

REVIEW: 'Slayer' Redefines What It Means to be the Chosen One!



Watcher. Slayer. Healer. Protector.

Kiersten White's *Slayer* is a real treat for *Buffy* fans. The book has enough throwbacks to the OG Chosen One while giving fans and readers a fresh perspective on what it is really like to be a Slayer while allowing us to peek behind the curtain of the Watcher Council. So yea there is a little bit of everything and something for everyone – well if that everyone is a fan of the Buffyverse – because even though this is a spinoff somewhat standalone series there is a lot of references to the very popular TV series (which thanks to streaming services like Netflix and now Hulu, a bunch of people are getting to experience the Scooby Gang for the first time) as well as the 1992 movie that really started it all...

...and that movie is really what started the narrative of Slayer. The book tells the tale of twin sisters, Nina and Artemis, who are the daughters of Merrick Jamison-Smythe aka Buffy's LA Watcher who ends up dead. Fast forward to a few years after the end of Buffy the tv series and we find the twin sisters and their mother living among the remaining Watchers in hidden castles in Ireland. Buffy did something in recent history that broke magic and closed all the portals so now all the demons are trapped blah blah blah. Well this is not really blah blah blah because a hellhound attack on the castle causes Nina to go from a potential to full on slayer!

Raised by Watchers and trailed to be a healer, Nina has a hard time adjusting to the idea that she is a slayer aka someone who LOVES to hit things. Add awkwardness between her cold mother, unspoken secrets between her twin sister, hiding a demon from the Watchers, the return of her crush who she EPICALLY embarrassed herself in front of and readers are in for a treat!

I don't want to go into plot because really if you are reading this review you clearly are interested in possibly reading this book and I am hear to tell you that you should definitely read this book! Okay, so now that we got that out of the way three-ish paragraphs into this article, let's continue.

What *Slayer* is able to achieve is giving us a new take on what it is to be the Chosen One. Not every Slayer is going to be like Buffy Summers (or Faith or any of the other members of the Slay army) and Nina is very different. Though the one annoying flaw of the book is the continuous mentioning of how much Nina hates Buffy – Nina has good reason to hate Buffy (thought without even knowing her) – but I don't think it needs to be mentioned almost every chapter. We get it, Buffy is far from perfect and there was several times when I personally questioned the actions of a one Buffy Summers. Though all the Buffy mentions are worth it when the two girls do meet – via a slayer dream – towards the end of the book. Buffy gives Nina the self-strength (I am making that a thing) to become the Slayer she is destined to be even if that means she may do more saving than killing.

Which now leads us to the main theme of the novel, besides learning that not all demons are bad but we kind of already knew that, is the idea of self acceptance. This theme extends beyond the character of Nina, by the time we come to the end of the book every character has gone through a journey of self discovery, no one is how we first met them.

Through out the whole book you see Nina battle with how she could continue to be the girl she was pre-slayer. She battles with even considering acting upon her slayer instincts. She has a hard time believing that you could be more than just a slayer, that there are other options. But the more Nina taps into her slayer abilities the more she likes the power and strength she has. After years of being told she is the weaker twin (that is a whole thing in the book), Nina feels self-sufficient for the first time. And while we as the reader just want to shake Nina and tell she can be both a slayer and a healer, a watcher and a protector – she has to come to the realization on her own, while with the help of a Buffy Summers.

See it was during that dream meet up with Buffy that Nina finally understands that while she felt like her life was out of her control, she is really the one that decides who she she is.

Buffy speaks. "We were Chosen for something we wouldn't have picked for ourselves. But you were Chosen because of who you are. So don't let being a Slayer define you. *You* define being a Slayer."

I am so happy that *Slayer* was the first book I read in 2019 because it is such a refreshing reminder that no one or nothing can define who you are or who you are capable of being. The book is a beautiful coming-of-age tale that can and will resonate with readers of all ages. Because at one time or another we have all been chosen for something we would not have selected for ourselves but no one should ever let anything

define them!

Gods, I really can't wait for Book Two!

Oh my, I completely forgot to mention that watch out Buffy and Angel, there is a new dreamy couple in town – Nina (or Athena) and Leo!

Slayer is currently available where ever you get your books! Feature Image via Simon & Schuster Tags: Lady Kaitlin Marie Bernadette Calabrò of House Ravenclaw, First of Her Name; Mother of Recaps, Breaker of News, Khaleesi of Wonder Wharf, Queen of Geekdom, and Empress of Anglophiles, is the Managing Editor of AGtM. By day she is the Marketing Manager of the Philadelphia Film Society, by night she is a serious relationship with her Netflix account. Kait is a proud Temple Owl! And is currently in a celebrity feud with both Samuel L. Jackson and Zachary Levi, unbeknownst to them. She spends her evenings watching the skies waiting for Thor to fly down and take her back to Asgard!

Related Posts