

BLOOD FROM A STONE

"Pilot"

Written by

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. ELLA STONE'S ROOM - MORNING

A MATCH flares, and lights an INCENSE STICK.

A BRUSH OF BLACK NAIL POLISH coats a fingernail.

That black-nailed finger presses "Play" on a 1980's WALKMAN.

The OPENING CHORDS of The Cure's "Plainsong" explode, and the jet-black hair of ELLA STONE (15) flops on her bed, foam headphones over her ears. She holds a small faded photo of her mother - CHRISTIANA STONE (27) - and tries to cry.

Instead: she sneezes.

ELLA (V.O.)

Can you hear me, Mom? From the other side? I feel your spirit.

Dolls line shelves around the room: what American Girl dolls would be if American Girl made Witches, Harpies, Medusas.

ELLA (V.O.)

Your scent. Your music. Too bad it doesn't Cure a thing.

Ella sprays and walks through a wave of perfume - smashes into her dresser - and chokes, coughing.

ELLA (V.O.)

If you are there, I need advice. Today I start Concord Prep. Home of the Venerable Vampires. Dad says it's a good school, but...I always thought I'd be a witch like you.

She opens Tik Tok on her phone and watches a video.

ON PHONE: MARGOT (16) and JAQUI (16), Juniors who look like (evil?) twins in matching swimsuits, stand before a mirror, dancing to "Flip The Switch." Margot flips the light off and on - and suddenly they're wearing matching school outfits in CONCORD PREP COLORS. Small fangs peek out of their smiles. A caption pops up on the video in pink bubble letters:

JUNIOR JOURNEY COMMENCES!

Ella judges her reflection and blows a sigh into her hair.

Ella clasps a SILVER CHOKER, covering her neck.

ELLA (V.O.)
I'll wear the armor you left me.
Not that it saved you.

Ella smudges her eyeliner and puts on earrings.

ELLA (V.O.)
If these Vamps have their way,
tonight I'll be one of them.

She dabs blood red lipstick on with her pinky.

ELLA
(singing, "movie snacks")
Let's all go to the Harvest. /
Let's all go to the Harvest. /
Let's all go to the Harvest, / and
get ourselves some fangs.

A faint DOOR KNOCKING. Ella checks the mirror a last time: a menagerie of blacks to make Rick Owens drool.

ELLA (CONT'D)
High school is gonna suck.

Outside the headphones, the door knocks are LOUD.

Ella's father CARL STONE (47) - a middle aged Zombie with yellow eyes and a flap of loose skin on his head bursts in.

CARL
Ella! Can't you hear me?

She takes off her headphones.

ELLA
No.

CARL
Tick tock - the world awaits!

ELLA
I don't want to.

CARL
You don't want to go to school?

ELLA
I don't want to be in the world.

Carl grabs a suitcase from the floor.

CARL

Too late. You're stuck here.
You're wearing that? It's High
School, not a Victorian Séance.

He drags the luggage out of the room. Ella yells after him -
the petulant teen daughter.

ELLA

Just because you're undead, doesn't
mean I can't live a little!

SMASH TO TITLES:

BLOOD FROM A STONE

ACT ONE

INT. CARL STONE'S CAR - MINUTES LATER.

Carl drives through Concord's version rush hour. Ella stares out the window, headphones on.

CARL
I gave your mom that tape.

ELLA
You must have been cool. What happened?

CARL
Kids. They ruin you.

He smirks at her. Ella hides her smile in her lap.

CARL (CONT'D)
Changing schools is hard - but Concord Prep will set your whole life in motion.

ELLA
My life is in motion.

CARL
Your real life.
(off her look)
We'll still have our weekends.

Ella stares at the cemetery as they drive past.

ELLA
Can we visit mom on Saturday?

CARL
Let's focus on life, huh?

ELLA
I thought death was a phase of life, Nurse Stone.

CARL
Not yours. Obsess over something your own age, like fashion.

Ella rolls her eyes.

ELLA
Death is the new Black.

Carl looks at her, all eyebrows, and drives on.

CARL

You'll love boarding on campus.
More friends, less time with your
raggedy dad.

ELLA

Except I don't have friends.

CARL

You will. You'll fit right in,
smarty-pants. I'm glad you got your
mother's brains. I'd give you mine,
but, I ate them.

He turns the car into the driveway of CONCORD PREP. A sign arching above, in GREEN AND WHITE:

CONCORD PREPARATORY: PREPARATION. PRUDENCE. PROSPERITY.

CARL (CONT'D)

You're the smartest girl I know.
They don't just let any half witch,
half Zombie into this place.

ELLA

Oh, good, so I won't fit in at all.

CARL

Be yourself. They'll love ya.

Ella's face scrunches up at him, like "gross."

ELLA

Ew, dad, you're all gooey.

CARL

I'm proud of you!

ELLA

No. Your head hole. Gross.

The wound in his head is, in fact, oozing. Carl dabs it with a HANKIE.

ELLA (CONT'D)

You said you would get it stitched.

CARL

I will. I'm going to. This school's
not cheap, you know.

ELLA

This is mortifying. Showing up to a new school with a Brainer.

Carl parks.

CARL

Hey - you're not a vampire yet. And I am still your father. You ready? Got your suntan lotion?

ELLA

SPF 300. Fangtastic.

EXT. CONCORD PREP PARKING LOT - MORNING

A cattle drive of teens, parents, cars, and luggage as students move into dorms for the semester. Most parents and upper classmen are Witches or Vampires - pale skin, broad hats and gloves - greeting each other after a summer away.

HEADMASTER PARKMAN (60s) holds court.

PARKMAN

So I told her: Preparation, Prudence, Prosperity!

The crowd laughs.

Carl dabs his wound and places his hat just-so, to hold the flap of skin in place. He and Ella carry bags through the blur of smiles and pastels. Margot and Jaqui - wearing their matching TikTok outfits - scowl at Ella like she's a wart.

CARL

Ignore the herd. You'll find your own friends.

They approach PEABODY HOUSE, a 19th century manse used for boarding, where a THIOL (50's), the mutant House Manager in charge of boarders, holds the door open, smiling toothlessly.

INT. PEABODY HOUSE, ELLA'S DORM ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The whole room is pastel. TAL (15) - also pastel - hangs a detailed-color-coded planner on the wall, by an RBG POSTER. Ella enters, with her bags.

ELLA

Is this number 7?

Tal turns, her whole body SQUEALING.

TAL
OHMYGOD. ROOMIE!

Tal crushes Ella - and her boxes - in a hug.

TAL (CONT'D)
I'm Talene - call me Tal, even
though I'm not. Ella, right?

She gasps at Ella's nails.

TAL (CONT'D)
You did your nails to match your
move-in day clothes?! Next level.

ELLA
Thanks. You're, uh, really bright.

TAL
No. I'm a pig. You're like so slim.

Tal turns and SCREAMS. Ella turns to find a terrifying sight:

TAL (CONT'D)
Ella, this is Jaqui, and Margot, my
sister. Margot-Jaqui, Ella.

MARGOT & JAQUI
Hiiiiii.

Ella gives a meagre wave.

ELLA
Hey.

JAQUI
(off Ella's outfit)
Whew, girl. Who died?

ELLA
Oh. My mom?

Awkward silence falls over the room.

JAQUI
She didn't leave you any clothes?

Ella settles her bags. Tal and Margot stare daggers at Jaqui.

MARGOT
Will you be pledging Moon Sisters?

ELLA
What's the, um, who are they?

Tal inhales with disbelief.

TAL
It's the coolest coven at Prep.
Once you're in, you're set.

JAQUI
Like: for life. And afterlife.

MARGOT
We make our selections after the
Harvest tonight.

TAL
Obviously. Like you can't join a
coven until you're a vampire.

ELLA
Obviously.

Ella drops her backpack and turns.

ELLA (CONT'D)
And everyone here joins a coven?

A beat of confusion, then the #Squad bursts into laughter.

MARGOT
You're so funny. She's funny.

In the doorway, Carl shakes hands with Thiol.

CARL
Thanks, Thiol. Good looking out.

He pokes in with the last of Ella's bags.

ELLA
Dad - this is Tal, my roommate.

CARL
Hi, Tal. Hi girls.

Carl tips his hat - and his skin flap flops. The girls gasp - they've never seen a zombie who wasn't a servant.

TAL
Huh, Hi, Mister - huh -

CARL
Stone.
(he holds out a hand that
Tal doesn't shake.)
I gotta run, Ella. Ready?

ELLA
Be right there.

Carl disappears to the hallway. Ella backs out, blushing.

ELLA (CONT'D)
I have to say goodbye before he
goes to work.

TAL
Work? What do you mean?

ELLA
His, um, job?

JAQUI
Job? What's a -

Margot slaps her arm. The girls stare, embarrassed for Ella.

ELLA
Nice meeting you. I'll see you, um.

Ella leaves. Jaqui glosses her lower lip at the mirror.

JAQUI
Pigmentation. Hue Tints.
Popularity.

MARGOT
She's an odd one, huh?

TAL
She's shy. And her mom. Jaqui!

JAQUI
Whatevs. I don't trust a girl who
lets her mom ruin her social life.

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - MINUTES LATER

Ella walks Carl to the car.

CARL
I'm sorry your dad's a zombie with
a real job, but someone has to pay
for this school.

ELLA
It's fine, dad, just --

TRIPP BARKER (40) pushes through the crowd, collecting double
takes in an unseasonable cloak, gloves, and wide-brimmed hat.

Behind him floats a TRUNK, carrying a potted plant. He blows a light tune on a FLUTE. Mid-quad, he turns:

BARKER
Come, Genji!

A TOAD leaps from the grass to follow him. Ella gapes.

ELLA
It's just a whole new world.

Carl takes her by the shoulders.

CARL
Give it time.

INT. CONCORD PREP CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

An 18th century meeting house, decked out with candles. The pews fill with students and parents. Teachers sit across the stage, including Barker. Parkman takes the PULPIT.

PARKMAN
Welcome, students, to Concord
Preparatory's fall term, 2021.

IN CROWD: Ella sits in the back, behind Margot, Tal, and Jaqui. Jaqui mouths along with Parkman; they've heard this.

JAQUI
... a new chapter in your lives.
For two hundred years -

PARKMAN
...these pews and walls paid
witness to young lives beginning.
Today it is your turn.
Preparation. Prudence.

JAQUI
Prosperity. The pillars of Prep.

PARKMAN
Preparation. Here we'll lay a path
you'll walk for life, and
afterlife.

Parkman smiles, his small fangs glinting in the light.

IN CROWD: NOAH CONTI (16), roguish, bumbles in. Heads turn. Margot scrunches her face in disapproval, but looks for too long. Noah flops into the back pew beside Ella.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
 (glaring at Noah)
 Prudence. We demand discipline.

IN CROWD: Noah hums, drawing annoyed glances from the #Squad. Noah passes Ella a WIRELESS EARBUD. He gestures "shh" - their secret. Ella puts in the bud and nods along to the beat.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
 Prosperity. Follow our light; it
 leads to eternal Suck-sess.

Barker looks over the crowd. He catches eyes with Ella, who blanches, stops head-dancing, and gives the bud back to Noah.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
 Our halls trace the bloodlines of
 history, to the heart of greatness.

IN CROWD: Ella casts a glance at the side walls, lined with GRADUATION PHOTOS of classes past.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
 The I.V. League. Political Power.
 Barons of Business...

JAQUI
 (her most pompous
 "Parkman")
 Captains of culture.

IN CROWD: Jaqui and Margot whisper one Parkman doesn't say.

JAQUI & MARGOT
 Vampires of Venture Capitalism!

PARKMAN
 This is why CP is the greatest
 preparatory academy in New England.

IN CROWD: The parents APPLAUD.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
 This term, I am pleased to welcome
 Tripp Barker, in Literature.

Barker nods as heads turn towards him; parents smile.

IN CROWD: The roomies whisper.

MARGOT
 Yum.

TAL

Gross.

JAQUI

You know what they say about men
with big hats.

TAL

What? What do they say?

JAQUI

Huge heads.

Ella rolls her eyes and looks over to see Noah slip out of
the pew and leave the Chapel.

PARKMAN

At tonight's Harvest Ceremony, our
new students will join our immortal
brood. Don't worry, friends: we
only bite, once.

Parents and older students titter in the crowd.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

Enjoy your GOREorientation. We'll see
you at dusk, for the Harvest.

The crowd rises. The #Squad files out. Ella lags behind.

She looks through the photos: Senators, scientists, a Queen.
A door by the stage opens, and Ella starts as Parkman enters.
He saunters towards her.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

New school. Old ghosts.

He stops beside her and looks at the photo wall.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

You're joining a long tradition.
Presidents, Queens.

ELLA

Teachers?

Parkman halts. Smirking.

PARKMAN

A good teacher alters eternity.

He nods out the window; Ella looks at the maintenance staff
outside: Goblins, Centaurs and Humans, setting up a TENT,
ROWS OF CHAIRS, and a STAGE on the Quad.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
Poor creatures, had bad teachers.
Dreaming their small zombie dreams.

ELLA
My father is a zombie.

PARKMAN
Oh? OH!
(giving her his attention)
Ms. Stone, is it? I was sorry to
hear of your mother's passing.

ELLA
You knew her?

PARKMAN
No. I do, however, keep an eye on
our scholarship students.

Ella looks down.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
May I offer some advice?

ELLA
Shoot.

Parkman leans against the wall - Ella's almost cornered.
Should she be intimidated? She's not sure.

PARKMAN
Stick with the good apples. Avoid
the rot.

ELLA
Any apples particularly rotten?

Parkman smiles and crosses his arms.

PARKMAN
Usually the ones sitting by
themselves in the back of Chapel.

Ella's face reddens. TIFFANY Hambish (15) clatters in - the
one girl besides Ella who's style didn't come from instagram.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
Or following their own schedule.

TIFFANY
Am I late? Did I miss it?

PARKMAN
Yes, and yes, Miss -

Tiffany pleads with her eyes.

TIFFANY
Hambish. Tiffany. I am so sorry, my
mom got called into work so I had
to take the bus and then the bus -

PARKMAN
- Broke down, like your syntax?
Good as your tale is, Ms. Hambish,
I don't have the time. Or interest.

He turns to Ella.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
Remember what the bad apple did to
the barrel, Ms. Stone.

He starts for the door.

ELLA
I'll just follow the Three P's.

TIFFANY
(desperate to save face)
Preparation. Prudence, Prosperity!

Parkman turns at the door.

PARKMAN
Perhaps we should add punctuality
to the list, Ms. Hambish?

He lets the door fall closed behind him.

TIFFANY
Great first impression, Tiff. I'll
go before I ruin your rep too.

ELLA
No - Stay. I'm Ella. You're
Tiffany, and you're the first
person here who acts like a parent
with a job isn't some freak.

Tiffany lowers her voice.

TIFFANY
OK, but don't tell them my mom-

ELLA

It's OK. My dad's a zombie.

Tiffany's eyes bulge, then her face turns contrite.

TIFFANY

I am so sorry.

ELLA

It's not a death sentence. These bloodsuckers with their money, and their power, and, OK, they have everything they want. But they act like turning Vamp is The End.

TIFFANY

That's the whole 'point,' right?
(laughs in vampire)
Ah, ah ah!

ELLA

Please. Vampires may run the world but they suck. And not like "I vunt to suck your blood". Suck, like, "you suck." You SUCK!

Her yell echoes through the chapel. Tiffany stares.

TIFFANY

You can't say that. Don't say that!

ELLA

Why not? I feel better.

She heads for the door. Tiffany looks after Ella.

TIFFANY

They suck your blood when they like you. What do you think they do when they don't?

She runs after Ella.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - MOMENTS LATER

Ella and Tiffany walk through, passing the creatures setting up the lawn for the Harvest Ceremony.

TIFFANY

Do you mean what I think you mean?

Ella stops and wheels on her.

ELLA

I didn't turn Vamp yet - I don't have the whole mind reading thing down yet. What do you think I mean?

TIFFANY

Don't you want to be a vampire? I thought everyone wanted to be -

Ella bites her lip, then turns and keeps walking.

ELLA

I just mean Vampires have baggage.

TIFFANY

Then why come to Vamp Central?

ELLA

I came here for the same reasons you did - the same as anyone. Because my parents made me.

Tiffany laughs, looking around to ensure no one heard.

TIFFANY

OK. Freak!

Elle nods at a Centaur who has stopped, staring at them.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Sorry. Not you.
(confidentially)
Someone might hear you.

ELLA

So? This is what my parents wanted for me. Not what I wanted.

Tiffany bites her lip and nods.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Did you want to be a vampire when you grew up?

TIFFANY

No. But it was out of reach, like being a princess or a Hobbit.

ELLA

Hobbit? What, do you speak Elvish?

TIFFANY

(she does.)

That's not the point. I'm saying: your dad is a Zombie? My mom is Jinn. They never had this chance.

Ella looks at a group of powerful parents standing on the lawn, big sun hats, heads thrown back in laughter.

ELLA

Don't they give you the creeps?

TIFFANY

Some. They also gave me a grant.

A BELL GONGS. Tiffany's face drops.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Day one and I'm already "the late girl." What do you have?

Ella looks at her CLASS SCHEDULE.

ELLA

Um, English. Barker?

TIFFANY

Same. Let's roll.

They enter a classroom building.

INT. EMERSON WING BASEMENT STAIRWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Ella and Tiffany come down the stairs. It's dark and...musty is too polite a word.

ELLA

Gah. All these undead teachers with windowless basement classrooms, you'd think they'd have a map. Basement C? Where -

A CRASH from the stairs spins them both around in fight mode. But it's just Noah, rushing down, also late.

NOAH
Don't bite. Just me.

ELLA
You've got a knack for entrances.

Noah shoulders his bag and joins them in the hallway.

NOAH
Know where Basement C is?

TIFFANY
Sure. We just like dank hallways.

ELLA
This is Tiffany. I'm Ella.

NOAH
Noah.
(off her outfit)
You must be the subversive chick.

ELLA
That makes you the know-it-all?

NOAH
Why, because I'm tall?

Tiffany and Ella stare at him, confused.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Noah, tall. Know-it-all.

Ella smirks. Tiffany rolls her eyes and groans.

TIFFANY
I never wanted to start class more.

Tiffany approaches a dark door. Noah whispers to Ella.

NOAH
She must be the one who doesn't
take any sh-

The door busts open - Tiffany screams, into the cloth-wrapped face of ZYANYA (2,352), a mummy, giving-off age-old dust.

TIFFANY
GAH!

She squeals back, crashing into Ella. Zyanya stares at them.

ELLA
American Lit? Room C?

Zyanya points down the hallway behind them - a dark, spiderwebbed doorway - and nods, urging them.

INT. DARK BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ella leads the way into the dark, dank hallway. Tiffany and Noah fall close behind.

NOAH
Preparation, prudence. Purell.

They turn a corner to find: a door marked C.

ELLA
Dr. New Guy better be good.

INT. BARKER'S BASEMENT CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ella, Tiffany, and Noah rush into the classroom to find...

ELLA
I'm sorry, Mr. Barker, Doctor, we -

Barker - sitting on his desk with eyes closed - holds up a finger to silence her. Ella turns to see a dozen sophomores sitting in silence: Tal sneaks peeks to make sure she's doing it right; GRANT (16) snores. The basement is dim - no windows - but warm and cozy: wood, chalk dust, and candles.

A CHIME RINGS. Barker opens his eyes.

BARKER
Open your eyes, return to the room.

The class sit up. Tal slaps Grant - he awakes with a snort. Barker waves a hand to empty desks.

BARKER (CONT'D)
Ms. Stone, Hambish, and Mr. Conti,
I presume. Take your seats.

They scurry to sit.

ELLA
Sorry. We couldn't find the room -

BARKER

Don't apologize, Ms. Stone. You thought you had better things to do; you were probably right.

Barker writes on the board.

BARKER (CONT'D)

American Literature: Nineteenth century. With a focus on the writings of Concord, Mass. That's the official description.

Tal writes this in her notebook. Barker turns to the class.

BARKER (CONT'D)

Bunkum.

The class falls still. Ella sits up.

BARKER (CONT'D)

You're here to learn one thing: who you are. The You who's not playing a role. As a student. A girlfriend.

GRANT

(whispering to Tal)

Who told him you like role play?

Tal reddens and smacks him.

BARKER

A son. A daughter. When you leave Concord Prep or - god forbid - college, you'll be expected to be a person. You'd better know who you are. What you want.

Tal trembles. Noah nods along.

BARKER (CONT'D)

Not what your parents want for you.

Barker draws on the CHALKBOARD: an image slowly takes shape.

BARKER (CONT'D)

"To live deep and suck out all the marrow of life." Thoreau.

It's a line portrait of Henry David Thoreau.

BARKER (CONT'D)

The marrow. Not merely the blood
you suck, with whichever coven you
join after tonight's Harvest.

The class stare at him - entranced.

BARKER (CONT'D)

Or, as the other great Concord
thinker, Mr. Emerson, wrote:
"Listen to the inward voice, and
bravely obey that."

Ella scribbles "inner voice" and shyly turns the page; Tal
gulps a bump in her throat; Noah snaps in approval. Tiffany
shakes her head, unimpressed.

Grant leans forward to Tal, like her inner voice.

GRANT (WHISPERED)

"Obey me... I'm your inner voice."

She smacks him, serious now, and turns back. Cross fade to...

INT. BARKER'S BASEMENT CLASSROOM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

At the BELL'S TOLL, the class leaps into CHAOS OF VOICES and
SCREAMING CHAIRS as students pour out.

ELLA

Hey, Tal! Going to lunch?

Tal sneers back at Ella, Tiffany and Noah.

TAL

Looks like you've picked your own
little coven, huh? C'mon.

She grabs Grant's hand and pulls him, as he laughs.

NOAH

Coven of the Unseen Clock!
Fashionably late everywhere we go.

He goes for a high five, which Ella and Tiffany ignore.

TIFFANY

We outnumber him, so we can kick
him out, right?

ELLA

Let's fashionably get to lunch. I'm
starving.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - MINUTES LATER

A ROW OF TABLES - manned by two or three students each - advertise each Coven: "The B-Positives." "Universal Donors." "Plastmatics" are the musical theatre bunch. GRIFFONS and DEMONS bring new trays of pizza, casseroles, and pitchers of water and juice. At the other end, a PODIUM.

Chicly dressed students fill the room. If it weren't so loud and flanked by amateur display boards out of a science fair, the room would look like a TeenVogue photo shoot.

Ella, Noah, and Tiffany enter, eyes and mouths agog; They do not belong in this room.

TIFFANY

Still hungry?

NOAH

Definitely a weird stomach feeling.

ELLA

Be yourself, dad said. You'll fit in, he said.

TIFFANY

He lied.

Ella turns as though to exit. Tiffany and Noah block her.

NOAH

Nope. We stick together.

TIFFANY

Which table should we hit?

ELLA

Food first. I can't stand Blood Pressure on an empty stomach.

Parkman clears his throat at the microphone.

PARKMAN

Welcome Fresh Blood, to GOREientation. Your Coven will form your closest bonds here, and for the rest of your life. Your coven is your destiny; choose wisely.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE

The trio reach the end of the buffet line, trays piled with food. FRULK (30's) a kitchen Goblin, works the register.

FRULK
Ten dollars, please.

ELLA
I thought it was all included.

TIFFANY
Didn't you get a meal card?

ELLA
No, I didn't know-

FRULK
Ten dollars, or eighty milliliters.

Off Frulk's gesture, Ella looks in horror at a syringe sterilizing in alcohol. Noah pulls out his meal card.

NOAH
Here: Put it on mine.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE

With plates full of food, the trio push through the crowd around Margot and Jaqui's table for The Moon Sisters.

MARGOT
We really are a sisterhood.

JAQUI
Moon Sister now; Sister for life.

MARGOT
The Pedigree speaks for itself.

She points to pictures of powerful female alum on display.

MARGOT (CONT'D)
Governor Ryan. Senator Clipp. The
First Lady?

Tiffany raises her hand.

TIFFANY
Wasn't Elizabeth Holmes a Moon
Sister?

JAQUI
You can't make an omelet without
breaking a few blood vessels.

The sisters laugh.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE CONT'D

They visit Fangs of the First Order, where Grant speaks.

GRANT

Fangs are Power. Privilege. Fangs
of the First Order take pride in
coming out of the Coffin!

His brethren cheer.

GRANT (CONT'D)

But most importantly, we are a
service organization, we give back.

Ella wipes pizza cheese from her mouth and raises her hand.

ELLA

What kind of service trips?

GRANT

Monthly shifts at the homeless
shelter, serving the less
fortunate. We end their suffering.

He laughs and slaps hands with a brother.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE CONT'D

Ella scrapes her food into a trash can. FRULK brings a new
TRASH BAG.

ELLA

Where is the recycling?

FRULK

("bless your heart")
I'll take care of it.

Ella hands her plate over.

ELLA

Thank you. I love your tattoos!

FRULK smiles, astonished. Before he can respond, Tal drags
Ella away by the elbow.

TAL

Hanging with the scholarship duds
is one thing, but Gob-nobbing with
"the help?"

ELLA
I'm a scholarship dud.

Tal pushes Ella against a wall, out of earshot.

TAL
 Sarcastic girl might play at the
 public school you oozed up from,
 but I won't let you take me down -

ELLA
 Take you down, how?

TAL
 We are roommates. Like it or not,
 we're seen as a unit. I need you to
 act like you give a suck for a few
 hours, so I can join the Moon
 Sisters, and move on with my
 eternal life. 'Kay? Good talk.

Tal turns away. Ella pulls her pride together and calls out.

ELLA
 Your eternal life riding your
 sister's coattails? You hanger-on.

Tal stops, livid, and turns.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 Or should I say, fanger-on?

TAL
 I might never outlive the stain of
 being your roommate. But at least I
 will never be a Brainer.

She stares daggers. Ella comes at her, on the attack -

ELLA
 What's so good about being a
 vampire? Vampires killed my mother!

- close enough to be picked up by the PODIUM MIC. Her
 admission blares across the room, which quiets, staring.

Ella spins, realizing she's been heard. Tal backs away.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 Eat up. Tip your Succubus.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - CONTINUOUS

The crowd scowls at Ella as though she's contagious. Margot and Jaqui giggle behind their hands. Parkman glowers.

Noah and Tiffany push through the crowd to Ella and drag her out of the cafeteria.

NOAH

Come on.

ELLA

Why?

TIFFANY

Oh, because they look hungry and you suddenly smell like a meal.

They drag her out of the cafeteria.

JAQUI

(loud enough for the room)

If a vampire killed her, your mom must have been a real witch.

INT. CONCORD PREP HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

NOAH

Is it true?

ELLA

Yes.

TIFFANY

That's why you feel jittery here?

She tugs Ella down the hall, as Noah follows.

ELLA

Shocker, right. A school full of mother-suckers makes me nervous.

NOAH

My step-dad's a vamp. I hate him.

Tiffany shushes them and pushes them into an alcove.

TIFFANY

You can't just say that here.

NOAH

It's true!

TIFFANY

I don't care if it is. You're going to get yourself killed.

ELLA

Like my mom? Like she deserved it?

Tiffany groans and rolls her eyes.

TIFFANY

No. I mean, don't make yourself an outsider if you don't have to.

ELLA

Ah, I get it. It's OK for a Fang to make my mom meatloaf, but impolite to mention that in mixed company?

TIFFANY

If you want bad blood, go ahead.

ELLA

Glad to know whose side you're on.

Ella leaves the alcove. Noah looks back to Tiffany, then follows Ella. Tiffany rushes after them.

NOAH

Ella, wait. What happened to your mom is unthinkable.

ELLA

Really? I think about it non-stop.

NOAH

But there's got to be a way to honor her and still, you know - be in high school.

Ella's eyes drop to the floor.

NOAH (CONT'D)

What happened is awful. But it's not like someone here is to blame.

Tiffany takes Ella's shoulder; Ella flicks her away.

TIFFANY

I'd bet your mom wouldn't want you to throw away the opportunity here.

A shadow falls over them and a chipper voice chimes in.

BARKER
Opportunity knocks but once!

Ella starts and turns to him.

BARKER (CONT'D)
And which opportunities are we
throwing away today?

Tiffany and Noah look away, sheepish.

ELLA
We need some advice, Mr. Barker.
Hypothetically: if a classmate
tells you to join - this, party.

Barker nods.

ELLA (CONT'D)
But it would mean doing something
you don't want to. Going against
yourself. What would you do?

Tiffany glares subtext into Ella's eyes.

TIFFANY
Going along means setting up your
entire future.

ELLA
A future based on compromising your
own values?

BARKER
If you're being blood-pressured
into something against the rules-

ELLA, NOAH, & TIFFANY
It's not against the rules. No.

Barker peers at them, inquisitive.

BARKER
"Is there not a sort of bloodshed
when a conscience is wounded?
Through this wound a man's
immortality flows out, and he
bleeds to everlasting death."

He looks deeply at Ella.

BARKER (CONT'D)
 Thoreau, on the poll tax that
 funded slavery. Heed your inner
 voice, Ms. Stone.

He begins down the hallway, then turns.

BARKER (CONT'D)
 I will always support the
 individual standing up for what
 they believe. It's quite American.

He goes. Outside - the CHURCH BELLS CLANG.

NOAH
 Harvest time. Time to reap what
 we've sown.

TIFFANY
 One more pun and I will end your
 eternal life before it begins.

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - DUSK

Parents and teachers mingle amidst rows of white chairs set
 out on the lawn. STAFF GOBLINS in formal wear pass trays with
 canapés and crystal glasses of chilled blood.

Margot and Jaqui hold court in the center of a cortege. Tal
 stands near, trying to get closer.

Barker stands awkwardly, outside the crowd. He waves away a
 goblin with a tray of B+.

Ella, Noah, and Tiffany are the only students who didn't
 change into something less comfortable for the ceremony.

A FEEDBACK SQUEAL from the mic silences the crowd, who turn
 towards the front, where Parkman stands at the podium.

PARKMAN
 Parents, teachers, please be
 seated. New students - line up. The
 Harvest is about to begin.

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - MOMENTS LATER

IN LINE: Ella stands behind Tal, in front of Noah and
 Tiffany. Noah looks as though he's swallowed something awful.

PARKMAN

Tonight, you join the ranks of
power. Welcome, to The I.V. League.

ON STAGE: Two GOBLINS set up a stand with I.V. bags of blood.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

The Harvest joins you to an old
world, a bloodline of vampires
tracing the history of power in our
great nation. Welcome to Forever.

ON STAGE: The first STUDENT in line mounts the stage. Parkman
bends and bites the student's neck, sucking deep.

The student stumbles and takes an I.V. BAG. His new fangs
sprout from his teeth, and he sinks them into the bag,
draining it lustily. The audience cheers and applauds.

ELLA

What if I don't want to?

TIFFANY

Don't want to what?

ELLA

This. Become a vampire.

TIFFANY

This is literally a prep school for
vampires. It's like what they do.

ELLA

Yeah. But is there a rule?

Tal turns around, angrily.

TAL

SHH! Please have some respect.

TIFFANY

(whispering to Ella)
I'll check the school charter.

Tiffany scrolls her PHONE. Ella looks at Noah, still green.

ELLA

Are you ok?

NOAH

Yep. Good. Psyched.

IN LINE: Another STUDENT steps forward to Parkman and repeats
the ceremony. The line creeps up.

Ella watches, biting her lip. She looks out at the crowd of parents, eyes wide with joy, fangs glinting in the firelight.

ELLA (V.O.)
 Mom, please. If you can hear me, I
 need you. Now.

The sounds of the ceremony fade away. Ella fingers her silver choker. Her father's voice echoes in her brain.

CARL (V.O.)
 Be yourself. They'll love ya.

Ella sees Margot and Jaqui, and their Coven, all in matching outfits of different shades; a clump of clones.

CARL (V.O.)
 Ignore the herd.

She looks at the line of students in front of her, slowly stepping forward, lemmings towards the cliff.

TIFFANY
 There's nothing here that says a
 student has to turn Vampire.

ELLA
 So what does that mean?

TIFFANY
 It means, No: you don't have to.
 But that doesn't make it not bad.

Ella turns around as the next STUDENT slurps on a BLOOD BAG.

BARKER (V.O.)
 "Listen to your inward voice, and
 bravely obey that."

Ella looks through the crowd and spots Barker.

BARKER (V.O.)
 "Your inner voice..."

He's looking directly at her. Is he ... speaking to her? She looks ahead - she's third from the stage.

The voice comes to her again but - but not Barker's. It's morphing. Another voice, impersonating Barker.

VOICE (V.O.)
 "Obey your inner voice."

She looks up again - two from the stage. The voice, urgent now - OH. It's Her. Ella's own voice doing a British accent.

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
Oi! Y'hear me or what?

ELLA (V.O.)
Who are you?

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
Your innah voice!

ELLA (V.O.)
Why are you British?

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
So you respect me. Well? Heed me!

In front of her, Tal steps onto the stage, giddy.

ELLA (V.O.)
Heed what?

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
Do I have to spell it out?

ELLA (V.O.)
Uh, that would be nice.

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
You know what's right. Go on.

Tiffany shakes Ella's shoulder, pulling her back to reality.

TIFFANY
Go on. It's your turn, Ella.

Ella looks out - the whole crowd is staring at her. On stage, Parkman leers down, beckoning her with his hand.

Ella whips back to Tiffany and Noah.

ELLA
We're friends, right?

Ella looks at both of them.

NOAH
Yeah. Friends.

ELLA
And friends stick together?

Tiffany and Noah look at each other. Before they can answer, Parkman calls to her.

PARKMAN
Ms. Stone. Come along.

Ella steps onto the stage. Time slows as she nears Parkman.

ELLA (V.O.)
Tell me this: If I have an inner
voice I can hear ...

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
Yeah? What of it?

ELLA (V.O.)
Then I'm not supposed to be a
vampire.

ELLA'S INNER VOICE (V.O.)
There. Wasn't so hard, was it?

Parkman takes Ella's hand and pulls her to him.

PARKMAN
Take it off.

Ella startles back to reality. She looks at Parkman, dazed, then to the crowd.

ELLA
Wh - what?

Parkman laughs. He reaches to unclasp her choker.

PARKMAN
I'll need your neck for this part.

ELLA
No.

Parkman's face drops. He looks at her in anger.

PARKMAN
Excuse me?

ELLA
I said No.

Whispers burble through the crowd. Ella steps to the mic.

ELLA (CONT'D)
I, Ella Stone, solemnly abstain
from vampirism.

IN CROWD: The crowd gasps and shouts.

PARKMAN
You can't do that.

ELLA
And I decree the formation of a new
Coven. For non-vampires.

PARKMAN
Faculty must approve of all cov-

ELLA
With Dr. Barker as our advisor.

Parkman's glare swings to Barker, who's shocked but nods.

ELLA (CONT'D)
Because he stands up for people who
stand up for their beliefs.

ON STAGE: Ella pushes past Parkman, to the side of the stage.
Hisses and whispers wash over the crowd.

Tiffany steps up to the microphone.

TIFFANY
I, Tiffany Hambish, abstain from
vampirism.

She joins Ella. Noah steps up to the microphone.

NOAH
I, No-
(he fights back puke)
I. What they said.

He joins Ella and Tiffany. They hold hands.

PARKMAN
Don't think I won't make your life
an un-living hell, Ms. Stone.

ELLA
How? You'll keep me in High School?

Parkman glowers, then turns back to the podium, holding his
hand up for quiet, as all vampiric hell breaks loose.

END OF EPISODE