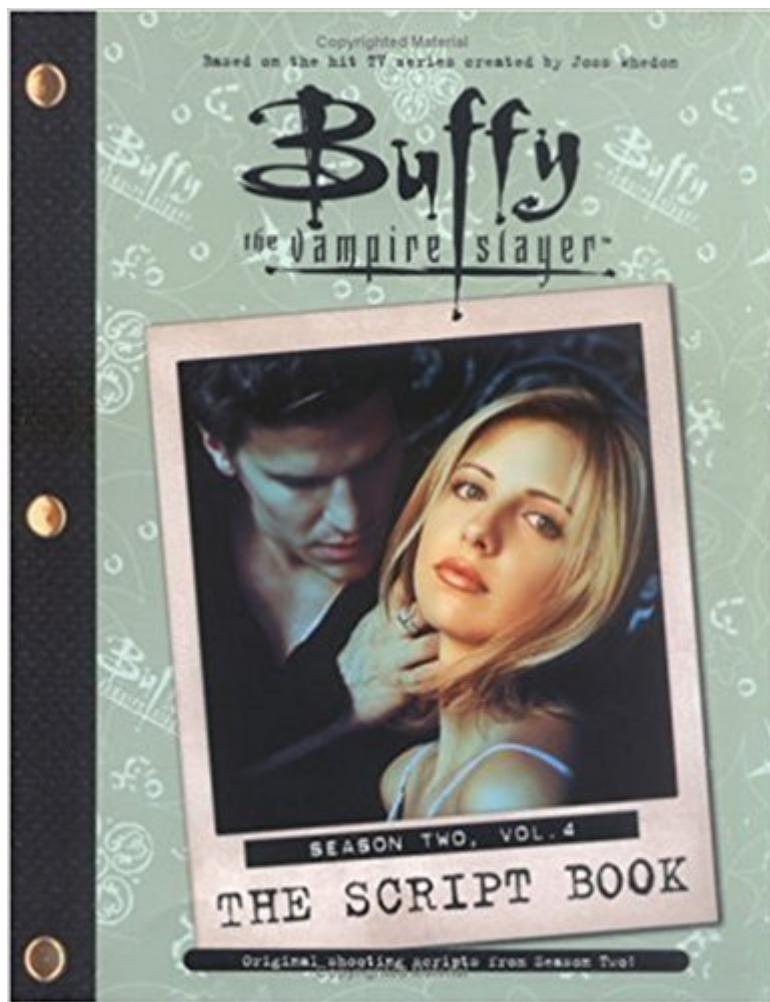


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# Buffy The Vampire Slayer: The Script Book, Season Two, Volume 4



## **Synopsis**

Angel: "That's everything, huh? No weapons, no friends. No hope. Take all that away and what's left?" Buffy: "Me." -- "Becoming, Part Two" Buffy the Vampire Slayer couldn't have known that a moment of perfect happiness would revert her soul mate, Angel, to the vicious vampire Angelus. She couldn't have predicted that he would stalk her cruelly or murder her friends and loved ones. And if she had known, she might not have been able to prevent herself from loving him, regardless. But she is prepared to kill him, even still. Read along to the wrenching conclusion of Season Two as Buffy must thwart Angelus's plan to bring about the destruction of mankind. The true Buffy-phile knows that the genius of the program lies in its savvy scriptwriting; now follow along with original shooting scripts -- complete with inside jokes, production notes, cut dialogue, and more! Sink your teeth into these episodes: "Killed by Death," "I Only Have Eyes for You," "Go Fish," "Becoming, Park One," and "Becoming, Part Two."

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This collection of shooting scripts contains three of the greatest scripts ever produced for the show, as well as one of the weakest. The two-part "Becoming" solidified the emergence of **BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER** as one of if not the best-written shows in the history of television. Although the season as a whole was remarkable, earlier in the season with "Surprise" and "Innocence," the show moved beyond being merely one of the finest shows on television to one of the finest ever produced. The emotional depth and complexity of those two episodes, and later of "Passion,"

signaled that this truly was a remarkable series. The question as the second season began winding down was whether the season ending could match the highpoints of the season. "Killed by Death" didn't bode well for the end, being the second weakest show of the season (following "Some Assembly Required"). It was not a flat out dreadful show, but it failed to match the inventiveness and passion of earlier episodes. Whenever fans vote for the weakest episodes in the history of the show, "Killed by Death" usually receives a significant number of votes, though it never rivals such shows like "Some Assembly Required" or "Beer Bad" for the top (bottom?) slot. The episode provides some opportunities for some funny lines, such as Xander's "My whole life just flashed before my eyes. I've got to get me a life." If one had any idea that the show might be slipping at all, "I Only Have Eyes for You," put any fears to rest. Marti Noxon's final script for her first year with the show, is arguably her best in the superb way she blends a wonderful ghost story about a female teacher who had been murdered by a student with whom she had been having an affair, with Buffy's feelings about her relationship with Angel. Although the scene between the dead lovers is played out twice earlier in the episode, the force and power when the two ghosts reenact the scene near the end is almost overwhelming in its power, not least because the ghost of the murdering male enters Buffy, and Angel speaks the lines of the school teacher. When it was filmed, an actress I have always loved but have too rarely seen, Meredith Salinger, plays the schoolteacher. I'm baffled why she hasn't been in more roles in her career. "Go Fish" is not an episode that I like very much. It doesn't do much in carrying forward the story arc, though it was probably helpful to have a tiny bit of a break before the emotionally overwhelming end to the season. The episode provides a few laughs at the expense of Xander, but I just couldn't get into the story of a high school coach who biochemically alters his swimmers to enhance their performance. Joss Whedon saved the final two episodes of the season, "Becoming," for himself. I am not sure that anyone not named Joss Whedon has ever written two better scripts for a television series than these, and in non-series perhaps only Rod Serling. Whedon is like a juggler with eight or nine balls in the air at once while riding about on a unicycle. The balance between all the elements in these two shows, as Angelus gradually brings the crisis to a head, Kendra returns to Sunnydale and is killed by Druscilla, and Buffy is separated from all her friends and mother is nothing short of astonishing. Every few seconds in the show brings forth some gem, either a new shock (like Kendra dying or Joyce learning that her daughter is the slayer) or line (as when Joyce asks "Have you ever tried not being the Slayer?") or comic moment (such as Joyce and Spike sitting silently in the Summers's living room, and her asking whether they had met before) or jolt (such as Angel recovering his soul only to have Buffy kill him a few seconds later) or even introducing a new character (the extraordinary and

mysterious Whistler, who tragically did not become an occasional visitor on the show, but who at least managed some utterly memorable lines), all of it culminating in that one heartbreakingly awful moment when Buffy finishes kissing Angel, and whispers to him, "Close your eyes." For me this remains the two most emotionally devastating hours in the history of television. At the end of the first season, *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER* had established itself as an absolutely first rate, funny, and exceedingly hip show, but one wouldn't after the first twelve episodes have been able to describe it as truly great. But Season Two changed that. Buffy became a genuinely great show this season, one of the high-water marks in the history of the medium. And the foundation for that was the writing. It isn't an accident that the scripts of this show are being reproduced: it is a demonstration of what truly great writing grounded the whole show.

"Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Script Book, Season Two, Volume 4" finally provides in print Joss Whedon's scripts for the two part of "Becoming." It was the second season of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" that established the show as being operatic television, in which case "Becoming" is the grand aria in which Whedon hits the highest note on the scale. "Becoming, Part 2," in which Buffy has to kill Angel and send him to a demon dimension to save the world, is still one of the ten best television episodes I have ever seen in my life. Having a copy of the script in my hands puts the final touches on my enjoyment of these episodes, not because it is a question of finding differences between what is in the final shooting script and what got aired on television, but simply because I finally get to see Whedon's stage directions. For example, after Joyce has learned Buffy is a vampire slayer there is a scene in Buffy's living room. There is no dialogue, just the shot, which is described as follows: Joyce sits in the living room with Spike. They both are silent and uncomfortable, like it's Sunday and he's come a 'courtin'. Joyce has a glass of bourbon in her hands, which shakes only slightly. For such small gems of insight into the mind of Joss Whedon picking up this collection of scripts is going to be worthwhile for "BtVS" fans. Completing the Angelus story arc that covered the second half of Season Two begun in Volume 3, you will find in Volume 4 "Killed by Death," "I Only Have Eyes for You," "Go Fish," "Becoming, Part One," and "Becoming, Part Two." Actually, I enjoyed "Go Fish" a lot more being able to read the inside jokes, production notes, and cut dialogue than I did actually watching that rather [weak] episode. Overall I think it was a good move to have divide the scripts for Season Two this way, so that the first two volumes do the Spike-Dru story arc and the last two the Angelus story arc. I was going to point out that all six of the episodes for the "BtVS" Season Two video tape set are from this latter arc, but now that we are in the world of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" on DVD this is no longer a concern.

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