

INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE

by

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Based on the novel by
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**FOR EDUCATIONAL
PURPOSES ONLY**

FADE IN:

EXT. DUBOCE STREET HILL SKYLINE (SAN FRANCISCO) - NIGHT

INT. BAR (SAN FRANCISCO) - NIGHT

UNDER CONTINUOUS ROARING ROCK MUSIC -- we see, but do not hear:

YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

talking in groups or couples, some dancing, as lights flash. Punk hairdos, heavy makeup. Chatter.

DAVID MALLOY, aged 25, well-dressed, leans close to a uniformed police officer, holding a mike to the officer's lips, as the officer talks. The wire from the mike leads to a small recorder on the bar. Malloy also wears one earphone plug connected to this recorder, which he holds to his left ear.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER PART OF BAR - BOOTH

Malloy interviews two beautifully-dressed women, who obviously flirt with him, as they answer his questions, lean forward, talk into the mike. Malloy finishes his drink, puts the recorder in his pocket, takes out a cigarette, looks for a door.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - MALLOY

Cigarette on lip, stumbles in darkness, amid garbage cans and debris, fumbling for lighter, then finally lighter flashes.

LOUIS is REVEALED for one instant only an inch from Malloy, his hand on Malloy's shoulder. Faces almost touching. Malloy stumbles away in shock.

Louis recedes more slowly into shadow.

MALLOY

I'm sorry! I didn't know... you were there.

He struggles to make out the figure but can't. Smokes nervously.

LOUIS

I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALLOY

Really, I didn't mean to run into you.

LOUIS

Go on. Pass by.

Malloy stamps out the cigarette, holds up the hand mike.

MALLOY

You don't want to tell me the story of your life, do you?

He flicks on the recorder in his pocket. Eagerly.

MALLOY

That's what I do. I interview people. I collect life stories. Sometimes I interview four or five people a night...

He backs away further. Louis is perfectly still.

LOUIS

The story of my life?

MALLOY

Yes, I've been collecting lives for years. F.M. radio. K.F.R.C. In there I just interviewed a genuine hero, a cop who...

LOUIS

(quietly, politely)
You'd have to have a lot of tape for my story. I've had a very unusual life.

MALLOY

So much the better. I've got pockets full of tapes.

INT. ROOM (SAN FRANCISCO)

City skyline from Duboce Street hill.

Louis in shadow moves to the window, as behind him Malloy sets the tape recorder on the table and sits in one of two straight chairs. Dim light burns on chest of drawers beyond. As they talk, Louis keeps his back to the room and Malloy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALLOY
This is where you live?

LOUIS
It's just a room...

MALLOY
So how shall we begin?
(playfully, almost
teasing)
What do you do?

LOUIS
I'm a vampire.

MALLOY
Ah, and you mean this literally, I
take it.

LOUIS
Yes. I was waiting for you in
that alleyway. You or whoever
came out of that doorway. And
then you began to speak.

Malloy laughs goodnaturedly.

MALLOY
Well, what a lucky break for me.

LOUIS
Perhaps lucky for both of us.

Still in shadow he turns from the window and approaches
the table.

LOUIS
I want to tell you my story. All
of it. I'd like to do that very
much. I'm glad we've met.

Malloy is uneasy as he studies the shadowy figure,
fascinated but afraid.

MALLOY
You were going to kill me? Drink
my blood?

LOUIS
Yes, but you needn't worry about
that now. I told you in the alley
to go on. I was letting you pass
by. I let a lot of motals pass
by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louis stands opposite, hand on the chair.

Malloy is riveted.

MALLOY

Oh this is one I have to hear.
You believe this, don't you? That
you're a vampire? You really
think...

LOUIS

(patiently)

We can't begin this way. I'm
going to turn on the light.

MALLOY

But I thought vampires didn't like
light.

LOUIS

We love it. I only wanted to
prepare you.

Louis pulls the cord of the overhead naked light bulb.

LOUIS'S FACE

appears inhumanly white, eyes glittering. Inhuman or not
alive. The effect is subtle, beautiful and ghastly.

MALLOY

Good God!

He struggles to suppress fear and understand.

LOUIS

Don't be frightened. I want this
opportunity.

The light appears to go out by itself and suddenly Louis
is in the chair, dimly lighted by the nearby lamp and the
tape recorder has been turned on. The cassette is
turning.

MALLOY

How did you do that!

LOUIS

The same way you do it. A series
of simple gestures. Only I moved
too fast for you to see. I'm
flesh and blood. Only not human.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I haven't been for two hundred years.

Malloy is speechless, frightened, yet enthralled. Spellbound.

LOUIS

What can I do to put you at ease? Shall we begin like David Copperfield? I am born, I grow up. Or shall we begin when I was born to darkness, as we call it. That's really where we should start, don't you think?

MALLOY

(baffled)

You're not lying to me, are you?

LOUIS

No. 1791 -- that's the year when it happened. I was twenty-four -- younger than you are now.

MALLOY

Yes.

LOUIS

But times were different then. I was a man at that age. The master of a large plantation just South of New Orleans...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOUISIANA - DAY (1791)

A disheveled Louis, hair in pigtail, in deep pocket frock coat, rides his horse through the fields of indigo, waving here and there to the African slaves at work.

He passes slave quarters and the distant colonial raised cottage mansion of Pointe du Lac.

CONTINUE V.O. as he speaks he approaches a small parish church and graveyard. He dismounts, approaches a rectangular Greek style above ground tomb. The stone is like a doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louis in ragged lace and dirty brocade coat walks drunkenly along the sidewalk. As he enters a crowded, smoky little tavern and blunders into a card game, flat-boat men and one FANCY-DRESSED GAMBLER eye him as a mark. He lays his money down on the table. They deal him in.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Perhaps if I'd had time, I would have come to my senses. Who can say? I might have married again. As it was, I courted death, taking every risk that I could.

As the men play cards two tavern waitresses approach -- TERESA and SUZANNE. Suzanne throws her arms around Louis, and exchanging glances with the Fancy-Dressed Gambler, puts a powder into a drink of whiskey which she pushes toward Louis, eyeing him stealthily. Teresa watches all and looks down at Louis' hand of cards.

PAN OVER tavern scene -- Indians, men of color, black African freedmen, sailors and wenches.

LESTAT, a hooded figure in the corner, smiles from beneath the shadow of his hood. Gleaming blue eyes.

CLOSE ON - LESTAT

He approaches the table as:

Louis lifts the glass of drugged whiskey. The hooded and cloaked figure of Lestat knocks it out of his hand, bumping into Suzanne and knocking Teresa roughly to one side.

Louis rises, drunk, outraged.

LOUIS

How dare you, monsieur.

Louis pulls out a pearl-handled pistol. Teresa clings to him. Others gasp and give way, though eager to see what will happen.

Lestat, face half-covered by the hood but eyes gleaming, backs away through the crowd, eyes riveted on Louis, smiling. The crowd closes indifferently.

Louis is slightly dazed by Lestat's eyes. Then shudders, loses interest, sits down and picks up his cards.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - COTTAGE - NIGHT

Louis and QUADROON PROSTITUTE emerge from the cottage, kissing fervently.

QUADROON PROSTITUTE
Don't leave me, Michie Louis.

Fancy-Dressed Gambler appears from shadows.

FANCY-DRESSED GAMBLER
First you call me a cheat, then
you try to steal my woman.

The Gambler spins Louis around and goes to hit him. Louis blocks punch, knocks Gambler into the dirt.

Quadroon Prostitute shouts warning to Louis as the Gambler draws his pistol.

LOUIS
Go ahead. Do it. I'm already
dead. Finish the task, so they
can sing the Requiem.

Louis shrugs.

Gambler rises slowly and warily holding the gun on Louis.

GAMBLER
The Oaks; tomorrow morning at
six.

Louis laughs and shakes his head, no. He turns his back.

CLOSE ON - LOUIS'S FACE

thoughtful distant, and behind him --

GAMBLER
Coward!

Louis staggers down the wood sidewalk. Quadroon Prostitute comes after him, embracing him, and he kisses her firmly and gently pushes her away. She pleads with him in French.

LOUIS (V.O.)
My invitation was open to anyone.
But it was a vampire that
accepted. I had never conceived
of such a thing.

Louis moves on into darkness among small colonial French buildings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rain falls. He looks up in it and lets it drench him. Over his shoulder, we see Lestat approach, hood still shadowing his face.

ANGLE ON LESTAT'S BLUE EYES

Lestat's hands clamp on Louis's shoulder and then Louis stiffens, cries out and freezes, as Lestat's teeth go into his neck.

Louis slips from Lestat's grasp, unconscious in the mud and rain.

INT. ROOM (SAN FRANCISCO)

Malloy and Louis facing each other.

MALLOY

That's how it happened?

LOUIS

No. That is how vampires drink blood. The Dark Gift of transformation requires a good deal more as you'll see. Besides, this vampire wanted something from me. He came back for it the following night.

INT. LAVISH FRENCH-FURNISHED BEDROOM AT POINT DU LAC (NEW ORLEANS)

Louis is delirious in four-poster bed, shrouded with mosquito netting. Female slave Yvette bathes his face with a rag. She is crying. Other slave women hover in shadows. Overseer, a Quadroon male, stands weeping in door.

Yvette puts out all candles save one by the bed.

LOUIS

My poor Yvette. What will become of you -- all of you -- if I die?

YVETTE

You won't die, Michie. We need you. You won't leave us here.

SAME SCENE - LATER

Louis alone.

Candlelight flickers on face of bisque virgin.

Louis tosses and turns, dreaming, murmuring incoherently. Then he opens his eyes.

Lestat, exquisitely dressed in French clothing, stands beside the bed smiling. In the light of the candle, we see that he is not human; skin too white; eyes too bright. It is more subtle than earlier electric light shot of Louis. Lestat looks amiable, even mischievous, but impossible -- an angel or a monster.

Louis rises, grabs for his pistol from the table and cocks it.

LOUIS

Who the hell are you? What are you doing in my house?

LESTAT

(looking around the
lavish bedroom)

And such a beautiful house. Yours is a beautiful life.

Louis takes aim and FIRES.

The BULLET passes through Lestat's slightly raised hand. It leaves a bloody wound. Lestat winces, studies the wound. It begins to heal as we watch.

Louis reaches for his sword, hanging over the end of the bed. He struggles to get up.

LESTAT

You're not afraid of anything, are you?

LOUIS

Why the hell should I be? I warn you again. Get out!

LESTAT

Are you going to put that sword through me, too? Ruin my beautiful clothes?

Louis rises up, jabs the rapier at Lestat who effortlessly knocks it from his hand. It "appears" across the room on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louis slumps against the headboard, staring keenly at Lestat. He is in a rage.

LOUIS
 (quietly and coldly)
 If some voodoo priest sent you here, say so. If you're the devil, I'm all yours.

LESTAT
 I don't believe in voodoo priests or the devil. Neither do you.

Lestat sits on the side of the bed, facing Louis.

LESTAT
 But I do believe in eternal life.

Lestat holds up his bullet-wounded palm, and we see the very last healing as it smooths out and is whole again.

LOUIS
 (coldly)
 How was this done?

LESTAT
 I love your courage. I even love your grief. You're no simple soul, are you, my friend?

Louis is bewildered. Feels pain. Is becoming spellbound.

Sound of SEA RISING.

LESTAT
 What if I told you I could give you back your old passion for living, and that for those with courage, living can be for all time?

Sound of HEARTBEAT, DRUM IN TIME WITH IT...

DISSOLVE TO:

DARK SEA

An 18th century ship sailing with black ragged sails. Only two figures on the top deck, Lestat at the wheel and Louis, in his soiled night shirt watching him. In this sea are the ruins of buildings, temples, churches, seen dimly in the midst.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LESTAT (V.O.)
 Vampires, that's what we are.
 Creatures of darkness, only we see
 more clearly in that darkness than
 any mortal has ever seen!

Dead men and women float in the water. Louis is amazed. Dead woman and dead infant float by. A giant dead oak floats by. Lestat holds the wheel steady. Lestat points to the horizon of white clouds stacked high under the moon. The two speak together but we do not hear their words.

EXT. PARISH GRAVEYARD (LOUISIANA) - NIGHT

Louis and Lestat stand before the tall crypt of Louis's wife and baby. Sounds of WIND. Lestat leads Louis from the graveyard into a dreamlike swampland.

DREAM SEQUENCE

thickens as we see HAZY fragments suggesting possibility:

- A) Louis, beautifully-dressed, dancing with a woman.
- B) Louis and Lestat together riding horses fast through the night.

LAUGHTER, MUSIC, HEARTBEAT INTERMINGLE.

PAN OVER an audience of bejeweled and wigged spectators all clapping and cheering. Return to:

INT. LOUIS'S BEDROOM

Louis sits against the bedstead staring intently at Lestat.

Silence.

FOCUS ON LESTAT

seated on the bed.

Then:

LESTAT
 You have to ask me for this. You
 have to give your full consent,
 do you hear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS

Give it to me!

LESTAT

(seductive)

Vampires. We slay our brothers
and sisters.

LOUIS

I want it!

LESTAT

And thrive on their blood.

LOUIS

Give it to me.

Lestat bends close as if to drink Louis's blood. Louis does not shrink back, but stares into his eyes. Lestat draws back, stands up, leaves through French doors, then says:

LESTAT

Tomorrow night. I want you to
prove yourself. I shall give you
the choice I never had.

(looks outside)

The sun's coming. Watch it
carefully. If you join me
tomorrow, you'll never see the sun
again.

Louis sits dazed staring at the empty French windows.

The sun rises over the swamplands and the plantation. Sun fills the room, striking water pitcher, glass, mirror.

INT. RIVERFRONT TAVERN (NEW ORLEANS)

Crowds of gamblers and revelers carry on at tables and makeshift bar.

Suzanne is slipping a poison into a man's drink and then helps him stagger into:

EXT. ALLEYWAY

There she robs the man and lets him fall down dead in the mud.

INT. TAVERN - LOUIS AND LESTAT

at a corner table are watching Suzanne as she re-enters.

LOUIS
(fearfully,
confusedly)
You mean now, with this knife?

He reveals the dagger inside his coat.

LESTAT
She's an evildoer, my friend.
I've made it easy for you. Don't
you see what she's up to? If you
can kill her, the Dark Gift is
yours.

Louis rises, uncertain, crazed, pushes through the crowded tavern, approaches Suzanne and seduces her out into the same alley.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

Louis stares in horror at the bloody knife in his hand as Suzanne falls back dead onto the ground.

Lestat appears over his shoulder, looking coldly at the dead woman. He puts his hand on Louis's shoulder.

LOUIS
What have I done?

LESTAT
(reassuring)
It won't be this way when you're
one of us.

Louis drops the dagger on the ground and moves away fast.

EXT. POINTE DU LAC

Louis on a horse dismounts and walks towards the steps leading up to the gallery. He is crazed with guilt. Suddenly, as he comes into light from lantern at foot of steps he sees --

LESTAT

sitting collected at the head of the steps.

LOUIS

backs up as Lestat rises and descends the steps so fluidly he hardly appears to move. Light from lantern illuminates Louis as:

LOUIS

You are the devil, aren't you?
That's who you are.

LESTAT

(gently)
I wish I were. But if I were,
what would I want with you?

LOUIS

I can't go through with this.

LESTAT

You're perfect for it. You're
bitter, and you're strong.

LOUIS

But why do you want me?

LESTAT

Because you're as strong as I
was... when I was alive. And
besides, I like you. I like your
conscience. You remind me of...
myself.

Louis takes out his flask and drinks. Fearlessly, drunk-
enly, he turns and heads slowly for the nearby swamp.

EXT. PARISH CEMETERY - GRAVES OF LOUIS'S WIFE AND BABY

Louis stops in front of the crypt. Leans his forehead
against the stone.

Lestat appears beside him, radiant, beautiful.

LESTAT

You really want to be with them?

LOUIS

Yes. I killed that tavern girl.
I deserve to die.

Lestat in quiet rage, raises his right fist and shatters
into large fragments the rectangular marble face stone,
revealing two coffins on the upper and lower shelf.
Insects swarm from opening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The upper coffin slides out, cracks open, revealing half-rotted body of a woman, holding an infant, no longer recognizable as individuals, a tangle of gruesome, rotted flesh, hair, eaten away lace, insects and worms crawling over it.

Louis gasps and bends closer taking in the full horror.

LESTAT

It's not your wife and child,
Louis. It's death. Just that
simple. Think and choose. It
happens to everyone. Except us.

Lestat stares at him, smiling, becoming a hazy dreamlike vision, and then hyperclear. He draws closer and closer. We hear the FLASK fall and BREAK ON paving STONES.

Louis is again spellbound. Sound of HEARTBEAT.

Lestate appears angelic in his radiance.

LESTAT (V.O.)

(patient and
persuasive)

We shall be this way, always.
Young as we are now. I'm so
lonely for a companion... But you
must ask. Do you want to or no?

Louis's senses are confused. He is entranced.

LOUIS

(tentative and then
sure)

Yes. Yes!

Lestat embraces Louis obscuring his face. HEARTBEAT grows LOUDER. DRUMBEAT comes, OUT OF SYNC, but almost together.

LOUIS'S POV

The moon, the clouds, the sky, and fragments of earlier visions, blurred figures are glimpsed, with earlier dream images. LAUGHTER and MUSIC rise and fall under the UNSYNCHRONIZED SLOWING BEAT of the HEART and the DRUM.

BACK TO SCENE

Lestat lets Louis fall down beside the broken crypt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lestat stands over him, once again radiant. Lestat speaks gently.

LESTAT

You may go now.

Lestat lifts his hand to his lips and blows Louis a kiss.

LOUIS

No! No, give it to me.

Lestat lifts his own right wrist to his teeth. Fangs slash his own flesh, blood falls. Louis rises to receive the first drops into his open mouth. Lestat gathers him up, as Louis clamps his hand on Lestat's arm and sucks from the wrist.

HEARTBEAT AND DRUMBEAT are SYNCHRONIZED and grow STRONGER and pick up speed.

Louis is released. Staggers.

VAMPIRE VISION

The world around him (and the look of the film) is transformed; the swamp, the CRY of the night BIRDS, the moon, the clouds, all reflect his heightened vision. He looks down in pity on the rotted woman and infant who appear to glitter and to be beautiful rather than repulsive. He closes the lid of the coffin, astonished at the ease of it. Then lifts the entire coffin and returns it to its slot in the crypt.

He turns and stares at Lestat whom he sees now with a vampire's vision. Lestat's eyes are brighter. His buttons are glimmering in the light.

Everything is clearer, brighter, containing more facets of light and color.

LESTAT

(lighthearted)

Stop staring at my buttons.

Didn't I tell you it was going to be fun? But we've work to do.

Lestat leads him into the swamp. Tiny CREATURES move or SING everywhere; leaves move as if growing before Louis's eyes. The water makes myriad OVERLAPPING sounds, and he can see deep into it, to the creatures swimming in the depths.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louis stops, hand going around his waist as he feels a cramp of pain.

LESTAT
Your body's dying, pay no
attention. It will take twenty
minutes at most.

Louis is horrified, but the beauty of moon flowers and banana trees continues to distract him. The sky is violet, flooded with luminosity. Again he feels pain.

LESTAT
Come, you're going to feed now.

LOUIS
I want a woman.

Lestat laughs and the laughter echoes like bells in Louis's ears.

LESTAT
That doesn't matter anymore,
Louis. You'll see. Come...

LOUIS'S DAZZLED POV - SWAMP

Small high ground. Camp of runaway slaves. Several share a bottle of rum around the fire. Male slave rises, a gorgeous hunk of flesh in the firelight, simply beautiful (Razor Rudduck) and goes into swamp to relieve his bladder.

LESTAT (O.S.)
They're all beautiful now. Men,
women, the old, the young... simply
because they are alive.

BACK TO SCENE

Louis sees.

The slave comes nearer.

Louis pushes past Lestat. Lestat is surprised but amused and proud, and folds his arms to watch. Louis sees the tiny crucifix on a chain around the slave's neck. Stops. Lestat snatches the crucifix off the man and throws it away, urging Louis towards him.

SLAVE'S POV

Two gleaming white beings stand before him with devil's eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

As the slave tries to bolt, Louis embraces him easily then his teeth into the powerful neck. They are new fangs, he has to really bite into the victim, but he is ravenous to do it. Holds tight to the man as he drinks.

LOUIS'S POV

Trance as he drinks the blood. ECHO of Lestat's LAUGHTER as the swoon thickens. Distant firelight gets brighter and brighter.

INT. POINTE DU LAC - NIGHT

Main floor parlor and dining room with floorlength windows to porches on all sides. Building for all its high ceilings is crude. Furnishing is lavish Parisian Louis XVI.

Lestat plays the harpsichord rapidly and exuberantly... an improvisation on Bach as Louis -- skin whiter, eyes brighter -- wanders from room to room, dazzled by the candles, the light on the furniture, the petit point tapestry of the chairs, the draperies. Before a mirror he stops amazed to see his reflection. In the distance, over the MUSIC, Lestat laughs.

LESTAT

Yes, that's you, my handsome friend. And you'll look that way until the stars fall from heaven!

Louis draws closer to the mirror, and sees his small, now fully-developed fangs. He runs his tongue over them.

LESTAT

Those will make it easier next time to neatly puncture the flesh. We are well mannered immortals, always remember.

WILD MUSIC.

YVETTE

the mulatto slave, stands still in alarm on the porch gazing at Louis as he stares into the mirror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Slowly Louis turns to her and is stupefied by her natural beauty.

The MUSIC gets LOUDER and more FRENZIED.

Louis moves out past the dazzled Yvette, along the --

EXT. GALLERY AND STAIRS TO GROUND

He moves out onto the grass and looks up at the stars. He begins to turn around. And suddenly he raises his hands to his lips and he roars. It's a long, horrified, grief-stricken roar. It DROWNS OUT the MUSIC.

INT. BASEMENT OF POINTE DU LAC

A brick walled storage room. Two coffins stand on the floor. Lestat, holding a lantern, closes and bolts the door. Then turns to see --

LOUIS

a full-fledged vampire of high gloss -- sitting on a bench staring at the coffin. Louis is stunned.

Lestat is apprehensive and protective of Louis. He approaches the nearest of the coffins and opens it. It is fitted with satin inside. Louis stares at it in shock. Then looks away sharply, staring at the lantern.

LESTAT

You must get into it. The sun can burn you to ashes.

LOUIS

But is it magical or merely a shelter?

LESTAT

It's the best shelter that you can have.

Louis rises, approaches the coffin, hands trembling as he peers into it.

LESTAT

Don't be afraid. In moments you'll sleep as soundly as ever you slept when you were living. You'll dream. And when you wake I'll be waiting for you, and so will all the world.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Louis looks for assurance at Lestat's beaming face. We can see the fear behind Lestat's smile. The uncertainty.

LOUIS

You told me something. Earlier.
You said that you didn't have a
choice. Was that true?

Lestat smiles bitterly and nods.

He points to the coffin.

CLOSE ON HIS HAND

pointing into the coffin.

LESTAT (O.S.)

Some night I'll tell you that
story, if you like. We have a lot
of time now to talk to each other.

Louis gracefully crawls into the coffin, fearful yet fascinated, and is suddenly lying on his back as the lid comes down with a bang. Total darkness. Sounds of his breathing, of his gasp. Of a whispered prayer:

LOUIS (O.S.)

Dear God.
