

My name is Dr. Insidious Faith and I am a vampire.

Yeah, that's right. I have become a creature of the night, a night stalker preying on humanity for my next meal. My own unlife thirsts jealously after the crimson river which marks those not like me, the living. Night after night I wander these hallowed halls of higher learning, pretending to still be that genius mortal professor trying to get as much published as possible before my mortal coil catches up to me. All so I can get that next fix of college co-ed.

Actually, now that I think of it, not much is changed, except for that whole, you know, living thing. I still stay up late at night writing articles average people don't read and overpriced textbooks students resent and sell. I still have an aversion to the sun which means I'm still just as pale as I was while I was breathing. I still chase after pretty little college freshmen, wide eyed first time away from home and wanting to try everything. Yup, that's me. Mortal or immortal, my life revolved around school.

I did really well in school as a kid. It may have been my birthdate, which was late September. I missed the cutoff date for getting into kindergarten so when I got in the next year I was already several months more developed than most my classmates. This caused my teachers to put me into more advanced classes the older I got. So while I really was not any more talented than the others in my class, by the time I was in high school the differences in education paid off.

The second thing that helped was my home life. I lived very comfortably in a gated community controlled by, what I now know was, a cult (this might have something to do with why my parents thought it was a good idea to curse a little boy with the name 'Insidious'). This cult believed that the greatest virtue a person could possess was the ability to have faith in things. Having a great deal of faith

based on as little evidence as possible was the quickest way to advance within the community. I was amazing at this. Anything anyone told me, I could convince myself almost instantly was completely true despite any evidence to the contrary. My teachers loved me for this. They wouldn't be bothered by 'why?' questions. Everything they said was taken to be true to the core of my being.

In fact, that's why I went to college in the first place. One of my teachers mentioned I belonged in an Ivy League school, so I immediately started applying, knowing to my very core that I should be in an ivy league school. I ended up in New York City as one of the 7,900 undergraduates currently attending Columbia University. There I did a triple major in Economics, Sociology, and Art History. That last one was a product of a pretty, and quite topless brunette seeing a doodle on a cocktail napkin I had left on my nightstand and telling me I should be an art major. I had broken my conformist trait enough to at least add history onto it.

After doing the undergrad thing I was told I should be in graduate school and I should go to the best school possible that would pay my way completely. Ann Arbor wouldn't pay my way, Princeton said they didn't want me, which left me to choose between Stanford and Berkeley. Since Berkeley came first in the alphabet, and the tour guide was this pretty blonde post grad with a tendency to moan in such a compelling way when I kissed her on that spot just below her neck, I decided the University of California – Berkley would become my future alma mater.

So, traveling from one coastal extreme to the other, I ended up right in the middle of the Free State, or what was left of it. It was here I became quite the activist. The cause wasn't that important to me but it seemed like every time I did something for a particular cause the group would pull me further in. That's where I met my first vampire. He made quite an impression on me, though for the life of me (unlife of

me, whatever....) I can't remember his name. He was on some kick about turning California into another Carthage. He disappeared one night. Never heard from him again.

It was one of the others that eventually embraced me. It was a few days before I graduated. I had a job offer from Carnegie Mellon as a professor of Sociology and was planning on moving back to Pennsylvania just after graduation to take up the post. I hadn't mentioned it to any of the others yet.

There were three of them, two males and a very attractive female whose temperament and passion quite matched the feiry red of her hair. That night they seemed desperate. They kept saying that the one who disappeared had broken some sort of tradition and disturbed a masquerade of some sort. They said they needed to make me one of them so I could help fight. I wasn't much of a fighter but I'm a sucker for a short haired girl with a pretty smile, though I didn't know she wasn't technically alive. Besides, I wasn't doing anything the next day, I had the whole weekend off.

We spent a week holed up in the basement of that pub, occasionally luring one of the unsuspecting patrons down to satisfy my new cravings. During that time my companions told me all kinds of things about life as a vampire and the dreams of a new Carthage. I was appropriately attentive for a good six nights. On the seventh I decided it was time for me to leave. I had to get to CMU after all.

So, without mentioning it to the others I walked out. The next day they met the Final Death at the hands of whoever had been hunting them and I was well on my way to setting myself up in the wine cellar of the house that the university had provided.

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