

Dream

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Just to see if I can write again...

Featured fandoms: Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Featured pairings:

A.S.S Story codes: gen

Story rating: PG

Willow dreams.

In her dream, she's standing in the hallway outside her room in Buffy's house. It is day, sunshine coming in from outside and reflecting until it diffusely reaches the hallway and Willow.

There is a huge noise, and she's trying to find out what it is and where it comes from. It is a strange sound, because even though it is louder than any other sound she has ever heard she can still hear the soft sound of her steps hitting the carpet as she walks. She cannot place it. It is familiar, that much she knows, but she can't seem to remember where she's heard it before.

In her dream, she sees her hand reach out and open the door to Dawn's room. As she watches it move, she realizes that she's walking around looking for the source of the sound.

It's not in Dawn's room. There are just Dawn's girly things. None of which make a sound.

She closes the door again. Moves on to Buffy's room.

Buffy's room is full of light. She can hardly see the things in it through the brightness. Softly, invisibly from inside, she hears breathing. Calm, relaxed breathing. As of someone pleased and unstressed.

She knows it's Buffy.

She knows she could pull her out from that blissful existence, return her to the material world of darkness and pain.

She realizes that she's already done that. The sound of breathing vanishes, and the glow fades. There's nothing left but the room.

The room and the noise, which doesn't come from Buffy's room either.

Willow walks on down the stairs.

The noise is a little less strong downstairs. It's strongest in the kitchen, and near the living room couch. A small voice inside tells her that she knows very well why, but she doesn't want to hear it.

So she doesn't.

She sits down on the couch, feels its worn fabric. Familiar. Safe. She, Buffy and Xander have been sitting here any number of times. Here, she and...

The noise crescendoes, turns into a world-filling wail that blots out her thoughts. She hides her face in her hands until it subsides again. The source of it must be close, she thinks. So close. She gets up from the couch, looks around. Looks out the window.

The garden is in full bloom. The sun shines, and it looks warm and pleasant. The trees move slightly in the breeze, and the grass...

There is something *wrong* with the grass. There is something lying on it, something dark. Something lies there, bleeding. She averts her eyes, and the noise lessens a little.

She turns from the window.

The noise she's hearing doesn't come from outside anyway.

Willow walks on.

In the cellar the sound is weak. She sits there for a little while, looking at all the stuff stored there. So many things. So many memories. An axe from when Xander had Amy cast that spell on Cordelia. Water-stains from when it flooded. Ropes and stuff from when Buffy went insane, tried to kill them all and they were only saved at the last moment by...

The sudden screaming surge of the noise makes her fall over and lie panting at the top of the stairs. Slowly, she picks herself up from the floor and leaves the cellar.

In Willow's dream, she looks through the entire house for the source of the noise. From top to bottom, from front door to back porch. She looks behind bookcases and armchairs, under the sofa cushions and in the dishwasher. She looks everywhere.

Everywhere except one room.

Every time she passes by its door the noise increases. Every time she gets close to it she remembers yet another place to look in first.

Until there is nowhere else left. Not even under the carpets.

She stands outside the closed white door, and she doesn't want to open it. She can hear the noise from behind it. The pulsing, screaming, noise that cuts through her flesh and bone and turns her stomach to cold lead.

She sees her hand move, grab the doorknob. She sees herself turn it, and she sobs in fear. The door opens.

Inside, her room looks like it usually does. There is the window, and the desk, and the closets. There is the double bed.

She walks in. The noise fills the world, drowning out everything, and she can hear herself breathe. The bed is empty, and properly made. The blankets are stretched over it with a crease. There is no Tara in it, and the terrible din of Tara not breathing shakes her entire body. There should be Tara. There should be breathing, and moving, and laughing, and that little yelp of pleasure and all the other sounds she made.

But there is nothing but silence, and it is driving her insane. Wherever she turns, wherever she goes, the roaring silence follows her.

In Willow's dream, the window shatters, and a bullet flies in slow motion and perfect silence towards her.

Willow wakes up with a start, sits up straight in her bed. For a moment, relief that it was just a dream fills her. But soon she hears again the deafening silence that Tara will never again break and feels again the numbing chill that Tara will never again ease. She lies down and pushes her face into her pillow.

In the next room, Buffy lies awake, listening to her friend's desperate sobs.