

Out of the Blue

Chapter 14 – Issues.

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RATING: PG-13 (T) to R (M).

TIMELINE: Takes place after season two in BTVS, and during the marauders last year at Hogwarts.

SUMMARY: BTVS/HP crossover. Life had never been kind to Buffy Summers, and she thought she had earned a break. Boy, was she wrong. Stuck in another dimension, with no way back, Buffy must learn to leave her past behind her, and look to the future: New friends, new enemies and new relationships is just the beginning of what will prove to be the longest journey and perhaps the biggest trial of her life.

CENTRAL PAIRING: Buffy/Remus

OTHER PAIRINGS: James/Lily, Sirius/OC

"Do you think she'll be alright?" Eliza asked Lily worriedly, when they got down to the common room. In the corner, Remus looked up from his book in interest.

"Yes," Lily said, joining him and smiling at the dark-haired girl. "She just...had a rough wake-up call."

"Are you talking about Buffy?" Remus wondered, frowning, with narrowed eyes. "What did you do?" He asked the green-eyes girl suspiciously.

"Oh, nothing much," Lily said. "Just helped her take yet another step away from the past and into the future." She sounded rather pleased.

Remus blinked. "Oh." He put away his books, stretching his limbs and yawning. "Anyone up for a game of chess?"

"No," James, Sirius and Peter said, slouching down around them. Lily bit back a groan. She was not in the mood of dealing with James and co tonight...

"What are you doing here?" She asked, trying not to sound annoyed, while gesturing to Remus to begin setting up the chess board.

"It's a free country," James said lazily, grinning. "And this is the Gryffindor common room – and we are Gryffindors. So, shortly speaking, we belong here!"

Lily rolled her eyes, moving a white pawn forward. "And I who hoped you'd be off making mischief or something. That would get you out of my hair."

"Why, Prongs," Sirius gasped. "Did you hear what I just heard? Lily-kins is *encouraging* us to play pranks!"

James nodded. "She has been doing that a lot lately," he said. "I thought she might be coming down with something." He felt her forehead, earning himself a slap. He grinned. "Yep. She's definitely *hot*."

Lily flushed, glaring. "Subtle, Potter, real subtle," she said, biting her lip in concentration as she considered her next move. Remus was looking awfully smug...what was he up to?

"Are we back at surname basis now?" James pouted.

"As long as you keep acting like a bull during mating season, then yes," Lily said, finally moving a knight...and regretting her move immediately as Remus' smirk widened.

Eliza snorted, and Sirius burst out laughing, along with Peter. Remus grinned, while watching his Queen crush one of Lily's Towers with vigour.

James blinked, a red flush starting to spread across his neck. He swiftly recovered though. "Why Evans, can't you just admit that you like me as an animal in heat?" He said, winking. Lily let out a sound of disgust, though she couldn't hide a twitch of her lips, which James quickly caught. "Because, know," he hurriedly continued, encouraged by the girl's sign of amusement, "nothing is as electrifying as a horny Head Boy."

Silence. Lily's jaw finally dropped in disgust and she spluttered, unable to get out a single sound. James winced. *I guess that was coming on too strong*, he thought miserably.

There was the sound of someone coming down the stairs, and everyone looked up, seeing Buffy coming into view, and James sighed in relief. The impending disaster had been averted.

Remus frowned as he noticed Buffy's eyes were suspiciously red-rimmed, as though she'd been crying. The blonde Slayer forced on a smile though.

"Hi," she said, her voice sounding a bit choked up. "What are you doing?"

"Remus is crushing Lily at chess," Peter said, cheeks red. "And James is making a fool out of himself, as usual."

Buffy grinned weakly, sitting down in the chair Remus quickly conjured up. "Sounds like fun," she said quietly.

Lily, in the meantime, tried to force down the feeling of guilt that had crept up. It had not been her intention to make her sad when bringing up Angel...

"So, Remus is the current chess master, huh?" Buffy asked, staring at the board. "How does the game work?"

"You don't know how to play chess?" Lily said in surprise, seeing an opportunity to get her friend's mind off Angel...and a chance to bring her closer to Remus. "We can't have that! Why don't you take over my pieces," she suggested, "and let Remus coach you through the rest of the game?"

Buffy shrugged. "Alright. If that's okay with you?"

"Yes," Lily quickly assured him. "I'm losing anyway. After six years of playing chess with Remus, and only three wins, I should have learned I'm fighting a losing battle. Even James and Sirius with their thick heads - "

" – Oi!"

" – Have learned that playing against Remus is the same as setting one-self up for total humiliation," Lily continued, ignoring the two marauder's yell of indignation. "But you're safe – Remus is always nice to the beginners, until they've learned the rules and how to think for themselves. That's when the beating begins."

Buffy grinned slightly, and Lily inwardly did a victory-dance for having put back a smile on her lips.

Buffy watched miserably as Remus' Knight beat her King to pieces, for what must have been the hundredth time. Lily had been right – once Buffy had figured out how the game worked, Remus had wasted no time in crushing the small self-confidence she'd built up through the evening, by crushing her time after time.

"How do you *do* that?" She whined.

Remus grinned. "Magic," he said, glad the Slayer seemed much happier, despite her constantly being defeated. "Maybe we should call it a night?" He suggested, looking around. "Eliza has passed out on the couch – I take that as a sign that it's late?"

Sirius yawned, checking his watch. "By Merlin it *is* late!" He said, sounding surprised. He stared at James, Lily and Peter, whose faces were covered in soot from the many games of exploding snap they had played, while Remus and Buffy were immersed in their games of chess. "Who wants to wake her up?" He asked, nodding towards the transfer student on the sofa, who was moving slightly in her sleep, a frown marring her beautiful face.

No one got the chance to answer, as the girl in question sat up with a jerk, screaming: "STOP IT!"

That's when she noticed her surroundings, and she blinked, paling considerably, as she saw the marauders and her room-mates watching her in shocked surprise.

August 29

Eliza slowly made her way into the huge manour, dragging her feet behind her. She had been visiting a friend for the past few days – even after her father had explicitly forbidden her to do so, due to Sophie's ancestry – muggles. She was not looking forward to his reaction... Closing the door, she listened intently after a sound; anything that could tell her where he was, so she could avoid him for as long as possible.

Finally, she thought she heard something, and she tensed as noticed it came from the basement. She froze, and then started going the opposite way, her heart beating quickly.

She let out a shriek in surprise as the family House-Elf appeared in front of her, blocking her way.

"The master wished to see you, miss," it said, pulling its ears pathetically.

"I-I will see him later," Eliza said.

"The master says right away, miss," the House-Elf continued, eyes large. "I have been ordered to bring you to him."

"And I am ordering you to stay away from me," Eliza snapped, moving to get past the creature. The House-Elf was unrelenting, and now grabbed her arm with a surprisingly strong grip.

"I have been told not to answer your orders," it said and looked up at her with sorrowful eyes. "I'm sorry."

Eliza looked confused. "For what?"

The House-Elf snapped its fingers, and for a moment, the world spun...

"Welcome back, daughter."

Eliza looked up, disoriented. As she took in her surroundings, she realised she was in the basement, with her father, who was staring at her with cold eyes. And...was that a whip in his hand?

Eliza turned around, desperately trying to reach the stairs, but found herself frozen in her steps. She yelped as an invisible force pulled her arms upwards, and she watched in fear as chains suddenly wrapped themselves around her wrists, and pulling her upwards, until she was hanging suspended from the ceiling.

Eliza did her best not to cry out from the pain of her limbs being stretched to their limits.

"Que faites-vous?" She asked weakly, her own voice unrecognizable, as she struggled against her bounds. "Papa?"

Her father spoke, and Eliza cried out as she felt something – the whip – beat down on her back. "I'm teaching you a lesson," he said. "I told you not to visit that friend of yours."

Eliza's lip quivered. "Mais papa..."

"Non," her father agreed, finally stopping the unrelenting whipping. "No more! Since you never seem to learn, despite what I do to you, I decided it was time for something drastic. You brought this upon yourself." His lips curled in distaste. "Your rebellious nature must come to an end!" Eliza cried out in pain as the whip fell again.

"Stop it! L'arrêtent!"

Her father ignored her, and the whip fell again.

"Have you learnt your lesson yet, Eliza?"

Eliza thought she was going to pass out.

"...Yes."

"I didn't hear you," her father sing-songed, and the whip fell again.

"Yes. Oui! Yes! Just stop it!"

Her father ignored her.

"Le père, l'arrêtent!"

"Say the magical words," her father insisted, smirking.

"Please..."

"That's not what I meant..."

"I promise I'll obey you," Eliza choked out through her tears. "Just...stop it. L'arrêtent! Please, STOP IT!"

Eliza blinked furiously, desperately trying to hide her tears, her chest heaving with every breath she took.

"Eliza?" Lily asked carefully. "Are you alright?"

It was too much. Eliza burst out into tears and the marauders stared bewildered at each other in concern.

"Did you have a nightmare?" James wondered, stupidly, and the tears increased. Lily slapped him. "Idiot!" The Head Girl hissed. "Isn't it obvious?"

Something that sounded like a half-laugh and half-cry escaped Eliza's throat. "It's alright," she got out. "I'm alright. Don't worry about me. I'll be fine."

"For some reason," Peter said carefully. "Your credibal – credabil – credybell," he let out a sound of frustration, giving Remus a desperate look. "Credibility," the werewolf supplied helpfully.

"Yes, that," Peter continued, rather embarrassed, "is suffering because of your tears. Makes it difficult to believe you when you say you're fine..."

"You're right," Eliza sniffed. "But it's my own issues. Just...go to bed. Don't worry about me."

It looked like they were about to give in, but that's when Sirius spoke up: "It's hard not to," he said. "I know we haven't been best buds with you or anything, but we want to help. It would feel wrong just to leave you like this, upset."

"Yeah," the others agreed.

"It's nothing," Eliza insisted.

Sirius let out a sound of frustration. "It's more than nothing!" He exclaimed. "I mean, one does not just show up after term has already begun, and then has one hell of a nightmare, without there being a longer story behind it!"

"It helps to talk about it," Buffy said quietly, sympathetic. "Believe me, I know."

"And we can keep a secret, no question about it," Remus put in.

Eliza closed her eyes in defeat. "Alright."

"My father is a...dark wizard," Eliza begun, hugging a pillow to her chest. She, Lily, Buffy and the marauders all sat in the boys' dorm, where they couldn't risk being overheard.

"Heavily into the dark arts, a proud supporter of Voldemort and his Death Eaters, even if he isn't one himself. He is also highly respected by the public – a lot like Lucius Malfoy in that aspect, I believe. In my family, there is a certain way we are supposed to act, certain opinions we should support," Eliza continued, her eyes far away.

"My mother was...well, in lack of a better term, she was easily controlled," she said, a sad smile on her face. "My father had no trouble with her. And then I came along; my mother died giving birth to me. Ever since I could talk, I questioned everything; I couldn't understand why it was wrong to spend time around muggleborns, for example, so, everything my father told me not to do, I did, because I wanted to know what it was that was supposed to be so horrible. And imagine my surprise when I found nothing amiss about it."

She looked down. "My father wasn't happy with me. He did all sorts of things to...discipline me. Mentally at first," Eliza continued slowly, swallowing, as though it hurt to speak about it. "And then – " She paused. "Then, one day, this summer, right before the start of term, I ran off to one of my muggleborn friends, even though my father told me not to. And when I got home..." Eliza closed her eyes.

"When I got home," she repeated, "he had finally had enough, I suppose. For the first – and only – time, he physically abused me. I ended up in the hospital because of it. I was too frightened to tell anyone the truth. And I also realised I couldn't stay with him. I was terrified he'd snap and kill me. So after he left me at the station, where I was to board the carriage that flies the students to Beauxbatons. I apparated away, instead."

The girls and the marauders stared at her with wide eyes, enthralled by what the dark haired girl was telling them.

"For several days, I just...wandered the streets aimlessly, with my trunk, where I had clothes, and money enough so I wouldn't starve. I was terrified to go to one of my friends, in case my father would be there, looking. Finally, though, I worked up enough courage to go see Audrey, a slightly older friend of mine. I convinced her not to contact my father, and I borrowed her fireplace and flooed to Hogwarts. I told Dumbledore everything, and he promised to protect me. He gave me a place as a part of the student body, and the rest you know." She sighed, leaning back against the wall. "So?" She wondered out loud. "Have I scared you off yet?"

The marauders, Lily and Buffy looked at each other uncertainly. Then, as one, they all turned towards Eliza, smiling sympathetically. "No," Buffy said. "You have not. Though your story is...awful," she said, "many of us, in this room, have been through a lot as well. I think we all can relate, in different ways."

Remus stared at Eliza, eyes filled with compassion. "You're not the only one with a difficult life," he said quietly, and, to his surprise, Buffy clutched his hand in hers.

"And you're definitely not the only one with a rough upbringing," Sirius continued, lips twitching. "We can exchange sobstories," he said, grin widening.

Eliza let her eyes wander, from the dark haired boy, to James, to Peter, to Remus, to Lily and to Buffy, and somehow, she knew they were telling the truth. They truly did understand. All of them obviously weren't ready to share their own experiences yet, but for now, it was enough to know that she wasn't alone.

"So," Eliza asked, sitting down by the lake beside a startled Sirius Black. "What's your story?"

Sirius stared at her stupidly. "Huh?"

Eliza smiled awkwardly, trying to hide the nervousity she felt. Perhaps she had read him wrong?

"What's your story? Last night, you said we could exchange sobstories. So what's yours?"

Sirius shrugged. "Oh, you know, heavy angst, drugs, booze and chicks. It will end with a tragic suicide in a few years, and everyone will mourn my passing, because the world has lost such a handsome soul no one ever really got to know."

Eliza burst out laughing. "Are you serious?"

"Always," Sirius said with a devilish grin, and Eliza rolled her eyes.

"No, *seriously*," Eliza prompted. "The truth, please!"

"Fine." Sirius' lips twitched, throwing a stone into the lake. "Scratch out the angst and the impending suicide – I like my life far too much."

Eliza grinned. "So you don't want to tell? I get it."

Sirius lost his smile. "No, it's alright. I did promise, didn't I? My entire family is a lot like your father. Heavily into to dark arts, quiet Voldemort supporters, I was the black – or rather white – sheep, who defied them all." He shrugged. "They never hurt me physically though. Not the way your father hurt you, anyway. But I finally decided enough was enough, and when I was sixteen, I ran off to live with James and his folks. I've never regretted it. The only thing I do regret is that I haven't been able to save my little brother, Regulus, from them."

Eliza frowned. "What do you mean?"

"You know how your mother was too afraid to defy your father?"

Eliza nodded.

"My little brother is the same way," Sirius explained. "Always afraid of what our parents will think, terrified of being disowned. When I ran off to live with James, he adored me, still. But he was too frightened to come with me, so he stayed. When that autumn came around, he pretended I didn't exist. He still does. And during a confrontation with the Slytherins, my brother – he's also a Slytherin, by the way – he was clearly on their side; he said straight out he despised me. He even tried to curse me, the little bugger." Sirius sighed wearily.

"That's when I understood I'd lost him. After I left, he had no one to keep him even the slightest bit grounded; there was no one there to show that one can stand up for oneself. I suppose it was just a piece of cake for my parents to brainwash him."

Eliza let her right hand rest on his arm comfortingly. "Maybe there's hope for him yet?" She suggested quietly, blue eyes filled with warmth and kindness.

Sirius snorted. "I doubt it," he said, shaking his head. "But I suppose it doesn't hurt to wish it, eh?" He looked up at the castle wistfully.

"No," Eliza agreed, smiling. "It doesn't."

Rough translation:

L'ARRÊTENT! – Stop it!

Que faites-vous? Papa? – What are you doing? Dad?

Mais papa – But dad.

Non – No.

Oui! – Yes!

Le père, l'arrêtent! – Father, stop it.