Until Eternity

by purplefeen

Spike/Willow
rating: Adult
time frame: sometime near the end of s7
summary: Willow meets Spike in the basement for a rendezvous. My answer to all the angst filled fics with this premise.

He heard her as soon as her feet hit the floor in her bedroom. The soft patting of her size seven feet across the beige berber carpet hardly makes any sound at all, but to Spike, it means everything.

It means that the one small ray of hope in this endless existence is on her way down to see him. Again. As she does every night. Has done every night for the past twenty-two nights.

In all his centuries, he'd never have guessed that the one thing that could calm his soul would be a young witch with almost as much blackness in her as he. That's why he understands her. That's why she understands him. That's why in the midst of the next great apocalypse, they both manage to stay calm. At peace.

Because they have found their peace in each other. And no matter what The First throws at them, he and Willow will survive. Will conquer any evil necessary. Because they've finally found what everyone's been looking for.

Peace.

World peace.

Peace within their own small corner of the world.

The footsteps grow louder now as she tiptoes across the kitchen. They've decided to keep their relationship on the QT for now; what with it being the end of the world and all.

"Spike?" she calls down when she reaches the top step.

He's on his feet in an instant. "Yeah, Luv?"

"Feel like going for a walk?"

No, he doesn't but if she wants to, then he will. Gladly.

"Where we goin', Pet?" he asks once they get outside and he can raise his voice. When he puts a cigarette in his mouth, she grabs his lighter and lights it for him.

"Dawn knows about us," she tells him with a small half-smile. She knows he won't be mad, but it's not in keeping with the plan and the relationship is too new for her to be second guessing him.

Spike takes her hand and smiles. "Figured. Niblet was giving me strange looks all through her self-defense lesson t'night. Knew somethin' was up, wasn't sure what."

He stops and looks down at Willow's face. "That all right with you?"

"Sure. I mean, if it's all right with you I mean. Are you sure its all right with you?"

He stops and pulls her to his chest and wraps his arms around her, kisses the top of her shining copper hair. "This been gettin' you in a tizzy? No worries, Luv, we'll handle it."

He gives her small body another squeeze and she feels so warm in his arms. So loved and protected. So safe, here in the arms of the one who has threatened, on several occasions, to kill her. How weird is that?

When she gives a small giggle, he asks her what's so funny. She tells him.

"Maybe its another one of those freak occurances that only happen on the Hellmouth."

She agrees that maybe he's right and they head off again.

She leads him through Sunnydale, to all the places that meant something to her during her short life. Past the library and the elementary school. Past the Quickie Mart where she and Xander and Jessie used to spend their allowances on candy and ice cream. She shows him Jesse's house and explains how her friend died. Tears fall and she wonders aloud if killing him was the right thing to do. Giles had told her that Jesse was no longer in there, that what was inside was only the thing that killed him.

"He's right, Luv. A vampire isn't a person; it's a monster wearing a person-shaped costume."

"But what about you? You're still..." she doesn't know how to explain.

"No, Luv. I have William's memories and that sometimes effects what I do. But it's a demon in here, Red. One demon in the shape of William Pratt, bloody awful Victorian poet."

"But you're not! A monster, I mean."

Spike sits on the lawn and pulls Willow onto his lap. Sunnydale is deserted so there was no chance of them being seen and run off. He calms her tears, running gentle fingers through long strands of hair that shown bright in the amber glow of the streetlight.

"I *am* a demon, Red, through and through. But I'm older than most you see around here. I've learned to control it. I don't have the bloodlust I once had, that the fledges you stake have. I've been around long enough to appreciate the creature comforts, and the comfort that good friends can bring. I've been on this earth long enough to appreciate family, something I'm sure Angelus would be tickled no end to discover. When you're more or less immortal, the only thing you can really hold on to are other immortals. Family. I may be a little more cultured than most, but I'm still a demon, Luv.

"Your friend, he was brand new. He hadn't been around long enough to learn how to control himself. Learn how to take the memories of the human his body had once been and adapt. He was just a monster, Luv, that's all. It was right to stake him. He'd have killed you or worse if you hadn't." They stand and walk on as Willow mulls over what Spike has said. Even if Jesse hadn't been turned, there was no guarantee he'd still be alive today. Look how many they had lost.

When they returned to the house, the light over the stove was on. The Slayer's Scythe was on the kitchen counter, Buffy asleep on one of the stools.

"She must have come looking for you," Willow comments without much inflection. She doesn't want to read more into that that than there might be. She hopes.

Spike takes her hand and leads her downstairs, closing the door behind them. He leads her over the queen size mattress he stole from the house across the street when the occupants left Sunnydale. His left index finger trails down her cheek and he says, "Willow, I love you. It's only you. I promise." She smiles. "I know," she lies but hopes its true. His hand cups her cheek and he raises her face for a kiss. A kiss that's soft and slow and sweet and he hopes it tells her just how true his words are.

This is all too new, too uncertain, for either of them to be sure. But somehow, so far down that they feel like its part of their inner being, it *feels* true. It feels like it was meant to be. Like this kiss and this night and this feeling will last forever and everything they've both ever prayed for in someone to love and love them in return in standing right in front of them.

Willow's soft warm hands slip under the black cotton of his t-shirt and she raises it up and lifts it over his head. Without looking, she throws it behind her. Usually she's neat and careful with their clothes, but time is running out and she needs to feel that peace that she has only ever found in his arms.

Something's coming, something bad, she can feel it, they both can, and they need this, they need each other, they need to fuse into one person so that they'll know, no matter what happens, that it was real and true and they held perfection, if even for a tiny space of time.

His skin warms under her touch as he takes his turn peeling off her shirt. She pulls off his pants as he desperately tries to drop her skirt at the same time. She kicks off her shoes, but he has to sit to untie his boots and she takes a breath, just watching him. As the boots, one by one, go sliding across the floor, he looks up and her smile steals his breath away.

"I love you," he tells her again. He could tell her forever and it doesn't feel like it would be enough. "I love you more," she says with a giggle as she falls onto the bed beside him.

"Oh, no," Spike whines, "I'm not playing that game again. Last time, I swear Anya heard us."

Willow grins. "What game?" she teases.

He pulls her into his arms. "The 'I love you more' game. It goes on forever and besides, I love you more anyway."

The thought is there to continue saying 'I love you more' until someone calls uncle, but the look in his eyes and the disappearing smile from his mouth change her mind.

He leans in to kiss her, and only a hair's breadth away from her lips, he says, "I really do love you, ya know. The forever and ever kind of love. I'll love you til eternity, Red." And the kiss begins and Willows skin heats up with every passing heartbeat. Spike pulls back and puts his hand over her heart, feeling each boom-ba-boom as if it were his own heart beating. In a way, it is.

No longer able to wait, Willow takes the lead and nudges Spike onto his back, crawling onto his body and melding hers with his. Soft strokes, hard touches, short caresses, long whispers of skin on skin. They take their time exploring each other until every cell is memorized.

When at last they join, it is with joyful relief at finally coming home. Being in the one place on earth where they are truly meant to be. The apocalypses will come and go, evil will be defeated - or not. But the one constant in their world is here and now and nothing, not The First, not Buffy, not Drusilla, not even Angelus - can take this away from them.

Hands grip and eyes lock and bodies move with a minimum of effort. Everything that means anything is here in this room, in this bed, joined as one, finding their own little piece of peace.

When it is over, she doesn't leave as she usually does. Doesn't put her clothes on and slip silently back up to her room.

Only two days left before the unknown comes. Dawn knows, the rest may as well too. Spike holds her close, feeling her heart beat against his chest, feeling her body warm even more as she falls deeper into slumber.

He snuggles against her. What they have left of this life may be too short to waste it on petty squabbles or indifferent encounters. He's going to spend the time he has left with the miracle he was lucky enough to find. Giles, Anya, Faith, Xander, the Potentials, even Buffy - they'll make it or they won't; it's up to them. But Willow and Niblet will survive, he'll see to it. And he'll spend what little time he has left making sure they know how very much they mean to him, in case he doesn't.

*(21 days later)*

As Spike's dust reconstructs itself, he lets out a deafening scream.

*Strange room, strange people, too bright lights...*

*Where is this place and where is...*

"Spike?"

He turns, and there is the one responsible for his demise. The one not brave enough to wear the amulet himself and so Spike was the only remaining choice. He growls and attacks... ...and goes right through him. And seems to be standing in a desk. *In* a desk.

*What the bloody fuck?*

It takes some time to sort through and discover that he is now non-corporeal. Like The First had been. Spike wonders for a time if he is indeed The First, come back to avenge itself on Angel's do-gooder friends. But after a few hours, he discovers that he doesn't feel any different. Physically, he's completely different. But inside, what matters, is exactly the same.

He manages to sneak past Harmony into Angel's office before he remembers that he couldn't even lift the phone, even if he did have a phone number to call. Where would he call anyway? Where would she have gone? And Dawn? Where would she be?

He tries to look nonchalant as Lorne wanders in and drops some papers on Angel's desk.

"Okay, Lemon Drop, something's up. Tell Lorne all about it. Or better yet, sing it out."

"Huh?" Spike has no idea what this drag queen wannabe is talking about.

"He's a cognitive demon," Angel informs him as he walks in. "He reads people's auras when they sing and helps them discover their path."

"I have no path!" Spike scoffs. "I just wanna call my girl!"

"*Your* girl?!" Angel barks defensively. "I'm the one she told to wait for the cookie dough to finish... whatever it was going to do! I know you had some sicko thing going with her, but get over it, Spike. She's moved on without you."

Spike, pretty much lost once the 'cookie dough' part began, said, "Moved on? Moved on! She - We - You're off your nut! She loves me! And I love her! She's not any cook-" he breaks off, comprehension dawning. "You're talking about Buffy, right? The cookie dough? Only the slayer would use a whacked analogy like that. I'm talkin' 'bout Red, Peaches! Where'd she go? And is Dawn with 'er?"

"Willow? You love Willow? When did this happen? Nobody told me about this!"

"Oh, well, so sorry Angelus, I didn't realize that affairs of the heart had to have your personal seal of approval!" Even though he doesn't have the body to back up the threat, he gets right in Angel's face and demands, "Now Where's. My. Girl!"

Angel pulls a piece of paper from the top drawer of his desk before picking up the phone and dialing a number. He sighs and rolls his eyes; he can't believe he's actually doing something nice for The Bane Of His Existence. Namely, Spike.

"Giles? It's Angel."

"Let me talk to her," Spike growls excitedly in Angel's ear.

"Yeah, we're all good. Um, is Willow there?"

"Let me talk to 'er!" Spike growls a little louder.

"Yes, you heard right, that's Spi-"

An infusion of pink smoke fills Angel's office. Coughing and making her way through the cloud is Willow.

Cough! Cough, cough. "Sorry, guys. Haven't quite got the hang of-"

Spike runs to her - and goes right through her.

"Luv?"

"Spike? Spike, what happened to you?"

"What happened to you?" he asks, taking in her long pale blonde hair.

"You don't like it," Willow whines, insecure as ever.

"No, Luv, it's beautiful. Makes you kind of -" he breaks off, searching for an appropriate word, "effulgent."

"Oh," she sighs, "I know. The glowy thing came with the whole goddess package but Fred told me that Cordy would glow sometimes and it never hurt her any, so - What? What's wrong?"

Spike is beside her, trying to take it all in. "Goddess?"

Willow looks embarrassed. "Um, yeah. That kinda happened when I did the spell and made all the potentials into slayers. Mari and Hecate told me that I would need more power to make the slayer spell work, so they gave me a boost."

"A goddess?" He still can't quite believe it.

"Is... is that okay?"

"I... well, I... sure, Luv. Be all you can be, right?" He sounds less than enthused. "A goddess. Knew you were somethin' special, first time I... Well, guess you have, ya know, goddess things to do then?" He wanted to sit down - or better still, fall down - but he couldn't. No body.

And Red had moved on. Way on. Way way on. No need for a washed-up vamp with no body to hold her close at night. Does she even need ta sleep any more?

"Spike?"

He looks up and puts on a fake smile. "Yeah, Luv?"

"Is... is something wrong?"

"No, Luv. Everything's just..." but he didn't know what everything was just, so he stopped talking.

Lorne, following the conversation better than anyone else in the room, said, "Goddess baby, sing me a few bars of one of your favourites."

Willow had met Lorne several times over the last couple of weeks - being able to teleport made dropping in for a chat a breeze - so she knew he must have something in mind by his request.

She thought for a minute and began, "Tell me your troubles and doubts
Giving me everything inside and out, out
Love's strange so real in the dark
Think of the tender things that we were working on
Slow change may pull us apart
I'll get us back together at heart, baby"

"Now you, Blondie Bear, sing me something sweet."

Spike felt ridiculous, but Peaches had said this guy could tell his path or some such. So he sang.

"I'm driving without sleep
There just ain't no tomorrow
Because misery is always colorblind
I've taken every remedy for ignorance and sorrow
Something to cure this wicked mind"

"Well, well, well. Angelcakes, it looks like we've stumbled into the Billy Idol fan club. And what amazing auras Mister Idol brings out in the two of you. Our lovely goddess's aura seems to be about five ten, with bleached blond hair and Johnny Cash's wardrobe. While Casper's aura is a petite five four with the cutest little freckles and bright copper hair. It's also wearing a pink fuzzy sweater with a lavender skirt and green sneakers, but I don't want the explanation for that one, all right, kiddies? Now, we seem to be matching up so what's the hold up?"

Spike turned away and walked toward the windows.

"Red hair?" Willow asked Lorne.

"That's right, Pumpkin. You in the flesh, and in your original hair colour."

"Oh." She looked up to Angel with tears in her eyes. "It, um, it doesn't change," she informed him, pointing to her hair. "I tried to dye it. D-D-Dawn tr-tried an-and... but it doesn't... I-I think I should go n-now."

"You think I don't want you because of your hair colour?!" came the incredulous reply from near the window.

Willow just looked at him, crying.

"Red, you're- Christ! I can't even call you Red anymore! You're a goddess, Luv! A goddess! With all your - whatever it is you can do now. I'm not even, I've got no body, I can't-"

He broke off because a shiver went up his spine as molecules came together, forming his body and clothes.

His jaw dropped.

"You were saying?" Willow asked with a small smile.

"You did that?"

She nodded. Spike looked more forlorn than ever. "Great! Just bloody wonderful! What does she need me for? Anything she wants, she can just goddess it together and make it happen!"

Willow gasped. "I didn't think of that!" Suddenly, Spike was no longer at the window, but standing beside Willow.

"There's some things I can't do," Willow informed him, looking at the floor. Spike was starting to get the idea that Willow might still want him.

"What's that, Luv?"

"You know that thing you do, where you make the world go away and hold me and make me feel safe?"

"Red, I mean Willow, you don't need me to protect you anymore."

Willow smiled, "Yes I do! And I need you to call me Red and I really really need you to be inside me right now because I'm scared that I might lose you and I just found you again! I still love you, Spike. Don't you love me even a little bit?"

"Until eternity, Red, you know that."

In a puff of pink smoke, they were gone.

The End