

TEASER

EXT. GLADE - NIGHT

NOONTIDE (19), pale human girl, is seated in front of a bonfire. She wears a dark purple hoodie and a black denim witch's hat over a dark grey beanie. Shoulder-length silver hair hangs loose from beneath the beanie, with a sheen as to seem almost metallic. Her irises are colorless and crystal clear. They reflect the light of the bonfire as she addresses persons unseen.

NOONTIDE

Things are going pretty great. In summer stock theater this year I was given not one, but *two* roles. Gods, it was so much fun. I did different cartoony voices for each one. Had a blast with those roles. And get this... when the local county paper reviewed the show, I actually got mentioned! They wrote: "...dual-role played by the scene-stealing Noontide Vance." If you don't know, 'scene-stealing' is a *huge* compliment. So I got my first ever review *and* it was complimentary.

She raises up a brown glass bottle and gives a toasting gesture before taking a hearty swig.

NOONTIDE (CONT'D)

Also, I was just cast in a holiday show. I'll be playing the young version of the main character. It's only for two flashback scenes, but still... I'm playing the main character briefly. So yeah, things are going really well right now.

She takes another swig.

Across from Noontide sits three girls of a similar age and garb: Two HUMANS with crimped hair and an ELF with multiple piercings, including on the points of each ear. All three are clearly high as dragon flight, with bloodshot eyes and vacant expressions.

ELF

(stifled)

Tight...

(MORE)

ELF (CONT'D)
 (exhales cloud of smoke)
 Good to have a hobby.

She passes a joint along to the next in the rotation.

NOONTIDE
 Oh, well, I'm hoping it's the start
 of a profession.

ELF
 Profession? You're getting paid?

NOONTIDE
 No, not for these shows. They're
 just community theater.

HUMAN 1
 Shouldn't you move out west for
 that for acting career? Or maybe up
 in Nortland Kingdom?

NOONTIDE
 Uh, yeah, eventually.

HUMAN 2
 I bet the fact that you're a
 thaumaturge probably helps getting
 those theater gigs. Especially with
 the gift of *glamouring*.

HUMAN 1
 Ha, yeah. In terms of magical
 ability, it doesn't get any more
 theatrical than that.
 (to Noontide)
 Do they ever get you to do any
 glamours in the shows?

NOONTIDE
 (agitated)
 No. All magical effects are
 performed by the stage mages.

Noontide's crystal clear irises suddenly begin to glow pink.

HUMAN 1
 (chuckling)
 Oh shit, speaking of *glamouring*.

She points towards Noontide.

HUMAN 1 (CONT'D)
 Your eyes are doing that thing.

Noontide cups her hand over her eyes to see the reflected light.

NOONTIDE

Damnit!

ELF

Are we embarrassing you right now?
Is that why it's glowing?

NOONTIDE

Emotions, yes. Embarrassment, no.
It's fine. Probably just the
alcohol. Let's just change the
subject. That'll help.

HUMAN 1

Hey, how about you do some glamours
for us.

HUMAN 2

Oo, yes! What was the one you used
to do at parties in high school?
Like, when we were all passing out.

HUMAN 1

The fuckin' fireflies!

HUMAN 2

Yes!
(to Noontide)
Do the fireflies, Noon.

Noontide smirks, her glowing irises already fading. She then lifts up her bottle in another toasting gesture. Hundreds of yellow-green motes of light suddenly appear around the group and immediately begin to blink and waft about.

The three applaud and cheer in a very stoned manner.

ELF

I just remembered...

The elf stands up, sly grin spread across her face.

ELF (CONT'D)

Do your fireball.

NOONTIDE

Ah, no, come on. My fireballs suck.
They still don't look like actual
fire. Just a wavering ball of li-

ELF

(interrupts)

I don't give a shit. You want to be an entertainer, but won't even indulge your friends when they want to be entertained? Come on, get up!

Noontide huffs out a muted sigh then gets to her feet.

ELF (CONT'D)

Sweet. Alright...

(points to her own nose)

Right here, square in the face.

Noontide nods, then turns her right palm face up. A wavering blotch of orange light suddenly appears above her palm. She winds back, half-mimicking martial arts movement, and thrusts her right arm forward in a pushing gesture.

The ball of light flies forward, catching the elf square in the face.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD SEQUENCE

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT I

INT. NOONTIDE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Noontide lays outstretched above the covers in bed, staring up at a starfield spanning her bedroom ceiling. The stars all twinkle with vivid realism.

She shifts her gaze up and to the right. A shooting star streaks across her ceiling. She smiles and nods her head approvingly. Lazily raising her hand and giving a slight flickering gesture, a glowing crescent that resembles the moon appears on the right side of the starfield.

She flutters her fingers while twisting her wrist repeatedly, each time the crescent grows slightly larger. She then drops her hand and glares intensely. The crescent waxes until it becomes a circular semblance of a full moon.

Noontide grins, then gives a sweeping gesture with her arm. The moon and starfield instantly fade to darkness. She rolls to her side, wrapping herself up in her quilt, and gives a single nod of her head. Her *fireflies* suddenly appear, filling her bedroom.

She stares at them for a moment before closing her eyes.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS' BATHROOM - DAY

Noontide stares at her reflection in the bathroom mirror. Sniffing, she reaches for the nearby roll of toilet paper and tears off a length of it. Bringing it to her nose, she suddenly stops and inspects it.

Excess bits of paper cling from the torn perforated edge. She plucks at them, stops for another inspection, then continues to pluck at a stubborn piece before finally blowing her nose.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Noontide rounds the kitchen island heading towards the coffee machine atop a far counter. She bumps up against the island with her right hip, stumbles, but doesn't break her stride. She stops just short of the coffee machine, turns around, and heads back to the corner of the island where she bumped her right hip. She bumps her left hip against it intentionally.

Grabbing a small wand off of the island, Noontide aim it towards a large ornately-framed mirror above the refrigerator and gives a flick of the wrist.

The weather channel appears across the surface of what had just been a reflective mirror pane. Noontide rubs at the small runestones embedded in the thick hard-plastic base of the wand, flipping through multiple programs before finally coming across a reality show and stopping to watch.

In the show, a STYLISH WOMAN (20s) with white irises and hair is being interviewed. The lower-third in the bottom left corner of the mirror pane reads: HELENA MELDRIC, NECROMANCER. A logo graphic on the bottom right side of the pane reads: HOUSE OF MAGIC. The interviewee talks for a few moments before...

YOUNG LADY'S VOICE (O.S.)
House of Magic? Seriously?

Noontide whirls around. Standing in the entrance to the kitchen is GRICELDA (19), obvious twin sister to Noontide. The only difference between the two are their hair and eye colors. Gricelda's hair is pitch black, with a sheen reminiscent of polished obsidian, and her irises are a dark magenta.

NOONTIDE
Nope.

She sets the remote wand back down on the kitchen island.

NOONTIDE (CONT'D)
All yours.

She heads back towards the cabinets.

Gricelda raises her hand, fingers outstretched. The remote wand suddenly flies into her hand. She catches it effortlessly, points it towards the mirror, and starts flipping through the channels.

GRICELDA
Though the notion of living and working together with a bunch of other thaumaturges is definitely intriguing, it's not enough to compel me to watch that stupid show.

Noontide selects a coffee pouch from a nearby cabinet branded: KAILACH WINTER BLEND, ELVEN COFFEE.

NOONTIDE
True. And yes, being the two in our friends group was kinda cool, but also... meh.

GRICELDA
Meh and also whatevs.

NOONTIDE
*Meh, whatevs, and sometimes even
 ugh.*

GRICELDA
 So true.

NOONTIDE
 (snickers)
 And of our friends group, we're the
 only two that could understand the
 conversation we had just now.

GRICELDA
 Ha! Definitely true. I always tell
 people in Fueganco that being a
 twin is its own sort of magic.

NOONTIDE
 Oh you're making friends out there?
 You didn't mention that.

GRICELDA
 No no, just coworkers. I'm still at
 that arcade slash bowling alley.
 That place sucks.

NOONTIDE
 Damn, sorry, yo.
 (pause, prepping coffee)
 You want to get down on some of
 this coffee?

GRICELDA
 Absolutely.

Gricelda stops changing channels, leaving it on a cartoon, and sets the remote wand back down on the island. She then makes a pinching gesture with her left hand and pulls back her arm. A cabinet door near Noontide swings open. Noontide doesn't pay it any mind. Gricelda reaches up with her right hand. A coffee mug slides off the shelf, drops a few inches but ultimately begins to float in the air - heading towards Gricelda - bobbing up and down all the while.

NOONTIDE
 You're going to break another mug.

GRICELDA
 Nah, I've been practicing.

The mug arrives at arm's reach to Gricelda. She snatches it out of the air and sets it down on the counter, taking a seat as well.

GRICELDA (CONT'D)

How about you? How's your glamours coming along?

NOONTIDE

Eh, some have improved recently. But I'm focused on cultivating other talents.

GRICELDA

Acting? But you're not in any theater classes this semester, right?

NOONTIDE

Right. But I've been in a few plays.

GRICELDA

Why not do both?

NOONTIDE

I don't know, just getting elective classes out of the way, I guess.

GRICELDA

And skipping a bunch.

NOONTIDE

What? Did I tell you that.

GRICELDA

Rey did. She says you skip a lot.

NOONTIDE

Compared to Rey. But I wouldn't say *a lot*, just *sometimes*.

GRICELDA

She also said you still make random road trips to go visit our friends.

NOONTIDE

(defensive)

What is this? Why are you all of sudden grilling me right now?

Noontide's irises begin to glow green.

GRICELDA
 Sorry, just making sisterly
 conversation. Didn't mean to get
 you riled up.

NOONTIDE
 (fluster)
 I'm not riled up.

GRICELDA
 I triggered your *eyeshine*.

Noontide turns to face the refrigerator. Green light reflects
 off of the metallic door.

NOONTIDE
 Damn it.

She sighs through grit teeth.

NOONTIDE (CONT'D)
 No, you know what-? This is good.
 Perfect timing.
 (gestures to her own face)
 The fact that I haven't out grown
 my *eyeshine* yet means that I'm
 still young. *We're* still young. We
 got plenty of time to get adulthood
 figured out.

Gricelda gives a big theatrical shrug.

GRICELDA
 I suppose. But at the same time...
 some things in life we have to wait
 on, others are waiting on us.

A beat.

GRICELDA (CONT'D)
 Damns, that was pretty good. I'll
 have to remember that one.

She stands up.

GRICELDA (CONT'D)
 Anyway, I gotta use the loo.
 Here...

She tosses the remote wand to Noontide.

GRICELDA (CONT'D)
 Choose whatever.

She exits. Noontide stares for a moment then flicks the wand at the kitchen mirror, turning it off.