

Buffy, the Vampire Slayer

by

Joss Whedon

FADE IN:

EXT. MEDIEVAL VILLAGE - JUST BEFORE SUNSET

We see an Italian village at the height of the plague. Funeral processions, decrepit houses with their windows boarded up... the stench of death all around.

TITLE: EUROPE. THE DARK AGES

Through the filth a KNIGHT walks his horse. He is weary but not so dingy as his surrounding; a stranger in these parts. He comes to an inn, where a boy takes his horse round back. He enters the inn.

INT. INN - SAME TIME

The inn is dark and almost empty. A couple of patrons drink silently at tables. Behind the bar stands a slovenly BARMAID, dark-haired and lazy. She scratches at her shoulder, on which we see a birthmark. The knight approaches the bar, throws money down.

KNIGHT

A tankard of ale, wench.

The barmaid pours him a cup of ale. He drinks deep, stands a moment.

KNIGHT

(continuing)

Some plague we're having, huh?

CUT TO:

INT. INN - UPSTAIRS HALL/BEDROOM - NIGHT

The barmaid leads the knight, by candlelight, upstairs to his room. The door opens inward. The knight stands in the doorway, places a hand on the barmaid's hip. She pauses a moment, then breaks free of his grasp, starts down the hall. He laughs a bit, resignedly, and closes the door.

A VAMPIRE stands behind it. Not two feet from the knight, grinning at him. His eyes are skull-hollow and dancing in his head, his bloody smile full with teeth. His skin is gray, and peeling. The knight turns slowly and sees him.

KNIGHT

Oh, my god...

The vampire licks his lips.

He is on the knight in a second, pushing him backwards into the middle of the small room. The knight struggles but is no match for the vampire, who buries his face in the knight's neck. The knight screams.

ANGLE ON DOOR

It suddenly flies open, the lock shattered.

The vampire turns like a frightened animal. In the doorway stands the barmaid, a SLAYER. In her hand is a wooden stake.

The vampire drops the knight, who crabs backwards into a corner. The Slayer and the vampire come at each other. The Slayer spins and kicks; the vampire flies back. Snarling, he comes back at the slayer. They struggle; he slips free and is out the door.

For a moment, the Slayer remains still, crouched on the floor. The knight watches her. She seems to be making a decision -- perhaps even knows what is going to happen.

She runs at the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE INN - SAME TIME

The vampire comes running out the front door. Before he is a few feet from the front of the inn, the Slayer SMASHES through the upstairs window and lands on him. They both hit the ground, and she plants the stake right in his heart.

After a moment, we hear a voice:

AMILYN (O.S.)

The lord giveth, and the lord taketh
away. Ashes, ashes...

She looks up.

AMILYN

(continuing)
... All fall down

There are ten or more vampires walking slowly toward her in
the otherwise deserted street. At the front, maybe ten feet
away, is AMILYN.

Amilyn is a grinning jackal, a servant to the Vampire-King.
His garb is a rotted approximation of a courtier's livery. He
ambles toward the Slayer, giggling, as she stands.

Behind her is LOTHOS, the Vampire-King. His skin is deep white,
and smooth. He wears a long coat -- his dress is not of any
era. He is practically upon her before he speaks.

LOTHOS

You must forgive Amilyn. He tends
to drool before supper.

She turns. He smiles, almost lovingly.

SLAYER

Lothos...

LOTHOS

You people will never learn.

She swings at him but he grabs her arm. Amilyn laughs
obnoxiously. Lothos grabs the back of the Slayer's head, brings
her to him in a loving embrace.

LOTHOS

(continuing)
We can't be stopped. This is our
world now.

He pulls her head back swiftly, snapping her spine as her head
hits the back of her legs. Lightning flashes.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLISH CASTLE - NIGHT

Lightning flashes outside the window. It is torrenting rain.
An old MAN speaks to a hysterical GIRL of sixteen or so. They
are both obviously noble of birth.

GIRL

I can't!

MAN

You know you must. There is only
one. Now you are that one. It is
time.

GIRL

Why? Why me?

MAN

She has died. You are the next to
be called. Why do you think you
were sent to me? Trained as you
were? You bear the mark.

He pulls aside her blouse to reveal a birthmark on her shoulder,
identical to the barmaid's.

MAN

(continuing)
The mark of the Coven.

GIRL

I don't understand.

MAN

Ever since Adam and Eve first left
the garden, he followed: the serpent.
Satan. He sends his legion in the
shape of men, to feed on us, to
breed his Hell on our earth. They
are a plague upon us.

The man unravels a satchel of cloth. From it he pulls an
elaborately carved wooden stake.

MAN

(continuing)

But as long as there have been vampire, there has been the Coven; the line of Slayers. Ones with the strength and the skill to kill them, to find them where they gather and stop the swell of their numbers. One dies, the next is called.

GIRL

I'm just a girl.

MAN

You are much more.

He hands her the stake. She feels the fit.

MAN

(continuing)

One dies, the next is called...

As she grips the stake more tightly, an awareness and sense of power sees to fill her. She lifts the stake over her head.

CLOSEUP - A HAND

The hand is lifted high, but it is not the girl's. It holds not a stake, but a pom-pom.

EXT. HEMERY HIGH FOOTBALL FIELD - WIDER SHOT - DAY

Opening CREDITS OVER:

A football game in progress. The stands are pretty full, the crowd enthusiastic. The hemery football stadium is just that; a real stadium, not just makeshift stands on grass.

On the sidelines are the Hemery cheerleaders, led by BUFFY. She is blonde (in nature as in name), pretty, and very gracefully athletic. She obviously enjoys what she is doing, and she's good at it.

With her on the squad are JENNIFER and NICOLE, two of her best friends. Beside them the COACH, yelling at the players. The scoreboard reads HEMERY VS. SETON.

On the field are JEFFREY, wide receiver (and Buffy's boyfriend), ANDY, quarterback, and GRUELLER, the huge left tackle.

Buffy and the crowd wince as Andy is sacked for a nine-yard loss.

COACH

Come on, do the play! The one where... the one from the book! Where you make it go forward!

The players huddle.

ANDY

All right, guys, come on!

He hits Grueller's helmet.

ANDY

(continuing)

Grueller! Fill that hole! They were all over me! Okay. Let's run twenty-two. Grueller, close the pocket, watch out for thirty-five. Thompson, run the post, right, wide out. Jeffrey, go up the middle and run around like a chicken.

They clap and break. As they line up, Jeffrey looks over at Buffy. She smiles at him. He winks, very suave.

BUFFY AND CHEERLEADERS

Jeffrey! Jeffrey!
He's our man!
If he can't do it
We don't want it!

On the hike, Andy drops back and looks for a receiver. Jeffrey runs in circles like an idiot (and not unlike a chicken), waving his arms until Andy sails him the ball and he breaks for a touchdown.

The crowd goes wild -- particularly Buffy, who does an impressive standing backflip. Nicole looks at her, impressed. Buffy smiles at her, giddy.

COACH

(looking around)

Is that good? Was that a good thing?

CUT TO:

INT. THE MALL - AFTERNOON

The mall is typically busy. Buffy, Nicole, Jennifer and KIMBERLY can be seen making their way through it. They are all dressed very similarly: bright colors, a lot of white and pink. Not trashy, but mainstream and uninspired. Esprit. All of them carry shopping bags; they've done a good day's work.

TITLE: CALIFORNIA. THE LITE AGES

The girls pass by stores, vaguely window shopping.

BUFFY

Mr. Howard is so heinous. He's always giving me a hard time. I get a C-plus on the test and he tells me, 'You have no sense of history.' I have no sense of history? He wears a brown tie.

NICOLE

You got a C-plus? I can't believe I cheated off you.

BUFFY

Excuse me for not knowing about El Salvador. Like I'm ever going to Spain anyway. Ooh!

A dress on a rack outside a store has caught her eye. She takes it and holds it in front of her.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Mmmm. Wouldn't I look just edible and nutritious in this?

Kimberly and Jennifer catch up to them.

KIMBERLY

Guys, what's the sitch? I'm bored.

BUFFY

(modeling the dress for Kimberly))

What do you think?

KIMBERLY

Please. It's so '91.

GIRL

Oh.

Buffy puts it back.

KIMBERLY

What are we doing?

BUFFY

Why don't we see a movie?

KIMBERLY

Well, where?

JENNIFER

Omniplex?

NICOLE

Nee sitch. No way.

BUFFY

No THX.

NICOLE

They don't even have Dolby.

KIMBERLY

Beverly Center.

BUFFY

Please. They show previews for foreign movies.

NICOLE

AMC?

KIMBERLY/BUFFY

Bogus corn!

KIMBERLY

Totally stale. And the ushers are like, the acne patrol. We're thinking Pavilion. Sitch?

BUFFY

Sounds tasty. We're going Pavilion.

JENNIFER

Excellent.

BUFFY

What's playing there?

A stranger, walking the other way, bumps into Buffy, doesn't stop. A man of about fifty, he is dressed shabbily, in a wrinkled black suit and a black shirt. He somewhat resembles a priest.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Excuse much! Not rude or anything.

KIMBERLY

(calling back)

Nice ensemble!

NICOLE

What a homeless.

The girls continue walking. The man stops, turns to stare after them. His look is intense, slightly worried, his face somewhat haggard. Intelligence shines through his eyes. He holds himself stiffly, arms close to him, almost as if he expected something to strike at him.

This is MERRICK. He pulls a picture out of his coat pocket, looks at it. Looks at them.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

The film is in progress. This has no effect on the girls, however, as they continue to talk ceaselessly. They all have diet sodas.

NICOLE

(to Buffy)

So, is Jeffrey really spending the night at your house?

BUFFY

That's the plan.

NICOLE

Good enough!

JENNIFER

Your parents are always going away for the weekend. You're so lucky.

BUFFY

(maybe not)

Yeah, I guess.

JENNIFER

My mom doesn't go anywhere. She even does the shopping network. I'm gonna die a virgin.

KIMBERLY

What did Jeffrey's dad say?

BUFFY

'Just remember you're in training, son'

NICOLE

Oh, God.

KIMBERLY

He is so bald.

Seated a few rows behind the girls are PIKE and BENNY. The are fairly punked out, (and not currently attending high school). Pike is long and lean, has short hair spiked and a taste for long coats and black. Benny is somewhat stockier, opts for a shaved head and suspenders. Doc Martins for both. Benny is clearly the more belligerent of the two -- when Pike speaks, it's with surprising wit and reserve. Sometimes.

PIKE

Will you guys shut up, please?

BUFFY

It could happen.

Pike and Benny throw popcorn at her.

PIKE

Booo!

BENNY

Suck!

PIKE

Wrong answer! No prize.

NICOLE

God! Take a chill lozenge.

KIMBERLY

Like we don't have rights too?

BUFFY

Ignore them.

BENNY

I can't believe these people. We paid money to see this.

PIKE

No, we didn't.

BENNY

Oh, yeah. But I still want to know what happens.

BUFFY

Everyone get horribly killed except the blonde girl in the nightie, who finally kills the monster with a machete but it's not really dead.

The boys stare at her.

JENNIFER

Oh, my God. Is that true?

BUFFY

Probably. What movie is this?

CUT TO:

ANGLE - THE MOON

Fat and yellow, behind the clouds. We hear a long HOWL.

EXT. THE MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Jeffrey pulls into the parking lot in his BMW convertible. Grueller, howling, sits in the back behind Jeffrey and Andy. They park and hop out, head toward the entrance.

GRUELLER

Look at that moon! It's huge! Come on, guys, we gotta do something tonight. Party.

ANDY

You know, if you would spend more time at home sleeping, you would spend less time on the field, sucking.

JEFFREY

You were a bone out there today. Anyway, I'm booked. Gonna spend some quality time with the little woman.

ANDY AND GRUELLER

(coughing it into their hands)
Pussy-whipped. Pussy-whipped.

JEFFREY

You guys are pathetic.

GRUELLER

Later for you, then. I'm blowing. Andy, you coming?

ANDY

No, I'll hitch a ride with Jeffrey.

GRUELLER

Okay. Later.

ANDY

Headbutt!

Andy and Grueller bring their foreheads together with painstaking slowness, grimacing, and barely tap heads.

ANDY

(continuing)

Later.

Grueller walks off, head through a park.

At the same time, Pike and Benny emerge from the theater. They pass Andy and Jeffrey and the two pairs circle each other, almost growling, eyes locked, before pike and Benny turn and walk off, not quite in the direction Grueller took. Buffy, Kimberly, Jennifer and Nicole come out right after. Buffy heads straight for Jeffrey and they kiss massively.

BUFFY

Nice game.

ANDY

Jeffrey, I don't mean to sound sexist or anything, but can I borrow her?

BUFFY

Andy!

JEFFREY

No way. You'd get her dirty.

(off her look)

He would, honey. He's an animal.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARK - SAME TIME

Grueller walks through the trees, enters an enclosed clearing of grass. He hears something, stops. Maybe his name, maybe just the BUSHES RUSTLING. He looks about him, hesitantly. Starts forward, stops again.

GRUELLER

Yo! Who is that? Don't mess with me man, I'll rip your head off.

Nothing.

GRUELLER

(continuing)

Come on, come out here. Let's see what you got.

RUSTLING. No one.

GRUELLER

(continuing)

Forget this.

He turns on his heel, ready to drop all show and bolt. WALLY BESSEL is right behind him.

Wally is a ninth grader, small, nerdy, and recently undead. In marked contrast to the older vampire in the prologue, Wally is freshly undead. He still has fat on his face; in fact, he looks almost normal from afar. But his inhuman eyes and his uncommon pallor mark him as a vampire. And the way he speaks is unearthly. Hollow, almost detached; repeating phrases sometimes almost as though he had never heard them before.

He smiles at Grueller.

GRUELLER

(continuing)

Bessel! What are you doing here?

WALLY

Hi, Grueller.

GRUELLER

What are you grinning at? You think I was scared?

WALLY

Could be.

GRUELLER

You think so?

WALLY

Could be.

Grueller grabs Wally by his shirt collar and readily hoists his small body up, Wally's feet dangling two feet off the ground.

GRUELLER

Listen, you little worm. I could beat your head to a pulp for you, just like I did last year, you got that? You got that?

WALLY

(repeating)
Got that.

GRUELLER

Good.

He lets Wally go. Wally remains two feet in the air. Grueller's eyes go wide.

GRUELLER

(continuing)
What the...

Wally smiles even more broadly, quietly hissing. He has long fangs, made somehow more grotesque by the fact that he also has braces.

Wally's hands vise onto Grueller's head, lightning quick. Grueller screams.

ANGLE - PIKE AND BENNY

Crossing a street, turning and listening.

ANGLE - JEFFREY'S CAR

Speeding by, everyone packed into it. Andy howls back at Grueller, mistaking his intent. He settles back. The girls are looking at him.

ANDY

It's um... you had to be there.

In the front seat next to Jeffrey, Buffy winces slightly.

JEFFREY

You okay?

BUFFY

I... yeah, I'm okay. I'm fine.

ANGLE - THE FULL MOON

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S LIVING ROOM - ANGLE ON TV - NIGHT

We see another full moon, this one on the TV screen. "Dracula" is on, Lugosi's original.

The lights are off in the living room as Jeffrey enters from the kitchen, sits down on the couch holding a bag of munchies. Buffy is still in the kitchen, making corn. Jeffrey flicks the remote, changes channels.

ANGLE - THE TV

The movie is replaced by the local news, in mid-broadcast. A NEWSCASTER sits at his desk, a super of a teenage girl behind him.

NEWSCASTER

-- The fourth such disappearance in less than two months. The sheriff was not available for comment, but a police spokesman issued a statement, saying that the situation is not out of hand...

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Buffy's FATHER walks purposefully into the kitchen holding a suitcase that he plops by the front door. He crosses out again as Buffy's MOM crosses in, also with luggage.

BUFFY'S DAD

We're gonna be late. I knew it.

BUFFY'S MOM

(to Buffy, but not looking at her)

Now, we'll be back on Sunday, number's on the fridge, don't drive the Jaguar and tell Consuela my underwear does not go in the dishwasher.

She's already out again by the end of this, as dad comes back in.

BUFFY'S DAD

Have fun be good stay away from the Jag.

BUFFY

I know.

And he's out the back, mom entering on his heels.

BUFFY'S MOM

Well, that's everything. Kiss noise.

She actually makes a kiss noise at her daughter.

BUFFY

'Bye.

Buffy's mom heads out the door as Buffy heads into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME**BUFFY'S MOM**

(calling out)

Bye-bye, Bobby!

JEFFREY

Bye!

(to Buffy)

They think my name's Bobby?

BUFFY

Well... it's possible they think my name's Bobby.

JEFFREY

Real 'quality-timers,' Hugh.

BUFFY

Something like that.

JEFFREY

Hey, it works for me. If they want to leave you alone in the house, all helpless and vulnerable...

Buffy sits, squints disapprovingly at the screen. She has a bag of microwave lite popcorn and is spraying diet butter substitute on it.

BUFFY

What show is this?

JEFFREY

It's the news, Buffy.

BUFFY

Oh. Who's in it?

(off his look)

I know what it is. It's what's on instead of the movie.

JEFFREY

I just want to see the basketball scores. It's important.

BUFFY

(over a handful of popcorn)
Mmmnkay.

Jeffrey leans in toward her.

JEFFREY

Of course, there are... other considerations...

He starts kissing her about the face and neck. She leans submissively back on the couch as he works his way on top of

her. He gives her a long kiss on the mouth, then works over to her ear. As he is burrowing about in there, Buffy sneaks another handful of popcorn into her mouth.

She leans back, by accident, on the remote.

ANGLE - THE TV

"Dracula" reappears.

CUT TO:

INT. 18TH CENTURY CHINESE WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT

Not, by any stretch, an upscale joint. Dark, cramped, and scummy. A young Chinese Whore sits on a bed, wearing little enough that we can see the telltale birthmark on her shoulder. A repulsive British SAILOR is dressing, his business finished. Looking disgusted, he throws his payment on the bed. For some reason, the bed is littered with popcorn.

SAILOR

You never touched my heart.

He leaves. Alone, the Girl hears a NOISE in the dark corner, a wet RUSTLING. Slowly she gets up to see. Approaches...

It is a pool of blood. She stares at it, terrified. A hand reaches out of it.

She runs out into the hall, but it leads nowhere but a dead end. Standing there, waiting for her, is Lothos. He smiles at her and we see she is now Buffy.

LOTHOS

Soon.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Buffy is thrashing in bed. Jeffrey is holding her by the shoulders and shaking her.

JEFFREY

Buffy! Hey, what's the sitch?!?
Wake up!

She wakes, grasping, her eyes melting into focus on Jeffrey's face.

BUFFY

Oh, wow. Oh, wow. Oh, wow.

JEFFREY

You were having a nightmare.

He settles back down, his arms around her, and almost instantly begins to fall asleep again.

JEFFREY

(continuing)
What'd you dream about?

BUFFY

Nothing.

JEFFREY

Come on, what was it?

BUFFY

Nothing. It was just a dream.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - SAME TIME

Dark, cavernous -- walls hewn from rock, lit torches clamped to them. Cold stone floor and in the foreground, a dark pool of blood. A HUM, possibly a chant, fills the air.

A figure steps up to the pool, his back to the CAMERA, and kneels before it. He holds his hand over the surface of the blood. As he speaks, his voice an urgent hiss, we TRACK AROUND him, see that it is Amilyn.

AMILYN

You have brought us here, and we thrive. We thrive. You will awake in a new world. Just as I promised, untold splendor, rubies dripping from our lips. Just as we said.

CLOSEUP - AMILYN'S HAND

A hand shoots out of the pool and grabs Amilyn's. Amilyn leans over and fervently kisses it.

AMILYN

(continuing)

Soon...

CUT TO:**EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY**

Buffy sits with Nicole, Jennifer, Kimberly and CASSANDRA. Cassandra is not quite in the same league as the other girls -- for one thing, she studies. She's not as glamorous, nor a vacuous.

BUFFY

The environment.

They consider this a moment.

NICOLE

The homelessees?

KIMBERLY

Oh, please.

JENNIFER

Are there any good sicknesses that aren't too depressing?

BUFFY

Guys. The environment. I'm telling you, it's totally key. The earth is in terrible shape, we could all die, and besides, Sting's doing it.

KIMBERLY

I thought he was doing Indians.

Jeffrey and Andy arrive, sit. Jeffrey straddles Buffy from behind, wrapping his arms around her. She snuggles in his grasp.

JEFFREY

Hey there.

BUFFY

Hi.

JENNIFER

(shyly)

Hi, Jeffrey.

ANDY

Whatchya guys doing?

NICOLE

The winter dance. We need to come up with a theme.

JEFFREY

The senior dance? How about... 'Our Friend, the Beer?'

ANDY

'Putting Out for Fun and Profit'... possible thought...

KIMBERLY

Try new Clue-flakes.

BUFFY

It has to be, like a socially conscious theme.

CASSANDRA

(reading from a memo)

'One that reflects the students' growing awareness of and involvement in the world around them.'

JEFFREY | ANDY

Downer.

BUFFY

I still say the environment. That's my suggestion.

CASSANDRA

It is a pretty crucial subject.

BUFFY

See, Cassandra likes it. Cassandra's my friend.

ANDY

I like it. Can I be your friend?

JEFFREY

Stay away from my thang.
(to Buffy)
Sorry, honey. 'Thing.'

NICOLE

Environment. That's cool with me.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

CASSANDRA

So, what are the most immediate threats to the world environment right now?

Cassandra has paper and pen, is poised to make a list of suggestions. The other all look at each other uncomfortably. Cassandra obviously knows the answer, but regards her friends silently, waiting to see what they come up with.

JEFFREY

Well, um... litter?

ANDY

Litter, yeah!

Everyone but Cassandra is impressed by this.

JEFFREY

(to Cassandra)
Write that down.

JENNIFER

Okay, what else?

NICOLE

Forest fires?

ANDY

Communism?

BUFFY

Bugs.

CASSANDRA

(helpfully)
Okay, guys, how about the ozone layer?

KIMBERLY

Oh, yeah!

NICOLE

Right!

BUFFY

We gotta get rid of that! That's right.

GARY MURRAY, a well meaning but pompous little administrator, come up to the kids. He's kind of like Charlie Brown: you always say his whole name.

GARY MURRAY

I don't suppose you kids heard the first bell, did you? The first bell was saying, 'Start going to class, it's time to go to class.' In about thirty seconds the second bell is going to be saying, 'Already be in class.'

JEFFREY

We're having a very important discussion here.

GARY MURRAY

Why do I have trouble believing you?

JEFFREY

Something from your childhood, maybe?

GARY MURRAY

Button it, Kramer. Classes are starting. Be there or beware.

Gary Murray walks off.

ANDY

Man has a complex.

BUFFY

He's got a... What do you call it?
A Napoleonic Code.

JENNIFER

It's 'cause he's so tiny.

ANDY

Yes, but what he lacks in height he makes up in shortness.

They get up and start heading to class.

KIMBERLY

Let's meet tonight, okay?

BUFFY

Where?

KIMBERLY

Cafe Blase.

NICOLE

Cool. We can figure decorations and stuff.

BUFFY

Cassandra, you gotta come, too.

CASSANDRA

Can't. History report. The Normans and the Saxons.

BUFFY

Bogutude. Blow it off.

CASSANDRA

I really can't. Besides, it's pretty interesting.

BUFFY

(not harshly)
You're weird and I'm afraid of you. Seriously, Cassandra, there's a lot cooler things you could be doing than your homework.

CASSANDRA

Like what?

BUFFY

Like my homework.

Buffy smiles, trots off.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY - NIGHT

We see SHOTS of the deserted city at night. It's a small, upscale town. Suburban streets, businesses, and a few more depressed areas, boarded up houses. No one is out. TREES RUSTLE, shadows flicker, but the curling mist is the only visible presence.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE BLASE - NIGHT

A classic faux-Fifties L.A. diner. Pictures of Frankie and Annette, bright lights, those same tired Fifties standards playing on the JUKEBOX. Buffy, Kimberly, Jennifer and Nicole are sitting at the end of the counter, at the corner.

KIMBERLY

I don't see why we have to invite everyone.

BUFFY

Kimberly, it's the senior dance.

NICOLE

If we don't invite all the seniors we can't use the school funds, you know that.

KIMBERLY

Can't they make exceptions? Maryanne
Heinel? She's such a scud. Can't
we have a Maryanne clause?

NICOLE

Well, look who's here.

GIRLS' POV

Pike and Benny have entered the diner, quite drunk. As they
pass the jukebox, Benny gives it a kick and the music stops.
A few people look up, annoyed, as they approach the counter.

WAITRESS

Hey!

BENNY

The Fifties are over.

PIKE

(earnestly)
We have to learn to let go.

WAITRESS

Don't give me any trouble, okay?

PIKE

No trouble. We just want to eat.

They sit next to Buffy and begin pooling their money on the
counter. It comes to about \$2.50, heavy with pennies.

PIKE

(continuing)
Come on, come on, fork up the scub.

BENNY

That's it, man. That's the whole
story.

PIKE

We're looking at a dog, possible
coffee...

He digs and produces a quarter from his pocket.

PIKE

(continuing)
It's coffee.

BENNY

Amazing!

KIMBERLY

(to the other girls)
Smell of booze much.

NICOLE

Nice much.

PIKE

(to the waitress)
Can we have a hot dog, please, medium
rare, and a cup of joe?

BUFFY

You guys are thrashed.

JENNIFER

(to Buffy)
What are you talking to them for?

BENNY

(to Buffy)
What did you say?

PIKE

Yeah, we're drunk. We're the Drunks.
What's your name?

BUFFY

Buffy.

BENNY

Figures.

PIKE

Do people ever call you 'Buffy the
Buffalo?' I'm just wondering.

Buffy gives him a look.

PIKE

(continuing)

The don't. You kind of wish they would, though.

KIMBERLY

Wit-tay.

PIKE

I'm sorry. I'm Pike. This is Benny.

KIMBERLY

Pike isn't a name. It's a fish.

PIKE

Hey, wait a minute...

BENNY

You're the guys from the movie!

PIKE

(good naturedly)

We hate you guys!

The girls all make sad noises, real sarcastic.

PIKE

(continuing)

You guys were way rude. It was shocking.

NICOLE

You just snuck in anyway.

PIKE

So you have to ruin the movie for us? You know, other people have feelings, too.

KIMBERLY

I am so sure.

The waitress brings the hot do. Benny takes it out of the bun and holds it over his crotch, phallus-like.

BENNY

Hey, Buffy, you hungry? I got something for you...

The other girls look down and shriek. Buffy looks at Benny, looks at him in the eye.

ANGLE - BUFFY'S HAND

It closes silently around the knife at her place.

Buffy is still looking at Benny, she seems to be hypnotizing him, and maybe even herself. The NOISE in the diner seems to FADE AWAY for a moment. Buffy shifts slightly, almost a twitch, and the spell is broken. The SOUND RETURNS, Buffy looks away, letting go of the knife exactly where it was.

Benny looks down. His hot dog has been sliced neatly down to about an inch. He is shocked.

BENNY

(continuing)

Hey! She wasted my dog!

PIKE

(smiling)

Bummer metaphor.

Buffy looks off, a little surprised herself.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Pike and Benny have left the diner and are walking down the street. Pike produces a bottle of Mezcal from his coat pocket and takes a swig, hand it to Benny. They continue to pass it back and forth.

BENNY

Rich bitches. They're a plague. They've gotta be stopped.

PIKE

You didn't like them.

BENNY

They're all the same! They're so stuck up, they're just... they're not even human. I hate them.

PIKE

Would you sleep with them?

BENNY

Yes. Definitely. Definitely. Please, God.

PIKE

Well, there it is, isn't it? You don't even like them, and you'd sleep with them. What's that all about?

BENNY

I got a news flash, man, another shot of this and I'll have sex with you.

PIKE

Oh, yeah, and then you'll never call me.

They continue walking. A shadowy figure appears behind them, following.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - NIGHT

The girls have all finished their sundaes.

NICOLE

Come one, that was so weird.

BUFFY

(uncomfortable)
What, it's not weird. I just cut the stupid hot dog in half.

KIMBERLY

I can't believe they still ate it.

JENNIFER

(to Buffy)
Where'd you learn how to do that?

BUFFY

I didn't learn... I just... it's not a big deal.

KIMBERLY

Buffy, I'm gonna tell Jeffrey you were playing with another man's Hebrew National.

BUFFY

(annoyed)
Get a boob job.

NICOLE

It's like when we took gymnastics in eighth grade.

Buffy makes a face. She doesn't want to hear this story. We HOLD on her as Nicole tells it.

JENNIFER

What happened?

NICOLE

Buffy was on the uneven parallels -- she was really good; coach said she could have been in the Olympics -- but she was doing a routine, spinning, and the beam broke.

JENNIFER

You're kidding.

NICOLE

Snapped. Buffy was, you know, on the upswing, and I swear to God she went across the room. Perm over heels.

JENNIFER

Oh, my God! Ouch! No wonder you quit.

NICOLE

Well, that's the thing. She landed on her feet. Didn't even sprain a toe. And I go up to her and she turns and looks at me and she's like this --

She makes a hyper-intense face. The others laugh.

NICOLE

(continuing)

-- like she's gonna kill me.

BUFFY

I was just scared is all.

NICOLE

No. It was mondo bizarro.

KIMBERLY

Buffy, the ape-woman.

NICOLE

Seriously, Buffy. That look was way twisted. What were you thinking about?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Perhaps in answer, we see the same shadowy figure moving behind Pike and Benny as they continue to walk home. They're really bombed now. They are somewhere in the hills now, and they come to the edge of a steep incline overlooking the valley. A waist-high concrete wall is built into the side of the earth. They stand below a thick, green tree.

PIKE

I'll have it running in a week. It's be beauty. It just needs new shocks, you know, break pads, an engine, and some wheels. It'll be totally cherry.

Pike finishes the bottle, eats the worm, and chucks the BOTTLE over the side. There is a moment before they hear it SHATTER.

BENNY

When you get your car together, man, let's bail.

PIKE

You think? Split?

BENNY

Utterly. Let's bail this town. It's getting... I don't know. Let's go somewhere where there aren't any rich bitches.

PIKE

Our own world, where we could live and grow beans. Hundreds of beans.

Benny wavers, catches hold of Pike.

BENNY

I think I'm gonna ralf.

He leans over the side of the wall, hangs his head down.

PIKE

Don't worry, Benny. I'm here for you.

Pike falls over backwards.

PIKE

(continuing)

I'm here for you, Ralf.

Pike passes out.

CLOSEUP - BENNY

Still waiting to throw up. The figure approaches slowly from behind him. The figure is a few feet away from him when a hand shoots down from above and grabs Benny's face.

ANGLE - IN THE TREE

Amilyn sits on a low branch, pulls Benny up to face him. Amilyn

has changed his manner of dress drastically. He wears a motorcycle jacket and sunglasses. His hair is punked out. Benny is in shock, as Amilyn holds him easily by his shirt collar.

AMILYN

You wanna go for a ride?

Amilyn leans back -- all the way back, falling back out of the tree and pulling Benny with him. We see them fall out past the wall just as the shadowy figure reaches it.

It is Merrick, the man from the mall. He runs to the side of the wall, looks over. The two are already lost in the dark mist. Merrick turns around, looks about him. He digs in his pockets, pulls out a cross and a stake, holds them tightly. While digging he pulls out an old, stained picture, lays it on the railing. Stake and cross in hand, he stands by Pike looking out at the night.

ANGLE - THE PICTURE

It is a ten year old girl about to blow out the candles on her birthday cake. The cake reads, "Happy Birthday, Buffy".

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

Buffy, Nicole and Jennifer and another cheerleader are practicing.

JENNIFER

What was the step after... The one from Thursday. I never learned it right, I don't think.

Buffy shows her. They do it together for a minute.

BUFFY

That is so cool.

NICOLE

Thank you very much.

BUFFY

Nobody is even gonna look at the game.

JENNIFER

Hey, I was thinking, for the dance, what about a big sign that says 'Don't Tread On Me'. You know, and a picture of the earth.

BUFFY

Don't tread on the earth?

NICOLE

I don't get it.

BUFFY

How do you not tread on the earth? I mean, you kind of have to.

JENNIFER

I never thought of that.

NICOLE

I gotta bail. You coming?

BUFFY

You guys blow. I'm waiting on Cassandra. She's gonna help me with my history.

NICOLE

Cassandra's really smart.

BUFFY

Yeah... She's okay, though.

NICOLE

I guess.

JEFFREY

Are you going out with Jeffrey tonight?

BUFFY

Jealous?

Jennifer laughs, uncomfortably.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Don't worry, Jennifer. Someday
your prince will come.

NICOLE

Yeah, just make sure you do first.
Let's go, guys.

BUFFY

B'bye.

The other girls leave. Buffy is alone on the empty field.
She looks around her. She starts doing a routine, tentatively.
Then she runs toward the middle of the field and jumps, flies
into an extraordinary series of gymnastic flips and cartwheels.
She rolls into one final flip, a huge one, and lands, a perfect
ten, about three inches from Merrick.

She screams in surprise, steps back.

BUFFY

(continuing)

God, where the hell did you come
from? You scared me to death.

MERRICK

I'm sorry. That was impressive.
The... tumbling.

His accent is clipped -- British.

BUFFY

What? Oh. I used to do gymnastics.
Are you looking for someone?

MERRICK

I'm looking for you, actually.

BUFFY

Am I in trouble or something?

MERRICK

Not at all. My name is Merrick. I
was sent to find you some time ago.
I should have found you much sooner
but there were... complications.
You should have been taught,
prepared.

BUFFY

What are you talking about?

MERRICK

I've searched the entire world for
you, Buffy.

BUFFY

Why?

MERRICK

To bring you... your birthright.

BUFFY

My birthright? You mean, like a
trust fund?

Merrick looks at her.

BUFFY

(continuing)

I had a trust fund my great-
grandfather, or maybe it was an
inheritance, 'cause he's dead, and
I spent it on shoes.

MERRICK

You must come with me. It's much
too late already. You must come
with me to the graveyard.

BUFFY

Wait a minute. My birthright is in
the graveyard? Later not.

MERRICK

Wait!

BUFFY

You're one of those skanky old men
that, like, attack girls and stuff.
Forget you. My, um, my boyfriend

is gonna be here in about thirty seconds, and he's way testy.

MERRICK

You don't understand. You have been chosen.

BUFFY

Chosen to go to the graveyard? Why don't you just take the first runner up, okay?

MERRICK

You must believe me. You must come with me while there's still time.

BUFFY

Time to do what?

MERRICK

To stop the killing. To stop the vampires.

BUFFY

Let me get this straight. You're like, this greasy bum, and I have to go to the graveyard with you 'cause I'm chosen, and there's vampires.

MERRICK

Yes.

BUFFY

Does Elvis talk to you? Tell you to do things? Do you see spots?

MERRICK

I don't have time for your prattling. I have proof. You bear the mark.

He steps forward and pulls the neck of Buffy's shirt aside, revealing her shoulder.

MERRICK

(continuing)

The mark of the Coven! The -- where's the mark?

There is no birthmark on her shoulder. He looks at the other one.

MERRICK

(continuing)

The mark of the -- wait a minute.

Buffy pushes his hand off her.

BUFFY

You mean that big hairy mole? Excuse me: eeyuu. I had it removed. And, like, knowing about my big old mole isn't proof of anything except that it's way past medication time.

She starts to walk away.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Just stay away from me, okay?

MERRICK

Did you ever dream that you were someone else?

Buffy stops. This obviously registers with her.

BUFFY

Everybody does.

MERRICK

In the past. A girl. Maybe... A Magyar peasant. An Indian princess. A slave.

The last one hits the mark.

BUFFY

I was a slave.

MERRICK

In Virginia.

BUFFY

I don't know. It was... There was a big gram or something. And there's one, I'm like a prostitute...

MERRICK

China.

BUFFY

Oh, my God. I never told anybody about this. I remember the one about the peasant, too. God, there's a bunch. Is this, like channeling or something.

Merrick rolls his eyes.

BUFFY

(continuing)

I had a dream once where I was... There was like, knights in it, and I worked in this bar. And I... was fighting. I'm always fighting. And there's a guy... He's not always there, but he's horrible, all white, and he's always... trying to kill me.

MERRICK

Lothos.

The name has an obvious effect on the girl.

BUFFY

How do you know all this?

MERRICK

I have to show you.

CUT TO:

ANGLE - THE SUN

Thick and orange, sinking beyond the hills.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - SUNSET

Merrick leads Buffy, searching for a particular grave.

BUFFY

I can't believe I'm doing this. I can't believe I'm in a graveyard with a strange man hunting for vampires on a school night.

MERRICK

Why didn't you ever tell anybody about your dreams?

BUFFY

Oh, yeah, tell everyone I'm crazy. Beauty ida.

Buffy stops, winces slightly.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Ow.

MERRICK

Cramps?

BUFFY

None of your business. God.

MERRICK

This is it.

Buffy is standing on a freshly dug grave. The headstone reads: "ROBERT BERMAN, 1972 - 1990. GOD IS AT HIS HEELS".

MERRICK

(continuing)

Robert Berman was killed three days ago. The body was found in the bushes out by the canal. Extensive tissue damage -- tearing -- at the neck and shoulders. Coroner thinks it's a dog. You sit her.

He points out a plot of ground about eight feet from the foot of the grave. Buffy sits and leans against another stone.

Merrick reaches into his jacket, pulls out a stake and a cross, hands the cross to Buffy.

BUFFY

Wait a minute.

MERRICK

Just for protection. You won't have to do anything. I just need you to watch.

BUFFY

All right. What do we do now?

MERRICK

We wait for Robert to wake up.

Merrick goes over to the other headstone, crouches by it.

BUFFY

Do you have any gum?

ANGLE - SUNSET

The last red glimmer disappears behind the hills.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL - SAME TIME

Cassandra stands waiting for Buffy. The sun is down, darkness increasing. She looks at her watch and gives up, heads for her car. Her key in the door, she hears a RUSTLING behind her. Looks slowly around.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - SAME TIME

Buffy sits fidgeting. Playing with her fingernails. Merrick stays in the position, listening.

A low, almost inaudible MOAN come from under the ground. Buffy sits up straight, holds the cross to her. The MOAN becomes louder, almost a scream. The SOUND is followed by the SOUND of FINGERS SCRAPPING wood -- of WOOD SPLINTERING -- of digging. The moaning continues, becoming eerier, somewhat more articulate.

Buffy and Merrick wait.

ANGLE - THE GRAVE

Finally, fingers break through the ground and hold stiff in the open air. The moan becomes a triumphant HISS. The fingers clutch at the ground.

ROBERT BERMAN pops halfway out of his grave like a jack-in-the-box, his face dirty and dead-white. He sees Buffy in front of him, and he bobs toward her with a crazy grin, stretching as to a mother's tit.

Merrick drops down behind Robert and grabs him, raising the stake. Buffy watches, immobilized.

A pair of arms shoot up from the ground right under Buffy. They grab her and pull her to the ground. Next to her face, the face of another vampire, a YOUNG WOMAN, emerges grinning from the crumbling earth.

Buffy screams lustily, and struggles to break free.

Merrick is momentarily distracted by this, and Robert throws him off, and pulls himself out of the grave. Merrick falls to the ground, and his stake goes flying.

Buffy pulls herself out of the girl's grasp, starts running away, but the girl grabs her. Buffy remembers the cross in her hand, spins and holds it to the vampire's forehead. It burns and the lady lets go, screaming and falling to the ground.

BUFFY

'Bye now.

Buffy runs.

ANGLE - MERRICK AND ROBERT

They are struggling, several feet away. Robert grabs Merrick by the shoulders and picks him up, preparing to bite him. A stake suddenly pops out of his chest, planted in his back by Buffy. He falls and dies.

MERRICK

Where's the other one?

BUFFY

She --

It leaps at her, screaming. She throws it off, as Merrick produces another stake and throws it to her. Buffy sticks it in the vampire's heart. She dies, screaming, her face still smoking, blood spurting onto Buffy.

Buffy looks at herself. At the blood.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF BUFFY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Merrick walks Buffy to the door. She is silent, slow.

MERRICK

Go to school tomorrow. Try to act normal. Don't let anyone know what's happening. This is important. When the vampires find out who you are... you won't be hunting them anymore.

BUFFY

All right.

He hands her a piece of paper.

MERRICK

Meet me at this address after school.

BUFFY

I have cheerleading squad.

MERRICK

Skip it.

Buffy nods. Merrick starts back down the path.

BUFFY

Merrick.

Merrick stops.

BUFFY

(continuing)
They can't come in, right? Unless you invite them. Is that true?

MERRICK

It's true.

Merrick moves on. Buffy goes inside.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - FOYER - SAME TIME

Buffy shuts the door, turns to go up to her room. She is startled by someone standing in her path. She almost screams.

It's her mother. She stands, arm akimbo, looking very confrontational. Buffy looks a sight, and stands uncomfortably in front of her mother for a moment.

BUFFY'S MOM

Do you know what time it is?

BUFFY

Uum... around ten?

Mom taps her watch, annoyed.

BUFFY'S MOM

I knew this thing was slow.

She crosses out of the room.

BUFFY'S MOM

(continuing)
You pay a fortune for something...
(calls out)
Honey, come on, we're gonna be late.

Her mother gone, Buffy lets out a small sigh -- of relief or frustration, it is not clear. She heads upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Buffy stands at the sink, washing her shirt. She tries to get the blood off with fierce intensity. She is near tears.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

She sits in the middle of the bed in her pajamas, the blankets pooled around her. She cannot sleep. Finally, she lies back on the pillow.

Lothos is beside her.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Buffy walks through the hall slowly, obviously the worse for last night's wear. Gary Murray comes up next to her, looking at his watch pointedly: she's late for class. He moves on. Jeffrey, going the other way, stops next to her.

JEFFREY

Hey, baby, how ya doing? You look beat.

BUFFY

I do? I guess I do.

JEFFREY

Where were you last night? I called your house like four times.

BUFFY

I went to sleep. I think I have the flu or something.

Jeffrey backs away from her.

JEFFREY

I can't get sick. You know -- training and all. I'm gonna be late.

BUFFY

'Bye.

Jeffrey moves off to class. Buffy walks on a bit. She bumps into Nicole.

NICOLE

Hey, Buffers. You look thrashed.

BUFFY

Thanks.

NICOLE

You and Cassandra get anything done last night?

Buffy looks confused for a moment, then remembers.

BUFFY

Oh. No. She never showed.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CAVE - CLOSEUP OF CASSANDRA'S FACE

She is waking up, obviously from being knocked out. She blinks stupidly, looks around. She is lying by a pool of what looks to be dark water in a large cave. Torches burn around her.

She tries to get up and finds it difficult. She pulls herself up to the side of the pool and splashes water on her face.

It's blood.

She starts, staring with growing horror at her hands. She does not even see the figure rise from the pool at first.

It's Lothos. He wears no shirt, only white trousers and boots, the style maybe Nineteenth Century. No blood seems to touch him as he rises. He looks at Cassandra with an almost sleepy lust.

LOTHOS

I find it restorative, sleeping in the life-blood of so many. To feel their souls coursing about me.

CASSANDRA

What's happening? What do you want?

LOTHOS

(smiling)
So very much.

CASSANDRA

My parents have money...

LOTHOS

Yes, I'm sure they do. This place
is everything you said it was,
Amilyn.

Cassandra turns. Amilyn stands behind her, grinning. He
hisses, bares his fangs at Cassandra.

CASSANDRA

What... are you?

LOTHOS

Are we so strange? So alien to
you? I've seen this culture, the
wealth, the greed, the waste...
it's truly heartwarming. The perfect
place to spread my empire. Honestly,
Eastern Europe was so dead, the
Communists just drained the blood
out of the place. It's livened up
a bit in the past few years, but
it's nothing compared to this....
this Mecca of consumption. The
city of Angels.

He steps right up to her.

LOTHOS

(continuing)
What are we? We are man, perfected.
We exist to consume.

On the world "to consume" we see Amilyn mouthing the words
with Lothos, his eyes to the ceiling. He's heard this a hundred
times.

AMILYN

So? Do we change this one, or do
we just drain her?

Cassandra pulls her gold card out of her wallet.

CASSANDRA

Here, look. My gold card. It's
your. I'll never report it.

Amilyn snatches it from her, looks it over.

LOTHOS

She has a certain quality, this
one...

Amilyn bites the card.

AMILYN

I don't think this is gold.

LOTHOS

Not as single-minded as the others,
not as sybaritic. Almost thoughtful.
She's useless.

CASSANDRA

No, wait. I can be dumb. Really.
Or mean, or whatever. I can learn.
I'm useful.

LOTHOS

Really?

CASSANDRA

Swear to God.

He rips out her throat, tearing at it with his teeth as blood
gushes around their faces and she wriggle, twists, dies. He
hurls her into the door and wipes blood from his mouth.

LOTHOS

I wish you wouldn't mention him...

Slowly Cassandra slides down the wall, her eyes glazing over.
As she descends we see, stenciled on the wall, "Hemery High
School. Maintenance Only."

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Grey, dusty and long since abandoned. Sunlight pours in through the large windows, practically caked with dust. Old crates are stacked here and there, bits of manikins leaning on one or two. Merrick sits on a crate, reading the newspaper.

Buffy enters hesitantly, puts down her bookbag next to a pile of Merrick's stuff, including a rolled-up sleeping bag. This is definitely not her turf. She runs her finger along a crate, picks up a world of dust. She holds up her finger at Merrick.

BUFFY

Fire the help. No kidding.

Merrick looks up at her.

MERRICK

It's not pretty, but it does suit our purposes.

BUFFY

Our purposes.

She repeats it not with attitude, but a dull wonder at her connection with this strange man. She crosses to him.

BUFFY

(continuing)

What, um... What do we do?

MERRICK

There's a great deal I have to show you, I'm not even sure where to start. There's so little time.

BUFFY

Why do you keep saying that?

MERRICK

Do you know what a Vampire-King is?

BUFFY

A Vampire-King? You mean like Dracula?

MERRICK

Oh, yes. And the man from your dreams. Lothos.

BUFFY

Oh, him.

MERRICK

Yes. They travel about, usually with one or two of their followers to lay the groundwork. The vampires find a community and they feed on it, make it their own. You were difficult to trace, and I think the process has gone a lot further than I'd anticipated. Usually this goads a community into some kind of paranoid frenzy. But for some reason, nobody here seems to be paying any attention.

BUFFY

(not paying attention)

What?

MERRICK

(annoyed)

We'll cover it later.

BUFFY

I still don't get how they happened to come to my town. I mean, was I born here because... because they were coming here? That Lothos guy, and his buddies?

MERRICK

In a way, yes. Your fate is inexorably connected to them.

BUFFY

Great. First I have a birthright, now I've got a fate. Hey, do I have to take notes on this?

MERRICK

(put down his paper)
We're going to have the work hard.
You'll need some excuse for staying
out. For your parents.

Buffy laughs.

BUFFY

Not a pressing issue.

MERRICK

I tell you, the best thing I can do
right now is find out more about
you. What your strengths are, your
likes... Everything. What's your
best subject?

BUFFY

Uh... gym.

MERRICK

Yes, you used to do gymnastics.
But you stopped. Why?

BUFFY

Well, everybody says... it's just
kind of dorky. I mean, have you
ever seen a gymnast's legs? They're
like --
(indicating huge)
-- the mighty oak. It's not a look.

MERRICK

But you enjoyed it, yes?

BUFFY

Well... I do cheerleading now.
It's way cooler.

MERRICK

Cheerleading. For... sporting
events, yes?

BUFFY

Sporting events, yeah.

MERRICK

All right. Why don't you show me a
cheer?

BUFFY

Here?

MERRICK

Yes, yes. It would be interesting.
A nice cheer.

BUFFY

Okay.

Buffy starts, a bit awkwardly, doing a cheer.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Who we gonna beat?

MERRICK

(pathetically following her
motion)
Who we gonna beat?

BUFFY

(stops)
No -- you don't have to --

MERRICK

Oh. I thought... you lead me --

BUFFY

No. You don't do anything. I do
it.

MERRICK

Oh. Good.

She starts again.

BUFFY

Who we gonna beat?
Who do we defeat?
Who will we be pulverizing

Into cream of wheat?

Gradually, Buffy gets more into the cheer. The steps become more complicated as she repeats the verse.

CLOSEUP - MERRICK'S HAND

We see a knife slip out of Merrick's sleeve. He palms it, hands behind his back.

In the middle of her routine, he hurls it at her. She catches it, reflexively, inches from her face. Stops dead. Then bursts into tears. Merrick is thrown off by this reaction.

BUFFY

Oh, what the hell is wrong with you? You threw a knife at my head!

MERRICK

I had to test you.

BUFFY

But you threw a knife at my head!

MERRICK

And you caught it! Only the chosen one could have done that.

BUFFY

I don't want to be the chosen one, okay? I don't want to spend the rest of my life chasing after vampires! I just want to graduate from high school, go to Europe, marry Charlie Sheen and die. It may not sound too exciting to a sconehead like you, but I think it's swell. And then you come along... and... and then I'm a member of the hairy mole club, so you throw things at me!

She is coming at him now. He begins to back up.

MERRICK

It was necessary.

BUFFY

(realizing)
Last night. You knew I was sitting on a fresh grave, didn't you?

MERRICK

I don't think you understand the full implications of --

Buffy punches him in the face. He goes flying a good ways, lands on his back. His nose bleed merrily. Buffy stops.

BUFFY

Oh. Sorry.

MERRICK

(getting up)
Don't you see what's happening? You're changing. You've got powers you've only just begun to tap. Physical, mental prowess you've never dreamed of.
(pulling a handkerchief out of his pocket)
God, this hurts. I've administered a few shocks to your system to start the adrenaline working. I'm sorry I have to take so many shortcuts in the training process.

BUFFY

Put your head back.

MERRICK

Two days ago, would you have even hit me? Let alone so powerfully?

BUFFY

No... I guess I would have gotten Jeffrey to hit you.

MERRICK

Exactly. You're changing. You're becoming something extraordinarily powerful.

Buffy looks at the knife in her hand. The MUSIC COMES UP and we...

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF IMAGES AND INTERCUT SCENES

Buffy's period of training. Over the difficult course of it, she is obviously becoming more self-possessed, more at ease. Her style of dress loosens a bit: a little punkier. Stops dying her hair blonde and her roots start showing. Accumulates a few more holes in her ears.

EXT. THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Buffy doing a series of gymnastic flips, swinging on vines, etc.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Buffy arriving late for class.

CUT TO:

INT. BRENTANO'S - DAY

Buffy charging some books: Lawson's Treatise on Demonology, Psychological Interpretations of Vampirism, The Book of the Dead, and The Complete Garlic Cookbook.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Merrick sits on a crate, reading the obituaries and circling certain entries.

Buffy stands on her head, sweating with concentration. The CAMERA TILTS up to reveal her feet. Between the toes of one is a nail brush, with which she is very carefully painting her toenails.

CUT TO:

INT. MELROSE CLOTHING STORE ("ROCK STAR") - NIGHT

Amilyn and a few of the old-world vampires are on a spree, trying on various leather jackets. As they cavort, the CAMERA TRACKS behind the counter, where we find the clerk, bloody and dead, slumped on the floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Buffy kissing Jeffrey goodbye after school. A long, lingering kiss, during which she pulls away, anxious to get going. She starts off, comes back and plants a big ol' on his lips one last time before splitting.

CUT TO:

EXT. MINIATURE GOLF COURSE - AFTERNOON

Merrick and Buffy are playing. Merrick tees off, shoots horribly.

BUFFY

(as announcer)

Ooh, another embarrassment for the teabag, while the chosen one is still well under par.

MERRICK

Your turn.

Buffy positions herself.

BUFFY

What about bats? Do they turn into bats?

MERRICK

No. No bats, no flying. They... float, occasionally. Not really flying.

BUFFY

Toasty. Were there ever any, like, famous vampires?

MERRICK

Oh, several. Lucretia Borgia, Joseph Mengele, Franklin Pangborn... are any of those names familiar?

BUFFY

If I say 'no' does that make me a bad person?

MERRICK

Good Lord. What do you study in history?

BUFFY

My nails.

She gives a little 'isn't that funny' kind of laugh. He doesn't respond.

MERRICK

All right. You've heard of the emperor Caligula, perhaps? Or Jack the Ripper?

BUFFY

They were vampires?

MERRICK

Same one.

BUFFY

Oh.

She considers this a moment. Tees off: another hole in one.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE (LATER)

Buffy and Merrick sparring, working their way in between the "trees." She is his superior in speed and strength, but he easily trips her up. She glares at him from the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Buffy late again. Gary Murray watches her from the hall, shaking his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE - EVENING

Two college-age guys stand hitchhiking. A red convertible pulls up, with a beautiful blonde behind the wheel. The guys look at each other -- all right! They can't see her teeth, or the look in her eye.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Buffy walks in, looks around. She approaches a PRIEST.

BUFFY

Excuse me...

PRIEST

Yes, my child? Is something troubling you?

BUFFY

Well, sort of.

PRIEST

Well, maybe I can help.

BUFFY

Yeah. Um... Could you bless these?

She holds up a six-pack of Perrier.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CAVE - NIGHT

We see the entire cave, the still pool of blood, the torches lit. At the far end sits Lothos. In his arms is the body of a dead girl. Blood stains her neck and yet the image is poetic, reminiscent of Michelangelo's "Pieta". They are both perfectly still, her draped across his lap, he with his eyes far far away. The silence holds.

Lothos belches massively.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Merrick is lecturing Buffy. Buffy is sitting, doodling in an open notebook, "uh-huh"ing and obviously not paying attention.

MERRICK

... Lothos was probably born in the eleventh or twelfth century; he's been difficult to trace. His power has increased with age. It will be a long while before you are ready to face him. We'll be lucky if we can get him to leave the area, to lie low for awhile. That will scatter the rest of them. Lothos is...

He looks at Buffy, who is staring down at her notebook.

MERRICK

(continuing)
... is extremely powerful, but he is still a vampire, and vulnerable to the same...

He looks at her. Is she listening?

MERRICK

(continuing)
Daylight is still his enemy. The stake can still find his heart.

Is she?

MERRICK

(continuing)
I have huge antlers growing out of my buttocks.

Nope. No reaction, just another "Uh-huh."

ANGLE - BUFFY'S NOTEBOOK

Merrick slams a stake right through the middle of it. Buffy screams, jumps back a good two feet and lands on her butt.

BUFFY

(angry)
What!?!

MERRICK

Try to pay attention.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - LATE LATE NIGHT

Merrick talking. Buffy drinking coffee, trying hard to stay awake. Listening.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Buffy in class, taking a test. Nicole leaning over, trying to cheat off her when she falls forward onto the desk, asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Buffy being ushered into Gary Murray's office.

CUT TO:

INT. GARY MURRAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Buffy sits in his chair. Gary moves about his desk, sitting behind it, leaning on it, talking to her. A FLY BUZZES annoyingly about his head.

GARY MURRAY

Well, I think we can safely say that something's going on with you, Buffy. Now, there's nothing to be nervous about; you're not in any trouble. I just hoped maybe we could talk. Don't think of me as

Gary Murray, administrator. Think of me as Gary Murray, party guy! Happening dude who can talk to the young. Me and you. It's open... Tell me. It's drugs, isn't it?

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - AFTERNOON

Buffy stands under a tree, blindfolded. Merrick stands a ways apart, watching. Buffy stands very still, neck craned, waiting.

Silently, a leaf falls. It wafts gently down. Buffy hurls a knife at it with easy precision.

ANGLE - ANOTHER TREE

The knife stick deep into the trunk, the leaf perfectly pinned.

Merrick looks at it. Buffy smiles, knowing she has hit the target. Blindfold still on, she turns toward Merrick and walks into a branch, falls heavily backwards.

CUT TO:

INT. GARY MURRAY'S OFFICE - DAY

The same session, continuing. Buffy still sits, expressionless, in the chair. The FLY still BUZZES.

GARY MURRAY

Hey, there's nothing to be afraid of! I know where you're coming from. Believe me. I'll tell you the truth. I've had my drug experiences, too. I did a lot -- I did some acid in the Sixties. Well, the late Seventies, actually. It was at a Doobie Brother's concert.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MALL - DAY

Buffy at the mall with Kimberly, Nicole and Jennifer. For the first time, we really see how she stands out against her friends. She is wearing much more functional, cool garb, and less makeup, while they still sport the same dainty shit from the beginning.

They stop to look at some dresses. Something in the next store catches Buffy's eye; she wanders off.

CUT TO:

INT. GARY MURRAY'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Gary Murray is crouching on his desk. Buffy still sits. The FLY still BUZZES.

As Gary talks, Buffy picks up a push pin from the table beside her, holds it.

GARY MURRAY

... and I could see the music flowing into me, it was bright red and electric, and I felt like a big toaster, and I thought, maybe I am a toaster, we're all molecules, and my friend Melissa, her head looked like a big party balloon, and that scared me, I started to freak out...

Buffy surreptitiously puts the push pin in her mouth.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MALL - DAY

The other girls are moving on from the dress shop, notice Buffy is not with them. They spot her in the next shop, urge her to come on. Buffy puts back the chain saw she was looking at, follows them.

CUT TO:

INT. GARY MURRAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Buffy hasn't moved, or opened her mouth. The FLY BUZZES on. Gary Murray now sits behind his desk.

GARY MURRAY

I guess you're surprised. Well, you know, there's more to most people than meets the eye. Everybody's got a secret. I just want you to know that you can always share your secrets with me. What you say in this office, it will stay in this office. I'm your pal.

Buffy smiles at Gary. As he looks away for a second, Buffy spits out the push pin. The BUZZING STOPS.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Buffy sparring with Merrick again. She holds a stake. This time she ends up pinning him, the stake at his solar plexus.

He moves the point to where his heart would be.

CUT TO:

INT. PIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is a shambles. Outside the first floor window, it is dark night. "Help Yourself" by the Posies blasts from Pike's STEREO. Pike lies on his bed.

Through the window we see Benny approach, slowly fading up to the pane. He's floating, really. (He's a vampire.) He scrapes his fingers on the glass.

BENNY

Pike...

Pike sits up, turns down the music. He goes to the window, begins to try to open it. It's stuck.

PIKE

Benny, man, where you been? You bailed on me, I passed out, man, I almost did a Jimi Hendrix!

BENNY

Let me in.

PIKE

Hey, I'm trying, but this window is burnt --

Pike gets a good look at Benny for the first time.

BENNY

Invite me in, Pike.

PIKE

Wait a minute. What's wrong with you, man?

BENNY

I'm fine.

PIKE

You look like shit, Benny.

Benny grins, presses his slimy forehead against the glass.

BENNY

I... feel.... pretty.

PIKE

No offense, man, but I think you're on something nasty. Why don't you just go and cool out and I'll see you in the morning or something.

BENNY

The sun! It burns! It burns!

He laughs at his impression, brown spittle caking the window.

BENNY

(continuing)

Let me in, Pike! I'm hungry!

PIKE

Get away from here.

BENNY

I'm hungry.

PIKE

I mean it.

Benny smiles, moves suddenly out of sight. Pike looks at the window for a second, then bolts out of his room. He runs to the front door, frantically hooks the chain. Benny appears at the door's little window, banging and scraping the glass.

BENNY

I'm hungry! I'm hungry! I'm hungry!

Pike backs away.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERTED STREET - NIGHT

Buffy walks slowly down the street, trying to appear nonchalant, but looking about her a lot.

BUFFY

Sure is cold. What a dark night.
Nice night for a walk.

She whistles some, keeps walking.

BUFFY

(continuing)
'Feelings, la la la la feelings'...
Boy, I'm helpless.

She passes an alley and there is a RUSTLING amid the garbage cans. She moves slowly down the alley toward the noise. She is about halfway down when a rat scurries out from the cans and down a drain.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Yeucch.

Behind her, another SOUND. She turns slowly. At the entrance to the alley stands a vampire. They stare at each other, some thirty feet away.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Hello...

She moves back a step. The vampire takes a step.

BUFFY

(continuing)
What do you want?

It floats rapidly at her, hissing. Buffy looks about her frantically, trapped. It hits her at top speed and she instantly rolls onto her back, flipping it and hurling it against the wall at the end of the alley. As it hits, Buffy, still rolling, produces a stake from her jacket and throws it directly at its heart. The stake punctures the startled creature's chest. Before he can so much as grab it, Buffy throws a roundhouse kick, driving the stake all the way home with her foot. The vampire screams, sinks to the ground.

Buffy turns, triumphant.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Toaster-caked him!

CLOSEUP - A STOPWATCH

A hand stops it. It is Merrick, who steps into the alley and stares at Buffy.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The two exit Merrick's car, an old Dodge Dart. As they talk, they make their way into the warehouse. Buffy looks out for trouble while Merrick unlocks the door. This is obviously their routine.

MERRICK

He was slow. Very simple. They
won't all be that easy.

BUFFY

Fine.

MERRICK

And the alley was a mistake. Never
corner yourself like that. If they'd

come at you in force you'd be dead
now. One vampire is a lot easier
to kill than ten.

BUFFY

Does the world 'Duhh' mean anything
to you?

MERRICK

You felt a little sick, didn't you?
The cramps.

They enter the warehouse.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WAREHOUSE - SAME TIME

They unload their stuff as they argue.

BUFFY

Nice conversationalist! Yeah, I
felt 'em a little, but I ain't due
for two weeks since you're so excited
about the subject.

MERRICK

It's natural. A reaction to their
presence, to the... unnaturalness
of it. It's part of how you are
able to track them.

BUFFY

Oh, wonderful. My secret weapon is -
PMS. That's just great. Thanks
for telling me.

MERRICK

You'll get used to it. I'm more
worried about your tactical mistakes.

BUFFY

You are such a wet.

MERRICK

A what?

BUFFY

A wet! Didn't I just kill that
vampire? I think I did. I didn't
see you killing any vampires. You
were too busy playing 'Beat the
Clock'.

MERRICK

Don't start with me again.

BUFFY

Aren't I, like the chosen one? The
one and only? The Grand High Poobah
and doesn't that mean you have to
be nice to me? Like, ever?

MERRICK

Buffy...

BUFFY

And why are you always wearing black?
It's so down. It's totally not
your color. I don't think you have
a color.

MERRICK

What do you want? Encouragement?
(in bad American accent)
'Gosh, Buffy, you're so special, I
just want to give you a great big
hug, oh I'm just having a warm
fuzzy.'

BUFFY

Oh, fuck you!

Merrick turns on her.

MERRICK

Do you know how many girls I've
trained to be Slayers? Five. Five
properly prepared girls, girls who
faced their responsibilities, who
worked hard to become women overnight --
harder than you've ever worked in
your life -- and I saw them ripped

apart. Do you want to live? Do you?

BUFFY

I...

MERRICK

What did you think, that being able to jump about and hit people makes you a Slayer?

Buffy looks at him a bit.

BUFFY

Five?

MERRICK

Five.

BUFFY

So, basically, I've got the life expectancy of a zit, right?

MERRICK

Not if you're careful.

BUFFY

How can you keep doing this?

MERRICK

It's what I was raised to do. There aren't many of us left, the Watchers.

BUFFY

Watchers?

MERRICK

There's a small village in Hampshire, near Stonehenge...

(sees she doesn't know it)

... near a bunch of big rocks.

That's where I was born. My father taught me about the training, about finding the Slayers, reading the signs. There's a small cluster of us, a few families, really... most of the neighboring villagers think we're just a bunch of harmless old loonies. I thought so myself for a time, when I was younger...

(stops himself)

I'm sorry. I'm not supposed to... I shouldn't go on like this.

BUFFY

I wish you would.

MERRICK

It isn't important.

BUFFY

I'm curious, is all.

MERRICK

Buffy, don't... don't start thinking of me as your friend. It interferes with the work, and it...

BUFFY

And it makes it worse when I die, right?

Silence.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Well, you know, I'm not gonna kick so easy. I've got a few things the other girls didn't have.

MERRICK

As for example, what?

BUFFY

Well... there's my keen fashion sense, for one.

MERRICK

Vampires of the world, beware.

BUFFY

(impressed)

Merrick. You made a joke. Are you

okay, I mean, do you want to lie
down? I know it hurts the first
time.

In spite of himself, Merrick smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Buffy, Nicole, Kimberly, and Jennifer are walking down the
hall.

JENNIFER

So they found Cassandra's body out
by the railway tunnels. Nobody's
saying anything, but they think she
was involved in something, like,
illegal or something. Like dealing.

KIMBERLY

Well, I hope so.

JENNIFER

Probably was. What do you suppose
she was doing out there.

BUFFY

Dying.

JENNIFER

Eeyuu.

Coming from the opposite direction are Jeffrey, Andy and some
of the other football players. They're suited up and heading
for the gym.

ANDY

... And they're having some memorial
service or something tomorrow. You
going?

JEFFREY

I don't know. Coach said I had to
work on my 'ab's.'

ANDY

Coach knows what abs are?

They pass Buffy. Andy stops and grabs her from behind.

ANDY

(continuing)
Got to get some!

Unthinkingly, Buffy flips Andy over and pins him against a
locker.

ANDY

(continuing)
Whoa! Whoa! I'm sorry. I'm sorry.
I don't actually need any right
now.

JEFFREY

(to Buffy)
What's with you?

BUFFY

Don't grab me, okay?

ANDY

Absolutely. I see now the error of
my mistake.

JEFFREY

Yeah, keep your mitts off my thang.
I'll pop you one.
(to Buffy)
Did he scare you?

Jeffrey puts his arm around Buffy but she shakes it off.

BUFFY

I can take care of myself, Jeffrey.

JEFFREY

So I noticed.

Buffy goes off by herself. Jeffrey watches her.

JEFFREY

(continuing)

Nice to feel needed.

ANDY

Let's move out!

JEFFREY

(rallying)

Yes!

The lads move off. We see Nicole, Kimberly and Jennifer, who have been watching the whole exchange. Nicole and Kimberly are obviously disdainful of Buffy's behavior. Jennifer is feeling sorry for Jeffrey. Boy does she want him.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING STORE - DAY

A mod, brightly lit store. A little hipper than your usual mall fare, but not Melrose either. Bright colors reign. Buffy is standing by a dressing stall, inspecting her fingernails, talking to Merrick as he changes inside.

BUFFY

I mean, most of the time Jeffrey's really sweet, but sometimes he gets kind of... 'Me-Tarzan'ish, you know what I mean? Lately it bugs me, I guess.

(no response)

Merrick? Are you still breathing?

MERRICK (O.S.)

(from inside)

I can't work this.

BUFFY

We call them zippers. They're not supposed to be a challenge.

MERRICK

But it's in the back. Why are we wasting time with this, anyway?

BUFFY

Because you clash, Merrick. You clash with everything. I mean you might as well go around with a sign, 'Slayers trained her.' Honestly, you look like something out of... Pasadena.

MERRICK

My clothes have always been perfectly serviceable.

BUFFY

Well, you're on my turf now. You're just gonna have to trust me.

Merrick comes out of the booth. He wears multi-colored parachute pants and an equally loud T-shirt. Buffy looks at him -- he looks at himself.

MERRICK

I want to die.

BUFFY

(doesn't like it either)

Okay. The important thing is not to panic.

CUT TO:

EXT. ZEPH'S AUTO REPAIR - LATE AFTERNOON

Pike is hurriedly working on a part in the hood of his beat-up Dodge, which is filled with all his belongings. ZEPH stands watching him. Zeph is about forty-five, greasy, good-natured. Pike works for him.

PIKE

You said you'd have the part by two! Christ, it's almost dark.

Pike finishes, slams the hood. He picks up a battered guitar case and stuffs it into the car, shuts the door.

ZEPH

What nasty bug crawled up your bungus and where the hell are you going?

PIKE

I'm leaving, man. I'm bailing town.
This place has gotten way too hairy.

ZEPH

Where am I gonna find another
mechanic stupid enough to work for
my money?

PIKE

Hey, have you seen Benny lately?

ZEPH

No... You want me to give him a
message?

PIKE

You should think about leaving,
too, man. Sell this place...
Something's going on here. I don't
know. Something real weird.

Pike gets in the car. It sputter, starts.

ZEPH

Ah, you'll be coming back.

PIKE

I don't think so.

ZEPH

All right. Take care of yourself.

PIKE

I am.

ZEPH

Hey. What should I do if I see
Benny?

PIKE

Run.

Pike peels out. Zeph watches him go.

ZEPH

That's my guitar...

ANGLE - THE SUN

burning down.

CUT TO:

INT. PIKE'S CAR - NIGHT

On the edge of town. The car has stalled at an intersection.
Pike is hunched over the wheel, his head down as he listens to
the rasping ENGINE.

PIKE

Come on, come on. Don't leave me,
baby. Come on, breathe.

Amilyn appears in the street in front of the car. Pike finally
hears the SCRAPING OF HIS FEET as he approaches the car. Pike
straightens up slowly, and as the rear view mirror comes INTO
THE FRAME, we see there are two more behind him. They are
both high-school age, fresh like Bessel and Benny. They all
approach, slowly.

Pike waits for a second, his hand on the key.

PIKE

(continuing)

This is for the money, baby. Make
me proud.

He turns the key again and the car ROARS to life. The
headlights trap the hungry scowl of the vampires as Pike pops
the car in reverse, smashing into the back two vampires. They
both go flying, hurt but not killed.

ANGLE - INSIDE THE CAR

Pike races at Amilyn, but he leaps up as Pike reaches him, and
Pike hears a THUD as Amilyn lands on the roof of his car.
Pike continues to bullet down the street as a hand suddenly
punches through the roof, grabbing at him. He fights off the
hand and tries to control the speeding car.

It can't be done: he goes off the road and into a park. The
car careens along.

ANGLE - ON TOP OF THE CAR

Amilyn ride it, laughing.

ANGLE - INSIDE THE CAR

Pike spots a tree with a low branch and heads for it. Still fighting, he aims at the branch. It gets closer.

ANGLE - ON TOP OF THE CAR

Amilyn looks up.

ANGLE - INSIDE THE CAR

They pass under the branch and we hear a TEARING THUD. The arm stiffens and falls into Pike's lap.

The car hits another tree dead on. Pike slams into the steering wheel. The guitar case flies right through the windshield and lands on the grass.

Pike pulls himself slowly from the car. He is bleeding, but not badly. Just shaken. He hears a low, seething WAIL from a few yards back and turns around. Amilyn is getting shakily to his feet.

PIKE

Oh, give me a break.

Amilyn hisses at him, then turns and races away, snarling, clutching what's left of his arm.

One of the other vampires nears him. Pike tries to run and his knees buckle. He lands on them right next to the guitar case. As the vampire nears, he pulls the guitar out of the case and swings it, hitting the vampire in the head. He hits him again. The vampire bats away the guitar and grabs Pike. Brings his face to Pike's as Pike squirms.

A blasting kick in the head from Buffy. The vampire is flung to one side, falls. He starts up at Buffy and she nails him with a stake. Pike stares at her. She pulls a walkie-talkie from her pocket.

BUFFY

(into walkie-talkie)
I'm on the east side, near the
playground... all right.

She puts the walkie-talkie back.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Hi.

PIKE

Hi there.

BUFFY

Is that your car?

PIKE

It was. I think it's pretty much
ready for the --

The last vampire hits Pike from behind. Without missing a beat, Buffy picks up the guitar and snaps the neck off. She and the vampire meet in the middle -- the creature barely moves before she buries the guitar neck in its chest. It falls.

Merrick runs up. He is wearing black jeans and a windbreaker. He is more modern than he was before, but subtly. He sees the decaying bodies, one with a guitar sticking out of its chest.

MERRICK

Interesting.

BUFFY

I kind of had to improvise.
(to Pike)
Sorry about your guitar.

PIKE

That's okay. Umm, listen, I'm
not.... I have to fall down now.

Pike's eyes glaze over slightly as he collapses into Buffy's arms.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM - CLOSEUP ON AMILYN - NIGHT

Thrashing about the room in hysterics, screaming and snarling, banging his one fist on the boiler tank. It booms hollowly. Lothos grabs him, throws him up against the wall.

LOTHOS

What's wrong with you!?!

AMILYN

My arm! He took my fucking arm!

LOTHOS

Shut up! You let him have it!

Lothos lets Amilyn go. Amilyn still fumes, quietly.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

You reckless imbecile. This place is ours for the taking and you let yourself... twelve hundred years old and you act like a child.

AMILYN

I had him in my grasp.

LOTHOS

Cheer up. You may still.

Only Lothos smiles at the joke. Amilyn raises his stump, looks at it. The tattered end of his jacket covers the grossness of it, but it still isn't good.

AMILYN

(forlornly)

I look horrible.

LOTHOS

The other two -- the new ones. Where are they?

AMILYN

I don't know. But the boy, he couldn't kill them.

LOTHOS

(thoughtfully)

No... Not a boy...

(gathers himself)

Find out if they're dead. And do something about that arm. Honestly, I don't know how you made it through the Crusades.

He turns toward his chamber.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

Let me know about our little recruits. I'll be in my chamber...

On his way through the door he passes a box on an oil drum. He plucks a large kitten out of it.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

... having a snack.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Buffy and Pike walk in, Pike still a bit unsteady on his feet.

BUFFY

How are you doing?

PIKE

Oh, I'm good. I'm good. Kind of miss my knees, though.

BUFFY

You want some water or something?

PIKE

Water. Okay.

They move into the kitchen.

PIKE

(continuing)

Do you do this kind of thing a lot? I mean, is this like a hobby?

BUFFY

Not exactly.

PIKE

They were vampires, weren't they?

BUFFY

Yeah.

PIKE

God! Unbelievable. Vampires.

Buffy hands Pike the water and they move back into the living room. Pike curls up in an armchair by the window. Buffy begins stripping off her bloody clothes, leaving on a tank-top and jeans.

BUFFY

You had a car full of stuff. Were you leaving?

PIKE

Yeah, I was bailing. I have a friend, and he's really... well, he's really vampire, I guess. Bad scene.

BUFFY

Well, stay here tonight.

PIKE

Thanks. Tomorrow morning, I'm on a bus. I'm gone.

BUFFY

Where are you gonna go?

PIKE

Well, I've always wanted to see Oxnard.

As Buffy strips down to her tank top, she notices a gash on her arm. It's not bleeding much any more, but it's fairly impressive. Pike jumps up to help as she pats it down with her shirt.

PIKE

(continuing)

Hey, jeez are you okay? You need a hand?

BUFFY

It's nothing. It doesn't hurt.

Pike looks at her a moment as she wraps her shirt around it.

PIKE

(almost awed)

Who are you?

Buffy doesn't look up. The questions seems to upset her a great deal. She even fights back tears.

PIKE

(continuing)

I'm sorry, I just mean... well you seemed like such a flake. But, in a good way! I can just keep talking till you strike me dead, or...

Buffy smiles at this, though still upset. She sits down.

BUFFY

Things are kind of confusing.

PIKE

I'll back that up.

BUFFY

Three weeks ago all I thought about was... well, I didn't actually think about anything. I definitely didn't expect this.

PIKE

I know. My guidance counselor never mentioned anything about vampires. 'Prison' came up a few times, but nothing about undead.

BUFFY

It's weird. I went back to my old

grade school once, to the playground --
I used to hang out there all the
time, playing on the swings and
stuff... I went back and it was so
tiny, the whole place. I couldn't
even fit on the swings. Everything
just looked so small.
(collects herself)
I'm sorry. I'm babbling.

PIKE

No, you're not.

But she stands anyway, head to the stairs.

BUFFY

I'm kinda beat. You can stay in my
mom's room if you want.

PIKE

I think I'll just hang out here.
Make sure the sun comes up and
everything.

BUFFY

You sure?

PIKE

Oh, I'll be fine. Got my chair,
got my window, I'm great.

BUFFY

Mmkay.

She starts up the stairs.

PIKE

Hey, Buffy...

BUFFY

Yeah?

PIKE

You know, you saved my life. And I
just wanted to say... I forgive you
for talking during the movie.
Almost.

She gives him a look, heads upstairs. He watches her go, looks
out the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS TERMINAL

A bus is pulling out. We see Pike through the window, looking
contemplative. He watches the terminal disappear.

PIKE'S POV

The streets move by. On one there is a Police Officer talking
to a hysterical Man. Next to them is a body, covered by a
sheet.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE SCHOOL - MORNING

Buffy and Merrick are walking along the path to the steps of
the main building, arguing. Merrick is wearing casual
California gear, but again, very subdued.

MERRICK

There isn't time.

BUFFY

Make time, okay? You're the one
who told me to act normal. I've
missed three practices already. If
I'm not there for the Barber game
tomorrow everyone's gonna talk.

MERRICK

Another distraction. It's not right.

BUFFY

Why because it's not my fate? It's
not in the Book-of-All-
Knowledgefullness that I'm gonna be
cheerleading at the Barber game?

MERRICK

Sooner or later you're going to

have to accept it. Your fate.

BUFFY

I'm pretty much learning not to accept anything anymore. Come on, Merrick. Football. Afterwards we can kill and kill until there is nothing left.

MERRICK

All right.

BUFFY

Toasty. You should come; it's gonna be a great game.

MERRICK

Oh, I'll be there all right. I'm not letting you out of my sight. Not till you're ready.

BUFFY

Try and be inconspicuous, okay? Act like a fan.

MERRICK

(being a fan)
Football is my life.

BUFFY

You're learning. Slowly, incredibly slowly, but you're learning.

She turns to go.

MERRICK

None of the other girls ever gave me this much trouble.

BUFFY

And where are they now?

She smiles at him and runs up the steps, where Jeffrey is waiting for her. He looks at the departing figure of Merrick.

JEFFREY

So that's your tutor, huh? What is he, like, your boyfriend now?

BUFFY

Jeffrey. Projectile vomit.

They enter the building together.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

Right before the game. The scoreboard reads "Hemery vs Barber". Fans fill the stands. We see Buffy with the other cheerleaders. She's really into it, enjoying herself as they all rally the crowd.

We see Merrick taking a seat. He is wearing another new outfit -- a letterman jacket and baseball cap. He has binoculars around his neck. He takes his seat amidst the teens. Real inconspicuous.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

The coach is giving players his pep talk.

COACH

Some people say winning is a state of mind. Can't win out there if you don't win --
(point to his head)
-- in here. I say, winning isn't a state of mind. I say winning is having more points. And how do we get point? By putting the thing, the ball over the.. in the place.

AMILYN

End zone.

COACH

Right. So I don't care about your minds. Maybe you're tired. Maybe you're worried about your grades. Maybe you dog just died or you've

suddenly found that you're attracted to other men. I don't care! 'Cause we're a team. And there only on thing that matters to a team. What that?

TEAM

Winning!

COACH

And how do we win?

TEAM

By putting the thing in the place!!

COACH

So let's go!!

TEAM

Yeahh!!!!

They run out, full of fire. The coach turns to one player, whose face we cannot see.

COACH

There you are! You missed practice again. You're benched till the fourth, um, the fourth part. Now get out there.

Coach heads out. The player turns around, smiles after him. It's Grueller.

CUT TO:

INT. STADIUM TUNNEL - SAME TIME

The players run out toward the field, yelling. The last of them is Grueller. He floats behind them slowly, grinning and speaking in a passionless voice, again as if he were repeating words phonetically.

GRUELLER

Go team. Rah. Go team go.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD (LATER)

Fourth quarter. The scoreboard read "Hemery: 17, Barber: 21". Fifty seconds left.

CHEERLEADERS

Two! Four! Six! Eight!
Who do we emasculate!
Barber! Barber! Yay!!

On the sidelines, a player hobbles out and coach pushes Grueller in. He passes Buffy and she winces slightly. It messes up the routine and Nicole practically falls over her.

NICOLE

Buffy, Jesus! You know these steps.

BUFFY

Sorry.

Buffy starts cheering again as the players huddle.

ANGLE - MERRICK

He is watching Buffy through his binoculars. A TEEN nudges him.

TEEN

Hey, can I borrow your binoculars, man?

MERRICK

(without looking around)
No.

TEEN

You're checking out the cheerleaders.
All right. Buffy, man.

Merrick does turn.

MERRICK

What about her?

TEEN

Everybody knows about her, man.

MERRICK

Knows what about her?

The teen leans closer.

TEEN

She's had sex.

He nods at Merrick; "You know what I mean". Merrick turns back.

MERRICK

I'm on the wrong bloody side.

ANGLE - THE FIELD

The players are lined up. Grueller, at left tackle, smiles at the player facing him, growls. The player looks worried.

ANDY

Twenty-three! Thirty-two! Hike!

The players scramble as Andy hands off. The carrier gets a few yards. When the pileup on the line of scrimmage peels apart, the player that had been facing Grueller is unconscious.

As he is carted off the field, Grueller gleefully trots back to the huddle.

ANGLE - BUFFY

Watching the game, a little perplexed.

ANGLE - THE STANDS

Merrick watches Buffy.

ANGLE - THE SIDELINES

The coach yells at the players.

COACH

Come on! Do the thing! Where you...
go towards the guy! Come one!
Throw the thing!

ANGLE - GRUELLER

Smiling, listening to Andy call the play.

ANGLE - ANOTHER SECTION IN THE STANDS

Kimberly sits, complaining to no one in particular.

KIMBERLY

What are they doing? The clock's
running out!
(shouts)
Throw the ball!

She sits back, turns to her neighbor.

KIMBERLY

Are they so brain-dead?

Her neighbor smiles at her. He is a vampire, and he speaks in the same monotone that Grueller used. He waves a pennant.

VAMPIRE FAN

Rah.

ANGLE - THE FIELD

The players are lined up again. Grueller is drooling. The other team is really worried about him now.

The snap. Andy drops back and lobs it to Jeffrey. Jeffrey is way open. He catches it easily, looks behind him as he runs. Barber players are rushing at him. And Grueller is coming at him too, throwing other players right and left.

Jeffrey looks a little worried. He bolts down field, toward the end zone, Grueller on his heels.

ANGLE - BUFFY

She sees something is definitely wrong.

BUFFY

Jeffrey...

In a flash, she races onto the field.

NICOLE

Buffy!

JENNIFER

What is she...

ANGLE - MERRICK

He stands, his eyes following Buffy.

ANGLE - KIMBERLY

She also see Buffy.

KIMBERLY

Oh, wow. She's really lost it.

VAMPIRE FAN

Party hearty.

Everybody rises to their feet and cheers as Jeffrey makes it to the end zone.

ANGLE - THE CLOCK

Two, one, zero.

ANGLE - THE FIELD

Grueller hits Jeffrey a second before he is enveloped by other players. Grueller, hungry with bloodlust, is confused by the exultant crowd, snarling at people.

Buffy races for the crowd. She sees Jeffrey is all right. Grueller makes his way out of the throng and up into the stands even as everyone else is rushing onto the field.

Jeffrey is triumphant. He sees Buffy running for him and raises his arms. She passes him right by and continues after Grueller, heads up the stands. He looks after her, confused, before he is swamped again.

ANGLE - MERRICK

He tries to make his way through the crowd.

ANGLE - TOP OF THE STANDS

Grueller reaches them and leaps over the back. Buffy sees him, runs up and without hesitation, dives off herself.

The stands reach some thirty feet off the ground. Buffy sails down like a diver, grabs a branch about halfway down. She swings like a gymnast and the branch snaps. Still holding the broken branch, she completes a perfect flip and lands on her feet.

The vampire fan is on the ground behind her, come for her and without stopping or even turning she twirls the branch and sinks the broken end in his heart.

She looks around for Grueller. He is booking out, already several yards away..

Merrick appears at the top of the stands just in time to see Buffy take off after Grueller.

MERRICK

Wait!

BUFFY

(calls as she runs)
He knows who I am!

She continues to race after Grueller.

ANGLE - MERRICK

Running back down the stands, making his way through the dispersing crowd to the nearest exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

Buffy is still following, but she can't keep up. She spot a BIKER tooling along the street on a Harley. She comes up to the side of the road and tentatively sticks her thumb out. The biker smiles, stops in front of her.

ANGLE - THE BIKE

Ground level, behind the bike, we see its engine revving, smoke puffing from twin pipes.

BIKER

Hey, babe. You want to get some
real power between your legs?

Buffy looks at the biker a moment.

ANGLE - THE BIKE

The same angle as before, ground level. Suddenly the biker's body lands in front of CAMERA

CLOSEUP - WHEEL

spinning

CLOSEUP - HAND

revving the engine.

Buffy takes off at top speed.

BIKER

Dyke! You're a dyke! I'm telling
the world!

CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE (MOMENTS LATER)

A RUSTLING in the trees signifies Grueller's flight. Seconds late, Buffy roars into view behind him. She navigates the streets with less ease than determination.

Her eyes follow him off the road and she steers the bike on a violently bumpy and erratic course through the site. She finally hits a pile of bricks and is thrown headlong from the bike. She hits the ground hard; she rolls into it but has trouble getting up.

BUFFY'S POV

Grueller's smiling face appears over her.

GRUELLER

Fall down go boom have to see the
nurse.

BUFFY (O.S.)

Grueller, God, what did they do
you?

He brings his face right next to hers. His voice is no longer passionless; it boils up from hell.

GRUELLER

They killed me.

RESUME SCENE

He grabs her and hauls her up.

BUFFY

No kidding.

She head-butts him with enormous force, sending him staggering back. Before he can recover, she dives for a pile of discarded lumber, chooses a nasty shard of wood.

She turns on Grueller, who is smiling again. There are two more Vampires approaching her, surrounding her.

GRUELLER

The Master walks tonight. This is
his kingdom, now.

They rush her. She takes one on as the second hits her, knocking her over. They all three swarm over her, meeting her kicks with raking claws. The two hold her in front of Grueller.

GRUELLER

(continuing)
You know, Buffy, I've always wanted
you.

He smiles again and leans toward her neck.

The stake that pops out through his chest is as much a surprise to him as it is to Buffy. He falls backward, shocked and dead. Behind him stands Pike.

One of the other vampires stupidly goes after Pike, who runs away. Buffy instantly flips the other one over onto Grueller, impaling him as well.

Pike runs more or less in a circle, yelling, the vampire at his heels.

PIKE

I didn't mean it! I didn't mean it!

Wooden shard in hand, Buffy sprints toward them, jumps into a series of flips. She lands with her legs around the vampire's shoulders, plants the stake in its heart as they topple onto Pike.

For a moment, Pike and Buffy lie on top of each other, breathing hard. Then they get up awkwardly, embarrassed by their touching, (and by their slight arousal).

BUFFY

I didn't expect to see you.

PIKE

I know.

BUFFY

Why'd you come back?

PIKE

I don't know. I kind of thought I ought to be here. You know, this isn't exactly the kind of thing you can run away from.

BUFFY

Thanks.

PIKE

Besides, Oxnard sucks.

They start out of the site.

PIKE

(continuing)

Listen, I... I really do want to help. I mean, these guys are dag nasty, and somewhere my best friend is out there, and I'd like to, I don't know. Even the score. Do some damage. I'm good with damage.

ANGLE - KIMBERLY'S CAR

She drives by, see Buffy with Pike. It's an eyebrow-raiser, but she keeps driving.

BUFFY

Pike, I don't think you're up to this.

PIKE

I think I could help. You gonna tell me you don't need help?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

Merrick runs up to the street where Buffy took the Harley. He has shed the raccoon coat. The biker is still there, standing in the road trying to thumb a ride.

MERRICK

Did you see a girl come by here?

BIKER

You don't mean, like, a cheerleader?

MERRICK

Yes.

BIKER

Yeah, I saw her. Bitch took my wheels.

MERRICK

Wheels?

BIKER

My bike! She's a lesbian, too. She told me.

MERRICK

Which way did she go?

BIKER

Down there.

He points. The CAMERA PANS with Merrick as he takes a step in that direction, leaving the biker behind (and momentarily OUT OF FRAME).

MERRICK

Idiot girl. Can't watch over her.
How long ago did --

The CAMERA PAN back with Merrick as he turns to the biker, but in his place stands Lothos. Not five feet from Merrick.

MERRICK

Oh, my God.

ANGLE - THE BIKER

On his knees, Lothos' hand firmly locked around his throat.
He cannot move or breathe.

Merrick and Lothos look at each other a moment.

LOTHOS

It's a beautiful night. I have
never understood the human tendency
to equate darkness with emptiness.
To me the black is so thick with
life, like soil... like blood.
Darkness writhes under my eye.

He looks at the night. Merrick slowly reaches for a gun stuck in the back of his pants as Lothos continues.

LOTHOS

(continuing)
I know who you are. She's out her,
as well, isn't she? Another Slayer.
Who is it this time? What offering
have you brought me?

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - ANGLE ON BUFFY - SAME TIME

She is crouching on the ground, holding her stomach and gritting her teeth.

PIKE

Buffy? What's wrong?

BUFFY

Oh, God. It's him. I think it's
him.

PIKE

Who?

BUFFY

(not answering)
Merrick...

Buffy ups and runs in the direction of the noise. Calls back to Pike.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Stay here.

She runs out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - ANGLE ON THE BIKER - SAME TIME

Lothos lets him go and he falls, dead.

LOTHOS

It doesn't really matter. The names,
the faces, they all melt together.
After a time, there really is no
difference. One more pathetic bitch,
begging for me to suck on her clotted
heart.

MERRICK

This one may surprise you.

CLOSEUP - THE GUN

Merrick holds it firm behind his back, finger on the trigger.

LOTHOS

I rather doubt it, if she was raised here.

He laughs. He doesn't appear to have noticed the gun, but:

LOTHOS

(continuing)

Where is she? I can't wait to meet her. Do you think she's ready to face me? Or perhaps you can stop me with that gun.

MERRICK

Perhaps.

Merrick looks out at the trees nearby.

MERRICK'S POV

Buffy appears, far away, between the trees.

Merrick looks at Lothos, afraid he will notice.

ANGLE - BUFFY

Approaching, stopping some twenty yards away. She looks about her for a weapon.

LOTHOS

Look at you. You pathetic thing. So small, so full of fury. After you've served me for a hundred years, I think you'll have a little more perspective.

MERRICK

I don't think so.

Lothos rushes suddenly at Merrick, hissing, his feet just off the ground. Merrick steps back, whips out the GUN, and SHOTS himself without hesitation in the head.

Buffy's eyes go wide.

Lothos growls, holding Merrick's spurting corpse.

A small, involuntary noise escapes Buffy.

CLOSEUP - LOTHOS

Even twenty yards away, he hears. He spins and stares, stares at CAMERA. Listening.

Buffy walks slowly, silently backward, fading back into the dark, terrified and shocked.

Lothos turns back and looks at Merrick dead in his hands. Disgusted, he lets him drop.

LOTHOS

Fool.

He looks at the blood on his fingers. After a moment, he tastes it.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET (LATER)

Pike is standing by the trees where Buffy stood before, looking out into the street.

PIKE'S POV

The same angle as Buffy's, before. Now Lothos is gone. Buffy is kneeling quietly by Merrick, holding his head in her lap.

CUT TO:

EXT. A WOOD - JUST BEFORE DAWN

Through the dark mist Buffy appears, carrying Merrick's body in her arms. She is alone. She does not stop.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - MORNING

On the outskirts of the graveyard, Buffy finishes filling in Merrick's grave under an old tree. She is still wearing her cheerleader outfit, now caked with dirt. She stands at the

foot of the grave, tries to think of a prayer.

BUFFY

Ummm, our Father, Who art in Heaven,
duhmm... hallowed be Thy name.
Uhh, kingdom come, daily break, I
don't know. I don't even know if
you're religious. You probably
are. But you're dead, you know.
You're just totally dead. and...

She sits heavily on his grave.

BUFFY

(continuing)
... and I don't know what to do.
You were the one who... I don't
know if the training was over. I
don't even know if I passed. You're
so stupid! How could you be so
stupid? What am I supposed to do
without you? You son of a bitch!

She stops, looks down for a moment.

BUFFY

(continuing)
Amen.

CUT TO:

INT. ZEPH'S AUTO REPAIR - DAY

Pike is at work on a contraption. Built out of scraps and
parts, it is the beginnings of a cartridge-load crossbow.
Zeph watches, behind him.

ZEPH

Hah, I'd knew you'd be back. Didn't
I say you'd be back? Ha, ha, ha!
You're sitting in your old car saying
'Nope, I'm never coming back.'
Hee, Hee! Like you got anywhere to
go. 'I'm never coming back' But I
knew you would. Birds got to return
to the nest sooner or later. That's
what I said. Just like I told you...

Pike pays no attention to this babbling monologue. Over the
course of it he takes a slim, handmade wooden shaft, slightly
thicker than an arrow, and rubs it with garlic. He places it
in the crossbow, take aim in front of him. He fires into the
tire of a truck. The tire pops flat. Zeph cracks up.

ZEPH

(continuing)
Hah! Shot the damn tire, dumbass,
didn't even look, just going around
shooting things, popped it flat, ya
bonehead.

Pike, still not listening, continues to work.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - DAY

We see a banner stretched across the central beam of the
ceiling. It reads "THE EARTH IS OUR HOME". A half dozen
inflatable globes dangle from the ceiling. Nicole and Kimberly
are setting up the drinks table, unloading and stacking
hundreds of styrofoam cups. Jennifer crosses by them, carrying
an armful of plastic wrappings and containers.

JENNIFER

I got all the plastic stuff. What
should I do with it?

KIMBERLY

("you idiot")
Throw it out.

Jennifer crosses out as the two resume their conversation.

NICOLE

I really was way way too too.

KIMBERLY

Oh, please! When she ran onto the
field in the middle of the game?
Was that the most out-of-it thing
ever, or did I blink?

NICOLE

I'm, like, yelling at her, 'What are you doing?' And she's going 'Jeffrey, Jeffrey!' Way mental.

They laugh. Jennifer is the first to see Buffy walk in, looking cleaned-up but still ragged. They stop laughing.

JENNIFER

Hi, Buffy.

BUFFY

Hi, guys.

KIMBERLY

You were supposed to be here at three.

BUFFY

I forgot.

KIMBERLY

Buffy, what is your sitch? You're acting like The Thing From Another Tax-Bracket; it's too weird.

BUFFY

Look, a lot's been going on. That's what I wanted to tell you guys about. I need to tell you. You see... a while ago, I met this guy --

KIMBERLY

Oh my God you're having an affair.

NICOLE

Cool!

JENNIFER

Does Jeffrey know?

BUFFY

It's not that at all. This is an old guy, he's like fifty.

KIMBERLY/NICOLE

Eeyuu.

BUFFY

No, no. Listen. Haven't you guys noticed how weird things have gotten around here? Like, people disappearing, people turning up dead...

NICOLE

What are you talking about?

KIMBERLY

Weird? You mean like you hanging out with that homeless, Poke? I saw you last night after the game.

BUFFY

Pike.

NICOLE

You're having a fling with him?

JENNIFER

He doesn't look fifty.

BUFFY

Guys. Guys! Reality pulled out of her five minutes ago.

KIMBERLY

Oh, thank you very much.

NICOLE

Like you've got a grip.

KIMBERLY

You're so out of it. You've blown off cheerleading, you've blown off dance committee --

BUFFY

Excuse me for having something important to do.

KIMBERLY

This isn't important? The earth is

our home.

BUFFY

Kimberly, it's a dance. It's a stupid dance with a bunch of stupid kids that I see every stupid day.

NICOLE

So, we're stupid now?

KIMBERLY

You know, just because you're having full-on wiggans doesn't mean you have to drag us into it. This isn't just any dance. It happens to be the last dance of our last year.

NICOLE

Except for Prom.

KIMBERLY

Right.

JENNIFER

And Spring Fling.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

NICOLE

And the January Semi-formal --

KIMBERLY

Okay! Look, Buffy. You want to play house with the unwashed masses, that's fine. But personally, I think you ought to spend a little time prioritizing. I really do.

BUFFY

Listen to you. What language are you speaking?

KIMBERLY

Get out of my facial.

She storms out.

NICOLE

Well, I guess you got what you came for.

BUFFY

Nicole...

NICOLE

Later for it.

She also leaves, with Jennifer. Buffy stands alone in the room, small amidst the streamers.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Buffy stands at the sink, rinsing a glass for way too long, staring. Her mother breezes THROUGH THE FRAME.

BUFFY'S MOM

Dinner's in the fridge, stay away from the Jag, we'll be back by twelve.

She stops, seems to notice something about Buffy.

BUFFY'S MOM

(continuing)
Buffy, honey?

BUFFY

(wanting to talk)
Yeah?

BUFFY'S MOM

Have you gained a few pounds? Maybe it's that outfit...

BUFFY

Maybe.

BUFFY'S MOM

What's Bobby gonna say?

BUFFY

I don't know, Mom; I've never met Bobby.

BUFFY'S MOM

(laughs)

Aren't we the chatty ones. Kiss noise.

And she's out. Buffy looks at her clothes, herself.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Pike drives slowly between the cars. He sees Buffy walking toward the mall. He pulls up by her, parks. Gets out of the car.

PIKE

Buffy, hey, I've been looking all over for you.

Buffy doesn't stop. He paces her.

PIKE

(continuing)

I been working on some stuff for you. What'cha doing?

BUFFY

I'm going shopping. Don't try to stop me.

PIKE

Cool. I could actually use a couple of Allen wrenches. What do you need?

BUFFY

A dress.

PIKE

Dress, huh? What for?

BUFFY

For the dance.

PIKE

Come again?

BUFFY

I'm going to the senior dance.

PIKE

(charades)

Second word... sound like 'dance'.

She stops.

BUFFY

I'm going to the dance.

PIKE

What for?

BUFFY

In order to dance and to drink punch and to be with my friends. Comprendre?

PIKE

I don't believe this. The world's under attack by the legions of the undead and you're going to a mixer?

BUFFY

It's not a mixer. It's the senior dance. And it's important. You wouldn't understand.

PIKE

You got that right. I thought you wanted to kill vampires.

BUFFY

I don't want to kill anybody, and I don't want to talk about it anymore.

PIKE

Listen, I know you're bummed about your friend, and I'm really sorry...

BUFFY

(offhand, almost disdainful)
He did what he was supposed to.

PIKE

But, Buffy, you're the guy, the
chosen guy.

BUFFY

Right. I'm the chosen one. And I
choose to be shopping.

PIKE

I should have known.

Buffy raises her fist at him; he starts back, involuntarily.

BUFFY

Leave me alone.

PIKE

Benny was right. You guys are all
exactly the same.

Buffy walks away, leaving Pike alone.

PIKE

(continuing; calls after
her)
I'm not disappointed, I'm just angry.

As Pike walks off, the camera TILTS UP the lamp post behind
them. Benny is perched upon it.

BUFFY

Buffy? Buffy?

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM - NIGHT

Vampires are gathered around. Lothos stands with Benny. Benny
is beaming.

LOTHOS

Buffy...

Lothos laughs, long and hard.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MALL - NIGHT

Buffy looks at dresses, most of them fairly tight and fairly
out there. She holds one in front of her, looks in a mirror.

CUT TO:

INT. ZEPH'S AUTO REPAIR - ANOTHER NIGHT

Pike sits, fiddling with his crossbow. Looks out the window,
discontented. Laid out next to him we see wooden shafts,
garlic, and a cross.

CUT TO:

INT. BUFFY'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Buffy lays her dress on the bed. We cannot see exactly what
it looks like.

She stuffs some blood-stained clothes into a duffel bag along
with some stakes. She tosses the bag in the closet.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GYM - PROM NIGHT

Dozens of limos pull up. Kids pour inside.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - NIGHT

The party is underway. Streamers everywhere, tables by the
windows. Couples dance, a D.J spins the tunes. There is a
setup in one corner for taking prom pictures. The kids are
all very elegant and hip. Every shade of black is represented.

ANGLE - PUNCH BOWL

Nicole and Kimberly stand by the punch bowl, chatting. They
are both wearing slinky little black dresses.

ANGLE - THE DOOR

There are two: at one end, leading to the house (it's closed) and one leading outside. Gary Murray stands by the outside door, on guard, as students enter. He is looking disdainfully at Andy and holding a flask he has confiscated.

ANDY

Well, it came with the tux.

Buffy enters the gym. She is wearing a long white strapless gown. It is lovely, but very conservative for this crowd. Over her shoulder is a purse that goes with the dress. She enters hesitantly, looking around her for Jeffrey. She passes Andy, who is moving away from Gary Murray.

ANDY

Buffy! Looking tasty.

BUFFY

Thanks. Have you seen Jeffrey?

But Andy has moved on. Buffy works her way through the crowd to the punch bowl, sees Nicole and Kimberly. They stop whispering real quick.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Hi, guys.

NICOLE

Hi.

BUFFY

Have you guys seen Jeffrey? The limo never showed, I thought he might be here.

Nicole and Kimberly look at each other significantly.

NICOLE

I haven't seen him tonight.

BUFFY

Oh.

She picks up a glass of punch.

BUFFY

(continuing)

I'm glad you guys are here. It's good to see you.

KIMBERLY

(miss sarcasm)

Yeah, whoops I came.

BUFFY

(tries again)

You look way pretty, Kim.

KIMBERLY

I know. I like your little outfit.

NICOLE

It's amazing what you can do with a parachute and some starch.

KIMBERLY

As long as there's room for three in it. What, didn't you bring your new friends?

Buffy is startled by this attack. Nicole giggles.

BUFFY

I guess you guys are mad at me. I'm sorry. I've been really --

Jeffrey suddenly appears between them. Jennifer is on his arm.

BUFFY

(continuing)

Jeffrey! There you are. I --

She stops, as everybody assesses the situation. Buffy is shocked, doing a slow fade to hurt. Jeffrey is uncomfortable. Jennifer is apoplectic with embarrassment. Kimberly is in serious giggle, Nicole a bit more restrained, checking it out.

JEFFREY

Buffy, what are you doing here?

BUFFY

I thought we were meeting here.

JEFFREY

I'm here with Jenny.

-- who is practically hyperventilating, pulling at his arm like a dog on a leash.

BUFFY

I don't understand.

JEFFREY

Oh, come on, Buffy. You know what's going on. It's not working out at all. I've got to move on. I mean, I've got needs, too. I told you about all this.

BUFFY

No, you didn't. When?

JEFFREY

Didn't you get my message?

BUFFY

You broke up with my machine?

JEFFREY

You weren't home. Like always.

BUFFY

You left me a message?

JEFFREY

I'm out of here. Jenny.

At the mention of her name Jenny jumps, and in her haste to get away, she bumps into Buffy's arm, spilling bright red punch on Buffy's chest. She flees, Jeffrey in tow. They leave the gym. Kimberly finds it all pretty funny. Nicole is silent.

Buffy turns away, toward the wall. A soft BALLAD come on over the SPEAKERS. Tears are forming in Buffy's eyes, as she wipes futilely at her dress. Finally she turns, looks toward the door.

BUFFY'S POV

Pike is there, walking in on his own. He wears a leather jacket and baggy old tux pants, accented by chains, earring and unlaced Doc Martins. He looks great.

He walks directly toward Buffy, and does turn a few heads.

PIKE

I crashed your party.

BUFFY

Pretty shallow of you.

PIKE

That's me.

BUFFY

I'm glad you came.

PIKE

Yeah, you look like you're having a swell time.

Pike picks up a glass of punch as he notices the stain on Buffy's dress. He looks about him a bit, then without hesitation dumps some punch on his lapel, matching stains. Buffy smiles at him.

PIKE

(continuing)

Will I get the shit kicked out of me if I ask you to dance?

BUFFY

I don't actually think Jeffrey's gonna notice.

They begin slow dancing, not too close.

PIKE

Yeah, well, you're the one I'm afraid of.

They dance for a while, closer and closer.

PIKE

(continuing; gee-whizzically)
You know, you're not like the other
girls.

Buffy pulls him closer, holds him, whispers almost weakly in
his ear.

BUFFY

Yes, I am.

We see couples dancing, kissing... Gary Murray watching them.

ANGLE - KIMBERLY

Sitting by the window with her bovine date, she watches Buffy
dance disdainfully.

KIMBERLY

I can't believe it.

The window SHATTERS by her head, a vampire's hand reaching for
her. She screams, starts back.

Other windows shatter, vampires appearing all around. A couple
of students run for the inner door but it is locked shut from
the other side.

Gradually the party stops as everybody becomes aware of the
situation. They vaguely herd to the middle of the room.

ANGLE - BUFFY AND PIKE

Looking around, assessing the situation.

ANGLE - OUTER DOOR

A STUDENT runs staggering in, blood spurting from his neck.

BLOODY STUDENT

They're out there! They're vampires!
God, help me!

He falls to the ground, a few feet in front of the doorway.
Nobody moves for a second. Then one of the students starts
toward the body.

BUFFY

Don't go near the door.

Buffy does instead, checking the lifeless body and listening
as a number of figures begin to lumber toward the door through
the mist.

Buffy steps back as three 17-year-old vampire come to the door.

1ST VAMPIRE

It's party time.

BUFFY

Don't worry! They can't come in
here. They can't come in unless
they're invited.

KIMBERLY

I already invited them.

Everyone looks at her.

KIMBERLY

(continuing; defensively)
They're seniors!

Pike reaches into an inner pocket and pulls out a number of
small stakes he has made, hands them to Buffy. She opens her
purse.

ANGLE - INSIDE THE PURSE

Cosmetics, hair spray, etc. She fits the stakes in.

BUFFY

The first thing we should --

1ST VAMPIRE

Buffy... You wanna dance?

PIKE

(to Buffy)
Looks like you're busted.

2ND VAMPIRE

We want her! We want Buffy. Send her out.

1ST VAMPIRE

Or we come in.

They fade back, almost out of sight. Pike looks out the window. More are gathering.

GARY MURRAY

All right, everybody stay calm.
(to Buffy)
What's going on?

PIKE

Looks bad, Buffy.

SENIOR GIRL

Send her out.

BUFFY

What?

KIMBERLY

They'll kill us! She's the one they're mad at.

SENIOR BOY

Yeah! Send her out!

GARY MURRAY

Everybody be quiet!

ANDY

What, are you kidding? They'll kill her!

KIMBERLY

They'll kill us!

PIKE

(moving toward Kimberly,
fist raised)
You want some punch?

GARY MURRAY

I got detention slips here, I'm not afraid to use them...

But other students have picked up the cry, are clamoring to sacrifice Buffy. Pike crosses to his bag, sitting by the door.

Two guys move toward Buffy, Andy intervenes. Pike steps in front of Buffy, holding his custom made cartridge-load crossbow. Trains it on the others. They quiet down.

PIKE

There's gotta be a back way out of here, or something.

Buffy looks at the partygoers. Her friends. They stare back at her, scared, angry. She looks out the door. Back at her friends.

BUFFY

I'm going out the front.

PIKE

Are you nuts, Buffy? There's a hundred of them out there. They'll rip us apart.

BUFFY

You're staying here.
(before he can speak)
Some of them might not come after me. If they don't this place is gonna turn into a total stain.

PIKE

You say that like it's a bad thing.

ANDY

Buffy, this is crazy. What do these guys want?

BUFFY

Andy, start breaking up some chairs. You'll need weapons.

Andy looks at her a moment, moves off. Buffy goes to Pike's bag, starts pulling out stakes.

BUFFY
(continuing)
Good thing one of us was prepared.

PIKE
Buffy, there's no way you're going
out there alone.

Buffy stands up. She kisses Pike very hard on the lips.

BUFFY
Don't piss me off.

She kneels down, begins to rip the hem of her dress.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GYM - NIGHT

We see the doorway to the gym. A mist has risen around the entire house, swirling about the feet of the undead who stand clustered about it. Some have keen and eager expressions, some vacant, half-conscious with bloodlust. They wait.

A figure appears in the doorway, walking slowly out. Buffy. Her torn dress now comes to just above her knees. She wears Pike's leather jacket over it. She wears her purse strapped across her chest under the jacket. In one hand she holds his crossbow; in her other hand is a cross. As she steps further away from the doorway, the vampires slowly begin to close around her.

The door shuts behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Kimberly and some of the others are anxiously barricading the door. Pike looks out the window after Buffy.

PIKE
(to himself)
Come on, move.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

The vampires move closer and closer. They circle her. She waits, apprehensive. When they are about eight feet from her she whips out a bottle of Perrier. She sprays it all around, searing the inner circle. Screaming, they clutch their faces.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

PIKE
Yes!

Others are watching as well. Andy comes up with some chair-made stakes, hands some to Pike.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Buffy is defending herself in an astounding blur of gymnastics and martial arts. Leaping, throwing kicks, punches, and the odd stake, she manages to scatter them enough to make a run for it.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Everyone is watching through the windows as the vampires follow after Buffy.

KIMBERLY
It's okay! I think they're going
after her!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Almost as if it heard that, one of the vampires turns toward the gym, grinning hugely. It and at least half the others turn back toward the easy pickings inside.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

PIKE

(to Kimberly)
I'll bet you feel stupid.

GARY MURRAY

Let's get away from these windows!
Find something to cover them with.

Students start mobilizing.

PIKE

Bring round the table.

NICOLE

There's nails and stuff we used to
put everything up.

PIKE

Get 'em.

Andy and some others drag a table forward. Pike helps hoist it up against the window. He looks one last time outside, then covers it up.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS LAWN - SAME TIME

Buffy runs. She heads toward the nearby cluster of school buildings. Close behind are the undead. She passes a line of parked cars.

ANGLE - CAR

Jeffrey and Jennifer are in the back of his parked BMW, making heated, clumsy love. We can see them through the window.

JENNIFER

Oh, yes! Yes!

JEFFREY

Oh, baby!

JENNIFER

Make me a woman! Yes! Make me a woman!

As they are spouting this nonsense, Buffy zooms IN and OUT OF the FRAME behind the car. After a second she walks back INTO the FRAME, staring at the two of them.

BUFFY

(pissed)
That was quick!
(looking up)
Oops!

She books out again, the horde on her heels.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFFREY'S CAR - SAME TIME

Jeffrey looks up and out the window.

JEFFREY

Buffy?

JENNIFER

(whining)
Jeffrey!

JEFFREY'S POV

Vampires swarm about the car in pursuit of Buffy.

Jeffrey goes wide-eyed at the sight. Starts climbing off Jennifer and into the driver's seat.

JEFFREY

(terrified)
Well, I'm done. Are you done?

JENNIFER

No --

JEFFREY

Okay, let's go.

JENNIFER

But --

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CAR - SAME TIME

The car roars off.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Windows and the boards covering them begin to smash inward. A student pounding in nails is caught, pulled out the window. A vampire crawling in is spiked by Pike. Another makes it in and is smashed on the head repeatedly by Andy. It staggers, smilingly, and turns toward him.

PIKE

The heart! Stab them in the heart!

Andy manages to shove the two-by-four in its heart just as it gets its fingers around his throat.

Kimberly screams. One of them has hold of her, starts pulling her out the window. Nicole runs to her, starts pulling the vampire's hands off her. Suddenly, the vampire grabs Nicole instead. Off balance, she is almost out the window before Kimberly can react, and all Kim can do is scream. Andy and Pike make it to the window too late; Nicole is pulled out, and they swarm over her.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNELS - SAME TIME

A vampire catches up to Buffy. She shoots the last crossbow shaft at it. Shucks the bow away as another reaches her. She wrestles with it, fights it off but doesn't kill it. Moves on as more approach.

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - SAME TIME

Students are still holding most of them at the windows. One or two have gotten in.

ANGLE - THE RECORD PLAYER

A junior vampire has snuck behind it and is going through the records. He stops, finding one he likes, and starts to put it on. MUSIC: "Teen Angel". It wafts over the carnage in the gym, lending it a surreal and dreamy quality.

Hearing the music, another vampire grabs Kimberly and starts dancing with her. She screams a lot.

It's about to plant one on her neck when Pike stabs it in the back. Pike turns from the dying vampire and is face to face with Benny.

Pike is frozen for a moment.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE SCHOOL BUILDING - SAME TIME

Buffy approaches the nearest building to the gym. The vampires are several feet behind her, some twenty of them.

The door is locked. She smashes it in with her shoulder. Runs inside.

A few vampires are about to follow Buffy into the building when a hand is suddenly raised before them, stopping the. Slowly they start fading back.

It is Amilyn. He smiles at the other vampires, and raises his fingers to his lips.

Shhhh....

CUT TO:

INT. THE GYM - CLOSEUP ON A TABLE - SAME TIME

Pike is slammed down onto it, Benny's face inches from his. "Teen Angel" has been replaced by some hard rock.

BENNY

Isn't this great, Pike? Isn't it

great? Finally got those bitches
on the run.

He hoists Pike up and backhands him in the jaw, sends him flying
against a wall. Pike shakes his head as Benny comes at him
again, no longer smiling.

BENNY

(continuing)

Of course I'm angry! I leave you
alone for five minutes, and look
who you're hanging out with!

He turns suddenly and grabs a girl, yells in her face.

BENNY

(continuing)

I don't want girls with good taste;
I want a girl that tastes good!

She faints and he drops her, turns back to Pike. Pike is
getting shakily to his feet. Blood trickles down his forehead.

BENNY

(continuing)

I was gonna change you, man. I was
gonna give you life! Do you know
what that means?

ANGLE - ANOTHER WINDOW

Gary Murray, yelling orders at student, holding a board against
a window as vampires pound on it. The exposed part of the
window above him shatters, raining glass on his head.

ANGLE - THE PHOTO SETUP

A vampire is clutching a helpless girl as another vampire takes
their picture with an Instamatic. He expresses confusion and
dismay when his image does not come out in the photo.

ANGLE - PIKE AND BENNY

Pike is backing away from Benny, who is approaching him. Pike
passes an overturned table, the stubs of its broken legs
sticking up at the ceiling.

BENNY

Never die. Never get kicked around,
never get busted.

Benny grabs him with hateful force. His fingers dig into Pike's
arms enough to draw blood.

BENNY

(continuing)

It means never having to say you're
sorry! And you blow it all off for
that slut?! What about my needs?!

Pike suddenly grabs Benny, holds him tightly in a brotherly
embrace. Benny is thrown slightly by this.

Still holding him, Pike pitches onto the table, driving the
leg-shard through Benny's back. Pike still holds Benny as he
twitches and screams, dying. Finally, he lets go, gets up.
He looks a little dazed, a little lost. A window shattering
far behind him pulls his eyes back into focus, and he goes to
help.

ANGLE - KIMBERLY

Sitting by a wall, tiny and silent amid the carnage.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - SAME TIME

Buffy moves quickly along, crouching near a window and peering
out. Nothing. She looks about her, waiting for an attack.
She checks her purse.

ANGLE - BUFFY'S PURSE

Cosmetics and hair spray. A small cross. No stakes left.

Muttering under her breath, she moves swiftly into a classroom.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - SAME TIME

Still moving cautiously, she heads for the window and pulls

down the shade. She crouches behind the teacher's desk and pulls the chair down to her, laying it on its side.

BENNY

(cattily, to herself)
'Ooh, make me a woman, Jeffrey...
oh, Jeffrey, you're so atheletical...
I love you...'

She slams her elbow down on the chair leg -- very controlled, efficient motion -- and snaps it off. Looks around to see if anyone is around to hear as she picks up the leg, now a weapon.

She goes softly to the door, peers cautiously out.

CLOSEUP - BUFFY

Looking out. Amilyn's face appears right next to her, also looking out.

AMILYN

All clear?

Buffy screams, turns, and Amilyn decks her, sends her flying back into the classroom. The stake flies out of her hand. It lands on a desk by the window.

Buffy does not land nearly as well, crashing into a pile of desks and twisting her leg badly. Amilyn laughs repulsively, advancing.

AMILYN

Pleased to meet you! Won't you
guess my --
(kicks her hard)
-- name?

BUFFY

(defiantly, through the
pain)
It wouldn't be 'Dick,' would it?

He kicks her again.

BUFFY

(continuing)
'Lefty'?

AMILYN

You're a fool, bloodbag. Die a
fool and go to hell!

He grabs her by the neck with his one arm and pins her against the wall in the corner. She reaches for the stake but it is just out of reach. He is squeezing the life out of her, his face inches from hers.

AMILYN

(continuing)
The chosen one. You're just another
bloodbag -- not even fit to die for
the Master. When will you ever
learn?

Buffy looks about for succor.

ANGLE - THE WINDOW SHADE

Buffy eyes the bottom of the shade, the pull dangling aimlessly.

BUFFY

(with difficulty)
I do know... one thing...

AMILYN

What?

BUFFY

I know... what time sunrise is.

She pulls down hard on the shade pull and lets go.

AMILYN

No!

He turns in horror, letting go of Buffy, trying to catch the shade. The instant he releases her, Buffy grabs the stake and in one swift motion, buries it in Amilyn's back.

The shade goes up, flapping loudly as it spins. It is still pitch black out. Amilyn stare, wide-eyed and silent, at the night as he dies.

BUFFY

It's in about four hours, Dick.

Amilyn spins, dying rage in his eyes. He grabs her. His strength is formidable even as his body begins to smoke. Suddenly screaming, he forces her over suddenly with such power that the two of them go crashing through the floorboards.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - SAME TIME

The two of them fall through the ceiling directly into the blood pool.

Amilyn's body surfaces first, now just a husk.

Buffy pops up from the waist-deep blood, soaked and wounded. She stays a moment, breathing hard. Suddenly her eyes go wide.

BUFFY

Oh, god, no... not yet...

Lothos rises from the pool, smiling. Buffy is clearly paralyzed by fear.

LOTHOS

I knew you'd come.

He moves toward her.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

You knew it, too, didn't you? All your life, dreaming... waiting to feed me.

Buffy is suddenly galvanized into action. She throws a few punches at Lothos, but he takes them without flinching. She grabs at the stake in what remains of Amilyn's chest. Lightning quick, Lothos closes his hand around her and squeezes till the stake splinters and she screams with pain. He knocks her back on her ass.

She starts moving backward, away from him, but it is hard enough for her to make her way through the thick gore. Lothos contemplates Amilyn's corpse, and his face darkens.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

Ah, my fool is dead. He was careless, always. Still, I'll pull out your tongue for that.

(coming toward her)

Don't you understand? I've killed you a dozen times. Your life is not a blink of my eye, not a single breath. I have lived in the shadows, in the pulsing filth behind men's eyes. A thousand years, and more. I have conversed with the worms that fed on my corpse and I have bathed in the blood of emperors.

BUFFY

(breaking the spell)

Have you ever thrown up in the front row of a Richard Marx concert?

LOTHOS

What?

And she is up, turning to run. He is thrown momentarily by her insolence.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - THE BOILER ROOM - SAME TIME

But he is on her the moment she emerges from the chamber, grabbing her by the hair and throwing her to the ground.

LOTHOS

You waste time. That is a sin.

He kneels over her prostrate body. She is reaching frantically into her purse. He runs his hand along her body, a gesture both lustful and disdainful.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

You're even weaker than the others.

BUFFY

I think you've forgotten something.

She pulls out a small cross, holds it in front of him. He snarls at it, then grabs it, his hand around her. The cross bursts into flame. He holds her hand onto it.

LOTHOS

This? This is you only weapon?
Your puny faith?

BUFFY

No...

With her other hand, Buffy holds up her hair spray.

BUFFY

(continuing)
... my keen fashion sense.

She squeezes it at him, the spray catching fire from the cross and whooshes a jet of flame right into his face. He screams, letting her go and backing up. Hey, his head is on fire!

Buffy turns and hobbles away.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - SAME TIME

Lothos stumbles about, head all aflame, till he finally pitches into the pool.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - HALL - SAME TIME

Buffy comes out of the boiler room and hobbles along, moving as fast as she can.

BUFFY

This is the suckiest party I have
ever been to. It's not even a
contest.

She reaches a locked door that says "Gymnasium -- Authorized Personnel Only". Puts her shoulder to it.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - CLOSEUP ON LOTHOS - SAME TIME

As he pulls himself out of the pool, we are treated to a good look at his new head. It is charred and torn almost beyond recognition. It is so inhuman looking, that we are almost surprised when it screams!

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - HALL - SAME TIME

The SCREAM fills the hall. Buffy is still working on the heavy metal door. She turns, wide-eyed, at the SOUND.

BUFFY

Oops.

CUT TO:

INT. LOTHOS' CHAMBER - LOTHOS' POV - SAME TIME

We TRACK rapidly through the cave, through the boiler room, the hall. We're moving much too fast to be running.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - SAME TIME

Buffy pulls herself up through a trap door in the corner. Everything stops. For a moment there is silence.

Buffy gets shakily up.

KIMBERLY

Don't let her in! Don't let her
in!

Pike and the others see her. Pike and Andy run to her to help.

KIMBERLY

(continuing)
They'll kill us! Get her out!

Gary Murray stops in front of Kimberly, takes her face in his hand and lightly pops the back of her head against the wall. Cross-eyed, she slides back down into comatic silence.

PIKE

Are you okay?

BUFFY

Get away from me!

She pushes them away. Lothos crashes through the trap door behind her, ugly and crazed. He picks her up, floating a good two feet off the ground.

LOTHOS

You bitch!

He hurls her the length of the room. She hits a locker, which opens, spilling out someone's notebook. The binder falls open, inside it is a plastic pen case with pens and pencils within.

Buffy looks, by this time, like shit. She props herself up as best she can, looks about her. There is nothing wooden, nothing sharp, within reach.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

You would challenge me?

Andy charges Lothos from behind. Pike tries to stop him, but is too late, as Lothos grabs him by the face without even looking at him.

LOTHOS

(continuing; to Buffy)

I'll rip the flesh from your stinking bones!

Squeeze Andy's head until we hear something crack. Lets him drop. Looks around at the cowed students.

LOTHOS

(continuing)

I am a God! A God!

BUFFY

I am so sure.

Lothos roars. Furious, he charges Buffy, his feet just skimming the ground, racing toward her, violently fast, upon her...

She spins, on her feet in a flash, one quick motion. She thrusts her palm forward and stops him, cold, like Superman stopping a train, palm at his chest.

Silence. Buffy looks directly into his eyes, the mad rictus of his face.

Lothos stops, almost wide-eyed, as he looks down at his chest.

Sticking out of the middle of his chest is a small eraser, and a #2.

He steps back, staring at Buffy. The expression on his horrible face seems to have changed to one almost of respect. Her look is unfathomable.

Lothos smiles, graciously.

LOTHOS

It doesn't... hurt... as much as I had imagined.

He falls gently to the ground. He's dust before he hits it.

Silence. One by one the vampires, stricken, slip out into the night.

ANGLE - PIKE

Kneeling by Andy's body. He gets up, and walks toward what's left of Lothos, warily keeping his eye on the spot. In the background we see Gary Murray, running out after a vampire.

GARY MURRAY

Just a minute, you! I'm not finished with you!

Pike kneels by the pile of dust with a pencil in it.

Everybody is looking at Buffy. She stares back at the students who cast her out. Turns and walks out. Pike follows her.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SCHOOL - EARLY MORNING

We see the direct aftermath; the gym, police cars, people helping the wounded. Over this is the voice of a reporter.

REPORTER (V.O.)

The death toll now reaches twelve and a half in the tragedy of Hemery High School. It was at the Senior Prom five days ago that the school was beset by a roving gang of crack-crazed gunmen. Survivors say some two hundred of the ruffians laid the school gym under a kind of siege, claiming several lives in the process. Said one administrator, 'Things here will never be the same.'

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

Students walk, holding their books talking.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CLASSROOMS - DAY

Students passing notes, yawning, falling asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MALL - DAY

Students window shopping, sucking on slurpies, laughing.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANGLE - A POOL

SHOT FROM ABOVE, the blue water FILLING THE SCREEN. Kimberly dives gracefully into it, comes up on the other side.

EXT. KIMBERLY'S BACKYARD - DAY

Kim climbs out and joins Jeffrey, Jennifer and a boy and girl we don't know. They are all in bathing gear, with fluorescent zinc on their noses.

JENNIFER

She was even crazier after that. I mean it, you wouldn't even have recognized her.

KIMBERLY

Buffy?

Jennifer nods. Kimberly wrinkles her nose in distaste.

JENNIFER

She didn't even hardly talk to anyone in school. All year. She didn't even go to the prom.

JEFFREY

I heard she got straight A's.

Jennifer glares at him.

JEFFREY

(continuing)
That's what I heard.

KIMBERLY

The worst is, her parents -- this is true -- her parents were gonna send her to the Bahamas for graduation, and she refused. True story. She said she didn't want to go. It is to vomit.

BOY

Well, where is she now?

CUT TO:

EXT. A COURTYARD - LATE EVENING

Buffy and Pike are walking up the elaborate stone drive toward us. We can't really tell where they are, but there are trees, hills in the background.

Buffy leads the way. She is confident, at ease. She wears a large old sports jacket, a baseball cap pulled backward. Skirt and sneakers. Casual, cool, but disarming. She carries a knapsack.

PIKE

I didn't say it was a bad idea, I just said the timing was off. We could maybe wait till later.

BUFFY

Don't be such a fraidy-cat.

PIKE

Who's afraid? Besides me, I mean.

BUFFY

We've come all this way. We just have to check it out. I got a hunch.

PIKE

You're the boss, boss. I just thought maybe we should wait.

Buffy stops at a large, elaborately carved door. She turns to Pike.

BUFFY

Trust me.

ANGLE - DOOR KNOCKER

Buffy grabs the large metal knocker, ringed through a gargoyle's mouth.

And on the boom of the knocker, we see:

WIDER ANGLE - THE CASTLE

The castle. Archetypal, turreted, terrifying. Standing lonely on the craggy hill, drenched in the light of the rising moon.

BLACK OUT.

THE END