

"VANISHING VERNA"

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THE NOT-SO-SUPERVILLAINS

EPISODE 105

April 2, 2024

FINAL DRAFT

SHR PROJECT
Gen Media Labs

EXT. EL DIABLO MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS - DAY

Students bustle into school for another day of villainy.

PRINCIPAL PANIC (O.S.)
Malicious morning, students, and
Happy Picture Day!

INT. EL DIABLO HALLWAY - SAME

LUTHER walks down the hallway in a shirt and tie. He passes A WEREWOLF, smoothing his fur hair gel. On the LOUDSPEAKER:

PRINCIPAL PANIC (O.S.)
Be sure to look your best, because
someday, these photos could be on
the FBI's 'Most Wanted' posters!

TARAÑA checks her reflection in the fountain pool as she puts mascara on one of her eight eyelashes...

PHOTOGRAPHER
Please wait your turn, and
remember, gorgons and basilisks, do
not look directly into the camera.

Luther finally reaches FRED, who is standing in line for the photographer waiting to have his picture taken.

LUTHER
Hey Fred. Looking sharp.

FRED
Have you seen Verna? It's almost my
turn, and she always helps me look
cool in my picture.

WE FLASH ON A PRIOR PHOTO DAY SHOOT: Verna strains to hold Fred off the ground, stretched out horizontally in her arms. A CAMERA FLASH reveals the finished product,

A PHOTO in which Fred seems to be FLYING.

We CUT BACK to Luther and Fred in the picture day line.

FRED (CONT'D)
She's my secret weapon.

LUTHER
(looking worried)
A little too secret right now. I
wonder where she went?

INT. THE LIBRARY - DAY

Luther and Fred find Verna in the library.

She's paging through a stack of old YEARBOOKS.

LUTHER

Hey, Vern. You okay?

FRED

You're missing picture day!

VERNA

I *always* miss picture day.

Verna points to the pile of open yearbooks, showing one BLANK SPACE after another where she should be.

First, there's a school production of *Romeo and Juliet* with a mutant Romeo gazing up at an EMPTY BALCONY--

VERNA (CONT'D)

Here's me *not* in the school play.

Another shot of cheerleaders in a pyramid, with a notable GAP where someone in the middle row should be.

VERNA (CONT'D)

Here's me *not* cheerleading--

Verna pages to a shot of students in swim suits and caps holding a trophy in front of a pool.

VERNA (CONT'D)

And here's me *not* on the swim team.

LUTHER

You were on the swim team?

VERNA

No. But no one would have known if I was! For once, it would just be nice...

LUTHER

To feel seen?

Verna nods, with a sad smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ASSISTED SCHEMING CLASSROOM - DAY

The kids are at their desks. Ms. Menace enters wearing a bizarre square-shaped polka dot dress.

MS. MENACE

Good morning. I just had my photo taken, and not to brag, but the photographer was speechless.

VERNA

Yes. There are no words.

MS. MENACE

Trust me... this look is the height of fashion in the Porvax Three System. I would be the talk of the galaxy, if any of the creatures there had mouths. Anyhoo, today's lesson is about infra-red radiation. *Lights!*

The LIGHTS DIM, and Ms. Menace fires up an old-school projector (or an overhead projector)--

The first slide depicts an EYE with lines emerging from either corner to represent the visible spectrum. Waves of different sizes and colors point toward the eye.

MS. MENACE (CONT'D)

The visible spectrum includes light of varying wavelengths, which we see as colors from violet, the shortest, to red, the longest.

FRED whispers to Luther and Verna, flashing a boastful grin.

FRED

Of course *red* is the biggest.

MS. MENACE

When it comes to energy, longer wavelengths are also the weakest.

Fred's smile fades. Verna grins at him.

VERNA

You were saying?

Ms. Menace CLICKS to a NEW SLIDE. A super-long crimson wave.

MS. MENACE

Infra-red light has a wavelength so long the human eye cannot see it.

The next slide depicts different uses of infrared light.

MS. MENACE (CONT'D)

It is used in remote controls,
satellite communication, and even
surveillance equipment, which I
employ to keep tabs on my enemies
across the universe--

MS. MENACE clicks another slide, which depicts a BANK of
security camera feeds depicting aliens of every shape and
size. Verna raises her hand, curious--

VERNA

Miss Menace, can infra-red light be
used to take pictures of something
that can't normally be seen?

MS. MENACE

Sure. Principal Panic keeps one in
his office to catch ghosts who try
to sneak off campus--

FLASH ON: Principal Panic POINTS AN INFRARED CAMERA out his
office window at the empty courtyard, then shouts--

PRINCIPAL PANIC

Hey you! Get back to class!

GHOSTS (O.S.)

(ad lib)

Aw man! / Come on! / BOOO!

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM, where Luther leans over to Verna.

LUTHER

Verna. Maybe we could get you in
the yearbook after all.

Ms. Menace turns off the projector and raises the lights.

MS. MENACE

I would like to remind all of you,
Principal Panic's office is
strictly off limits. Sneaking
inside would be very naughty.

The kids look at her for a confused beat.

LUTHER

But, being bad is good here, right?

MS. MENACE

That's right. Which is wrong. So do not break the rule, of never not breaking rules, or you will get in big trouble... in a good way.

ON LUTHER, VERNA and FRED: they're completely lost. Ms. Menace walks to the classroom door and holds it open.

MS. MENACE (CONT'D)

I absolutely *forbid* you to leave.

INT. PRINCIPAL PANIC'S OFFICE - DAY

Luther, Fred and Verna sneak into Principal Panic's office. There are STRANGE GADGETS everywhere. Beakers bubbling with potions hover in the air.

Fred holds up a gun-shaped device.

FRED

Cool! A laser gun.

VERNA

That's a thermometer, Fred.

Verna takes the gadget and points it at Fred's forehead. It BEEPS. Verna shows the result to Fred and Luther.

LUTHER

Two hundred degrees?!

FRED

Yeah. That's normal for a demon.

Luther finds the CAMERA on a shelf in the back of the room.

LUTHER

I found the infra-red camera!
Verna, sit down over there.

Luther takes down the camera as Verna sits down awkwardly.

FRED

Say cheese! Or...something vegan.

VERNA

Beets!

Verna smiles and bears her FANGS. The camera clicks. The kids gather around as it spits out a PRINTED INFRA-RED IMAGE. Their expressions turn from hope to disappointment.

LUTHER

I don't understand.

THE PICTURE is mostly a DARK SQUARE. No sign of Verna.

VERNA

It didn't work. Ugh, I smiled for nothing!

The kids are discouraged, until Luther points at something in the background of the picture: a glowing COFFEE CUP.

LUTHER

Wait. The coffee cup is visible.

VERNA

There's hot coffee in it. And heat gives off infra-red radiation.

FRED

Verna, take your temperature.

Verna points the thermometer at her own forehead. It BEEPS.

VERNA

Sixty eight point two. Normal for a vampire.

(off Luther's reaction)

What can I say? I'm cold blooded.

Luther looks over at the wall THERMOSTAT: "ROOM TEMP: 68".

LUTHER

You guys... the infra-red camera shows *differences* in temperature. Verna was invisible because *she's the same temperature as the room!*

VERNA

I can't change my temperature.

LUTHER

No - but we can make the room warmer! Right, Fred?

Fred holds out his hands and cracks a devilish smile...

FRED

I thought you'd never ask...

Two FIREBALLS appear over Fred's open palms. They hover and pulsate, little globes of heat.

VERNA

Show off.

Luther looks over at the thermostat. It ticks up to 70 degrees. Then 71...

LUTHER

It's working! Keep it going, Fred!

Fred concentrates, and the fireballs glow even HOTTER.

Luther gets behind the camera, pointing it at Verna. The camera CLICKS. Luther checks the image as Fred and Verna wait eagerly. Luther's face falls.

LUTHER (CONT'D)

Oh no....

(then, cracking a smile)

Your eyes are closed.

Luther holds up the infrared photo. VERNA'S OUTLINE is there in silhouette against the red aura of the heated room.

VERNA

(delighted)

You guys! *I took my first bad picture!*

FRED

We did it!

Fred pumps his fist and accidentally shoots a FIREBALL into the OFFICE CURTAINS. They immediately burst into flames.

FRED (CONT'D)

Oops.

VERNA

Let's get out of here!

INT. ASSISTED SCHEMING CLASSROOM - LATER

We start CLOSE ON VERNA'S "PICTURE": she is SILHOUETTED IN BLUE blue against a glowing red background.

It's not a detailed *portrait* exactly, but it's VERNA.

VERNA

First vampire to ever make it in the yearbook, thank you very much!

MS. MENACE

Heating the room to create contrast
was very ingenious.

FRED

And a little destructive.

We CHANGE ANGLE TO REVEAL that they are all standing in front
of the classroom window.

A FIRETRUCK is parked outside. PRINCIPLE PANIC directs FIRE
FIGHTERS who hose down the other wing of the school, which
has FLAMES shooting out of every window.

MS. MENACE

You get extra credit for that.

Verna takes another admiring look at her photo.

VERNA

I never realized how much I needed
to be seen. And I never would have
tried without Fred and Luther.

LUTHER

That's what friends are for.

MS. MENACE

(scolding)

Luther! At El Diablo, we don't have
friends. We have *accomplices*.

The kids laugh and settle in to watch the school burn...

FADE OUT.