

Throughout the past 4 seasons I feel like none of my questions have been answered:

what is with the wild decor, why is there so much live music and are they serving alcohol to minors???

I don't know how the costume department came to the conclusion that David Boreanz should wear that frazzled wig. Did they spend too much of their budget on the special effects make-up? They also should have probably allocated more of the budget to accent training for David. If Darla gets to have an American accent throughout all the flashbacks why does Boreanz have to attempt this terrible

Irish accent everytime they want to indicate its 1880.

After some weird 'sexual tension' between Buffy and Spike (and I mean weird because it's mainly Spike being sexual and Buffy not saying anything) we cut to the ridiculous fight in the middle of the Boxer Rebellion, with the slayer going for every over the top flip she can but totally neglecting to actually kill Spike. And as usual, Spike 'doesn't speak Chinese' and then makes love to Drusilla inside a burning building. So much of this show is vampires totally forgetting they're extremely flammable.

David Boreanz looks so old in this! I guess not having your usual impeccable spiky hair ages you by quite a few years. I also think his face gets impressively wider as he gets older? Let me know if that's just a personal bias.

Now we're back at Ronz and Buffy is sex-shaming Spike for being turned on by death, which only brings to my mind pain and heartbreak: Faith. I miss her. I miss her boob window top, I miss her leather pants that Buffy borrows in the episode 'Becoming: part 1', I miss her dark lipstick and dramatic eyeshadow and her chunky shoes, I miss her and

WATCH 12: CONTINUED

Buffy being in love sorry I mean gal pals, I miss her so much! I'm glad to have seen some amount of resolution for her in Angel season 1, but watching season 3 is so heart-wrenching - not once does Buffy offer to help her move out that motel, or offer for her to sleep in Summer's guest room, or have her over for dinner more than one time. It doesn't take much to make someone's life a whole lot better Buffy. Maybe think about it before you lose another friend from being so self-centred *cough* Willow *cough*.

Riley, the perfectly mediocre man, is walking in the dark with absolutely no expression on his face and he's never looked more like a Ken Doll.

Spike and Buffy are also in the dark, but with all the feelings and expressions. Although Buffy has a serious stab wound, here they are taking out their sexual tension in the only way they know how: punching and kicking. And now its time for...

THE SUBWAY SCENE

Laced leather pants, safety pins, spiked blonde hair, a tank top with sinewy arms out and proud, and Buffy confronting her death wish.

It's got to be one of my favourite scenes of the whole series. It's so well written and shot and edited, and it makes me feel all the feelings, and James Marsters just absolutely nails the 'sexy epiphany' tone. And to top it all off, it ends with Spike genuinely thinking that they are going to kiss and totally misreading the vibe and then ending up crying on the ground clutching at Buffy's crumpled money.

I just want to hold him but also I know he deserves it! I am so conflicted by you Spike!

And now we're back at Spike's crypt with Harmony! I have really grown in my appreciation for Harmony, she is such an interesting character, and I'm glad that her and Spike's power dynamic has kind of shifted to them both being terrible and

using each other in different terrible ways. I hope that one day she ends up with someone who deserves her and they can do terrible vampire crime together. I can't believe that I thought Harmony was Spike's sister - can you imagine what a duo that would be!

And now for my favourite flashback: Drusilla and the wet, wet Chaos Demon. I also love how Spike is pissed off but not jealous that Drusilla is sleeping with someone else - maybe that's more a vampire tendency or practice from the amazing throuple that is Angel/Dru/Spike.

Once again, Buffy's mum has mysterious brain issues and I have no better ideas than before as to why. Except for maybe how her daughter isn't real, but that could be a misdirect. Buffy cries it out on the porch and has a special moment with Spike. The line from spike 'Is there something I can do' is actually so wild and out of character in a way I couldn't have noticed before, and the fact he gently touches her back - I can't tell from Buffy's expression if she's into it or if she's just super shocked and confused by what is happening.

I'm trying to imagine how she might try and explain this strange occurrence to Willow, and I can kind of see why she wouldn't tell anyone. It's just all too weird.

Anyway that's the end of my twelve watch, which ended up actually taking 12 days, as it's now 3:01pm on the 22nd of February. I guess I really didn't want to watch episode 7 of season 5 of Buffy the Vampire Slayer for the 12th time, but hey - the things you do for love.

Buffy is a really great series and I'm excited to maybe finish it one day, but for now I am proud of myself for getting to this point. Hopefully there are no 'The Gentlemen' level episodes scheduled in my future, I like to sleep and feel safe.

Anyway, See you next time!

THE END

Thanks for reading my ramblings about
Buffy the Vampire Slayer "Fool for Love"
(episode 7 season 5)

If you ever want to chat very specifically
about this episode or any that precede it,
hit me up on instagram
@dr.jesseeggy

But please, no Buffy spoilers.

This zine was created on the
stolen lands of wurundjeri
people of the Kulin nation.

I pay my respects to Elders
past, present and emerging and
acknowledge that sovereignty
has never been ceded.