

BLOOD FROM A STONE

"Pilot"

Written by

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LOGLINE:

When a disaffected scholarship student joins an elite prep school, everyone expects her to join the ranks of vampires on the path to suck-cess. But with inspiration from a teacher, and the death-by-fang-gang of her mother fresh in her memory, she yearns to ditch the herd and forge her own future.

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. ELLA STONE'S ROOM - MORNING

A MATCH flares, lights an INCENSE STICK.

A BRUSH OF BLACK 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.

ELLA (V.O.)

Help me, mom. I conjure you: your music. The armor you left me. Not that it saved you.

Ella clasps a SILVER CHOKER, covering her neck.

ELLA (V.O.)

Your scent.

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

ELLA (V.O.)

Today I start Concord Prep. Dad says it's a good school, but...I want to be a witch like you.

Ella smudges her black eyeliner, dabs blood red lipstick on.

ELLA (V.O.)

And if Prep has it's way, tonight I'll become a vampire.

A faint BEEPING behind the music. Ella checks the mirror a last time: a menagerie of blacks to make Rick Owens drool. Ella locks eyes with her reflection and tries to cry.

ELLA (VO)

Can you hear me, Mom? Help me. Give me a sign?

Instead, she sneezes.

Her headphones fly off; the smoke alarm WAILS - her incense set fire to some BLACK LACE. Ella douses it with the bottle of perfume as the door busts open.

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

CARL

Ella! No hexing before school!

She waves away the smoke. The alarm quiets.

ELLA

Sorry, dad.

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

Well, you're stuck here.

He grabs a suitcase from the floor.

CARL (CONT'D)

You're wearing that? It's a Vampire high school, not a Victorian Séance.

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

ELLA

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

She grabs the rest of her BOXES, and follows him out.

ELLA (V.O.)

Vampire high school is gonna suck.

CREDITS: 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 once. What happened?

CARL
Kids. They ruin you.

He smirks. Ella hides her smile in her lap.

CARL (CONT'D)
Nervous?

ELLA
No. I just don't want to go to Vamp Camp.

CARL
Changing schools is hard. But trust me: it sucks now - pun intended - but you'll thank me later.

Ella stares at the cemetery as they drive past.

ELLA
I just don't think mom wanted her life insurance money to go to the vampires who killed her.

CARL
Concord Prep did not kill your mother. And she wanted you to have the best education possible.

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

CONCORD PREPARATORY: PREPARATION. PRUDENCE. PROSPERITY.

Carl parks.

CARL (CONT'D)

Hey: you've got my sense of humor
and your mother's brains. They'll
love you...just like I do.

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

ELLA

Ew, dad, you're all gooey.

CARL

So what?! I'm proud of you!

ELLA

No. Your head-hole. Gross.

His head wound is, yes, gooey. 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

UGH. First day, new school, and I
show up with a Brainer.

Carl places his hat just-so, to hold his skinflap in place.

EXT. CONCORD PREP CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS

Ella blanches at the

Ella grabs a box from the trunk and looks across campus: a
cattle drive of TEENS AND PARENTS - vampires with pale skin
and parasols - greet each other after a summer away.

The crowd parts for THE MOON SISTERS, a coven of eight
identically dressed girls, drawing sgasps from awkward
freshmen. Ella gapes after them.

TRIPP BARKER (40) pushes past Ella, collecting double takes
in an unseasonable Oscar Wilde cape and hat. A TRUNK floats
behind him, barely carrying an unsteady potted plant.

BARKER

(turning, calling out)
Come, Genji!

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

CARL

Close your mouth; your Zombie is showing.

They carry the luggage to PEABODY HOUSE, a 19th century boarding manse. THIOL (50's), a Zombie, holds the door open, smiling toothlessly, and takes one of Ella's bags.

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

Two bunk beds. All pastels. TAL (15) - also pastel - hangs a color-coded planner, by an RBG POSTER. Ella enters with 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 grimy move-in clothes?! Next level.

ELLA

Thanks. You're, uh, really bright.

TAL

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

Ella's eyes lock onto a dark shape in the lower bunk; something in there blinks. Before she can ask, Tal SCREAMS. Ella turns to find a terrifying sight: two of the identicals from the Moon Sisters.

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. Ella fingers her choker.

JAQUI

She didn't leave you any clothes?

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 select after Harvest tonight.

TAL

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

ELLA

Obviously.

Carl and Thiol enter, carrying bags. Tal points.

TAL

Top bunk, please.

The men put away the luggage.

JAQUI

Get lost, ghouls.

Thiol bows and leaves. Carl waits, awkward.

ELLA
Tal, this is my dad. Dad, this is-

JAQUI
DAD? You're kidding.

They gasp - they've never met a zombie who wasn't a servant.

CARL
Don't worry; already ate my fill of
brains today. Hi, Tal. Hi girls.

Carl tips his hat - and his skin flap flops.

CARL (CONT'D)
I gotta run, Ella. Ready?

ELLA
Be right there.

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

ELLA (CONT'D)
Um. Nice meeting you all.

Ella leaves. Jaqui glosses her lips; Tal slaps her arm.

TAL
Jaqui! Oh, god and her mom died?

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

MARGOT
Can't believe you got stuck with a
half-brainer, Tal.

A voice comes from dark lower bunk.

TIFFANY
Half a brain is more than the three
of you combined.

TIFFANY SOBHRAJ (15), in a punky hijab, uncurls from the bed.

MARGOT
Who the hell are you?

TIFFANY
The other roommate.

JAQUI
Nice headgear. Is that to keep your
brains in?

TIFFANY
No. I'm Djinn.

Margot and Jaqui share a look, push Tiffany into the closet.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
Hey! Stop!

MARGOT
Want you to feel at home: in a
small dark space.

She barricades Tiffany, who bangs on the door, yelling.

MARGOT (CONT'D)
Make a wish, djinni.

Jaqui slides a WOODEN HANGER through the handles, locking it.

JAQUI
Calm down. I'm sure someone will
come along to let you out. Someday.

They leave, laughing.

EXT. CONCORD PREP PARKING LOT - MINUTES LATER

Ella walks Carl to the car.

ELLA
I'm sorry, dad, they -

CARL
It's fine, El. It's not my world.
But it will be yours.

He pulls her into a hug - she squirms but he holds tight.

ELLA
If you ooze on me, dad, I swear -

CARL
(fake gnawing her)
Brains! Smart daughter! Mmm.

ELLA
Literally want to die, dad. Ugh.

A TOWER BELL RINGS. Carl squeezes Ella's shoulder and goes.

INT. CONCORD PREP CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

An 18th century meeting house, candlelit. The pews fill with students and parents. Teachers spread across the stage.
HEADMASTER PARKMAN (60s) - gray all over - takes the PULPIT.

PARKMAN

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

IN CROWD: Ella sneaks in the back, behind the Moon Sisters.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

Today your journey commences.
Preparation. Prudence.

IN CROWD: Jaqui mouths along to Parkman; they've heard this.

JAQUI

Prosperity. The pillars of Prep.

PARKMAN

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

Parkman smiles, fangs glinting in the light.

IN CROWD: Ella looks at the only other boy in her pew: NOAH CAREY (15), nervy and jiggling, looks away when she smiles at him. She clocks water dripping from his jeans into a puddle.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

Prudence. We demand discipline.

IN CROWD: In the quiet between Parkman's words, Ella hears a far-off, quiet squeal. She looks around, then lands on Noah's ears: he wears tiny ear bud headphones. Margot and Jaqui hear it too and glance back. Noah blushes.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

Prosperity. Follow our light; it
leads to eternal Suck-sess. Our
halls trace the bloodlines of
history, to the heart of greatness.
The I.V. League. Political Power.

JAQUI

(pompous "Parkman")
Baronth of Buthineth!

IN CROWD: Margot nudges her, snickering.

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.

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, trailing wet footprints.

PARKMAN

At tonight's Harvest, new students will join our immortal brood. Don't worry: 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 files out. Ella lags behind, looking at the walls lined with alumni photos: Senators, scientists, a Queen. A throat clears behind her; Ella startles at Parkman.

PARKMAN (CONT'D)

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

ELLA

Teachers?

Parkman 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

Sad 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
Hardly. I do, however, keep an eye
on our scholarship students.

Ella looks down.

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

Ella's cornered. Should she be intimidated?

PARKMAN (CONT'D)
Choose the right coven tonight.
With the wrong friends, high school
can feel like eternity. Then again,
so can eternity.

ELLA
Gotcha. Any other sage advice.

PARKMAN
You'll lose a lot of blood at
Harvest. Eat a big lunch.

Tiffany clatters in through the doors; Ella and Parkman turn.

TIFFANY
Am I late? Did I miss it?

PARKMAN
Yes, and yes, Miss -

Tiffany pleads with her eyes.

TIFFANY
Sobhraj. Tiffany. I am so sorry,
Headmaster, I was -

Parkman holds up a hand, silencing her.

PARKMAN

Remember what the bad apple did to the barrel, Ms. Stone.

ELLA

I'll just follow the Three P's.

TIFFANY

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

PARKMAN

(turning at the door)
Perhaps we should add Punctuality to the list, Ms. Sobhraj?

He lets the door fall closed behind him.

TIFFANY

Great first impression, Tiff. Ugh.

She goes.

ELLA

Wait! Tiffany? I'm Ella. You're the first person here who doesn't act like a total fang banger.

TIFFANY

Don't you want to be a vampire?

ELLA

Please. These bloodsuckers with their money and power and, OK: they have everything. But it's not like turning Vamp is the end.

Tiffany fake-laughs, looking around to ensure no one heard.

TIFFANY

OK. Freak!

Ella blushes at Thiol, cleaning the pews.

ELLA

Sorry. Not you.

Ella nods at the creatures setting up outside, the vampire parents drinking wine on the lawn.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Don't they give you the creeps?

TIFFANY

Sure. They also gave me a grant.

ELLA

I came here for the same reasons you did - my parents made me. It's not like I wanted to be here. Wait! Where are you going?

TIFFANY

(bolting for the door)
I have a hard enough time as a scholarship djinn, I do not need to be tied in with the anti-vamp girl.

ELLA

(calling after Tiffany)
I'm not anti-vamp. I'm just pro keeping-all-my-blood; it's very near and dear to my heart.

The door slams. Ella looks out at gaggles of students; everyone has a place but her. The BELL RINGS for class.

ELLA (V.O.)

Nice work, Stone. By the Harvest tonight the whole school will know you're a half-Zombie vampire hater.

Ella grabs her backpack.

ELLA

At least no one knows I talk to myself.

She turns to go and sees Thiol, who obviously heard her.

ELLA (V.O.)

Coven for one?

She slams out of the Chapel doors.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. EMERSON WING BASEMENT STAIRWAY - MINUTES LATER

Ella comes down the stairs: a dark, musty, haunted hall.

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 her around in fight mode. But
it's just Noah, who falls down the stairs.

NOAH

Sorry.

ELLA

You've got a knack for entrances.

Noah shoulders his bag and joins her in the hallway.

NOAH

You know where Basement C is?

ELLA

I do, yes. I just prefer dank
hallways.
(off Noah's befuddlement)
I'm going there, too. 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?

Ella stares at him, confused.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Noah, tall. Know-it-all.

Ella smirks. Noah goes to a dark door...

NOAH (CONT'D)

You try this one, yet?

And it busts open - Noah SCREAMS, into the cloth-wrapped face of ZYANYA (2,352), a mummy, giving-off age-old dust.

NOAH (CONT'D)

GAH!

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

ELLA

Sorry! We're lost. Room C?

Zyanya points down the hallway behind them - a dark, spiderwebbed doorway. Noah pulls Ella that way.

Ella turns back to Zyanya, digging through her bag. She pulls out a bottle of lotion.

ELLA (CONT'D)

(pumping lotion onto
Zyanya's hand)

Try this. I live for it.

She follows Noah down the hall. Zyanya sniffs the lotion then slowly rubs it into their hands.

INT. DARK BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ella leads the way into the dank hallway; Noah 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

The room is dim but warm, cozy: wood, chalk dust, candles. Ella and Noah clambor in.

ELLA

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

Barker silences her with a finger. Ella turns to see a dozen SOPHOMORES in silent meditation: Tal scowls at Ella and Noah; GRANT (16) snores. 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, Mr. Carey. Sit.

They scurry to chairs. 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.

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

BARKER (CONT'D)
Bunkum.

The class falls still. Ella hides her notes.

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)
A hottie.

Tal reddens and smacks him.

BARKER
A son. A daughter. When you leave Concord Prep you'll be expected to be a person. You'd better know what you want from your life. Not what your parents want for you.

Ella nods. Barker draws on the board: an image 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.

Grant snorts. Ella's face drops:

BARKER (CONT'D)
 Or, as the other great Concord
 thinker, Mr. Emerson, wrote:
 "Listen to the inward voice, and
 bravely obey that."

Ella scribbles "inward voice" and shyly turns the page.
 Grant leans forward to Tal, whispering as her inner voice.

GRANT (WHISPERED)
 "Obey me... I'm your inner voice."

She smacks him, serious now, and turns back.

INT. BARKER'S BASEMENT CLASSROOM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

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

ELLA
 Hey, Tal! Going to lunch?

Tal sneers at Ella and Noah, and the puddle at Noah's feet.

TAL
 Sorry - didn't wear my rainboots.

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

Noah blushes at his puddle, then to Ella.

NOAH
 Sorry to be a wet blanket.

ELLA
 OK, Dad-Joke. Let's go.

Noah's face lights up.

NOAH
 To lunch? Us?

ELLA
 You eat, right? Or do you just
 drip?

NOAH
 Yes. I - sometimes both at once.

They go.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - MINUTES LATER

GRIFFONS and DEMONS set out buffet trays of pizza and sandwiches. A PODIUM at the far end.

Chic STUDENTS swarm TABLES for each Coven: "The B-Positives," "Universal Donors." If it weren't flanked by science fair display boards, this would look like a TeenVogue shoot.

Ella and Noah gawk: one of these does not belong: Us.

ELLA
Still hungry?

NOAH
Definitely a weird stomach feeling.

Noah turns to go. Ella blocks him.

ELLA
Nope. We stick together.

NOAH
OK. Which table should we hit?

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

They go to the buffet. At the mic, Parkman clears his throat.

PARKMAN
Welcome Fresh Blood, to Harvest.
Your Coven will form your closest bonds here, and for the rest of your life; choose wisely.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - MOMENTS LATER

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

FRULK
Ten dollars.

ELLA
I thought it was all included.

NOAH
Didn't you get a meal card?

ELLA
No, I didn't know-

FRULK

Ten dollars, or eighty milliliters.

Ella looks in horror at a filthy blood donation set up.

NOAH

(offering his card)

Put it on mine.

ELLA

Thanks. I'll owe you.

NOAH

(Dracula voice)

Ah ah ah! Blood Money!

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE

Ella and Noah eat, watching students from the PLASMATICS sing an a capella ode to vampirism.

Noah bobs his head. Ella rolls her eyes and leaves. Noah shimmies towards where she was, realizes she's gone, follows.

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

They visit Fangs of the First Order.

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

We volunteer at homeless shelters, and put an end to their suffering, and the homeless problem.

He laughs cruelly and slaps hands with a brother.

INT. CONCORD PREP CAFETERIA - LATER - MONTAGE

The duo joins the crowd around the Moon Sisters' table.
Tiffany watches.

MARGOT

The Moons are a sisterhood.

JAQUI

Sister in strife; 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?

Other Moons applaud. Tiffany calls out from the crowd.

TIFFANY

Didn't your founder marry into the
Klan?

MARGOT

The Smiths left the Klan over a
century ago.

JAQUI

A naive dalliance of youth.

TIFFANY

Isn't she your great grampire.

JAQUI

Don't blame me for my family.

TIFFANY

Can't make an omelet without
bursting a few blood vessels.

The crowd laugh. Jaqui sneers at Tiffany.

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

Ella scrapes her food into the trash. Frulk brings a new BAG.

ELLA

Where is the recycling?

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

Ella hands her plate over.

ELLA
 Thanks. I love your tattoos!

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

ELLA
 Take you down, how?

TAL
 We are roommates. A unit. Act like
 you give a suck, 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 goes at her -

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 out, loud. Ella spins to see the whole
cafeteria gawking: shocked, disgusted, judging.

Tal backs away.

ELLA (CONT'D)

(into the mic)

And that's why you should always
get your veggies. 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. Parkman glowers. Tiffany pushes through to Ella.

TIFFANY

Come on.

Tiffany drags Ella out of the cafeteria.

JAQUI

That Djinn gets under my skin.

MARGOT

I think it's time we rub her the wrong way.

They share a snarling smile, and follow Ella and Tiffany.

INT. CONCORD PREP HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tiffany pulls Ella down the hall; Noah trails them.

ELLA

I thought you didn't want to be friends with the anti-vamp.

TIFF

That doesn't mean I want to watch you get eaten alive.

ELLA

I can handle one bully.

NOAH

I think she means literally.

TIFFANY

Was that true? About your mom?

Ella stops. Her hand flutters to the choker at her neck.

ELLA

Yeah. This spring. A clutch of vamps jumped her. This was hers.

NOAH

Jeez. No wonder you're jittery.

ELLA

Shocker, right? Local student feels
awks surrounded by mother-suckers.

Tiffany pulls her into an alcove.

TIFFANY

You can't just say stuff like that
here. You'll get yourself killed.

ELLA

Like my mom? Like she deserved it?

NOAH

Ella, what happened to your mom is
unthinkable.

ELLA

Really? I think about it non-stop.

TIFFANY

Look: I'm sorry about your moms but
if you can't join the fang gang, at
least keep your head down.

ELLA

Gotcha. So it's OK for vamps to
make meatloaf of my mom, but rude
to mention that in mixed company?
Glad to know whose side you're on.

She pushes past them, out of the alcove.

NOAH

Ella, wait.

ELLA

(wheeling on him)

No! Vampires may run the world -
and this school - but they suck.
And not like "I vunt to suck your
blood". Suck, like, "you suck."

(to the whole hallway)

You SUCK!

She spins, yelling right into Barker's face.

BARKER

Ms Stone.

Ella backs into Tiffany and Noah.

BARKER (CONT'D)

I failed to mention: when sucking the marrow out of life, be careful not to swallow the bone. May I see you in my office?

She sulks after him, glumly. Noah sighs. Tiffany looks down at his dripping fingers.

TIFFANY

Why are you always dripping?

NOAH

It's um, genetic.

TIFFANY

Are you a merman?

NOAH

No. Part banshee, part selkie.

TIFFANY

All wet. I need lunch. Don't follow me.

Noah halts. He goes the other way.

Tiffany walks down the empty hallway. She hears a clicking.

She turns, but Noah's disappeared. She turns again and -

Margot grabs her, covering her mouth before Tiffany can yell.

Margot twists her around to face Jaqui.

JAQUI

Lunch time for everyone. And this time: you're lunch.

Jaqui grabs Tiffany's legs; she and Margot drag Tiffany away.

INT. BARKER'S CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Barker and Ella enter.

BARKER

I always loved the breadth of food options at Prep, but biting the neck that feeds you is a bit much.

ELLA

You went here too?

BARKER
I haven't made the alumni wall yet.

ELLA
But you aren't a fa- a vampire?

BARKER
I attended before the mandatory
vampirism.
(off Ella's look)
Forced fang-ganging is a modern fad
- modern relative to eternity.

ELLA
It feels like I'm either going
against everyone and everything
here or... going against myself.

Barker grabs a BOOK from his shelves.

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

He hands her the book: Thoreau's Civil Disobedience.

BARKER (CONT'D)
Thoreau, on refusing to pay the
poll tax that funded slavery.

ELLA
Old dudes felt like this?

BARKER
Yes, even Thoreau was once a
teenager.

He opens the door.

BARKER (CONT'D)
Heed your inner voice, Ms Stone.

They exit.

INT. DARK BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Barker closes the door to his class, and nods to Ella.

BARKER

See you up there.

(a la '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.

He climbs the stairs.

Ella sighs. She hears a CRASH from behind a nearby door.

She holds her ear to the door: scuffling, moaning, then A
VOICE CRIES OUT.

Ella throws open the door.

INT. ZYANYA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Thiol stands over Tiffany - pinned down with a needle in her
arm, connected through a tube to a needle Zyanya holds.

They all look up at Ella.

ELLA

Stop! What are you doing to her?

She slaps the needle from Zyanya's hand; the hand falls off.

ELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, God. I am so sorry.

She wraps the hand to Zyanya's arm with the mummy wrapping.

THIOL

The curse! Zyanya's thirst must be
fed each year on the harvest.

ELLA

But not from Tiffany, Thiol!

THIOL

You - you know my name?

ELLA

Of course - you helped me move in.

THIOL

No student has ever known my name.

Ella holds up Zyana's loose hand.

ELLA

Oh! It healed. Did the lotion help?

Zyanya nods. Ella pulls the lotion from her purse and hands it to Zyanya, who grins, squeezing and rubbing it in.

ELLA (CONT'D)

I love this one because it's lavender - smell that? - and it really helps heal cracked skin.

TIFFANY

Hey, can we get off the cosmetics lesson and get back to saving me?

Zyanya holds up their nice, lotioned hands.

THIOL

The curse!
(he grabs Zyana's hands)
It's going away.

ELLA

So are we good here?

INT. DARK BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ella and Tiffany pour out of the room. Tiffany holds gauze to her elbow where the needle was.

TIFFANY

I would not expect some Avon lady jazz from you.

ELLA

I'm a well of secrets.

The BELL TOLLS.

TIFFANY

The Harvest. Time to reap what we've sown.

ELLA

(re: her torn clothes)
Oh, I clearly don't sew.

TIFFANY

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

They go up the stairs.

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - DUSK

Parents mingle amidst chairs on the lawn. GOBLINS in formal wear pass hors d'oeuvres and glasses of blood.

Barker lingers alone. He waves away a tray of B+.

Ella and Tiffany, grimy from the basement - the only students who didn't slip into something less comfortable - walk up to Noah. Margot and Jaqui - holding court with the Sisters while Tal tries to join the circle - glare at them.

Parkman taps the mic.

PARKMAN

Your attention, please. The Harvest will soon begin.

EXT. CONCORD PREP QUAD - MOMENTS LATER

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 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.

IN LINE: Ella, Noah and Tiffany stand behind Tal.

ELLA

OK. Cool. Just a nice, normal first night of high school.

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

ELLA (CONT'D)

I can't believe they can make us do this. Can they make us do this?

TIFFANY
I mean...yes?

ELLA
(she looks at Noah, green)
Are you OK?

NOAH
Yep. Good. Psyched.

On stage, Parkman bites into the next student.

NOAH (CONT'D)
No. Nope. Definitely puking.

Tal turns around, angrily.

TAL
SHH! Please show some respect.

Tiffany types into her phone, frantic. The line creeps up.

TIFFANY
(reading from phone)
There's nothing in the school
charter that says a student has to
turn Vampire.

ELLA
What does that mean?

TIFFANY
It means, No: they can't make us.
But, it is strongly encouraged.

ELLA
I didn't peg you for a nerd.

TIFFANY
I'm a well of secrets.

Tiffany nudges Ella forward. Parkman bites the next student.

ELLA (V.O.)
Mom, please. I need you. Now.

The ceremony sounds fade. Ella fingers her silver choker.

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, lemmings to the cliff.

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

Ella looks through the crowd for Barker: his weird hat, his
 toad on his shoulder.

ELLA
 (to herself, murmured)
 There are witches at Concord Prep.

She scans the crowd again: fangs glinting but here and there,
 someone slightly more goth, fangless.

She looks up at stage: Parkman bites into Tal's neck.

NOAH
 What did you say?

ELLA
 There are witches at Prep.

She turns to Tiffany and Noah, whispering.

ELLA (CONT'D)
 The charter says they can't make us
 turn Vampire. Right, Tiffany? So?

Tiffany nods, confused. Noah stares, bewildered.

PARKMAN
 Ms. Stone?

Ella whips around. Parkman smiles, waving her forward.

She turns back to her friends. Her friends!

ELLA
 They can't make us.

Tiffany and Noah stare at each other, but Ella is gone.

She walks up to Parkman.

PARKMAN
 Take it off.

Ella 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.

She pulls away. Parkman's face drops.

PARKMAN
Excuse me?

ELLA
I said, No.

Parkman laughs, angry. Hisses and whispers wash over the crowd. Ella steps to the mic.

ELLA (CONT'D)
I, Ella Stone, 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 pushes past Parkman, to the side of the stage.

Tiffany steps up to the microphone.

TIFFANY
I abstain from vampirism.

She joins Ella. Noah steps up to the microphone.

NOAH
I -
(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 ACT THREE