

A Buffy's Angel Rises

Buffy heads UC-Sunnydale while her love interest Angel swoops into Los Angeles



Charisma Carpenter, David Boreanaz and Glenn Quinn give "Angel" its life.



Television

By Yael Menahem
Oregon Daily Emerald

Buffy Anne Summers, a.k.a. The Vampire Slayer, is walking through the University of California-Sunnydale campus when she runs into a group of vampires.

The head bloodsucker threatens to kill Buffy to which she indifferently replies, "You know that threat gets more frightening every time I hear it."

Then a California surfer vampire says, "Are we gonna fight, or is there just going to be a monster sarcasm rally?"

This smart, witty, and sometimes downright ridiculous television show began as a mid-season replacement based on the less-than-stellar movie, also called "Buffy the Vampire Slayer."

This fall season, Buffy creators expanded their wings and created a spin-off show for Buffy's love interest and ex-flame bad-vampire-turned-good, Angel.

"Angel" is living up to its hype and the pair gives fans more vampire slayings than they ever could've imagined.

Critics and audiences alike were skeptical of Buffy's debut, but the series is enjoying success as the show heads into its third season, following Buffy and the gang to college.

The concept of the show, where Buffy, played by Sarah Michelle Gellar, is the chosen slayer of her generation who fights vampires in small town Sunnydale, Calif., which sits on top of the entrance and exit to

hell called a Hellmouth. Strange as that may sound, this is an accepted concept by all of its residents and viewers.

The appeal of the show to many audiences is in its fairly real representation of high school life, and now college. Buffy is not an A-student — matter of fact, her GPA is 2.8, and in the season premiere, she didn't seem too excited about being in college.

When choosing classes with her nerdy witch-practicing friend Willow (Alyson Hannigan) Buffy ponders taking a class called Introduction to the Modern Novel. Realizing that she'd have to read more than one book for the class she says, "Do they have an Introduction to the Modern Blurb?"

The lead character in "Angel" (David Boreanaz) left Buffy — the show and the character — after the two consummated their relationship and he turned into a bad vampire, killing Buffy. Even though the two were revived, Angel left Sunnydale knowing their relationship could never continue in this universe.

"Angel" is appropriately set in the city of angels where Angel (Glenn Quinn) has taken it upon himself to help women in distress in order to atone for his days as a bad vampire.

The show is darker than "Buffy" and it has more action than satire.

Doyle, equipped with an Irish-accent and the power of visions, helps steer Angel in the direction of those who need his help.

During the first episode, Angel runs into Sunnydale High School graduate, Cordelia Chase (Charisma Carpenter) whose family fortune was taken when the IRS seized her parent's property for never paying taxes.

Cordelia is trying her luck as a not yet successful actress in Los Angeles, but realizes the business potential through Angel's I'll-come-to-your-rescue missions.

The first three episodes have found Angel helping blond women in distress, which raises questions. Can this be his way of making up for leaving his blond ex-girlfriend Buffy? Maybe, but could we please see more than blond women in distress? Or is that too much to ask?

The show doesn't entirely separate itself from the former residents of Sunnydale. In a cross-over show, Buffy's friend Oz, who is also a werewolf, makes a trip to Los Angeles with his band. He meets Angel to give him a sacred ring that Buffy sent, one that would protect him from death even in the light of day.

Even though Angel is touched by the gesture, he declines wearing the ring and opts to fight vampires as he was always meant to, in the dark of night.

So far the show has offered us new and old vampires and even a parasite that travels from one person to the next when they sleep together. The graphic depictions of the parasite's travels from one body to the next is not for the weak-stomached.

"Angel" is a promising show, keeping in Buffy's tradition of fighting vampires while dealing with true heartbreak between Angel and Buffy. The burning question, however, is will the two ever be able to consummate their relationship again?

That's a hopeful thought for fans of both shows, so stay tuned to see what this not-so-typical 200-year-old vampire Angel does.

"Buffy the Vampire Slayer" airs Tuesday on the WB network at 8 p.m., followed by "Angel" at 9.

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