ACT ONE

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATE NIGHT


INT. SUV - NIGHT

A YOUNG COUPLE sits in the front seat. DARREN, 24, has that cute-I’m-probably-gonna-die-soon look. Beside him is BROOKE, 24, pretty, smart-faced. Has that I’ll-probably-live-longer-than-my-boyfriend look. MUSIC PLAYS.

THROUGH THE FRONT WINDSHIELD - Headlights pierce darkness.

DARREN
An hour drive to hear that crap,
wasn’t even a band; guy with
guitar. An hour -- each way.

BROOKE
He wasn’t that bad.

DARREN
He sounded like James Blunt.

BROOKE
What’s wrong with that?

DARREN
We already have a James Blunt.
One’s all we need.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD -- A misty fog starts rolling by.

DARREN (CONT’D)
You owe me so much sex for this
night.

The fog grows thicker and thicker. It becomes difficult to see the road in front of them.

BROOKE
What’s with the fog?

DARREN
It’ll clear...give it a sec.

BROOKE
You could slow down.

There’s nothing but white all around them. The road’s almost completely gone from view. Then, all of a sudden...
THE FOG LIFTS. They can see again.

DARREN
Told ya.

Brooke SCREAMS.

BROOKE
Watch out!!!!

WINDSHIELD – POV – A MAN STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD.

Darren HITS the brakes. Not fast enough -- THEY CRASH INTO THE MAN.

His body goes up and over the JEEP, rolling off the top, hitting the ground behind them.

Darren YANKS THE WHEEL, sending the Jeep into a tailspin across the road. It comes to a SCREECHING HALT.

Everything goes silent. Darren turns to Brooke.

DARREN
Are you okay?

BROOKE
We hit someone, oh god...

She’s in full panic. Starts CRYING. Darren reaches for his cell phone. Starts dialing. Opens the door.

DARREN
Jesus. Shit. Stay here, okay?

BROOKE
Please, let him be all right.

Darren hops out of the car. Leaving Brooke shaking. She peers out the window, but she can’t see anything. The HEADLIGHTS are pointed to the woods.

BROOKE (CONT’D)
Please, please, please...

She turns to look out her side window when...

A FACE APPEARS IN THE WINDOW. Brooke LEAPS OUT OF HER SKIN.

It’s Darren.
DARREN
I can’t get reception. Try your phone.

And he’s gone.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

Darren races across the road, where the MAN lies. Still.

DARREN
Oh god...

Slowly, he approaches the man. Kneels down...

BESIDE THE BODY. It’s not moving. Darren knows this isn’t good. He finds his hand -- lifts it. Feels for a pulse.

DARREN (CONT’D)
Please be alive.

We glimpse a ring on the DEAD MAN’S FINGER. It’s unusual. ANTIQUE. A LAPIS STONE.

He peers down to the MAN’S FACE. Unable to see him at all. It’s pitch black.

He flips his cell phone around and hits the touch pad, it lights up his LCD screen. Uses it as a LIGHT when...

IN A FLASH -- HANDS REACH OUT.

IN A FLASH -- THE MAN RISES UP

IN A FLASH -- Darren’s head YANKS BACK, neck exposed.

IN A FLASH -- SHARP. GLEAMING. FANGS.

Rip into Darren’s throat. He’s dead in an instant. No scream. NO NOISE AT ALL. A vicious, silent death.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Brooke gets out of the car with her cell, having no idea what’s happened just yards away. She’s having trouble getting reception as well. She walks around to the front of the car. Calls out.

BROOKE
Mine doesn’t work either.

Her eyes search the darkness. There’s no Darren. No man either for that matter. Brooke looks around.
BROOKE (CONT’D)

Darren?

She turns back to the car. Frightened. Terrified. A NOISE behind her. She turns. Just as...

DARREN’S BODY FALLS ONTO THE CAR’S HOOD. From above. Out of nowhere. It lands with a resounding THUD. Sprawled across the hood -- his neck a raw and bloody mess.

Brooke is paralyzed in horror. A FIGURE emerges behind her. A MAN silhouetted in the headlights. His face shadowed.

She senses his presence. She spins around. No one’s there. Because, now he’s on the other side of her. How did he get there? Impossible.

She spins around again. He’s gone again.

Brooke turns and begins to run. Down the center of the road. SCREAMING HYSTERICALLY. Trying to put distance between her and whoever is out there...

She keeps running and running...directly into the fog.

Everything becomes blurry real fast. Brooke keeps moving, not looking back, disappearing further into the hazy mist.

A POV TRACKING SHOT BEHIND HER...TRAVELING LIGHTNING FAST. IT CATCHES UP WITH HER.

Suddenly, Brooke’s feet leave the ground as her entire body takes flight. Her SCREAM echoes through the night as something much faster and stronger YANKS HER ENTIRE BODY OUT OF SIGHT. Then, her SCREAM is cut short. A deadly silence.

SWIRLING FOG FILLS THE FRAME...

From it, appear the following words...

THE VAMPIRE DIARIES

FADE UP:

EXT. ELENA’S HOUSE - DAY

Morning. Birds chirp. Sun shines down on a big family home. A veranda wraps around the front. All charm. No sense of last night’s horror.

ELENA (V.O.)

Dear Diary...today will be hell.
INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

ELENA GILBERT, 17, faces herself in the mirror. A silent assessment. Fresh-faced, perfect features.

ELENA (V.O.)
But, I’m ready. I can deal. I have a plan. I will smile. It will be believable. Genuine. My smile will say, “I’m fine, thank you.” “Yes, much better.” “Time heals everything.”

Elena is now at her desk writing in her journal.

ELENA (V.O.) (CONT’D)
They will see that Elena is alive and well.

As she writes, the CAMERA moves around her room. Taking inventory of her life. Items of an over-achiever; awards, certificates, ribbons, etc.

ELENA (V.O.) (CONT’D)
And if I can convince them, then maybe, just maybe, I can believe it myself.

Snapshots and framed photos. Friends in funny, happy poses, reflecting the life of a popular and well-adjusted girl. These are personal photos -- they mean something.

Her parents, brother -- obligatory family photo. Linger on it for a beat. There’s a story there.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The morning news is muted on a small TV in the background. Photos of Darren and Brooke flash ON SCREEN. MISSING COUPLE.


She opens the fridge door. Studies its contents. Jenna is not domestic. She never will be.

JENNA
Toast. I can make toast.

She’s talking to Elena who just walked in. Goes straight for the coffee pot. Pours a cup. Elena drinks it black.
ELENA
It’s all about the coffee, Aunt Jenna.

Jenna nods, of course.

JEREMY
Is there coffee?

JEREMY (15) enters the kitchen. Cool look; has an original take on grunge punk, nothing extreme. Tinkers with the nail polish and eye-liner, but won’t commit. A bit of a mess. Outcast cute.

JENNA
Your first day of school and I’m totally unprepared.

She grabs TWO POWER BARS. Hands ‘em out. Reaches for her purse, finds some cash. Elena declines. Jeremy takes it.

JENNA (CONT’D)
Lunch money. Anything else? A No. 2 pencil? What am I missing?

She’s trying to get it right.

ELENA
Don’t you have a big presentation today?

JENNA
I’m meeting with my thesis advisor at --
   (checks her watch, realizing)
Now. Crap.

ELENA
Go.

Jenna disappears in a flash. Elena turns to Jeremy.

ELENA (CONT’D)
You good?

JEREMY
Don’t start.

Jeremy exits the back door. Uninterested and annoyed. Left alone in the kitchen, Elena SIGHS. Steeling herself for the day.
EXT. MYSTIC FALLS/INT. PRIUS - MORNING

A small Virginia town. Quaint, picturesque. A place you’d like to raise a family. Southern in its hospitality, northern in its attitude.

A Prius makes its way past Main Street. Mom and Pop. A couple restaurants. A hardware store. A church.

Elena rides beside BONNIE (17). Light, bubbly, and adorable. A loyal friend with a big heart. She’s in chatty Cathy mode.

BONNIE
So Grams tells me how I’m psychic because we’re descendants of the Celtic Druids; I know, right? I wasn’t buying it either until I remembered my uncanny accuracy. I predicted Obama, I predicted David Cook, Heath Ledger, Britney’s comeback and I still think Florida will break off and become little resort islands. I think there’s something to it.

She glances over at Elena who is staring out the window, not listening. She’s in another world.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Did I tell you about the orgy? I had the football team over. Threw a blindfold on. I still don’t know who took my virginity -- ELENA! BACK IN THE CAR!!!

Elena JUMPS when she hears Bonnie YELL her name. She quickly snaps out of her daze.

ELENA
I did it again, didn’t I? I’m sorry, Bonnie. You were saying...

BONNIE
What? C’mon, you can do it...

ELENA
(thinking hard)
Something about being psychic.

Bonnie TOOTS the horn. They both LAUGH.
ELENA (CONT’D)
Okay, then, predict, what’s in store for me? Give it up.

Bonnie is turning a corner. She holds one hand out, waving it like a magic wand. In complete goof mode.

BONNIE
I see puppies and daffodils and a naked Ryan Gosling...

SUDDENLY, SOMETHING FLIES INTO THE WINDSHIELD. Bonnie JERKS the steering wheel. The car goes SKIDDING.

She SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
What was that? Oh god...

Bonnie turns to Elena.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
Elena? Are you okay? I’m so sorry.

Elena sits frozen in the front seat.

ELENA
I’m okay. It happens.

BONNIE
No, I’m so sorry, it was like a bird or something. It came out of nowhere.

ELENA
It’s okay. I can’t let cars freak me out for the rest of my life.

She shakes it off. Determined not to let it cloud her day. Bonnie gets it. Appreciates it.

BONNIE
I predict this year is gonna be kick ass. And I predict all the sad and dark times are over. And you’re going to be happier than happy. With some hot sex too.

Elena smiles. Touched by all Bonnie says.
ELENA
That’s all good. Just one thing.
If you’re psychic, how come you
didn’t predict the bird?

Bonnie grins. HITS the gas and they’re off.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Bonnie’s Prius takes off down the road. The CAMERA PANS to a
telephone pole. Where an ominous BLACK CROW sits, perched at
the top. Deadly still.

EXT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY


A GUY enters frame, moving across the parking lot. We don’t
see his face. He passes through other arriving STUDENTS.
Slowly a few people start to turn, noticing this new arrival.

EXT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Bonnie and Elena move down the hall when...

CAROLINE TRUITT (17) approaches. Extremely pretty in a
manufactured way. Hair, make-up, wardrobe, she’s done to
death. Bit of a queen bee persona.

She sees Elena and immediately goes to her, embracing her,
holding her tight.

    CAROLINE
    Hi girls. Elena, my god, how are
    you? It’s so good to see you.

    ELENA
    (as rehearsed)
    Thanks, Caroline, I’m fine.

Caroline is genuine. In her own way, she truly cares. Elena
busies herself with her locker.

    CAROLINE
    Have you seen Matt yet?

Elena shakes her head.

    BONNIE
    They broke up, Caroline.
CAROLINE
I know that. But they can still talk.

ELENA
He was at his Dad’s all summer.

CAROLINE
So what’s the status? Friends, cordial, awkward at best?

Elena shrugs just as MATT (17) comes waltzing around the corner. Everybody’s All-American. Handsome jock. Even-tempered, gentle eyes.

He sees the three girls.

MATT
Hey, guys...

His eyes go straight to Elena. She smiles. Friendly.

ELENA
Hi, Matt.

He gives her an awkward nod and takes off.

MATT
Good to see you. Later.

Caroline watches him go.

CAROLINE
In case you missed it, you two are awkward at best.

She heads off. Bonnie gives Elena a supportive smile. *Hang in there, girl.* Then, she takes off with Caroline. Elena turns back to her locker -- doing exactly that.

INT. ANOTHER HALLWAY - DAY

The mysterious new guy walks down the hall, turning into the ADMINISTRATION OFFICE. We catch a half-glimpse. Chiseled profile. Sunglasses.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - MORNING

The empty football field. Empty bleachers.

JEREMY (V.O.)
Don’t take more than 2 in a 6 hour window.
EXT. DUMPSTER AREA - MORNING

Behind the bleachers of the football field, near the storage garage, hidden by dumpsters is -- THE PIT. As in a stoner’s pit stop. Where you come to partake in all things illegal. Every small town school has one. Jeremy hangs with some STONERS.

VICKI (18) stares at two pills in her hand. Sexy hot. A little on the trashy side. She’s very desirable And she knows it. Depends on it -- in that sad way.

She takes two and pops them in her mouth and swallows.

VICKI
What are they?

JEREMY
You might wanna reverse the order next time, ask first, swallow second; Alprazolam, a mellow and breezy descendant of the benzodiazepine family.

VICKI
What happens if I take more than two?

JEREMY
You’ll shave your head and lip sync for the rest of your life.

Someone passes Jeremy a lit joint. He takes a toke. Turns back to Vicki just as...

TYLER STRATTON (18) saunters up. Athletic, attractive, arrogant. He goes straight for Vicki.

TYLER
I knew I’d find you here, holding court.

VICKI
(flip)
With my fellow crack heads.

Tyler notices Jeremy -- sees the joint, takes it from him.

TYLER
Hey, Pete Wentz called. He wants his eyeliner back.

Jeremy doesn’t miss a beat.
JEREMY
Pete Wentz, huh? How old school TRL of you. Carson Daly fan?

Tyler starts to lunge. Vicki pulls him back.

VICKI
Be nice. That’s Elena’s little brother.

TYLER
I know who he is, I’ll still kick his ass.

He does a fake-out lunge. It makes Jeremy jump. Tyler LAUGHS. So does Vicki. That burns.

Tyler takes a big toke of the joint. Then, leans over and kisses Vicki -- shotguns his toke. It’s sexy.

And it drives Jeremy mad. Deflated, Jeremy turns back to the STONERS, takes another hit. Bummin’ hard.

INT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - ADMIN. OFFICE - DAY

The back of the new guy as he interacts with the secretary.

SCENE INTERCUTS:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Caroline passes by, then stops.

CAROLINE
Who’s this?

She and Bonnie peer through the window.

BONNIE
I can only see his back.

CAROLINE
It’s a hot back.

The secretary looks up at Stefan.

SECRETARY
Your records are incomplete.

STEFAN
Are they?
SECRETARY
You’re missing immunization records, transcripts, parental contact information...

THROUGH THE WINDOW -- THE GIRLS CONTINUE TO WATCH.

CAROLINE
There’s style there. Check out his boots. California? New York?

Bonnie closes her eyes -- calling on her psychic abilities.

BONNIE
I’m sensing Seattle. And he plays a guitar.

CAROLINE
Turn around, turn, turn...

INSIDE THE OFFICE
The secretary is shaking her head.

SECRETARY
We really prefer a parent to come in and meet with us in person. And we insist on transcripts.

Stefan slowly lowers his sunglasses. We still don’t see his face, but the secretary looks up at him, suddenly transfixed. He speaks in a low, soft tone.

STEFAN
Please look again. I’m sure everything you need is there.

The secretary looks back down, scattered. Slightly frazzled.

SECRETARY
Well, you’re right. So it is.

BONNIE
No fugly, no fugly...

Slowly, he turns. On Bonnie and Caroline’s reactions. We still don’t see his face. But, it’s definitely thumbs up.

DOWN THE HALL
ELENA is at her locker. She sees Jeremy walk by with his STONER FRIENDS. He’s shuffling his feet, swaying some, definitely stoned. He disappears into the Men’s Room.
A flash of anger from Elena. She SLAMS her locker shut and charges off.

INT. MEN’S ROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

Jeremy is at the sink, putting drops of Visine in his eyes when Elena storms into the bathroom.

TWO GUYS at the urinals complain.

**PEEING GUY**
Whoa, pants down, chick.

Elena ignores them. She storms up to Jeremy and spins him around, pushing him against the sink. She grabs his hands and SNIFFS them. She SNIFFS his face. Yes, he reeks of pot.

A look into his eyes reveal they’re bloodshot. Reefer red. Jeremy jerks away. Embarrassed in front of the OTHER GUYS.

**ELENA**
Great. First day of school. And you’re stoned.

**JEREMY**
No, I’m not.

Elena starts digging through his coat pockets, trying to find his stash. He jerks away, but she’s fast and tough. She has her hands inside his coat jacket, feeling his pockets.

**ELENA**
Where is it? Is it on you?

**JEREMY**
You need to chill yourself.

**ELENA**

She’s searching his back pants pockets now. A COUPLA GUYS continue to watch, LAUGHING. “Cavity search” “I’m next.”

**JEREMY**
There’s none on me. Stop it--

He pushes her away. But Elena doesn’t back down. She stands there -- determined.
ELENA
No, I’m gonna be all over your ass every single time, so before you take that next bong hit think to yourself, is it worth it? Is it worth the hell hath no fury of my crazy sister? Because I will be there to ruin your buzz every time. Got it?


Elena backs off a little. Did she go too far? Her anger gives way to hurt. She has nothing but love and concern for her brother.

ELENA (CONT’D)
I know who you are and it’s not this person. Don’t be this person.


JEREMY
I don’t need this.

He takes off, defiant, blasting out the door. Elena watches him go. Her face pained.

INT. CORRIDOR - HIGH SCHOOL

Stefan exits the office. We still have yet to see his face. We see his feet, shoulders, back of his head.

Bonnie and Caroline follow him. We notice OTHER STUDENTS turn and glance at the NEW KID. Reactions vary. He moves to a door. Just as he approaches it, it opens, revealing...

ELENA. She stops in her tracks when she sees Stefan. And, finally, we see his face.

He’s a gloriously, amazingly, epic-ly beautiful young man. Elegant and ageless, in a hanging on the wall of the Louvre kind of way.

He bumps into her. Steps back.

STEFAN
Pardon me.

He removes his sunglasses, revealing his gorgeous eyes. Looks at the door. Checking that it’s the Men’s Room.
Elena is mesmerized in the moment by his presence. He looks back to her.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
Is this the Men’s Room?

ELENA
Yes, I was...long story.

They both move at the same time, bumping again. She goes the other way, when he does too, they almost bump again. He stops and allows her to pass. She smiles, embarrassed.

Elena starts off, but she can’t help but turn back. The door slowly closes. But not before she locks eyes with him again.

ON ELENA -- Who was that guy?

TIME CUT:

INT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Elena is in class. The teacher, MR. TANNER, 40’s, drones on. History -- Civil War. Ugh.

MR. TANNER
Since our own home state of Virginia was a border state during the war, it played a significant role in the outcome...

Elena steals a glance to her right. Stefan is several desks away. He looks up, meeting her gaze. She quickly averts her eyes. When she dares to look up a moment later, he’s looking at her again. Two desks back, Bonnie stealthily sends a text.

Elena’s purse vibrates. She slides out her phone. FROM BONNIE: HAWT-E. STARING @ U.

She looks back to Bonnie and they share a smile. Then, she glances right and sees Matt staring at her. He looks away. She looks at Bonnie -- who shrugs.

EXT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - FIELD - DAY

Elena, Caroline and Bonnie approach the football field. They carry practice POM POMS.

CAROLINE
His name is Stefan Whitmore. He lives with his great-uncle in the old Whitmore Boarding House.

(MORE)
He hasn’t lived here since he was a kid. Military family. They traveled a lot. He’s a Gemini and has a scratched retina and that’s why he wears the shades inside.

BONNIE
You got all that in one day?

CAROLINE
I got all that in between bells after third period. So, bagsies. He’s all mine. I saw him first.

BONNIE
I say we both throw ourselves at him and whoever he picks gets him.

CAROLINE
That’s the same as saying he’s mine.

BONNIE
Ouch. Bitch.

Elena looks to the field. Sees the CHEERLEADERS warming up. The FOOTBALL TEAM running drills. Beat.

ELENA
You know what, guys? I’m gonna skip out.

CAROLINE
What do you mean? It’s Freshman tryouts.

BONNIE
It’s better than IDOL.

ELENA
You guys enjoy. I’ll catch up with you later.

Elena throws them a smile and takes off.

CAROLINE
You can’t just...

BONNIE
Let it go.

Bonnie motions to Caroline. Don’t make a big deal.
EXT. CEMETERY - LATE AFTERNOON

A sprawling, ornate cemetery filled with enormous mausoleums, and rows and rows of well-tended tombstones. This town is rich in history, and its dead are revered.

ELENA (V.O.)
Dear Diary. I made it. I got through the day in one piece.

Find Elena leaning up against a tombstone, writing.

ELENA (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Okay, so I wasn’t feeling the pom pom’s. But I think that could be a good thing...

A closer look reveals that the pair of tombstones are labeled GRAYSON GILBERT and MIRANDA SOMERS GILBERT. LOVING PARENTS.

ANGLE THROUGH A NEARBY CRYPT

Someone is watching Elena. Lurking. She looks up, noticing...

There’s a CROW perched on her mother’s tombstone. Large, black, still. It stares at her, like it knows her.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Okay...hi, bird.

It doesn’t move. Just watches her. Unblinking.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Not creepy or anything. Big black crow in a cemetery.

A slow, thick FOG creeps in, settling in around Elena. She notices it. Weird. She stands up.

ELENA (CONT’D)
And cue the fog. Jesus.

The crow still stares. Annoyed, she waves one hand at it.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Shoo...or whatever.

It doesn’t move. She looks at it. Then makes a sudden LUNGE for it. Startled, the crow flies away.

ELENA (CONT’D)
That’s what I thought.
She turns around and GASPS --- THE CROW IS ON THE TOMBSTONE
BEHIND HER. Its eyes burning into her. Her head whips in
the direction she saw it fly and then back to the tombstone.

ELENA (CONT’D)
How did ---

Freaked out, she bends over to pick up her bag, but the crow
suddenly takes flight again, fluttering its enormous wings.
Enter holds back a scream.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Screw you.

She briskly walks away. The fog is getting thicker...
murkier. And there’s the crow again, perched in a low tree.

She picks up her pace, almost running. The fog swirling
around her. She loses her bearings, trips over a vine...

She goes to the ground. Shit. She rights herself, wincing.
Have scruffed her leg. She looks back and sees...

THE FIGURE OF A MAN through the fog. What the...?

That’s it. Elena hauls ass. She takes off in the opposite
direction, running, racing through the cemetery when she...

RUNS SMACK INTO STEFAN. Elena SCREAMS.

STEFAN
Are you okay?

Elena scrambles back, freaked.

ELENA
Were you following me?

Confused, she looks behind her. Where the FIGURE was.

STEFAN
No. I mean, yes, sort of. I saw
you fall.

ELENA
(suspicious)
You like to lurk in graveyards?

STEFAN
I was visiting...I have family
here.

She sags. Embarrassed. Suddenly nervous in his presence.
ELENA
Oh wow. Tactless, I’m sorry. I’m not thinking clearly, it’s the fog, made me foggy and there was this bird and it was all very Hitchcock there for a second -- it was Hitchcock, right, the bird movie?
(beat, stopping herself)
I’m Elena.

Stefan smiles at her nervousness.

STEFAN
I’m Stefan.

ELENA
I know.

He reaches over and brushes her hair to the side. Pulls a small leaf from it. Elena almost trembles.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Thank you...

There’s something electric in this moment. As he pulls his hand away, Elena notices a RING ON HIS HAND. An antique. With a lapis stone at its center. We’ve seen it before.

ELENA (CONT’D)
(dry)
Nice ring.

STEFAN
Family ring. I know it’s weird.

ELENA
It’s just, there are rings and then there are RINGS.

Stefan stops suddenly, head tilting. As if smelling the air.

STEFAN
Did you hurt yourself?

Elena looks down and sees her pants are torn. She leans down and lifts her pant’s leg to reveal...

BLOOD COMING FROM A SMALL CUT. Stefan’s eyes FIXATE on it.

ELENA
Oh, yeah, look at that.
She inspects it. Blood drips down her ankle. Stefan can’t tear his eyes away. His breath gets ragged.

STEFAN
Get away.

ELENA
(looking up)
What ---

He spins away from her, hiding his face. Elena doesn’t see, but we glimpse something -- a vein pulsating? Something in his eyes? It’s so fast, we’re not quite sure.

STEFAN
(fierce)
I SAID GO.

Stunned and confused, Elena retreats a few steps. But then stops and looks back. Stefan is gone.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

EXT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - DUSK

A turn-of-century home set deep in the woods. A gorgeous arched window on the upper floor...A MALE VOICE. Stefan.

STEFAN (V.O.)
I lost control today.

INT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - STEFAN’S ROOM - DUSK

He sits at an old desk, writing in a journal.

STEFAN (V.O.)
In an instant. My veins were on fire, I couldn’t resist her.

INT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - BATHROOM - DUSK

Stefan stands under the streaming jets of his shower.

STEFAN (V.O.)
I never should have tried to enter her life. What would she do if she ever learned the truth? About me...and why I’m really here.

INT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - STEFAN’S ROOM - DUSK

Stefan, dry and shirtless, paces the room. Restless.

STEFAN (V.O.)
I should stay away. But I don’t know if I can.

He stops at his desk, picking up a book. It’s ELENA’S JOURNAL. He stares at it for a beat.

CUT TO:

INT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - STEFAN’S ROOM - DUSK

Fully dressed, Stefan steps to the ledge of the enormous window that lines the wall of his room and JUMPS...

EXT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...falling the fifty feet to the ground. He lands effortlessly. And heads off into the woods.
INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - BATHROOM - EVENING

Elena puts a bandage on her cut leg. Jenna stands in the doorway chatting with her.

JENNA
Maybe blood makes him squeamish?

ELENA
This guy is not the squeamish type. This guy has DANGER tattooed somewhere on his body.

Jenna eyes her watch.

JENNA
Aren’t you meeting Bonnie?

ELENA
I’m gonna stay in. I’ll call her.

JENNA
You should go. Don’t sit home. Keep it up. You’re doing good.

Elena smiles. Appreciates this. She puts the bandage box back in the medicine cabinet. She stops, pulls out a prescription bottle. She shakes it, opens it. Suspicious.

JENNA (CONT’D)
What’s the matter?

ELENA
Dr. Henderson prescribed these after the accident.
(off Jenna’s nod)
I took two.

She tilts the bottle so Jenna can see. It’s almost empty.

ELENA (CONT’D)
I’m gonna kill him.

JENNA
I got this one. He’ll be home soon. Let me handle it.

Jenna is resolute.
INT. MYSTIC GRILL - EVENING

A cozy neighborhood bar and grill. JEREMY is at a video game, playing and eating at the same time. Vicki, in a waitress apron, passes by. She barely acknowledges him.

AT A BACK BOOTH

Vicki sets down a burger plate in front of Matt. He’s sitting with Tyler.

She gives Tyler a side-long glance before walking away. Tyler subtly checks out her ass. Matt busts him.

MATT
Please tell me you’re not hooking up with my sister.

TYLER
I’m not hooking up with your sister.

MATT
(knows he’s full of shit)
You’re not an asshole, either.

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - BACK ROOM - EVENING

Vicki fills a tray with supplies. Jeremy enters the room.

VICKI
You can’t be back here.

JEREMY
What’s your deal? This summer you’re one way, school starts and you can’t be bothered.

VICKI
I’m ignoring you.

JEREMY
(challenging)
Ignoring implies caring enough to avoid.

VICKI
What implies total lack of interest? Look, Jeremy, I appreciate all the attention and the pharmaceuticals, but you can’t follow me around like a lost puppy.
JEREMY
When was the last time you had sex with a puppy?

Vicki looks to the dining room to see if anyone’s listening.

VICKI
Keep it down.

JEREMY
What does it matter who knows?

VICKI
Because I’m a senior and you’re not. I don’t wanna tell the world I deflowered Elena’s kid brother.

JEREMY
And deflowered and deflowered.

VICKI
We hooked up a few times in a drug-fueled haze. Now, back off before you ruin things with me and Tyler.

JEREMY
The guy’s a douche, he only wants you for your ass.

VICKI
Yeah? And what do you want me for?

She blows by. On Jeremy, pissed off and hurt. He exits...

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

...makes a beeline for the door. Vicki watches him go out of the corner of her eye.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elena grabs her purse and keys, heading out. She opens the front door to find...

EXT. ELENA’S HOUSE - VERANDA - NIGHT

...Stefan standing on her porch.

ELENA
(startled)
Oh.
STEFAN
Hi. Sorry. I was about to knock. (beat)
I wanted to apologize for earlier.
I know it was strange.

ELENA
That’s an understatement. How did you know where I lived?

STEFAN
It’s a small town. (then)
I thought you might like this back.

He hands over her journal.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
You must have dropped it in the cemetery.

ELENA
Thank you.

She’s wary, but intrigued.

STEFAN
I didn’t read it.

ELENA
You have more restraint than most people.

STEFAN
I wouldn’t want anyone to read mine.

ELENA
You keep a journal?

STEFAN
(simply)
Memories are important.

Elena knows this.

ELENA
Yeah. (re: the journal)
I’ll just...
She heads inside to put the book away in her school bag. Stefan lingers at the door. Eyeing the threshold. Unable to enter. Elena calls back to him.

ELENA (CONT’D)
You don’t have to stand out there.

Not exactly an invitation.

STEFAN
I’m fine.

She returns to the front door. He notices her purse.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
I’m sorry, were you going somewhere?

ELENA
I’m meeting my friend.

She stares at him. Considering.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Do you want to come?

He smiles at her. A smile you could get lost in.

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

Bonnie slides into the booth with Matt. Grabs a fry.

BONNIE
Five minute heads up. I’m meeting Elena.

MATT
How’s she doing? I can’t get a read.

BONNIE
Her mom and dad died. How do you think? She’s putting on a good face, but it’s tough. It’s only been four months. She needs time.

MATT
I get it. That’s what I’m gonna give her.

Suddenly Bonnie’s face shifts. He turns to follow her gaze.

AT THE FRONT DOOR
Elena and Stefan enter together. Matt’s look hardens. He quickly turns back around.

ON ELENA. She saw Matt’s reaction. She hesitates at the door for a second, uncertain.

ON MATT AND BONNIE

As Caroline appears at their booth. She’s staring at Stefan with Elena. She looks to Matt.

CAROLINE
Could you do something about your girlfriend? I’m getting really annoyed with her lack of respect.

MATT
She’s not my girlfriend.

Matt gets up. Just as Elena and Stefan arrive.

ELENA
Matt, have you met Stefan yet? He’s new and I was telling him how this was the spot.

Stefan holds out his hand. Pause. Matt shakes it.

MATT
It’s the only spot.

STEFAN
Hey, how ya doin’?

Matt returns to Tyler. Avoiding more awkwardness.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE – KITCHEN – NIGHT

Jeremy enters the kitchen from the back door. Jenna finishes setting the table.

JENNA
Great, you’re just in time for dinner.

JEREMY
You actually cooked?

JENNA
All your favorites.

Jeremy sits down. He looks at his plate, startled.
JEREMY
What is this?
The plate contains an assortment of pills, pot and various
accoutrements. All laid out like separate courses.

JENNA
I found the main course in your
sock drawer. The sides, courtesy
of your dress shoes. Oldest trick
in the book, by the way.

She points at a small bong.

JENNA (CONT’D)
Under the mattress.

Rolling papers.

JENNA (CONT’D)
DVD cases. We’ll save the girl-on-
girl porn you hid in Iron Man for
another conversation.

JEREMY
I can’t believe you went through my
room.

JENNA
Technically it’s my room. Your
parents left it to me, along with
the responsibility for you.

JEREMY
I guess that was their mistake,
wasn’t it?

Jenna exhales. Keeping her anger in check.

JENNA
Look. Four months ago I didn’t
even know how to keep a plant
alive. So I’m not pretending to be
some expert on parenting. Because,
let’s face it, I’m better at being
the cool aunt who looks the other
way. But the jig is up. School’s
started and I know how it can go
one way or the other for someone
like you. So we’re gonna go
textbook on this one.
JEREMY
Yeah, what’s that?

JENNA
You’re not leaving this house for two weeks. School, home, every day. And that’s law.

She’s firm. Intense. On Jeremy, not happy with Jenna’s new disciplinarian persona.

EXT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

Through the front window, we see a group of teens crammed around a table together.

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

Caroline and Bonnie sit across from Stefan and Elena.

BONNIE
Why Mystic Falls?

STEFAN
I was born here. I missed it.

CAROLINE
Parents?

STEFAN
Both my parents are dead.

Elena registers this. So does everyone at the table, with all eyes finding their way to Elena.

ELENA
That’s terrible. I’m sorry.

STEFAN
Thank you.

Something else that connects them. Caroline doesn’t like it.

CAROLINE
No siblings?

STEFAN
None that I talk to. I live with my great-uncle.

ANGLE ON TYLER AND MATT

Playing pool. Both of them very aware of Stefan’s table.
TYLER
They’re throwing looks. She’s into it.

MATT
Don’t want to talk about it, Tyler.

TYLER
Just sayin’, man. Looks like she’s coming out of her “I can’t be with anyone” phase. You might wanna try to get back in that before it’s too late.

MATT
You might wanna shut your mouth.

But Matt’s troubled by it. Tyler can tell.

TYLER
Watch this.

He heads for the booth just as Vicki arrives with a tray full of soda refills. He gives her the slightest nudge.

Her tray spills all over Stefan.

VICKI
Jesus, Tyler.

Elena gets up, glaring at Tyler. Bonnie and Vicki try to wipe up the mess.

ELENA
What the hell was that?

TYLER
(smirking)
Sorry.

Tyler stares at Stefan. Wanting Stefan to instigate the fight. But Stefan won’t take the bait.

STEFAN
It’s fine.

TYLER
Are you sure? Cuz I’d understand it if you were mad.

Stefan glares. But he still won’t take the bait.
BONNIE
Your shirt.

She tries wiping it off. But when she touches him, she stops. Her face clouds for a second. She looks up at him, slightly troubled. No one else picks up on it.

STEFAN
It’s only a shirt. It’s about time I get going anyway.

He looks at everyone. Poised. Polite.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
It was nice meeting you guys.

Then to Elena.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
Goodnight, Elena.

She smiles goodnight. Then, Stefan turns and exits. It takes a moment for Elena to shake it off. But then she turns to Tyler. Disgusted.

ELENA
Really nice.

Tyler ignores her, happy with himself.

INT. WHITMORE BOARDING HOUSE - STEFAN’S ROOM - NIGHT

Stefan is writing in his journal again. A KNOCK on his door breaks his reverie. An OLDER MAN, PETE (70’s) enters. He carries some papers.

PETE
I filled ‘em all out. If that school needs anything else, have them call me.

STEFAN
Thanks, Pete.

Pete sees Stefan’s conflicted face.

PETE
What’s wrong with you?

STEFAN
I think I’ve made a mistake exposing myself.
PETE
It was your choice. You wanted to be near her. To know her. Either leave or make the most of it.

He heads for the door. Turns back. Smiles.

PETE (CONT’D)
It’s just teen angst. You’d think after 200 years you’d know that, Uncle Stefan.

Pete exits. Stefan’s smile goes away. He can’t quite shake his turmoil. He goes to a big armoire. Finds the key, unlocks it.

Inside are his private KEEPSAKES and stacks of OLD JOURNALS. From the last two hundred years.

He pulls out one particular journal -- an older one.

Aged leather, thick paper, written in quill pen. He flips to a page. It’s a drawing of a girl. She looks identical to Elena. How is that possible?

Only a closer look reveals the inscription: Katherine, 1864.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

INT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Tanner is in the middle of a discussion. He’s a brittle, ornery man who is determined to “teach you” at all costs.

MR. TANNER
The Battle of Willow Creek. Took place right at the end of the War. In our very own Mystic Falls. How many casualties resulted in this battle? Miss Bennett?

BONNIE
Uh...a lot, I’m not sure...but like a whole lot.

MR. TANNER
Cute becomes dumb in an instant, Miss Bennett.

Bonnie shrinks in her seat. That wasn’t nice.

MR. TANNER (CONT’D)
Mr. Donovan?

Matt looks up. Uh-oh.

MR. TANNER (CONT’D)
Would you like to take this opportunity to overcome your embedded jock stereotype?

MATT
That’s okay, Mr. Tanner, I’m cool with it.

MR. TANNER
Elena. Surely you can enlighten your friends about one of this town’s most significant historical events.

ELENA
I’m sorry. I don’t know.

MR. TANNER
I was willing to be lenient last year, for obvious reasons, Elena. But the personal excuses ended with summer break.
Elena’s eyes widen. No one can quite believe Mr. Tanner went there. Suddenly, someone pipes up:

**STEFAN**  
There were 346 casualties, unless you’re counting the local civilians.

Everyone looks at him with surprise. How did he know that?

**MR. TANNER**  
You’re correct, Mr....

**STEFAN**  
Whitmore.

**MR. TANNER**  
Whitmore? Any relation to the original Mystic Falls settlers?

**STEFAN**  
(wry)  
Distant.

**MR. TANNER**  
Very good, sir, except there were no civilian casualties in that battle.

**STEFAN**  
Actually, there were twenty-seven. Confederate soldiers fired on a church believing it to be housing weapons. They were wrong.  
(beat)  
The Founders’ archives are stored in Civil Hall, if you’d like to brush up on your facts. Mr. Tanner.

Point, Stefan. Elena stares ahead, trying to hide her smile.

**EXT. MYSTIC FALLS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Lunchtime. STUDENTS mingle, eat, chatter. Matt and Tyler throw a FOOTBALL around with some other PLAYERS.

Elena and Bonnie sit together, snacking on chips. Bonnie points across the quad. To where Caroline walks with Stefan, chatting him up.

**ELENA**  
She’s relentless.
BONNIE
Like a pit bull. She’s inviting
him to the pop up party.

ELENA
There’s a pop up party?

BONNIE
Tonight. Caroline decided. She
wants to be the first one this
year.

ELENA
Why didn’t she tell me?

BONNIE
It just popped up. And she’s
pissed at you.

ELENA
Because of Stefan?

BONNIE
Because you breathe, Elena.
Because the teacher chose you to
erase the chalk board in the first
grade. Because it’s who she is.

They continue to watch as...

ACROSS THE QUAD
Matt hurls the football. He gets tackled right as he lets
go. The ball sails off course.

Elena sees that the ball is heading right for Stefan and
Caroline. She opens her mouth to shout a heads up...

...but at the last second Stefan turns, catching the ball
with ease. As if he heard it coming.

Elena and Bonnie exchange a look. That was hot.

ON STEFAN AND CAROLINE
As Matt jogs up to them. Begrudgingly impressed.

MATT
Nice catch.

STEFAN
(handing the ball back)
Thanks.
Matt heads back to his buddies.

ON ELENA AND BONNIE

BONNIE
So, party. You in? I mean, I understand if you’re not feeling it.

ELENA
I’m in.

Elena doesn’t tear her eyes away from Stefan. Bonnie registers this.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MYSTIC FALLS - THE FALLS - NIGHT

A stunning waterfall, lit up by the rich moonlight. We see how the town got its name.

Through the trees, a wide clearing. A BONFIRE roars in the center. TEENS enjoy their impromptu party.

Stefan arrives. He scans the sea of people. It’s crowded. He tilts his head, listening.

PUSH IN ON HIS EAR as it filters through the sounds of the party. The ROARING BONFIRE...a couple GIRLS rolling a joint. A GUY picking up on a GIRL...

A CACOPHONY of CHATTER. And then, the voice he’s listening for.

CAMERA PUSHES AT HIGH SPEED THROUGH THE PARTY, arriving at Elena. She’s talking to Bonnie.

BONNIE
It was more like a vibe.

ELENA
What kind of vibe?

BONNIE
Like a dangerous vibe. I debated even telling you.

ELENA
Aren’t you taking this psychic thing a little too far?
BONNIE
All right, maybe I’m not psychic, but I do have good intuition. And when I touched Stefan, I felt something.

BACK WITH STEFAN. He’s overheard their conversation. Not sure what to think of it.

He starts moving in their direction, but Caroline waylays him. She has a drink in her hand. Clearly not her first.

CAROLINE
You made it.

STEFAN
I did.

CAROLINE
Let’s get you a drink.

He’s too polite to say no. They head off. Across the way, Elena still talks with Bonnie. Unaware that he has arrived.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jenna works on her laptop, papers spread out all around her. She rubs her eyes, bleary. Gets up.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - HALLWAY/JEREMY’S ROOM - NIGHT

Jenna knocks, then opens Jeremy’s door.

JENNA
I’m ordering pizza. What...

She realizes Jeremy’s not there.

JENNA (CONT’D)
Unbelievable.

EXT. BONFIRE - NIGHT

The party is raging. And Jeremy is right in the center of it, helping himself to a drink at the keg. He sees Vicki and makes a beeline for her.

VICKI
(dismissive)
Is that for me?

She takes the drink from his hand. He lets her.
JEREMY
What’s got you so screwed up? I know my problem, but what’s yours? Mom? Dad? That golden retriever brother of yours?

She LAUGHS. Takes another drink.

VICKI
Don’t read into me. Sometimes a crack whore is just a crack whore.

JEREMY
Why do you talk that way about yourself?

VICKI
It’s a joke.

JEREMY
Lacking in humor and self esteem. And, for the record, sex is not your calling card. Not with me. We had fun this summer and you know it and it sucks that you can’t admit it.

BAM! Suddenly, Jeremy is RAMMED FROM BEHIND. By Tyler. It knocks the wind out of Jeremy. Who almost keels over.

Tyler is there to LAUGH HIMSELF SILLY.

TYLER
Now why is it I always see you hovering around this beauty? (to Vicki)
Does he think he has a chance?

Vicki locks eyes with Jeremy. There’s a connection there. However brief. Then, Vicki LAUGHS.

VICKI
Yeah, right...

Together, Tyler and Vicki saunter off as Jeremy watches.

ON ELENA AND BONNIE

BONNIE
No sign of Stefan?

ELENA
Mr. Danger Vibe?
BONNIE
All right, all right, I take it back.

ELENA
Can your psychic powers tell me if he’s coming?

BONNIE
Go ahead, make fun of me. I’m sure the Druids were laughed at too.

But Bonnie closes her eyes, concentrating. Tipsy. Elena watches her, amused.

ELENA
Is anything happening?

BONNIE
Just give me a minute. I’m supposed to concentrate...

ELENA
You need a crystal ball. Wait --

She grabs a beer bottle from the ground. She places it in Bonnie’s hands. They touch. Suddenly, Bonnie’s face shifts. She grabs Elena’s wrist.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Ow. Easy --

Bonnie stares into nothing. Like she’s in a trance. Elena pulls away -- snapping Bonnie out of it.

BONNIE
Okay, that was weird.

ELENA
Ya think? What happened?

BONNIE
I don’t know. I’m drunk. It’s just, when I touched you, I saw a crow.

Elena stops cold.

ELENA
What?

BONNIE
Yeah, I saw this black crow and...
ELENA
What else?

BONNIE
(remembering)
I felt scared -- or more like I should be scared...because the crow brings death. Wait, that’s not it...the crow brings the man and the man brings death. Yeah, that’s it.

Elena is disturbed. For that matter, so is Bonnie.

BONNIE (CONT’D)
I need a drink.

She heads off. Elena turns around. Stefan stands right in front of her.

ELENA
Oh...

STEFAN
I did it again, didn’t I? Sorry.

He smiles at her, charming and sheepish. Then notices her face.

STEFAN (CONT’D)
You’re upset about something.

ELENA
It’s nothing. My friend...she thinks she’s ---
(shaking it off)
Never mind. Hi. You’re here.

She seems glad to see him. As is he to see her.

STEFAN
I’m here.

ACROSS THE BONFIRE
Jeremy throws back a drink. Drains it. Then, looks over to see his sister Elena with Stefan across the way. He ducks out of sight.

He moves through the crowd, recognizing his Stoner friends. He heads over -- just as a GIGGLING Vicki disappears into the woods with Tyler. They’re both drunk.
ON ELENA AND STEFAN

They stroll through the party, not really going anywhere, just being together. The FIRE CRACKLES behind them, casting a romantic glow.

ELENA
You’re kind of the talk of the town.

STEFAN
Am I?

ELENA
New guy, tragic past. Very mysterious.

STEFAN
How do you know it’s tragic?

ELENA
You lost your parents.

To her it’s that simple. Stefan nods, agreeing.

STEFAN
What about you? What’s your sad story?

ELENA
What makes you think I have a sad story?

STEFAN
We met in a graveyard.

ELENA
Technically, we met in the Men’s Room.

They both smile. Then, she turns to him quietly.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Last Spring, my parents’ car went off a bridge into the lake. I was in the backseat. I survived. They didn’t. That’s my story.

Silence.
STEFAN
Thank you for telling me.
(then)
You’re right. It’s tragic.

ELENA
Yeah...it is.

On both of them, united by tragedy.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jeremy is shit-faced. He stumbles through the woods. He finds a spot, unzips and pees.

He can hear a COUPLE making out. He quickly finishes and zips up -- moving towards the NOISE. Through trees and brush, he comes upon...

VICKI AND TYLER

He has her up against a tree. They’re all over each other.

ON JEREMY -- completely bummed out. He starts to leave when he hears...

VICKI
No way, Ty.

ON VICKI AND TYLER

He’s laughing, enjoying himself. It’s all fun and games with him. Vicki pushes him away with little success.

VICKI (CONT’D)
I am not having sex against a tree.

TYLER
C’mon, it’ll be hot.

VICKI
For who? Not going to happen. Not here like this. No, no, no...

But, Tyler is persistent. Aggressive, even.

VICKI (CONT’D)
Ow, now that hurt.

Jeremy comes out from the trees.

JEREMY
Leave her alone.
Tyler pulls back. A little breathless.

    TYLER
    You’re starting to get on my nerves, Gilbert.

    VICKI
    Just go, Tyler, get the hell away from me.

Tyler gathers himself. Playing it cool.

    TYLER
    Vicki Donovan says no. There’s a first.

What a dick. He heads off. Vicki adjusts her clothing.

    VICKI
    I didn’t need your help.

    JEREMY
    Seems like you did.

    VICKI
    He was just drunk.

    JEREMY
    I’m drunk. Am I throwing myself on you?

    VICKI
    No, you’re worse. You wanna talk to me. Get to know me. Really, truly, deeply. See into my soul. Be dazzled by my intelligence. And screw and screw and screw until you’re done with me.

Beat. Jeremy stares at her. Thrown by her drunken and very honest outpouring.

    JEREMY
    Is that what you think?

    VICKI
    It’s what I know.

And with that Vicki takes off through the woods.
EXT. BONFIRE - NIGHT

Stefan and Elena are sitting by themselves, away from the crowd.

They see Caroline with Bonnie nearby. Caroline is trying not to look at them, but she can’t help herself.

**STEFAN**
I like Bonnie. She’s seems like a good friend. Very loyal.

**ELENA**
Yes, the best.

**STEFAN**
You might have to explain Caroline to me.

**ELENA**
She’s one of my oldest friends. She’s just playing some role she thinks she’s supposed to. As seen on TV. But it’s not really her.

**STEFAN**
And Matt? Who can’t keep his eyes off of us.

Elena looks around. Sure enough, Matt is with a GROUP OF GIRLS, but he keeps glancing their way.

**ELENA**
Friends since pre-school. Good friends. But, somewhere along the way we had this notion we should be more than that, so we started to date. It was comfortable, but not...

**STEFAN**
Passionate.

**ELENA**
No, it wasn’t passionate.

Elena looks directly into his eyes. Then, she leans over and touches his face, brushing his bangs aside. A current moves between them. It’s potent. Stefan takes a deep breath. Struggling a little.

**STEFAN**
Are you thirsty?
ELENA
A little.

STEFAN
Me too. Here, let me.

He takes her cup and then walks off, disappearing into the crowd. Elena waits, a little confused by his abrupt exit.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Vicky is walking drunkenly through the brush. A THICK, MOVING MIST begins to swirl around her feet. In moments the ground is covered by a blanket of fog.

She looks around. The fog is everywhere. Rising to waist level. A RUSTLE OF LEAVES makes her spin around.

VICKI
Jeremy?

The BLACK CROW SWOOPS down from the trees. Flying by her.

VICKI (CONT’D)
Jesus.

Her eyes dart up to the trees. What the hell was that? Suddenly, WHOOSH. She’s YANKED down, disappearing.

A BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM. And then SILENCE.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

EXT. BONFIRE - NIGHT

Elena approaches the keg. Looking around. She doesn’t see Stefan anywhere. But Matt’s there.

MATT
Looking for someone?

She doesn’t know what to say. He pours a cup of beer, offers it to her. She takes it. Thank you. An awkward silence.

MATT (CONT’D)
Elena, I’m not so good with the awkward.

Elena nods. She’s not either.

MATT (CONT’D)
It’s not us. It never has been. That was the cool thing. We were always easy.

ELENA
Yes, we were--

MATT
You know this isn’t the way I want things to be. But what I want isn’t as important as what you need. I’m your friend, Elena. So, I’m here. For you. Okay?

A long silence. Elena smiles softly. Grateful. Matt smiles too. There’s a special bond between these two.

ACROSS THE FIRE

Caroline sees Stefan heading for Elena. Waylays him.

CAROLINE
There you are.

She moves closer. She’s drunk and forward.

CAROLINE (CONT’D)
Have you been down to the falls yet? It’s really cool at night, I can show you...if you want.

STEFAN
Are you drunk?
Caroline GIGGLES.

    CAROLINE
    Very drunk. C’mon, let’s go, if
    the water’s warm we can...

    STEFAN
    It’s not going to happen.

    CAROLINE
    We can stay here if you want.

    STEFAN
    You and me. We’re not going to
    happen. I’m sorry, Caroline.

Caroline is stung. Not accustomed to rejection. He gives
her a polite smile and walks away.

He heads for Elena, leaving Caroline in the dust.

ON STEFAN AND ELENA

As they come together. Elena’s amused.

    ELENA
    I was wondering who abducted you.
    Now I know.

    STEFAN
    Is she like this with all guys?

    ELENA
    You’re fresh meat. She’ll back off
    eventually.
    (noticing something)
    You’ve got to be kidding me.

FOLLOW HER LOOK

Jeremy is stumbling through the crowd. Hammered.

    STEFAN
    What is it?

    ELENA
    My brother.

    STEFAN
    The drunk kid?

    ELENA
    That’s the one. Excuse me?
STEFAN
You want help?

ELENA
Trust me. You don’t wanna witness this.

Elena hurries off. She sees Jeremy heading into the woods. Follows him.

EXT. WOODS – NIGHT

He weaves into a couple making out against a tree. The GUY pushes him away.

MAKE-OUT GUY
Bounce, moron.

JEREMY
My apologies.
(under his breath)
Douchewheel.

He stumbles down the path. Elena is gaining.

ELENA
Jeremy. Jeremy!

He keeps moving deeper into the woods. Calling out.

JEREMY
I don’t wanna hear it.

ELENA
Too bad.

She picks up her pace. Jeremy tries to run, pushing through the brush. He suddenly TRIPS and falls. Over a BODY.

It’s Vicki. Her eyes are wide open. Staring into nothing. Blood is everywhere.

JEREMY
Holy shit. Vicki.
(shaking her)
VICKI.

Elena reaches them.

ELENA
Oh my god.
Suddenly Vicki lets out a RAGGED GASP. It's a horrifying sound. Her hand GRABS Jeremy. Her eyes pleading for help.

EXT. BONFIRE - NIGHT

ELENA
Somebody help!!

ANGLE ON ELENA as she comes out of the woods. Jeremy is carrying Vicki in his arms. Everyone begins to take notice. Matt pushes through the crowd.

MATT
What the hell -- Vicky!

He races to help his sister. Instant panic. Chaos. A DIN OF VOICES as everyone reacts. Bonnie calls 911, Matt takes Vicki, lays her down. OTHERS crowd her, trying to help. Tyler is freaked.

TYLER
What happened to her?

On Stefan, staring in shock at the sight. PUSH IN ON HIS FACE as ONE VOICE cuts through the all else.

ELENA
(tunneled)
Her neck. Something bit her. It’s bad, she’s losing a lot of blood.

Stefan is stunned. He slowly backs away. Freaked out.

Matt, tending to Vicki, catches a glimpse of Stefan’s face. He shakes it off, focused on his sister. But he’ll remember it later.

Stefan lets himself get swallowed up by the crowd. And then, with everyone’s attention elsewhere, he RUNS.

INT. WHITMORE HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Stefan races into the house. Pete is surprised by the ferocity of Stefan’s entrance.

PETE
What’s going on?

STEFAN
You said it was quiet here. That I was the only one.
PETE
Mystic Falls hasn’t been active in years. I’m certain of it.

STEFAN
A girl was attacked tonight.

PETE
Do you think it was...?

But Stefan doesn’t respond, he’s already up the stairs. Pete watches. Worried.

INT. WHITMORE HOUSE - STEFAN’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stefan enters his attic loft to find the huge bay window open. Curtains blowing. He stops. Senses something amiss.

He walks slowly across the room towards the window when...

A BLACK CROW COMES DARTING THROUGH. Stefan ducks, as the crow disappears into the rafters. Crossing back and forth, up and down. Manic.

Stefan watches it flutter about madly -- not seeing the FIGURE THAT APPEARS IN THE WINDOW BEHIND HIM. But, then Stefan stops in his tracks. Sensing it. Slowly, he turns and comes face to face with--

A DARKLY HANDSOME MAN. (23)

Stefan’s eyes burn with distaste.

STEFAN
Damon.

The Man’s piercing eyes glitter smugly.

DAMON
Hello, brother.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

INT. WHITMORE HOUSE - STEFAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The CROW SITS on the window sill watching...

Stefan pace across his bedroom floor. While Damon can be seen through the bathroom door, washing up.

STEFAN
When did you get here?

Stefan is very pointed and reserved around his brother. While Damon is just the opposite. Damon is deliberately light. Casual. Endless charm.

DAMON
I couldn't miss your first day of school.

STEFAN
How did you find me?

Damon stops. Looks at his brother. Really? Do I really have to answer that?

DAMON
Your hair's different. I like it.

STEFAN
It's been 15 years, Damon.

DAMON
Time flies. Thank god. I couldn't take one more day of the 90's. That horrible grunge look. It didn't suit you. It's important to stay away from the fads, Stefan. Always opt for timeless.

Damon dries his hands. Was that blood he was washing away?

STEFAN
Why are you here?

DAMON
I missed my brother.

STEFAN
You hate small towns. It's boring. There's nothing to do.

DAMON
I've managed to keep busy.
Beat. Damon smirks.

STEFAN
You almost killed that girl tonight.

DAMON
Ya know I like the pill-poppers. Nice buzz. Don’t worry, I made it look like an animal. They’ll blame a bear or mountain lion. You’re safe.

STEFAN
You didn’t come all the way back to Mystic Falls just to play games.

DAMON
Maybe. Maybe not. I would ask you the same question, but I’m fairly certain the answer is all summed up in one word: Elena.

Stefan’s jaw clenches at the mention of her name. Damon grins. He knows he’s hit his target.

EXT. MYSTIC FALLS - ACCESS ROAD - NIGHT

Matt climbs into the back of the AMBULANCE before it pulls away. POLICE question the remaining PARTIERS.

An ANIMAL CONTROL UNIT pulls in.

Bonnie comes up to Elena. Her face tense and drawn.

BONNIE
We’re gonna go mainline coffee and wait for news.

ELENA
I have to get Jeremy home.

Bonnie nods, understanding. Elena starts to go but senses Bonnie is very withdrawn. Haunted.

ELENA (CONT’D)
Bonnie? What is it? Are you okay? Don’t freak yourself out with this psychic stuff.

Bonnie nods.
BONNIE
I know, I know...but, I’m getting
this crazy feeling that whatever
happened tonight...is just
beginning.

Elena stares at her friend. What is she talking about?

ON JEREMY

He sits under a tree. Glassy eyed. Watching the scene
unfold before him. He watches the AMBULANCE take off. He
sees Elena walking over to him.

ELENA
Let’s go.

Jeremy staggers to his feet, silently. Together, they walk
towards the road. Suddenly...

TYLER APPEARS -- ATTACKING JEREMY.

TYLER
You sonofabitch. Why did you leave
her?

Elena tries to break them apart. But Tyler’s too big, he has
Jeremy on the ground, straddling him, choking him.

TYLER (CONT’D)
You were the last one with her.
You left her in the woods.

ELENA
Tyler, stop. Get off him.

Suddenly, TWO COPS appear -- they pull Tyler off Jeremy.
Jeremy sits up. Elena looks at her brother, but he’s staring
at the ground. Guilt-ridden.

INT. WHITMORE HOUSE - STEFAN’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Damon moves around the room, perusing Stefan’s books and
pictures, etc.

DAMON
I suppose I should go down and say
hi to Pete. Are we calling him our
great uncle? So much clutter.
Do you save everything?

Stefan is at his desk, closing his journal, putting it away.
DAMON (CONT’D)
She took my breath away -- Elena.

Stefan turns to his brother.

DAMON (CONT’D)
She’s a dead ringer for Katherine. Is it working, Stefan? Being next to her? Being part of her world? Does it make you feel “alive”?

STEFAN
She’s not Katherine.

DAMON
No? Let’s hope not. We both know how that ended.

Stefan’s eyes narrow. His anger flaring. He reins it in. But Damon sees it. Smiles.

DAMON (CONT’D)
Tell me something, brother. When was the last time you indulged?

Stefan says nothing.

DAMON (CONT’D)
Really? When was the last you had something stronger than a squirrel?

Stefan is disgusted by his talk. By his ribbing.

STEFAN
Stop it, Damon. I know what you’re doing and it’s not going to work.

DAMON
Yeah? C’mon, don’t you crave a little? Let’s do it. Together. You and me, I saw several little tarts tonight...

STEFAN
Stop.

Damon WHACKS him on the head. A playful but hard thunk.

DAMON
Whaddya say? Let’s cut to the chase and go straight for Elena.
THUNK. He pops him again. Stefan tries to dodge him, but Damon keeps coming at him.

**STEFAN**
Stop it.

**DAMON**
Make me. You know you want to.

Damon keeps taunting his brother, pushing him across the room, knocking his head.

**DAMON (CONT’D)**
I bet you can barely resist her now. Imagine what her blood would taste like. I can.

He gives Stefan another tap, but he’s gone too far. Stefan whirls on him. Eyes rimmed with blood, veins protruding from under his translucent skin. Full of fury.

**STEFAN**
I said stop.

He rushes Damon, literally leaving the ground. They both go crashing through the enormous window.

**EXT. WHITMORE HOUSE – NIGHT**

Shards of glass rain down as they land on the ground with a thud.

**END OF ACT FIVE**
ACT SIX

EXT. HOUSE - SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Stefan lies flat on the ground. SHATTERED GLASS all around. He rises, rubs his head. He’s back to himself. He stands. Looks up to the attic. Sees the broken window. Turns to find Damon leaning against a tree.

DAMON
I was impressed. I give it a six. Missed on style, but I was pleasantly surprised. Really good with the whole face ARRGGGGHHH.

STEFAN
Stay away from her.

DAMON
You just proved you can’t make requests. So, this Elena. You think she’d go for an older man?

STEFAN
Everything is fun and games with you. But wherever you go, people die.

DAMON
That’s a given.

STEFAN
Not here. I won’t allow it.

DAMON
Where’s your ring?

Stefan stops cold. Looks to his hand. His ring is missing. Instant panic. Anger.

DAMON (CONT’D)
Couple of hours, the sun comes up, and poof. Ashes to ashes.

Stefan tries to keep his anger in check.

DAMON (CONT’D)
Relax. Here.

Damon holds his hand out. The ring lies in his palm. We notice Damon has the exact same one on his hand. Stefan goes to him, takes the ring, slips it on when...
DAMON GRABS HIM BY THE THROAT - COMPLETELY PICKING HIM UP AND THROWING HIM ACROSS THE YARD WITH INHUMAN STRENGTH.

He hits the side of the house. Freefalls to the ground. Damon walks to where Stefan lies. For the first time, Damon’s face turns PURE EVIL. Without question -- he can go there.

   DAMON (CONT’D)
   You should know better than to think you’re stronger than me. You lost that fight when you stopped feeding on people. I wouldn’t try it again -- brother.

And, instantly, Damon is back to his charming self.

   DAMON (CONT’D)
   I think we woke Pete up.

Damon walks away, leaving Stefan in a crumbled heap.

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

Bonnie and Caroline nurse cups of coffee. Caroline is still visibly drunk.

   BONNIE
   Are you sober yet?

Caroline pauses -- thinks about it. Shakes her head.

   CAROLINE
   Nope.

   BONNIE
   Keep drinking. I gotta get you home. I gotta get me home.

Caroline is lost in drunken thought. Beat.

   CAROLINE
   Why didn’t he go for me? How come the guys I want never want me?

   BONNIE
   I refuse to answer that. You may remember it.

   CAROLINE
   (answers herself)
   I’m inappropriate.
   (MORE)
I always say the wrong thing. Elena always says the right thing.

Caroline hiccups.

She doesn’t even try. And he picks her. She’s always the one everyone picks. And I work so hard and I’m never the one...

Her voice trails off. As she sits there in her stupor. Sad. Vulnerable. Bonnie doesn’t know what to say.

Elena pulls the car into the drive. She and Jeremy sit there. Neither in a hurry to get out of the car. Then...

People are gonna stop giving you breaks, Jer, because they don’t care anymore. They don’t remember our parents our dead. They’re too busy living their lives. The rest of the world has moved on. You have to try too.

Like you? I’ve seen you at the cemetery. Writing in your diary. Is that you moving on?

Silence. Elena shrugs. She’s at a loss.

Mom and Dad wouldn’t want this.

Then it’s a good thing they’re not here.

And with that Jeremy gets out of the car. Still angry, still restless. Still on a dangerous path. And from the look on Elena’s face, she knows it.

Vicki lies in her hospital bed. Spots of blood seep through the bandages on her neck. Matt sits by her side. Worry etched on his face.

Vicki’s eyes flutter open. Matt leans in, relieved.
MATT
Vick. It’s okay. You’re okay.

She looks at him. Voice raspy.

VICKI
Matt...

MATT
What did this to you?

Her hand finds his, gripping it tightly. Eyes full of fear. She struggles to speak -- her wounds excruciating. In the faintest whisper, she manages to speak one word...

VICKI
Vampire.

INT. ELENA’S HOUSE - HALLWAY/JEREMY’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jenna is standing in the hallway when Jeremy exits the bathroom. She looks at him with disappointment. But love, too. Lots of love.

Jeremy gives an apologetic shrug. Then, disappears into his bedroom. It’s enough for Jenna. For now.

ELENA (V.O.)
Dear Diary. I couldn’t have been more wrong.

Jeremy falls back onto his bed. Rolls over. His eyes fall on a picture of his parents. A long look.

EXT. ELENA’S HOUSE - VERANDA - NIGHT

Elena sits out on the veranda, curled in a blanket, writing in her journal.

ELENA (V.O.)
I thought that I could smile and nod my way through it. Pretend like it would all be okay.

INT. WHITMORE HOUSE - STEFAN’S ROOM - NIGHT

Stefan returns to his room. Takes stock of the mess of broken glass.

His voice takes over from Elena’s.
STEFAN (V.O.)
It seemed like a good plan. Let go of who I was. Create a life as someone new. Someone without the past.

ELENA (V.O.)
Without the pain.

Stefan and Elena’s voices join.

STEFAN/ELENA (V.O.)
Someone alive.

INT. MYSTIC GRILL - NIGHT

Bonnie heads to the bathroom, leaving Caroline alone.

ELENA (V.O.)
But it’s not that easy. The bad things stay with you.

STEFAN (V.O.)
They follow you.

A MAN is sitting at a nearby table, his back to the camera. When Bonnie crosses, he turns, eyeing Caroline.

It’s DAMON. Caroline catches his stare. The looks begin...

STEFAN (V.O.) (CONT’D)
You can’t escape them. As much as you want to.

EXT. ELENA’S HOUSE - VERANDA - NIGHT

ELENA (V.O.)
All you can do is be ready for the good, so that when it comes, you let it in. Because you need it.
(beat)
I need it.

Elena stands, opens the front door. Then, from offscreen.

STEFAN
Elena.

She turns. He’s standing on her front walk.

ELENA
Stefan.
He walks towards her, joining her at the door. Stopping just inches from the threshold. She stares at him, drinking in his face.

STEFAN
I know it’s late. But I needed to know that you were okay.

Elena has to smile to herself.

ELENA
You know, for months that’s all anyone has wondered about me. If I’m okay.

STEFAN
What do you tell them?

ELENA
I tell them I’ll be fine.

STEFAN
Did you ever mean it?

ELENA
Ask me tomorrow.

Their eyes connect. Two lost souls drawn to each other. Elena shivers.

ELENA (CONT’D)
It’s warmer in the house. We can talk...

She walks away from the door, but once again Stefan can’t enter. Until Elena turns...

ELENA (CONT’D)
Don’t you want to come inside?


STEFAN
Yes.

He steps into the house. Elena has invited her vampire in.

As the door shuts...

FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT