

This entry is part 6 of 7 of the story [The Couple that RoadTrips Together](#)

### Part 6

With her face a mask of concentration, Buffy rummaged around in her suitcase, hunting for her gift for Spike. She should have put it somewhere easier to retrieve. Damn it.

She'd tried pulling the present out while the luggage was in the car, but that was a dismal failure. So, she'd dragged the bag onto the sidewalk at the Chevron station while Spike was in the shop, buying another snack for her. She'd talked him into stopping before they passed through Baton Rouge, hoping for her plans to go smoothly and without demonic interruption if they were in a more populated area.

But this Louisiana humidity in December? For the birds. She was sweating in the winter. Though she supposed the extra moisture in the air was good for her skin.

Her fingers snagged the small package underneath her favorite sweater (her only sweater) where she'd forgotten she'd put it. Finally. With a happy sigh, she stood up and leaned against the car. Thankfully, the package was still intact.

"What's this?" Annoyance tinged Spike's voice. "Do you know how hard it was to put your bloody bag in the car?"

Ignoring his irritation, Buffy shrugged. "Don't worry. I'll put it back." She thrust the brightly-wrapped package at him. "Merry Christmas!"

"Christmas is tomorrow." Spike slung the plastic bag with his purchases into the front seat and accepted the gift. Despite the bit of protest in his words, his expression was one of absolute awe, and Buffy wondered how long it had been since he'd been given a present.

His lips were soft and cool on hers as he gave her a brief kiss, and then, he drew back and studied the gift with a smile of such genuine joy that she wished she could pause the moment and roll around in it. "Thank you."

She danced anxiously from one foot to the other. "Open it?"

Spike's fingers trembled a bit as he reverently loosened the tape to not tear the paper. Tucking the wrappings under the gift, he touched the small silver-framed picture with the cheesy image of a bright red heart and blooming pink flowers winding around the borders. He read the message printed underneath, "Home is where the heart is?" He held up the other item, plastic green leaves and white berries reflecting the light from the gas station. "And mistletoe?"

Her cheeks grew hot as she hurried to explain. "The mistletoe because it's Christmas, and we're not anywhere where I can decorate. I thought we could hang it from the rearview mirror? Plus, I like kissing you. A lot."

"I think I got that memo," he teased. "And the picture?"

Buffy kept her eyes trained on his hands holding the gift. "Was Mom's. She used to keep it on her bedside table wherever we lived. When I was growing up, she would say that home was wherever we were, no matter what roof was over our heads. When she died, I kept it in my room, mostly tucked in a drawer because it hurt to look at it, and it was one of the only things I packed in Sunnydale prior

to well. . . everything.” She couldn’t summarize it in a neat set of words. “And now, I wanted you to know that wherever you are? That’s home to me.” She peeked up at him almost shyly, uncertain of his reaction.

To her surprise, tears were shining in his eyes, and her own tears soon matched his as she moved into his arms. He clung to her, holding her so tightly she almost couldn’t breathe. “I love you, pet. Happy Christmas.”

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