

THE CULT OF GIDEON

By Janet E. Swainston

EXT WOODED AREA - DUSK

The sun is setting over the horizon, a gathering of about two dozen people in hoods is called to order. One voice beckons the crowd to silence. Shouts of frustration and anger come to a halt and discussion begins.

HOODED LEADER

Enough! Silence. We have things to discuss.

HOODED FOLLOWER #1

What is there to discuss. They have him. They have the master.

HOODED FOLLOWER #2

Yes. The master is in danger. We should go and get him.

The crowd gets riled up again but the leader holds up his hands.

HOODED LEADER

No! We cannot attack outright. We must do this in quiet. We have someone on the inside.

HOODED FOLLOWER #2

But what have they done. What can only one do.

HOODED LEADER

We will send others. Two more will be sent.

The crowd murmurs softly.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY, DUSK

A crowd of adults can be seen milling around, while down at the end of the hall two voices are engaged in heated conversation. The two figures come in to view; **KEVIN RILEY**, school vice principal and **MICHELLE BINKS**, teacher.

RILEY

We have to get it out of here. It can't stay. It's too risky with the new school year starting.

MRS. BINKS

No! We can't move it now. If it remains undisturbed it can be closely observed. Mr. Heikel will keep things under control.

RILEY

You don't understand. I can't risk our students safety.

MRS. BINKS

It's more unsafe to move things now.

A loud noise is heard from behind the doors they stand in front of. Both look at the door with concern.

EXT WOODED AREA - DUSK

The crowd waits expectantly as the leader holds up his hands to silence them again.

HOODED LEADER

Come forth. Come forth faithful followers. Show your power.

Two female figures move through the crowd from the rear. The crowd parts to allow them passage and when they reach the front they turn and throw back their hoods. They are two young attractive blonde women, **LILY WEBB** and her sister, **CHARLOTTE**. The crowd goes quiet as they turn to face the leader.

HOODED LEADER

Lily. Charlotte. You are our best hope of bringing our father back to us. You must bring him back to his proper place. You will find him at a local high school. You are the only ones amongst us who can do this.

He takes two pendants on chains from another figure and hands one to each girl

HOODED LEADER

Take these amulets. They will protect you and identify you to our insider.

(MORE)

HOODED LEADER (cont'd)

Their special powers will enable you to walk freely in sunlight, eat and drink as humans do, and cast a fog over the minds of those you must recruit to do the job you are being sent to do.

The girls nod, put on the pendants and then turn and smile to each other.

INT SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

There are sounds of a struggle as Riley and Binks enter the dimly lit room. The two stand staring in horror at the scene before them. Two figures, both male are struggling frantically. Riley moves forward to help break things up, but the losing figure, **MR. HEIKEL**, speaks to him from the darkness.

MR. HEIKEL

Don't kill!

Riley flounders for a moment and the other figure takes that moment to snap the neck of Heikel.

As the victor drops his victim to the floor, Riley retrieves a crowbar from the floor and clouts the victor over the head. The figure falls to floor beside his victim as Riley gestures for Binks to help him.

They wrestle the body into a coffin-like box and seal it shut. Riley places on the top of the box a string of garlic, a bible and a crucifix.

Silently, they stare at one another briefly before shoving the box into a storage space beneath the auditorium stage.

Then, they move to lift the lifeless form of Heikel and carry him out a side door.

EXT HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT, EARLY MORNING

Students are arriving for the first day of school. A two door cool car roars into the parking lot, parks haphazardly and three friends spill out onto the pavement.

JORDAN BANKS, school jock; **BETHANY WALTERS**, the smart and popular girlfriend of Jordan; and **FINN JACKSON**, Jordan's best friend and class clown.

Before Bethany exits the front seat, Finn shoves his way out of the car, knocking her over.

BETHANY

Hey. Finn!

Finn stands on the pavement looking at her as he adjusts his clothes.

FINN

What?

Bethany shoves Finn as she exits the car.

FINN

What's that for? What did I do?

Jordan joins them and slides an arm around Bethany.

JORDAN

Don't touch my girlfriend. She's my property.

Bethany shoves Jordan away from her.

BETHANY

I belong to nobody.

JORDAN

I was kidding.

At that moment, another cool car screeches into the parking lot and parks beside Jordan's car. A young man, **MAX CONNORS**, artist, likeable guy and friend to the first group, exits the passenger door, stumbles to the front of the car and vomits.

The driver of the car steps onto the pavement, **SUZANNE DAVIDSON**, Bethany's best friend and a sports babe. She steps over to Bethany and shakes her head.

SUZANNE

I swear, he's got the weakest stomach.

The four friends show various levels of disgust as they wait for Max to finish throwing up. He finally raises his head, wiping his mouth.

MAX

I don't have a weak stomach.
You're just a really bad driver.

SUZANNE

Whatever!

The school bell rings and all the students start moving into the school.

JORDAN

Come on you guys. Let's get this over with.

SUZANNE

So Jordan, you going out for track again this year?

JORDAN

Of course.

FINN

Me too Suzanne. I'm gonna run the one foot in thirty seconds. Watch me!

Finn attempts to run in slow motion but Jordan trips him and he stumbles into Bethany again. She pushes him to the ground.

BETHANY

Finn! Stop touching me!

She rolls her eyes and looks at Jordan.

BETHANY

Well?

Jordan stops and offers a hand to Finn, helping him to his feet.

JORDAN

Off my girlfriend, klutz.

FINN

Klutz. Is that the best you can do? That's the best insult you got?

(MORE)

FINN (cont'd)

I've been trying to teach you to be funny since second grade and I still have to do all the work myself. Come on man!

Finn sweeps his arms wide almost knocking Suzanne down. Suzanne sidesteps Finn's arm, grabs it and pulls it up behind his back.

SUZANNE

Shut up Finn.

FINN

Aw crap Suze! That hurts. Maybe you should go out for the wrestling team.

She lets him go and he leers at her.

FINN (CONT'D)

I can be your training partner. I'll let you pin me to the mat!

Bethany and Suzanne glare at Finn and move away. Finn looks at Jordan and when his friend just shrugs, the joker turns to Max.

FINN

So Max, dude. Let's check out the freshmen. Maybe we can find some hot young thing that will let you touch her.

Suzanne flicks Finn's ear with a nail.

SUZANNE

Do you always have to be such a pig Finn. I mean really. Leave Max alone.

She smiles sweetly at Max, who smiles shyly back.

MAX

It's okay Suzanne. It's just Finn.

Everyone but Finn laughs as they reach the school steps.

As they reach the bottom of the stairs Max drops his sunglasses. He pauses to watch an unfamiliar car pull up to the curb.

The passenger door opens and Charlotte emerges from the car. Max stares as she gathers herself out of the car and speaks to her sister Lily who is following her.

Suzanne interrupts his observations.

SUZANNE

Hey. Come on Max. Don't fall behind.

Max follows reluctantly as Suzanne leads him away by the arm.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY

Lily and Charlotte have entered the building and stop to ask another student where the office is. They are given directions and move that way. As they pass, we hear the whispers of the other students, not all of the comments are flattering. They enter the office and ask where they register.

LILY

Excuse me?

The receptionist ignores her.

LILY

Excuse me, we're new here.

The receptionist ignores her. Charlotte pushes her sister aside and steps up to the counter.

CHARLOTTE

(using command voice)

Excuse me.

Everyone in the office stops in their tracks to stare at the girls. Charlotte smiles sweetly as Lily looks embarrassed.

SECRETARY

How can I help you ladies?

LILY

We're new here and we need to register.

SECRETARY

Oh. Yes. The Webb sisters. Transfer students.

The secretary looks at the paperwork with a puzzled look and then looks back at the girls.

CHARLOTTE

Is there a problem?

SECRETARY

No. Sorry. You'll have to speak to our Principal, Mr. Riley.

LILY

Is that normal? Do all transfer students have to see him?

SECRETARY

Yes. If you ladies will follow me.

The secretary takes their paperwork and shows them to Mr. Riley's office.

INT MR. RILEY'S OFFICE

A knock comes at the door and Riley answers

RILEY

Come in.

The door opens and Lily and Charlotte enter. He takes their papers and beckons them to sit.

RILEY

Have a seat.

He eyes them suspiciously as he glances over their paperwork. After a moment he gets up and comes from behind his desk to perch on the edge.

RILEY

So, ladies. You are sisters?

CHARLOTTE

Uh, yeah. Obviously.

Lily eyes her sister as Riley's look darkens.

RILEY

And you come to us from where?

The girls answer simultaneously.

RILEY

Well. So long as you know you can come to me if you have any problems. I have been known to help a student or two when the need arose.

He stares meaningfully at both girls. They look back at him innocently.

RILEY

Okay then. So, I guess there is nothing else. Get your schedules from Mrs. Jones outside. She's the nice lady who brought you in here.

Both girls nod and smile, as they rise and leave.

EXT SCHOOL HALLWAY

Lily and Charlotte pause outside the office in the now empty hallway and look at their schedules until the secretary closes the office door. Lily pulls Charlotte over to her as the younger sister snarls.

LILY

That was dangerously stupid, little sister.

CHARLOTTE

You didn't have to hurt me. Even though I like it. And what about you?

(mimicking Lily)

"I had some trouble with a boyfriend and she tried to follow in my footsteps."

(she laughs)

That's pretty clever actually.

Both girls laugh softly until a teacher pokes a head out of a classroom doorway.

CLASSROOM TEACHER

Ladies. Don't you have somewhere to be?

LILY

Of course.

The two girls glance at their schedules again.

CHARLOTTE

Oooh. I have art first period.
What have you got?

LILY

English Lit. Now behave yourself.

CHARLOTTE

I always behave like myself.

LILY

Okay then, so be a little less like
your self and a little more like my
self.

CHARLOTTE

Okay. I'll try. Later!

Both girls head off in separate directions.

INT ENGLISH CLASS IN PROGRESS

A door opens into an almost full classroom being taught by Mrs. Binks. As Lily enters, she hands over a note from the office. Mrs. Binks takes the paper and looks it over.

MRS. BINKS

I see. Miss Webb. You can take a
seat over there.

Binks addresses the class.

MRS. BINKS

Class, this is Lily Webb, new
transfer student. Try and make her
feel welcome.

The others students give blank looks and some smiles to Lily as she makes her way to the empty seat right in front of Jordan and Finn.

MRS. BINKS

As I was saying, Mr. Heikel has
taken an extended leave of absence
this year to upgrade his doctorate.
I will be taking over the class.

(MORE)

MRS. BINKS (cont'd)
Now if you will all open your
notebooks and I will outline the
new course of study we will be
taking.

Lily settles herself as Finn stares at her legs.

FINN
(whispering)
Look at that. Prime chicken.

Jordan snickers and opens his book as Lily shoots Finn a
nasty look. Mrs. Binks writes on the board as she continues
to speak.

MRS. BINKS
We will be studying the classic
murder, horror genre as well as a
study of the supernatural. Now.
Let's start by classifying the
types of supernatural creatures.
Ghosts or poltergeists, mummies and
zombies, demons, werewolves and of
course the most popular and sought
after creatures, the vampire. Can
anyone describe the basic
characteristics of the common
vampire?

Several students raise their hands but Mrs. Binks calls on
Lily.

MRS. BINKS
Yes, Miss Webb. You have an
answer?

LILY
Yes. There is no such thing as the
common vampire. Vampires come in
several classes. First there are
the ghouls who cannot actually turn
anyone else into a vamp but are
wholly subservient to whomever
turned them. They don't usually
possess any powers other than some
super hearing and strength. Then
you have turned vamps who are only
subject to the rule of their sire
but can also create other vampires.
(MORE)

LILY (cont'd)

Their powers are usually weaker than their master and can be anything from three times the strength of humans to the ability to go out in the sunlight without protection or eating real food without becoming ill. Then there is the master vampire who usually possesses more than one of the many powers and is very strong. He or she can usually control the minds of others who are not vampires.

The other students stare at her before Mrs. Binks speaks.

MRS. BINKS

Very good Lily. You certainly seem to know a lot about vampires.

FINN

Someone certainly seems to watch too much of the sci-fi channel.

Lily's glares at Finn again.

INT ART CLASS IN PROGRESS

The class is full of students standing behind easels while the teacher is in the center of their circle. Charlotte enters at the back of the class, but is not noticed.

ART TEACHER

All right class. Now I want you to look at the still life in the middle of the room. I want you to see the fruit and bowl with your eyes.

Charlotte begins to stroll towards the still life. Students begin to notice her.

ART TEACHER

Don't look too hard at the display, but try and see what your mind sees. The interpretation between eye and mind is very complex. One of you might be drawn to a ripe red apple or the banana might be more appealing. Try to let your hand be guided by what you don't see.

(MORE)

ART TEACHER (cont'd)
The fruit is alive, teeming with
nutrition.

Charlotte has reached the bowl of fruit. The teacher has
paused and Charlotte picks up the apple and bites into it.
Everyone looks directly at her. The teacher approaches.

ART TEACHER
Who are you and what do you think
you are doing?

CHARLOTTE
I'm Charlotte Webb. Transfer
student. And I'm interpreting what
my mind sees. I see breakfast.

She hands over her paperwork. The teacher takes it and walks
to the desk.

ART TEACHER
Well, take one of the spare easels
Miss Webb. You will find all the
materials you need there.

Charlotte takes a spot near the fascinated Max, whom she
ignores.

INT ENGLISH CLASS IN PROGRESS - LATER

The class is in a uproar as students have shoved their desks
to opposite sides of the classroom. The wide space in the
middle is occupied by an angry Jordan and a mocking Lily.
They are arguing.

JORDAN
Vampires are evil. It's in the
Bible lady!

LILY
You're wrong. They are merely
victims, slaves of their addiction
in their blood, which gives them
life.

JORDAN
And you don't think that addiction
is wrong? Man, somebody missed the
"Just Say No" campaign.

LILY

Look, nobody asks to become a vampire, or haven't you seen the traditional movies? You know the ones, pretty young girl in a white nightgown opens her window to get a little air and then before you know it, some guy in a tux with a cape is chomping on her neck.

JORDAN

And the guy chomping on her neck isn't evil?

LILY

Of course not. He's only doing what he is compelled to do.

Finn, perched on the windowsill, jumps to his feet.

FINN

Which is apparently to drink the blood of really dumb blonde chicks who wear ugly granny lingerie.

Everyone laughs, including Jordan but excepting Lily and Mrs. Binks. Lily has an angry look on her face. She turns to face Finn.

LILY

How do you know she's dumb? Maybe she's just confused and scared and lonely? Maybe she's just looking for someone to take away her pain? You have no right to call her dumb.

Everyone stops and stares at Lily as she has Finn pressed up against the window ledge, her nails on his throat. Finn looks terrified. Mrs. Binks puts a hand on Lily's shoulder.

MRS. BINKS

I think that's enough debate for now. Miss Webb?

Lily backs down, flicking her hair away from her face and stalking away from Finn. Finn stares after her and then at Jordan.

INT ART CLASS IN PROGRESS - MOMENTS LATER

The art class is nearing its end, as the teacher begins to circulate checking everyone's work. She pauses at Max's easel.

ART TEACHER

Very nice Max. Very nice work indeed. Lovely interpretation.

MAX

Thanks Miss Cowlin.

The teacher moves to check Charlotte's work.

ART TEACHER

Dear God. What is that?

CHARLOTTE

What I see.

Charlotte's picture shows the fruit as if it had been left out for a few days.

ART TEACHER

Would you mind explaining yourself young lady?

CHARLOTTE

Well, if the fruit isn't on the tree it isn't alive anymore. It's not growing. It's dead.

The teacher shakes her head and moves to her desk while the class files out trying to catch a glimpse of Charlotte's painting. She grabs her purse and glides out of the class. Max is left behind gathering up his things. In his hands is a sketchbook with a pencil sketch of Charlotte.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The hallway is now crowded with students moving to lockers and other classes. Lily and Charlotte meet up in the main hallway. They put their heads together and we can see they are talking. We can't hear them but we can hear the voices of their schoolmates. As the girls make their way down the hallway it is obvious that Lily is berating Charlotte for what occurred in the art class.

Both girls look unhappy for a moment and then as they enter the library they pause. Lily turns to her sister.

LILY

Look. You can't be so obvious here. Our insider must have things in hand. All we have to do is find our connection and not screw up.

CHARLOTTE

Okay.

Lily glares at her sister.

CHARLOTTE

I said okay. But I don't have to like it.

The girls enter the library.

INT SCHOOL LIBRARY

As the girls enter, they scan the room and wait for the Librarian to finish. As they wait, they both realize they are being watched by Bethany and Suzanne. The two other girls move a little closer as they get their turn with the librarian.

LIBRARIAN

Yes ladies. How can I help you.

LILY

You can tell me where to find the books that discuss the existence of the supernatural in the natural world.

The librarian gives them a quizzical look.

LILY

It's for our senior project.

The Librarian types on her keyboard, studying her computer monitor. After a few seconds she turns back to the girls.

LIBRARIAN

There are some in Science, over there by the window, but you might find more of what you are looking for in Mythology and Religion, which is at the back.

Lily and Charlotte move away from the desk as they consider where to research.

CHARLOTTE

I don't like the religion section.

LILY

Why? It's just books. They can't hurt you.

CHARLOTTE

What about the bible?

Lily taps her amulet with a finger.

LILY

We have these to protect us.

Charlotte nods and the two girls make their way to the back of the library.

Bethany and Suzanne have followed along. As the two sisters peruse the shelves, Bethany introduces herself.

BETHANY

Hi. I'm Bethany Walters. Senior Class president. And this is Suzanne Davidson. Star of the girls tennis team, though I think she could probably beat any of the boys.

CHARLOTTE

I'd say.

Suzanne glares at Charlotte. Lily nudges her sister.

LILY

Nice to meet you. I'm Lily Webb and this is my sister Charlotte. We just transferred.

SUZANNE

Yeah, we saw you this morning
getting out of the hearse.

LILY

It wasn't a hearse.

BETHANY

Yeah, Suzanne. Not all big black
cars are hearses.

SUZANNE

It looked like a hearse to me.

Bethany glares at Suzanne before turning back to Lily and
Charlotte.

BETHANY

So. A new school must be a little
exciting.

CHARLOTTE

Not really. I was hoping to be
through with high school.

LILY

She's kidding. We love school.

BETHANY

Me too. Can't wait for college.

CHARLOTTE

College. Oh yeah. More school.

Bethany notices Lily's amulet.

BETHANY

I love your necklace. It's so
pretty.

Bethany reaches out to touch it but Lily grabs her hand.

LILY

Don't touch it please.

Bethany pulls back.

BETHANY

Sorry. Is it a family heirloom or
something?

CHARLOTTE

Yeah. We both have one. The only one's like them in the whole world.

BETHANY

Oh. Well, they're really beautiful.

LILY

Thank you.

There is an awkward silence.

BETHANY

So, there's this house party on the weekend and you should really come. You can meet everyone and you know, have some fun.

CHARLOTTE

A party. Now you're talking. We should go to the party, Lil. It's a great way to have some fun.

LILY

I don't know if we will have time.

CHARLOTTE

Sure we'll have time. We'll be there. You can count on it.

BETHANY

Perfect.

SUZANNE

Yeah. Well, we should go Beth. We have gym class next period and I want to warm up.

BETHANY

Right.

The four girls stare at each other for a moment before Bethany and Suzanne leave.

BETHANY

I guess we'll see later.

LILY

Okay. Sure.

Charlotte grins and pats her sister on the shoulder.

BETHANY

Great. Well, gotta get to class.

LILY

Bye.

CHARLOTTE

Ciao!

SUZANNE

Yeah. Bye.

Suzanne glances back at the two girls as she and Bethany leave.

SUZANNE

(whispering)

I don't like those two.

BETHANY

Oh stop it. You're just jealous because Max noticed one of them.

SUZANNE

Isn't that enough reason not to like someone?

BETHANY

Just shut up Suzanne.

Lily and Charlotte are left looking at each other meaningfully.

MONTAGE OF SCHOOL LIFE.

Students going to and from class.

Students having lunch in the cafeteria.

Students running around the track outside.

Students going to and from their lockers.

The bell rings and the school empties out.

EXT WOODED AREA, CLEARING - NIGHT

The hooded group is back and they are chanting.

HOODED FOLLOWERS

Blood for the master. Strength
from the weak. Empty the vessel.
Bring us what we seek. GIDEON!

The chanting continues as Lily and Charlotte enter the clearing. They have a bound and gagged teenaged boy with them. Charlotte is dragging him along. The leader of the group sees them and rises to his feet.

HOODED LEADER

Silence. The sisters have returned
to us.

The crowd goes quiet. Charlotte drags the terrified boy to the center of the group.

CHARLOTTE

I have brought you a convert.

The crowd applauds. Charlotte preens as the young man cowers on the ground.

HOODED LEADER

And who shall make him a convert?

CHARLOTTE

I will.

Charlotte leans down to the boy and is about to bite him, when Lily grabs her sister by the hair.

LILY

No!

Charlotte snarls at her sister and the two girls are about to come to blows when the leader intervenes.

HOODED LEADER

Lily is right. She should have the
privilege of turning this poor lost
soul into a follower of Gideon.

LILY

Why?

HOODED LEADER

She is the first of us. The master
made her his own first. She is the
one to turn our converts.

Charlotte shoves the boy at Lily. Lily pulls the boy to his
feet and leans close to him.

LILY

Do you want to die?

The young man shakes his head.

LILY

Do you want to live?

The young man nods his head. Lily hesitates and Charlotte
jabs a nail into her sister's side.

CHARLOTTE

Stop playing games. It almost
looks like you don't want to do it.

Lily shoves her sister away and Charlotte falls to the
ground. Lily faces the crowd of followers.

LILY

(shouting)

Do you want to live forever?

The crowd roars its approval and Lily pulls the boy gently to
her. She pulls on his hair until his throat is arched and
exposed. Charlotte leans over her.

CHARLOTTE

Hurry up or I'll do the job for
you.

Lily whispers to the boy.

LILY

I'm sorry. Forgive me.

Lily then licks her lips and bites down on the boy's neck.
He tries to scream but can't because of the gag. Blood runs
down his neck and into his shirt. The crowd of followers
begins to chant again.

HOODED FOLLOWERS

Blood for the master. Strength
 from the weak. Empty the vessel.
 Bring us what we seek. GIDEON!

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY

The school is filling up with students and teachers again. Bethany and Finn can be seen hanging posters for the welcome back dance.

The halls clear. There is the sound of heels clicking along the empty hallway. We watch the heels from floor perspective as they wander down the hall and stop at the gym where a boys gym class is being held.

Charlotte Webb stands at the door of the gym, watching through a small window. A lollipop is settled snugly in her cheek and there is a faint smile on her distorted lips. She pushes the doors of the gym open and enters quietly.

She watches as the ball is mishandled and rolls towards the sitting figure of Max. He picks up the ball and stands. He moves to enter the game but the others just yell for him to throw them the ball. He looks crestfallen, but does as he is asked and sits down.

GYM TEACHER

That's okay Max. We'll call you
 when we need you, okay son.

Max looks glum and bored until he looks up, seeing that Charlotte is watching him. She walks around the edge of the floor as they watch each other. When she reaches him she stands a foot away looking coy.

CHARLOTTE

(taking lolli out of her
 mouth)

Hi.

MAX

Hi.

CHARLOTTE

How you doing.

MAX
(shrugs)
Fine.

CHARLOTTE
You don't look fine. I mean, you
look "fine", just not too happy.
Anything I can do.

MAX
Uh. Aren't you one of the new
girls.

CHARLOTTE
Yeah. I'm Charlotte, but then I
think you know that, Max. We have
the same art class. You're really
good you know.

MAX
How do you know?

CHARLOTTE
I've seen your work around school
and I've watched you do some stuff
in class.

MAX
You watch me in c-class.

CHARLOTTE
Sure. Who wouldn't want to study
your, form.

MAX
Huh. My form.

CHARLOTTE
Yeah. You know. Your strokes, the
way you hold things.

MAX
Are we talking about art here.

CHARLOTTE
Of course. What did you think I
meant by form and strokes.

MAX

Uh, nothing, just art.

Charlotte licks the lollipop.

CHARLOTTE

So. You don't play with balls.

MAX

Uhm. I'm not really much of an athlete. I prefer art.

Charlotte puts the lolli back in her mouth and sits beside Max.

CHARLOTTE

Well, yeah but wouldn't you like to play.

MAX

Sure. Better than sitting here.

CHARLOTTE

You don't like sitting next to me.

MAX

Oh. Yeah. Of course I do. I mean who wouldn't like to...sit...next to you.

CHARLOTTE

But you would rather be playing than sitting, right.

MAX

Of course.

CHARLOTTE

Well, I know a secret about playing ball.

MAX

You do.

CHARLOTTE

Oh yeah. Want me to tell you.

MAX

Okay.

Charlotte leans close to his ear.

CHARLOTTE

But I have to whisper so nobody
else can steal the secret.

She whispers in his ear. Max shivers as she does so and his eyes glaze over slightly. She pulls away and Max shakes his head.

MAX

What does that mean. That word.

CHARLOTTE

Depends. Do you want to get the
ball in the basket.

MAX

That would be a nice change. Then
maybe I could at least not feel
like such a loser.

CHARLOTTE

Then go ahead.

MAX

But I don't have the ball.

The ball rolls over and bangs into Max's legs. He looks down and then up at the smiling Charlotte. She grabs it and hands it to him. The teacher calls for it but Charlotte looks at him meaningfully.

CHARLOTTE

Go on. Take aim.

He swallows hard and then looks at the ball in his hands. Then he takes aim and takes the shot. He sinks a three pointer.

The teacher looks amazed but calls to one of the other students and sends him to the bench, summoning Max onto the floor.

Max turns to glance at Charlotte before he goes. She just swirls her tongue around her lolli and puts it back into her mouth, shooing him onto the floor. He grins and runs onto the court. She turns to leave.

CHARLOTTE

See you soon sweetie.

She places her lolli back in her mouth and leaves.

EXT SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DUSK

One car remains in the parking lot as the sun begins to set.

INT SCHOOL HALLWAY

The main floor hallway is deserted and the doors of the auditorium are closed.

We hear the sound of a feminine voice humming softly.

INT SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

The doors of the dimly lit auditorium open and a woman enters. She wanders down the center aisle to the storage area at the front of the stage.

She pulls the storage area door open and then the trolley with the coffin on it.

The woman takes a hammer from the storage area and pulls several nails from the coffin. She then removes the crucifix, the bible and the garlic.

The lid of the coffin begins to rise accompanied by the squeal of the few remaining nails.

The lid clatters to the floor as the woman stands back.

A male figure rises from the coffin. The woman holds out a hand to help him to stand.

The man stands before the woman and she falls to her knees, fawning at his boots. As she looks up at him, the dim lighting reveals it is Mrs. Binks.

MRS. BINKS

Blood for the master. Strength
from the weak. Empty the vessel.
Bring us what we seek. GIDEON!

The man's laughter changes to the pounding beat of music.

FADE TO:

EXT A COUNTRY HOUSE - LATER

A party is in full swing when Lily and Charlotte pull up in their car. They park and exit the car, dressed in party clothes and each carrying with them a water bottle filled with a ruby red clear liquid.

The girls make their way to the house while Charlotte swigs from her bottle as Lily lectures her.

LILY

Now remember, we are here on business. We need more converts to ensure that the Master can escape. We also have to figure out who our insider is.

CHARLOTTE

You've said that before. I just don't see why you get to convert them all.

Lily stops and grabs her sister's arm.

LILY

You know why.

CHARLOTTE

No. I don't. And why can't I hear him? I was always able to hear him before.

LILY

I don't know.

CHARLOTTE

Have you been able to get anything? Anything from him?

LILY

Nothing but darkness and wood. But that could mean he's just inside his bed.

CHARLOTTE

Are you sure the mental link is working? Have you tried from inside the school?