

Giving Evil a Name: Buffy's Glory, Angel's Jasmine, Blood Magic, and Name Magic

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Janet Brennan Croft¹

Giving Evil a Name: *Buffy's* Glory, *Angel's* Jasmine, Blood Magic, and Name Magic

"It's about power. Who's got it. Who knows how to use it." ("Lessons" 7.1)



"I would suggest, then, that the monsters are not an inexplicable blunder of taste; they are essential, fundamentally allied to the underlying ideas of the poem ..." (J.R.R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics")

Introduction: Names and Blood in the Buffyverse

[1] In Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) and *Angel* (1999-2004), words are not something to be taken lightly. A word read out of place can set a book on fire ("Superstar" 4.17) or send a person to a hell dimension ("Belonging" A2.19); a poorly performed spell can turn mortal enemies into sappy lovebirds ("Something Blue" 4.9); a word in a prophecy might mean "to live" or "to die" or both ("To Shanshu in L.A." A1.22). Research is often the first order of the day when the Scooby Gang or Angel Investigations is presented with a new problem, and much of that research involves classifying demons in order to understand and control them, or discovering exactly the right spell for a situation, or deciphering the precise meaning of ancient prophecies. Lisa K. Perdigao theorizes that Buffy's power resides as much in her command over language as in her physical strength, and quotes Overbey and Preston-Matto: "Buffy is able to survive longer than other Slayers because she is embedded in language and because she embodies language" (83). And as Caroline Ruddell reminds us in her study of Willow, through magic, words themselves become speech acts (par. 31).

[2] It is not surprising that names, as a special category of powerful (and, indeed, embodied) language, are vitally important. Despite their underlying differences, both series are deeply concerned with personal growth and identity, and they also deal with magic and the supernatural, all areas where names are especially significant. There is a constant tension between essentialism, the destiny of characters reduced to or signaled by their names, and "existential self-determination," the urge to oppose destiny and re-define one's name or re-name oneself (see Wilcox 47; see also Ragussis 231-233 on types of naming plots). The importance of names is signaled in the very titles of the shows, both named after their protagonists. Buffy's name, as much as her appearance, stands in opposition to her role as Slayer; neither exotic and solitary, like *Kendra* (Edwards 91), nor significant and problematic, like *Faith*, the name *Buffy Anne Summers*

contrasts normalcy, a place in a family, and her quintessential girly California-ness (Siemann 121), with her status as Chosen One and a far-off echo of the Persephone myth (Wilcox 63). The name *Angel* for a vampire who, in his soulless phase, committed countless acts of evil, balances the deep irony of the source of his name—what his little sister called him when, newly sired, he came to kill his family—with aspirational symbolism (“The Prodigal” A1.15).

[3] The names and nicknames characters use for each other can signify the power relationship between them. Nicknames (or names which are not the named person’s own preference) especially may indicate an attempt to demonstrate power over another person—to “[make] our enemy small, inferior, despicable or comic” (Gölz 6) or to “[deny] the existential freedom of growth” by “[trapping] their essence” in a name (Wilcox 55).² Giles is almost always called by his last name, indicating respect and some formality, though he is called *Rupert* by people with whom he is intimate, like Jenny, Ethan, or Joyce; but Dark Willow uses his first name when she is asserting her power over him (“Grave” 6.22), and Spike does the same on multiple occasions when he is being deliberately insubordinate. Angelus mocks the Slayer with the diminutive nickname *Buff* while Angel uses the full name *Buffy*; thus Angel, when playing Angelus, adopts the mannerism as a trait of that character (“Enemies” 3.17). Spike especially takes great pleasure in nicknaming, mock-endearments, and word-play with names, reflecting his own identity as a trickster figure with a way of seeing through things to their underlying truth, as well as his need to define himself against others. On *Angel*, Lorne is also an identity-changer, truth-teller, and seer of the hidden, as well as a constant nick-namer; so much so that Angel begs him to stop calling him pastries (“Waiting in the Wings” A3.13).

[4] On a symbolic level, names are powerful things, and name-magic takes many forms. A personal name is a nexus for many deeply important concepts and feelings about being a person and having a place in the world in relation to other people. At a very basic level, a name has three essential components. First, there is the word itself—the name, along with whatever etymological or historical baggage it might carry with it. What does the name mean? Who has held it before? What hearers are likely to understand this background, and what will it mean to them? Then there is the person, entity, or thing being named, which becomes associated with that word—even, as we shall see below, somehow equivalent to it. Behind both of these is the name-giver—the namer. This can mean either the entity that originally connected that particular name with that named person or object; or it can mean the entity that is using an already-given name to refer to that person or object. The name-giver, through giving or using a name, may assert a certain amount of power over the named, or indicate their equality with, neutrality about, subservience to, or admiration for the named entity. To complicate matters further, in many cases it is the named person who gives him or herself a name, thus asserting power over his or her own name and all it indicates; and a single person may answer to multiple names, which could either dilute or multiply their

power. In any given interaction, the name chosen by the name-user indicates something about their mutual relationship and power levels—anything from “I am more important than you” through “you have power over me.” The use of an inappropriate name in a given situation tells us that something is off-kilter. The negotiation of the appropriate form of address between the namer and the named is part of the broader, ever-shifting power negotiation between them.

[5] The name/power nexus is also complicated by the concepts of magic and taboo, which are ultimately based on the idea of the name being an essential and inseparable part of the named being. As Frazer puts it in *The Golden Bough*, in this form of magical thinking

the link between a name and the person or thing denominated by it is not a mere arbitrary and ideal association, but a real and substantial bond which unites the two in such a way that magic may be wrought on a man [or other entity] just as easily through his name as through ... any ... material part of his person. (3.318)

Philosopher Ernst Cassirer confirms the central importance of this concept in myth:

The notion that name and essence bear a necessary and internal relation to each other, that the name does not merely denote but actually *is* the essence of its object, that the potency of the real thing is contained in its name—that is one of the fundamental assumptions of the mythmaking consciousness itself. (3)

Naming an evil thing may call it forth; conversely, discovering its hidden name may weaken or banish it. To placate powerful beings, one might find it advisable to use a flattering euphemism instead of a name they might consider an insult; Edward Clodd points out how “substitutes, roundabout phrases, [and] euphemisms” are used as a “mode of flattery ... employed to ward off possible mischief, ... jealousy or spite in maleficent spirits” (88). A prime example is the way the ancient Greeks were careful to call the Furies the Eumenides, or the Kindly Ones. As we see with Spike, “a being who chooses a self may also choose a name,” or as with Buffy, “[change] the meaning of [her] name” (Wilcox 64-65); claiming control over one’s own name is a source of great strength. Michael Adams points out that “The name *Buffy* carries baggage in American English—it’s a cheerleader name” (98); alt-Xander says in “The Wish” (3.9), “That name is striking fear in nobody’s hearts.” Yet by the end of the series, the name ‘Buffy’ means something entirely different to those who know her. ³

[6] The magic of words and names is indeed ancient, and coeval with the development of language. But the other major source of power I want to consider in this study is even older—blood. It is not too surprising that in these two vampire-centric series, blood plays an important symbolic and thematic role; like names, blood too connects characters, divides them, changes them, redeems them, kills them, saves their lives, summons and controls demons. With blood, like names, we see a fundamental tension between a fatalistic essentialism and existential self-determination, between

nature and nurture. Blood is subject to the same sort of mythological and symbolic concerns about identity and taboo as names; but blood is also a metonym for genetic heritage and thus signals a physical and scientific essentialism as well. In the story arcs of the villains Glory (*Buffy* season 5) and Jasmine (*Angel* season 4) we can trace who has power and who does not through the complicated interplay of name magic and blood magic.

Glory's Tale

[7] Glorificus, usually called by her self-chosen nickname Glory, is the Big Bad of season five of *Buffy*. She functions in a Jungian sense as "the Terrible Mother, determined to sacrifice [the whole world] for her own selfishness" (Frankel *Buffy* 159), or she might be seen as a "female patriarch" in the sense that she wields her power in a strictly top-down, hierarchical fashion (Durand 182). Her story arc begins with the surprise introduction of Buffy's younger sister Dawn as a major character and ends with the (temporary) death of Buffy.⁴ Glory was one of the three gods of a hell dimension, and was exiled to Earth by her companions, who doomed her to be imprisoned in the body of a mortal and die forever when he died. What keeps her imprisoned in his body is the Key, a mystical energy nexus. The monks charged with protecting the Key hide it by embodying the Key as Dawn and altering the memories of everyone connected with her so it will seem she has always been part of the Summers family.

[8] When Glory's host, Ben, reaches adulthood, Glory is able to manifest and begins to search for the Key so she can get back to her home dimension.⁵ Eventually discovering that Dawn is the Key, she kidnaps her and begins a ritual to open the barrier keeping her, Glory, from her homeworld—which will consequently unleash all the demons of the hell dimensions on Earth. Dawn's blood will hold the portal open as long as it continues to flow, so Glory plans a slow draining of her body to prolong the action of the Key. Giles kills the human form of Ben, trapping and destroying the essence of Glory in the process, but the rift remains open. Buffy realizes that because she and Dawn share the same blood, she can sacrifice her own life to close the portal and save Dawn (and the world) before the Key can complete its task.

[9] The Glory arc is first foreshadowed in the previous season's "This Year's Girl" (4.15), in which Buffy has a dream-vision of making up a bed with Faith, who says "Little sis [is] coming." In the final episode of that season, "Restless" (4.22), a similar dream sequence ends with Tara telling Buffy to "Be back before Dawn." We meet Ben in "Out of My Mind" (5.4), the episode which sets up the problem of the bleeding in Buffy's mother Joyce's brain, which may perhaps be a side-effect of the creation of Dawn as it troubles her only after Dawn is created.

[10] We finally meet Glory in episode five of this season, "No Place Like Home" (5.5), though we do not have a name for her until episode eight. The various factions

trying to keep her trapped on earth call her The Beast or The Abomination. Giles draws attention to this as they begin their research: "All we've managed to uncover so far is the Dagon Sphere was created to repel That Which Cannot Be Named. ... Anything that goes unnamed is usually an object of deep worship or great fear—maybe both." In the next episode, "Family" (5.6), Glory declares "[M]y name is a holy name!" though we still do not know what it is.

[11] In "Shadow" (5.8), Giles, Tara, and Willow speculate that the reason they cannot find a name for her in their books is that she "pre-dates the written word . . . predates language itself." We hear a minion call her *Glorificus*, and Buffy later overhears Dreg use the name *Glory*. If she does, as the Scoobies speculate, pre-date language, *Glorificus* is probably not her actual name—more likely it is a title. The Latin suffix *-ficus* might be interpreted as meaning 'making, causing, producing,' 'performing actions of a certain kind,' or 'bringing into a specified state' (OED). She prefers her minions to call her *Glory*, and glory of a certain twisted and destructive sort is what she sees herself as being, causing, producing, or becoming. Her name even echoes back and forth into other episodes. In a season five episode which does not feature *Glory*, "Fool for Love" (5.7), we get two uses of the word *glory* by Drusilla and Spike. In the seventh and final season, in "Lessons" (7.1), The First, appearing in *Glory's* form, says to Spike, "My name will be on everyone's lips," and *glory* is one of Caleb's favorite words to describe the coming victory of The First; he uses it in "Dirty Girls" (7.18) and "Empty Places" (7.19).

[12] An interesting aspect of *Glory's* name-story is the forms of address used by her minions, an unnamed race of demons she gathers around her when she sets up her lavish Sunnydale apartment; these are an example of Clodd's observation about "substitutes, roundabout phrases, [and] euphemisms" being used as a "mode of flattery ... to ward off possible mischief ... in maleficent spirits" (88). In one episode alone ("Shadow" 5.8), she is addressed as "most beauteous and supremely magnificent one," "most tingly and wonderful *Glorificus*," "shiny special one," "your elaborate marvelousness," "your terrifically smooth one," "your creamy coolness," "your extremeness," "perturbed, yet ultimately merciful one," "most silky and effervescent *Glorificus*," "your most fresh and cleanness." Besides adding a comic touch, her evident appreciation of their fawning presages her eventual susceptibility to the weakness of human emotions; so much so that in "Forever" (5.17) she is annoyed that her gravely wounded minion is only capable of especially "lame toadying." A female minion even uses similar language in addressing Ben, and in "Spiral" (5.20), Ben becomes so impatient with their effusions that he snaps "*Glory*. Her name is *Glory*, and she's your god, you little scab, not mine."

[13] There is a great deal more that could be said about names in this season—for example, there is a significant moment in "No Place Like Home" (5.5) where Joyce nicknames Dawn but reveals that Buffy was "always just Buffy," "irreducibly" herself (Wilcox 63). Perdigao states that season five, as a whole, "highlights a crisis in language

and representation," but she primarily focuses on the introduction of the Buffybot, the robot built to Spike's orders by Warren, and its own particular programming as a locus for exploration of Buffy's linguistic power (par. 7). But I want to move on to the theme of blood. Joyce dies from a blood clot in the brain ("The Body" 5.16); Giles nearly dies from loss of blood when attacked by the Knights of Byzantium ("Spiral" 5.20); Drusilla drains a train car full of people as she returns to Sunnydale ("Crush" 5.14); Buffy's bloody wounding in what should have been a simple slaying leads to Spike's revelations in "Fool for Love" (5.7), in which we witness his bloody draining of one Slayer and bloodless neck-snapping of another. Blood-sharing is a major theme this season, from the very first episode where Dracula drinks from Buffy and persuades her to taste his own blood ("Buffy vs. Dracula" 5.1). A deeply conflicted Riley pays vampire prostitutes to drink from him ("Into the Woods" 5.10); we also see Spike falling off the wagon and drinking from a fresh corpse supplied by Drusilla ("Crush" 5.14). Blood, as much as name, means family: Tara's family fears the witchcraft in her blood ("Family" 5.6); Drusilla and Spike's complex relationship stems from her initial siring of William the bloody awful poet and her original siring by Angel, a process requiring the sharing of blood ("Fool for Love" 5.7).

[14] "Blood Ties" (5.13) is an especially important episode in the Summers family dynamic. Dawn, upon finding out she is the Key, cuts her forearm as she questions her identity as a person and a member of a family. After a climactic fight with Glory, in which Buffy is seriously wounded, they have this exchange:

BUFFY: ... I love you. You're my sister.

DAWN: No I'm not.

BUFFY: Yes you are. [Lifts Dawn's arm, so we can see her arm and hand are still bloody] Look, it's blood. It's Summers blood. [Buffy presses her hand against the wound on her shoulder, wincing a little. She clasps her bloody hand in Dawn's.]

BUFFY: It's just like mine. It doesn't matter where you came from, or, or how you got here. You are my sister. [pause] There's no way you could annoy me so much if you weren't.

[15] In "The Weight of the World" (5.21) Dawn is held captive by Glory, whose gloating is punctuated by increasingly frequent shifts between her own form and Ben's, as each begins to infect the other's personality. She tells Dawn: "Know what they're all chanting for out there, Dawnie? Blood. 'Cause we found out your blood is the key to the Key! All I gotta do is bleed you dry, the portal opens up, and I can go home!" (Note the controlling, infantilizing use of a nickname for Dawn.) As the Scooby Gang figures out what Glory's plans are in "The Gift" (5.22), Xander asks: "Why blood? Why Dawn's blood?" and Spike answers "'Cause it's always got to be blood. ... Blood is life, lackbrain. Why do you think we eat it? It's what keeps you going. Makes you warm. Makes you hard. Makes you other than dead. Course it's her blood." Giles tries to remind Buffy that

Dawn is not her sister but a construct, but Buffy replies “No. She’s not. She’s more than that. She’s me. The monks made her out of me. [...] It’s not just the memories they built. It’s physical. Dawn . . . is a part of me.” In the end, it is this realization—that no matter how Dawn was created, they share the same blood—that allows Buffy to shut down the rift between worlds and save Dawn’s life at the price of her own.

[16] And yet Giles kills Ben bloodlessly, simply holding Ben’s mouth and nose shut with his own hand till he suffocates. As C.W. Marshall points out, “he acts quickly, deliberately, and ... never looks away” (par. 9). Why? It is a morally ambiguous act; Ben was not at fault for Glory’s actions and in fact fought against them until her personality started interfering with his own, yet only his death could stop her for good. It is Giles’s sworn duty to “protect this sorry world” (5.22) and he is willing to take on the moral burden of killing an innocent person to save it, as well as to save Buffy from the consequences; but he need not make it worse by spilling blood, and perhaps he feels he owes Ben the dignity of looking him in the eye while doing it. Blood spilled is dangerous, strong magic; safer to keep this particular death clean of it, when blood has been so important to Glory’s plans. But there is no escaping blood; we return to it in Willow’s ritual slaughter of a fawn at the beginning of the next season, bringing Buffy out of her grave through blood magic as much as through incantation (“Bargaining Part One” 6.1).

Jasmine’s Story

[17] The goddess Jasmine was the major evil force in season four of *Angel* (which takes place concurrently with the seventh and final season of *Buffy*, two years after the Glory arc). She claimed to be bringing utopia to Earth, but used mind control to overcome the free will of her followers and secretly fed on the bodies of human beings. She had previously done the same in another dimension as a trial run. In this story we see a more explicit treatment of the themes of name and blood; as Wilcox points out, “[t]his storyline seems on the surface to represent the essentialist use of naming” (64); but while name magic is crucial, the resolution of the story is via the older magic, of power, family, and love passed down in blood.

[18] It is hard to pinpoint exactly where her story starts; Jasmine had been manipulating events on Earth for some time in order to create a path for her ascension. Most particularly, she arranged Darla’s pregnancy by Angel and the birth of Connor, hijacked Cordelia’s return to Earth from her sojourn with the Powers That Be, and then instigated the faux-Cordelia’s seduction of Connor in “Apocalypse, Nowish” (A4.7) as a way to create a final physical vessel for herself. The best place to begin is perhaps with the return of an amnesiac Cordelia at the end of “The House Always Wins” (A4.3) and her flight with Connor in “Slouching Towards Bethlehem” (A4.4). Although she behaves suspiciously at times, it is not until Cordelia’s revelation of her mystical pregnancy in “Orpheus” (A4.15) and her attack on Lorne in “Players” (A4.16) that her friends become convinced that something is not right. In “Inside Out” (A4.17) Cordelia demands that

Connor sacrifice a virgin and use her blood to trigger the birth. The child is born as a fully grown woman; Cordelia falls into a coma from which she will never recover, and the witnesses instantly fall to their knees and worship the mysterious woman.

[19] In “Shiny Happy People” (A4.18) we can start to see the intersection of blood magic and naming magic. In the core group’s initial foray to the vampire-infested bowling alley, the newly born woman asks Winifred to help her find a name:

FRED. I don’t know. I can’t imagine one word, you know, summing you up. I mean, you’re a superior being. Shouldn’t you— Don’t you want to choose it yourself?

WOMAN: No one born to this earth can choose their own name. They are named by those who love them. There are some rules even I must follow.

But at nearly the same moment, the blood magic that can overcome her power is also set in motion, as a vampire wounds the woman and she gets blood on her shirt. Later in the episode we see Wes and Gunn discussing potential names for her, the recurring theme of the scent of jasmine, and Fred scrubbing the bloody shirt till her own fingers bleed. We learn that the woman has taken the name Jasmine (but not who ultimately gave it to her) when she’s introduced on the television in the diner where Fred has taken refuge.

[20] Fred figures out that mingling Jasmine’s blood with her own breaks the enchantment, and maneuvers events so that she can shoot a bullet through Jasmine into Angel, freeing him as well. But even though Cordelia’s blood works to break the spell over Gunn, Wes, and Lorne, there is only so far that much blood will stretch, and Connor (who was never under the spell because of their pre-existing blood link but still worships Jasmine) betrays them (“Magic Bullet” A4.19). While Jasmine is preparing for a broadcast that will bring the rest of the world under her control,⁶ Wesley is captured by a being from another dimension who claims they worshipped her first (“Sacrifice” A4.20):

WESLEY: Jasmine. That’s what we call her. The . . . superior being that—that you loved first.

DEMON: (angrily) Pfah! You name her. Filthy little mice! She is the devourer . . . the song . . . the peace . . . the whole . . . and you try to name her.

And in a particularly striking example of the interaction between name and blood magic, the demon prepares a sacrifice for her as Wesley interrogates it:

DEMON: Mmm, this blood magic. Flesh magic. Older than words. More much power. This magic she will hear. She will hear and remember her true ones.

WESLEY: So no incantations, then?

DEMON: No words. (scoffs) She gives no care about words. Word magic.

WESLEY: Really.

DEMON: There is only one word she—

WESLEY: One word?

DEMON: Shh!

WESLEY: What word . . . does she give care about?

After Wesley mentions Angel's name, the demon goes on:

DEMON: You creatures! Throwing your names all over all the time! That's why you're so weak. Too many are knowing your names, takes your power away.

WESLEY: It doesn't work that way here. With us—(beat) So that's the word, isn't it? The word she gives care about?

DEMON: (stops working, turns to face Wesley) Shut.

WESLEY: It's her name.

DEMON: (shouts at Wesley) Shut! Shut! Shut! Shut! [...]

WESLEY: She has a name, and it has power over her! That's why she keeps it a secret! [...] And somehow her true name prevents her from choosing a false one? So one of us had to do it.

DEMON: What it matters, eh? Eh, talky meat? I don't keep the name. High priest keep the name! ⁷

It takes blood magic to get Angel to the High Priest; Wesley must activate the sphere that takes him between worlds with a smear of his own blood. We also get a glimpse, during the ensuing fight, of Jasmine using magic to take away and instantly heal the bloody wounds her followers receive, and she has Cordelia's body hidden to protect herself from further use of her physical mother's blood. But in the final episode of the Jasmine arc, "Peace Out" (A4.21), Angel brings back Jasmine's true name, and her psychic hold over all who see her is broken by its release from the mouth of the Keeper. Jasmine threatens Angel: "This world is doomed to drown in its own blood now." Frankel says, "This [naming Jasmine] of course is the key to defeating her, even more than the magic of her blood" (*Joss Whedon's Names*). Still, name magic only weakens her; in a final battle, she nearly destroys Angel before Connor, torn between his loyalties, his blood ties to his father and his "daughter" and his sense of betrayal by both, kills her with his bare hands. The story isn't quite over; Angel, motivated throughout by his love for his son and to save him from suicide, strikes a bargain with Wolfram and Hart to wipe away his memories and give the boy a new life and a new name ("Home" A4.22).

Parallels, differences, and conclusions

[21] In these two season-long arcs, we may note some interesting parallels. Most obviously, the evil characters have no name at first and both incarnate as beautiful and super-powerful human women. Both revolve around a character who is brought into existence specifically to play a part in the Big Bad's story (Dawn, Connor) and who struggles to assert his or her individuality against an essentialist destiny; "family" love for this character motivates the actions of their champions despite their origins. Both villains tie themselves to humanity through their means of incarnation—Glory shares a body with Ben, and Jasmine occupies Cordelia's body until she can take over the fetus. (Originally, in fact, Cordelia actor Charisma Carpenter was to have played Jasmine, but her pregnancy and departure from the series had to be worked into the story.) Blood ties conquer both in the end. We also see false memories at work—Dawn added, Connor subtracted—and both build on hints, prophecies, and events set into motion in previous seasons. Both also mark a mid-series turning point, with our heroes defeating god-like beings, followed by conflicts with a seemingly more mundane evil (The Three, Wolfram and Hart), and then building to a final conflict with a primal evil (The First, The Black Thorn).

[22] There are significant structural differences, though, that show Joss Whedon and his writing team were not simply telling the same story twice, and in fact it seems likely that they intentionally revisited the themes raised in the Glory arc in order to treat them with deeper complexity. Dawn is saved and accepted by Buffy's friends, but Connor cannot be healed in spirit and must be given a new life apart from his family; trauma at that level is not something so easily overcome. Glory has no problem getting personally physical with her enemies, from her very first interaction with Buffy; Jasmine, a more insidious evil, avoids using mere physical strength until her psychic powers are blocked. Glory is only interested in returning home at any cost, but Jasmine wants to keep the world intact yet under her control to feed her appetite for human flesh. While both seasons feature the loss of a beloved and motherly figure, Joyce's death is, if indeed caused by the good side's plan altering her memories, a completely unforeseen side effect, while Cordy's ascension, return, and coma are central to the evil side's plan. In fact, one of the most fundamental differences between the series is that a large part of Buffy's character arc is about being a daughter, while conversely, Angel's is about being a father. The fragile young girl to whom Buffy stands *in loco parentis* is intended to be the sacrifice in *Buffy*, as Buffy struggles to fill Joyce's role; but similarly frail-looking Fred, who has been nurtured by Angel, is the one who figures out how to break Jasmine's enchantment. *Buffy*, for all its complexity, is in many ways more direct and black-and-white than *Angel*; it makes sense that Glory is a simple and selfish villain. She is not ultimately as important to the show's themes and to Buffy herself as Buffy's relationships with her family and friends. Jasmine's more complicated story raises issues of appeasement, control, collaboration with the enemy, totalitarianism, ambivalence, and compromised morality that are deeply tied to the overall themes of *Angel* and of

Angel's life, twinned as he is with his own internal demon (see Harper, Iatropoulos).

[23] But both stories come back to the relative power of blood and names when dealing with ancient and god-like antagonists. Is blood magic stronger because it's older and purer, or is name magic more effective because names are more sophisticated, a product of civilization? Blood is something we share with animals; names are something only humans use (so far as we know), and are perhaps the oldest form of language. The shifting balance between the two is a powerful engine of story, but in *Buffy* and *Angel*, the incarnation of an evil being in human form means that it becomes mortal and, in spite of whatever name-magic—lack of name, hidden name, self-naming, worshipper-chosen name—may give it existential power, it must subject itself to the essential magic of blood. Names and spells may weaken their evil but in the end, the surest way to defeat them is to go back to the deeper magic before language, to the true essence of blood—what it carries, how it connects and binds us, how it makes us other than dead.

"[M]ost people forgot that the very oldest stories are, sooner or later, about blood." (Terry Pratchett, Hogfather)

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Notes

¹ A shorter version was presented at the Southwest Popular Culture/American Culture Association Conference in Albuquerque, February 2013, and at the Mythopoeic Society Conference in East Lansing, July 2013.

² Conversely, of course, nicknames can also a way to cement egalitarian in-group ties or show affection—as in nicknames like Will, Xander, An, Fred, or Cordy.

³ Portions of paragraphs 4 and 5 draw on my previous work on names and naming in J.R.R. Tolkien, J.K. Rowling, and Lois McMaster Bujold.

⁴ Though it is not relevant to the theme of this paper, note the significance of Dawn's name: as Fritts points out, she is "not the dark side of Buffy to be suppressed, but the part of her that needs nurturing and growth" (38).

⁵ For the source of Ben's name, *The Buffyverse Onomasticon* suggests a shortened form of the Latin word *benedictus* or "blessed"; the monks would have tried to bless and protect him, and Glory would feel he was especially blessed and privileged to be her host. "Wilkinson" could be parsed as "son of little Will," playing on his wavering willpower to resist Glory, and an intriguing addition to the pattern of "Will" names noted by Wilcox (51-52).

⁶ Why isn't Sunnydale under her spell? At this point the town is all but deserted as The First prepares its armies, and power and communication with the outside world is mostly cut off ("Empty Places" 7.19).

⁷ Quotations from episodes are based on transcripts from *BuffyWorld*, edited where necessary.