

The Brides



Chapter One: “The Vows”
written by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa

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The Brides

Chapter One:
"The Vows"

CAST

CANDACE MUNROE
RENÉE PÉLAGIE
LILY STEVENS
COUNT DRACULA
ARTHUR SEWERD
LUDOVICO
PETER
ROLAND GRANT
JUSTINE STRANG
SEBASTIAN SHAW
XAVIER
MARIE
ABRAHAM VAN HELSING
JONATHAN HARKER
MARQUIS DE SADE
JACK THE RIPPER
RIVAL BIDDER
AUCTIONEER
DETECTIVE QUINCY MORRIS

The Brides

Chapter One: "The Vows"

SETS

INTERIORS

ANCIENT NUBIA
- THE QUEEN'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS

ARTHUR'S APARTMENT
- BEDROOM
- HALLWAY

CASTLE DRACULA
- BANQUET HALL
- CATACOMBS
- CRYPT
- DRACULA'S CHAMBER
- DRAWING ROOM
- HALLWAY
- LILY'S ROOM

HIGHGATE TOWER
- CANDACE'S APARTMENT
- BATHROOM
- DINING ROOM
- FRONT DOOR
- KITCHEN
- INDOOR SWIMMING POOL
- LILY'S APARTMENT
- RENÉE'S APARTMENT

RENÉE'S STUDIO
- LOFT SPACE
- PRIVATE OFFICE

SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE
- AUCTION ROOM
- HALLWAY

STORE-IT-YOURSELF STORAGE

THE FRICK
- OVAL ROOM
- THE GARDEN COURT

THE HOUSE OF PAIN
- BEDROOM
- SALON

INTERIORS (CONT'D)

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
- THE COURT CAFÉ

TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE
- BATHROOM
- BEDROOM
- LIVING ROOM

EXTERIORS

ANCIENT NUBIA
- THE PALACE

ARTHUR'S APARTMENT
- ROOFTOP

BIG BEN

BORGIO PASS

CASTLE DRACULA
- COURTYARD

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

HIGHGATE TOWER

RENÉE'S OFFICE BUILDING

SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE

STORE-IT-YOURSELF STORAGE

STREET IN THE EAST VILLAGE

STREETS OF LONDON TOWN

TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE

ACT ONE (TEASER)

1 EXT. CASTLE DRACULA - COURTYARD - NIGHTFALL (1897) 1

We are in the CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS. It's snowing. A full, orange MOON hangs in the sky over churning STORM CLOUDS. The CASTLE sits at the edge of a CLIFF. It evokes both a skull and a dragon. A triumph of Gothic architecture.

WOMAN (V.O.)

Where to begin this story...?

(then, measured:)

It was snowing. There was a hunter's moon above the clouds. And a devil's wind howling down from the mountains. Twelve men had arrived at the castle to kill our husband...

A PACK OF WOLVES, huddled at the tree line, watches as: A DOZEN MEN ON HORSES arrive in front of the castle. The oldest man, their grizzled leader, ABRAHAM VAN HELSING, regards it.

VAN HELSING

As you said, Mr. Harker. The castle of -- *nosferatu*. The *vampyr*.

One of the youngest men, strapping JONATHAN HARKER, on a horse next to Van Helsing, nods.

HARKER

Where he kept me locked away with those *creatures* -- those *she-devils* from the pit --

As the men climb off their horses:

VAN HELSING

Yes, yes, the concubines of darkness, the unholy brides of Dracula -- how many were there, did you say?

HARKER

Three, Professor. Each one hellish in her own way.

The men are taking up a BATTERING RAM they dragged behind their horses. Harker yells to be heard over the wind:

HARKER (CONT'D)

Make no mistake, Men. The Count's wives are more dangerous than he is. Meet their eyes -- *and you are at their mercy and whim.*

As the men move towards the castle, Harker takes a SHORT SWORD out of its sheath. So does Van Helsing.

HARKER (CONT'D)

For my beloved Mina. To protect her.

VAN HELSING

To protect all who are living.

The men *slam* their battering ram against the CASTLE'S DOORS, *hitting it*, wood splintering, until they break through *and keep going*, disappearing into the castle's DARKNESS...

The wolves, at the forest's edge, stare at the castle...

Then, from deep within its bowels, INHUMAN SCREAMING...

The wolves *howl* in despair, *racing down* towards the castle...

2 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - LILY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 2

We hear sounds of the place being ransacked. The youngest of Dracula's Brides, pale-skinned LILY (20), by her bed, her DRESS drenched in BLOOD. She's placing a book, HER DIARY, in the middle of a cloth, tying it up like a sack, just as -- Dracula's *middle* bride, voluptuous RENÉE (French, early 30's), her gown similarly covered in blood, appears in the doorway, hysterical --

RENÉE

-- *Lily! We have to leave! NOW!*

Lily bundles the cloth, and is up and after Renée --

3 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - HALLWAY - NIGHT 3

Lily and Renée join Dracula's oldest bride, dark-skinned, regal, beautiful CANDACE (30's), also in a bloodied gown. She puts her arms around them, protectively, keeps them moving down a HALLWAY lined with TAPESTRIES. They pass an OIL PORTRAIT OF THEIR HUSBAND -- handsome COUNT DRACULA...

4 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT 4

The Brides race alongside a long, wooden DINING TABLE. As they pass an ARCHWAY, they spot a drooling, misshapen, hunched-over FIGURE, shuffling in the *opposite* direction, from where they came --

LILY

Renfield --

RENÉE

Should we kill him?

CANDACE

No, leave him -- there is no time, and he is not our concern --

They continue on their way; RENFIELD continues on his --

5 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - CATACOMBS - MOMENTS LATER 5

In the castle's dungeon, the Brides are flying down a STONE STAIRCASE --

RENÉE

*They're coming, they'll follow us, on
their horses, wherever we go --*

CANDACE

No, no, the wolves serve us --

6 EXT. CASTLE DRACULA - COURTYARD - SAME TIME 6

WE SEE: The wolves, circling the horses, *terrifying* the beasts --

CANDACE (POST-LAP)

The horses won't do them any good --

7 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - CATACOMBS - SAME TIME 7

The Brides reach the edge of an UNDERGROUND RIVER, flowing into a CAVE. Behind them, we hear MEN APPROACHING. We see FLICKERING SHADOWS, the GLOW OF TORCHES --

CANDACE

Take my hands, Sisters --

Lily and Renée do. The Brides wade *into* the river, submerging and disappearing under the water's surface *seconds* before Van Helsing, Harker, and the other men appear on the stone steps behind them. Harker turns to Van Helsing --

HARKER

The Count may be dead, Professor,
but if *they* escape --

VAN HELSING

Pray for your Mina -- and pray for
the world, Mr. Harker --

The men continue down the stairs...

8 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - CRYPT - NIGHT 8

Back in the castle's crypt, RENFIELD approaches a STONE TOMB. He looks into it, sees DRACULA, dead, *BLOOD* everywhere --

RENFIELD

No, Master, NO --
(stricken with grief:)
(MORE)

RENFIELD (CONT'D)

*My life for yours -- my life for
yours -- my life for yours...*

OFF Renfield, sobbing...

9

EXT. BORG PASS - DAWN

9

The Brides, naked, huddle by the RIVER'S EDGE. Dripping wet, their CLOTHES hung to dry around a SMALL FIRE. In the far, far distance, we see the SMOKING RUINS of Castle Dracula...

LILY

What...what happens now?

RENÉE

*Now, ma petite fleuriste? We
suffer. We starve.*

CANDACE

(the leader:)

No, Renée, we do what we've always
done: *We survive.*

RENÉE

How? We have nothing.

CANDACE

We have our lives. We have our
wits. We have each other.

LILY

Where will we go, Candace? To
London?

RENÉE

(excited, suddenly:)

No, to France -- *Ca me manque. Ma
France me manque --*

(translation:)

I miss it. I miss my France --

CANDACE

Wherever we go, we go as one.
Together. We will help each
other...

(a new idea:)

...to live amongst them.

RENÉE

(outraged:)

What, as humans? Marking time by the sun
instead of the moon? Oh, Queen, *no --*

CANDACE

Better to live as humans than to be
hunted by them.

(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)
 (riffing on that idea:)
 Feeding only when necessary. Not
 killing for sport, not drawing
 attention. And, if ever our true
 nature is discovered, we'll go
 underground. Time, itself, will hide
 us from our enemies.

RENÉE
 You're imposing laws? Now?

CANDACE
 No, *vows*. Vows I am *asking* we take.
 To face whatever comes next, we
 must be of *one* mind, of *one* heart.
 (then:)
 Lastly, that we never, *ever* fall in
 love again -- love is what doomed
 us, led us to this place -- are we
 agreed? Lily?

LILY
 Agreed.

Lily takes hold of Candace's hand. They turn to --

CANDACE
 -- Renée? Be with us or be alone.

Grudgingly, Renée takes hold of their hands --

CANDACE (CONT'D)
 Then we are as married -- as sisters --
 as wives -- now and for all eternity.

END ON: The Brides, around the fire, hands clasped, a primal
 bond connecting them... SMASH TO TITLE: **THE BRIDES**

10 EXT. HIGHGATE TOWER APARTMENT BUILDING - NYC - MORNING 10

Establishing. We are in THE PRESENT, looking at a gleaming,
 neo-Gothic SKYSCRAPER. All steel and glass. We hear the sound
 of...*lapping water?*

11 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - INDOOR SWIMMING POOL - SAME TIME 11

The most sublime SWIMMING POOL in New York. Not a ripple in the
 water. Until...*our THREE GORGEOUS BRIDES* surface. It's their
 daily swim. They wear nothing. As they towel off --

CANDACE
 Ludovico procured a new shipment of
 blood. Imported. From his village in
 Italy.

Both Renée and Lily's eyes widen -- *yummy*.

12 INT. H. TOWER CANDACE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING 12

The heart of this expansive, expensive apartment: The MARBLE ISLAND in the middle of the kitchen. The Brides' personal chef -- LUDOVICO, handsome, Italian -- is blending BLOOD RED BREAKFAST SMOOTHIES.

Lily is sitting at the island, reading Donna Tartt's "The Goldfinch." Renée (now an Anna Wintour-like fashionista, complete with signature glasses) comes in --

LILY
(smiling, knowing:)
You were loud last night, Renée.

RENÉE
(really?)
Eavesdropping, Lily?

LILY
It was hard not to, you were being
so -- *enthusiastic*. Boy or girl?

RENÉE
Boy. Though I'm feeling less and
less omnisexual these days. Back to
girls, I've decided. Exclusively.

Ludovico sets two tall glasses of RED SMOOTHIE on the island.

LUDOVICO
A new supplier, tell me what you
think. Pricier, but --

LILY
(sipping:)
Yum. This is *sogood*, Chef Vico.

RENÉE
Agreed. For someone who doesn't
drink blood, your expertise is
undeniable.

LUDOVICO
I studied at *Le Cordon Bleu*.

CANDACE (O.C.)
I'm surprised you have room for a
smoothie, Renée. Given the night
you had.

They turn as -- Candace, now dressed like the power-house real-estate agent that she is, enters --

RENÉE

Oh, did I keep you up, too?

CANDACE

No, dear, I sleep like the dead.
Were you careful?

RENÉE

Yes, Mother. I only drained him a little, then sent him home. Later today, he'll wake up anemic and with no memory of what happened. Just a vague sense that he had the *best* sex of his life.

LILY

Ugh -- no details -- please --

CANDACE

Ludovico, have you decided on a menu for tonight?

LUDOVICO

I have some options prepared.

LILY

What's tonight?

CANDACE

Don't you know?
(turns to Renée:)
Do you not know?
(they have no clue)
It's our *anniversary*.

RENÉE

Oh --

LILY

Oh --

CANDACE

Of when we left the castle. I had Peter add the dinner to both your calendars.

LILY

I'm meeting a friend at the museum --
(off Candace's look:)
-- but then I'll come right home.

RENÉE

I'm prepping for my photo-shoot, but I'll be back in time for whatever delicious *amuse-bouche* Chef Vico has conjured.

OFF Candace, annoyed that her sisters had forgotten...

13 EXT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - DAY 13

Establishing. 1334 York Avenue.

14 INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY 14

Candace is fast-walking with her Man Friday, PETER (20's, perfectly put-together). The master of her domain, Candace is on a call with a wealthy foreign client --

CANDACE

(into phone)

-- don't worry, Nigel, I am *getting* this apartment for you.

(then:)

Understood, not a cent over fifty million, but it will go for *much* less.

(then:)

Because Tom and Gisele haven't stayed at the San Remo in *ages*.

(then:)

No, no, you're the *only* real player in this game -- and you have me in your corner --

Candace hangs up. Peter beams at her:

PETER

I'm obsessed with everything you do.

Candace winks at Peter, as WE PRE-LAP the sound of a GAVEL.

15 INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - AUCTION ROOM - DAY 15

The room's packed with potential BUYERS and/or their REPRESENTATIVES, impeccable and glamorous. Candace and Peter amongst them. On a STAGE, at the front of the room, an AUCTIONEER stands at a podium, gestures to a PHOTOGRAPH on an EASEL. The photo is of a spectacularly huge, gorgeous APARTMENT.

AUCTIONEER

Listing Number 2-4-9, ladies and gentlemen. The crown jewel of the San Remo, this triplex penthouse is entering the market for the first time in twenty-five years. With seven thousand square feet of living space, the starting bid is thirty million --

Candace raises her paddle --

CANDACE
Thirty-five million --

AUCTIONEER
-- thirty-five million, very good,
Madame, do we have forty? Forty
million dollars, ladies and
gentlemen, to live like royalty --
(no one bids)
Thirty-five million, going once,
going twice --

Candace allows herself a smile. It's almost *too easy* -- but
then, a dapper gentleman, a RIVAL BIDDER, enters the fray --

RIVAL BIDDER
Forty million --

AUCTIONEER
-- *forty million*, very good, Sir,
very good --

CANDACE
(frowning)
Forty-five million --

AUCTIONEER
Forty-five million, and still a
bargain at that, Madame --

RIVAL BIDDER
Fifty million --

AUCTIONEER
We have fifty million, do we have
fifty-five? Fifty-five million?

It's taking every ounce of Candace's willpower *not* to bid,
but even so, Peter reminds her --

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
Fifty, going once -- going
twice --

PETER
(whispering)
You promised Nigel --

CANDACE
Fifty-five million --

AUCTIONEER
We have fifty-five million, ladies
and gentleman --

While the room bursts into polite, spontaneous APPLAUSE --

PETER
Candace --

CANDACE
I know what Nigel wants and
what he's willing to pay --

AUCTIONEER
Fifty-five, do we have sixty? Sixty
million?

Candace looks at her Rival Bidder, as if they were playing a
game of chicken -- he lifts his paddle --

RIVAL BIDDER
Sixty million --

AUCTIONEER
Sixty-million, ladies and gentlemen,
we are at *sixty-million* --

More APPLAUSE. Candace is *enraged* --

CANDACE
Who the fuck *is* that, Peter?

PETER
I don't recognize him --

AUCTIONEER
Do I have sixty-five? Sixty-five
million for this stunning home? No?
Holding at sixty, then -- *sixty*
going once, going twice --

Now it's the Rival Bidder's turn to look at Candace, but she
maintains her cool, even as she loses the apartment --

AUCTIONEER (CONT'D)
-- *sold* at sixty million dollars,
ladies and gentlemen!

APPLAUSE takes us into --

16

INT. SOTHEBY'S AUCTION HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

16

Candace, followed by Peter, strides up to the Rival Bidder.
Her wheels are turning, she's not giving up that easily...

CANDACE
Congratulations. Well fought.

RIVAL BIDDER
Thank you, Ms. Munroe.

CANDACE

You know who I am?

RIVAL BIDDER

The Queen of New York real-estate.

CANDACE

Well, then, you have me at a disadvantage. Again.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Forgive me. My name is Sebastian Shaw. I'm here representing my employer, Roland Grant.

CANDACE

Hmm. I don't know him, and I know *all* the major players. That is, I *represent* most of them. It might be advantageous for your employer if we met.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Mr. Grant would welcome that.

CANDACE

Good. My assistant Peter will coordinate.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Perfect.

With that, Candace turns on her heels and starts walking away, Peter keeping up --

CANDACE

Get Nigel on the phone -- I want to find out how high he'll *really* let me go for that penthouse --

PETER

But -- we lost the bid --

CANDACE

For the moment. But you know how... *persuasive* I can be, Peter. Get me in a room alone with Roland Grant and he'll be selling me that penthouse for *less* than he just paid --

(then:)

If we're meeting at his home, make sure I'm *explicitly* invited, otherwise --

PETER

You can't enter -- I'm aware of the
rules --

As they exit, Sebastian Shaw watches them go with interest --

17 EXT. RENÉE'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY 17

A classic building in the Fashion District. THE CAMERA FINDS:
Renée, with signature SUNGLASSES, walking up the sidewalk,
entering the building through its REVOLVING DOOR...

18 INT. RENÉE'S STUDIO - LOFT SPACE - DAY 18

Loud and raucous, TWO DOZEN SUPER-MODELS, in various stages
of undress, as Renée moves amongst them. Renée's designer
friend, XAVIER, *dramatique*, falls into step next to her --

XAVIER

It's too soon, Renée, I'm not ready --

RENÉE

You are *absolutely* ready, Xavier.

She is inspecting models and looks, everywhere she goes.

XAVIER

Nothing is working --

RENÉE

Everything is working --
(she spots one hideous dress)
Most everything. I'd cut that --

XAVIER

(agreeing, to the MODEL:)
Take it off and burn it --

RENÉE

It's a shoot, Xavier, not a show.
And I'm lending you the best girls
from my agency. *Calme-toi*.

Renée stops; she's just caught sight of a YOUNG WOMAN (20's,
an otherworldly beauty) at the far end of her studio --

RENÉE (CONT'D)

Who's *that* Cosette-like waif?

XAVIER

I don't know, she walked in off the
street, it's *chaos* here --

The Young Woman is holding a piece of LUGGAGE. Renée takes
off her sunglasses; their EYES meet...and everything else
falls away, it's just the two of them...

...then, in slow, stylized motion, Renée *glides* across the loft, until she's almost on top of the Young Woman --

RENÉE

You lost lamb. Can I help you?

YOUNG WOMAN

Ms. Pélagie, I -- I want to be a model. And I want you to represent me.

RENÉE

And so you came straight from the bus station?

(the girl looks down)

You *did*, didn't you?

(the girl nods)

Where are you staying?

YOUNG WOMAN

Wherever I can get a room that's cheap.

RENÉE

What's your name?

JUSTINE

Justine. Strang.

MEANWHILE: One of Renée's models, MARIE (a total diva) starts *shrieking*, throws a STOOL in a rage -- Renée rolls her eyes --

RENÉE

-- as you can see, Ms. Strang, I have my hands full, but there's a hotel for women on 85th and 2nd. The Webster House. Go there, ask for Nadine. She's a friend, she'll help you. Then, come back and see me tomorrow.

Before Justine can thank Renée, she -- Renée -- is off to deal with her problem-child, who's *still* hysterical --

RENÉE (CONT'D)

Alright, Marie, what's today's drama?

MARIE

You said I would be on the cover --

RENÉE

Yes, and you will be --

MARIE

With three other girls -- It's like putting a swan amongst *ducks* --

RENÉE

The spread in *Vogue* is to showcase
Xavier's designs, *not* your ego --

MARIE

I don't *share* covers --

One of the other MODELS nearby hides a giggle; *Marie lunges at her*, even as Justine (about to exit) turns back --

MARIE (CONT'D)

I'll kill you, you fat sow --

Marie's trying to claw the model's eyes out; Renée steps in --

RENÉE

You brat, when I found you, you
were wearing a coat from *Dillard's*,
you'd do well to remember who got
you your *first* cover --

MARIE

Yes, and you took *plenty* in exchange --

A beat, a GASP! All eyes are on Renée, who shockingly *slaps Marie* -- *hard* -- A BIGGER GASP because --

MARIE (CONT'D)

You bitch, *I'm bleeding* --

Indeed, one of Marie's lips is split -- Renée looks down at her hand; there's A SMEAR OF BLOOD on her fingers --

RENÉE

Talk to me that way again and you
won't just be done at this agency,
you'll be done in New York. You'll
be working retail at the Paramus
mall -- *again*.

Renée can't stop staring at the delicious-looking blood --

RENÉE (CONT'D)

Everyone, back to it, chop, chop --

As Renée turns from the assembled group, *she licks the blood off her hand* -- continues off. THE CAMERA FINDS: Justine, slipping out...

Lily (as tour guide) leads a GROUP. They're in front of a PAINTING by Charles Cromwell Ingham: "The Flower Girl."

LILY

Our last stop. Paintings of street vendors were common in Europe during Ingham's time. Something in this young lady's face must have caught Ingham's eye on one of his trips to London. Some critics say the plant she holds is symbolic of frustrated love. Me, I think it's just what she happened to be selling that day...

As the tour starts to disperse, we notice the resemblance between Lily and the girl in the painting -- *which, itself, transports Lily into the past...*

20

EXT. STREETS OF LONDON TOWN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

20

We see: Lily-as-flower-girl, holding a basket of them, walking down a deserted, foggy, cobble-stoned street.

Lily hears FOOTSTEPS behind her, turns around -- sees a very tall, very dark GENTLEMAN following her. Lily passes a wall covered with newspapers. The headlines read: 'RIPPER' CLAIMS FOURTH VICTIM!

Lily speeds up, ducks around a corner, finds herself in a narrow ALLEYWAY. She rushes down it, straight into --

-- JACK THE RIPPER, who pulls a LONG KNIFE from his cloak, as he advances on Lily. He presses her up against the alley's wall; she's frozen with terror --

Just as Jack is about to run his knife-blade across Lily's throat, the SHADOW of a *second* DARK SHAPE rises next to her. Jack looks up in terror, as DRACULA (every inch the vampire king) *pounces* on him, tearing Jack's THROAT out; Jack's BLOOD splatters Lily's face --

Dracula tosses the Ripper's dead, oozing body aside. Lily cowers as he kneels down, touches her face, wipes away the blood. Lily's *terrified, begging* for her life --

LILY

(cowering)

Please, Sir, I, I have nothing...

DRACULA

That's not true. In this sewer of a city, you have youth. Innocence. Purity. You're a miracle. A flower-girl who has not yet been corrupted by the world.

Lily looks into Dracula's face. His spellbinding EYES...

DRACULA (CONT'D)
What's your name, Child?

LILY
Lily, Sir...Stevens...

DRACULA
Lily Stevens...

Dracula *envelopes* Lily in his CAPE -- they disappear in a SWIRL OF DARKNESS -- we hear the sound of FLAPPING -- then they *re-appear* --

21 EXT. BIG BEN - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 21

Dracula has brought Lily to the TOP OF THE CLOCK TOWER, the top of London. She shivers in the wind --

DRACULA
All this can be yours, Lily. The world. The night. But you *must* say you want it. Do you?

LILY
(nodding)
Y-yes, Sir...

Pleased, Dracula bares his FANGS. He kisses Lily's neck, *then bites into it*, BLOOD spurting down her front --

22 INT. THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - DAY 22

In THE PRESENT, in THE MUSEUM, a MAN has come up behind Lily -- she turns, fearful --

LILY
Arthur --
(she smiles, relieved:)
-- you scared me.

This is Lily's handsome, intelligent, sensitive boyfriend, ARTHUR SEWARD. He smiles back at her.

ARTHUR
Why aren't you wearing a jacket, you're *freezing* --

LILY
I always am --

Arthur kisses Lily, takes her hand --

ARTHUR

Come with me --

23 INT. THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - THE COURT CAFE - DAY 23

One of the CAFE'S WALLS is all glass, so we can look out at the SCULPTURE GARDEN. Arthur and Lily sit at a table --

ARTHUR

-- I told the *maître-d'* it had to be this table, do you remember why?

LILY

(a shy smile)

Of course. I was sitting here, with my book, on a break, when you came over to ask me what I was reading.

ARTHUR

"Anna Karenina." You said you were re-reading it.

(then:)

You were the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen. You still are. You always will be.

LILY

Arthur...

ARTHUR

Lily -- Lily Stevens --

(deep breath:)

-- *will you marry me?*

LILY

(oh, shit!)

Arthur -- I -- I --

ARTHUR

You don't have to answer me right now, take as much time as you need, but Lily -- I want to spend my life with you -- *share* my life with you. There's so much about me you don't know -- I'm sure there's a lot about your life I don't know --

LILY

(uhm, yes:)

Oh, *for sure* --

ARTHUR

I want to know *all* of it -- your childhood, *everything* -- and I want to learn it as...your husband.

(Lily's speechless)

-- oh, God, did I just wreck it?

LILY

-- no, you didn't. And everything you said -- everything you want -- I want it, too --

ARTHUR

Great --

LILY

There's just...a few things I have to do before I can say yes --

ARTHUR

But -- you *are* going to say "yes," right? I mean -- no pressure --

OFF Lily, kissing Arthur, knowing what obstacles are ahead of her --

24 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - LILY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 24

Minimalistic. Black-and-white PHOTOS on off-white walls, some CANVASES stacked against them, mountains of BOOKS piled high.

After her *rendezvous*, Lily comes home, goes to sit on her couch, but then -- makes a fateful decision -- and continues walking, towards a wrought-iron SPIRAL STAIRCASE -- up she goes, into...

25 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - RENÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 25

This apartment's décor is Versailles-like. Renée reclines on an ornate chaise, sipping a GLASS OF SOMETHING RED. The staircase from Lily's apartment rises *through* Renée's...

Renée looks up from her blood-cocktail as Lily ascends, not wanting to stop and chat --

RENÉE

Lily? No hello?

LILY

(as she climbs:)

I need to talk to Candace, Renée, and please stay out of it --

RENÉE

-- out of what?
(but Lily's not stopping:)
-- *Lily, stay out of what?*

And, of course, Renée's immediately intrigued...

26

INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

26

Beyond high-end. ANCIENT ART. The style looks Egyptian, but is, in fact, Nubian. The spiral staircase that connects all three of the Brides' apartments starts/ends here. Candace is at her DESK, working. Lily ascends into view --

CANDACE

I was just contemplating a cocktail,
Lily, can Chef Ludo fix you one?

LILY

That depends on how you react to my
news. It's...*good* news, Candace. I,
I want you to be happy for me.

CANDACE

Lovely Lily, you're trembling.

LILY

...I, I've been proposed to. Is the
thing.
(Candace goes deathly still)
Arthur -- he -- he asked me to
marry him.

CANDACE

(tight, controlled:)
Arthur. That's -- your friend.

LILY

He's much more than a friend.
(biting the bullet:)
We love each other.
(looking down:)
I, I'm sorry, Candace.

CANDACE

We took a vow, Lily, the three of
us, that we would *never* fall in
love again -- because why?
(answering for her:)
Because falling in love makes us
vulnerable --

LILY

Arthur would *never* hurt us --

CANDACE

You are *such* an innocent, you want to believe the best in people --

LILY

(an explosion:)

I am not an innocent --

(then:)

My innocence was *ripped* from me on a foggy night in London, many, *many* lifetimes ago --

CANDACE

Have you told him what you are?

(Lily's silent)

What do you think he'll say, when you *do* tell him? You'll have to, eventually. Being a daughter of darkness isn't a secret you can keep. Do you think he'll still love you?

LILY

Yes --

CANDACE

No -- *Lily* -- when he grows old and sagging, and you stay *exactly* as you are *right now* -- will you be satisfied?

LILY

If I'm with Arthur, yes --

CANDACE

And when he wants to have *children* and you can't, not with him -- what then?

LILY

I *don't* know --

CANDACE

And you *never* will --

Renée has come up the spiral staircase, but goes no further --

CANDACE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, I *won't* let you break your vow. Be angry with me -- don't speak to me for years, *decades* -- but I

(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)

will not allow you to put us, and yourself, in danger.

(then, conciliatory:)

You have needs, Lily, we all do -- so take lovers -- be like Renée, take many lovers --

(Renée reacts, indignant)

But for your own good, you are ending this particular tryst, is that clear?

LILY

Yes, except -- it's not a tryst, and I'm not ending it.

CANDACE

Lily, I am warning you --

LILY

And I am telling you, Candace: I love and respect you, but I am not asking for your permission, I'm asking for your blessing. Give it to me or not, but I am marrying Arthur Seward --

OFF THE BRIDES, shocked at Lily's defiance. In a way that has never happened before, a gauntlet has been thrown --

27

EXT. STREET IN THE EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

27

The street's empty. Renée's bitchy model, Marie, is leaving Indochine on Lafayette. She rounds a corner, annoyed --

MARIE

And no cabs, of course --

As she pulls out her phone to order a car, Marie senses someone behind her -- she whips around, frightened -- no one's there --

MARIE (CONT'D)

...hello?

THE CAMERA is above Marie, looking down on her -- as SOMETHING AIRBORNE BUT UNSEEN falls on the model, ALL FANGS, ripping the very scream from her throat; BLOOD grotesquely splatters the sidewalk --

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

28 EXT. HIGHGATE TOWER - THE NEXT MORNING 28

Establishing. The sky is streaked with orange and purple. We hear MUSIC. *Someone is playing something, aggressively.*

29 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - LILY'S APARTMENT - MORNING 29

Lily sits on a stool, playing a CELLO with great vigor. Renée comes down the spiral staircase...

RENÉE

Good as you are, Lily, you could play with any orchestra in New York. Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center --

LILY

-- what do you want, Renée?

RENÉE

Don't you snap at me. That petulant child act *may* have worked for Marie Antoinette, but *you*, my dear, could never pull off a powdered wig.

(then)

I want to talk about last night. I want to help bring peace to our marriage again.

LILY

It's between Candace and me.

RENÉE

Not true. We three took the vows --

LILY

-- yes, literally over a *century* ago, and we're *still* living by them. The world has changed -- we've changed -- shouldn't our laws change, too?

RENÉE

Probably, but you have to look at this from Candace's perspective. You've been courting this human boy for -- how long?

LILY

Six months -- and he's *not* a boy --

RENÉE

Yet you *never* talk about him with us,
you've never brought him around --

LILY

The last potential I "brought around"
ended up in your bed --

RENÉE

(oh, please)

It was the eighties, we were at
Studio 54, he was gay --

LILY

Can't I have something that is just
mine? Someone I *don't* have to share
with you two?

RENÉE

(quiet, real:)

I'm sorry, but no. "We are as wedded."
That's our strength, but also our
curse.

(then:)

And Candace belongs to a...different
generation of our kind. Think of who
she was -- who she still is. A *queen*.
Perhaps all she needs is a bit of time.
And to meet Arthur. Over dinner.

LILY

Her Highness would *never* consent to that.

RENÉE

Oh, don't you worry about Boss Lady,
I'll get her there. Ludovico will
pick the menu, make the arrangements.
All you have to do is invite Arthur.
Say you'd like him to meet your two
oldest and dearest friends.

LILY

I'm not sure that's a good idea --

RENÉE

If Queen Candace doesn't come around,
at least you'll be able to sleep at
night, knowing you tried your best.

(a twinkle in her eye:)

As for me...

30 INT. RENÉE'S STUDIO - PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

30

RENÉE (O.C.)
...don't worry, I won't bite.

Renée sits in a chair, arms crossed, eyes hidden behind her sunglasses. Justine stands in front of Renée. Her jacket draped over a chair next to her.

RENÉE (CONT'D)
To the right, please.
(Justine turns)
Now to the left.
(Justine turns)
Your weight is good. Show me your
back again?
(Justine does)
Bone structure is nice. Sit down.

Justine sits, in the chair, opposite Renée.

RENÉE (CONT'D)
Tell me about yourself. Where are
you from?

JUSTINE
Does it matter? Someplace that
isn't here.

RENÉE
Where did you stay last night? Not
Webster House, I checked.

JUSTINE
Even with a special rate, I couldn't
afford it. So -- the park.

Renée stands, begins to slowly circle Justine...

RENÉE
What does your family think of you
coming here? Are they supportive?

JUSTINE
We're not really in touch.

RENÉE
Any friends in New York?

JUSTINE
None.

Renée's standing behind Justine; she touches Justine's back --

RENÉE
So no one knows you're here?

JUSTINE

...no.

As Renée's fingers graze Justine's skin, the girl shivers --

JUSTINE (CONT'D)

Sorry, it's just -- cold fingers.

RENÉE

Your neck's tense. Relax.

Renée starts massaging Justine's neck...

RENÉE (CONT'D)

Do you have a boy back home? You must, a pretty thing like you.

(she shakes her head "no")

A girl?

(another "no")

So if the world were to split open and swallow you whole...

Renée's *right* behind Justine; her hands are around Justine's neck; her *CANINE TEETH* are extended --

RENÉE (CONT'D)

...no one would miss you?

Suddenly, the door bursts open, and in comes -- Xavier, in a frenzy. Renée pulls away from Justine -- her teeth retract --

XAVIER

It's a catastrophe!

As Renée steps out from behind Justine --

RENÉE

Justine, Xavier. Xavier, Justine. Xavier, you have the timing and subtlety of a minotaur --

XAVIER

And your girl Marie? *Is nowhere to be found -- and no one else fits into that dress --*

RENÉE

(a quick decision:)

You, Justine, come with us --

31

INT. RENÉE'S STUDIO - LOFT SPACE - DAY

31

Amidst all the OTHER MODELS, Renée, Xavier, and Justine reach a corner of the space where Xavier's dress, a spectacular GOWN, hangs on a frame --

XAVIER

-- you see? Dress, but no girl --

RENÉE

Marie will turn up -- in the meantime --

(she turns to Justine)

You want to be a model? If you fit
into Xavier's dress, you're in --

PRE-LAP: The sound of a DOORBELL RINGING --

32 EXT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - EVENING 32

Candace, gorgeous, dressed to kill, in pearls, stands in the townhouse's PORTICO. The FRONT DOOR's opened by Sebastian.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Ms. Munroe. Come in. He's expecting you.

33 INT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - MOMENTS LATER 33

Candace walks into a wood-paneled STUDY. Sebastian pulls the doors closed behind him as he goes. A MAN'S VOICE from the shadows at the far end of the room --

MAN'S VOICE

I was fixing myself a drink, would
you like one?

He steps forward; the shadows recede. ROLAND GRANT is preternaturally stylish -- handsome -- sexy. Hard to tell his age.

CANDACE

Whatever you're having, Mr. Grant.

ROLAND

Absinthe.

(preparing the drinks:)

Now, Ms. Munroe. What would you
like to know about me?

(Candace raises a brow)

You have questions. That is why you
approached my valet, isn't it?

CANDACE

(a beat, she smiles)

You're from all over, Mr. Grant, but
most recently Prague. You've never
been married, though you date, often
and aggressively. You're purchasing
majestic homes around the world. Your
money is old; your taste, impeccable.
You're renting this townhouse for

(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)

three months -- long enough to renovate the penthouse in the San Remo. If you keep to your pattern, you'll be in New York for the next three or four years.

(then:)

What else do I need to know?

He smiles, pleased. Hands her one of the glasses of absinthe. As they settle on the couch --

ROLAND

My turn. What got you interested in real estate?

CANDACE

I've always been interested in real estate, in -- *territory*. I was taught, early on, that there's *nothing* more valuable than land. Controlling it, trading it, amassing it. Land begets money, money begets power. As for what got me interested *in power...*

34 EXT. ANCIENT NUBIA - THE PALACE - DAY (FLASHBACK) 34

A splendid, pyramid-like PALACE. Candace, who is the QUEEN OF NUBIA, in full royal regalia, stands on a BALCONY, surrounded by her ATTENDANTS. She is looking down at SOMEONE approaching the palace...

CANDACE (POST-LAP)

...I was born to power.

The approaching FIGURE is dressed, head-to-toe, in WHITE ROBES. He is stopped by PALACE GUARDS. He looks up at Candace, who gives a nod, signaling that he may pass.

35 INT. ANCIENT NUBIA - THE QUEEN'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS - NIGHT 35

Candace is with the man (Dracula, again). He's disrobed. His hair's dark; his body's thick, muscular. They sit on pillows, a sumptuous meal set before them.

CANDACE

What brought you to my palace?

DRACULA

I heard tales of Candace, Queen of Nubia. That when Alexander the Great tried to conquer this land, you met his armies with your own. That you sat astride an elephant.

(MORE)

DRACULA (CONT'D)

(then:)

I came to meet such a formidable woman.

Candace smiles, drinks WINE from a golden CHALICE.

CANDACE

And so you have. But who are you, Stranger?

DRACULA

I've had many names, none you would know. I'm old, you see. Much older than I appear. As old as darkness. Some call me King.

CANDACE

Do they? Of what kingdom?

DRACULA

Night. I seek a companion. Every king needs a queen, even one such as I.

CANDACE

Is *that* why you've come? To take me as your wife?

(his eyes never waver)

I've *never* been conquered by a man. Even Alexander, I met as an equal.

DRACULA

Oh, but I am so much more than a man, Queen.

(then:)

You love power, Candace of Nubia, and you wield a great deal of it, but none over death. I could give you that. One kiss from my lips, and you would *never* be claimed by Anubis, the jackal, the death-god.

CANDACE

(eyes wide, breathless:)

Dominion over death? Immortality? Like the Pharaohs? Is that what you offer me?

DRACULA

You would be the most powerful woman who ever lived.

CANDACE

I already am.

DRACULA

Yes, but I mean for all time. But first...*you must tell me you want it.*

Dracula and Candace lock eyes. He bares his FANG-LIKE TEETH. Candace gives a quick nod -- *she wants it* -- Dracula lunges at her -- *a jolt that bumps us back into* --

36 EXT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - EVENING 36

THE PRESENT. Resume with: Candace sitting with Roland --

CANDACE

...there's a story there, worth telling, but not tonight. It's too long. Besides, I'd rather we do something *other* than talk now.

They both drink their absinthe, AND WE HARD CUT TO:

37 INT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 37

Candace and Roland in bed, naked, having sex. Hot, sweaty, *animal* sex. They're both *loving* it. Candace is in control, on top. WE HARD CUT TO:

POST-SEX. Roland is in bed. Candace is getting dressed.

ROLAND

That was...unexpected.

He smiles. Candace fixes him with her vampire gaze. She's -- *mesmerizing. Literally, she's mesmerizing him...*

CANDACE

Now we'll talk a little business. The penthouse at the San Remo...

ROLAND

(as if in a trance)
Yes...

CANDACE

You're going to sell it to me...

ROLAND

Oh...?

CANDACE

Yes, you're going to decide that it's not for you and then you're going to sell it to me for what it cost you.

ROLAND

I am...?

CANDACE

I was actually going to have you sell it to me for *less*, but I so enjoyed what we just did, I'm feeling generous with my client's money.

ROLAND

Tell me, Ms. Munroe...is this how you conduct all your business?
(*wait, he was faking it!*)
Mesmerism may work with humans, but it won't with me.

CANDACE

Wait -- are you -- ?

ROLAND

Take a look.

With terrifying speed, Roland is suddenly holding Candace's head in his hands, *flooding* her mind with IMAGES OF BLOOD, DISMEMBERMENT, CARNAGE -- it's Roland's bloody stream of consciousness -- overwhelming Candace -- she gasps, frees herself from his grip, backs away from him --

CANDACE

-- *what* -- *what do you want?*

ROLAND

Exactly what you have. Power, influence, *land*. An empire. The purchase of the San Remo penthouse heralds the arrival of -- a new King.

(*off her shock:*)

What's wrong, Ms. Munroe? Afraid of some competition between vampires? Especially since you won't have any special advantage over me?

Speechless, Candace steps back into the room's DARKEST CORNER. *She blends in with that DARKNESS -- then, A FLOCK OF BATS flies from the darkness, out the room's open window --*

38 EXT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - NIGHT

38

Once the BATS are all outside, they gather into a vortex of *flapping wings*, which coalesce into: *Candace*, on the sidewalk. Panting, shaken, enraged, Candace looks up at -- *Roland*, in the window, staring down at her -- *smiling...*

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

39 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 39

Family Meeting Time. The three Brides, Peter, and Ludovico sit at the dining room table. Candace is angry at herself.

CANDACE

I *should've* recognized it. The *second* I walked into that house, I should've smelled the reek of, of vampire on him.

RENÉE

He's strong. If he could mask it.

CANDACE

At least as strong as I am.

PETER

How long has it been since you encountered another of your kind?

CANDACE

Los Angeles. The Manson murders.

(then:)

So many questions: *Where* did Roland come from? Who turned him? Is he part of a dynasty?

RENÉE

And *why* is he interested in you? Does he have a personal grudge?

CANDACE

We should think about going underground. Retreating, regrouping, *re-emerging* -- somewhere else. Some *time* else.

PETER

It would only take two or three days to make the arrangements.

RENÉE

Isn't that a bit premature? We've co-existed with other vampires before and it's been *fine* --

CANDACE

Not always. When necessary, we've gone underground --

RENÉE

Only once in the last century -- here,
in New York, in the 80s, during the
blood-plague --

(then:)

Roland sounds like a *hound* to me,
barking and pissing to mark his
territory, but harmless enough.

CANDACE

He knows who and what I am, Renée.
And if one of us is threatened,
we're *all* threatened. That was our
agreement, our promise --

LILY

If this is a ploy to keep me from
Arthur --

CANDACE

Of course it's not --

RENÉE

-- though the timing *is* somewhat
suspect, Candace. And Roland didn't
even threaten you, did he?

CANDACE

We've *always* been cautious. It's
what's kept us alive.

LILY

Always moving, establishing roots
in one place, only to rip them up
just as they're beginning to bear
fruit -- and then having to start
over again -- is *that* a life?

CANDACE

Yes -- *ours*.

RENÉE

-- *must* we decide this right now?
Tonight? Because don't forget --
Roland can't cross our threshold
without an invitation -- which
we'll *never* give. So as long as
we're vigilant, we have time to
weigh our options. If he turns out
to be dangerous, we can do as you
say, Candace, and go into hiding,
though I have my girls, my life, my
photo-shoots --

LILY

-- and I have Arthur. Option Two:
We go our separate ways. That would
make it harder for us to be found
out. Maybe it's time we tried that.

The way Lily says this, it sounds like she's given the idea
some thought. Renée doesn't want to dwell on that, so --

RENÉE

Or, Option Three, we kill Roland.

LILY

(sarcastic)

No, that's another one of the Queen's
sacred rules, Renée -- never kill, not
even when backed into a corner --

CANDACE

Yes, to keep us from becoming like
him. An animal. A monster.

RENÉE

I'm just *saying*, it's an option I'm
more than happy to explore.

OFF the Brides, at a crossroads --

40

EXT. COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY - THE NEXT MORNING

40

One of those gorgeous, arched BREEZEWAYS. Lily sits on a
ledge, waiting. A CLASS has just let out -- a group of
STUDENTS, followed by their junior professor -- Arthur. Lily
intercepts him --

LILY

Arthur --

ARTHUR

Lily -- is everything okay?

LILY (CONT'D)

(breathless)

-- yes, but I, I need to ask you.
If us being together meant leaving
New York -- would you do that?

ARTHUR

Lily, everything I have, everything I
know, is here. My job, my friends --

LILY

(crushed)

I understand --

ARTHUR

-- but I would walk away from it
all, in a second, if it meant being
with you -- why do you ask?

Lily's looking at him -- grateful, relieved --

41 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - INDOOR SWIMMING POOL - MORNING 41

Candace is doing laps. Relentlessly. Renée, dressed for her
day, comes in. Stares at Candace.

RENÉE

(almost chanting it)
Look up. Look up. Look --

-- *Candace looks up.* Renée gestures for her to swim over.
Candace does. She pulls herself out of the water, starts
toweling herself dry.

RENÉE (CONT'D)

Clearing your head? You'll need all
your wits if you don't want to lose
Lily.

(then:)
Meet her halfway.

CANDACE

There is no halfway on this, Renée.

RENÉE

Yes, there is, there's *dinner*. Lily
would agree to that. A meeting.
With Arthur.

(then:)
Aren't you the least bit curious?

CANDACE

You two may not be concerned about
Roland, but *I* saw what was in his
mind. Hosting a dinner is the *last*
thing we should be doing --

RENÉE

-- oh? It should be the first. If
Roland's as much of a threat as you
believe, shouldn't we be united?

(Breaking. It. Down.)
If you *don't* extend an olive branch,
and soon, you *will* lose Lily. She
will disappear from our lives.

CANDACE

It used to be, you would've done
anything to get rid of Lily --

RENÉE

At first, yes, but the last fifty
or sixty years, that's -- shifted.
I've grown to -- love her, I
suppose. To the point where now,
I'm not sure you and I would
survive *without* Lily. We're a
threesome, delicately balanced, for
better or for worse.

Renée starts to head out; Candace calls after her --

CANDACE

-- *Renée?* Extra careful today,
alright?

RENÉE

(rolling her eyes)
Yes, Mother.

Renée goes. OFF Candace, holding on to her traditions for
dear life...

42

INT. THE FRICK - THE OVAL ROOM - DAY

42

Chaos. Renée's MODELS getting dressed in Xavier's designs for
the shoot. WE FOLLOW RENÉE through the sea of bodies, until
she reaches -- Justine, in her underwear, looking at the GOWN
she's meant to put on.

RENÉE

Why aren't you ready? Are you sick?

JUSTINE

No, it's just -- the dress, Ms.
Pélagie, it's *so* beautiful, I won't
do it justice.

Renée is both annoyed and moved by Justine's humility.

RENÉE

The dress *is* the crown jewel of
Xavier's collection. But it's
nothing without a body. Yours.

JUSTINE

But what if --

RENÉE

Your generation is *enraging*. *Get.*
Dressed.

Renée turns to go, but --

JUSTINE

-- will you stay with me?
(Renée turns back...)
I'd feel better if you were
watching.

RENÉE

(eyebrow raised:)
Are you trying to provoke me?

JUSTINE

Are you open to being provoked?

Renée's caught off-guard by Justine's boldness, but she sits and stays, remembering...

DRACULA (PRE-LAPPED)

What are the rules, *Marquis*?

43

INT. THE HOUSE OF PAIN - SALON - DAY (FLASHBACK)

43

We're in France, the late 1700's. MEMBERS OF THE ARISTOCRACY, boys and girls, some naked, some in period underwear, frocks, skirts, powdered wigs, and masks, fill the BALLROOM. Moving through them: Renée, the MARQUIS DE SADE (40's), and the gentleman we've come to recognize as Dracula...

MARQUIS

You're in the House of Pain, presided over by the Marquis de Sade and his wife, there are no rules. Pick someone, a girl or a boy -- my wife and I don't judge -- take them upstairs, to one of the rooms.

Dracula looks around; so many willing victims. Renée's looking at *him*, intently...

RENÉE

May I ask, *Monsieur*, why did you seek an invitation to one of our -- salons?

DRACULA

I was bored, Madame de Sade.

RENÉE

Ah, you must be married, then.

DRACULA

I am. To a Nubian goddess.

RENÉE

And you didn't bring her? More's
the pity.

JUSTINE (PRE-LAP)

How do I look, Madame?

44 INT. THE FRICK - OVAL ROOM - DAY 44

Renée break from her reverie and regards Justine, a pure
vision in Xavier's dress --

RENÉE

You're -- beautiful. Now come, come,
let's get you in front of those
cameras.

45 EXT. STORE-IT-YOURSELF STORAGE - NEW JERSEY - NIGHT 45

We're at a remote, creepy STORAGE FACILITY in remote, creepy
Jersey. Peter's driving Candace, in the backseat of a BLACK
TOWN CAR. The HEADLIGHTS pierce the LOW FOG, as they arrive
at a particular UNIT and park. Candace, in a glamorous
trench, and Peter climb out. Candace carries a FLASHLIGHT.
Peter unlocks the unit, rolls up its door. They duck into
it...

46 INT. STORE-IT-YOURSELF STORAGE - NEW JERSEY - NIGHT 46

Inside the unit, Candace shines her flashlight on...THREE
WOODEN, COFFIN-LIKE CRATES, which Peter starts to inspect.

CANDACE

I learned this tactic from the
master, himself. Going underground.
It's how Dracula outlasted his
enemies for so long.

(then:)

Maybe I'm wrong about Roland, but
if I'm not --

PETER

If you're not, we'll be covered.

Peter lifts one of the crate's lids. It's filled with --

PETER (CONT'D)

-- dirt?

CANDACE

Soil. From the castle.

(then:)

You've never helped us through one
of these..."sleeps," I call them,

(MORE)

CANDACE (CONT'D)
but it's straight-forward.
(instructions:)
If the worst happens, we'll come
here. You'll seal us in the crates
for transport.

PETER
Where?

CANDACE
Someplace warm this time. South
America. Buenos Aires?

PETER
I'll work on my Spanish.

CANDACE
While watching over us.
(softer:)
Or maybe, this time, it will just be
me...
(then:)
Once you're certain we haven't been
followed, you'll wake us.

PETER
And it begins anew.
(then:)
Of course, it would be *much* easier
if you'd grant me the dark gift.

This isn't the first time Peter's asked to be "turned."

CANDACE
You're like your father, Peter. You
think you want it, but believe me:
There's *nothing* lonelier than
immortality.
(easing into it:)
Tell me. Have you met this...Arthur?

PETER
I have. Once or twice. He's
perfectly charming and nice.

CANDACE
(a thawing?)
Would you mind, Peter, inviting him
to dinner? So we can *all* meet him?

PETER
Of course, Queen. Happily.

OFF Candace, bending for her sisters...

47 INT. THE FRICK - THE GARDEN COURT - NIGHT 47

THE PHOTO-SHOOT. All eyes are on Justine, riveted. Renée, the PHOTOGRAPHER, his ASSISTANT. Even Xavier, next to Renée, is impressed.

XAVIER

Who is she again?

RENÉE

My new protégé. I'm going to teach her everything...

From this promise -- or threat -- WE SEGUE INTO...

48 INT. THE HOUSE OF PAIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 48

Dracula's in bed, naked, waiting for his "selection" to join him. The DOOR to the SUMPTUOUS BEDROOM opens, and in comes: A gorgeous FEMALE FIGURE, barely dressed, a mask covering her face. She lowers it -- *it's Renée!*

DRACULA

Madame de Sade -- you're not the woman I picked.

RENÉE

No. You, however, were my choice, Monsieur. Or may I call you by your true title -- Count?

(off his expression:)

Oh, my dear Dracula, the look on your face. Of course I know who you are. Whenever someone wishes to secure an invitation to one of our parties, we learn everything about them to make sure we won't be compromised.

Dracula starts to rise in the air, a manifestation of his dark powers --

DRACULA

You're foolish to play games --

RENÉE

-- make me like you.

(then)

My husband and I, we have reached the limits of human experience. There is no pain we haven't inflicted, no pleasure we haven't felt -- except one. I want to experience what death is. I want to feel it. And then: What it is to be reborn, to a world of night. I've tasted blood, Count, many times,

(MORE)

RENÉE (CONT'D)

but never a vampire's blood. Make me like you are...and there will be no boundaries left.

DRACULA

Once given, *Madame de Sade*...the dark gift is forever.

Renée climbs into bed, kneeling before Dracula. She opens her arms, wide --

RENÉE

I'm not afraid of forever.

Dracula bares his fangs -- *and bites into Renée's neck* --

49

INT. THE FRICK - OVAL ROOM - NIGHT

49

The models, changing back into their street clothes. Justine, in her corner; Xavier's gown hanging on a rack. Renée comes up behind Justine, just as the girl slips on a sweater. Renée hugs Justine from behind, whispers into her ear:

RENÉE

You were magnificent. They *all* wanted you -- did you *feel* it?

(Justine nods)

Good. You'll never forget your first time.

JUSTINE

Thank you, Ms. Pélagie. Even if I never wear a dress like that again --

RENÉE

Oh, stop. You *own* that gown. I bought it for you.

JUSTINE

What? I, I can't accept that --

RENÉE

Rule Number One: You don't say no to me, *ever*. The dress is yours, I'll have it boxed-up and sent to your new apartment at Webster House. Don't worry, I've taken care of your rent for the next six months. In the meantime...

Renée maneuvers Justine behind a folding screen, away from the other models, and...*she kisses Justine, ravenously*...

PRE-LAP: THE SOUND OF A PHONE BEING ANSWERED, then --

OPERATOR'S VOICE

This is 9-1-1, what is your emergency?

50 INT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - BATHROOM - NIGHT 50

THE CAMERA PANS ACROSS: Roland Grant, relaxing, soaking in a MARBLE BATH. His assistant, Sebastian, is on a blue-tooth, holding a CERAMIC PITCHER, on the phone with 911.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Yes, is this the police?

OPERATOR'S VOICE

No, this is 9-1-1, do you have an emergency?

Sebastian starts pouring from the pitcher, into the tub. Thick, warm BLOOD --

SEBASTIAN SHAW

("acting")

There's the body of a dead girl in the alley behind the Waverly movie theatre --

OPERATOR'S VOICE

-- alright, Sir, hold on --

SEBASTIAN SHAW

(making it crystal clear:)

Behind the Waverly movie theatre at 14th and 6th -- I think she's a model or something -- hurry, before the rats get to her --

Sebastian hangs up. He turns to Roland for approval.

ROLAND

(re: the Brides)

And that's two.

(then:)

Thank you, Sebastian, you were utterly convincing.

SEBASTIAN SHAW

I live to serve, Master.

THE CAMERA REVEALS: Roland Grant, soaking in a tub filled with HUMAN BLOOD...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

51 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 51

The table's set for dinner. Ludovico lights CANDLES under Renée's supervision...

RENÉE

All our futures rest on tonight.

LUDOVICO

I made *coq au vin*.

RENÉE

I feel better already.

Lily comes in, dressed up and anxious --

LILY

I can't believe I agreed to this --
I can't believe *Candace* did --

RENÉE

And *you* didn't want me getting involved. Isn't Vico's table magnificent?

LILY

Yes -- always --
(to Renée:)
You promise you'll behave?

RENÉE

I promise I'm going to treat Arthur exactly as I would any human. With subtle contempt until they've proved to me that they don't deserve it.

(then:)

We need more candles, Vico.

From this, we segue into *THE PAST*...

52 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 52

MATCH-CUT WITH: The previous scene. This table, too, is set. Except now, it's *Renfield* lighting the candles, as Candace and Renée look on, gossiping.

RENÉE

It's outrageous! Why does he need a third? Are we not enough?

CANDACE

I asked myself the same when he brought you into our bed.

RENÉE

(to Renfield:)

We need more candles, you clod --

(back to Candace:)

She's common, I've heard --

CANDACE

Shut your mouth, Renée --

(turning to:)

My Lord.

Both Renée and Candace turn towards the room's ENTRYWAY. Dracula is there, with Lily, wearing a gorgeous, period-appropriate gown, on his arm. *The Brides' first meeting!*

DRACULA

Queen of Nubia. Madame de Sade. May

I present to you...

(drawing her forward:)

...Miss Lily Stevens.

Lily smiles, shyly, and bows. Candace and Renée pointedly *don't* bow. Now knowing what else to say --

RENÉE

We're having one of the villagers for dinner. He's young and plump. Renfield, will you make sure he's bathed?

DRACULA

Dinner will keep. First...

Dracula smiles ever-so-slyly. Candace and Renée know what *that* look means...

53

INT. CASTLE DRACULA - DRACULA'S CHAMBER - NIGHT (F.B.) 53

Though he sleeps in a coffin, Dracula has a spectacularly large BED. Large enough for, at the moment, him and the Three Brides. Lily sits curled up in one corner of the bed, watching as Dracula, Candace, and Renée kiss each other, *enjoy* each other's naked bodies. The ladies as much as Dracula. More so, even. Eventually, Candace turns to Lily --

CANDACE

Come on, then. There are kisses for us all.

Lily slides over to join them. First, Candace kisses her. Then, Renée does. Then Dracula kisses Lily. Then, they become

a tangle of arms and limbs. Renée steals a whispered moment with Lily.

RENÉE

I'll tell you a secret, Little One. It's
all. About. Us.

Lily smiles at Renée, comforted. THE CAMERA PANS from this scene of VAMPIRE EROTICA to...the room's DOORWAY. A FIGURE stands there, in the shadows: It's Renfield, spying on them...

PRE-LAP: A DOORBELL'S RINGING, which takes us back to --

54 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT 54

Outside, in the HALL, Arthur's there, with a BOTTLE OF WINE and FLOWERS. Candace opens the door, greets him.

CANDACE

Welcome to my house, Arthur Seward.
Enter freely and of your own will.

OFF Arthur, nervous (and wouldn't you be?)...

55 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 55

WE CUT INTO: Dinner. Arthur and the Brides are sitting around the table. Ludovico is serving them.

ARTHUR

Your home is incredible. All your art -- it's Nubian, isn't it?

CANDACE

That's right. Most people mistake it for Egyptian.

ARTHUR

You could open your own museum.

Candace is impressed, but Renée's already pushing ahead:

RENÉE

You're a handsome creature, Arthur, but I'm curious: What is it you do, exactly?

ARTHUR

I'm in graduate school -- and I teach, too.

CANDACE

What subject?

ARTHUR

Sleep. I study sleep disorders.
Insomnia, dreams, narcolepsy --

LILY

Arthur helped me with my insomnia.

CANDACE

You have insomnia? Since when?

LILY

Had. Not anymore.

CANDACE

Caused by what?

LILY

Nightmares. Memories.

CANDACE

(affected by this:)
Why didn't you say anything?

LILY

I did. To Arthur.

ARTHUR

How, how did you three meet?

LILY

We --

RENÉE

Oh, Candace and I have known each other for *ages*. And then, Lily came into our lives, and we more or less -- adopted her, you could say.

ARTHUR

Ah. Are you and Candace...?

RENÉE

On occasion. We share *everything*. All three of us do. Isn't that right, Lily?

CANDACE

Chef Ludo, would you clear this and bring out dessert?

LUDOVICO

Yes, Queen.

Arthur looks up at this; Renée deflects --

RENÉE

What, he calls everyone "Queen."

ARTHUR

Do you, uh, have a washroom?

LILY

Of course --

But as quick as Lily says it, Renée is behind Arthur, putting a hand on his shoulder --

RENÉE

-- I'll show you the way.

56 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT 56

Renée escorts Arthur to the GUEST WASHROOM. He enters it.

RENÉE

I'll wait for you here.

57 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 57

Resume with Candace, Lily, and Ludovico:

LILY

Well, Candace?

CANDACE

(torn)

You want my blessing, Lily, and I,
I *wish* I could give it to you --

LILY

You *can* -- you're just choosing *not*
to. And finally -- *finally* -- I think
I've figured out why: You're scared.
Everything in your life is driven by --
by fear --

(emboldened:)

You were a warrior-queen once -- a
goddess -- and now -- *now*, some threat
appears -- and your *first* instinct is
to retreat? To go into hiding?

CANDACE

*No, my first instinct is to protect
you and Renée* --

LILY

To protect yourself --

(realizing:)

And not just from threats, from

(MORE)

LILY (CONT'D)

change. From anything you don't or can't control.

CANDACE

Lily, when I was given the dark gift, I lost *everything* --

LILY

What? Your palace? Your army?

CANDACE

(a huge admission:)
My husband -- my children --

LILY

(shocked:)
What -- you -- you were married?

CANDACE

Yes, to Alexander -- we had sons --

LILY

Candace, I, I had no idea...

CANDACE

I will *not* abide losing another family. You and Renée, you are that to me --

LILY

You won't lose us --
(then)
But the laws *have* to change. Our family *has* to be able to grow. You *must* see that, Candace --

CANDACE

I see how this story ends -- how it always does for our kind -- with heartache -- with betrayal --

Candace's emotion carries us into...

58

INT. CASTLE DRACULA - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

58

CLOSE-UP ON: RENÉE'S HAND, holding a LETTER she's opened.
REVEAL THAT: She's just come into the room where Candace and Lily are. Renée's crying --

RENÉE

(trembling)
-- I, I read a letter he wrote to Renfield --

(MORE)

RENÉE (CONT'D)

(then:)

They're instructions -- He, he's deserting us -- There's a woman in London -- some harlot named Mina Harker --

LILY

Jonathan's wife?

RENÉE

He's planning to leave us here, trapped and entombed -- so he can be with her -- be with Mina --

CANDACE

If he means to take her as a fourth --

RENÉE

No, he doesn't -- He's through with us -- he's through with his life here --

OFF the Brides' collective shock...

59 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT 59

Lots of marble. Arthur washes his hands at the sink. He looks up, into the mirror -- nothing's amiss, but when he turns: *Renée's there, suddenly and silently.* (Vampires don't cast a reflection, remember!)

ARTHUR

(startled)

-- *Renée* -- how did you -- ?

RENÉE

I meant what I said earlier. We do share everything.

The implication is clear. She wants a piece of him.

ARTHUR

Renée -- I asked Lily to marry me.

RENÉE

But she hasn't said yes yet, has she?

Renée presses up against Arthur, is whispering into his ear -- It's a true vampire seduction, and a test of Arthur's will --

RENÉE (CONT'D)

You could kiss me -- and no one would know, I promise you --

ARTHUR

I would -- and you would -- and I'd
never do that to Lily --

Renée's right in Arthur's face. For a moment, it seems like
she *might* rip out his throat -- but then, the moment passes...

RENÉE

...I believe you.
(protectively:)
But be warned, Trueheart: If you
ever betray Lily, or hurt her,
Candace and I will tear you apart.
She deserves the world.

ARTHUR

I -- couldn't agree more...

Satisfied, Renée lets Arthur go by her.

60 INT. H. TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 60

RESUME WITH: Ludovico, Candace, and Lily -- tense, silent.

LILY

...Candace, I didn't know -- you
never told us -- about your family.
I'm so, so sorry --
(Candace's eyes are wet)
-- but shouldn't that open your heart to
this? Can't you try? For me?

A BELL rings.

LUDOVICO

That's Madame's door. Excuse me.

Ludovico goes -- as Arthur and Renée return --

LILY

-- *please*, Candace -- won't you accept
Arthur?

Candace can't -- *she can't bring herself to say she does* --
Lily's heart breaks in this moment -- so does Candace's --

LILY (CONT'D)

-- *it's decided, then.*

RENÉE

What is? What's happening?

LILY

We're going, Arthur, *right now*. And
yes, I'll marry you --

ARTHUR
-- *what?*

RENÉE
-- *Candace, what did you do?*

LILY
Please, Arthur, before I lose my
nerve --

They go -- even as Ludovico comes up the spiral staircase --

LUDOVICO
Queen -- Madame --

They turn to him -- *how could tonight possibly get any worse?*

LUDOVICO (CONT'D)
The -- the police are downstairs
for you, Ms. Pélagie. They have
some questions about one of your
models.

RENÉE
-- Justine?

LUDOVICO
No. Her name is Marie. She was
found murdered last night. Her
throat was ripped out.

OFF RENÉE'S FACE --

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

61 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - RENÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

61

Renée, sitting with Ludovico, opposite POLICE DETECTIVE QUINCEY MORRIS (quirky, rumpled). No sign of Candace.

RENÉE

Marie missed work yesterday. But I, I had no idea...

DETECTIVE MORRIS

Why didn't you report her missing?

RENÉE

Marie was famous -- *infamous* -- for three things, Detective. Her cheek bones, her temper tantrums, and her vanishing acts. She throws a hissy fit, hides in her apartment for two or three days, gorges herself on ice cream and cookies, then comes back as if nothing's happened. I assumed it was business as usual.

DETECTIVE MORRIS

If having your neck chewed open and your body exsanguinated is business as usual.

(Renée covers her mouth)

You were close to the victim?

RENÉE

She -- worked for me.

DETECTIVE MORRIS

And you were -- *involved* for a time.

RENÉE

Those were early days. Months ago -- years ago.

DETECTIVE MORRIS

You get friendly with a lot of your girls, Ms. Pélagie?

Renée opens her mouth to answer, but then she "hears" a VOICE in her head and stops -- the voice is Candace's --

CANDACE'S VOICE

Don't answer that --

RENÉE

I'd rather not answer that, Detective.

DETECTIVE MORRIS

Would you describe your relationship to the victim as -- antagonistic?

RENÉE

Not at all.

(then:)

I mean, we *fought*...

DETECTIVE MORRIS

In fact, you had an argument that got violent the day she was murdered, didn't you?

Again, Candace's Voice intercedes --

CANDACE'S VOICE

He's entrapping you. Say you'll help with his investigation, but right now, you'd like to call your lawyer --

RENÉE

(blurting it out:)

I need to talk to my lawyer --

OFF Detective Morris, stymied --

62 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - CANDACE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

62

Renée and Ludovico have rejoined Candace, upstairs --

CANDACE

First, I have to ask: Did you do it?

RENÉE

What? Kill Marie? No, I'd never do that to one of my girls -- mutilate them in that way --

CANDACE

(working something out:)

Her body was drained of blood. One of our kind did that...

(realizing:)

-- *Roland Grant. I was wrong about him. He does know about you and Lily; he must. And his feud isn't just with me, it's with -- all of us --*

RENÉE

I'm not following you --

CANDACE

He's attacking what's dearest to each
of us. My empire, your girls, Lily's --

RENÉE

The only thing she has is --

CANDACE

-- *Arthur.*

(turning to:)

Ludovico, where did they go? Are
they downstairs?

Ludo's on his cell phone, already calling the front desk --

LUDOVICO

(into phone)

-- yes, it's Ludovico, did Miss
Stevens and her guest leave the
building?

(quickest beat)

Thank you --

(hangs up)

They left and hailed a cab --

Renée's on her cell phone -- waiting for Lily to pick up --

RENÉE

Trying Lily, she's not picking up --

(leaving a message:)

*Lily, it's Renée, where are you?
Call me --*

CANDACE

She won't, she's upset, it's my
fault --

RENÉE

Do we know where Arthur lives?

LUDOVICO

I do -- yes -- downtown --

RENÉE

Wait, wait, she's angry, but she'd
never invite Roland Grant in --

CANDACE

He doesn't work alone, Renée, he
has a human *aide-de-campe*, who can
come and go as he pleases --

Candace closes her eyes, concentrates -- projects a message --

CANDACE'S VOICE

*Lily -- Lily, hear me -- hear me,
hear me, hear me --*

63

INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

63

Arthur's packing a small suitcase, open on the bed -- Lily's
sitting on the bed --

LILY

*Hurry -- whatever I need, we'll buy
when we get there --*

Then, something breaks through to Lily's consciousness --

CANDACE'S VOICE

*Dammit, Lily, hear me -- **hear me** --
HEAR ME --*

Lily shifts slightly, away from Arthur. She "answers" back --

LILY'S VOICE

I'm not speaking to you, Candace --

CANDACE'S VOICE

*Just listen, then -- we're on our
way, but you and Arthur could be in
danger --*

Lily stands up, off the bed --

LILY'S VOICE

Candace --

CANDACE'S VOICE

Roland Grant knows what we all are --

LILY'S VOICE

He can't come in here --

CANDACE'S VOICE

*He has a lieutenant who can -- are
you sure you're secure in that
apartment? Will you check?*

Lily turns to Arthur, smiles --

LILY

I'm just getting something to
drink, do you need anything?

ARTHUR

No, thanks --

Lily heads out of the bedroom --

64 INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

64

Lily, walking down the hallway, rounds a corner so she can
see the apartment's FRONT DOOR, *which is chillingly open* --

LILY

Oh, no --

CANDACE'S VOICE

We're almost there --

And Lily bolts, doubling back into --

65 INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

65

-- Lily rushes in. Arthur looks up from his packing --

ARTHUR

What happened? Did you get your --

Lily takes Arthur's face in her hands --

LILY

Arthur -- do you trust me?

ARTHUR

Of course --

LILY

Then go to sleep, my love --

Immediately, Arthur's eyes shut and he goes limp. Lily eases
him down onto the bed. Then she leaves the room, locking the
door behind her, to keep Arthur safe --

66 INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

66

Lily (as a Gothic-heroine) moves down the long hallway,
towards the FRONT DOOR --

LILY

Whoever you are, I know you're in
here, *I can smell your blood* --

No answer. She continues down the hall --

LILY (CONT'D)

I can hear your breathing -- are
you scared? Or excited? Or both?

Lily rounds the corner, reaches the front door, looks out --

DOWN THE APARTMENT BUILDING'S LONG HALLWAY -- Lily sees Candace and Renée, emerging from the STAIRWELL -- Lily relaxes --

LILY (CONT'D)

Here! We're down (here) --

-- she says, as TWO HANDS, holding a SILVER CHAIN, encircle her neck, pulling her back into Arthur's apartment --

CANDACE

Lily -- NO --

INSIDE THE APARTMENT: Roland's servant, Sebastian, is choking Lily with the chain -- *the silver burns her flesh* -- as he drags her away from the door --

SEBASTIAN SHAW

You vamps don't very much like silver, do you?

Lily's not breathing, she's kicking and flailing, but no sound can escape from her throat --

Sebastian keeps dragging Lily down the hall -- even as Renée and Candace *reach* the open door, which they cannot enter --

CANDACE

Lily, we can't --

RENÉE

Invite us in --

Lily claws at the chain that's tight around her throat -- she manages to get her fingers underneath it enough to loosen the chain's grip -- *she chokes out two words* --

LILY

*You're --
(a gasp:)
Invited --*

In that second, Renée and Candace *hurtle* into the apartment, throwing themselves at Sebastian -- who is no match for three vampires --

His grip on Lily breaks -- she collapses to her knees, drawing in deep breaths of precious air -- as Renée and Candace drag Sebastian out the door, out of the apartment --

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

67 EXT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

67

START WITH: Sebastian, on his knees, at the mercy of Candace and Renée, circling him like sharks...

CANDACE

You have *one* chance. Tell us about Roland Grant. Who he is -- why he's after us --

RENÉE

We'll know if you're lying --

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Roland Grant is...your doom. The Great Dragon at the End of Time. The Monster at the bottom of the Ocean of Blood. *The Destroyer* --

Renée kicks Sebastian across the face --

RENÉE

That was for Marie -- now tell us: Why does Roland care about us?

SEBASTIAN SHAW

(grim, laughing:)

Nothing you bitches could do to me would be worse than *his* punishment if I betrayed him.

CANDACE

-- "*bitches*"? That's fine. Sometimes, being a bitch is all a vampire has to hold onto.

Lily appears, floating over the edge of the building --
Candace turns to her, meets Lily's gaze --

CANDACE (CONT'D)

How's Arthur? Was he hurt?

LILY

...no. He's fine. Asleep.

CANDACE

Good.

(then:)

Now come, Little Sister. Come, so we can show Roland Grant what we do to our enemies...

Lily joins her sisters. Candace notes Lily's seared throat --

CANDACE (CONT'D)

Your poor neck...

(to Sebastian:)

What did he promise you, in exchange for hurting us?

SEBASTIAN SHAW

Life everlasting.

Candace bends down to him -- whispers in Sebastian's ear:

CANDACE

In that case...what I'm about to do to you...is a mercy...

Suddenly, Candace's TEETH are long and sharp. Her EYES shine in the dark. *She hisses as she takes the first bite out of Sebastian's neck! Then Renée and Lily move in for a bloody feeding-frenzy -- pushing us into the past --*

68

INT. CASTLE DRACULA - CRYPT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

68

We've circled back to the night of our Prologue. We're in DRACULA'S CRYPT, with the Brides, standing next to a STONE TOMB. In the tomb, Dracula sleeps, his eyes closed. Lily holds a STAKE. Renée, a MALLET. Candace, a KNIFE.

CANDACE

If we do this, Sisters --

RENÉE

-- *he deserves it!* He would've left us here to rot for that whore Mina!

(Lily's wavering...)

If we leave *without* doing this, Lily, he *will* come for us, we will never be safe from his wrath --

Lily nods, places the stake over Dracula's heart. Renée moves into place, beside her, lifts the mallet, when -- *suddenly* -- POUNDING echoes through the castle. (The BATTERING RAM from the Prologue!) Lily turns her head, hesitates --

LILY

-- *what?*

-- *Renée shrieks, starts HAMMERING ON THE STAKE ferociously, driving it into Dracula's chest, releasing a GEYSER OF BLOOD, drenching all of the Brides, as the Count writhes in agony -- Candace moves in for the final blow -- she cuts Dracula's head off his body --*

69 EXT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - ROOFTOP - NIGHT (THE PRESENT) 69

PAN ACROSS: SEBASTIAN'S CORPSE, face-down in a pool of blood.
THE CAMERA FINDS: Renée, licking BLOOD off her fingers. She
wafts over to Candace and Lily, doing the same --

RENÉE

So much better when it's fresh,
isn't it? And when the kill is
yours.

CANDACE

...I'd forgotten.

RENÉE

Good to be reminded of them, every
now and then. The old ways.

LILY

(echoing the Prologue:)
What happens now...?

RENÉE

Yes, Queen, what *are* we doing?
Roland's a threat -- should we go
underground?

Candace looks at her sisters -- her wives -- decides...

CANDACE

No. No more hiding. No more running.
We stay and fight. Three minds as
one. Three hearts as one. Standing
together, for whatever comes next.

LILY

(risking it:)
And Arthur?

CANDACE

You're asking me to break every one
of our vows tonight... But if
Arthur is what you want --

LILY

He is --

CANDACE

-- then he is yours. And we will
determine how to best...*integrate*
him into our family at a later
date.

LILY

Oh, Candace, I love you, thank you --

Lily rushes to Candace, hugs her, so grateful. Candace hugs her back, ferociously, a mother lioness. Renée looks at them, pleased, then turns back to Sebastian's corpse --

RENÉE

What about our leftovers?

CANDACE

I'll handle that. Personally.

70 INT. HIGHGATE TOWER - RENÉE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (LATER) 70

Renée comes into her apartment, where Ludovico is, waiting with a BOUQUET OF WHITE ROSES.

LUDOVICO

They're from a -- Justine Strang.
Along with a card, thanking you for
a dress. And for taking her on as a
client.

RENÉE

Call Ms. Strang tomorrow and invite
her to dinner. Just the two of us.

Intrigued, Renée touches one of the roses -- pricks her
finger on a thorn -- *sucks the blood...*

71 EXT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - NIGHT 71

Roland, coming home from a night out, walks up the STEPS. He reaches the brownstone's PORTICO, opens the OUTER DOOR, stops when he sees -- SEBASTIAN'S CORPSE, propped up against the FRONT DOOR, hidden from street-view, his eyes open, his neck so chewed through it's barely keeping his head attached.

There's an ENVELOPE resting on Sebastian's chest. Roland bends down to open it. Inside, there's a card. At the top of the card, it reads: *From the desk of Candace Munroe*. Written on the card is a simple note: *Welcome to New York*. A beat, Roland shuts the corpse's eyes.

ROLAND

War, then.

72 INT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 72

Roland has brought Sebastian's corpse inside; it sits on the couch. Roland moves from his bar -- he's poured himself a glass of blood -- towards a PORTRAIT that hangs over his FIREPLACE. It is the same one from our Prologue, of Dracula. Roland lifts his glass to toast it, *taking us back into...*

73 INT. CASTLE DRACULA - CRYPT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK) 73

Dracula stands next to his tomb. Scooping a handful of EARTH out of it -- while a twisted Renfield watches, shuffling...

DRACULA

You've arranged for my transport to London?

RENFIELD

Yes, Master. There's a ship, leaving for England. The Demeter. I've told the captain to expect several boxes of earth. I'll go ahead and be there waiting for your arrival.

DRACULA

And then, to my precious Mina.
(then:)
What about the Three?

RENFIELD

The mason is coming. We'll put them down the well, coffins and all. Then we'll seal it shut. The Three will never breathe air or see light again.

DRACULA

Well done, Renfield, you've served me well.

RENFIELD

Thank you, Master -- *my life for yours.*

DRACULA

Yes, my friend, yes. But quite the opposite. Your reward will be what you desire most: Eternal life. Come. Step closer.

RENFIELD

Please, Master -- *thank you, Master...*

Dracula bends down to bite Renfield, and as he bites him -- Renfield cries, tears of happiness, which take us back to --

74 INT. TOWNHOUSE ON THE EAST SIDE - NIGHT 74

THE PRESENT, with Roland, as we realize: *Roland was once the twisted, misshapen Renfield!*

ROLAND

...my life for yours, Master.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Let's hope it doesn't come to that.

Roland turns to -- *Justine, as she walks into the room!*

JUSTINE

I feel bad about Sebastian.

ROLAND

Don't. He died with honor. And provided us the necessary distraction --

JUSTINE

-- so I could slip into the henhouse, unnoticed. Well planned, Renfield.

She goes to him -- they kiss -- then --

ROLAND

-- thank you, Mina. Now that we've found the Three, I want to enjoy our revenge on them. *I want it to hurt. I want them to suffer...*

-- *holy shit, so Justine is actually Mina Harker?!? There can't be any more twists, can there?? -- well, except for --*

75

INT. ARTHUR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

75

Shirtless, Arthur crosses his bedroom. As he climbs into bed, he senses...*something* in the corner, in the shadows. A DARK FIGURE. Which steps forward. It's Lily, looking beautiful, sexy, holding her diary, canine teeth extended, a true Bride of Dracula...

WOMAN'S VOICE (LILY'S)

How best to tell this story...?

(then, measured:)

With a diary, kept by a vampire, given to a human she loved more than the night...

ARTHUR

Lily...?

LILY

Arthur, my dearest. There's something I think you should read.

SMASH TO BLACK --

END OF PILOT.