

THE IMPROVED, BENEVOLENT, AND PROTECTIVE ORDER OF --

NIMRODS

Written by

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PILOT - New World, New Rules

FORMAT: 1/2 hour serialized single-cam

GENRE: dark comedy, horror, historical, supernatural

Logline: Follows the exploits of "renowned" Vampire Hunters in the
American Colonies

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OVER BLACK, WHITE TEXT:

NIMROD, noun

1. A skillful hunter

2. An inept person.

INT. STONE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Torches burn in wall sconces. A spider crawls in a web.

FOOTSTEPS on stone. Leather boots. Moving with purpose.

We catch glimpse of COLONIAL VAMPIRE HUNTERS (20s-50s) all men, carrying flintlocks and sabers. Leading them is --

MALAKAS (30s), Black, a very tall African hunter, carries a rungu club and body shield. The men follow behind him.

CRACK. A sound from behind them. The men all turn to regard --

FRANCIS SPENCER (30s), pudgy, dressed more for fashion than function with a pompous white Edwardian collar, steps on a human bone. Malakas pauses, looks at him. Francis frowns.

FRANCIS
Sorry.

MALAKAS
Shh.

FRANCIS
Sorry.

ALL HUNTERS
Shhh!

FRANCIS
Okay, got it, say nothing.

Malakas frowns. They continue to descend into --

INT. CRYPT - NIGHT

A stone sarcophagus dominates the room, depicting a VAMPIRE QUEEN (30s), Iranian, in an elaborate headdress, SAMARA. Her stone mouth is open, leering, with porcelain fangs.

FRANCIS
Holy shit.

MALAKAS

Francis.

FRANCIS

Sorry, I just mean, this was her,
right? Samara, the Blood Queen.
After years of searching, this is
the moment! I'm going to kill
Samara the Blood Queen.

(off Malakas' frown)

I mean, help, I'm going to help.

Malakas signals the men to fan out around the room. They do.

Hunters tighten grips on their weapons. Francis tightens his
grip on a clumsy looking BLUNDERBUSS with an underslung AXE.

OLD HUNTER

(re: blunderbuss)

What the hell is that?

FRANCIS

Oh, this? This little darling is a
blunderaxe. It's a prototype. A
little heavy, but I really think
it's going to catch on.

OLD HUNTER

It's ridiculous. You're ridiculous.
If it wasn't for your father--

FRANCIS

If it wasn't for my father, what--

ALL HUNTERS

Shhh.

FRANCIS

He started it.

Hunters aim their weapons at the sarcophagus. Malakas signals
and a pair of STRONG HUNTERS slide the stone lid away.

Francis peeks inside. A torch reveals ... nothing. Empty.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Well, that was anti-climactic.

The sarcophagus suddenly rises on its pedestal, CLICKING
into a locked position. Francis considers.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

A weight. A scale?

All around the room, stone panels slide into the floor, revealing a dozen crypts, too dark to see inside.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

A trap.

RED EYES in the otherwise black crypts. Suddenly BLOOD STARVED VAMPIRES, shriveled husks, attack the Hunters.

The Vampires are frenzied, a pack of wild dogs. Their blackened claws slash at the Hunters, HISSING and SNARLING.

The Hunters fight back. Flintlocks fire, sabers swing.

Smoke fills the room, making it difficult to see.

Malakas is a force of nature. He swings and vampires die. He crushes a skull with his rungu, shield bashes another vampire up onto a torch scone, impaling it to the crypt wall.

Francis takes aim with his blunderbuss. Pulls the trigger.

Nothing happens.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Oh, come on. Misfire?

Francis swings the blunderaxe, hits a vampire. And suddenly the business end discharges and --

--shoots the Old Hunter. He slumps against the crypt wall.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

I am so sorry.

The Old Hunter raises his flintlock to shoot Francis when the LAST VAMPIRE rises up and bites the Old Hunter in the neck.

Malakas bashes the Vampires head with his club, splattering Francis with blood.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Nice assist, Malakas. But I had it.
Well, I helped.

Malakas looks around the room. Many dead Hunters. Malakas looks at Francis. Francis shrugs.

CUT TO TITLES - NIMRODS. The symbol is a stylized N, on a large heraldic shield, like the badge of a Masonic lodge.

END TEASER.

ACT ONE

The heraldic shield with the stylized N hangs on the wall of--

EXT. SPENCER MANOR - DAY

An extensive English estate, lavish, and well fortified.

INT. SPENCER MANOR - DAY

Portraits of Vampire Hunters from the past thousand years.

Along walls hang axes, maces, and a wide variety of swords.

INT. GALLERY HALL - NIGHT

Feels like an medical amphitheater. Francis dissects a BLOOD STARVED VAMPIRE CORPSE. Francis opens the vampires mouth.

FRANCIS

As you can see, salivary glands on either side of the mouth excretes a highly toxic saliva, injected during a bite through the puncture.

Francis picks up a clove of garlic on the table--

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Garlic can be used as a neutralizing anti-toxin.

--and puts it in the vampire's open mouth.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

Yummy-yummy. Fun fact, a salivary gland behind the eyes excretes a highly concentrated pheromone which waters the eye and produces the hitherto fore 'vampiric gaze', which is used to paralyze prey . . .

MALAKAS (O.S.)

Francis.

Francis looks up. It's Malakas, looks impatient.

MALAKAS (CONT'D)

Who are you talking to?

FRANCIS
Just warming up for my
presentation. Where is everybody?

INT. MEETING HALL - DAY

A long hall. A shrine to men, tradition, and hunting.

Vampire Hunters line either side of a meeting table. At the head sits LORD IGNATIUS SPENCER (60s), stern, and impatient.

The doors open and Francis shuffles in before Malakas.

FRANCIS
So sorry, I thought we were in the--

IGNATIUS
--Let us begin. Having spoken with
Malakas, it's quite clear that her
majesty has moved on and it is our
duty, gentlemen, to find her.

The WIZENED HUNTER unfurls a map - the East coast of North America, circa 1700. He indicates the PROVINCE OF CAROLINA.

WIZENED HUNTER
There have been very few new
reports of vampiric activity in
Europe. However we are getting some
interesting news from the colonies.

FRANCIS
The colonies?

IGNATIUS
Francis, men are talking.

Francis shrinks down in his seat.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
The colonists brought many things
with them to the new world,
including disease. Consumption has
spread like wildfire.

Ignatius coughs. He wipes his mouth with a handkerchief.

WIZENED HUNTER
Roanoke Colony, abandoned in 1585.
Jamestown, 1609, eighty percent
dead before being abandoned.

IGNATIUS

By request of the Lords Proprietor, the Albemarle settlements are in need of an apothecary. Spread out, impermanent, the colonists are under threat from piracy, natives, and hurricanes. Colloquially, this area is known as Rogue's harbor.

FRANCIS

Super cool name.

The other Hunters look at Francis.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

What? Rogue's harbor. You don't think that sounds cool?

IGNATIUS

Under the guise of an apothecary, a member of the lodge will travel to America and investigate the rise of vampirism in the New world. This mission will be long term, taking years, and support will be minimal.

Francis LAUGHS. Everyone stares at him.

FRANCIS

Sorry. It just occurred to me that if a vampire bit a pirate, are you ready for this . . . vampirates.

Ignatius glares at his son. Francis stops laughing.

IGNATIUS

Malakas. As our most experienced hunter, will you honor the lodge by undertaking this mission?

MALAKAS

Lord Spencer, it would be my --

FRANCIS

--I'll do it.

IGNATIUS

You'll do . . . what?

FRANCIS

The mission. I'll do it, I'll go.

IGNATIUS

Malakas is my first choice.

FRANCIS

Yes, but Malakas isn't an apothecary.

IGNATIUS

The apothecary is just a ruse.

Ignatius coughs into a rag. Blood.

Malakas notices. Makes eye contact with Ignatius, then away.

FRANCIS

So how is it an effective ruse if you don't at least know the basics? You know, apothecaries also work as doctors, even surgeons. They have to compound medicines, harvest plants and herbs from local flora.

IGNATIUS

What's your point, Francis?

FRANCIS

How long until his cover is blown? If you want this mission to succeed, then you should let me go.

Laughter from around the table. Francis winces.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

MALAKAS

You are without a doubt the worst hunter that has ever sat at this table. If not for your father--

FRANCIS

If not for my father, what?

IGNATIUS

Enough.

MALAKAS

Lord Spencer, with all due respect, I do not have time or inclination to watch over your son whilst--

IGNATIUS

--Is there any new business?

FRANCIS

Yes, as a matter of fact, there is.

Francis produces a sheaf of paper and passes it down the table to Ignatius - a sketch of a SPIKED METAL GORGET.

IGNATIUS
What is this?

FRANCIS
Just a little prototype.

IGNATIUS
Francis, Hunters don't wear armor
because it slows them down.

Ignatius crumples the paper up, tosses it on a fire.

FRANCIS
That was my only copy.

IGNATIUS
Give us the room.

The Hunters leaves. Malakas glares at Francis, then exits.

IGNATIUS (CONT'D)
Francis, the Benevolent and
Protective Order of Nimrods has
stood for a thousand years by
valuing tradition over whimsy. This
lodge was built on stone, not sand.

FRANCIS
Even stone wears down with time.

Ignatius stare at Francis. Francis looks nervous.

IGNATIUS
Very well. You have my leave to go
to America.

Ignatius stands and walks over to the door.

FRANCIS
Really? I won't let you down,
father.

IGNATIUS
I expect you and Malakas will make
excellent traveling companions.

FRANCIS
Exactly. Wait, me and Malakas?

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. GALLEON - NIGHT**

A massive ship, caught in a STORM. Wood creaks, ropes groan.
Superimpose ... Somewhere in the Atlantic

INT. BELOW DECKS - NIGHT

Malakas glares at Francis.

Francis looks green. He suddenly vomits in a bucket.

FRANCIS
I'm so glad we get this time
together.

Francis heaves again. Malakas sighs.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
I'm sure there are so many things
we can teach each other.

Francis spills the bucket. Malakas glares at him.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Sorry.

Water pours from a crack above them, dousing Malakas.

ANTOINE
(French accent)
So you two know each other?

ANTOINE AUGUSTIN CLEMENT (50s), a French Benedictine monk.
Antoine is a quirky book worm, Overly friendly and outgoing.

FRANCIS
We're coworkers.

ANTOINE
Oh, what line of work are you in?

MALAKAS
Apothecaries.

FRANCIS
We're vampire hunters.

ANTOINE
 Vampire hunters! Fascinating! The
 Roman Church has great interest in
 accumulating knowledge about the
 supernatural and the occult.
 Actually, that's why I'm here. You
 see, I'm a missionary and I'm on a -

EXT. MONASTERY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A Benedictine Monastery. MONKS meander outside.

Superimpose ... France

ANTOINE (V.O.)
 -- world tour.

INT. MONASTERY - DAY

Antoine speaks with a ABBOT (60s), the head monk. Monks
 shamble around in the courtyard, CHANTING.

ANTOINE
 I'm thinking of calling it
 Dissertations on the Apparitions of
 Angels, of Demons and of Spirits--

ABBOT
 Um...

ANTOINE
 --and on Revenants or Vampires of
 Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia
 ... and America.

ABBOT
 America?

ANTOINE
 Yes, it's the newest thing. It's
 like England, only ... newer.

ABBOT
 Father Clement, are you sure this
 pilgrimage is a good use of your
 time?

Antoine looks doubtful. He notices a few SNICKERING MONKS.
 That's right, they snicker, then go back to CHANTING.

END FLASHBACK/BACK TO SCENE

ANTOINE
So as you see, I'm a bit of a
vampire hunter myself. Father
Antoine Augustus Clement.

MALAKAS
Malakas.

ANTOINE
Just Malakas?

Malakas stares ant Antoine. Francis vomits in the bucket.

FRANCIS
Francis Spencer.

ANTOINE
A pleasure. So, where are you two
headed?

FRANCIS
Rogue's Harbor.

ANTOINE
That's where I'm going!

FRANCIS
Really?

EXT. COLONIAL AMERICA - DAY

In a series of establishing shots we get a sense of rural
America, circa 1725. Over a hundred years into colonization.

Superimpose . . . 3 months later.

EXT. ROGUE'S HARBOR - DAY

A primitive, unnamed settlement ala Jamestown. Log dwellings,
a church, a tavern, wagons, horses, and the like.

*In this reimagined American, there is no slavery. Blacks and
whites work side by side, equally exploited by the Crown.

EXT. APOTHECARY - DAY

The sign reads Apothecary, Vampire Hunter, and Gifts.

A smaller sign reads Apprentices Needed, Inquire Within

FRANCIS (PRE-LAP)
As you can see, salivary glands on
either side of the mouth excretes a
highly toxic saliva, injected
during a bite through the puncture.

INT. APOTHECARY - DAY

Shelves lined with oils, herbs, salves and the like.

COLONIAL CHILDREN (under 10) are gathered around a table
where Francis is dissecting a . . . snake.

FRANCIS
Fun fact, some snakes can spit
their venom . . . oh, no, no, no,
we aren't touching anything behind
the counter.

Francis looks over. Several children are behind the counter,
reaching towards his blunderaxe, mounted on a wall rack.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Malakas, do you mind?

Reveal Malakas, standing behind Francis.

MALAKAS
Why do we let children into the
shop?

FRANCIS
Because little children one day
grow up to be little vampire
hunters, which we need.

DOUBTFUL CHILD
Are you really a vampire hunter?

FRANCIS
Yes, of course I am.

DOUBTFUL CHILD
My father says there's no such
things are vampires.

MOCKING CHILD
Why do you dress like that?

Francis strokes his Edwardian collar.

FRANCIS
What's wrong with the way I dress?
Don't I look like a vampire hunter?

DOUBTFUL CHILD
No.

FRANCIS
Well, what do you think a vampire
hunter looks like?

Every single child points at Malakas.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Yes he is also a vampire hunter.

Malakas reaches the kids behind the counter. They stare up at his imposing figure. He narrows his eyes. The kids back away.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Now then, any questions?

Francis looks back. The kids are spread out around the store.

Two MACABRE KIDS are playing with a WOODEN STAKE and HAMMER, pretending to stake each other.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Hey! This isn't a toy.

A HUNGRY CHILD holds a specimen jar full of "pickled eggs".

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Oh, no, those aren't pickled eggs.

Hungry Child drops the slippery jar. The jar shatters and eggs roll all over the floor. When they stop rolling, we realize they're eyes, all staring up at now TERRIFIED KIDS.

The Terrified Kids run SCREAMING from the shop, knocking things over as they flee. It's pandemonium.

After they've gone, Francis turns to Malakas.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Good turnout today, huh? So you
want to get the broom, or should-

Malakas leaves.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Or I could just clean up on my own.

Francis begins to clean up.

LENA (O.S.)
You dropped your eyeball.

A kind hand reaches out, holding a few eyeballs. Francis looks up to find LENA PROCTOR (30s). Lena is a 20th century woman born ahead of her time. She's impatient for change.

FRANCIS
Oh, hello.

LENA
I heard there was a new apothecary
in Rogue's Harbor. I'm Lena
Proctor.

He reaches out to shake her hand. Francis is flustered.

FRANCIS
Francis Proctor. I mean your last
name is Proctor. My last name is
Spencer. Why would you have my last
name unless we were married. Not
that I'm proposing. Not that I'm
presuming, not that I'm implying.
Are you married? Sorry. Francis
Spencer. That's me. I'm Francis.

LENA
No.

FRANCIS
I'm pretty sure I'm Francis.

LENA
No, I'm not married.

Francis realize he's still shaking her hand full of eyeballs. They ooze out between their fingers. He pulls his hand away.

FRANCIS
I'm going to wash up.

Francis walks into adjacent living quarters and washes his hands in a basin. Lena peruses the wares on his shelves.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
So, Miss Proctor. How can I be of
service to you?

LENA
I'm actually here about the sign.

Francis returns, drying his hands.

FRANCIS
Are you looking for a gift? For a
boyfriend, maybe?

LENA
Not that sign. This sign.

Lena is holding the sign that says Apprentice Needed.

FRANCIS
I see. Do you know anything about
being an apothecary?

Lena moves over to a shelf of herbs, near the fireplace.

LENA
Well, I know you shouldn't store
your herbs so close to your
fireplace. It dries them out.

FRANCIS
Good note.

LENA
Actually, I'm more interested in
this vampire hunting business.

FRANCIS
Your not scared?

LENA
That's a little patronizing. There
aren't a lot of opportunities for
women around here. Other than
Emmeline Watts, who runs the local
tavern, as a woman your only
choices are wife or midwife.

Francis casually leans on a counter --

FRANCIS
So, no babies in your future.

It's leans precariously. Lena helps him steady it.

LENA
No. Not all women are put on this
earth to crank out babies.

Francis smiles at Lena. She smiles back.

LENA (CONT'D)
So, what do you think?

FRANCIS
Traditionally the lodge has never
trained women as vampire hunters.

LENA
(suddenly angry)
And just why not?

FRANCIS
I'm not sure. Tradition I think.

LENA
Men's traditions. I'll have you
know that women are more than
capable of doing anything a man can
do. In fact, did you know that you
know that in every species, the
female is always the stronger
hunter. Always.

FRANCIS
Good point. Perhaps the lodge is a
little stuck in the past.

LENA
New world, new rules.

A PANICKED CHILD runs into the shop.

PANICKED CHILD
Doctor. We need a doctor!

Francis looks at Lena.

FRANCIS
You're hired. Can you start now?

INT. THE TURNER HOME - DAY

The curtains are drawn. PRIMROSE TURNER (18) lies in bed,
drenched in sweat. Fevered, raving. Her mother swabs her head
with a damp cloth.

Francis ENTERS, carrying a leather bag. Lena follows.

THE MOTHER
Are you the doctor?

FRANCIS
Ish.

THE MOTHER
Beg your pardon?

LENA

Yes, he is.

FRANCIS

What seems to be the trouble?

PRIMROSE

Fat, ugly.

FRANCIS

Hey!

THE MOTHER

She's hysterical! She doesn't know what she's saying.

PRIMROSE

Slob.

FRANCIS

You sure?

THE MOTHER

She's been like since late last night. She came in very late. Said she'd fallen asleep but her features were flushed and her lips were red, so I know she'd been . . . you know.

Francis hasn't a clue. Lena makes a smooching gesture.

FRANCIS

Oh, gotcha.

THE MOTHER

I hope she hasn't disgraced her family. You won't mention this to anyone else? Doctor Patient confidentiality and all that?

FRANCIS

Mums the word. Could you give us the room?

THE MOTHER

Of course. I'll be right outside.

She leaves. Lena closes the door behind her.

FRANCIS

Now then, let's just have a look.

Francis inspects Primrose. He rolls her head to the side, inspects her neck. There is a bloody neck bandage.

LENA
What's that?

Francis peels back the bandage - twin puncture marks.

LENA (CONT'D)
Is that?

ANTOINE (O.S.)
Hey, hey, hey! I'm here!

FRANCIS
Oh, great. This guy.

Lena looks confused as Antoine enters.

ANTOINE
Did somebody send for a priest? I'm just kidding, of course they did, cause here I am.

FRANCIS
Seems a bit premature--

ANTOINE
(to Lena)
And who is this lovely creature?
Are you the new apprentice? Father Clement. Nice to meet you. Are those bite marks? Oh, not good. Here, I brought these just in case.

Antoine produces a stake and hammer from his robes.

FRANCIS
What?! Put that away.

ANTOINE
I just thought, you know, being a hunter and all.

Francis tries to give the hammer and stake back to Antoine.

FRANCIS
I am not going to stake a still living girl with her mother in the other-

THE MOTHER (O.S.)
I brought fresh water and -

Francis hides them behind his back as The Mother returns.

THE MOTHER (CONT'D)
Oh, Father, thank you for coming.

ANTOINE
Of course, my child. Shall we pray?

The Mother and Antoine kneel by the bed.

Francis pulls Lena to the back of the room. They whisper.

LENA
So, what now?

Francis looks at the hammer and stake, then at Primrose.

THE MOTHER
Primrose? Primrose?! Oh, God, no!

Francis looks. The Mother weeps over her dead daughter.

Antoine looks back and gives them the thumbs up sign with one hand while comforting the Mother with the other.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

A coffin is lowered into the ground. As it descends, reveal The Panicked Child and The Mother weeping, loudly.

Francis and Lena are in attendance. Malakas stands nearby.

MALAKAS
You know what this means.

FRANCIS
We're back in business.
(to Lena)
Got any plans tonight?

LENA
No, why?

FRANCIS
There is only one formal
requirement to join the lodge. You
have to kill a vampire.

Lena looks down at the coffin.

END ACT TWO.

ACT THREE**EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT**

Night, dark, heavy fog. An owl HOOTS. A graveyard, full of wooden crosses and headstones.

There's also a woolen blanket, a picnic basket. Francis reaches inside and starts arranging food on the blanket.

FRANCIS

I've got some cheese here, some grapes, roast chicken.

LENA

Oh, I'll take a piece of chicken!

Francis hands her a piece. She rips into it. Everyone looks at her.

LENA (CONT'D)

What? A girl can't be hungry?

FRANCIS

Would you care for a glass of champagne?

Lena sucks the marrow from the bone. Francis is surprised.

LENA

The marrow's the best part.

Francis pulls out a bottle and glasses. Lena smiles.

LENA (CONT'D)

Are all vampire hunts this nice?

Reveal Malakas, standing behind them, club in hand.

MALAKAS

Not even remotely.

FRANCIS

We're celebrating. Our first vampire since landing!

MALAKAS

Exactly. This is a hunt, not a date.

LENA

Is this a date?

FRANCIS
No. Why, did you think it was?

LENA
No.

FRANCIS
Of course, me neither.

Francis pours champagne. Malakas rolls his eyes.

ANTOINE
I'd like some.

Reveal Antoine, sitting right by them.

FRANCIS
I thought priests didn't drink.

ANTOINE
I'm a monk, not a saint.

LENA
So, how does one kill a vampire?

FRANCIS
Traditionally a wooden stake
through the heart will stop them,
but I've modified this weapon to
fire pellets of petrified wood.

LENA
Really? How inventive!

FRANCIS
Thank you!
(to Malakas)
Not everyone appreciates my
contributions. And then to be sure,
you also chop off the head.

Francis indicates the axe blade on his weapon.

LENA
Just like a snake.

FRANCIS
Exactly, just like a snake! Fun
fact, vampires and snake both --

LENA
--Can I hold it?

Francis passes it over.

LENA (CONT'D)
It's heavy.

She runs a finger along the barrel. Francis fidgets.

LENA (CONT'D)
Would you make me a weapon?

FRANCIS
That might be a little premature.

LENA
I don't mean right now. Or even
this big.

FRANCIS
Well, it's not really about size.

LENA
Not that I mind a big weapon, but
perhaps something thinner, a bit
more elegant, meant for thrusting.

Lena and Francis make eye contact. They look at each other
with longing as . . . Antoine reaches across them for more
champagne. The mood, if you could call it that, is gone.

ANTOINE
And then you use a silver knife to
cut out the vampires heart.

FRANCIS
It doesn't have to be silver.

ANTOINE
No?

FRANCIS
No. That's a common misconception.

ANTOINE
Isn't silver a Holy metal?

FRANCIS
Vampires aren't evil, they're sick.

LENA
Then why don't you just cure them?

FRANCIS
I've been looking into that, but
it's hard to find willing test
subjects, you know, when they're
trying to kill you.

MALAKAS

Pointless. You just crush the head
and burn the body. Takes care of
everything. Guns are cheating. If
you're going to kill something you
should look it in the eye.

OLD GRAVEROBBER (O.S.)

Do you mind?

They all look up. A pair of GRAVEROBBER (OLD and TALL,
threadbare) work by lamplight in a hole, four foot deep.

TALL GRAVEROBBER

We're trying to work here.

ANTOINE

Have they been there the whole
time?

LENA

Who are they?

FRANCIS

Oh, I hired them.

MALAKAS

You hired them?

FRANCIS

Did you want to be here all night?

LENA

What's the rush?

FRANCIS

Oh, no, nothing. Normally, I like
to take my time, but since it's
your first time, I thought, you
know, we should be quick.

ANTOINE

Are we still talking about the
vampire?

FRANCIS

What else would we be talking
about?

Paydirt. The shovels strike wood. The Robbers toss the
shovels and use their hands to uncover the COFFIN.

TALL GRAVEROBBER
Now, don't forget, we get to keep
anything she was buried with?

FRANCIS
Agreed. We're not grave robber
robbers.

The Old Graverobber opens the coffin lid to find Primrose,
dressed in a fine white gown, and a gold broach tied around
her neck with a silk ribbon.

OLD GRAVEROBBER
Looks like we only just buried her.

TALL GRAVEROBBER
We did only just bury here.

Malakas rolls his eyes. Francis stands, checks his weapon.

FRANCIS
(to Lena)
So, for tonight, you just observe,
alright? But just in case . . .

He hands her a smaller flintlock pistol.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
Aim for the heart. But only if she
approaches you. Leave this to the
professionals.

ANTOINE
And what should I do?

FRANCIS
I have no idea. No one asked you to
be here.

ANTOINE
Well, safety in numbers.

They all wait. Primrose just lays there. Moments pass.

TALL GRAVEROBBER
Should something be happening?

OLD GRAVEROBBER
I knew it was hogwash. There's no
such thing as vampires.

The Old Graverobber reaches to unclasp her broach, his mere
face inches from Primrose's mouth, her pouty blood-red lips.

OLD GRAVEROBBER (CONT'D)
Now then, lassie, you won't be
needing this, will ye?

FRANCIS
Careful. Wait for it.

Francis tightens his grip on his weapon. Malakas readies his club and shield. Lena stands in front of Francis.

LENA
This is so exciting!

FRANCIS
Maybe you should get behind me?

LENA
Because all women need protection?

Primrose's eyes suddenly open. Her lips part revealing FANGS. Her lips part and she YAWNS. The Graverobbers are startled.

PRIMROSE
Oh, my God, I was having the
craziest dream. Wait, where am I?
Who are you? Are you robbing me?

OLD HUNTER
Um, not exactly?

Lena fires. Primrose moves unnatural fast and grabs the Tall Graverobber and uses him like a shield. He is shot--

PRIMROSE
What the hell, lady?

--in the neck. Primrose puts her hands over the wound to staunch the flow.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)
Oh, my God! Look what you did!

Blood gets in her mouth. Her eyes light up, literally, they now shimmer in a catlike unnatural way.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)
Oh, my God! Oh, *my God*.

She puts her lips to his neck and drinks his blood. The Tall Graverobber weakly thrashes, his life leaving him.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)
(as the horror sets in)
What is happening to me?

LENA
 You're dead.
 (to Francis)
 How exactly does one reload?

PRIMROSE
 I beg your pardon?

ANTOINE
 Well, undead, technically. You are
 reborn to darkness, Nosferatu--

LENA
 You're a vampire!

PRIMROSE
 Vampire, who's a vampire? I'm a
 vampire? That ... sucks.

Lena snatches Francis' gun away from him.

FRANCIS
 Oh, Lena, I don't think-

Lena tries to shoot but the Tall Graverobber is in the way.

LENA
 Can you move?

The Tall Graverobber, bleeding out, collapses in the grave.

LENA (CONT'D)
 Thank you!

Lena shoots. Primrose springs up, catlike. Lena misses.

Primrose lands right on top of Francis. She's on his back,
 strangling him from behind.

Malakas raises his club to strike. Primrose points a long
 fingernail at Francis throat.

ANTOINE
 Fascinating! Their primal instincts
 are active seconds from unbirth!

FRANCIS
 (choking)
 Um, Malakas, a little help?

MALAKAS
 What do you want me to do, exactly?

Lena raises the axe to strike.

FRANCIS
No, not that. Any other ideas?

Antoine holds up a crucifix right in front of Lena.

ANTOINE
In the name of the Christ, I banish
you back to hell!

Primrose looks confused. Francis rolls his eyes.

FRANCIS
Again, she's not evil, just sick.

PRIMROSE
You guys are the ones that are
sick!

Francis staggers, losing consciousness.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)
Well, when in Rome.

Lena bites Francis in the neck. Francis GASPS--

LENA
No!!!!

--Primrose pulls away, her mouth bloody. She falls off of
Francis, backing away. She puts a hand to her mouth, pained.

PRIMROSE
What the fuck?

Francis stands, pulls away his collar revealing--

A SPIKED METAL GORGET. Primrose glares at Francis.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)
That really hurt! You are a
terrible doctor!

Francis picks up his blunderbuss.

FRANCIS
That's only my day job!

Malakas swings. Primrose dodges, unnaturally fast, a blur.

They lose sight of her.

LENA
There!

They spot Primrose hiding behind a headstone. Francis quickly reloads, makes it look easy.

FRANCIS

(aiming)
Gotcha.

Primrose picks up the headstone and flings it at Lena.

Francis shoves her down. The headstone shatters on another.

Francis is laying on top of Lena, shielding her from harm.

LENA

Holy, shit! She just threw a
headstone at my ... head. This just
got personal!

They stand and look for Primrose, but she's gone.

The Old Graverobber helps the Tall Graverobber to his feet.

OLD GRAVEROBBER

Who the fuck are you guys?

EXT. WOODED PATH - DAWN

A remote part of the wood, some distance from town. Francis walks Lena home. It has the feel of the morning after prom.

LENA

Sorry again about ruining the hunt.

FRANCIS

Not to worry. The first time can be
intense. That said, I'd understand
if you don't want to see me again.

LENA

What? No. I'm very interested, in
seeing you again. As your
apprentice.

FRANCIS

Right, yes, of course. So, you live
all the way out here?

LENA

What? It's not that far.

FRANCIS

It's a little far. Should I be
worried? Don't murder me, okay?

They reach **LENA'S HOUSE**. Feels like a witches home out of a fairy tale story book. Francis, oblivious, admires it.

LENA
Well, this is me.

Francis smiles at Lena. She smiles back. He leans in for a kiss. She smiles, tempted, then when he is inches away-

LENA (CONT'D)
I'm not sure if we should mix
business and pleasure.

FRANCIS
Right, of course.

LENA
It's just, your my boss and-

FRANCIS
Totally get it. Good, great.

Francis extends a hand. They shake. It's awkward. They smile.
The front door opens.

PHINEAS
Who art thou?

Francis looks up. PHINEAS PROCTOR (late 50s) has the look of a bible thumping Puritan. He glares at Francis.

PHINEAS (CONT'D)
Lena, the shame you bring on our
family by staying out all night. If
anyone should have seen thee-

LENA
Francis, this is my father, Phineas
Proctor. Father, this is my, um,
mentor. Francis Spencer.

PHINEAS
Spencer, eh? Of the House of
Spencer? So you've taken an
interest in my daughter, have you?

LENA
I think a hot bath and soft bed are
calling my name. Francis, I will
see you soon. Father, good morrow.

Lena smiles at Francis then walks by Phineas.

PHINEAS
What are thy intentions with my
daughter?

FRANCIS
Well, she seems very nice--

PHINEAS
Dost though haft any prospects to
speak of?

FRANCIS
Prospects? Um . . .

Phineas closes the door in Francis face.

MALAKAS
Well, that was embarrassing.

Reveal Malakas, standing nearby.

FRANCIS
Did you really have to accompany me
the entire way here?

MALAKAS
In case you've forgotten, there is
a vampire on the loose.

FRANCIS
Yes, I know. Isn't it great!

From the window, Lena watches and listens.

MALAKAS
I'm not sure inviting a woman into
the lodge is such a good idea.

FRANCIS
Well, Father isn't here, so that
means I'm in charge.

MALAKAS
No one said that.

FRANCIS
It's sort of implied.

MALAKAS
No it isn't.

ANTOINE
What about me, can I be in the
lodge?

Reveal Antoine, standing nearby.

FRANCIS
Oh, my God, you're still here?

ANTOINE
Before you say no, I thought you'd
like to see this.

Antoine produces a heavy tome. He hands it to Francis.

FRANCIS
What's this?

The cover reads Dissertations on the Apparitions of Angels,
of Demons and of Spirits and on Revenants or Vampires of
Hungary, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia ... and America.

ANTOINE
It's a working title.

Francis opens the book. Flipping through the pages-

Endless research of occultism, demonology, the undead,
footnotes, diary entries, maps, and illustrations.

FRANCIS
Holy shit. This amount of research
must have taken you decades.

ANTOINE
A lifetime. So, what do you think?

FRANCIS
You're in!

MALAKAS
I guess we're just letting anybody
join, now, are we?

FRANCIS
Malakas, this is why we're here!
We're doing it! We're building a
lodge! In America.

MALAKAS
Now we just have to track down that
lost vampire.

FRANCIS
Relax, how far could she have
gotten?

Overhead THUNDER ROLLS. It rains.

FRANCIS (CONT'D)
She wouldn't be dumb enough to go
home, would she?

INT. TURNER HOME - DAY

Primrose, soaking wet, sits across from her Mother and the
Panicked Child (her brother).

THE MOTHER
Sorry?

PRIMROSE
Sorry? Sorry! You buried me!

THE MOTHER
To be fair, you were dead at the
time.

PRIMROSE
Look at me, I'm filthy!

Primrose inspects herself in a mirror, but her reflection
doesn't show. The reality of her situation is setting in.

The Mother crosses herself and wraps an arm around her son.

THE MOTHER
Begone, devil! You are no daughter
of mine!

A sudden gale slams open the door. The candles sputter and go
out. Primrose turns to face her mother.

Her eyes shimmer in the dark, in a catlike, unnatural way.

Primrose's blinks, like her eyes are bothering her.

HER POV: Her family's veins throb bright red, heat vision.

Her Mother looks at a FLINTLOCK RIFLE, hanging on the wall.

Primrose tracks her eyeline. The Mother tries to look calm.

PRIMROSE
I think I should go. Goodbye,
mother.

Primrose goes over to the door, grabs a red shawl, dons it.

EXT. TURNER HOME - DAY

Primrose EXITS. The door is LOUDLY LOCKED behind her.
 She turns and walks away. Her Mother watches from the window.
 A WAGON rolls by Primrose, the LONELY DRIVER unseen.

PRIMROSE

Wait!

The wagon stops. Primrose puts a hand on the Driver's thigh.

PRIMROSE (CONT'D)

Where are you headed?

INT. LENA'S HOME - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Lena soaks in a tub. She spins her fingers in lazy circles.
 Suddenly the tub (a cauldron of sorts) starts to bubble like
 a hot tub. It's MAGIC. She lays back, soaking it in.

EXT. TRADER'S OUTPOST - NIGHT

Compared to the first town, this place is half the size, more
 'rural'. Primrose wanders the central street, alone, cold.
 Primrose passes by COLONIALS; their veins throb bright red.
 She hears LAUGHTER, and WARM LIGHT spilling out from the--

EXT. THE QUIVERING STAG - NIGHT

The sign depicts a large horse mounting a mare from behind.
 A SMELLY TRAPPER (40s) goes inside and we catch a glimpse of
 MADAME EMMELINE WATTS (50s), the owner of the bar, drifting
 from table to table, filling drinks, smiling, observing.
 She notices Primrose and she moves over to the door,
 darkening the doorway. She is backlit, cloaked in shadow.

EMMELINE WATTS (O.S.)

Are you lost child?

From the darkened doorway, Primrose can only make out
 Emmeline's curvaceous form and that her eyes shine in the
 same way as Primrose. Emmeline is also a vampire.

Primrose smiles and walks towards the tavern.

INT. THE QUIVERING STAG - NIGHT

A tavern/brothel. Inside FRONTIER MEN (20s-40s), hunters and trappers mostly, mingle with COMELY LADIES of all ages, shapes, sizes, and races. They ply the men with wine, grapes, roast meat. There's a lot of kissing and groping.

Primrose is seated alone, watching the happenings. She fixates on LILLY (20), also a vampire, entertaining a client.

Emmeline saunters over, carrying a crystal decanter of red liquid. She fills a sherry glass in front of Primrose.

EMMELINE WATTS

I'm Emmeline Watts. And you're safe. No need to be shy. Drink up. You must be thirsty. You're safe now. You're with family.

PRIMROSE

I thought I was all alone.

Primrose drinks. Emmeline smiles.

INT. APOTHECARY - NIGHT

The door opens. Malakas, Antoine, and Francis enter, soaked to the bone. Outside, the rain pours down.

MALAKAS

She could be miles away by now.

FRANCIS

Not to worry. We'll just widen the search, go from village to village. Follow the herd. We'll find her.

HUNTS THEM AND KILLS THEM (O.S.)

Sounds like you need a tracker.

The door opens. Between lightning strikes we catch glimpses of HUNTS THEM AND KILLS THEM (late 20s, Two Spirits ie. Transwoman), a Tuscarora Indian Scout. Her leather clothes are covered in dried blood. She's like a badass biker.

HUNTS THEM AND KILLS THEM (CONT'D)

I heard you were looking for vampire hunters?

The men all stare at her, then at each other.

END ACT THREE

TAG**INT. STONE CORRIDOR - NIGHT**

Torches burn in wall sconces. A spider crawls in a web.

FOOTSTEPS on stone. Leather boots. Moving with purpose.

INT. CRYPT - NIGHT

The open sarcophagus dominates the room, depicting the Vampire Queen Samara. Her stone mouth is open, leering.

Ignatius loiters. He coughs Bloody rag.

IGNATIUS

Everything has been arranged. Your
boat leaves at sundown.

From the darkness, the glimmer of eyes. Stepping out of the shadow is SAMARA, just like her stone likeness, cold and unflinching. Thousands of years has made her very patient.

SAMARA

(Iranian accent)

Our kind has always been persecuted
We were gods to the Aztecs, until
they cast us out. We were Lords in
Europe, your kind hunted us to nigh
extinction, but then I thought
perhaps in this New World, we might
escape the fires of old hatred. It
seems there is no place for our
kind, unless we take it.

Ignatius erupts in a coughing fit, sputtering blood.

IGNATIUS

There may be some trouble for you.
Hunters, including my son.

SAMARA

I can handle a few hunters, even a
Spencer. Now, for your reward.

Samara opens her mouth and bares her fangs. She bites him.

SMASH TO BLACK.

END PILOT