

Voodoo Child

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

We see three extremely stylish, expensive cars drive into the Walpole High School parking lot and park in three prime faculty spaces. Three super fashionable, perfectly accessorized senior girls holding coffees get out of these cars and playfully grin at one another. These are CHRISSIE, JESSIE, and LISSIE, the most intimidating of all high school cliques.

Mr. Connor drives up, preparing to park in his space, but finds that it has already been taken by these girls. He looks at them and gives them a nervous smile.

MR. CONNOR
(waving uncomfortably)
Hey girls.

The girls nod in acknowledgement and coolly walk up the front stairs to the school as other students enter the building.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

We see the three girls walking through a crowd of admiring students in the senior hallway. A group of FOOTBALL PLAYERS watch the girls as they pass.

FOOTBALL PLAYER #1
Ow ow!

Lissie excitedly begins to approach the football players, but Chrissie grabs her by the arm and pulls her back into their trio. Jessie, the most meticulously dressed of the three, strides down the hall with a distinctly developed runway walk. Lissie, the group's shameless flirt, winks at the football players and blows the occasional kiss. Chrissie, the trio's understood leader, walks confidently in the middle, flicking back her shiny, flowing hair.

SCHOOL HALLWAY - OPPOSITE END OF HALLWAY

We see an artsy-looking, oddly-dressed freshman girl carrying an art folder. This is BELINDA BLINKS, our protagonist. She scurries down the hallway, trying to be unnoticed.

Suddenly, the three girls collide with Belinda. Chrissie's coffee spills all over Belinda's shirt and converse shoes.

CHRISSIE
Oh my god! You freshman loser!
Watch where you're going!

Chrissie turns frantically to Lissie and Jessie.

CHRISSIE (CONT.)

Is it in my hair? Did the little
freak get it in my hair?

Jessie lets out a blood-curdling scream.

JESSIE

My new Hollister skirt! It's
ruined!

We see a miniscule speck of coffee on Jessie's skirt. We see
Belinda with her whole front drenched in hot coffee.

BELINDA

(mumbling bitterly)

Sorry.

CHRISSIE

Nice job Belinder.

Belinda scurries away towards the history hallway.

INT. STAIRWELL

Belinda walks up the stairs to the history wing, facing a
constant stream of students who are walking in the opposite
direction and will not move for her.

INT. HALLWAY

Belinda walks awkwardly through the hallway to her history
class in her soaking clothes. Unlike the three popular
seniors, she is bumped, jostled, and completely ignored by
the boys and other students. She flips back her hair, much
like Chrissie's motion, but her glamour is cut short as she
is blindsided by the teachers' bathroom door, which Ms. Milne
has just opened. She recovers from the hit and enters her
history class.

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM

Belinda takes her seat near the back of the class and sulkily
begins to doodle. Within moments a small, energetic boy with
spiked hair and a strikingly uncool vintage backpack drops
into the seat behind her. This is TOPHER, Belinda's best
friend. He leans over her shoulder and begins excitedly
talking at Belinda.

TOPHER

Did you watch the American Idol
special last night?

(MORE)

TOPHER (cont'd)
Can you believe that Gretchen got
kicked off?

BELINDA
(inattentively)
Oh yeah, um, to be honest, I
stopped watching that show after
Hernando was voted off.

TOPHER
Belinda, that was like, last
season. You need to learn to let
stuff go.

Belinda shrugs and Topher looks around distractedly and
changes the subject.

TOPHER
So big art show tonight. Is that
Magnum Opus sculpture of yours
going to be on display?

BELINDA
Yeah, I worked really hard on it,
so I'm hoping it wins at least
something.

TOPHER
I want my picture of that mountain
lion wearing a--

A HISTORY TEACHER enters the class and cuts Topher off.

TEACHER
All right class, today we will be
studying the Salem Witch Trials.
If you turn to page 116, you will
see how voodoo dolls were used to
seek 'sweet' revenge on
townspeople.

Topher notices Belinda's coffee-stained outfit for the first
time.

TOPHER
Oh, so I'm guessing you had a run-
in with them.

BELINDA
(angrily nodding)
I'm so sick of it. My shirt is
soaked with coffee. They aren't
even supposed to have coffee in
school!

(MORE)

BELINDA (cont'd)
 They mock my lunch box, they make
 fun of my socks, Topher! My rainbow
 socks!

We see Belinda wearing a knee-high pair of rainbow toe socks. The entire class shoots offended looks at her hideous socks as she wiggles her toes.

TOPHER
 (unconvincingly)
 Yeah, they're... beautiful. But
 seriously, Belinda, don't worry
 about them, they're not worth the
 energy, and they've got nothing on
 you.

Belinda shrugs and is clearly not convinced.

INT. ART ROOM - AFTER SCHOOL THAT DAY

We see Mrs. Hampe cheerfully moving about the room and admiring her students' art work. Belinda enters the room and greets Mrs. Hampe.

BELINDA
 Hi Mrs. Hampe.

MRS. HAMPE
 Hello Belinda. I am so looking
 forward to putting your piece in
 the show tonight. That contrast is
 really fantastic.

Belinda smiles appreciatively and takes her sculpture down from inside a secured closet. With loving care, she dusts the piece off with a cloth.

MRS. HAMPE
 That looks superb. Why don't you
 take that over to Ms. Allison's
 room and put it with the other
 finished products.

BELINDA
 Sure thing.

Belinda carefully picks up her sculpture and walks out of the room.

INT. ART HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Belinda walks towards Ms. Allison's room, carrying her piece with pride.

Suddenly, an enormous designer bag knocks the sculpture out of Belinda's hands, and the work lands in two pieces on the floor. Then, three pairs of high heeled shoes stomp across the sculpture, crushing it into many pieces.

Belinda watches this scene with an expression of wide-eyed horror. We see Chrissie, Jessie, and Lissie turn and smirk at Belinda.

CHRISSIE
(insincerely)
Oops. Sorry. We're so clumsy
sometimes.

Chrissie tosses back her hair, and the three girls turn, laughing, and walk away.

Belinda stands perfectly still as her eyes swell with tears. She then dives to the ground and picks up the miserable remains of her sculpture. Ms. Hampe comes out of her classroom and stands in the hallway. Belinda, consumed by despair, turns to address her.

BELINDA
Look at what they did! It's, it's
ruined! I spent months working on
this, and now it's completely
destroyed!

Ms. Hampe helps pick up the last remains of Belinda's project that are on the ground. She regards the destroyed piece of art with a hopeful expression.

MRS. HAMPE
It's not so bad. It's very...
abstract now. Very Jackson
Pollock.

Belinda looks utterly defeated and stands before Mrs. Hampe with her lip quivering and her eyes tearing up. She stares off in the direction that Chrissie, Jessie, Lissie.

BELINDA
I'm never going to be able to put
this in the show. It'll never win
anything. I, I hate them!

MRS. HAMPE
Oh, don't worry about it. If those
girls don't have anything better to
do with their lives than tamper
with other people's art, then you
are the real winner, Belinda.

Belinda begins to furiously walk away. Mrs. Hampe watches her as she goes.

MRS. HAMPE

Sometimes you just have to let things go.

EXT. BELINDA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We see an average suburban home with one light on in an upstairs window. This is Belinda's house. It is late during a stormy night, and there is thunder and lightning. The single light turns off.

INT. BELINDA'S ROOM

We see Belinda turning in her sleep uneasily. She appears to be dreaming.

TEACHER (V.O)

Voodoo dolls were used to seek 'sweet' revenge.

Belinda sits bolt upright and seems shaken. Her eyes wander to the paper mache materials on her desk. She crosses the room and sits down at her desk and lays the history book beside her. She turns and looks back at the crumbled remains of her sculpture and then begins reading her book. While reading, she begins working feverishly with her sculpture materials.

MONTAGE - BELINDA GATHERS HER VICTIMS' SPECIMENS

BELINDA (V.O)

The women accused of witchcraft in Salem were said to have gathered materials from their greatest enemies and performed rituals to create dolls that would control the actions of these enemies. These dolls were pure evil.

We see Chrissie brushing her long mane in front of the girl's bathroom mirror. She then exits the bathroom, leaving a clump of her hair in the sink. We then see that Belinda has been sitting underneath the sink, and she reaches up and grabs a strand of Chrissie's hair.

Jessie carefully places her clothes in a gym locker and walks away. Belinda quickly opens Jessie's locker and removes one of her high-heeled shoes.

Lissie, seated in front of Belinda in class, applies lipstick and then kisses a love letter she has been writing. She then places the lipstick back in her purse. Belinda covertly reaches into Lissie's bag and takes the lipstick.

We see Belinda, sweating but finished, hold up three voodoo dolls baring the likenesses of Chrissie, Jessie, and Lissie. Just as she lifts up a pin as if to poke one of the dolls, her mother knocks on her door loudly.

MOM

Belinda!

Belinda quickly pulls the pin away and shuts off her CD players, which has been blaring epic, horror movie music.

BELINDA

Sorry Mom!

Belinda puts down the CD, which reads "epic horror movie music," and the voodoo doll of Lissie and goes to bed. As she turns off the light, we see Lissie's doll fall off the desk.

INT. LISSIE'S BEDROOM

We see Lissie fall out of bed with an audible grunt.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

Belinda walks into school with the three dolls just barely visible in her bag.

INT. MATH HALLWAY

Belinda and Topher are walking through the hallway and see Jessie talking sweetly to an underclassman PUNK GIRL.

JESSIE

Omg, those are the cutest boots I have ever seen! Love it!

PUNK GIRL

Oh, thanks!

The punk girl smiles and walks away from Jessie. Jessie's smile fades and she immediately turns to a nearby football player.

JESSIE

Omg, those boots are boot.

Belinda watches this scene with disgust and hurries off towards the bathroom.

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM

Belinda holds up Jessie's voodoo doll and, looking around to make sure she is alone, dunks the doll's body in the toilet, and then drizzles it with soap.

She hears laughter in the hallway and exits the bathroom, stuffing the doll back into her bag as she goes.

INT. MATH HALLWAY

Belinda is shocked to see Jessie standing in the hallway, her clothes soaking wet and covered in soap.

BELINDA
(quietly to herself)
Oh my god, they actually work.

Jessie is confused and angrily embarrassed. People in the hallway snicker and crack jokes, and Jessie flees the scene.

INT. CHILD DEVELOPMENT CLASS - LATER THAT DAY

Belinda sits down near Topher. All of the students are enthusiastically chatting about Jessie's "accident."

TOPHER
Did you hear about Jessie? It was epic.

BELINDA
(happily)
No, I must have been in the bathroom when it happened.

TOPHER
Oh man, the one time one of those girls finally gets what she deserves, you miss it. That's tough.

We see a large FOOTBALL PLAYER enter the classroom. A nerdy-looking boy in a Battlestar Gallactica shirt looks up and excitedly greets him. This overly-confident nerd is NATHANIEL.

NATHANIEL
What up bro! What's bubblin?

FOOTBALL PLAYER
Shut up Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL
That's cool man. Whatever you say
bro.

Lissie enters the room and immediately begins blowing kisses to every boy she passes. Nathaniel prepares himself for Lissie's arrival. She takes a seat in front of him, and he takes a deep puff of his inhaler before turning to address her.

NATHANIEL
Greetings my fellow earthling! I
was hoping you would join me in a
galactic conquest of Jalepenos
Taqueria tonight.

LISSIE
As usual Nathaniel...

Lissie makes a vomiting motion and turns back around to face the front of the class.

Belinda notices the striking resemblance between Nathaniel and a stuffed animal frog lying nearby. She has an idea. She reaches for the frog and covertly makes the Lissie voodoo doll kiss the frog toy.

At this same moment, Lissie suddenly turns back around to face Nathaniel and lunges towards him, knocking him out of his seat. The pair fall to the floor and Lissie passionately kisses Nathaniel. Nathaniel, gleefully shocked at his luck, gives the thumbs up to the football player as Lissie continues to kiss him. The classroom breaks into applause and hollers appreciatively.

As soon as Belinda separates the toy frog and the doll, Lissie emerges, horrified. Nathaniel takes a quick puff from his inhaler.

LISSIE
Oh! Eww! Get off me you toad!

NATHANIEL
But, I, I didn't--

Belinda once again makes the two kiss, and Lissie lunges back towards Nathaniel, screaming during the kiss. The rest of the class watches in total amusement and no one notices Belinda's actions.

INT. CAFETERIA - LATER THAT DAY

Belinda enters the cafeteria and sits with a small group of other freshmen friends. Belinda notices that Chrissie and a number of other popular seniors are sitting at the other end of the table. One FRESHMAN GIRL muses over the effects of karma on the popular clique.

FRESHMAN GIRL

It's karma, it has to be. I mean, how else can you explain two of the three most perfect members of the senior class losing it.

Belinda half-listens to the conversation at her lunch table while also eavesdropping on the discussion near Chrissie.

CHRISSIE

Oh my god, I know! That girl is so weird. I mean, who dyes their hair blue? Is she like a smurf or something? I use four types of conditioner on my hair, and I rotate the brands according to a 9 day cycle. It's, like, so important.

Belinda rolls her eyes and walks towards the condiments table. She takes the Chrissie voodoo doll out of her bag and squirts mayonnaise and ketchup into the doll's hair. She then returns to her lunch table to find Chrissie in hysterics.

CHRISSIE

(shrieking)

What theæ who did this? This isn't funny!

The freshman girls at Belinda's table laugh appreciatively.

FRESHMAN GIRL

You know something, I could get used to this. *Belinda grins mischievously.*

- action

MONTAGE - BELINDA TORTURES THE POPULAR CLIQUE

Belinda wraps the Jessie doll in a plastic bag; we then see Jessie looking uncomfortable in a black trash bag at school.

We see Belinda dressing the frog stuffed animal in a little tux; we then see Lissie scowling in a prom picture with Nathaniel.

Belinda pours green paint in the Chrissie doll's hair, and then we see Chrissie with a green Mohawk.

Finally, we see Belinda unscrewing the wheels on three fashionable Barbie cars.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING ABOUT ONE WEEK LATER

We see Chrissie, Jessie, and Lissie all miserable get off the school bus. Belinda watches them and smirks.

INT. ART ROOM

Belinda enters the room and sits down next to Topher, who greets her with a vague nod.

BELINDA

So, did you see Chrissie's new hair style? Someone should tell her that the beehive hasn't made a comeback. Don't you think it looks insane?

TOPHER

(unenthusiastically)

Yup, it looks pretty insane. It looked pretty insane yesterday too when you asked me that same question.

BELINDA

Oh...

Mrs. Hampe approaches Belinda with a worried expression.

MRS. HAMPE

Belinda, I noticed that I still don't have the latest abstraction piece from you. It was due on Tuesday, and I just wanted to make sure that everything was all right with you.

BELINDA

Oh, yeah sorry, things are fine. My project is coming along.

INSERT - THE PROJECT

We see an untouched lump of clay with a piece of wire protruding from the top.

BACK TO SCENE

Belinda looks back at Mrs. Hampe with an unconvincing smile. Mrs. Hampe, unimpressed, frowns at Belinda's work.

MRS. HAMPE

Well, I was just asking because you are usually much more responsible than this, and I thought you should know when you fail a project.

Mrs. Hampe walks away from the table, and Belinda watches her go with an indignant expression; Topher, a disappointed one.

BELINDA

What is her problem? I mean, I'm going to get it done. Why is she one my case?

Topher turns to look at Belinda and angrily slams his books on the ground.

TOPHER

Gee, I don't know Belinda. Maybe she's on your case because you can't seem to focus on anything but Chrissie, Lissie, and Jessie's new, sucky lives. Or maybe it's because you've abandoned the things you used to love.

BELINDA

(defensively)

What? How can you not be ecstatic that those girls have finally gotten what they had coming? Their lives have completely changed for the worse; how is that not awesome?

TOPHER

I don't know, I guess it was awesome at first. But now I just sort of feel bad for them. And they aren't the only ones who have changed. You haven't hung out with me in almost a month. I had to go to Nathaniel's Pokemon snap tournament all by myself last night.

BELINDA

I had, um, stuff to do. God Topher, you're making such a big deal out of this.

TOPHER
Whatever Belinda.

Topher picks up his books and walks away from the table.

INT. CAFETERIA - NEXT DAY

We see Belinda talking manically to a group of girls at her lunch table.

BELINDA
Seriously, Topher is so weird.
Everybody else thinks that the
curse of the senior girls is funny.

In the background, we see Lissie chasing Nathaniel with her arms outstretched.

BELINDA
He has no appreciation for karma.

Jessie, dressed in a gothic outfit with an Iron Maiden shirt and face makeup, approaches Belinda's table looking morose.

JESSIE
Um, excuse me...?

Belinda, never looking at Jessie, coldly reaches into her bag and fiddles with something. Suddenly, Jessie trips, spilling spaghetti sauce and chocolate milk all over her outfit. A few students laugh while Jessie's eyes fill with tears.

JESSIE
(muttering through tears)
I just wanted to know where you
found the straws.

Jessie flees from the lunchroom and Belinda looks over guiltily at a nearby table. She sees Topher glare at her and shake his head sadly. The bell rings, signaling the end of lunch.

INT. HISTORY HALLWAY

Belinda walks down the hallway and turns into the bathroom.

INT. HISTORY WING BATHROOM

Belinda enters the bathroom and is surprised to find Chrissie standing in front of the mirror sobbing. Chrissie's hair is messy, uneven, and has been cut short.

Belinda nervously approaches her.

BELINDA

Hi Chrissie. Um, is everything
Okay?

CHRISSIE

(furiously)

Okay? Two days ago, I woke up with
my head looking like this! does
that seem okay to you?

Belinda looks into her bag, seeing that, indeed, Chrissie's
voodoo doll has had its hair cut off.

BELINDA

Well, at least its only hair,
right?

CHRISSIE

(between tears)

You don't understand. My hair is
everything! I have a job as a
Pantene hair model lined up after
graduation. I can't get into
college with my grades, and without
my hair, I don't know what I'm
going to do.

Chrissie wipes her eyes and exits the bathroom, leaving
Belinda to guiltily stare at her own reflection.

EXT. BELINDA'S HOUSE - SUNSET OF THAT NIGHT

We see Belinda rushing into her house.

INT. BELINDA'S ROOM

Belinda determinedly enters her room and sits down at her
desk. She types the key word "voodoo dolls" into Google and
takes a deep breath while she waits for the results. She
looks momentarily at her crumpled sculpture and then clicks
on a link.

BELINDA (V.O)

The only way to destroy a voodoo
doll is to set it on fire.

Belinda leans back, rereading this sentence, and then gathers
her coat and bag and leaves the room.

INT. ART ROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. Hampe is working at her desk when there is a sudden
knock at the art room door to the outside.

Mrs. Hampe opens the door to find Belinda standing outside carrying her school bag.

BELINDA

Hi Mrs. Hampe.

MRS. HAMPE

Why, hello Belinda. Now what are you doing here at 9 o'clock at night?

BELINDA

There's something I need to do. I was wondering, can I use the sculpture kiln?

INT. SCULPTURE ROOM

We see Belinda standing over the fiery kiln holding her three voodoo dolls. She drops the dolls one by one into the fire and watches as they are consumed by flames. Mrs. Hampe approaches her and watches the dolls burn.

MRS. HAMPE

So, what exactly are you doing?

BELINDA

Letting things go.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING A FEW DAYS LATER

Belinda walks up the front sidewalk to the school. She runs to catch up to Topher, who is walking a few paces ahead.

BELINDA

Hey Topher. Can I walk with you?

TOPHER

(sarcastically)

Are you sure you don't have to go check Chrissie's hairstyle today?

BELINDA

No, I've decided to forget about those girls. I have better things to be doing instead of worrying about them.

Topher nods silently, trying to hide his happiness that Belinda has returned to her old self. Belinda focuses on changing the subject.

BELINDA

I hear that the American Idol finale is on tonight. Maybe you could come over and watch it with me?

TOPHER

I hear Sanjiya is going to blow away the competition with "It's Raining Men." And I beta

Topher is cut off when he and Belinda cross paths with Chrissie, Jessie, and Lissie, all of whom have returned to their prior fashionable statuses. The clique stops abruptly as Chrissie signals the clique to pause. Chrissie then hands Belinda and Topher copies of herself in a Pantene Pro-V magazine ad.

CHRISSIE

Here you go, losers? Jealous Belindork? Why don't you go cry about it and paint a picture about your feelings.

BELINDA

(smiling serenely)

Yeah, I am jealous. I mean, all I have is art, family, and my friends. We're pretty much the biggest losers ever, right Topher?

Topher grins and nods. The trio of girls look at each other with confusion and begin to turn around.

BELINDA

(sweetly)

Oh, and by the way Chrissie. I love what you've done with your bangs.

Chrissie's face falls and she quickly reaches up to touch her hair. She and her two friends uneasily turn around and scurry into the building, with Chrissie muttering to them.

CHRISSIE

(nervously)

What's wrong with my hair? Is something wrong with my hair?

Belinda and Topher laugh and then walk into the building together.

FADE OUT.