

<Planet ROT>

an original screenplay by

Heather Bennett

and Stacy K. Newton

<Heather Bennett>  
<1459 E Lassen Ave  
APT 52>  
<Chico, CA, 95973>  
<5309908497>  
<mogmog8@gmail.com>

EXT. STREETS OF DEAD VEGAS - DAY

Young girl, ISABELLA runs, bloody cuts on her bare feet from the dry cement. Hands tied behind her back. Tears of terror down her face, leaves streaks through the grime. She is no longer the person she was less than twenty - four hours ago. In this excruciating moment under the oppressive lights of an undead metropolis, she is an animal. Prey to a Hungary predator. Survival is the only thing on her mind. Full speed down a dim alleyway, desperate for the eyes and ears of anyone who will listen.

The BEAST is fast. She hears the familiar crack of his whip, on her ankle snap. A split - second later she is yanked backwards. Face to face with cold concrete. The beast silent. She might be as famous as the other woman in his captivity, only for different reasons.

Isabella is being dragged back into the sewer by a humanoid monster covered in staples and stitches, the gruesome amalgamation of his victims. As he looks over his broad shoulder at her, she sees a face worse than any nightmares could concoct. Pieces of flesh both living and undead, male and female, human and animal. Like the rest of her, there is little sense to his handiwork, and even less of anything resembling an actual...person. Her vision blurs and screams fall on deaf ears as once more she is pulled beneath the streets of Dead Vegas. All she can hope is that someone will hear her cries. That they will send cops out here to rescue them before they end up as this asshole's next accessory.

Clang. Another blow to her head.

INT. UNDER THE SEWER - DAY

Isabella is thrown into the bars of an occupied cage. Inside cries a WOMAN, she reaches out to her. An eerie lamplight casts the shadow of the woman enduring this nightmare beside him. The great DAYANNA MORELS CORDONA, co-founder of THE SANCTUARY ISLAND for warm-bloods. Traveler of the oceans, destroyer of Dr. Frankenstein. Immigrant. Survivor. Warrior turned humanitarian.

ISABELLA

Mom, I'm so sorry! I was so scared,  
I tried finding help, but I  
couldn't...I couldn't...

She sees the tears shining in her eyes as Dayanna feigns a comforting smile. Her angular face and voluminous hair glow in the pale yellow light. Even now, after everything she suffered through, she's still absolutely gorgeous.

DAYANNA

(voice trembles)

It's okay, mi hija We will survive this. I won't let him hurt you.

ISABELLA

Mama, I'm so sorry for what I said to you. I didn't mean any of it! I was just so angry, because-

DAYANNA

It's okay, we have -

She interrupts herself as she stops to yell hoarsely at the towering monster behind him. Isabella is too afraid to look back.

DAYANNA (CONT'D)

(shouts)

Take me and let my daughter go!

No answer. His heavy boots slosh closer, until he's upon Isabella. The bits of flesh exposed under his gloves and heavy cloak are full of cuts, bruises, and burns. A bizarre and evil entity that has no doubt suffered countless deaths. A defiance of God's will, the worst example of what Dr. Frankenstein's reanimation can do to a person's existence brings only suffering.

Immortality for monsters, disconnected from what it means to be alive. Or human.

ISABELLA

(shouts)

No! You're not hurting her! I'm the one who ran! I'm the one you want!

They do this back and forth. Bartering with a madman who hasn't listened to a word since he kidnapped them. He clicks his fingers, jitters his head like a broken bobble head. There is no interest in Dayanna. The collection of eyes behind that black veil fall squarely on the girl. Most of THEM: the nonfunctional ones stare blankly into the middle distance bloodshot. Those bore into Isabella's soul the deepest.

He forces Isabella to sit up. She can barely hear her own voice over the sounds of Dayanna's pleading screams. From his cloak rises one of his extra appendages: the pale arm of a woman half his size, welding a messed up scalpel. As he struggles to hold her down with his bigger arms, Isabella sees that scalpel rise above her with unwavering conviction. He's going to cut off a piece of her, and he wants to make sure Dayanna sees every second of her daughter's slow death.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Shit. Is this...How it ends?

Her heart stops. Shrieks of terror in unison. She closes her eyes. She is going to die. For the first time, she'll be dead. Maybe they'll reanimate her in time. Besides life after death has been the new normal for centuries. If somebody can bring Dayanna and her daughter back to life, then maybe they can survive this hell...even if they don't. But it's a long shot. This monster is not known only for what he takes from his victims, but also for what he leaves behind.

ISABELLA

Bye, Mama. Hopefully it isn't forever...Maybe I'll get to meet Dad and Dante.

A loud crack echoes through the sewer. Metal scrapes across cement. Isabella opens her eyes to a bizarre sight. Her would-be killer is taken back, sharing the bewilderment of his captives. There is more than one monster beneath the city tonight.

Standing between her and the psychopath is this...THING. Watching with unwavering eyes that glow like fireflies, planted in a bulbous head pulsating with veins and wiggling tentacles. Bat-like wings peeling and stretching from a huddled form best described as a miniature prehistoric alien. The weapon that would be used to tear her up is in pieces on the floor.

The killer seems to be staring at it too, frozen in shock.

In disbelief, she decides to act. She kicks the evil incarnate as hard as she can in the shin, eliciting a muffled scream from the holes of his face. Then she pounces at the biggest piece of the scalpel and attempts to cut her restraints. Wincing through the pain, she manages to release her binding. But before she can plan the next attack, she's in for more retribution.

Pain unlike anything she's ever felt. She blips out of consciousness, from the shock.

Her heart racing. The monster looms above her.

Dayanna in the cage acts first. A lantern ripped down. Oil is all over. All three of them are doused in oil. Isabella is confused for a moment, on the verge of fading out again. Through the agony and her failing vision.

DAYANNA  
(desperate, cries out)  
More fuel! Your guardian will protect  
you!

With Isabella's other leg, she kicks over the killer's lantern. More oil pools around them. The killer isn't phased. Isabella turn back to her mom as they share this powerful movement. Their together. Isabella can't hear anything just ringing in her ears.

DAYANNA (CONT'D)  
(mouths, no sound)  
I love you.

She pulls a match from her blouse.

ISABELLA  
(scream)  
Mom! Don't!

DAYANNA  
It's the only way. You must survive,  
Isabella. Run, and don't look back.

ISABELLA  
Mama!

One final forced smile as the match is lit...and dropped.

CUT TO:

INT. DAYANNA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The past. Dayanna is getting a presentation ready and set up. Isabella, sits and watches her.

ISABELLA  
Mom, you know that nobody does  
PowerPoints anymore, right?

DAYANNA  
Humor me.

Isabella sighs and leans forward in her seat, attentive.

ISABELLA  
Alright. On with the show.

Dayanna is adorable when she's nervous. Isabella watches her fumble with her papers, checks her hair and clears her throat 90 times before she finally picks up her clicker and begins.

DAYANNA

Hello everyone, and thank you for making it today. My name is Dayanna Morales Cordona, and I am the co-founder of the sanctuary island for warm-bloods.

ISABELLA

Everyone already knows who you are. It's only been like 19 years since you and aunt Maggie founded this place.

DAYANNA

The islanders know, but not the outside world Mi hijja, I understand you've been nervous about the sanctuary going public. However, we cannot remain a secret any longer.

ISABELLA

I'm not nervous. Carry on.

Click. Slide showing Earth from space, with poorly photo-shopped lightning bolts shocking the entire planet.

DAYANNA

Life as our ancestors know it was forever changed during the late 18th century, when Dr. Victor Frankenstein invented reanimation. From that point onward, death would no longer mean the end for those unconcerned with the sanctity of life. Anyone could rise again.

Click. Next slide. People that look like zombies walking down the streets of some city, accompanied by a few statistics splashed over with blood dripping effect.

DAYANNA (CONT'D)

My dear daughter said it best, in the beginning, reanimation was a very rare practice as most people still doubted its safety and morality. However, the practice picked up mainstream momentum during the Third Industrial Revolution, 1969. Religious entities ran campaigns against its practice continuously ever since its invention, but their efforts were in vain. Consumerism, and capitalism had already shifted individual values.

(MORE)

DAYANNA (CONT'D)

The United States played a critical role in transforming worldwide perception of reanimation. What was once reviled and viewed as unnatural was quickly becoming commonplace and glamorous. Celebrities and politicians began reanimating themselves publicly. By the mid 1970's, only 13 percent of the world's population was undead. However, by the mid 1980's the number skyrocketed to 48 percent. Soon the practice would be officially adopted by most countries, and laws would be made to govern and monetize it.

ISABELLA

Geez, mom. It's necessary to include an excerpt from my old history report on reanimation? It's awful and clunky.

DAYANNA

You are going to part of this. Either I include an excerpt from your beautiful report in my speech or you do a speech yourself.

ISABELLA

Never mind, the report's good. Go on.

Click. A famous photo taken during The Undead Wars, showing a warm-blood mother clutching her baby and crying as a reanimated soldier points a gun at her face.

DAYANNA

As the undead population grew, so did general unrest. Conflict escalated worldwide as populations experienced moral and religious divides over reanimation. The Undead Wars were the result of this unrest. For nearly thirty years, nations across the globe experienced civil wars where the undead fought against the living. Needless to say, the warm-bloods did not win that fight.

Click. Slide page-wipes to an aerial view of South America, looking positively apocalyptic.

DAYANNA (CONT'D)

Columbia wa my homeland. Like so many other countries in the aftermath of the Undead Wars, it was completely destroyed. Indeed, the world's warm-blood population was decimated and forced into hiding. By the late 1990's, only 20 percent of the world's population was still living. Nearly 98 percent of the United State's population was reanimated at the time.

ISABELLA

(interrupts)

Fast forward to the part where you co-founded a warm-bold sanctuary and we ask for money.

DAYANNA

This is serious, Isabella. And not all people are as bad as you think. Our cause is just. Anyone who hears the whole story will believe in our cause too. Your father and I-

ISABELLA

(interrupts, irritable)

I know, Mom. You and Dad traveled th world to make a future for me. Dad died for it. You believed in aunt Maggie and together you survived all kinds of scary shit. You put your faith in others and the sanctuary was born. Don't think I take that lightly. I'm aware of of the sacrifices you had to make, and hr chances you had to take on people.

DAYANNA

Then why can't you take this seriously?

Isabella paused.

DAYANNA (CONT'D)

Well?

ISABELLA

I do take it seriously. I'm just concerned with whether or not a bunch of stuffy undead donors will recognize that. People may die and come back, but they don't change.



DAYANNA

(hope, faith in her  
eyes)

People can change, Isabella. I've seen it. Reanimation has divided us, but it had also given a lot of people a second chance at life. Chances to fix their mistakes and to make the world a better place. That's what this sanctuary is all about: second chances.

ISABELLA

(unconvinced)

I know this is a fundraiser needs to happen, and all we can do is hope for the best. I realize that we're gonna need to take chances on people to make this sanctuary work. I'm proud of you.

Dayanna cracks a smile, she's still upset. Isabella jumps out of her seat and gives her a big hug, big enough she giggles. Isabella plops back down and sit up straight.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Please continue, Mama. I'll keep my loud mouth shut this time, I promise.

EXT. MANSION - SANCTUARY ISLAND - DAY

Isabella's hair whips around at her patch - ridden bomber jacket. She watches the cliff side mansion she calls her home shrink into the distance as her bumblebee yellow Vespa carries her and her worries away. Another day in paradise. The sanctuary island, located in the Pacific Ocean: Isabella's home for the last 19 years. Tropical climate, the kind of place most folks would love to spend a vacation. As the daughter of the island's co-founder, she's found some important work of her own. Mostly delivery services.

CAT

Meow.

A reanimated cat pops its little head out of her backpack. His whiskers are hanging on by stitches and a prayer. He won't stop kicking them.

ISABELLA

We're not there yet, Eckerd. Don't worry, I won't forget about you.

It's her aunt's cat. Run over by a truck, the punishment for his fascination with fast cars. Nine lives down and half a synthetic body later.

ECKERD was eager to feel the wind in his whiskers. She was happy to have him for the company on her errands.

Most of the local kids her age think she's anti-social and too sheltered. Isabella tells herself that is not anti-social. That she likes people and people like her. She is not too sheltered. Everything she needs to know about the outside world she learns from absorbing the stories of the people and watching movies with her aunt.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

Take the corner, a hard left at the end of a dirt road. Drive by mile after mile of farmland, waving to the friendlier FARMERS along the way. Mostly root crops: yams, taro, cassava, and sweet potatoes. Every meal she has ever eaten involves some combination of the four. Her business today, isn't with the farmers: it's with the FISHERS.

Their only source of animal protein is fish, tuna. They got fishers on every corner of the island. The people here have argued a lot over whether or not to open up a trade with other countries, knowing how much the community needs assistance. Like Isabella, most of the warm-bloods here are suspicious of outsiders. What they had to endure to get here. No blame.

Farther down the dirt road, leaving row after row of humbling housing. Past the small cemetery, with pair of crosses she's visited more times she can count.

They have made due with what they have here. Lots of volunteer work, and little help from her rich aunt friends. What is there...isn't a lot, but she is proud. A triumph for a block of humanity that already fighting against all the odds. They had been successful on their own. They could count on each other.

She rides by her PEERS as they're doing laundry outside. Her eyes stay firmly planted on the road ahead as she increases speed.

ISABELLA

(to herself)

They're not Dante. They would never understand.

EKERD

Mrrreow!

ISABELLA

You get me though, don't you Eckerd?

EXT. SOUTHERN FISHERY - DAY

They reach the southern fishery. She parks her Vespa and takes a load of bags with her down to the port.

ISABELLA  
(shouts out)  
Morning!

The FISHERMEN take notice of her coming.

FISHERMEN  
Buenos dias!

Young and old. All kinds if different languages and cultures. The only thing the folks had in common prior was to starting new lives here. Warm - bloods. Something entirely new and beautiful. Isabella was proud to be part of it.

She greets them with smiles and waves. One friendly older GENTLEMAN waves a fish in the air quality the last few days. GEORGE, an old man, fisherman, always complaining.

GEORGE  
(grumbles)  
Damn cold-bloods pollutin'the air.  
Givin' me one helluva migraine.

ISABELLA  
Same here, but I don't complain too  
loudly or else you'll scare the fish  
away!

Isabella gives them bags of supplies, and in exchange she gives a new list of things the fishery needs. She lets Eckerd out of the backpack so he can stretch his legs and smell the fish while she talks to Cho-Hee, the LADY in charge. Before she leaves, she offers her a small crate. It's full of tuna, Yellowfin.

CHO-HEE  
(gracious nod)  
For your mother. Bless her.

Gratitude and farewells are exchanged. Eckerd is returned to the backpack-to his disappointment- and the crate gets strapped to her bike. The rumble and patter of her Vespa down the road as they head back home.

V.O.  
(Isabella)  
Isn't a bad life. It's peaceful.  
Predictable. And Aunt Maggie's got  
one hell of a DVD collection.  
(MORE)

V.O. (CONT'D)

But that's all I've ever know. Here, I'm not much more than the daughter of Dayanna Morales Cordona. It's a title that had gained me a fair share of advantages on the island, but it's not without it's pitfalls. Anyway. In a few sort days I'll be leaving the island for the first time ever. We'll be going to the so-called undead capital of the United States, Dead Vegas. City of Perpetual Night.

Scene

Flashes of popular and classic movies. Ordinary people reading books.

Camera close up on book titles.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

So many movies and so many book about the outside world-I've absorbed them all with healthy cynicism. These fun tales are purely fictional and cathartic: the polar opposite of the stories my fellow islanders and I share. Warm-blood or cold-blood, it makes no difference. People suck.

EKERD

Mrrrrreow!  
(behind Isabella's  
ear)

ISABELLA

Not you, Eckerd. You're the cat's meow.

EXT. DEAD VEGAS - DAY

A menacing mass towering structures wearing a crown of smog of dense smog reveals a symbol of mankind's overindulgence as the plane descends.

CUT TO:

Inside the casinos:

Pictures of anxious old, leathery people smoking cigarettes at slot machines. Old fat men with big cigarettes hanging out of their mouths playing at crap tables with exotic looking women dressed in slinky dresses with huge breasts.

Hustle and bustle of Vegas, neon lights flashing.

EXT. JET - DAY

CAMERA CLOSE UP OF MAGGIES' FACE IN WINDOW FROM THE OUTSIDE.

INT. JET - DAY

Isabella's face is pressed against the window of Aunt Maggie's private jet. Giant electronic billboards flashing commercials for the undead and ESTRIDS Industries. Dancing holograms the size of a mansion, depicts reanimated celebrities with their own products to sell. Cars everywhere, backing up wide city streets. Dayanna sits next to Isabella and talks to her.

INT. JET - DAY

Dayanna's familiar tone of irritation snaps Isabella out of her thoughts. She pulls her head away from the window to see her sitting beside her, rolling her eyes.

DAYANNA

Did you hear a word of what I just said?

Isabella fumbling and feeble attempts at dodging eye contact gives her the answer she wasn't hoping for. She sighs and mumbles something in Spanish under her breath.

AUNT MAGGIE

Aww, give her a break, the girl's excited.

V.O.

(Isabella)

It's Aunt Maggie, coming to my rescue yet again.

AUNT MAGGIE, has a glass of champagne in hand, sitting across from them.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

Pop star turned philanthropist, first reanimated at age 27 back in the early 90's. She hasn't aged a day...well, technically. She definitely has th skin of somebody who's been walking dead for awhile. She continues I my defense.

AUNT MAGGIE

Can you blame her?

(MORE)

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)

First time leaving the sanctuary,  
and seeing on of the biggest cities  
in U.S. I'd be loosing my shit too.

ISABELLA

Excuse me, I'm not loosing anything.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Act cool Izz.

ISABELLA

So, Aunt Maggie...you've been here  
before, right? Is it like the movies?

She sees a smudge of purple lipstick on her teeth as she  
grins wide at her.

AUNT MAGGIE

I've visited a few times, ad hell  
yeah it's like the movies. Some  
trips for business, other trips for  
the Lavender District.

ISABELLA

The Lavender District!

Dayanna pipes in with that mom tone.

DAYANNA

Mi jija, ho do you know about tha-

V.O.

(Isabella)

Aunt Maggie to the rescue...again.

AUNT MAGGIE

Oops, nah, that isn't real, it's a  
Hollywood thing. The point is, Dead  
Vegas is a fucking blast. So much  
to do and to see.

Isabella plays it cool and shrugs it off.

ISABELLA

A city so polluted that you never  
see the sun? Insane crime rate?  
Massive target for invasions? Not  
interested in dying yet. We're here  
for the fundraiser ans that's it.

DAYANNA

Isabella, don't you want to explore the city? We can find some fun things to do.

AUNT MAGGIE

Like gambling!

DAYANNA

Not that kind of fun, Mags. Please. Maybe we can go shopping or hunt for an actual movie theater. I know how much you want to go.

AUNT MAGGIE

Fuck yeah, we should explore.

Aunt Maggie finishes her gals and leans forward.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)

I'll show you the sickest locales. The headquarters for ESTRID Industries. The undead roller-derby- I mean, those girls hold nothing back! You gotta see it to believe it! Plus all those street performers everywhere, sporting all kinds of crazy body modifications. Oh, and-

ISABELLA

All of that sounds..pretty rad, not gonna lie. But we can't get too ahead of ourselves. Mom and I are gonna get a lot of unwanted attention as living females. It happens all the time o the news. We need to be careful.

DAYANNA

Isabella, things are a lot different now than they were before you were born. The world is changing.

AUNT MAGGIE

(blurts out)

Yeah, that we call all agree on.

She realizes her glass is empty.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Ah, more champagne. Do you girls want any?

ISABELLA

Sure.

DAYANNA

No, you're only 19.

AUNT MAGGIE

Yeah, that's right, listen to your mom. I'm gonna get some more bubbly.

Aunt Maggie swaggers off to the back of the cab, leaving them alone together.

ISABELLA

I know how huge this trip is, but I don't want you to get your hopes up on outsiders. We don't even know how they'll react to finding out we exist.

DAYANNA

Is it because they're undead? You should know-

ISABELLA

No, Mom. It's because they're people, and people suck.

DAYANNA

Certainly, that's true, at least 60 percent of the time.  
(smiles)

But if the sanctuary island is to thrive, we need to take chances on people.

ISABELLA

You keep saying that, but-

DAYANNA

I took a chance on your Aunt Maggie, and look what we accomplished together.

ISABELLA

Yes, Mama. All I'm asking is that you don't waste your chances on people who aren't worthy of them.

DAYANNA

One can never stay properly hydrated with a glass half empty. Oh, how do you remind me of myself at your age...You must learn to trust sooner than I did.



ISABELLA

Oh, is that all? Because you trusted David, and -

AUNT MAGGIE

What did I miss?  
(takes a sip)

Dayanna and Isabella look up in unison to see Aunt Maggie walking back to her seat with a fresh glass of champagne in hand.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)

You girls are looking a little intense. Should have said yes to a drink, huh, mom?

Aunt Maggie giggles and starts sipping away. Dayanna shifts back into her seat, avoids eye contact. Both look uncomfortable.

EXT. AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

Jet lands. Isabella, Aunt Maggie and Dayanna file out, luggage in tow. Aunt Maggie has the most. Paper work, small talk. Signatures, photographs. Shuffled off into a taxi cab. Isabella is quiet most of the time, taking everything in, and trying not to puke.

V.O.

(Isabella)

You can't help but feel so microscopic on the streets of a city. Like a car beneath a kaiju's foot. A lone survivor in the apocalypse. Though it's only 2PM, the sky is dark as night thanks to all that smog. It is utterly surreal, actually being in it. And I see dead people...everywhere. More reanimated folks than I've ever been around, ever. Though I'm curious and mildly starstruck, I reject all offers to explore. I'm not ready for that. Straight to the hotel room we go, to the dismay of both women in my life.

CAMERA PANS:

Gray atmosphere. People shuffle and bustle. Major traffic. The taxi cab pulls up to a five star hotel on the strip.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella are in the living area of the hotel suite. Their bags and luggage half open and a room service cart has various drinks, glasses and food.

They talk over the itinerary for the weekend. They argue over who sleeps in what bed and who gets stuck with the sofa by the window. The blankets have a garish floral print that match the curtains.

Isabella sorts out her clothes for the conference. She walks over to the window and looks out at Dead Vegas.

V.O.

(Isabella)

For being the country's most polluted and dangerous city, Dead Vegas is surprising...lovely.

CAMERA PANS TO HOTEL SUITE WINDOW. CLOSE UP of the activity on the streets.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Dayanna brings her record player. She finds an empty outlet and plugs it in. She shifts through her bag to look for the record albums she packed. She pulls one out and plays the record.

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella dance in their hotel room, singing poorly and laughing at each other. The levity is welcomed.

INT. HOTEL SUITE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dayanna and Isabella are lying in the hotel bed. Isabella gets out of the bed and walks to the side of bed Dayanna's lying in.

ISABELLA

(whispers)

Hey mom?

DAYANNA

...Yes, Isabella?

ISABELLA

What do you think Dad would have thought of Dead Vegas?

DAYANNA

I think...your father would have loved the city for what it represents:

(MORE)

DAYANNA (CONT'D)  
 opportunity, and what the future  
 might hold. He loved science-fiction.  
 Such a grand place as this...it would  
 be like a page from one of his books.

V.O.  
 (Isabella)  
 I wish my dad and Dante were here to  
 see me and my mom.

ISABELLA  
 ...Goodnight, Mama.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella wake up the next day and  
 get ready for the conference. There is a cart with breakfast  
 prepared Dayanna ordered from room service.

DAYANNA  
 (call out to Isabella)  
 Isabella your breakfast is here!

Isabella enters the hotel suite living area dressed.

ISABELLA  
 Good morning, Mama.

Isabella kisses her Dayanna on the cheek. She is on the  
 couch looking over her notes for the conference.

AUNT MAGGIE  
 What about me?

ISABELLA  
 (smiles)  
 Good morning Aunt Maggie.

She gives her a kiss on the cheek.

ISABELLA  
 How do you think I look?

Isabella stands there waiting before she sits down.

DAYANNA  
 You look beautiful. What about me?

Dayanna puts her papers down and stands up.

ISABELLA  
 You look great, Mama.

AUNT MAGGIE

I already know I look good. I always  
look fabulous.

Dayanna and Isabella look at each other.

ISABELLA

That's true.

They laugh. Isabella sits down and eats breakfast.

INT. CIVIC CENTER - DAY

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella enter the civic center. Isabella takes a couple of steps forward and inhales slowly before exhaling. She begins to look up and all around the interior.

A couple of friendly OLD REANIMATED PEOPLE greet them in suites, shaking their hands and introducing themselves. Dayanna and Aunt Maggie talk business with them: the guest list, seating arrangements, itinerary, and fliers.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

The joint is a little lavish for my taste, looking fit for a masquerade ball in the Victorian era or something. But there's no doubt that the kind of folks attending a place like this would have some pretty deep pockets.

OLD FOLK

Everyone so quite excited to learn more about this warm-blood sanctuary of yours.

She is showing them around the center. Her posture in the Maude dress is so perfect that it's almost robotic.

OLD FOLK (CONT'D)

It is a very brave endeavor. I believe your request for donors will fall upon compassionate ears.

Dayanna smiles and nods enthusiastically. Her bright personality is so unlike that of the woman walking alongside her.

V.O.

(Isabella)

I doubt my mom feels as out of place as I do, even though we stick out in  
(MORE)

V.O. (CONT'D)  
 more ways than one. But I know my  
 mom . If she's got any fears, she's  
 hiding them brilliantly.

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella feel a mutual excitement  
 for the fundraiser.

V.O. (CONT'D)  
 (Isabella)  
 My mom and Aunt Maggie are gonna  
 kill it Sunday night.

They shake hands with the VENUE MANAGERS and the EVENT  
 PLANNERS, each hand colder than the last. They say their  
 goodbyes, accept their best wishes for the big day, and head  
 back out for another taxi.

INT. TAXI CAB - DAY

Isabella spends the car ride glued to the window, watching  
 city life unfolding all around them.

Undead people with synthetic or mechanical replacement parts  
 at every corner.

People with skin flawless enough to catfish a warm-blood,  
 others with the patchwork complexion of Frankenstein's  
 monster.

V.O. (CONT'D)  
 (Isabella)  
 It doesn't seem to matter what time  
 of day it is, the streets are always  
 packed and full of energy. Nothing  
 at all like home. Maybe a little  
 exploration wouldn't hurt.

ISABELLA  
 Hey, uh, driver,

Isabella prods from the back seat.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)  
 I'm starving. Any place to eat around  
 here?

Aunt Maggie hoots excitedly and Dayanna cheers. Isabella  
 turns beat red, and the razzing intensifies.

AUNT MAGGIE  
 (teases tone)  
 Looks like our party pooper is coming  
 around!

(MORE)

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
 (shakes Isabella's  
 shoulder)  
 Thatta girl!

The driver grumbles tugging down his derby cap so it sits right above his pronounced brow.

TAXI DRIVER  
 I know a place.

INT. DINER - DAY

Dayanna, Aunt Maggie and Isabella eat at an old diner on the strip. There is a big hole in the wall. The reanimated patrons paid little attention to them. They ate in peace.

INT. HOTEL ROOM SUITE - NIGHT

Dayanna and Aunt Maggie are sitting on the couch. Isabella sits in a chair.

ISABELLA  
 We should experience the city tonight.  
 Aunt Maggie always talks about the  
 nightlife. I wanna see it for myself.

Aunt Maggie was so excited to hear this, already, running off possible itinerary for the evening. Dayanna was less enthusiastic. She was increasingly uncomfortable.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)  
 I thought you would be happy to have  
 me on board.

DAYANNA  
 No, Nightlife can be very dangerous.  
 We'll explore the city tomorrow  
 afternoon.

ISABELLA  
 When did you start worrying about  
 the dangers of Dead Vegas?

DAYANNA  
 (sighs)  
 Evenings in the big cities like this  
 are full of mischief and temptation.

AUNT MAGGIE  
 Damn straight!

DAYANNA

Which is exactly why my daughter shouldn't be out there. She's too young and vulnerable.

ISABELLA

I'm not a kid, Mom. I can handle myself.

Dayanna gave a death glare to Aunt Maggie that quickly changed her tone.

AUNT MAGGIE

Err, your mom's right on this one, kiddo. Sorry.

Isabella disappointed and agrees with them and drops the topic.

V.O.

(Isabella)

In reality my mind was made up. I was going out tonight, with or without my mom's approval. I'm giving the city a chance. Isn't that what she wanted in the first place? Maybe my mom's stubbornness is hereditary.

Digital clock reads 9:00pm. Dayanna is asleep in the bedroom and Aunt Maggie is passed out on the bed next to the window in the living area. Isabella, dressed, tiptoes out of the suite, jacket over her shoulder, shoes in one hand, backpack in the other. She opens the a squeaky door. She stops and looks around. She manages to sneak out. She manages to sneak out unnoticed.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

She does a happy dance in the elevator ride down.

EXT. DEAD VEGAS - SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Isabella walks the street of Dead Vegas outside, overwhelmed and excited. The city's lights glow brighter all around her, promises of possibilities. She is unsure where to go.

V.O.

(Isabella)

I'll see what the city has to offer and be back at the hotel before anybody notices I'm gone. Let's do this, Izz.

Crosswalk signal lights up, she follows behind a boisterous group of drunken UNDEADS, as they're telling jokes and arguing over what bar too hit next. The air is dry, different than being a group of warm-bloods. Skyscrapers stare down at her through the smog, and a humility rushes over her. Her heart flutters and a tinge of anxiety strikes, but she keeps moving on. One block after, eyes all over the place.

A giant red hologram of a reanimated soccer player pops up out nowhere on the corner behind her, and she jumps. A couple of UNDEAD hipsters with cigarettes in hand chuckle at her, leaning against the side of a closed travel agency under a sign that reads NO LOITERING. She plays it cool and continues loosely follow behind the intoxicated troupe.

The lights are getting brighter. Heavy bass music blares out of bars as happy PATRONS pop in and out of their doors. WOMEN hoot and holler from the backseats of passing cars, the drunkest of them spilling alcohol and flashing passerby. Neon signs for business with names like The Velvet Casket, The electric Hookah Lounge, Dead Fed's, Black Cemetery Tattoos, and Cheap Booze N'Smokes. Fliers with crude police sketches of the so called Skin Craft Killer are plastered all over, asking for information. Psycho murders like that only exist I slasher movies.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

Psycho murderers like that only exist in slasher movies. You'd have to be an idiot to fall for their tricks.

A couple of big refrigerated trucks pass slowly by.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

They call 'em Slump Trucks...well, you're not supposed to call them that, but that's what everybody calls them anyway. I did a report on'em once in school. Homeschool, that is. The United States Corpse Retrieval Service, or USCRS. Since dying is no big deal, everybody's doing it more than ever. Stupid, avoidable deaths. Fights over bullshit, failed dares, reckless thrill-seeking. Bordem, even.

The Slump trucks make their rounds around the city. One stops across the street, to pick up dead bodies piled up at the corner, to bring back to reanimation chambers specified by their insurance. GUYS in puke-green jump-suits dragging dead bodies into refrigerated cargo beds before driving off.



V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

May seem like a scene out of one of those old gangster films, but around here it's perfectly normal. Besides, the dearly departed won't stay that way for long.

Isabella stops under a stoplight's pale glow to watch one of the giant electronic billboards posted on the side of another skyscraper. It's playing highlights from the NBA game, and the players are sporting a variety of synthetic body parts as they dart across the court.

There's a bachelorette party a few bars ahead of her, she hears them talking about the Lavender District. She perks up.

She tugs at her jacket hood farther over her head and continues on, hands tucked tightly in my jacket pockets.

Slowly, she sees the crowd and landscape transform. The lights get dimmer, the streets get more narrow. There are some BUSINESSMEN in expensive-looking suits talking in hushed voices, looking repeatedly at their phones as they walk ahead of her. She sees the slumped bodies of HOMELESS UNDEAD down even tighter alleyways. Some look like they're sleeping, others look like they might be drugged out.

She continues her loose trail behind the PARTY GIRLS. She smiles awkwardly at the reanimated ladies in short skirts and sequined belly shirts standing on each corner looking for a bite.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

Was this a bad idea? Following these complete strangers into who-knows-where? My mom would absolutely murder me if she knew I was doing this right now.

She sees a pair of luminous eyes staring back at her from atop a flickering street lamp.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

I've got to be imagining it in my growing paranoia...Dad wouldn't be afraid. Neither would Dante.

The streets widen and she finds herself on a strip lit exclusively by purple string lights and neon signs. It's like an intimate festival of lights and mischief, a whimsical dream wrapped in a pungent reality.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

It's era. The Lavender District.

A limb comes flying out a window of some bar on her left. One at a time, each girl in the bachelorette party steps over the broken glass and severed arm now lying on the sidewalk. They don't flinch.

The OWNER of the arm hobbles out of the door, grabs his recently departed appendage, and stumbles right back into the same bar, mumbling incoherently.

The Lavender District has always been portrayed as a fast-paced, seedy underground for criminal overlords, spies, and brave protagonists unafraid of getting their hands dirty for clues.

V.O. (CONT'D)

(Isabella)

I guess you really can't trust Hollywood. There are no sexy spies, or dashing heroes fighting gangsters here. There are no sexy spies, or dashing heroes fighting off gangsters here. It's clearly all about one thing...

Isabella is surrounded by strip clubs, adult toy stores, and porno theaters. There are bouncers and sign warnings about age restrictions everywhere. The smell of cigarettes, booze and sweat fills the air. Isabella is surprised and uncomfortable.

Isabella snoops around outside one club whose neon sign for Hot-Blooded Nights has half the letters illuminated. An animated pin-up girl kicks her legs up and down above the crackling lights.

BOUNCER

ID please.

She's startled by the BOUNCER outside, big as a refrigerator and as white as one. He has bolts in his neck.

ISABELLA

Um, sorry, I was just looking.

She tries to shuffle away until he sticks one big arm out to stop her.

BOUNCER

Wait...you're a warm-blood, aren't ya?

She looks for some kind of escape. Some UNDEAD PEOPLE begin to gather around.

ISABELLA

(whisper)

Shit.

(louder)

Sorry, wrong place, gotta get going.

BOUNCER

The boss is looking for new talent.

He starts to look her up and down without reservation.

BOUNCER (CONT'D)

He'll like you, no doubt about it.

Come in.

He opens the door for her.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The music inside pours into the street. It's loud. Women pole-dancing inside under an eerie magenta glow. It smells like cheap booze and expensive cigars.

ISABELLA

No, I'm good, thanks.

She dashes away, only garnering more attention.

V.O.

(Isabella)

This was a stupid idea.

She's moving faster through the crowd, all eyes are on her at this point. She sees a huddled FORM in the darkness, taller than any normal human, staring her down with a wicked gaze.

EXT. OUTSIDE - NIGHT

She's darting down one street, then another as she's being followed. She makes eye contact with a few STRIPPERS smoking behind another club. They're eyes and heads follow me in unsettling unison as she pulls her hood tighter over her head.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Does everyone know I'm a warm-blood, now, or am I just freaking out?

(MORE)

V.O. (CONT'D)

Maybe I was right all a long, and all those stories I've heard are true. It's not safe for any warm-blood in the city. I might really be in danger.

ISABELLA

Shit!

She checks her phone and is relieved she has no ne texts or missed calls. After moving a little farther away from the clusters of undead, she decides it's time to head back to the hotel before Dayanna or Aunt Maggie notice she is gone.

Isabella turns back around carefully, trying to keep as low of a profile as possible. She follows the signs and sights that brought her here, promptly leaving the Lavender district behind her only to realize she can't remember the rest back to the hotel.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Shit.

She will have to suck it up and ask for directions back to the hotel.

V.O.

(Isabella)

But who can I trust out here, at almost 11 o'clock at night? Shit, I don't know. Dante, what would you do?

Bam, she bumps into some tall GUY in a trench coat.

TALL GUY

Watch it, lady!

His voice fades behind her as she picks up the pace once more. She makes it to another crosswalk and waits uncomfortably, eyes everywhere.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Come on, Izz. Stop freaking out and I just think...You gotta know-

HOMELESS MAN

The end is coming!

Quickly Stunned she sees the appearance of a HOMELESS MAN waving a giant cardboard sign that reads THE END IS COMING- TRIUMPH OVER YOUR FEAR OR BURN-Isaiah 35:4.

His reanimated canine companion barks at me questioningly, sporting lackluster patchwork from snout to tail. The man makes eye contact with me beneath his matted red hair and utters something, but she's too freaked out to hear it. She draws her arms closer around her body as she moves as her heart is pounding.

A vehicle pulls up slow behind her. It's a red truck alongside the curb. The DRIVER, a super gorgeous undead girl with curly pink hair and pink eyebrows to match. She's rocking an expensive, synthetic body, perfect porcelain doll compared to Isabella with blemished skin and tousled hair.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

A warm-blood in Dead Vegas, huh?  
You look lost. Need a lift?

V.O.

(Isabella)

Unreal. Her skin looks so alive that the only giveaway for her being reanimated is the eyes, misty, like they're still lost somewhere in the great beyond.

Before Isabella answers, she leans forward to see if anybody else is in the truck with her. She's alone.

ISABELLA

Yeah, and I need to make it back to Cemetery Suites, ASAP. Um. Please.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

(simplers)

Well get your ass in here, girl.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Why would someone like this stop for someone like me? What if I'm being recruited of some warm-blood prostitution ring? Is that...too extreme? I dunno. Kinda feel like shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth.

INT. RED TRUCK - NIGHT

Isabella gives in, and hops into the passenger seat. The truck smells like cigarettes and vanilla. Death metal is playing low over the radio. Fuzzy dice are bouncing above the dashboard dotted with photographs and dragon figurines.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

(coos)  
I'm Olivia.

Isabella buckles up.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

I've lived in this city ever since I was nine years old. I can spot a newbie from a football field away.

Isabella is embarrassed.

ISABELLA

Thanks. For your help. Dead Vegas is awesome, but...kinda...

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

(giggles again)  
Scary? Crowded? Pungent? All of the above?

ISABELLA

Um...yeah, I guess so. No offense.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

What's your name?

ISABELLA

Isabella. But Izzie works

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Alright, Izzie, consider us friends. I was actually headed to my auto shop to drop something off. Ri's on the way to Cemetery Suites. Do you mind?

ISABELLA

Um...You have an auto shop? Like, for mechanics?

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Huh, yep, mechanics tend to work at auto shops. And trust, you aren't the first person to doubt it by looking at me.

Olivia smirks, unphased.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

And I wouldn't call myself a mechanic. More like a...paid tinkerer.

(MORE)

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

That sounds kinda dirty actually,  
but it's not.

(chortle)

I'm just really good at taking things  
apart and figuring out what makes  
them tick.

ISABELLA

That's cool.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

So tell me, city newb, where ya'  
from? And what brings you to Dead  
Vegas? We don't see a lot of warm-  
bloods around here. Well...around  
anywhere, anymore.

Isabella's heart sinks. She begins to consider the likelihood  
of survival. Open the door, hop out and run.

Olivia snaps her out of her panicked consideration of escape.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

Chill, I get it. If there's anything  
I understand, it's being different.  
You don't have to tell me anything  
you aren't ready to. We'll just  
focus on getting you back to that  
gaudy hotel.

EXT. AUTO SHOP'S GARAGE - NIGHT

They pull up to the auto shop's garage. Olivia pushes a  
button on the sunvisor. A garage door opens and she drives  
inside. She pushes the button again the garage door closes.  
She rolls the windows down before she cuts the engine off.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Boom. I am so fucking good at this.  
You can stay in the car or get out.

She hops out of the trucks and turns on the lights. The  
unlikely mechanic puts down her tools and grabs a rag with a  
smidge of dramatic flair. She ends up working on a customized  
motorcycle.

ISABELLA

Hey,

(she squeaks out from  
the window)

Where did you...learn to do that?

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

My pops taught me, way back when.

Olivia looks distant.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

Side bar, I've been working on this junker for weeks. Hoping to get it road ready in a couple more. It just needs a little work on the engine, some replacement chains, new wheels...I mean, I don't wanna die in a blaze of glory, girl. Once was a enough, trust me.

ISABELLA

Must be fun, though...Um, not dying in a blaze of glory, but riding something fast enough to you there. I love my Vespa, but it's top speed is trash.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

(snorts)

You ride a Vespa, huh? Cool Take it here some time, I can modify it. And if it's speed you want, no problemo. Nothing a little homemade rocket fuel couldn't fix honey.  
(eyebrow wiggles)

Isabella catches herself staring at the Aussie with envy. She was taller than here even without the pointy purple heels. She wears a tube top and leather pants, resembling a movie star.

Olivia finishes wiping off her hands and tosses the rag aside. She struts over to Isabella and leans against the hood of a nearby car.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

Can I ask you something? Honestly?

ISABELLA

Um. Sure. Of course.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

What's your deal?

ISABELLA

Excuse me?

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

You are radiating this sort of negativity about yourself, ad I don't get it.

Isabella is confused and caught off guard.



SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

(softly)

All I'm saying is, you're gorgeous as fuck and you have this look like you should be in a comic book or something. I'm getting serious roller-derby girl vibes from you, like you don't take shit from any motherfucker.

Isabella is flustered, and begins to glow.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

See, that, right there.

Olivia sinks closer and nudges her on the shoulder playfully.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

You aren't buying what you're selling. But I'm a fucking great judge of character, and I recognize you've got that shit in you. Just gotta take some Exlax and get it all out, you know?

Olivia giggles, and Isabella stands there completely uncool.

V.O.

(Isabella)

I am a doofas. Plain and simple, I suck at taking compliments. I haven't allowed many people to get close to me. Like, ever.

ISABELLA

My mom had a boyfriend six years ago, and that was a shit show. Ever since then, it's just been the three of us. My mom, aunt and your truly. And with the two of them so busy all of the time, I've had no shortage of quality time with me, myself, and sweet potato pie.

V.O.

(Isabella)

I can't help but wonder how much more calm and collected Dante would have been. Or how much more social I would be if it were the two of us out here.

Isabella stands with her arms crossed and stares at her sneakers.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 It's okay, girl. I get it, trust.  
 Just think about what I said, okay?

Isabella gives a tight-lipped smile and a nod. Suddenly they hear a door chime in the rear of the garage. It's a tall and wide GENTLEMAN, wearing a greasy set of overalls and a tool-belt at his hip. He is reanimated in his forties, he's got a roughness about him. He stops in his tracks when he sees the two of them.

GENTLEMAN  
 (grumbles)  
 This is private property. Take your sorority somewhere else.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 (raises a brow  
 incredulously)  
 Nice one, never heard that before.  
 I actually come here to work, like  
 on a regular basis. I'm the one who  
 put that scorch mark in the wall  
 ages ago, testing out rocket fuel.  
 We've see each other before, lots of  
 times.

The man just grumbles more, clearly not buying it.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)  
 (whispers)  
 Arsehole.

GENTLEMAN  
 Oh yeah? Does Tony know?

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 Yeah, he fucking knows. He orders  
 the supplies for my experiments and  
 I'm helping him rebuild a 1963 Ferrari  
 250 GOT on the weekends.

GENTLEMAN  
 (chuckles)  
 Sure ya'are.

He sets his stuff down.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 Want me to call him up right now?

Olivia whips out her phone, and it's obvious she is getting progressively more pissed off as she repeatedly blows pink curls out of her face.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

I can tell him some asshole is in  
his garage insulting his apprentice.

The man says nothing., just prepares to work under some other  
junker car in the garage.

GENTLEMAN

It's late. Go home, lady. And take  
your doe-eyed girlfriend with ya.

The undead mechanic slides under the car to start working,  
humming to himself. Olivia angry-walks over and yanks the  
roller seat he's on, sliding him out until he's right at her  
feet. He's laying flat with tools still in hand and an  
annoyed look on his stubbly face.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

One last thing.  
(lips pouty)  
I am so sorry about your dick.

GENTLEMAN

What in the hell are you-

Olivia puts one pointy heel on his crotch. He crunches up  
and starts howling in agony, tools clanging to the floor.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Bam. That...has to hurt.

All he's got left is a slew of obscenities and sexist slurs  
too mangled by his pain to be comprehensible.

Olivia reacts a mischievous smile, stepping over the failing  
gentleman and checking out her nails absent-mindedly.

V.O.

(Isabella)

That confidence. That take no shit  
attitude, like Aunt Maggie's. Strong  
and unafraid, like my mom. I can't  
help but be drawn to Olivia. She's  
everything I wish I was.

Olivia grabs her keys and takes off. Isabella follows her  
lead, listening to the geyser of dirty words and afflicted  
groans erupting from the garage fade behind a closed metal  
door.

EXT. OUTSIDE - NIGHT

A short drive and they are back outside Cemetery Suites.  
Isabella and Olivia say their farewells and exchange numbers  
after some initial resistance on Isabella's end.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

There's a party tomorrow, at my friend Hideo's penthouse. You should totally come.

V.O.

(Isabella)

A party implies lots of people. Already I feel myself wanting to retreat, but this time I fight it. New city, new opportunities to grow. Right? Besides, my mom is always encouraging me to give new people a chance.

ISABELLA

Um...Yeah. I'd love to go.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Righteous, I'll text the deets later.

Olivia gives her a wink and hops back into her truck. Isabella stands alone again, feeling better than she did twelve hours ago.

INT. HOTEL ROOM SUITE - NIGHT

Isabella sneaks into the hotel. Dayanna and Aunt Maggie are still asleep.

EXT. DEAD VEGAS - DAY

Saturday morning in Dead Vegas was low-key. Dress-shopping, toy hunting for Eckerd, and another rehearsal of Dayanna's speech. They finished up with errands by mid afternoon and returned back to the hotel for fast food Aunt Maggie had specially delivered.

V.O.

(Isabella)

God, fast food rocks. When Aunt Maggie told me this kinda stuff used to be on every street corner, I could hardly fathom the idea.

CUT TO:

Dead Vegas in present times with fast food restaurants busy with cars pulling up to the drive through window.

INT. HOTEL ROOM SUITE - DAY

Slight vibrations in Isabella's pants pocket periodically. Texts from Olivia. When neither Dayanna or Aunt Maggie was looking, Isabella texted Olivia back: 'C U there'.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Yep, I'm sneaking out again tonight to go that party. Cliche, I know. Stubborn curiosity is beating my cautious cynicism, but only barely. I had been tossing around the idea of staying at the hotel instead. The thought of being around a lot of new people my age in a new place makes me anxious. I managed to convince myself that going to the party will act as a warmup for going to that fundraiser, but still fell like throwing up.

Dayanna was brushing her teeth in the bathroom. She looked at Isabella sitting on the edge of the bed. She could tell something was wrong with Isabella.

DAYANNA

(mouthful of toothpaste)

Are you alright, Isabella?

Isabella pulls out her phone to see what time it is. It's 9 PM and Dayanna is getting ready for bed.

ISABELLA

(lies)

I'm fine. Just, uh, feeling constipated.

DAYANNA

Have some yams. They will help you, I promise.

Aunt Maggie stops messing around on her phone long enough to snicker and give me a look. They make their jokes and they say their goodnights.

Isabella roused Dayanna before sleep.

ISABELLA

(whispers)

Mama?

Dayanna's head still buried under blankets.

DAYANNA

Si, mi hija?

ISABELLA

Are you nervous? About tomorrow?

DAYANNA

Nervous. Terrified. Oh, yes. But there's too much at stake for me to let my fear win. A lot of people are counting on me to succeed, so I will.

V.O.

(Isabella)

She's so brave. Speaking to a room full of rich undead donors in a different country, trying to convince them that they should financially support the warm-blood minority that they used to discriminate against for decades? It's a tall order, to say the least. I still be skeptical about those donors, but I have no doubt in my mom's drive and passion.

ISABELLA

You're gonna kick ass, Mom.

Dayanna lifts up blankets just enough to see Isabella's face under the orange glow of the bedside lamp.

DAYANNA

Thank you, Isabella. You make me strong.

Isabella turns off the lamp. Hops in bed. Pretends to be asleep until she is positive that her family is.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF CEMETERY HOTEL - NIGHT

Olivia was on time.

INT. RED TRUCK - NIGHT

Isabella hops in the truck, and spends the next 15 minutes in traffic. Listening to Olivia sing with Madonna on the radio.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

She used to be pretty big in the 80's and 90's. But I didn't find out about her until her latest album, Unbeating Heart. Most artists get reanimated and their best music comes postmortem, in my opinion.

ISABELLA

Can't help but think about my aunt, back in the 80's and 90's.

(MORE)

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Guess I can't blame pop and rock  
stars for wanting to live forever.

A few more blocks karaoke and vape smoking later, they show up at their destination: a towering skyscraper in upper Dead Vegas.

EXT. TOWERING SKYSCRAPER - CURB - NIGHT

Olivia hops out of the truck and flounces over to the big revolving doors, her perfect ponytail bouncing from side to side. She waves Isabella over. Isabella is checking herself out in the review mirror and patting her hair down. Olivia is wearing a long-sleeve, fitted crop top and puffy pants. Isabella has on a bomber jacket, holy tank top with a tiny ketchup stain, and the same camo pants she's been wearing for the past couple of days.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Olivia looks ready for a cool clothing commercial. I look ready for an intervention and a nap.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Come on, girl!

Olivia smiles as she waves dramatically towards the doors.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Isabella and Olivia enter a stellar penthouse. Fancy, real expensive. Many stories up the skyscraper, complete with a balcony pool. The view overlooks a sea of flickering lights and glowing holograms that illuminate a rambunctious CROWD parading the streets beneath.

ISABELLA

It's rad.

There are lots of PEOPLE. All KIDS that were reanimated in their teens, full of energy and booze. Laughter and smoke fill the air.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

(softly to herself)

Is these kids were all living, th  
room would be humid as hell.

The temperature is cold with the undead. Isabella zips up her jacket. The stench of cheap liquor acts as unusual contradiction to the lavish household that contains it.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 What? It's so loud I can barely  
 hear you.

Isabella shakes her head.

ISABELLA  
 It's okay. I didn't say anything  
 important.

Olivia points to her ear. They make gestures at each other.  
 Isabella follows Olivia.

Lots of people look at Isabella: the single warm-blood in  
 the penthouse, maybe in the whole building. They are  
 whispering. Kids with bolts in their necks and body  
 modifications that have been looking more cyberpunk than  
 undead.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)  
 I feel really out of place.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
 Don't worry about them.

Olivia reassures Isabella.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)  
 They're not used to seeing warm-  
 bloods, but they're cool.

Olivia introduces Isabella to a few people, but is  
 uncomfortable and distracted.

ISABELLA  
 I'm not going to remember their names.

Everybody recognizes who Olivia is, and she excitedly whoops  
 everyone who drunkenly calls out her name.

She excuses herself for a second. The seconds turn into  
 long minutes. Isabella is restless. She steps outside for  
 some fresh air.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Isabella steps outside, near the pool. There are lots of  
 kids jumping in and flirting with each other.

TEENAGE BOY  
 (southern accent)  
 Feeling a little out of place?

Isabella turns around to see a red-headed teenage BOY with  
 half the body of a jock.



He has a lot of steampunk replacement parts pecking out under his tank top and heavily embellished jacket. Good-looking, a little bit goofy.

ISABELLA

Yeah, I know I'm the only warm-blood here.

TEENAGE BOY

No shit, Sherlock, but that ain't why I asked.

He steps in front of her.

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)

I recognize that look. The discomfort, the awkward lurch. You wanna hear a joke, am I right?

ISABELLA

Um...not really?

The teen crosses his arms and gets the biggest grin over his freckled face.

TEENAGE BOY

Why is stand-up comedy such a good gig for zombies?

ISABELLA

Um...

TEENAGE BOY

Because they're either dying out there or killing it.

His smile is bigger and looks satisfied.

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)

I'm Beckett. AKA the Red Bastard. Heh. I'm friends with Olivia. Well. Friends with everybody, kinda.

He sticks his hand out enthusiastically. He's almost child-like in his self-satisfaction. Isabella gives in and shakes his cold hand. His demeanor is warm and genuine.

ISABELLA

I'm...Izzie.

The two of them talk and she tells him how she met Olivia.

TEENAGE BOY

Yeah, Olivia's one of a kind.  
(MORE)

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)

(finishes up his beer)

Plus she totally digs me. Watch her  
get fifty shades of twitter-pated  
when she sees me tonight. Just wait.

Soon Isabella is introduced to the undead kid who is responsible for the party, HIDEO. He rises from the pool with a GIRL on each arm. High cheek-bones and platinum white hair, dripping with water. He is aware of how handsome he is. Isabella notices sutures around his entire neck, and everything below that is silicon and shiny aluminum. He is 90 percent android. He's amped, he could keep flirting and swimming if Beckett had not called him over to meet the warm-blooded Olivia had invited. He poses for a quick selfie with his bikini-clad FANGIRL before breaking away. They're giggling.

HIDEO

Any friend of Livi is a friend of mine.

(smiles)

Sorry you had to meet Beck though.  
Did he tell you one of his crappy  
jokes?

TEENAGE BOY

Screw you, pretty boy!  
(sticks a toothpick  
in his mouth)

Olivia returns. Isabella is relieved.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Sorry for the delay, hon. Had some  
business to take care of.

Beckett leans down to whisper something in Isabella's ear...loudly.

TEENAGE BOY

She means she had to finish a drug  
deal first.

Olivia shoves Beckett in the chest, a gesture that seemed equal parts playful and annoyed.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Shut up, dumbass.

Beckett simply chortles and looks down at Isabella with a wink.

TEENAGE BOY

See? Told ya. Twitter-pated.

Olivia rolls her gray eyes loudly before turning them back on Isabella.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

I see you tow have met. Did he  
already tell you one of his dad jokes?

TEENAGE BOY

Why is everybody hatin'on my jokes?  
They aren't that bad.

Hideo crackles, taking the vape pen from Olivia for a few hits himself.

HIDEO

We'll stop talking shit about them  
the moment they actually net you a  
girl.

They are together. Olivia properly introduces me to everyone and they make small talk. They haven't been there long, Isabella is nervously checking her phone for missed calls or angry texts. Hideo seems to notice.

HIDEO (CONT'D)

This party's getting boring. What  
do you guys say we get out of here?

The three of them agree. Hideo puts his shirt back on- Isabella recognizes it as one of those overpriced designer tank tops marked 'dead meat'.

HIDEO (CONT'D)

You think the city lights look  
gorgeous from up here? Just wait  
until you see them from the rooftop.

Olivia, Beckett, and Isabella follow after Hideo as climbs out the window, up the stair well, and onto the roof. The noise from the party is substantially subdued.

EXT. ROOF TOP BUILDING 1 - NIGHT

Stunning panoramic view lit like a Christmas tree.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Not bad, huh, newbie?

Olivia nudges Isabella, giggling. Her reaction is plastered all over her countenance.

ISABELLA

Where I'm from, we don't have anything  
like this. It's amazing.

Hideo hops down from the ledge, hands in his pockets.

HIDEO

I know an even better place to view  
the city. Just a few rooftops from  
here. Come on, let's boogie.

ISABELLA

But...isn't that your party down  
there?

HIDEO

(shrugs and smirks)  
So?

Hideo takes a running start and bounds off the rooftop. Isabella fears for the worst. Quickly she runs past Olivia, ignore Beckett's hearty guffawa, and looks off the ledge. She looks down and sees Hideo has made across on the other rooftop of the skyscraper across from them, waving.

ISABELLA

(softly to herself)  
This kid is nuts.

Beckett makes another retort before dashing and bounding off the ledge himself. Olivia signals Isabella over before she follows suit. She watches as Olivia leaps and lands on the next rooftop with a gentle roll, gracefully.

All three of them are waving and beckoning Isabella to follow. She takes a deep breath and backs up enough running room. Hop up and down a little, warm up.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Don't overthink it, Izz. Don't think  
about how crazy this is. You used  
to climb trees and play outside all  
of the time as a kid. This is a  
piece of cake.

The moment lingers, with Isabella suspended in the air between two buildings more than forty stories up. She catches a glimpse of some demonic STALKER for a second, fluttering in the air close by.

She feels the jolt of pain in her knees and in her left wrist. Cold cement beneath her, and a rain of cheers above.

EXT. ROOF TOP BUILDING 2 - NIGHT

TEENAGE BOY

(cheers)  
Way to go, Izz!

He helps Isabella to her feet.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
Oh my god, I didn't think you'd do  
it! You fucking rock!

HIDEO  
(smirks)  
Not bad, for a warm-blood.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
I know that look.

Hideo looks at Olivia.

HIDEO  
What?

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
You're thinking about hitting on the  
new girl, I can tell.

HIDEO  
Liv, I'm hurt. I'd do no such thing.

Beckett chuckles, playing with toothpick in his mouth.

TEENAGE BOY  
Says the horndog who takes his pants  
off for every girl in a ten mile  
radius. You're worse than that  
playboy Viking douche-bagel who runs  
ESTRID Industries.

HIDEO  
His name is Frode Algar and he is  
literally a genius. Oh, and he also  
invented reanimation ages before  
Victor Frankenstein took a crack at  
it.

TEENAGE BOY  
(snickers)  
Allegedly.

Olivia nudges her and rolls her eyes as the continue arguing.  
She proceeds to walk past the, towards the rooftop's edge.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
Are you boys gonna stay here and  
bicker over our shared man crush all  
night, or we can get back to showing  
Izzie a good time.

Before either Hideo or Beckett can make a retort, Olivia darts and leaps off the rooftop to the next building. Beckett and Hideo are quick to follow, with Hideo even quicker to take the lead. They are competitive with each other.

Hideo leads them from one building roof top another. He is a natural parkour. He's got them hopping across buildings, swinging off stairwells, climbing up windows. The three of them are cracking jokes as they're performing these crazy feats, it's a normal Saturday night for them. Isabella tries to keep up.

They finally got to the building Hideo talked about. The horizon is covered in flickering neon signs and dazzling lights, and the smog above is illuminated by their glow. Isabella takes a selfie with her new friends, using the cityscape below her backdrop.

V.O.

(Isabella)

It feels so good to be part of something. To feel normal for a change.

Olivia, Beckett, Hideo, and Isabella chill out, and talk more. Her three new friends had found something meaningful through reanimation.

HIDEO

I lived my whole life paralyzed from the neck down. It wasn't until I died and was reanimated that I could change that. I started with a biochemical spine and ended like this. ESTRID Industries changed everything for me. Now I can do anything.

TEENAGE BOY

Ask him why he didn't change his mug.

Hideo's face shifted into that familiar grin.

HIDEO

Because I'm too handsome. ESTRID Industries changed everything for me. I could finally get a new body and anew chance to live the life I always wanted.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

While Hideo choose to keep his pretty face, I opted for a total overhaul.

TEENAGE BOY

(pipes in)

All that matters is in the brain.

He points to his temple a grin.

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)

Scientists found out you can change  
everythin' else, as long as the brain  
is intact.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

I spent the seventeen years of my  
life in a body that wasn't mine and  
it wasn't until after my death that  
I was finally able to be who I was  
meant to be.

HIDEO

Amen to that.

Hideo purred cheerfully, and Beckett hooted loudly in  
agreement. He pulled a flask out and took a swig.

TEENAGE BOY

'And what about you Beckett?' You  
ask. Picture it: A U.S. soldier  
stationed in post was South America,  
killed by a grenade blast. Boom.  
Took my arm and most of my torso, as  
you can see. The government didn't  
have much of a plan for us reanimated  
veterans, so my grandpappy had to  
step in and put his tinkering skills  
to the test. Built me these  
replacements with his own hands.  
Pretty nifty, huh?

Beckett flexes his robotic arm and twiddles his mechanical  
fingers. Gears turning, random pieces ticking and rotating.  
Like clock pieces, everything small and precise...outdated.

ISABELLA

Why not get replacements from ESTRID  
Industries, too? They're supposed  
to be pretty affordable these days,  
from what I read.

TEENAGE BOY

(shrugs)

Reckon I'm a little sentimental.

ISABELLA

What's it like? Being reanimated?

Stifled laughter from Beckett, Olivia and Hideo answers her question.

TEENAGE BOY

It feel like...I have this insatiable need...

Beckett stands up and sticks his arms out.

TEENAGE BOY (CONT'D)

For braiiins!

Brawny Beckett comes after Isabella, Olivia, and Hideo react with a cocktail of amusement and annoyance.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Come on, Beck. She's serious.

Olivia rolls her eyes and takes another hit off her vape pen.

ISABELLA

That smells like pineapple.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

And you shouldn't make zombie jokes. Not after what happened in '84.

TEENAGE BOY

(grumbles to himself)  
Sensitive bunch.

HIDEO

It's hard to explain. Mostly it feels the same. Maybe a little hollow sometimes.

TEENAGE BOY

Are you a social media fuckboy or a twelve year-old emo kid? It's one or the other, my dude.

HIDEO

Shut up, Clockwork Hillbilly.

Olivia gives Isabella's question a little more thought.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

Hideo's right. When you're reanimated, you're still you. But at the same time, it feels like occupying an oversized shell.

TEENAGE BOY

More like overpriced.



SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
Way better value for my suit than  
rust junk you call 30 percent of  
your body.

Beckett puffs out his mostly metallic chest.

TEENAGE BOY  
Better than the fancy place where  
you got your tits, so I suggest you  
promptly calm them.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
No, you're right. I'm sure it was  
very magical when your grandpappy  
whittled you together like a trailer  
trash Pinocchio.

As Beckett and Olivia go at it, Hideo laughs.

V.O.  
(Isabella)  
They're like brothers and sisters.  
Charismatic, chill and confident in  
themselves. Everything I'm not.

HIDEO  
So what's Izzie's story?

Passes the flask.

HIDEO (CONT'D)  
A warm-blood in an undead metropolis.  
Inquiring minds what to know.

ISABELLA  
(hesitant)  
Business trip with my family.

TEENAGE BOY  
What kind of business?

Olivia, Beckett and Hideo stare at Isabella intently for the  
answer.

ISABELLA  
(uncomfortable)  
Furnishing for our community.

Olivia takes a hearty drink and passes the flask.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL  
A warm-blood community? Here, in  
the United States?

ISABELLA

Nah. Overseas.

Olivia, Beckett and Hideo bombard Isabella with questions. More than she could keep up with. Isabella is flustered and eager to get out of the spotlight. A pocket vibration snapped Isabella out of her newfound comradery. She looks down at her phone to read it's from Aunt Maggie.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Shit!

Everyone stops laughing and looks at Isabella.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

I gotta get back to the hotel. Now.

TEENAGE BOY

(chuckles)

What, mommy's got a curfew for ya?

ISABELLA

(whispers)

I am so screwed.

Olivia picks up on Isabella's discomfort.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL

She's serious, guys.

Isabella's hand clasped in Olivia's hand.

SUPER GORGEOUS GIRL (CONT'D)

Come on, I'll take you back.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - STREET - DAY

They climb back down and got Olivia's truck. Drive back to Cemetery Suites.

INT. RED TRUCK - NIGHT

Olivia gives Isabella a hug goodbye and wishes her luck.

EXT. CEMETARY SUITES - NIGHT

Isabella gets out of the truck.

ISABELLA

I'm gonna need it.

INT. CEMETERY SUITES - NIGHT

Isabella gets out of the elevator and back to their room. She greeted by a stern Aunt Maggie outside the door.

Her arms are crossed, cigarette in hand, standing near the No Smoking sign. Isabella approaches her slowly, with her head down.

AUNT MAGGIE  
(inevitably, quietly)  
So, where are you sneaking off to?

V.O.  
(Isabella)  
There's no bullshitting the former pop star. I spill the beans nervously, avoiding eye contact.

ISABELLA  
(whispers)  
Does Mom know?

AUNT MAGGIE  
No, she's still out cold.

ISABELLA  
Are you...gonna tell her?

Aunt Maggie sighs and puts out her cigarette.

AUNT MAGGIE  
Not my place.

Isabella is relieved.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)  
(softly)  
Listen, I get it. And I'm happy you're warming up to the city after all. But I can be dangerous out there at night, Izz. She's not wrong about that. You better promise me you're gonna be more careful from now on. Leave the dumb decisions to me, alright?

ISABELLA  
...Alright. I promise.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Isabella and Aunt Maggie quietly enter their hotel room. Dayanna stirs a bit for a moment. Aunt Maggie is quick to cover for them.

AUNT MAGGIE  
(whispers)  
Sorry, needed a smoke.

Isabella hops quietly back into bed. Dayanna mumbles and covers her head again.

ISABELLA

(mouths)

I owe you big time.

AUNT MAGGIE

(mouths)

I know.

She smiles tiredly and climbs back onto the sofa.

INT. HOTEL SUIT - LIVING AREA - DAY

Sunday the big day of the conference. Isabella and Dayanna are getting ready. Isabella confesses about sneaking out to meet with new friends.

DAYANNA

You can't trust them, Isabella.

ISABELLA

Excuse me? You're always telling me to make friends and try trusting people! Aren't you happy I'm actually taking your advice?

DAYANNA

Not like this. It isn't safe.

ISABELLA

A little hypocritical, don't you think? I'm almost 20, Mom. I'm not a child. You should have a little more faith in me.

DAYANNA

Those cold-bloods you met might look your age, but you have no idea how long ago they actually died. They could be over 100 years old.

ISABELLA

All three of them died between 3 and 6 years ago.

DAYANNA

Is that what they told you?

ISABELLA

Yeah, and I trust them.

DAYANNA

You shouldn't, mi hija. They could be lying about everything they told you.

ISABELLA

Didn't you say you wanted me to start trusting people earlier than you did? I'm not stupid, mom! When will you ever trust my judgment? Seriously?

Dayanna sighs loudly frustrated.

DAYANNA

(change of tone)

This is our last day in the city. I want it to be a good one, with the three of us all together. But to do that you need to promise me that you won't see those reanimated kids again. No more sneaking, off, either.

Isabella frustrated and gives in.

ISABELLA

I promise.

They hug it out and finish getting ready for one last eventful evening in the city that never dies. Isabella dresses.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Strapless bra. Pantyhose. Uncomfortable tiny shoes that clink loudly and announce your presence everywhere. No pockets, so you gotta carry around a stupid little purse. And the dress. Man, I hate dresses. They make you have to move all stiff like a preppy robot or else you'll flash your business some way or another. Give me a tank top, shorts, and sneakers any day.

INT. CIVIC CENTER - NIGHT

The foyer is packed full of reanimated rich people and their eyes follow Isabella everywhere. They seem uneasy.

V.O.

(Isabella)

They are sizing me up, trying to decide if an investment in the living is worth their time and money.

Isabella stands in the corner. The PIANO PLAYER, a lively undead fellow as white as his suit.

TALL WAITRESS

Would you like a drink, miss?

A tall WAITRESS with a platter of champagne glasses offers Isabella a drink. She declines. Aunt Maggie pats Isabella on the back hard. She almost tips over.

AUNT MAGGIE

Having fun playing the uncool kid at the party?

Aunt Maggie has a half-empty glass of champagne in hand, wearing a slinky dress.

ISABELLA

They're just staring at me. Like they want me to do a little dance for them or something. I hate it.

AUNT MAGGIE

(chuckles and pounds her glass)

So do I, Izz. But it's a big night. We're gonna secure the future of your mom's sanctuary. Happy enduing for everyone.

Aunt Maggie is greeted in passing by a few of the donors, who call her by her former stage name: Rita Venue. She greets each one of them turn, smiling and making a show of it.

ISABELLA

You sure look like you're hating this too.

The former pop star takes another sip of champagne then quickly embraces Isabella.

AUNT MAGGIE

Buck up, buttercup! I get it that you feel outta place, but you gotta give yourself more credit. You're the daughter of a fucking hero. People stare because you're basically a celebrity. Trust me. I'm familiar with that stare.

Aunt Maggie teases with a wink, pounding the rest of her bubbly before giving the empty glass to some random guy who doesn't work there.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Now, let's make some friends with thick wallets, huh?

ISABELLA

Do you really think this will work?

AUNT MAGGIE

It better. Seriously though, with your mom involved, how could it fail?

The undead pop star prances off. She is rich and undead just like the crowd. Through out the night Isabella is pleasant with the rich and douchey. Introductions to white undead, names Isabella forgot as soon as they shook her hand. Weird hand kisses from a few FELLOWS who looked thirty, but had been dead for twice as long. Comments about how good Isabella's skin looked.

UNDEAD GUEST

You are so lucky to be the daughter of such a brave and influential woman.

On separate occasions, three older white WOMEN asked if they touch her hair. Isabella smiled politely and lied.

ISABELLA

(irritated)

It's not gonna grant your wishes.

UNDEAD GUEST

Excuse me?

ISABELLA

I've spent a lot of time fixing my hair and don't want it to get messed up. Thank you.

People were not sure of her ethnicity.

Frames of Isabella answering about her ethnicity.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Afro-Columbian, actually.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, we're from Columbia.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

No, um, we aren't drug runners.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

It's in South America.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

Nope. Not a U.S. state corrupted by  
the Radical Deep Left-Wing Vampire  
Conspirators.

The reanimated people are haughty and elitist. A group of  
LADIES before the speech started, ignored Dayanna completely.  
They address Aunt Maggie as if she is the brains behind the  
operation, the sole founder of the sanctuary the one making  
this happen.

Isabella nudges Dayanna.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

(whispers)

They're being totally rude to you,  
Mama. Screw these guys. You don't  
need their help.

Dayanna remains cool.

DAYANNA

Don't worry. I don't like it either.  
But Maggie is right. We need them.  
I will change all their hearts with  
my speech, just you wait.

ISABELLA

...I sure hope you're right, Mom.

DAYANNA

You need to have faith. Now, wish  
me luck.

Dayanna kissed Isabella on the head and went on her way.  
She is nervous.

BIMBO

Oh my gawd, another living girl!

Isabella twists around to see the BIMBO headed her way on  
loudly-clacking heels. She's wrapped in diamonds and an  
expensive club dress.

BIMBO (CONT'D)

This must be the daughter of that  
chick who's talkin' tonight.

Her breath smells strongly of champagne and a small amount  
of cocaine powder near her nostril. She examines Isabella  
with enthusiasm, tugs at dress as it rides up. She squeezes  
Isabella's cheeks until she resembles a fish.

BIMBO (CONT'D)

You're pretty for an immigrant girl.



Isabella smacks her hand off of her face, insulted.

ISABELLA  
Fuck off, trainwreck.

Isabella begins walking away as the bimbo calls for back up.

BIMBO  
(yells)  
Frodoh! Frodho!

A tall man comes quickly to her rescue. He is wearing a designer suit with a vest, too small. He has a various scars and a big beard. He is drenched in stinky cologne. Isabella realizes this is the undead playboy from TV, the inventor, the founder of ESTRID Industries. FRODE ALGAR, Viking warrior turned immortal inventor.

The bimbo is pawing at him and crying about how mean Isabella was to her.

FRODE ALGAR  
How about you run along to the lady's room and cool off? I'll handle this.

She leaves and shoots Isabella a stink eye before click-clacking off.

Frode Algar's eyes fall back on Isabella unphased.

ISABELLA  
Frodoh, huh?

FRODE ALGAR  
(deep voice)  
Pleasure to meet you, Isabella Corona.

He extends his hand to her.

FRODE ALGAR (CONT'D)  
Dayanna has so many good things to say about her daughter. Frode Algar, founder of ESTRID Industries.

V.O.  
(Isabe)

ISABELLA  
I know who you are. I watch the news. Your new gal pal is a real piece of work.

FRODE ALGAR  
Be nice. I think I might actually like this one.

ISABELLA

Yeah? What's her name?

FRODE ALGAR

(pauses)

...Nikki? Or is it Trinity?

ISABELLA

Good luck with that. Is it true that you're literally the oldest tightass in this building? That you found a way to reanimate yourself way before reanimation was invented?

FRODE ALGAR

(snickers)

Yes. Adversity breed innovation, and my first life was nothing but.

ISABELLA

(unimpressed)

Nice. Steal that one from a website with inspirational quotes for boomers?

FRODE ALGAR

Well, the old adage is true: with age comes wisdom.

ISABELLA

But mostly unwanted body hair.

FRODE ALGAR

Charming, but not inaccurate.

ISABELLA

Enough small talk. I heard you're in a legal battle to take control of land intended for farms in California. Land you wanna take from warm-bloods and drop more factories all over.

FRODE ALGAR

I'm sorry you feel that way. However, I'm merely following the flow of demand and supply.

ISABELLA

Yeah. At the cost of everything that still lives and breathes on Earth. Body part stores on every corner, zombie skin cream being sold everywhere from supermalls to Amazon. But a few farms or food-processing plants? Some fucking cans of beans for us living folks? Nah, too much.

FRODE ALGAR

Statically, demand for produce and proceed food is at a historic low, accounting for less than 8 percent of the world's economic output. This trend appears-

ISABELLA

Oh, can it with the statistics, artifacts. We've established that you don't give a shit about warm-bloods. What are you doing here, for real?

FRODE ALGAR

Your mother invited me.

ISABELLA

If I find out you're here to smack on my mom, I swear to God I'll find you and kick you in the dick so hard that you forget how to use it.

He lets out a chuckle, a flick of gold lighting up that big white row of wolf's teeth.

FRODE ALGAR

If I didn't know better, I'd think you were the daughter of rita Venus, over there.

He sluggishly points one ringed-finger off at aunt Maggie who is dancing and singing one of her own songs with an empty glass in her hand. A few donor COUPLES watch on: husbands with dumb smiles on their faces, wives with disdain or embarrassment.

ISABELLA

(aspersively)

How do you know my mom?

FRODE ALGAR

I ama friend, believe it or not. Just a friend, so no...dick-kicking required.

ISABELLA

Oh yeah? How come she never talked about you then?

FRODE ALGAR

I'm sure she has her reasons, but those aren't mine to share.

ISABELLA

Sure. Satisfy your warm-blood fetish with some other living girl. One who has less self-respect and loves Viking roleplay as much you do.

FRODE ALGAR

(smirks)

I will take your suggestion into consideration. Now, find your seat. The main event is about to begin.

Frode Algar gives her a snooty bow and swaggers into the crowd.

CUT TO:

Dayanna stood at the podium giving her speech.

Camera pans the crowd. Zooms onto Dayanna's face.

She is stiff, nervous, using her hands occasional to talk. People in the crowd mumble, check their watches, drink their wine. Dayanna becomes more comfortable and holds her hands beneath the podium.

DAYANNA

I believe that we are constantly reshaping our future. Reanimation has taught us that we are the writers of our own fate. We are not deterred by the impossible. We are not paralyzed by our own fears. It is true that warm-bloods and cold-bloods have long been at odds with one another. However, our painful past of violence and discrimination does not have to be our future. I speak to you all now, not only as a warm-blood humbly asking for your help, but as a proud immigrant and mother. Whether alive or dead, do we not share the same hopes, dreams, and desires for ourselves and for the future of our loved one? Do we not understand that the human condition transcends all superficial differences between us?

Her final plea for assistance is equally heartfelt and moving. After the speech she gives a control bow. Isabella imagines a grand, standing ovation, but in reality the audience is quiet and bored, few claps. Dayanna looks at Isabella, smiling at her, as Isabella cheers loudly. She's unsurprised by the audience reaction but too proud of her mother to care.

We see a strange figure in the crowd, out of place and out of focus. Isabella doesn't see it, lost in admiration.

V.O.

(Isabella)

I wish I were in my mom's place.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNDER THE SEWER - DAY

Dayanna is dowsed in oil, about to pull the match out.

ISABELLA

(scream)

Mom! Don't!

DAYANNA

It's the only way. You must survive  
Isabella. Run, and don't look back.

ISABELLA

Mama!

One final forced smile as the match is lit and dropped. Everything bursts into flames as Isabella covers her face in shock and fear and runs. As she runs in slow motion, underneath the sewer with the winged beast protecting her.

V.O.

(Isabella)

Full of promise. Hope. Me? I'm  
nobody. But my mom? Well, it doesn't  
matter what some rich dead heads  
think. She's gonna change the world.