

BRANDY ROW

FIRST SERIES IN
'THE HEART OF STONE SAGA'

EPISODE ONE: THE KIMBERLIN

FADE IN:

1/1 EXT. CHESIL BANK, PORTLAND: DAWN JULY 1830

1/1

PANORAMIC SHOT OF CHESIL BANK COASTLINE FROM PORTLAND HEIGHTS, SETTING THE SCENE DURING THE TITLES, FINALLY CLOSING IN ON VIOLET ALLEN, 15-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER OF FISHER-FOLK, STRIDING ALONG THE BEACH.

Violet moves with urgency from the shelter of the bordering cottages picking her way speedily across the large pebbles. She pauses and scans THE BEACH. THE CAUSEWAY IS DESERTED. She continues northward, towards the mainland.

She encounters MATTHEW STONE, (fisherman and smuggler) MENDING NETTING sitting beneath a LERRET to her right. THE CLINKER BOAT is propped up on end, resting on its stern, forming a concave shelter. Violet turns her face to the sea, pretending not to notice him.

CLOSE UP OF MATTHEW - SWITCH TO (MATTHEW'S P.O.V.)

Matthew is working, whilst relaxing on A PILE OF SACKING with his back supported by the WOODEN BENCHES OF THE BOAT. He surveys the ocean intermittently for any sign of MACKEREL.

(O.S.) Hearing the crunch of the pebbles Matthew pauses and listens. As Violet passes, Matthew watches her until she is out of sight, deciding to wait until she returns.

LATER (MATTHEW'S P.O.V.)

Violet returns from her errand. RICHARD DRYER (Kimberlin) is leaving the island ON HORSEBACK and Matthew watches as the paths of Dryer and Violet converge. Dryer raises his TALL HAT and Violet drops a slight curtsey. Violet pauses, turns back to watch Dryer and then continues to climb higher up the pebble ridge. At her approach Matthew looks up.

VIOLET ALLEN
(Flippantly)
Morning, Matthew.

MATTHEW

What did that Kimberlin have to say to you, then?

VIOLET ALLEN

Nothing. He just said 'Good morning' and took off his hat to me.

(Demonstrates with an imaginary hat and grins)

MATTHEW

You wouldn't be so cheerful if he'd noticed what you were up to.

VIOLET ALLEN

Ah, but he didn't did he?

MATTHEW

No you were lucky, but what if he'd a sudden urge to bed a pretty maid, as is the way with them Kimberlins.

Continuing to weave the BONE NEEDLE through the MESH.

VIOLET ALLEN

Do you think I'm a pretty maid then, Matthew?

MATTHEW

Don't stray from the subject, I'm serious. You were quite isolated out there and if he'd a mind to bed you, you'd have been done for.

Glance falls to her hemline slowly moving up to look her in the eyes.

He'd have discovered what other delights you had hidden among your petticoats.

Flushing, Violet turns to face the breeze.

VIOLET ALLEN

I wonder which would be worse, to be ravished, or transported?

MATTHEW

(Warning)

Don't you be too flighty, Mistress Violet 'tis not only you as 'ud pay the price.

VIOLET ALLEN

Don't you concern yourself on my account, Matthew Stone, I'm not a child no more, I'll soon be 17 and I know how to look out for myself.

(Flashes a smile)

MATTHEW

That charming smile of yours will get you into trouble just as quickly as it will get you out of it, you know. I shouldn't like to see you come a cropper, Vi, you don't seem to admit to anything bad in folk and there are those who'd do you harm, make no mistake.

VIOLET ALLEN

(Scornfully)

What on earth are you prattling on about, Matthew? You talk like you're a man of the world, but you're only 3 years older than I am.

MATTHEW

(Voice low, eyes
penetrating hers)

I might surprise you one day, Violet. I could teach you a thing or two, don't you worry.

(He pauses, then
adds quietly)

You might even enjoy it.

VIOLET ALLEN

(Looking
thoughtfully into
his eyes)

I might even look forward to it.

(Uncomfortable
silence)

Anyhow I can't be standing here all day. Me Ma will wonder where I'm to. I'll be seeing you, Matthew.

1/2 INT - VIOLET'S HOME, BRANDY ROW - LIVING ROOM: DAY

1/2

VIOLET ALLEN

(Calling as she
enters)

Can you help me Ma, please... with the bottles at the back?

Mary Allen enters from THE YARD, wiping her hands in a WORN TOWEL. Violet busies herself with the LARGE POCKETS, STITCHED AT MEASURED INTERVALS all the way round the underside of her PETTICOATS, containing BOTTLES OF FRENCH WINE. One by one they draw them out. At last free of their weight, Violet stretches and relaxes.

VIOLET ALLEN (cont'd)

I was obliged to curtsy to a Kimberlin out on Chesil, and I was so afraid the bottles would clang against the shingle; it was a considerable relief when he passed on his way.

MARY ALLEN

Violet 'tis no game we're playing, could mean prison or worse for a good many of us, if any one of us were caught, so don't you treat it like just a bit of fun.

VIOLET ALLEN

I wasn't, Ma. I said I was scared, but he didn't see nothing, so I was a bit pleased with myself, that's all.

Violet looks at her mother's anxious face
Don't worry about me, Ma. I'm careful enough.

MARY ALLEN

(Shrugs and shakes
her head)

I hope so Vi, I hope so.

Violet & Mary Allen move a SMALL SIDEBOARD away from the wall, and lift out a LOOSE BLOCK OF STONE. They place the bottles into the concealed hiding place and replace THE SIDEBOARD and the LAMP ETC stood on it.

VIOLET ALLEN

(sighs with relief)

Thank goodness that's out of sight.
Now we can relax.

MARY ALLEN

No, Violet. That's where you're wrong, we can never relax. Times are changing and since the more desperate Venturers have become so violent; it isn't as easy as it used to be.

(MORE)

MARY ALLEN (cont'd)

A lot of folk have turned against us, which makes it a much more risky business. Also there's the new coastguard men to watch out for. You have to be more careful than ever before.

VIOLET ALLEN

Ma, you mustn't worry yourself. You don't understand the thrill I get from each adventure. But I'm no feather-head, and I've too many tricks up my sleeve to get caught, have no fear on that score.

MARY ALLEN

(Exasperated)

Violet, you're so young and cocksure of yourself. How do you know what I will or will not understand? Do you think that I was never young like you?

Mary Allen grabs up her TOWEL and marches out.

1/3 **EXT. CHESIL BEACH DAY: EARLY EVENING**

1/3

Violet and her friend MOLLY BYATT are sitting near the shore line dipping their bare feet into the waves as they reach them. Molly leans back on her elbows relaxing.

MOLLY BYATT

I've been looking forward to this all day.

VIOLET ALLEN

I know what you mean. It's lovely to be free of the chores at last.

Violet relaxes beside her friend.

Moll, you didn't happen to see a Kimberlin about this morning, did you? A tall, well dressed gent with dark hair and eyes. He passed me by on a beautiful chestnut mare, when I was returning along the beach carrying loot from over Hamm.

MOLLY BYATT

You never were? Oh I've seen 'im all right. We've had him staying at the Cove House since Friday.

(MORE)

MOLLY BYATT (cont'd)

He made me go all of a dither when he looked at me, him being so polite and handsome, but he didn't look at me very often.

(She giggles)

VIOLET

What was he doing here?

MOLLY BYATT

He were after lodgings or summat.

(she pauses)

John Motyer reckons he's the new preventive man.

VIOLET ALLEN

No!

(Incredulous)

I might've guessed. So he's destined to become the enemy. Father'll be interested in that. I wonder when he'll be back.

MOLLY BYATT

Dunno, time 'll tell.

They both lapse back into thoughtful silence.

MOLLY BYATT (cont'd)

'Ere you seen John Pearce and Robert Comben lately, Vi?

VIOLET ALLEN

No I haven't, why?

MOLLY BYATT

Well, I saw them in Fortuneswell the other day, and they were making eyes at me. They were saying how pretty I was, and John carried my basket up to the dairy shop for me. I think maybe John's sweet on me, 'cause he were ever so nice. I told them I come up most days on errands for Ma'am, and I hope I'll see them again, 'cus, Robert works for John's father in Mill and they was delivering flour down Underhill and gave me a ride back home in horse 'n cart, must've saved me a half hour.

Violet gives Molly a squeeze.

VIOLET ALLEN

You lucky thing, Mol. You'll soon be walking out.

Violet and Molly both laugh. Violet pretends she is John Pearce and puts on a posh accent.

VIOLET ALLEN (cont'd)

May I have the pleasure of your company this evening, Miss Molly?

Violet and Molly giggle. Suddenly a voice makes them jump.

MATTHEW STONE

Evening, Miss Violet, Miss Molly.

Matthew stands on the ridge above them grinning at their foolishness. Looking sheepish, Violet and Molly reply in unison

VIOLET

Hello, Matthew.

MOLLY

Hello, Matthew.

Violet watches Matthew approach and sit down close behind them; his eyes warm with amusement, but still scanning the ocean for mackerel. He picks up a FLAT PEBBLE and lazily flicks his wrist. The flat stone skims the sea's surface jumping off it several times before sinking.

MATTHEW STONE

Saw the Pearce family going into Chapel just now.

MOLLY BYATT

(Hides her
embarrassment)

Were John with them?

MATTHEW STONE

(Grinning)

He were.

MOLLY BYATT

What's so funny?

Violet laughs, as Molly dries her feet in her PETTICOAT.

MATTHEW STONE

(He shrugs and
grins)

Nothing that I know of.

Molly puts her BOOTS back on.

MOLLY BYATT

(Artfully)

Anyway I'm not staying here playing
gooseberry. I've got to go and see
your sister Hannah about summat. I'll
see you tomorrow, Vi.

(She jumps up)

Don't you two do anything to get
folks talking, now.

Giggling, Molly leaves them both.

Violet looks shy and uncertain, avoiding Matthew's gaze she
turns her attention to wiping her own feet dry. Matthew
moves forward to sit beside her. Violet can feel him
observing her as she lowers her eyes engrossed in her task.

MATTHEW STONE

Robert Comben were there too, if
you're interested?

VIOLET ALLEN

No, not me, I hardly know them, they
live up top o' hill, they only know
Molly 'cus Robert's her cousin.

MATTHEW STONE

You know I well enough.
(Looks into her
eyes)

Violet looks away, trying to hide her blushes from him.
Still she feels his eyes on her. She busies herself by
attending further to her feet until eventually she is
compelled to break the silence.

VIOLET ALLEN

(Blurts out)

Don't you think 'tis strange that the
pebbles here are as big as potatoes
and they're gradually smaller as we
go along the beach, till they're just
like gravel at Bridport?

MATTHEW STONE

(Aware of her
discomfiture)

Aye it's a mystery all right, but I'm
glad 'tis so. There's many a pitch
black night I've put ashore and 'twas
my only clue as to where we were to

Matthew moves closer to her. Disconcerted Violet fumbles for
a FLAT PEBBLE in order to play ducks and drakes, as Matthew
had done. Her first pebble skims the waves.

MATTHEW STONE (cont'd)

That were a good'n.

Violet's hand closes over another FLAT PEBBLE. Matthew's
hand covers hers and he pulls her towards him and kisses her
tenderly. Violet looks up into his eyes and she is
trembling. Matthew kisses her again and puts his arm around
her moving even closer. Violet's eyes close excluding all
else around them and she returns his kisses willingly. The
sun casts long shadows behind them. She feels safe but is
reminded of the earlier events of the morning when Matthew
had watched her encounter with the stranger.

VIOLET ALLEN

You know that Kimberlin nearly
frightened me to death this morning,
I were concentrating so hard on where
I trod I never heard him coming. He
didn't half make me jump.

MATTHEW STONE

(Studies her)

I thought you were making light of
it. I had heard he might be the new
riding officer, so for heaven's sake,
Vi, be careful.

VIOLET ALLEN

That's what John Motyer said to
Molly.

MATTHEW STONE

If he's coming back here to stay,
we'll have to get more organised.
We're all too cocksure of ourselves.
We got too used to old Taggart being
a pushover. But this here Kimberlin
don't look like no pushover to me.

(MORE)

MATTHEW STONE (cont'd)

He's used to giving orders and having folks obey. My guess is we're in for a battle of wits, but he's going to have to be something special to get one over on us. I reckon we can show him a thing or two.

VIOLET ALLEN

He didn't say much to me, but I don't think he do miss much neither. Although he didn't discover my bottles he really looked hard at me, as if trying to see if I'd anything to hide.

MATTHEW STONE

Well, we'll have to be ready for him if he's coming back to stay. We can't afford any blunders.

They fall silent for a while, then Matthew stands up and holds out his hand for Violet, pulling her to her feet with ease. Violet looks down at his hand holding hers and feels safe and then she looks up into his eyes.

VIOLET ALLEN

Don't take any chances, Matthew. You must warn the others to take special care.

MATTHEW STONE

We'll tread carefully, Vi, don't fret. No Kimberlin's got the better of us in the past and the sport can only sharpen our wits for the future. You'll see.

Violet and Matthew walk off arm in arm.

FADE OUT