

## B U F F Y / A N G E L

another, beating one another down, climbing into cars and shootin' people for no good reason 'cept they come from a different block of the same crappy tenements." Calvin shook his head and spread his arms out wide. "What you got here, Gunn? 'S' just another gang war. The difference is, right here, right now? There's something *worth* fighting for. Dangerous? Hell, yeah. But no more so than at home. And if I'm gonna cash in at fifteen, I'd rather it be fighting for something than for nothing."

Gunn stared at him a long time. At length, he sucked in a breath and let it out long and slow. "There's a place inland, like an arena. We gathered up the children and the old folks, some of the demons who can't fend for themselves. There's a whole tribe lives underground here, slowest things you ever saw."

Calvin swore. "You ain't gonna put me in there with them!"

"No," Gunn agreed. "I'm not. But someone's gotta defend them. Cordelia's over there now. Willow's working on some protection spells. We've got a ton of demon soldiers guarding the place. I have you on the front lines with me, I'm never gonna be able to focus. Probably get me killed just worrying about you. But if you wanna help, really do some good, that's the place to be."

Calvin stared at him for several long seconds, and then he put out his hand. Gunn took it and they shook, then he pulled Calvin into his arms and hugged him.

"You stay alive," Gunn whispered in a raspy voice into the kid's ear. "Or I'll never be able to go home again."

"Yeah. I wouldn't want to get you in trouble with your boys."

"What do you mean he won't fight?"

Wesley ran along the jungle path with Lorne right behind him. The Host was trying desperately to keep his suit from getting ruined, but the jungle was not being kind to his couture.