

**BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER:**

**NEW SUNNYDALE**

"Pilot"

Written by

Nora Zuckerman & Lilla Zuckerman

The Jackal Group  
Book of Shadows

10/31/2024

20th Television  
Searchlight Television

**ACT ONE**

INT. SUNNYDALE HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Ominous shots of a deserted high school hallway. This looks familiar, and retro signage confirms it -- we're at the original Sunnydale High. Which is odd, didn't it burn down?

A GIRL moves through the shadows. Her sexy school uniform skirt swishes as she walks. She eases a wooden STAKE down from her coat sleeve, grips it with deadly purpose.

GIRL

Are we playing hard to get? Don't  
make a girl beg for it.

A full-length LOCKER opens behind her. The girl STOPS. Steps into a shaft of light. It's not Buffy. This is STACY.

STACY

Another day, another slay.

Stacy spins towards the locker just as a VAMPIRE drops from the ceiling! Caught off-guard, her stake CLATTERS to the ground. She backs up, STAKE at her feet. She hooks it into the air with a toe, catches it, and STABS the vampire.

VAMPIRE

Ow -- SECURITY! She freaking  
stabbed me --

Lights WHOMP on. It's a haunted house MAZE meant to look like Sunnydale High. False walls conceal "backstage" areas where costumed 'vamps' are ready to burst from the shadows. SECURITY GUARDS race in.

SECURITY GUARD

Hey! No hard weapons in the maze.

STACY

It's just plastic --

SECURITY GUARD

Plastic is hard.

A MANAGER in a old-timey Dracula costume marches up.

DRACULA

We have a zero tolerance policy.  
I'm revoking your pass.

STACY

But it's only preview night!

DRACULA

And I won't be responsible for another larping lawsuit. Not again.

She gives up her Festival LANYARD with a glare at her waiting boyfriend, CHRIS, in a leather-strapped "Blade" costume.

CHRIS

What? I toldja not to do it --

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE SQUARE - "VAMPIRE WEEKEND" - NIGHT

Stacy and Chris are shuttled by Security through "**VAMPIRE WEEKEND 2025**" - a counterculture event à la RenFaire, full of HORROR FANS, TOURISTS, and GOTHS. There's cosplaying and cos-sl原因ing and miles of vampire merch. They move past EDWARDS and BELLAS, an 80s-perfect LOST BOYS group, even some SLAYERS, but they are overly sexy, "off" versions of Slayers.

STACY

You could've at least defended me --

CHRIS

I didn't want to take away your agency, babe. You hate it when I dim your light.

STACY

That is so you, trying to weaponize my feminism against me. I'm going home.

CHRIS

Okay well, I'm staying.  
(justifying)  
It's only preview night!

As Stacy stomps through the exit, the Security Guard shakes his head with a sigh.

SECURITY GUARD

Every year, every goddamn year these nuts show up. This town...

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - GOLF COURSE - NIGHT

Stacy cuts through a construction area, past signage about luxury homes, golf, and the picture-perfect community to come. She finds herself on a half-built golf course.

STACY

So much for freakin' allies.

Her phone pings with a TEXT: "I'm sorry. I couldn't stay. #Solidarity." Stacy smiles with a satisfied HUFF when her shoe's HEEL sinks into newly laid TURF GRASS.

STACY (CONT'D)

Ugh. Goddamn short cut --

As she reaches down to dislodge her shoe -- A DESICCATED HAND grasps her wrist! Another gnarled hand thrusts up from the earth and clutches her foot. Stacy falls into a SAND TRAP with a scream!

Behind her, a second wraith-like FIGURE crawls from the sand. Its skin is dead and stretched like a corpse, with stringy HAIR and dirty clothes that might identify it as FEMALE. It SKITTERS, lizard-quick, and PULLS her under --

Stacy CLAWS the turf -- SCREAMS as she sees the thing's VAMPIRE TEETH! The creatures DRAG her beneath the sand.

There's undulating, violent movement on the surface... Stillness. Then a blooming pool of BLOOD.

ANGLE ON Stacy's phone, flashing with texts: "Babe? You still mad?" "Come on, answer." "Whatever."

SPRINKLERS snap on and soak the sand. As the gruesome evidence washes away, GO WIDE to a sign for the coming development: "WELCOME TO NEW SUNNYDALE!"

TITLES UP:

**BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER: NEW SUNNYDALE**

INT. NOVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A TEENAGE GIRL tosses in her bed, murmuring, trapped in a bad dream. Her eyes fly open and she BOLTS UP, gasps for air.

This is NOVA (16) a brainy introvert who lives in her head or in a book. She calms as she takes in long, practiced, controlled breaths. She re-oriens herself. Her room is a comfy mix of second-hand novels, thrifted décor, and a love of all things retro.

Nova stumbles towards the attached bathroom. As she FLIPS on the light, IMAGES FLASH into her mind:

*A silver CROSS glints.*

*A wooden ARROW flies.*

*A CADUCEUS symbol splattered with blood.*

She splashes water on her face. She's got big, curious eyes, and long hair with a streak of purple -- her only act of rebellion. She GULPS tap water from her hand.

Blood pools in her palm.

NOVA

What the --

She feels with her hands, there's more BLOOD as a TOOTH CLATTERS into the sink. Panic rises as... Crack. Pop. More teeth PLINK down onto the porcelain. Feels her gums where two RAZOR-SHARP FANGS are budding.

She looks to the mirror but has NO REFLECTION. Then she spots A DARK FIGURE reflected behind her. She spins - it's ANOTHER NOVA, this one a warrior, face cold, holding a wooden stake. She PLUNGES it into Nova's heart.

Nova screams and shatters into DUST --

INT. NOVA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Nova BOLTS up in bed with a panicked GASP. It's morning. She collapses back on her pillow. Her teeth are normal. She catches her breath. Calms easily this time.

ABE (O.S.)

Nova! Breakfast!

NOVA

Be right there --

QUICK POPS as Nova: Steps out of pajamas and into an outfit that... also looks like pajamas. Pulls back her hair and throws on lipgloss. Next to a bunch of classic fantasy novels is her LAPTOP, which she WAKES.

NOVA (CONT'D)

Hello demon machine.

A completed APPLICATION for a Summer Abroad program at CAMBRIDGE in the UK is on-screen. Her face goes soft as she gets lost in dreamy photos of a gothic library and bookish STUDENTS soaking up knowledge.

A prompt blinks: **SEND** or **SAVE FOR LATER...**

ABE (O.S.)

Nova!

Nova PANICS. She's all elbows as she SAVES the application and puts the laptop in her bag -- only to realize the program's CATALOGUE is also out for all to see.

She **SHOVES** the catalog into her **BAG**, which topples some books -- sending a thrifted-but-beloved **BUST** of William Shakespeare hurtling to the ground. Nova's hand flashes out **BACK** behind her and **CATCHES** William, preventing disaster.

NOVA

Whoa. Bill. You saw that, right?

Off Nova, shocked at this rare moment of agility --

INT. NOVA AND ABE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Barefoot and whistling at the stove, Nova's dad, ABE, is the kind of guy who fits comfortably anywhere.

ABE

Want some eggs?

NOVA

Nah, just a cuppa mud.

ABE

You got it mudbug.  
(he takes her in a beat)  
You sleep okay?

NOVA

Not really. Weird dreams.

ABE

It wasn't the one about the scary --

NOVA

No. It wasn't that.  
(off his concern)  
I swear. It was about vampires, if  
you can believe it.

ABE

Vampires. I can't imagine why.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE SQUARE - ABE'S CAR - MORNING

Nova and Abe pull over under a sign for "Vampire Weekend!" This is the Old Sunnydale drag, all throwback California cuteness. DEMONS and VAMPS wander past.

NOVA

Not to judge but, one must wonder  
if this is the best way to explain  
away a tragic geological event.

ABE

Imagine how the people of Roswell feel. Besides, you always said you wanted to live somewhere with culture.

NOVA

I was thinking more like Portland.  
(then, testing)  
You know I could always look into doing something abroad...

ABE

Not in a million years. That stuff's for parents who can't stand their kids. I happen to like you.

He pulls over.

ABE (CONT'D)

Remember, curfew's ten --

NOVA

If you're so worried, just buy me a phone already.

ABE

I don't want you living life through a screen.

NOVA

I'd even be happy with a grimy crime show burner phone!

Abe senses something deeper at work.

ABE

Hey, bug. I know it's not easy, but this time we're staying put. It might take some time, but... you'll find your people.

She watches a TOURIST adjusting her kid's plastic fangs.

NOVA

Yeah... I don't think my people are in Sunnydale.

INT/EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - "THE SINK" - MORNING

A warehouse has been converted into "The Sink" -- with food stalls, an organic wine bar, vintage record sellers -- bands play in the courtyard at night. It's hip and indie, the hangout of Old Sunnydale. FIND Nova as she opens her laptop.

That Cambridge application POPS up: **SEND** or **SAVE FOR LATER**.

NOVA

Sorry, dad.

She takes a breath, hits **SEND**. Feels like a rebel for a beat, then gathers her things and follows other kids grabbing coffee and ambling toward:

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - "THE SINK"/BUS STOP - MORNING

A bus stop teems with high school STUDENTS. These kids are Old Sunnydale -- from blue collar families who hung on during the bad times, more alternative and less giving of fucks. Nova stays on the fringes. Nearby, two kids share a VAPE.

VAPE KID 1

And I'm like, if you're gonna call it Vampire Weekend, fuckin' book Vampire Weekend.

VAPE KID 2

False advertising.

Nova tries to enter the conversation.

NOVA

Or just throw a Ren Faire. At least the Renaissance was cool.  
(off blank looks)  
Jousting, enlightenment...  
Falconry?

They just stare. She moves off, embarrassed. Nearby, a fashion model-perfect SLAYER poses in front of an Insta-Wall MURAL that says, "**KEEP SUNNYDALE WEIRD.**"

FAUX SLAYER

Hey, you.

NOVA

(brightening)  
Me?

FAUX SLAYER

Yeah. Can you scooch? You're ruining my shot.

The "Slayer" reframes herself and pouts sexily. Nova's grateful when a BUS pulls up.

INT. BUS - MOVING - DAY

Nova stares out the window as the bus chugs out of Old Sunnydale. A few turns and the streets become newly paved. They pass new gated and planned communities with names like "Maple Court," "Monarch," and "Tapestry."

This is New Sunnydale. Once a giant sinkhole, it's now the California dream rebuilt and re-engineered. If you're feeling "You only moved the headstones!" vibes, good.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ACADEMY - DAY

An ultra-modern high school. This charter could be a Silicon Valley tech campus, and in a way, it is. A "VoreTechs" company logo is ever-present, having bankrolled the place.

As Nova exits the bus, New Sunnydale kids pull up in Teslas and BMWs. A Lyriq slows with a purr. HUGO fist-bumps the uniformed DRIVER, keeping it real, and joins his CREW. They have the latest tech and wear the sneakers others collect.

HUGO

Yo...

Hugo, proud geek, rolls with confidence. Being one of the wealthiest kids has earned him a place in the cool crowd. The gang's alpha, COLE, looks at Hugo's outfit.

COLE

Hu-go! What's with your shirt?  
Galaga?

HUGO

What? It's vintage! We hitting  
Vampire Weekend tonight?

COLE

Dude. Lame. Geeks in costumes and  
shit?

Rich kid or not, Hugo's status is constantly at risk, so:

HUGO

No man, there's a reason they call  
it the "Fang Bang." Cosplay chicks  
show skin like it's an art form.  
What I saw at Comic-Con like,  
defied gravity.

Hugo mimes enormous boobs, gets laughs. Cole gives him a high-five. Hugo's back in, feeling good, as he spots Nova. He gives her a "s'up" nod, but doesn't want his crew to see it. Nova doesn't respond, sees through the act.

INT. NEW SUNNYDALE ACADEMY - COMMON AREA, HALLWAYS - DAY

Nova moves past signups for WINTER SEMESTER EXTRACURRICULARS. Tables of clubs pitch themselves. Chess. Coding Club. Academic Decathlon. Cheerleading. PETA. Nova lingers at the Drama Club Winter Play table.

NOVA

Oh wow. You guys are doing  
Midsummer Night's Dream?

DRAMA KID

Yeah, but don't worry, we're not  
doing the original text. We're  
setting it entirely in the  
metaverse.

Nova tries to hide her horror as she moves off.

INT. NEW SUNNYDALE ACADEMY - LOCKERS - DAY

Nova at her locker. Nearby, several Evangelical STUDENTS (JESSICA, KENT, and KEIKO) wearing Christian Canyons Ministry gear over their designer duds have an overly polite "debate."

JESSICA

I just think we shouldn't go.  
Vampires are satanic, like, by  
definition. They're mocking God.

KENT

Vampires don't exist.

KEIKO

But God does, right? And demons...  
don't?

Confused eyes fly to GRACIE, the ringleader.

GRACIE

We all know God's real. So what if  
it's all real?  
(then, leaning in)  
We've all heard the rumors about  
Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

The group exchanges looks. It's not something they talk about, but there are whispers...

GRACIE (CONT'D)

What she's not just some urban  
legend? What if she was sent here  
by God, like a Joan of Arc for our  
time?

JESSICA

I have faith, but that doesn't mean I believe some girl actually slayed demons. Unless they were like, inner demons.

GRACIE

Maybe. But we don't know what we don't know, you know?

KENT

But we do know. Those vampire stories were just cover for a crazy crime wave. In old Sunnydale.

KEIKO

And we're gentrified now.

GRACIE

Then explain the earthquake, or the Sunnydale Sinkhole, or the fact that there hasn't been a single earthquake here since.

(dramatic pause)

Sounds pretty biblical to me.

They all take that in, mind blown. Nova eye rolls and moves off, confirming it: her people are not in Sunnydale.

INT. MR. BURKE'S HISTORY CLASSROOM - DAY

Nova rifles through all her novels to find her history book. HUGO sits next to her. Finally works up the nerve:

HUGO

Hey, it's Nova, right? I'm --

NOVA

Hugo. I know. We've been sitting next to each other for six weeks.

HUGO

You hitting up Vampire Weekend?

NOVA

Don't you mean the "Fang Bang?"

HUGO

Oh. I just said that because--

NOVA

You want your friends to think you're cool.

HUGO  
 (realizing)  
 Yeah. Whoa. I guess that makes me  
that guy.

He seems hurt. Nova starts to apologize, realizing she might have misjudged him, but instead --

The bell RINGS. In front of the class, MR. BURKE, 30s, Cali-cool in a beachy MAN-BUN, brings the class to order.

MR. BURKE  
 All right, let's bring our energy and focus everyone, energy and focus. One cleansing breath, and... let's begin. First up, we still need volunteers for the Blood Drive.

No takers. He amicably tries again.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)  
 Don't you want to be the only ones at Vampire Weekend sucking real blood?

The VAPE KID 1 (DILLON) raises his hand.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)  
 Yes! Dillon, wonderful --

DILLON  
 Can I take a personal day? I can feel my mental health, like, flagging.

Mr. Burke's jaw clenches, but he tries to keep it positive.

MR. BURKE  
 Of course. Mental health is so important.  
 (as Dillon bails)  
 Now. Time to pick a historical figure for your midterms. And remember you must use original texts as reference. No wikipedia. So, let's hear it. Jessica?

JESSICA  
 I'm doing Hamilton.

COLE  
 I'm also doing Hamilton.

MR. BURKE  
 (to himself)  
 Every year --  
 (then)  
 Okay. How many people are doing  
 Hamilton?

Half the class raises their hands.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)  
 What if I said you can't use the  
 musical, only original texts.

VAPE KID 2  
 Federalist papers, bitch!

The class chuckles. Mr. Burke tamps down his annoyance.

MR. BURKE  
 All right, let's... use inclusive  
 language.

Heads turn as CARSON enters, tennis whites clinging to his  
 muscles.

CARSON  
 Sorry, Mr. Burke. I had  
 conditioning.

MR. BURKE  
 Of course. I guess we make  
 exceptions for Junior Olympians.

Over-programmed and hard-charging, Carson is the object of  
 many a student's desire, including NOVA, who awkwardly gets  
 up from her seat --

NOVA  
 Okay, um -- you can sit here --

CARSON  
 Or I can sit at my own desk?

Carson glances to the empty desk nearby. Nova flushes red.  
 Wants to die.

MR. BURKE  
 Give any thought to your historical  
 figure, Carson?

CARSON  
 Andre Agassi?

MR. BURKE  
Really? Okaaaay. Who else --

KEIKO  
Billy Graham.

HUGO  
Nolan Bushnell.  
(off blank stares)  
He's the founder of Atari, you  
philistines.

NOVA  
Agatha Christie.

GRACIE  
Buffy Summers.

The class gives a collective GROAN.

STUDENTS  
Seriously?/Come on./You gotta be  
kidding.

VAPE KID 2  
Wasn't she some cheerleader who  
died at the sinkhole?

MR. BURKE  
(ever "patient")  
Gracie, Buffy Summers is a myth,  
not a historical figure.

GRACIE  
No, she was real. And a modern-day  
saint. I'm going to prove it.

MR. BURKE  
Fine, but you'll have to source  
from original texts, not the  
conspiracy claptrap online.

Gracie sits back, pleased. Nova leans over, whispers.

NOVA  
The public library has an old  
collection about Sunnydale history.  
You could start there.

GRACIE  
Thanks. Nova, right?

Gracie's CROSS around her neck glints in the sun. Nova's hit  
with deja vu. MEMORY HIT (DREAM): *A silver CROSS glints.*

NOVA  
Right. You're welcome.

MR. BURKE  
Okay, how about you, Larkin --

All eyes go to an empty seat. Mr. Burke SIGHS.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)  
Anyone know where Larkin is this time?

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

LARKIN, a chronic do-gooder with more heart than sense, is protesting with a HANDS OFF THEIR LAND sign outside that construction site with a gaggle of kooky activists.

LARKIN  
Whose land? The people's land!  
Whose land? The people's land!

This boisterous group aims to disrupt a RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY for Phase Two of New Sunnydale Estates. At a podium, MAYOR ADAMS does her best to ignore the ruckus.

MAYOR ADAMS  
Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, Phase Two of New Sunnydale Estates will shine like a beacon of hope for Sunnydale's bright and abundant future. This new development has been engineered by our friends at VoreTechs, our partners in commerce and community.

We find ABE in the crowd, snapping pictures. His vest lets us know he's with the Sunnydale Press. As he moves to get a better angle, Larkin shows him a flyer --

LARKIN  
Did you know this project is being built on sacred Indigenous land?

ABE  
Thanks, but I just take the photos.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - GOLF COURSE - SAME

A distance away, a CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR yells at his grounds crew on the partially completed golf course.

SUPERVISOR

This hole is supposed to be photo  
ready and it looks like hell!

A small BACKHOE shovels sand into the sand trap. Its scoop  
reaches down into the sand and -- lifts up STACY'S BODY. Her  
neck is ravaged. Everyone REELS at the gruesome sight.

BACKHOE OP

Uh, boss?

ACROSS THE WAY

Abe spots the commotion. Just as the Mayor cuts the ribbon,  
someone in the crowd SCREAMS. As Stacy's body is hoisted up,  
Abe snaps photos as people panic.

Watching it all, an OLD TIMER in a construction vest pulls  
out a cigarette and lights it.

OLD TIMER

Well look at that. It's just like  
old times.

Off this gruesome sight --

**END ACT ONE**

ACT TWO

INT. NEW SUNNYDALE ACADEMY - MRS. LADUCA'S OFFICE - DAY

Nova nervously bops her leg as MRS. LADUCA (frighteningly direct, zero boundaries) reads Nova's file on a tablet. A nameplate lets us know she's the College Counselor. She swipes. Frowns. Swipe. Frown.

MRS. LADUCA

Straight As. Honors. AP classes.  
But no extracurriculars or  
volunteer work, and zero athletics?  
I thought I was missing part of  
your transcript --

She jokily flips the tablet over like she's missing a page.

MRS. LADUCA (CONT'D)

But nope.

NOVA

I'm terrible at sports. But my  
grades --

MRS. LADUCA

Honey. You think this is about  
grades? If you need a scholarship,  
we might have to photoshop you into  
a crew boat.

(then)

I didn't say that. Hm. Could you  
try track? You just gotta run in a  
straight line.

NOVA

I have asthma.

MRS. LADUCA

Now that's promising. Maybe we can  
say you're disabled!

NOVA

Oh -- I did just apply to a summer  
literature program in Cambridge.  
It's reading, writing, analysis.  
They have this incredible library --

MRS. LADUCA

Honey, I get it. You're shy,  
you're hormonal, you're in your  
Dark Academia phase.

(MORE)

**MRS. LADUCA (CONT'D)**

Don't waste a whole summer on it.  
You know what you need? To be more  
like Larkin.

NOVA

Larkin?

MRS. LADUCA

She's got six social justice  
campaigns, summers digging wells in  
Africa, and her brother died last  
year. That's who you're up  
against.

NOVA

Seriously? Her social justice  
thing's just an excuse to cut  
class.

MRS. LADUCA

Well it's working. Meanwhile, your  
transcript's a mess. Five high  
schools?

NOVA

My dad's a photojournalist, so we  
move a lot. It's why I'm not into  
the joining and clubbing --

MRS. LADUCA

Wait. Single dad. And mom is...  
(oh this is good)  
Dead, right? We can use that. You  
write your admission essay about  
how you yearn for a mother to fill  
the void. So literary. You love  
this. Her absence. Always felt.

NOVA

I never knew her? And I'm super  
close to my dad, so I don't feel a  
void per se --

MRS. LADUCA

But you're hiding something. I can  
see it. Under the surface.  
There's trauma. Let's mine it.

Nova does not want to talk about it, but it may be the only  
way to get out of this office, so --

NOVA

I was kidnapped once. By a scary lady in the park where I was playing. I was five. I was treated for PTSD, it was a thing.

MRS. LADUCA

A thing? You bet your ass it is. It's also a banger of an admissions essay.

NOVA

No, I, no -- I don't even talk about it -- it was terrifying --

MRS. LADUCA

Oh we are workshopping this.

(hopeful)

Was there physical harm? Sexual abuse?

NOVA

No, no -- my dad found me and saved me a few hours later.

Mrs. LaDuca has never felt more excellent at her job.

MRS. LADUCA

Honey. Cut the "few hours" part and I can get you into USC with that.

INT. NEW SUNNYDALE ACADEMY - LOCKERS - DAY

Nova **SHOVES** her books into the locker with such force it makes her **JUMP**. Did she just dent the back wall? Larkin, in protest gear, opens her locker nearby. Sigh. *This girl.*

NOVA

Save the world yet?

LARKIN

Just trying to be the change you want to see, you know?

Larkin hands Nova a **FLYER**. Nova just shoves it in her bag.

NOVA

No, I don't. I was too busy actually going to class.

LARKIN

Well, it was worth it. They paused all construction on Phase Two.

NOVA

Wow. Because of your protest?

LARKIN

No, because they found a girl on the ninth hole who was... unalived. Still, direct action --

NOVA

Wait, they found a dead body? A girl was killed?

LARKIN

Yeah. I mean, we shouldn't presume gender but -- Mr. Burke!

Larkin's face lights as Mr. Burke finds them. He wears a "Vampire Weekend Blood Drive" t-shirt and makes it look good. Larkin definitely has a bit of a crush.

MR. BURKE

Larkin. Hey. You know how much I respect your passion for social activism, but missing this much class, it's just... It's not cool.

Nova stays to watch this, feeling a bit vindicated.

LARKIN

But we're about to expose the New Sunnydale Development Company. They're building on the Sacred Circle, it's an Indigenous holy site --

MR. BURKE

Larkin...

LARKIN

We might even get tribal lawyers on board. What's history class when we're making *actual history*?

MR. BURKE

What's actual history is your GPA if you don't start showing up to class. I mean it this time.

Larkin looks crestfallen. Mr. Burke takes a deep breath, tries to smooth things over.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)

Hey. You're a special kid. Know that, okay?

"Kid." It sears onto Larkin's romantic soul. Nova pounces.

NOVA

Mr. Burke, do you still need  
volunteers for the Blood Drive?  
I'm trying to get more involved.

MR. BURKE

Sure, Nova. Thanks. Just find me  
at the fest.

After Mr. Burke moves off, Larkin glares.

NOVA

What? Just saving the world.

Nova shuts her locker and moves away, pleased.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - GOLF COURSE - DUSK

Yellow crime scene tape flaps in the wind. A DEVELOPER looks  
at the sun low in the sky and chatters into her cell.

DEVELOPER

We gotta get insurance on board.  
The family's threatening to sue,  
even though she was the one  
trespassing. Yeah, neck wound.

She looks at the half-built vista... her empire.

DEVELOPER (CONT'D)

But I'm not worried. Hellmouths  
are temporary. California real  
estate is forever.

If you're wondering about the operating philosophy of the  
folks who built New Sunnydale, here you go. She gets in her  
Lexus and motors off.

STAY on the golf course as the sun dips below the horizon.

HANDS burst out of the sand trap. They're not gnarled  
anymore, they're pale, YOUNG. A vampire, SHIRLEY, surfaces,  
shakes herself clean. We recognize that stringy HAIR. She  
SHOVES her arm back into the sand and PULLS. The second  
vamp, JACK, emerges.

Since they feasted on Stacy their looks have improved.  
They're 20ish, fashion circa 2003, Jack in a Weezer T-shirt,  
Shirley in her asymmetrical skirt and choker. They share  
twin-like GREEN EYES. Jack takes in the moon, the stars.

JACK  
Finally. The sky. Night.

SHIRLEY  
It's been --

JACK  
Twenty five years. So many of us  
down there, dying, starving,  
trapped --

Jack can't contain his emotions as he falls to his knees and POUNDS at the earth, overwhelmed. Shirley shuts her eyes, trying to contain her own fury.

SHIRLEY  
Never forget who did this to us.

JACK  
(spitting with rage)  
Slayer. I'm going to find that  
bitch and put her in the dirt.

SHIRLEY  
Jack, we're family, I'm with you.  
But we can't get distracted, we  
have an army to raise. The  
Magister will lead us.

JACK  
The Magister will lead us. As it  
was foretold.

SHIRLEY  
We need our strength. We need to  
feed.

They both look around at the half-finished golf course, the dusty construction zone, confused.

JACK  
One question. Where'd everybody  
go?

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - VAMPIRE WEEKEND - DUSK

Night has fallen on Vampire Weekend. It's in full swing. In the swirl, find NOVA.

NOVA  
Hi, would you like to donate blood?

A Gary Oldman top hat Dracula hisses at her and moves on.

HUGO ambles past, happy to see her.

HUGO

Hey Nova! You decided to slum it after all.

Nova shrugs, points to her blood drive button:

NOVA

Well apparently grades don't matter anymore so I have to "get involved" if I ever want to go to college.

HUGO

Yeah, I might just skip it? My dad's high up at VoreTechs so I pretty much have a job waiting.

NOVA

And what is it exactly that VoreTechs does?

HUGO

Everything, I think? Destroying the planet and saving it? Making life simultaneously better and worse? The usual.

Nova smiles at that. Just then, Cole and his crew rolls up --

COLE

Bro, buncha hot cheerleaders rolling up to the maze. Let's go!

NOVA

As you were.

Hugo, embarrassed, gets pulled away.

Nova spots CARSON in the distance, waiting in his warm-up gear by the curb. Her eyes linger.

NOVA (CONT'D)

Hi, you don't know I exist, but can I convince you to donate some bodily fluids? Ah, what the hell.

She moves towards Carson, just as --

ACROSS THE WAY Cole, Hugo, and crew pass by an archery range.

COLE

Hey Hugo, if we're the Avengers, you'd be like, our Hawkeye.

CREW

Ohhhh/Sick burn/He's the worst

Hugo SHOVES Cole, which jostles an ARCHER with a vintage CROSSBOW. He triggers his ARROW --

The arrow SCREAMS through the air like a speeding bullet. It's headed right towards Carson. He turns. Sees it coming - - there's no time to react --

THWIT! Nova CATCHES the arrow in midair. Inches from Carson's face.

CARSON

Woah. Thanks. I. Thanks.

Nova is too stunned to speak. An SUV pulls up nearby and HONKS. Carson ignores it. Looks at Nova, fascinated.

CARSON (CONT'D)

You're in my history class.

Nova manages a weak nod. Now the SUV lays on the HORN.

CARSON (CONT'D)

Sorry, that's Overbearing Dad for "Can't wait to spend quality time together."

(But he lingers, a rebel.)

Thanks for saving my life.

He picks up his gear and goes to the SUV. Nova shoves the arrow in her backpack.

NOVA

Ohmygod, could I be more of a freak?

As she blends into the crowd, REVEAL Hugo. He saw it all.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Jack and Shirley take in a changed Sunnydale. TEENS have eyes locked onto their iPhones. A KID whizzes by on a Bird scooter. A GUY plugs his Tesla into a charging station.

SHIRLEY

What happened to this place?

JACK

Is it me or is the future exceptionally... lame?

SHIRLEY

These maggots have no idea what's coming. Once we raise the army, no one will be able to stop us --

They turn a corner. In the DARKNESS a silhouette. A WOMAN holding a STAKE, backlit buy moonlight. SLAYER.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D) JACK  
Is it -- ? Can't be --

POP! A camera FLASH strobos from her selfie stick. It's that cos-player Nova met earlier. She turns to Jack and Shirley, smiles.

FAUX SLAYER

Ohhh, love your look. Your vintage gear? So throwback, ten out of ten. Can we selfie for my Insta? I'm also on TikTok, the algo loves me. I'll legit tag you.

Jack and Shirley could not be more spun out.

JACK  
You'll what -- ?

FAUX SLAYER  
Okay, we slay on three.

She positions herself between them, angles her selfie stick.

FAUX SLAYER (CONT'D)  
Ready? One... Two...

ON THE PHONE SCREEN: Jack and Shirley VAMP OUT and LUNGE AT HER NECK. Blood FLECKS SPLATTER her phone as we --

**END ACT TWO**

ACT THREE

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

GRACIE mounts the steps of the library, a new mission-style building in the Old Sunnydale aesthetic.

INT. OLD SUNNYDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

An older LIBRARIAN with Boho-flair guides Gracie through the stacks and down a staircase.

LIBRARIAN

You're the first one in months to ask about the collection.

GRACIE

It's for a school project.

The Librarian clocks Gracie's silver CROSS necklace.

LIBRARIAN

Ah. I thought maybe there were other reasons. The signs.

GRACIE

Signs?

They hit the BASEMENT and head toward a gated APSE.

LIBRARIAN

I've been here a long time. I remember when the troubles started. The swallows migrated away, the tremors began. Nobody spoke about it, of course. Just like nobody wants to talk about the murdered girl they just found at the new golf course.

GRACIE

They did?

The librarian unlocks the ornate gate with a key. Above a sign reads: RUPERT E. GILES COLLECTION.

LIBRARIAN

Ah. Here we are, the Rupert Giles Collection. Mostly gathers dust, but the funding shows up every year like clockwork.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - GILES COLLECTION - CONTINUOUS

Stacks and shelves of books -- real books! -- and tables for study and archival work, like Giles himself designed it.

LIBRARIAN

Happy hunting, dear.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - VAMPIRE WEEKEND, STAGE - NIGHT

A WOODEN STAKE flies through the air, and WHAP -- hits its target. WIDEN TO SHOW Nova passing a stake-throwing carnival game. Mr. Burke sweeps by, pulling a rolling COOLER.

MR. BURKE

Hey, Nova. Just want to say you're doing stellar work. I want you to hear it. Know it. Feel it.

NOVA

Thanks. I just tell people you get a free cookie after and they're all "sign me up!"

MR. BURKE

Inspiring. I gotta run these to the hospital. Catch you later.

As he goes, she clocks the cooler. Marked with a CADUCEUS.

MEMORY HIT: *That same caduceus from her DREAM, only with BLOOD splattered on it.*

Nova snaps back to reality. Chilled. The skin on Nova's arm PRICKLES. She spins, looking -- just missing Jack and Shirley as they pass behind her. Then, the moment's gone.

NOVA

O-kay, now I'm losing it.

PICK UP Jack and Shirley. They take in whole scene, the fake vamps and Van Helsings and goth carnival games --

JACK

My god, what have we been reduced to? I'm beginning to feel like there's not a lot of respect for our kind anymore.

She shows Jack a website on the Faux Slayer's phone called **VampyreLore.com**.

SHIRLEY

Case in point -- there's like,  
twenty versions of the blood ritual  
online, but none look right.  
What's the point of the internet if  
everything on it is wrong?

JACK

Did you Ask Jeeves?  
(off her look)  
MySpace?

Then, they spot Mr. Burke, blood drive cooler rolling behind  
him. They can't believe their luck.

JACK (CONT'D)

We do know one thing. We need  
blood. A lot of it.

SHIRLEY

Let me handle him. You find a live  
tribute. And Jack? Bring me back  
something fresh.

Off Jack and Shirley, on the hunt...

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Mr. Burke cuts through an alley to a parking lot. His cooler  
rolls, masking the sound of footfalls behind him. He listens  
to his instincts and STOPS -- turns -- no one is there.

He walks faster, cooler rolling, fishes his key fob out of  
his pocket. He pops the trunk of his plugged-in EV, turns to  
lift his cooler to REVEAL -- SHIRLEY. Mr. Burke startles.

MR. BURKE

Oh. You scared me. Can I help  
you?

She stares like he's a prime rib roast.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)

Are you... lost?

SHIRLEY

I'm hungry.

Shirley flashes her VAMPFACE. Mr. Burke GASPS as Shirley  
ATTACKS. She pulls away from the jugular with a SQUISH.  
BLOOD SPLATTERS across the cooler's caduceus, an exact match  
to Nova's dream. Shirley goes back for seconds.

Over Mr. Burke's hoarse screams --

EXT. VAMPIRE WEEKEND - STAGE AREA - NIGHT

FIND Nova with her clipboard, winding through an ever growing crowd. Behind her, on a stage, a spotlight hits a cheesy contest HOST who may have gotten his start at strip clubs. Dramatic synth-driven track PULSES, slow at first.

HOST

Into every generation, there are  
chosen ones who stand against the  
vampires, demons, and forces of  
darkness. They are... the Slayers!

Everyone has their eyes trained on the stage, except Nova. Over the untz-untz-untz COSPLAY "SLAYERS" take the stage for a costume contest. Cos-slay women (and men) pose with stakes and crossbows.

Nova rolls her eyes as she brushes past HUGO and his friends whose JAWS are DROPPED watching the parade of flesh.

HOST (CONT'D)

When a Slayer awakens, they develop  
unusual strength, lightning fast  
reflexes, and have prophetic  
visions of what's to come!

Nova stops. FLASHES TO --

MEMORY HIT: A *CROSS glints -- the one Gracie wears.*

MEMORY HIT: *An arrow flies -- Nova catches the arrow.*

MEMORY HIT: *Mr. Burke, rolling away his cooler with the caduceus... then, another MEMORY HIT (DREAM): That same caduceus, now splattered with blood.*

RESUME ON NOVA as the audience swirls around her. The tumblers in her mind clicking together. She may not understand what this means, but she knows one thing:

NOVA

Mr. Burke's gonna die.

Fuck it. She trusts her instincts and GOES --

HOST (O.S.)

*Are you ready to slay?*

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Nova, heart racing, at the edge of the parking lot. In the distance, Mr. Burke's EV is gone, cord abandoned on the ground. Bad sign. We TRACK BEHIND Nova as she walks over --

NOVA

Mr. Burke?

She takes a few more cautious steps, her instincts tingling. Then with a SQUISH, the soles of her sneakers peel off the ground and come up RED. In a WHISPER:

NOVA (CONT'D)

Oh no no no no -- I'm too late --

She spins. The whole area is stained with BLOOD. She RUNS.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Nova fights tears as she cuts through a dark alley. Feeling like she failed.

ABOVE

Looms JACK on a second floor railing. (If this reminds you of a bizarro Buffy and Angel meet-cute, bonus points.)

He silently flips down to the ground, landing softly behind her. But Nova stops. GOOSEBUMPS again. She turns. Jack leans against a dumpster, smiles lasciviously.

JACK

Hey cupcake. Looking for someone?

She wipes away tears, turns to go. He follows. Nova turns to look, he's CLOSE, impossibly so.

NOVA

Leave me alone.

JACK

You seem upset. You lonesome? I could be your friend.

He curls an arm around her. She squirms away, he enjoys her fear. Nova reaches into her bag and finds a PEPPER SPRAY canister. Her hands shake as she aims at him.

NOVA

Get away. I'll use it, I'm not afraid.

JACK

Oh, you're terrified. But I like a girl with a vulnerable side.

Jack lunges. Nova SPRAYS. His hands fly to his face, then he VAMPS OUT -- his face demonic, FANGS like razors --

Nova stumbles back in HORROR and hits the pavement, her bag and pepper spray go flying. She scrambles away as Jack stalks towards her, full monster now.

NOVA  
What are you --

JACK  
You know.

With a sadistic smile he leaps ON TOP of Nova, pins her to the ground, a maw of fangs as he nuzzles her neck. She Fights back tears. Scared first --

Then ANGRY. It knits something inside of Nova together. Her fists CLENCH. Body TENSES. Feels an uncanny FORCE. As JACK rears back to BITE... She HEADBUTTS Jack in the face.

He falls back, stunned. Nova, amazed that worked, KICKS Jack in the torso with both legs. HARD. He goes flying. Nova staggers upright, in shock.

NOVA  
What -- oh my god this is real.

Jack's back on his feet. Ready to fight. POUNCES. Nova LEAPS up on top of a dumpster, in awe of her own dexterity.

NOVA (CONT'D)  
Whoa.

Jack jumps onto the other dumpster. Incensed. Realizing:

JACK  
Slayer.

Nova hears that word and her instincts TRIGGER, she fights -- lands HITS, blocks hits -- and KICKS Jack's knee out.

She jumps back to the ground, so does Jack. He shakes off the hurt with a smile this time.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Get ready for payback, bitch.

NOVA  
But I didn't do anything --

JACK  
I've spent twenty-five years  
dreaming about slicing you open.

He RACES for her, all fangs and supernatural strength.

In SLO MO: Nova CLOCKS the spilled contents of her bag. It's crystal clear. She knows what to do. Realization lands on Nova like a ton of bricks.

NOVA

You can do this --

ACCELERATE out of the moment as:

Nova baseball slides across the ground and comes up with the wooden ARROW.

She staggers to her feet and just as Jack COLLIDES with her -- she CLUTCHES the arrow and DRIVES it into his torso.

He DUSTS in a cloud of ash.

Nova stands there, adrenaline racing, trying to process. What the fuck just happened?! Tears start immediately. Confusion. Relief. Then --

HUGO (O.S.)

Holy shit!

She SPINS to see HUGO at the end of the alley, slack-jawed.

HUGO (CONT'D)

You're a Slayer!?

Off Nova, reeling --

**END ACT THREE**

ACT FOUR

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - GILES COLLECTION - NIGHT

Fingers TRACE along the stacks of leather-bound books. Arcane, historic, musty... the hand stops and pulls out one book, *Vampyre* embossed on the cover. Reveal:

SHIRLEY

Like I need my own instruction manual.

Shirley tosses it aside and finds a smaller book made of red leather. *The Blood Incantations*. She flips through to:

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

"Ritual must be done at the hallowed ground of --"

LIBRARIAN (O.S.)

Must have missed you coming in.

Shirley looks up and smiles sweetly at the Librarian.

SHIRLEY

Hi. Do you have a map of the area? Everything's changed so much since I was last here.

LIBRARIAN

Yes, but it's closing time. You'll have to come back in the morning.

Shirley happens to be below a convex security MIRROR but casts no reflection. The Librarian clocks it. Pales.

SHIRLEY

You know I can't do that.

Shirley VAMPFACES, leaps at the Librarian and BITES into her neck. As she DRINKS HUNGRILY --

PUSH through the shelves and FIND GRACIE pressed into a corner, hand clamped over her mouth, trying not to scream.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Nova paces to burn off adrenaline, her breath returning surprisingly quick. Still processing. Hugo is giddy.

HUGO

Nova! I can't believe you're a Slayer!

NOVA

People keep saying that word --

HUGO

And also Slayers are real? I mean, fuck yeah, did this town just get cool?

NOVA

Hugo, no -- I mean that guy, I... unalived him.

HUGO

You don't have to act all "what'd I just do?" Your secret Slayer identity is so safe with me.

NOVA

(not hearing him)

He had a body, he was here then, poof. Dust. Did I breathe it in? Oh god, this is why we mask --

She's spinning out. It's only now Hugo realizes --

HUGO

Wait. You've never done that before?

NOVA

Did it look like I've ever done that before!?

HUGO

Yeah, those were some fighting moves --

NOVA

I was *fighting* because I thought I was gonna be...

(pointed)

I was walking alone? At night? What they warn us not to do?

HUGO

Whoa. Yeah. I'm sorry. I didn't think about it from that perspective. Thank you for educating me.

NOVA

Welcome to being a girl. It's a lot.

Nova sits on a stack of PALLETS. She puts a hand to her chest, tracking her own breaths.

HUGO

But -- you're okay?

NOVA

Yeah, weirdly. I haven't reached for my inhaler in days. And I had this dream about vampires turning to dust, and these *images* -- then I saw them in real life...

HUGO

And I saw earlier -- you just bam -- caught an arrow mid-flight.

(realizing)

It's like they said back there:

(a la the cheesy Host)

"When a Slayer awakens..." That's what's up!

NOVA

I don't know about any of that, all I know is I had this bad feeling about Mr. Burke and, oh god... He left with a cooler full of blood and now he's gone and I found more blood --

HUGO

Okay. Vampire, lotta blood, no Mr. Burke... I'm thinking no history quiz on Monday.

NOVA

We have to alert the authorities.

Nova heads back toward Vampire Weekend. As he follows:

HUGO

Nova, wait! I think you ARE the authority!

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Gracie, still cowering in the corner. She eyes the exit, but won't make it past Shirley, who paces, VENTING.

SHIRLEY

We've planned on summoning the Magister and raising a vampire army for years, and we're finally here and Jack's M.I.A? He was supposed to bring the tribute!

She goes to a study table, comparing an ANCIENT MAP to a NEW MAP of New Sunnydale.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

None of it matters unless we find the site. Sacred Circle here, no Sacred Circle there. Landmarks? Gone, buried. Thanks, Slayer.

An odd SLURPING sound interrupts her.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

Can you keep it down? I'm trying to think.

REVEAL a VAMPIRE, long shaggy hair covering his face, draining the librarian dry. He lifts his head with a GAH -- it's Mr. Burke! Mr. Burke grins with new fangs --

MR. BURKE

Did you say "Sacred Circle?"

SHIRLEY

Yes, I did, teacher-pet. Why?

He lets out a dark LAUGH.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - VAMPIRE WEEKEND - NIGHT

LARKIN stands in the middle of the Vampire Weekend revelry with three ACTIVISTS. She hands a flyer to a VAMPY LADY.

LARKIN

Help us stop the New Sunnydale Development company!

VAMPY LADY

Genius meta Hellmouth cosplay. So creative.

As she moves off, Larkin finds herself face to face with CHARLES, another Old Sunnydale kid. He's Native American.

CHARLES

Yo, Larkin. You know my grandma's full Chumash, right? I told her about your protest.

LARKIN

Thank you, Charles, I hope she feels our support.

CHARLES

The reason they haven't backed your campaign is that they don't want the land back.

(taking her flyer)

Your translation's wrong. It's not "sacred" circle, it means "cursed." Cursed Circle.

LARKIN

Gosh, I'd never "well, actually" your heritage, but that doesn't sound right to me?

CHARLES

Well you "actually" just did.

He makes the sane choice and moves off as Larkin's PHONE rings. She looks at the screen and gets flustered.

LARKIN (INTO PHONE)

Mr. Burke? Oh my gosh, hi...

INT. VAMPIRE WEEKEND SECURITY TENT - NIGHT

Nova is with our old pal, the SECURITY GUARD.

SECURITY GUARD

So you're worried about your history teacher because you saw some blood on the ground.

NOVA

I am fully aware how this sounds.

SECURITY GUARD

You sure it wasn't one of those hemo-globin-tinis? Cause I got all that shit all over my shoes too --

NOVA

This blood was real.

He zeroes in on her Blood Drive button.

SECURITY GUARD

Maybe from your *blood drive*?

NOVA  
 (cringing as she says it)  
 What if I told you I saw a vampire?

SECURITY GUARD  
 Girl. Why're you messing with me.

EXT. VAMPIRE WEEKEND SECURITY TENT - NIGHT

Nova exits the tent, finds Hugo waiting.

HUGO  
 Lemme guess. Conventional channels  
 have failed our intrepid Slayer.

NOVA  
 Please stop calling me that.

HUGO  
 Well as an unofficial you-know-what  
 sidekick, I texted around --  
 (off her look)  
Stealthily. No one's seen Mr.  
 Burke. He'll probably turn up in a  
 sand trap like that girl with the --

He mimes getting his throat ripped out.

NOVA  
 Oh god, yeah. Why is nobody  
 looking into that? She was  
 probably killed by that --  
 (mouths "vampire")

HUGO  
 Yup, way ahead of you. See? You  
 need me.

Hugo and Nova nearly collide with LARKIN, who is on her way  
 out. She raises an eyebrow at Nova hanging with Hugo.

LARKIN  
 Hey Nova. You're volunteering  
 extra hard. Does Hugo know he has  
 to donate actual blood and can't  
 just swipe daddy's credit card?

HUGO  
 Oooh, but it's way too dark out for  
 you to still be throwing that Old  
 Sunnydale shade.

LARKIN

It's not "old Sunnydale," it's just Sunnydale and I'm fourth gen and proud. You're just some tech bro transplant --

NOVA

We're looking for Mr. Burke, okay? He might be in trouble.

LARKIN

Oh. He's fine. He just called me.

NOVA

He did?

LARKIN

He found an expert who can authenticate our claim that they're building on a holy site. I'm meeting them right now.

Nova reels a bit -- *then what has she been chasing?*

LARKIN (CONT'D)

Yeah. I guess when it's a cute little blood drive versus my quest to return sacred stolen land...

She does a "weighs the scales" thing with her hands and of course, wins.

LARKIN (CONT'D)

Welp, gotta go.

Hugo watches her trot off.

HUGO

Guess I better study for that History quiz after all.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

From her dark corner, Gracie pops her head up. She's alone. She quickly looks over to the dead librarian, pale and drained on the table. She STIFLES a little scream.

Hands trembling, Gracie pulls out her cell phone and RUNS.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Nova leaves Vampire Weekend. Hugo tries to keep up.

HUGO

Nova, wait!

NOVA

You heard her, Mr. Burke's fine,  
and I'm an idiot. I'm just gonna  
go hide under the covers of my bed  
and wait for this to... wear off.

HUGO

Wear off? Why? You just  
downloaded the Kung Fu upgrade!

NOVA

I can't do Kung Fu -- my PE teacher  
banned me from pickleball, she said  
I was a danger to myself and  
others. I know you're trying to  
help, but this all makes me feel  
like a freak. And maybe I am a  
freak, but that's because I'm  
uncool, have no friends, and broke  
three pickleball paddles.

(near tears)

That's plenty. I don't need more.

HUGO

Sorry. Thank you for educating me.  
Again. Also, dare I suggest -- you  
do have a friend now.

She warms at that, sees he's genuine.

NOVA

Thanks. And I am really glad you  
were here tonight.

HUGO

Hey, I got to see you dust the only  
real vampire at Vampire Weekend.  
Never seen anything like it.

The last part was really about her. It's a real moment of  
connection, broken when they see --

GRACIE. She runs down the street, disheveled, hysterical.

NOVA

Gracie?

Gracie gets defensive, holds out her silver cross --

GRACIE

Get back!

NOVA

It's okay. It's just us.

HUGO

Hold up. Why'd you put your cross out like we're vampires? We're not, FYI.

GRACIE

Swear you won't make fun of me and call me a Jesus freak?

NOVA

We swear.

GRACIE

I saw this girl in the library. But she wasn't a girl. She was demonic and had actual fangs. Like...

HUGO

Like a vampire?

GRACIE

It wasn't a costume, she was real. And this is the part where you tell me I'm crazy.

NOVA

We believe you.

GRACIE

You do?

They nod and Gracie is so relieved it all comes tumbling out.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

She killed the librarian, I saw it, it was horrible and I didn't do anything, I just hid. Shelter in place, like they taught us. After they left I called 911 but they thought it was a prank on account of, you know --

HUGO

The Weekending.

NOVA

Wait. You said "they" left.

GRACIE

I was just getting to that. Mr. Burke was with her. Guys? I think our history teacher is a vampire.

Nova looks sick now, mind racing...

GRACIE (CONT'D)

And she mentioned a brother and that they were looking for the "Sacred Circle" so they could do a ritual and raise a vampire army. It all sounded very not good.

HUGO

Very not good.

GRACIE

Please don't tell anyone. If my parents knew I was seeing demons, the consequences would be like, call-the-exorcist bad.

NOVA

Of course.

HUGO

Yeah.

GRACIE

I have to go pray a lot now.

Gracie hurries off.

Nova fishes through her backpack, finds Larkin's flyer.

NOVA

Hugo, the Sacred Circle -- it's all here. And Larkin --

HUGO

Oh shit. You in danger, girl.

**END ACT FOUR**

ACT FIVE

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - NIGHT

Larkin walks through the area where the developer's ribbon-cutting ceremony took place.

LARKIN  
Mr. Burke?

HEADLIGHTS snap on, revealing Mr. Burke and Shirley. Mr. Burke's LONG HAIR flows free. He has a sinister twinkle in his eyes. Larkin's breath catches.

LARKIN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Burke... you look different.

MR. BURKE  
Larkin! So glad you could come.  
Meet Shirley, she's the one who's,  
ah, gonna authenticate the site.  
You know the location, right?

Larkin just keeps staring at Mr. Burke.

LARKIN  
Yeah. Yes. But security --  
Shirley reveals a ring of keys.

SHIRLEY  
Not a problem.

WIDEN TO REVEAL two SECURITY GUARDS sprawled behind Mr. Burke's EV, dead with neck wounds, out of Larkin's view.

Larkin fires up her phone's GPS and heads into the darkness.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

Nova grips that flyer, brain locked in conflict.

NOVA  
I don't know how to do this.

HUGO  
It's your calling. You slay  
vampires. And other things.

NOVA  
*Other things?*

HUGO

Nova. Every day I see you, your nose is in a book and they're all about these epic adventures. You know how to do this. You're the hero that saves us all... Mua'dib. Luke Skywalker. The boy who lived. Neo. Frodo --

NOVA

Those are all dudes.

HUGO

Yeah, I should probably get your reading list, but that is you. You are that. Maybe you don't believe it, but I do. I saw you become it.

NOVA

But... I'm not brave.

HUGO

You went to save Mr. Burke.

NOVA

And look how that turned out. Look. I -- went through something when I was a kid, something terrifying. Since then, I've lived in a safe, small little bubble so I'd never be afraid again. But now, I'm afraid. I'm not Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

HUGO

Yeah, you're not. You're Nova the Vampire Slayer.

Nova absorbs that. It taps a hidden well of resolve. A new feeling, bigger than fear.

NOVA

(to herself)

Screw your courage to the sticking place.

HUGO

Huh?

She looks at him, her eyes are steady now, sure.

NOVA

That's Shakespeare for let's do this thing.

HUGO

Yesssssss.

Nova looks to the twinkle lights of Vampire Weekend.

NOVA

We're gonna need some gear.

EXT. VAMPIRE WEEKEND - MERCH ALLEY - NIGHT

HUGO

You may be a Slayer, but I do have  
one super power.

Hugo smiles and flashes his AMEX BLACK CARD at Nova like he's Wolverine unleashing his claws.

OVER MUSIC (the BTVS theme Song?), Hugo and Nova gather gear:

- Nova picks out a silver CROSS necklace.
- Hugo questions the authenticity of a vendor's holy water.
- Nova buys an old self-published copy of *Vampire Hunting: Simplified* by Wesley Wyndam-Price, Rogue-Demon Hunter.
- Nova and Hugo have found VAMPY LADY whittling and selling artisan wooden STAKES. Hugo Venmos her.
- At the ARCHERY range, Hugo pays a SELLER hefty sum for a CROSSBOW and WOODEN ARROWS. He walks away in a badass HERO SHOT, then circles right back to the seller. MUSIC STOPS.

HUGO (CONT'D)

How does this actually work?

- MUSIC RESUMES as Nova and Hugo exit Vampire Weekend, shopping done, ready to take on the real thing.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION PIT - NIGHT

Larkin has led Mr. Burke and Shirley to a deep construction PIT as if an underground parking garage is being built.

LARKIN

See? They said they weren't  
building on it, but, obvi...

She watches curiously as Shirley places the last of five metal DRUMS and begins to DRAW lines connecting them all with a piece of rebar. The grooves in the ground create a complex SYMBOL -- like a pentagram's badass boss brother.

LARKIN (CONT'D)  
How is this going to help again?

MR. BURKE  
(staring at Larkin's neck)  
Hm?

FWOMP-FWOMP-FWOMP-FWOMP-FWOMP... Shirley lights the fires.

LARKIN  
I've worked really hard to keep our message pure, and vandalism seems counter-productive?

MR. BURKE  
None of that'll matter when we're done. All that will remain in Sunnydale will be chaos, anarchy, and violence.

LARKIN  
(uhhh this took a turn...)  
But you always said peaceful protest was the most effective tool change agents have. We did a whole week on civil disobedience --

MR. BURKE  
Ugh. Snooze city. And the worst part was seeing your dumb, oh-so-inspired lovesick face.

Larkin looks gutted, doesn't know this is the demon talking.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)  
You kids think everything revolves around you. You wanna make the world a better place? Hold hands and stop racism? What if every little voice was valid and heard and oh my god all you're doing is making everyone feel like shit!

LARKIN  
(choking back tears)  
Mr. Burke, why are you saying this?

MR. BURKE  
Because being "woke" is exhausting. But now... I'm a different kind of woke. See, earlier tonight, I died. *Then I woke up.*

Mr. Burke flashes his VAMPIRE FACE and BITES Larkin's neck. Larkin GASPS in shock, tears streaming --

Shirley VAMPS and tears Mr. Burke off of Larkin.

SHIRLEY  
Not yet baby vamp. We need her  
blood for the ritual.

Larkin puts a hand to her neck. It comes away bloody. Sees the two monsters in front of her. She SCREAMS.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Nova and Hugo stand near the unlocked construction fence as an Uber Black rolls away. It seems very desolate. They share a look and start walking into the dark, Hugo using his phone as a flashlight.

HUGO  
So did you think of a plan?  
Because I did not.

NOVA  
I was supposed to think of a plan?

Nova and Hugo hear Larkin's SCREAM.

NOVA (CONT'D)  
That's Larkin!

As they race towards the PIT --

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT - CIRCLE - SAME

Shirley's got her spell book out. She rips a blood donor bag open and pours it into the grooves on the ground as:

SHIRLEY  
Forces of the underworld, I wake  
you with this tribute so the  
Magister can lead you --

As the blood fills the design, it takes on a LIFE of its own.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)  
I pour the blood of men into your  
hungry mouth, drink and be reborn.

The design COMPLETES. Mr. Burke watches, entranced. Larkin wrenches free and RUNS -- reaches the edge of the circle and UNFF! -- is thrown back as if by an electric fence.

MR. BURKE

Don't worry, Larkin. This is a safe space.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT - ABOVE - SAME

Nova and Hugo hunker down at the edge of the PIT. Below, the drum fires burn. They watch in horror as Larkin's screams turn to sobs.

NOVA

She's alive at least --

HUGO

Classic force field.

Nova scans construction scaffolding, bulldozers and equipment. An access ramp snakes up at the far end.

NOVA

These Slayer powers -- I'm like, actually coordinated?

HUGO

Oh, and you get good at clever quips. Like, ah, "get ready for a stake out" or uh... What?

His gaze follows Nova's. She watches the FIRES send SMOKE upward from the circle and into the sky. Her eyes narrow.

NOVA

I think I do have a plan.

INT. CONSTRUCTION PIT - CIRCLE - MOMENTS LATER

Shirley CHANTS in Latin.

SHIRLEY

Cum altera luna oritur, cum altera luna oritur. Cum altera luna oritur. Cum altera luna oritur!

The blood PULSES, gaining power. Mr. Burke holds Larkin in the center of the design, blood dripping from her neck.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

CUM ALTERA LUNA ORITUR!

The fires FLARE. Shirley looks to Mr. Burke:

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

That's your cue. Bleed the bitch and feed her to the circle!

MR. BURKE

You are a special flower, Larkin.  
Your blood's going to wake an army.

FROM ABOVE

Nova runs along some scaffolding -- then PARKOURS to an EXCAVATOR scoop shovel. She RUNS along the excavator arm and JUMPS high enough to slip OVER the force field and into:

INT. CONSTRUCTION PIT - CIRCLE - CONTINUOUS

Nova LANDS in a WOBBLY hero pose. Mr. Burke, Shirley, and Larkin can't believe it.

NOVA

Okay, anyone want to weigh in on how cool that was, or...

LARKIN

Nova?

MR. BURKE

Ugh, really? You?

SHIRLEY

So this town does have a Slayer.

NOVA

Yeah, anyway, hi. I'm going to need you to refrain from raising any vampire armies.

Shirley, triggered, LUNGES for Nova but -- FWIT! -- a flaming ARROW lands at Shirley's feet. They all look up to:

THE SCAFFOLDING

Where Hugo runs, crossbow in hand, lighting up arrows with a bong-friendly Vampire-themed torch lighter. He GRINS.

HUGO

Fuck everyone, Hawkeye was cool.

IN THE CIRCLE

Nova draws a hippy-ish floral stake from her jacket. BURKE ATTACKS -- Nova blocks his advances, a few of her punches land -- not all of them, it's catch as catch can. Nova gets close and PLUNGES the stake into Mr. Burke, but misses his heart. He extracts the stake and flings it into the fire.

MR. BURKE

It's so gratifying, seeing you get involved. When I rip out your throat, I want you to hear it. Know it. Feel it.

Burke delivers a brutal PUNCH. Nova lands in the dirt, and rolls. Recovers quickly.

NOVA  
Okay. Still here. Doing this.

Nova leaps and KICKS, smashing him into the force field.

NOVA (CONT'D)  
Dammit. I keep forgetting to quip.

ACROSS THE WAY Larkin looks for escape, SHIRLEY grabs her.

SHIRLEY  
You're not going anywhere. I'm gonna drain you like a juice box --

NOVA  
Let her go.

Shirley spins to see Nova with a peace-sign stake, armed and ready. She doesn't look very cool, but she's working on it.

SHIRLEY  
You think you can take me?

NOVA  
I did just dust your brother.  
(off her surprise)  
Oh, did you think he was just running late?

Nova THROWS the stake at Shirley, but she bats it down. Nova is weaponless. Shirley drops Larkin, goes for the real prize: The Slayer.

NOVA (CONT'D)  
Larkin. Run!

SHIRLEY comes at Nova, all fury. Nova takes blows. Blocks one -- then comes back and -- WHAM -- bloodies Shirley's nose. Shirley KICKS Nova's legs out from under her.

Nova's on her knees. Shirley wraps Nova in a demonic HEADLOCK. Starts choking the life out of her.

ABOVE

Hugo tries to light more arrows. The novelty lighter won't cooperate. Helpless, he YELLS to Larkin:

HUGO  
You gotta break the force field --  
put out the fires!

Larkin NODS -- SHOVES over the metal drum. The fire dissipates. The BLOOD PULSING around them seems to DULL.

LARKIN

I think it's working!

But MR. BURKE blocks the next fire drum. Oh shit.

On NOVA and SHIRLEY

Shirley SQUEEZES Nova who GASPS for breath. Nova eyes that blood-splattered COOLER, seeing double... her eyes lose focus, her brain starved of oxygen.

SHIRLEY

I've been underground for years,  
starving, clawing, and cursing the  
one who put us there. A Slayer.  
Then we finally break out, and the  
world forgot we existed. We're  
just...

(disdain)

...pop culture. No more. I'm  
going to finish you myself, Slayer.

FWIP! An arrow lodges in Shirley's shoulder. It's on FIRE.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

Well, shit --

Shirley DROPS Nova so she can tear the arrow out. Nova scrambles away, sucking in air. That asthmatic feeling. But it subsides.

Nova gets up, knows she can't run. Has to fight.

In a HERO SHOT, Nova TURNS to face the vampire. No weapon. Pure steel. She RUNS at Shirley. It's a kamikaze move --

NOVA

HUGO!

THWIP! -- Hugo shoots an ARROW from above -- it streaks down. Nova PLUCKS the arrow out of the air -- SPINS, and PLUNGES the arrow into Shirley's heart. She SHATTERS into dust.

HUGO

WHOOO! YEAH!!

ACROSS THE CIRCLE

Larkin holds Mr. Burke off with a flaming chunk of wood but the flame's going out. He stalks towards her, a cat cornering a mouse.

MR. BURKE

Put that down. We can be together.  
Isn't that what you want?

LARKIN

Get away from me --

MR. BURKE

I have so much left to teach you.

Nova joins Larkin. Defiant. Nova still has the arrow.

NOVA

She said get back. Or did I miss  
the part where the vampire army  
arrived? 'Cause here's the thing.  
I'm a Slayer. And you got nothing.

Mr. Burke hesitates, sizes up his chances.

NOVA (CONT'D)

Speak up, Mr. Burke. Is there  
something you'd like to share with  
the class?

(sotto, to Larkin)

I quipped! Was that cool?

LARKIN

(what the fuck is even  
happening)

I thought it was fine?

MR. BURKE

I despise your generation.

He PICKS UP a flaming drum and FLINGS it at them, a shower of  
fire and sparks. Nova and Larkin DUCK. When they come up,  
the force field has dissipated.

Mr. Burke RACES up a RAMP and disappears into the night.

Nova looks to Larkin, elated. Larkin HUGS Nova, sobbing.  
It's fierce, genuine. She hugs her back.

LARKIN

I thought I was going to die --

NOVA

It's okay. We're okay.

Nova realizes she is okay. The fear is gone.

LARKIN

You're a Slayer?

NOVA

I guess so. It's my first day.

HUGO

And that's a FUCK to the YEY-AH --

Hugo races up, puts his hand up for high-fives, until he sees Larkin's face is a mess of tears.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Ah. Still traumatized. Okay.  
Reading the room.

Larkin brings him into the EMBRACE. Hugo accepts, a little overwhelmed himself. Off these three, now friends --

EXT. BUS STOP - THE SINK - NIGHT

An Edward-Cullen-in-baseball-gear hails an Uber. A Tom-Cruise-ish LESTAT makes out with a BRIDE against his car. Vampire Weekend is done for the night. Nova, Hugo, and Larkin walk past the **KEEP SUNNYDALE WEIRD** mural.

NOVA

Well, no vampire army. I think we're good.

HUGO

We still have a demonic history teacher.

LARKIN

I know in many ways he's a victim caught in a cycle of violence but --  
(fuck it)  
Vampire Mr. Burke's a real asshole.

NOVA

Eh. He'll probably just explode when the sun comes up.  
(off their doubt)  
Seriously. By Monday everything'll be normal again.

HUGO

Except now you're a *Slayer*.

NOVA

Not without vampires to slay.

A city SHUTTLE BUS pulls up. Nova heads for it.

NOVA (CONT'D)  
 Seriously. We did it. Take the  
 victory. And let us never speak of  
 this again.

Nova swings into the shuttle. Hugo and Larkin share a look.

LARKIN  
 So we're in agreement she's like --

HUGO  
 -- Completely in denial.

EXT. OLD SUNNYDALE - NOVA'S STREET - NIGHT

Nova slows outside her house, nervous. She checks her watch,  
 it's after midnight. She steels herself to walk up to the  
 door when CARSON comes jogging past. Shirtless. Hot.

CARSON  
 Oh hey.

NOVA  
 Hey. You're jogging. At midnight.

CARSON  
 It's the only time I can get away,  
 have a little freedom. You?

Nova could not look more strange and disheveled.

NOVA  
 Oh I just like to wander the  
 streets, looking like I just did  
 battle with the forces of evil.

CARSON  
 I'd buy it. After all, you did  
 save my life today.

NOVA  
 Ah, N.B.D.

CARSON  
 You caught an arrow. If you hadn't  
 been there, I'd be over.

NOVA  
 I'm really glad you're not.

They share a charged beat, then Carson smiles --

CARSON  
 Well thanks again, Nova. 'Night.

He jogs away. Nova practically floats to the front door. ABE answers before she has her key out. He's coiled with worry and panic. Nova wants to tell him everything, but:

NOVA  
Dad, I -- I'm sorry.

INT. NOVA AND ABE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

In the light of day, Abe and Nova sit, eating eggs.

ABE  
I was there when they found the girl at the golf course. And then you didn't come home. We have these rules to keep you safe, to keep anything bad from happening to you again.

But Nova feels emboldened.

NOVA  
Dad, I don't need that anymore. I know you want me to feel safe, but all you've done is make me afraid.

ABE  
What? No, Nova --

NOVA  
I don't need to live my life not being scared. If I'm never scared, I'll never learn to be brave. Bad things are out there. And I need to learn how to face them.

ABE  
All I want is to protect you.

NOVA  
You can't.

ABE  
Just at least let me pretend, okay?

NOVA  
Deal.

They share a smile. As Nova gets up to go refill her coffee, she accidentally tips over her BAG. Abe glances down to see that Cambridge Study Abroad CATALOG peeking out.

He takes it in, then looks at Nova, who stands at the sink. We're not sure why, but his face betrays it. He's chilled.

EXT. THE SINK - MORNING

Hugo sits with Larkin, slurping a multi-layered Boba, still vibrating with adrenaline. Larkin, fresh bandage on her neck, drinks black coffee and picks at avocado toast.

HUGO

I spent all night on Reddit. When shit started back in the day, it went on for years and didn't stop until a sinkhole swallowed most of the town.

They look to market's signage: The Sink.

LARKIN

My family lived through it. They don't talk about it, much less believe in... you know. But things were bad. Lots of people died.

HUGO

If it's happening again, we're gonna need a Slayer.

LARKIN

She has no idea what she's in for. She'll need help. We all will.

HUGO

A Slayer also gets some kind of handler. He's called a Watcher.

LARKIN

Ew. It's giving patriarchy.

They quiet. GRACIE is at their table, holding a giant BOOK.

LARKIN (CONT'D)

Hey Gracie.

GRACIE

Hey Larkin. Nice neck bandage.

Gracie THUNKS down that leather-bound *VAMPYRE* book.

GRACIE (CONT'D)

We need to talk.

INT. NOVA AND ABE'S HOUSE - SUNSET

OVER MUSIC, we go into a MONTAGE. Nova puts a well-worn BOOK down, and glances out the window. The sun is setting. Widen to show she's been reading Bram Stoker's *DRACULA*...

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION PIT - NIGHT

Forgotten, Mr. Burke's cooler of BLOOD BAGS drip into the earth. As the MOON comes out from behind a cloud, the blood MOVES, filling that elaborate symbol. When the edges CONNECT, blood ABSORBS into the ground.

The ground RUMBLES. It's an EARTHQUAKE...

INT. NOVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

NOVA mumbles something in her sleep, then wakes with a gasp as the room RATTLES. The words come to her --

NOVA  
Cum altera luna oritur, cum altera  
luna oritur --

Abe rushes in, pulls Nova into a doorway.

EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hugo has a bad feeling about this as he stands on a balcony overlooking his family's POOL, watching the water slosh.

INT. LARKIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Larkin looks up from her bed, hides under a desk. There, hidden away, are a stack of PHOTOS of Larkin and her brother.

INT. GRACIE'S ROOM - SAME

Gracie scrambles out of bed as a CROSS falls off the wall.

INT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

CRACKS in the earth form. The fissures SPREAD from the pit and outward... everywhere...

INT. NOVA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The shaking finally stops. Abe loosens his grip on Nova.

ABE  
What were you saying? Was that  
Latin?

NOVA  
Uh, I think I read it in one of my  
books?

ABE  
I'm gonna go check the gas line.

He leaves. Nova digs out her laptop. Types the Latin phrase into a translator. It reads: "**When the next moon rises.**" Nova looks out of her window. The moon hangs in the dark.

NOVA

Oh god. We didn't stop it.

EXT. NEW SUNNYDALE ESTATES - CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Out of fissures in the earth, HANDS claw their way out. Vampires. Buried and starving, but renewed by the blood ritual. They RISE. Horrific. Hungry.

RESSURECTED VAMPIRES

Magister // Where's the Magister //  
Find the Magister --

One LARGE HULK of a vampire CLAWS his way out of the mud. They gather around him.

RESSURECTED VAMPIRES (CONT'D)

Magister! He's here!

Is this HULKING VAMPIRE a former bodybuilder or the last remaining Uber-vamp? He lets out a heroic YAWP -- that CUTS OFF as a SHOVEL is swung through his neck, beheading him!

DUST explodes, and when it clears --

MR. BURKE stands there, triumphant.

MR. BURKE

Did none of you take Latin?  
(they did not)  
"Magister" means teacher.

The vampires gather around him now. Mr. Burke has prepared for this moment his whole life.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)

Now. Let's bring our energy and  
focus everyone, energy and focus.

He has their rapt attention.

MR. BURKE (CONT'D)

Good. My name is Mr. Burke.  
Welcome to New Sunnydale!

Off this prophecy fulfilled we --

**END PILOT**

TAG

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY

A beautiful autumn day. Big "Let the River Run" vibes as sharply dressed WORKERS all pour into midtown. We track a WOMAN in a pantsuit from behind as she makes her way across into a massive building housing INSURANCE COMPANY HEADQUARTERS.

INT. MULTINATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY - CONTINUOUS

The woman swipes her ID and sweeps into a crowded elevator. Just as she turns and we think we'll see her face, the ELEVATOR DOORS shut.

INT. MULTINATIONAL INSURANCE COMPANY - CUBICLE FARM - DAY

Follow as the woman makes her way to a cubicle, stows her tasteful work bag, sips her coffee, wakes her COMPUTER.

JANET (O.S.)

Anne? You headed in? Don't want to be late for the morning meeting.

Anne turns around. It's BUFFY SUMMERS. Buffy smiles, wry but genuine:

BUFFY

Nope... wouldn't want that.

She looks smart, professional, happy to be one of the many in a field of cubicles. The name plate on her cubicle says "ANNE SUMMERS" (an alias she's used before). She grabs her notes and heads off with the others in her department.

STAY on her computer as a curated ALERT box pops up in the corner of her computer screen:

**"Insurance Claim # AHJ86472, Property destruction"** Then another ALERT: **"Death in workplace"** and **"Possible death liability"** **"Earthquake Damage"** etc. The alerts POP UP, on and on... and all from one town: SUNNYDALE, CALIFORNIA

Buffy, er, "Anne" is unaware as she piles into a conference room. As a crushingly boring Powerpoint begins, she sits and zones out like everybody else.

Off Buffy, far from the Slayer we once knew her to be...

THE END