

FADE IN:

EXT. THE SKY OVER BOSTON -- DAY

(OVER) the BATTING of rotor blades, a WBZ-4 News helicopter flies above Interstate 93, jam packed with traffic.

TRAFFIC REPORTER (V.O.)

If you're on your way into Boston
this morning, be prepared for a slow
go on 93.

The helicopter banks over the Charles River. Below, on the Longfellow Bridge, a silver minivan changes lanes and exits.

TRAFFIC REPORTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Route 3 is in good shape moving into
Beacon Hill.

As the minivan continues down Cambridge Street, the SOUND of the helicopter fades away.

The minivan rolls down a shady street of luxury row houses.

INT. MINIVAN

In the back seat, three-year-old ALINA is strapped in her car seat. MOM and DAD are looking out the windshield.

MOM

Twelve ... Fourteen ... Sixteen.

Mom points.

MOM (CONT'D)

Right there. Eighteen. That's the one.

Dad parks in front of a three-story luxury row house. He shuts off the engine. Exhales. Looks worried.

MOM (CONT'D)

It'll be okay. He's a good lawyer.

DAD

I never thought I see the day I'd have to file for bankruptcy.

EXT. LUXURY ROW HOUSE

The family stands on the porch. Dad BANGS the door-knocker, shares a concerned look with Mom. The door opens, revealing an elderly, stately BUTLER. He looks at the family, smiles.

BUTLER
Mr. & Mrs. Carr?

Dad nods. The butler stoops to Alina.

BUTLER (CONT'D)
And who is this little cutie pie?

MOM
Alina.

BUTLER
Well, hello there, Alina.

She hides behind her mom's legs.

BUTLER (CONT'D)
(back to business)
Please, come in. He is expecting you.

INT. LUXURY ROW HOUSE FOYER

On the marble floor lies a big dog, head up, tongue lolling, mildly interested in the visitors.

Alina tugs at her mother's handhold.

ALINA
Doggie.

Mom restrains her daughter, asks the butler:

MOM
Is the dog okay? Does he bite?

BUTLER
Bones? Nah. He won't hurt a flea.

MOM
Okay, honey. You can pet the doggie.

Alina scurries over to Bones, puts her face up to his snout and pats his head.

ALINA
Doggie.

Bones shows teeth. GROWLS.

DAD
Don't be so rough, honey.

With a sharp YAP, Bones lashes out. A mouthful of fangs. A SCREAM. Then blackness.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET -- NIGHT

A faint glow grows bigger and brighter revealing a house on fire. Flames break through the roof and lap the night sky.

(OVER) SIRENS. Flashing lights approach. Fire trucks arrive. Firemen scramble in full suits and masks.

Firemen carry out two charred bodies, burned beyond recognition. They are laid side by side on the lawn and covered with yellow tarps.

The roof caves in. Embers fly. Walls collapse into the inferno.

EXT. GRAVE SITE -- DAY

Under a sunny sky, a girl wearing pigtails and a Sunday dress, her face not visible, places flowers on the grave. The headstone reads: CARR

A dark and mysterious man watches from the trees.

EXT. GRAVE SITE -- DAY

Snow covers the ground. A young woman stands before the CARR tombstone. She's wearing a long coat and high-heel boots. Black hair shields her face as she places flowers on the grave.

A dark and mysterious man watches from the trees.

EXT. BOSTON -- ESTABLISHING -- DAY

Skyscrapers tower by the bay.

EXT. WBZ-4 TELEVISION STATION -- DAY

A WBZ-4 News helicopter settles on the helipad.

As the rotor blades rotate overhead, a woman bails out, ducking the down-wash, her face not visible. This is ALINA CARR now twenty-five years old. She wears goth clothing and spiky short hair, and she carries a laptop. Her gait is hurried.

Behind her emerges MEREDITH MULDOWNY. She's dressed professional. High heels. Jewelry. Running awkwardly, she shields her blond hairdo from the helicopter's down-wash.

MEREDITH
Alina, wait up!

ALINA
Twenty minutes to air time, Meredith.
I've got to write your script.

Alina charges through the building's entrance door.

Meredith stops, jabs her hands on her hips.

MEREDITH
I want to read it first.

The door SLAMS closed.

A cameraman climbs out of the helicopter, lugging equipment. This is BRAD COVINGTON, wearing sunglasses, two-day beard, and a pony tail. He catches up with Meredith.

BRAD
Gotta admit, she's a go-getter.

MEREDITH
She'll never make it in this business.

BRAD
Give her a break. It's her birthday.

INT. WBZ-4 NEWS ROOM SET -- DAY

In left profile, Alina sits at a desk, typing frantically on a computer keyboard. A pencil is clenched in her teeth.

The floor director, WILLIAM JENKINS, wearing a headset, storms across the set.

JENKINS
Two minutes, people.

Technicians adjust lighting. The TELEPROMPTER OPERATOR sits at her booth, looking at Alina expectantly. Meredith fusses with her hairdo.

Directors take their positions at the main control terminal, where monitors and equipment are stacked to the ceiling.

Jenkins charges toward Alina.

JENKINS (CONT'D)
Where's Meredith's script, Alina?

She speaks through the pencil clamped in her teeth.

ALINA
It's coming. Right now.

Punching a key, she looks up at the computer screen.

ALINA (CONT'D)
There.

The teleprompter operator examines her monitor.

TELEPROMPTER OPERATOR
Got it, Alina. Thanks.

MEREDITH
I want to read it first.

JENKINS
Wing it, Meredith. Take your position.

Meredith scrambles into her seat behind the news counter.

MEREDITH
It better be perfect.

Alina slumps back in her chair. Jenkins counts down with his fingers held up.

JENKINS
Three, two, one, cue music.

Intro MUSIC comes on. Meredith smiles into the camera.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
From Boston, Massachusetts, this is
WBZ 4 News with Meredith Muldowny.

MEREDITH
Good evening, everyone. Thanks for joining us.

The floor director storms to Alina.

JENKINS
My office. Now!

ALINA
Mr. Jenkins, please--

JENKINS
Now!

INT. JENKINS' OFFICE

Dark wood furniture. Book shelves. Trophies. In left profile, Alina steps through the door.

Jenkins closes the door behind her.

ALINA
Look, Mr. Jenkins...

Alina turns to face him, revealing horrific scars on her right cheek, from her eye to her lip. A mangled, lumpy mess.

ALINA (CONT'D)
I finished the script. Sorry there wasn't time for Meredith to dawdle over it.

Jenkins inhales, steps toward her.

JENKINS
I know you don't want this job.

ALINA
Writing script for Miss Priss and taking a bunch of crap for it, would you?

JENKINS
Just say the word, I'll make you the morning news anchor. That simple.

Alina shrinks back, puts her hand on her scars, panic welling in her eyes.

ALINA

I can't, Mr. Jenkins, I just can't.

JENKINS

Alina. Hello-o! Nobody cares about
your scars.

ALINA

(adamant)

I do.

Jenkins steps up to her, puts a hand on her shoulder.

JENKINS

You've got talent. You've got drive.

ALINA

But no guts. If I were pretty like
Meredith--

JENKINS

She's a trophy blonde. Come on, she
can't even write her own script.

ALINA

She's meant to be a star. In front
of the camera. I'm just a behind-
the-scenes kind of girl.

JENKINS

If that's all you think you are,
then that's all you're ever going to
be? It's a damn shame.

Alina hangs her head, mute.

JENKINS (CONT'D)

Think it and you will become it,
Alina. Think you're beautiful, you
are. Think you're a star, you are.
Life is more about attitude than
beauty and brains.

ALINA

I just can't.

JENKINS

(exasperated)

Let me know if you change your mind.

She steps around him and exits the office.

INT. WBZ-4 NEWS ROOM SET

Alina stops, sees Meredith's beaming and beautiful face on every monitor around the news room.

MEREDITH
(on screen)
The Wildlife Wanders Traveling Zoo
arrived at Franklin Park today.

Alina touches her scars. Her eyes bleed despair.

Brad, leaning on a desk corner, the camera case slung on his shoulder, spots her, smiles, stands.

BRAD
Alina --

She dashes to the exit, SLAMS the door on her way out.

BRAD (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Happy birthday.

He pulls a cell phone from his shirt pocket, dials and puts the phone to his ear.

BRAD (CONT'D)
She just left.

VOICE ON THE PHONE
Follow her.

EXT. BOSTON -- ESTABLISHING -- NIGHT

(OVER) the HOWL of a wolf, lighted skyscrapers reflect off dark bay waters.

EXT. FRANKLIN PARK ZOO - NIGHT

(OVER) the HOWL, street lamps reveal parked semi-truck trailers. *WILDLIFE WANDERS TRAVELING ZOO. In one open-sided trailer, a wolf paces behind steel bars. He lunges forward with a vicious BARK, jaws gnashing, then blackness.*

EXT. BLACK JAGUAR SEDAN - NIGHT

A black Jaguar sedan glides down a dimly lit street.

Beyond the leaping chrome jaguar on the hood prow, a woman walks along the sidewalk, bundled against the cold.

The car slows.

INT. BLACK JAGUAR SEDAN - NIGHT

The driver, MAKEC, addresses his back-seat passenger, SORIN TOROK, via the rear view mirror.

MAKEC
You must feed, sir.

SORIN (O.S.)
Not until I talk to Alina.

Makec watches the woman as the car passes her by.

MAKEC
You're getting pale.

Sorin leans forward, his white handsome face visible only in the flash of passing street lamps. His black hair is combed straight back. He wears a black coat and red tie.

SORIN
How much farther to the club?

MAKEC
Sorin, I wish you'd let her enjoy her birthday.

SORIN
She's turning twenty-five. It's time.

MAKEC
Can it wait until tomorrow?

Sorin settles back into the rear seat, his face a white glow surrounded by shadow.

SORIN
You think I'm making a mistake.

MAKEC
You know my thoughts as if they're your own. Why do you ask?

SORIN
Her parents are to blame, not me.

MAKEC
What about Patrice?

SORIN

Makec, don't you dare speak of him.
He's a disgrace to the Torok name.

MAKEC

But he's still your son.

SORIN

Just drive.

The Jaguar approaches a club lit up in red neon. *The Coven.*

Makec parks the car at the curb.

Sorin is now sitting in the front passenger seat and watching chicks and punks huddle on the sidewalk in front of the club, smoking. A gothed-up chick approaches the bunch. They cheer, bump knuckles, and go in.

Sorin glances left and right. The street is deserted.

SORIN (CONT'D)

Wait here.

He shape-shifts into a mist that seeps out the door seams.

MAKEC

(under his breath)

I hate it when he does that.

INT. THE COVEN

(OVER) loud MUSIC the punks enter the club and meld into a crowd of pale faces pierced in every imaginable way.

At a table, two chicks nurse drinks. One is Alina, dressed in a black lacy camisole and wearing dark makeup. The bumpy scar on her face is clearly visible. She shouts at the REDHEAD sitting with her.

ALINA

My boyfriend's late, as usual.

The redhead swirls ice cubes in a glass.

REDHEAD

Mine, too.

Alina sips her drink.

ALINA

What is it with men, anyway?

REDHEAD

Subspecies.

ALINA

We had a fight.

REDHEAD

Oh?

ALINA

I wouldn't give him any pussy.

(sighs)

Some birthday, huh.

REDHEAD

You've got family, right?

ALINA

My parents are dead. Only child.

I've always wanted a brother.

REDHEAD

They're no better than boyfriends.

A punk arrives, turns a chair around and straddles it backwards. TONY wears a ring in his nose and sports a Mohawk.

ALINA

Tony. You're late.

She reaches out to touch his arm, but the redhead blocks Alina's hand and purrs to Tony.

REDHEAD

Why do you keep me waiting so long?

Alina pulls back, glaring at them.

ALINA

What the hell's going on?

REDHEAD

(sly smile)

Seems we have the same boyfriend.

TONY

(to Alina)

Gotta go with the flow, babe.

ALINA
Why you cheating bastard!

TONY
You had your chance to bang my bones.

Alina jumps to her feet.

ALINA
A quickie in the back seat of your
dad's Buick? No way.

TONY
With that face, you're just a charity
fuck, anyway.
(to the redhead)
Gave me blue balls, the bitch did.

The redhead grins at Alina.

REDHEAD
Happy fuckin' birthday, Alina.

Alina storms off, pushing through the crowd and runs into a man blocking her way. Black coat. Red tie. Black hair swept back.

ALINA
Excuse me, mister.

She tries to step around him. He won't let her pass.

ALINA (CONT'D)
What's your problem, man?

SORIN
May I buy you a birthday drink?

Alina looks back at the table where Tony and the redhead are all lovey-dovey. Her angry expression turns vindictive.

ALINA
Sure, why not?

(OVER) loud MUSIC, Sorin leads her to a table occupied by four punks dressed in leather and chains. He gives them a cold stare. They quickly abandon their seats.

Alina looks surprised.

ALINA (CONT'D)
I thought I was the only one who had
that effect on people.

Sorin holds a chair out for her.

SORIN
Allow me.

She's seated. Sorin sits across from her.

SORIN (CONT'D)
Scotch and water, right?

A waitress brings drinks. Alina looks at the glass, and then Sorin and frowns.

ALINA
How did you know it's my birthday?

Sorin raises his glass.

SORIN
I know everything about you, Alina Carr.

She looks shocked then uneasy.

ALINA
I'd better go.

Rising, she sees Brad, the cameraman, at the bar. He nods to her. She looks down at still-seated Sorin.

ALINA (CONT'D)
What do you want?

SORIN
Sit, please. I'll explain.

Slowly, she retakes her seat, eyes riveted on Sorin.

ALINA
Who are you?

SORIN
Forgive me. The name's Sorin Torok, ma'am.

He extends his hand. She just glares at him. He retracts his offered hand.

SORIN (CONT'D)
I knew your parents.

ALINA
They died in a fire. I was ten.

SORIN
Unfortunate. Yes.

ALINA
What else do you know about me, Mister
Torok?

SORIN
You're a writer.

ALINA
A staff writer, A-K-A peon for
Meredith Muldowny.

SORIN
But you want to be a news anchor.

ALINA
With this face?

She touches her scars.

He takes a swig from his glass, looks at her hard.

SORIN
What if you didn't have those scars?
Would you take the news anchor job
at WBZ?

ALINA
You know about that?

SORIN
I told you, I know everything.

ALINA
Sounds like an invasion of my privacy.

Sorin shifts back in his chair.

SORIN
What if I told you I can make your
scars go away?

ALINA
(huffs)
Fix this mess?

She waves at her face.

ALINA (CONT'D)
Face transplant, maybe

SORIN
I'm not talking about surgery.

ALINA
I've tried every magic scar reduction
cream on the market.

SORIN
I'm not talking about magic.

Alina stands.

ALINA
And I'm not comfortable talking to
you about this.

She turns to leave, but Brad is standing in her way.

BRAD
Alina. It's important--

ALINA
You're in on this, too?

BRAD
Every day I watch you muddle in
Meredith's shadow. You should be
the star, and if those scars are the
only thing stopping you, he can help.

ALINA
I don't believe it.

BRAD
At least hear him out.

She glances at Sorin a beat then returns to her seat.

ALINA
What do I have to do, sell my soul?

SORIN

Not exactly.

Cautious, she picks up her drink.

ALINA

Well, I'm not sleeping with you.

She takes a swig, watches Sorin grin.

SORIN

That won't be necessary, either.

Alina sets down her glass.

ALINA

So how do you plan to work this
miracle?

SORIN

By making you my daughter.

Sorin's lips curl back to reveal a flash of vampire fangs.

ALINA

You've got to be shittin' me.

SORIN

I can give you beauty and immortality.

ALINA

Aren't you a little too old for
playing the vampire card?

SORIN

Four hundred years. Is that old
enough?

ALINA

Fake fangs and a lame pickup line.
Is that the best you got?

A HISS behind her. She turns. Brad shows her his vampire fangs.

ALINA (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Not you, too.

In plain view, his fangs retract to normal size.

ALINA (CONT'D)
(uneasy now)
You guys don't have anything better
to do?

SORIN
One bite, that's all it takes.

ALINA
Bite? Like bite my neck? Like in
the movies. I knew this was bullshit.

She downs her drink, slams the glass on the table, and rises.

ALINA (CONT'D)
You guys are a joke.

She storms off. The two vampires watch her go.

EXT. THE COVEN

The club door BANGS open. Alina rushes out, hugs herself against the cold. A bus pulls up to the corner. Brakes SQUEAL. The doors HISS open.

She bolts for the bus but stops short, her eyes fixed and fearful on a mongrel dog stalking toward her, GROWLING. Frozen in place, Alina touches the scar on her face.

The dog lunges at her.

Fast as a blink, Sorin is there to catch the dog in mid leap. He tosses it to the ground and stands in front of Alina protectively. YELPING, the dog runs off.

ALINA
(shocked)
How did you do that?

A HISS as the bus doors close. Sorin turns to face her.

SORIN
I'm a vampire. No joke.

ALINA
(retreating)
I've...I've got to go.

She runs toward the bus, waving.

ALINA (CONT'D)

Hey, wait!

CRACK. The heel of her right shoe breaks off. She stumbles, catches her balance, hops on one foot. The bus ROARS off.

Sorin moves behind her, fast as a flash, speaks into her ear.

SORIN

One bite, Alina. Those scars are gone forever. You'll be beautiful.

She takes a breath, peers at him over her shoulder.

ALINA

You think I'm so vain that I'd let you bite me, suck my blood, and kill me for beauty?

SORIN

We have a history, you and I, a destiny unfulfilled.

She's trembling.

ALINA

History? What history?

FLASH BACK to the school girl at the grave, the man watching.

SORIN (V.O.)

I promised your parents I'd take care of you, and on your twenty-fifth birthday, I'd make you beautiful again.

BACK TO SCENE

ALINA

They knew you were a vampire?

SORIN

Exactly. They gave you to me in exchange for the beauty you lost.

ALINA

Why?

SORIN
Parents take risks for their children.
Make sacrifices.

He steps around to face her, holds her by both shoulders.

SORIN (CONT'D)
Guilt is a powerful motivator.

His fangs grow.

ALINA
No!
(shrinking back)
I don't want to die. Please.

He pulls her into him, bites her neck. She stiffens. Gasps. Moans. Sorin drinks heartily. She falls limp in his embrace.

A wolf HOWLS in the distance.