

This entry is part 4 of 16 of the story [In for a Penny](#)

Title: In for a Penny [3a/?]

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Rating: NC-17 (eventually)

Length: ~9,200 words this chapter

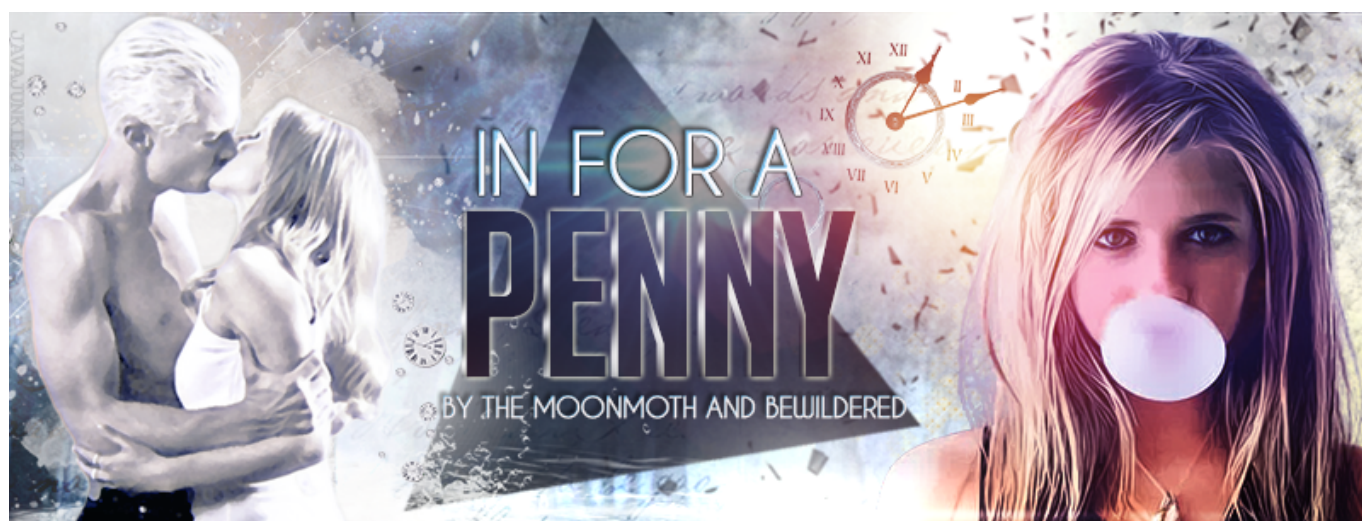
Timeline: s4-5

Warnings: Sexual situations, bad language, violence, smut. Suicidal ideation. Temporary Spike/Other and Buffy/Other.

Summary: Spike travels back in time to change the future. It goes poorly.

Notes: See end of chapter for Translation Notes for the Americans ;) Apologies in advance for having to break the chapters up like this — gdocs and LJ are the NOTP of fandom platforms, apparently

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Chapter 3, part 1

Spike was going to kill himself.

Not *himself* himself, of course; not the himself currently chained to a bloody wall with nothing but a paltry supply of pig's blood and whiskey within reach. No, he was going to kill the other himself, the one responsible for his imprisonment, currently sprawled drunkenly on the other side of the room, muttering some nonsense about butterflies and dawns and bloody witches who needed to fix their bloody declensions.

God, what a tosser. Spike would be doing himself a favour.

Had been right entertaining, watching his other, less-nefarious self fall to pieces a while back over god-knew-what — though the smashed bottle of bourbon had been a damn waste, and had made the mansion's cavernous living room stink besides — but it had been less entertaining when the bastard had stuffed the key to Spike's freedom back in his pocket and stormed out into the night. When he'd returned an hour or so later, he'd been laden down with booze and styrofoam cartons of blood, and had been sporting some truly tasteless jewelry. Without even offering Spike a fresh bottle, he'd collapsed heavily onto the couch and commenced drinking.

Fucking bastard. Would it have killed him to bring Spike back a juicy sorority girl? God, he was going to enjoy putting an end to the wanker's pathetic existence....

Other-Spike suddenly sat up, eyes glittering. "You're thinking up the best way to kill me, right now." Spike put on a wounded expression. "Perish the thought."

"Bollocks. I was you once, I know exactly what you're thinking. You've just gotten to the bit where you

make a Molotov cocktail.”

He had.

Spike's less-evil twin sank back down, staring glumly at the ring on his finger. (Where had that ghastly thing come from, anyway? Looked like something Elton Bloody John would turn his nose up at.)

“Should let you bloody well do it, too. Be doing me a favour.” He rummaged in his pockets, turning up two identical lighters — or nearly identical, the one on the left had a few added scuffs — and lighting them in unison, eyes crossing slightly as he stared at the twin flames.

Figured the bastard would snaffle his lighter. So, no pretty bonfire. Spike was nothing if not adaptable. Perhaps he could lure himself within reach, cosh him over the head...

“Don't bother trying to plan how you can lure me over there, either,” the gormless tit slurred, flicking the lighters closed and stuffing them away. “Not coming anywhere near you. You've got plenty of blood and bourbon for tonight. And s'not like our plans ever bloody pan out, anyway.”

“I see you're keeping the quality Scotch for yourself?” From the selection, it looked like he'd just gone to Willy's and nicked the whole top shelf.

“Piss off!” the prat muttered half-heartedly, tossing back a gulp of the good stuff before rummaging in a paper bag and pulling out...

Oh. The bastard. The fucking *bastard*.

“Those are mine!” Spike snarled, struggling against his chains. “Get your fucking hands off!”

“Damn right they're yours,” the son-of-a-bitch grumbled. “Which makes them mine.”

Spike watched in helpless rage as the dickhead wearing his face took up his knitting needles — the shawl he was crafting for Drusilla! — and began, clumsily but determinedly, to knit.

“I'd say this was my favour to you,” the git slurred conversationally, “'cept you're never going to finish this for Dru. In another year or so, bloody Harmony's going to get in a snit and set it on fire. Not changing a bloody thing if it has a few more inches to burn.” He glared wildly up at the ceiling. “Did you hear that, Red? I am not changing a bloody *thing!*”

Spike took another, very tiny, swig of bourbon, eyeing his enemy thoughtfully. So, Teen Witch was involved in this bitter self-betrayal, and somehow calling the shots. That was an interesting development.

Funny, how this all took him back. He wasn't in a wheelchair this time around, but he was all too familiar with the cold nausea of sitting powerless while someone took what was bloody well his. He'd been *saving* this bit of knitting, where the lace got all intricate, for when he'd got the Gem of Amara and killed the slayer and could relax in his boudoir, victorious. He'd even imagined Drusilla showing up at that very moment, shoving Harmony aside — maybe after a final blow job, Harmony had a way with those — and cooing with delight at his success. *I'll be covered in her, all right*, he thought darkly. *Covered in her blood, just waiting for my dark princess to lap it up...*

Bloody bugging *fuck*, would the overbearing bellend ever stop *whingeing*?

When the idiot paused in his endless muttered rant about whatever the fuck he was incensed about to concentrate on a particularly tricky bit — *MY particularly tricky bit, you insufferable prat!* — Spike made his move.

“So,” he said casually. “How goes the dig?”

Pathetic-Spike narrowed his eyes. “Well enough.” He looked away, shifting the shawl to one hand long enough to quaff some more Scotch. “Gave Brian a few hints. We've been headed northwest.”

Proper-Spike narrowed his own eyes in return. Last he recalled, Brian had been dead certain the crypt was south of their headquarters. “You wouldn't be trying to scupper the excavation, would you? Send us off on a wild goose chase?”

“Course not!” the bastard scoffed. “You are completely and totally off your bird if you think I'd do anything even remotely like that.”

Damn. The pillock had Spike's excellent poker face; it was impossible to tell if he was lying.

He'd already moved on in any case, mournfully swishing a half-empty bottle of Glenlivet about, watching the amber liquid slosh. “Bloody fools for love, aren't we?” he said, in an infuriatingly commiserating tone of voice.

But Spike could play along. “Too right. Bloody women.”

“Here I am, all the way back in time, when she's all fresh and bright and unburdened, and I can't even go look at her. Bloody Willow.”

Spike made a noncommittal noise, absorbing that. Apparently his future self was in a relationship with the slayer's best friend, which was... unexpected, but it wasn't like he hadn't noticed that she was

prime filet. Fetching. Tasty. Bit of steel to her, too, the way she'd handled him last year. He'd kill to see the look on the slayer's face if he turned the witch, her chin all crumpled up and her eyes all teary and glittery, perky little tits quivering.... Made him hard just thinking about it.

He shifted to relieve the pressure on his cock, vaguely noting that his ostensible future self was doing the same, a faraway look in his eyes.

Then the pitiful nob sat up with a jolt.

"*She can't see you,*" he breathed, as if he'd seen the bloody face of god. "That's what she said. That she couldn't see me."

"Is it indeed?"

But the arsehole was in the grip of his vision. "I can see her. I can see her all I bloody well want. I just have to make sure *she* doesn't see *me*."

Spike just rolled his eyes. God, he'd never been this wet when he was in love, even when Dru'd tossed him over. Fucking pathetic, it was.

"What day is it?"

It took a moment for Spike to realize that was a real question, aimed at him. "Saturday." *Also known as the day I kill you.*

Other-Spike closed his eyes, brow furrowed, "What would she be doing on a Saturday?" His eyes popped open. "Of course. She's at the bloody Bronze." He staggered to his feet, tossing their knitting at Spike and running anxious hands through his hair.

And then, before Spike could even compose a cutting *bon mot*, the bastard was gone.

Along with the key.

Spike glared after himself for a moment before gathering up the half-knitted shawl, scrutinizing the progress Arsehole Spike had made. High-handed pillock better not have dropped any stitches, or Spike was going to figure an extra-painful mode of death for him.

Well, all right. He was already going to do that. But perhaps he could dial it up to bloody eleven.

Spike sniffed grouchily and began to knit.

A wave of nostalgia washed over Spike the second he walked in the door of the Bronze, waved through by a nervous bouncer who had obviously learned not to challenge vampires for identification. Place hadn't smelled the same since the bloody troll had done his impromptu remodeling job; Spike watched hungrily as an onion blossom passed by on a tray.

There was a perk of time travel he was not going to pass up; he claimed a table in the corner (evicting its previous occupants with a pointed glare) and ordered.

Band onstage had the wolf-boy on guitar, which was another unusual stab of nostalgia; Spike hadn't interacted with the bloke much, but he'd known of and about him, as one of the lesser entities orbiting the slayer's life, and the band had been a bit of all right. Spike had a liking for groups that weren't too pretentious with the chords, just got on stage and did their thing and didn't fucking care if they were good.

Also, dingoes eating babies was hilarious.

He sat in his corner, and ate his fried onion blossom, and drank an unremarkable beer, and watched the band, and after a good twenty minutes of that, he admitted to himself that he was terrified.

He was terrified of seeing the slayer.

She was there. He could *feel* her, a little twinge on the tips of all his nerves, a vague sense of imminent danger teasing at his senses - and his senses didn't even know the half of it, how bloody dangerous she was to everything that Spike embodied. She'd stake him without a second thought - she didn't know he was all chipped up, this slayer - and then she'd go right back out on the dance floor and dance, and she'd never even know what she'd done, who he really was, why he was there. All he had to do was take off the ring, and make his presence known, and it would all be over. At her hand, which was - truth be told - the only way he'd ever wanted to go out. He'd been meant to die at her hand before she was even born. He just needed to go to her....

God, he was a coward. All the bottled courage he'd been tossing back since he'd got here - none of it made him strong enough to seek her out.

But then his eyes caught a flash of blonde hair - not just any blonde, but slayer-blonde, the colour he'd recognize anywhere - and his eyes were either less cowardly or more desperate than the rest of Spike, and they were drawn to that flash of gold like a lodestone to the north, and then... he saw her. There she was.

Alive.

It felt like a noose had been dropped around his neck, tightening moment by moment as he drank in the sight of her. She was dancing with Willow, that distant-sexy way girls danced together when they didn't want men to approach, and her eyes were closed, eyelids fluttering in time with the music, and he stood and started to walk forward, leaving the detritus of his onion behind, because oh god she was there, she was *there*, warm and alive and....

And she would still be dead in less than two years, if he didn't do his fucking job.

She can't see you.

He turned on his heel, stumbling under the stairs and out of sight, and he stood there for a moment, chest heaving like he needed the oxygen, which of course he didn't, except of course every inhalation was riddled with her scent, and he needed *that*, he needed it more than oxygen, the ripe warm *alive* slayer scent. He stepped closer to the stairs, watching the slayer through the risers as she danced, and he didn't care that he was choking, on her scent and emotion and that damned garrote; just the sight of her was enough to make him dust.

He would have watched her dance forever — or at least for the two months he'd been allotted — except a song or an eternity later, she and Willow exchanged some mysterious signal and headed back to their table, which was... too close. Not close enough in another sense, not close enough for his preferences — he wanted her so close she was inside him — but where she was sitting, all she had to do was glance around and she'd see him for certain, she'd see him and then she'd stake him — she'd get the ring off him somehow, cunning bitch — and it was a straight shot from that to broken slayer in the dawn.

He couldn't do it. He couldn't go over. But he couldn't be this close and not go over, either.

And so he fled.

"There you are, Blondie Bear!" Harmony clapped her hands in delight at finally laying eyes on her honey. He hadn't been at the dig site when she'd come back, which was kinda weird given how obsessed he'd been with it before, but she'd totally used her super new vampire senses and tracked him across town. Or, like, she would have? Except it had been way hard and she'd kept getting lost, and it had been a couple of days, so in the end she'd just gone to Willy's and leaned over the bar really far until his eyes had practically bugged out and he'd told her what he'd heard. And then it had been day, and she'd been tired. And then she'd been hungry. But now here she was! And there he was! Yay!

"Harm?" Spike asked, putting down his — were those knitting needles? For a cool guy, he could be a complete weirdo sometimes. He looked kind of surprised. Probably just really pleased to see her.

"Where are the others?"

"What others?"

"The others! You know, backup?" She still didn't know what he meant. "Other *vampires*, you bird-brained little twit. Please tell me you're not the only one who knows where I am?"

It was then she noticed he was manacled to the wall.

"What the hell is this?" she demanded in a calm yet forceful manner, just like Cosmo recommended.

"You've been gone for days, just up and left without so much as a note, and when I finally find you, you're in the middle of some..." — unable to contain her outrage, she stamped her foot — "*sex game!* Is Droodzilla back? Is that it? She just crooks her bony finger and you come running, wrists first?"

"Harm—"

"Is this because I said I wouldn't do chains?" she asked, hurt. She'd thought he'd respected her preferences — he'd just shrugged, after all, and not, like, made a big deal out of it or anything — but maybe she just hadn't realised how much he'd wanted it. Oh god! Maybe *she* hadn't respected *his* preferences. Cosmo said relationships were totally about negotiation. Though, it also said she should assert herself and not be a doormat to her man's desires, so that was kind of confusing. And, well, they were only about fifty-fifty with their blow job advice, even given how much more vampires liked teeth. She'd tried that one thing once and....

"Harm—"

Geez, couldn't Spike tell she was thinking? About important things? He was so high-maintenance. But whatever. She eyed him up and down, all restrained and glowering. "It *is* kind of hot, I guess," she said thoughtfully. Honestly, when he'd suggested chains, she'd assumed she would be the one tied up, but this... this totally had potential.

"Listen to me, you demented nitwit. I have been kidnapped. I'm being held hostage. Got that? These chains," he shook his wrists at her animatedly. "Restraining me against my will. So why don't you use that bubblebrain for once and *go find something to get me out of here!*"

"Oh no, Spike," Harmony said in the silky tones she thought of as her bedroom voice. "I couldn't possibly release you. You've been such a bad, bad boy."

She slinked over, and when he tried to speak again, she reacted on instinct — she slapped him across the face.

Harmony gasped at her own daring, and for a moment afterwards, Spike just stared at her. Impressed by her dominance, she realized, as his eyes darkened and his pants started to look uncomfortably tight.

"Oh, hi there, Little Spike," she said smugly to his crotch.

Spike growled. "I told you not to call it that." But he stopped complaining when she leaned over, really far, his cool breath gusting down the front of her top and her hand caressing the top of his thigh.

An hour or so later, she was just coming down from a wonderful high when Spike yelled something about distractions and how nice her ya-yas were — well, that's how she interpreted it — and threw her off of him. He yelled at her to go get Brian and bring him back here with an ass-setting-something torch, as if she even knew what that was, and she might have done it, too, if he hadn't been such a big jerk about it all. Honestly, he could show a little gratitude for her going along with his kink. He could be so *moody* sometimes. Of course he was entitled to his feelings, or whatever, but he didn't have to lash out like a big baby.

"You know, Spike," she said softly, dignified... edly... as she gathered up her scattered clothes. "You don't have to speak to me like that all the time. I know we're vampires and all, but I don't mind it when you're nice."

He looked horrified. "When am I ever nice to you?"

She sniffed as she walked away. "Exactly," she murmured sadly.

God, she needed a drink.

Spike took up station against the wall, behind the pool tables, where he could watch the slayer's face in a security mirror without any danger of her glimpsing him in her peripheral vision. She kept glancing up at the mirror, all flirty-like, and he could almost pretend that she was flirting with him, if he didn't know she couldn't bloody well see him. There was something hot and hungry in her eyes, but innocent too, which of course was rubbish because she'd been through all that drama with Angelus, but he basked in it anyhow, wishing it was him she was hungry for.

"Dude, that girl's watching you like a bowlful of candy on Halloween."

"Where?"

"In the mirror. Blonde chick, sitting with the redhead."

"Oh, her. That's Buffy."

Spike flinched at the sound of her name, reflexively, but his ears perked up and he focused on the pool players more closely. Bloke in teal had a familiar air, like Spike had seen him from a distance, and when the fellow circled the table to take his shot, and Spike could see his face, it was more than familiar.

He's got... what's the word? Vulnerability.

Spike's fist clenched around his bottle of beer as emotions roiled up inside him. Suddenly, he remembered the heady glee of walking out into the sunlight and watching the slayer's face crumple with the realisation she'd been duped, using the knowledge to mock her as they fought, loving the dull pain in her eyes. The memory made him sick now, dizzy with conflict, because *god* he was done with seeing her eyes dull, cloudy, *dead* — he chugged his beer and looked up at the mirror again, desperately seeking her eyes. They were bright and glowing with hope, and god they *hurt*. She had no right to glow at him so, not with what was to come.

He was a hair's-breadth from launching himself at bloody Parker What's-his-face, chip be damned, but a tiny thread of good sense managed to hold him back, even in his drunken state. Reflection or no, the slayer would be sure to notice her bit of fluff being assaulted, and of course once she turned around she'd see Spike, and it would all be over. Willow's voice rang in his mind once again, *She can't see you*. He'd been treading the fine edge of that command, unable to resist, but he was at the very least going to follow the letter of the sodding law.

So he sank back against the wall, sullenly gesturing at one of the waitresses for another bottle. "Thought you were all hot and heavy with Monica?" Parker's mate was laughing, setting up his next shot.

"Monica? Yeah, she's all right," the twatwaffle shrugged. "Kinda crazy, though."

Another bloke in their party snorted. "She's here, too. Over at the bar."

"God. Spend a little *quality time* with a girl, and she starts planning the wedding, right?"

Spike followed the bastard's glance across the room to the cute brunette who was watching them sidelong, draped to best show off her assets. That had to be Monica. Biteable. She had that useful combination of put-on confidence and low self-esteem that made for excellent prey.

For more than just vampires.

Something about Biteable Monica kept niggling at him, though, and he watched her sidelong, trying to tease out the thorn, when it finally struck him: she reminded him of Dawn, long brown hair flowing down and eyes older than they should be. Dawn when she was trying to be grown-up, when she was trying to be....

Fuck. Why had he switched to beer?

Bloody Parker and his bloody mates kept talking, the usual crass, vapid, college-boy tosh, and Spike kept drinking, wincing every time the crassness landed on the slayer. God, he was a masochist, standing here listening to the bastard who was about to shag the woman Spike loved prove how little he deserved the honour, but... she was still flirting with the mirror, and he couldn't walk away from it. Even knowing what was going to happen, this night or the next.

Unless... he stopped it.

Spike shuddered in sudden realisation of the power he held. He knew what was supposed to happen, and he also knew — from a century of preying on women with a skill Parker Fucknozzle could only aspire to — just how easy it would be for the deal to go south. The wrong word at the wrong time, an interruption at a crucial moment, and anything could happen.

Willow would tell him no, that he needed to get his arse back to the bloody mansion and spend the next two months in seclusion, careful not to crush any fancy little flowers, but it was her sodding fault he was trapped here, wasn't it? And she'd barely believed he could make it two days, herself.

He looked up at the mirror again, drinking in the intoxicating sight of the slayer, alive, eyes sparkling. Eyes that all too soon were going to be dead.

He couldn't just sit on his arse and allow those eyes to happen.

Bloody hell. He'd already stepped on the damn butterfly. Not to mention all the other little things that had to have changed, just by taking his past self off the streets for a few days. For all he knew, bloody Harmony had already sent the timeline careening into madness, just because he hadn't shagged her lately.

"In for a penny..." he muttered, shoving off from the wall.

He had some history to change.

[Chapter 3, part 2](#)

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