

This entry is part 3 of 7 of the story [The Couple that RoadTrips Together](#)

### Part 3

"You're gonna have to let me off the hook sometime, pet." Spike was curled up around Buffy in the hotel room bed with its inviting pillow and comfy mattress, and she was already halfway to dreamland.

Buffy's whole world except for Dawn was in that hotel room, and she was content and more than a little sleepy. They'd driven several more hours after she'd cleaned up in the demon-filled gas station and made love to Spike on one of the rocking chairs, which had had some unique challenges but was crazily enough perfect. She'd then consumed most of her Slim Jim's and drunk a bottle and a half of water (that she had still paid for). Her bodily functions except for needed rest had been met, and she really needed some sleep. Now, the sun was rising, and she and Spike had stopped at the first hotel in a reasonably sized town for rest. What was he bringing up now at the worst possible time imaginable? "What do you mean?" she mumbled.

He drew his legs up behind hers, spooning her closer. "I mean, I get that you're angry with me about. . . well, about a lot of things. I've made some bloody wrong moves. And you have a right to be upset. But if we're going to make a go of it, I need to know that at some point, you might be able to forgive me."

She frowned even though he couldn't see it. "Forgive you? I have forgiven you. A-and I'm not angry. Queen of stupid moves in our relationship over here, remember?"

He sighed. "We've both contributed to our relationship being more than a bit messy. And I know it doesn't help things move along, but I am sorry, pet. I'm sorry for not coming to find you sooner."

"Would you have ever come to find me?" She honestly didn't know because they hadn't had time to really talk. Los Angeles had been too busy for a lot of reasons, and the main thing she'd communicated was that she loved him. She brought his forearm up to her chest, clasping his hand in hers.

"If I knew this was how you felt, I'd have come as soon as I was solid again."

"You really didn't know?" Buffy nestled her hips against his and owned her piece. "I get why you weren't sure. We weren't exactly clear at the end, and I did kiss Angel."

"There is that." Spike's words were no longer tinged with jealousy. "But it was more that I wanted you to remember me as someone who went out saving the world and not someone who came back in an ugly bauble stuffed in a box and sent through the postal system."

"That logic is not my logic."

"Feelings have nothing to do with logic."

"Duh." She paused for several seconds. "I don't love you because you're some hero that saved the world. I love you for who you are. I believe in you as a person, remember? I wouldn't give a crap if you came back in some other ridiculous way that I can't think of right now because. . . well, because tired here."

"Oh."

"Yeah, oh."

"We should have talked about this before." He freed his hand and ran it over her hip in a nondemanding way before settling on her belly. The small gesture was familiar and slightly possessive, which nowadays she relished.

"Like when? During that last year in Sunnydale between you being temporarily insane and controlled by the First and me still recovering from depression and trying to lead an army of Potential Slayers?"

"We did the best we could." He sounded surprised by this conclusion.

"We were both still healing." She'd been thinking about this for over a year. "And I thought somehow me showing you would mean more than telling, but I guess we both needed words."

"Maybe both."

"Both would have been good," she agreed.

"I didn't want to overstep after what happened. . . before I left for Africa." He still couldn't talk about what happened in her bathroom. "And you were obviously still struggling with it. As only makes sense."

"Maybe we did the best we could?" she repeated, solidifying his deduction.

"Sounds like, love." He held her tighter and pushed his face into her hair.

Buffy shivered with desire and felt comforted at the same time, but sleep still beckoned her from the edge of her conscious mind. Something asserted itself, shoving aside the lure of dreams. She could tell Spike was almost gone to sleep, too, but she still whispered, "Me being afraid of you not being there anymore has more to do with what happened with people before you." If she let herself dwell, she still felt the sharp pain of losing Angel multiple times and Riley's betrayal. The other two weren't worth mentioning even in her own mind. "Dying to save the world has a whole other connotation."

"Mmm?" Spike shifted. Buffy almost thought he didn't hear her until he said, "Not going anywhere. Not now. Unless you tell me to. And I get the insecurity. Have it too for similar reasons with others."

She didn't feel like rehashing their exes, but she was curious at his hint at someone else besides Drusilla. "I know. Give me some time?"

"As much as you need, love. From the sound of it, I might need some, too."

"I love you." She couldn't say it enough now.

"I love you, too." He breathed out with what sounded like happiness. "Still can't believe you love me."

"I'll keep saying it until you do."

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