

"Laissez les Fin Temps Rouler!" Let the End Times Roll!

A Buffy the Vampire Slayer Role Playing Game Series Bible

INTRODUCTION

Jess: Oh, sure, the other Slayer gets the Hellmouth. We get the Zombie Hole.
—1.12 *Leviathan Awakes*

LtETR is a Series concept for the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Role-Playing Game. This Series bible details the general course and themes of the premiere Season of the Series, as well as detailing aspects of the setting which will be common to many of the episodes therein. Sample Cast and Supporting Cast, as well as the Season Big Bad, are also detailed. These can be used either as is, to springboard your group into the action quickly, or as a guide to the types of characters your players may want to consider if generating original concepts for this Series, just as this 'Bible' can be a guide for Directors in developing their own Series concepts. Pick and choose ideas as you want, filling in the specifics as needed for your own Cast.

The default setting, as the name suggests, is New Orleans, Louisiana, in the latter half of 2001. Though this treatment and subsequent episodes are written to this assumption, changes needed to play the episodes in other settings, such as Sunnydale, will be mentioned where appropriate. As usual, information from this point on is for the Director of the production only. Cast members playing should proceed no further or risk spoiling their fun later on. It's not like we're going to pass out named and numbered copies of the script, but you have been warned!



CONTENTS

Here is the layout for the rest of the *LtETR* Bible, in case you're like us, and like to skim ahead for the juicy bits.

Concept – The underlying ideas that the rest of the Series springs from.

Slayer Mythology – Discussion of assumptions made about the Slayer that make the concept possible.

Season One Big Bad – Description and History of The Baron, a vampire possessed by the voodoo god of the dead.

Sample Cast Members – Characters developed for the playtest of *LtETR*.

Plot Overview and Episode Synopses – An outline of the plots being woven through the Season's twelve Episodes. While the Episodes may be presented in full later, we hope that enough information is presented here for a Director to



develop her own as well, either as replacements, or as supplements to listed episodes, expanding the Season further.

Setting Details – Description and plot hooks for many locations in New Orleans, and resources for further development.

Organizations – Sample Organizations for use in developing Supporting Cast, and other plot complications.

Lexicon – Some New Orleans terms.

Supporting Cast – Some prominent characters to use in your Series.

Voodoo Primer – Terms, names of spirits, and other information to give your series a little style.

Voodoo Rules for BtVSRPG – Unofficial rules for a different type of magic in your Series.

SERIES CONCEPT

Jess: So we have a vampire who's risen and gathering power.

Suzi: Who can't be staked.

Jake: Maybe his heart's just in the wrong place.

—1.3 *Enter the Baron*

LtETR concerns the awakening of certain powers of Chaos long aslumber, and the individuals called to fight them and their agents. These powers are prophesized to bring New Orleans to ruin in the next few years, causing it to collapse into a decay which will trigger a mystical overlap and merging with its demonic counterpart, Igr'ntna, an extradimensional city which is in turn a nexus for similar hell towns to be found in most demon dimensions. As with many prophecies, these are murky at best, hinting at the worst yet to come in veiled phrases and dire threats. One thing is clear, though, and that is that a Slayer is called to face increasing evils in the years leading up to the final reckoning.

After Buffy's death fighting Glory, once none of the Slayers-in-Training were called up to the Big Leagues, the Watchers' Council determined that New Orleans was likely to be where an unknown Slayer would be drawn to. The signs pointed to a new Slayer being called in New Orleans to deal with the prophecy involving the worship and actions of a being of Entropy enveloping the city and causing its destruction, as a prelude to that of the Earth, by the return of the Old Ones. They sent Ian Charleson to the area, under the guise of a visiting professorship, to locate and train the Slayer if she appeared. That summer, she did, only the Slayer turned out to be someone totally unexpected.

Our Slayer is Shannon O'Reilly, not quite 18 and a freshman pursuing marine biology at Tulane University in New Orleans. She discovers her calling during the Series Premiere at the Freshman Mixer, when a motorcycle gang of vampires attacks the outdoor setting. Ian has been keeping an eye on her to see if she is ready to accept the mantle of the Chosen One, and introduces himself, and on-the-job training, to Shannon right then and there. So she and her college friends get a rude and quick awakening to the realities of the world. Following that, and some less stressful explanations, a regular training schedule gets set up, and her formal training starts.

Only, here's the secret that will come back and bite them: she's not really the Slayer. Her barely 12-year-old sister, Erin, is.

Ian discovered the Slayer all right, as well as a real problem. He discovered a very young, scrawny girl, not at all ready physically or mentally for the challenges she must face. But he also discovered her older sister, and decided to risk an experiment that could provide a solution. Doctoring Erin's food, he is able to keep any signs of her strength hidden (as in the *BtVS* episode 3.12 Helpless), while using an alchemical formula to try and 'activate' the near-Slayer potential he hopes her sister Shannon has. In this way, he hopes to use Shannon as a smokescreen and delaying tactic, as he surreptitiously trains both sisters for the eventual day when Erin is old enough, or the situation is desperate enough, for the truth. When he sees the super-strength Shannon displays at the mixer, he knows it's worked. And just in time!

Since the O'Reilly sisters are orphans, he arranges through the Watcher's Council to adopt Erin, ostensibly to give him more control over Shannon. This gives him the legal authority to keep Erin under watch and safe (or as much as one can, with a teenage girl with budding Slayer powers), and also the opportunity to do the drugging necessary to maintain the ruse. To do this, though, he needs a wife, which the Council provides in the form of Emily, a Supporting Cast Member (or possible late addition to the Cast) who joins for several episodes in the middle of the Season. Just as he keeps the secret



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of who the Slayer actually is from Emily and the Council, she is under orders to follow his lead and keep their non-marriage a secret from the Cast. At least until it's appropriately funny, of course.

Director's Commentary:

Shannon is built on the standard Hero template. Her condition mimics the Slayer Quality exactly, so she could easily be replaced with another Slayer Archetype, such as the New Slayer from the Corebook. Due to the nature of her powers, however, the Director should be careful in assigning the role, to insure against any player backlash when the truth is revealed during play. Of course, the Director may wish to inform the player up front, or even keep the Slayer as a Supporting Cast Member for greater flexibility.

Ian is also a Hero. If he is to be replaced by an original character, the Director should maintain the horticulture and alchemy background element. Though he would probably be best run as a Supporting Cast Member, if done as a regular Cast Member the Director should insure that the Watcher's player is aware of the facts, and is willing to follow along. If this won't work, and you have someone dying to play a Watcher, bring them in as a White Hat Watcher under Ian's supervision, and possibly replacing Emily, if female (see Supporting Cast, pg. 39).

Erin is built as a White Hat, using the Slayer-in-Training Quality from the *Slayer's Handbook*, to simulate effects of the weakness drugs. She should remain a Supporting Cast Member throughout the First Season. Note that she still has the Slayer's Dreams.

WHEREFORE ART THOU SLAYER? — SERIES SLAYER MYTHOLOGY:

Jess: You could have business cards that say 'Shannon O'Reilly, Chosen One'.

Shannon: Yes, and I could leave them at all the restaurants we don't get to eat at.

—1.3 Enter The Baron

How did this Slayer situation come about? Like it says in the *Slayer's Handbook*, most Slayers are called between the ages of 15 and 18, seldom any earlier or later, and never at such a tender age as Erin was. To explain, a little background is in order. Obviously what follows is just one possible interpretation, with questionable canonicity. While left deliberately vague for expansion by the Director as necessary, feel free to throw it all out and use what works for your production. If you are running things fast and loose, it need never come up. But it never hurts to be prepared.

Slayers arose around the same time (geologically speaking, at least) as vampires, but Watchers came much later. We don't pin down exactly how they came about—the Director might need to specify that later, so for now it remains flexible. Thoughts include the intervention of a mother-goddess-type (which contrasts nicely with the later coercion of said champion by the male-dominated Watcher's Council), a god/force of entropy and chaos (perhaps even the First itself or the similar disincorporate entity behind things in this Series), or something as mundane as a neutral-player demon such as Whistler being sent by the Powers That Be to mix its demon DNA (or whatever) into the human gene pool to balance the contamination made by the existence of vampires. Whatever the cause, the result is that the potential for Slayers to pop up is given to humanity. But it's a random, chaotic process, dependent not only on human genetics, but the apparently VERY recessive demonic variety. (As Buffy might say, 'Your demon genetics don't resemble our Earth genetics...' OK, maybe not). So Slayers do occur from that point on, but very infrequently; maybe one in a century, maybe less often. You could call these 'Natural Slayers'.

Much, much, much later enter the precursors of the Watchers' Council to the scene. These shamans cast a ritual to bring order to this chaotic process. (Note: This is very similar to the explanation given in *Monster Smackdown*, but 'tweaked' for the purposes of this story.) They bind this naturally occurring phenomenon (explaining the chains Buffy saw on the First Slayer, eh?) into a regular occurrence. The naturally dormant 'demonic' genes are mystically activated in a new subject whenever the previous one expires. And, wherever possible, the Watchers' Council picks up the signs for when and where this occurs (in visions, prophecies, and the like). If you want to include the possibility of natural male Slayers, this is your chance to explain why they seem to never show up—they are excluded—the Council bound the ritual to young women, being easier for them to control (obviously they never saw the movie *Species*).



Running this forward to Buffy's time, we start to see a breakdown in the process. Buffy is revived, calling Kendra, a typical replacement Slayer (Council-trained and obedient through and through). Two Slayers? Unprecedented, apparently. And maybe dangerous for the Council's purposes—was something awakened in the process? Or worse, maybe the ritual was weakened by Buffy's return? Then when Kendra dies, a decidedly non-standard Slayer is called in the form of Faith. Was something (power/force/birthright or whatever) seeking another Buffy to further free its bonds? Run forward to the start of this Series: Buffy dies again during the summer of 2001, and is brought back by magic. Is another Slayer called? For our purposes, yes! But why Erin?

From what the Buffy creators have said in other media, indications are that Slayers disappeared around Buffy's time. Suppositions for this Series include the concept that Buffy's deaths and returns, and the activation of so many concurrent Slayers either released a primal force from the Watcher's binding, which promptly took its ball and went home, or simply weakened the Calling magic so it no longer functioned correctly. It will take centuries for the next naturally-occurring Slayer to be born, or for the magic to recharge sufficiently for the next Calling. In other words, the mojo goes wrong.

So, back in the present, we start to see the beginning of the end, as the faulty Calling magic activates Erin, a barely-12-year-old girl. Since Slayerdom and its incumbent powers are partially genetic, she is very sub-par for even the newest Slayer, and will be until puberty fully kicks in. In the meantime, she's in for a world of hurt once the truth comes out. Survival, unaided, just isn't in the cards.

SEASON ONE BIG BAD: THE BARON

Pete: So we're not just looking for a vampire.

Suzi: 'Cause that would just be hard.

Pete: We're looking for a magic voodoo vampire.

Suzi: 'Cause that's impossible.

—1.3 *Enter The Baron*

Henri LeBlanc was a young New Orleans octroon in the mid 19th century. For years he served his community loyally, eventually becoming houngan (priest) for a powerful mambo (priestess). In the years following the Civil War, and amid all of the other hardships placed on the area, bands of bokors (evil sorcerers) came to the city in number to take advantage of the lower classes. Henri strayed from the accepted ways of his teachers, and turned to some of the same Petro tricks of the bokors in an effort to fight their growing influence. For his efforts, he was turned out by his mambo after he began using these darker aspects of Voodoo to combat those who were threatening his flock. He was turned into a vampire shortly thereafter, and took his revenge on the bokors, and then his parishioners. The new vamp managed to call up a Guede, the darker Petro aspect of the Loa Baron Samedi, which possessed him. Samedi **LIKED** being in the dead body - it's dead, after all, and it doesn't wear out like most human bodies do, so he didn't have to leave after a few hours. The demon in the vamp and Samedi got along just fine, and got the other vamps (among other creatures) to do their bidding. Thus The Baron was born.

As a 'ridden vampire', The Baron is all but undustable in his current configuration. Stakes are just a nuisance, beheadings don't seem to take (think Deacon Frost after the Blood God took him in *Blade*), and crosses are a part of his trappings, so no good there. Holy Water, too. In fact, most of the vampiric weaknesses are sadly lacking, though he still requires an invite to enter a dwelling, and while the sun won't turn him to dust, exposure to its rays hurts just as badly so he avoids it.

All of the houngans and mambos of the time ganged up to oppose him, led by the aged Queen of Voodoo, Marie Laveau, herself. They eventually imprisoned him inside Marie Laveau's tomb. To this day there's a common custom in New Orleans of leaving offerings at her tomb and scratching a cross (an 'X', really) into the side for good luck, even though there is some debate over who is really buried there—most tombs in New Orleans are for entire families, and are reused generation after generation. That is actually a bastardization of the real reason, which is to keep the rituals empowered that not only keep The Baron trapped, but use The Baron's presence to make the area unpalatable to vampires in general, so that New Orleans has had a relatively vamp-free century or so, which the Scooby gang will discover through research.



With the people continually scratching crosses, the spell should have lasted forever, but our friend Entropy crept up into the ground beneath The Baron, and weakened that, the only face of the tomb that people **COULDN'T** scratch a cross in. It gave through, and released him into the waiting tentacles of the Leviathan below. He sets about rebuilding his power and attracting vampires and darker elements back to town, as well as exercising his abilities to raise and command the undead. However, when he tries to summon Loa and spirits to inhabit other vampires, he finds the paths blocked. Papa Legba, who could be called a chief among the Loa and guardian of the roads they must take, has made it impossible for the same circumstances that created The Baron to recur. His dreams of an army of Barons thwarted, The Baron turns towards other means to achieve the power and destruction he craves. He settles on the idea of raising the Leviathan during Mardi Gras, unaware that it has been suggested to him as a means of quickening the coming decay of the city.

Director's Commentary:

Before combating the bokors, Henri removed his own soul to protect himself against their magics. A key element leading up to the Season Finale could involve finding this out (possibly from the Loa Marie Laveau), and discovering a way to reintegrate it into him, forcing The Baron out, and making him vulnerable to staking again (or let him go all weepy with that Anne Rice routine, if one wanted to make him a Cast Member for Season Two). If the game is set other than in New Orleans, then 'Henry' could have been a local sorcerer before being vamped, and called up a possession demon, like Eyghon the Sleepwalker (from the *BtVS* episode 2.8 The Dark Age, see *Monster Smackdown* for further details), who found the soul-free vampire body a perfect vessel to set up shop in ever since. You might want to modify some of his resistances in that case, though, in regards to the religious trappings.

Appearance: The Baron appears as an athletic light-skinned black man in his late twenties, wearing a black tux and top hat, but no shoes. His dark sunglasses are missing the right lens, and fail to conceal the fact that when he goes into vampface, his entire head turns into a gleaming white skull with fangs.

THE BARON (HENRI LEBLANC)

Character Type Experienced Hero (Loa-Possessed Uber-Vamp Big Bad)

(Note: Once the Baron Samedi Loa is banished from him, the character should be readjusted to simply Hero Type)

Attributes

Strength 8

Dexterity 6

Constitution 7

Intelligence 3

Perception 3

Willpower 5

Life Points 95

Drama Points 20

Qualities

Attractiveness +2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Tests; +5 to Initiative)

Hard to Kill 7 (+21 Life Points; +7 on Survival Tests, 2 from Vamp Quality)

Nerves of Steel (+4 on Fear Tests; only necessary under very unusual circumstances)

Photographic Memory (+1 to fact rolls; +1 to 3 where memory involved)

Sorcery 5 (+5 to spellcasting; add to Willpower for telekinesis; quick casting)

Vampire (adds certain bonuses and vulnerabilities; 1/5 damage from bullets; able to heal 7 Life Points per day from fire damage, 7 per hour otherwise)

Drawbacks

Bad Luck 2 (once per game session, Director subtracts -2 from any roll or a total of -2 spread among more than one roll)



Tragic Love (*develops romantic relationships that end badly; -3 Willpower check to follow head over heart*)
Showoff
Reckless

Skills
Acrobatics 5
Art 3
Computers 0
Crime 5
Doctor 3
Driving 0
Getting Medieval 4
Gun Fu 0
Influence 3
Knowledge 3
Kung Fu 3
Languages 2 (French, Spanish)
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 3
Occultism 5
Science 2
Sports 0
Wild Card 0



Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Grapple	11	—	Resisted by Dodge
Kick	8	18	Bash
Punch	9	16	Bash
Toss	12	8	Bash; must Grapple first

OUR CAST

First a word of thanks to the players who originated some of these characters, and helped shape the Season as it turned out. My wife, Valerie (Suzi, Debbie), Mark and Jenn Friedman (Jake and Jess), Katie Kloczek (Emily), Kevin Mowery (Pete) and Aaron Sturgill (Nikolai). Thanks, guys! Now, on with the show!

SHANNON O'REILLY

Shannon: So how do we find the sucking place? I can't believe I just said that.
—1.6 *A Stalk in the Park*

Casting Note: Jewel Staite (We cast her before she showed up on *Firefly*. Really!!)

She's the newly-Called Slayer, a fresh-faced redheaded girl not quite 18. A freshman planning to study marine biology, she was orphaned at age 10 and grew up, with her sister Erin, in the system of Catholic schools and orphanages in New Orleans. Her older brother is starting to make a name for himself out-of-state as a computer game developer. He also inspired his sisters to take karate from an early age, which along with her love of competitive Irish dance, helped prepare Shannon for the physical life she was apparently destined for. These extra-curricular also activities help balance her otherwise nerdish tendencies, which saw her get great grades in high school, but kept her from developing a lot of deep friendships. Or romances. She spent a lot of time volunteering at the Aquarium instead. She's all set to blossom in college.



Shannon has often viewed her little sister as an unwelcome weight around her neck, making her always the one in the role of the ‘grown-up’, though now that she’s out on her own, she’s starting to mellow. At least until Erin starts hanging around the dorm rooms, too, that is. Regardless, she’ll be fiercely protective of her, and try to shield her from the realities of the Slayer’s life, but isn’t very good at keeping secrets from Erin.

Director’s Commentary:

Shannon’s Slayer abilities are actually from alchemical ingredients that the Watcher secretly introduced to her food before the Pilot Episode begins. Though she is referred to as such during the Season, she’s not really the Slayer – her sister is, though both are unaware of this. These induced changes put a strain on her, and she begins acting more rashly and impulsively starting about halfway through the Season. Towards the end of the Season, she will become violent, with rages that are nearly uncontrollable. She may take out this rage on the Watcher, once she realizes his part in it, and leave the group after the Season Finale. By this time, the changes are self-perpetuating (so any one playing her doesn’t have to fiddle with the points), but she has a physical need for some of the compounds, leading her to possibly be one of the Bads for Season Two.



Shannon could be played as a Cast Member, but even more would have to be worked out with the player beforehand (perhaps a hint that something is not kosher with her background, and a deal to switch to Erin when the character implodes and goes rogue in the Season Two?).

Since Shannon’s powers kick in during the Pilot Episode, they are not at full strength, and the rules on Becoming a Slayer from the *Slayer’s Handbook* should be used (i.e. reduce her strength, dexterity and constitution by one for the duration of the pilot).

Character Type Hero

Attributes

Strength 6

Dexterity 7

Constitution 6

Intelligence 5

Perception 4

Willpower 5

Life Points 73

Drama Points 10

Qualities

Attractiveness +2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Tests; +5 to Initiative)

Hard to Kill 5 (+15 Life Points; +5 on Survival Tests)

Nerves of Steel (+4 on Fear Tests; only necessary under very unusual circumstances)

Nerd (bonus to two Mental Attributes and one skill; -1 on all Social Tasks)



Slayer (adds bonuses to Attributes, Qualities and Drawbacks already figured, heals 6 Life Points per hour)

Drawbacks

Adversary (Lots) 5 (occupational hazard; Slayers attract enemies)
Secret (Slayer) 3 (Risk Life/Limb/Lymph)
Obligation (duties of the Slayer, to the death)
Reckless
Addiction (Slayer Serum) 2

Skills

Acrobatics 4
Art 3
Computers 0
Crime 1
Doctor 0
Driving 0
Getting Medieval 4
Gun Fu 0
Influence 3
Knowledge 2
Kung Fu 4
Languages 0
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 2
Occultism 1
Science 3
Sports 1
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Axe	11	30	Slash/stab
Crossbow	11	16	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	8	16	x5 vs vamps
Dodge	11	—	Defense action
Grapple	13	—	Resisted by Dodge
Jump Kick	8	21	Bash; Acrobatics + Dexterity roll first
Kick	10	14	Bash
(Groin Kick)	7	14	Ouch!
Punch	11	12	Bash
Spin Kick	9	16	Bash
Stake	11	12	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	8	12	x5 vs vamps
Sweep Kick	10	6	Bash; target prone
Sword	11	24	Slash/stab
(Decapitation)	6	24	x5 damage
Thrown Stake	10	10	Slash/stab
(Through the Heart)	7	10	x5 vs vamps
Toss	8	6	Bash; must Grapple first



IAN CHARLSON

Jess: 'Cause we're at the Boot, and some of the band members are funky.

Pete: Others are vampires.

Jess: (off Ian's look) We discovered it on a lark, when we were playing with mirrors. And stuff that you don't need to know about.

Ian: (agreeing) And probably don't want to.

—1.4 No Fury Like

Casting Note: Neil Dickson (Professor Ian Matheson in *She-Wolf of London*)



The Watcher. A dark-haired Englishman in his mid-30's, Ian was recruited by the Watcher's Council at age 20 for his uncanny knowledge of, and interest in, herbal and folk remedies and their precursors in the alchemy of ages past. Better at potions and brews, he has participated in some practical examples of sorcery in the past. He brings along a substantial occult library, skewed more to his specialties, though he is light on texts dealing with the Slayer, as they are still in transit from Sunnydale after the death of the previous Chosen One. He was sent to discover the new Slayer in the guise of a guest lecturer in horticulture at Tulane, and he spent the summer acquainting himself with the area by looking for her.

Because of the prophecies uncovered by the Council, and firmly believing that a fully capable Slayer is needed in the city for years to come, Ian was not prepared to discover upon his arrival to New Orleans that the signs pointed to an immature 12-year-old as the one Called.

Using his knowledge of Slayer mythology, and his own alchemical expertise, he implemented his (unauthorized and) desperate plan to try and 'induce' Slayer abilities in a near

relative who could take Erin's place until she matured enough to be properly trained and powerful. He knows he's condemning another young girl to the fate of a Slayer, but he's rationalized that Shannon would want to spare her sister the death that would quickly befall her in the current situation.

To follow through with his plans, he initiates the adoption of Erin, to keep her close and under his control. He uses Council resources to do this, with the explanation that it will help him keep control of Shannon, whom he reports as the true Slayer. This causes an additional problem, as she's nearly 18, and time is ripe for the Cruciamentum (see 3.12 Helpless or the *Slayer's Handbook*). He is able to delay them, citing her recent Calling and lack of training as rounds for a dispensation. He knows that excuse won't last forever, but hopes for enough time for Erin to mature enough to take her true position. Also, when suspicions are raised late in the Season that he may be hiding something from the group, Ian may reveal the Council ceremony to the Scoobies in an effort to throw them off the scent (his non-marriage to Emily could serve the same purpose, if it is still a secret).

Director's Commentary:

These actions will come to haunt him when Shannon learns the truth during the Season Finale, and potentially puts him in the hospital. He will likely be replaced as Watcher next season, when this comes to light, but will remain in town to try and set things right. The Watcher should remain a member of the Supporting Cast unless you have a player who can, well, play along.



Character Type Hero

Attributes

Strength 3
Dexterity 3
Constitution 3
Intelligence 5
Perception 4
Willpower 3

Life Points 49
Drama Points 10

Qualities

Watcher (*bonus to one Physical Attribute and Getting Medieval; +2 to Supernatural Learning Rolls*)
Occult Library 2 (*modest collection, containing D10 + 30 spells*)
Resources 2
Resistance (Poison) 2 (*+2 to constitution rolls*)
Photographic Memory (*+1 to fact rolls; +1 to 3 where memory involved*)
Hard to Kill 5 (*+15 Life Points; +5 on Survival Tests*)
Nerves of Steel (*+4 on Fear Tests; only necessary under very unusual circumstances*)
Contacts 2

Drawbacks

Adversary (Assorted) 2 (*hazard by association; a Slayer's allies attract enemies*)
Zealot (Role of the Slayer)(*willing to sacrifice all for goal*)
Secret (Shannon's Slayerdom) 3 (*Risk Life/Limb/Lymph*)
Major Obligation (The Slayer's Watcher) (*More than Own Life*)

Skills

Acrobatics 2
Art 0
Computers 0
Crime 2
Doctor 1
Driving 1
Getting Medieval 3
Gun Fu 0
Influence 2
Knowledge 3
Kung Fu 3
Languages 3 (Latin, Greek, Arabic)
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 2
Occultism 3
Science 2
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	5	—	Defense action
Punch	6	6	Bash
Kick	5	8	Bash
Stake	6	6	Slash/Stab
(Through the Heart)	3	6	x5 vs vamps
Crossbow	6	16	Slash/Stab



ERIN O'REILLY

Jess: OK, where is it? Your stash of voodoo supplies? I looked everywhere.

Erin: I don't keep stuff like that in the house.

Jess: So... You hide it on the ledge outside your window?

Erin: No... I hide it on the ledge outside your window. It's wider.

—1.5 *And So It Begins*

Casting Note: Zena Grey (from *Snow Day*)

Shannon's 12-year-old-sister, a student at Shannon's and Jessamine's alma mater, Academy of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic girls' school on St. Charles. She starts having the Slayer's prophetic dreams during the summer, seeing both Nikolai and Ian in those visions before actually meeting them. After seeing Nikolai at the library down the street from her school, she becomes infatuated with him, and spends her afternoons bothering him, rather than her sister, for a while.



She barely remembers her parents, having spent the majority of her life under the nuns at St. Elizabeth's. While outwardly she follows all of the expected Catholic norms, she's developing quite the wild streak, and learning just how to hide it. Like sneaking out to visit friends NOT stuck in a dreary old orphanage. And back in again. Once she discovers Jess' involvement with voodoo, she drops her constant hampering of her sister's activities and begins to model herself after this new 'sister'.

This is not to say she isn't a good, obedient student in school. She is. And she has taken many of the same physical activities as her sister, but is more interested in soccer than dance at this point. While Shannon may try to hide her life as the Slayer from Erin, Ian will find a way to introduce Erin to some preliminary training, too. It's only a matter of time.

Director's Commentary:

She is the real Slayer, though too young to have fully developed strength or other qualities. The Watcher, using other alchemical preparations in her food, suppresses her heightened abilities. She will train by her sister's side, supposedly for self-defense, but in reality preparing for her true destiny.

Towards the end of the season the Petro Spirit Erzulie of the Red Eyes, the Voodoo Loa (god/spirit) of feminine beauty and lust, will possess her. As a result, she will temporarily be transformed into her mid-twenties, and her Slayer powers will be fully active for that period. Erin could potentially be a PC starting in Season Two, but for the current Season, she should remain Supporting Cast to give the Director the greatest flexibility.

Character Type White Hat

Attributes

Strength 1

Dexterity 3

Constitution 4

Intelligence 3

Perception 4

Willpower 4



Life Points 39
Drama Points 20

Qualities

Slayer-In-Training (*bonus to two Physical Attributes and 4 skills already figured*)
Hard to Kill 3 (+9 Life Points; +3 on Survival Tests)
Nerd (*bonus to two Mental Attributes and one skill; -1 on all Social Tasks*)
Good Luck 3 (*once per game session, add +3 to any Task or a total of +3 spread among more than one Task*)
Psychic Visions (*sees future in visions or dreams, when the Director wants*)

Drawbacks

Adversary (Assorted) 1 (*part of the Slayer-In-Training Quality*)
Obligation (Watcher) 1 (*part of the Slayer-In-Training Quality*)
Teenager
Reckless
Obsession (Occult) 2
Covetous (Ambitious) 1

Skills

Acrobatics 3
Art 2
Computers 0
Crime 1
Doctor 0
Driving 0
Getting Medieval 2
Gun Fu 0
Influence 3
Knowledge 3
Kung Fu 2
Languages 2 (French, Latin)
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 3
Occultism 3
Science 1
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	—	Defense action
Punch	5	2	Bash
Stake	5	2	Slash/Stab
(Through the Heart)	2	2	x5 vs vamps





JACOB 'JAKE' RUTH

Jake: I like my danger, you know, safe.

Jess: We're a little paranoid right now.

Jake: Yeah, we just had midterms.

—1.5 *And So It Begins*

Casting Note: Jason Lee (pick a Kevin Smith movie)

An undecided freshman slacker from Seattle, who seems more interested in his ever-present laptop computer than in his classes. He does the minimum amount of work possible, and carries along a sketch pad and pretends to draw (doodle, actually) to make it seem like he's busy. And with that much invested in the persona, he decided to go ahead and sign up for some art classes while he was at it. Seems to come from money, and has his own car (a jeep). His unceasing video game playing is augmented by an encyclopedic memory, great manual dexterity, and unflinching nerves. And his senses are sharper than possibly any of the Scoobs (save maybe Shaggy, in search of a kitchen).

Director's Commentary:

The Zeppo of the group, who is full of potential (and qualities) but few talents at this point. He puts on a show of knowing computers inside and out, but is really just a script-kiddie with good contacts in the hacker underground. His parents went to Tulane, and he had no say in the matter – he was going, too. The reasons why will unfold as the source of his family's money comes to light.

If being replaced by an original character, the key points to cover are out-of-state origin, flush with family money, but little to no ambition. He plans to skate through life, until his worldview becomes seriously challenged by the events to come.

Character Type White Hat

Attributes

Strength 2

Dexterity 3

Constitution 2

Intelligence 3

Perception 3

Willpower 2

Life Points 26

Drama Points 20

Qualities

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Tests; +5 to Initiative)

Nerves of Steel (+4 on Fear Tests; only necessary under very unusual circumstances)

Photographic Memory (+1 to fact rolls; +1 to 3 where memory involved)

Situational Awareness (+2 on Perception Tests to sense trouble)

Acute Sense (Vision) (+3 to vision rolls)

Resources 1

Contacts 2



Drawbacks
Fear of Rejection
Lazy
Cowardly
Obsession 2 (computer games, escapist fantasy)

Skills
Acrobatics 0
Art 1
Computers 2
Crime 2
Doctor 0
Driving 1
Getting Medieval 0
Gun Fu 0
Influence 2
Knowledge 3
Kung Fu 1
Languages 0
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 3
Occultism 1
Science 1
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	3	—	Defense action
Punch	3	4	
Stake	3	4	
(Through the Heart)	-1	4	x5 vs vamps



PETE MALRAUX

Pete: It's like a Pandora's box of ideas. All the ones that will kill us fly out first.
—1.7 Change of Perspective

Casting Note: Vin Diesel (*Pitch Black*, *XXX*, *The Fast and the Furious*)

A 20-year-old New Orleans quadroon starting college late on a minority scholarship, who has spent his life running from his ability to see the dead. He works part time at a small motorcycle garage, and rooms with Jake at Macgruder Hall. Tall and very strong, he acquired a reputation as a 'bad boy' to overcome the inherent weirdness that grew up around him when he couldn't control his talent. More 'TV bad' than actually criminal, once he finds people who are as weird as he is, his loyalty will know no bounds.

He spent some time in a psych ward in his early teens, after a disastrous night spent in a haunted house. During this stay, he briefly met Jess, who was having her own issues with possession at the time. He eventually learned to avoid highly haunted areas, and was able to tune out most of the rest. Practical, he knows how to get things done in the city, above board or not. He's not above telling his roommate, 'We're going, you're driving,' when Jake is pulling his shy act.

Estranged from his immediate family due to the unpleasantness associated with his visions, his closest family member is a widowed aunt, who has seen stranger things in her day. He tries to make it back to her place at least once a week for dinner.

Director's Commentary:

Any character replacing Pete should have the talent to see/talk to the dead (an application of the Medium Quality from the *Magic Box*), as well as his reluctance to use it. The character should also be a native of the city, and know its underside a little. This is the character most likely to accompany the Slayer on her patrols.

Character Type White Hat

Attributes

Strength 4

Dexterity 3

Constitution 2

Intelligence 2

Perception 2

Willpower 2

Life Points 40

Drama Points 20

Qualities

Hard to Kill 2 (+6 Life Points; +2 on Survival Tests)

Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Tests; +5 to Initiative)

Attractiveness +1 (+1 on all Social Tasks)



Natural Toughness (4 Armor vs. blunt attacks)
Medium (sees dead people and talks to them, when the Director wants)
Contacts 2 (Aunt Lizzie, Bob the Cycle Shop Owner)

Drawbacks
Fear of Rejection
Recurring Nightmares
Resources –1

Skills
Acrobatics 2
Art 0
Computers 0
Crime 2
Doctor 0
Driving 1
Getting Medieval 2
Gun Fu 0
Influence 2
Knowledge 0
Kung Fu 5
Languages 0
Mr. Fix-It 3
Notice 0
Occultism 1
Science 0
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	5	—	Defense action
Punch	8	8	Bash
Stake	5	8	Slash/Stab
(Through the Heart)	2	8	x5 vs vamps
Choke	9	3	Asphyxiation
Break Neck	9	16	Bash; must Grapple
Grapple	10	—	Resisted by Dodge
Take Down	9	4	Bash; knocks target down





JESSAMINE PITOT

Jess: Pardon me if I'm just a little wiggled out by hearing this right after I found that information.

Suzi: You're pardoned.

Jess: I'm a 12 on the terror scale of 1 to 10. Let's go.

—1.1 Freshman Disorientation

Casting Note: Mira Sorvino (*Replacement Killers*, among others)

A 20-year-old anthropology junior from an upper middle class Creole New Orleans family. The Pitots supplied New Orleans second mayor, and the Pitot House Museum maintains a snapshot of upper class urban life in the early 19th century. In a family with generational stakes in construction, banking, and their own law firm, Jess is a definite dark horse. As a child, she suffered a demonic 'possession' which lasted years and eventually required an exorcism.

During one of her occasional stays in a discreet mental facility run by the Church, she briefly met Pete. After her cure, she became obsessed with the supernatural, particularly with spirits and possessions. She became a frequent visitor in the

Old Ursuline Convent archives, looking for other occurrences of her 'affliction', and eventually turned to Voodoo in addition to her devout Catholic upbringing.

While still close to her father, and eldest brother, as well as her two younger siblings, she is often at odds with her mother (who was terribly embarrassed by the whole possession situation, insisting Jess must have been making it up) and her older sisters (who side with her mom). Not having anyone close to confide in, or even talk things over, have taken their toll on her perceptions of people. This leads to a little thing called paranoia when first meeting people, but once she discovers that she isn't the only supernatural odd duck in the bunch her mental health takes a turn for the better. She may even start to see Shannon and Suzi as surrogate sisters (though only God knows how she'll react to Erin!).

Director's Commentary:

Jess is somewhat familiar with the surface religious workings of the city, and has access to some resources as an upperclassman that the others will not. Her position working for Professor Braid in the anthropology department could lead to the group's involvement in the mummy kidnapping in Episode Two. Her possession experience left her with physical changes (Hard to Kill) as well as an untrained basic level of sorcery. Jess immediately takes to the learning aspect of being a Watcher, and will be groomed to join the Council by Ian. Any character replacing her should be made with those qualities in mind.

Character Type White Hat

Attributes

Strength 2

Dexterity 2

Constitution 2

Intelligence 4

Perception 3

Willpower 4



Life Points 38
Drama Points 20

Qualities

Hard to Kill 4 (+12 Life Points; +4 on Survival Tests)
Nerd (bonus to two Mental Attributes and one skill; -1 on all Social Tasks)
Resources 1
Sorcery 1 (+1 to spellcasting; add to Willpower for telekinesis; quick casting)

Drawbacks

Adversary (Possessing Demon) 3
Fear of Commitment 1
Secret (Fear of Loss of Control/Possession) 2
Recurring Nightmares
Obsession (Occult – Spirits and demonic possession) 2

Skills

Acrobatics 1
Art 0
Computers 0
Crime 0
Doctor 2
Driving 0
Getting Medieval 0
Gun Fu 0
Influence 2
Knowledge 4
Kung Fu 0
Languages 3 (French, Spanish, Latin)
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 2
Occultism 3
Science 0
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	—	Defense action
Punch	5	2	
Stake	5	2	
(Through the Heart)	2	2	x5 vs vamps



SUSAN 'SUZI' HUMAN

Ian: Do you want us to come with you?

Pete: Backup would be good, yes.

Suzi: That was the correct answer.

Ian: I'll come along, certainly. And Suzi...

Suzi: Insists upon it.

—1.3 Enter the Baron

Casting Note: Rachel Leigh Cook (*She's All That*, and more!)

A short, dark-haired freshman from Washington DC, who is big into activist causes, both political and ecological (especially ecological—she's a tree hugger). She's also a practicing witch, which she tries to keep quiet about in mixed company. Though she's potentially quite strong, magically, she knows few true spells. Very outgoing and sociable, she may be the initial glue that brings the gang together, as she drags them all along to the Boot. She rooms with Shannon at Macgruder.

Director's Commentary:

Suzi was originally created as a Supporting Cast Member designed by the Director to be 'Doyle'd' mid-way through the season (see Subplots, pg. 24). She's to be killed during one of her activist outings off screen from the others to inject some tragedy and irony (as one of the more capable characters, when her death is not related to the big bad) into the season. She will already have begun a tentative relationship with Pete, placing her at one corner of a love triangle with him and the Slayer at the others. She is meant to give the group some magical power early on, until Jess or Nikolai develop their potential further.

That being said, Suzi could easily be another Cast Member. If so, the Director should work with her player regarding the planned death, perhaps offering Suzi in place of a character concept that would be difficult to integrate into the initial group, but could be used once Suzi's death has occurred. Another alternative would be to introduce Suzi's twin, Debbie (who is a scientific prodigy, or anything else desired as a contrast), after the death.

Character Type White Hat

Attributes

Strength 1

Dexterity 3

Constitution 2

Intelligence 3

Perception 2

Willpower 4

Life Points 22

Drama Points 20

Qualities

Attractiveness +2 (+2 on all Social Tasks)

Resources +1

Contacts 2

Sorcery 3 (+3 to spellcasting; add to Willpower for telekinesis; quick casting)



Drawbacks
Adversary (Vamps and Demons) 3
Showoff
Reckless
Honorable (Pacifist) 2
Fear of Commitment 1

Skills
Acrobatics 3
Art 1
Computers 0
Crime 0
Doctor 0
Driving 1
Getting Medieval 1
Gun Fu 0
Influence 3
Knowledge 3
Kung Fu 2
Languages 0
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 2
Occultism 3
Science 0
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	6	—	Defense action
Punch	5	2	Bash
Stake	4	2	Slash/Stab
(Through the Heart)	1	2	x5 vs vamps



NIKOLAI SEVRUK

Jess: He's an antiquarian.
Erin: Not some flea-market bimbo!
—1.6 *A Stalk in the Park*



Casting Note: Brendan Fehr (*Roswell*)

A 25-year-old Russian national, recently arrived to work as the night manager at Obscure Alternatives, an antique store in the French Quarter. He also has a day job at a branch of the public library in the Garden District. Blessed with visions of the future and the past, these have led to him to join (and later leave under mysterious circumstances involving an addiction they helped him acquire) the Archivists (A mystical organization like the Watchers, without the responsibilities, and strictly in it for the research. They grew out of the Hospitallers who went to Russia a few centuries back at the request (and bequest) of the Tsar.), and later to leave his country to pursue his destiny in New Orleans.

As an Archivist, he worked at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, helping to catalog and test the collection. Something happened during one of his drug-induced visions that released a demon from one of the artifacts. The demon escaped, but not before marking the lad so he could be tracked, no matter where he went. He doesn't know what it was, or what it may want in the future.

Director's Commentary:

Nikolai is intended to be the outsider, helping the group, but not really being one of them, initially. His visions will lead him to them, and should prompt him to help (he may interpret the Slayer as his future lover), as he sees it as his destiny. After the Pilot Episode, Nikolai might try to come to an arrangement with the local chapter of the Archivists to keep an eye on, and report to them about, the Slayer. The money he gets from this could enable him to quit one of his jobs after a few months, or possibly even set up his own store, if he can overcome his addiction. The relationship will also give him access to esoteric volumes and texts for research he can use to help the Slayer.

His addiction is pure opium, not heroin, to which he was introduced to by the Archivists to boost his prophetic powers. He might be able to kick the physical addiction, but he gave up his former membership in the group rather than give up the added power it gives his visions. This is a rare substance, and the only current source he's found is via one of the bartenders at the campus bar, the Boot.

Nikolai is another character that could easily end up as a Supporting Cast Member. His visions could be replaced by Erin, but are what give him the reason to come to the States, so new rationales would have to be developed. His addiction could be downplayed or removed. He should remain a resource that lies mainly outside of the core group, with his reporting duties bringing a duality to his character, an opposition to the group much like the Watcher.

Character Type White Hat
Attributes
Strength 2
Dexterity 3



Constitution 2
Intelligence 4
Perception 4
Willpower 1

Life Points 26
Drama Points 20

Qualities
Fast Reaction Time (+1 on Fear Tests; +5 to Initiative)
Archivist (bonus to one Physical Attribute and Getting Medieval; +2 to Supernatural Learning Rolls)
Psychic Visions (sees future in visions or dreams, when the Director wants)
Contact (Archivist Chapterhouse) 2 (allies help in any way they can)

Drawbacks
Addiction (Opium) 5
Adversary (Supernatural) 2
Misfit (-2 to Influence Tasks)
Secret (Addiction/Ex-Archivist) 1 (risk reputation/livelihood)

Skills
Acrobatics 2
Art 3
Computers 0
Crime 0
Doctor 1
Driving 0
Getting Medieval 4
Gun Fu 0
Influence 0
Knowledge 4
Kung Fu 3
Languages 2 (Russian, Latin)
Mr. Fix-It 0
Notice 4
Occultism 4
Science 0
Sports 0
Wild Card 0

Maneuvers	Bonus	Base Damage	Notes
Dodge	5	—	Defense action
Punch	6	4	Bash
Stake	7	4	Slash/Stab
(Through the Heart)	4	4	x5 vs vamps



SEASON ONE THEMES:

Loss of Innocence, Duality (good intentions/evil deeds) of Life and Being, Betrayal of Trust, and the Strength of Loyalty and Perseverance.

SEASON ONE OVERVIEW:

The plan is to have several ‘little’ bads First Season, including the gradual introduction of the Entropy-personified idea (though that really is a multi-Season plot), some of which will be linked back to The Baron.

Jess: Maybe we'd be better off trying to separate the vampire from the Loa.

Suzi: Fine, Jess. Make sense.

Jess: Well, I figured if I just kept throwing out all the stupid ideas that came to me, eventually I'd find a smart one.

—1.4 No Fury Like

Erin, as a Supporting Cast Member, can be used (sparingly, one hopes) to steer the Season from time to time in the direction of the overarching plan. One recurring subplot involves Erin getting interested in voodoo. She will make sure to dog the steps of any Cast Member knowledgeable in the subject (or barring that, regular sorcery) to learn all she can, but will do so on her own as well. This connects to another subplot with one of her friends who is the younger brother of Tom Warner, from the *BtVS* episode 2.5 Reptile Boy. Young Master Warner follows his brother's instructions and manipulates Erin and other magically endowed friends into performing a ritual that causes them, one by one, to become personifications of voodoo spirits reflecting some aspect of their personalities. The Warners will encounter some very great luck because of this, and when Tom shows up towards the end of the Season, the coincidences may be so great as to make him seem to be the true Big Bad of the Season.

One of these episodes will involve Erin's possession, causing her to grow older—old enough for one of the Scoobies she has a crush on, and old enough to activate her full Slayer powers. So for a while, we will have two Slayers, essentially. This is a clue to the Cast about the truth, though they may just interpret it as part of the wish fulfillment part of the Loa's powers. Things may go back to normal when it's reversed, or our girl Erin may remain slightly ‘matured’ and made available as another regular Cast Member for Season Two.

Shannon will get increasingly edgy and short tempered as the Season goes on, due to side effects of the formula she's been taking. If being played as a regular Cast Member, this should be worked out with the player in advance, so the progression to ‘less thinking, more hitting’ can be telegraphed to the others. If you are brave enough to keep the player in the dark as to the reason behind this, you could always mask this in a discussion of the despair and ennui that most Slayers run into, as described in the *Slayer's Handbook*. But during the Season One Finale, Shannon will become fully aware of Ian's deception, and that it's been the cause of the personality changes she's been experiencing. She will help take care of the Season Baddie, but will also probably trounce Ian in the process, and may leave the group behind, setting up shop on her own.

Ian will probably survive Shannon's departure, but depending on how the rest of the group reacts, may end up being replaced by a new, younger Watcher when the review board comes to rip him another one. So Season Two begins potentially Watcher-less (or Watcher-lite, at least, if Emily is left in charge), with Shannon hunting vamps on her own to sustain herself (since one of the alchemical ingredients for her potion is vampire's blood—she actually DOES have an addiction to the blood and the power it engenders at that point—I know, I know, how very WW of us) and acting as the occasional belligerent thorn in the side of the Scoobies. And the true Slayer Erin, still just 13, is still in no position to take over, and will rely on their guidance and help.

Season Two will include a millennia-old worshiper of the Entropy-being as the prime villain (assuming Shannon doesn't grab that spot for awhile), and the Season Finale should involve them trying to reunite with Shannon to prevent a ritual to speed up the natural decay forces of entropy in the city. Should they succeed, they will discover they did too well, and reversed time's arrow to end up in the New Orleans of the 1700s. And so on to Season Three... but we're getting a bit ahead of ourselves. Let's pull back for now and look at some subplots you may want to integrate into your Cast's backgrounds, and then we present a summary of the proposed 12 Episode Season.



CAST SUBPLOTS AND HOOKS:

The Psychic: Sample Character Nikolai

If a Cast Member has psychic visions, then these visions will occasionally intersect with Erin's. Erin will have been aware of this person for sometime, having seen her in dreams for months before their first meeting. If the Cast Member is male, then Erin will instantly develop a crush on him, and he will have had other visions in the past of a romantic relationship with a red-haired woman. When he meets the Slayer, he realizes the dream woman looks much like her, only a little older. In fact, this is a foreshadowing of Erin's possession by Erzulie in *The Siren's Call*.

The Medium: Sample Character Pete

He sees dead people. And talks with them too! Using the Medium Quality from the *Magic Box*, one of our Cast can interact with ghosts and spirits, at the Director's discretion. This ability led to a troubled youth, and probably kept him isolated from others. If originally from New Orleans (if not, maybe the Psychic above had this experience), a stunt as a youngster had him sleeping in an abandoned haunted house in the French Quarter with friends (see Raven's, pg. 34), leading to the most harrowing night of his life (until meeting the Slayer, D'uh!). The incident may have unhinged him for awhile, leading to a temporary stay in St. Mary's Home, a Catholic institute for disturbed children. He fears losing control of those abilities again, and avoids areas he knows to be heavily populated with ghosts, which will become extremely difficult after the magical solution to *Mummy Business*.

The Vodounista: Sample Character Jessamine

For the Cast Member following the path of Voodoo (probably raised locally, but not necessarily), there is both good and bad. On the good, she will get the most attention from, and become the closest to Erin, aside from the crush. Or is that the bad, since Erin will constantly be on her footsteps, reading her books, following her into the projects to worship, and using her supplies.

On the definite downside will be the tendency for the contacts she makes in the voodoo community to die. Through no fault of her own, we must point out—The Baron becomes very interested in the living voodoo community when he discovers his powers limited. Once he becomes aware of the Slayer, then he becomes doubly interested in those whom her friends associate with. That doesn't bode well for their longevity. As such, it becomes difficult after the first few deaths to find additional tutors—word gets around. In fact, if she isn't careful, she may be caught in a trap set by a sired tutor, and taken herself. Let's just hope she doesn't drag Erin along for the ride.

On the plus side, the hard-won contacts with those that survive will be a good source of information, and the benefits of Voodoo vs. plain ol' Sorcery are described below in 'USE OF VOODOO IN A BTVS RPG SERIES'.

The Tragic Lovers:

Sample Characters Pete and Suzi

The Sample Cast Member Suzi was designed to be 'Doyled' part way through the Season, killing her off in *Stalk in the Park*. She's to be killed during one of her activist outings off screen from the others to inject some tragedy and irony (as one of the more capable characters, when her death is not related to the Big Bad) into the season. To heighten the tragedy, you may wish to involve the character in a romance with a male Cast Member (especially one with the Tragic Love Drawback). Even after death, she could continue to influence this tragic lover, either as a ghost, or during *Jung-le Fever*.



Suzi can be used as a Supporting Cast Member to this end, though it is even more effective if she is a member of the Cast itself. Having an ace in the hole like that can make the eventual end of maximum shock. If you have a player who may enjoy this type of challenge, or who came up with a character concept that wouldn't immediately fit into the group (say, a graduate student, when the rest of the group are freshmen), you could offer Suzi (or Steven) instead. You should work with Suzi's player regarding the planned death, so it doesn't come as a surprise to her, and so you can introduce another character for her to take over once the blow comes. You must also insure there is an out during *A Stalk in the Park*, in case she becomes too attached to the character, so the Cast can save Suzi in the end after all.

Which brings up the very real point of not going too far in these 'arranged' plots. Especially with a deadly theme such as this, you can easily take a Series that is going along nicely in a Buffy Season One light comedic tone and plunge it directly to Season Six despair with one swift stroke. It can be intense, and you'll have to gauge whether your players will appreciate it and roll with the punches. If not, scrap the idea. You're all here to have fun, after all, not act out a soap opera (unless that's your idea of fun, of course). If you're not sure, set up the basics and play along, making the decision when you need to at the time. The Season won't fall apart if Suzi lives.

Family Ties: Sample Characters Jake and Jess Snake Slayers and Luck

An out of town Cast Member, preferably one with some Resources, can be plugged into the Warner saga to recreate their serpent god of good fortune towards the end of the Season. His parents send him to their alma mater, neglecting to mention the fact that they helped destroy a snake cult when they were his age which resulted in their success over the years. Starting with *No Fury Like*, when the Warners' plan is put into action, he begins experiencing sporadic bad luck, and those Resources become inaccessible. This gets continually worse, until the matter is resolved during *Lucky Strikes*.

Construction Company

A local Cast Member has family who manage or own a mid-sized construction company. This company is implicated in the deadly explosion during *A Stalk in the Park*, and does some work for the refurbished sorority house in *And So It Begins*. It is also awarded a contract to handle the reconstruction of the State Supreme Court building, which becomes more relevant in Season Two.

The Zeppo: Sample Character Jake

Every group needs its Xander, right? The guy who is indispensable not for what he can do, but for just who he is. Whether he be car-guy, or a human monster alarm (i.e., a screamer), one of the great things about the *BtVS RPG* is how it deals with the interactions between the heroes, and these not-so-heroic (at first blush, anyway) ones. These Cast Members can sometimes struggle to remain in the limelight, however; special attention is sometimes required. In addition to those appropriate subplots already mentioned (*Family Ties*, *Tragic Lovers*), the Zeppo can be the ideal choice to explore the gray areas of the Buffyverse, such as the nature of evil. Let the Zeppo be the Cast Member 'pseudo-vamped' by The Baron during *Change of Perspective*, and deal with the assumptions and behavioral changes this causes to him and his friends. After the Cast (hopefully) restores him, let him continue to have occasional flashbacks to the enhanced abilities, much like Xander's military knowledge. Will he come to rely on these abilities? If so, what does that do to his psyche if the powers eventually diminish. Does form follow function, and he try to avoid using them? Will he try to sustain them? And what does that say about true vampires? Will these experiences influence how he deals with the fact that the woman he's been chatting up, Lori, is more than she seems, and needs his help (see Supporting Cast, pg. 39)?

EPISODE SYNOPSIS:

Series Premiere: 'Freshman Disorientation'

It's the start of a new school year, and our undiscovered Slayer arrives to meet the people she will face her destiny with. And an interesting year it promises to be, since just a week ago a subsidence in an old graveyard released an evil from the 19th century, the Baron, and allowed vampires back into the city for the first time in over a century. The Slayer's younger sister and possibly others have had disturbing dreams relating to these upcoming events, and the Slayer may find herself observed by a mysterious figure who remains just out of reach.

Things heat up at the freshman mixer, held as a Renn Faire at the Carousel and Storyland area of City Park



(<http://www.neworleanscitypark.com/>). During the mixer, the stalker reveals himself as her Watcher, just as a gang of vampire bikers attack the revelry in an effort to put their mark on the city. Forced into action, the new Slayer and her friends learn the facts of supernatural life and hopefully prevent rampant bloodshed. The Baron intercedes to spirit away a few vampire survivors for his own purposes.

The Watcher fills in the blanks with regards to the duties of a Slayer, and does what he must to persuade the others to keep silent about her identity. He also explains that the sudden reappearance of vampires suggests something major has happened, which may figure into the trials yet to come. He enlists the aid of the others in tracking this event down, with the hopes that it can be reversed, or at the least, understood.

Mama Tamara, a respected mambo, is dismayed to hear that vampires have been spotted, and follows instructions passed down via oral tradition to combat this infestation. The result is her death in the St. Louis I cemetery, which leads the gang to the tomb of Marie Laveau and a showdown with the vampires sent to destroy it.

Episode Two: 'Mummy Business'

A student/wanna-be sorcerer flubs the spell transforming a pair of Komodo Dragons into snake-demon assassins to kill his rival, allowing the creatures to eventually kill him. Innocents are killed first, leading the group to delve into the pseudo-magical underworld of the city to discover the identity of this poseur, and then must piece together the story from his ghost. They correct the ritual to reverse it, in the process stealing a mummy from the college museum, before the beasts can kill again.

Episode Three: 'Enter The Baron'

Training continues, emotions flare, and some members of the group must deal with fallout from the dismissal spell in Episode Two and confront the worst of their childhood experiences to reverse the supercharging of their abilities, discovering a subtle new vampiric tactic in the process (see Raven's in the Setting section, pg. 34).

Meanwhile the celebration dinner at Commander's Palace for the Slayer's 18th birthday is sidetracked into a meeting with the Baron in the most famous cemetery in the City. A mysterious figure in black (a lone member of the Inquisition) shows up at the last minute to help them escape, dying in the process. Research indicates what The Baron is, but not how to stop him. And now he knows the Slayer's name (from the restaurant's waiting list, if by no other means).

Erin dreams of a skeletal monster riding a beast up from the ground below, swallowing the city.

Episode Four: 'No Fury Like'

A series of gruesome murders linked to the Slayer (the victims have her last name) indicate someone may be gunning for her. Someone has raised zombies to bother the Slayer and her friends, and provided them with access to the Leviathan to make their strikes. Investigations of a desecrated unmarked grave lead to an atrocity early in the city's history.

In the late 18th century Don Alejandro O'Reilly put down a revolt of the New Orleans French by, among other things, slaughtering the ringleaders and letting them rot on the steps of the cathedral in Jackson Square, refusing them burial. Apparently these reanimated corpses hold a grudge against O'Reillys, related to the long dead Don or not. So, is this a coincidence, or the work of The Baron? The singing ghost of the priest who secretly buried the bodies must be summoned to send them back to the grave permanently.

Meanwhile the group investigates a new business near the cemetery and discover the Watcher's wife and their new digs, *Sub Rosa*. Erin gets involved with some schoolmates in a ritual that will change them all, starting with a friend who soon develops a very electric personality.

Episode Five: 'And So It Begins'

It's Halloween! Nothing ever happens on... OK, you heard that one before. A sorority masquerade starts with a rededication of the recently renovated house, but gets sidetracked when a sorcerer convict from the past uses the house to escape to the future.



To escape the gallows, this worshipper of Chaos links his prison to both the sorority and the Supreme Court Building a year in the future; three distinct time periods connected by the recycled marble façade from the old jailhouse. Unable to leave the reconfigured building, the group encounters glimpses of their future, including the experience of watching their lives dramatized on TV as *New Orleans Scoobs* (see the TVLand section, pg. 28) due to the bleed of chaos energies.

Meanwhile, Erin and her chaperone have an eventful night of Trick or Treating when one of her schoolmates becomes possessed by the Loa Shango when she and Erin both show up dressed as Hermione Granger. Shango calls up a storm and multiple lightning strikes stranding them at Sacred Heart Academy as if it was under siege.

Episode Six: 'A Stalk in the Park'

Several protesters (including Suzi) die at Audubon Park during an all-night vigil. Clues point to a developer with explosives, but the group discovers that the Meteor landmark that fell a century ago actually imprisoned a soul-stealing monster, a Gosvorian, that the explosion released.

The Gosvorian possesses one of the subcontractors responsible for the explosion, and a soul-sucking murder spree ensues. Discovering that the meteor-geode contained a spirit absorbing material called pergeinum, the group must raid the police impound lot to recover the pieces. Then they will not only have a weapon against the Gosvorian (and possibly The Baron), but will be able to release the trapped souls of Suzi and the other park victims.

Episode Seven: 'Change of Perspective'

The Baron tries to get the Slayer to kill one of her friends by capturing them, and performing a ritual that switches their skull with one of his minion vampires, giving the friend a vampiric visage. The minion is dusted, leaving the skull, which is discovered by an eccentric collector who believes it can speak to her.

Returned to the group, the fake vamp must survive long enough to figure out the extent of the transformation, and try to explain things. Working from the confused recollections of the ritual, the group tracks down its location, and encounters the skull wielder. Once the requisite gaggle of vamp guardians is removed, the ritual can be reversed, though there may be lingering side effects (see Subplots, pg. 25). One of The Baron's lieutenants bargains for his 'life' with information on his boss' goals.

While the group is out resolving the issue, someone breaks into the Watcher's library and removes several volumes.

Episode Eight: 'Third and Goal'

The gang uncovers a vampiric kidnapping attempt on a young witch. This, along with an analysis of the stolen books of magic (and possibly some inside info from a new friend – see Lorelei in the Supporting Cast Section pg. 39, and the Subplots pg. 25) reveals The Baron's plan to use the Super Bowl (or, if you decide to change the timeframe, the Sugar Bowl) to channel powers into himself and his minions to facilitate his goal of awakening the Leviathan and plunging the city into chaos.

The Baron is gathering magical vamps to him, and siring even more at a rapid pace. He needs these to act as a focus for his own abilities, and needs to tap into the life force of thousands of beings at once to initiate these links. The bowl game is one possible event to tap. Another might be Mardi Gras. The security around the Super Bowl seems impenetrable, but another possibility exists – the old Girod Street Cemetery (see Cemeteries, pg. 36). This leads to a magical showdown with sorcerer vamps in the graveyard.

Episode Nine: 'Lucky Strikes'

Another of Erin's friends, Todd Warner, becomes the dark incarnation of Damballah, the snake. The good fortune it brings to him and his family is related to the bad fortune that occurs to one of the gang, culminating in the arrival of Todd's older brother, Tom.

Besides hooking up and gaining the trust of the gang, Tom begins his mini reign of terror, abducting the girls he needs to sacrifice to complete his brother's transformation and secure the family's future. Finally Erin is kidnapped and taken to Bright Lake (a small town about an hour to the west, which comes with its own Hellmouth—see *Monster Smackdown* for



details) to become Todd's mate, and timely intervention is needed to prevent her own scaly transformation.

While avoiding the local werewolves, our 'Bad Luck Boy' can fulfill a family tradition, and redeem his own fortune by defeating the snake cult. In the end, Tom will try to escape the caves underneath the plantation house with his life by releasing a hallucinogen into the air and taking advantage of the resulting confusion.

Episode Ten: 'Jung-le Fever'

A surrealistic episode playing on the characters' hopes, fear and desires in the land of the Loa. They first encounter a major sign of the force of destiny/chaos/entropy that is prophesied to bring about the destruction of the city by making it into the incarnation of a city that lies in all of the demon dimensions. The Baron is shown to be but an unwitting pawn of this force. See TVLand below for more details.

Episode Eleven: 'The Siren's Call'

Rescued from the Warners, Erin still suffers from some fallout of her kidnapping. She is possessed by the serpentine Petro Erzulie (La Sirene), and uses her new adult form, abilities and inclinations to try and seduce her crush, and then the other men in the group. The action takes place in The Red Room, a dance bar that was once part of the Eiffel Tower (and turns out to be a demon hangout), which leads to Erin's Slayer abilities being discovered.



Erin treats the Slayer as a rival, and attempts to take on The Baron by tunnels. She must be restrained, or possibly rescued, before The Baron reveals some facts about The Baron, and suggests that they talk to Marie for cryptically to the Slayer about Erin's abilities, implying they were **NOT** part of herself in the Leviathan can usurp her abilities for his future of the character), Erzulie more specifics. She also talks the possession.

Episode Twelve: 'Leviathan Awakes'

Mardi Gras approaches, and someone must channel Marie Laveau to discover that returning Henri's soul to him can defeat The Baron. The Slayer reads through the Watcher's private journals and discovers the truth of his manipulations of herself and her sister, and she confronts him, sending him to the hospital after an uncontrolled rage. She leaves to confront the Baron alone, while the others must track down the whereabouts of the stone vessel containing the soul.

The answer lies in one of the exhibits at the New Orleans Museum of Art back at the scene of their 'initiation' into the Slayer's world—City Park! Once again, our gang must wrestle with the necessity to burgle something. As they execute their plan, The Baron's goons show up—he's on to them. In the chaos that follows an Egyptian exhibit on loan from the Cairo branch of Wolfram & Hart is damaged, which has ramifications to be borne out during Season Two.

Whether it include chases through the tunnels under the city, or stalking and sulking through the cemeteries, the gang's relentless pursuit and attempts to disrupt the growing trappings needed for this final ritual will bring The Baron to their doorstep for the final showdown. Hopefully they will be ready, either with the soul jar, or the spirit-sucking stone, or it could be a very lopsided battle.

CASTING YOUR CAST: WELCOME TO TVLAND!

Pete: I don't take swings at guys with guns.

Mira Sorvino: (possessing Jess) But you beat up all those supernatural creatures.

Pete: Without guns.

—1.6 Change of Perspective



As suggested in the *BtVS RPG Corebook*, you may wish to have your players “cast” their Cast Members using actors all will recognize. Not only is it a quick way for them to give a general physical description of their characters, but it can also be a stepping stone for getting into the character’s “voice”. The Sample Cast included here have “casting” notes derived from the playtest sessions. Feel free to use these, or let your own players come up with choices that they feel comfortable with.

In addition to the usual reasons to do some star casting, you can use these choices during the Season to hint at the larger powers acting behind the scenes. During the Halloween episode, *And So It Begins*, while the Cast is trapped in the various time zones, they’ll come across a group of students watching an episode of *New Orleans Scoobs*, a TV show based on their exploits that can’t possibly exist. Use their casting choices as an added bit of surreality as they watch some of their past (and potentially future) actions being played out by those actors onscreen, as well as introducing cut scenes with the villains to drop a relevant clue or two.

Later, after the gang succumbs to Tom Warner’s funky incense and goes on a trip to the dreamtime in *Jung-le Fever*, they’ll have a chance to experience that show firsthand, as they appear on the set AS the actors (à la *Quantum Leap*). Once they see the missing fourth wall and the cameras, they should get the idea.

During the ‘shoot’ for the current Episode, they’ll encounter a lot of the same as above, but up close and personal, which should ‘kick it up a notch’. In this ideaspaces, which may be linked to the collective unconscious, they might run across people they thought dead (leading to bittersweet reunions), or discover the links they need to put The Baron in his place (by bribing the writers or searching for scripts). Or they might just play around with the malleable reality, jumping from TV Show to TV Show for a while, until danger calls them back.

If one of your Cast takes up the young vodounista option, then an additional twist anytime after the Halloween episode might be to spring a switcheroo when one of her attempts at summoning the Loa or a similar spell goes awry. In other words, send her character to the ‘set of the show’ while having her play out the rest of the session as her actor, suddenly thrust into the game world in the character’s body. If such a thing might appeal to your group, of course. If they like *Buffy*, then they probably like the self-referential, but that might a little too much referential for some selves. Could be very good for the quoteage, though! Our vodounista during playtesting, Jess, was cast as Mira Sorvino. So of course, the whole concept of the Loa-space was dubbed the ‘Mira-verse’! We couldn’t have planned it any better.

A bonus to this, besides the amusement potential for you, is that this occurrence points to a kind of link between the realm of the Loa, and this ideaspaces. Taking it one step further, since the Halloween episode involved a worshipper of Chaos, this might indicate some connection between the object of such worship, and the Loa themselves. You might play up that angle if the Cast is relying too much on their supernatural benefactors.

This sort of thing can be used to drop hints later in the Season, or foreshadow things to come in future Seasons (if you’ve got the vaguest notion of what might be going on). Using non-sequiturs, odd folks that the Cast runs into start saying things that can be taken in multiple ways—one of which is meaningful only to those who’ve lived through these adventures, events of that nature. Don’t use the technique too often, though. Just enough to generally give them the wiggins and remind them that no matter how well the current Episode is going, there are some things they just don’t understand about the world. Chaos and Entropy have taken an interest in this city, and they’ve come to its/their attention. This attention causes some spectacular side effects. For additional (and quite excellent) inspiration on this topic, we recommend the section on the Hastur Mythos in Pagan Publishing’s *Delta Green: Countdown*.

Given the pop-culture quotient of the show, pulling this stunt as a take off on a television show seems like a natural to us, but it might not be up your alley. Other possibilities include setting up the group as writers working on a series of novels detailing their own adventures, much like Sisko’s mental journeys to 20th century Earth during the last few seasons of *DS9*. Or, if you’re big comics geeks like we are, have them show up **inside** their own comic book (maybe as a *Dark Horse* spin off...). Remember to pull out all the stops when describing the tropes of their situation. It should be worth it to see their faces the first time they run into the edge of one of the panels. And the splash pages... WoW!



SERIES SETTING: NEW ORLEANS

This isn't going to be Travel Guide to the Crescent City. There are plenty of good ones out there already: National Geographic's, DK Eyewitness' and TimeOut (<http://www.timeout.com>) are all recommended, as is *Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu New Orleans Guidebook*, which is a terrific guide to the city in the 1920s and even has sample floor plans for few houses in different city districts. For otherworldly inspiration, try *New Orleans Ghosts* by Victor C. Klein. No, this section will point out some of the interesting locales around the city that may be featured prominently during the Season. Not all will be used explicitly – some are left for the Director's imagination to expand upon. One thing to keep in mind, though, is that being at the same latitude as Cairo, Egypt, the city enjoys a mostly tropical climate.

Note: A lot of these places are real, but that doesn't mean you can go to New Orleans, wander into any of them, and expect to see it as described here. While it is extremely cool that Tulane comes with Willow Street Dorms, and a sports center named Reily, not all the details of a given location are as generous for our purposes. So liberties have been taken, here and there, for purposes of plot and drama. So, while there is a student hangout called The Boot near campus, in reality it's probably a lot less Bronze-like than we'd like to imagine. Sad, but true.

TRANSPORTATION AND DIRECTIONS:

Jake: How does one actually dawdle?

Shannon: I think you have to be English to do it.

—1.2 *Mummy Business*



For those students without cars (which should be most of them, if our own experiences are any guide—grrr...arrgh!) a convenient mode of transport is the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar, running directly in front of the University from the suburb of Carrollton Uptown, all the way Downtown to Canal Street at the French Quarter. It runs every 15 minutes from 6 am until midnight, and on the half-hour after that. Though prone to the occasional breakdown, the fully electric system takes around 45 minutes to go one way from beginning to end. While it's relatively inexpensive (\$1.25), give the kids a break and bundle an All Parish Pass with their school lodging. A second, shorter route covers the riverside of the French Quarter from Canal Street.

Speaking of riverside, here's the lowdown on directions in New Orleans. Locals don't generally use North, South, East and West to describe where things are; they use Lakeside, Riverside, Downtown and Uptown respectively. Why? Well, since the Crescent City gets that name from the lazy curve of the Mississippi River it's cradled in (sort of like a sideways 'S'), the West Bank of the river is often South of the City, and sometimes to the East of it! And it doesn't help that the original city grid was set up pointing to the northwest. If it all gets too confusing, just drop it for the normal compass points and assume a more normal grid setup. It's all for flavor, anyway. Just making sure we're on the same (skewed) page.

Transportation for those of the light-impaired persuasion is a bit tricky, since New Orleans lies so low. There are some huge storm drains and tunnels, but they tend to be filled with water, with huge pumps keeping the city from drowning. While there are a few tunnels and drains passable by vampires, they luckily have an alternative not made by man—see the section on Leviathan, pg. 36, for details.

So without further ado (and working from Uptown to Downtown as we go – follow along on maps at neworleans.com):

RIVERBEND AND CARROLLTON:

This marks the Uptown edge of the crescent, where the streetcar takes a right angle at Carrollton Ave to end at Palmer Park. Not far from touristy malls full of upscale shops, there are plenty of good, affordable restaurants and shops right on the line as well.



UNIVERSITY DISTRICT:

Tulane University

Famous for its medical school and vast historical collections. Rather than providing too much detail, here are the official links to the university, and neighboring Loyola. Check out the detailed campus maps especially.

Tulane: <http://www.tulane.edu> Wired for access, and working on wireless, for the nerds in the Cast.

Loyola: <http://www.loyno.edu/> There are members of the Inquisition among the Jesuits teaching here.

See the Organizations section, pg. 37, for more details.

Willow St Dorms

Well, where else would our Slayer and her Scoobies be housed at Tulane? These are a series of residence halls grouped into ‘villages’ housing all variety of students, from Freshmen, to Honors, to International.

Reily Student Recreation Center

Adjacent to the Willow Dorms, this center has the perfect athletic facilities and equipment for a new Slayer to hone her craft, and the private rooms to keep it intimate for just her and her Scoobs.

The Boot Bar & Grill

Located on Broadway on the Uptown side of Tulane, just down the street from Greek Row. Think of it as our Series’ version of the Bronze. Catering mainly to the college crowd (location, location, location!), the place has a small venue for up-and-coming bands (Fridays and Saturdays and special occasions), a few pool tables, and even a small patio. Though other bars and venues will usually provide free shuttle van rides to and fro, the Boot is hands down the no-brain winner of the ‘where to hang’ quiz.

One of the bartenders, a short burly middle aged guy named Mike “Mac” MacKenzie, is a well connected drug dealer. He also fancies himself something of an expert on the occult underworld in New Orleans. In reality, he knows all about the façade that covers most of the really nasty stuff, one step above touristy nonsense. Still, some of the genuine article does travel in that circle as well, so he’s actually right some of the time.

Rue de la Course

A local coffee chain, café style, favored by the students. They have a small shop on Willow, just down the street from the dorms. Quiet and relaxing, it’s usually a good place to study.

Audubon Park & Zoo

The Park and Zoo encompass all the land Riverside of the University, built on the same area as the 1884 Cotton Centennial Exhibition, where the plantation of Mason Etienne Bore, the city’s first mayor, once stood. The park is right across St. Charles Avenue, and has a full golf course, several miles of bike and hiking trails, and even a horseback-riding rental. One particularly interesting landmark is the Meteor, a large boulder of non-native rock found near one of the course holes. Said to have appeared on April Fool’s Day 1890, while initially thought to have been an actual meteorite, it is commonly thought of today as an alumni prank, or a remnant of the Centennial.

The park is currently undergoing a multi-year ‘renovation’ to expand and upgrade the golf course and clubhouse. Many student organizations see this as a money grab at the expense of other uses of the park. As a result, much of the park is currently unavailable due to construction (see the Series Premiere, *Freshman Disorientation*, for further details) and the inevitable protests are under way.

The Zoo is closer to the river, and has several unique attractions, such as the Komodo Dragons, and the albino alligators of the Swamp Exhibit. There are several interesting sculptures and statues scattered throughout, though none as noteworthy as those in the Jaguar Jungle section. These include scale models of several Mayan temples, and some full-scale duplicates of their sacrificial altars.



The Zoo also has an hourly Riverboat shuttle, which follows the Mississippi around the crescent to land at the Aquarium of the Americas near the French Quarter. A one-way trip takes just over a half-hour.

More on the Park, Zoo and Aquarium can be found at:

<http://www.auduboninstitute.org>

Some info on the Park Protests can be found at:

<http://www.saveaudubonpark.org/>

Ursuline High School and Convent

The current location of the Ursuline Academy for girls is just a few blocks from campus. The nuns, whose order came to the city in 1727 (see the Old Convent, pg. 34), maintain a museum of relics from their days in France, through their stint as medics for the city militia, their contacts with kings and presidents, to the present day. The Ursulines have taught the young women of the city all along, from the wealthy daughters, to the outcasts, to the so-called 'Casket Girls' (whose belongings were shipped in small coffin-like boxes, leading to erroneous latter-day vampire stories) sent over from France in the early days of the colony to be potential mates from the men streaming to the area.

For those wishing a high school Series, this locale is a potential alternate setting for the Scooby Gang. Just introduce a recent change to co-ed facilities, which could prove useful fodder for story subplots in itself.

See <http://www.ursulineneworleans.org/> for more info.

UPTOWN DISTRICT:

Latter Memorial Library

Built as a private residence in 1907, this St. Charles Street mansion and grounds covering an entire block was donated to the city in the 1940s by silent screen star Marguerite Clark, after the loss of a child to the War. Just up the street from Sacred Heart, many of the students spend time here after school, and would make a good alternate Scooby HQ off campus, especially if Nikolai is being used in the Cast. He works there part-time during the week. If he's her crush, Erin will be glad to spend her free time here—it's just down the block from her school. Oh, and it's haunted (of course).



Sacred Heart Academy

The St. Charles St. Catholic girls' school which both O'Reilly sisters have attended (Erin's still there), and most likely any local Catholic girls in the Cast. A large, elaborate building with several wings, it features a central courtyard, and balconies all around.

Find out more about it at <http://www.ashrosary.org/>.

Again, this would be a good place to set the Series if you decide to take it back to high school instead of college-age Casts. Oh, you'll have to fudge to make it boy-girl, natch, but hey—that's show biz!

St Elizabeth's Orphanage

Just around the corner from Sacred Heart on Napoleon Ave, this is where Shannon grew up, and where Erin still lives at the start of the Series, and from where Ian arranges to adopt her.

Additional details and pictures of the building can be found at http://www.annerice.com/ano_stelizabeths.htm As you can tell, in reality the Orphanage closed a while ago, and the building was bought by vampire publicist Anne Rice. We're ignoring that little tidbit.



GARDEN DISTRICT:

Sub Rosa

Just an empty, boarded-up, two-story shop on the corner of St. Charles and Washington, one block Lakeside of the Lafayette Cemetery at the start of the Series. During November Sweeps (or similar appropriate time), this shop is bought by Ian, and turned into a flower shop named Sub Rosa, as a cover to be nearer to the 'action' and to establish a permanent base for the Slayer's training and education.



The Rink

Mall kitty-corner from Lafayette, hosting the Garden District Bookstore, a coffee shop, and the Anne Rice Collection Store, among other businesses.



Lafayette Cemetery

This is the one you see in almost all of the movies, and features prominently in many of Anne Rice's books. Covering the entirety of two of the huge Garden District blocks, this place looks more like a small city made from the crypts, with wall tombs holding old yellow fever victims on all sides.

Commander's Palace

One of the premier restaurants in the city, if not the country, this place has seen the rise of chefs such as Chef Paul and Emeril. Oh, and it's conveniently located across the street from Lafayette Cemetery.

Rosegate

Also known as the Brevard-Wisdom-Rice house, this Garden District mansion is detailed almost room for room in Anne Rice's *The Witching Hour* (hey, grab descriptions where you can!). She should know; it's where she lives in reality. In our Series, though, it would make the perfect place to headquarter the local chapter of the Archivists (see pg. 37).

The Alexander Harris House

No, I'm NOT kidding. This historic landmark house was done by the same architect as Rosegate, so be sure to steal the floor plan and use it here, too. It'd make the perfect substitute if you wanted to leave Anne's house alone.

Pontchartrain Hotel

One of the grand old hotels on St. Charles, this hotel might be most notable in our Series because of the restaurant across the street.

The Red Room

An eclectic Jazz/Swing/Zydeco club, whose unusual wrought iron exterior comes from its earlier incarnation as a restaurant in the Eiffel Tower. Shipped over and reassembled across the street from the Pontchartrain Hotel, its stint as the hotel's catering service left it with a service tunnel running beneath St. Charles which is still used as a discreet entrance for VIPs.

This place caters to all kinds, from the upscale college crowd to pensioners, depending on the night. The premises are circular, fitting into the overhead iron latticework supporting the building. You enter via a causeway to the second floor. From the glass-lined outer walls, you cross the dance floor ringing the place as you head for the tables. The central spoke is encircled by the bar, and contains the kitchens, offices and restrooms, as well as the elevator to the VIP Lounge (and the service tunnel) on the ground floor.



It's in the VIP Lounge that the truly eccentric clientele are entertained—demons. Georges, the midget maitre d' who seems omnipresent in his spotless red suit, has the knack of always knowing what his patrons require in the way of food and drink. He sees that the place is kept well stocked to meet most needs.

National D-Day Museum

More in the Central Business District, just off of Lee Circle, the D-Day Museum contains just what you might expect. We mention it here on the off chance that a world-threatening plan goes too far, and needs some heavy-duty firepower to restrain it. A kind gesture from the Director here could get the Cast back onto a fighting-chance footing with the Big Bad.

Superdome

It's the Superdome, and hosts the Super Bowl in 2002. 'Nuff said, right? Well, how about we add in the deconsecration and moving of the old Girod St cemetery in the 1950s to make way for the construction. Even better, right? The former cemetery lies under the Home Team Endzone. Makes you go, huh, eh?

FRENCH QUARTER:

State Supreme Court

This old building takes up an entire block in the Quarter, and has been vacant for many years. Designed as the state courthouse, it later housed the Fish and Wildlife Department before falling into disuse and disrepair. In the 1990s a renovation project began to restore the building for use as the State Supreme Court once again, but this faltered due to lack of funds. Now it sits, empty, surrounded by a chainlink fence, while the repairs slowly fall victim to decay. The gang will encounter this building a year in the future, during *And So it Begins*, when it becomes linked to a present day sorority house. Unable to leave it, they will glimpse mummy-like creatures and a radically altered cityscape, foreshadowing one possible outcome of Season Two.

Old Ursuline Convent

The oldest building in the Mississippi Valley, this was once the home to the Ursuline Nuns (see High School and Convent, pg. 32) and still contains some relics from their time here. Now, it serves as the repository for all the Diocesan records dating back to the founding of the colony here in the early 1700s. In addition, the National Shrine to St. Lazarus can be found here. The old slave quarters building in back are now used to house retired clergy.

<http://www.accesscom.net/ursuline/>

Royal Street

Obscure Alternatives

Royal Street houses many fine antique stores, specializing in European goods (for the best in American antiques, check out Magazine Street, running parallel and Riverside to St. Charles). Obscure Alternatives is of special note because Nikolai is the night manager of the store, which can occasionally be used as a French Quarter HQ for the group if he is being used.

Raven's

The two-story building on the corner of Ursuline and Royal would be unusual in the Quarter for its dark brick construction alone. Add to that the wild tales told of its tenant around 1920, an Englishman calling himself Jacques St. Germain, and you start to wig. Tour guides still spout stories of how one of his victims leapt from the second floor balcony, rushing to the police in a confused, bloodied state. When they responded to her tale, they found the bloodstained rugs and floors of a monster who had plied his trade for months, but no sign of the man himself. The building has never been rented for very long since then, despite the prime location. Renovation plans never seem to survive the planning stages, and more stories, this time of hauntings by a dark, spectral force wielding a knife, emerge.

If one of the Cast native to New Orleans is a sensitive, whether with the Sight, or a Medium or simply with Psychic Visions, this is a good location to insert into their background for later mining. For much of the last few decades, the rear of the building has been exposed to the elements, allowing the curious children to look closer at the 'haunted house' in a way not afforded them by the continually occupied Lalaurie house just one block down. Perhaps they spent the night one summer with school chums, hiding out on the second floor, and saw sights which will never leave them.





Within a month of the Baron's release, this place is not only fixed up, but opens for business as Raven's, a Gentlemen's Club. A very upscale joint, with Valet Parking even, though some of the strippers here are a bit unusual. It's good thing the windows have all been bricked up on the ground floor, and the place is devoid of mirrors! For those who get the chance to examine it closely, an odd note to the construction is the replacement of the normal sprinkler system with one charged with Haylon. Almost as if the new owner wasn't concerned with breathing...

The owner of the club, Raven, is thought to be a former dancer herself, and word is she still dances on rare occasions. Mostly, though, if seen at the club at all, she just greets customers from her position at the end of the bar in her lilting, and slightly archaic, French accent. Business looks to be very promising, with a specialized clientele even willing to fly into the city for a night of pleasure found in few other places.

For those wishing a bit more background on the mysterious Madame, she could very well be the modern incarnation of Brigitte DeRais from the Stakes and Six-Shooters setting in the *Slayer's Handbook*. Having updated her business plan to the modern day,

she still has a few Snake Girls on hand, for those few who like a little extra kink.

New Orleans Historic Voodoo Museum

This is not only a place for the tourists, as in addition to the numerous voodoo artifacts displayed it also contains several working voodoo altars used by those living there. A good place to hear a mostly historic telling of voodoo in New Orleans, and to learn about Marie Laveau.

Mystic Occurrences

A completely fictional magic shop for your Cast to get the workings for their mojo. If you prefer the real things, here is a partial list:

Marie Laveau's Voodoo Shop (and Bar—it's located on Bourbon Street)

Rev. Zombie's Voodoo Shop

Esoterica

Mystic Curio

Spade & Archer Curiosities by Appointment—(OK, this one is Harry Anderson's Magic Shop, but stage magic could come in useful, you never know!)

Maskarade

One of several shops in the Quarter specializing in leather masks. There are numerous costume stores, too, in case you want to add some spice to the Chaos goodness going down on Mardi Gras.

St. Louis I Cemetery

Just to the Lakeside from the Quarter, and adjacent to Armstrong Park (where the legendary Congo Square, home to many a voodoo ritual, lies), this cemetery is in a very bad neighborhood. As with many of the 'Cities of the Dead' in New Orleans, one of the worst dangers is that muggers from the surrounding projects will be hiding behind the tombs. Security guards are posted on Sunday mornings to protect any visitors. This is the oldest cemetery in the city, with burials going back to the 1700s. The most famous tomb here is that thought to belong to Marie Laveau.



CEMETERIES:

Jess: *After we just had this discussion about how bad the cemetery is?*

Suzi: *We had a discussion about how bad St. Louis Cemetery is.*

Jess: *Well, I was extrapolating from that to say ALL cemeteries, bad.*

Suzi: *Evidently, they weren't.*

Jess: *Cemeteries are full of the dead. Some of which aren't quite dead. Happy birthday. You should have told us. We could have planned a non-cemetery celebration.*

—1.3 Enter the Baron

Yes, the city has many cemeteries. St. Louis has a II and a III besides. Since New Orleans lies only a few feet above the water table, these quickly became elaborate mock-cities built with aboveground tombs and statuary. Some pictures can be found at the following link: <http://www.laimages.com/cemeteries.html>

See also the *Images in America Series* book: *New Orleans Cemeteries*.

In addition to the ones already mentioned, special note should be made of the Metairie suburban cemeteries. The largest in the city, and grouped close together, they hold some of the most unique constructions, and are big enough to drive through (St. Louis I is crowded enough that you sometimes have to squeeze just to get by). In fact, the Metairie Cemetery was built on the site of the old Racetrack, a fact which can still be seen in its layout (in case you feel the need for some vampire car chases—maybe Lyle Gorch has a couple of cousins named Bo and Luke! On second thought... no).

The old Girod Street cemetery was deconsecrated and entirely demolished in 1957, and made way for the construction of the Superdome. Most of the bodies were relocated to St. John's Cemetery on Canal Street, adjacent to Metairie. The Baron uses this fact to set up a sympathetic ritual he hopes will grant him the power he needs in *Third and Goal*.



THE LEVIATHAN:

Pete: *What's blocking your way?*

Jess: *It's some kind of magical sphincter.*

—1.5 And So It Begins

Back when the Old Ones walked the Earth, the Leviathan roamed there freely. But when the demons were forced out into other dimensions, banished from the Earth, the Leviathan was unable to follow, and died. All that remains is its gigantic, multi-tentacled corpse, which now rests far under the city, having slowly turned almost to stone over the millennia. It is so large, that if it were somehow to come to life and rise to the surface all at once, the entire city might be engulfed in its disturbance, and that which wasn't destroyed outright, sink into the swampy water below.

Some of the creature's tentacles lie near the surface, and its circulatory system was such that one could walk into a huge vein in one place, spends hours walking and crawling in the semi-darkness, and come out again at the surface at a completely different point in the city. The Baron discovers soon after his release that his power to animate the dead extends to the Leviathan in part. He can cause individual tentacles to move and reposition themselves, breaking into sewers, basements, even tombs. He can't cause the main bulk of the beast to move, however. This is fortunate, as the small movements he can make produce, in effect, minor earthquakes as the subsoil is disturbed and redistributed. To animate the entire demon-corpse, The Baron would need the help of many other spell casters, and the life force of hundreds to power the required ritual. In the meantime he uses what control he has to build a virtual underground highway for his minions, so that easy access to the various parts of the city is created for the undead.

Attentive readers may note similarities between this creature, and another of the same name detailed in *Monster*



Smackdown. Perhaps they are from the same race of demons, or more likely it is simply that all such massive creatures are called Leviathan. A more interesting possibility is that they ARE the same creature, and Leviathan's corpse spans several dimensions. If our Cast isn't careful, they may one day find themselves completely elsewhere while taking the Dead Highway! In that case, perhaps the prophecies of the extra-dimensional cities are innately connected to the presence of Leviathan. And if it is tied into the Chaos-being, then maybe Leviathan also spans somewhens too. That might come in useful if they get trapped in the past a few Seasons down the line. Sooner or later, though, the Cast will have to find a way to address that issue, without causing the whole of the city to collapse down on top of it.

ARCHIVE8:

Some of the larger and unusual collections in New Orleans are listed here:

<http://nutrias.org/gnoa/norepos.htm>

ORGANIZATIONS:

Pete: And let's omit that detail when anybody else finds out about it. Not that I want to keep it a secret. I just don't want anybody to know about it.

—1.2 Mummy Business

Here are examples of a couple of groups which might appear during the course of the Season. Membership in one or two might be appropriate for recurring Supporting Cast, or even Cast if you deem it so. As such, they are given Quality Costs as per the Magical Organization rules in the *Magic Box*.

Permanent Special Committee of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (The Inquisition)

Type: Religious Group

Source: New

Number: Hundreds (world-wide)

Cost: 2-point Quality—Occult Library (Impressive) (3), oppose supernatural/help victims (-1), equipment (1), must obey leaders (-1)

Library: The listed library is what a particular location has on hand at the moment. Given sufficient time, and proven need, access to the Special Collections in Rome can boost this to a rating of 5+. To do so, you must convince a Member with the 4-point Quality of the necessity.

Requirements: As an outgrowth of the Inquisition (which has had a presence in the city since the 1780s, when Pere Antoine first imported it openly, and then in secret when he repudiated it on his return after being deported for bringing it in the first place), the members are primarily Catholic priests (especially Jesuits), though they have been known to recruit specialists in an area rife with supernatural activity (law enforcement, technical experts), depending on the situation.

Esoteric Brotherhood of Justice and Obedience (the Archivists)

Type: Hierarchical Order

Source: New

Number: Hundreds (world-wide)

Cost: 4-point Quality—Occult Library (Amazing) (5), help members in need (-1), teaching (1), must obey leaders (-1)

Library: Collected tomes and papers inherited from the Templars and augmented in Tsarist Russia.

Requirements: Membership is by recruitment only. This organization is descended from Hospitallers who left Malta for Russia under Tsar Paul I. They stayed when the others left Russia, being pressed into service by the Imperialists to document and study the supernatural, building a global reach in the process. In New Orleans, they work out of Rosegate (see Garden District, pg. 33).

Awakened Order of St. Lazarus

Type: Subgroup within a Hierarchical Order

Source: New

Number: Dozens (world-wide)

Cost: 1-point Quality—Occult Library (Minimal) (1), help members in need (-1), teaching (1), must obey leaders (-1)



Library: This group has the equivalent of one spell book hidden among the numerous papers and records of the order at the Old Ursuline Convent.

Requirements: Recruitment is only from the existing membership of the Order of St. Lazarus, and generally limited to those who have been in the order for over a decade (though exceptions during troubled times occur). The order encountered many strange sights in the Holy Land during the Crusades, and was infiltrated by vampires and worse at one point. These beasts were thrown out by vigilant Knights, and a group within the order has kept watch ever since.

Warrior of the Natchez

Type: Religious Group

Source: New

Number: Three

Cost: 1-point Quality—Occult Library (Minimal) (1), mutual aid (-1)

Library: This group has only its oral traditions to go by.

Requirements: The Natchez were all but wiped out by the French settlers in the early 1700s, forcing the survivors to abandon their homelands or be adopted into other tribes. There are only three noble descendants of that sun worshipping people left, so membership is obviously closed, and these will be Supporting Cast exclusively (Unless the Director decides to create a situation where ghosts of the Natchez return to mentor new warriors, such as with the Totem Warriors found in the *Slayer's Handbook*. This may be a good counter to the introduction of the Aten worshippers during Season Two). This Quality only reflects the magical resources of this group.

If the Director wishes to create a physical quality with bonuses akin to other packages, we suggest basing it on the aforementioned Totem Warriors and substituting some solar powers for the animal-derived ones.

For Example: *Great Sun of the Natchez* (10 pt Quality)

+2 to Strength, Constitution and Perception
(+3 when in direct sunlight)

Can see normally as long as ANY light is available.

Heals at Con/Hour when in direct sunlight

1 level of Hard to Kill, and can purchase up to 10 levels total (though the last 5 only work in sunlight)



NEW ORLEANS LEXICON:

Jess: *No, you were wrong not to call everybody for backup.*

Jake: *But we only had a table for two.*

Jess: *You bring such clarity to things sometimes.*

—1.3 Enter the Baron

Not an exhaustive list by any means, this list is just meant to illuminate a few concepts, and give you the opportunity to sprinkle the Series with a little flavor.

Cajun – A descendant of French refugees from Nova Scotia (Arcadia), or a reference to their food and language.

Creole – A descendant of European settlers of the Caribbean basin, or a reference to their food.

Faubourg – A neighborhood.

Go Cup – It is legal to carry open containers of alcohol while walking on the street, as long as it is in one of these plastic cups, available at any bar 'to go'.

Gris-Gris – Magical charm, made with various powders, herbs, etc.

Ju-Ju – As gris-gris, but including animal parts (chicken's feet, etc.).

Lagniappe – Something extra, as in a baker's dozen.



Laissez les Bons Temps Rouler – Let the Good Times Roll, a Cajun expression from which our Series Title is derived.
Neutral Ground – The median, a (usually) grassy strip of land dividing streets and highways.
Parish – A county, by any other name.
Quadroon/Octoroon – Archaic terms referring to a person who is one-quarter/one-eighth black.
Vieux Carré – Literally ‘the old quarter’. The French name for the French Quarter.

PROMINENT SUPPORTING CAST:

Debbie: (to Jess) So you have a dick named Harry following Tom?
—1.9 *Lucky Strikes*

Fr. James Graham – This popular priest in his sixties teaches a series of courses on mythology and folklore at Loyola. One or more of your Cast taking classes from him will come to find his descriptions of vampires unconventional, but very accurate. Once he is spotted at a few crime scenes, suspicions will probably arise until they discover he is the police and regional FBI chaplain. In reality he is also the local head of the Inquisition, and is galvanizing the organization when the resurgence of vampires becomes apparent.

Lorelei, Lilyana, and Liesl – Sisters from a magical family, each with her own magical specialty. The youngest, Lily, is a wild child rebelling against her stodgy siblings and gets herself vamped. Learning of The Baron’s need for magical talent, she sires her sisters to curry favor with him, and to lord their new status over the others. Lori chafes at the clashes between her sisters, and often spends time alone, cruising the Red Room, trying to figure a way out of her submissive position. Finding one of the Cast in an agreeable mood one night might lead her to the solution.

Tom Warner – From the *BtVS* episode 2.5 Reptile Boy. Tom has been in jail since we last saw him on TV. But once his brother involves Erin in a specialized voodoo ritual, the family fortunes start to change and good ol’ Tom is released very early. Arriving in New Orleans, he begins to insinuate himself into the Slayer’s life, at college and around her friends, knowing that eventually he will need to take three women as sacrifices, so why not get a little revenge while he’s at it. If you feel your players are too familiar with the series, you may want to have Tom assume a pseudonym and then hold the ‘unmasking’ at the end, or even change him to be some other member of the fraternity in that episode.

Harold Dhiver – A private investigator with experience in the world of the occult. Somewhat resistant to magic himself, he is often drawn into situations where that talent is tested. If he is not encountered sooner, Harry should cross paths with the Cast when he investigates the kidnappings that Tom Warner perpetrates in preparation for Todd’s final transformation.

Emily Walker (Charleson) – A young Watcher recruit in her mid-twenties, Emily is placed under Ian’s charge in New Orleans to act the part of his wife, starting in *No Fury Like*, until the adoption is complete sometime late in the Season. A humorless, driven woman, she is highly intelligent and attractive, but covetous of Ian’s position as the active Slayer’s Watcher. She doesn’t care for the marriage ruse, but follows the letter of the instructions perfectly. While not a witch, Emily does have a strong telekinetic gift (Telekinesis 5, as per the *Magic Box* – as Sorcery minus the, uh, magical bits).

VOODOO PRIMER

Suzi: I think there are elements of Ian’s occult education we don’t want to know anything about.
Jess: Well, there’s that mandatory session with the succubae...
Ian: Actually, it’s not mandatory.

—1.2 *Mummy Business*

Thanks to Jennifer Friedman for compiling most of this information. For more inspiration, we suggest the aforementioned *Call of Cthulhu New Orleans Guidebook*, the *GURPS Voodoo* book, and of course Eden Studios’ *Abomination Codex* for the *WitchCraft* game.



Voodoo, or Vodoun/Vodun, is a real life religion, and no disrespect is meant by any of the references to it or its practices in this material. While information in this primer is based on real life sources, no claim of completeness or accuracy is being made.

For those interested in seeing the real thing in action, here's a relevant link:

Voodoo Temple (Rampart Street on the Lakeside edge of the French Quarter):

<http://www.access.avernus.com/~rogue/temple/>

VODOON BELIEFS:

Voodoo, like Christianity, is a religion of many traditions. Each group follows a different spiritual path and worships a slightly different pantheon of spirits, called **Loa**. The word means "mystery" in the Yoruba language.

Yoruba traditional belief included a chief God **Olorun**, who is remote and unknowable. He authorized a lesser God **Obatala** to create the earth and all life forms. A battle between the two Gods led to Obatala's temporary banishment.

There are hundreds of minor spirits. Those which originated from Dahomey are called **Rada**; those who were added later are often deceased leaders in the new world and are called **Petro**.

In regards to magic, Rada is usually considered beneficial; dedicated to everyday, peaceful uses. Petro rites are the flip side; more violent and harmful, dealing with curses, evil spirits and the like. All of the major Loa generally have both a Rada and Petro aspect in these terms.

Some of these are listed below, with a few important to the season highlighted:

Agwe: spirit of the sea

Aida Wedo: rainbow spirit, represents the powers of the sky, mate of Damballah Wedo, she shares Damballah's function as cosmic protector and giver of blessing, antithesis of Dark Sorcery, her name is often invoked when trying to lift sorcery

Ayza: protector

Baka: an evil spirit who takes the form of an animal

Baron Samedi: guardian or protector of the grave, servant of Guede. Usually materializes as a tall muscular black man with the right side of his head painted white in a skull pattern, his color is white (the white of bones and skulls), normally depicted wearing a heavy white cross on a chain around his neck, as well as wearing a white top hat. A pick or a white cane, topped with a skull is usually found in his left hand.

Damballah (or Damballah-wedo): serpent spirit, spirit of the snakes, source for virility, luck and power, mate of Ayida Wedo, loving but somewhat withdrawn father to his people, characteristics are his lack of articulate human speech, his affinity with water, and his preference for white or colorless food and drink.

Erinle: spirit of the forests

Ezili (or Erzulie): female spirit of love, jealousy and revenge. This Loa is a dangerous one to trade with. She knows the secrets of seduction and love potions, her temper is unpredictable, and her wrath is terrible. Generally the Loa is mentioned with the title "Maitresse". She has become an ideal figure of delicate and alluring womanhood. She has an aquatic form, La Sirene, which maybe related to her earlier serpent manifestations. Apart from that, she has two different traditions: La Grande Erzulie, which shows her as elderly and grief-stricken and that of "the Erzulies" who traditionally fought in astral manifestation alongside the liberators in Haiti. Her symbol is the moon.

Guede: spirit of the dead, lord of the mysteries of dead and the dark sorcery. This is the most powerful of the dark Loa, and the only Loa to have lost its face completely. It is a mysterious one without any form. When materializing, it speaks from the darkest of shadows, and its voice sounds like the screams of thousands of unborn fetuses and that of the dead in their graves. Usually acts through Baron Samedi.

Legba: overlord of the Loa, spirit of communication between all spheres, lord of the ways, lord of the crossroads, gatekeeper of the passage between worlds or opener of the gates, guardian of the center post. Without Legba there is no magic. He is the first Loa that is called, has many faces and is both light and dark Loa. The line is sharply drawn, so it seems that there are two Loa named Legba or Papa Legba. In his facet of light he is the advisor, the sage and the helper, trying to guide humanity and its fellow Loa. In his dark facet he is scheming, diabolical and often mistaken for Satan. He appears as an elderly black man with a handsome face framed by the soft lines one gets from smiling and laughing a lot.



He is very charismatic and persuasive in both of his forms. When he appears he is dressed appropriately for a sage or a priest of the area in which he materializes.

Mawu Lisa: spirit of creation

Ogou Balanjo: spirit of healing

Ogun (or Ogu Bodagris): spirit of war

Osun: spirit of healing streams

Sango (or Shango/Chango): spirit of storms/fire

Yemanja: female spirit of waters

Zaka (or Oko): spirit of agriculture

Marie Laveau, the 19th century voodoo queen, is venerated as a powerful spirit herself by some in New Orleans, and as such can be considered a Loa of that city in her own right.

There are a number of points of similarity between Roman Catholicism and Voodoo:

- Both believe in a supreme being.
- The Loa resemble Christian Saints, in that they were once people who led exceptional lives, and are usually given a single responsibility or special attribute.
- Both believe in an afterlife.
- Both have, as the centerpiece of some of their ceremonies, a ritual sacrifice and consumption of flesh and blood.
- Both believe in the existence of invisible evil spirits or demons.
- Followers of Voodoo believe that each person has a **met tet** (master of the head) which corresponds to a Christian's patron saint.

Followers of Voodoo believe that each person has a soul which is composed of two parts: **agros bon ange** or "big guardian angel", and a **ti bon ange** or "little guardian angel". The latter leaves the body during sleep and when the person is possessed by a Loa during a ritual. There is a concern that the ti bon ange can be damaged or captured by evil sorcery while it is free of the body. Some sorcerers have been known to store their little angels in a jar to keep them safe from capture.

VOODOO RITUALS:

The purpose of rituals is to make contact with a spirit, to gain their favor by offering them animal sacrifices and gifts, to obtain help in the form of more abundant food, higher standard of living, and improved health. Human and Loa depend upon each other; humans provide food and other materials; the Loa provide health, protection from evil spirits and good fortune. Rituals are held to celebrate lucky events, to attempt to escape a run of bad fortune, to celebrate a seasonal day of celebration associated with a Loa, for healing, at birth, marriage and death.

Voodoo priests can be male (**houngan** or hungan), or female (**mambo**). A Voodoo temple is called a **hounfour** (or humfort). At its center is a **poteau-mitan** a pole where the God and spirits communicate with the people. An altar will be elaborately decorated with candles, pictures of Christian saints, symbolic items related to the Loa, etc. Rituals consist of some of the following components:

- a feast before the main ceremony
- creation of a **veve**, a pattern of flour or cornmeal on the floor which is unique to the Loa for whom the ritual is to be conducted (you may note a few veve patterns worked into our border scheme)
- shaking a rattle and beating drums which have been cleansed and purified
- chanting
- dancing by the houngan and/or mambo and the **houns** (students studying Voodoo). The dancing will typically build in intensity until one of the dancers (usually a houns) becomes possessed by a Loa and falls. His or her ti bon ange has left their body and the spirit has taken control. The possessed dancer will behave as the Loa and is treated with respect and ceremony by the others present.
- animal sacrifice; this may be a goat, sheep, chicken, or dog. They are usually humanely killed by slitting their throat; blood is collected in a vessel. The possessed dancer may drink some of the blood. The hunger of the Loa is then believed to be satisfied. The animal is usually cooked and eaten. Animal sacrifice is a method of consecrating food for consumption by followers of Voodoo, their gods and ancestors.



EVIL SORCERY:

The houngan and mambos confine their activities to “white” magic which is used to bring good fortune and healing. However **caplatas** (also known as bokors) perform acts of evil sorcery or black magic, sometimes called “left-handed Voodoo”. Rarely, a houngan will engage in such sorcery; a few alternate between white and dark magic.

One belief unique to Voodoo is that a dead person can be revived after having been buried. After resurrection, the **zombie** has no will of their own, but remains under the control of others. In reality, a zombie is a living person who has never died, but is under the influence of powerful drugs administered by an evil sorcerer. Although most Haitians believe in zombies, few have ever seen one. There are a few recorded instances of persons who have claimed to be zombies.

Sticking pins in “voodoo dolls” was once used as a method of cursing an individual by some followers of Voodoo in New Orleans; this practice continues occasionally in South America. The practice became closely associated with Voodoo in the public mind through the vehicle of horror movies.

For a more complete listing of terms, lists of Loa and their correlations, holy days, and symbols, check out <http://voodooomagic.com/history.html>.

THE USE OF VOODOO IN A BTVS RPG SERIES:

Ian: Magic is...more of an art than a science. Well, except when it's a science, and then it's less of an art.

Pete: It's this thing. I'd describe it more, but it would be inaccurate.

—1.1 Freshman Disorientation

There are a couple of questions you have to ask yourself, before introducing voodoo as an option for your players. Most of them center around the question, ‘how does voodoo differ from standard magic in the game?’ If the answer in your series is ‘none’, then off you go. No need to stick around for the rest of this article. The rest of you, however, will have to figure out how skill checks, spell casting, and side effects differ for a voodoo ritual.

Occult or not to Occult, that is the question. The skills in the game are meant to be extremely broad, so Occultism could easily be used to cover knowledge of all the ritual trappings and offerings needed to summon the various Loa, etc.

On the other hand, if you want someone to be able to do voodoo magic, but not have access to the normal magic system, you should have her put points into a Wildcard skill ‘Voodoo’ instead.

Anyone with the Occultism skill, however, should have the knowledge in general. This reflects how the show portrays characters picking up knowledge of disparate (in real life) magic systems reading the same books at the same table week after week.

So, if sticking to Occultism, what keeps voodoo from being just like any other ritual magic? For many simple purposes it doesn't have to be – just a little extra window dressing to describe for effect. One thing you could do is make distinctions in the types of voodoo rituals. Say, allow those with Occultism to perform simple voodoo rituals (much like ordinary spells), but only those with the Sorcery quality be able to invoke the Loa directly, to be ridden or request boons.

As discussed earlier, if you want to restrict the use of both voodoo and standard BtVS magic, substitute a Voodoo quality instead (4 pt. Quality, lacking the TK aspect of Sorcery and restricted to voodoo).

Now, for more mundane rituals, you might want to allow certain other skills to be substituted for Occultism, such as Doctor skill if the person is creating a healing poultice or whatnot.

Also, in addition to the researched and learned rituals to be cast, it's possible to have the skilled voodoo sorcerer summon an appropriate Loa from the many available, placate and make offerings and promises to it, and ask it to provide



the magical effect/knowledge/etc needed. In this way, it is a little more powerful an option in that, though it takes longer and the result is uncertain, the direct knowledge of the specific ritual is not needed.

For that kind of supplication, have the player roll Int + Occult to figure out which Loa to summon (at least the first time for a particular Loa, optional for a repeat performance), Will + Occult to summon them using the correct ritual, and then another roll using willpower and influence (which does not get to add sorcery) to get the Loa to respond favorably. So one could summon the Loa correctly, but still get a capricious response.

Modifiers could definitely be applied to the summoning and persuasion, especially if the spell caster has had negative dealings with that particular Loa in the past. Add a -2 modifier for each such incident, to a maximum of -6 (they hold grudges, but you CAN sweet talk your way back into their good graces). Add an additional -4 modifier if all of the proper offerings are unavailable, -8 if no promises are made to make the offering in the future or a similar promise was not kept in the past. Similarly add a +2 modifier, to the summoning only, if the same or related Loa has been successfully contacted and interacted with that same season. A certain amount of role-playing can be used in the persuasion, at the Director's discretion. A variable bonus based on additional promises, arguments for help, etc can be added to the persuasion roll.

The number of success levels needed to persuade the Loa to help is based on the Power level of the spell effect needed (yes, you still need to work out the spell in game terms... the Loa are an in-game shortcut only!). Take the Power Level + 1, and add any other modifiers to get the required number of Success Levels. As with Spell Casting, a roll over 9 but less than the required Success Level will result in persuading the Loa to do SOMETHING, but not necessarily what was intended. Look at the spell side effect table for guidance, tailoring the mishap to the personality of the Loa involved.

Can voodoo magic be quick cast? For the simple rituals, they work like most spells, which means that ability for witches to quick cast them is determined on a case-by-case basis. For the more complex rituals involving the Loa, however, the answer is no. Well, actually more like 'not really', as there is a work-around. While not actual subject to quick casting, a witch can prepare an effect in advance, and work out the trigger of the effect during the persuasion phase. The trigger may be a word or phrase, the clutching of a bead on a prepared necklace, anything of that nature. Success is not automatic; a Will + Influence roll must still be made.

One singular effect of voodoo is the possession or 'riding' of a spell caster, which must be done as a voluntary act of invitation by the 'horse' to be ridden. If the caster allows herself to be ridden during the persuasion phase, add an additional +1 modifier to the persuasion roll. While being ridden, she normally has no control over her physical actions, has a +3 bonus to strength, and has double her normal Life Points (other effects may manifest, depending on the Loa, such as the Good Luck quality with Damballah or a temporary increase in the Getting Medieval skill with Ogun). The riding lasts a number of Turns equal to the Success Levels of the summoning plus the Levels of the persuasion (if any). If the horse needs to remain in control, she may take her regular actions for a Turn if she succeeds in a Willpower (not doubled) roll. If this is not associated with the request, or if the actions are against the Loa's interests, this counts as a negative dealing for future interactions. When the riding is done, the horse's strength and Life Points return to normal, and any damage taken is halved.

Example of Fortune-Creating a Good Luck Charm: Mama Isla (Int 3, Willpower 4, Occult 4, Influence 4, Sorcery 1) wants to create a Good Luck Charm. An Int + Occult roll of 12 tells her the proper ritual and offerings to summon Damballah, symbol of luck and prosperity. A roll of 5 is sufficient with her Willpower, Occult and Sorcery to summon the Great Snake, and Mama decides to be ridden to enhance her supplication, and she involuntarily starts rolling on the ground, hissing.

Mama Isla wants to enchant of string of beads with +5 Good Luck (like the quality, but nonrenewable), at a difficulty level of 5. Her total bonus is 9 (Will + Influence + riding bonus), and a roll of 6 gives a Success Level of 4, which means that the Loa doesn't quite grant her request as she requested it. The Director determines that Damballah does enchant the beads with the Luck enhancement, but that Mama Isla pays for it by having an equal amount of Bad Luck, point for point, whenever the Director decides.



VAMPIRES AND VOODOO

When a person is killed by a vampire, the two parts of her soul (see Primer, pg. 41) leave her body. The gros-bon-ange is replaced by the infecting demon spirit, which gives the vampire its motive force. There is no replacement for the ti-bon-ange, as the demon has no personality of its own. Without the 'little angel', the vampire makes do with the remnants of the victim's memories left behind – just a shell of the victim left. If the actual ti-bon-ange could be reintroduced to the vampire, an 'Angel' situation could result. Such a 'resouled' vampire would be vulnerable to having its ti-bon-ange stolen by a bokor, or having it leave the body during a Loa possession. This would be bad.

As noted under the description of The Baron, for the purposes of this Series, Papa Legba has prevented the way from opening for any Loa to ride a vampire since Henri LeBlanc was ridden by Samedi to tragedy.

