

# Wake Me Up

by Lynne C.

**Rating:** R

**Disclaimer:** It's all Joss' – I worship at the altar of his genius, and acknowledge that he owns all these folks and everything that they do and say.

**Setting/Spoilers:** post-*Storyteller* (7.16); post-*Lies My Parents Told Me* (7.17); post-*Chosen* (7.22) ~ no real episode spoilers...this is all setting.

**Summary:** A song brings Buffy to catharsis.

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She couldn't really remember exactly when she'd heard the song on the radio for the first time. It was probably sometime after she'd used Andrew to shut down, as it turned out, just temporarily, the Seal of Danthazar. But she wasn't certain. The tune was the kind that stuck with you, and she'd hum along with it when it came on. It wasn't until some weeks later that she'd really *heard* the song for the first time. As in, really listened to the words. She recalled that incident very clearly, as she remembered many moments in those final days of Sunnydale. It had been the day before Faith's return. Or, more specifically, it had been the night that Willow was in Los Angeles. She knew it because she'd wished so desperately that her friend had been there, not necessarily so that she could truly unburden herself, but she knew that Willow would sense her anguish, and offer sympathy and comfort, even in the absence of a detailed explanation.

She'd locked herself in the bathroom, indulging in some rare and much-needed privacy; a Mr. Bubble oasis in the midst of the three-ring-circus that couple of candles, though one right down the wick in the out. No matter – the one that carefree relaxation, indulgent cup. It even had an earthy identify, but reminded her a afford (courtesy of the bank facial scrubs and body

She'd turned the radio on, soak and daydream and water had turned quite tepid, that she was contemplating on. And because she wasn't required her attention, the spoke to her emotional state couldn't breathe. Her heart beginning to pound against the side of the tub, half ready off, but unable to tear herself described both her sense of one person who held it at bay.

The song was her affair with

In the end, she'd sat with her hard as she relived fragments

She'd been taken so unawares not even questioned why she resurrection. But he made her with each new level of was terrifying, not just because the contrast was so feeling, and the sudden once. She'd touch him, kiss anger and sadness and loss, passion whose origin and to understand. Had she for Spike? Did she have one for all vampires, as part of the mojo that was the basis of the whole Slayer package??

He'd once told her that theirs was a dance; and that she was a little bit in love with death. Was that why he electrified her? Was it that her very being cried out to return to the grave, and so drew her closer and closer to that instrument of death to which the Slayer was most keenly attuned? Is that why she wasn't driven to consummate her growing hunger for Spike until she knew that he could harm her if he chose?

*Bring Me To Life ~ Evanescence*

*how can you see into my eyes like open doors  
leading you down into my core  
where I've become so numb without a soul my spirit sleeping  
somewhere cold  
until you find it there and lead it back home*

*(Wake me up)*

<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>call my name and save me from the dark</i>	<i>(Wake me up)</i>
<i>bid my blood to run</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>before I come undone</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>save me from the nothing I've become</i>	

*now that I know what I'm without  
you can't just leave me  
breathe into me and make me real  
bring me to life*

*(Wake me up)*

<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>call my name and save me from the dark</i>	<i>(Wake me up)</i>
<i>bid my blood to run</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>before I come undone</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>save me from the nothing I've become</i>	

*frozen inside without your touch without your love darling only  
you are the life among the dead*

*all this time I can't believe I couldn't see  
kept in the dark but you were there in front of me  
I've been sleeping a thousand years it seems  
got to open my eyes to everything  
without a thought without a voice without a soul  
don't let me die here  
there must be something more  
bring me to life*

*(Wake me up)*

<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>Wake me up inside</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>call my name and save me from the dark</i>	<i>(Wake me up)</i>
<i>bid my blood to run</i>	<i>(I can't wake up)</i>
<i>before I come undone</i>	<i>(Save me)</i>
<i>save me from the nothing I've become</i>	<i>(Bring me to life)</i>
<i>I've been living a lie, there's nothing inside</i>	<i>(Bring me to life)</i>

was her home. She'd even lit a of them seemed to have burned first five minutes, and fizzled remained had symbolized luxury – a day spa in a votive fragrance that she couldn't bit of the days when she could of Mom) to buy the expensive polishes.

climbed in, and proceeded to generally clear her mind. The and she was prune-y enough getting out when it had come doing anything else that words penetrated. And they so of a year before that she almost had squished painfully, before her ribs. She'd sat up, gripping to fly to the radio and turn it away from the words that so isolation, and the effect of the

Spike in a nutshell.

face in her hands, breathing of those months.

by her reaction to Spike. She'd sought him out after her dormant spirit hum, more so intimacy that she initiated. It because it was Spike, but acute between her utter lack of maelstrom of all of them at him, fuck him – and feel all the against the backdrop of a nature she couldn't even begin always had a spark of attraction

Yet, if she was really seeking death, how ironic that it was only in a dead man's bed that she'd really felt alive. Well, more like on his carpets, tables, sarcophagus...up against his wall. Hardly ever in his bed. But still....

Then again, Spike had ceased to be like any other vamp a long time before. Though she'd found that he could hurt her, kill her – hell, even turn her, if he'd wanted, she had believed in her heart that he wouldn't. Of course, she'd also cared just little enough that she had been willing to risk being wrong. She'd certainly provided him every opportunity....

Words from days long past had washed over her – snatches of conversations she'd tried to forget:

*"I can fool Giles, and I can fool my friends, but I can't fool myself. Or Spike, for some reason..."*

*Wake me up inside*

*"You can't love without a soul."*

*"Oh, we can, you know. We can love quite well. If not wisely."*

*Wake me up inside*

*"Buffy, if you're in ... if you're in pain ... or if you need anything... or if I can do anything for you..."*

*"...Everything here is ... hard, and bright, and violent."*

*call my name and save me from the dark*

*"What's wrong?! You were gonna help me! You, you were gonna beat heads and, and, and fix my life!"*

*bid my blood to run*

*"This isn't real/*

*But I just want to feel"*

*before I come undone*

*"Tell me you love me..."*

*save me from the nothing I've become*

*"Being with you ... makes things ... simpler. For a little while... and it's killing me"*

*without a thought without a voice without a soul*

*don't let me die here*

*there must be something more*

*bring me to life*

She'd said that being with him was killing her. But that hadn't been it at all. Being with him had been the only thing keeping her going ~ her shame in that fact was what had been killing her. It was all just so confusing, really...her feelings then, her feelings now. So different, but still... She hadn't really realized how much of the previous year she had buried under her newfound desire to get on with this life of hers. Until it all came flooding back, unlocked by the raw words of the song. She'd walked in the shadow of the valley of despair – and because Spike was her only solace from that suffering, she'd given him reason to hope. Her denial of that hope had provoked Spike's own crisis, from which had stemmed...everything since.

She'd had no idea how long she'd sat there, lost in her reverie, when at last she'd surfaced from it. An irritating commercial for a used car dealership had penetrated the tangle of memory and emotion, and returned her to her bathtub, where she sat with precious few bubbles left around her and her flesh gone goose bump-y. She'd climbed mechanically out of the tub, pulling the stopper lever, and tried to focus on the sound of the water draining, attempting to calm the riot in her breast that was now raging just below the surface.

Her usual grooming rituals had followed then out of habit, the girlish enthusiasm that she'd summoned up an hour or so prior replaced by the sober recollection of how far from herself she'd been.

~/~

It turned out that Sunnydale and the Hellmouth and Anya and Amanda and Chao-Ahn and Spike had had just seven days to live. So much had happened in that short span of time, but she'd somehow, improbably, managed to make the most of it. She'd certainly gone into it more aware than ever of how far she'd come in the two years since her death. She and Spike hadn't spoken of their dark times. But in those final nights when they'd held and comforted one another, they had shared a profound peace that served to point up how long ago and far away those bleak days had receded, for both of them. She was able to see the change for what it was, something akin to a miracle – particularly in that they had both survived it to find themselves chastely wrapped in one another's arms in her basement on the eve of yet another “final” battle.

Later, when she'd begun to wrap her head around their victory and the fact that it was due entirely to Spike's sacrifice, she was supremely grateful to the words that had served as a catalyst for her to better understand that ugly time of her life. She *was* grateful...but she couldn't hear those words again. No one else seemed to notice that when it was played, she would immediately stop whatever she was doing, and either change the radio station, or have business out of earshot.

But she'd already learned its lesson. And she knew that despite the pain of all of it, she could finally embrace the life that she'd been brought to, over and over again....