

V:TES STORYLINE

“These are the last words of Caine before he entered the earth...

With Lilith's knife, I cut myself and sang:

'From these open wounds

Life shall come from death,

As the last daughter

Bearing the mark of the moon,

Sends Lasombra's bane to the ashes,

*Sends Gangrel's brood to the cold
stone,*

*Infests Nosferatu's den with snakes
and strikes down his wife,*

*And pierces the rest of my
grandchilder*

With the fires of the wise.'

At these words, I sank

Embraced by the cold arms of

Lilith's garden.

Please,

Erase my folly.

And end this.



The words of the ancients are clear. It is our task to hear them and to understand."

Helena swept her hand over the platinum disk and the parchment translation of its text that lay on the table in front of her.

"Caine surrendered himself to Lilith in the Garden of Ba'hara and he was destroyed. He is no more. Soon his children will follow him into oblivion. But you, all of you, have a different path to follow. You can turn to Lilith. You can accept our Mother, as I have, and be accepted by her. We will survive and we will rule in the order that is to come. Trust in Lilith. It is from her blood that we receive the blessing of immortality. She is the source of our power. Caine's only legacy for us is his curse. We must forsake him as he has forsaken us."



Helena looked about the room. The one called The Siamese had leapt effortlessly into the rafters of the rustic cabin as soon as they had entered. She stopped pacing back and forth on the wide wooden beams. Nettie Hale was curled up tightly on a chair, completely motionless. Only her eyes moved, flicking from Helena to the eldest Ahrimane, Muricia, and then back to Helena.

Muricia had been sprawled out on the large sofa. She got up and approached the table gracefully, silently. Muricia looked over the items on the table as Helena resumed.

"These texts are written in Enochian, the language of Caine and his children. This disk was lost, sealed away in the forbidden city of Kaymakli. I bring it to you to show you this is not some lost prophecy whispered and twisted over the centuries. These are the words of one who was there and witnessed these events. They speak the truth. These words have shown me the way."

"Lilith calls all of her children to her bosom - the serpent, the owl... the cat. This is your purpose. This is your destiny."

"This is bullshit." Angelo leaned back and put his feet up on the table in the empty bar. "Seriously Germaine. I respect what you've been doing. But, really? Garden of Eden? Adam's bitchy ex-wife? What is this shit you're selling?"

Count Germaine extended his canines and flashed the Blood Brother a toothy grin. "What's the problem? You don't believe in the supernatural?"

"Naw. It's not that. Smartass. Vampires and werewolves and all that - that's one thing. But this is something else. You've met the Chicago Circle. They're twitchy. If I bring them this load they will kick my ass and run me out of town."

"You want me to come with you? I could hold your hand."

Angelo shook his head and smiled. He was silent for a moment. "Even when I was a kid, even before all this, I didn't ask too much of the hows and whys of it all. Things just are. All of it. Some shit is pretty wild. But you take what you're given. You make the most of it. Focus on the what and who. That's what gets me through the night. Spare me the prophecies and portents."





Count Germaine leaned in close. "I used to be like you. I didn't ask questions. I took comfort in my ignorance. Now I've seen enough to know better. You want to know about the who and what? I'll tell you what. We've got the maps. We know where the Antediluvians are hiding and we are going to take them out. Do you want to be part of the action? Or do you want to get swept up with the trash? You want real? This is real. You think you can sit this out? Ask a Ravnos how well that works. If you can find one."

"That's how it is, huh? The brothers sign up with you, drink the magic Lilith Kool-Aid, and we get to survive. Otherwise it's all Gehenna and shit?"

"That's how it is."

"What happened? Did you just wake up and decide to go out and end the world?"

"Not exactly."

"The infernal plague laid further the seeds of our corruption. Was that the end of it? Oh, no. They were just getting started. The Temptress of Troy ventured deep into the Abyss. She returned with Nergal, the Prince of Hell. The lord of the demons was freed from his prison. He slipped the chains that held him. The tormentor was liberated. He walks this earth even now. And he does not walk alone. He and his kind will not be satisfied until they get their hands on your immortal soul!"



When a person undergoes the transformation that turns him into a vampire, he experiences a number of physiological changes. Among those changes is the arresting of all processes that generate bodily secretions. Typically, this includes the individual's salivary glands. It was obvious that Reverend Adams was an exception to this rule.

The Reverend held an old and well-worn Bible. With each pronouncement he smacked a hand down onto the book. He was frothing. His shaggy beard was damp and particles of spittle splattered the hard, pale face of the Gargoyle standing in front of him.

"Do you think that was the end? The Prince of Hell has been set loose upon the land. Do you think nothing could be worse than that? Well, you are wrong. There is something worse. Even now the



seductress that launched a thousand ships has sent her infernal servants to every corner of the globe. They will not be satisfied until they have brought forth the Demon Queen. They will not stop until they have summoned the Bride of Lucifer. They will not rest until they have turned every single one of us into a sacrifice to their Dark Mother."



Lucinde had heard enough. "Thank you, Reverend." She silenced the preacher with a look. He stepped back and sat down on a front row pew. Reverend Adams closed his eyes, threw his head back and held The Book over his head with both hands. Lucinde turned to the Gargoyle, Ferox the Rock Lord.

Ferox stepped up next to the pulpit and turned slowly. He surveyed the vast cathedral and contemplated each of the stained-glass windows, illuminated by the soft light of the streetlights outside. Then he spoke.

"They are promising us our freedom. That is an offer that many of us are eager to accept. Many Gargoyles have already joined them."

Lucinde approached. "Ferox, they offer you lies. They promise you freedom but following them will only lead to a different kind of enslavement. You know the Reverend speaks the truth."

Ferox nodded. "He does." He spread his massive wings. Ferox's eyes shone with the righteous fire that burned within him. "The Time of Judgment is at hand. The lines are drawn. We will prepare for war."

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